Attachment A - Staff Report:

2020 Housing Action Plan and Needs Assessment

Implementation Update and Next Steps

June 9, 2025

KITIMAT

A Marvel of Nature and Industry

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a status update on implementation of 17 action items in the 2020 Housing Action Plan and Needs Assessment (HAPNA) that has occurred over the past five years, and to identify potential next steps for Council's consideration for the next three years.

2.0 Background

In 2019, the District of Kitimat hired a consultant to prepare a Housing Action Plan and Needs Assessment. As identified in the HAPNA document, the purpose was to identify housing needs and propose actions to address them. The Housing Needs Assessment component of the report was completed to meet *Local Government Act* requirements, which as of April 2019, mandated that local governments collect data, analyze trends, and present reports that describe current and anticipated housing needs for a period of 5 years. The Housing Action Plan was intended to provide a framework of tools to allow the District to respond strategically to different issues and opportunities as they arose.

In reviewing the number of housing units needed in Kitimat, the HAPNA found that there was a sufficient supply of housing at that time to accommodate forecasted population growth to 2026; however, it identified that although supply appeared to meet the current and projected demand, the condition and suitability of housing may not meet the needs of residents. Additional factors were highlighted in the document, including but not limited to:

- Kitimat's housing stock is aging and a significant proportion of units are in need of major repair.
- The majority of housing units are single-detached dwellings.
- There are limited "move-in-ready" detached homes.
- The average price of rental and owned housing has fluctuated in response to industrial activity.
- Renters are particularly challenged to afford adequate and suitable housing.
- Among renters, vulnerable residents are particularly challenged to afford the average price of rental housing.

3.0 Implementation Update

The Housing Action Plan portion of the HAPNA provided 17 recommended actions based on the findings of the Needs Assessment. The housing gaps found in the Needs Assessment included non-market rental housing, accessible housing, and more diverse housing forms, and the recommended actions in the Housing Action Plan focused on ways to address these gaps through policy measures, regulatory measures, financial measures, partnerships, and awareness and advocacy.

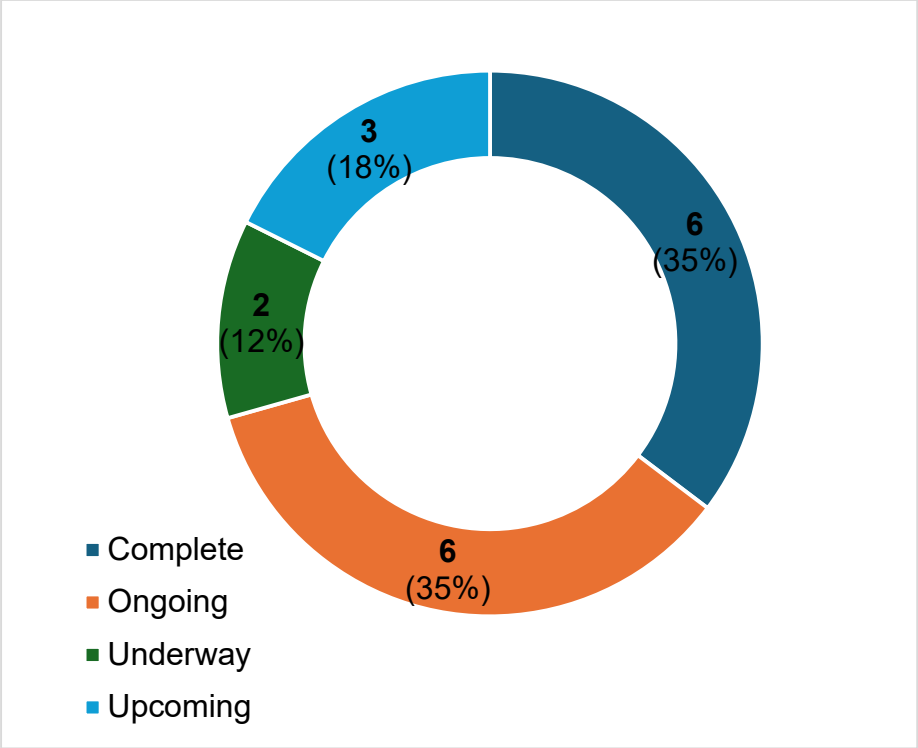
The following subsections 3.1 through 3.4 present updates on each of the 17 recommended actions in the HAPNA. The actions are clustered in four groups in this report based on status of implementation. At the time of this writing, of the 17 actions:

