

Date: November 13, 2024

To: **Mayor and Council.**

Name and title: Deanna Wasnik, Director of Planning and Development

Subject: City of Prince George Interim Housing Needs Report

Attachment(s): Appendix A: Appendix F to the Housing Needs Report

**Recommendation(s):**

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated November 13, 2024, from the Director of Planning and Development titled “City of Prince George Interim Housing Needs Report”.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report (HNR). The attached Interim HNR, provided as an appendix to the existing Housing Needs Report, was completed in accordance with Section 790(3)(b) of the *Local Government Act*, which requires local governments to receive, by resolution, the Interim HNR at an open meeting on or before January 1, 2025.

**Background:**

In 2019, the Provincial government introduced the first legislative requirements for Housing Needs Reports to enhance local governments' ability to understand and respond to housing needs by gathering data, analyzing trends, and producing reports. These reports outline the number of housing units required over a five-year period. The City of Prince George published its first HNR in 2021 and updated it in 2022 to incorporate the latest census data.

In 2023, amendments to the *Local Government Act* through Bill 44 *Housing Statutes (Residential Development Amendment Act, 2023)* revised the timing and methodology for HNRs. Local governments are now required to prepare an Interim HNR using the provincial methodology by January 1, 2025. This Interim HNR does not replace the 2021/2022 City of Prince George HNR, but rather serves as an update to the housing need projections until a new HNR is completed. Additionally, municipalities are required to update their Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw by December 31, 2025, to incorporate the number of housing units needed to meet the projected 20-year need identified in the Interim HNR. After completing the Interim HNR, a full HNR must be submitted by December 31, 2028, with updates required every five years thereafter, in line with the census cycle.

## Interim Housing Needs:

The attached Interim HNR addresses three key components: the number of housing units required from 2021 to 2026 (5 years) and from 2021 to 2041 (20 years), the need for housing in close proximity to active and public transportation options, and a summary of actions taken by the City of Prince George to reduce housing needs since the previous HNR. The housing projections were developed using the Housing Assessment Resource Tools' BC HNR Calculator, which automates the provincial methodology otherwise known as the [HNR Method](#), detailed below.

The HNR Method calculates six housing demand components that together produce an overall housing figure that reflect housing need in the short and long term. These are:

1. The number of housing units for households in extreme core housing need
2. The number of housing units for individuals experiencing homelessness
3. The number of housing units for suppressed households
4. The number of housing units for anticipated household growth
5. The number of housing units required to increase the rental vacancy rate to 3%
6. The number of housing units that reflects additional local housing demand ("demand buffer")

To meet the anticipated housing needs, the City of Prince George would require 5,218 new housing units by 2026 and 12,503 new housing units by 2041. The attached Interim HNR provides a detailed breakdown of the six components, along with the required statement of need and a summary of actions taken since the original 2021 HNR release.

## Interim HNR vs. Housing Target Order:

The Interim HNR and the [Provincial Housing Target Order](#) (HTO) differ in scope, timelines, and methodology. The HTO is intended to address immediate housing supply needs based on population projections over a specific timeframe (e.g., 2024-2029). In contrast, the Interim HNR takes a longer-term view, assessing housing needs over both 5 and 20 years. The Interim HNR incorporates a demand buffer to account for market fluctuations, ensuring municipalities can provide diverse housing options, such as homes closer to jobs, larger homes for families, and downsizing options for seniors. Additionally, the Interim HNR uses different household projections from earlier periods (e.g., 2021-2026), which saw higher growth rates due to factors such as immigration, resulting in more robust housing need estimates. While both tools share similarities in methodology, the Interim HNR projects higher housing needs due to the demand factor and differing BC Stats household growth assumptions.

## Strategic Priorities:

Meeting housing needs directly supports Council's strategic priorities for city growth and quality of life enhancement. Additionally, expanding the local housing stock aligns with the broader *myPG* social development goals, which emphasize accessible, affordable, and safe housing options for all residents.

## Summary and conclusion:

The 2024 Interim HNR provides an updated analysis of housing needs in Prince George, supplementing the 2021/2022 Housing Needs Report. Prepared in accordance with Section 790(3)(b) of the *Local Government Act*, the Interim HNR outlines a projected need for 5,218 new housing units by 2026 and 12,503 by 2041, includes a statement of need regarding housing within proximity to public and active transportation infrastructure, and summarizes the actions taken by the City to reduce housing need since the first HNR was released in 2021. This Interim HNR will inform housing policy and planning until the next full HNR is completed by 2028.

Respectfully submitted:

Deanna Wasnik, Director of Planning and Development

Prepared by Imogene Broberg-Hull, Housing Development Liaison

Approved:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting date: 2024/12/02