

OCP Housing Task Force Recommendations Provide Future Blueprint

(Penticton, BC – December 8, 2023) – The Official Community Plan-Housing Task Force is making 18 recommendations to make housing more attainable and accessible in Penticton.

“As chair of the task force, it has been a privilege to work with such a capable and diverse group of members,” says chair Nathan Little. “The task was difficult as the issues we face are complex and our geography adds another layer of complexity. All of the recommendations made here are designed to meet the housing needs of today and tomorrow. Some of them will challenge perceptions of what Penticton is but we believe this work will set us on a path towards Council’s goal of improved housing across the entire spectrum.”

The recommendations include:

- Allowing up to 4 or 6 residential units on all currently single- and two-family designated lands
- In strategic areas, support changing the commercial, tourist commercial, industrial and residential land use designations to the ‘mixed use’ designation.
- Removal of the 3-storey height limit in the downtown and 4-storey height restriction on Lakeshore Drive
- Allow additional high-density residential capacity on large shopping centres by designating them ‘mixed use’
- Review parking regulations and shift from parking requirements to parking recommendations, in strategic areas to incentivize housing development and encourage alternative forms of transportation
- Support the city and staff working with non-profit housing proponents to develop new non-market housing that meets the needs of a range of people, and retains existing non-market housing units (no net loss)
- The City to develop a “social housing plan” in the near term to provide strategic direction to determine and achieve a range of non-market housing goals
- Remove the Spiller Road area as a ‘growth area’, and change the future land use designation of Spiller Road to ‘Rural Residential’
- Investigate policies and programs to spur new housing development and redevelopment

“The OCP-Housing Task Force has done a tremendous job of assessing all the data presented, taking in the input through the community engagement process and providing Council with a thoughtful approach to how we move forward,” says Blake Laven, the City’s Director of Development Services. “The timing of the task force work corresponded with changes introduced by the provincial government and that meant some of the recommendations align with the new directives from Victoria. However, the task force also used the local knowledge of the committee members to identify some proposals that reflect the City’s unique needs.”

The Official Community Plan-Housing Task Force was established earlier this year to advise on amendment to OCP that addresses residential growth trends and housing needs, assist with targeted consultation to gather input on housing needs and review and recommend new and innovative housing forms to benefit housing affordability.

The City recently conducted the 2023 Housing Needs Assessment to understand the need for housing in the community and guide the work of the Task Force. The assessment showed that between 2016 to 2021, Penticton's annual growth rate was high at 1.9 per cent. If this trend continues, the City may have around 20,000 additional residents and 9,200 additional households by 2046.

The recommendations are being presented to Council on December 12 and staff are asking that Council receive the report and direct staff to incorporate the recommendations into the upcoming Official Community Plan amendments.

A copy of the OCP-Housing Task Force Recommendations can be found as part of the [agenda package](#)

-30-

Media Contact:

250-490-2339

communications@penticton.ca

Backgrounder

Future Land Use Designations and Future Land Use Map recommendations

1. Consolidate several designations to ensure more flexibility in the development process
2. Specifically consolidate the 'infill residential' and 'detached residential' designations – allowing up to 4 or 6 residential units on all currently single- and two-family designated lands
3. Designate lands in areas close to parks, services and employment to support densities 'greater than' 4 units per lot
4. In strategic areas, support changing the commercial, tourist commercial, industrial and residential land use designations to the 'mixed use' designation. The 'mixed use' designation supports higher density housing mixed with the option for commercial, office, institutional, retail and other uses. A list of strategic areas and key corridors is included below, with key corridors having access to transit, bike lanes, services and Infrastructure (several areas such as the downtown, North Gateway, South Gateway, College Precinct and strategic transportation corridors are referenced)
5. Removal of the 3 storey height limit in the downtown and 4 storey height restriction on Lakeshore Drive
6. Allow additional high-density residential capacity on large shopping centres by designating them 'mixed use'

Housing Policy recommendations

7. Add additional policy direction on specific areas intended for new growth and density
8. Review parking regulations and shift from parking requirements to parking recommendations, in strategic areas to incentivize housing development and encourage alternative forms of

- transportation (i.e. reducing parking minimums, and/or remove parking requirements entirely in certain areas) while taking into consideration the accessibility and service needs of the community
9. Support streamlined and efficient reviews of Development Permit applications, with appropriate design guidelines in place to support densification through quality design
 10. Continue to exceed energy efficiency requirements with new housing development
 11. Support the city and staff working with non-profit housing proponents to develop new non-market housing that meets the needs of a range of people, and retains existing non-market housing units (no net loss)
 12. The City to develop a "social housing plan" in the near term to provide strategic direction to determine and achieve a range of non-market housing goals
 13. Include policy support in the OCP for micro-suites and studio units as a housing option, in addition to one-, two- and three-bedrooms

Growth Plan recommendation

14. Remove the Spiller Road area as a 'growth area', and change the future land use designation of Spiller Road to 'Rural Residential'

Other housing action recommendations

15. Update associated bylaws and plans as a result of the OCP amendments, that impact housing (Zoning Bylaw, Subdivision and Development Bylaw, Capital works plan updates, Development Cost Charge Bylaw as examples)
16. Investigate policies and programs to spur new housing development and redevelopment, such as:
 - Property tax exemptions for rental housing and other forms of affordable housing
 - Density bonus policy
 - Development Cost Charge (DCC) program amendments / exemptions
 - City installing infrastructure to support development
 - Allowing small-scale, mixed use buildings in more zones
 - Utilizing city land to support new housing development; either directly for a housing development, or indirectly through providing land for additional parking or parkland
17. Process improvements to bring housing on quicker such as waiving public hearings or pre-zoning specific areas to align with OCP designations
18. Plan for and consider funding options for additional amenities to support residential growth in our neighbourhoods such as:
 - Neighbourhood parks
 - Road design to support alternatives to single occupant vehicles
 - Recreational facilities (pool, community centre, outdoor sports fields etc.)
 - Arts and cultural events
 - Infrastructure upgrades