

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

**TO** Council **MEETING DATE** October 2, 2024

**FROM** Kevin Pearson, Senior Policy Planner

**SUBJECT** OCP Amendment Bylaw No. 492-35 – Request for Second Reading

**FILE NO** 3900-02 492-35

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## RECOMMENDATION:

1. That second reading granted on June 19, 2024 for Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw 492-35 be rescinded; and

**That Council consider second reading of Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw 492-35, as amended.**

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## PURPOSE

In an effort to reduce barriers to housing development in Sechelt, Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment Bylaw No. 492-35 updates density / height policies to align with recent, current and anticipated development proposals and trends.

## BACKGROUND

The last version of the amendment bylaw was endorsed by the Committee of the Whole on September 11, 2024. Staff believe this version has addressed relevant concerns raised by the public at various meetings and input sessions this year, while still maintaining the original intent and purpose of the amendment. The [September 11 staff report to the Committee](#) includes additional background.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Bylaw No. 492-35 proposes adding “General” clarification of the amendment to the beginning of Part 5 (Attachment 1), and replacing the current Figure 17 (Attachment 2) with the revised version that would reference the land use maps in Schedule C (Attachment 3). The focus of the bylaw is the serviced areas of the municipality; in particular lands designated in the OCP as: “Special Infill Areas”, “Multifamily/Mixed Residential”, “Downtown Centre”, and some “Residential” areas. Attachment 4 shows various locations of Housing Density Trends where seven applications have been made in recent past proposing to increase the density of the OCP for over 460 residential units.

## CONCLUSION

Local governments have significant control over housing supply, development, and unit costs through an array of bylaws, permitting processes and discretionary approvals. Frequent amendments to the OCP on a site-by-site basis reflects on the outdated density policies in our current OCP that continue to place barriers to housing development in Sechelt. The current OCP has been viewed more as a regulatory bylaw since 2011 with an aim to protect the status-quo in most neighbourhoods. It is far past its due date for renewal and while the OCP is under review, changes to it are needed now.

Initially proposed in November 2023, the amendment is aligned with the 2024 Housing Needs Report received by Council on September 25, and it would move the District closer to meeting the other Provincial requirements of Bill 44. Along with this directive from the Province, the proposed density and height policies have been formulated based on the following:

- recent and anticipated housing development trends in Sechelt;
- the need to streamline housing development approvals for more “effective growth” as is deemed a priority in Council’s Strategic Plan (2023 - 2026);
- modernized OCP policies in other BC municipalities of similar size, population, growth trends, context and geography (realizing each municipality is unique, there are also many commonalities when it comes to housing development);
- incorporating the same land use designations; and
- public input, feedback from Council and thoughtful consideration by staff.

Should Council grant second reading of OCP Amendment Bylaw No. 492-35, as amended, scheduling a public hearing in October 2024 is recommended, after which time the bylaw could be considered for third reading and adoption.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Pearson, RPP, MCIP  
Senior Policy Planner

#### Attachments

1. Page 37 - Part 5 of OCP
2. Current Figure 17 of OCP
3. Schedule C - Land Use Maps of OCP
4. Housing Development Trends