6 actions are complete (see section 3.1)

6 actions are ongoing (see section 3.2)

2 actions have been started and are underway (see section 3.3)

3 actions are upcoming (see section 3.4)



The two actions that are started and underway, and the three actions that are upcoming, are included in a Housing Action Plan and Needs Assessment Workplan for 2025-2028 in Attachment B. Also included in the Workplan for 2025-2028 are some optional supplemental tasks identified in relation to action items for Council's consideration.



Optional supplemental tasks - A light bulb icon in this report with italicized text denotes an optional supplemental task identified in relation to an existing action item. As noted above, these items have been included in the HAPNA Workplan for 2025-2028 in Attachment B for Council's consideration.

Actions in the proposed Workplan for 2025-2028 in Attachment B are categorized into either short term (1 – 1.5 year) or medium term (1.5-3 year) items. The Workplan does not contain long-term items extending beyond 2028 because the District is required to complete a new Housing Needs Report (i.e., a new HAPNA) by the end of 2028 to comply with provincial requirements in the *Local Government Act*.

3.1 Actions Completed

Action 1 - Develop a Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy to increase tenant protection and compensation in the event of renovation or redevelopment

The District of Kitimat Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy T-19 was approved by Council in May 2023 (Motion R23-097). The stated purpose of the Policy is to keep rental units from leaving the market and to protect renters from the impacts of rezoning and/or demolition. The Policy applies to all rezoning applications that involve purpose-built rental buildings containing five or more units.

Optional supplemental task – Explore preparing a Tenant Relocation and Protection Bylaw

If Council wishes to explore adding a regulatory tool for tenant relocation protections to supplement Policy T-19, staff could undertake research, identify options and report to Council seeking direction on the potential preparation of a Tenant Relocation and Protection Bylaw. The Province of BC introduced legislation in 2024 providing a new authority for municipal tenant protection bylaws. These bylaws can be prepared and used by municipalities to require property owners to provide added support for tenants facing displacement in cases of redevelopment, similar to the intent of District of Kitimat Policy T-19. A comprehensive Provincial Policy Manual for Tenant Protection Bylaws was released by the Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs in March 2025.

Action 2 - Introduce an Adaptable Housing Policy and propose a minimum adaptable or accessible unit requirements for all new developments.

In 2024, an amendment to the *BC Building Code* was introduced requiring a minimum number of adaptable units in new developments. The *BC Building Code* defines an adaptable dwelling unit as "a dwelling unit designed and constructed with some accessible features, and which accommodates the future modification to provide more accessible features."

As of March 2025, a phased approach to implementing adaptable unit provisions in the *BC Building Code* has begun. The adaptable dwelling unit provisions apply to single-storey units that are served by a common accessible interior corridor. The first phase of this program will require one in every five dwelling units in large apartment buildings* to be adaptable and one in every five dwelling units on the first floor of small apartment buildings* to be adaptable. The Province of BC recently indicated that they decided on a phased approach to the adaptable housing requirements after consulting the home-building community. At the time of this writing, a timeline for subsequent phases of the program has not yet been released.

Given that the provincial government is now implementing a program to introduce minimum adaptable housing requirements through the *BC Building Code* that did not exist at the time the 2020 HAPNA was prepared, staff consider the intent of this action item in the 2020 HAPNA to have been met.

Optional supplemental task – Modify or expand the scope of the Secondary Suite Incentive Program

If Council wishes to consider a further task to support the creation of adaptable or accessible units, staff could undertake research, identify options and report to Council seeking direction on a potential refresh of the District of Kitimat Secondary Suite Incentive Program. For example, the program scope could be modified or expanded to allow for greater eligibility in relation to adaptable and/or accessible units, such as allowing for upgrading an existing suite or construction of a suite in a new dwelling (both of which are currently not supported). This would complement BC Housing's existing Rebate for Accessible Home Adaptations, which provides financial help in the form of funding to eligible households to complete home adaptations for independent living.

