



Creston Housing Action Plan

WCS Engagement + Planning led the project in collaboration with **Ian Scott Consulting**, the lead author of this report. Funding for this project was provided in part by the **Real Estate Foundation of BC** and **BC Housing**.



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Introduction

About this Plan

This Housing Action Plan provides the Town of Creston with a series of recommended actions to address the current challenge facing Creston residents in obtaining affordable, secure, and healthy housing. The actions are focused on and structured by the four priority areas below.

- **Overall housing:** Actions to increase the supply of more affordable housing generally (both rental and ownership) that those with low and moderate incomes can afford.
- **Non-market housing:** Actions that will increase non-market housing supply (primarily rental given the current market context) for households with lower incomes and larger households in the moderate-income category. (Note: Non-market housing has traditionally been viewed as serving those with “special” needs such as seniors and those with disabilities, but non-market housing is needed for workers and families as well.)
- **Rental housing:** Actions that will increase the supply of rental housing generally (including market and non-market).
- **Lower-priced ownership housing:** Actions that will increase the supply of lower-priced homes, including manufactured homes, duplexes, rowhouses, townhouses, co-housing, and efficiently-sized strata condos – sometimes called the “missing middle.”

This Plan purposefully avoids an exclusive focus on “affordable” housing. Affordable housing – typically defined as housing that costs no more than 30% of gross household income – is a relatively subjective

term that depends on household income. Moreover, it is often used to focus on the provision of housing for low-income households.

What appears true for households in Creston is that increasingly there is a broader spectrum of income brackets that cannot secure housing that: (1) is a match to their needs (e.g., size and accessibility), (2) is not in need of major repairs is affordable to their household, and (3) is available indefinitely. Housing that meets these three parameters is sometimes described as “attainable” housing. The housing challenge has become more than just an issue for those on fixed incomes or the “working poor”; it is a challenge also faced by many workers, including hourly wage earners and a variety of salaried professions with moderate incomes.

This Plan addresses housing actions the Town of Creston can tackle. However, it should be emphasized that this is not simply a local issue, and action is also required by the federal and provincial governments. CMHC recently estimated that if current trends continue, Canada will be short 3.5 million homes by 2030, indicating that

It's time to think differently – drastic change is required...Canada's approach to housing supply needs to be rethought. It needs to be done differently. There must be a drastic transformation of the housing sector – including governments – and priority given to increasing the supply of housing to meet demand.”¹

The CMHC report emphasizes that it is simply not about funding for public or subsidized housing, but a larger effort to establish a better balance between supply and demand for housing across Canada. Both the BC and federal governments have been making efforts in recent years to improve the supply and make policy changes to address challenges (e.g., empty homes, conversions of existing lower-priced rental to more expensive rentals) in market and non-market housing via the federal *National Housing Strategy* and provincial *Homes for BC*. Further policy changes, new strategies and additional investments can be expected in the years to come.

Local government has a role to play to address these housing challenges and this Plan identifies actions the Town of Creston should undertake. The recommended actions are not focused simply on building new housing, no matter the type; rather, the actions focus on enabling the supply of housing that is most missing in Creston – more affordable, secure, and healthy housing for low- and moderate-income residents.

Background

This Plan builds on and was informed by from the *2020 Greater Creston and East Shore Kootenay Lake Housing Needs Report*, *2017 Official Community Plan*, *2022 Affordable Housing Open House*, *2021 Residential Revitalization Tax Exemption Program (Rentals)*, *2022 Zoning Bylaw*, and the establishment of the *2022 Town of Creston Affordable Housing & Development Council Select Committee*.

The impetus for action to provide more housing options in Creston stems from a community call to action. In 2017, Creston's Official Community Plan, developed with significant community input, includes policies to increase density in residential zones. These increased densities are reflected in Creston's Zoning

¹ *Canada's Housing Supply Shortages: Estimating what is needed to solve Canada's housing affordability crisis by 2030*, CMHC, June 2022.

Bylaw, which was recently re-written and adopted in June 2022. The Zoning Bylaw also includes regulations for accessory dwelling units, to allow for more flexible housing options in the community.

Since 2017, Creston continued to experience a growing need for housing, affordable housing, and rentals. On March 9, 2022, the Town of Creston held a public meeting to discuss the Affordable Housing situation in Creston. There were 59 community members in attendance, representing a variety of local organizations and non-profits, business owners, landowners, investors, builders, developers, realtors, and tenants. Following this meeting, the Affordable Housing and Development Advisory Select Committee was established by Council.



Thank you to the Affordable Housing and Development Advisory Select Committee members for providing feedback on this Housing Action Plan. An indication of their level of support for each action is provided in the action section. Moving forward, their purpose will be to provide advice to Council on the implementation of this Plan and other Town of Creston policies and strategies to address housing needs in the community.



Creston Housing Context

Creston is a small community with a 2021 population of 5,583 and 2810 private dwellings, of which 2670 (95%) are inhabited by full-time residents. Of the homes lived in by residents, single detached homes represent the vast majority (74%), 11% are condos/apartments and 10% are duplex/townhouses. The 2021 Census indicates there are only 15 “movable dwellings”, but there are about 200 manufactured homes in the Creston manufactured home parks that would represent 7.5% of the 2670 resident-occupied homes.

While this Plan focuses on housing actions the Town of Creston can take, there is also a significant amount of housing in surrounding rural areas. As of the 2021 Canada Census, the population for neighbouring communities is 8,603 split between the Lower Kootenay Band population and Electoral Areas A, B and C. The majority of RDCK residents live in single detached homes (92%). Approximately 1% live in an apartment or condo, less than 1% live in a townhome or duplex, and about 5% live in a “moveable dwelling”. These rural areas could consider implementing some of the housing actions recommended in this plan. However, providing housing in rural areas is often more costly as water and sewer (septic systems) need to be provided.

Providing adequate housing for all Creston residents is not a new concern. The inability of the market to address all the community's housing needs has been tackled by a variety of volunteer run societies and charities operating non-market housing for those with lower income, disabilities, or other specific circumstances. The eight non-market housing properties in Creston are operated by seven different organizations.

1. Glaser Terrace: 12 accessible units for adults with physical disabilities
2. Catalpa Apartments: 19 units of seniors housing, including some for those with disabilities
3. Cedar Linden: 9 units for those with disabilities (outside town boundaries)
4. Archibald House and The Cottage: 5 units (outside town boundaries)
5. Legacy Place: 6 units of family housing
6. Rebekah Manor: 26 units for low-income seniors
7. Crestbrook Gardens: 24 units for seniors and those with disabilities
8. Erickson Golden Manor: 12 units of seniors housing

Combined, these 114 non-market dwellings represent about 4.3% of the 2670 resident-occupied dwellings in Creston.

In 2020, there were two proposals for about another 44 units of non-market rental housing that were submitted to BC Housing's Community Housing Fund. Neither project was approved for construction.

There is no published estimate of primary market rentals (i.e., purpose built rental) and secondary market rentals (i.e., rental of strata condos and secondary suites – legal and unauthorised). There are an estimated 100 legal secondary suites in town and 258 apartment units. There are an unknown number of unauthorized suites as well.

Housing Need

The *2020 Greater Creston and East Shore Kootenay Lake Housing Needs Report* documented some of the housing challenges in Creston. In terms of the conclusions driving this Housing Action Plan a few key conclusions are noteworthy:

1. **There is a general lack of affordable and available housing in the Greater Creston sub-region. Access to appropriate housing is very difficult for families, people on income assistance, and anyone with a specialized need.** Interviews with residents and responses from surveys universally pointed to a lack of available and affordable housing as the main challenge impacting Greater Creston's housing market. This was especially apparent for older residents who lived on a fixed-income or who wished to downsize to a smaller unit that was easier to maintain. Younger residents also struggle to find appropriate housing, especially those individuals or families who may be relying on only one income. Detached home ownership is generally out of reach for most singles or single-income households, and renting (when units are available) is similarly challenging.
2. **Renting is becoming increasingly popular, whether by choice or necessity.** The percentage of people renting is generally increasing across each population cohort, demonstrating a cross generational shift towards the tenure type. Notably, families with or without children who rent grew significantly faster than those who own, likely representing both an increase in the preference for renting, as well as a compromise driven by housing affordability and availability. Engagement data indicates that 67% of renter respondents would like to own a home but are unable to primarily

because of affordability issues. Renters are also more likely to be in unaffordable or unsuitable housing than homeowners.

- 3. The size and quality of housing is improving, allowing residents to live more comfortably and securely. Unfortunately, the compromise appears to be less affordable housing.** Single person and low-income earning households, who are often younger and hold lower wage jobs or older and living off investments and/or savings, do not earn enough to comfortably rent or purchase a dwelling in Greater Creston. This emphasizes the importance of non-market support, particularly for those segments that can be looked over when metrics like household income are rising. It is always important to remember that when looking at median figures it means that half of the people or households are worse off than what is reported.

In addition to these key findings, the release of some of the 2021 Census data helps to illustrate an important trend highlighted by the report that people moving to Creston are wealthier and are driving demand for, and the price point of, new housing.

From the report: Total households grew 11% between 2006 and 2016, while households earning more than \$100,000 grew 54%. It is possible that inflows of new, high-earning people have had a larger impact on median incomes than the progression of existing households into higher income brackets. However, the data is not available to verify these types of dynamics.

Between 2016 and 2021 the trend continued. Households earning more than \$100,000 after-tax increased another 69.8%. The making-more-than-\$100,000 segment represents 16.9% of Creston households, so the 69.8% growth in this segment represents a 6.9% growth of overall households. Since the overall population grew by only 3.1%, increases in the number of higher income earners were more than offset by declines in other population segments. It is impossible to determine how much this trend was the result of income growth in existing Creston residents, an influx of new wealthier residents or new wealthier residents replacing lower earning residents.

A trend observed in the Housing Needs Report was the growth in rental households:

From the report: Between 2006 and 2016, renter households grew 16%, higher than owner households' 5%. Renter growth was particularly strong in Creston (26%); owner growth was strong in Electoral Area C (26%).

In contrast, between the 2016 and 2021, Census renter households decreased 10.4% (60 households). During that same period, the number of renter households spending more than 30% of their income on housing dropped from 402 households to 245 (39%). So, even though rental rates were rising, income characteristics of households were shifting, which made rental housing more affordable overall given that median after-tax income grew from \$42,965 to \$54,400 (up 26.6%). There has been a corresponding shift in the number of people in lower and moderate incomes brackets compared to higher income brackets.

Table 1: Household income - changes in from 2015 to 2020

Income	2015 (2016 Census)	2020 (2021 Census)	% Change
Less than \$30,000	820	535	- 34.8%
Less than \$45,000	1355	1065	- 21.4%
Less than \$60,000	1755	1485	- 15.4%
Less than \$80,000	2105	1920	- 8.7%
Less than \$100,000	2320	2220	- 4.3%
More than \$100,000	265	450	+ 69.8%

This data reveals the following trends:

- Creston is becoming wealthier, but at a rate that suggests it is from in-migration of wealthier residents rather than income growth amongst the existing population.
- There is a shift from renter households to owner households, and it is likely that some renter households were forced to leave Creston.
- Even though rental rates are rising (see the next section), more wealthy residents are renting; on average it would appear that rental affordability is improving (e.g., less households spending more than 30% of their income on housing) but households in the lower income brackets are likely both worse-off financially and likely more challenged to find housing. The 2021 Census has not reported on households spending more than 50% of their income on housing.

Current housing challenges in Creston

Since 2013, the average price of a home in the Kootenays has risen from about \$260,000 to about \$500,000 (up 92%) in 2022². The Census reports the median rental rate in Creston has risen from \$751 in 2015 to \$900 in 2020 (up 19.8%). According to CMHC, rental prices in Nelson have risen from an average of \$710 in October 2013 to \$977 (up 37.6%) in October 2021. For Cranbrook, average rental rates have gone up on 21.8% over that same period.

Generally, housing is defined as being “affordable” in Canada when a household is paying no more than 30% of gross income on housing. For renters, this means rent and basic utility costs (heat/hot water). For a homeowner, this also includes mortgage, property taxes and basic utilities (heat, hot water, sewer). It is known that some households pay more than 30% of the income on housing, whether by choice or necessity. The 2016 Census reported that 25% of Creston households spent more than 30% of income on housing (this data is not yet available for 2021). Affordable monthly housing costs are listed in Table 1 below for different household incomes below.

² Canadian Real Estate Foundation via the Association of Interior Realtors – Kootenay Branch

Table 2: Household income, monthly affordability, and purchase price maximum

Household before tax income	Affordable 30% of Income Monthly Housing Costs	Maximum allowable home purchase price with 5% down (stress test – 5.25% interest) ³
\$58,800 – 2020 Median ⁴	\$1470	\$273,175
\$45,000 – 36.9 of households in 2020 earn this amount or less	\$1125	\$198,700
\$30,000 – 18.9% of households in 2020 earn this amount or less	\$750	\$117,750

Price is only one consideration, but lack of availability is another important factor experienced by Creston renters (and lack of supply drives up prices). Since the early 1990s, there has been a significant drop in new rental housing supply across Canada as federal and provincial investment in non-market rental dropped significantly and changes to federal tax laws removed certain incentives for private rental housing development. There is no specific data for Creston, but Creston's experience seems consistent with the trends occurring provincially and nationally. Over the past decade there has been an uptick in new rental housing supply in more urban centres, but less so in smaller, more rural communities. This is explained by a variety of both market (e.g., demand from urbanisation, lower risk, and higher return on investment in urban areas) and non-market factors (e.g., government efforts to address homelessness and affordability crisis first apparent in urban locations).

Table 3. Primary Rental Market New Units⁵ (does not include suites or rental of condos)

	Before 1960	1960-1979	1980-1999	2000 and later	Total
Cranbrook	41	783	109	15	948
Nelson	237	220	35	17	509
Kelowna	90	2,199	1,520	3,906	7,715
Vernon	413	1,226	164	342	2,145
Vancouver	17,220	68,333	11,850	19,765	117,168
B.C.	23,820	108,970	25,387	38,963	197,140

The Housing Math (Affordability) Problem

The financial incentive for a private developer to serve certain housing markets has been steadily diminishing to the point where there is no profit in developing lower-priced, and sometimes even

³ Assumes good credit with Total Debt Service Ratio of 39% and \$281 per month for property tax and basic utilities

⁴ 2021 Census

⁵ Source: CMHC Housing Market Information Portal – Primary Rental Market Universe

moderate-priced housing. A non-profit approach (i.e., not requiring profits) to housing development can make a modest difference, but this alone has limited benefit due to the high cost of land and construction.

