



# **MAYOR'S HOUSING COMMISSION**

**Thursday, June 12, 2014  
4:00 PM**

**Henry Baker Hall, Main Floor, City Hall**



Office of the City Clerk

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**Public Agenda  
Mayor's Housing Commission  
Thursday, June 12, 2014**

**Approval of Public Agenda**

**Minutes of the meeting held on May 15, 2014.**

**Administration Reports**

MHC14-10 Downtown Residential Tax Incentives Policy – Six-Month Update

**Recommendation**

1. That this report be received and filed and remain permanently closed.
2. That MHC13-1 be removed from the list of outstanding items for the Mayor's Housing Commission.

MHC14-11 Housing Statistics Update

**Recommendation**

This report be received and filed.

**Adjournment**

AT REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN, THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2014

AT A MEETING OF THE MAYOR'S HOUSING COMMISSION  
HELD IN PUBLIC SESSION

AT 4:00 PM

**These are considered a draft rendering of the official minutes. Official minutes can be obtained through the Office of the City Clerk once approved.**

Present: Mayor Michael Fougere, in the Chair  
Councillor Bryon Burnett  
Councillor Bob Hawkins  
Councillor Barbara Young  
Robert Byers  
Blair Forster  
Tim Gross  
Malcolm Neill

Regrets: Terry Canning

Also in Attendance: Committee Assistant, Elaine Gohlke  
Solicitor, Cheryl Willoughby  
Director of Planning, Diana Hawryluk  
Manager of Communications, Sheila Harmatiuk  
Manager of Neighbourhood Planning, Yves Richard  
Senior City Planner, Jennifer Barrett

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC AGENDA

**Malcolm Neill moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that the agenda for this meeting be approved, as submitted.**

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

**Councillor Young moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that the minutes for the meeting held on April 24, 2014 be adopted, as circulated.**

COMMUNICATION

MHC14-9 Ranch Ehrlo Society: CHAZ Court - Pocket Housing

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**Recommendation**

This communication be received and filed.

Shelley Sayer, representing Ranch Ehrlo Society, addressed the Commission and made a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

**Councillor Hawkins moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that this communication be received and filed.**

ADJOURNMENT

**Tim Gross moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that the meeting adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

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Chairperson

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Secretary

June 12, 2014

To: Members,  
Mayor's Housing Commission

Re: Downtown Residential Tax Incentives Policy – Six-Month Update

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RECOMMENDATION

1. That this report be received and filed and remain permanently closed.
2. That MHC13-1 be removed from the list of outstanding items for the Mayor's Housing Commission.

CONCLUSION

The City of Regina's Tax Incentive Program was created in 1997 to stimulate new residential units in the Downtown. In 2013, Revisions to the *Downtown Residential Incentives Policy* (DRIP) were made to continue to encourage residential development and the conversion of non-residential buildings to residential units in the Downtown but to cap the amount of tax exemptions for ownership units at \$7,500. Second, a revision was made to the policy to allow units to be eligible for the capital incentive grants under the *Housing Incentives Policy* (HIP) in order to encourage and support the creation of below market and affordable units. Prior to this change, units in the Downtown area were eligible for tax exemptions only, regardless of whether units created were market or non-market units. Other small housekeeping amendments were also made to align the policy with the City's other housing policies.

Administration transitioned to the revised DRIP for applications received in 2014 to align with the transition to the new HIP. In 2013, Administration received an application for tax exemptions for the 64-unit Gardens on Rose project at 2055 Rose Street eligible for exemptions in 2015. Administration anticipates applications for an additional 189 units in 2015-2016 as summarized below.

BACKGROUND

This report serves to satisfy the outstanding item in Recommendation #4 from MHC13-1 that Administration provide a six-month update on the progress of the revised DRIP. On October 24, 2013 the Mayor's Housing Commission reviewed report MHC13-1 *Downtown Residential Tax Incentives Policy* (DRIP) – Revisions to the Current Policy. At that meeting, a motion was made to add a fourth recommendation requiring:

“That Administration report back in six months with respect to the progress of the program's operations, including:

- a. The number of new housing units constructed, and;
- b. The diversity of housing stimulated in the Downtown area.”

