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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

A new affordable housing project on the horizon for Sutton

Sutton, August 4, 2023 - At its August 2 meeting, Town Council approved the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Town of Sutton and Solutions Immobilier Solidaire (SiS) to evaluate, by December 31, 2024, the feasibility and profitability of developing a perpetually affordable housing project on the municipal land adjacent to Les Villas des Monts de Sutton on Western Street.

“The council welcomed this proposal with unanimous enthusiasm,” declared mayor Robert Benoît. “It's very good news, and in line with our reaffirmed goal of developing affordable housing for families with modest incomes. The project is another step in our ongoing efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing.” In fact, in addition to supporting the HAS project, which is currently building 18 affordable housing units on Principale Sud Street, the Town intends to rapidly put in place regulatory measures such as the conversion of accessory buildings to residential use, a ban on converting rental units to condominiums, and the obligation to retain at least one rental unit in the case of conversion of use, for example, from residential to commercial.

“The possibility of using vacant municipal land for social purposes of affordable housing is an avenue that many municipalities that want to take action are exploring,” added the mayor. “It's an excellent way of realizing our goals of adding housing supply, especially for low-and-moderate-income citizens. We are convinced of the relevance of this structuring project for our community.”

SiS, a recognized organization in the region

Solutions Immobilier Solidaire (SiS), a non-profit organization, is already exploring collaborations with other municipalities in the region. The Brome-Missisquoi MRC has lent its support to SiS in obtaining funding from a number of financial backers to create an MRC-wide Community Land Trust (CLT) and carry out projects like the one in Sutton.

The CLT is an innovative real estate model that originated in [the United States](#) and is now spreading around the world, and now to Quebec. Among other things, the CLT makes it possible to create and protect affordable housing by eliminating the value of the land and limiting rent or sale price increases.

Clear, achievable objectives

During the planned 18-month project evaluation period, specific objectives were set by the Town of Sutton to achieve its goal of adding perpetually affordable housing to its housing stock:

- Units must meet the [Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's](#) (CMHC) criteria for acceptable housing: a housing unit is acceptable if it is of suitable quality and size, and if it is affordable for a household to spend less than 30% of its before-tax income on it;
- Priority will be given to local residents, permanent residents and low- and moderate-income households;
- Housing units should offer a mix of sizes, serving both single people and larger households;
- Rental units will be preferred.

The Town of Sutton and SiS wish to apply for a subsidy from the [Housing Accelerator Fund](#), managed by CMHC, with a submission deadline of August 18, 2023. A follow-up will be given on the progress of the feasibility study, at the end of which the Town will decide on the further course of the project and on the options relating to the land.

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