

## SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT STAFF REPORT

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**TO:** Planning and Community Development Committee – February 8, 2018

**AUTHOR:** Julie Clark – Planner

**SUBJECT:** HOUSING POLICY - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REPORT

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### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the report titled Housing Policy - Public Participation Report be received for information.**

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### BACKGROUND

Sunshine Coast Regional District Board adopted the following resolution at the meeting held on October 12, 2017:

272/17 (in part)     **Recommendation No. 8**     *Affordable Housing Policies*

THAT the report titled Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaws (Affordable Housing Policies) – Consideration for First Reading be received;

AND THAT the following Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaws be forwarded to the Board for First Reading:

- *Halfmoon Bay Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 675.4, 2017*
- *Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 641.8, 2017*
- *Elphinstone Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 600.7, 2017*
- *West Howe Sound Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 640.2, 2017*

AND THAT two public information meetings be held with respect to the proposed Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaws (Affordable Housing Policies);

The direction included in Recommendation 8 above, and the plan for Phase 2 of short term rental (STR) consultation provided the basis for combining the OCP Amendment and STR meetings into a series where both projects were profiled and public comment gathered.

Because of the interconnected nature of these projects, the comments gathered for either project may inform the other.

**DISCUSSION**

Staff conducted a series of three public information meetings on two concurrent policy projects in November 2017. The Public Participation Report is attached.

*Timeline and Next Steps*

Reports for each project will be forthcoming in the first quarter of 2018 to the Planning and Community Development Committee.

The comments regarding Official Community Plan amendments to encourage affordable housing will be summarized and used to prepare recommendations for the next step of OCP amendments.

The Short Term Rental research results will be reported on and used to recommend whether or not to pursue specific regulations.

**STRATEGIC PLAN AND RELATED POLICIES**

The attached Public Participation Report is reflective of the SCRD Public Participation Program and the strategic priority to Facilitate Community Development.

**CONCLUSION**

A public information meeting series was hosted in November 2017 to provide public participation opportunities for two interconnected housing policy projects, to provide information and gather feedback.

Comments from these meetings is being used to refine the next steps of each project. The next steps for each project will be presented to a future meeting of the Planning and Community Development Committee.

The Public Participation Report is attached.

Attachment:

Attachment A – Housing Policy Public Participation

Reviewed by:			
Manager	X – A. Allen	Finance	
GM	X – I. Hall	Legislative	
CAO	X – J. Loveys	Other	



# Sunshine Coast Regional District

## Public Participation Report

## Housing Policy

Report to the Planning and Community Development Committee

February, 2018

J. Clark, Planner, Y. Siao & D. Raphael, Senior Planners - Sunshine Coast Regional District

## **Housing Policy**

Sunshine Coast, British Columbia

Report Date: February, 2018



## **SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT**

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REPORT**

## **Housing Policy**

**Sunshine Coast, British Columbia**

The purpose of this report is to document comments received from three public information meetings about affordable housing and short term rental research. All three meetings took place in November 2017. Feedback highlights from the Advisory Planning Commissions (APCs) and the Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Committee (OCPC) are also included with respect to affordable housing and short term rental policy.

### **Background**

In November 2017 the SCRDR hosted three public information meetings. The format was designed to achieve the following goals:

- Inform: Share specific data and information about each project, being clear about SCRDR role
- Consult/Engage: record community ideas, solutions and concerns to guide the development of recommendations

The concurrent projects were:

- Updating the land use policies in the Official Community Plans (OCPs) to support Affordable Housing
- Research regarding the benefits, impacts and possible regulatory solutions for Short Term Rentals on the Sunshine Coast.

## **Housing Policy**

Sunshine Coast, British Columbia

Report Date: February, 2018

### *Planning Project: OCP Policy Update to Support Affordable Housing*

The OCP is a Bylaw, required by the Province of BC. In order to update the OCP land use policies to support affordable housing, the SCRCD must follow the process for an OCP amendment. This process is a legislated requirement of the *Local Government Act*. The steps of the process are included in Appendix 1. This meeting was the public information meeting in advance of preparing bylaws for consideration of second reading.

### *Planning Project: Short Term Rental Research*

The project includes analysis and public participation to understand the benefits and impacts of Short Term Rentals on the Sunshine Coast to determine whether specific regulatory solutions are of interest to the community. Research is still underway and if there is interest in regulatory solutions, then recommendations will follow the appropriate planning process such as outlined above for bylaw amendments, including further opportunities to provide feedback.

## Housing Policy

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### General Observations on the Public Information Meetings

Three meetings were advertised and hosted:

- November 22, 2017: Halfmoon Bay, Egmont & Pender Harbour
- November 23, 2017: West Howe Sound and Elphinstone
- November 28, 2017: Roberts Creek

Each meeting was open to residents from other rural areas and adjacent municipalities.

The meetings were drop-in style, open for three hours in the late afternoon to early evening. The structure was a one-hour meeting design repeated three times to welcome new participants as their schedule allowed. Short presentations were delivered once an hour, with the majority of the hour reserved for dialogue. Discussion took place at a series of long tables in a different part of the room than the presentations to emphasize the shift from delivering information to facilitating exchange.

A total of 100 people attended 3 meetings led by the SCR D Planning staff. The OCP policies to support affordable housing were also referred to the APCs and Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Committee (OCPC) for discussion and comment.

At the time of writing this report, the Short Term Rental project is still in the research phase so referrals to the APCs and OCPC have not yet taken place.

### Attendance

Date	Rural Areas of Focus	Attendance
Nov 22	Halfmoon Bay, Egmont & Pender Harbour	17
Nov 23	West Howe Sound, Elphinstone	27
Nov 28	Roberts Creek	56
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

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### Overarching Themes from Public Information Meetings: Land Use Policies Related to Affordable Housing

#### ➔ EFFECTIVENESS AND ORGANIZATION OF PROPOSED POLICIES

- The proposed policies should include incentives for the creation of affordable housing.
- More aggressive approaches are needed. The proposed policies are not much different from existing policies.
- Existing policies in their original context should be kept, instead of being replaced by a set of general policies.
- Definition of housing affordability should cover all levels of income below the median level.

#### ➔ LOCATION OF DENSITY

- Areas north of the Sunshine Coast Highway, forested areas and provincial lands should be allowed for development of higher density, such as small-lot subdivisions, mobile or tiny home parks.
- Density should be contained within defined boundaries, such as village hubs.
- Density should only be achieved through cluster development in village hubs, not by additional homes on existing lots.
- Density should not affect the ambience of space and rural lifestyle of the Sunshine Coast.
- Recognize the neighbourhood activity center in the OCP, as a potential commercial core, and increase residential density around the core to allow small-scale affordable housing at density of 8-10 units per acre. Gradually reduce density towards outlining areas away from the core.

#### ➔ CONCERN ABOUT INFRASTRUCTURE

- A comprehensive study on infrastructure should be carried out before increasing density.
- The current infrastructure capacity is inadequate to support any increase in density.
- A regional growth strategy should be prepared before considering density increase in rural areas.

#### ➔ HOUSING DESIGN AND LAYOUT (Zoning Bylaw comments)

Housing design and layout is particularly relevant to the 2018 project to update Zoning Bylaw 310. Any comments received will be recorded and kept to inform the Zoning Bylaw update.

- Regulate density by total floor area of buildings and lot coverage, instead of the number of dwellings.
- Allow detached buildings (e.g. separate sleeping quarters) to form parts of a dwelling to provide flexibility for building layout.

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- Define density by the number of people instead of the number of dwellings.
- Use basement suites to provide additional housing units.
- Currently there are too many restrictions on dwelling type, size and design, such as carriage house.
- Support the effort in updating the zoning bylaw to remove technical barriers in housing design and flexibility.

### ➡ OTHER CONCERNS EXPRESSED

- How can long term affordability be secured? Need more information on how housing agreements are implemented and enforced.
- There will be impacts on privacy by introducing neighboring infill development.
- There is no economic incentive to build second dwellings or auxiliary dwellings.

### ➡ OTHER SUPPORT / SUGGESTIONS EXPRESSED

- Allow tiny home parks or new subdivisions to be developed above the highway and on provincial lands.
- Allow a recreational vehicle with hookup to be used as habitable space on a property.
- Promote alternative, green and off-grid buildings.
- General support to locate cluster housing in village hub areas.

## Overarching Themes from Public Information Meetings: Short Term Rental Research

The Public Information Meetings generated ideas, concerns and comments regarding Short Term Rentals. The comments have been grouped into themes: regulation, impact on long term availability / affordability, noise and enforcement, impact on community, housing policy, insurance and other.

