

The City of Victoria Needs Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing

Homes for Living endorses and supports the City of Victoria’s “Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing” initiative and hopes city council will unanimously approve the policy. The city faces a housing affordability and availability crisis and policies like this are critical to addressing these issues.

Approving this policy would have many benefits related to the city’s housing supply, tight rental market, and the escalating living costs. It would reduce development timelines, increase development certainty, depoliticize more inclusive housing options, cut red tape, and lower the cost of construction. Taken together, these features would improve housing affordability, availability, and start to push back against escalating rents and persistently low vacancy rates. Furthermore, over the long run, this policy will reduce the odds today’s housing crisis re-emerging compared to today’s cumbersome approval process.

This proposal would also improve access for people seeking non-profit housing and increase funding opportunities from other levels of government where secured zoning is required. Moreover, it would better align the city’s policies with its official position that states housing is a human right.

This policy also has incorporated and addressed many criticisms levelled against it in prior iterations. Applicants must comply with design guidelines which are generated at council’s discretion, applications must still go to the Advisory Design Panel, and applications must be consistent with the OCP. Taken together these measures provide effective safeguards and ensure the spirit and character of the city is maintained while improving Victoria’s housing options.

Finally, and most important of all, approving this measure would help the city tackle many other challenges. At the heart of Victoria’s biggest issues sits housing policy. Therefore, action on housing like the “Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing” also means action on reducing homelessness, cutting crime, reducing traffic, decreasing the city’s carbon emissions, increasing its tax base, lowering taxes paid per capita, and alleviating the labour shortages which impact Victoria’s business community.

Thank you for bringing this important policy forward for consideration at a public hearing. We sincerely hope city council will unanimously approve the policy as it presents a win-win for the entire community.

About Homes for Living:

We are a community housing advocacy group, made up of volunteers impacted by and concerned about the growing housing crisis in the capital region. Homes for Living is advocating for more homes to make Victoria more affordable for people across the income and housing needs spectrum. We believe reforms at the local and provincial government level are crucial to accomplishing these goals. For more information, click here [\[REDACTED\]](#)

Homes For Living Contact Information:

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Jeremy Schmidt

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

From: Philip MacKellar [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, April 9, 2022 11:33 AM
To: Public Hearings; Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: I support the Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing policy

Dear Mayor, Council, and City Staff,

I am emailing you to voice my support for the “Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing” initiative. This policy change would represent a significant step forward and help address the unaffordable, unattainable, and oftentimes even unavailable housing situation within our city. Rental vacancy rates are persistently below what is considered a balanced market, rents are eating up a substantial share of household incomes, and the trend is getting worse. Our city lacks a diversity of housing options including purpose-built rentals, non-profit housing, and below market housing. By approving the Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing policy, the city would take a significant step in pushing back against these conditions.

Voting for this measure would also help the City of Victoria reduce homelessness and crime, cut traffic and carbon emissions, while increasing the city’s labour pool and tax base thereby helping our local businesses and regional economy. Therefore, this looks like a win for the entire community and appears aligned with the City of Victoria’s long term strategic direction.

Given this policy will apply to many projects in the future, it makes your vote on this matter much more important than your vote on other specific housing projects which regularly come before council. As such, how council votes here (and future big housing reforms such as the Missing Middle) will determine how I vote in the upcoming fall election. Housing is the biggest issue facing my family, extended family, and many peers. The city needs a fundamental overhaul of the current housing approval process and its zoning laws. The Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing initiative represents what I hope will be the first of many steps in the direction of zoning liberalization and housing reform.

Thank you for your time reading my thoughts on this matter. I hope you will all vote in favour of this policy. Feel free to reach out to me directly if you wish [REDACTED]

Best regards,

Philip MacKellar

2530 Cedar Hill Road
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: David Berry [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 8, 2022 4:47 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council; Public Hearings
Subject: April 14th hearing, Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing

Hi all,

I would like to email in my overwhelming support for the Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing policy that will be going in front of council on the 14th of April. I believe this is a much-needed, extremely important step to building more affordable housing in this hurting city.

I work professionally as a construction manager for a general contractor in Victoria. I am currently building an affordable seniors housing project for Baptist Housing in Saanich. I worked through the whole preconstruction on this project, which included the public hearing. This is a building that met the OCP and is providing affordable seniors housing, but there was still public push back and the owners, Baptist Housing, felt an incredible risk in proposing it. I feel that this is an absolute shame and affordable housing should not have to go through an extra step of scrutiny prior to it being built. The OCP should be respected by council and the communities that put them together should be trusted to decide what buildings should be built without an extra step of neighbors fighting affordable housing.

I would also like to note that many people believe there is little reason for this policy because the construction industry in Victoria is maxed out. As a builder myself I see this every day. The reason this policy needs to be passed is so that future, more exclusionary and less progressive councils can no longer say no to affordable housing. We had years and years of no housing being built, funding was an issue but also the will of our city councils not approving or not encouraging building was a major issue. This policy will no longer let 40 years of housing stress build up like it has for the last 4 decades.

I truly hope this council recognizes the pain that many people in Victoria are in and lead the rest of greater Victoria by approving this policy.

Thank you for your time,
David Berry
Resident of Fairfield
1607 Chandler Ave

[REDACTED]

From: Karen Dykes [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2022 9:08 AM
To: Public Hearings; Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: I strongly support the Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing policy

Dear Mayor, Council, and City Staff,

I am emailing you to voice my strong support for the “Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing” initiative. As a younger home owner in the North Park neighborhood I see the effects of the unaffordable, unattainable, and oftentimes even unavailable housing situation within our city everyday first hand. Rental vacancy rates are persistently below what is considered a balanced market, rents are eating up a substantial share of household incomes, and the trend is getting worse. Our city lacks a diversity of housing options including purpose-built rentals, non-profit housing, and below market housing. By approving the Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing policy, the city would take a significant step in pushing back against these conditions.

Voting for this measure would also help the City of Victoria reduce homelessness and crime, cut traffic and carbon emissions, while increasing the city’s labour pool and tax base thereby helping our local businesses and regional economy. Therefore, this looks like a win for the entire community and appears aligned with the City of Victoria’s long term strategic direction.

Given this policy will apply to many projects in the future, it makes your vote on this matter much more important than your vote on other specific housing projects which regularly come before council. As such, how council votes here (and future big housing reforms such as the Missing Middle) will determine how I vote in the upcoming fall election. Housing is the biggest issue facing my family, extended family, and many peers. The city needs a fundamental overhaul of the current housing approval process and its zoning laws. The Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing initiative represents what I hope will be the first of many steps in the direction of zoning liberalization and housing reform.

Thank you for your time reading my thoughts on this matter. I hope you will all vote in favour of this policy as it is by far the most important housing policy proposal for those who live on below average incomes in a long, long time.

Sincerely,

Karen Dykes

#103 930 North Park Street
[REDACTED]