Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – May 6, 2015

REPORTS

Item No. 2 Operational Review of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On April 20, 2015, the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and recommended to the Executive Policy Committee that the report be received as information.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: **Operational Review of Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee**

Critical Path: **WHSC – EPC**

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
W. Yee	M. Pittet	n/a	M. Jack A/CAO

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this report be received as information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides EPC with an operational review of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee activities and mandate as directed by Council in 2011.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On March 23, 2011, Council concurred with recommendations of Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That clauses II and III of the November 22, 2000 Council decision entitled "Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee", which clauses set out the current mandate of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee ("WHSC") be rescinded, and replaced with clauses 2-6 hereof.
2. That the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee be delegated the authority to work with the Federal and Provincial governments, and representatives of the private and non-profit sectors, to develop the policy framework for a tri-level affordable housing strategy (the "Strategy") for Winnipeg, which Strategy and any funding related thereto shall be subject to Council approval.
3. That the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee be delegated the authority to examine best practices in the provision of affordable housing and make recommendations to the Executive Policy Committee regarding the applicability of such best practices to the City of Winnipeg.
4. That "affordable housing" be defined in accordance with Schedule "A" hereto.

5. That the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee provide quarterly updates to the Executive Policy Committee on: (i) the status of discussions regarding the Strategy; (ii) all work undertaken by the WHSC in the preceding quarter.
6. That an operational review of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee activities and mandate be completed by the City of Winnipeg Public Service no later than two years following the approval of the foregoing, and that recommendations arising from such operational review be submitted for consideration of the Executive Policy Committee within three months following the commencement of such operational review.
7. That all Council decisions inconsistent with the foregoing be rescinded.
8. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Item 6 specifies an operational review of the Committee, which is the subject of this report.

OPERATIONAL REVIEW:

The basis / format of our review are based on the recommendations of Council, as per their March 23, 2011 directive.

Housing Policy Development (Clause #2)
The Public Service, in consultation and cooperation with the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee, issued a tender for consultation to develop a revised Housing Policy, and Myers Norris Penny was selected based on their proposal. Consultations were held with the Province (both Housing and Community Development and Local Government), with Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation representing the Federal Government, with community groups, non-profit developers and the general public. Delegations presented to WHSC on July 15, 2013. The new Winnipeg Housing Policy was approved by Council on September 25, 2013.

Affordable Housing Practices (Clause #3)

- The following reports were requested by WHSC and were provided by the Public Service:
    - Innovative Best Practices for Affordable Housing
    - Homelessness Partnering Strategy (regular updates)
    - Downtown Residential Development Grant Program
    - Secondary Suites
    - Housing Policy Implementation Plan
    - Centennial Neighbourhood Housing Plan (which promotes a balanced mix of housing in the Centennial neighbourhood)
    - City involvement on the Rooming House Task Force
    - City involvement on the Visitability Task Force

These reports provide up-to-date information on municipal involvement and efforts to create affordable and appropriate housing in Winnipeg, and they strive to identify opportunities for future development of complete communities throughout the city.

Council adopted the Housing Policy Implementation Plan in April, 2014 as a result a firm 5 year mandate was provided to the division to achieve specified goals.

Affordable Housing Definition (Clause #4)
The Winnipeg Housing Policy uses the following definition for Affordable Housing, which is consistent with Schedule A of the motion passed by Council:

Affordable Housing: *Housing is generally considered affordable if all costs related to shelter, including rent or mortgage payment (principal and interest), taxes, and utilities require 30% or less of gross household income. For purposes of this policy, home ownership shall be considered affordable if the total shelter cost is 30% or less than the top of the second quintile household income bracket, as defined by Statistics Canada for the City of Winnipeg. Median Market Rent as published by CMHC and the Province of Manitoba will be used for rental purposes. While Affordable Housing may be built with the assistance of capital grants, it would not require ongoing operating subsidies.*

Reports to EPC (Clause #5)
Regular quarterly reports have been provided by the WHSC to EPC as required.