This report was forwarded to City Council (CR13-171) on November 25, 2013 and the recommendations for revisions to DRIP were approved. Recommendation #4 did not require Council approval.

Since 1998, DRIP has supported the creation of 409 residential units. Under DRIP, tax incentives were offered at 100 per cent for a five-year term for all new units created in the Downtown. All units created to date under DRIP were developed from the conversion of non-residential buildings into residential suites. As such, these conversions preserved existing buildings that might otherwise have suffered from low occupancy and disrepair, and have brought residents to the Downtown where they can benefit from the many services, amenities and employment opportunities. The policy was created separate from the City's HIP, which establishes tax exemptions for new residential properties in other areas of the city, in order to address the specific housing needs and unique challenges of the Downtown (see map of Downtown in Appendix A).

Until the revisions made in 2013, the DRIP had not undergone review since the policy was put in place in 1997. Since then, the city has started to see new residential construction in and around the Downtown. Additional residents to Downtown provide customers for local businesses in daytime, evening and weekend hours, and support events in the Downtown such as farmers' markets and other public activities while also increasing safety in the Downtown with added pedestrian activity. The *Regina Downtown Neighbourhood Plan* (RDNP) and the growth plan for the City as defined by the *Design Regina: The Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2013-48* (OCP) identifies the need for increased residential growth in the Downtown. The OCP and RDNP establish a goal of 5,000 new residents in Downtown within the life span of the RDNP and to achieve the goals of the OCP. The current population of the Downtown, based on estimates from the Statistics Canada, is just over 1,400 residents. The DRIP is a tool to encourage housing in the Downtown to align with these policy objectives.

## DISCUSSION

Throughout the City, recent economic and population growth has created an unprecedented demand on housing with rental vacancies at or below 1 per cent for 2008-2012 and dramatic increases in housing prices. While redevelopment and infill development has begun in many inner city neighbourhoods for both new ownership and rental units, the Downtown is only beginning to see the construction of new residential units. This is due largely to the fact that the nature of construction in the Downtown core (multi-storey buildings on infill sites) requires more time and investment to complete than smaller, infill projects in lower-density neighbourhoods or greenfield areas. Based on current projects underway in the Downtown, a residential project can take from five to seven years from the start of design to the completion of construction. In 2014, Administration expects to see the first new large residential development in the Downtown with the completion of the 64-unit Gardens on Rose at 2055 Rose Street.

Construction and land costs have made development of residential units Downtown more costly per square foot than comparable units in newer neighbourhoods. Tax incentives for residential units Downtown, therefore, help to decrease the cost difference between units in the Downtown and units in new neighbourhoods. Under the revised DRIP, a five-year 100 per cent exemption is offered for new rental units. For ownership units, the revised policy provides a tax exemption of up five years with a cap of \$7,500 per unit in order to restrict the tax exemption for large units. Both rental and ownership units are eligible for capital incentives if units are affordable or below market. Should a developer propose the development of affordable or below market units, the stacking of tax exemptions and capital incentives would assist in making a below market project feasible.

In 2014, there are five units receiving exemptions under DRIP. These units are part of the conversion of a designated heritage property at 1853 Hamilton Street (The Leader Building). Under the DRIP, designated heritage properties are able to stack both heritage and DRIP exemptions for a total exemption of ten years. Two additional units will be eligible for a five-year exemption at this same address starting in 2015. In addition to tax exemptions for the 64-unit Gardens on Rose project, 180 condominium units at Capital Pointe, located at 1971 Albert Street, would be eligible under DRIP. These units range from bachelor to three-bedroom suites therefore adding a diversity of housing sizes to the Downtown. An application for incentives has been made for this property and Administration has been contacted by residents interested in purchasing a unit who would like to understand the housing incentives for this building. We have also been made aware of the addition of seven new units to 1801 McIntyre Street, the Renaissance Retirement Residence, which would be eligible for exemption beginning in 2015. Past and anticipated units funded under DRIP are summarized below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Units funded</b>	<b>Five-year municipal contribution</b>
1998-2014	409	\$1.6 million
Estimates 2015-2016 +	253	\$1.3 million <sup>1</sup>

Administration will continue to monitor and report on the effectiveness of the DRIP as part of its reporting on the HIP.

## RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

### Financial Implications

Revisions to the DRIP have capped tax exemptions on future Downtown units for ownership units. By capping incentives at \$7,500 per unit, tax exemptions would be provided equally to all new units limiting the exemption on more expensive units while benefitting the purchaser of smaller, less expensive units.

Under the previous Downtown policy, new residential units were created through the conversion of existing buildings. Administration expects to see an increase in new residential development Downtown in the coming years with two substantial projects planned for completion in the next one to five years. Therefore, the number of properties receiving tax exemptions is expected to increase in the next two to five years. With a cap on incentives for ownership units, the total dollar amounts will be significantly less than if exemptions were applied under the old policy.

### Environmental Implications

Additional residential development Downtown will provide environmental advantages to the city as a whole. With the completion of the RDNP in 2009, and the completion and approval of the OCP, there is an increased emphasis on bringing residents to Downtown. The environmental advantages of downtown residential development include reduced car use and car dependency of residents due to close proximity to employment, services and amenities by foot, bike or bus. For the most part, downtown residential units, by nature of the economics of development and land use, will be smaller units in multi-unit buildings requiring less land to develop.

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<sup>1</sup> This estimate of municipal tax exemption is based on units receiving the full \$7,500 exemption for all taxes (municipal, library and education). Based on actual unit size and assessed value units may not reach the cap and the total municipal exemption may be less than \$1.3 million.

New downtown development will use existing infrastructure, or in some cases provide upgrades to aging infrastructure.

### Policy and/or Strategic Implications

Housing incentives are one of the most effective tools the City has for addressing the need for additional residential growth in the Downtown. Revisions to DRIP are also in keeping with the recommendations brought forth in the *Comprehensive Housing Strategy* approved by Council on April 29, 2013, the RDNP approved September 2009, as well as the OCP approved by Council on December 16, 2013. Incentives provided to the Downtown help achieve the goals of the OCP including: Direct at least 30 per cent of new population to existing urban areas as the City's intensification target (Policy 2.3); Incentives for encouraging intensification development (Policy 2.10.3); A diversity of housing types to support residents from a wide range of economic levels, backgrounds and stages of life (Policy 7.1.5); Implementing the Regina Downtown Neighbourhood Plan (Policy 7.7.7).

### Other Implications

None for this report.

### Accessibility Implications

Developers are required to provide five per cent accessible units in all multi-unit rental developments. In addition, the Design and Development Criteria established for eligibility for capital incentives under the HIP, for which downtown below market units are now eligible, encourages the creation of accessible units that exceed the required five per cent in rental buildings and the addition of accessible units in ownership developments. Administration will continue to encourage accessible units in downtown residential development.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Information on DRIP and other municipal housing incentive programs are available through the City's website as well as in printed materials. Developers have been notified of the change to the DRIP. Administration continues to communicate with developers to provide information on the City's housing incentives for the Downtown area.

### DELEGATED AUTHORITY

This report is provided for informational purposes only and does not require City Council approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Fred Searle, Manager  
Current Planning  
Report prepared by:  
Jennifer Barrett, Senior Planner

Respectfully submitted,



for Jason Carlston, Executive Director  
City Planning & Development

# Boundaries of Downtown

# APPENDIX A

Exemptions under the Downtown Tax Incentives Policy must fall within the boundaries of downtown.



June 12, 2014

To: Members,  
Mayor's Housing Commission

Re: Housing Statistics Update

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**RECOMMENDATION OF THE MAYOR'S HOUSING COMMISSION - MAY 15, 2014**

This report be received and filed.

*MAYOR'S HOUSING COMMISSION – MAY 15, 2014*

Jennifer Barrett, Senior Planner, made a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

The Commission adopted a resolution that:

An edited version of this report be forwarded to the public session of the June 12 meeting of the Mayor's Housing Commission for information.

Mayor Fougere; Councillors: Bryon Burnett, Bob Hawkins and Barbara Young; Robert Byers, Blair Forster and Malcolm Neill were present during consideration of this report by the Mayor's Housing Commission.

