

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: Planning & Development Committee
FROM: J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer
DATE: February 20, 2025
RE: Housing Needs Report (HNR) Update (2024)

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the Regional District Board receive the “Housing Needs Report Update (2024)”, in accordance with Section 585.31 of the *Local Government Act*.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present the “Housing Needs Report Update (2024)”.

Statutory Requirements:

The Regional District is required to prepare a Housing Needs Report in accordance with Section 585.2 of the *Local Government Act*.

Section 23 of the provincial *Housing Needs Report Regulation* further prescribed a date of January 1, 2025, by which an interim report on housing needs was to have been received by a local governments (NOTE: this requirement applies to all local governments throughout the province).

Section 585.31 of the Act further requires that the Regional District Board receive an interim housing needs report in a meeting that is open to the public and that it be accepted by resolution.

Section 585.4 of the Act further requires that, “as soon as practicable after a local government receives a housing needs report, the local government must publish the housing needs report on an internet site that is”:

- a) *maintained by the local government or authorized by the local government to be used for publishing the report, and*
- b) *publicly and freely accessible.*

Finally, and after having received an interim housing needs report, the Board is required to consider the report when developing or amending an official community plan (OCP).

In future, the Regional District Board will be required, pursuant to Section 585.31(3) of the Act, to receive its next updated Housing Needs Report by December 31, 2028, “and on or before December 31 in every fifth year after [this] date” (e.g. by December 31, 2033, and again by December 31, 2038, etc.).

Background:

At its meeting of April 1, 2021, the Regional District Board receive the “Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen 2021 Housing Needs Assessment”.

On November 30, 2023, the Provincial Legislature adopted Bill 44, 2023, which introduced various amendments to the *Local Government Act*, with the intent to deliver “more small-scale, multi-unit housing for people, including townhomes, triplexes and laneway homes, and fix outdated zoning rules to help build more homes faster.”

These amendments to the *Local Government Act* set out a new requirements in relation to the completion of Housing Needs Reports, which are now required to include the following:

- The total number of housing units required to meet the anticipated housing needs of the local government for the next 5 years and the next 20 years;
- Actions that have been taken by the local government, since receiving the last Housing Needs Report, to reduce housing needs; and,
- A statement regarding the need for housing near transportation infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, public transit, or other alternative forms of transportation.

While the amendments also set out requirements in relation to updating Official Community Plan (OCP) and zoning bylaws to “pre-zone” for the number of required housing units as identified under both the interim and subsequent regular housing needs reports, these only apply to municipalities.

Housing Needs Reports may be completed by an individual local government, or as a joint report between two or more local governments, provided that the joint report include community-specific information to support local housing decisions and that the report be received by each participating board and council.

In 2024, the Regional District initiated the regional Housing Needs Report Update (2024) project, with the participating member municipalities being the City of Penticton, Town of Osoyoos and Village of Keremeos.

Analysis:

The Housing Needs Report Update (2024) is seen to fulfill the Province’s requirements for housing needs reporting, as outlined under Section 790 of the *Local Government Act*.

The report provides a comprehensive overview of the housing needs within the Regional District, and provides a housing needs forecast over 5 and 20 years.

The report does not, and is not intended to, provide for specific solutions or strategic recommendations, but rather, is a collection of data and information to support future decision-making and for developers to consider as they undertake future housing projects.

Although regional districts are not required by legislation to “pre-zone” lands to address the housing needs under the report, there is seen to be merit in initiating OCP and zoning amendments to do so. In particular, it is noted that such amendments would ensure that a regulatory framework is in place that will support the development of the housing units required to facilitate the projected growth of the Regional District by removing the burden of rezoning on developers and property owners.

Accordingly, it is anticipated that Administration will prepare OCP and zoning amendment bylaws for the Board’s consideration at a future date.

Financial Implications:

Financial implications have been considered and none were found.

Communication Strategy:

It is proposed to publish the interim housing needs report in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act*, specifically, that it be on an internet site that is:

- a) *maintained by the local government or authorized by the local government to be used for publishing the report, and*
- b) *publicly and freely accessible.*

Alternatives:

- .1 THAT the Regional District Board not receive the “Housing Needs Report update (2024)”.

Respectfully submitted



Shannon Duong
Planner II

Endorsed by:



C. Garrish
Senior Manager of Planning

Endorsed by:



A. Fillion
Managing Director, Dev. & Infrastructure