Operational Review (Clause #6)
WHSC has met 11 times since its mandate was revised, and quarterly meetings are scheduled for 2015. The Committee has been effective in fostering discussion on housing issues and affordable housing development in Winnipeg.

Agendas are posted at least one week prior to meetings, and earlier upon request or when a critical issue (such as discussion of the Winnipeg Housing Policy) is planned. In addition to public posting of the agenda, the Committee Chair conveys information to community groups and other interested parties via email. Communication regarding upcoming meetings appears to be effective in reaching community stakeholders.

Under the scrutiny and advice of the WHSC, the Public Service undertook to review and revise the Winnipeg Housing Policy to reflect the broader goal of creating complete communities throughout Winnipeg. The new policy supports development and rehabilitation in areas of need, and identifies or enables creation of incentives necessary to promote new development that is balanced and appropriate.

Conclusion
The mandate of the WHSC has multiple components and as indicated above, the Committee has successfully taken efforts to address each aspect of its mandate. The Committee is and continues to be a useful tool to examine affordable housing development in Winnipeg.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

HISTORY

- The Winnipeg Housing Policy was drafted in October 1999 and adopted by Council on March 22, 2000 to address housing renewal needs in Winnipeg's inner city. This policy provided direction for evaluation of neighbourhoods into four categories, and provided for establishment of Housing Improvement Zones (HIZs) to which financial and administrative resources could be directed.
- Five HIZs have been created since implementation of the original Housing Policy. The neighbourhoods of West Broadway, Spence and William Whyte were initially designated as

HIZs in 2000. The North Point Douglas neighbourhood was designated as an HIZ in 2002, and the Centennial neighbourhood was designated as an HIZ in 2006.

- The Housing Rehabilitation Investment Reserve (HRIR), approved by Council on June 21, 2000, was created to, "fund City Housing Programs, particularly capital intensive programs, with the exception of those funded through the current budgets."
- In November 2000, Council created the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee to oversee implementation of the Winnipeg Housing Policy, which guided distribution of funds from the HRIR.
- The function of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee, as delegated by Council, was "to establish eligibility criteria for specific housing programs and approve the allocation of funds to other appropriate housing programs within the financial limits as approved by Council."
- With Council approval, the Mayor signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2000 with the Province of Manitoba to provide up to $7 million in funding for housing programs. This amount was increased to a total of $17.5 million in 2003, with an estimated $3.2 million in land contributions and $14.3 million in cash funding.
- Council began funding the HRIR in 2000, initially with $2 million in 2000, and then with budget surpluses for following years. Also in 2000, $1.3 million was transferred to the HRIR from the Commitment Reserve Fund. Council provided $1 million from budget surpluses for each of the next two years, then $705,000 in 2003. The 2004 Operating Budget did not project a surplus, so no additional funds were provided in that year. Council provided $940,000 in 2005, and $1 million in each year thereafter. With the exception of 2006, funds have been allocated from the City's Operating Budget each year (funds were allocated from the City's Capital Budget in 2006). The HRIR also accumulated interest during these years, which was used to offset the City's operational costs related to program delivery through the Housing and Strategic Initiatives Division.
- In 2012 the WHSC provided guidance and direction to the Public Service to undertake development of a new Housing policy, which was subsequently adopted by Council in 2013.
- The WHSC provided guidance and direction to the Public Service on the development of an implementation plan for the Housing Policy. In 2014 Council adopted the Housing Policy Implementation Plan, which provides a clear 5 year mandate with specific goals.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: March 20, 2015

Project Name:

Operational Review of Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

"Original Signed By"
Mike McGinn, CA
Manager of Finance

CONSULTATION

In preparing this report there was consultation with:

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Planning, Property & Development
Division: Housing & Strategic Initiatives
Prepared by: Winston Yee / Dave Dessens
Date: March 24, 2015
File No.

O: Reports Directive / Housing Development / RIS WHSC Operational Review – V2