

Report to Council



Date: November 4, 2024
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Housing Action Plan Interim Report
Department: Housing Policy and Programs & Social Development

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives for information the report from the Housing Policy and Programs and Social Development Departments, dated November 4, 2024, regarding the Housing Action Plan Interim Report;

AND THAT Council directs Staff to further explore and report back on the draft objectives and actions of the Housing Action Plan as described in the report from the Housing Policy and Programs and Social Development Departments, dated November 4, 2024.

Purpose:

To receive an interim update on the Housing Action Plan report and to direct Staff to further explore and report back on the draft objectives and actions of the Housing Action Plan.

Council Priority Alignment:

Affordable Housing
Homelessness

Introduction and Overview:

As one of the fastest growing cities in Canada, Kelowna’s housing system is facing complex challenges to improving access to housing that meets people’s needs. The Housing Action Plan is designed to build upon past, ongoing, and future City efforts and investments in housing and social development, serving as a roadmap for our activities in the years ahead. The HAP is designed to address the critical housing challenges facing the community, ensuring that the City can meet both immediate and future needs. The plan aims to achieve two key outcomes:

- Ensure residents have access to suitable housing options.
- Maintain a housing system that adapts to future community needs.

Draft Objectives and Actions of the Housing Action Plan

To achieve these outcomes, the City has identified five high-level objectives:

1. Homelessness in Kelowna is rare, brief, and one-time.
2. Kelowna has a diversity of housing types, tenures, and affordability levels to meet the needs of all community members.
3. Kelowna continues to provide innovative leadership on housing issues.
4. The community's housing objectives are advanced through collaboration.
5. The City and its partners establish clear roles for decision-making roles for complex housing-related issues.

These proposed objectives are supported by 26 individual actions that have been selected to improve access to housing for people across the *safety net*, *housing with supports* and *market housing* areas of the Housing Wheelhouse. The actions are outlined in Attachment A – Draft Actions.

Recognizing the constraints of capacity, resources, and time, the City has prioritized five high-impact actions to facilitate swift and effective implementation. These actions were selected based on their potential for significant impact, their alignment with priority housing needs, and the effort required for implementation:

- Improve access to services for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness by enhancing communication and collaboration among service providers.
- Support tenants facing eviction due to redevelopment.
- Strengthen the City's incentives for affordable housing.
- Reduce municipal charges for affordable housing projects.
- Ensure minimum parking regulations don't reduce housing affordability by driving up development costs.

Developing the Plan:

The draft objectives and actions were developed based on several significant inputs, including the 2023 Housing Needs Assessment, insights from the Housing Wheelhouse, and feedback from both current and previous housing and homelessness-related initiatives. Additionally, contributions from for-profit and non-profit industry stakeholders played a crucial role in shaping these objectives and actions, ensuring they are well-informed and aligned with the needs of the community.

Housing Needs Assessment

The draft HAP objectives and actions build on key findings from the 2023 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA), which highlights several critical challenges. These include the severe impact on low-income renters and priority groups, a current housing deficit of 3,750 to 5,000 homes, and the need for up to 20,130 additional homes by 2031. It also addresses the shortage of subsidized rental housing, calling for a tenfold increase in delivery, and emphasizes the need for supportive housing, market rentals, and a wider range of ownership options.



Housing Wheelhouse

The HAP integrates actions across the Housing Wheelhouse to advance objectives related to both housing and homelessness. The Wheelhouse sets a framework for cohesive and coordinated action across every part of the housing system. It reflects the movement of individuals among different housing types throughout their lives and recognizes the diverse socio-economic and demographic needs of Kelowna residents.

Integration of Federal and Provincial Initiatives

The HAP objectives and actions build on the progress made under the Healthy Housing Strategy (HHS) and integrate key actions from the city's previous 5-year homelessness strategy. It leverages lessons learned and data in the HNA and aligns with several other initiatives to ensure a cohesive approach, including:

Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF): The HAP will incorporate the seven initiatives under the federal HAF, which are designed to expedite the creation of new housing units.

Reaching Home: The federal Reaching Home program will provide guidance on prioritizing actions within the HAP to effectively tackle homelessness.

Homes for People Action Plan: This provincial plan will serve as a basis for legislative reforms affecting housing policy, ensuring the HAP remains in sync with provincial housing legislation.

2023 Planning Legislation Changes: The province passed new housing legislation aimed at increasing multi-family housing availability, streamlining development processes, and strengthening tenant protections.

Provincial Housing Targets: The province has set specific housing targets to boost the supply of affordable and diverse housing options through the Housing Supply Act (Bill 43), introduced in 2023. The Act's goal is to increase both the amount and pace of new housing by establishing clear supply and affordability objectives for selecting high-growth, high-need municipalities.

Belonging in BC: Through this provincial strategy, the HEART and HEARTH programs will aid HAP's objectives by easing the shift from homelessness to stable housing, highlighting the dedication of both provincial and local authorities to tackle housing insecurity.

Industry Input

The City hosted a series of discussions, workshops and interviews with stakeholders in the housing and homelessness response systems to review and refine draft actions for the HAP, gathering feedback on key supports, necessary adjustments, and identified gaps. These sessions focused on members of the development community, local non-profits and people with lived experience. Feedback from these meetings has played a pivotal role in shaping the 26 draft initiatives and five high-impact actions.

Next Steps:

Staff will continue to investigate the proposed actions and develop a finalized version of the HAP for Council's consideration and endorsement in Q1, 2025. As part of this process, additional engagement will be conducted with industry members (for-profit and non-profit) to ensure a collaborative approach. The Plan will solidify the objectives and high-impact actions and include a comprehensive set of indicators to measure success. These indicators will align with provincial housing targets and legislative requirements, ensuring that the City's progress can be tracked in real-time and adjusted as needed to respond to emerging challenges.

Internal Circulation:

Long Range Policy Planning
Development Planning
Parking Services
Real Estate
Community Safety Services
Risk Management

Communications
Capital Planning and Asset Management
Development Services
Corporate Strategy & Performance
Financial Services
Development Engineering
Partnerships Office
Data Services & Analytics

Considerations applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

2023 Legislative Changes

- Bill 16 – Housing Statutes Amendment Act
 - Includes measures to prevent renovictions, where tenants are evicted under the pretext of renovations, and;
 - Provides tenants with more security and stability in their housing arrangements, making it harder for landlords to evict tenants without a valid reason.
- Bill 44 – Small Scale, Multi-Unit Housing:
 - Increased the minimum densities in many single-family neighbourhoods by requiring single-family and duplex lots to allow;
 - A minimum of three to four units;
 - At least one secondary suite or accessory dwelling unit (ADU), and;
 - Six units minimum near frequently serviced transit stops.
- Bill 46 – Development Financing:
 - Altered the collection of development charges by municipalities;
 - Expanded the scope of Development Cost Charges (DCCs), and;
 - Introduced Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) for funding local amenities.
- Bill 47 – Transit-Oriented Areas:
 - Increased minimum densities near transit stations and bus exchanges and removed minimum parking requirements in these areas, and;
 - Established four transit-oriented areas in Kelowna, enhancing residential zoning and supporting transit accessibility.

Existing Policy:

Healthy Housing Strategy, 2018
2040 Official Community Plan Bylaw
Imagine Kelowna

Consultation and Engagement:

On May 23, 2024, the City in collaboration with Urban Matters CCC conducted two stakeholder workshops to discuss the Housing Action Plan. These workshops aimed to gather input on the proposed draft actions for the HAP, identify areas of consensus, highlight necessary changes, and pinpoint any missing elements. Following these sessions, a detailed summary was created, offering additional context and updated actions, which was shared with the broader stakeholder community, including those who could not attend the workshops. The feedback received led to further refinement of the draft actions by City staff and consultants, ensuring each action was accompanied by a clear description.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Communications Comments:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations

Legal/Statutory Authority:

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Appendix:

Attachment A – Draft Actions