* Small apartment buildings, as regulated in Part 9 of the Building Code, are buildings that are 3 storeys or less in building height, have a building area that does not exceed 600m^2 used for major occupancies classified as Group C residential occupancies, and do not require an Architect. Large apartment buildings, as regulated in Part 3 of the Building Code, are buildings that are taller than 3 storeys, have a building area larger than 600m^2, and require an Architect.

Action 6 - Change bylaw to allow Affordable Housing Fund to finance operation-related expenditures

In November 2023, Council adopted District of Kitimat Affordable Housing Reserve Fund Amendment Bylaw No. 2044, 2023 (motion R23-227) and approved an update to Affordable Housing Initiatives and Operational Fund Policy A-13 (motion R23-230). These amendments allow for affordable housing reserve funds to be granted to eligible organizations for use towards operation-related expenditures. Public and non-profit organizations can now apply for operational funding for up to five years and receive up to 50% of total eligible expenses. Eligible operating expenses include such items as:

- insurance, mortgage, utilities, accounting and legal fees
- maintenance and repairs for property and snow removal
- professional management of the property
- staff expenses
- small capital expenses including building and system maintenance

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Action 10 - Maintain close relationships with industry partners in Kitimat and the surrounding area to ensure information about key housing indicators is shared collectively.

The 2020 HAPNA notes that the District participates in Social Management Roundtable sessions with LNG Canada and emphasizes the importance of the District continuing to be a part of these conversations. Included in the document were recommendations related to: (1) supporting LNG Canada housing data collection and sharing it with stakeholders and the community; (2) consulting with other industry representatives as needed; and (3) maintaining communication with prospective industry partners.

The District has attended Social Management Roundtable sessions with LNG Canada on a continuous basis over the past five years. LNG Canada, with the support of their consultants, collects and monitors housing statistics such as apartment vacancy rates and average rental costs. This information is included in a Housing & Accommodation Indicators Report that is submitted to the District. The Planning department uses this information in the Housing Fact Sheet that is published every Spring and Fall, presented to Council, and posted online at www.kitimat.ca/housing.

The District also regularly meets with other industry representatives and prospective industry partners (e.g., Rio Tinto, Cedar LNG, and many others) on an ongoing basis.

Action 8 - Support tenant readiness initiatives

Action 17 - Provide information and outreach on housing programs and funding opportunities to community members.

In early 2025, staff completed a comprehensive review and update of the “Housing” page (www.kitimat.ca/housing) on the municipal website in support of tenant readiness and to provide information and outreach on housing programs and funding opportunities to community members. The page now contains information on housing statistics and housing needs forecasts, municipal policies and programs, tenant resources through different local agencies, and provincial housing programs and funding opportunities.

Communications via the District of Kitimat’s social media channels have been scheduled to notify the public about the information recently made available on the new Housing page. Staff will also continue to bring awareness to tenant readiness initiatives, housing programs, and funding opportunities through other avenues such as the external newsletters prepared by the Economic Development Department.

The following tenant readiness information and resources are highlighted on the new Housing page:

- District of Kitimat Tenant Protection and Relocation Policy T-19.
- District of Kitimat Redevelopment of Manufactured Home Park Policy R-15.
- Residential Tenancy Branch website, which provides information, resources and dispute resolution services for tenants and landlords.
- Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre website and 1-800 info line number, which provides free legal information and referral services to tenants in BC.
- Renting it Right website, which has a free online course that gives tenant practical and legal information.
- BC Housing website, which has information on various housing options and rental assistance options and how to apply.

The following housing programs and funding opportunities information and resources are highlighted on the new Housing page:

- District of Kitimat Affordable Housing Initiatives and Operational Fund Policy A-13.
- Tamitik Status of Women Housing website page, which provides information on the women’s second stage and long-term housing available in Kitimat.
- Kitimat Community Development Centre (CDC) Better at Home website page, which provides information about the services available in Kitimat.
- Kitimat Services Community Society Rent Subsidy Program website page, which provides emergency financial assistance to those facing eviction or hardship in Kitimat to remain in their home.

