2023



Increasing Housing Options

White Paper

Increasing Housing Options is a series of recommended changes aimed at making housing more attainable in Nanaimo. This White Paper is the result of feedback received during that engagement process.

CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

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Background

As we grapple with the growing challenges associated with housing affordability, the City of Nanaimo continues to take steps to plan and respond. The City's *Affordable Housing Strategy* (AHS), *Housing Needs Report* (HNA), and *City Plan: Nanaimo Relmagined* provides guidance for decision-making going forward.

The City's AHS provides a framework for working with other levels of government, the private sector, and non-profit organizations to facilitate the development of affordable housing. The HNA uses quantitative and qualitative data to provide an understanding of current and anticipated housing needs and gaps. City Plan provides policy direction for future land use decisions and contains over 30 affordable housing policies and actions to address housing supply gaps and needs.

On October 24, 2022, Council endorsed several projects to promote affordable housing and recommended prioritization of the following actions:

- Expand Secondary Suite and Coach House regulations.
- Explore and support further opportunities for infill and intensification in existing neighbourhoods.
- Develop a family friendly housing policy to encourage the construction of more two and three plus bedroom units in new multi-family developments.
- Develop an Accessible and Adaptable Housing policy to increase the amount of adaptable and accessible residential units.

Together, these four projects make up the Increasing Housing Options initiative.

Expanding Secondary Suites

Suites are an important part of the City's market rental housing stock. While some minor amendments have been made, secondary suite regulations have largely remained the same as when they were first added to the Zoning Bylaw in 2005. Since then, changes have been made in the BC Building Code (BCBC) to permit secondary suites more broadly in different unit types and to remove maximum size requirements of suites. The BCBC changes do not override any local Zoning Bylaw regulations, and to date no changes to Nanaimo's secondary suite regulations have occurred in response to the revised BCBC.

Adding Infill in Existing Neighbourhoods

Housing market conditions and needs have changed considerably in recent years. Infill housing is defined by the province as "housing that fits within an existing neighbourhood without significantly altering its character or appearance". There has been growing interest in infill housing across BC in the last few years, with the Provincial government introducing the *Housing Supply Act* (2022) and announcing the Homes for People action plan (2023) and Bill 44 (2024).

Expanding Family-Friendly Housing

Increasing housing costs has made finding housing challenging for families requiring multiple bedrooms. Single-detached houses are often no longer affordable for families, and there is a need for more attainable alternatives, such as 2 and 3+ bedroom strata units, rental apartments, and townhouses.

Adaptable Housing

Findings from recent housing needs research indicates that seniors who own their homes are finding it challenging to age-in-place because there are limited housing options that would allow them to downsize. Nanaimo's aging population is growing, and as a result there is an increased need to accommodate adequate housing for seniors, as well as for people with disabilities. Of the 1,075 multi-units issued building permits in 2022, it is estimated that 20 adaptable units were constructed (not including seniors housing).

Engagement Process Overview

Summary of Process

Increasing Housing Options is a series of recommended changes aimed at making housing more attainable in Nanaimo. The program focuses on four key areas – expanding secondary suite regulations, adding infill housing in existing neighbourhoods, increasing housing for families, and requiring adaptable housing for all physical abilities. Between 2020 and 2022, the city engaged with residents through the 'Reimagine Nanaimo' process that culminated in the adoption of "City Plan: Nanaimo Reimagined". This program is informed by what was heard during the Reimagine Nanaimo Process, the Nanaimo Affordable Housing Strategy (2018), and the City's Housing Needs Report completed in May 2023.

The timeline below describes the steps taken by Staff in 2023 to engage all stakeholders in the Increasing Housing *Options* project.

- August 29th the project site was published on Get Involved, which included a survey. Social media posts were published at this time.
- August 30th targeted 'eblast' notifications were sent to registered Get Involved participants.
- August 30th an advertisement was published in the Nanaimo News Bulletin regarding the public Open House event.
- August 30th an email invitation was sent to all Neighbourhood Associations inviting them to participate at the Public Open House.
- September 6th Staff presented the Increasing Housing Options project to the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness.
- September 12th Public Open House at Beban Social Centre
- September 14th Staff presented the Increasing Housing Options project to the Mayor's Leaders' Table.
- September 14th Staff presented the Increasing Housing Options project to the Design Advisory Panel.
- September 22nd Staff presented the Increasing Housing Options project to representatives of the Development Community.
- September 29th Increasing Housing Options survey closes.
- October 4th Staff presented the Increasing Housing Options project to the Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network.

The Get Involved Nanaimo platform, and the City of Nanaimo's project page, were the main sources used to deliver information on the project. Feedback was received through an online survey, the general community planning email, stakeholder meetings and through conversations held at the open house. In total, the Get Involved project page had 3.5k visits, and 864 survey responses.

Who We Targeted and How

Housing affects everyone in the city, therefore engagement practices focused on receiving input from all residents of Nanaimo. Specific project stakeholders were also identified and included the following:

- Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness
    - The purpose of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness is to promote social and political equity within existing and proposed City plans, policies, bylaws and infrastructure and make recommendations to ensure that they are inclusive and accommodating to citizens of all ages, abilities and walks of life.
- Design Advisory Panel
    - The Design Advisory Panel (DAP) is an advisory committee to Council made up of design professionals and members of the general public. DAP reviews form and character development permits in relation to relevant design guidelines, good design principles, and conformance with the Official Community Plan and related documents. DAP also provides independent, objective recommendations to the applicant, City staff, and Council aimed at improving matters of design that affect the public realm.
- Development Community
    - The development community represents developers, architects, realtors, builders, etc. A total of 97 people were invited to attend a hybrid (teams & In-person) 'Developer Workshop' meeting.
- Mayor's Leaders' Table
    - The purpose of the Mayor's Leaders' Table is to work in collaboration with First Nations, public bodies, private institutions, and community organizations to enhance local resilience and continue momentum for advocacy, community unity, and cohesion, especially with respect to large community-oriented infrastructure.
- Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network
    - The purpose of the Network is to facilitate the ongoing development of effective neighbourhood associations through shared information, consultation and decision-making between neighbourhood associations, municipal government and other organizations.
- General Public
    - The general public was engaged through various platforms including 'Get Involved Nanaimo', an online survey, social media channels, newspaper advertisements, and a public open house.

The Get Involved webpage was the City's main source for sharing information about the project. The online platform allows staff to create separate project pages and use a variety of widgets to push information out and receive feedback in return.

The Increasing Housing Options project page provided details about the four initiatives. A project timeline was included. Project documents including staff reports, maps, policy documents and open house materials were posted to the site for quick access. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' tab was used as a means of providing information on commonly asked questions or concerns surrounding the topic area. An interactive map tool invited participants to scroll the City's boundaries to visualize the extent of the proposed R5 pre-zoning.

Social Media posts were used as a method of reaching the general public. Both the City's official Facebook page and Instagram page were used to invite the public to complete the survey and attend the open house. A total of six posts were made to the City's official Facebook Page and Instagram (stories), reaching a combined 24k followers.

Two 'eblasts' were generated through Get Involved and were received by the 2,288 registered to the Get Involved platform, inviting them to complete the survey and attend the public open house.

Two advertisements were published in the 'Nanaimo News Bulletin' paper, and one in the 'Nanaimo News Now' online site which ran in two consecutive issues.

The Public Open House was held on Tuesday, September 12th at the Beban Park Social Centre, from 6 to 8 pm. Approximately 80 people were in attendance, not including staff representatives from Community Planning and Current Planning. The Open House was set up as a casual walk through with illustrative boards explaining the four different initiatives. 9 staff members were present to answer questions from the public and receive input. A large (draft) R5 map was present to help staff explain the properties proposed for pre-zoning. In addition, the City's zoning and land use designation maps were available. All materials were available in physical copy as well as online using laptops at the table stations.

A survey was published on the Get Involved site with 14 questions specific to the four individual initiatives.

Survey Results | Demographic Information

When asked how you would describe your relationship to Nanaimo, **787** participants said they are 'a full-time resident of Nanaimo', **312** participants own property in Nanaimo, **272** participants work in Nanaimo, **67** own a business in Nanaimo, and **38** participants lived in another nearby community but come to Nanaimo regularly.

When asked whether or not participants currently rent or own their home, **74.4%** of participants said they owned their home, **22.5%** said they rent their home, and **3.1%** said 'other'.

When asked what kind of housing they live in, **65.8%** of participants said they live in a single-detached home. Whereas 4.5% said they lived in a duplex, 0.5% in a triplex/fourplex, 4.8% in a townhouse/rowhouse, 11.6% in an apartment/condo (less than 6 storeys), 2.1% in an apartment/condo (6 or more storeys), 5.9% in a suite, 0.2% in a mixed-used building, and 4.6% in 'other'.

What We Heard - Survey Results

Expanding Secondary Suite Regulations | Quantitative Data

When asked whether or not they supported changes to increase the number of secondary suites allowed on a residential lot **58.6%** (501) of participants said they 'definitely supported' the idea.

58.6% (501) Definitely support	20.8% (178) Somewhat support	3.7% (32) were neutral	5.5% (47) somewhat do not support	11.3% (97) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported changes to expand the eligibility of where detached suites are permitted, **64.7%** (554) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

64.7% (554) Definitely support	20.4% (175) Somewhat support	2.7% (23) were neutral	4.3% (37) somewhat do not support	7.8% (67) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported allowing one secondary suite in a side-by-side or detached duplex, **52.2%** (446) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

52.5% (446) Definitely support	18.5% (158) Somewhat support	7.1% (61) were neutral	9.5% (81) somewhat do not support	12.6% (108) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported allowing one secondary suite in each side-by-side townhouse, **47.9%** (408) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

47.9% (408) Definitely support	19.2% (163) Somewhat support	7.4% (63) were neutral	9.9% (84) somewhat do not support	15.6% (133) Definitely do not support

Expanding Secondary Suite Regulations | Qualitative Data

Qualitative data was collected through survey comments. A total of 360 entries were provided for expanding secondary suites. From those comments themes were identified including:

1. Density & Type of Housing (44.44%)
2. Parking & Traffic (31.94%)
3. Financial (23.61%)
4. Regulatory Process (18.10%)
5. Design (13.61%)
6. Services & Infrastructure (13.33%)
7. Short-Term Rental Accommodation (4.44%)

1. Density & Type of Housing

Of the 360 entries for expanding secondary suites, **160** (44.44%) responses mentioned density and/or types of housing. Of the 160 responses, 40% (64) had mixed feelings toward expanding secondary suites in that they thought it was needed but cited issues like parking, design, services & infrastructure. Others supported increasing density but not in the ways currently recommended (in Increasing Housing Options). *"I support the use of apartments and condos for denser housing but would prefer to not see an increase in coach houses and detached suites in single family home neighbourhoods."* and *"Build apartments and do not make single family neighbourhoods become a cluttered mess with cars causing further congestion."* Others supported suites in single family dwellings but not in townhomes or duplexes. *"Definitely support adding coach houses and suites on large lots. I do hesitate on duplexes and townhouses, because I think there's a tendency to have really small suites. Probably specifying a minimum size too, to avoid people converting closets or laundry rooms."*

Of the 160 comments on density & type of housing, 20% (32) were negative. Many of which mentioned the need to focus on single family dwellings instead of higher density models of housing. "*What we need is more single-family detached homes with yards to support FAMILIES. Suites, apartments and condos drive the price of homes UP and intensify the problems we are facing. We MUST focus on building single detached homes with yards to support families. That is the only way to improve Nanaimo. Full stop."*

Others felt the regulations didn't go far enough to support increasing housing options and felt other options are still needed. *"You're not doing enough. 800sq metres is a ridiculously large lot for 3 suites. Nanaimo needs to encourage people (but most likely developers) to get rid of the remaining mega lots in the city. Allow 3 suites on smaller (maybe 500sqm with 15m of frontage) lots and get the remaining giant plots of wasted land within the city to subdivide."* And *"Look into building micro suites and places for tiny homes." And "Allow*

residential rv parking somewhere in Nanaimo", "Consider new zoning possibilities for A) multiple small houses on a property OR B) a large main house plus multiple other small bedroom bath bunkhouse etc. This generation needs new ideas and methods to achieve home ownership and sense of community."

Of the 160 responses, 40% (64) were positive and supported the proposed increase in density. *"More suites are a great idea. There are already many illegal suites, better to allow them legally and accept that we need A LOT more than we currently have. This is an easy fix to the city's housing issues." And "IN FILLING IS THE KEY!",* and *"Strongly support efforts to increase density and reduce unused space. "*

2. Parking & Traffic

Of the 360 entries on expanding secondary suites, **115** (31.94%) mention parking. Of them, 80.87% (93) had mixed feelings toward expanding secondary suites because of parking. These comments reflect opinions like; *"my only concern is making sure there is adequate room for parking",* and *"I am concerned that parking for all of these added residents wouldn't be sufficient. I would like to see on-site parking be a requirement to fully accommodate the increase in vehicles. Nanaimo is not really a transit-oriented community, nor is it realistic to expect people to take transit these days for things like grocery shopping, school, work, daycare, etc."*

Of the 115 parking comments, 80.87% were not against parking altogether but felt that it was an issue that should be addressed before increasing allowances in secondary suites. Many felt that if parking was addressed, their support for this initiative would increase. *"Parking issues and road infrastructures is the reason I chose 'somewhat support' vs 'definitely support'".*

There was a particular concern over street parking in newer subdivisions. *"If the city is going to increase secondary suites, they need to look at their policies on parking. There needs to be enough parking provided on site and not rely on street parking. Driving through some of the newer neighbourhoods where everyone has suites is a nightmare. The roadway essentially becomes a one lane road. "*

Additional concerns included the lack of efficient transit systems in the city, *"My only fear is parking problems and congestion that result from increased density. That isn't reason enough to halt efforts at densification, but it's another compelling reason to invest in improvements in public transit that will allow more residents to ditch their cars."*

Of the 115 comments about parking, 13.04% (15) had negative feelings towards expanding secondary suites, in that they did not support the initiative due to parking concerns. *"Not enough parking and broader infrastructure to support all this infill"*, and *"I do not support this as Nanaimo already doesn't have adequate parking available for these extra suits. What*

this city is neglecting is that there is only a very small minority of people who ride bikes. Make more parking available for the suites you are wanting to add, and things would work better."

Of the 115 comments about parking, 6.09% (7) were positive in nature. Noting parking as an impediment to much needed development. *"On-site parking provides a serious barrier to developing these kinds of units and should be reduced as well." and "The lack of change to parking minimums means we still provide more space for cars than people. The removal of on-street parking and parking minimums would provide for more affordable housing for those that do not have cars. Most of my friends do not own a car. The parking spaces could be used for more housing or missing middle mixed use."*

3. Financial

Of the 360 entries on expanding secondary suites, **85** (23.61%) respondents identified financial reasons as a main concern or advantage. Of the 85 respondents, 40% (34) had mixed feelings toward the proposed changes. "*Assuming someone chooses to add secondary suites where do we think they will get the money. Only investors, developers and the well off will be able to do this. There should be interest free loans and tax-free building material costs so all home owners are on equal footing*."

Many respondents felt that even if these proposed changes are approved it would not be enough to help with the affordability crisis. *"More suites don't necessarily mean *more affordable* suites. Opening up new units doesn't help if they're priced above currently existing units. Relaxing rules on where rental units can go is great news for housing investors, who can buy single family homes to convert into multi-unit overpriced rentals. But no amount of new $2500/month 1 bedrooms will solve the affordability crisis."*

Many respondents felt as though there needed to be more incentives in place to encourage people to build additional units on their property. *"Having recently looked into building a detached suite on a property that is already zoned for one, there are so many bylaws and costs to factor in, it isn't feasible or affordable for us to do. Wondering if there could be incentives for homeowners who are zoned and have space, to do it?"*

Of the 85 respondents who identified financial reasons, 36.47% (31) felt negatively towards the idea of expanding secondary suites for various reasons. Some felt as though adding more units to the market won't decrease the price for the people who need them most. *"This will not decrease the cost of living. It will only serve people with investment properties by offsetting the cost of the increase in mortgages. Assuming the process in not capitalized on by investment companies."* Others felt like these proposed changes missed the mark entirely, citing; *"There needs to be more reasonably priced units available for rentals. Maybe offer some incentives for that. Paying over 2000.00 for a tiny two-*

bedroom place is ridiculous. Maybe consider co-ops so people have more incentive to take pride in their space."

Of the 85 respondents who identified financial reasons, 23.53% (20) felt that these changes would have a positive financial impact. *"This type of housing is a key component - it allows very quick "building" of homes often within existing structures and done completely by private individuals. While it cannot solve all problems, it can alleviate some stress on the rental market, and very inexpensively. It can also make house / townhouse purchases more affordable for those looking to buy a place and rent out part of it. Love these ideas." and "Allowing these types of things is fantastic for private homeowners as a low barrier means to increase income and support additional housing. This is exactly the type of thing the city should be doing. Great!"*

4. Regulatory Process

Of the 360 entries on expanding secondary suites, **65** (18.10%) commented on the regulatory process. *"Make it easier to build. Red tape for making new builds makes housing availability take longer and makes it more expensive."* Of the 65 comments on the regulatory process, 50.77% (33) had mixed feelings toward expanding secondary suites in that they believed it was necessary but expressed how important it is to reduce the steps needed in the process in order to speed up the development process. *"Before you consider these great initiatives, please speed up your building permit approval process."* Others mention the need to change other regulatory factors like building height, landlord versus tenant rights, and other 'affordable' forms of housing like tiny homes. *"Create zoning to legalize tiny houses, both existing and to be built."* And *"Building Height is very restrictive for detached suites. Ht. regulations work for flat lots. Slope lots can be very challenging. Energy regulations require more roof insulation forcing higher height."*.

Of the 65 comments on the regulatory process, **25** (38.46%) had negative feelings toward the recommended changes. *"Municipal regulations to build a secondary suite in existing homes are extremely punitive. These need to be fixed, or this is a wasted exercise."* and *"Stop putting unnecessary build items into homes driving up costs. Make them as basic as possible for people to afford them."*

Of the 65 comments on the regulatory process, **7** (10.77%) had positive feelings towards the recommended changes and felt as though the city, Province and Federal governments should be doing everything in their power to make housing more accessible. *"CMHC needs to return to a mandate of providing affordable housing. All levels of government and advocacy groups should be promoting this."* and *"I support our local, provincials and Federal Governments putting their efforts to move towards affordability and before this problem gets serious, out of control. I urge local government to ease bylaws a bit and*

process Development Permits and Building Permits faster, so developers and builders can help you to bring more units into the market."

5. Design

Of the 360 entries on expanding secondary suites, **49** (13.61%) mentioned design features including green space, setbacks and height. Of the 49 who mention design, 63.27% (31) had mixed feelings about expanding secondary suites. Many felt strongly that design considerations ought to be a part of the process. *"We need to be assured that there are appropriate form and character design guidelines in place that, for example, manage the parking so that it is appropriately landscaped; no parking variances to be allowed; that windows be 5-10 metres from the lot line; height should not exceed 2 storeys; the principal house should be higher than the detached suite; massing, footprints and heights should complement existing neighbourhood patterns and forms; and, most importantly, require that the applicant discuss the proposal with surrounding property owners, residents and the relevant neighbourhood association."*

26.53% (13) of respondents felt negatively toward expanding secondary suite regulations for reasons related to design. *"Quality of life has to have some bearing on what is obviously your intention. Not everyone wants to or should have to live in a shoebox, just because it is "affordable"*. Others felt housing should not take precedent over green space, *"Please stop taking land away from urban farms to Create housing. Short term financial gain is not going to age well when we have no farms left."*

10.20% (5) of respondents felt positively toward expanding secondary suite regulations for design reasons including the ample space in their existing home that could be used for a suite. *"These changes are much needed! Our own home is a spacious duplex which could easily host two more tenants/families, with plenty of room for an additional detached suite. And I strongly support the idea of ensuring that additional buildings in the Old City area fit in with the heritage style of existing housing."*

6. Services & Infrastructure

Of the 360 entries on expanding secondary suites, **48** (13.33%) mentioned services & infrastructure as a concern. Of the 48, 45.83% (22) of respondents supported expanding secondary suite regulations provided there are the appropriate services and infrastructure necessary to do so. *"There seems to be a lot of discussion around increasing density in our city. Which on the whole makes a lot of sense. However where is the discussion around increasing services to accommodate the influx of people and families. Such as parkland, schools (the majority of our schools of over capacity as it is), and Emergency services. I am also concerned that many current homeowners will not be able to actually build out their*

property's potential without financial incentives and support from the province or municipality. Which could lead to a glut of homes being sold to developers and in turn loosing diversity of homeowners. As a city we should be encouraging long-term homeownership, hopefully multigenerational. I would also like to see density increasing in all areas of the city."

Of the 48 respondents who mentioned services & infrastructure, 54.17% (26) felt negatively about expanding secondary suites. *"I don't feel more housing should be added to bring in more people until the city figures out services for people moving to the area such as room in schools, doctors, hospital room (I waited in emergency for 10 hours in August), policing, water, garbage. The city isn't handling the population we have and all they are doing is putting up taxes!"* and *"Increasing density will place a burden on existing infrastructure which meets the needs of current residents. Adding to that infrastructure will be costly and future increase the very high taxes Nanaimo currently has. This is effectively asking for current taxpayers to subsidize this increased density as well as reduce the quality of life in existing neighbourhoods."*

None of the 48 respondents answered positively with respect to services & infrastructure.

7. Short Term Rental Accommodation

Of the 360 entries on expanding secondary suites, **16** (4.44%) comments mention short term rentals. All 16 comments express concern over expanding secondary suites without also regulating short-term rentals. *"I think the regulation of Airbnb/vacation rentals would be important to protect additional rental suites". and "This may go some way to address housing need however, alongside of those short-term rentals must be addressed. We don't need new units swallowed into the short-term Airbnb etc. market."*

Summary of findings for 'Expanding Secondary Suites'

The primary comment in the survey responses for expanding secondary suites was related to density and type of housing (160). 128 respondents who talked about density and/or type of housing spoke positively about it. Half of them supported the initiative but had concerns related to the other theme areas. Primarily, parking, finance, design and services and infrastructure. The second most prevalent theme people talked about was parking and traffic (51). Of them, a resounding 80.87% (41) said they would support the initiative if parking was considered. The third most popular theme was finances (38). 40% of the responses said they support the initiative but felt it would not do anything for affordability. 23.53% felt it would positively have an effect on the affordability crisis. Short-term rentals had the fewest comments (2).

Adding Infill Housing in Existing Neighbourhoods | Quantitative Data

When asked whether or not they supported pre-zoning existing single family (R1/R1b) and duplex (R4) lots within 1km buffer from downtown, and in the 'Neighbourhood' designated areas in City Plan, to the R5 (Three- & Four-Unit Residential zone), **56.1%** (477) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

56.1% (477) Definitely support	20.2% (172) Somewhat support	4.6% (39) were neutral	5.6% (48) somewhat do not support	13.5% (115) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported reducing the R5 minimum lot size from 1,200 m² to 800 m², in order to expand the eligibility of lots that can build a fourth unit, **50.5%** (428) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

50.5% (428) Definitely support	19.3% (164) Somewhat support	5.9% (50) were neutral	8.6% (73) somewhat do not support	15.7% (133) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported reducing the R4 minimum lot size from 700 m² to 600 m², and the front yard setback from 4.5 m to 3m, **48.2%** (408) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

48.2% (408) Definitely support	22.9% (194) Somewhat support	7.1% (60) were neutral	8.5% (72) somewhat do not support	13.3% (113) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported reducing the R5 minimum lot size from 800 m² to 600 m² and the front yard setback from 4.5 m to 3 m, **46.2%** (392) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

46.2% (392) Definitely support	20.4% (173) Somewhat support	9.3% (79) were neutral	9.2% (78) somewhat do not support	14.9% (126) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported reducing the R6 minimum lot size from 1,500 m² to 1,200 m², and the front yard setback from 4.5 m to 3 m, **48.3%** (407) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

48.3% (407) Definitely support	19.8% (167) Somewhat support	10.1% (85) were neutral	8.3% (70) somewhat do not support	13.4% (113) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported reducing the R13, R14 and R15 minimum front yard setbacks from 4.5 m and 6 m to 3 m, **45.3%** (382) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

45.3% (382) Definitely support	20.3% (171) Somewhat support	10.4% (88) were neutral	10% (84) somewhat do not support	14.1% (119) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported changes to the R13, R14, and R15 zones to permit additional units and floor area on a lot where a house in a dwelling built before 1975 is preserved, **54.3%** (460) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

54.3% (460) Definitely support	20.7% (175) Somewhat support	11% (93) were neutral	5.9% (50) somewhat do not support	8.1% (69) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they supported changes to the Row House Residential (R7) zone to allow both fee-simple rowhouses and townhouses, **51.9%** (441) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

51.9% (441) Definitely support	22.1% (188) Somewhat support	13.1% (111) were neutral	4.4% (37) somewhat do not support	8.5% (72) Definitely do not support

Adding Infill Housing in Existing Neighbourhoods | Qualitative Data

Qualitative data was collected through survey comments. A total of **265** entries were provided for adding infill in existing neighbourhoods. From those comments themes were identified including:

1. Design (53.47%)
2. Density & Type of Housing (26.04%)
3. Parking & Traffic (23.02%)
4. Overcrowding & Quality of Life (21.51%)
5. Financial (14.72%)
6. Services & Infrastructure (6.04%)
7. Regulatory Process (5.28%)

1. Design

Of the 265 comments received on adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, **94** (35.47%) mentioned design considerations like parking, green space and setbacks.

Of the 94 comments on design, 53.19% (50) had mixed feelings associated with adding infill in existing neighbourhoods. Many felt as though increasing housing options, and more specifically, adding infill was important but that it must be done in tandem with adding more green space like parks and green roofs. *"While doing all this, we must ensure that lots aren't totally hardscaped but have shade trees, hedges, space for vegetable gardens, and significant amounts of native plants. Green roofs a plus."*

Another common theme was having an appropriate amount of parking available for residents (both existing and new) and visitors in infill developments. *"My concerns about lot size reduction are ensuring that there are enough services and green space. Too many developments are being built without sufficient parking (I live with disability). Transit is also insufficient and would need to be improved."*

Of the 94 respondents who mentioned design considerations, 29.79% (28) felt negatively toward adding infill in existing neighbourhoods. Many felt this would only decrease the availability of green space and parking. *"I think that 4 units on a residential lot is too many especially when reducing the lot size requirement - creating problems with parking and limiting outdoor space around the buildings."*

Of the 94 responses, 17.02% (16) felt positively about adding infill and suggested reducing setbacks could help save water. *"Reducing front yard setbacks is a great idea: front yards are much less useable for occupants than back yards. Additionally, less front yard means less water-hungry lawns."*

2. Density & Type of Housing

Of the 265 comments on adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, **69** (26.04%) respondents mentioned density and/or type of housing. Of them, 44.93% (31) had mixed feelings around adding infill in existing neighbourhoods. Many of them agreed it should happen but that it ought to be throughout the whole City and not just focused on the downtown area. *"In looking at this map, it appears the city is continually focusing on adding density to the downtown core and the Southend while making few changes to the north end. If you're going to encourage triplexes and fourplexes via pre-zoning, broaden the map to encompass more areas of the city."*

Of the 69 comments, 23.19% (16) had negative feelings toward adding more density. Many felt that with density comes added crime, and poor quality of life. *"While the City seeks to increase density, the reality is that density causes all the social ills of our times. Without a proper plan to support people with mental health services and to address the rising crime rates that accompany increased density, I cannot support attempts to increase population density!"*

Of the 69 comments, 31.88% (22) felt the added density in existing neighbourhoods was a positive thing. In fact, many respondents suggested the proposed changes didn't go far enough to encourage density. *"This doesn't go far enough, we should start pre-zoning areas in corridor zones in the OCP for R8 and R9, like in the Wakesiah Corridor by VIU. The CAC contribution is marginal when considering the annual property tax base-increase you would get."* And *"I support the above measures fully, although I think upzoning buffer radius about downtown should be larger, and setback limits should be reduced more than proposed."*

3. Parking & Traffic

Of the 265 entries on adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, **61** (23.02%) mention parking. Of the 61 comments, 55.74% (34) had mixed feelings toward adding infill in existing neighbourhoods because of parking concerns. Many respondents expressed support for the initiative as long as parking was also considered. *"My only concern with Infill Initiatives is ensuring that there is ample parking for renters/owners in multi-family dwellings and their existing neighbors."* And *"Again, parking and transit have to be improved to accommodate density."*

Of the 61 comments on parking, 32.79% (20) had negative feelings toward adding infill because of the parking issues already facing the City. *"Parking is already a problem in the areas suggested for these changes, with many residences already having 3, 4 or more vehicles-each resident in a household tends to have their own vehicle. These amendments would significantly exacerbate this problem."*

Of the 61 comments on parking, 11.48% (7) had positive feelings toward adding infill in existing neighbourhoods. All of whom saw parking as disadvantageous to increasing housing options. *"Setbacks and parking minimums are detrimental to the construction of affordable housing in cities, and reducing (and, ideally, removing) them will help improve housing variety across the city."*

4. Overcrowding & Quality of Life

Of the 265 comments received on adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, **57** (21.51%) mentioned overcrowding and poor quality of life. Of the 57 comments, 8.30% had mixed feelings toward adding infill and suggested green space and communal living areas could help decrease the feeling of over crowdedness. 13.21% (35) had negative feelings toward adding infill as it would likely result in overcrowding. *"I do not want to be overwhelmed by the proposed density in so many areas of the city. Parking/vehicle conflict with pedestrian safety, height/mass of buildings overwhelming pedestrian experience/walkability of neighbourhoods."* And *"pushing people closer to noisy streets punishes people who already have little peace and privacy due to poverty (excuse the unintentional alliteration)."*

5. Financial

Of the 265 entries on adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, **39** (14.72%) mention financial implications and/or incentives. Of these, 5.28% (14) had mixed feelings around adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, in that they felt support around the recommendations but acknowledged the additional units would need to be "affordable". *"All my answers to the prior questions depend on the affordability of properties + buildings and/or rentals on those properties. (If they are unaffordable, you're going to need to re-think everything.)."* and *"we need more supportive and truly 'affordable' housing."*

Of the 39 comments, 6.04% (16) felt negatively toward adding infill, citing issues like caps on rent, high taxes, and over regulation. *"I don't support any housing measures -- particularly zoning measures, such as densification -- that will only result in increased land prices unless true affordability is built into the housing measures, e.g., rental rates for 80 per cent of rental units to be no more than 30 per cent of household income."* And *"Again what is the point of building more if we can't afford the rent"*.

Of the 39 comments, 3.40% (9) felt adding infill in existing neighbourhoods would have positive financial effects. *"Awesome. Minimum lot sizes and setbacks should be smaller throughout Nanaimo. This will encourage more affordable housing types and more efficient usages of space, and also encourage a more walkable city."* And *"More affordable housing is needed and if this helps, then yes."*

6. Services & Infrastructure

Of the 265 comments received on adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, **16** (6.04%) mentioned services and infrastructure as a concern. Of them, 3.77% had mixed feelings toward adding infill, citing issues like proximity to services, adequate parking infrastructure and traffic. *"Again, some of the neighbourhoods where the infill is being proposed do not have any services within walking distance (Departure Bay, north of Long Lake). Adding density here will just increase congestion. Keep it focused in areas with services and transit."*

Of the 16 comments, 2.26% had negative feelings toward adding infill based on inadequate services and infrastructure.

7. Regulatory Process

Of the 265 comments received on adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, **14** (5.28%) mentioned the regulatory process. Many suggest existing development processes are an impediment to the housing crisis and that governments should simplify their regulations.

"Having been involved with 2 city developments (one in the old city), I found the rezoning process the most onerous. Hopefully these changes would make the process smoother for future developers." Others mention the need for 'transparent' processes and that pre-zoning land would take away their democratic rights. *"No pre-zoning unless the public can have input on individual projects! Zoning without public input is like giving someone a blank cheque."*

Of the 14 comments on the regulatory process, 3.02% (8) felt mixed feelings toward adding infill in existing neighbourhoods in that they felt development processes need to be streamlined in order to facilitate more development. *"I'm neutral on all of this because there are simply too many regulations. Too many zones, too much work for bureaucrats at City Hall and too many impediments to getting homes built."* And *"pre-zoning will not result in on-the-ground change if City of Nanaimo procedures and staff practices make the prospect unpalatable, onerous, or time consuming. Concerns about the design of development can be mitigated with effective form and character guidelines. Unfortunately, the City of Nanaimo relies on guidelines from the 1990's and treats them as regulatory requirements rather than a tool to ensure quality and fit."*

Of the 14 comments, 2.26% (6) felt negatively towards pre-zoning land as a method of adding infill in existing neighbourhoods. *"I do not support pre-zoning R1 lots to R5. By pre-zoning, the city is taking away the right of a neighbourhood to voice its approval of or concern about a 4-unit development particularly when there are heritage residences involved. There are 2 options:*

1. the city retains the R1 Zoning and continue to use the R5 spot zoning process to ensure that there is a public hearing on the proposed development; or

2. the city builds in a community consultation process to the R5 zone where developers are required to submit a Development Permit Application and are mandated to review their proposal with the neighbourhood; and the neighbourhood association is formally asked by the city to comment on the suitability of the project and those comments are contained in a staff report/ decision about the project."

Summary of Findings for 'Adding Infill in Existing Neighbourhoods'

Of the 7 themes identified in the comments on adding infill in existing neighbourhoods, design was the most frequently used. 94 respondents commented on elements of design including having adequate green space and parking. The majority felt positive about the changes provided design considerations were also part of the process. The second most common theme was density and type of housing (69). Again, the majority of respondents supported the changes and encouraged that they go even further to include areas in the north. Parking and traffic were the third most discussed theme (61), with the majority of

respondents supporting the initiative provided parking was considered in its implementation.

Expanding Family-Friendly Housing Options | Quantitative Data

When asked whether or not they supported changes to require all new, multi-unit residential developments of 10 or more units, to provide a minimum 30% of the units as 2+ bedrooms, and 10% as 3+ bedrooms, **59.5%** (506) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

59.5% (506) Definitely support	20.9% (178) Somewhat support	8.5% (72) were neutral	4.5% (38) somewhat do not support	6.6% (56) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they support incentivizing additional 2 and 3+ bedroom units by allowing for a density bonus on parcels zoned for multi-family if the units are within 400 m of a public school and if the units are ground oriented, **60.8%** (517) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

60.8% (517) Definitely support	20.9% (178) Somewhat support	8.8% (75) were neutral	3.2% (27) somewhat do not support	6.3% (54) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they support amending the 'Consideration of a Parking Variance Policy', to include reducing parking requirements for underground parking spaces when 3-bedroom units are proposed in a multi-unit development, **36.2%** (305) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

36.2% (305) Definitely support	16.2% (136) Somewhat support	12.2% (103) were neutral	13.8% (116) somewhat do not support	21.6% (182) Definitely do not support

Expanding Family-Friendly Housing Options | Qualitative Data

Qualitative data was collected through survey comments. A total of **260** entries were provided for expanding family friendly housing. From those comments themes were identified including:

1. Parking and Traffic (52.31%)
2. Density and Type of Housing (25%)
3. Services and Infrastructure (20.77%)
4. Financial (15%)

5. Regulatory Process (10%)
6. Incentives (5%)
7. Livability / Quality of Life (1.92%)

1. Parking and Traffic

Of the 260 comments received on expanding family friendly housing, **136** (52.31%) mentioned parking and traffic. Of them, 38.24% (52) had mixed feelings toward parking and using it as an incentive to encourage more 3-bedroom units. Many respondents felt as though there should be more emphasis on expanding transit infrastructure and bike lanes. *"Reducing parking only makes sense to me if simultaneously applied with either extensive bicycle infrastructure (within and around the building) and/or linkage to existing transit infrastructure or designated 'shared vehicle/coop' spaces nearby."*

Of the 136 comments on parking and traffic, 49.26% (67) had negative feelings toward reducing parking required as an incentive for including family friendly units in multi-unit developments, based on concerns for parking and traffic. *"Re parking - a 3-bedroom unit should still require multiple parking spots. The unit(s) could easily be occupied by a family with 3 drivers - they won't all be people with young children."*

12.50% (17) felt more positive about reducing parking for family friendly units and beyond. *"I know that parking requirements lead to reducing housing units due to the high cost (especially underground parking). A question for the city to consider: "What is more important, housing for vehicles or housing for people?"* and *"Reduce parking requirements for all uses not just to 'support families'."*

2. Density and Type of Housing

Of the 260 comments received on expanding family friendly housing, **65** (25%) mention density and/or housing typology. They used words like 'density', 'units', or other forms of family-friendly housing like townhomes. Of the 65 comments on density, 36.92% (24) had mixed feelings toward expanding family friendly, often not opposing the recommendations but suggesting other forms of housing. *"Co-op housing. I see new single-family houses on huge lots in areas with great access to nature (i.e., near Westwood Lake) and wonder why you don't see co-op housing in these areas like you do in other countries (in my experience, Denmark). I think the city should buy these lots when they become available and set aside for co-op housing. Or rezone certain areas to only allow co-op housing and let people organize."* Others suggested family friendly housing is important but should not negate sufficient parking.

Of the 65 comments, 18.46% (12) had negative feelings toward multi-unit family friendly buildings. *"Everything in this survey misses the point entirely. We need to issue permits*

for the expansion and development of the city via single family detached homes with yards, non-strata, playgrounds and sidewalks. We need to stop wasting money building fancy parking lots and build HOMES not suites, not apartments not condos not townhouses and not rowhouses. Family homes. With yards, garages, fencing, driveways, space for gardens and kids to play. That's the ticket, that's the future. High density residential living is poisoning us all. Thankyou."

Of the 65 comments on density, 44.62% (29) felt positively toward the type of density and typology proposed. *"Anything to increase supply of 3-bedroom units is needed!"* In fact, many respondents who supported the proposed changes suggested the required percentage of family friendly units be increased from 10% to 30% and above. *"I think the percentages of required multi-bedroom units could be higher. In a 10-unit development, the 10% 3-bedroom requirement is only 1 unit. I think the 3-bedroom requirement should be increased to 20% so that combined with the 30% 2-bedroom requirement, 50% of all new multi-unit builds will be family-friendly."*

3. Services and Infrastructure

Of the 260 comments received on expanding family friendly housing, **54** (20.77%) were about services and infrastructure. Of them, 48.15% (26) had mixed feelings toward the recommended changes and felt that, specifically with a reduction in parking requirements, other forms of more active transportation should be prioritized. *"We need mixed use buildings that provide services and reduce traffic such as allowing expanded definition of eligible home businesses. Density increases need to be coupled with increased access to public transit, improved active transportation infrastructure and access to services (food, childcare, health care) that are walkable/bikeable to reduce single vehicle traffic. Side streets are not equipped to accommodate multiple households per lot each having multiple cars - many of which already lack a safe walking shoulder."*

Of the 54 comments on services and infrastructure, 37.04% (20) felt negatively toward the proposed recommendations, almost entirely related to the reduction in parking requirements as incentive for 3-bedroom units. *"There is not enough public transportation and Nanaimo services are to spread out to do without a vehicle so reduced parking spaces only causes conflicts between neighbors and increased isolation for those who have disabilities."*

Of the 54 comments on services and infrastructure, 14.81% (8) felt positively about the recommended changes. All 8 respondents mentioned parking. "*Yes, reduce parking spaces especially when near bus routes."*

4. Financial

Of the 260 comments received on expanding family friendly housing, **39** (15%) mentioned 'money', 'affordability', 'income', etc. Of the 39 responses, 6.54% had mixed feelings toward the proposed changes. Many respondents did not oppose the recommendations directly but did question whether or not this would help with making the units affordable. *"We need more stock of subsidized housing units for families, specifically rent geared to income. Providing incentives, as well as partnering with BC Housing and non-profits is needed. There is a lot of discrimination in the private rental market towards families, even more so if they are on income or disability assistance. "*

6.92% felt negatively about the proposed changes, and 1.54% had positive feelings. *"Parking stalls cost $100,000 per stall for most multi-family projects. If we want to incentivize anything from multi-family developers, this is a great place to start."*

5. Regulatory Process

Of the 260 comments received on expanding family friendly housing, **26** (10%) mentioned bureaucracy and process. Of them, 1.54% (4) had mixed feelings about the proposed changes, 13 (5%) had negative feelings, and 3.46% (9) had positive feelings. Many of the comments suggested that lengthy development processes are a hindrance to construction, whereas others suggested parking requirements should not exist.

"Parking minimums are one of the most detrimental zoning policies Nanaimo has. It gatekeeps housing projects by requiring developers and mom-and-pop landlords to build arbitrary parking stalls. Not everybody wants or needs parking -- letting housing developers and mom-and-pop landlords decide how much parking to build will reduce hurdles to housing development across the city."

6. Incentives

Of the 260 comments received on expanding family friendly housing, **13** (5%) mentioned incentives. The majority of which suggested incentives were a positive way to encourage more family friendly housing.

"I think the idea of creating family friendly spaces is critical and therefore the incentive ideas proposed would allow for the developer to create many multi-unit facilities to support families and build a community. "

7. Livability / Quality of Life

Of the 260 comments received on expanding family friendly housing, **5** (1.92%) respondents commented on livability and quality of life. Some of the comments included:

- *"I think it is really important for all multi units to provide pleasant outside spaces and gardens for growing alongside their units. Also, I am not sure families will be able to afford these 2/3-bedroom units that would be built. Not sure this will fix the problem for affordable housing for families or others."*
- *"Require open space and children and youth playscape in multiple family dwelling developments that have 3 or more-bedroom units."*
- *"Higher density is not family friendly, that screams issues for mental health."*

Summary of Findings for 'Expanding Family Friendly Housing'

Of the 7 themes identified in the comments on expanding family friendly housing, parking was the most frequently used (136). The majority of whom spoke negatively about incentivizing family friendly units by requiring less parking. The second most common theme was density and type of housing (65), with the majority of respondents feeling positive about adding more family friendly units. The third most common theme was services and infrastructure (54), with the majority of respondents feeling as though they could support the initiative provided there were enough services and infrastructure to support the increase in density.

Creating More Adaptable Housing Units | Quantitative Data

When asked whether or not they support changes that would require multi-unit developments of 10 or more units, to provide 50% of the residential units as basic adaptable units in accordance with the BC Building Code, **49.6%** (419) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

49.6% (419) Definitely support	20.8% (176) Somewhat support	15.7% (133) were neutral	7.6% (64) somewhat do not support	6.3% (53) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they support changes to require 100% of the housing units in a Seniors Congregate Housing development meet the basic adaptable unit standards in accordance with the BC Building Code, **68.2%** (577) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

68.2% (577) Definitely support	16.1% (136) Somewhat support	10% (85) were neutral	2.1% (18) somewhat do not support	3.5% (30) Definitely do not support

When asked whether or not they support amending the Zoning Bylaw Schedule D (density bonus criteria) for adaptable units from requiring a minimum of 10% adaptable units, to

requiring more than 50% adaptable units in multi-unit buildings, **43.4%** (367) of participants said they 'definitely support' the idea.

43.4% (367) Definitely support	21.3% (180) Somewhat support	18.3% (155) were neutral	9.3% (79) somewhat do not support	7.6% (64) Definitely do not support

Creating More Adaptable Housing Units | Qualitative Data

Qualitative data was collected through survey comments. A total of **174** entries were provided for creating more adaptable units. From those comments themes were identified including:

1. Accessibility & Design (25.88%)
2. Financial (23.56%)
3. Targets (14.37%)
4. Regulatory Process (8.62%)
5. Incentives (5.17%)
6. Livability & Quality of Life (3.45%)

1. Accessibility & Design

Of the 174 comments received, **45** (25.88%) commented on accessibility and design. 13 (28.90%) had mixed feelings about requiring more adaptable units. Citing issues primarily with design of the units. "*Lots of time in non-profit, the adaptable units sit empty because they are above the 2nd floor and make it difficult for folks to escape during fire/emergencies builders need to put some common sense into projects.*"

4.44% (2) had negative feelings toward the recommendations, while 66.67% (30) supported the proposed changes and accessibility in general. "*There is a great misconception that adaptable or accessible units are for special *other* people. They are for all of us, as we will inevitably need them (if we are lucky). Additionally, many accessibility features are great for people who don't consider themselves disabled, such as people using strollers, or temporarily injured people. Who among us hasn't used a lever doorknob to open a door with their elbow, while balancing a coffee and a laptop?*"

"I am strongly in support of initiatives that enable aging in place, and requiring adaptable units is great. I would love to see the city (and province, of course) explore more ways to facilitate at-home living for our aging population."

2. Financial

Of the 174 comments received, **41** (23.56%) mentioned money. Of the 41 comments, 34.15% (14) had mixed feelings toward the recommended changes in an effort to create more adaptable units. They agreed adaptable units are important but worry what it will do to the affordability of them. *"Accessibility/adaptable units are important, but this must be balanced against the likelihood that costs for such units (and perhaps the entire project) likely will increase."* And *"I agree everyone needs a home but putting too many building restrictions drives up builder cost significantly which is then passed to the buyer."*

Of the 41 comments, 51.22% (21) felt negatively toward the recommended changes for financial reasons. In some cases, the respondents were not against providing adaptable units but thought the cost associated with such units outweighed their benefit. *"I am not against adaptable units. I am against government dictating them, contradicts your affordability priority as adaptable units cost more."*

14.63% (6) felt positively about the proposed changes. *"All new construction should be built to accommodate potential mobility issues when they are constructed. Units should be adapted and not adaptable. Doing so is less expensive and disruptive. This should include level access, three-foot doorways…. Accessible construction cannot be limited only to specific apartments or condos. Those with mobility issues (i.e., grandparents) often visit houses and townhouses that are not readily accessible. If they can get in, they may not be able to even use the toilet if the toilet is on the upper floor…"*

"I am homeless because of the cost of housing but also because accessibility is a big issue - making me climb steps with my walker is cruel."

3. Targets

Of the 174 comments received on creating more adaptable units, **25** (14.37%) talked about the proposed targets. The majority of those respondents, 19 (76%), had mixed feelings toward the proposed changes, in that they felt providing adaptable units was a good thing, but thought the increase was too much. Many said they felt 30% was more realistic. "*The 50% threshold is too high. 20 - 30% is more reasonable and would not increase the cost to build as much as 50%."* And *"50% is too much, 30% is sufficient in both Schedule D and Question 19."*

4. Regulatory Process

Of the 174 comments received on creating more adaptable units, **15** (8.62%) talked about the regulatory process. Of them, 11 (6.32%) said the intention is good but that heavy restrictions will only exacerbate the problem. 4 (2.30%) said we should stop regulating it all

together. *"You still want to regulate and re-regulate. Just let the building industry design and build. Get rid of the design committee process. "*

5. Incentives

Of the 174 comments received, **9** (5.17%) mentioned incentives. Many of whom said there needs to be more incentive for developers to do this type of construction. If not, it will only increase unaffordability.

6. Livability & Quality of Life

Of the 174 comments received on creating more adaptable units, **6** (3.45%) mentioned livability and/or quality of life concerns. All of whom expressed concern over things like comfort, availability and health. *"If we house all of the old people from Vancouver that's a pretty good way to overcrowd our hospitals and care homes. I hope there are plans to expand those too."*

Summary of Findings on Creating More Adaptable Housing Units

The majority of respondents who commented on creating more adaptable housing units mentioned accessibility and design most frequently (45). Of them, the majority felt positively about adding more spaces for folks who need them in our community. A close second theme was money (41). Most of the respondents who mentioned money (12.07%) spoke negatively about the idea of requiring more adaptable units in multi-unit developments solely for the reason that it has the potential to drive up the cost of construction. The third most common theme in creating more adaptable housing units was 'targets'. 14.37% of respondents felt the proposed increase in the number of required adaptable units was too high.

General Themes from Survey Results

Consistent themes emerged throughout the qualitative data from one topic area to the next. There were two themes that were consistent throughout all four topic areas – financial or monetary concerns including doubts that these changes will have any effect on affordability. And the regulatory process, or over regulation, being a burden on affordability. Although parking was a major theme in the first three topic areas, it was less of a concern in 'creating adaptable units'. Still, parking was the most frequently noted concern in all of the responses received.

Of those comments received on parking within the first two initiatives (expanding secondary suites and adding infill), the majority had mixed feelings. Respondents felt they could support the changes provided parking was accounted for. Some even suggested parking as a major impediment to increasing housing options and should in fact be reduced. Whereas, with respect to the comments received about expanding family friendly housing, parking was commented on negatively. In this initiative, parking was proposed as an incentive to promote family-friendly housing, by allowing reduced parking to be considered for underground parking spaces for 3-bedroom units in a multi-unit development. This incentive would help developers with the additional financial cost that is often associated with underground parking. Suffice it to say, respondents weren't against expanding family friendly units for this reason, rather they were not in support of using parking as an incentive to build more of them.

The second most common theme focused on density and the type of housing proposed. The majority of respondents who mentioned density and/or type of housing in their response fell within the 'mixed' or 'positive' reaction, sentiment or feeling toward the topic. The overall consensus was that density, when done properly, is a positive thing that could help with many issues the city is facing including homelessness and affordability. Many felt as though the proposed changes don't go far enough and that we should be doing more to allow alternative forms of housing including tiny homes and co-ops. Additionally, there was a sentiment toward proposing more density in the North End of Nanaimo. Of those who mentioned density and/or type of housing, many also mentioned other themes like parking and traffic and services and infrastructure. The three seem to be intertwined in peoples' thoughts toward increasing housing options.

Issues surrounding financial implications were the third most relevant theme in all responses received. The majority of respondents felt as though these changes would have little to no change with respect to making housing affordable. Although the Increasing Housing Options initiative was specific in not using terms like 'affordable housing' and instead using language like 'attainable', it was clear from the comments received, that affordable housing is top of mind for residents.

Stakeholder Feedback | Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI)

On September 6th, 2023, staff presented the recommended changes to the ACAI and received the following feedback/comments.

- Committee expressed the need to consider basic accessibility requirements in new construction (e.g., require main floor bathroom and wider hallways); it's costly to retrofit and there is landlord resistance to allowing tenants to retrofit to suit needs.
- Question raised: Could we require ground-oriented front entry suites in townhouses?

- Consider accessible requirements in secondary suites and detached suites.
- Challenges identified:
    - Real Estate Investment Trust (REITs) not renting to people unless their income is "3x" the rent amount (limiting factor in terms of attainable housing)
    - How do we ensure 3+ bed units are being used by families not just groups of people e.g., students.
- Parking supply and use of parking on-site (not impacting on-street) is a concern.

Stakeholder Feedback | Developer Workshop

On September 13th, 2023, Staff presented the recommended changes to members of the development community. 97 people were invited to attend the hybrid meeting, 14 were in attendance. The following feedback/comments were received.

<u>Secondary Suites & Infill</u>

- Stratifying detached secondary suites to allow the sale of the unit. It would be the perfect "starter" unit. If we called them something else the BC Building Code would allow the stratification.
- Many building schemes in the city limit the lot to one SFD. They are very hard to get rid of.
- The city should consider not requiring commercial building permits for infill housing (4 or more units). The process is long and expensive.
- Concern about staff resources. This has the potential to increase the number of permits.
- Having two heights in one zone is frustrating. 7m is challenging when trying to do a 3/12 storey building, etc.
- For smaller SFD sites consider an increase in impermeable surface coverage.
- Townhouse zones have been difficult to make viable. Height can be an issue especially when trying to make green roofs or solar panels. Designs are shifting to flatter or less sloped because of it.

<u>Adaptable Housing</u>

- The increase in unit size to accommodate adaptability will make the project financially very difficult. It's a big ask to go from 0 to 50. It would be better to require some outright accessible units.

- Definition of adaptability is different depending on where you look. Be clear about what is required.
- Supportive of adaptable units but concerned over the amount that is required.
- Need to consider other allowances (variances) to permit these types of units (e.g., variance to parking for handy dart, size of parking spaces, landscape strip, etc.)

Family-Friendly

- There aren't enough incentives to do family friendly units. Parking also dictates the number of units.
- It's an affordability issue not a numbers issue. It's not the developer who will end up paying – it's the renter.
- Pulling back parking requirements in walkable areas. Incentivize underground parking.
- Average rent in Nanaimo is upwards of $3 a foot.
- Don't incentive more family friendly units by requiring less parking. Family units need more parking than a single occupant.
- Projects on smaller lots with 12 2-bedroom units are not economically feasible. 10 is arbitrary. The number should be higher (25-30).
- Developers are getting requests for 1-bedroom units.
- Tenure could determine the required number of parking spots. A 3-bedroom rental unit could be rented with 1 parking space but would struggle to sell a 3-bedroom unit with 1 parking space.

Stakeholder Feedback | Special Mayor's Leaders' Table

On September 14th, 2023, Staff presented the recommended changes to the Mayor's Leaders' Table. All four initiatives were unanimously supported by the Mayor's Leaders' Tables. The following comments/feedback were received.

Secondary Suites & Infill

- Support for the work done by Staff.
- Concerns regarding parking, such as the additional cost it adds to the developer.
- The Parking Bylaw dates from 2018 which is before our current Official Community Plan
- A lot of the City's infill sites are brownfield sites; therefore, limited to surface parking.

- Council can consider parking variances on a case-by-case basis; however, it adds time to the process.

Creating More Family-Friendly Housing

- Suggesting that many of these amendments be directed to the corridors.
- When designing units beyond the corridors, design them in such a way that the site can be converted over time.
- Significant change in demand for parking between rental and strata units
- Potential opportunity to lease School District land to BC Housing which would be more tenable than using City parkland.
- Builders will build what the market wants, and affordability is market driven.

Increasing Adaptable Housing

Table discussion took place regarding the cost of adaptable units and recognizing that the added costs create concern for affordability.

Stakeholder Feedback | Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

On September 14th, 2023, Staff presented the recommended changes to the DAP. A motion was passed: It was moved and seconded that the Mayor's Leaders' Table support Staff's proposed amendments to "City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500" related to infill housing and secondary suite regulations, increasing adaptable housing, and increasing family-friendly housing. The motion carried unanimously. In addition, the DAP included the following recommendations:

Secondary Suites & Infill

- Consider the possibility of having one suite on top of another located in a secondary building on a property.
- Review the tree bylaw to determine if infill and additional suites will reduce the tree coverage.
- Look into the possibility of having flexible front and rear yard setbacks; and
- Ensure that there are guidelines in place to ensure consistent form and character within a neighbourhood.

Creating More Family Friendly Housing

- Consider if there is sufficient outdoor amenity space when adding more family-friendly units.
- Consider issues around increased off-street parking in areas with more children; and
- Need to review parking variances.

Stakeholder Feedback | Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network

On October 4th, 2023, Staff presented the recommended changes to the Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network. The following feedback/comments and questions were received.

- Concern about impact on light and views on existing homeowners.
- Concern about how this impacts certain areas with historic homes. How is historic character going to be maintained with new development.
- Concern that on-road parking will become an issue (see Vancouver for example).
- Seems like new R5 zoning is mostly focused on older, core areas of the city – not in the North End single family dwelling areas for example.
- Discussion took place on history of Old City Neighbourhood zoning and Old City Neighbourhood Plan, noting at one time neighbourhood plan land use requirements took precedence over OCP land use requirements. Noted that Old City Neighbourhood is a unique historic area of the city whose character needs to be protected. Concern is that R5 Zone change proposed will changed this character drastically over time.
- Question about land use capacity for these areas when density increases – will the proposed zone changes really yield the density desired? Would it not be better to focus development on existing multi-family zoned lots, for example on large empty lots elsewhere in the city. Noted that the initiative was not only about housing numbers, but also the diversity of this housing to accommodate a range of housing needs. Also noted that large empty lots in suburban areas are often zoned for steep sloped development with specific Steep Slope zones applicable.
- Do we want to encourage aging in place, and owners retaining housing they already live in? New zones will likely result in loss of old housing in favour of new housing, affecting character of the area. Staff noted that we want to allow new housing options but do this gently/surgically – ideally retaining existing housing in combination with new infill.
- Concern expressed that we could still see expensive dwelling units even with density increase.

Stakeholder Feedback | Newcastle Neighbourhood Association

1. Recognize the heritage character of the proposed R5 zone in Newcastle.
   - The City plan recognizes that Newcastle is a heritage neighbourhood and that heritage considerations should be integrated into the City's development approval process.

- Newcastle needs, therefore, to have specific zoning requirements which recognize its heritage. For example, the Old City has three zones that aim to preserve the historic and architectural character of the Old City Neighbourhood for houses that are built before 1975. In Newcastle, over 90% of the houses in the proposed R5 pre-zone were built before 1975 with the average year of construction being around 1939. We think these are worthy of recognition and preservation in the zoning bylaw.

2. Develop form and character guidelines specifically for both the proposed R5 zone and for detached suites in Newcastle.
    - We support the Design Advisory Panel's recommendation to City Council that form, and character guidelines be developed as part of these infill initiatives.
    - The community needs to be consulted on these design guidelines and they should form part of the zoning bylaw.
    - Design guidelines should be clear as to what "character/ appearance" means and how to ensure not to "significantly alter the character or appearance of the neighbourhood."
    - Guidelines should address the issue of front yard parking, and parking variances.
3. Establish a mechanism that allows for consultation with residents and input from the neighbourhood association on development proposals.
    - There will no longer be a public hearing process to allow the neighborhood to express its opinion on a proposed rezoning to R5.
    - Developers should be required, therefore, to submit a Development Permit Application and, as part of that application, be mandated to review their proposal with the neighbourhood.

The community association should be formally asked by the city to comment on the suitability of the project and those comments are contained in a staff report/ decision about the project.

Stakeholder Feedback | Wellington Neighbourhood Association

1. The Proposed R5 Regulations state that… *the lot is a corner lot; the lot is next to a lane or a minimum of 800 m2*. Although the lots that are located along the Long Lake shoreline meet regulations, the lots between Norwell and the Old Island Highway (red circle on map) by and large do not (except a few corner lots). The majority of lots are 683 m2 (70'X105'). Why are these lots included in this proposed rezoning?

2. How would the required off-street parking for these 3–4-unit dwellings fit into the plan on a 683 m2 lot?

3. There are many transportation studies on the books for the City of Nanaimo and traffic congestion in this particular area is an ongoing problem because of the close proximity of

Long and Diver lakes. What are the plans for traffic management if infill in this section of the Wellington neighbourhood occurs?

Stakeholder Feedback | Wellington Action Committee

1. What about the Wellington Neighbourhood?
    1. No formal heritage status but people have lived between Long Lake and Diver Lake for 150 years.
    2. Designating Country Club Mall as a Secondary Urban Centre doesn't mean it should take over our neighbourhood.
    3. What about mature tree protection? We cannot afford to wait 25 years for an urban canopy to regrow.
    4. No sidewalks currently and more cars from infill housing will reduce walkability.
2. The Long Lake – Diver Lake community has already experienced major increases in density over the past 5 years
    1. Lots of big residential buildings constructed on either side of Hwy 19A between Bowen and Mostar/Rutherford
    2. Why add infill housing when we've already given up so much green space and added so many condo/apartments/homes? Is there not an upper limit?
    3. Maybe consider only pre-zoning for duplexes; 3-plexes, 4-plexes just too dense in an R1 setting
    4. Continuing this kind of density will increase tensions around traffic and parking as more people move into an area.
    5. Diver Lake is slated to be re-developed/expanded in the next 5 years which is very good but…
    6. 3-yr study showed Diver Lake is becoming eutrophic (a condition that is hard to reverse) – low dissolved oxygen in summer and risk of fish kills/harmful algae
    7. Loudon Park green space is on the chopping block for deforestation to build a new activity centre and boathouse.
    8. New construction took down so many mature trees and even further decreased the connection to green space in the neighbourhood.
3. Why are some lots excluded from this proposed R5 pre-zoning, e.g., on the north side of Apsley Ave and along Norwell Dr. from 104th to 107th, and closer to Loudon Park?
4. Proposed reduction of R5 lot size to 600 m2 is very difficult to visualize on the ground (p13 of your PPP)
    1. esp. with required parking, if off-street parking is eased, then residents would look for street parking in front of other properties.
    2. single story house could be overshadowed by a 3-storey building close to the property line.
5. Property assessments would probably increase with pre-zoning.

1. The option would be in place to build more than one house on a lot in the future = more money and developers would jump in.
2. The 2017 redevelopment of property on 104th St into 7 small lot houses drove local property assessments up; those small lot houses are currently assessed at ~$800K.
3. Wellington Neighbourhood has a relatively stable, older and/or mid-income population who cannot afford higher property taxes.

Stakeholder Feedback | Brechin Hill Neighbourhood Association

- Ensuring there is adequate traffic safety being factored into these developments.
- How are ancillary services such as emergency services, schools, infrastructure (ie roads, parking, bylaw enforcement, hospital) services which are already stretched being accommodate to handle increased loads?
- Ensuring historical preservation is part of the consideration for older communities.
- Ensuring constructive consultation with affected communities is part of the process, not just lip service.
- How is increased resident densification going to be controlled to ensure they are being used for residential purposes and not expanding short term rental income such as Airbnb, VRBO, etc.?

Stakeholder Feedback | Nanaimo Old City Neighbourhood Association

As a recognized neighbourhood association, NOCA has been watching and responding to the initiatives that are increasing housing options in the Old City. None of the proposed options are new or concerning for us.

Until this time many of these initiatives happened as a result of variance, but we did not object to the variances except to those relating to the old hospital site at 388 Machleary Street. We have had a chance to watch how these variances like the 7 units on the site in the 400 block of Kennedy did not negatively affect the neighbourhood.

We continue to stress that character design like pitched roofs is necessary to keep the feel of the neighbourhood, rather than the number of units (except for muti-story apartments). Things like shared walls, narrow lots, reduced setbacks are already in place in places like Langford and they do not destroy the feel of a village centre and a residential neighbourhood.

Additional Public Feedback Received

15 emails were received from the public wishing to include additional feedback and/or ask questions of staff. Much of the feedback received through emails highlighted similar themes as those collected through the survey. They included issues related to parking and the form

and character or design elements of new construction as well as maintaining the character of existing buildings (specifically in the Old City). Servicing was also mentioned as a potential issue, as was the lengthy development process.

Lessons Learned

Throughout any public engagement project, it is important to reflect back and consider what to do better next time. The following is a list of considerations and lessons learned from this engagement process.

- The Public Open House venue was too loud. Staff received a couple of comments suggesting the venue was too loud and it was difficult for folks to hear and understand the content. Next time staff may consider a venue with better sound attenuation or host multiple events to provide the public with more options of when to attend. Virtual sessions may also help those who are hard of hearing.
- The content was too complicated. Despite staff attempts to make the content visual and easy to understand, comments were received by some members of the public suggesting the content was too technical and 'wordy'. This sentiment was largely received via the survey and less so when staff were available to answer questions at the open house.
- Provide more space for comments. Some survey respondents felt having a space to comment on each proposed change would have been beneficial. Staff provided only one space for comment at the end of each of the four initiatives.
- Provide measurements in imperial and metric. Some respondents felt it would have been easier to comment on some of the survey questions had the numbers been provided in imperial and metric.