Written comments and table discussion covered many of the same issues raised in questionnaire responses received in the first phase of the STR project. The meetings allowed for sharing of personal stories and experiences from people impacted by and those who operate STR.

### ➡ CONSIDER FOR REGULATION

#### Increase Knowledge of Rules/Guidance/Safety

- STR renters need to be informed of rules such as fire bans
- Needs to be publicized that STRs are not currently allowed
- Some STRs provide guidelines for the guests

#### Licensing

- Business Licences help to track STRs number and compliance, can the fee be put to other uses such as infrastructure
- There has to be a way to license STR that are currently illegal

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### Operator Present/Available

- STR operator should be required to notify neighbours in a ½ block area that they are providing STR and provide contact number for neighbour to call if there is a problem



### IMPACT ON LONG TERM AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY

Loss of Long Term Rental (LTR) is not just due to Short Term Rental

- Landlords who operated LTR have recently sold and new owners choose to reside in home
- Changes to *Landlord Tenant Act* further discourage LTR; having an end date (vacate clause) to a contract cannot be only reason for removing the tenant.
- Small, cheaper rental homes are lost as they get torn down and larger more expensive homes replace them

Concern regarding noise and need for proper enforcement

- Constant change of renters means constant repeating of request to keep noise down
- Neighbours to STR experience loud music and foul language to the point of having to leave home during the day. Noise bylaw is only enforced by RCMP after 11pm
- Any STR regulations needs to consider the practical requirements for enforcement. 1 to 2 bylaw officers can't enforce all things all over the Coast

Short Term Rentals displace Long Term Renters

- Stakes are so much higher for people pushed out of long term rentals than those running STRs
- Long term renters risk losing their home to STR, despite having a full time job

The benefits and impacts to the community

- Loss of community, revolving door of people renting and having no stake in the community
- STR brings tourists with money to spend on the Coast



### OTHER CONCERNS EXPRESSED

- The rules and requirements varies between insurance companies
- Some insurance companies will not cover you if you do not live in/near the property where the STR is based unless you have a property management company
- Signed agreement with renter is considered to be LTR
- STR do not have signed agreement then insurance rates go up
- Airbnb/VRBO fees include some insurance cover but should have extended cover with your insurance company

## **Housing Policy**

Sunshine Coast, British Columbia

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### **Overview of Email Submissions**

A total of 5 follow-up emails were received after the completion of the meetings. Comments are included in this report.

An additional meeting was requested by Pender Harbour Chamber of Commerce and was held on January 17, 2018.

### **Supporting Documents**

The following supporting documents are attached to this report:

