

To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Diane Campbell, Director of Administrative Services

Re: Housing Needs Assessment

AIM

To obtain Council's approval to access funding for consulting services to complete the Housing Needs Assessment as per the requirement of the Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF).

BACKGROUND

At the Council meeting on July 11, 2024, Council authorized the Mayor and Clerk to sign a Municipal Funding Agreement to access the Canada Community-Building Fund and also approved the necessary by-law.

Included in the report was information related to a new requirement, for municipalities with a population over 30,000, to prepare and submit a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) by March 31, 2025 in order to access the funding.

The HNA is a report informed by data and research that describes the current and future housing needs of a municipality. It includes information on economic data, population and household forecasts as well as qualitative research and analysis. The intent of the HNA is to assist all levels of government to understand the local housing needs of communities and how they relate to infrastructure priorities.

A standard HNA template was provided and a portion of the information was pre-populated. However, there is still a considerable amount of information to be provided by the City including community profiles and trends, household profiles and economic characteristics, priority groups, housing profiles and projected housing needs.

Finally, there are several other grants including this requirement in order to access financing. This HNA will also meet the needs of other funding programs, should the opportunity arise to access additional funding.

COMMENTS

As the requirement for the HNA was announced during 2024, this work has not been included in the 2024 operating budget. Initially, City staff, in conjunction with planning staff from the County, discussed the requirements of the HNA and opted to engage with a consultant to complete some of the required information using consulting funds already included in the 2024 operating budget. As the work has progressed, it has become apparent that additional consulting services and funds will be required in order to complete the HNA.

As the deadline is approaching for completion of the HNA, staff are requesting approval to spend up to \$20,000 on consulting services to satisfy the requirements of the CCBF related to the Housing Needs Assessment. While this is an eligible expenditure under the new

funding agreement, staff are recommending use of the Contingency Reserve in order to preserve the CCBF grant for capital projects.

RECOMMENDATION

That Woodstock City Council approve the funding of up to \$20,000 for consulting services from the Contingency Reserve to complete the Housing Needs Assessment required as part of the new 10-year CCBF funding agreement; and further,

That any unspent funds be carried over to 2025.

Authored by: Diane Campbell, CPA, CA, Director of Administrative Services

Approved by: David Creery, MBA, P.Eng., Chief Administrative Officer