Through the authors' experience in other communities and consultation with the development industry in Creston and elsewhere, the complete cost to develop housing in Creston today is currently approximately \$300-500 per square foot depending on site characteristic, type of building and quality of finishes. The complete cost of developing a housing unit includes:

- the price of land
- architects, engineers, and other development professional fees
- insurance, borrowing and holding costs
- municipal permit fees and development cost charges
- land clearing and servicing
- building construction
- site works and landscaping

As illustrated by Table 3 below, even if developed and sold by a non-profit entity without a profit margin, the resulting baseline costs mean the non-market rental rate will be too high for many in Creston. It is for this reason that non-market housing requires not only a non-profit development approach, but also construction grants, fee waivers and/or operating subsidies. The market rental rate in Table 3 represents what is likely required, based on a 6% capitalization rate, for a market rental housing developer to be willing to develop in Creston (with current interest rates a 6% capitalization rate is too low – so rents will have to be higher until interest rates drop again). Ultimately, a private market rental housing developer will look at cost of capital, cost of construction, cost of debt, operating costs, and an assessment of what the market price of new rental will be to determine a likely profit margin and whether it is worth investing in Creston, or elsewhere.

Homeownership might initially appear a lower cost option, but once you consider property taxes and payment of all utilities it is usually more expensive. This ignores the debate related to the potential long-term financial benefits, risks and pitfalls associated with homeownership; nonetheless homeownership remains a goal of many for both financial and other reasons.

Table 4: Estimated current Creston Development Cost vs Rental and Ownership Prices (no grants or subsidies are included)

	Development Costs (\$350 per square foot)	Purchase Price – 15 % profit	Monthly mortgage for home purchase ¹	Qualifying Income based on Stress Test limits ²	Market Rental Rate ³	Non-Market Rental Rate ⁴	Income to meet 30% affordability for non-market rental
2-3 BR (1000 square feet)	\$350,000	\$402,500	\$2,015	\$82,335	\$2,415	\$2,025	\$81,000
2 BR (800 square feet)	\$280,000	\$322,000	\$1,612	\$67,850	\$2,010	\$1,715	\$68,600
1 BR (600 square feet)	\$210,000	\$241,500	\$1,209	\$52,800	\$1,608	\$1,405	\$56,200
1 BR (525 square feet)	\$183,750	\$211,313	\$1,058	\$42,175	\$1,457	\$1,290	\$51,600

1. Monthly mortgage costs are based on 5% down, 30-year amortization and interest rate of 4.5%
2. Qualifying Income is based on mortgage stress test requirements for a buyer with a good credit rating, a total debt service ratio of 39%, no other debt and 25-year amortization at 5.25%.
3. Market rental rate is based on Capitalization Rate of 6%.
4. The rental rate presumes a 100% debt service ratio, 35-year amortization, 2.5% interest rate and \$475 per unit per month operating costs.

Context Conclusions

The limited data available emphasizes the following:

- Creston has a small amount of non-market housing (4.3%) and while more than some other small BC Communities, it not enough to meet the current demand
- The demand for non-market housing is driven by those in the community with incomes too low to afford what is available in the market and is likely approaching 20-40% of households given that
 - Median rents (which would include non-market housing) are \$900
 - 18.9% of the population can afford a maximum rent \$750
 - 36.9% of the population can afford a maximum rent \$1125
 - There will be larger households who can afford more than \$1125 but cannot afford the rents for large homes.
- Grants and subsidies are required to make provision of lower-priced housing financially viable for those in the lower-income brackets (about 80% of median income - \$47,000 - and less) as well as many households in more moderate-income brackets (from 80% of median income to about 140% of median income – \$82,300). BC Housing's moderate-income limit for two bedroom and larger homes is \$120,990
- \$273,175 is the maximum house price that is affordable for 49% of Creston households and this population will be more easily housed in non-market or market rental housing, as developing homes for purchase at \$275,000 or less is not viable except for one-bedroom apartments.
- Finding ways to increase the supply of more affordable entry-level housing is important, but only 28% of the population makes \$90,000 or more and would qualify to buy a home at \$440,000 or more.



Action Recommendations

There are 19 action recommendations, which are listed briefly below and then addressed in more detail on the subsequent pages.

Actions to increase housing supply for low- to moderate-income households

1. Create a Housing Liaison position focused on supporting homeowners, non-market housing providers and developers to develop in Creston.
2. Increase housing density and lower parking requirements in the R4 Residential High-Density Zone (apartment, multi-family)
3. Provide Development Cost Charge waivers for rental housing (100%) and strata developments, including apartments and multi-family housing (50%)

Actions to increase non-market housing supply

4. Provide municipal land and acquire new municipal land for non-market housing
5. Create an Affordable Housing Fund
6. Allocate a portion of property tax revenues to the Affordable Housing Fund
7. Lobby the Province to be able to apply Development Cost Charges to new development to help fund employee housing

Actions to increase rental housing supply

8. Extend the property tax exemptions for new rental development beyond 2024
9. Increase the permitted size of Accessory Dwelling Units

10. Permit more Accessory Dwelling Units per lot
11. Reduce Accessory Dwelling Unit parking requirements
12. Establish an Accessory Dwelling Unit advisory service
13. Permit shared housing and room rentals

Actions to increase lower-priced homeownership opportunities

14. Reduce parking requirements for multi-family housing (townhouses, rowhouses, triplexes and fourplexes)
15. Adopt a 1:1 floor area ratio (FAR) maximum density within the R3 Medium Density Zone
16. Decrease the minimum lot size in R1, R2 and R3 Zones
17. Reduce the R1 duplex lot frontage requirement to 15.2m
18. Reduce permitted lot coverage except where Accessory Dwelling Units are constructed on single family and duplex lots
19. Participate in the BC Housing Affordable Homeownership Program with developers, and provide 100% Development Cost Charge waivers

Possible Future Initiatives

- Improve regional development and construction capacity
- Regional price restricted homeownership

Ongoing Initiative

Implementing a short-term (e.g., vacation) rental zoning, bylaw enforcement and licensing strategy is already included in the workplan for Town of Creston staff. Currently short-term rentals are not permitted by zoning, but nonetheless there appear to be a small number of such rentals in the community. Experience elsewhere has demonstrated the nuances of this issue as it relates to long-term rental housing. Prohibiting short-term rentals does not necessarily mean a property owner then rents the unit long term. Moreover, operating a short-term rental is sometimes a strategy for homeowners to be able to afford the mortgage on their home in the first place.

Actions to increase housing supply for low- to moderate-income households

This section includes actions to increase the supply of more affordable housing generally (both rental and ownership) that those with low and moderate incomes can afford.

Action 1: Create a Housing Liaison position focused on supporting homeowners, non-market housing providers and developers to develop in Creston.

Affordable Housing and Development Committee (AHD Committee) support: Unanimous

Rationale: There is a need to make it easier to develop new or renovate existing housing in Creston, particularly more affordable options. This new position should act as a housing advocate and focus on efficient coordination, education, removal of unnecessary obstacles, and supporting projects through the approval processes, which can sometimes be challenging.

Description: The Housing Liaison needs to work across multiple departments, and its responsibilities should evolve and respond to stakeholder input but could include:

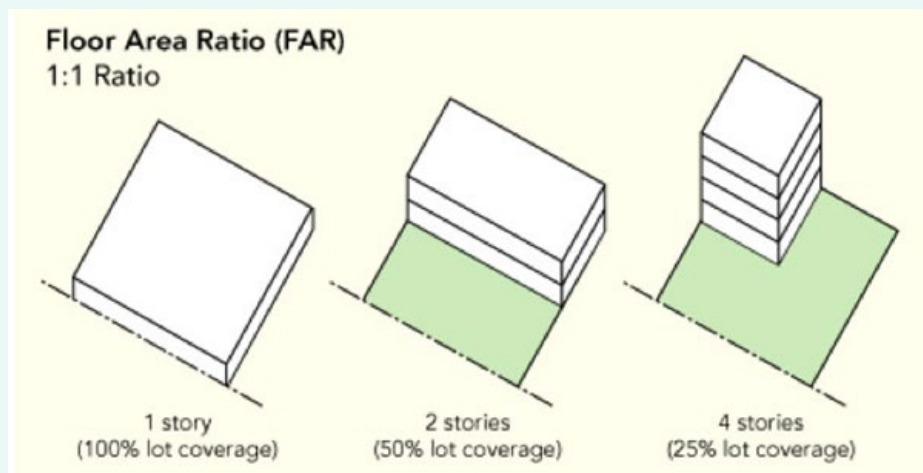
- Being the first point of contact for homeowners interested in developing accessory dwelling units
- Liaison and principal point of contact for developers tasked with getting answers to questions and ensuring staff respond in a timely way.
- Writing letters of support for grant applications and coordinating with non-market housing providers.
- Identifying and correcting limitations and deficiencies with website information or guidance documents.
- Providing education sessions on accessory dwelling units and development opportunities at public events and conferences.
- Conducting home / property inspections for those considering developing accessory dwelling units or other housing types.
- Promoting Creston to trade associations as a good place to develop new housing.
- Coordinating with other communities and groups in the region to address barriers to new housing development, including lack of developers, construction companies and trades.
- Engaging with private and non-profit stakeholders to find creative, new ways to address these housing challenges

Action 2: Increase housing density and lower parking requirements in the R4 Residential High-Density Zone (apartment, multi-family)

AHD Committee support: Mostly supportive, with some hesitation related to changes in outdoor space requirements, reduced parking requirements in all areas, and lack of current transit options.

Rationale: Development under Creston's current R4 apartment zoning requirements – 90 units per hectare, parking, private outdoor space, common outdoor space, and setbacks – encourages the development of large, more expensive units and has resulted in a relatively low number of units compared to other places in BC. There has not been any significant apartment development in Creston for 13 years (2009 - 11-unit dwelling). Attracting senior government funding or private rental or condominium development will be easier with a higher unit count for any lot.

Description: In urban places, multi-family density is usually measured in Floor Area Ratio (FAR), which is a measure of the amount of building per lot area. For a 4-storey building at 1:1 FAR, the building would take up about 25% of the lot. Currently the maximum lot coverage in R4 zone is 75% and is not a limiting regulation. It is difficult to equate units per hectare to FAR, but if total area per unit averaged 800 square feet⁶ then 90 units per hectare equates to a FAR of about 0.65. A FAR of 0.65 is lower than typical townhouse density in most communities. A FAR of approximately 1.2 to 1.5 is typical for a 4-storey apartment with surface/or tucked-under parking and 1.5 to 2.0 for underground parking.



For Creston, the 90 units per hectare is the dominant limiting requirement. However, the other regulations relating to parking, setbacks and useable private and common outdoor space also work to impose limits. As illustrated by the context section, it is just about impossible to develop lower and more moderate priced

⁶ Average unit size depends on units mix and amount of common space to private space – 800 sq ft per unit allows a decent mix with more smaller units (~50%), but also decent amount of larger family-oriented units (~20%).

housing due to construction, servicing, and land costs alone. Reducing all these requirements will lower development costs and increase the potential for this type of development to occur in Creston.

A detailed analysis of multiple development scenarios is beyond the scope of this Plan. Based on the authors knowledge and using 1700 Birch Street, a vacant R4 lot, the following is recommended for the R4 Zone:

Zoning Category	Recommendation	<i>Rationale</i>
Density	2:1 FAR	Form of development will be driven by parking strategy and requirements, with 2.0 FAR reasonable for underground parking in private condo development.
Height	12.2m	No change, allows for 4 storeys
Lot Coverage	75%	No change, other regulations likely limiting even for underground parking buildings
Parking	0.75 per studio/1 bedroom 1 per 2 bedroom 1.25 per 3 bedroom or larger 50% reduction to above for rental	Current requirement is 1.25 per unit regardless of unit, which is higher than for lower density housing forms. A 50% reduction for rental housing fosters development of this needed type of housing form. These recommendations may put pressure on street parking, but generally there is an abundance of this in Creston. The 50% reduction for rental could be restricted to specific areas.
Private Outdoor Space	10% of unit size, but allowed as common indoor space instead	Same as current requirement but could be provided as alternative in common indoor space. Helps align with BC Housing requirements of 20 sq ft amenity space per unit. There is no specific private or common outdoor space requirement, though useable outdoor areas are encouraged.
Common Outdoor Space	3.7 m ² (40 sq ft) per unit, minimum 93 m ² (1001 sq ft)	Current requirement is 10 m ² (107.7 sq ft) per unit.
Outdoor Space allowed in setback areas except front	Allowed in setbacks, but fenced/landscape screened if in setback	Is a new requirement in the R4 zone and finding location for this space will be exceedingly difficult with the other recommended zoning changes
Front Setback	6m	Current requirement is 7.6m, aligns with other residential zones (consideration should be given to reducing setback requirements throughout residential neighbourhoods)
Rear Setback	6m	Current requirement is 7.6m
Interior Side	3m	Current requirement is 3m; much closer impedes limiting distances significantly
Exterior Side Lot Line	5m	To align with front setback requirement

The table below illustrates how the recommended R4 zoning requirements would apply to 1700 Birch Street, which is a 1.03-acre vacant R4 property. The current 90 units per hectare restricts development scale. The recommendation is to make the density high enough that the other requirements become limiting. As illustrated by the table, a development at a density of 1.2:1 FAR is viable with surface parking since it results in only 76% lot coverage. This would approximately double the density currently permitted, with a mix of both small, medium, and large unit sizes. A FAR of 1.5:1 will be difficult to develop since it would result in 95% lot coverage before accounting for the 8% for the front setback area. It would only be possible with a 50% reduction in parking requirements for rental housing or by including tucked-under or underground parking. A rental housing development of 2:1 FSR is unlikely without underground parking. Site specific variances can be considered for all the R4 zoning requirements except for FAR.

Percent of lot occupied by different R4 zoning requirements at different FARs with average unit size of 800 square feet

Zoning Parameter	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning			
FAR	N/A	1.2:1	1.5:1	1.75:1	2:1
Units	37	67	84	99	113
Lot Coverage Area	18%	32%	40%	46%	52%
Surface Parking Area	21%	36%	45%	53%	61%
Private Outdoor Area	2%	3%	4%	4%	5%
Common Outdoor Area	9%	5%	7%	8%	9%
Total Calculated Lot Coverage	50%	76%	95%	112%	127%
Front Setback Area	10%	8%	8%	8%	8%

Action 3: Provide Development Cost Charge (DCC) waivers for rental housing (100%) and strata developments, including apartments and multi-family housing (50%)

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mostly supportive

Rationale: It is challenging to achieve financial viability for new rental housing and strata ownership apartments/multi-family development in Creston. Development Cost Charges (DCCs) are currently limited to a small number of properties in Creston where housing could be developed but are expected to expand

in the near future. It is important that DCCs do not become a further disincentive to multi-family housing development.

Description: The current DCCs in Creston are \$1,754.06 per unit, which equates to only about 0.6% of total development costs for rental development and 0.3% for strata developments. The recommended DCC waivers would be a relatively minor cost-saving that will only provide a small incentive.

DCC waivers do shift a financial burden onto other taxpayers.

Actions to increase non-market housing supply

This section includes actions that will increase non-market housing supply (primarily rental given the current market context) for households with lower incomes and larger households in the moderate-income category. (Note: Non-market housing has traditionally been viewed as serving those with “special” needs such as seniors and those with disabilities, but non-market housing is needed for workers and families as well.)

Non-market housing includes a range of housing and can include temporary housing or emergency shelter that serves those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This Plan does not specifically address housing solutions for this population, but this section does include actions the Town of Creston can implement to provide land and increase financial resources for non-market housing initiatives. With resources to contribute to non-market housing efforts, the Town would need to make decisions on which agencies and/or non-market projects to support or prioritize, whether it be emergency shelters, supportive housing, transition housing, special needs housing, low-income housing (for seniors, families or individuals), or housing for moderate income households.

Action 4: Provide existing municipal land and acquire new land for non-market housing

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Unanimous

Rationale: Non-market housing development cannot support the full cost of delivering housing and this is one way the Town of Creston can support non-market housing provision.

Description: The Town of Creston should identify land it currently owns that could be used for housing and establish appropriate policies and processes to gift it to non-market housing providers. The Town should also look to acquire additional land for this purpose through partnership arrangements and through the rezoning process. The Town may also consider purchasing land for this purpose. If it is a single property purchase, this action is effectively the same as allocating property tax revenues to affordable housing. However, there are few reasons there may be financial advantages to the Town acquiring land:

- The Town may be able to acquire larger parcels at more affordable per acre prices than small housing societies or charities
- Buying land at today's prices for future uses under a long-term land banking approach
- Acquisition of land for another municipal purpose, with the surplus being used for housing

Action 5: Create an Affordable Housing Fund

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Unanimous

Rationale: Non-market housing needs financial support to be economically viable, and local contributions increase its viability and the likelihood of securing provincial and federal funding.

Description: Establishing an Affordable Housing Fund creates a financial reserve from which the Town of Creston can allocate funding to support a variety of non-market housing projects, including emergency housing, supportive housing, special needs housing, independent below-market rental, and co-op housing. Policy decisions are required with respect to who would be eligible to access the funding, for what purposes, and through what mechanisms.

Action 6: Allocate a portion of property tax revenues to the Affordable Housing Fund

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mostly supportive, but some concern about impact on taxpayers

Rationale: For Creston, other than property tax revenues, there are not other options to raise money to support non-market housing projects. Funding sources that have worked elsewhere but that are not high revenue streams for Creston include:

- Developer contributions from rezoning – this only works where demand for and price of new development is quite high
- Municipal Regional District Tax – originally a destination marketing hotel bed tax, this tax has now been expanded to all providers of short-term accommodation (though most of this is not currently permitted) and affordable housing is permitted use of the TAX; the amount collected in Creston is small and the Creston Tourism Society only just started to receive this tax, and allocating a portion to affordable housing was identified as inappropriate by the Steering Committee.

Description: An allocation of 2.5% of property taxes would raise approximately \$123,000 based on the 2022 Town of Creston Budget. Affordable Housing Funds supported by local taxation are common in many communities in the US, but rare in Canada. Three examples include:

- Comox Valley Regional District Homelessness Supports Service allocates approximately 0.3% to 0.4% of property taxes depending on the community and property class type.
- The City of Victoria contributes about 0.4% of tax revenues to its Affordable Housing Reserve Fund annually.

At current construction costs and anticipated rent levels, each unit of non-market housing requires a capital grant between approximately \$100,000 to \$250,000 depending on unit type and rental price. There are no reliable estimates of the total need for non-market housing in Creston but based on household incomes (see *Context* section) and current rental prices, it is likely double (another 114 units), if not threefold (another 228) or fourfold (another 342), the current supply.

If a new Creston Affordable Housing Fund accounted for 10% of funding provided to any project – with the other 90% coming from provincial, federal and partner sources – then \$123,000 per year would be sufficient to support construction of 5-12 homes annually.

Any amount of a tax allocation will help to increase the non-market housing supply; but even 2.5% (which might be received with opposition from some taxpayers) will likely not adequately address the non-market housing need in a timely way.

Action 7: Lobby the Province to be able to apply Development Cost Charges to new development to help fund employee housing

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mixed support, not confident how this would work

Rationale: Resort municipalities and designated resort regions have the authority per section 559(3) of the Local Government Act to impose an employee housing Development Cost Charge (DCC) on new development. Communities like the Town of Creston are facing the same challenges that resort and tourism-focused communities face, which is that monthly rents and home ownership are priced out of reach for those working in retail and service sectors.

Description: The DCC regime assigns a certain portion of the cost of providing municipal services onto new development while the existing taxpayers pay the other portion. Even if the Town of Creston had this power, it would not be a silver bullet as there is not significant amounts of new development in Creston to which the employee housing DCC would apply to. Moreover, this Plan recommends waiving in full or in part DCCs on desired housing types.

Lobby the Province to be able to apply Development Cost Charges to new development to help fund employee housing

Actions to increase rental housing supply

This section includes actions that will increase the supply of rental housing generally (including market and non-market).

Action 8: Extend the property tax exemptions for new rental development beyond 2024

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: N/A – Program exists already; introduced in 2022

Rationale: It is challenging to achieve financial viability for new rental housing development, and a tax exemption provides a financial benefit to improve financial viability by reducing operating costs.

Description: The current bylaw limits the timeframe for applications to between 2022-2024, and no applications have been received to date. The Town of Creston should consider extending the program beyond 2024 until some rental housing starts to be built. According to the current bylaw, a successful applicant is eligible for:

- a 10-year property tax exemption equalling 100% for non-market rental housing (called “Purpose Built Rental” in the Bylaw) and rental housing in a mixed used development

- Other apartment and multi-family (e.g., townhouse) rental housing developments are eligible for 100% tax exemptions in year 1 to 5 and 75% in year 6-10.

The value of the 100% tax exemption is roughly equivalent to about 5% difference in capital costs (e.g., lowers operating costs so higher debt amounts are possible). Five percent is not unimportant, but with construction costs rising approximately 20-30% over the last few years, this policy alone will not likely stimulate much new rental housing development.

A tax exemption for new development does shift a financial burden onto other taxpayers.

Action 9: Increase the permitted size of Accessory Dwelling Units

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Unanimous

Rationale: Homeowners provide Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a way to supplement their income. While ADU rentals will always be more expensive than non-market housing (i.e., keeping ADUs small doesn't really create "affordable" rentals), they do help to increase market rental supply which is more affordable for many than home ownership. Current ADU size restrictions preclude developing multi-bedroom, family-oriented units.

Description: The recommendation is to increase the size of attached and detached ADUs according to the table below. Attached ADUs are often referred to as secondary suites. Detached ADUs are small buildings that are a home for one household and are sometimes referred to as garden suites, cabins, cottages, or tiny homes⁷. Allowing two-storey detached ADUs allows a homeowner to incorporate a detached unit more readily on their property.

Item	Current rule	Proposed Amendment
Size of attached Accessory Dwelling Units	No larger than the lesser of 75.0 sq. m. (807 sq ft) or 40 percent of the gross floor of the principal dwelling.	No larger than the lesser of 105.0 sq. m. (1150 sq ft) for each individual suite or 49 percent of the gross floor of the principal dwelling for all suites combined.
Size of detached Accessory Dwelling Units	No larger than the lesser of 75.0 sq. m. (807 sq ft) or 60 percent of the gross floor of the principal dwelling.	No larger than the lesser of 105.0 sq. m. (1150 sq ft) or 60 percent of the gross floor of the principal dwelling.
Detached ADU height	Single storey only	Two storey

⁷ Tiny home is a non-specific term, but most often used to refer to a very small home that is moveable and is promoted by some as an important housing solution. Under current BC law a moveable dwelling can only be certified to the CSA Z240MH standard (typically only in a factory) as there is no allowance for such a dwelling under the BC Building Code. However, a Detached ADU cannot be CSA Z240MH building.

Action 10: Permit more Accessory Dwelling Units per lot

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mostly supportive, with some concern about possible change in neighbourhood character.

Rationale: For both single-family dwelling and duplex lots, allowing up to four dwelling units per lot may encourage more homeowners to becoming landlords or create opportunities for these types of homes to be effectively triplex or fourplex properties. Suites can be important mortgage helpers and expanding the allowance to duplexes (now permitted by the BC Building Code) may be important as duplex prices rise.

Description: Amend the zoning to according to the table below:

There are many types of and a mix of names for ADUs, including secondary suites, on-lot tiny homes, garden suites, duplex or town house lock-off suites, laneway/garage units, carriage homes, coach houses, and any other dwelling unit type that can be placed in or adjacent to an existing or new dwelling unit on the same lot.

Essentially, an ADU is an independent living space, self-contained with its own kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping area. It may share common space on the same floor with the primary residence (e.g., a laundry room).

Item	Current rule	Proposed Amendment
Attached ADU in a duplex	Not permitted	Allow in both half of the duplex
Attached ADU in a single-family dwelling	1 permitted	Allow 2; Note combined the two ADUs could not exceed 49% of the gross floor area of the principal dwelling. ⁸
Attached ADU and Detached ADU on same lot	Only 2 Dwelling Units per lot	Allow up to 4 Dwelling Units per lot, but only 1 Detached ADU per lot.

Action 11: Reduce Accessory Dwelling Unit parking requirements

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mostly supportive, with some recommending restricting only to certain areas or implementing via a variance process

Rationale: Providing additional parking for the Accessory Dwelling Unit adds to the cost of their development, and for some properties it is challenging to find the space. Further, not all renters own cars and Creston streets have significant on-street parking.

Description: Eliminate the requirement for off-street parking for ADUs except where more than one ADU per lot is being developed, with one additional stall for the second and third ADIU required in that circumstance. For duplexes, this means no additional parking for the ADU on each half of the duplex (i.e., one ADU per strata lot). A single-family dwelling with a single ADU – whether attached or detached –

⁸. Note that under current BC Building Code rules adding two suites to a home turns it into a 3-unit dwelling to which secondary suite building code rules to not apply.

would not require an additional parking stall, but each additional ADU would require one.

Action 12: Establish an Accessory Dwelling Unit advisory service

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Unanimous

Rationale: Homeowners are often unsure of the combination of zoning and Building Code rules related to developing ADUs, which can be an impediment to them being considered.

Description: Either include it as a duty of the Housing Liaison (if qualified) or a service provided by the building department staff. There will be uptake if there is no charge for the service. It will have to be clear to homeowners that the site visit is only to look at the Accessory Dwelling Unit considerations and not a process for initiating bylaw enforcement. However, the Town of Creston should develop and publish a list of egregious items that staff will be required to pursue should they be encountered such as:

- Missing or malfunctioning smoke alarms
- Missing or malfunctioning carbon monoxide detectors in home with fuel burning heating sources
- Bedrooms without a form of emergency exit
- Especially low ceiling heights (height TBD)

Action 13: Permit sharing of homes and room rentals

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Supportive

Rationale: The zoning should explicitly allow multiple unrelated people to share a dwelling unit or a family to rent one or more rooms to long-term renters.

Description: Currently the dwelling units are to be used by one “family”, which the zoning defines as:

one (1) person or a group of persons who through marriage, blood relationship or other circumstances normally live together

There is uncertainty in this definition as to whether this precludes friends, work colleague or students co-renting a home or family renting one or more rooms in their dwelling unit. These living situations can benefit both the landlord (e.g., supplemental income) and the tenant (more affordable rents).

The recommended addition to the definition of family is shown in bold text below.

Family means one (1) person or a group of persons who through marriage, blood relationship or other circumstances normally live together **and may include up to five unrelated persons or up to three persons in addition to the main family group.**

Given the existing definitions of dwelling unit, this would mean the sharing of a dwelling unit between roommates or long-term rental of a room or rooms to up to three people by a family. In this case, there would be sharing of facilities such as entrances, bathrooms, and/or kitchens. This is different than an ADU rental which occurs in a fully self-contained dwelling unit (i.e., is not shared). Staff intend to include this definition of “family” in a housekeeping update of the Zoning Bylaw fall 2022.



Actions to increase lower-priced homeownership opportunities

This section includes actions that will increase the supply of lower-priced homes, including manufactured homes, duplexes, rowhouses, townhouses, co-housing, and efficiently-sized strata condos – sometimes called the “missing middle.”

Action 14: Reduce parking requirements for multi-family housing (townhouses, rowhouses, triplexes and fourplexes)

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mostly supportive, but some concern and recognition of the need for better transit options

Rationale: Current requirement of 1.25 parking stalls per unit assumes large individual multi-family homes ((e.g., large homes require more parking) and exceeds even the parking requirements for single family and duplex homes. Parking is costly to develop and is a disincentive to developing this type of less costly housing.

Description: Amend parking requirement from 1.25 parking stalls per unit to 0.55 for studios, 0.7 for 1-bedroom, 0.85 for 2-bedroom and 1 for 3-bedroom units and larger.

