



Committee of the Whole Excerpts
February 11, 2025

RFP AWARDING WHRMPD24-2, PRE-APPROVED HOUSING DESIGN OPTIONS EXCERPT

WHRM submitted a Housing Action Plan for the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) which identified attainable actions Council could take between 2024-2027 to support the development of new housing units by making policy changes that will enable or incentivize new home construction.

In January 2024, the Municipality secured funding to participate in the HAF program. On January 30, 2024, Council approved the Housing Action Plan as submitted to CMHC and directed staff to begin implementation. Action Item #6, *Promote Alternative Forms of Housing*, identified an opportunity to create a set of designs for missing middle housing types that could be considered pre-approved by municipal staff. This item was given a total budget of \$100,000 through the HAF funding. Action Item #6 seeks to provide an easier path for development of alternative housing forms, specifically focusing on the *Missing Middle*. This type of housing includes developments of approximately 2-6 units. The requested designs are intended to fit the context of our region through the design of multiple sets of plans for both secondary suites and two-unit dwellings.

The recommended motion was that Committee of the Whole recommend that ...

COUNCIL AWARD THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS # WHRMPD24-2 TO PASSIVE DESIGN SOLUTIONS AND UPLAND TO COMPLETE PRE-APPROVED HOUSING DESIGN OPTIONS AS IT RELATES TO ACTION ITEM #6 OF THE HOUSING ACTION PLAN AT A PROJECT PRICE OF \$89,100.00 PLUS APPLICABLE TAXES.



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation X	Decision Request ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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To: Members of Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee (PAC/HAC)

Submitted by: _____
Alex Dunphy, Senior Planner

Date: February 11, 2025

Subject: RFP Awarding: WHRMPD24-2, Pre-approved Housing Design Options

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Municipal Government Act Section 65

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends for Committee of the Whole to forward a positive recommendation by passing the following motion:

...that Committee of the Whole recommends that Council award the Request for Proposals # WHRMPD24-2 to Passive Design Solutions and Upland to complete pre-approved housing design options as it relates to Action Item #6 of the Housing Action Plan at a project price of \$89,100.00 plus applicable taxes.

BACKGROUND

Property X	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☐	Social ☐	Economic ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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West Hants Regional Municipality submitted a Housing Action Plan for the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) on August 16, 2023. This plan identified attainable actions Council could take between 2024-2027 to support the development of new housing units by making policy changes that will enable or incentivize new home construction.

In January 2024, the Municipality secured funding to participate in the HAF program. On January 30, 2024, Council approved the Housing Action Plan as submitted to CMHC and directed staff to begin implementation. Action Item #6, *Promote Alternative Forms of Housing*, identified an opportunity to create a set of designs for missing middle housing types that could be considered pre-approved by municipal staff. This item was given a total budget of \$100,000 through the HAF funding.

A Request for Proposals was posted on December 20, 2024 and three (3) submissions were received. However, two submissions didn't meet the technical requirements of the procurement process.

DISCUSSION

Action Item #6 seeks to provide an easier path for development of alternative housing forms, specifically focusing on the *Missing Middle*. This type of housing includes developments of approximately 2-6 units. The requested designs are intended to fit the context of our region through the design of multiple sets of plans for both secondary suites and two-unit dwellings.

The tender submissions were reviewed by the Acting Director of Planning and Development, as well as the Senior Planner to confirm compliance with the expectations of the Action Item and that it would meet the Department's operational requirements.

Proponent	Total Cost	Final Score
Passive Design Solutions and Upland	\$89,100	98.25

NEXT STEPS

Pending the approval of Council, staff will notify the successful proponent with an offer to enter into agreement.

RFP Posting Date	December 20, 2024
RFP Closing Date	January 17, 2025
RFP Expires	March 17, 2025
Days Remaining	34

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Cost

Recommended Proponent Cost	\$89,100.00
Applicable Tax (4.29%)	<u>\$3,822.39</u>

Total Proponent Project Cost	\$92,922.39
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Budget

HAF Budget – Action Item #6 2024-25	\$50,000.00
HAF Budget – Action Item #6 2025-26	<u>\$50,000.00</u>
Total Budget – Action Item #6	\$100,000.00
Variance – Under Budget	\$7,077.61

Based on the funding that was received for the HAF program, the Municipality has a total of \$100,000 over two years for action item #6. The recommended proponent's total costs would be \$92,922.39 with applicable taxes, coming in \$7,077.61 under budget for the project.

