

District Services Board seeking expressions of interest for Gore Bay property

By
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GORE BAY—Three vacant Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (DSB) properties may be offered up for development, one of which is located in Gore Bay.

Expressions of interest (EOI) will be sought for two lots in Espanola (located on the Queensway and Arthur Court) and the other on Water Street in Gore Bay. The Gore Bay property is located beside one of the DSB's current properties at 3 Water Street, Bayside Apartments.

DSB CAO Fern Dominelli noted that the Gore Bay site is large enough to house an approximate 25 apartments.

He also noted that the DSB will prioritize the involvement of non-profit housing providers in order to grow the number of affordable units within the housing system over the long term. "As such, an EOI from non-profits will receive additional consideration for a commitment to the greatest number of affordable units."

A report to the property committee shows that the greatest need identified by the DSB waitlist is for one bedroom units.

"The proposed units must be suitable for tenants to live independently," the report continues. "While the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB would allow the affordable rental housing to bill separately; for utilities, preference will be given for rental housing which is made more affordable by including some or all utilities in the monthly rent."

Projects approved must have at least 30 percent of units with affordable rents and must remain affordable for a minimum period of 20 years. (Affordability is defined as having rents for the project that are at or below 80 percent of the DSB market rent amount based on unit size.)

"We'll likely give it two months (to receive EOIs), see what we get and go from there," Mr. Dominelli said. "It'll probably be more attractive in Gore Bay."

As was reported last fall, Gore Bay's other DSB apartment complex, the 50-year-old Woods Lane Apartments, has been placed on a list of the DSB's most expensive complexes to run.

Woods Lane Apartments (six bachelor, four one-bedroom) units had a cost of \$1.15 per square foot to run in 2017 but is anticipated to rise to \$42.39 per square foot by 2023. The Woods Lane Apartments (named after former Gore Bay mayors Marv Woods and John Lane) are Manitoulin Island's original social housing units and were opened as a Gore Bay Centennial project in 1967. They front on both the main downtown street (Meredith Street) and run through to Water Street.

In the coming months, the board will be reviewing which of the most expensive units should be sold and re-invested in new housing units.