The Mayor's Housing Commission, at the **PRIVATE** session of its meeting held on May 15, 2014, considered the following report from the Administration:

RECOMMENDATION

That this report be received and filed and remain permanently closed.

CONCLUSION

This report provides an overview of the City of Regina's housing statistics covering periods from the past two censuses in 2006 and 2011 as well as annual Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) data on housing. A high level summary of housing data is provided herein as well as an analysis of the data using the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (S.W.O.T.) method for assessing Regina's housing situation. This report will be accompanied by a presentation providing data sets, charts and graphs to better illustrate the information provided.

In general, the housing situation in Regina has improved significantly over the past five years with more housing starts each year and more purpose-built rental units entering the market annually. Vacancy rates have started to rise and prices have started to level after substantial increases between 2006 and 2013.

However, there is still work to be done in order to meet the goals of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy (CHS) and the policy objectives of the Official Community Plan (OCP). Increasing home prices threaten the opportunity for homeownership for many families and the increase in costs of both homeownership and rental units has impacted the City's most vulnerable households. In addition, while the diversity of housing that has entered the market in the past few years has helped to provide housing choice for households based on neighbourhood and housing preference, there is still a greater need for new housing development in proximity to necessary services and amenities including schools, employment opportunities, commercial and retail services, as well as access to public transit, to create complete communities.

## BACKGROUND

The Mayor's Housing Commission began in October 2013 to provide overall guidance on the Comprehensive Housing Strategy and its implementation. Since the inception of the Mayor's Housing Commission, Administration has provided an overview of implementation of the CHS to date as well as some high-level data on housing starts and the City's Housing Incentives Policy. Administration has continued to gather and compile housing data from various external sources as well as data from internal branches of the City. Data provided herein will offer a more in-depth, citywide look at housing data with a focus on trends over the past eight years as well as year end data from 2013.

Administration continues to monitor and track the housing situation on an on-going basis. Therefore updates to information will be provided quarterly or semi-annually to the Mayor's Housing Commission as new information is made available and is analyzed.

## DISCUSSION

Below is a high-level summary of the most recent data, as well as an analysis of the data in terms of challenges and opportunities, followed by a list and description of some of the additional data being collected by Administration that will be presented to the Mayor's Housing Commission throughout the year as data is made available and analysis is completed. Data presented here has been gathered from a number of sources including Statistics Canada 2006 and 2011 Census of Canada information, CMHC annual and monthly reports and internal data collected by the Neighbourhood and Long-Range Planning Branches, Building Standards Branch, and Assessment, Tax, and Real Estate Department.

### **Summary of data**

- The City of Regina has grown by approximately 4,500 people annually in the past five years. While growth is expected to continue, it is not expected to exceed the average of the past five years and may decrease slightly. It is projected that Regina's population will reach 300,000 by 2038, which reflects an annual population growth rate of 1.5 percent.
- One and two-person households make up 64 percent of the households in Regina yet 67 percent of our housing stock is single-detached homes and 64 percent of dwelling units have three or more bedrooms.
- Although a small part of the overall household composition (2.5 percent), households of six or more persons grew by 35 percent (520 households) in Regina between 2006 and

