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Municipal Candidates Affordability Survey

Please fill out this survey and return to info@citiesforeveryone.org by 24 September 2018.

Candidate Name ___Andrew Appleton_____   **Date _Sep.24 / 18_____**

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For more information see the *Victoria Affordability Backgrounder* and other documents at www.citiesforeveryone.org.

Context	Questions	Comments
Our region is considered unaffordable, based on income-to-cost ratios (households spending no more than 45% of income on housing and transport), and low rental vacancy rates.	1. What priority do you give to local efforts to increase affordability? **Low___ Medium___ High X**	Oak Bay has much to do to create more affordable housing, and while this is specifically called for in our OCP virtually no implementation has taken place. In short, Oak Bay needs to look at every tool available to us to create more affordable housing options.
Many middle-income households ($40-80k per year) spend more on housing and transport than is affordable, and so want more middle-priced ($1,200-2,500 per month) housing in walkable urban neighbourhoods.	2. Do you support efforts to increase middle- as well as lower-income affordability? **Yes X No___ Maybe____**	For Oak Bay, affordability is closely linked with housing choice and I have been vocal in my view that we should encourage a diversity of housing options. *Missing Middle* housing types are sorely lacking in Oak Bay and are ideal for our context.
Affordable infill (more compact housing types, such as multiplexes, townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings, within existing urban areas) is often opposed by neighborhoods who want to preserve existing conditions.	3. Do you support affordable infill: **In all neighborhoods ____** **In some neighborhoods X** **Only on a case-by-case basis ____** **In no existing neighborhoods ____**	Oak Bay is fortunate that we have suitable locations for gentle density already defined in our village centres. These areas are highly appropriate for a mix of compact housing types, and this type of development would also serve to revitalize commercial tenancy. We have some "quick wins" that will create more compact housing options including the legalization of Oak Bay's many duplex buildings (currently all non-conforming), encouraging their retention and renovation. I firmly believe that we can create a significant number of new housing units in highly transit accessible areas by prioritizing our village centres.

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Most residential neighbourhoods only allow two stories and limited densities, which excludes most *missing middle* housing (see below). Affordable housing requires upzoning.	4. Do you support upzoning: **Neighbourhood-wide** **____** **For all corner and larger lots** **____** **Only on a case-by-case basis X**	In general, many larger lots in Oak Bay may be suitable for higher density housing forms, but the varied context of individual lots (shape, access, natural features, etc.) makes a universal approach unsuitable. Referring also to my earlier comment on bylaw language, a significantly updated zoning bylaw is necessary to support this type of housing option and I have placed modernizing this and other bylaws as a key policy item in my platform. As many of the largest lots tend to have older homes on them, We have seen good success in subdivision and creation of additional units through Heritage Revitalization Agreements (HRAs). This process should be encouraged. As stated above, our village centres provide a highly suitable location for missing middle housing and I am a strong proponent of encouraging developments of this type to revitalize these areas.

The "missing middle" includes moderate density housing types such as multiplexes, townhomes and low-rise apartments. These are generally the least costly houses to develop.

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Many jurisdictions have *inclusionary* mandates which require that a portion (typically 5-15%) of new units be priced below market rates. However, if this requirement is excessive it can reduce the number of new units built.	5. Do you support mandates: **For all new housing ____** **For higher-priced housing ____** **Only on a case-by-case basis X** **Under no circumstances ____**	I am highly supportive of this type of policy but very realistic about what we can accomplish in the short term to get us there. We have much to do with Oak Bay's outdated bylaws and development standards before we can implement such a strategy- As stated above, one of my key platform items is the creation of new bylaw tools and policies for development (including

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		absolutely essential components such as a Development Cost Charge bylaw and a defined approach to amenity contributions). Once we get these fundamental tools and policies in place I would very much like to see such a standard implemented.
Urban parking typically costs $10-60k per space, and an increasing portion of households are car-free. For affordability and fairness sake many experts recommend reducing parking requirements so occupants are not forced to pay for costly spaces they do not need.	6. Do you support reduced parking requirements for infill housing, even if some neighbours object? **Yes X** No___ Maybe___	Oak Bay's parking bylaw is significantly out of date and must be modernized quickly. We have solid evidence that buildings in our village centres situated close to transit do not use significant portions of their specified capacity. As I favour adding density along transit and active transportation corridors, it's clear parking requirements for these developments can be reduced.
Infill development often requires variances to allow taller buildings, higher densities and fewer parking spaces than codes require. Neighbors often oppose these variances.	7. Would you approve variances needed for medium-priced infill? **Generally approve** ___ **Generally reject** ___ **Approve if: we develop standards with the community that are consistent and equitable.**	Oak Bay's residents have been highly critical of variances and have stated loud and clear that they would be more supportive of new development if a clear standard was in place. Because our standards are out of date, there is no consistent "rule book" to follow which leads to a significant number of variances. I would like to see us move away from variances to the extent possible by being very precise in our standards for each zone.
Oak Bay's *Official Community Plan* allows up to three stories in *urban villages* and eight stories in *multi-unit residential areas,* but some residents consider these too tall and dense.	8. If a proposed development meets OCP guidelines and includes moderate-priced units (less than $600k), but is opposed by some neighbors, would you: **Reject it** ____	Residents in Oak Bay have concerns about the pace and scale of developments but are also broadly supportive of development that revitalizes neighbourhoods. What I think

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	Approve it _____ **Approve if** _<mark>an accessible public engagement process accompanies the development.</mark>_____	is necessary in implementing the OCP is a string commitment by the District to guide public engagement on development projects. I firmly believe we can get better buy-in on development with better citizen engagement opportunities. Ultimately, if the project is in keeping with the OCP, meets standards and shows a clear benefit to the community as a whole it should be approved.

9. What other municipal affordability strategies do you support?

I support the implementation of secondary suite regulation in Oak Bay to ensure the ongoing availability of this affordable option.

10. Please let us know if you have other thoughts concerning our community's inaffordability problems and solutions?

Overall, Oak Bay needs to see itself as a participant in the *regional* issue of affordability and commit itself to working with our neighbours to tackle the problem holistically.