



July 28, 2020

Mayor Karen Elliott and Council
District of Squamish
37955 Second Avenue
P.O. Box 310
Squamish, BC V8B 0A3

Dear Mayor and Council:

Re: 2020 Zoning Bylaw Update - Phase 1

On behalf of the 950 members of the Urban Development Institute-Pacific Region (UDI), we would like to respectfully outline our concerns with some of the downzoning provisions in the proposed *2020 Zoning Bylaw Update Phase 1*. Some of these proposed changes will have significant impacts for builders and create uncertainty for our members investing in housing, commercial and industrial projects in Squamish.

Several of the proposed changes in Phase 1 of the *2020 Zoning Bylaw Update* involve the downzoning of properties through a reduction in the amount of buildable area permitted. As staff outlined in the report, many of the landowners consulted about the proposals were opposed to the changes.

UDI is also generally opposed to the downzoning of properties – with the exception of cases in which there are health/safety issues or environmental concerns. Downzoning is especially problematic for UDI's members because they purchase land based on the policies and rules established by local governments in their Official Community Plans (OCPs) and zoning bylaws. Financial institutions provide loans to our members because they trust that OCPs and zoning bylaws will not be amended to undermine projects and devalue sites.

We were pleased that staff had proposed to mitigate the impacts of the downzonings through Section J of the *2020 Zoning Bylaw Update*, as presented on July 7:

"Where a future application for re-zoning is made, subsequent to a District of Squamish initiated rezoning process that reduces potential maximum residential densities in order to better align zoning with policies of the Official Community Plan, voluntary community amenity contributions that are offered as part of such future rezoning applications to mitigate or address neighborhood impacts of increased density will be considered in relation to the original zoning, rather than zoning implemented through the District led re-zoning to align with OCP policy."

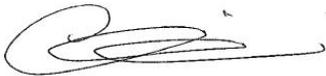
This was intended "... to recognize previously permitted residential density on existing properties in any future consideration of development where voluntary community amenity contributions are offered by the applicant," which would have reduced the financial impact on many of the properties.

However, we were disappointed that Council requested that Section J be removed from the *Update*. This will have a significant impact on property owners and builders effected by the *2020 Zoning Bylaw Update*. This change has the potential to increase the Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) costs and these costs will ultimately impact the future home prices and continue to hinder affordability.

As noted above, this also creates uncertainty for all builders, and the financial institutions that support them, who are investing in housing, commercial and industrial projects. Our members build housing in partnership with local governments. For this partnership to work, our members need a process that is certain, predictable, and fair. Should Council choose to move forward with the proposed zoning bylaw changes, we respectfully ask that Council reconsider its decision to exclude Section J, and revert to the CAC policy as presented by Staff on July 7, 2020.

We hope that you will consider our letter as part of the Public Hearing proceedings and if you have any questions regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to contact us. UDI looks forward to working with the District on this and other issues.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne McMullin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anne McMullin
President and CEO, Urban Development Institute