

DATE OF MEETING September 22, 2021

AUTHORED BY DAVID STEWART, SOCIAL PLANNER

SUBJECT FAMILY-FRIENDLY HOUSING POLICY

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness of Staff's intent to begin work on a Family-Friendly Housing Policy.

BACKGROUND

Nanaimo's primary rental vacancy rate of 1% (October 2020) is well below the 3-5% threshold indicator of a healthy rental housing market. The 2020 vacancy rate for two bedroom apartments is even lower at 0.8% and 0% for three or more bedroom units.

The City's Affordable Housing Strategy, and recent rental housing survey, recognizes that the increasing housing costs and lack of rental spaces has made finding housing challenging for all types of families requiring multiple bedrooms. The City of Nanaimo's Official Community Plan (2008) and Affordable Housing Strategy (2018) include an objective to "Diversify Housing Form in All Neighbourhoods" in order to "create attainable homeownership options and alleviate pressure on the existing rental housing stock". Developing a policy on Family-Friendly Housing (objective 3.2) is identified as a short-term priority (1 to 2 years) within the Affordable Housing Strategy.

The Affordable Housing Strategy recommends the following actions as part of developing a policy on Family-Friendly Housing:

- Complete market research analysis to understand the cost implications of requiring an increased proportion of two and three bedroom units in new multi-unit residential developments, including both rental and ownership housing.
- Consult with the development community and non-profit housing sector regarding the proposed incentive program.
- Develop a specific policy on family-friendly housing to encourage new multi-unit developments to provide a minimum percentage of two and three bedroom units.
- Provide incentives for developments that provide a greater proportion of units that are two and three bedrooms. For example, where a project included 20% of units as two and three bedrooms, then the additional incentive would apply.
- Ensure the parking requirements for family-friendly housing reflect access to frequent transit service and that there be access to local amenities such as parks, playgrounds, and schools.
- Provide guidelines or suggestions to developers in terms of family-friendly design, space programming, and availability of amenities.

DISCUSSION

Staff have begun work on creating a family-friendly housing policy for the City of Nanaimo. The goal of the project is to encourage the construction of two, three and three plus bedroom units appropriate for larger and/or extended families, including families with children, within new multi-unit residential developments. The project will seek to better understand the following:

1. The supply and demand for two, three and three plus bedroom multi-family housing (rental and ownership) in Nanaimo.
2. The cost implications of requiring an increased proportion of two and three bedroom units in new multi-unit residential developments.
3. How to encourage amenities and housing types best suited to support families with children.
4. What amendments, if any, should be made to City bylaws and other documents to encourage more family friendly multi-family housing. This includes informing the development of REIMAGINE Nanaimo strategy documents (integrated and updated City Plan that includes the OCP with other documents like the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan) as well as other documents or bylaws such as the Off-Street Parking Bylaw, Zoning Bylaw and/or design guidelines.

The project will include:

- a review of best practices from other municipalities;
- an inventory of two, three and three plus rental and condominium units in Nanaimo;
- an economic impact study of housing policies that require a set percentage of accessible and/or adaptable units; and
- stakeholder engagement.

There will be engagement opportunities for identified stakeholders including: developers, real estate professionals, renters with children, non-profit housing providers, family advocacy groups, neighbourhood associations and School District 68. The project is expected to conclude with a final report to Council in Spring 2022. Prior to bringing a report with recommendations to Council, Staff will present the report to the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness for endorsement.

NEXT STEPS

Staff anticipate presenting a draft adaptable and accessible housing policy to the Committee early this winter for feedback. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- Staff have begun work on creating a family-friendly housing policy for the City of Nanaimo.
- Introducing a family-friendly housing policy was identified as a short-term priority of the Affordable Housing Strategy
- The goal of the policy project is to encourage the construction of two, three and three plus bedroom units appropriate for larger and/or extended families, including families with children, within new multi-unit residential developments.


Submitted by:

Lisa Bhopalsingh
Manager, Community Planning

Concurrence by:


Bill Corsan
Director, Community Development

Dale Lindsay
General Manager, Development Services



Family Friendly Housing and Adaptable/Accessible Housing Policy

*Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness
2021-SEP-22*



AGENDA

-  Family Friendly Housing Policy
-  Adaptable and Accessible Housing Policy

Project Goal


To encourage the construction of larger 2 and 3 + bedroom units appropriate for larger and/or extended families within new multi-unit residential developments.



Looking to understand...


