



NANAIMO
AFFORDABLE
HOUSING
STRATEGY



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THE STRATEGY – AT A GLANCE

Nanaimo's Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS) provides a framework for the City to work with other levels of government, the private sector, and non-profit organizations to facilitate the development of affordable housing. The Strategy also assists the City to establish policies and regulations that allow them to effectively respond to development applications.

The AHS is the culmination of a year-long process, involving extensive engagement with the community, and collaboration with government and non-profit partners. The Strategy identifies the priorities for the City of Nanaimo to address non-market and market housing affordability across the housing continuum, and includes an implementation plan identifying short, medium, and long-term actions. The first three phases of the project led to the preparation of a companion document, the *Affordable Housing Discussion Paper*.



For the purpose of Nanaimo's Affordable Housing Strategy, affordable housing is described as:

Housing that includes a variety of housing types, sizes, tenures and prices and housing that supports a mix of incomes, ages and abilities. It includes housing across the entire housing continuum from temporary shelter to social or supportive housing, market rental and homeownership.

VISION

Nanaimo residents have access to a diversity of housing options that meet their needs for safe, stable, appropriate and affordable, within the context of a healthy built environment.

EIGHT GOALS

- Build on past successes
- Prioritize affordable housing among other municipal priorities
- Focus on low to moderate income households
- Encourage diversity and inclusion
- Minimize uncertainty
- Seek opportunity and innovation
- Foster collaborative partnerships
- Build community support and trust

FIVE POLICY OBJECTIVES

1. To increase the supply of rental housing;
2. To support infill and intensification in existing neighbourhoods;
3. To diversify housing form in all neighbourhoods;
4. To continue to support low income and special needs housing; and
5. To strengthen partnerships and connections.

INTRODUCTION

The availability of suitable and affordable housing is vital to the economic stability, livability and social wellbeing of communities. With notable increases in rental and homeownership prices in the region, the City of Nanaimo has identified affordable housing as a municipal priority and launched a year-long process to develop an Affordable Housing Strategy.

WHAT IS AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY?

An affordable housing strategy assesses the local housing market conditions, identifies housing challenges and gaps along the housing continuum, and outlines tools to address these challenges and gaps. Nanaimo's Affordable Housing Strategy provides a framework for the City to work with other levels of government, the private sector, and non-profit organizations to facilitate the development of affordable housing. The Strategy also assists the City to establish policies and regulations that allow them to effectively respond to development applications.

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and BC Housing define affordable housing to be housing that costs less than 30 per cent of a household's before-tax income. This is a widely accepted benchmark for setting affordability levels and for some types of comparative analysis.

There are, however, a multiplicity of housing issues in Nanaimo and the "30 percent of gross household income" measure may not adequately represent the range of issues that residents experience in Nanaimo. The companion document to this Strategy, the Affordable Housing Discussion paper, provided a comprehensive look at all aspects of housing supply and demand and attempted to more broadly understand the housing context in the city. In recognition of the multiplicity of housing issues in Nanaimo, this Strategy provides a set of definitions to assist with the development and implementation of affordable housing policy and initiatives.

For the purpose of Nanaimo's Affordable Housing Strategy, affordable housing is described as:

Housing that includes a variety of housing types, sizes, tenures and prices and housing that supports a mix of incomes, ages and abilities. It includes housing across the entire housing continuum from temporary shelter to social or supportive housing, market rental and homeownership.

Nanaimo's strategy targets both low and moderate income households, as well as renters and owners. As such, a number of eligibility or levels of affordability apply to different types of households. These were developed based on an assessment of the current market and non-market context in Nanaimo.

- **Non-market housing** – provided at income assistance levels and/or on a rent-geared-to-income (RGI) basis at 30% of a household's income.
- **Affordable rental housing** – provided at 65% to 90% of market rent levels.¹
- **Affordable homeownership** – discounted below market prices and costs no more than 32% of a household's gross income.² Housing costs should include mortgage payments, maintenance fees, property taxes and utilities. Eligibility levels can vary depending on the type and timing of the initiative.

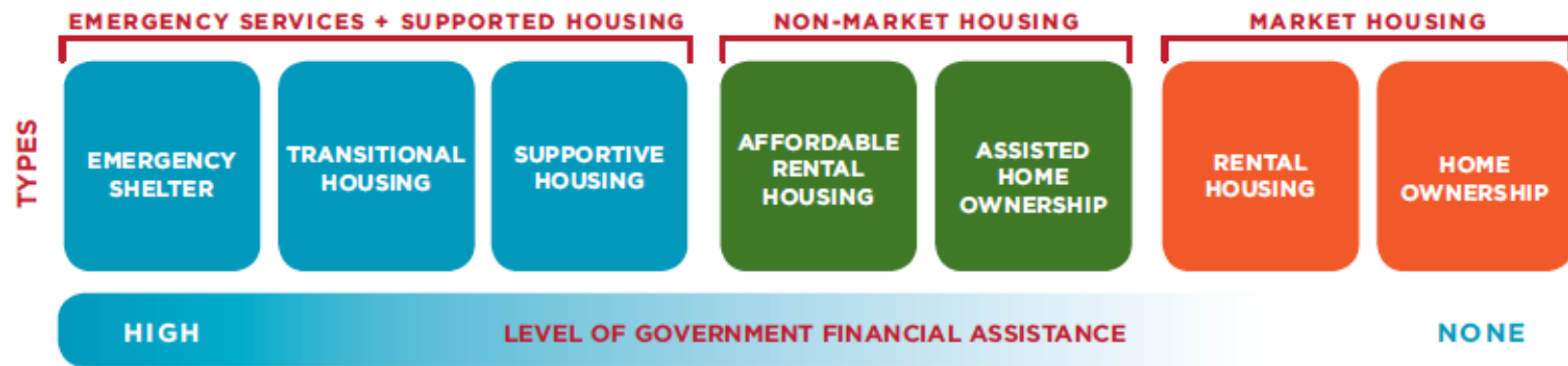
¹ Using 65% to 90% of market rent levels provides flexibility to create rental housing suitable for a range of low to moderate income households.

² Financial institutions typically use a 32% Gross Debt Service (GDS) ratio to determine how much a household can afford to borrow. The GDS is calculated by totalling all anticipated shelter costs (mortgage payments, estimated property taxes, estimated heating costs, and 50% of maintenance fees for strata condominiums) and dividing this by a household's gross annual income.



THE HOUSING CONTINUUM

The Housing Continuum describes a range of housing in a community and illustrates both market and non-market housing. Non-market housing refers to housing below market rents or prices, ranging from emergency shelters through various forms of supportive housing and housing co-operatives. Moving across the continuum to the right is market rental housing and home ownership. To meet the needs of residents, communities strive to maintain housing across the continuum, identifying and filling gaps as needed.



The policy directions and actions outlined in this document span the spectrum of non-market to market housing. Residents should have the opportunity to move across the housing continuum and find housing that is most appropriate and best suited to their needs and circumstances, and housing that meets the standards of adequacy, suitability, and affordability.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

The City of Nanaimo's Official Community Plan (OCP) states that, **"For Nanaimo to remain home for people of all income levels, it is critical to maintain the existing stock of affordable housing and to create opportunities for the development of new affordable housing."** Through a number of policies and regulations, Nanaimo has been actively responding to issues of housing need across the housing continuum. The City has also taken a proactive role in responding to homelessness, including facilitating the provision of 128 new supportive housing units.

