

Strong year for housing, more growth planned

(Penticton, BC – January 17, 2025) – A focus on creating more attainable and accessible housing saw Penticton have a strong year with more than 600 units receiving development permit approval in 2024.

"We have placed an increased emphasis on building housing across the entire spectrum and made significant changes to ensure we're meeting the needs of all members of our community," says Mayor Julius Bloomfield. "The statistics from 2024 show those efforts are showing dividends and put us in a favourable position for the upcoming year."

In 2024, 629 units received development permit approval, a critical first step before moving forward to construction and 151 units – a mix of ownership and rental, apartment and (multi) single family home - received building permits with construction underway. The average approval length for Planning Department' approvals was five months and for building permits was four to six weeks.

"The changes we made in 2024 to streamline the approval process has allowed staff to manage applications more efficiently and that has meant getting shovels in the ground quicker, for projects aligned with the vision of the Official Community Plan," says Bloomfield.

Last year, following the work of the City's Official Community Plan-Housing Task Force, Council approved a variety of changes that included:

- Directing more growth and allowing higher density in the built-up area
- Designating large major commercial streets as Mixed Use to support housing
- Changing policies to provide more flexibility in future housing forms
- Relaxing on-site parking requirements and allowing increased building heights in the downtown area
- Supporting the use of City owned lands for housing projects – three sites have been identified for housing

Further work on the remaining Official Community Plan Housing Task Force recommendations is planned for 2025. This includes various ways for the City to support more affordable housing.

Council has initiated the Social Housing & Infrastructure Plan, which will work with local partners to not only identify land amongst partners and funding opportunities, but be a guide for future social housing needs and a roadmap for how to get there. That report is due later this year.

Bloomfield notes several major projects are expected to apply for building permits this year, which will continue the positive trend towards bringing more housing online.

-30-

Media Contact:

250-490-2339

communications@penticton.ca