



DISTRICT OF SAANICH: PHASE 1 – ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

July to September 2020

Overview

The Saanich Housing Strategy, being developed to direct how we move forward to achieve greater housing supply, affordability and diversity, and accommodate a broad range of community housing needs now and into the future, was initiated in June 2020. The purpose of this engagement summary is to highlight the results of the stakeholder and public engagement and includes a top 10 challenges and opportunities based on engagement results.

To support the development of the Housing Strategy, and to inform the Housing Task Force through better understanding challenges and opportunities that are associated with housing in Saanich, the first of two planned engagement series was managed between June and August 2020. Stakeholder engagement activities in this phase aligned with those undertaken as part of the Housing Needs Report with the intention to build an understanding of housing challenges, experiences, and ideas for housing actions, and to expand upon feedback collected through the Housing Needs Report engagement process. Phase 1 engagement activities included the following:

- stakeholder interviews;
- stakeholder focus groups;
- public survey (online); and
- building awareness through social media, print media ads, and project website content.

The engagement activities completed to date demonstrate the commitment to raise public awareness and gather public input regarding housing needs, affordability, and supply challenges to inform the development a Saanich Housing Strategy.

For additional information relating to the outcomes, please refer to the stakeholder engagement summary in Attachment A and the public survey summary in Attachment B.

Saanich Housing Strategy Engagement Activities

The development of the Saanich Housing Strategy is divided into five phases, from project initiation to monitoring and implementation. The focus of Phase 1, operating between June and August 2020, is understanding housing challenges and opportunities. As a key deliverable for this phase and as part of the development of the Housing Needs Report, engagement undertakings involved stakeholder interviews and focus groups (Attachment A).

In order to fully understand the challenges, gaps, and opportunities for positive change, stakeholder interviews were conducted with several stakeholders within the community as well as provincial stakeholders who could provide insight into the larger landscape of affordable housing. Each interview focused on the challenges and barriers to increasing the supply of affordable housing, core housing needs, the best options for retaining and renovating rentals, opportunities for partnership, and considerations for equity and inclusion. In addition, interviews produced innovative ideas and perspectives related to addressing housing needs within Saanich.

Focus groups were established through inviting stakeholders to participate in one of four groups, namely community serving organizations, housing providers, institutional (education), and development and real estate. Participants in these focus groups provided information about current and anticipated housing needs and trends within the core municipalities of the Capital Regional District (CRD), namely Esquimalt, Saanich, and Victoria. Additionally, a focus group was held with Saanich Community Association members to gain insights into housing issues from a community perspective.

To help identify housing challenges and opportunities, and to support the Housing Strategy Task Force in developing recommendations for housing solutions, a community survey was developed. To gauge feedback on the recommended strategies and actions that will be established by the Housing Task Force in the coming months a subsequent survey will be distributed in December 2020 (Attachment B).

Finally, feedback on the Housing Strategy was received during a Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting on August 20, 2020.

Media Outreach

As part of online and advertising outreach, social media and print media advertising was undertaken (**Table 1**). To trigger a wider audience, provide project updates, and encourage participation of the community survey and application to the Housing Task Force, online media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, and Saanich/Housing) generated the following activity:

Table 1: Social Media Outreach

Social Media Platform	Impressions / Reach	Link Clicks
Twitter	3,518	113
Facebook	17,277	404
Saanich/Housing	-	1523

Notification of the Housing Strategy and associated participation outlets were published in the Saanich News, Times Colonist, and Times Colonist Extra.

Additional Feedback

Saanich's Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee received a presentation on the Saanich Housing Strategy at its meeting on August 20, 2020. Following a staff presentation, discussions ensued and included housing challenges and housing gaps in the community and strategies and actions to focus on in terms of improving housing affordability, diversity, and supply (see Attachment D).

Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities

Devised from the collection of public and stakeholder input received during the various engagement activities, the Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities synthesizes the scope of

feedback based on a collective recurrence. Numerous challenges and a variety of opportunities have been identified and grouped into themes, as follows:

Table 2: Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities

Top Challenges	Top Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ extreme costs of land and housing/development ▪ rise in individuals experiencing homelessness ▪ shortage of housing supply ▪ lack of housing diversity (singles, seniors, students, and families) ▪ barriers towards affordable housing (i.e. NIMBY) ▪ poverty of single person/income households ▪ absence of protection for tenants against renovations ▪ lack of supports for tenants and housing providers ▪ lack of services for youth and seniors ▪ imbalance between risk and reward for purpose-built rental builders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ update tools, policies, and bylaws to effect change ▪ permit garden suites, secondary suites and tiny homes on residential lots. ▪ fast-track application processes and simplify procedures ▪ partner with developers and housing providers ▪ offer financial incentives to housing providers ▪ develop new regulatory tools, including inclusionary zoning and pre-zoning ▪ foster new development near centres and villages ▪ facilitate meaningful conversations and build relationships ▪ provide family appropriate housing, including three bedrooms and multi-generational homes ▪ develop student housing

The array of challenges and opportunities that are showcased in Table 2 are a snapshot of what we've heard so far and will assist the Housing Task Force as they progress through their workplan and the development a Housing Strategy for the District of Saanich.

Attachments

- Attachment A: Saanich Housing Strategy - Stakeholder Engagement Summary
- Attachment B: Saanich Housing Strategy - Public Survey Summary

District of Saanich

Housing Strategy Phase 1 - Engagement Summary: Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

September 2020

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1. Overview

As part of the first phase of the development of the Saanich Housing Strategy, engagement activities were conducted with the intention of understanding issues, trends, and ideas for actions on housing in the District. Engagement was undertaken in alignment with activities being completed as part of the Housing Needs Report process for 11 communities within the Capital Regional District, including the District of Saanich. All activities conducted for the Housing Needs Report were held in collaboration with geographically relevant communities, the District of Saanich belonging to the “Core” communities geographical area, all “Core” engagement activities included Victoria and Esquimalt, along with the District of Saanich. Engagement activities conducted specifically in relation to the Saanich Housing Strategy are intended to build on and further expand feedback received through the Housing Needs Report process.

Equity, inclusion, diversity, and accessibility are foundational to the District of Saanich’s Housing Strategy development and engagement activities were designed with this in mind. Due to the need for social distancing related to the Covid-19 health crisis, all engagement activities were conducted either online or via telephone.

This summary highlights the results of stakeholder interviews and focus groups conducted for both the Housing Needs Report and Housing Strategy.

2. Housing Strategy Engagement Findings

Stakeholder Interviews

In order to fully understand the challenges, gaps and opportunities for positive change, interviews were conducted with several stakeholders within the community of Saanich as well as provincial stakeholders who could provide insight into the larger landscape of affordable housing. Stakeholders included:

- VanCity Credit Union
- Catalyst Community Development Society
- Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)
- BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA)
- Landlord BC
- Co-operative Housing Federation of BC
- Greater Victoria Acting Together
- Saanich Neighborhood Place

Each interview was conducted using the same 13 questions which focused on the challenges and barriers to increasing the supply of affordable housing, core housing needs, the best options for retaining and renovating rentals, opportunities for partnership, and considerations for equity and inclusion. The interviews also focused on innovative ideas or perspectives on addressing housing needs within the community. The comments and insight collected during the interviews have been compiled and summarized into the appropriate sections below.

The Current Needs

Throughout the interviews several housing models emerged as being crucial for the community:

- Emergency shelters spaces (particularly for families)
- Affordable housing for families (larger bedroom sizes)
- Housing geared to income
- “Missing middle” housing

- Secure tenure for renters and a larger diversity of tenure-ship models (co-operative or co-housing)
- Non-profit housing
- Affordable purpose-built rental housing
- Units that incorporate universal design to support aging populations
- Single family housing for growing families
- Seniors housing

Other potential housing models that were recommended by stakeholders include:

Co-operative, social, and shared living space options: These have the potential to fill several gaps in the current community housing model including affordability and density.

Flex housing – when stakeholders redevelop existing properties, they can simultaneously build new units for the tenants to move into. This limits the frequency of “renovictions.”

The Challenges

Although several housing needs were identified, so were the key challenges. The list below outlines significant challenges that were acknowledged throughout the interview process:

- The cost of land is high throughout the District
- The rental market is currently unaffordable
- There is a lack of infrastructure to support an increase in density
- There has currently (and historically) been poor utilization of available land
- High costs of managing housing discourages many landlords from continuing their business model
- Local governments are under resourced and have many competing priorities
- Municipalities are often focused more on buildings rather than renters/tenants
- Improving or retaining existing rental housing stock is difficult
- The “Not in My Back Yard” attitude towards affordable housing or modular housing

The Opportunities

Developments on community land should be something that the community is proud of. Finding opportunities and initiatives that address community needs is important for the long-term goals of the District. When large lots are sold to developers, they become rezoned, subdivided, and reappraised at an increased value. This puts community wealth into private hands. There can be several changes to the policies and regulations that have the potential to lower barriers to affordable housing provision and keep the development of land in community hands:

- Create density incentives that favour the non-profit sector
- Reduce municipal fees or waive fees for non-profit housing providers (reduced property taxes, preferential fee structure for utilities on non-profit rental buildings, consider DCC waivers for priority housing types etc.)
- Fast-track or prioritize non-profit/non-market development proposals
- Apply inclusionary zoning throughout the District or in areas close to amenities (such as Transit)
- Incorporate inclusion policies into local bylaw to provide more opportunity for development options
- Regulate demolition and conversion policies – developers that apply for demolition permits should have to demonstrate that they can replace the units
- Investigate affordable housing grant programs – accumulate funding from market housing projects and other areas
- Explore opportunities for below market land leases or develop a land bank– opportunity to develop on District owned land with a reasonable land lease that supports affordability
- Develop a community land trust

- Explore policies that priorities retaining community owned real estate assets rather than shifting to private development (such as local Churches)
- Review policies to see where they are creating barriers to affordable housing and non-profit developments

Other policies and regulation changes that were discussed suggest that the District:

- Prevent renovations – ensure that any renovation that requires eviction is absolutely necessary and encourage flex housing where possible
- Update policies to make it easier to provide secondary suites – make it an option in any neighbourhood
- Ensure that municipal policies are not contingent on public funding programs (for example, requiring that public funding be available to access inclusionary zoning)
- Improve the development approvals process- both predictability of process and length of process
- Consider pre-zoning and zoning for rental housing
- Ensure units/housing that is demolished is replaced with a unit to house the same number of previous tenants or higher
- Encourage more gentle density (duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes)
- Explore the introduction of “right of first refusal” policies for the non-profit housing sector
- Allow for flexibility in design guidelines for non-market housing developments (for example, units above 6 stories)
- Implement zoning bylaws specifically for rental housing
- Ensure bylaws encourage multiple housing types
- Access and use land to its highest benefit

