

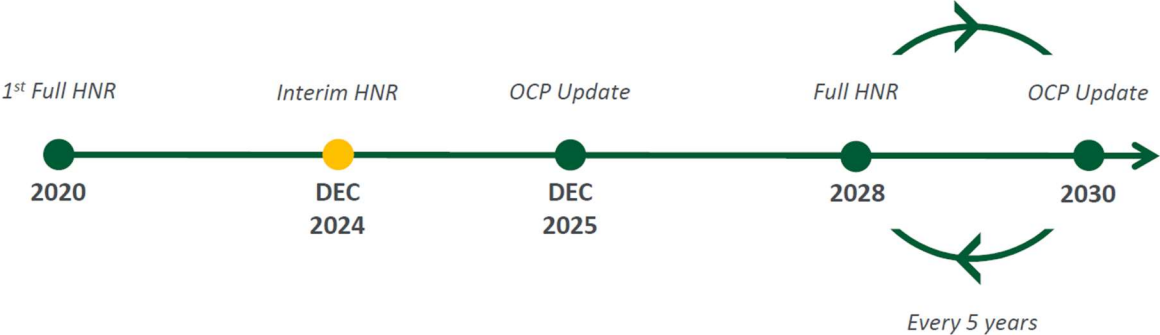


Interim Housing Needs Report

November 2024



The City has prepared the 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report (HNR) in compliance with the Bill 44 changes to the *Local Government Act*. Following this interim report, a full housing needs report is required every 5 years, the first by December 31, 2028. An update to the Official Community Plan (OCP) is then required 2 years after, beginning a 5-year cycle of HNR and OCP updates.



This interim HNR is organized by the 3 components outlined in the *Local Government Act*:

1. A description of the actions taken by the local government to reduce housing needs in the applicable area of the local government (since receiving the most recent housing needs report);
2. A statement about the need for housing in close proximity to transportation infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, public transit or other alternative forms of transportation; and,
3. The total number of housing units required to meet the anticipated housing needs of the local government for the next 5 years and for the next 20 years (calculated in accordance with an applicable method set out in the regulations).

Growth on First Nations lands make valuable contributions to the housing needs of Chilliwack. In the 2020 HNR this growth was included, and it is also included in this interim report.

The total housing need for the 5- and 20-year periods is shown in Table i below. These figures were calculated using the prescribed method outlined in the Technical Methodology document. The OCP update required by the end of 2025 must accommodate the 20-year housing need of 28,143 units.

Table i. 5- and 20- year housing needs in Chilliwack

2024 Interim Housing Needs		
Time period	5-Year Need	20-Year Need
Housing units	8,347	28,143

1. Actions to Reduce Housing Needs

Since receiving the 2020 Housing Needs Report (HNR), the City of Chilliwack has taken the following actions to reduce housing needs:

- a. Initiated the Official Community Plan update project which will effectively pre-zone a number of sites for higher-density residential development, encouraging complete communities;
- b. Complied with provincial regulations through enacting Zoning Bylaw amendments to permit - Scale Multi-Unit housing;
- c. Complied with provincial regulations through enacting a Transit Oriented Area Bylaw to remove parking requirements for residential uses in Transit-Oriented Areas;
- d. Developed the Short-Term Rental Bylaw and amended associated Zoning Bylaw regulations to protect long-term rental housing stock;
- e. Endorsed the R1-C (Urban Infill) Rezoning Process Policy, which streamlines the application process between rezoning to subdivision;
- f. Adopted a delegated authority process for minor Development Variance Permits;
- g. Introduced tenant relocation guidelines in the South Vedder Neighbourhood Plan;
- h. Adopted three neighbourhood plans, focusing higher density nearby public transit and 10-minute walking scores;
- i. Introduced Small Apartment Units to the Zoning Bylaw, which permits a higher residential density and reduced parking requirements for apartment developments within 400m of a frequent transit route and 800m of the Downtown Transit Exchange;
- j. Initiated block rezoning of approximately 400 properties to make the use/zone of the properties consistent, rectify legally non-conforming status, and enable a wider range of housing options;
- k. Endorsed the Secondary Suites Policy, which permits secondary suites within any single detached dwelling, regardless of the zone;
- l. Adopted text amendments to the R1-A (Urban Residential) Zone to permit detached Accessory Dwelling Units;
- m. Adopted text amendments to expand the definition of Garden Suites to permit a greater range of housing forms on low-density residential lots;
- n. Developed a streamlined delegated authority approval process with reduced application fees for detached Accessory Dwelling Unit and Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing Development Permit applications;
- o. Reduced financial barriers for affordable housing projects in the community through:
 - i. Building and Development Permit Fee Waivers (\$817,000 in fees waived to date for 12 affordable housing projects);
 - ii. Development Cost Charges (DCC) Waiver for Eligible Developments Bylaw (\$4.78 million in DCCs waived to date for 13 affordable housing projects);
 - iii. Contribution of money-in-lieu of a site (\$1.65 million contributed to date for three affordable housing projects) budgeted at regular intervals within our Comprehensive Municipal Plan;
 - iv. Special zoning and an expedited approvals process (Supportive Housing zone with reduced parking requirements, and approvals as quickly as four months); and
 - v. Contribution of site (the City contributed the project site for the Paramount housing project, valued at \$1 million).

