

**Subject: Bylaw No. 20/032 - Land Use Bylaw Amendment -
Definition and General Regulations Related to Project
Accommodations****APPROVALS:**_____
Director_____
Chief Administrative Officer**Recommended Motion:**

1. THAT Bylaw No. 20/032, being an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw specific to the definition and general regulations related to project accommodations, be read a second time.
2. THAT Bylaw No. 20/032 be read a third and final time.

Summary:

Administration is proposing amendments to the Land Use Bylaw related to project accommodations. The proposed amendments encompass changes to definitions, duration for maximum permit approval, approvals extensions, annual updates, and a more precise application submission and review process for development permits.

Proposed amendments were first brought before Council for consideration on January 8, 2019 (Bylaw No. 19/002), followed by a revised set of amendments on July 9, 2019 following feedback from stakeholders (Bylaw No. 19/018). On July 9, Council heard from interested parties and deferred second reading, directing Administration to continue engaging with stakeholders.

Further engagement allowed topics of concern to be explored in greater detail, leading to the development of new amendments that seek to balance the interests of all parties. The proposed amendment provides greater oversight and gives permit applicants a more consistent and predictable regulatory framework while still allowing flexibility to maintain their operations.

Background:

Project Accommodations provide housing in remote areas where operations are significantly distant from urban and rural centers and are a common form of housing for the region's industrial workforce. Over time, concerns have arisen for accommodating

this population officially in terms of the region's "Shadow Population". Currently accounting for roughly 31% of the region's population, there is a need to update current provisions to introduce a framework for enhanced processes and data collection for project accommodations that serve this segment of the population.

The Land Use Bylaw currently allows project accommodations in almost all land use districts with little supporting regulation, which is inconsistent with the direction provided in several Area Structure Plans, namely those for rural hamlets where project accommodations are prohibited within hamlet boundaries.

There is a need to revise provisions in the Land Use Bylaw to provide more robust direction to the Development Authority when reviewing such development permit applications. Relevant definitions in the Land Use Bylaw are out of date, and there is currently insufficient direction given to identifying appropriate locations for project accommodations, duration of the permit approval, and application submission criteria.

Administration first brought forward amendments to address these issues on January 8, 2019. Bylaw 19/002 was given first reading, and proceeded to a public hearing on February 12, 2019. However, the public hearing was deferred until July 9, 2019. During the intervening months, Administration refined the amendments to take into account stakeholder concerns, including adjusting the permit approval duration from 2 years to 4 years.

The changes were significant enough to warrant a new bylaw, and thus Bylaw 19/018 was brought forward for first reading on June 11, 2019 and second and third reading on July 9, 2019. During the public hearing, Industry representatives raised concerns with respect to the proposed changes and Council directed Administration to continue engaging with stakeholders.

The amendments propose to remove project accommodations as an allowable use in almost 30 land use districts. Where they continue to be allowed (most notably the Rural District), project accommodations are proposed to have a maximum permit duration of up to 5 years, which is a further increase from the last two proposed amendments. Rather than requiring applicants to go through a complete development permit process each time a permit expires, a significant change is proposed whereby existing project accommodations that meet certain criteria will be able to apply for a one-time extension. The extension will be valid for up to 5 more years after which a new development permit must be sought. This is a notable change because it entails the implementation of a new process that has never before been offered. The bylaw also introduces a reporting program that requires operators to submit annual updates pertaining to their facility.

Budget/Financial Implications:

Permit fees for project accommodations will continue to be collected, and the proposed amendments are not expected to have a substantive impact on revenues. Operational costs are expected to remain stable, as the increased workload arising from the annual

reporting program will be offset by the efficiencies realized from a more streamlined permitting process.

Rationale for Recommendation:

The proposed amendment to the Land Use Bylaw will provide better regulatory oversight for project accommodations, allowing the Municipality to exercise a greater degree of control over the applications it receives. With the increase in approval duration, the introduction of a new process by which extensions may be sought, and a new reporting program, significant improvements have been made in an attempt to balance the interests of the Municipality and concerns expressed by stakeholders.

Strategic Priorities:

Responsible Government
Regional Economic Development

Attachments:

1. Bylaw No. 20/032 - Land Use Bylaw Amendment - Project Accommodations