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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sechelt Committee Releases Housing Survey

Sechelt, BC – The District of Sechelt Housing Advisory Committee released a survey to better understand the needs of property owners wishing to build rental housing on their properties. Council established the volunteer Housing Advisory Committee of citizens, organizations, and council members to explore housing solutions in Sechelt. Providing a mix of housing types throughout the District is one of Sechelt Council’s strategic goals.

This survey by the Sechelt Council’s Housing Advisory Committee is intended for property owners who may be able to build freestanding rental suites on their property. A more broad survey for renters and others in need of housing will be released in March as part of a Housing Needs Assessment by the town of Gibsons in cooperation with the Sunshine Coast Regional District and the District of Sechelt.

This survey seeks property owners who may have space to build a freestanding rental suite. Also known as garden suites, carriage houses, or auxiliary dwellings; freestanding rental suites can provide high quality market rate rental housing. There are many properties in Sechelt eligible to build guest cottages or even a second single family dwelling, but the committee has found that few are being built.

Committee Chair Councillor Matt McLean shares the benefits of this program, “By building a second dwelling on an existing property, we can build gentle density that has minimal impact on neighbourhood character. There are things we can do as a local government to encourage the construction of these with negligible tax implications. This survey will help us identify those actions.”

The Housing Advisory Committee selected increasing the market rate rental stock as their first priority. They recognized the impact that a lack of rental housing was having on young families and seniors, causing them to leave our community. The committee then began to research what could be done within the private rental market. They looked to examples in other communities and found successful programs like the Town of Gibsons Garden Suite Guide, and the Squamish Housing Task Force. The survey will help the committee understand local needs.

The survey is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GardenSuite> or by completing a paper copy at the District of Sechelt municipal hall.



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