- Kitimat CDC Homeless Prevention Program website, which provides a place in Kitimat to register for government assistance programs.
- BC Housing's Rental Housing website page, which provides detailed information on how to search for and apply for subsidized housing, market rentals and housing co-operative.
- BC Housing's Rental Assistance Program website page, which provides eligible low-income working families with monthly assistance with their rent.
- BC Housing's Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters website page, which provides eligible seniors with monthly assistance with their rent payments.
- BC Housing's Canada-BC Housing Benefit Program website page, which provides rental assistance for people who do not qualify for our other rental assistance programs.
- BC Housing's BC Rebate for Accessible Home Adaptations website page, which provides financial help in the form of rebates to eligible low-income households to complete home adaptations for independent living.

3.2 Actions Ongoing

Action 4 - Support innovative housing forms such as pocket neighbourhoods to increase housing choice and ensure older residents can age-in-place.

Under this action item, it was recommended in the 2020 HAPNA that the District create a pocket neighbourhood zone upon receipt of a suitable development application. The document defines pocket neighbourhoods as ranging from 4 to 12 dwelling units on one property.

In 2025, Council approved a development application to rezone a property from a low-density greenbelt zone to a new multi-family residential zone for a proposed single detached, bareland strata development (motion R25-075). A new R3-D1 (Low Density Multi-Dwelling Residential) Zone was added to Part 9, Division 4 of the *Kitimat Municipal Code* for this project. The new zone increased the number of permitted single detached dwellings on the subject property from one to four, in keeping with the lower range of the HAPNA definition of a pocket neighbourhood. The R3-D1 zone can now potentially be used as a template or starting point for future rezonings on a case-by-case basis, which may help facilitate the development of future pocket neighbourhoods in Kitimat.

In addition to the above, the province has introduced legislation that considers the concept of "pocket neighbourhoods" for all municipalities over 5,000 in population in British Columbia, including Kitimat. In 2023, the provincial government passed the Housing Statues Amendment Act (Bill 44), requiring that municipal zoning bylaws be amended by June 2024 to allow 3-4 units on most residential properties, and up to 6 units in areas with frequent transit service, subject to conditions. The provincial initiative is commonly referred to as small-scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH) and is consistent with the concept of pocket neighbourhoods in the 2020 HAPNA.

Recognizing that there are infrastructure servicing constraints in some Kitimat neighbourhoods (particularly with respect to sanitary sewer servicing), the District applied for and was granted an extension to the June 2024 deadline for SSMUH zoning, to December 31, 2030. An infrastructure capacity study is now underway, and upon completion, staff will begin to draft the necessary SSMUH zoning regulations to meet provincial requirements in the *Local Government Act* and Provincial Policy Manual and Site Standards.

The Planning Department is currently undertaking a Complete Community Study with provincial grant funding from the Union of BC Municipalities. In early 2025, the project team engaged with community members on preferences for different types of housing forms. The feedback of this engagement – which has since been summarized in a Phase 1 Community Engagement Summary document and posted on the project web page on Get Involved Kitimat - indicated that the most preferred housing type to be prioritized in Kitimat over the next 20 years is small-scale multi-unit housing forms,

including secondary suites and accessory dwellings such as garden suites and coach houses. Participants stated that they value single-storey accessibility, multi-generational living potential, and relative affordability when compared to larger housing types.

The findings of the Complete Community Study are being incorporated into the District's Housing Focused Official Community Plan (OCP) Update project that is currently underway. To address *Local Government Act* requirements, the District of Kitimat must prepare and adopt an Official Community Plan amendment addressing 5- and 20-year housing needs identified in an Interim Housing Needs Report by the end of 2025. Council received the Interim Housing Needs Report in December 2024 through motion R24-291 and received a report regarding the Housing Focused OCP Update project in January 2025 through motion R25-003. Work is underway on the OCP amendment, with community engagement scheduled for Q3 2025 and a draft bylaw scheduled to be presented to Council by Q4 2025. Pocket neighbourhoods/small-scale multi-unit housing will be addressed in the OCP amendment in keeping with legislative requirements and the findings of the Complete Community Study.