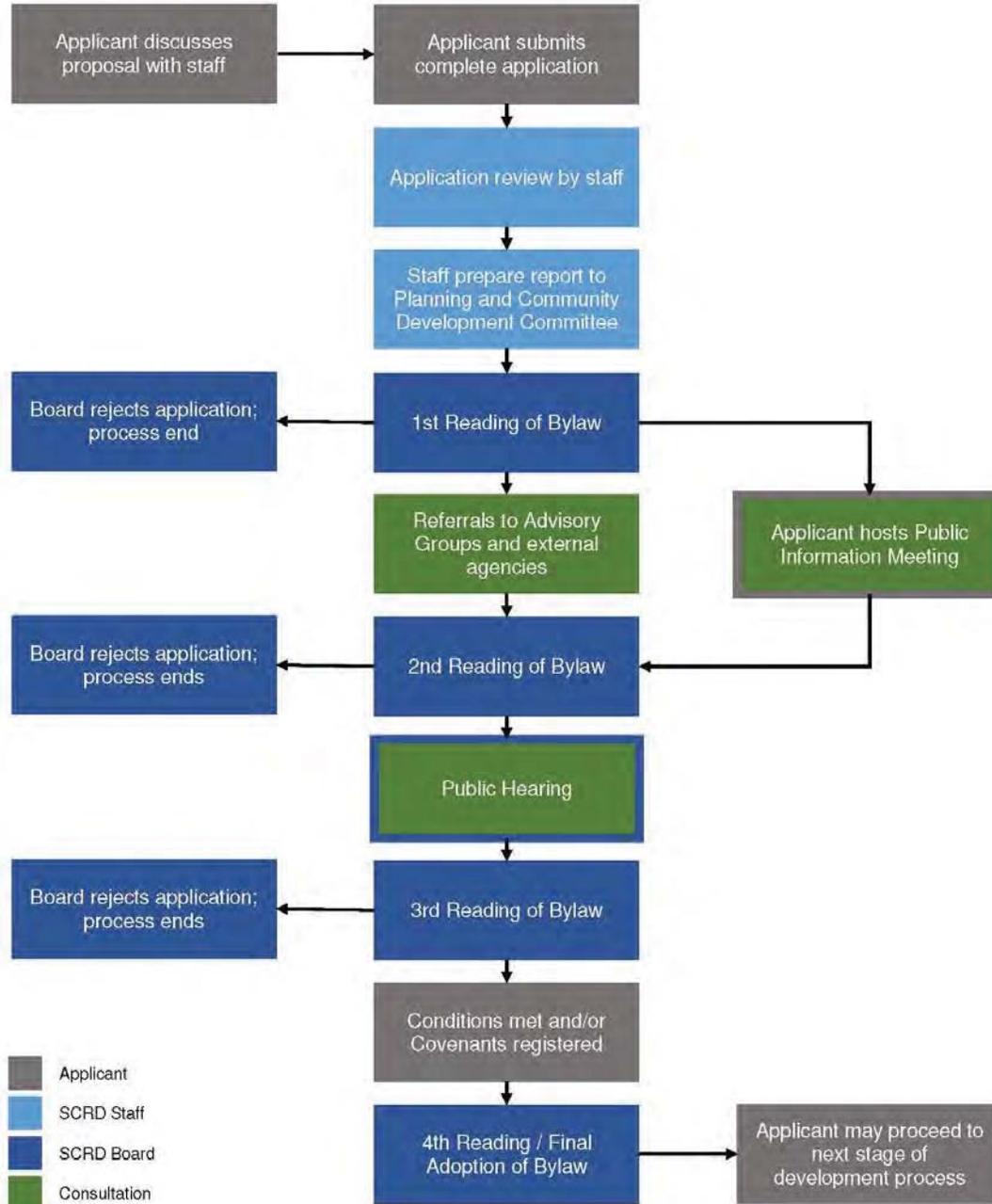
Appendix 1: Process Chart for OCP updates

Appendix 2: Poster

Appendix 3: Coast Reporter Advertising

Appendix 4: Social Media Advertising

## SCRD OCP AND ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT PROCESS



# Public Information Meetings

- Land Use Policies to Support Affordable Housing
- Short Term Rental Research



Join Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) planners to learn about and provide input on two separate yet interconnected policy projects for the rural areas — **Land Use Policies to Support Affordable Housing** and **Short Term Rental Research**.

The meetings are designed to help the SCR D hear from residents — please bring your questions and ideas. SCR D planners will share information directly with residents about each topic — there will be lots of time for one-on-one conversation as well as short presentations, which will be repeated once per hour.

These meetings will take place in late November, in three different locations:

Date	Open Meeting	Location	Short Presentations at:
Nov 22	3pm-6pm	Pender Harbour Music Hall 12956 Madeira Park Road	3:30, 4:30, 5:30
Nov 23	4pm-7pm	Gibsons and Area Community Centre, Rm 209 700 Park Road	4:30, 5:30, 6:30
Nov 28	3pm-6pm	Roberts Creek Hall 1309 Roberts Creek Rd.	3:30, 4:30, 5:30

**RSVP** by email is encouraged to assist in preparations.

Please RSVP to [planning.department@scrd.ca](mailto:planning.department@scrd.ca) with the subject line: Information Meeting.

Drop-ins are also welcome.

**For background information please visit:**

Land Use Policies to Support Affordable Housing [www.scrd.ca/Affordable-Housing](http://www.scrd.ca/Affordable-Housing)

Short Term Rental Research [www.scrd.ca/str](http://www.scrd.ca/str)



[www.scrd.ca](http://www.scrd.ca)



## Public Information Meetings

Join SCRD Planners to learn about and provide input on two policy projects for the rural areas:

- Land Use Policies to Support Affordable Housing
- Short Term Rental Research

These are two separate projects that are interconnected.

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For more details and background information about each project, please visit:  
<http://www.scrd.ca/planning-meetings>

Appendix 4 Sample of Facebook Advertising, November 15-28, 2017



**Sunshine Coast Regional District**  
November 15 · 🌐

Public Information Meetings

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