ALTERNATIVES

In response to this application, Council may:

- not support the recommendation; or
- provide alternative direction such as requesting further information on a specific topic.

ATTACHMENTS

West Hants Regional Municipality, Housing Accelerator Fund Report – January 2024

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER COMMENTS

The recommendation and report are in alignment with the HAF plan and initiatives. Additionally, it is within the budget allocation assigned to Action Item #6.

I support the recommendation.

Report Prepared by: _____

Alex Dunphy, Senior Planner

Report Reviewed by: _____

Carlee Rochon, Director of Finance

Report Approved by:  _____

Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation ☒	Decision Request ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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To: Mayor Zebian and Members of West Hants Regional Municipality Council

Submitted by: _____
Sara Poirier, Director of Planning and Development

Date: January 30, 2024

Subject: Housing Action Plan

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 59 of the Municipal Government Act.

RECOMMENDATION

If Council wishes to proceed the following motion would be in order:

...that Council approves the Housing Action Plan as submitted to CMHC and directs staff to implement the action plan.

BACKGROUND

Property ☒	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☐	Social ☐	Economic ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) opened a new funding stream, the Housing Accelerator Fund, in 2023. The goal of the funding stream is to encourage initiatives that increase housing supply and promote the development of affordable, inclusive and diverse communities that are low-carbon and climate-resilient. The Director of Planning and Development applied to this funding stream on behalf of WHRM on August 16, 2023.

CMHC contacted the Director of Planning and Development on Monday January 29, 2024, to discuss the WHRM application as it is currently undergoing final review. The application review process is late in the final stages of a second round of approvals and CMHC has requested

Councils' endorsement of the Housing Action Plan by January 31, 2024 in order to be considered.

DISCUSSION

Part of the application process for the Housing Accelerator Fund was to submit a Housing Action Plan. The Director of Planning and Development, in consultation with the CAO and Director of Public Works, developed the Housing Action Plan as attached in Appendix A. This plan outlines seven (7) actions to increase housing, and specifically affordable housing units, in the Municipality (Table 1) and three (3) additional actions that would support increased density in the serviced areas of the Municipality.

Table 1: Action Items 1-7 as outlined in the Housing Action Plan

Action	Anticipated Dates	Funding Allocation	Anticipated Resources
<i>#1: Allow greater density as-of-right</i>	2024	\$390,000	Policy / Planning Documents Internal staff / External consultants
<i>#2: Create affordable housing policy requirements</i>			
<i>#3: Reduce parking requirements</i>			
<i>#4: Remove permit fees for accessory dwelling units</i>		\$160,000	Policy / Program Internal staff
<i>#5: Promote infill development</i>	2025	\$128,000	Land Inventory / Education Internal staff / External consultants
<i>#6: Promote alternative housing forms</i>	2025	\$204,000	Policy / Planning Documents / Education Internal staff / External consultants
<i>#7: Upgrade permit software</i>	2026	\$200,000	Computer Software Internal staff / External consultants
		\$1,082,000	

Based on the calculation of new units being proposed in the Housing Action Plan, a total of \$1,081,886 was requested from the Housing Accelerator Fund for West Hants Regional Municipality. For CMHC to continue to evaluate the application submitted by WHRM, they require Councils' endorsement of the Housing Action Plan as submitted to CMHC. This funding represents 100% of the anticipated costs of the Housing Action Plan with no financial commitment from the Municipality.

NEXT STEPS

The Director of Planning and Development will submit the approved motion to CMHC to form part of the WHRM application to the Housing Accelerator Fund that is currently under review.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no anticipated costs to the Municipality with regard to this application. The Housing Accelerator Fund provides 100% funding of the approved applications.

ALTERNATIVES

In response to the request, Council may decide to:

- approve the Housing Action Plan as submitted to CMHC and direct staff to implement the plan; or
- provide alternative direction such as requesting further information on a specific topic.

APPENDICIES

Appendix A Housing Action Plan

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

This is great news and recognition from the CMHC that the application reflects their goals and targets and for our area. To have the opportunity to complete the components of the action plan, with 100% funding over the next two (2) or three (3) years, would accelerate the work required to support the policy changes scheduled for review in our future. This will also help to address the specific housing needs of our region.

It is regrettable that we have been given such short notice by CMHC for a return confirmation. It is an indication of the final stages of the application review process as we understand the larger cities were given priority in earlier rounds of review.

I support the recommendation.

Report Prepared by: _____
Sara Poirier, Director of Planning and Development

Report Reviewed by: _____
Carlee Rochon, Director of Finance

Report Approved by: 
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer