



City of Port Moody

Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: September 17, 2021
Submitted by: Community Development Department – Policy Planning Division
Subject: Update to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Corporate Policy

Purpose

To present the updated Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Corporate Policy for Council's consideration.

Recommended Resolution(s)

THAT the updated Affordable Housing Reserve Fund – Guidelines for Allocation of Funds Corporate Policy be approved as recommended in the report dated September 17, 2021 from the Community Development Department – Policy Planning Division regarding the Update to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Policy.

Background

At the Special Council (Committee of the Whole) meeting on April 21, 2020 Council considered the Interim Report from the Port Moody Affordable Housing Task Force (**Attachment 1**) and passed the following resolutions:

CW20/047

THAT the report dated April 12, 2020 from the Port Moody Affordable Housing Task Force regarding Interim Report from the Port Moody Affordable Housing Task Force be received for information;

AND THAT staff be directed to:

1. extend an invitation to the Cooperative Housing Federation of BC in order to inform Council of how community land trusts may assist with Council priorities for redevelopment of public property;
2. report back to Council with costs and implications associated with updating Port Moody's laneway housing bylaws as informed by recommendations from the task force in order to increase uptake of that program;
3. establish a renovation bylaw in line with the municipalities of Port Coquitlam, New Westminster, and Burnaby; and

4. update the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Terms of Reference, including amending the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Policy to allow distribution of funding out of the Reserve for rental relief initiatives for renters in need of financial assistance;

AND THAT these recommendations be given high priority.

This report responds to the direction in the fourth bullet to “update the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Terms of Reference, including amending the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Policy to allow distribution of funding out of the Reserve for rental relief initiatives for renters in need of financial assistance” by presenting the amended Affordable Housing Reserve Fund – Guidelines for Allocation of Funds for Council’s consideration.

Discussion

The City of Port Moody’s Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (AHRF) - Guidelines for the Allocation of Funds corporate policy was endorsed by Council on March 8, 2016 and amended on September 19, 2017. The intention of the policy was to set out guidelines for the allocation and distribution of funds held in the AHRF to projects that include the provision of affordable housing units. Affordable housing units are classified as units affordable to those on low and moderate incomes, with a strong preference for rental units for households classified as low income. Since 2018, \$530,360 has been distributed to secure affordable housing units, with the City’s current AHRF balance at \$1,480,859.

Amendments to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Policy

In response to resolution CW20/047, staff have proposed amendments to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund – Guidelines for Allocation of Funds Corporate Policy to allow the disbursement of funds for activities that support affordable housing initiatives beyond securing units. The proposed changes to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund policy include the ability to use the funds to:

- provide interest-free loans to market-renter households in Port Moody through a local rent bank in order to maintain tenancy in their dwelling unit through rental payment assistance, a utilities payment, or security deposit; and
- fund staff salaries and City projects that support the development of affordable housing strategies.

While the City does not have the resources to manage a rent bank, SHARE Society currently operates the [Tri-Cities Rent Bank](https://sharesociety.ca/tri-cities-share-rent-bank), which would control the funds on the City’s behalf.¹ The Tri-Cities Rent Bank program works to provide interest free loans to market renters to help them maintain their tenancy through help with their rent payment, a hydro/natural gas payment, or security deposit. These loans are meant to be repaid over an 18-24 month period.

The proposed changes to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund policy (**Attachment 2**) will also formalize the use of the funds to cover staff salaries, a practice Council has already endorsed since 2018. Currently, the social planner position is costed to the AHRF, as a primary function of the role is to assist with the creation of affordable housing in the City.

¹ <https://sharesociety.ca/tri-cities-share-rent-bank>

Finally, staff have also taken the opportunity to propose an additional update to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund policy to fund projects that support the creation of affordable housing projects in the City. As the City has started developing policies that will lead to the creation of affordable housing units, costs associated with these projects, such as procuring consultants, are common. The proposed change to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund policy will allow for these funds to be costed to the AHRF, at Council's discretion.

A draft updated policy is included as **Attachment 2**.

Other Option(s)

1. THAT the updated City of Port Moody's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund – Guidelines for Allocation of Funds Corporate Policy be received for information.
2. THAT the City of Port Moody's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund – Guidelines for Allocation of Funds Corporate Policy be amended as directed by Council.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with receiving this report. Utilizing funds from the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund will remain at Council's discretion.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

There are no communications or civic engagement initiatives associated with the recommendations of this report at this time.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

The recommendation in this report aligns with the following Council Strategic Objectives:

- plan for a variety of housing types to meet community needs; and
- work with other levels of government and private agencies to support housing and homelessness programs and services.

Attachment(s)

1. Interim Report from the Port Moody Affordable Housing Task Force.
2. Draft updated Corporate Policy – 10-5080-01 – Affordable Housing Reserve Fund – Guidelines for Allocation of Funds.

Report Author

Liam McLellan
Social Planner

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Update to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Policy.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 - Interim Report from the Port Moody Affordable Housing Task Force.pdf - Attachment 2 - Draft Corporate Policy - 10-5080-01 - Affordable Housing Reserve Fund - Guidelines for Allocation of Funds.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Oct 4, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Mary De Paoli, Manager of Policy Planning - Sep 27, 2021 - 7:23 PM

Kate Zanon, General Manager of Community Development - Sep 28, 2021 - 1:34 PM

Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Sep 28, 2021 - 6:29 PM

Natasha Vander Wal for Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement -
Sep 29, 2021 - 9:00 AM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Oct 2, 2021 - 11:59 AM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Oct 4, 2021 - 1:23 PM