Action 5 - Consider accessible ground-oriented housing forms where feasible, such as accessory dwelling units.

While the HAPNA document was being prepared in late 2019 and early 2020, a zoning amendment application was received from property owners in Strawberry Meadows to permit detached accessory dwelling units (ADUs). During the application process, Council directed staff to investigate the suitability of including additional properties in Strawberry Meadows and Cable Car in the zoning amendment. As a result, a District-led zoning amendment was initiated to allow ADUs on most residential properties in Strawberry Meadows and Cable Car. Both zoning amendments were adopted by Council in March 2020 (motions R20-060 and S20-028), adding ADU permissions to over 300 properties between the two neighbourhoods.

In April 2025, the District received a zoning amendment application to add secondary dwellings – including secondary suites and detached ADUs – to all 25 vacant residential properties on Mulberry Street. These 25 properties were not included in the District-led zoning amendments noted above in 2020 because Mulberry Street had not yet been created at that time. When Mulberry Street was created/subdivided in 2023, there was R1-B zoning in effect that precluded secondary dwellings. In May 2025, Council adopted the proposed zoning amendment to change the zoning of the 25 properties to R2-A with a site-specific text amendment, allowing for secondary suites and ADUs.

As mentioned in Action 4 above, the District will be required to amend its zoning regulations by the end of 2030 to permit 3-4 dwelling units on most Residential (R)-zoned lots across the community to comply with Bill 44. ADUs will be one of the housing types included in this work.

Action 13 - Consider strategies to encourage additional commercial amenities in Kitimat.

The 2020 HAPNA notes that there was a desire in the community for a brewery to open in Kitimat, highlighting that social connectivity is an important element of a supportive community network. In 2021, Council approved a Development Permit for a new brewery at 678 Mountainview Square. Construction commenced in 2022 and Two Peaks Brewing opened in 2023, creating a "third place" as referenced in the HAPNA where people gather outside of home and work, social connections are strengthened, and community is built.

Action 13 also recommended that the Downtown Plan under preparation at that time should prioritize commercial space and design that encourages social interaction and connectivity. In 2021, Council approved the following Downtown Plan vision and guiding principles:

Vision:

Defined by its unique heritage masterplan, Downtown Kitimat is a reinvigorated community heart. Transformed by infill development, new investment and revitalization efforts, pedestrian-friendly streets connect the community with downtown. New downtown residents bring life and add vibrancy to gathering places and a renewed civic pride in Downtown Kitimat.

Guiding Principles:

PEOPLE-ORIENTED - *Prioritize people through (re)orientation of downtown development and the creation of high-quality pedestrian spaces.*

COMPACT - *Encourage the development of complementary uses within the Downtown, including residential and additional commercial/ retail offerings.*

COMPLETE - *Encourage the development of complementary uses within the Downtown, including residential and additional commercial/ retail offerings.*

CONNECTED - *Enhance connections and wayfinding within and beyond Downtown Kitimat, linking pedestrian spaces and gathering places to the larger landscape and natural setting.*

TIMELESS - *Employ thoughtful architecture that honours Downtown Kitimat's historically unique mid century modern form and character or complementary designs that add variety to the built environment.*

SUPPORTED - *Partner with community stakeholders and local First Nations in the planning, design and development of Downtown Kitimat.*

The vision and guiding principles above were the foundation for an update to the District's Downtown Design Guidelines, which were completed and adopted by Council in 2022. The updated Downtown Design Guidelines provide a standard of quality for all improvements within downtown Kitimat, specifically related to the form and character of development. The guidelines are intended to facilitate a transparent and streamlined development approvals process by providing applicants with direction for the preferred form and character of development, which are used by District staff and Council to evaluate development applications.