Action 15: Adopt a 1:1 floor area ratio (FAR) maximum density within the R3 Medium Density Zone

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mostly supportive

Rationale: Current R3 zoning allows ample building area, and the current use of units per hectare fosters development of larger, more expensive units. Instead, a FAR approach to regulating density encourages the provision of smaller, more affordable townhouses. A 1:1 FAR is significant for a townhouse development, and parking requirements are likely to drive maximum unit counts.

Description: Development of multi-family dwellings in the R3 zone is not limited by current permitted density of 60 units per hectare, which is roughly equivalent to an FAR of 1.10:1 when developing 2-storey buildings and 1.6:1 FAR when developing 3-storey buildings. Since the goal is to foster more “missing middle” development, switching to an FAR approach with a slightly reduced density may encourage more units per lot, with lower average prices. When combined with reduction in parking requirements for smaller units, developers will have a better opportunity to meet the needs of moderate-income households.

Action 16: Decrease the minimum lot size in R1, R2 and R3 Zones

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mostly supportive

Rationale: Support the goal in the Official Community Plan (OCP) to have smaller homes on smaller lots and it expands options for the development of duplexes, rowhouses, pocket neighbourhoods, and townhouses.

Description: The recommended minimum lot sizes are listed in the table below. There are several lots in Creston's core that are just over 450 sq. m. and good candidates for duplexes. Reducing the single-family dwelling minimum lot size to 250 sq. m. would foster smaller single-family dwellings but discourage subdivision of existing lots less than 500 sq. m that might accommodate duplexes, rowhouses or townhouses which tend to be lower-priced than single family dwellings.

Where rowhouses back onto lanes, a 150 sq. m. minimum lot size would allow at a 1:1 FAR about 1600 sq. ft. homes. Rear lane access reduces the need for space in the front yard for driveway so rowhouses can be accommodated on smaller lots. The units at each end of the row of rowhouses need a larger 175 sq. m. size to accommodate an interior side yard (where end unit is mid-block) or exterior side yard (where end unit is at the end of the block).

For pocket neighbourhoods, the intent is to foster a cluster of small footprint homes. The maximum size of small footprint home is 112 sq. m (1206 sq. ft.). At the new proposed minimum lot requirement of 125 m² per unit, the small footprint home would need to be one and half or two storeys to keep within the permitted 75% lot coverage.

Zone/type	Current minimum lot size	Proposed minimum lot size
R1 Single Family Dwelling	333 sq. m.	250 sq. m.
R1 Duplex	660 sq. m.	450 sq. m.
R2 Duplex/Rowhouse	333 sq. m.	225 sq. m.
R2 Rowhouse with lane access	n/a	150 sq. m. for interior lots, 175m for end units
R3 Multi-Family (townhouse)	1000 sq. m.	660 sq m.
R3 Pocket Neighbourhood		125 sq. m. per unit

Action 17: Reduce the R1 duplex lot frontage requirement to 15.2m

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Unanimous

Rationale: This action aligns lot frontage requirements across duplex and rowhouse zones. The current 18m requirement excludes several lots that could be candidates for duplexes in Creston.

Description: A frontage of 15.2m (and sometimes less) is sufficient for duplex developments.

Action 18: Reduce permitted lot coverage except where Accessory Dwelling Units are constructed on single family and duplex lots

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Mostly supportive

Rationale: This will restrict the construction of large, more expensive homes and entice developers/homeowners to build Accessory Dwelling Units.

Description: The current 50% lot coverage allowance is very generous, and when combined with 9.2m building height (which facilitates 3-storey construction), it allows for the construction of very large homes. Currently, 3-storey construction is not typical. With current setback requirements on the proposed 250 sq ft lot, maximum lot coverage is about 30% with a 2500 sq ft home. The modified lot coverage and the introduction of Floor Area Ratio (FAR) regulations are recommended per the table below. Proposed modifications would allow a home of approximately 1000 sq. ft. (not including a basement) unless one or more ADUs are constructed. It is unlikely two or more ADUs will be built on smaller lots. As lot size increases, the lot coverage and FAR allocations decrease, providing incentive to develop both smaller lots and more modest sized homes.

R1 home type	Current requirement		Proposed Amendment	
	Lot Coverage	FAR	Lot Coverage	FAR
Single Family Dwelling	50%	N/A	30% for 250 sq m lot, minus 2% for each 100 sq m of lot area to minimum of 10%	0.4 to 1 for lots 250 sq. m., decreasing by 0.02 to 1 per sq. m to minimum of 0.2 to 1.
Single Family Dwelling with 1 ADU	n/a	N/A	40% for 250 sq m lot, minus 2.5% for each 100 sq m of lot area to minimum of 15%	0.55 to 1 for lots 250 sq. m., decreasing by 0.025 to 1 per sq. m to minimum of 0.3 to 1.
Single Family Dwelling with 2 or more ADUs	n/a	N/A	50% for 250 sq, minus 3% for each 100 sq m of lot area to minimum of 20%	0.7to 1 for lots 250 sq. m., decreasing by 0.03 to 1 per sq. m to minimum of 0.4 to 1.

With these regulations maximum home sizes would be as follows:

Housing Type	Maximum home size – square feet							
	250 sq m		450 sq m		750 sq m		1050 sq m	
	Single Storey	2 + storeys	Single Storey	2 + storeys	Single Storey	2 + storeys	Single Storey	2 + storeys
SFD	807	1076	1259	1744	1615	2422	1582	2713
SFD + 1 ADU	1076	1480	1695	2422	2220	3660	2260	3956
SFD + 2or more ADU	1345	1884	2131	3100	2826	4440	2939	5199

For duplexes, the lot coverages and FAR allowances are increased to encourage the construction of this housing form that is typically more affordable. With the current setback requirements on 450 sq. m. lot and with 3-storey construction, a duplex at 3400 sq ft per side is permitted. The proposed changes would reduce that maximum to about 1200 sq ft per side unless ADUs are built.

R1/R2 home type	Current requirement		Proposed Amendment	
	Lot Coverage	FAR	Lot Coverage	FAR
Duplex	50%	N/A	40% for 250 sq m lot, minus 2% for each 100 sq m of lot area to minimum of 24%	0.5 to 1 for lots 250 sq. m., decreasing by 0.02 to 1 per sq. m to minimum of 0.39 to 1.
Duplex with 1 ADU	n/a	N/A	50% for 250 sq m lot, minus 2.5% for each 100 sq m of lot area to minimum of 30%	0.7 to 1 for lots 250 sq. m., decreasing by 0.025 to 1 per sq. m to minimum of 0.5 to 1.
Duplex with 2 ADUs	n/a	N/A	60% for 250 sq, minus 3% for each 100 sq m of lot area to minimum of 36%	0.85 to 1 for lots 250 sq. m., decreasing by 0.03 to 1 per sq. m to minimum of 0.61 to 1.

With these regulations, maximum home sizes would be as follows:

Housing Type	Maximum home size – square feet					
	450 sq m		750 sq m		1050 sq m	
	Single Storey	2 + storeys	Single Storey	2 + storeys	Single Storey	2 + storeys
Duplex	1938	2664	2745	3956	3165	4830
DP + 1 ADU	2422	3391	3431	5046	3956	6216
DP + 2 or more ADU	2906	4117	4117	6135	4747	7572

Action 19: Participate in the BC Housing Affordable Homeownership Program with developers, and provide 100% Development Cost Charge waivers

Affordable Housing and Development Committee support: Unanimous

Rationale: Lower-priced homeownership options are diminishing in Creston and the BC Housing Affordable Homeownership Program (AHOP) works with developers to provide new housing at a minimum of 10% below market prices. Enticing developers into this program will provide needed lower-priced homeownership options.

