



Memo to Council

Date: January 9, 2024
Subject: Advocacy Integration of shelter for people experiencing homelessness into mandated housing – Motion Served by Councillor Amy Lubik

Motion Served

Notice of the following motion was provided at the November 28, 2023, Regular Council meeting:

THAT the following resolution regarding “Advocacy: Integration of shelter for people experiencing homelessness into mandated housing” be submitted to the 2024 LMLGA and UBCM conventions;

AND THAT staff be directed to forward copies to the Provincial Ministers involved in housing, municipal affairs, mental health and poverty reduction, and the Union of BC Municipalities, as recommended by the report dated January 9, 2024 from Councillor Amy Lubik:

WHEREAS on November 8, 2023 the province introduced legislation it estimates could provide up to 100,000 new homes near designated transit areas over the next decade, which was intended to ease the housing crisis; and

AND WHEREAS the Province has committed to addressing the housing and support needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and make homelessness a rare and brief occurrence, but the 2023 Homeless Count showed a drastic increase in the number of our neighbours facing homelessness, many for years;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the BC Government will amend their legislation such that across all communities, new constructions near designated transit will incorporate at least enough dedicated supported housing units and associated services to house the unprecedented number of our unhoused neighbours captured in the most recent homeless count.

Background

Homelessness is at an all time high across BC, with many people who took part in the 2023 Homeless count declaring that they had been without a home for years, and that the main reason was lack of income, with mental health and substance challenges also of consideration.

The Housing First model is the now established as best practice to help stabilize our neighbours and connect them to services. Simply put, housing is provided first with supports provided including physical and mental health, education, employment, substance abuse and community connections¹.

Many local governments are taking on supporting our homeless neighbours without the tools or the proper resources. Some communities trying to provide land, but there is little public land to provide such services, especially as the number keep growing. Even when there is public land there are significant hurdles.

At the same time, the BC Government has recently mandated the creation of high density housing developments and complete communities near transit across the lower mainland. However, there is currently no stipulation on affordability and especially not for those who are the most equity denied in our society. Good urban planning principles of Transit oriented communities generally include public services and provide transportation opportunities to appointments, education, and employment. While the province adds housing, this is unparalleled opportunity for the province to ensure that housing supports the alleviation of object homelessness, and provides supports that people need to stabilize and thrive.

Requested Timeline

<u>Level</u>	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Staff Turnaround Time</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory or interjurisdictional requirements Major and immediate risk and/or financial impact 	< 3 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Time-sensitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant impact to the community Significant financial impact 	3-6 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-urgent	All other work	< 12 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Council Strategic Plan Alignment

This motion aligns with the following Council Strategic Plan Goal(s):

- Create complete and connected communities through balanced growth: Implement best practices that result in growth that is consistent with community needs
- Enhance community well-being: Incorporate our values, including diversity, equity, inclusion, Truth and Reconciliation, and climate action, into our policies, plans, and initiatives
- Prioritize transit-oriented development and diverse and equitable housing options
- Facilitate community well-being through programs and long-term planning

¹ <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/housing-accommodation-and-supports/housing-first>

Corporate Project Plan Alignment

This motion aligns with the following Corporate Project(s):

- Advocacy.

Council Options

The following responses are available for Council consideration:

1. Receive for information.
2. Refer to staff to bring back a report (staff will determine if the nature of the work warrants a project proposal or a staff report, and will include considerations with respect to feasibility, resources, timeline, strategic plan alignment, and legislative analysis).
3. Other.