

# **THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF MISSISSIPPI MILLS**

## **STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** October 4, 2022

**TO:** Committee of the Whole

**FROM:** Melanie Knight, Senior Planner

**SUBJECT:** Affordable Housing Grant Program Update

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to undertake consultation with County Staff to develop a Mississippi Mills Affordable Housing Grant Program or Policy as a supplement to the recently approved County Affordable Housing Capital Grant Program and report back to Council during the 2023 budget deliberations.**

### **BACKGROUND:**

In the 2022 budget, Council allocated \$50,000 to be used for an affordable housing grant program. In March 2022, Council approved the Housing Directions Report. This Report implemented a number of reliefs to fees and charges that are often upfront costs (and barriers) to the development of affordable housing. The report also included direction to staff to use \$10,000 of the allocated \$50,000 to hire a consultant to establish an affordable housing grant program. Since that time, staff have completed research on other municipal affordable housing grant programs but have not yet engaged a consultant to develop a program. A summary of staff's research is contained in Attachment 2.

In addition, staff have participated in many of the County-led sessions regarding the County's Affordable Housing Strategy process. The Municipal Tools to Support Affordable Housing Final Report contains a number of recommendations for implementation. The 44 recommendations contained in the report include policy and regulation changes, funding and partnership programs as well as increased awareness and advocacy for affordable housing.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Community Services Department at the County is the provider and administrator of affordable housing in the County. County staff have recently presented a recommendation report to County Council to establish an Affordable Housing Capital

Grant Program and to bring forward the funds necessary to fund a program in their 2023 budget. A copy of this report can be found in Attachment 1.

In light of the progress on the Affordable Housing Capital Grant Program being developed at the County level, staff are recommending that engaging a separate consultant to develop a separate affordable housing grant program should not be undertaken at this time. There is an opportunity for Mississippi Mills Staff to work with Community Services Staff at the County to develop a process to ensure that any affordable housing development opportunities within the Municipality have access to both the County affordable housing grant fund as well as the allocated affordable housing grant fund at the local, municipal level. Consultation with Community Services Staff will need to be undertaken to determine if any special approvals may be required for inclusion into the County program or if a separate policy or program may be required at the municipal level.

The applicant would apply to the County and any project that the County approved within Mississippi Mills would also be eligible for a portion of the grant funding that Mississippi Mills Council has made available. In this manner there is only one application intake and review process which streamlines municipal processes for both the applicant and administration/planning staff.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

As noted above the full \$50,000 grant funds remain unspent within the 2022 budget. Staff recommend transferring the unspent \$50,000 to reserves at year end 2022. Staff will return with a report with options for the use of the existing funds and 2023 funds during the 2023 budget deliberations.

#### **SUMMARY:**

Staff recommend that the unspent \$50,000 capital funding be held until the 2023 budget deliberations and that at that time, staff return with a summary of the consultation with the County regarding the opportunity for a partnership to enable supplemental affordable housing grant funding from the Municipality as part of the County's newly established Affordable Housing Capital Grant Program.

Respectfully submitted by,



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Melanie Knight  
Senior Planner

Reviewed by:



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Ken Kelly  
CAO

ATTACHMENTS:

1. County Report – Affordable Housing Capital Grant Program
2. Best Practice Research Summary – Affordable Housing Grant Programs