Potential Partnerships:

Key to the success of affordable housing development in Saanich is the partnership between the public sectors, private sectors and non-profits. Although these models require substantial relationship building and engagement, they can be leveraged to develop shared goals that focus on what is best for the community. With open and honest dialogue, and early engagement, these reciprocal relationships have the potential to drive development that is strategically aligned with the District for generations to come. Several ideas were mentioned throughout the interviews on how to build, strengthen and leverage these relationships:

- Identify and encourage the partnerships between private developers and non-profits to deliver units that the non-profit can manage and own
- Network with community supports to advocate for the prevention and of homelessness (i.e- youth aging out of care)
- Partner with other municipalities in the region to do public awareness campaign to discuss the loss of affordable housing increasing the risks of homelessness
- Engage with groups like CMHC will provide a deeper understanding of the programs and services available
- Encourage local government staff and elected officials to facilitate these partnerships

Some potential partnerships that were recommended were with:

- Non-profit organizations and housing providers
- Churches and faith communities
- Funders (CMHC, BC Housing)
- Development community
- Individuals with lived experience
- BCNPHA and Co-operative Housing Federation
- LandlordBC

- The Province
- Other local municipalities
- Public sector (schools and hospitals)

In order to further facilitate these partnerships the District should consider facilitating key policy conversations, engage funders early in the development process, and encourage honest conversations regarding aligning housing priorities across sectors.

Successful Models and Inspiration

The affordable and accessible housing challenge is not unique to Saanich alone. There are several communities and organizations working throughout the region that could provide support, data, or inspiration such as:

- Vancouver's Rental 100 program
- New Westminster's Community Living Society- planning staff are empowered through their own policies that make zoning successful
- Pembina Institute and BCNPHA's research into housing affordability and coding requirements
- The BCNPHA's acquisition strategy for non-profits looking to build more affordable rentals
- The New Housing Strategy program- provides opportunities, to improve regulations, processes, and policies

Communicating Housing Need

Addressing NIMBYism and building public awareness of housing needs within the community are key to long-term community support for affordable housing developments. Several strategies were shared for raising awareness and acceptance for housing needs and related actions. Ideally, the District should consider undertaking a multi-pronged communications and engagement strategy that:

- Includes easy to use graphics that can help community members understand who is living in their community and what type of housing challenge they are facing
- Highlights housing data
- Communicates needs through person anecdotes or stories
- Educates the public around the types of housing and affordable housing – people don't realize there is a whole continuum of housing when we say "affordable housing"
- Works with already existing organizations that are already doing the work and really promote them
- Focuses granting programs on non-profits who are advancing affordable housing

This needs to be a long-term communications and engagement strategy in order to build public awareness, understanding, and trust over time. Understand who the community housing providers are in Saanich and help to publicly celebrate their successes will also create greater awareness of the good work being done in community and build trust for when these organizations propose additional housing developments.

Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

As the District of Saanich looks to develop a more inclusive housing strategy, there are many ideas that were proposed to decrease the current barriers to community led development. The Housing Needs report was suggested as a guiding document that accurately represents the current needs of the community.

In addition, it was suggested that the District of Saanich could:

- Include individuals with lived experience and with lived expertise in the strategy process
- Applying an equity lens to the whole strategy and prioritize housing for marginalized groups

- Include Indigenous families and individuals (connecting with the Friendship Centre in Saanich would be a good first step)
- Strengthening relationships with the Nations that the District shares land with (work with them as government to government)
- Outreach – the most in need have the least time to engage. It is really important to do outreach.
- How do you leverage relationships to connect with people. Not asking too much of them but asking the right things of them.
- Working with the intercultural associations
- Ask, “which voices do we need to hear?”, rather than just listening to those voices that are the loudest

Looking Ahead

The interviews provided ample suggestions for the District of Saanich as it looks ahead towards strategy development. Using the Housing Needs Report to inform the process, it was suggested that the rental housing index tool should be used to clearly understand the connection between rental housing and household incomes. Stakeholders also suggested that the District:

- Facilitate an open and honest dialog to affirm the District’s mission, which can be continually referred to throughout the process
- Emphasize cycling infrastructure and encourage people to use cars less and decrease the need for parking – this will help to extract costs from the development process
- Ensure community lands and spaces remain open to public access
- Implement an Affordable Housing Strategy task force
- Align housing goals with the municipal/local government’s economic goals
- Educate the public on housing types and options, to alleviate mistrust of certain programs (i.e. co-op housing model)

The following opportunities for funding were also discussed:

- Access available funding opportunities such as CMHC Seed Funding for existing housing and those with operating agreements with CMHC
- Align plans to address renovations of existing units with the sustainability funding and energy retrofit programs
- Leverage funding opportunities to investigate innovative ways of developing housing
- Review local policies to see where they may be unintentionally impacting the District’s ability to provide further affordable housing options.

Focus Group

Along with the the focus groups held for the Housing Needs Report (summarized in the next section of this report), an additional focus group was held for Saanich stakeholders related specifically to the Housing Strategy. Focus groups were held using the online Zoom conferencing platform and each discussion began with a presentation of data related to District of Saanich demographics and relevant housing data, followed by a facilitated discussion. A summary of stakeholder discussion is provided below. The numbers following various sentences indicate the number of comments that were received related to each identified topic.

- July 14th, 2020 (Community and Student Associations)

Attendees:

- Broadmead Area Residents' Association
- Gordon Head Residents' Association
- Cadboro Bay Residents Association
- UVic Graduate Students' Society
- Gorge Tillicum Community Association
- Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association
- Camosun Community Association
- Mount View Colquitz Community Association
- UVic Students' Society
- Camosun College Student Society
- Royal Oak Community Association
- Prospect Lake District Community Association
- Residents' Association Strawberry Vale, Marigold, and Glanford

Discussion following data presentation:

Stakeholders wondered if there was an opportunity to gather data related to 'hidden' in the District (i.e. illegal rental suites), as some zoning does not allow for dwelling units in Saanich, however it is believed there is likely a significant number of units that are being made available for rent (2).

It was generally understood and agreed by stakeholders that the largest housing challenges facing residents of Saanich are a lack of availability (low vacancy rates) and a lack of affordable housing options, particularly for families who may need multiple bedrooms (4). It was felt that adding mixed income, higher density housing could help to address these issues and support more affordable housing options in the District. Stakeholders agreed that more diverse housing options (not just single-family dwellings) are needed in order to better serve the community (4). Additionally, there was acknowledgement that the Housing First model is also important to consider when addressing acute housing need (2).

Several ideas were shared related to updating policy and planning processes within the District in order to better support a greater supply of affordable and appropriate housing. The District's current development approvals process was highlighted as a barrier to development. Streamlining the development approvals process could mitigate additional costs associated with lengthy approvals timelines, moving away from the need for Council approval and relying more heavily on staff to approve development permits with variances and rezoning etc., as long as projects are aligned with OCP and other strategic documents within the District (5). It was also suggested that a staffing position could be considered for a housing planning/development liaison to support individuals in completing smaller infill projects, as these processes can sometimes feel daunting for those who are unfamiliar with them (2). Additional planning and policy considerations included pre-zoning, allowing for housing as secondary uses in commercial/light industrial/alternative zones, developing local areas plans, and encouraging more co-operative housing opportunities (4).

Partnerships and Collaboration were identified as key to moving forward towards more affordable housing. Partnerships between municipality/private and public sector, providing city owned land, and incentivizing the forms of housing in greatest need is were all seen as opportunity for collaboration across sectors (2).

What do you see as the main housing challenges facing Saanich residents?

A lack of affordable housing in general was seen as the greatest challenge for Saanich residents (3). In particular affordable workforce housing was identified as a current gap (2). It was identified that currently Saanich has a large number of single-family homes and a larger variety of housing is needed, spanning the entire housing spectrum and addressing “missing middle” housing types (4). Stakeholders also indicated that denser forms of housing needed to be located close amenities, including services, transit, and transportation infrastructure (4).

Families were identified as a household type that currently faces particular affordability challenges, particular accessing affordable housing that has enough bedrooms to mee their needs (3). Although Saanich is seen as a family-oriented community, there currently is not a variety of housing types to accommodate varying levels of affordability (2).

It was also acknowledged that a lack of housing diversity also negatively impacts students and their ability to find affordable and appropriate rental options (2).

What housing gaps are you observing? What type of housing is needed for residents, including students?

Stakeholders again identified a lack of housing diversity as a key gap in the community, particularly row and town homes (2). A lack of infill opportunities and barriers surrounding infill development through the development approvals process were both seen as hindering the community’s ability to address housing gaps (3). Again, the need for affordable housing for families was identified as a gap, particularly for graduate students from the local universities, who typically are of an average age of 30 and have young families (2). It is important to note that affordable childcare opportunities are also needed in order to support families (2). Students highlighted the need for a diverse range of affordable options for single young adults, couples, and families – and supporting infrastructure (3). University of Victoria students most often live on campus for the first year of their education and then move to off-campus housing options. For students, the greatest challenge is often finding affordable rentals near transit routes (2). Focusing on developing complete communities and mixed market developments with varying affordability rates, close to transit, was seen as key for the long-term viability of the District (3).

Additional gaps included a lack of universally acceptable units (1) and co-operative housing and other innovative tenure types (2).

What opportunities do you think exist for addressing housing issues in Saanich?

Opportunities for addressing housing challenges included improving the development approvals process and providing more clarity regarding development contribution requirements, as well as encouraging developers to think outside of the box and provide more housing diversity across neighbourhoods, particularly when it comes to addressing clearly identified housing gaps (4). Whistler and Squamish were both highlighted as communities to look to for, both for their provision of smaller housing units and workforce housing programs (2). Stakeholders again mentioned pre-zoning as a possible policy solution and suggested learning from other local governments who have already integrated pre-zoning policies (2). Additional policy considerations included allowing developers to use land as an equity contribution in order to leverage provincial and federal dollars, developing a Housing Reserve Fund (similar to the City of Victoria, and exploring various protection mechanisms to ensure long-term rentals and affordability (3).

In order to access and leverage funding opportunities from other levels of government, proposed affordable housing developments must come forward with the appropriate zoning, land, partnerships and

community services or amenities. with Could help us leverage funding opportunities from provincial and federal governments. It was felt by stakeholders that one of the biggest challenges in coordinating these initial aspects of an affordable development was access to land (2). It was suggested that the District look at land availability and consider ways to make it available to better support affordable development, rather than market value (1).

Considering the input provided so far and your understanding of housing challenges in Saanich, how can Saanich best work with and support community members in finding housing solutions, now and into the future?

Updating Local Area Plans was identified as a key opportunity for supporting community members. It was felt that updated Plans would provide a framework for decision making, allow for widespread community input, and that a targeted housing Local Area Plan would allow for the convening of stakeholders groups to meet and identify strategic directions for housing (4). Including student societies in discussions and planning processes was highlighted as an important opportunity to better support younger community members and their families (1).

3. Housing Needs Report Engagement Findings

Stakeholders across the housing system were invited to provide insight into housing needs throughout the region and in the core area communities, including Saanich, Esquimalt, and Victoria. Focus groups discussed community strengths, housing needs and gaps, and opportunities to address the communities' housing need. Stakeholders interviews focused on unmet needs and demands, issues and challenges when it came to addressing housing needs, and potential solutions

Findings for Saanich

Focus group participants were asked about housing challenges and opportunities in Saanich and the core area communities (Saanich, Victoria, Esquimalt). The demand for housing has increased in Saanich while housing unaffordability has deepened. Stakeholders reported that some households are being pushed to consider moving out of the community due to rising housing costs. Unaffordability is felt throughout the housing systems but will impact vulnerable households the most.

This section focuses on specific barriers to addressing housing issues and opportunity areas in Saanich.

Barriers and Challenges in Developing and Operating Housing

Housing Supply is Not Keeping Up

Stakeholders noted that housing starts in Saanich are declining and that high development costs and policy changes do not encourage developers to build in the community (e.g. large increases in development cost charges).

Lengthy Development Approvals Process

Stakeholders felt that the average timeline to obtain approval for a development application is significantly longer in Saanich than in other CRD communities, which has discouraged some builders from developing in Saanich. Participants noted there is an opportunity for to fast-track affordable housing applications to encourage developers to build new housing similar to other CRD communities.

Lack of Rental Incentives

Stakeholders felt that there is a lack of incentives (e.g. both policy and financial incentives) to direct developers to build specific housing types and forms. Although rental housing is needed in Saanich and rental vacancy rates are low, there are currently no municipal incentives to encourage the development of rental housing.

Family Housing Regulations

One stakeholder felt that while increasing the supply of housing for families is needed, the regulation for family-sized housing (e.g. 2 and 3 bedroom units) in development projects should be aimed away from corridors and targeted towards lower-density areas.

Opportunity Areas

Large Land Base for New Housing Development

Saanich has one of the largest land bases across all the CRD communities. Stakeholders felt that there were opportunities to build new housing across the housing continuum to address pent-up demand. In addition, housing located close to outdoor public amenities and spaces in Saanich were viewed by participants a benefit for the community to support health and wellbeing and are especially used during times of crises (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic). It was also noted that there is opportunity to explore affordable housing and community services in Saanich.

Encourage Higher Density Housing

As developing housing in Saanich is costly, allowing higher density housing would encourage more affordable housing to be built. A participant highlighted the need for smaller land plots and more infill

development. Mixed-use six-storey affordable housing project with amenities is possible because there are strong capital, developer, and labour markets in the core area communities including Saanich.

Protect Rental Housing Options

Participants reported an opportunity to protect existing rental stock in Saanich. Stakeholders reported that the demolition of rental stock is outpacing the growth of affordable rental housing options in Saanich.

Support Workforce Housing

One stakeholder reported that supporting housing for the workforce was important and could be facilitated by allowing residential and industrial uses to co-exist in Saanich. Participants noted that the protection of industrial lands drives employment and co-locating housing around these areas allow for long-term economic growth.

Stakeholder Interviews

As part of the Capital Regional District Housing Needs Reports, eleven (11) interviews were held with stakeholders that represent diverse perspectives on the housing system. They were interviewed through July and August of 2020 via Zoom conferencing or telephone. Stakeholders were asked a series of questions based on the sector that most closely represented their area of expertise. Interview questions can be found in Appendix C of this report. Interview findings are summarized below and represent findings for the Core communities of Saanich, Esquimalt, and Victoria.

The following individuals / organizations were interviewed:

- Community Social Planning Council
- Cool Aid Society
- Coalition to End Homelessness
- BC Housing
- Greater Victoria Housing Society
- Pacifica Housing
- Urban Development Institute
- Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society
- Victoria Native Friendship Centre
- M'akola Housing Development

Key Themes - Issues

Housing Affordability & Insecurity

Service Providers and First Nation Serving Organizations interviewed identified housing affordability as a major issue for renters and owners in the CRD (7). Affordable housing is needed for low-income earners regardless of gender, age, or ethnicity (2). The same two interviewees are increasing their services related to housing, whether through refocusing programs or expanding into new municipalities (2). One interviewee expressed that seniors on fixed incomes are particularly vulnerable to housing issues, due to rising rents and renovations (1).

Stakeholders stated that housing insecurity is due to lack of affordability, scarcity, and rental housing instability for any group without large incomes (4). Therefore, there is high demand for affordable housing and supportive housing (3).

Current affordable housing options tend to exclude the aforementioned groups at risk of homelessness. The reason they exclude them is because individuals need to show that they can rent units at 30% of income, which is still a high threshold and nearly impossible to meet (1). The working poor and middle-to-low income individuals are falling through the gaps because they do not qualify for RGI (1).

A housing provider sees the issue worsening because of the very low vacancy rate, which has worsened because the region hasn't created enough housing. High demand for rentals allows landlords to become increasingly picky and demanding of tenants. The income threshold of people seeking affordable options has been increasing. As a result, more families are seeking lower end market affordable housing, which is pushing more vulnerable groups out (1).

Even now, the stakeholder believes the region as a whole still doesn't know how to provide an appropriate amount of supply into the market (1). They believe that more people will need to decide whether or not they should move to a different region where housing costs are lower (1).

Income Supports

The number of people living on a single income who need support has increased (2). For example, there is a large need to house poor single men (not seniors) aged 45 to 65. This demographic relies on relationships with other income earners, such as their children. (1) Generally, families with two working adults are less in need than single parents (1).

Rent supplements for affordable housing have not increased over time and are no longer realistic when compared to market units (1).

Indigenous Housing Over Focused on Families

Two stakeholders said Indigenous housing providers in the region only provide low-income family housing (2). There is no transition / supportive housing for parents whose children move out (2). Otherwise parents are forced into unstable, marginal situations (1). Still need for more family housing (2), including for non-traditional families (i.e. Children's who guardians are not their parents) (1).

Aging Housing Stock, Demolitions and Renovations

Over the past five years, two stakeholders stated that the housing stock is aging and that there was a period where no housing was being built (2). As a result, there is an increasing rate of housing needing repairs that can lead to added costs to tenants (1). A stakeholder noted that demolitions and renovations of older stock in James Bay are leading to more luxury units (1). However, another stakeholder said that there is a high volume of housing options currently being built, and if construction continues over the next couple years, could the region get ahead of the issue (1).

Homelessness and other marginalized groups

Two service providers noted that marginalized groups and people experiencing homelessness have grown in recent years (2). Two housing providers also noted that there is a visible population of people experiencing homelessness that has been present in the region for a long time (2).

One stakeholder highlighted that over the past five years, rent prices have increased. However, incomes (including government payments) have not increased and worsens the problem (1).

The same service providers identified homelessness as another priority (2). Homelessness needs to be prioritized in order to identify different areas of support required, and it is instead addressed as a mass group (1). People experiencing homelessness gravitate to Victoria because of available services, which can also be said for Salt Spring Island. Both Victoria and Salt Spring Island have mild climates and cultures of tolerance (1).

Service Delivery Challenges

Two stakeholders highlighted two different challenges impacting their ability to deliver programming and services. The first spoke to the challenge of being overburdened because of increased demand from growing vulnerable populations (1). High housing costs also impact the service staff, which leads to even higher turnover at non-profit organizations. Being overburdened, non-profits involved in the housing crisis are having difficulty in effectively planning. There is less demand for program reviews, capacity building and proactive projects (1).

Supportive Housing

One stakeholder sees that sufficient support is not always offered due to limited funding, or that the medical care is not readily available (1). In other cases, supportive housing may simply not have the supports needed by tenants.

First Nation Serving Organizations identified multiple groups in need that require tailored supports. The largest group in need are those with mental health, alcohol and substance abuse challenges (2). Youth aging out of foster care need targeted supports before they become street-entrenched or trafficked (2). Elders on fixed income need affordable housing (2). Women, especially young Indigenous women, who are fleeing violence need housing (2). Post-secondary students from small communities need support understand how to rent.

Limited Available Land

Downtown core is built out but more development needs to take place. Result will be moving to communities like West Shore, Saanich, and Sooke. Requires leadership to ensure housing doesn't remain concentrated in downtown Victoria. The sooner housing becomes more distributed the sooner we can positively impact Indigenous street community, or any street community, while involving them in the conversation. Thinking at least 5- to 10- years ahead. (1)

Development Process Challenges

The second stakeholder expressed process challenges related to rezoning, fast-tracking, land availability, NIMBYism, and challenges finding funding (1). The bureaucracy involved with zoning and approval processes can be a challenge. In theory, supportive and affordable housing is to be fast-tracked, but that process is often slowed down. This stakeholder has adapted their approach to development because of resistance from neighbourhoods. It is a challenge when the people become the focus rather than the land use issue (1).

There are strong providers and innovative private developers in the CRD that are able to benefit from Regional Housing First, BC Housing and Community Housing Fund. However, a challenge remains in finding affordable and/or pre-zoned land. (1)

Developing can be challenging (2). In Victoria, an interviewee found their process too cumbersome and they lack a framework that incentivizes rentals. Victoria gives more priority to upgrading heritage buildings than rentals. Saanich is similar and the interviewee said they refuse to do any more building in Saanich until they address these issues. Housing will continue to stagnate in Saanich until they see some progressive changes. Esquimalt's zoning is prescriptive in nature and can be challenging (1).