Description: AHOP provides lower priced financing in exchange for the developer guaranteeing sale prices at least 10% below market. While not necessary for program participation, BC Housing prefers that the local government provides increased density, variances, or other support, like DCC waivers, to further entice the developer to participate in the program. BC Housing has worked with CMHC such that when the home is sold, they hold a second mortgage that reflects the difference between what the homeowners has paid and market price. With this second mortgage in place the homeowner can get conventional financing without paying high-ratio mortgage insurance, which is a saving to the homeowner. When the homeowner sells their home, BC Housing's second mortgage is paid out from the sale and that money is provided to the municipality to support local affordable housing programs.

Possible future moves

In addition to the actions identified above, the following two future moves are identified for consideration in collaboration with regional partners.

Improve regional development and construction capacity

One of the reasons cited by the Affordable Housing and Development Committee for lack of new housing and Accessory Dwelling Unit development is a lack of capacity in the development and construction sectors. There are not many developers active in the Creston and finding housing contractors is difficult. This challenge has roots that involve provincial, if not national, development and construction industry dynamics. We do not have any information as to whether this issue is more significant in Creston or the Kootenays as compared to anywhere else. However, the Town of Creston may be able to work with regional or provincial partners to better understand the problems and take actions to address it at the regional level.

Regional price restricted homeownership

There are select examples, the Whistler Housing Authority being the most successful with over 1000 homes, of programs that sell housing at below-market prices to locals. Future resales also must be to locals and resale price is typically linked to an inflationary measure like the Consumer Price Index instead of allowing open market bidding. Where these programs have been successful is in housing markets that are significantly inflated, which does not appear to be the case in Creston. Moreover, it needs an appropriate host organisation that facilitates resales and/or enforces resale covenants. Given the mobility of residents within the region and size of Creston, exploring how such a program could be implemented regionally is recommended. Such a program would have to identify a funding formula – whether through

developer contributions or government funding – because it is unlikely to be successful if simply developing at market costs.



Glossary

- Accessory Dwelling Unit a is term used by the Creston zoning bylaw that means a home that is accessory (or secondary) to the principal use and includes either an Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit within or attached to the principal building (often understood as a secondary suite) and a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit that is in a separate building. Essentially, an ADU is an independent living space, self-contained with its own kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping area. It may share common space on the same floor with the primary residence (e.g., a laundry room). There are many types of and a mix of names for ADUs, including secondary suites, on-lot tiny homes, garden suites, duplex or town house lock-off suites, laneway/garage units, carriage homes, and any other dwelling unit type that can be placed in or adjacent to an existing or new dwelling unit on the same lot.
- Apartment means a type of building that includes multiple homes (units) with a shared common entrance and may be rented, or subdivided into individual strata lots (e.g., “condos”).
- Co-op or Cooperative Housing means housing owned and operated by a co-op established under the Cooperative Association Act of BC. Co-op housing is managed by the members of the co-op who must reside in the co-op to be a member. Most co-op housing is rental housing as individual members do not have a significant equity stake in the co-op.
- Duplex means a building divided into two homes for separate households and is often also subdivided into two separate real estate entities as individual strata lots.
- Development Cost Charge means a charge imposed on new development by municipal bylaw to help pay for the cost of new infrastructure such as water, sewer, stormwater, and parks.
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR) means the ratio of floor area to lot area of all the buildings on a lot.
- Exterior side yard means the yard that is not the front yard on a corner lot but faces the other flanking street. This is sometimes called a flanking side yard.
- Housing Society is non-profit organisation established under the BC Societies Act to own and operate housing, almost always rental housing. A Housing Society is governed by a board of directors made up of individuals who are not residents of the housing. Some Housing Societies are also registered charities.
- Interior side yard means a yard adjacent to a side lot line for middle-of-the block lots.
- Manufactured home / mobile home are terms used interchangeably in the Creston zoning bylaw that means a home constructed in a factory to the CSA Z240MH standard and installed either on a permanent foundation or temporary foundation. Increasingly there are manufactured homes, sometimes described as “modular”, that are constructed in CSA A277 certified factories to the BC Building Code standard and placed on permanent foundations on site. This style of manufactured home may be small single-family dwellings or larger multi-family or apartment buildings that are assembled on site from individual modules.
- Missing Middle is a term that is starting to gain prominence that means housing that is not single-family dwellings nor large apartment buildings, but rather medium density housing such as duplexes, townhouses, rowhouses, triplexes, fourplexes and small apartment buildings that have not been constructed in sufficient numbers (e.g., are “missing) in many communities.

- Moveable dwelling is the Statistics Canada term for dwellings lived in that can be moved, including manufactured homes, boats, recreation vehicles, tents, and trailers.
- Non-market housing means housing that is run by a non-profit entity such as a municipal housing corporation, co-op, housing society or charity and provided at rates lower than market prices, with rental rates sometimes linked specifically to household income. Non-market housing may also include homes sold at below market rates by similar organisations with medium to long-term restrictions on resale prices and/or who retains the capital gains on resale.
- Multi-family is a term often used in zoning bylaws, including Creston's, to refer to a building with multiple homes (or dwellings units). In Creston's zoning bylaw, multi-family buildings must have individual entrances to the outdoors and a minimum of 3 units and include townhouses, rowhouses, triplexes and fourplexes, but not apartments.
- Pocket Neighbourhoods is a term used in Creston's zoning bylaw that means a residential development with at least 3 small footprint homes clustered around a shared outdoor common space, with each home no larger than 112 sq m (1205 sq ft)
- Primary Rental Market is a term used by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) that means rental homes in purpose-built multiple-unit rental buildings (e.g., apartments) that are consistently part of the rental market.
- Rowhouse means a home in a multi-unit building where the outside wall of the building is also a subdivision line for fee simple property. Middle rowhouses have two of these walls/property lines while an end rowhouse may only have one. In contrast, townhouses are subdivided as strata lots.
- Secondary suite means a rental home contained within another home and has a specific meaning under the BC Building Code.
- Secondary Rental Market is a term used by CMHC that means rental homes that are provided in privately owned dwellings and may not be consistently part of the rental market (e.g., secondary suites, rental of individual strata-apartment units).
- Setback means the required distance a building or other specified element (e.g., a parking stall) must be away from a property lot line.
- Single family dwelling or single detached home means a building that is a home used primarily for one household and is a single real estate entity.
- Tiny home is a non-specific term but is most often used to refer to a very small home that is moveable and is promoted by some as an important housing solution. Under current BC law a moveable dwelling can only be certified to the CSA Z240MH standard (typically only in a factory) as there is no allowance for a moveable dwelling under the BC Building Code. A CSA Z240MH home can also be affixed to a permanent foundation.
- Townhouse means housing within a building that includes multiple homes, each with their own entrance. Townhouses typically are side by side but may be stacked with one home over or partially-over another. Townhouses are typically subdivided into building strata lots.
- Tucked-under parking means parking spaces that are covered by the upper floor of building but are otherwise open.