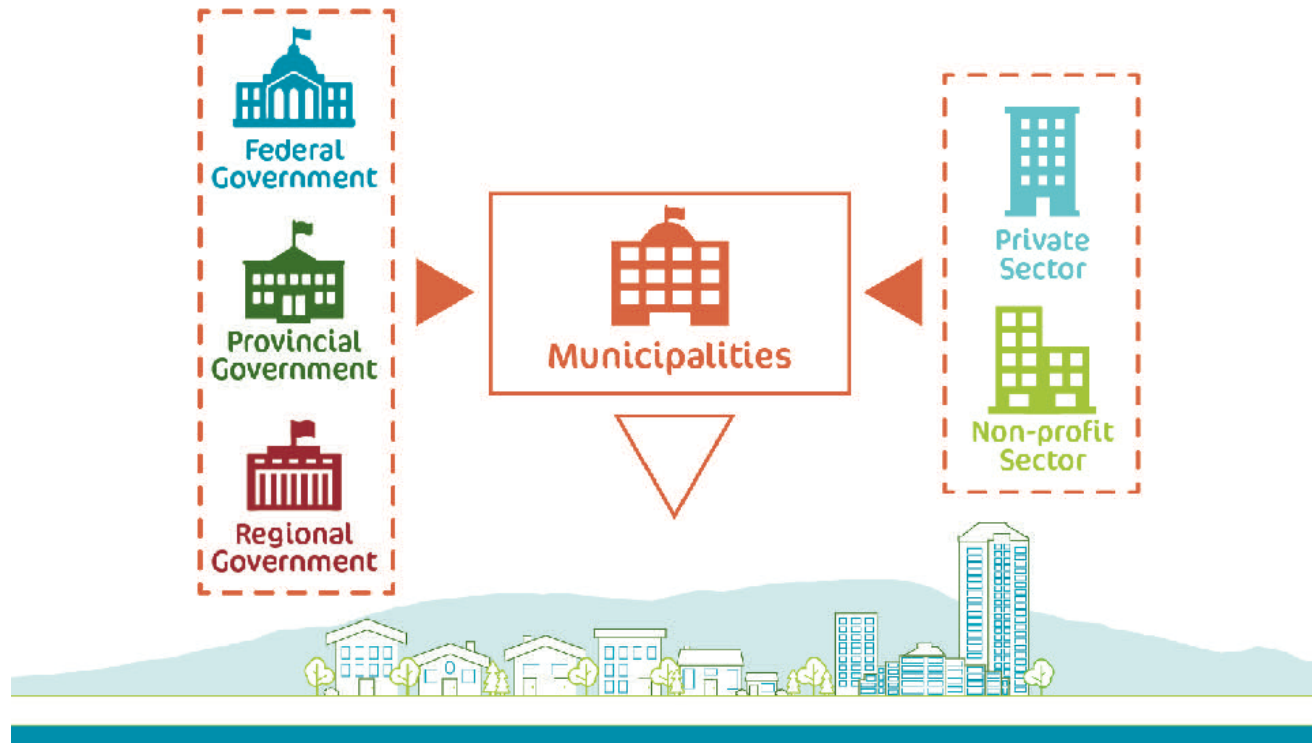
While these efforts have been steps in a positive direction, the City did not have an overall guiding policy document to coordinate and prioritize efforts towards greater housing affordability of both market and non-market housing. And with notable increases in rental and homeownership prices in the region, the City of Nanaimo identified affordable housing as a municipal priority. This context resulted in the launch of the Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS) project.

The first three phases of the project led to the preparation of a companion document, the *Affordable Housing Discussion Paper*. This document represents the culmination of a year-long process, involving extensive engagement with the community, and collaboration with government and non-profit partners. This Affordable Housing Strategy identifies the priorities for the City of Nanaimo to address non-market and market housing affordability across the housing continuum, and includes an implementation plan identifying short, medium, and long-term actions.



WHO DOES WHAT?

There are many factors that have contributed to the current housing situation that are outside the influence of local governments. The limited funding available for affordable housing from senior levels of governments in recent years has particularly impacted the most vulnerable individuals. Recent funding announcements from both the provincial and federal governments and the decision by the federal government to create a National Housing Strategy reflects a renewal for affordable housing. The City will continue to work with all levels of government, as well as private sector and non-profit partners, to facilitate the development of appropriate, accessible, and affordable housing for City residents.



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The federal government provides mortgage insurance to homeowners through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and sets the rules and requirements for government-backed mortgage insurance. They also implement a variety of programs, including the provision of capital funding and operational assistance for non-market housing. The release of the National Housing Strategy in 2017 and recent funding announcements demonstrate a renewed commitment towards housing and homelessness by the Canadian government.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The legislated responsibility for housing falls on the provincial government. As such, much of the legislation that impacts land use and housing is under provincial jurisdiction. In addition to a directly managed portfolio, the Province also provides funding and support to non-profits to build and operate emergency shelters and safe houses as well as transitional, supported and independent non-market housing. It also funds several rent supplement programs to assist lower income individuals and households to access market housing. Recent announcements by the provincial government will lead to the introduction of a number of new tools and regulations, and is expected to contribute to the creation of a large number of rental and affordable housing units in BC in the coming decade.

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Regional governments provide a general framework for growth and land use in the region, often with an emphasis on concentrating growth in the urban centres. Affordable housing policy and practice should also align with the regional government's own housing plans and policies.



MUNICIPALITIES

Municipalities are the agents responsible for land use decisions and development approvals that lead to the housing forms that make up their communities. Municipalities have a critical role to play in creating policies and strategies that target local housing conditions and increasingly, municipalities are playing a more active role in providing and facilitating affordable housing. This may include fiscal measures, such as the use of municipal land, direct funding, and relief from approval fees and charges; policies and regulations that support the development of affordable housing; education, advocacy and research on local affordability issues; and, occasionally, the direct provision of affordable housing either through a civic department or agency, such as a municipal housing authority.

PRIVATE SECTOR

This sector includes landowners, developers, builders, investors, and landlords, and is responsible for the development, construction, and management of a range of housing forms and tenures, including ownership and rental. The private sector has been increasingly involved in the supply of rental housing, with a large proportion of rental housing comprising of secondary suites and rented condominiums.

NON-PROFIT SECTOR

The non-profit housing sector creates and manages housing units that rent at low-end or below market rates and may include support services (e.g. life skills, employment training). The sector includes community-based nonprofit organizations that typically receive some form of financial assistance from other levels of government to enable them to offer affordable rents.

POLICY + PLANNING CONTEXT

POLICY ALIGNMENT

To be effective, the Affordable Housing Strategy needs to be aligned to current and future policies in the City of Nanaimo. The policy directions and actions in the Strategy are therefore a reflection of the foundation of policies and regulations in the Official Community Plan, neighbourhood plans, the Zoning Bylaw, and other planning and regulatory documents. Future plans and policies are similarly expected to work in alignment with the Affordable Housing Strategy.

HOUSING + TRANSPORTATION

Housing affordability is inextricably linked to transportation, where proximity to public amenities and frequent transit is often associated with higher house prices. Yet, when transportation costs are combined with housing costs, the overall impact on household spending can be significant. In recognition of the close link between housing and transportation choices, Nanaimo's Transportation Master Plan and the Official Community Plan aim to promote development where a range of transportation options are available, including walking, cycling and public transit. There is also recognition of the need to improve these options throughout the city.

HOUSING + HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is acknowledged to be a fundamental component of the City of Nanaimo's affordable housing strategy and policy response. Throughout 2017 and 2018, the City was participating in the Homelessness Action Plan – a five year plan to end homelessness, a process led by the Homelessness Coalition. While the Affordable Housing Strategy is inclusive of housing solutions for homelessness, it does not specifically include the range of service delivery and programming responses required to effectively respond to homelessness. These elements are addressed in a separate and distinct plan.