Capacity issues relating to developing and establish projects were a challenge for two First Nation Serving organizations (2). One stakeholder has challenges competing against larger organizations like Pacifica Housing and Kool Aid (1). Two stakeholders have challenges buying property and bridging financing (2). One stakeholder prefers converting old units to non-market rather than building new ones (1).

Development processes (i.e. permits, approval times, parking variances, etc.) can also be a challenge. (1)

Operating Challenges

One interviewee's organization had grown a lot, which created challenges in having the right foundations, structures, and staff to keep up with growth. (1)

They have challenges with a lack of skills and burnout. There is a limited labour pool for experienced, trained staff because of the vulnerable populations the interviewee works with. Lack of housing affordability also creates staff burnout because they are often working two or more jobs (1).

One interviewee said they are dealing with more individuals with mental health issues, which takes capacity. Generally, they contract through non-profit operators that have capacity challenges. (1)

Other issues included social issues with tenants (i.e. rent collection).

Key Themes – Unmet needs and demands

Affordable Housing

According to service providers affordable housing is needed for the working poor, Indigenous, single parents, youth and seniors on fixed incomes (3). One stakeholder expressed that the country is moving into an economic crisis and communities need to come together to support one another. Another respondent believed that interim housing during COVID has been a success.

Housing Providers also state that there is a broad need for anything affordable (3). One interviewee listed seniors and need to ensure physical mobility, young working families and people in low-wage workforce, and people living in hotels since COVID (1). Another stated the need to prioritize supportive housing and RGI. They also stated the need to prioritize long-term purpose-built rentals. New builds should ensure units that can accommodate people with disabilities, as older buildings cannot be repurposed (1).

Affordable housing should include one-bedrooms with rent-geared-to-income (1).

Singles and Families

Both singles and families are on waitlists for affordable, independent housing (3). Regarding family housing, two stakeholders said there is a clear need (2). Another felt that municipalities need to be more strategic in how and where they supply family housing (1). The fourth stakeholder felt that families already dominated the conversation (1). One stakeholder felt that studios and 1-bedroom units that are rent-geared-to-income are in more demand than family housing (1).

Two stakeholders expressed that ensuring families and couples can live together is a priority (2). For one stakeholder, this includes reuniting families, especially women with children in foster care (1)

Expanding on family housing, one housing provider highlighted issues with land use policies. The stakeholder sees land restricted to single-family and duplexes as problematic in certain areas, where there could be more density. Families generally cannot afford these more expensive units but still prefer to have yards and ground-oriented doors. There is a need for family housing, but more dense developments can better serve single-person households. (1)

One stakeholder mentioned that off-reserve members living in the CRD are looking for family housing, and supportive housing.

Supportive Housing

The majority of stakeholders said there is a clear need for more supportive housing (3), which was operating at-capacity before the COVID-19 pandemic (1). Since the COVID-19 outbreak in Canada, supportive housing has had to reduce capacity to meet social distancing requirements, further compounding many issues related to housing stability Respondents identified the following needs in their areas:

- culturally appropriate housing (4);
- Supportive housing for families and individuals (3);
- supportive housing with harm reduction services (3), especially for women (2);
- human-centred supports (1);
- permanent and flexible housing programs (i.e. Housing First is flexible to those in housing need) (1);
- Alcohol harm reduction (1)

- Healing Houses for Indigenous people; and
- initial support for people with tough backgrounds (1).

The consensus amongst housing providers is that the need for more housing has grown and is more acute (4). There are also now additional supports for mental health and addiction for all household types (2).

Relative to the general population, the amount of people requiring emergency mental health and substance abuse supports is small. However, these supports are important because this is where we see the most damaging behaviours. In terms of community and social wellness housing for those with complex needs is a key service and a huge gap (1).

Housing providers also see a significant need for supportive housing and assisted living (3), especially for seniors (3) but also for youth, individuals with disability, and individuals with mental health issues (1).

Seniors who can no longer live independently need to be moved quickly. In cases where they could not be moved to assisted housing, safety and health concerns are much more likely (1).

Culturally Supportive Housing

Three stakeholders identified the need for cultural supportive housing (3). Cultural supportive housing includes Elders, land-based healing, and cultural activities. One stakeholder mentioned that BC Housing recently inquired about it, but specific funding is still unavailable (1).

Two stakeholders also mentioned the need for a decolonized, harm reduction framework (2) and more pathways for healing (1).

Youth Housing

Respondents also expressed that a gap in youth housing is another prominent issue that has existed in the region for a long time (3). In particular, youth aging out of foster care have a much higher risk of experiencing homelessness, with over 50% becoming homeless in the first year. 41% of people who are chronically homeless became homeless in their youth. (1)

Affordable Workforce Housing

Two housing providers identified the need for affordable workforce housing (2). The need will likely increase due to COVID-19 (1). Workforce housing will need to align with economic goals. Municipalities can also increase opportunities for townhouses and other densities (1).

Shift from RGI units to low end of market

More construction of low end of market and decrease in RGI units (2). The shift is likely due to government funding. Need to consider that low end of market is still not affordable to many from Indigenous communities (1). It is also unaffordable and excludes people with very low incomes (1)

Key Themes – Innovations, Solutions, Best Practices and Strategies

Partnering and Capacity Building with Non-Profits

Partnerships with non-profits that are innovative, communicative and collaborative when addressing issues (3). Pre-allocating units to societies that could allow governments to get ahead of developments (1). This includes more partnerships and co-locating non-profits (1). Capacity-building to help societies' capability to operate 100-unit buildings (1).

Equitable Access

For one service provider, their priority is to ensure equitable access to safe, adequate housing, while also recognizing that some people need additional supports (3). This approach involves avoiding a “one-size-fits-all” solution. The call for equitable access is a recognition that youth and the working poor fall through the cracks because they do not tick the box for being a vulnerable population with the lowest income. Over the years, there has been more emphasis on the most vulnerable, and now most of those programs are in place. Therefore, more emphasis could be put onto low-income groups instead of lowest-income groups. (2)

Another service provider said it is most important to continue to serve the most marginalized in the community. It is also important that cultural supports are provided, because one-third of their clients are Indigenous. (2).

Pre-zone and Up-Zone Properties to Higher Density

Housing Providers identified the opportunity to pre-zone and up-zone properties to higher densities (2), which does not necessarily need to be done in corridors (1). They also identified it as an opportunity to de-risk and de-politicize the development process (2).

An interviewee provided two examples from Seattle and Vancouver. In Seattle, when they extended transit in 2015, they completed an area plan and up-zoned everything. Decisions were based on the ability to meet parking and site coverage requirements, which shortened the process. In Vancouver, they also had certain form-based restrictions that were specific to revitalizations in HA1A zone. (1)

Mixed-Market Developments and Inclusionary Zoning

The CRD can explore mixed-market developments that include luxury, middle-income and low-income rentals, to promote more inclusive communities and housing while tackling NIMBYism (2). Toronto has mixed-income communities and continues to support/encourage them (1). In general, one stakeholder suggests continuing to experiment with new approaches, such as inclusionary zoning through iterative planning to test ideas (1).

Culturally supportive Housing

A stakeholder highlighted that there has been more emphasis on culturally supportive housing as of late (1). For example, the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness is opening a small housing program for Indigenous women. M’akola Housing Society provides affordable housing options primarily to Aboriginal people and families, a population that has historically faced housing challenges (1).

Capacity Building of Indigenous Families

Capacity building of Indigenous families seeking homeownership, including financial literacy and importance of investing (1). There are more Indigenous families interested and capable of seeking homeownership (1).

Indigenous Advocacy

In the last five years, one stakeholder has seen the positive effects of their advocacy work. There are now more healing houses and places to go once discharged from hospitals and treatment centres. A pilot project for Alcohol Harm Reduction Housing at a culturally supportive housing is taken place. They also got \$500,000 for a three-year research project on developing culturally appropriate housing. (1)

PiT count illustration 33% of homeless are Indigenous people. That statistic is being used to advocate for more Indigenous housing (at least one-third), which is becoming a reality (1).

Dual Model of Housing Care

A First Nation Serving Organization is developing a new way to house target population called dual model of housing care. One aspect is culturally supportive (i.e. Elders, traditional foods). Second aspect includes healing and recovery (i.e. land based healing, family reunification). It’s being written up as a decolonized

harm reduction framework, which will lead to proposals to all levels of government. It is based on MMIW findings, UNDRIP and Jordan's Principle. (1)

Innovate Perspective through Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being

Innovate perspective by trusting Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Provide more space for Indigenous people and organizations. Shift outside paternalistic attitudes of Western institutions. Convene organization around leading practice on Indigenous housing. (1) Proportionate access to housing linked to PiT count (1).

Create Big Picture Understanding of Actors

Create big picture understanding of all the various actors, such as Indigenous partners, First Nations, non-Indigenous housing providers, municipalities, BC Housing, CMHC. Regional consultation and brainstorming sessions that lead to action. Most conversations are siloed. (1)

Land Availability

Partner with First Nations that have set aside land for revenue through development (1)

New Shelter Models

Shelter models with wrap around services and assessment during the day. Will limit the amount of wandering people that are homeless. (1)

Housing Agreements

Housing agreements are important for increasing access to housing (2). One service provider felt that 10% of buildings that are RGI need to be increased through and thresholds reduced so more people could qualify (1). Currently, it is not enough to meet demand and many people do not qualify (1). Another stakeholder said that housing agreements for rental units (including secondary suites) is important for developers to undertake (i.e. CRD Housing Corporation) (1).

Service Provider Training

A service provider trains staff in harm reduction, coordinates with health care professionals to visit their buildings, and offers services to support day-to-day maintenance of life. The same interviewee utilizes a triage system called "Community Coordinated Access and Assessment System" to address housing requests (1).

Development Processes

Municipalities can also target the approval process with deregulation and incentives to make development easier (1). They can also reduce parking requirements (1). Continue to support renewal and purpose-built rentals (1).

Transportation

A service provider's organization's bus pass program has been helping more people who live in vulnerable situations (1).

Affordable Housing Rental Subsidies

Affordable rental subsidies in all housing is needed to fill gap between market rents and programs (1). Expand programs like RAP and Safer to all renter households (1).

