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Delegation information
Committee: Executive Policy Committee
Committee - council: N/A
Committee - other: N/A
Agenda item (number and title): Item No. 10 Establishment of a Development Fee or Charge associated with the Housing Accelerator Fund

Service inquiry: Submit Comments in writing
Participation preference: N/A
Comments in writing: Executive Policy Committee
July 8, 2024
As elected officials you have an opportunity to level the playing field by ensuring that part of the funding problems the City is facing is being is addressed in a fair and equal manner. As has been reported and written on in the Free Press numerous times over the years, the inner city is funding the suburban sprawl, most recently by Erna Buffie: "What does our city Value?" May 1, 2024. The city of Ottawa recently raised its Development Charge (DC) to $50,000 per development. This is so both hard infrastructures, roads sewers, etc that are needed to service the new developments and soft infrastructure, recreation amenities that are wanted can be built and maintained.
Many cities across Canada including some here in Manitoba have some form of development fee, although the wording used "impact fee" better describes the need for such a fee.
I think that Ottawa is no different from Winnipeg in that there is a big push on infill development in the inner city mature communities with that DC funding going into infrastructure in the suburbs, while not maintaining inner city infrastructure. Mayor Gillingham is quick to dismiss taking any action even a small amount of development charge, as he fears it will hurt the building of affordable units. First and foremost true affordable housing is not a large percentage of units built in the suburbs. Examples would be Bridgewater Lakes with 1,090 units and none being subsidized housing and where the average home value is $642,000. Sage Creek would be another example again out of 2,540 units none being subsidized and the average home value being $546,000 looking at Bridgewater Forest with 1,720 units with an average home value of $566,000 and 15 being subsidized. From these numbers it is obvious that many new homes being built today do not fall into the affordable housing model, and if they do there are many ways to address that issue. As report in the WINNIPEG BUILDING PERMITS SUMMARY of December 2023 there were 946 single family homes, 303 Semi-detached homes, 485 Row-house, and 65

Apartment built for a total of 1799 new units. When taken into account with the total number of housing units 300,440 (2021 Census) in the city of Winnipeg an addition by way of a impact fee on some of those 1799 would not have a great impact on housing costs.
True development that is affordable could be given a waiver on the fees, a threshold or cap can be placed on development prior to the fees being charged, or a fee indexed to the type and cost of a unit. Single family homes over a certain price would see one amount where a one bedroom rental unit could see a lower fee or no fee. I hope that you allow for more conversation and allow Councillor Orlikow's motion to proceed; the inner city cannot afford to finance new amenities in the suburbs when inner city amenities are not maintained or closed.
Before amalgamation municipalities built the amenities they could afford. As an example if a municipality wanted pools taxpayers voted to be taxed in order to build or not. There was no big pile of money outside the municipality to pay for it. Now the City of Winnipeg taxes the inner city to provide that big pile of money to new communities in the suburbs that have not provided enough in taxes to pay for all their wants. Where once the amenities within a community within a municipality was able to sustain itself those sustaining funds now go outside the community.
Past City Council including the past Mayor saw the wisdom in a development fee which showed funds which could be used to better the communities in which development happened. The implementation of the plan was flawed but not the idea.
Some Points
? When applied to infill local residents might be more receptive if there were funds because of the development that were going to stay in the community and provide benefits to the residents.
? When applied to infill, local residents might be more receptive if the developers were paying into a community fund to offset the use of local infrastructure that had been paid for by the current residents.
? New developments would benefit from monies being available earlier to provide wanted soft infrastructure such as community clubs, sports fields etc earlier ? New development would be in a better position to maintain local amenities with a dedicated fund.
? Older communities would have better maintained amenities and hard infrastructure as local taxes can serve the local community

Thank you and I hope you see the importance and justification of Councillor Orlikow's motion. A motion that is just a start with the details to make it fair while providing opportunities for true affordable development to be established.

Tom Scott