- p. Approved Building Permits for 2,784 new residential units within the City, including Building Permit approvals for:
 - i. 133 units of new affordable housing; and,
 - ii. 350 small apartment units;
- q. Supported the development of new 1,369 residential units on First Nations land since the last HNR. When combined with Building Permit approvals (4,093 units in total), the total new units created exceeds the previously projected housing needs between 2020-2025 (by 249 units).

2. Housing Near Alternative Transportation Infrastructure

Since the previous HNR, the City has adopted the Active Transportation Plan as a complement to the Transportation Plan (updated in 2018) and Cycle Vision Chilliwack (2017). These various transportation plans will be integrated with the updated OCP to ensure that higher density housing is prioritized at key public transit areas and where alternative forms of transportation, including walking, cycling, and public transit, are readily available or planned for the future. Furthermore, mixed land uses will continue to be encouraged in strategic areas to support complete communities.

While the existing OCP identified the importance of the relationship between density and alternative transportation infrastructure in creating healthy communities, the Sardis Neighbourhood Plan further includes a policy to encourage townhouse development in areas within a 10-minute walk to services, transit, parks and amenities. This policy is supported through the Townhouse Residential land use designation within the neighbourhood plan.

The Province has identified one Transit Oriented Area (TOA) within the City, located at the Transit Exchange on Spadina Avenue in downtown. Spanning a 400-metre radius from the Transit Exchange, the TOA Bylaw enacted by the City will permit higher density residential development within the area, supported by the elimination of residential parking requirements for these developments. Rezoning for residential development on properties within the TOA are allowed to have up to the maximum building heights and floor area ratios set in the TOA Bylaw.

The City's Zoning Bylaw also permits higher density apartment development within 800 meters of the same Downtown Transit Exchange, in addition to within 400-meter of bus stops for the frequent transit route (Route 51). Small apartment units permitted in these areas are allowed to have reduced parking requirements, further enabling higher density development in these key public transit areas. This has resulted in Building Permit approvals for 350 new small apartment units since 2020.

The 2050 Official Community Plan update will further the initiatives started by the TOA Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw through identifying any changes to key transit corridors and providing opportunities for introducing more housing to strategic areas in the City, aligning with the Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan.

3. Five-Year and Twenty-Year Housing Need

An HNR Calculator was created by the Housing Assessment Resource Tools (HART) group to assist local governments with calculating 5-year and 20-year housing need using the methodology provided by the Province¹. City staff confirmed all figures generated by the HART calculator using independent calculations following the provincial methodology. All calculations for each component of the provincial method are detailed in the City’s Technical Methodology report as well as the Provincial Technical Guidelines.

Many First Nations are part of the community and share borders with Chilliwack. A number of First Nations have been undergoing residential (and non-residential) development and experiencing population growth. The City provides water, sewer, parks, roads, and other amenities to developments on reserve land. These new developments make a significant contribution to the overall housing supply of Chilliwack, impacting housing demand and vacancy rates. As such, First Nations lands and growth have been included in the City’s housing needs assessment to provide a more complete picture of housing supply and needs in the community. Local First Nations include the following: Sqwa (Skwah), Kwaw’Kwaw’Apilt, Sxwoyehálá (Squiala), Áthelets (Aitchelitz), Shxwhá:y Village (Skway), Sq’ewqéyl (Skowkale), Yeqwyeqwí:ws (Yakweakwioose), and Ch’iyáqtel (Tzeachten). Details of the method are outlined in the ‘First Nations Lands’ section of the Technical Methodology document.

Table ii compares the 5- and 20-year housing needs between the current interim report and the City’s first HNR (2020). An important contributor to the large increase in housing need between the two reports is due to the large change in population growth rates provided by BC Stats. BC Stats regularly adjusts population growth rates as population estimates are updated with the most recent figures. See the ‘Population Projections Comparison’ section of the Technical Methodology document for additional details. Further, there is a slight shift in the years used for each time span due to the availability of updated data from the 2021 census.

Table ii. Comparing anticipated housing needs between the 2020 and 2024 housing needs reports

Anticipated Housing Needs		
Report Year	5 Year Need	20 Year Need
2020	7,448	19,678
2024	8,347	28,143
% change since 2020 HNR	12.07%	43.02%

¹ Guidelines for Housing Needs Reports – HNR Method Technical Guidance, Ministry of Housing, 2024.

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/housing-and-tenancy/tools-for-government/uploads/hnr_method_technical_guidelines.pdf