



Corporation of the City of  
**NEW WESTMINSTER**

*A vibrant, compassionate, resilient city where everyone can thrive.*

**CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

**MINUTES**

**Monday, October 21, 2024, 3:00 p.m.**

**Meeting held electronically and in Council Chamber  
City Hall**

PRESENT: Mayor Patrick Johnstone  
Councillor Ruby Campbell  
Councillor Daniel Fontaine  
Councillor Tasha Henderson  
Councillor Paul Minhas  
Councillor Nadine Nakagawa

Hanieh Berg, Corporate Officer

ABSENT: Councillor Jaimie McEvoy

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1. **CALL TO ORDER IN OPEN SESSION & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Mayor Johnstone called the meeting to order at 3:20 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

MOVED and SECONDED

**THAT** Council adopt the October 21, 2024 Council Workshop agenda as circulated.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### 3. **PRESENTATIONS**

#### 3.1 **Family Friendly Housing Policy Update**

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Lynn Roxburgh, Manager, Housing and Land Use Planning, accompanied by Anji Rana, Housing Planner, presented an update to the Family Friendly Housing Policy and the following information was highlighted:

- the policy was implemented in 2016 and covers all multi-unit residential projects with 10 or more units, including townhouse and apartment buildings;
- the current policy includes required minimum percentages of two- and three-bedroom units in new multi-unit ownership and rental projects;
- the purpose of the policy is to grow the City's housing stock with appropriate dwellings for households with children;
- following economic analysis, it was determined that an increase in the requirement of family-friendly units would not significantly impact financial feasibility of development projects and minimum unit sizes would not impact financial feasibility of rental projects; and
- in general, the development of rental projects are challenging due to current market conditions.

Staff then spoke to the proposed updates to the Policy, noting that, if approved, the changes would be implemented in a phased approach, as follows:

- ownership projects with 10 units or more would be required to have a minimum of 40% two- and three-bedroom units, with at least 15% of total units containing three- or more bedrooms;
- market rental projects with 10 units or more would be required to have a minimum of 30% two- and three-bedroom units, with at least 10% of total units containing three- or more bedrooms; and
- effective November 1, 2026, market rental projects with 10 units or more would be required to include a minimum of 35% two- and three-bedroom units, with at least 10% of total units containing three- or more bedrooms.

L. Roxburgh then spoke to next steps, noting that should Council approve the proposed policy updates, zoning bylaw amendments to effect the proposed new policy requirements would be presented for Council's consideration at the November 4, 2024 Regular Council meeting.

In reply to queries from Council, L. Roxburgh provided the following information:

- the City's Housing Target Order addresses the total number of net new housing units and includes all housing types including single-family and infill development, whereas the policy only speaks to multi-unit residential development;

- the proposed phased approach is being recommended due to the current market conditions and the viability of such developments;
- staff will monitor the family friendly housing program and track the number of family friendly units delivered in ownership and rental housing projects; staff will also consider the number of variance requests received and how the design guidelines are implemented;
- feedback from the Urban Development Institute indicated preference for guidelines rather than a regulation for family friendly unit sizes; this was primarily to enable flexibility for unit size given the current market conditions; however, staff recommend a regulation in recognition of the types and sizes of the space required to function for families;
- the City is unable to ensure that rental units with lock-off suites are purchased and benefited from by families and therefore, staff do not recommend the inclusion of lock-off suites in the family-friendly regulations; and
- the saleability of four-bedroom multi-family dwellings may be attributed to their costs in comparison to the costs of older detached, single-family dwellings.

Discussion took place and Council spoke to (i) the need for green space for families and children of multi-family dwellings to gather and play, (ii) the potential to have units be constructed as fully universal from the onset, and (iii) the need for storage and other space required unique to families such as stroller parking, including the potential to incentivize the inclusion of such spaces.

MOVED and SECONDED

1. **THAT** Council endorse the proposed Family Friendly Housing Policy included as Attachment 1;
2. **THAT** Council forward Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Family Friendly Housing) No.8486, 2024 to the November 4, 2024 Regular Meeting of Council for consideration of First, Second and Third Readings; and
3. **THAT** no Public Hearing be held, in accordance with the *Local Government Act*

The question on the motion was not called as the following amendment was introduced:

MOVED and SECONDED

**THAT** the following be added as Part 4:

“THAT Council establish as a five-year target to be in the middle tier of comparable cities in Metro Vancouver when it comes to the construction of three-plus bedroom units.”

The question on the amendment was not called as an amendment to the amendment was introduced:

MOVED and SECONDED

**THAT** Part 4 be amended to add “in multi-family dwellings” after “units.”

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The question on the amendment, as amended, was then called and it was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

The question on the main motion, as amended, to read:

- “1. *THAT Council endorse the proposed Family Friendly Housing Policy included as Attachment 1;*
2. *THAT Council forward Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Family Friendly Housing) No.8486, 2024 to the November 4, 2024 Regular Meeting of Council for consideration of First, Second and Third Readings;*
3. *THAT no Public Hearing be held, in accordance with the Local Government Act; and*
4. *THAT Council establish as a five-year target to be in the middle tier of comparable cities in Metro Vancouver when it comes to the construction of three-plus bedroom units in multi-family dwellings.”*

was then called and it was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

### **3.2 Provincial 'Growing Communities Fund': Allocation of Remaining Funds to Support New Investments in Recreation Related Amenities**

In reply to queries from Council, Dean Gibson, Director, Parks and Recreation, spoke to the use of the Growing Community Fund to “top up” planned capital projects; for instance, if an existing lacrosse box were earmarked for restoration, a “top up” could include the addition of a cover or additional features such as equipment storage. The funds would be used to expand the scope or enhance the quality of a capital project.

Discussion took place and the following Council comments were noted:

- flexibility with regard to the use of the funds is important as it enables the City to address the highest areas of need;
- “new” investment could include projects that are captured in the City’s capital plan but not currently underway;
- use of the funds to bring forward a capital project is supported; conversely, use of funds to improve existing infrastructure is supported;
- it is important to maximize the use of existing parks and recreation infrastructure for a broad range of activities;

- the addition of covers and lighting to existing parks and recreation infrastructure would allow for the use of such spaces year-round;
- the timely completion of projects is key to ensure the maximize value of the funds are utilized.

In response to further questions from Council, D. Gibson advised that staff will report back with guidelines that reflect a balance of Council’s feedback and provide clarity to sport-user groups.

MOVED and SECONDED

1. **THAT** Council provide further clarification regarding the January 8, 2024 resolution regarding the use of funds for recreation investments as set aside in the city’s Growing Communities Fund Reserve; and
2. **THAT** Council confirm its expectations around processes to be used to identify candidate projects to be funded from the Growing Communities Fund Reserve.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED and SECONDED

**THAT** Council adjourn the October 21, 2024 Council Workshop (4:24 p.m.).

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Council meeting for Workshop of the Council of the City of New Westminster held on October 21, 2024.

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Patrick Johnstone

MAYOR

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Hanieh Berg

CORPORATE OFFICER