CRD-wide Systems: Coordinated Access System & Universal Housing Agreement

One stakeholder's solution is to create a coordinated access system with names and identified needs, which the CRD may already be creating. COVID-19 has highlighted the challenges of communities without a coordinated access system for homeless groups. (1)

Interviewees presented multiple strategies and innovations to address housing in CRD. They include a Universal Housing Agreement within the CRD. Currently, each municipality has their own which causes huge process delays (1).

BC Housing – Location Specific Model

BC Housing could replicate Ontario's location-specific model that is seen as more responsive and driven by communities (1).

Additional Comments Specific to the District of Saanich

The same stakeholder critiqued Saanich for including family housing in their Uptown Douglas Corridor Plan, which they think could better serve as workforce housing. Saanich does need more family options, but they could likely be served outside of dense corridors. Saanich also needs to strategically better their utilization of infrastructure, such as parks and schools, in areas of low-density that are overserved. (1)

Saanich's approval process is very cumbersome and one interviewee said they refuse to do any more building in Saanich until they address these issues.

Saanich is similar and the interviewee said they refuse to do any more building in Saanich until they address these issues. Housing will continue to stagnate in Saanich until they see some progressive changes. (1)

Focus Groups

Four focus groups were held for Core community stakeholders (Saanich, Esquimalt, and Victoria) that work in housing and housing related sectors in order to inform the Housing Needs Report. Stakeholders were invited from community serving organizations, housing providers, institutional (education), and development and real estate sectors. Each focus group was asked to speak to a different set of questions which related to their particular sector. Each set of questions focused on challenges, gaps, and opportunities in addressing housing needs across the Core region, as well as information related to current and anticipated housing needs and trends. All focus groups were conducted using Zoom web conferencing software.

An additional, focus group was held with representatives from Saanich Community Associations and Student Associations from University of Victoria and Camosun College in order to improve our understanding of housing issues and opportunities from a resident and student perspective specifically related to Saanich and the development of a Housing Strategy (summarized in the section above).

Findings of focus group discussions are summarized below, by sector. Numbers within each summary indicated the number of instances that each comment was received.

A session was held for each of the following groups:

- July 6th, 2020 (Community Serving Organizations)
- July 7th, 2020 (Housing Providers)
- July 15th, 2020 (Institutional)
- July 16th, 2020 (Development and Real Estate)

Stakeholders included:

- Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
- Intercultural Association
- Together Against Poverty Society
- Mount Douglas Seniors Housing
- Threshold Housing Society
- Seaspun
- Camosun College
- University of Victoria
- Downtown Victoria Association
- South Island Prosperity Project
- Residential Designer and Land Use Consultant
- Residential Builders Association
- Arise Developers
- Abstract Developer
- Tri-eagle Developer Corporation

Community Serving Organizations

The following questions were asked and discussed by the stakeholders whose feedback is summarized below:

What strengths and opportunities do the core communities (Esquimalt, Saanich and Victoria) have regarding new market and non-market housing development?

Community gardens, and other outside areas were seen as opportunities in Victoria / Esquimalt and a strength in Saanich (3). They represent safe places where people can engage in community while supporting health and safety, especially during COVID. Therefore, its not about maximizing footprints.

All three communities have ability to build around urban centres to ensure access to services (3).

Community serving organizations viewed both Victoria and Saanich as being good to business with (2). Victoria has a quick process for projects. Saanich has an opportunity to create a fast-tracked process for projects. Esquimalt previously had a permissive tax exemption, which was benefit of operating community serving organizations (2).

Victoria has a progressive council. However, they have the largest homelessness problem. Affordable Housing bylaw has been difficult to access (1).

What housing or service needs are not being met? What are some of the key reasons that your clients and/or constituents may be struggling to find appropriate housing or service supports? What obstacles are you facing/seeing for meeting housing-related service needs (e.g. funding/resources, community attitudes, etc.)?

Stakeholders view informal relationships as very important for community serving organizations and their clients in overcoming obstacles (3). They are important to move people to different housing, especially when wrap around services are needed. Developing informal relationships requires a lot of advocacy work.

There is a need for supportive housing sites with less units (opposed to more) (3). Many unit buildings have a larger impact to neighbourhoods than fewer units buildings, which supports “scattered housing” (3). For example, Pandora Street and OUR Place seems to have created a net negative (1). Around 12 units per building seems ideal. However, BC Housing funding incentivizes larger buildings not smaller (1). Modular housing project in Vancouver was a success, which included having a person living on-site to offer supports.

Additional income supports are needed for tenant and housing provider (2). New buildings split into three stages of low end; rent to income and market rentals provides income support for housing providers. For tenants, BC Housing made changes where tenants can no longer access Rental Assistance Programs (RAP), or other income supports. As a result, market rentals can be more affordable if tenants can access RAP. However, market rentals do not provide wrap around supports for tenants.

There is a need to provide wrap around supports (3). It is difficult for service providers to operate in Esquimalt unless they have an outreach location (2). Esquimalt has become more difficult to operate in since they removed permissive tax exemptions (2). Most services are provided from Victoria. There is a big gap between market housing and full-service supportive housing (1).

At-risk tenants have multiple obstacles (2). First, understanding when to apply the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA) is difficult when providing services to at-risk tenants. For example, how to complete safety checks for at-risk people when the RTA states they cannot check-in unannounced (1). Second, there is a need to balance independence of tenants also rely on services. There is a difference between providing food and providing the means to access food (2). Lastly, immigrants can be at-risk tenants for landlord because they may not be used to household systems, such as running water. Language difficulties are a big barrier for both tenants and landlords that create additional risk (1).

Victoria and Saanich need to address issues of renovictions (2). Concern is that the pace of development will continue to cause renovictions. Demolitions of affordable housing outpaces creation. Lastly, housing First in practice is difficult. In most cases, it isn't first but second to income assistance and process (1);

What suggestions do you have for creating more housing options for your clients?

Create a landlord registry that allow tenants to rate landlords and the types of units they have. Due to low vacancy landlords have more power. A landlord registry could help balance the power difference (2).

Expanding the role of municipalities as affordable housing providers (2). Allows for greater local context to influence affordable housing and housing service options. BC Housing has a monopoly on selecting the

type of units and services offered. Municipalities can help break up this monopoly. Municipalities should consider greater use of inclusionary zoning or pre-zoning to encourage affordable housing in various neighbourhoods (2). 20 years ago, James Bay had a land swap with CRD Housing Corporation.

Victoria and Saanich need to address issues of renovictions (2). Concern is that the pace of development will continue to cause renovictions. Demolitions of affordable housing outpaces creation.

Additional suggestions by stakeholders included, Simplifying processes related to application and permits is important to reduce costs and increase affordability (1); Esquimalt should bring back permissive tax exemptions (1); Informal forums (closed groups) are needed to help find housing for certain groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community (1).

Housing Providers

The following questions were asked and discussed by the stakeholders whose feedback is summarized below:

What strengths and opportunities do the core communities (Saanich, Esquimalt, and Victoria) have regarding new market and non-market housing development?

Stakeholders stated that there are challenges due to the unavailability of affordable land and limited geography, which creates challenges even with BC Housing funded projects (2). Partnering with municipalities that have available land is an opportunity to address this. Additional opportunities include reducing development costs by streamlining application / permitting processes and through DCC waivers. Municipalities should also treat non-profits differently than for-profit developers. Finally, alleviating height constraints can lead to better fiscal sustainability of operations.

Each municipality needs political leadership to address NIMBYism. Affordable housing also needs to be geographically close to service hubs for the target demographic (i.e. schools for youth, medical clinics for seniors) (2).

What housing or service needs are not being met? What obstacles are you facing/seeing for meeting housing-related service needs (e.g. funding/resources, community attitudes, etc.)?

One of the biggest obstacles is NIMBYism (2). The next is the large service gap, which is seen by very long waiting lists. Operating costs are also increasing (largely due to insurance premium increases for multi-family buildings).

Youth and seniors both have a large unmet need (2). Youth require trauma-informed / harm reduction services. Seniors have difficulty accessing housing with additional supports. As a result, independent housing is taking on seniors who need additional care, which adds additional costs to which they are not funded for.

What housing gaps are you observing in your work? What demands are not being met? What barriers and/or challenges exist for new development in the central communities of the CRD? Are some forms of housing more challenging to develop for this area than others?

Homelessness, and youth homelessness, is a common issue in the CRD (2). Saanich has an opportunity to help address it. However, one stakeholder felt unsure of Saanich's position on affordable housing.

Increasing the height of multi-storey buildings allows housing providers to scale up and add to revenue streams at reduced cost. The most expensive items are the foundation and roof. A three-storey maximum is not necessarily financially sustainable to operate (1).

What suggestions do you have for creating more housing options for your clients?

Diverse affordable housing types are needed to support multiple groups (2). These include those on disability and income assistance, youth and adults. In most cases, income supports do not support independent living or even affordable costs to living. Therefore, rent subsidies should be based on

geographic location so that individuals can rent where they want (1). Poverty is a real issue and single-person households, especially seniors, are at high risk due to one income stream.

If income cannot be supplemented then the housing stock needs to increase (2). Multi-unit buildings with diverse rent schemes are also needed to support the housing provider (2).

Institutional

The following questions were asked and discussed by the stakeholders. Their answers are summarized below each question.

Discussion after data review

Multiple stakeholders stated that planning needs to be done at regional level (5). Multiple jurisdictions result in additional costs for developers because of different policies and processes between municipalities (2). The region is one fluid economy. Households derive income from downtown despite living elsewhere. Regional growth will lead to sprawl without adequate planning. Requires smart land use and transportation planning to address for even 1% continuous population growth. West shore is getting a lot of development (1).

Important to understand average cost of square foot of land, and average time/cost of going through rezoning process. Real Estate Developers, municipal staff and Councils would all benefit in understanding this (1).

A stakeholder was curious about the differences in wealth versus income (renter vs. owner). How has the wealth and income gap increased over time? (1)

Smaller land plots and more infill development is preferred (1). Saanich has a big opportunity for this.

What strengths and opportunities do the core communities (Esquimalt, Saanich and Victoria) have regarding new market and non-market housing development?

Mixed-use 6-storey affordable housing projections with amenities is possible because there is strong capital, developer and labour markets in the core communities (2). Therefore, affordable projects can be financed and built more easily than elsewhere (1). Land costs and house prices are the limiting factor. However, the region remains attractive for people to come and live.

The Urban Core is condensed and allows for multi-modal transportation (2). Creates easy access into downtown core (if you can't live in it). Strip malls are an opportunity to further this. Incentives need to be put in place to turn strip malls into mixed-use areas and denser corridors. An example is University Heights or Vancouver's Cambie Corridor (1)

Over time the community has become more accepting of taller buildings. Townline Hudson and Bay View are both examples in Victoria. This has changed over the last 10-years. (1)

University Campus desires more freedom to better service the area as a major hub (1). University could benefit from having more control over its zoning. They require development variance permits for every building due to a 10m height limit. Campus plan is to densify.

There is enough money on the table between Regional and Senior levels of government. However, there are multiple challenges that need to be addressed. For example, competition in construction industry requires capacity building; Councils need to be more accepting of affordable housing in their communities; neighbourhood associations generally resistive to development; public misperceptions of who lives in "affordable housing" and "public housing" units.

Over the past five and ten years, what changes have you observed in the core communities housing market?

Over the past five- to ten-years, stakeholders noted that market prices are drastically outpacing incomes creating a large affordable gap (4). Affordability issues are driving people further and further out (3). Family-sized housing is increasingly scarce and both parents need to make at least \$25/hour to afford. Student's, who are large source of population influx regionally, are also seeing an large affordability crunch (3).

Newer generations (and empty nesters) have different priorities and preferences than older generations. They are more willing to live closer to downtown core, have smaller families, need less floor space, have less vehicles, and prefer walkability. Preferences for smaller units are being driven by affordability and lifestyle values (3). Non-vehicular travel is increasing quickly (1).

Escalations in construction costs are also happening (2). High construction volumes and trade bottlenecks are seen as the cause. Generally, the impact of raising construction costs are misunderstood by Councillors and the public who see developers as being greedy. At the end of the day, any added costs are passed down to customers (1).

Other changes identified by stakeholders include very low interest rates and new loaning requirements by Feds. Airbnb and short-term rental properties are also new (1)

What housing gaps are you observing in your work? What barriers and/or challenges exist for new development in core (Esquimalt, Saanich and Victoria) communities?

Housing gaps include purpose-built rental units for workers (2). For example, low-income workers who work in Victoria but reside in Saanich (or farther). Furthermore, these units can benefit students who go from living in residence to worker housing, which can help them transition.

Family-friendly units are also missing in the Urban Core, and in areas with amenities for families (3). 3-bedroom rentals are not common in downtown cores. Vancouver created a policy where 25% of units must be 3-bedroom to allow for family. Now developers are building at 30% because there is demand. Remote working will also create demand for additional rooms for offices (1).

Student focused housing is another gap (2). Generally, student housing is run like a not-for-profit with rents put to maintenance, renewals and some programs. University is limited to expand student housing because they cannot take on debt. Required a lot of financial mechanisms to get new housing built.

Availability of land and access to road network lessens as area expands/densifies. Creates difficulty in warehousing and ability to deliver goods. Need to consider where business will be placed, especially as land availability decreases (1).

University needs more support as a community hub and major destination. More policy support for building height, density, parking requirements and transportation management. They needed a 500-parking stall variance for a development. (1)

Current variances and permits create roadblocks (1). Addressing them would alleviate pressures on rental market.

What opportunities do you think exist for addressing housing issues in Esquimalt, Saanich and Victoria?

Industrial lands need to be protected for future demand and needs (2). Industrial lands sustain salaries and contribute hugely to our communities and quality of life. It will require an integrated conversation on the demand being placed on the remaining lands. Perhaps, a 100-year protected industrial land reserve could be included in the subsequent housing strategy. Would force the conservation for smarter land use in areas that are in and around these zones. For example, the Uptown Douglas Corridor Action plan has a focus area intent on maintaining an industrial areas while at the same time mixing in housing with the light industrial buildings to provide more worker housing. Otherwise, residential (mostly condos) will

continue to encroach on industrial lands. Keating Cross Road represents 18% of industrial land in the region but is surrounded by ALR land (which also cannot be encroached upon).

Council leadership is very important. They are land use managers. There is funding on the table but Councils need to do their part (1).

Creating clarity and certainty in the development process is important. It builds trust that people can get things build in a timely fashion (1).

Development and Real Estate

The following questions were asked and discussed by the stakeholders. Their answers are summarized below each question.

Discussion post-data

A stakeholder noted that the data is very outdated (1). Another noted that eighty percent (80%) of rental stock was built in the 80s or earlier, after the 1980s much less was built (1).

Typology, date of construction and population growth should be considered. Finished sale value, land costs, constructions and FSR density over time also need to be measured. Development inputs are more costly but developers get the flak for being greedy but inputs are not considered.

In Royal Oak, the vast majority of an affluent community cannot afford houses. There isn't the political will to approve housing through the public process. Requires pre-zoning to inoculate the process. (1)

What strengths and opportunities do the core communities (Victoria, Esquimalt and Saanich) have regarding new market and non-market housing development?

Developers appreciate approval processes that provide certainty and offer timely approvals (4). Victoria was previously difficult to develop in but has now gotten better. As long as policy requirements are met in Victoria there isn't much Esquimalt is great to develop in (3). In Esquimalt, there is a general hierarchy and good customer care that look to moving things forward.

Saanich, however, remains the most difficult to business in due to its process (3). Saanich has largest land base and population but it takes years to get anything done. The culture is seen as very obstructionist with much uncertainty and layering of costs (3). As a result, housing starts are declining. In comparison, West Shore takes 3-months while Saanich takes 17 months for approval. Addressing the issue would tap into the pent-up demand to create housing throughout the housing continuum.

Over the past five and ten years, what changes have you observed in the region's housing market?

Federal changes to immigration policies created greater influx of immigrants between 2015/2016. As a result, there is additional housing demand that wasn't present in 2015. Underlies a disconnect between municipal zoning / land use policies and national policy (1).

Increasing difficulty in putting development sites together due to costs and bureaucracies. Cost include land cost and materials costs as well as costs associated to the process.

Missing Middle Housing is becoming increasingly difficulty (2). In Victoria, Missing Middle gets lumped into apartment zoning. Furthermore, building high-rise buildings (six storeys) increases land costs, which makes it more difficult to build small buildings (i.e. two-storey buildings. Cost of land and cost of houses are disconnected as land might be worth \$800,000 and houses \$60,000 (2).

Land use rezoning needs to shift to accommodate smaller lot sizes to address affordability of land. Currently, it is difficult to find smaller lots. It is also not possible to put a home on smaller lots. So, single-family homes are getting knocked down and put into high-density. More reliance on mixed housing stocks in areas is needed (2). However, there continues to be a "Single Family Land Reserve" that is restrictive to medium-density.

The development industry is playing catch up due to decades of municipal inaction. Now due to high costs of development incremental change is not possible as the industry must go with high density (2). Prolonged periods of regulatory inaction lead municipalities to make large changes, which is disruptive to industry (i.e. DCCs in Saanich). Doing so goes against development principles of fairness and certainty (2). The way to avoid disruptive change is to change incrementally.

Planning transportation, land use and housing are disjointed because of the multiple jurisdictions in the CRD. With more coordinated planning across jurisdictions then something like an LRT to West Shore with surrounding density could be possible. Remains a difficulty. (1)

What housing gaps are you observing in your work? What demands are not being met? What barriers and/or challenges exist for new development in the core communities? Are some forms of housing more challenging to develop for this area than others?

It's important to build mixed housing at all levels. Doing so will free up housing near the bottom of the continuum, which is more affordable. At the same time, politicians are confusing \$700,000 townhomes as social housing and stating that "its not affordable," but, its not intended to be social housing (3). Also need to consider "contextual affordability" where new development is more affordable than old housing stock.

There is going to be a multi-generational wealth transfer as mortgages are paid off and as new generations buy from older generations (3). Still, "Where are the millennials going to live when starting families?" If they cannot afford the lots, and can't live in 1-bedroom condos, where will they live? One stakeholder has shifted projects to include more family friendly townhomes. However, townhomes get lumped into apartments, which creates undue difficulty.

What opportunities do you think exist for addressing housing issues in core CRD communities?

Community associations need to be addressed (3). They are not necessarily representative of communities and can host very vocal minorities (2). They are perceived as having too much decision-making power but there shouldn't be that much weight put on them. Finally, a stakeholder identified them as "professional obstructionist organizations."

Communities need to be leaders. Use evidence-based decision-making to limit the sway of vocal minorities. They also need to take a look at their processes and remove obstructive bureaucracies. Be objective and create certainty. Look to other municipalities such as Langford as to how things can be done. (1)

Appendix A: Housing Strategy Stakeholder Interview Questions

1. Can you please tell us about your organization and your role within it?
2. What kind of housing, or housing-related service does your organization provide?
3. What do you think the biggest challenges and barriers are to increasing the supply of affordable housing and the diversity of housing types Saanich/BC Municipalities?
4. What housing forms and types of housing are most needed in Saanich/BC Municipalities?
5. In your opinion, what is the best approach to balancing retention of existing rental, renovating existing rental, and redeveloping with new rental housing?
6. What changes could be made to regulations, processes, or policies to make it easier to construct new market and non-market housing?
7. What actions should Saanich take for each of the focus areas? Do you have any innovative ideas you'd like to share with us? Tools? Models? Focus areas include: 1) Increase Affordable Housing 2) Support Housing Diversity and Supply 3) Promote and Protect Rental Housing 4) Reduce Barriers to Housing 5) Strengthen Partnerships and Build Awareness
8. Do you have any insights in to what process should be used to determine priorities? What should the evaluation criteria should we include?
9. How can Saanich best support community awareness of housing challenges, in particular the need for affordable housing for very low, low, and moderate incomes?
10. Do you have any ideas on how to build an equitable and inclusive strategy? OR How can we consider impacts to equity for these actions?
11. Who do you see as the key partners for Saanich to engage in the development and implementation of an effective housing strategy?
12. Do you have any ideas for strategies to strengthen partnerships between government, private and non-profit housing providers and service providers in order to improve access to affordable housing?
13. Anything else that you think would be important to note?

