

**The Corporation of the
City of Sault Ste. Marie**

C O U N C I L R E P O R T

August 13, 2018

TO: Mayor Christian Provenzano and Members of City Council

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DEPARTMENT: Community Development and Enterprise Services

RE: Shape the Sault Update

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief update on the status of the Shape the Sault project to create a new Official Plan. The report also provides background information on recent provincial requirements to permit second units within existing housing.

BACKGROUND

Launched in February of this year, the Shape the Sault project is currently in phase 1 of the approved work plan: educating, marketing and gathering community comment to support the creation of a new official plan.

The *Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act 2011* and associated regulations recently came into effect, requiring municipalities to establish Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law provisions to authorize second units in single, semi and multiple attached dwellings, both in urban and rural areas.

ANALYSIS

Shape the Sault Public Outreach

To date, staff have held 2 public open houses on the Rural Area (March 27) and the Natural Environment (June 19). Staff have met with 10 local stakeholder groups, including the Chamber of Commerce, Construction Association, Downtown Association, Sault Naturalists, Historic Sites Board and STRIVE Young Professionals. Shape the Sault has also attended 23 community events such as Passport to Unity, Local Immigration Forum, Jane's Walk, Mill Market, Hub Trail Festival, Rotaryfest and Pridefest. In total staff has had over 1000 in-person conversations with people at these events.

Comments to date span a wide spectrum including praise for the Hub Trail and suggested expansion areas, as well as trouble spots related to difficult

intersections and confusing signage in certain areas. We have also heard positive feedback on the city's waterfront and suggestions for improvement, such as facilitating the location of businesses along the downtown waterfront, catering to those utilizing this portion of the trail. Many people also want the City to continue to focus on revitalizing the downtown, and increase efforts to revitalize the west end and Jamestown. Property standards and consistent municipal enforcement has been cited as an issue in these areas.

Another common theme is developing strategies to keep young people here, by providing a better diversity of recreational and cultural opportunities, as well as more employment and educational options for local youth. We have also had numerous discussions related to the local public transit system. Attitudes towards the new routes have been mixed, with some seeing significant improvements, and others preferring the previous system. We have also heard from many that more money needs to be spent to fix pot holes and construct a new north/south link to alleviate traffic on Great Northern Road. Others feel the City needs to focus less on automobiles and more on other modes of transportation, to create safer pedestrian and cycling environments. Those that don't own a vehicle have indicated that getting around can be challenging, feeling that the city is too spread out.

The Shape the Sault stakeholders list and social media followers continue to grow. Staff will continue attending public events and speaking to stakeholder's groups throughout the remainder of the summer.

Second Unit Housing Regulations

Second units are self-contained residential units with a private kitchen, bathroom facilities and sleeping areas, within dwellings such as a basement apartment or within accessory structures such as above a garage. Second units cannot be standalone structures.

As the name implies, the *Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act* was enacted to increase the supply and range of affordable rental housing, and to allow homeowners to earn additional income to help meet the costs of homeownership. Other benefits include providing more housing options for extended families, elderly parents, live-in caretakers and students.

Second units are a Provincial priority. The *Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act* also amended the *Planning Act* to remove the ability to appeal the establishment of Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law regulations related to second units. Furthermore, section 1.4.3 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2014 directs municipalities to permit and facilitate all forms of residential intensification and redevelopment, including second units.

Guidance documents suggest that second units should be permitted in single, semi-detached and multiple attached units, in both urban and rural areas.

Guidance materials also recommend that regulations consider reduced parking requirements for second units. Site specific constraints such as inadequate servicing, the presence of hazards and natural heritage features, and land use compatibility remain applicable issues that can be addressed through local regulations.

The timing of the new Official Plan appropriately integrates the requirements of the *Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act*. The next focus area for public consultation is housing. In addition to speaking with various stakeholders throughout the community, staff will be holding two public open houses to discuss housing policies and second units. The first of these outreach sessions will be held this September.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Proceeding with a public open house to discuss new Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law regulations related to housing and second units will not impact municipal finances.

STRATEGIC PLAN / POLICY IMPACT

The new Official Plan will support all four major focus areas of the City's Corporate Strategic Plan including: Quality of Life, Community Development and Partnerships, Infrastructure and Service Delivery.

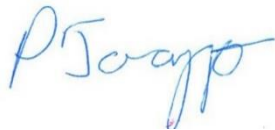
Although second units are not specifically referenced in the Corporate Strategic Plan, it is recognized that residential intensification initiatives such as second units results in an efficient use of existing infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that Council take the following action:

Resolved that the Report of the Senior Planner, dated 2018 08 13 concerning the update on the Shape the Sault project and second unit housing regulations be received as information.

Respectfully submitted,



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