1. The supply and demand for 2, 3 and 3+ bedroom multi-family housing (rental and ownership) in Nanaimo.
2. The cost implications of requiring an increased proportion of 2 and 3 bedroom units in new multi-unit residential developments.
3. How to encourage amenities and housing types best suited to support families with children.
4. What amendments, if any, should be made to REIMAGINE Nanaimo strategy documents (OCP, Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan) as well as other bylaws (e.g. Off-Street Parking Bylaw or Zoning Bylaw) to encourage more family friendly multi-family housing.






Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS)

- **Short-Term Goal of the AHS (2018)**
- AHS recommended actions:
 - Policy to encourage new multi-unit developments to provide a minimum % of 2 and 3 bedroom units.
 - Complete market research analysis.
 - Provide incentives for developments that provide more 2 and 3 bedroom units.
 - Consult with the development community and non-profit housing sector regarding an incentive program.
 - Ensure the parking requirements for family-friendly housing reflect access to frequent transit services and local amenities such as parks, playgrounds and schools.
 - Provide guidelines to developers in terms of family-friendly design, space programming, and availability of amenities.





Situation in Nanaimo

Vacancy Rate (October, 2020)

	BACHELOR	1 BEDROOM	2 BEDROOM	3 BEDROOM +	TOTAL
Nanaimo	0.0	1.4	0.8	0.0	1.0
Centre	0.0	1.3	1.0	0.0	1.1
South	0.0	2.0	0.7	0.0	1.2
North & Periphery	**	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.6

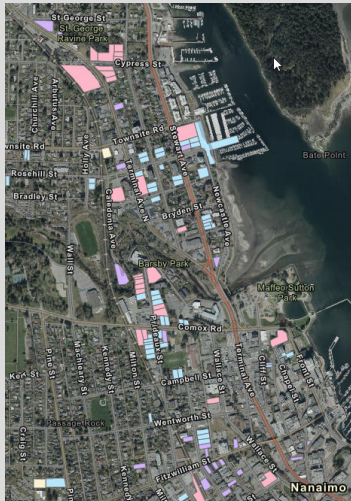
CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Situation in Nanaimo

Rental Stock by Bedroom Type:

# of bedrooms	# of units
Studio/bachelor/housekeeping	1,042
1 bedroom	3,110
1 bedroom plus den	109
2 bedroom	2,313
2 bedroom plus den	72
3 bedroom	440
4 bedroom	20
Total	7,106


- Less than 7% of rental housing has 3 or more bedrooms



CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Renter Survey

- Survey opened on the Get Involved website from April 21 to May 12
- 465 total responses – 101 respondents with children
- Lack of family-friendly rentals mentioned as a concern by 23% of renter survey respondents
- Need for yard and play space noted in survey responses – COVID impact



It can be hard to find housing that suits my needs.

Increasing affordable places to rent is a priority.

NANAIMO RENTAL SURVEYS
Renters Survey | Landlords Survey | Short-Term Rental Survey

Survey Quotes from Families

"Having children makes it difficult to find a place"

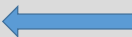
"Landlords shun single parent families, especially those on disability"

"Affordability for two adults and two kids is not reasonable need 3-4 bedroom units under \$2000 /mth w/ a household earning \$14 /hr each adult for a total of 160 hours.."

"The bedroom situation is unsafe for me to separate my daughters and the room is too small to share resulting in the baby still being in my room"

"We soon need to move kids to separate rooms but also need a guest room to accommodate grandparents who help with child care"

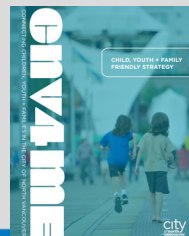
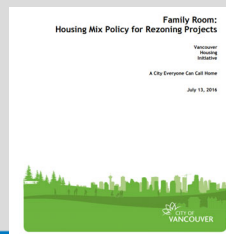
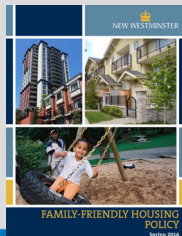
Work Plan

- Phase 1 - Research and Project Launch (we are here) 
 - Document review
 - Best practice
 - Rental stock inventory
- Phase 2 - Impact Study/Draft Policy (late Fall/Winter 2021)
 - Market research study
 - Draft Policy Recommendations
- Phase 3 - Stakeholder Engagement (Winter 2021/22)
 - Present policy recommendations
 - Developers, Renters with children, Non-profit housing providers, Neighbourhood Associations, SD68
- Phase 4 - Final Policy (Spring 2022)
 - Final policy for endorsement by Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness and Council
 - Follow-up Zoning, OCP and/or development guidelines?


Best Practices

- Most cities' family-friendly housing strategies developed by cities were either Design Guidelines or Zoning Bylaw/Policy Documents.
- Most cities with family-friendly housing policies require between 10-40% family-friendly units.



City	New West (Own)	New West (Rent)	Coquitlam	Richmond	Toronto	Eugene, OR
Total Family-Friendly	30%	25%	25%	40% (Encouraged)	25%	50%
2 Bedroom					15%	
3 Bedroom	Min 10%	Min 5%	Min 5%		10%	




Questions, Comments, Feedback
on this Project?



AGENDA

-  Family Friendly Housing Policy
-  Adaptable and Accessible Housing Policy



Accessible v. Adaptable Housing

- **Accessible** – housing is designed to meet the needs of people with all abilities.
- **Adaptable** - housing is designed to be easily renovated to meet tenant or owner's changing accessibility needs.

Project Goal

Options to consider to increase the amount of adaptable and accessible multiple-family (apartment, condo, townhouse) units developed in the City of Nanaimo.



Looking to understand...

1. The supply and demand for accessible and adaptable housing in Nanaimo.
2. The barriers for including adaptable and accessible housing units within new developments.
3. The impacts of implementing minimum adaptable unit requirements for all new multiple-unit dwellings.
4. The need for additional accessible and adaptable housing standards beyond those required by the BC Building Code.



CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Affordable Housing Strategy

- **Medium-Term Goal of the AHS (2018)**
- AHS recommended actions:
 - Propose minimum adaptable unit requirements for all new multiple-unit dwellings.
 - Evaluate incentives for developers to supply a higher percentage of adaptable units.
 - Consider higher adaptable unit requirements for senior-oriented developments.
 - Develop an associated bylaw to implement the adaptable housing policy.
 - Promote financial assistance programs for households to make modifications to their home for accessibility.



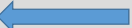
CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Renter Survey

- **12%** of rental survey respondents had difficulty finding a rental that suited their accessibility needs.
- **8%** were unhappy with their rental due to accessibility challenges.
- Comments about barriers to housing due to accessibility:
 - "I have mobility issues so need an elevator"*
 - "landlord is retiring into house.. have to move. it is increasingly difficult due to age and disability."*
 - "some places don't have elevators"*
 - "People discriminating against disabled even though home is wheelchair accessible"*

CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Work Plan


- Phase 1 - Research and Project Launch (we are here) 
 - Document review
 - Best practice
 - Accessible unit inventory
- Phase 2 - Impact Study/Draft Policy (late Fall/Winter 2021)
 - Market research study
 - Draft Policy Recommendations
- Phase 3 - Stakeholder Engagement (Winter 2021/22)
 - Present policy recommendations
 - Developers, Seniors Groups, Non-profit housing providers, Neighbourhood Associations, Accessibility advocacy groups (SCI- BC, NACL, NBIS, NDRC, CNIB, SEIA), Island Health
- Phase 4 - Final Policy (Spring 2022)
 - Final policy for endorsement by *Special Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness* and Council
 - Follow-up Zoning, OCP and/or development guidelines?

CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY


Best Practices

- Most cities' adaptable housing guidelines developed by cities were either Design Guidelines, Zoning Regulations or OCP policies.
- Most requirements and guidelines reference BC Building Code – Adaptable Housing Standards (voluntary standards - applies where required by the local government).
- Most cities with adaptable housing policies require between 15 to 100% adaptable units.

City	New West	Port Moody	Langley	Chilliwack	Vancouver	Pitt Meadows	Coquitlam	Burnaby
Total Adaptable	40%	50%	20%	50%	25%	100%	30%	20%




MANDATORY BUILDING STANDARDS FOR ADAPTABLE HOUSING

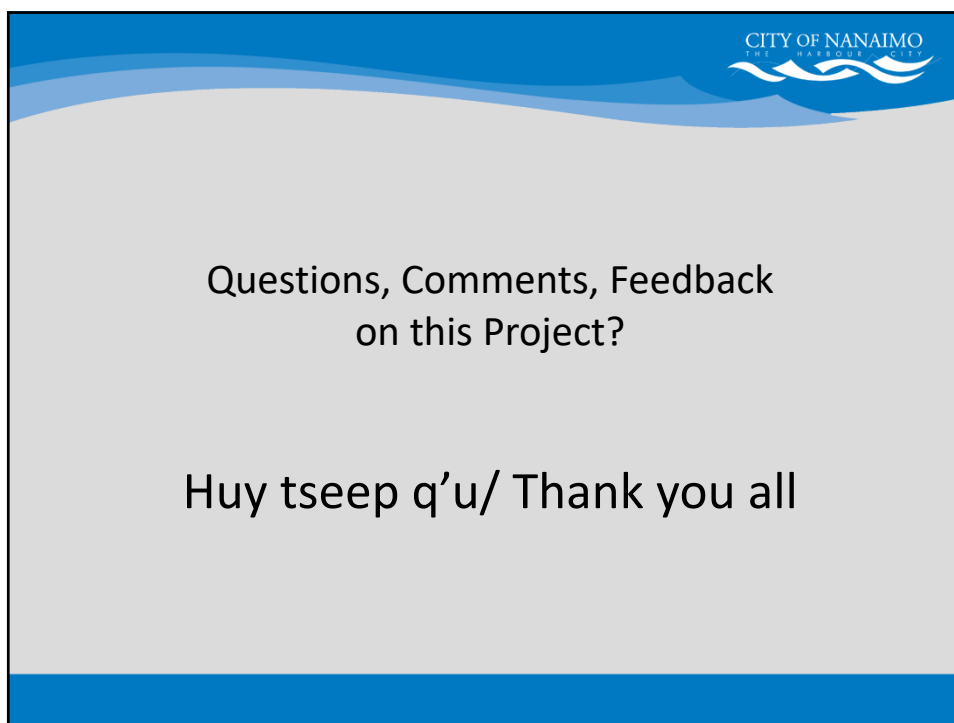


Adaptable Housing Requirements
What is it?
How can I find it?

BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY HANDBOOK 2020
Illustrated Commentary on Accessibility Requirements
British Columbia Building Code 2018



Office of Housing and Construction Standards



DATE OF MEETING September 22, 2021

AUTHORED BY DAVID STEWART, SOCIAL PLANNER

SUBJECT ACCESSIBLE AND ADAPTABLE HOUSING POLICY

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness of Staff's intent to begin work on an Accessible and Adaptable Housing Policy.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, Nanaimo City Council endorsed the Nanaimo Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS). The AHS sets the priorities for the City of Nanaimo to address affordability across the housing continuum over the next ten years. Introducing an adaptable housing policy that requires a minimum percentage of residential units as part of rezoning applications to be either accessible or adaptable was identified as a medium-term (3-5 year) priority of the AHS.

Adaptable and accessible housing refers to housing that accommodates all residents regardless of their abilities. Housing that is accessible is designed to meet the needs of people with all abilities; housing that is adaptable is designed to be easily renovated to meet tenant or owner's changing accessibility needs.

The City of Nanaimo currently has accessible parking requirements and awards Schedule D density bonus points to developments where "at least 10% of the residential dwelling units meet all the accessibility requirements within the British Columbia Building Code 2012 (BCBC)". The City does not otherwise have any adaptable or accessibility requirements with respect to residential housing.

The AHS includes the following actions related to an adaptable housing policy:

- Following consultation with the development community and non-profit housing sector, propose minimum adaptable unit requirements for all new multiple-unit dwellings.
- Evaluate the viability of offering incentives for developers to supply a higher percentage of adaptable units.
- Consider higher adaptable unit requirements for senior-oriented developments.
- Develop an associated bylaw to implement the adaptable housing policy.
- Promote financial assistance programs (e.g., Home Adaptations for Independence (HAFI) grant) for households to make modifications to their home for accessibility.

In 2019, the City of Nanaimo endorsed the Nanaimo Age Friendly Plan 2019 - 2023. Supporting the development of more attainable (affordable) and accessible housing for seniors in Nanaimo, that are close to amenities, is included as an objective within the Age Friendly Plan. The Age Friendly Plan also recommends reviewing “how the City of Nanaimo considers accessibility to ensure it meets the needs of an aging population”.

The Regional District of Nanaimo’s Housing Needs Report (2020) also encourages expanding accessible and adaptable housing guidelines in the region.

DISCUSSION

Staff have begun work on creating an adaptable and accessible housing policy for the City of Nanaimo. The goal of the policy project is to consider options to increase the amount of adaptable and accessible multiple-family (apartment, condominium, townhouse) units developed in the City of Nanaimo. The project will seek to better understand the following:

1. The supply and demand for accessible and adaptable housing in Nanaimo.
2. The barriers for including adaptable and accessible housing units within new developments.
3. The impacts of implementing minimum adaptable unit requirements for all new multiple-unit dwellings.
4. The need for additional accessible and adaptable housing standards beyond those required by the BC Building Code.

