

Mayor's Message – September 2016

The Town has been working with the Sunshine Coast Affordable Housing Society on the development of affordable rental and / or ownership single family homes. The project is in its early stages with a feasibility study underway.

Following several years of discussion and research, it was determined that a Society based on a land trust model would be best suited to work with local governments, not-for-profit housing providers and the development industry to create more affordable housing options on the Sunshine Coast. The Society is particularly focused on affordable housing options for working families and individuals, as well as independent seniors.

The Town of Gibsons has been pursuing policies and bylaw changes to support affordable housing, including by legalizing secondary suites and introducing a garden suite program. Partnering with the Society on possible sites fits with our Official Community Plan and Strategic Plan goals to support the development of affordable housing.

The Society works with Click Homes who has volunteered to assist in the planning and feasibility analysis of the sites. The houses may be offered for sale at a rate protected against market increases or may be rented out at affordable price levels. The focus of the Society is on working families and individuals that do not have other options in the current real estate market.

Five locations have been identified where road dedications are largely unused, and where it would be possible to create parcels big enough for a single family home. In June of this year, Council discussed the sites and requested staff to start the process of further identifying the parcels for a possible road closure and the creation of titles to the lands.

Before the road end locations can become parcels for housing, a road closure process would need to be followed. As part of this process, public input will be sought in the future as part of the road closure bylaw process. To prepare for the start of this process, a geotechnical assessment has been done for 2 sites and surveying is planned for 4 or 5 sites. You may see the surveyor in your area soon.

It is yet to be determined if the Society and the Town will be able to realise the Affordable Housing Project. The current feasibility analysis is looking at the location of the sites, site planning, the cost of services to the site, construction cost, possible sale or rent price levels, and financing options. Once it becomes clear whether the sites are suitable and the project appears viable for the Society, a more specific outline will be prepared for the Affordable Housing Project. At that time, the Society and the Town will organise an Open House to present the results and to seek community input regarding the project.