

Council Member Motion

Notice given on: Wednesday, February 19, 2025

Meeting Date Wednesday, March 5, 2025
From Councillor Caljouw
Subject Exploration of Surplus Properties for Potential Sale

Background

As part of our ongoing commitment to fiscal responsibility and effective land management, the municipality will conduct a review of its real estate assets. This review will identify specific parcels of land that are surplus; meaning they are no longer required for municipal operations or future development plans.

The sale of these surplus lands presents an opportunity to generate revenue, which can be directed into a designated Land Sale Reserve Fund. This fund will serve two critical purposes:

1. **Offsetting Tax Burden:** By utilizing the proceeds from these sales, the municipality can alleviate some of the financial pressures on taxpayers. This proactive approach to land asset management demonstrates our commitment to maximizing the value of municipal assets while minimizing the tax impact on our residents.
2. **Purchase of Necessary Lands:** The funds generated from the sale will allow the municipality to strategically acquire lands that are vital for community development, infrastructure projects, and other essential municipal services. This ensures that we are not only selling off excess properties but also reinvesting strategically in lands that will benefit the community in the long term.

In summary, the motion to sell surplus municipal land is a prudent financial strategy that aims to enhance our fiscal standing and improve our ability to meet community needs. By directing the proceeds into a Land Sale Reserve Fund, we can work towards a more sustainable future for our municipality while ensuring that our financial obligations to taxpayers are met effectively.

I would ask for the support of my fellow council members in moving forward with this initiative to better serve our community.

Recommendation

Whereas:

1. The Municipality of North Cowichan is committed to fiscal responsibility and ensuring that property taxes remain affordable for residents and businesses.
2. The municipality owns a portfolio of properties, some of which may no longer be required for municipal purposes and could be considered surplus.
3. The sale of surplus properties has the potential to generate revenue that could be used to offset budgetary pressures and reduce the need for tax increases.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

1. Staff be directed to conduct a review of municipally owned properties to identify those that are surplus to the needs of the municipality.
2. Staff provide a report to Council outlining the identified surplus properties, including their estimated market value, potential uses, and any legal or environmental considerations.
3. The staff report includes recommendations on the potential sale or disposition of surplus properties, with a focus on maximizing revenue to support the municipality's financial goals.
4. Staff explore opportunities to prioritize the sale of surplus properties in a manner that aligns with the municipality's strategic priorities, including community development and environmental sustainability.

Be it further resolved that the proceeds from the sale of surplus properties, where appropriate, be allocated to a dedicated land sale reserve fund.