THE STRATEGY

VISION

Nanaimo residents have access to a diversity of housing options that meet their needs for safe, stable, appropriate and affordable, within the context of a healthy built environment.

GOALS

- **Build on past successes**
Through leadership and good practice, Nanaimo has provided an effective response to barriers to affordable housing policy and projects. Continued leadership and initiative in the face of such adversity is an essential role for the City of Nanaimo.
- **Prioritize affordable housing**
Municipalities often have competing interests and limited funds and resources. Ensuring that affordable housing is a key priority in the development of updates to plans, regulatory updates and other policy documents.
- **Focus on low to moderate income households**
In the recent past, Nanaimo has prioritized the needs of households at risk of homelessness in their plans and initiatives. With the escalation of rents and house prices in Nanaimo, there is a need to extend the effort towards a greater range of households, including low to moderate income households.
- **Encourage diversity & inclusion**
Facilitate the development of a variety of housing forms and tenures in all areas of the City. This includes development of housing that is suitable for families, persons with special needs, and creating a range of options throughout Nanaimo.
- **Minimize uncertainty**
To support the efforts of the development community (including non-profits) to respond to the need for affordable housing and for a diversity of housing options, efforts to streamline the development process and minimize uncertainty is needed. This may include checklists and information guides; clarity around available incentives and/or contribution requirements; using prototype designs; pre-zoning; shepherding projects that meet certain criteria; or other measures.

- **Seek opportunity & innovation**

Housing has become a top issue for all levels of government and numerous programs, policies and initiatives are being developed. Local governments should seek relevant opportunities as they come available and take advantage of new regulatory tools and initiatives where they can.

- **Foster collaborative partnerships**

Many housing projects and related initiatives require multiple partnerships to be successful. The City is in a unique position to support and to bring together potential partners through information sharing, strategic meetings, and the availability of grants and programs.

- **Build community support & trust**

It is important to engage Nanaimo residents and stakeholders in transparent and meaningful ways about affordable housing plans and projects. Creating opportunities for feedback is critical, but also providing clarity on changes to policy and bylaws will achieve a sense of trust and ultimately garner support for such change.



FIVE POLICY OBJECTIVES

Based on the findings from the background research and consultation, a preliminary list of housing issue areas, policy ideas and considerations were identified. The policy options were grouped under five categories, presented here as policy objectives:

1. To increase the supply of rental housing;
2. To support infill and intensification in existing neighbourhoods;
3. To diversify housing form in all neighbourhoods;
4. To continue to support low income and special needs housing; and
5. To strengthen partnerships and connections.



OBJECTIVE 1: INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF RENTAL HOUSING

To address the current local rental housing shortfall and to meet the anticipated rental demand in the future, a number of actions are outlined that aim to expand the rental stock, diversify the rental options available, and minimize the potential impact of short term rentals on existing supply.

1.1 DEVELOP A SECURED MARKET RENTAL HOUSING POLICY

The City can facilitate the development of market rental housing by developing a secured market rental housing policy that is based on access to a number of incentives. Different levels of incentive could be made available to the development community depending on the level of affordability and how long the units are secured as rental.

Actions

- a. Conduct public consultation with development community and non-profit housing providers on proposed incentive program.
- b. Develop a package of incentives that includes density bonus for 100% rental housing; reduction/waiving of community amenity contributions; parking relaxations in transit nodes and corridors; financial incentives; and concurrent processing.
- c. Consider the use of rental zoning to secure a portion or 100% of new development on selected sites for rental housing.³ Alternatively, rental housing would continue to be secured by a housing agreement that is registered on title.
- d. Provide additional incentives where a share of the rental units are available at below market rent levels, targeting households with low and moderate incomes. The incentives could include:
 - Establishing revitalization agreements to waive or lower the property taxes on new developments where rent levels for below market units are secured for a minimum of 10 years. Such discounts would be secured via a housing agreement.
 - Granting additional density.
 - Lowering the parking standards when located in areas with frequent transit access.

³ The BC government has prepared an amendment to the Local Government Act (Bill 23 - 2018) that would enable municipalities to amend their zoning bylaws to limit the form of tenure to residential rental tenure. As of June 2018, the Bill had yet to receive Royal Assent, but this new tool is anticipated to be available to municipalities in the near future.

- e. Confirm the eligibility conditions and the threshold for setting affordable (i.e., below market) rent levels. One approach would be using Housing Income Limits (HILs), which represents the income required to pay the average market rent for a private market unit. HILs are often used to represent affordable rent levels for low to moderate income households.

HOUSING INCOME LIMITS, NANAIMO (2018)			
Type	Housing Income Limit (2018)	@ 30% of Household Income	Monthly Rent
Studio	\$29,600	\$8,880	\$740
1 Bdrm	\$34,400	\$10,320	\$860
2 Bdrm	\$41,200	\$12,360	\$1,030
3 Bdrm	\$52,300	\$15,690	\$1,308

1.2 EXPAND SECONDARY SUITE POLICY

This policy direction would expand Nanaimo's well established secondary suite policy to permit in-home secondary suites as part of the construction of duplexes and townhouse developments. Suites could be rented or used by family members. No stratification would be permitted.

Actions

- a. Facilitate public consultation regarding the proposed changes.
- b. Introduce a bylaw amendment to allow secondary suites in duplexes and townhouses; this can apply to both new and existing dwelling units, as long as they meet BC Building Code requirements.
- c. Develop standards and design guidelines for secondary suites in a duplex or townhouse developments.
- d. Allow some flexibility in the parking standards, such that the parking requirements could be lowered depending on the project location and site context.

1.3 RESTRICT SHORT-TERM RENTALS

There is ongoing concern that short term rentals have the potential to impact the availability of rental housing for long-term tenants. These actions are designed to minimize the perceived and actual impact on housing supply and create a level playing field among operators. Short-term rental accommodation is defined as the rental of a room or an entire residential dwelling unit on a temporary basis (i.e., less than 30 days).

Actions

- a. Restrict short-term rentals (i.e. less than 30 days) to dwelling units where the owner is currently residing on the property, either in the main dwelling or the secondary suite.
- b. Require all short-term rental operators to obtain a business licence and to display their business licence number in all listings. This will include the operators of bed and breakfasts and other types of lodging.
- c. Support fair taxation for all types of short term accommodation, including hotels, bed and breakfasts and other types of short-term rentals.
- d. Ensure that zoning regulations that apply to bed and breakfasts are extended to short-term rentals.
- e. Assess the implications of requiring different business licences for properties located in areas zoned residential vs. properties located in areas zoned as commercial.
- f. Determine an appropriate fine for listing a short-term rental without a valid licence.
- g. Prepare an explanatory guide that outlines short-term rental operator requirements.



OBJECTIVE 2: SUPPORT INFILL & INTENSIFICATION IN EXISTING NEIGHBOURHOODS

To meet this objective, a number of policy directions were developed to encourage and support increased housing supply in existing neighbourhoods through smaller houses and a higher number of dwellings on each lot. This includes infill and intensification of properties in low density neighbourhoods; updating the policies on coach houses or laneway homes; and providing incentives and support for innovative approaches.

2.1 UPDATE THE POLICY ON COACH HOUSES

Secondary suites in accessory buildings are permitted in Nanaimo when located on a corner lot or a lot that is adjacent to a lane. This policy direction aims to make the process easier for owners and developers to build coach houses. By updating the current regulations, the City would potentially see a greater level of take up of this housing form.

Actions

- a. Develop a specific policy and regulations to support the development of coach houses on laneways in all standard single detached lots that are less than 800 m²; this includes revisions to the zoning bylaw to distinguish secondary suites from coach houses.
- b. Consider allowing smaller laneway houses on single detached lots that are smaller than 800 m² and those not on a laneway or a corner lot.
- c. Consider revising the regulations to allow three dwelling units on an existing single detached lot (e.g. a house with a secondary suite and a coach house) where additional density can be accommodated (e.g. corner lots or lots on lanes).
- d. Consider the development of a number of designs for coach houses such that, if a homeowner selects one of these, the length of the approval process could be reduced.

For Example: Kelowna Infill Housing

The City of Kelowna recently adopted the new RU-7.

Infill Housing zone in select areas of the urban core, allowing for a maximum of four dwelling units on selected properties with lane access in the centre of the city. Prior to the adoption of the new by-law, the Infill Challenge was launched as an innovative competition to identify new designs for sensitive infill housing in select parts of the urban core. Winning projects were given development process incentives as a reward.

Alongside the new zone, changes have been adopted to the Official Community Plan to introduce new design guidelines to ensure a high quality of design and landscaping for new developments.

- e. Consider allowing more than two bedrooms in coach houses within the maximum permitted floor area.
- f. Consider appropriate parking requirements for a lot with a coach house, including when the principal dwelling has a secondary suite.
- g. Explore the legal and market implications of permitting the stratification of secondary suites in accessory buildings.

2.2 SUPPORT INFILL & INTENSIFICATION IN SINGLE DETACHED NEIGHBOURHOODS

To diversify the housing options available in low density areas, the City can proactively support the development of a variety of housing options that are appropriate to the form and character of existing low density neighbourhoods.

Actions:

- a. Revise the R5 zoning district (three and four residential units) to allow up to three units to be built on a standard size lot (less than 800 m²), four units on larger lots (greater than 800 m²) and higher densities for assemblies of 2 or 3 lots.
 - For lots less than 800 m², this may include a triplex, duplex with a coach house, or principal dwelling with a secondary suite and coach house (as per Policy 2.1).
 - For lots greater than 800 m², this could include up to four units in a variety of configurations, such as pocket or courtyard housing, a fourplex, or a triplex with a coach house.
 - For lots greater than 1500 m², a townhouse development could be permitted as per the R7 zoning district.



For Example: Parking Requirements for Infill Housing

Nanaimo: 3 spaces required on a lot with a carriage house

New Westminster: Lots with a detached dwelling, a secondary suite, and a detached accessory dwelling, two parking spaces provided

Kelowna: One medium parking space per dwelling unit

Victoria: Garden suites have no additional parking requirements; the primary dwelling should have a minimum of one parking stall (that is not located in front yard)

Coquitlam: 3 spaces required on a lot with a carriage house

Vancouver: One unenclosed parking space required on site

- b. Identify areas that may be suitable for an infill housing pilot project. Criteria for selecting the pilot areas may include access to transit, suitable land use designations, or other factors.
- c. Implement a pilot project in one or two areas over a two-year period, where all existing single detached lots are pre-zoned to permit the proposed level of infill and intensification. At the end of the pilot period, a review and report back would result in an update to the policy, and potential expansion of the policy to other areas, as appropriate.
- d. Prepare an explanatory guide that outlines the requirements for infill housing and showing prototype examples of several lot configurations and requirements.
- e. Consider launching a design competition to inspire new innovative infill housing forms and as an approach to communicating the details of the pilot project to local residents and stakeholders.
- f. For development applications during the pilot period, provide staff support to enable fast-tracking of projects that use the plans from the prototype layouts/designs.
- g. Explore the use of Heritage Revitalization Agreements as a way to retain neighbourhood character while increasing site density through infill development.
- h. Reduce the parking requirements for developments in the pilot areas to one parking space per dwelling unit.

What is a lock-off suite?

A lock-off suite (also called a lock-off unit or multi-family flex unit) is a secondary suite inside of an apartment unit, similar to the concept found in flexible suites in resorts and hotels. The lock-off suite has a separate entrance and a common door to the principal unit, which can be “locked off” by the owners for rental purposes. The lock-off suite may contain living space, a bedroom, and cooking facilities.

Lock-off suites can be used to increase the number of available rental units, serve as a mortgage helper for apartment owners, or provide flexible space for multi-generational or growing families. These types of units can be incorporated into multi-unit buildings ranging from smaller apartment buildings to larger towers.

2.3 INCENTIVIZE MULTIPLE & SMALLER UNITS

With a specific focus on incentivizing smaller units, the City can facilitate housing affordability and innovative approaches to diversifying the housing stock.

Actions

- a. Amend the zoning to encourage the use of lock-off suites in multi-unit developments in selected areas. This may be suitable for areas with a big student population, areas in close proximity to frequent transit, and tourism-centred areas such as the waterfront or Downtown.
- b. Support the development of micro-suites in selected areas in close proximity to frequent transit, community services, amenities and green space.
- c. Consider the impact on quality of life and the need for public amenities in areas with high density developments and as apartment units become smaller. Enhancements to parks, recreational facilities, public spaces and other amenities may be necessary over time.
- d. Consider approaches to allow accommodation in recreational vehicles in mobile home parks and possibly in other residential areas.
- e. Review local bylaws and regulations and identify ways to reduce the barriers to alternative housing forms such as tiny homes. Consider supporting a local demonstration project.
- f. Amend how development cost charges are applied to a single detached lot to encourage the development of smaller lots.
- g. Consider extending the DCC exemption for self contained dwelling units that are larger than the 29 m² in area.
- h. Review and revise the density ranges in the OCP; consider how the size and mix of dwelling units may be adjusted when calculating density (i.e. number of units per hectare).



OBJECTIVE 3:

DIVERSIFY HOUSING FORM IN ALL NEIGHBOURHOODS

In the recent past, ownership of a single detached house in Nanaimo was attainable for many moderate income households. With increasing real estate prices, choice in both rental and ownership markets has become constrained. In response, Nanaimo aims to facilitate a diversity of housing options in order to create attainable homeownership options and alleviate pressure on the existing rental housing stock.

3.1 PROMOTE HOUSING INNOVATION

To promote housing innovation, the proposed actions seek to encourage creative ideas and approaches, but also support and demonstrate to the development community by way of pilot projects, information sessions, guides and resources.

Actions

- a. Encourage the development of fee simple townhouses. Make information available to builders/developers such as templates of legal agreements for fee simple townhouse projects. Partner with a local developer and design team to support the development of a demonstration project in Nanaimo.
- b. Consider revising a number of the residential zones to accommodate different roof styles and types of developments (e.g. stacked townhouses). This may include an update to the height limits and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) calculations for townhouse, rowhouse, and medium density residential districts (R6, R7 and R8).
- c. Use the Revitalization Tax Incentive Program to promote development in targeted urban nodes outside the Downtown.⁴

⁴ A municipal council may exempt specific properties from municipal property value taxes for up to 10 years in order to encourage economic, social or environmental revitalization within a community.

What are Fee Simple Townhouses?

The elimination of strata title and related fees make fee simple townhouses more affordable to moderate income households and an attractive alternative to single detached dwellings. Fee simple means each townhouse unit is located on an individual parcel separated by a wall located on the common property line. Easement agreements can be established for several servicing connections in addition to binding party wall agreements.

What are Stacked Townhouses?

A concept where townhouses are stacked one on top of the other, instead of the traditional side-by-side units. All units have separate entry with no common corridors. This housing form provides an alternative family friendly, ground-oriented option with easy access to the outdoors. Different configurations can typically support stacked flats, meaning townhouses without stairs, which are an option for seniors or others looking for a mobility-friendly unit. Stacked townhouses are typically three to four storeys and blend well into low to medium density neighbourhoods.

3.2 DEVELOP A POLICY ON FAMILY FRIENDLY HOUSING

This policy targets the construction of larger two and three bedroom units appropriate for larger and/or extended families within new multi-unit residential developments.

Actions

- a. 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.
- b. Consult with the development community and non-profit housing sector regarding the proposed incentive program.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. Provide guidelines or suggestions to developers in terms of family-friendly design, space programming, and availability of amenities.

For Example: New Westminster

To develop their Family-Friendly Housing Policy, the City of New Westminster completed background research that found no negative impact on return where there was an increased proportion of two and three bedroom units in new multi-family projects.

The City now mandates that multi-unit strata condominium projects include a minimum of 30% two- and three-bedroom units, and that at least 10% of the total units in a project be three-bedrooms or more. It also requires that multi-unit rental projects include a minimum of 25% two- and three-bedroom units, and that at least 5% of the total project units be three-bedrooms or more.



3.3 SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH REDUCED PARKING REQUIREMENTS

The City of Nanaimo's parking regulations are in line with those of large urban centres around BC and reflect a commitment to multi-unit residential development in the Downtown, corridor areas, and in non-Downtown neighbourhood centres. There is, however, the potential to create additional efficiencies for non-market housing projects or increase affordability of rental developments by reducing parking requirements when below market units are introduced.

Actions

- a. Conduct a parking supply and demand assessment study, focusing on non-market and rental housing projects.
- b. Develop a policy to support parking variances, where there is evidence that such a variance can be supported for market and non-market rental housing.
- c. Consult with the development community and non-profit partners on the proposed incentive structure that would include reduced parking for non-market housing, particularly for specific population groups, and secured rental housing that is rented at below market levels.
- d. Ensure parking requirements take into consideration the intended resident group of new affordable housing developments and accommodate parking variances where appropriate.

For Example: Kamloops Parking Reductions

The City of Kamloops provides reductions in minimum parking requirements for affordable residential units. Upon the submission of a Housing Agreement, a development can receive a 7% reduction in parking supply if they provide a minimum of 50% of the total units as affordable housing.

OBJECTIVE 4: CONTINUE TO SUPPORT LOW INCOME & SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

Nanaimo has a well-established history of supporting the development of non-market housing. The following policy directions would further support low-income households and those with unique needs to access affordable, accessible, and suitable housing.

4.1 DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO GUIDE LAND ACQUISITION DECISIONS MADE BY THE CITY

The City of Nanaimo can play a major role in facilitating affordable housing by purchasing sites for the purposes of future development as affordable housing. This Policy direction would provide clarity and consistency in the approach to land banking and would enable the City to take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

Actions

- a. Review the City's past approach to land acquisition and develop a land acquisition strategy to assist staff and Council with the land acquisition decision making process. This would include:
 - Developing criteria to assist with assessment of acquisition options and opportunities, e.g. proximity to frequent transit service, access to parks, services and other amenities.
 - Identifying funding sources for land acquisition, such as the Housing Legacy Reserve Fund, estate gifts, borrowing, or other sources.
 - Prioritizing affordable housing as part of the City's land acquisition strategy, specifically sites suitable for multi-unit residential development.
 - Enabling Council to acquire sites as they come available, and that these sites would be developed and leased at a subsidized price to non-profit agencies, as and when funding programs and opportunities arise.

For Example: YWCA & City of Vancouver

There are examples of new non-market housing projects being co-located with civic facilities such as these two YWCA projects in Vancouver. One includes 21 units of housing and community programming space that is located above a new branch library in the Strathcona neighbourhood. A second is located above a new fire hall in the Champlain Heights neighbourhood.



- b. Consider opportunities to co-locate civic facilities and affordable housing where appropriate. Partnerships can be developed with non-profit housing providers to facilitate the development of new housing as part of municipal halls, community centres, fire halls, libraries or other civic facilities.
- c. Identify potential sites that are suitable for new non-market housing, including City-owned sites, existing non-market housing sites, and private development sites. This would strategically focus on sites that would benefit from current and upcoming federal and provincial funding for affordable housing.
- d. Explore the potential for creating a municipal housing corporation that would be lead the development and operations of future affordable housing.

**For Example:
Kamloops Affordable Housing
Developers Package**

The City of Kamloops created an information guide intended for private and non-profit developers interested in getting involved in the affordable housing sector in Kamloops. The package summarizes incentives and programs available by all levels of government including the municipality.

4.2 CONTINUE TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF NON-MARKET HOUSING

This policy direction would reconfirm the City's commitment to support the non-market housing sector with new construction and redevelopment projects. The City would prepare a guide that would provide clarity to non-profit housing operators as they complete their financial proformas and encourage funders to support new projects in Nanaimo.

Actions

- a. Produce a step by step guide for non-market housing providers, that outlines how to take a project through the approval process, describes available programs and resources, the types of assistance available, and key contact information.
- b. Continue to support the non-profit sector by assigning a staff person as a primary liaison to field questions and shepherd projects through the approval process.
- c. Consult with the development community and non-profit housing providers on how to successfully integrate below market affordable housing into new rental and strata condominium projects and what level of financial assistance would be needed.
- d. Review and update the types of assistance available to the non-profit sector and to private market development projects.
For example:

- Planning assistance and support by dedicated staff to facilitate the process.
 - Use of density bonusing to facilitate secured non-market housing.
 - Provision of property tax exemptions upon completion.
 - Provision of discounted land lease arrangements where available and appropriate.
 - Exemptions or reductions to development cost charges (DCCs).
- e. Consider the use of Municipal and Regional District Tax revenues, as per the new provincial budget, for the purposes of low income and special needs housing.⁵ The extent to which this revenue source should be used should be weighed against the need for funding for tourism marketing and related programs.
- f. Review the current zones, such as the Community Service Zone, to determine if the permitted use could include a range of supportive housing and not just seniors housing.

⁵ The Municipal and Regional District Tax (otherwise known as the Hotel Tax) was created in the late 1980s to provide funding for local tourism marketing and programs. A tax of up to three per cent can be applied to sales of short-term accommodation on behalf of municipalities and regional districts. In the 2018 Budget, the Province of BC added affordable housing to the permissible use of funds. Municipalities have flexibility in determining what types of affordable housing initiatives would be suitable.

4.3 UPDATE THE EXISTING PRACTICE OF DENSITY BONUSING

The City of Nanaimo will review its current policy and practice of density bonusing with the objective of increasing the supply and integration of non-market housing.

Actions

- a. Revise Schedule D in the Zoning Bylaw to specifically include affordable housing (including non-market housing, affordable rental and affordable ownership) as an amenity that can result in additional density in a new development.
- b. Consider including multiple tiers of density bonusing relative to the number of bedrooms (i.e. two, three and four bedroom units) or the level of affordability offered.
- c. Undertake market analysis along with a review of the regulations to ensure the density bonusing practice continues to reflect current market conditions in Nanaimo.
- d. Consider identifying particular zoning categories, or housing forms in certain areas, for defined density bonuses, where the permitted development could exceed the zone's base density.

What is Density Bonusing?

The density bonus mechanism creates an opportunity for a voluntary exchange of affordable housing or community amenities. By allowing the density on a site to exceed that which is generally permitted in a given zone, the municipality is able to request a contribution in the form of affordable housing or other community amenity in exchange. This situation would only occur if there is market demand for the additional density and the developer is willing to include affordable housing in the development.

4.4 UPDATE THE EXISTING COMMUNITY AMENITY CONTRIBUTION POLICY

The City of Nanaimo will review its current policy and practice of community amenity contributions to ensure it responds to the local need for affordable housing.

Actions

- a. Update the Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) policy to direct a portion of the funds into the Housing Legacy Reserve Fund (HLRF).
- b. Consider waiving or reducing the CAC when below-market rental units are included on site. The number or proportion of below-market rental units required to receive this reduction should be updated on a regular basis to reflect current market conditions.
- c. Consider reducing the CAC subject to the total number or proportion of family friendly rental units (two and three bedroom units) proposed in the new development.

4.5 UPDATE THE HOUSING LEGACY RESERVE FUND POLICY

The Housing Legacy Reserve Fund (HLRF) was established in 2005 as a resource for municipal support to affordable housing initiatives. In conjunction with the update to the CAC policy, there is an interest in using the fund to leverage the maximum number of units and projects possible. This policy direction re-examines the use of the HLRF and proposes additional clarity and flexibility.

Actions

- a. Conduct public consultation with development community and non-profit housing providers on project eligibility and contribution amounts.
- b. Create an allocation structure to direct HLRF revenues, with the goal of maximizing the number and variety of units generated. For example, different incentive levels could be granted to different types of units.
 - Units secured at Housing Income Levels (HILs)
 - Units secured at deep subsidy levels (income assistance rates)
- c. Review municipal yearly contributions to the Housing Legacy Reserve.
- d. Consider allocating funds to purchase land for affordable housing, in addition to financing specific affordable housing projects.
- e. Partner with other levels of government to ensure the funds are used to leverage the greatest number of units possible.
- f. Assess the legal framework surrounding affordable housing developments to ensure units remain affordable.
- g. Continue to allocate Housing Legacy Reserve fund monies to affordable housing projects based on clearly articulated and communicated policies. The criteria for eligibility is to be regularly reviewed and updated.

For Example: Adaptable Housing in Burnaby & Langley

The City of Burnaby requires developments in all areas of Burnaby, subject to the Comprehensive Development (CD) rezoning process, to supply 20% of single-level units as adaptable in new market and non-market, multi-family developments which employ interior corridor or exterior passageways to access the dwelling units.

The Township of Langley requires adaptable design features in at least 5% of all new single family, rowhouse, and townhouse units and 10% of all new apartment units.

4.6 INTRODUCE AN ADAPTABLE HOUSING POLICY

Develop a policy that requires a minimum percentage of residential units as part of a rezoning application to be either accessible or adaptable.

Actions

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



4.7 DEVELOP A TENANT RELOCATION POLICY

Consider preparing a tenant relocation policy for redevelopment projects (both rental housing and manufactured home parks) as well as for existing residential buildings that undergo significant improvements, that result in displacement of tenants.

Actions

- a. Continue to support the City's Strata Conversion Policy and review the policy with every update of the Official Community Plan.
- b. Require tenant relocation plans as a condition of approving the redevelopment of existing rental housing.
- c. Consider establishing a unit minimum at which a tenant relocation plan is required (i.e., six units or more).
- d. Conduct public consultation with the development community and non-profit housing providers to determine the necessary elements of a tenant assistance plan.

- e. Seek legal counsel to establish adequate compensation for displaced tenants, and discuss first right of refusal and mandatory notice requirements
- f. Assess the possibility of providing alternative accommodation options for each tenant in a comparable unit type, and within a reasonable percentage of the current rental rate.

For Example: Tenant Assistance Policy in New Westminster

The policy is mandatory for rezoning applications and heritage alteration permits and is applied on a voluntary basis for development permits and demolition permits. Policy applies to rezoning applications and heritage revitalization agreements which involve the demolition of six or more purpose-built market rental units within a multi-unit building.

A Tenant Assistance Plan includes:

- A commitment to provide a minimum of three months' notice prior to eviction;
- Compensation equal to or greater to the equivalent of three months' rent;
- Documentation of units including unit types, rental rates and vacancy rates in the building;
- A strategy for assisting tenants in finding appropriate housing; and
- A communications plan for the applicant and tenants, including notice of all consultation events or activities related to the application.

OBJECTIVE 5: STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS & CONNECTIONS

The City is well-positioned to facilitate partnerships among key stakeholders to encourage the development of affordable housing. This objective guides the City to build partnerships with senior levels of government, non-profit organizations and community agencies to respond to housing issues. This will ensure relevant information is available for tenants, landlords and homebuyers to access the assistance they need in finding affordable, appropriate housing.

5.1 FACILITATE AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP THROUGH PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

In partnership with private and non-profit partners, the City can facilitate the development of affordable homeownership for eligible families. This policy direction explores ways to further support such initiatives by fostering new connections and introducing incentives.

Actions

- a. Strengthen the existing partnership with Habitat for Humanity to facilitate the development of affordable homeownership for eligible families.
- b. Foster partnerships between non-profit agencies and private sector developers interested in affordable homeownership.
- c. Explore opportunities to incentivize and support the development of affordable homeownership through additional density, parking relaxations, reductions of development cost charges, payment of legal fees, or other types of relaxations.
- d. Consider how the Housing Legacy Reserve Fund may be used to facilitate the development of affordable homeownership.

5.2 INCREASE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

Through ongoing research and information sharing, as well as public outreach and leadership, the City can help raise awareness of local housing issues, build support for projects, and advocate for increased resources and funding.

Actions

- a. Continue to organize and support housing-related events and workshops to encourage information sharing and building awareness of housing issues in Nanaimo.
- b. Support the development of new non-market housing by engaging community members and key stakeholders.
- c. Identify existing resources and prepare educational materials based on information gaps.
- d. Build awareness through regular reporting to Council and the public on housing measures and progress updates.
- e. Prepare an online and paper guide on current programs and resources.

5.3 SUPPORT RENTAL HOUSING & RELATED PROGRAMS FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

With a lack of housing options available for university students, the City can explore a variety of ways to facilitate more student friendly housing options in selected areas.

Actions

- a. Explore partnership opportunities between Vancouver Island University (VIU) and other organizations to facilitate more rental housing for students (e.g., setting up linkage program with seniors).
- b. Assess the viability of establishing rental-only zones in areas in proximity to VIU and potentially other areas.

5.4 FACILITATE POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN DEVELOPERS & NON-PROFIT HOUSING PROVIDERS

The City is well positioned to facilitate new relationships and build partnerships between developers and non-profit housing providers.

Actions

- a. Support partnership opportunities between developers and non-profit housing providers to ensure a proportion of units secured through the development approvals process are operated by non-profit housing providers.
- b. Create an inventory of non-profit housing providers available to operate affordable units secured in new developments.

5.5 CONTINUE TO SUPPORT TENANT READINESS INITIATIVES

Financial literacy and education programs on tenants' rights and responsibilities are another way to support housing stability and prevent housing loss for at-risk renters. This policy direction involves supporting local partner agencies that are committed to delivering such programming.

Actions

- a. Support the efforts of the non-profit sector in the implementation of Ready to Rent BC, a Renter Readiness program.
- b. Engage with Ready to Rent BC and local partners to obtain ideas on further supporting tenants' rights and responsibilities.

For Example:

Portland Housing Centre

The Portland Housing Centre has operated a housing readiness course in Portland since 1998, targeting renters facing barriers such as criminal records, credit histories, and lack of references. The Centre provides an "action kit" for preparing prospective tenants for renting, including:

- Problem solving such as budgeting, legal problems, poor credit history;
- Spending plan, including identifying poor spending habits and costs to consider, such as moving expenses;
- Looking for a home, including the application process, rental agreements, and screening;
- Good tenant practices; and,
- Moving in and preventing evictions.

5.6 SUPPORT POLICIES & PRACTICES THAT ALLOW RENTERS TO KEEP PETS

BC's Residential Tenancy Act (RTA) allows the prohibition of pets in rental units (i.e., a landlord can refuse to rent a unit to someone with a pet). While there are few precedent examples of agencies with policies that specifically address concerns around pets in rental housing, Nanaimo can actively support existing efforts and advocate for changes that support a pet-inclusive rental housing supply.

Actions

- a. Support local agencies, such as Pacifica Housing, which have introduced pet policies that allow tenants to have pets in selected units.
- b. Facilitate research into good practices in legislation or other policies that support pets in rental housing. For example, legislation in Ontario does not permit a "no pet" clause in rental agreements, but have had varied experiences with its implementation.
- c. Consult with the provincial government regarding possible revisions to the RTA to facilitate more pets being allowed in rental housing.

For Example: Pet Policy at Pacifica Housing

Pacifica Housing recently revised their pet policy to allow tenants in 5 to 10 of their 36 buildings. Pacifica will monitor the impact of the new pet policy and survey the reactions of neighbours.

- The new policy will require the spaying and neutering of pets.
- Initially, only indoor cats will be allowed.
- Owners must obtain pet identification or licence as required by the municipality.
- To accommodate allergies or comfort of other tenants, Pacifica will maintain a couple of buildings or floors in buildings where pets will not be allowed.

5.7 SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RENT BANK PROGRAM

Rent banks provide small one-time loans to tenants that are facing financial hardship and may be having difficulty paying their rent, utilities, damage deposit etc. Typically, the goal is to ensure households are able to stay in their homes during a time of temporary crisis; they often have high repayment rates and are successful at preventing homelessness. Rent banks are usually operated on behalf of a financial institution and involve a non-profit agency that administers the loans.

Actions

- a. Support and partner with a local agency to undertake a review and analysis of existing rent bank programs and assess the viability of implementing a regional Rent Bank program.
- b. Support the start-up of a Rent Bank program, whereby a non-profit society manages a fund that offers short term loans to rental households.
- c. Assist with the distribution of program information to Nanaimo residents.
- d. Advocate for provincial funding and support for a BC Rent Bank program.

For Example: Rent Banks

The Kamloops Rent Bank started in 2013 for low income wage earners, providing emergency funds for people who have nowhere else to turn. The Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society administer the program. The maximum loan is \$1,000 with an interest rate of 5% to be paid in full over a maximum of 2 years. Funds are paid directly to the landlord or utility company.

IMPLEMENTATION

Nanaimo's Affordable Housing Strategy provides a framework to guide decision making in policy and practice over the coming ten years. The vision and outline presented in this document provide a roadmap for staff and Council at the City of Nanaimo around the priorities for affordable housing. It can also support decision making by external stakeholders and partners as they plan and pursue affordable housing initiatives of their own. A high level implementation timeline is suggested in the following table. It is recommended that Nanaimo undertake an annual Report Card that reviews the progress on all policy directions and actions.

Note: SP = Social Planning, CP = Current Planning and Subdivision, RE = Real Estate, BL = Business Licensing, BI = Building Inspections

Table A: Prioritization of Policy Directions & Actions

OBJECTIVE	POLICY DIRECTION	PRIORITY			IMPLEMENTATION BY	
		Ongoing + Short Term (1-2 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5-10 years)	City Lead	External Partners
1. Increase the supply of rental housing	1. Develop a secured market rental housing policy	✓			SP	-
	2. Expand secondary suites policy		✓		CP	-
	3. Restrict short term rentals		✓		CP/BL	-
2. Support infill & intensification in existing neighbourhoods	1. Update the policy on coach houses	✓			CP	-
	2. Support infill & intensification in single detached neighbourhoods		✓		CP	-

OBJECTIVE	POLICY DIRECTION	PRIORITY			IMPLEMENTATION BY	
		Ongoing + Short Term (1-2 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5-10 years)	City Lead	External Partners
2. Support infill & intensification in existing neighbourhoods	3. Incentivize multiple & smaller units: a. Encourage lock-off & micro-suites b. Enhance public amenities c. Consider allowing recreational vehicles in mobile home parks d. Reduce barriers to tiny homes e. Revise how DCCs are calculated f. Extend DCC exemption to units > 29 m ² g. Use DCCs to incentivize multiple units		✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	CP/BI/RE	-
3. Diversify housing form in all neighbourhoods	1. Promote housing innovation a. Encourage fee simple townhouses b. Revise height limits + FAR calculations (R6-R8) c. Use revitalization tax exemption to promote development in certain areas		✓ ✓ ✓		CP/RE	Builders
	2. Develop a policy on family friendly housing	✓			SP	-
	3. Support affordable housing through reduced parking requirements		✓	✓	CP/SP	-
4. Continue to support low income & special needs housing	1. Develop a land acquisition strategy	✓			RE/SP	-
	2. Continue to support non-market housing development	✓			SP	Non-profits
	3. Update approach to density bonusing		✓		CP/SP	-
	4. Update the community amenity contribution policy		✓		CP/SP	-

OBJECTIVE	POLICY DIRECTION	PRIORITY			IMPLEMENTATION BY	
		Ongoing + Short Term (1-2 years)	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Long Term (5-10 years)	City Lead	External Partners
4. Continue to support low income & special needs housing	5. Update housing legacy reserve fund policy	✓			SP/RE	Senior govt./ Funders
	6. Introduce an adaptable housing policy		✓		BI/CP	-
	7. Develop a tenant relocation policy		✓		SP	-
5. Strengthen partnerships & connections	1. Facilitate affordable homeownership through partnerships			✓	SP	Non-profits/ Developers/ Senior govt.
	2. Increase community engagement & education		✓		SP	Non-profits/ Developers
	3. Support rental housing & related programs for students			✓	SP	Vancouver Island University
	4. Facilitate developer & nonprofit partnerships	✓	✓		SP	Non-profits/ Developers
	5. Continue to support tenant readiness initiatives	✓			SP	Non-profits/ BC govt.
	6. Support pet-friendly practices & policies		✓	✓	SP	Non-profits/ BC govt.
	7. Support the development of a local rent bank program			✓	SP	Non-profits/ Regional govt. /BC govt.

Table B proposes a set of measures and indicators to assist with the reporting and review process. These measures and targets were identified based on a review of key housing demand statistics and general understanding of the local context and issues. In terms of targets, notable progress towards these figures is to be realized within the three to five years.

Table B: Prioritization of Policy Directions & Actions

OBJECTIVE	KEY MEASURES & TARGETS
1. Increase the supply of rental housing	• More than 50% of new residential building permits/housing starts are intended for rental use • Number of units secured as rental housing (market or non-market) for 10 years or longer • Number of suites in duplexes/townhouses
2. Support infill & intensification in existing neighbourhoods	• Housing supply target mix: • More than 70% of new residential building permits/housing starts in multi-unit dwellings (not including replacement units) • At least 20% of new starts in other ground-oriented units (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses) • At least 50% of new starts in apartments • Number of lock off, micro-suites or tiny homes
3. Diversify housing form in all neighbourhoods	• Number of fee simple townhouse units/developments • Description of innovation and alternative housing forms • At least 20% of apartments in two and three bedroom units

OBJECTIVE	KEY MEASURES & TARGETS
4. Continue to support low income & special needs housing	• Number and description/location of parcels acquired by City • Non-market housing targets: • 200-240 supportive housing units • 100-120 rent supplements to facilitate access to independent living through private market • 400-600 additional below market rental units for low to moderate income households (ranging from 60%-90% below market) • Total funds in Housing Legacy Reserve Fund, total funds (\$) added to HLRF each year, total funds allocated to groups/number of units generated • Number of adaptable housing units by dwelling unit type • Description of tenant assistance plans implemented and number of tenants assisted/type of support etc.
5. Strengthen partnerships and connections	• Number and affordable homeownership units created • Description of new partnerships, initiatives and programs

