

# Report

City of Merritt  
REGULAR Council Meeting  
February 11, 2025

File Number: XXXX

**To:** Cynthia White, Chief Administrative Officer  
**From:** Holly Ferris, Housing Merritt Director  
**Date:** February 4, 2025  
**Subject:** Municipal Development Corporation Feasibility Study

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT Council receive the Municipal Development Corporation Feasibility Study;**

**And**

**THAT Council approve Option A: Internal Housing Department, with an optional external operational review after two years from the date of launch.**

**Background:**

As per the briefing note provided to Council at the Committee of the Whole Meeting on March 5, 2024 the Housing Department has been exploring the many local and regional government housing corporations or authorities. Through this research it was determined to do a feasibility study, which focuses on the opportunity to invest in both commercial rental spaces and housing options. Merritt is in a unique position to support housing affordability in a similar manner. We currently have approximately \$4M remaining in the flood recovery housing fund and the units that were purchased as transitional housing post-flood.

As a follow-up to the December 3, 2024 Committee of a Whole meeting where Urban Metrics presented to Council a Background Report on Exploring Municipal Pathways for the City of Merritt, the final report has been completed and included with this report.

**Options / discussion**

The report outlines two options.

Option A: Internal Housing Department.

The Department would remain internal to the City using the internal structure, led by a director and supported by one to three staff members specializing in project management, housing policy and stakeholder engagement. The department would oversee the disbursement of the housing funds, coordinate municipal housing initiatives, and manage partnerships as well as any other contractual arraignments/agreements with non-profits, developments and other stakeholders.

Option B: Housing & Development Commission

Creation of a housing and development commission. The commission would report to Council and receive direction on the overall strategy, while at the same time be empowered to solicit advisory services from subject matter experts, integrate the community's perspective through community representation and the commission's board and operate at arm's length from Council.

**Financial / Risk Implications:**

Funding for the Internal Housing Department will come from the provincial government through the treasury board funding and will focus on affordable housing options.

**Others Consulted:**

Senior Leadership Team

**Attachments:**

Municipal Development Corporation Feasibility Study – urban Metrics

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Holly Ferris  
Director of Housing**