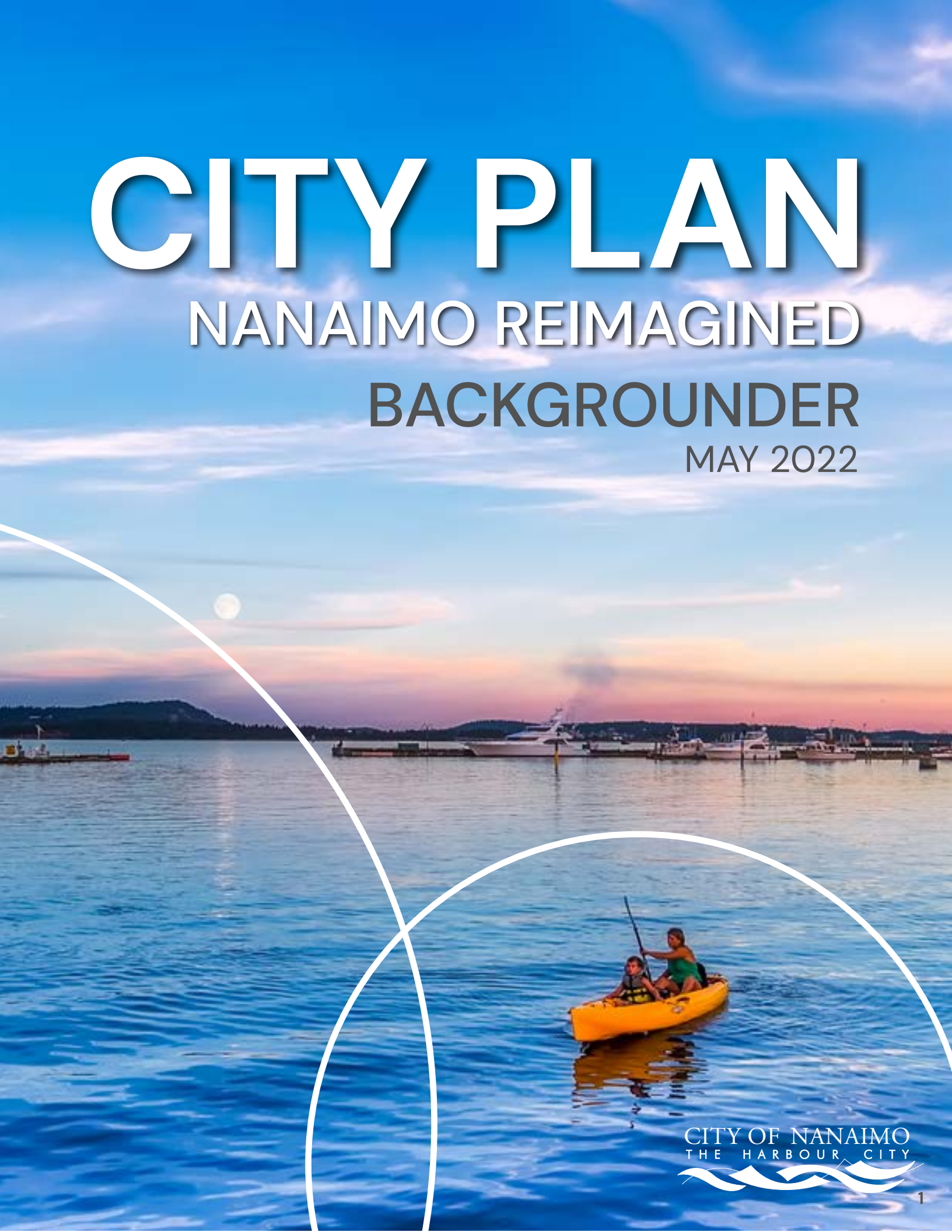
CITY PLAN

NANAIMO REIMAGINED

BACKGROUNDER

MAY 2022



CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

11.1 CREATING CITY PLAN

CONTINUING A TRADITION OF PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

Starting with Imagine Nanaimo (1992), through Plan Nanaimo (1996), then planNanaimo (2008), and now City Plan (2022) created through the RE**IMAGINE NANAIMO** process, we are in the fourth of a series of processes that continue to shape growth and manage change in our city. Imagine Nanaimo recognized that planning for future growth and development is in the long term interest of the community. Each subsequent plan has built upon the vision, goals, and policies of previous plans, continuing a tradition of maintaining what is working well, while integrating new knowledge and community voices to extend our aspirations a little further each time.

Figure 1: RE**IMAGINE NANAIMO Process 2020-2022**

	PHASE 1 GATHERING IDEAS SUMMER - WINTER 2020	PHASE 2 EXPLORING SCENARIOS SPRING - FALL 2021	PHASE 3 DEVELOPING PLANS WINTER 2021 - SPRING 2022
OVERVIEW	The initial phase focused on sharing information and listening to the community's ideas about Nanaimo's future. This information was used to build options and scenarios explored in Phase 2.	Phase 2 focused on developing and exploring options for how Nanaimo can achieve its shared vision and evaluating how different scenarios could support our goals. This information informs the draft plans.	Phase 3 is focused on compiling draft directions into plans, policies, and actions to guide Nanaimo's future. These plans will be refined together with the community.
ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES	» City of Nanaimo online engagement tool » Public Ideas Questionnaires » Topic Questionnaires » Statistical Survey » Welcome Meetings » Meetings and Dialogues with Stakeholders and Local Organizations » Community Mapping & Ideas Boards » Pop-up Events » Creative Community Contest » Chalk Comments » Youth Activities	» City of Nanaimo online engagement tool » Foundations Feedback Form » Scenarios Survey » Virtual Scenarios Workshops » Representative Scenarios Workshops » Pop-up Events » Youth Art Kits » Youth Workshops & Chats » Meetings with Partners & Governmental Organizations » Committee Updates » Council Updates	» City of Nanaimo online engagement tool » Community Survey » Statistical Survey » Community Information Session » Stakeholder Information Meetings » Pop-up Events » Geographical Information System (GIS) Story Map Explorer » Referrals to Stakeholders, Partners, and Government Organizations » Committee Updates » Council Updates



8,824
surveys completed

In the coming years, Nanaimo should be a community that is resilient, self sufficient, caring, and compassionate. We need to be ready to take care of each other with anticipated climate change impacts.





In our future, Nanaimo is a city that has less traffic congestion, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions because most people are using the excellent public transit system, cycling, or walking.

135+
meetings with stakeholders and local organizations

522
participants in facilitated workshops and events



Nanaimo should be a city on the leading edge of sustainability and equality.



80
pop-up events around the city

1
amazing dance by local dance duo Funkanometry



18,524
visitors finding information on GetInvolvedNanaimo.ca



> Nanaimo's future is a city that is full of life!



965
art-based submissions

Raising Awareness:

Social Media
Media Releases
Radio Ads
Newspaper Ads
Vehicle and Door Decals
Posters in Parks
Signs in Buses
Banners
+ more







In the future I see:

Well connected outdoor community spaces and parks.

Vibrant downtown.

Well attended and organized community events.

Walkable communities within Nanaimo.

11 PRESENT, PAST, FUTURE

To plan where we are going, we must consider where we have been.

SHAPED BY MANY INFLUENCES

COAST SALISH

The shoreline, islands, hills, and valleys of these lands have been home to Snuneymuxw mustimuxw since time immemorial. Long before the first European settlers, this land supported several thousand ancestors of the Snuneymuxw in winter and summer villages. This territory is also shared with Snaw-Naw-As in the northern area of the City. The Snuneymuxw and Snaw-Naw-As are known for their rich living culture and heritage.

COAL TOWN

It was the presence of coal, discovered in the 1850s around what is now Nanaimo's downtown, that first attracted European settlers to the area. This led to the first known town plan in 1864 that laid out the radial street network of the downtown. The City of Nanaimo was eventually incorporated in 1874.

HUB CITY

As the coal mining industry waned, new employment in sectors like fishing, forestry, industry, and tourism rose and Nanaimo established its role as the "hub" of Vancouver Island. Rapid expansion occurred in the 1960s - 1990s quickly stretching Nanaimo north and south and in 1975, Nanaimo amalgamated with Harewood, Departure Bay, Wellington, Chase River, Northfield, and Protection Island to form the area generally known as the City of Nanaimo today.

11.1 OUR RECENT PAST: THE LAST 25 YEARS

We are growing. Faster. While Nanaimo has experienced steady growth over the past 25 years, our growth has been accelerating in recent years with 10.3% growth since 2016 compared to the average in British Columbia of 7.6%.

WHAT IS DRIVING GROWTH?

As the second largest urban centre on Vancouver Island, Nanaimo is the services hub and urban core of the central Island. In recent years, Nanaimo has seen an influx of new residents from other parts of BC, other provinces, and internationally.

Figure 2: Nanaimo Population Growth (1996 to 2021)
Source: Statistics Canada Census

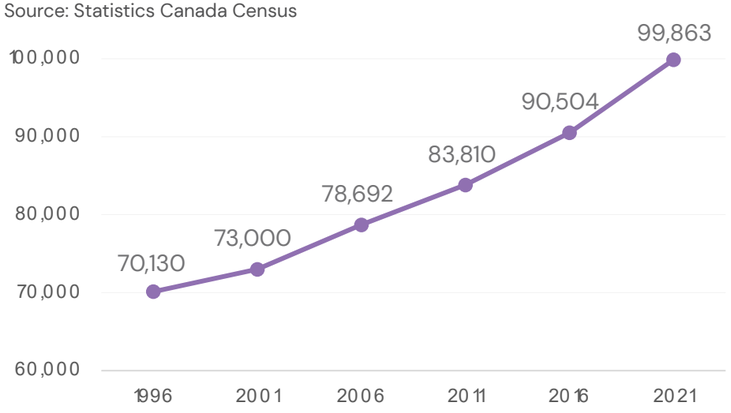
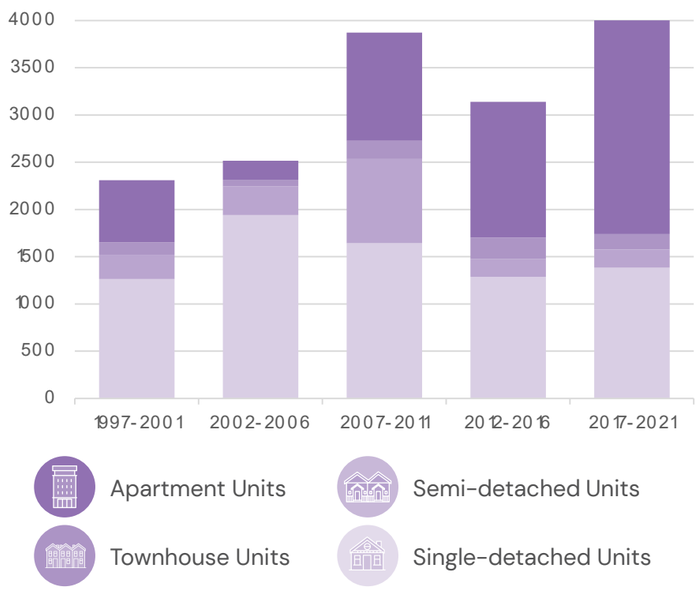


Figure 3: Housing Stock by Dwelling Type in Nanaimo (1997 to 2021)
Source: CMHC, Starts and Completions Survey, 2021



GROWING DIFFERENTLY

Nanaimo's housing stock can be roughly divided into four types: apartment units, townhouse units, semi-detached units, and single-detached units (with or without secondary suites). For the first time, new housing completions in apartment forms are outpacing those of single-detached dwellings. This trend signals a shift towards a more compact, urban city form, from Nanaimo's largely suburban past.

11.2 OUR PRESENT: CURRENT TRENDS

As we plan, we must consider trends that are affecting our city and our region.

Our Role in the Region

As the largest city in our region and on Central Vancouver Island, Nanaimo has an important role in accommodating growth, reducing regional sprawl, and protecting the vital forests, meadows, fields, and recreational lands beyond our city edges, which are essential to the health and character of our community. If we plan well and reduce sprawl into nearby regional lands, the city will work more efficiently.

Building on What We Have

In 2021, Nanaimo had 99,863[1] residents, and we are planning for an additional 40,000 to join our community over the next 25 years.[2] This means that approximately 70% of our 2046 population is already living here. Change through growth is slow and incremental, and much of what exists today will very much be part of what is here in our next 25 years. Planning to position growth where it's desired is important, but it also won't completely change the city we are today.

1 Statistics Canada Census, 2021.
2 Vann Struth Consulting Group Inc, June 2020. City of Nanaimo Population, Housing, and Employment Projections

A Mid-Density City

Starting from a compact harbour focused city formally established in 1874, the amalgamation of six rural "Improvement Districts" in 1975 that expanded the City's boundaries, creating a legacy of long and lineary growth, stretching north and south at relatively low densities. This means, as a city with a suburban past, we have and will continue to have, a much lower population density than other urban cities in the Capital Region and Lower Mainland. Even as our population grows, Nanaimo will continue to be a mid-density city.

Many Opportunities for Infill

Because of Nanaimo's past growth patterns, we have many low density sites in our city. Many of our commercial areas are auto oriented, with single storey buildings and vast surface parking. As our city grows, these large land areas will likely become more attractive for future redevelopment, providing opportunities for infill within our existing city structure.

Choosing Where We Grow

If even a few large scale developments occur, they may absorb a large proportion of the future growth projected for Nanaimo. This means less demand for growth in other areas. Therefore, it is important to think about encouraging growth in locations where it will best help us achieve our goals.

11.3 OUR FUTURE: PROJECTIONS & LAND INVENTORY

As an initial step to *City Plan - Nanaimo Relmagined*, the City prepared population and housing projections to better understand key drivers of change in Nanaimo and completed a land capacity analysis to gain knowledge of the capacity of existing lands to accommodate these changes.

LIVING

Figure 4: Population Projections to 2046
Sources: Vann Struth Consulting Group Inc, June 2020. City of Nanaimo Population, Housing, and Employment Projections and Statistics Canada Census 2021.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

2021 CENSUS
99,863
Nanaimo's recorded population in the 2021 Census.

2 PROJECTION SCENARIOS FOR 2046

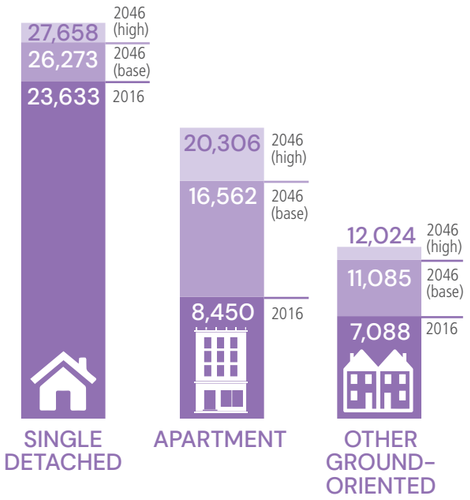
BASE
+31,445
125,970
Migration to Nanaimo will follow projected BC averages – 0.96% growth per year.

HIGH
+46,814
141,339
Migration to Nanaimo will be above average – 1.35% growth per year.

HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS

Total housing units in 2046 are projected to be between **53,900** and **60,000**, an increase of approximately **9,000** to **15,000** units from 2021.

Apartments will be the fastest growing type of housing, likely doubling in number. Other ground-oriented units, such as townhomes or duplexes, will also see strong growth, following an evolution towards higher density forms.





AN AGING POPULATION

MOST GROWTH >75 AGE GROUP

LEAST GROWTH <35 AGE GROUP

An aging population affects the types of housing we will need, employment options, transportation needs, health services, and more.

AGING POPULATION, SMALLER HOUSEHOLDS
This means housing needs will grow faster than population.

For planning purposes, City Plan prepares for the high growth scenario, planning for a population of 140,000 by 2046.

WORKING

Figure 5: Employment Projections to 2046
Source: Vann Struth Consulting Group Inc, June 2020. City of Nanaimo Population, Housing, and Employment Projections.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

45,179 jobs in 2016

57,791–63,127 jobs projected by 2046

WHAT KIND OF JOBS WILL THERE BE?

TRENDING UP

- Repair, Personal, Non-Profit Services
- Health & Social Services
- Information, Culture & Recreation
- Education
- Accommodation & Food Services

MAINTAINING

- Professional, Scientific, Business Services
- Wholesale, Transportation, Warehousing
- Retail
- Construction

TRENDING DOWN

- Primary Industry (farming, forestry) & Utilities
- Public Administration
- Manufacturing
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate

AGING POPULATION, SLOWER JOB GROWTH

Employment growth will be slower than population growth due to the rapid expansion of the elderly population, most of who will no longer be in the workforce.

CAPACITY

Figure 6: Land Capacity Analysis
Source: Colliers International Consulting, 2020. City of Nanaimo Land Inventory and Capacity Analysis.

RESIDENTIAL CAPACITY

How much land will we need for new homes?

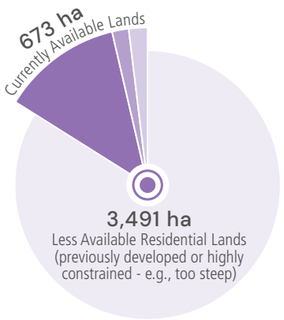
Growth projections suggest we'll need between 15,000 to 21,000 new homes by 2046. How much land we need for new homes depends on the types of units that are developed.

253 HECTARES TO **607 HECTARES**

If we grow at a status quo rate with more high density units

If we grow faster than average with more low density units

How much land is available for new homes (per the current OCP)?



520 ha
Vacant & Developable

72 ha
Developable Portion of Constrained Lands

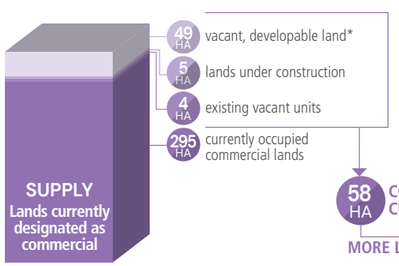
81 ha
Vacant Lands with Existing Permits (likely to be developed in next 5 years)

Key conclusions

- **There is likely enough vacant land to support residential growth to 2046 if housing forms are higher density as we've been seeing; however, if the city grows quickly with low density housing forms, land may become scarce**
- **The largest opportunities for new low density residential are in the southern parts of the city**
- **New development is shifting from mainly single-unit homes to multi-unit housing forms**

COMMERCIAL CAPACITY

How much commercial land do we have (per the current OCP)?



How much land will we need for new businesses?



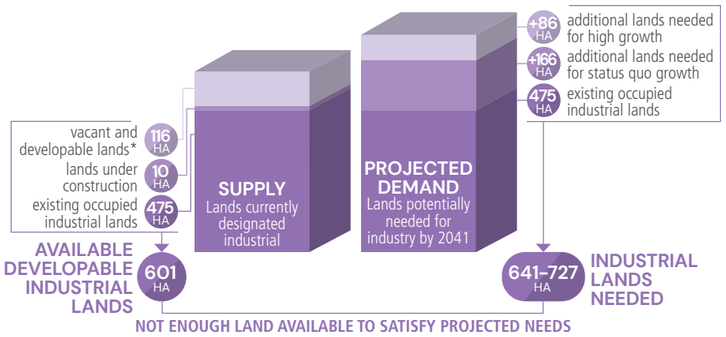
Key conclusions

- **There is more than enough commercially-designated land to last to 2041 and beyond**
- **Small scale convenience nodes in neighbourhoods are a missing format of commercial uses in Nanaimo**
- **New lands designated for commercial are not recommended; rather, the focus should be on promoting infill of existing commercial areas to create vibrant, self-sustaining commercial areas**

* NOTE: In the Land Inventory and Capacity Analysis, vacant and developable lands are those that are within land use designations that could support commercial development and are not currently occupied by other uses. The OCP designates additional lands that could support commercial activities, but are currently occupied by other uses (e.g., residential, institutional, etc.) and therefore not considered available for commercial development in the analysis.

INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY

Industrial supply (per the current OCP) vs projected demands



* NOTE: In the Land Inventory and Capacity Analysis, vacant and developable lands exclude approximately 60 ha of Industrial-designated lands that are considered constrained for Industrial development (slopes exceeding 10% and other geographical restrictions).

Key conclusions

WE ARE IN DEMAND

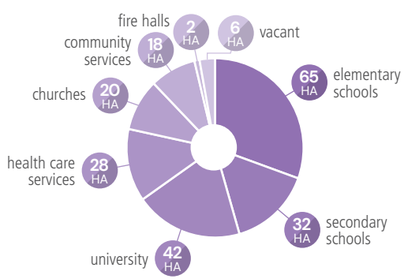
Nanaimo's location and key transportation infrastructure like the port and airport makes Nanaimo attractive to industry.

BUT LIMITED LAND SUPPLY IS AN ISSUE

Without new industrial land supply, new industry may choose to locate to other locations.

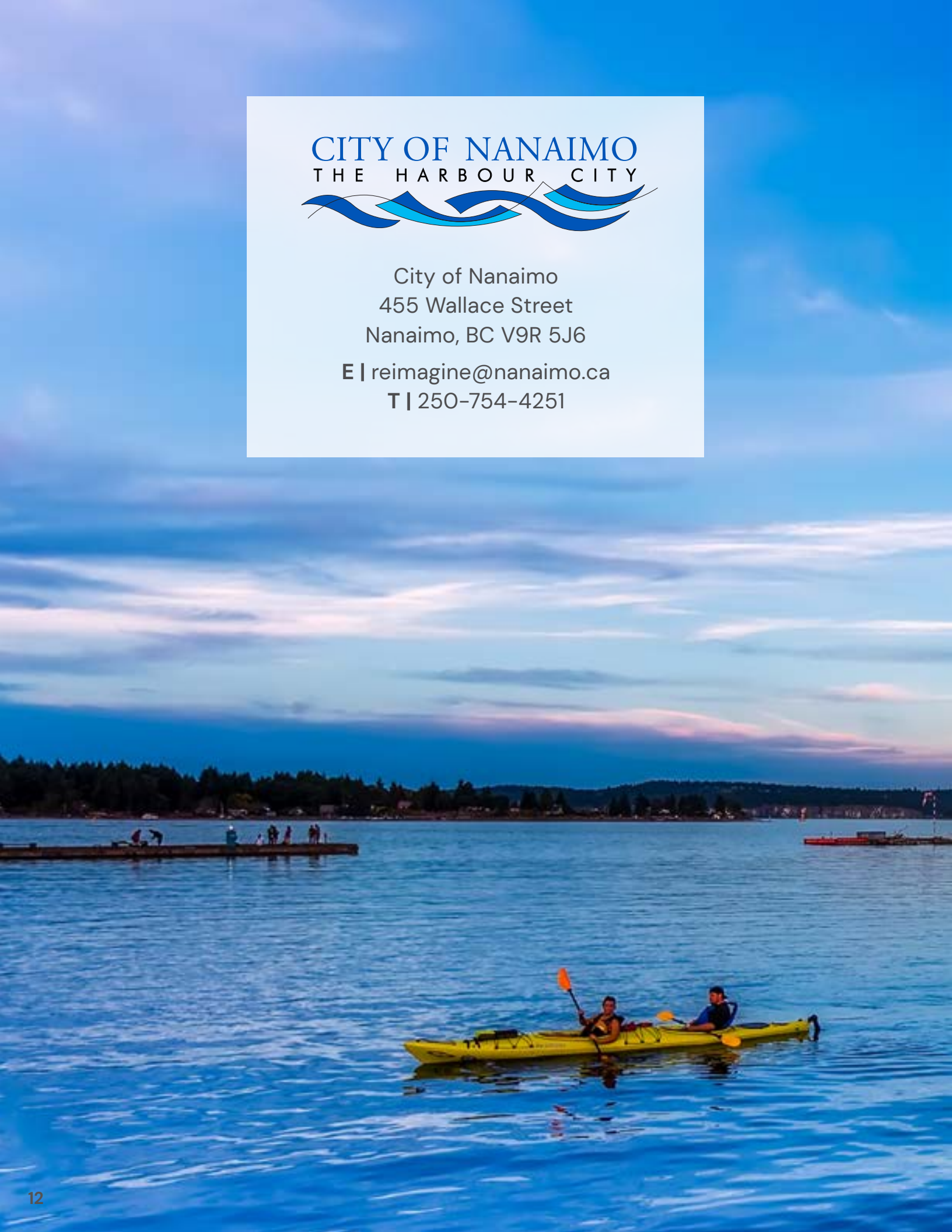
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

What are Nanaimo's current institutional uses?



Key trends and conclusions

- **Moderate growth in school enrollment is expected in the short term but will stabilize in the long term due to an aging population**
- **Our aging population will lead to growth in demand for healthcare services, seniors housing, and seniors support workers**
- **Institutional uses are permitted in a variety of land use types, making their integration flexible**
- **Most of Nanaimo's institutional uses are fixed and there will be a need to use the existing land efficiently for the future (e.g., shared use)**



CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

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