APPENDIX A:

Municipal Initiatives in Affordable Housing

WHAT ARE COMPARABLE MUNICIPALITIES DOING?				
Policy/Practice	Kamloops	Kelowna	Prince George	Victoria
Housing strategy	✓	✓	✓ Housing Need & Demand Study Housing Strategy Framework	✓
Definition of affordable housing	X Community Vision for Affordable Housing	✓ Housing is considered to be affordable if shelter costs account for less than 30 per cent of before-tax household income	X	✓ The City of Victoria defines affordable housing as costing no more than 30% of gross household income.
Permits coach house & secondary suite	X Where garden or carriage suites are permitted, the primary residence cannot contain a secondary suite	✓ Permitted in the RU7 - Infill Housing Zone	X Secondary suites are not permitted in accessory buildings	X Garden suites are not permitted on properties that already have secondary suites
Allows suites in duplexes or townhouses	X	X	X	X

WHAT ARE COMPARABLE MUNICIPALITIES DOING?				
Policy/Practice	Kamloops	Kelowna	Prince George	Victoria
Restricts short-term rentals	X	✓ Short-term rentals of less than 30 days are not allowed in any of the City's residential zones. City of Kelowna is in the process of developing regulations to govern short-term rentals.	X	✓ Short-term rental operators must obtain a Business Licence and comply with operating requirements. The short-term rental must be the operator's principal residence and self-contained suites cannot be listed.
Tenant relocation policy	X	✓ During a proposed mobile home park redevelopment, a policy applies to ensure all tenants are notified, offered a right of first refusal for purchase, and relocation issues are identified.	X	✓ As part of the Market Rental Revitalization Study, the City is considering a new policy to guide tenant assistance during displacement (sets guidance to encourage greater note, compensation, relocation assistance, moving expenses and assistance, and right of first refusal.
Secured market rental policy	X	X	X	X

WHAT ARE COMPARABLE MUNICIPALITIES DOING?				
Policy/Practice	Kamloops	Kelowna	Prince George	Victoria
Adaptable housing requirement	X	X OCP Policy: Encourage use of adaptable design to increase flexibility of housing by referring developers to adaptable design guidelines.	✓ City of Prince George offers an incentive program for multi-family housing located in key growth areas that incorporate adaptable housing standards into 50% of the units.	X
Family-friendly housing	✓ Downtown revitalization tax exemption applies to multi-family residential new construction or renovation.	✓ Rental Housing Grants program: purpose-built rental buildings with five or more units are eligible for rental housing incentives. Three bedrooms are eligible for a higher grant amount.	✓ City of Prince George offers an incentive program for multi-family housing located in key growth areas that incorporate adaptable housing standards into 50% of the units. City of Prince George's Downtown Incentives Program offers incentives for new multi-family, mixed-use, commercial, and green projects and upgrades to existing development in the downtown area.	

WHAT ARE COMPARABLE MUNICIPALITIES DOING?				
Policy/Practice	Kamloops	Kelowna	Prince George	Victoria
Reduced parking requirements for affordable housing	 The City of Kamloops provides parking reductions in minimum parking requirements for affordable residential units. Upon submission of a Housing Agreement, a development can receive a 7% reduction in parking supply if they provide a minimum of 50% of total units as affordable housing.	X	X	X
Housing Legacy Reserve	 Affordable Housing Reserve Fund provides direct capital assistance to a housing provider wishing to build or purchase rental housing targeted at low-income households.	 The Housing Opportunities Reserve Fund encourages the development of affordable housing by providing funds for rental housing grants and contributing to land acquisitions that generate affordable housing partnerships by leasing the land at no cost.	X	 The Victoria Housing Reserve Fund was established for the purpose of providing grants for funding to assist in the development and retention of affordable housing for households with no, low or moderate incomes to support community diversity and infrastructure; and to facilitate the development of affordable rental and affordable home ownership projects.

APPENDIX B: Key Terms

Accessible Housing

Dwelling units that include features, amenities or products to better meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Adaptable Housing

An approach to residential design and construction in which homes can be modified at minimal cost to meet occupants' changing needs over time.

Affordable Housing

As per Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, affordable housing is housing that costs less than 30 per cent of a household's before-tax income, where housing costs include the rent or mortgage, utilities, maintenance fees, property taxes and insurance. Nanaimo's Affordable Housing Strategy describes affordable housing more broadly and includes specific levels of affordability for different households/type of housing, e.g., non-market housing or affordable ownership.

Coach House

A dwelling unit that is self-contained and is detached from and accessory to a single detached dwelling unit.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is Canada's national housing agency that provides housing research, advice to consumers and the housing industry, and reports to Parliament and the public on mortgage loan insurance and financial reports.

Core Housing Need

Housing that does not meet one or more of the adequacy, suitability or affordability standards; and, where households spend 30% or more of their before-tax income to access acceptable local housing. Acceptable housing is adequate in condition, suitable in size, and affordable. Adequate housing does not require any major repairs. Suitable housing has enough bedrooms for the size and makeup of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard requirements.

Family-Friendly Housing

Housing that meets the needs of families including units with enough bedrooms to accommodate all members of a family household. This includes multi-unit development projects with a greater mix of two and three bedroom units.

Ground-Oriented Dwellings

Single detached houses, duplexes and townhouses are considered to be ground-oriented dwellings. This means that these units have direct access to the street. Often planners use the term Other Ground-Oriented to refer to dwellings other than single detached houses that have direct access to the street.

Heritage Revitalization Agreement

A formal, voluntary, written agreement that allows the City to supersede zoning regulations and to provide non-financial incentives which would make it viable for owners to conserve property of heritage merit.

Housing Authority

An arm's length housing management body, which may or may not be incorporated, that manages, operates and administers housing on behalf of owner(s), which can include a local government.

Housing Agreement

An agreement in a form satisfactory to the City that limits the occupancy of the dwelling unit that is subject to the agreement to persons, families and households that qualify for affordable housing based on their household income level, that restricts the occupancy of the dwelling unit to rental tenure, and that prescribes a maximum rental rate and the rate of increase of rental rate for the dwelling unit.

Housing Covenant

A document registered on title to ensure that units are secured for affordable housing purposes in perpetuity.

Housing Income Limits (HILs)

The income required to pay the average market rent for an appropriately sized unit in the private market, as defined and annually updated by BC Housing.

Housing Legacy Reserve Fund

A municipal fund used to support and facilitate the implementation of affordable housing policies including the development of affordable housing projects, initiatives and research.

Inclusionary Housing

Housing policy that requires a contribution to affordable housing, either in the form of built units or cash, as part of a rezoning development and where an exchange in density or other incentives are granted.

Market Rental Housing

Private rental market units provided by the private market. This includes purpose-built rental housing as well as rental housing delivered through the secondary rental market such as secondary suites, rental condominium units, or other investor-owned houses/units.

Non-Market Housing

Affordable housing that is subsidized by an external party such as the government or a non-profit agency in order to serve specific populations such as those experiencing homelessness, with disabilities, or other challenges.

Rent Geared to Income (RGI)

Subsidized rental housing units where rents do not exceed 30% of income earned by tenant. The ongoing operating costs of the units are typically subsidized by the federal or provincial government.

Short-Term Rental Accommodation

Short-term rental accommodation is the rental of a room or an entire residential dwelling unit on a temporary basis (i.e. less than 30 days).

Secondary Suites

Self-contained accessory dwelling units within a single-detached dwelling or townhouse that may be rented out at market rates.