2011. Households may include individuals who are not family members but who reside together.

- Residential starts and rental starts have increased dramatically in the past five years reaching a high of 3,122 total units and 746 rental units in 2013; 240-280 of these were in the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA) outside of the City of Regina.
- Increases in housing starts including increased construction of purpose-built rental units have kept pace with growth and have helped to increase the rental vacancy rates; the fall 2013 vacancy rate reached 1.8 percent – the highest since 2007.
- In 2013, the proportions of rental and ownership unit starts among all starts were 24 percent and 76 percent respectively; this is a significant change from an eight-year average (2006-2013) of 11 percent rental to 89 percent ownership unit starts. Approximately 31 percent of Regina households rent their home.
- Rental rates have increased substantially since 2006 when the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment was \$619; in 2013, the average rent was \$1,018 – an increase of 64 percent. With increased rental unit supply, the yearly percentage rate change was 4 percent from 2012 to 2013 compared to a high of 14 percent yearly change between 2007 and 2008.
- The number of secondary rental units including houses, condominium, suites within houses and two-unit buildings has grown by approximately 2,400 units in the past five years. Although these units are not captured in the vacancy rate, they provide rental units to the more than 24,000 households who rent based on Census data. During this same period, approximately 1,900 purpose-built rental units were added to the market.
- Secondary suites and small rental buildings have increased in the City with funding from the provincial Secondary Suite Program (responsible for 140 new suites from 2008 – 2013) and a tax exemption from the City for two-unit rental buildings.
- Home prices in Regina averaged \$316,606 for 2013. Although this is below the average price of a home in most major western Canadian cities (with the exception of Winnipeg), home prices increased in Regina by 140 percent between 2006 and 2013 – a greater rate of increase than houses in Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon and nationwide.
- With an increase in home prices, homeownership has become more difficult for households in Regina to achieve. Capital incentives have helped to provide homeownership opportunities to households that meet provincial income requirements, yet households in the median income for Regina may struggle to afford the median home.
- Capital incentives for affordable and below market units have continued to increase year over year with a total of 168 units receiving City incentives in 2013. This is expected to hold true for 2014. In the past, the majority of incentives have gone to rental units; however in 2012 and 2013 more ownership units received capital grants for the creation of below market and affordable homeownership units sold to income-eligible households.
- Tax exemptions for purpose-built rental units have also continued to increase reaching a high of 454 units for exemptions in 2014. The provincial Rental Construction Initiative

(RCI) among other provincial programs has helped encourage and fund purpose-built rental units by providing a grant to match the City's tax exemption up to \$5,000 per unit.

### **SWOT Regina housing market and Comprehensive Housing Strategy alignment**

Using data available, Administration has evaluated housing in Regina, identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to a healthy housing market. The tools for addressing the threats and opportunities based on the strategies of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy (CHS) have been noted in the Policy Implications section below.

#### **Strengths:**

- Increased housing starts have increased the available rental housing and offered more housing diversity (including a variety of ownership options) especially in 2012 and 2013.
- Development is keeping pace with growth and helping to increase the vacancy rate.
- Rental rates are continuing to increase but the yearly percentage change has decreased substantially (+4 percent between fall 2012 and fall 2013, compared to +14 percent year-over-year for 2007-2008).
- Administration has estimated that another 350-375 units under construction were not counted in the last (fall) vacancy rate. Therefore the rate is expected to climb to 2.1 percent or more for spring 2014.
- Uptake in the City's Housing Incentives combined with the provincial Rental Construction Initiative have increased purpose built rental unit completions from approximately 200 per year for 2010-2013 to more than 450 in 2014.
- Small-scale infill housing including duplexes and rental homes with a secondary suite have dispersed new units throughout the city, adding rental units and additional density to neighbourhoods incrementally.
- Given the number of new condominiums being built (from 249 units in 2006 to just over 1,000 condominium units per year in 2012 and 2013), the threat of conversion of rental units to condominiums is less likely to occur even at a 3 percent vacancy rate. An increase in condominium construction has also provided additional and more diverse home ownership options.
- The City's Housing Incentives Policy has continued to provide more opportunities for first time home buyers to achieve home ownership and has added more affordable and below market rental units to the market.
- The majority of capital incentives have gone for infill developments (73 percent since 2006). Thus capital incentives have increased affordable and below market rental and homeownership in established neighbourhoods, which means that households in these areas have access to a range of amenities.

#### **Weaknesses:**

- The majority of households in Regina are one and two-person households, yet the majority of housing is single-detached homes with three or more bedrooms. This creates an affordability gap as the size and type of homes does not meet the needs of smaller households.
- Half of the rental units in the city are in the secondary rental market (ownership units such as houses or condominiums being rented), which are more vulnerable than purpose-built rentals in that they may revert to being owner-occupied.

- Administration is constantly working on improving access to data from other branches in the City Administration as well as external sources. Issues such as changes in Census data collection (voluntary vs. mandatory reporting) as well as changes in information collected by various branches create some challenges in comparing data across periods of time. Similarly, because some data sets (Census) are only collected every five years, and not released until 12-18 months after collection, they are quickly outdated during periods of significant growth and change. Administration has been working closely with other branches to refine data collection and find alternative sources of data available on a more frequent basis.
- Due to the time required to consult with stakeholders, revise policies and communicate policy changes, the length of time between policy-making to adjust to new conditions, and policy implementation, can be significant.

### **Opportunities:**

- New households moving to Regina may have different housing needs, primarily a need for smaller units close to services and transportation as well as a need for units that can accommodate extended families. More diversity and flexibility in new unit types will be important to addressing the changing needs of households as will housing that is close to services and transportation to create more complete neighbourhoods. Communication with stakeholders will be important to understanding housing needs as they evolve.
- With ownership units making up a larger percentage of units receiving capital incentives in recent years, more households have been able to achieve homeownership than if City and provincial programs for affordable ownership did not exist.
- This movement of households through the housing continuum helps households to achieve housing stability and also frees up rental units. Continued investment in affordable homeownership will be important to maintain a balance in the housing continuum; a variety of homeownership options will also be important.
- As the housing market improves, policies and programs should continue to focus on the development of additional below market and affordable rental units to address the housing needs of the City's most vulnerable populations.

### **Threats:**

- As rental unit numbers increase, substandard rental units are expected to come off the market. While this may increase the overall quality of rental housing, older units may be at risk of being lost due to disrepair or redevelopment pressure. Since many of the older units are in established neighbourhoods, rental units lost may be the most affordable as well as those located close to services and transit. It will be important to encourage the retention of these older units for the long-term.
- Secondary rental units (ownership units such as condominiums and houses being rented) address rental demand. However, they are often more expensive and can be sold as ownership units based on market demand. The fluctuation of these units can lead to the displacement of households who depend on this housing stock (especially families who require larger units).
- The development of below market and affordable units in greenfield areas, although contributing to housing diversity throughout the city, creates challenges in some locations due to a lack of public transit or nearby services and amenities. This situation may negatively impact housing affordability due to increased transportation costs and other costs related to meeting a household's everyday needs.

**On-going research and housing data updates.**

In addition to the information provided herein, Administration has several data collection and research projects on-going as they relate to the implementation of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy. A complete list of the CHS strategies is included in Appendix A. Information will be brought forward to the Housing Commission at subsequent meetings on the following topics:

1. **Vacancy rates and rental unit count.** Vacancy rates reported by year are provided for the period of 2006-2013. With the release of the spring Rental Market Report in June of 2014, Administration will provide a more in-depth look at rental vacancy rates including changes in rates, rental unit creation and location, areas of the city with the most rental units, and areas with high vacancies. Once the spring vacancy rate is announced, Administration will also revise its estimates on the required number of new units to reach a three percent vacancy and to assess if we are on target to reach this goal by 2017 or even before. This data will touch on a number of recommendations within the CHS including *Strategies 1, 6, 10, 16 and 17*.
2. **Residential building permits.** Administration will provide a brief analysis of new residential building starts in 2013 by location and type. This work relates to *Strategies 10, 16, 17 and 29* in the CHS.
3. **Housing condition.** Administration has been collecting internal data from several branches throughout the City to gauge how we collect data related to the quality and condition of housing, especially rental housing units. Census data also identifies the percentage of rental units in the City that are in need of major repair. Once data is compiled and analyzed, it will be examined to understand the level of knowledge about the condition of residential buildings and to assess the most vulnerable situations. This work relates to *Strategies 11, 12, 13 and 14* in the CHS.
4. **Housing vulnerability and special housing types.** Several of the strategies in the CHS (*Strategies 2, 6, 9, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28 and 35*) address the need for diverse housing options to meet the needs of those with specific needs. Further, several strategies address the need to work closely with federal and provincial agencies to meet the housing needs of the City's most vulnerable populations. Data is being compiled and evaluated on core housing need (households spending more than 30 percent of income on housing), as well as special housing types including social housing units, seniors housing and special care homes. This data will be presented to show needs and trends among this segment of the population.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

None with respect to this report.

Environmental Implications

None with respect to this report.

## Policy and/or Strategic Implications

Data collected and presented herein is done so to track the housing market and to provide information used to adjust and implement the strategies of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy (CHS). In addition to the strategies noted above with future housing data updates, the data provided relates to the following strategies:

***Strategy 1: Refine current property tax and capital incentives to target the issue of insufficient supply of rental and affordable housing.*** Continued tracking of the City's housing incentives and their effect on the housing market can help to address issues of supply and demand. Currently, housing incentives in the form of tax exemptions are provided to encourage the creation of additional purpose-built rental units and affordable ownership units. Capital grants are provided for below market and affordable rental and ownership units.

