
Subject: Expedited Site Plan Approvals

Staff Report No. DS-011-25

**Department/
Commission:** Development Services Commission

Date: April 16, 2025

Recommendation:

- 1) That Council provide post-budget approval in the amount of \$50,000 for the Expedited Site Plan Approvals project to the 2025 Capital budget.
- 2) That the Treasurer fund the Expedited Site Plan Approvals project from the funds received through the Housing Accelerator Fund.

Report Highlights

- The Town has received funding in the amount of approximately \$8 million over four years to increase the supply of housing through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF).
- The application for funding included seven (7) initiatives, one of which is the Expedited Site Plan Approvals project.
- While the Expedited Site Plan Approvals project was approved by Council as part of its HAF application, it was not included as a project in the 2025 Capital budget.
- The funding source for this project will be the HAF funding that the Town has been awarded.
- Staff are seeking Council approval to add the Expedited Site Plan Approvals project to the 2025 Capital budget, in order to proceed with the procurement process.

1. Purpose:

As part of its Housing Action Plan through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF), the Town has committed to undertaking a process review to create an expedited site plan approvals process for certain residential development applications. While this was included as a project in the Housing Action Plan that accompanied the Town's HAF application, it was not included as a line item in the 2025 Capital budget. As such, staff are seeking to add the Expedited Site Plan Approvals project.

2. Background:

On October, 16 2024 staff brought forward the Town's revised Housing Action Plan for Council endorsement. This was developed in conjunction with the Town's resubmission application for funding through the federal government's Housing Accelerator Fund. The purpose of the HAF program is to create more housing supply at an accelerated pace.

There are seven (7) key initiatives that form the Town's Housing Action Plan, including: Inclusionary Zoning Study, Growth Management Reporting and Tracking Software Tool, Medium and High Density Parking Study, Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan, Expanding Missing Middle Housing Study, Servicing Allocation Study and By-law and the Expedited Site Plan Approval Process.

The vast majority of the projects that form the Housing Action Plan were included in either the 2024 or 2025 budget, thus received budget approval regardless of whether or not the Town was successful in its HAF application.

On [January 28, 2025](#), it was announced that the Town was successful in its funding application and has been awarded approximately \$8 million over four years to increase the supply of housing in the Town. As such, many of the projects listed are currently at various stages of the procurement process, save and except for the Expedited Site Plan Approvals project. An RFP is currently being prepared for this project. As such, staff are seeking post-budget approval of the project in order to proceed with the procurement process.

3. Analysis:

The Expedited Site Plan Approvals project is one of seven (7) initiatives that formed the Town's application for the Housing Accelerator Fund. This is a two-phase project in which the Town will develop a new streamlined process to fast-track certain site plan approval applications, while meeting the requirements under Section 41 of the Planning Act.

The first phase of the project will include creating a process that will focus on removing duplication and redundancies in current site plan application approval processes. It will ultimately lead to the improved circulation, review and processing of all development applications. The expedited site plan review process will be created for projects that specifically include affordable and purpose-built rental housing units. This may include deferring certain engineering reviews, agreements and requirements to the building

permit stage, as opposed to the site plan approval process, thereby eliminating duplication and finding efficiencies in the approval process.

The second phase of this project will be the implementation, in which the Town will consider a process by which site plan application fees for eligible housing projects could be reimbursed if: a) the development project receives a building permit within six (6) months of receiving site plan approval; and b) the development project is ready for construction within twelve (12) months of receiving site plan approval.

4. Options:

4.1 Option A (Recommended)

Staff recommend that Council approve the addition of the Expedited Site Plan Approvals project to the 2025 Capital budget.

5. Financial Implications:

It is estimated that the cost to undertake the first phase of the project in 2025 will be in the amount of \$50,000. However, the funding source for this project will be the HAF funding that the Town has been awarded. As such, there is no impact to the Town's levy.

Costs associated with implementation phase of the project may vary depending on uptake by the private market. It is estimated that implementation costs could be in the range of \$650,000 and will be assessed through an economic analysis as part of the first phase of the project. Implementation costs were considered and approved through the HAF funding awarded to the Town. Costs associated with implementation will be considered through the 2026 budget process.

6. Broader Intergovernmental Impacts and/or Considerations:

The Housing Accelerator Fund is a federal grant program that is administered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

7. Communication:

N/A

8. Alignment with Strategic Plan:

1. A Town that Grows
A Town that grows in support of complete communities
2. Good Governance
Provide Good Governance
3. Organizational Effectiveness
To Elevate our Organizational Effectiveness

9. Attachments:

None

10. Related Reports:

October 16, 2024 – [DS-049-24](#) Housing Accelerator Fund Application Resubmission

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For further information on this report, please contact the Department Head: Dwayne Tapp, Commissioner of Development Services at 905-640-1900 or 1-855-642-8697 ext. 2431 or via email at dwayne.tapp@townofws.ca