Appendix B: Student and Community Association Focus Group Questions

1. What strengths and opportunities does Saanich, have regarding new market and non-market housing development?
2. What housing forms are most needed in Saanich (rental, multi-family etc.)?
3. Where should these housing types be located (e.g. residential areas, centre, villages)?
4. From your perspective, what kind of affordable housing (supportive, transitional, subsidized rental etc.) is most needed in Saanich?
5. For students:
 - a) What programs (support or services?), do you find the most successful in helping students find off-campus housing?
 - b) What is the demand for on-campus and off-campus student housing?
 - c) What are the challenges students face when finding on/off campus housing?
 - d) How can the District of Saanich help meet this need?
6. What suggestions do you have for creating more housing options in your community?
7. Do you have any ideas for strategies to build better public awareness of housing challenges and help to alleviate fears of changes in your neighbourhoods?

Appendix C: Housing Needs Report Stakeholder Interview Questions

Housing Providers (Developers, Non-Profits)

Organization Specific

1. Can you please tell us about your organization and your role within it?
2. What kind of housing, or housing-related service does your organization provide? If relevant, please describe your operations, including locations, number of units, housing types, tenants, or programs and services offered, as well as any waitlist numbers
3. What housing needs or demands are not currently being met in the community you serve? Are there specific groups you see facing more housing challenges? *Prompts: families, renters, individuals with disabilities, women and children, seniors, people with mental health issues, others?*
4. Have you observed any changes in housing needs or demand over recent years (e.g. 5 years)?
5. What challenges does your organization face when it comes to building or operating housing?
6. What are your organization's housing priorities?
7. Do you have any new projects or initiatives that are planned / recently completed / ongoing in the CRD?
This might come up during earlier question but ask if it doesn't.

Broader Housing Challenges and Opportunities

8. What do you see as the biggest housing priorities in the CRD?
9. What opportunities do you see to build and operate new housing in the CRD?
10. What solutions, innovations, strategies or best practices would you encourage in the CRD for addressing housing?
11. Any other observations?

First Nations Serving Organizations

Nation Specific

1. Can you please tell us about your role and if there are specific Nation(s) you serve? *Some interviewees may be working for multiple Nations or may be focused on serving off-reserve Indigenous community members, please capture this and any differences they observe within each Nation.*
2. What kind of housing, or housing-related service does your organization provide (*if any*)? If relevant, please describe your operations, including locations, number of units, housing types, tenants, or programs and services offered, as well as any waitlist numbers.
3. What housing needs or demands are not currently being met in the community you serve? Are there specific groups you see facing more housing challenges? *Prompts: families, renters, individuals with disabilities, women and children, seniors, people with mental health issues, others?*
4. For off-reserve members living in the CRD, are there any housing needs that aren't being met? What housing type(s) are being sought by these members?
5. Have you observed any changes in housing needs or demand over recent years (e.g. 5 years)?
6. What challenges does your organization face when it comes to building or operating housing?
7. What are your organizations housing priorities?
8. Do you have any new projects or initiatives that are planned / recently completed / ongoing in or near the CRD, for members or non-members? *This might come up during earlier question but ask if it doesn't.*

Broader Housing Challenges and Opportunities

9. What do you see as the biggest housing priorities in the CRD and nearby areas?
10. What opportunities do you see to build and operate new housing in or near the CRD?
11. What solutions, innovations, strategies or best practices would you encourage in the CRD for addressing housing?
12. Any other observations?

Service Providers (and any others not directly involved in the provision of housing)

Organization Specific

1. Can you please tell us about your organization and your role within it?
2. How do housing issues come up in your work?
3. What housing needs or demands are not currently being met in the community you serve? Are there specific groups you see facing more housing challenges? *Prompts: families, renters, individuals with disabilities, women and children, seniors, people with mental health issues, others?*
4. Have you observed any changes in housing needs or demand over recent years (e.g. 5 years)?
5. Are any of the housing challenges you identified impacting your ability to delivery programming or services? *Prompts: students not being able to find housing, recruitment or retention of staff, etc.*
6. What is most important for your organization when it comes to housing in the CRD?
7. Is your organization exploring opportunities to build and / or operate housing in the CRD? *You may know early on that the answer is no, but it may be relevant to ask education institutions and others, for example.*

Broader Housing Challenges and Opportunities

8. What do you see as the biggest housing priorities in the CRD?
9. What opportunities do you see to address housing needs in the CRD?
10. What solutions, innovations, strategies or best practices would you encourage in the CRD for addressing housing?
11. Any other observations?

Attachment B: District of Saanich Housing Survey

Phase 1 Engagement - Public Survey Summary



Overview

Saanich's Housing Strategy will direct how we will move forward to achieve greater housing supply, affordability, and diversity and accommodate a broad range of public housing needs now and into the future.

Community input is an important component of developing the strategy. To help identify housing challenges and opportunities, and to support the Housing Strategy Task Force in developing recommendations for housing solutions, a community survey was developed. To gauge feedback on the recommended strategies and actions that will be established by the Housing Task Force in the coming months a subsequent survey will be distributed in December 2020

The public survey was published online on July 13, 2020 and closed on August 17, 2020. It was advertised on Saanich's social media platforms, website homepage and banners, newspaper advertisements, and multiple sandwich board signs were erected, including at the Municipal Hall and at three Saanich recreation centres as well as the Cedar Hill Golf Course.

A total of 360 surveys were completed and 83 percent were identified as Saanich residents. A summary of the survey analysis is provided below.

Survey Analysis

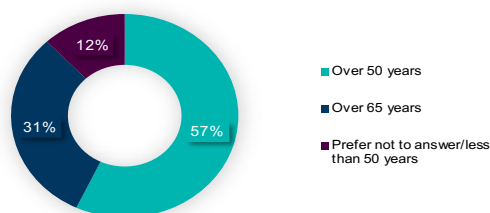
The survey was comprised of 38 qualitative and quantitative questions to help identify the types of housing challenges residents have faced and to develop a list of opportunities to help address these challenges. While the survey results provide some insights into housing issues in Saanich, they should not be construed to be representative of the community as a whole. This is due to the limited number of responses (360), in addition to respondent profiles that are not entirely reflective of community demographics. Nonetheless, the analysis has enabled common messages related to challenges and opportunities to be formed and provides insight to local experiences.

The three most prevalent themes that were raised identify a need:

- more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach to address the high cost of housing across the spectrum.
- more housing choice and diversity including townhouses, duplexes, purpose built rental, and co-operatives for students, families, and seniors.
- updated policies and bylaws to improve affordability and housing diversity for everyone.

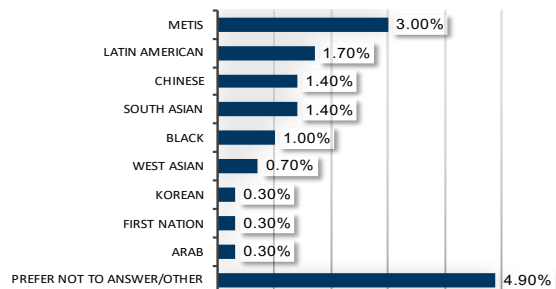


Age of residents



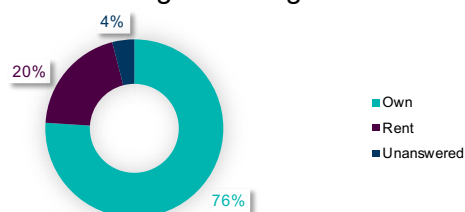
Note: The Saanich statistic for over 50 years is 42%, and for over 65 years is 20%

Nationality of residents

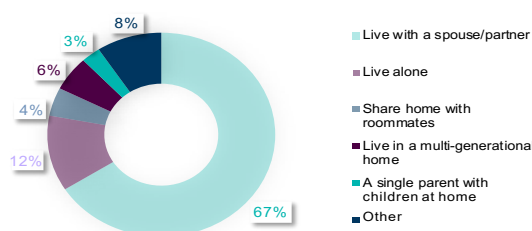


Note: The Saanich statistic for Caucasian is 78%

Residents owning or renting

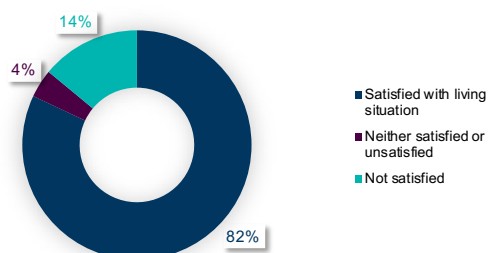


Household member makeup



Note: Those living with a spouse/partner: 41% with no children at home, 36% with children at home

Satisfaction with living situation



Of the 360 total survey respondents 299 (83%) currently live within the District of Saanich. 60% of which have lived in Saanich for more than 10 years and 24% have lived in Saanich between 1 and 5 years. 85% of respondents are Caucasian's of European descent; the next highest was Metis at only 3% (9 people). 57% of respondent are over 50 years of age and 31% are over the age of 65. These numbers show that people over the age of 50 are over represented in this survey as only 42% of the population of Saanich is over the age of 50 and only 20% are over the age of 65. Furthermore, Caucasian's are also over represented as they account for 78% of the population of Saanich and the survey has very few responses from visible minorities.

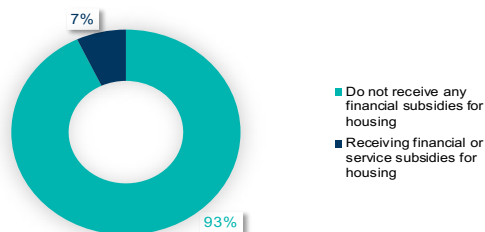
17% of respondents have household incomes over \$150,000 and 40% of survey respondents have household incomes over \$100,000, which when compared to the Saanich population is slightly higher with 9% and 36% respectively. While the higher incomes are represented slightly above the Saanich averages, they are not significantly over represented. That said, the lower incomes groups, specifically those at higher risk to housing challenges, are significantly underrepresented in this survey. 38% of the Saanich population has a household income under \$60,000, but only 18% of survey respondents indicated that they have incomes under \$60,000.

Most respondents (76%) indicated that they are homeowners, with 64% of respondents living in single family homes. 48% of respondents have been living in their current accommodations for more than 10 years, while 37% having lived in their current situation for less than 5 years. Many of the respondents (77%) live with a spouse or partner, 41% live with no children under the age of 18 and 36% live with children under the age of 18. It should be also be noted that some respondents mentioned that they have adult children living at home because they are unable to find affordable accommodations.

A majority of respondents 82% are somewhat satisfied, satisfied, or very satisfied with their current living situation. Those that were not satisfied felt this way because they are unable to find housing they can afford to purchase (59%), did not have enough space (41%), or because their rent was too high (33%) *Note multiple answers could be chosen for this question.