***Strategy 2: Leverage the City's land assets to increase the supply of rental, affordable and special needs housing, promote the diversity of housing, and support the creation of complete neighbourhoods.*** Data has shown the need to continue to provide affordable housing within existing neighbourhoods. Two City-owned infill sites were sold in 2013 to non-profit housing providers for affordable rental development (19 new units total). Three infill sites were sold for the development of affordable ownership units (3 units total).

***Strategy 3: Foster the creation of secondary suites.*** Data has shown an increase in the construction of two-unit buildings throughout the city as well as the addition of secondary suites to new or existing homes to provide more rental units within neighbourhoods. To encourage this, tax exemptions have been added to the Housing Incentives Policy for an owner-occupied home with a new secondary suite (25 percent exemption). A pilot project for laneway suites as an alternate form of secondary suites is also underway.

***Strategy 9: Advocate to federal and provincial governments for additional support for rental, affordable, and special needs housing.*** Provincial programs including the Rental Development Program and the Rental Construction Initiative have helped to fund and encourage purpose-built rental development. Headstart on a Home was created to provide financing for the development of entry-level homeownership units. The Secondary Suite Program is responsible for the creation of 140 new secondary suites since the program began in 2008. Administration meets quarterly with Saskatchewan Housing Corporation to discuss housing issues and alignment of provincial and city policies and programs.

***Strategy 10: Monitor changes to the existing rental housing stock.*** The tracking of housing in Regina including existing residential units, change in residential unit types, new residential starts as well as rental rates and home prices is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Housing Incentives Policy and the need for subsequent revisions as well as other measures that may be taken by the City to improve housing affordability and supply.

***Strategy 15 - Revised Strategy (October 2013): Foster the creation of diverse and economical rental accommodations.*** The data on household types suggests that our housing stock does not address the housing needs of smaller households of one and two persons. This data provides evidence for the need for more small accommodations with a mix of both rental and ownership options.

***Strategy 16: Facilitate the creation of additional apartment units through changes to the Zoning Bylaw.*** We have seen an increasing number of multi-unit buildings constructed on

greenfield sites due to the affordability and availability of land. Additional density to existing neighbourhoods will be important to addressing the need for more housing diversity throughout the city and in proximity to services and transit. This parallels the policy objectives of the OCP.

***Strategy 17: Establish policies in the Official Community Plan that specify housing targets; an intensification target; and a rental housing vacancy rate target.*** Housing development and location are being tracked and monitored as part of the implementation of the CHS and OCP. Tools such as the Housing Incentives Policy and infill development will be important to achieving the goals of the CHS and OCP. The rental vacancy rate is also being monitored with the goal of three percent vacancy by 2017; both provincial and City incentives are focused on increasing rental supply to achieve this.

***Strategy 26: Support a community outreach initiative to demonstrate the benefits and opportunities of increased density and diversity.*** The data collected, especially as it relates to the City's housing incentives, supports the need for housing on infill sites. Both market rental units and affordable and below market housing are being constructed in larger proportion on the outskirts of the city.

#### Other Implications

None with respect to this report.

#### Accessibility Implications

Several strategies within the CHS focus on increasing housing supply and diversity for individuals with special needs. Accessible units are encouraged as part of the City's Housing Incentives Policy.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Administration continues to work with the Communications Branch to inform stakeholders of housing programs and information. Several of the strategies from the CHS will involve public engagement as outlined in the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan approved by Council in June 2013.

#### DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The Mayor's Housing Commission has the authority to seek, gather and research information that will assist in providing overall guidance in the implementation of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy.

Respectfully submitted,

MAYOR'S HOUSING COMMISSION

*Elaine Gohlke*

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Elaine Gohlke, Secretary

**SHS STRATEGIES – as per Consultant’s Comprehensive Housing Strategy - Final Report**

- Strategy 1:** Refine current property tax and capital incentives to target the issue of insufficient supply of rental and affordable housing:
- Strategy 2:** Leverage the City’s land assets to increase the supply of rental, affordable and special needs housing, promote the diversity of housing, and support the creation of complete neighbourhoods
- Strategy 3:** Foster the creation of secondary suites
- Strategy 4:** Establish an interim innovative affordable housing rezoning policy that allows for consideration of rezoning applications immediately in specific existing residential or mixed use areas
- Strategy 5:** Develop policies to support the use of alternative development standards
- Strategy 6:** Implement a policy and process to fast-track affordable housing and special needs housing developments through the planning approval process
- Strategy 7:** Work with the Regina Regional Opportunities Commission to encourage major new developments/investments to prepare a housing plan
- Strategy 8:** Permit density bonusing and transfer of development rights with an aim of increasing the supply of affordable and special needs housing
- Strategy 9:** Advocate to federal and provincial governments for additional support for rental, affordable, and special needs housing
- Strategy 10:** Monitor changes to the existing rental housing stock
- Strategy 11:** Promote and assist landlords and others in accessing existing Provincial housing repair funding
- Strategy 12:** Advocate to the federal and provincial governments for additional support for the retention and regeneration of the existing housing stock
- Strategy 13:** Develop a strategy for improving compliance with safety and property maintenance standards
- Strategy 14:** Explore the option of developing a Regina rental housing repair initiative that involves a revolving fund to provide loans for affordable rental housing repair, and exemptions on incremental taxes due to the repairs/improvements
- Strategy 15:** Revised Strategy (October 2013): Foster the creation of diverse and economical rental accommodations  
~~Foster the creation of temporary rental housing and rooming houses/ single room occupancies~~

- Strategy 16:** Facilitate the creation of additional apartment units through changes to the Zoning Bylaw
- Strategy 17:** Establish policies in the Official Community Plan that specify housing targets by type/density, tenure, and affordability; an intensification target; and a rental housing vacancy rate target
- Strategy 18:** Strategy removed. ~~Add a policy to the Official Community Plan that neighbourhood level plans identify target percentages for different housing types and forms within the neighbourhood~~
- Strategy 19:** Encourage the creation of accessible housing through Official Community Plan policy changes
- Strategy 20:** In the Official Community Plan permit housing for persons with special needs, through a range of housing types, in all residential land use designations
- Strategy 21:** Add a policy to the Official Community Plan to consult and work with Aboriginal groups to develop affordable housing
- Strategy 22:** Add a policy to the Official Community Plan to formalize the city's policy of discouraging down zoning to support an increased diversity of housing options
- Strategy 23:** Define attainable and affordable housing in the Official Community Plan
- Strategy 24:** Define an adequate land supply in the Official Community Plan
- Strategy 25:** Develop and promote prototypes and pilot initiatives of innovative housing forms
- Strategy 26:** Support a community outreach initiative to demonstrate the benefits and opportunities of increased density and diversity
- Strategy 27:** Continue to support housing and homelessness initiatives through the Community Investment Grants Program and identify ways to allocate funding for maximum community impact
- Strategy 28:** Continue to play a lead role in the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy by preparing the Community Plan to Address Homelessness
- Strategy 29:** Strengthen Official Community Plan policies related to encouraging a mix of land uses, walkable neighbourhoods, and access to public transportation
- Strategy 30:** Support the redevelopment of brownfields, greyfields and bluefields for affordable housing development
- Strategy 31:** Prepare an implementation plan for the Comprehensive Housing Strategy and annual reports to monitor achievements and outline annual work plans
- Strategy 32:** Consolidate the City's housing functions, build the capacity of staff related to housing, and dedicate staff time to housing facilitation

- Strategy 33:** Prepare educational materials and engage in educational outreach about the full range of housing and related funding programs available in Regina
- Strategy 34:** Update data in the Comprehensive Housing Strategy when the full 2011 Statistics Canada Census data is released, and adjust strategies as required
- Strategy 35:** Play a lead facilitation role in establishing and coordinating a housing and homelessness coalition of community stakeholders as a way of coordinating collaboration, engaging stakeholders, and obtaining advice
- Strategy 36:** Over time update long-range planning documents to be consistent with the Comprehensive Housing Strategy