



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
3400 – 30th Street
Vernon, BC
V1T 5E6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: July 23, 2018

MEDIA CONTACT: Nick Nilsen, Communications Officer

TELEPHONE: 250-550-3539

Council supports first step in creating new neighbourhood

City of Vernon Council today supported the first step to creating a new small lot residential neighbourhood to be named the Highlands of East Hill.

Vernon Reservoir Developments Ltd. is proposing to develop the 20-acre site located at 901 39 Avenue. The proposed neighbourhood includes a variety of housing types including single family homes, duplexes and row housing. Secondary suite options are encouraged to act as mortgage helpers and to provide more rental housing in the City.

The proposed 173-unit development includes a new park, connected trail systems, active laneways and walkable streets designed to slow automobile traffic. A small commercial node is proposed to provide services to surrounding residents.

“The development proposes many of the things that Vernon residents have told us they want to see in their community,” said Vernon Mayor Akbal Mund. “This includes more parks, better trail connectivity and a variety of housing types to choose from.”

Guided by the Official Community Plan (OCP), the proposed development aims to add diversity to the housing supply and support Vernon’s growing population. In order to accommodate growth in a sustainable and affordable manner, residential development is being encouraged close to existing services and amenities, like schools, parks and shopping. This approach uses existing infrastructure more efficiently and helps to protect rural areas, agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas.

The City was approached in April 2017 by the developer regarding the City-owned land. The site, known as the McMechan Reservoir, was previously used as an open air water reservoir and was decommissioned in 2006. Since that time, the City has explored a variety of ways to prepare the site for sale and development, all of which required the City to make a significant investment. The sales agreement to Vernon Reservoir Developments Ltd., for just under \$6.5 million, required the developer to apply to rezone the land and prepare all the necessary professional planning and engineering work to support the application.

Council also supported a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the property going towards Attainable Housing. Seven to 10 units at Highlands of East Hill are proposed to

be sold below market value to the Vernon and District Community Land Trust. The units, which would be spread throughout the development, would be rented to families household annual income levels below the Vernon median income.

City Administration has been directed to prepare the necessary bylaws for the proposal to be considered. A public open house is expected later in August to present the Highlands of East Hill neighbourhood proposal to the public and to gain further feedback.

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For information, please contact:

Cleo Corbett, Long Range Planner

City of Vernon

ccorbett@vernon.ca

250-540-7830