

Shoemaker Lays Out Details of Housing Development Initiative

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Today, Matthew Shoemaker, candidate for Mayor in the October 24th municipal election, released the details of a housing development initiative he intends to spearhead if elected this fall.

"We have heard from home buyers and developers that the need for housing at our city is at a crisis point. By implementing a program like the New Foundations program that has been rolled out successfully in Barrie, we can encourage under-utilized land to be used for multi-unit housing projects," said Shoemaker.



The Sault Ste. Marie initiative, which would be modeled on Barrie's program, would see the City become an active partner in new multi-unit housing developments. Planning staff would be tasked with seeking out not-for-profit entities, cultural organizations or religious organizations that have large swaths of under-developed land. A development plan would then be prepared for an individual piece of land to see how it could best serve the needs of the organization, as well as the need for additional housing. The development plan and business case would be partially funded by the City, with up to a \$20,000 contribution to each project. The funds for such plans would come from the Community Development Fund, up to a total initial allocation of \$200,000 for the concept.

Once a plan is developed, the not-for-profit entity would then apply to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, with the assistance of the City along the way, for mortgage funding to pay for the proposed development. As projects come to fruition, City residents will benefit from more housing supply and options, while participating organizations will gain new income streams based on sound business cases.

Shoemaker said, "We have seen this type of project work in our community, both at the Trinity Tower project at the corner of Northern Avenue and Great Northern Road, and at the Royal Canadian Legion property on Great Northern Road. What we now need is a concerted effort to take what has worked for those projects and implement it across the community, with the main push being on development in the downtown area."

To facilitate the program, the City would also need to amend the zoning by-law to allow as-of-right zoning amendments for residential uses in institutional zones. This program, along with changes to minimum parking requirements, and a lifting of the moratorium on rural developments in already developed rural areas, will help Sault Ste. Marie build the additional 4,000 homes that are projected to be needed between now and 2040.

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