The project may inform the REIMAGINE review process and make policy and bylaw recommendations that may include suggested zoning, OCP and/or design guideline revisions.

The project will include:

- a review of best practices from other municipalities;
- an inventory of accessible and adaptable units in Nanaimo;
- an economic impact study of housing policies that require a set percentage of accessible and/or adaptable units; and
- stakeholder consultation.

There will be engagement opportunities for identified stakeholders to provide feedback, including but not limited to: developers, real estate professionals, seniors and seniors’ advocacy groups, non-profit housing providers, diverse ability advocacy, peer and support groups, neighbourhood associations and Island Health. The project is expected to conclude with a final report to Council in spring 2022. Prior to bringing the report to Council, Staff will present the report to the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness for endorsement.

NEXT STEPS

Staff anticipate presenting a draft adaptable and accessible housing policy to the Committee early this winter for feedback. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- Staff have begun work on creating an adaptable and accessible housing policy for the City of Nanaimo.
- Introducing an adaptable housing policy was identified a medium-term priority of the Affordable Housing Strategy
- The goal of the policy project is to consider options to increase the amount of adaptable and accessible multiple-family (apartment, condominium, townhouse) units developed in the City of Nanaimo.

Submitted by:

Lisa Bhopalsingh
Manager, Community Planning
|

Concurrence by:

Bill Corsan
Director, Community Development

Dale Lindsay
General Manager, Development Services|

DATE OF MEETING APRIL 28, 2021

AUTHORED BY LAARA CLARKSON, MANAGER, RECREATION SERVICES
PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

**SUBJECT 2021 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY AND
INCLUSIVENESS WORK PLAN**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide an overview and opportunity for feedback on the 2021 Work Plan for the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness prior to forwarding to Council for consideration and endorsement.

Recommendation

That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council endorse the 2021 Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Work Plan.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the City of Nanaimo's Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI) is to promote social and political equity within existing and proposed City plans, policies, bylaws, and infrastructure and make recommendations to ensure that they are inclusive and accommodating to citizens of all ages, abilities and walks of life.

The proposed draft 2021 Work Plan is intended to establish how the Committee will meet its mandate and offer input and advice on accessibility and inclusiveness to Council.

DISCUSSION

The 2021 ACAI Work Plan outlined below presents the committee's consideration and recommendations to Council for endorsement.

2021 Work Plan		
Topic	Lead Department / Section	Overview
Guiding principles summary		Create a guiding principles summary, to help guide decision making, specifically related to accessibility & inclusion for use in various areas of City operations.

REIMAGINE Nanaimo	Community Planning & Parks, Recreation & Culture	Continue to participate in the engagement process for REIMAGINE Nanaimo. Some specifics would include input regarding accessibility of facilities, infrastructure and parks.
Complete the review of the LEAP Program	Parks, Recreation & Culture	Complete the review of the LEAP Program to identify opportunities for change or improvement.
Projects as referred by Council and/or Staff for Review and Input	Legislative Services	Review & provide input into existing and future projects and plans as directed.

The above work plan table provides a list of projects that fall within the purpose of the Committee. Additional topics that fall under the Committee's purpose may arise that require Council's attention or may be referred by Council to the Committee for consideration.

OPTIONS

1. That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness recommend that Council endorse the 2021 Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness Work Plan.
 - The advantages of this option: A work plan provides Council with a list of focus areas and a way for Council to measure Committee activity and progress in meeting its mandate.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Having a set work plan may limit the flexibility of the Committee to respond to questions and issues that are presented to them throughout the year.
 - Financial Implications: No immediate financial implications. Any completed actions identified on the work plan would be presented with more detailed financial implications to Council.
2. That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness refer the draft 2021 Work Plan back to staff for further amendments.
 - The advantages of this option: Following input from the Committee, Staff could revise the draft to meet the suggested revisions.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Process for adopting a work plan for 2021 would be further delayed and could stall progress on the listed initiatives.
 - Financial Implications: None identified.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The 2021 ACAI Work Plan is intended to illustrate how the Committee will meet its mandate and offer input and advice to Council.
- The Committee recognizes that in addition to this proposed work plan, additional topics that fall under the Committee's mandate may come up that require Council's attention or may be referred by Council for the Committee to consider.
- Topics for 2021 build on the work the Committee completed in its inaugural year in 2020.

Submitted by:

Laara Clarkson
Manager, Recreation Services

Concurrence by:

Lynn Wark
Director, Recreation & Culture Services

And by:

Richard Harding
General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture