

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

1100 Patricia Blvd. | Prince George, BC, Canada V2L 3V9 | www.princegeorge.ca

DATE: April 15, 2024

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Deanna Wasnik, Director of Planning and Development

SUBJECT: Provincial Housing Initiatives and Development Finance Legislation

ATTACHMENT(S): [Provincial Policy Manual & Site Standards: Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing](#)
[New Development Finance Tools - Interim Guidance](#)
[Provincial Policy Manual: Transit-Oriented Areas](#)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated April 15, 2024, from the Director of Planning and Development titled "Provincial Housing Initiative and Development Finance Legislation".

PURPOSE:

To provide Council with a summary of the provincial legislation changes for Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH), Transit Oriented Areas (TOAs), and development finance tools. This report will also identify the next steps required for the City of Prince George to become compliant with the legislation.

BACKGROUND:

The *Local Government Act* was amended on December 7, 2023, following the passing of three pieces of new legislation regarding planning and land use.

- Bill 44: Residential Development
- Bill 46: Development Financing
- Bill 47: Transit-Oriented Development

The new legislation is intended to fulfill the priorities set out in the Homes for People plan to increase housing supply, create more diverse housing choices, and over time, contribute to more affordable housing across the province.

Bill 44: Residential Development

Bill 44 governs minimum residential densities, new zoning processes, and municipal planning requirements. This bill is intended to make it easier and quicker to build a wider variety of housing types in areas that were traditionally only single detached or duplex (two-unit) homes. The SSMUH legislation is intended to remove barriers to housing in single detached and two-unit zones. It is not intended to apply to non-residential zones like agriculture, commercial, and industrial zones, even if these non-residential zones permit a dwelling unit, like a residential security/operator unit.

The new legislation requires local governments to update zoning bylaws to allow SSMUH within the City's urban boundary on lots currently zoned for single detached or two-unit homes. Under the new legislation, property owners won't need to rezone a lot to build SSMUH, if it is compliant with the zone and provincial policies. The number of SSMUH that will be permitted on a lot will vary by lot size and location. For information, the Provincial Policy Manual & Site Standards: Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing has been linked as a supporting document to this report.

SSMUH Legislative Requirements

A minimum of one (1) secondary suite or one (1) detached accessory dwelling unit (i.e., secondary dwelling) must be permitted on lots zoned for single detached housing. Local governments may decide to permit either a secondary suite or secondary dwelling, or both on a lot.

The SSMUH legislation has mandated three-six dwelling units be permitted on single detached and two-unit lots depending on their size and location, subject to the following:

- a) wholly or partly within an urban containment boundary established by a regional growth strategy, or
- b) if (a) does not apply, wholly or partly within an urban containment boundary established by an official community plan within a municipality with a population greater than 5,000 or
- c) if neither (a) or (b) apply, in a municipality with a population greater than 5,000.

The minimum number of units is determined by the following characteristics of the parcels to which the requirements apply:

- A minimum of three (3) dwelling units must be permitted on each parcel of land 280 m² or less.
- A minimum of four (4) dwelling units must be permitted on each parcel of land greater than 280 m².
- A minimum of six (6) dwelling units must be permitted near frequent transit routes.

SSMUH Exemptions

Exemptions to the minimum dwelling unit requirements on lots zoned exclusively for single detached and two-unit housing include:

- lands that are not connected to a water or sewer system provided as a service by a municipality or regional district;
- parcels of land that are larger than 4,050 m² (0.4 ha) or lands in a zone for which the minimum lot size that may be created by subdivision is 4,050 m² (0.4 ha);
- land that was protected, as of December 7, 2023, under the *Heritage Conservation Act*, or by bylaw under s. 611 Heritage Designation Protection of the *Local Government Act*; or
- land within a designated TOA.

Bill 46: Development Financing

Changes to local government legislation provide new and updated development finance tools that local governments can use to help fund the costs of infrastructure and amenities needed to support complete and livable communities. For information, the province has released Interim Guidance for New Development Finance Tools which has been linked as a supporting document to this report.

Development Cost Charges

Local governments can collect Development Cost Charges (DCCs) on new developments to help pay for specific infrastructure needed to adequately service the demands of that new development, including water, sewer, drainage, and roads. Bill 46 has updated the scope of infrastructure eligible to be funded through DCCs to include fire protection facilities (e.g., fire halls), police facilities, and solid waste facilities.

Amenity Cost Charges

Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) are a new development finance tool that allow local governments to collect funds for amenities like community and recreation centres, daycares, and libraries. These amenities support livable and complete communities in areas of growth. To implement an amenity cost charge, local governments will need to:

- Identify areas where more housing supply is planned (based on Official Community Plans and other planning documents) and what amenities are needed to support that supply. ACCs would apply to new development in those areas;
- Determine the ACC amounts following the rules set out in legislation (for example, the capital costs must be allocated between existing users and new users);
- Consult during the development of the ACC bylaw and charge rates; and
- Pass a bylaw that implements the charges.

Bill 47: Transit-Oriented Development

Transit-oriented development is intended to encourage people to live, work, and play close to home and transit. Bill 47 requires local governments to designate prescribed transit stations as TOAs. TOAs are to be identified within a prescribed distance from a transit station. In TOAs, local governments are required to ensure that the densities and building heights established by the Province are allowed, and to remove residential parking minimums. For more information, the Provincial Policy Manual: Transit-Oriented Areas has been linked as a supporting document to this report.

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS:

To comply with recent housing initiatives and legislation, the City is working to:

- Amend **Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007**, for all single detached and duplex zones within the City's urban boundary to comply with the new legislation by June 30, 2024.
- Complete interim **Housing Needs Report** by December 31, 2024.
- Update **Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 8383, 2011**, to reflect the interim Housing Needs Report and TOAs to comply with provincial requirements by December 31, 2025.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

This information report provides Council with a summary of the provincial housing initiatives and legislation changes, and next steps required for the City to become compliant with the legislation.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Deanna Wasnik, Director of Planning and Development

PREPARED BY: Kali Holahan, Supervisor, Land Use Planning

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2024/05/06