

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT STAFF REPORT

TO: Electoral Area Services Committee – November 21, 2024

AUTHOR: Jonathan Jackson, Manager, Planning and Development

SUBJECT: 2024 Housing Needs Report

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- (1) **THAT the report titled Housing Needs Report be received for information;**
 - (2) **AND THAT the Housing Needs Report be referred to the Advisory Planning Commissions for information.**
-

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to present the Sunshine Coast Regional District's 2024 Housing Needs Report (HNR) to the Board, before the legislated deadline of January 1, 2025.

Legislative Context

In BC, the *Local Government Act* (Division 22, Section 585) requires municipalities and regional districts to prepare HNRs based on a standard methodology provided in the *Housing Needs Report Regulation*. HNRs must include the total number of housing units required to meet anticipated housing needs for the next 5 years and 20 years for each electoral area. HNR data and findings must be considered when updating local government Official Community Plans (OCPs).

Identified housing needs are estimates that are calculated using the province's specified methodology. Staff recognize each electoral area has unique influences that may not be fully captured by the standardized provincewide methodology. As SCRD considers the application of these results to future growth planning, it may be prudent to plan for a range of new housing capacity that is nimble to adjust to actual demand. HNRs are required to be updated every 5 years to reflect new statistical data.

DISCUSSION

The HNR study area includes the electoral areas of Pender Harbour/Egmont, Halfmoon Bay, Roberts Creek, Elphinstone, and West Howe Sound. HNRs for the Town of Gibsons, District of Sechelt, and Islands Trust areas are complete or underway. shíshálh Nation Government District is not required to complete a HNR.

Summary of Key Findings & Insights

The SCRD study area has a population of 15,590 people and 7,195 households, with an average household size of 2.2 people, according to the 2021 Canada Census. HNR findings show 930 additional housing units are needed over the next 5 years, and a total of 3,018 additional housing units are needed within 20 years. This represents a 29.3% growth in total households from 2021. For comparison, 1,705 new housing units were constructed over the past 20 years from 2001 to 2021. For further results, the full HNR can be found in Attachment A.

The HNR demonstrates the current housing development pace in the study area is not sufficient to meet projected housing needs for the next 5 and 20 years. Legislation further requires, as a local government, SCRD must align OCP growth capacity with the HNR. While the HNR informs housing need, as a community SCRD gets to determine where new units go, what forms they take, and how growth management tools are applied to ensure new housing meets community vision.

Organization and Intergovernmental Implications

HNRs are intended to inform evidence-based land use and infrastructure decision making for local governments. Growth management tools such as OCPs and implementing bylaws (zoning, servicing, and development financing) can support effective and efficient delivery of housing and supporting infrastructure and amenities. SCRD has roles in supporting both housing needs within the electoral area HNR study area and also larger regional housing needs contained in member municipality HNRs. HNRs can inform cross-departmental rural and regional decision making on key service area issues related to growth, ranging from potable water supply, fire flows, solid waste, wastewater, parks, recreation, transit and more.

Currently there is adequate zoned land available for development of the number of housing units identified as required in the HNR. For example, there are thousands of residential or rural use parcels that are permitted to have second dwellings, auxiliary dwellings or secondary suites. OCP and zoning bylaw renewal offer the opportunity to engage the community in dialogue about the preferred location, form and amenities associated with future growth. As well, coordination between utilities planning and growth planning – at a regional scale; not just in electoral areas – will promote community and local government financial sustainability.

Financial Implications

The 2024 HNR was funded through the Capacity Funding for Local government implementation of Housing Legislation provided to the SCRD by the Province. In 2019, the HNR was also funded through a dedicated grant. The *Local Government Act* prescribes that a HNR needs to be prepared every five years to report on the current and anticipated housing needs. Looking ahead, SCRD must plan for the resourcing required to meet

ongoing legislated HNR requirements, including supporting growth management of determined housing needs.

Timeline for Next Steps

SCRD's HNR is due to the province and to be received by the Board before January 1, 2025. In alignment with legislation, the HNR data is required to be considered when updating OCPs and zoning bylaws to accommodate the number of new dwelling units identified.

Communications Strategy

The HNR is required by legislation to be published on SCRD's website. The HNR can be used by the public, First Nations, and stakeholders such as non-profit organizations, private developers, and other government agencies to inform housing investment decisions in the region.

The HNR can be referred to the Area Planning Commissions (APCs) for information, as noted in recommendation number two of this staff report. The HNR will also be added to the document library on <https://letstalk.scrd.ca/ocp-update>.

STRATEGIC PLAN AND RELATED POLICIES

HNR data directly informs planning for water and solid waste services, and therefore supports the Board's strategic priorities. The HNR also implements the Strategic Plan lenses of service delivery excellence, social equity and reconciliation, and governance excellence.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 Sunshine Coast Regional District HNR is due to the province by January 1, 2025. The report will help the SCRD, province, and community understand the current and future housing needs. Per the *Local Government Act*, the HNR will be used to inform the SCRD's forthcoming OCP and zoning bylaw update project.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – 2024 Sunshine Coast Regional District Housing Needs Report

Reviewed by:			
Manager	X – J. Jackson	Finance	
GM	X – I. Hall X – R. Rosenboom	Legislative	X – S. Reid
CAO/CFO	X - T. Perreault	Other	