

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Mayor Cote and Members of Council **Date:** May 9, 2022

From: Emilie K. Adin, MCIP
Director, Climate Action, Planning and
Development **File:** 13.2525.02

Item #: 2022-322

Subject: Phase One Infill Housing Program: Comprehensive Review Work Plan

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council direct staff to proceed with the proposed work plan for the Phase One Infill Housing Program comprehensive review, as outlined in this report.

PURPOSE

To seek Council's approval to proceed with the proposed work plan for the Phase One Infill Housing Program comprehensive review, as outlined in this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Phase One Infill Housing Program, which includes laneway and carriage houses, as well as infill townhouses and rowhouses, was implemented concurrently with the adoption of the Official Community Plan (OCP) in October 2017. As part of the OCP Implementation Work Program, the City is undertaking a comprehensive review of this program to assess the success of Phase One. This report outlines a work plan for undertaking this process.

BACKGROUND

Phase One Infill Housing Program

The Phase One Infill Housing Program includes policies that encourage ground-oriented infill housing forms, such as laneway and carriage houses, townhouses, and rowhouses. Each of these housing forms helps increase housing choice in the city.

Laneway and carriage houses contribute to the amount and diversity of available rental housing, while infill townhouses and rowhouses, which are often family-friendly, may be more achievable to own than a single-detached house.

As part of the implementation of Phase One, staff committed to reporting back to Council after one year with an update to the program. A one-year interim report was presented to Council on February 2, 2019, which included a summary of the first year of Phase One. Some zoning and process changes were adopted by Council shortly thereafter to improve the program.

Staff also committed to a further comprehensive review of Phase One, including:

- 1. A close look at the development permit guidelines, zoning regulations, and the approvals process to identify any refinements required; and,
- 2. An exploration of minor refinements to the land use designation map to increase opportunities for infill townhouses and rowhouses.

Changes in Council Direction

Following Council direction in February 2019, Council declared a Climate Emergency, and in November 2019, Council endorsed Seven Bold Steps for Climate Action.

At its February 24, 2020 meeting, just prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Council then endorsed a revised 2020-2021 land use policy planning work program that was more in line with the City’s declaration of a climate emergency. The Planning Division was directed to prioritize creation and implementation of the 22nd Street Station Bold Vision over the previous identified priorities for the long-range planning group. As a result, the comprehensive review of Phase One of OCP Implementation was deferred out to 2022.

Subsequently, in April 2020, following the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, Council endorsed postponement of several planning and other City work plan items so that the City could focus resources on the pandemic response and recovery efforts. Despite the impacts of the pandemic, staff are now able to move forward with the infill work this year, as previously directed by Council.

PROPOSED WORK PLAN

Project Scope

The proposed comprehensive review would assess the success of the Phase One Infill Housing Program since its inception in 2017, and would explore impacts on City objectives including: uptake; distribution of projects across the city; quality of design and energy efficiency; and, barriers to potential projects. Based on the findings, staff may recommend changes to the development permit guidelines, zoning regulations, and/or approvals processes.

On September 18, 2017 Council directed staff:

1. To explore additional locations that could be designated Residential – Infill Townhouse, as part of a two year Townhouse and Rowhouse Monitoring Program; and,
2. To include the outcome in a proposed Land Use Designation Map update at the conclusion of the Program.

It was determined that this would best be achieved through the comprehensive review, with the objective of designating more properties Residential – Infill Townhouse (RT) and Residential – Ground Oriented Infill Housing (RGO).

Consultation

As significant neighbourhood consultation occurred during development of the 2017 OCP and the Phase One Infill Housing Program, the intent of online consultation proposed here would be to understand how the Program can be refined to better support the City’s objectives. As a result, two surveys are proposed: one to past Program participants and one to the general community, to be accessed through Be Heard New West. The building and design community would also be engaged to review the feasibility of any proposed changes.

Process and Timelines

The comprehensive review would include three main phases:

Phase	Timeframe
1. Program review and public consultation: Review of projects completed under the Phase One Infill Housing Program, and consultation with program participants and the broader community	Spring/summer 2022
2. Analysis and initial findings: Analysis of program data and public feedback and presentation of findings to Council	Late 2022
3. Proposed revisions: Development of revisions to Phase One and adoption by Council	Early 2023

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This project would be managed internally with staff resources. No consulting services would be required.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

Staff from the Engineering Department, Parks and Recreation Department, and Building Division will be consulted throughout this process.

OPTIONS

The following options are presented for Council's consideration:

1. That Council direct Staff to proceed with the proposed work plan for the Phase One Infill Housing Program comprehensive review, as outlined in this report.
2. That Council provide Staff with alternative direction.

Staff recommend Option 1.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - February 4, 2019 Council Report – Phase One Infill Housing Program:
One-Year Update

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:
Wendee Lang, Development Planner

This report was reviewed by:
Lynn Roxburgh, A/ Supervisor of Land Use Planning and Climate Action

This report was approved by:
Emilie K. Adin, Director, Climate Action, Planning and Development
Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer