

2024 Interim Housing Needs Update

Legislated requirements for Housing Needs Reports were updated as part of the suite of housing-related legislative changes made by the Province of British Columbia in November 2023. Specifically, Bill 44 amended Division 22 (Housing Needs Reports) of the *Local Government Act*, with amendments to the *Housing Needs Report Regulation* following on June 18, 2024.

This Interim Housing Needs Update section was added to the original 2021 Housing Needs Report in 2024 to comply with updated legislative requirements, namely to:

- Identify the number of housing units needed over the next 5 and 20 years;
- Add a statement about the need for housing in close proximity to transportation infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, public transit or other alternative forms of transportation; and
- Add a description of the actions taken by the City to reduce housing needs since receiving the original 2021 Housing Needs Report.

Housing Units Needed Over the Next 5 and 20 Years

The number of housing units needed in the City currently and over the next 5 and 20 years was calculated using the standardized “HNR Method” as required under Section 585.41 (2) of the *Local Government Act*. The following table outlines these housing needs along with the individual components that comprise them. Housing needs, in terms of housing units, calculated for each component have been rounded for clarity and may deviate from the totals.

	5-Year Need	20-Year Need
a. Extreme Core Housing Need	221	885
b. Persons Experiencing Homelessness	61	122
c. Suppressed Household Formation	209	834
d. Anticipated Growth	2,961	7,702
e. Rental Vacancy Rate Adjustment	20	78
f. Additional Local Demand	219	876
Total New Units	3,691	10,498

Housing Need Near Alternative Transportation Infrastructure

The City of Langley’s Official Community Plan (OCP) strongly aligns housing growth with walking, bicycling, and public transit. It sets a concentric growth model, with the highest residential densities in apartment form planned nearest the City’s two now-under-construction SkyTrain stations and gradually decreasing densities further away. This model has since been supplemented by the adoption of Provincially mandated Transit Oriented Areas to set minimum allowable heights and densities and eliminate residential parking requirements within 800 metres of the future SkyTrain stations. Further from SkyTrain, the OCP increased missing-middle density (such as townhomes) near arterial streets with planned future frequent bus routes, one of which is identified as a future RapidBus, and potential eventual BRT, corridor.

This OCP approach recognizes the strong and mutually beneficial relationship between housing and alternative transportation infrastructure, especially in Langley City's context where generally challenging soils and an airport-related height limit reduce the maximum size of both buildings and their parkades. Even with reduced or eliminated residential parking requirements, market demands for parking put pressure on these constrained building parameters and result in reduced residential density and/or high-cost underground parking levels, which increases costs that need to be absorbed by fewer units and creates fewer homes available overall. Orienting residential density near high-quality transit helps reduce both the need and demand for vehicle parking and allows for more homes to be located on a given site with lower integrated parkade construction costs. To further support active transportation options and allow for more trips to be made without a vehicle, the City has invested in several corridors in the city centre high-density growth area to add bus priority features, protected bicycle lanes, and upgraded sidewalks.

As outlined in the original 2021 Housing Needs Report, Langley City has median incomes lower than those of Metro Vancouver as a region. Building more homes, including rental units, near high-quality pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure supports the City's population by providing housing options for residents who may have, or can feasibly choose to own, fewer or no vehicles and thereby reduce their combined housing and transportation costs. More people living near alternative transportation, and using it more often, can support a positive feedback loop where additional transportation investments become viable and allow these options to become usable to more people and incentivize additional housing development.

Looking ahead, there are more opportunities to meet housing needs near alternative transportation infrastructure. With recent legislative changes, density bonusing and inclusionary zoning are being studied to understand how they could viably be implemented to support the creation of even more homes, both market and below-market, in highly-accessible areas.

Actions Taken by the City Since the 2021 Housing Needs Report

Since the City received its current Housing Needs Report in February 2021, the need for housing, and the focus on this need, has only grown across the country, including in Langley City. The City has taken several actions from multiple angles to help address this need, with further initiatives ongoing and planned.

In November 2021, nine months after receiving the 2021 Housing Needs Report in February, the City adopted a new Official Community Plan (OCP), to replace the previous 2006 OCP. The new OCP was organized according to "5 Big Themes", with the first being "Affordable Living & Diverse Housing for all Generations". The new OCP specifically included significant increases in residential density throughout the City, including higher-density apartment buildings in the Regional City Centre near future SkyTrain, townhome corridors along two major arterial streets with planned frequent bus service which were previously limited to single-detached homes only, and additional flexibility for other missing middle housing forms including smaller lot subdivisions and garden suites. Development applications immediately began to make use of this additional potential and hundreds of additional homes have been built as a result.

The OCP also included enabling policies related to rental housing, specifically requiring any redevelopment application of purpose-built rental buildings to replace the existing number of rental units one-to-one and to provide compensation and relocation supports to existing tenants. The tenant policy was further developed with the adoption of a standalone Tenant Relocation Plans Policy in 2022 to expand on the specific obligations a developer has toward their tenants, including the amount of compensation to be provided. In 2024, an updated Tenant Relocation Plans Policy was adopted to increase the compensation amounts, enhance communication with tenants, and enact stricter relocation and right-of-first-refusal requirements. These policies are helping to add housing while ensuring no net loss of existing purpose-built rental units and that existing tenants are supported in finding new housing as a result of redevelopment.

The City has also made several Zoning Bylaw updates to support the development of a greater supply and diversity of housing in line with Provincial legislative changes in 2023, including increasing densities to permit multiple units on properties that were previously limited to single-detached homes and secondary suites and allowing higher densities in the few sites within Transit-Oriented Areas (TOAs) that were below those enabled by the OCP. Residential parking requirements were also updated, to eliminate them in TOAs and lower them for plex-homes.

The City is continuing to work on updates to the Zoning Bylaw and other policy projects to further support housing construction of all densities. It is also studying density bonusing and inclusionary zoning to identify opportunities to further increase the supply of both market and below-market housing and incentivize family-friendly housing.