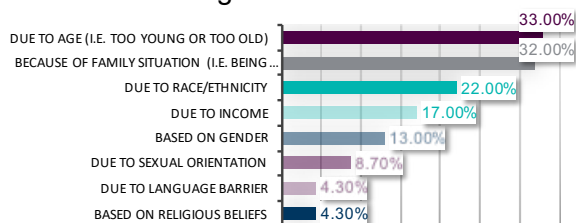
93% of respondents do not receive any financial supports to

Subsidies for housing



maintain their housing, while 3% receive rent subsidies and the remaining 4% receive other forms of subsidies. 73% of respondents have indicated that they are not experiencing any financial challenges for household expenses. Of those that are experiencing financial challenges 14% are having difficulty affording major repairs to their home, 10% are struggling to pay energy bills, 9% are struggling to pay for other necessities such as food, and others are struggling to pay for rent (5%) and for their mortgages (6%).

16% Experienced discrimination when seeking housing/accommodation



A significant portion of the survey respondents (84%) have not experienced any discrimination when trying to find housing. The remaining respondents (16%) have experienced discrimination for a variety of reasons, but the most prominent were because they were a young person (28%) and because they were a single parent (33%). It should be noted that some respondents mentioned that having children or pets caused them to experienced discrimination regardless of age or marital status.

Qualitative Survey Top 10 Themes

Top 10 Themes in ALL Qualitative Questions

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Housing costs are too high Rent costs are too high	284	1
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	195	2
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	172	3
Saanich needs more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach. Current prices are too high.	166	4
No change is needed we should keep doing things the way we are We need to stick to the existing legislation and OCP	151	5
Secondary Suites and Garden suites and/or Tiny Homes should be used in Single Family Neighbourhoods	99	6
Existing bylaws, policies, processing times, and legislation is a barrier to obtaining or creating housing	90	7
Government subsidies are not enough or more subsidies are needed	90	7
More supportive housing is needed for seniors, vulnerable population, and people with mental illnesses and addictions.	79	9
Saanich needs more affordable rental units	71	10

Q18 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about housing challenges you've experienced in Saanich?

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Housing costs are too high Rent costs are too high	56	1
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	23	2
Affordable places are occasionally in disrepair and poor quality	11	3
There are too many cars parked on the street Not enough parking	10	4
Improve walkability and accessibility in communities and in housing	9	5
Problems with Neighbours Problems with Renters	9	5
Existing bylaws, policies, processing times, and legislation is a barrier to obtaining or creating housing	8	7
There is a lack of affordable family sized housing in Saanich	7	8
There is not enough housing available It is very hard to find housing in Saanich	7	8
Construction is destroying the environment, public space, parks, etc.	5	10
Single family neighbourhoods are being destroyed by development The character of single family neighbourhoods is being destroyed by change	5	10

Q19 Are you aware of any housing issues that do not directly affect you, but may affect someone you know? Tell us more.

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Housing costs are too high Rent costs are too high	82	1
Saanich needs more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach. Current prices are too high.	32	2
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	20	3
Saanich needs more affordable rental units	18	4
Too expensive for young people and/or young families to get housing	16	5
There is a lack of affordable family sized housing in Saanich	16	5
There is not enough housing available It is very hard to find housing in Saanich	14	7
Worried that they (or their children) will never get into the housing market	11	8
Government subsidies are not enough or more subsidies are needed	10	9
Existing bylaws, policies, processing times, and legislation is a barrier to obtaining or creating housing	8	10
Improve walkability and accessibility in communities and in housing	8	10
Affordable places are occasionally in disrepair and poor quality	8	10
More supportive housing is needed for seniors, vulnerable population, and people with mental illnesses and addictions.	8	10

Q21 If you agree there is a housing crisis, what do you see as the key reasons for the housing crisis?

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Housing costs are too high Rent costs are too high	120	1
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	60	2
Saanich needs more affordable rental units	29	3
Existing bylaws, policies, processing times, and legislation is a barrier to obtaining or creating housing	28	4
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	27	5
Saanich needs more affordable rental units	20	6
There is not enough housing available It is very hard to find housing in Saanich	14	7
Government subsidies are not enough or more subsidies are needed	12	8
Secondary Suites and Garden suites and/or Tiny Homes should be used in Single Family Neighbourhoods	12	8
Saanich needs to have more density We need more density in Saanich	12	8

Q22 Has the COVID-19 pandemic changed your viewpoint on how Saanich should address housing?

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
My opinion has not changed	145	1
COVID-19 has highlighted the existing issue more	16	2
Density is bad and will cause the virus to spread No more density	15	3
Saanich needs more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach. Current prices are too high.	14	4
It has highlighted the homelessness problem in our region	12	5
Having a home is important Housing should be a right not a privilege	11	6
More supportive housing is needed for seniors, vulnerable population, and people with mental illnesses and addictions.	11	6
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	7	8
It highlights the need to create more public spaces (Parks, Plazas, Open space, etc.)	7	8
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	7	8

Q24 In the next 5 years, would you consider moving to Saanich? Why or why not?

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Yes	32	1
No	16	2
Housing costs are too high Rent costs are too high	9	3
Maybe It depends	6	4
It is a very desirable location Very nice scenery	5	5
Saanich needs more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach. Current prices are too high.	4	6
Improve walkability and accessibility in communities and in housing	4	6
There is a lack of affordable family sized housing in Saanich	3	8
Do not want to live in a dense place	3	8
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	3	8

Q27 Please share your ideas for actions Saanich should take to Increase Affordable Housing?

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Saanich needs more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach. Current prices are too high.	47	1
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	27	2
Government subsidies are not enough or more subsidies are needed	23	3
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	23	3
Secondary Suites and Garden suites and/or Tiny Homes should be used in Single Family Neighbourhoods	20	5
More supportive housing is needed for seniors, vulnerable population, and people with mental illnesses and addictions.	19	6
Work with other levels of government, non-profits, stakeholders, etc	17	7
Saanich needs to have more density We need more density in Saanich	16	8
Existing bylaws, policies, processing times, and legislation is a barrier to obtaining or creating housing	14	9
Discussed survey example only - "Saanich is prioritizing the processing of development applications that include an affordable housing component."	12	10

Q28 Please share your ideas for actions Saanich should take to Support Housing Diversity and Supply.

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Discussed survey example only - "Saanich is legalizing garden suites as a housing option in single family zoned (RS) neighbourhoods."	65	1
Secondary Suites and Garden suites and/or Tiny Homes should be used in Single Family Neighbourhoods	39	2
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	24	3
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	18	4
There are too many cars parked on the street Not enough parking	15	5
Existing bylaws, policies, processing times, and legislation is a barrier to obtaining or creating housing	11	6
More supportive housing is needed for seniors, vulnerable population, and people with mental illnesses and addictions.	11	6
Government subsidies are not enough or more subsidies are needed	8	8
Saanich needs to have more density We need more density in Saanich	8	8
Fix or control rental amounts through government control or other means	5	10
There is a lack of affordable family sized housing in Saanich	5	10
Saanich needs more affordable rental units	5	10
Focus density around urban centers and not Single Family Neighbourhoods	5	10
Use taxes for affordable housing, subsidies, etc.	5	10

Q29 Please share your ideas for actions Saanich should take to Promote and Protect Rental Housing.

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Landlord and Tennant laws should be reviewed and changed	28	1
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	24	2
Discussed survey example only - "Saanich is developing a Tenant Assistance Policy."	19	3
Saanich needs more affordable rental units	14	4
Government subsidies are not enough or more subsidies are needed	13	5
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	11	6
Tennants should not have to live with the fear of being evicted from current residence	9	7
Fix or control rental amounts through government control or other means	7	8
Work with other levels of government, non-profits, stakeholders, etc	7	8
Create a database of housing in Saanich so people can find available housing options	5	10

Q30 Please share your ideas for actions Saanich should take to Reduce Barriers to Housing.

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Discussed survey example only - "Saanich is undertaking a development process review in order make improvements to the permitting process with the intention of making it easier to build new housing."	52	1
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	20	2
Don't let developers have too much control Citizens should be listened to	12	3
Government subsidies are not enough or more subsidies are needed	10	4
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	9	5
Saanich needs more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach. Current prices are too high.	8	6
Construction is destroying the environment, public space, parks, etc.	7	7
Improve walkability and accessibility in communities and in housing	7	7
Saanich needs to have more density We need more density in Saanich	7	7
Do not want density Saanich does not need more density	6	10

Q31 Please share your ideas for actions Saanich should take to Strengthen Partnerships and Build Awareness.

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Discussed survey example only - "Saanich is undertaking a development process review in order make improvements to the permitting process with the intention of making it easier to build new housing."	36	1
Work with other levels of government, non-profits, stakeholders, etc	28	2
Saanich needs more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach. Current prices are too high.	8	3
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	8	3
Don't let developers have too much control Citizens should be listened to	7	5
There is a homeless problem There are too many homeless people	5	6
Fix or control rental amounts through government control or other means	3	7
Public transit needs to be improved	3	7
More supportive housing is needed for seniors, vulnerable population, and people with mental illnesses and addictions.	3	7
Existing bylaws, policies, processing times, and legislation is a barrier to obtaining or creating housing	2	10
The government should take control of rental properties and lower rents and/or construction costs Affordable housing should be built on Saanich owned land	2	10
Government subsidies are not enough or more subsidies are needed	2	10

Q37 Do you have any other comments you would like to share on the housing in Saanich or for the development of the strategy?

COMMON THEMES	FREQUENCY	RANK
Saanich needs to update policies and regulations to improve affordability and housing diversity to give everyone more options and affordable choices.	30	1
Saanich needs more affordable housing, rental units that are affordable, home ownership options that are within reach. Current prices are too high.	19	2
There are not enough housing options There is not enough supply or diversity of housing options	17	3
More supportive housing is needed for seniors, vulnerable population, and people with mental illnesses and addictions.	16	4
Saanich needs to have more density We need more density in Saanich	12	5
Housing costs are too high Rent costs are too high	11	6
Existing bylaws, policies, processing times, and legislation is a barrier to obtaining or creating housing	11	6
Construction is destroying the environment, public space, parks, etc.	11	6
Too expensive for young people and/or young families to get housing	10	9
Work with other levels of government, non-profits, stakeholders, etc	10	9