As of 2025, the District is currently working on a number of downtown projects that are in keeping with the Downtown Plan vision and guiding principles. These include but are not limited to design plans for Mountainview Square and the Lower City Centre Parking Lot, detailed engineering design for a Spray Park in Lion's Park, and a feasibility study for an Outdoor Market. Staff are also in the process of preparing a final Downtown Plan document to weave together all the noted items; staff are targeting completion of this final document and presentation to Council for consideration by Q4 2025.

The 2020 HAPNA recommended that District staff work with the Chamber of Commerce to generate ideas for new commercial activity in City Centre. The Economic Development department works closely with the Chamber on downtown initiatives on an ongoing basis. In 2023, Council approved the 2023-2029 Economic Development Strategic Plan (motion S23-076), which includes a goal area and 18 underlying actions to "Boldly Revitalize Downtown".

Action 14 - Convene a working session with BC Housing, Haisla Nation, DOK and Northern Health to collaborate on housing and healthcare-related initiatives, with a priority be addressing housing for those with an immediate risk of homelessness and hard-to-house persons and advocating for additional assisted living and long-term care facilities in Kitimat.

Over the past five years, the District has been involved in working sessions with external agencies on various housing and healthcare-related initiatives. For example, the District has participated in meetings with Northern Health in relation to implementation of the proposed Dementia Care Home project and with BC Housing in relation to funding opportunities for seniors housing in Kitimat. Supporting the Dementia Care Home project and supporting the development and operation of additional seniors housing are identified as Strategic Actions in Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.

District staff regularly meet with Haisla Nation staff as part of the District of Kitimat and Haisla Nation Council Friendship Agreement gi guáƛaṗ nis. This agreement was signed in June 2024 and sets a foundation for collaboration between the District and Haisla Nation. District and Haisla Nation staff participate in quarterly Working Group meetings and monthly Working Committee meetings on different topics, including but not limited to land use planning and social development.

In late-2024, Council approved new Terms of Reference to reestablish the District of Kitimat Housing Committee (motion R24-274). The stated Scope of Work for the Housing Committee is to undertake activities that increase affordable housing, support housing diversity and supply, promote and protect rental housing, reduce barriers to housing, and strengthen partnerships and build awareness. The Housing Committee will include representation from Haisla Nation, and stakeholder groups and agencies including Northern Health, the Kitimat CDC, Tamitik Status of Women and others as per the approved Terms of Reference. In early 2025, staff connected with representatives for the agencies and stakeholder groups identified in the Terms of Reference and, at the time of this writing, nearly all the member positions have been filled. The first meeting of the reestablished Housing Committee is targeted for mid-2025.

Optional supplemental task – Invite BC Housing to present to the reestablished Housing Committee

If Council wishes to consider a further task to promote collaboration on housing initiatives between different agencies, staff could invite the northern representative for BC Housing to virtually attend a future Housing Committee meeting(s), either as a one-time presentation or on a reoccurring basis. This will allow an opportunity for Housing Committee members to engage directly with BC Housing on current or future funding and collaboration opportunities.

Action 15 - Advocate to BC Housing for continued funding for a Housing Resource Worker and additional rent supplements for persons experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

The 2020 HAPNA states that available rent supplements were not able to fully address community needs at that time, and that it was important to maintain sufficient hours for the Housing Resource Worker position. The document does not state what the hours were for the position at that time.

Today, the Kitimat CDC operates the Homeless Prevention Program which includes a Housing Resource Worker. As stated on Kitimat CDC's website (https://kitimatcdc.ca), the hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 4:30 am. The space is available for people to talk about housing challenges, access emergency food, learn about renting in Kitimat, obtain information about the *Residential Tenancy Act* or get help with tenancy challenges, as well as several other support services.

As part of preparing this report, District staff contacted BC Housing for information about their rental assistance programs. One of their programs, Canada-BC Housing Benefit Program, provides funding to Kitimat CDC who in return can use this funding to select eligible applicants from the priority groups they serve.

Since 2020, the District has provided funding to the Kitimat Community Services Society (KCSS)'s Rental Subsidy Program. 2025 was the 5th year of the program and a request for $39,512 was approved by Council during the 2025 budget deliberations. The District has also provided funding to Kitimat CDC's Better at Home program, which provides contracted services for a subsidized fee that include light housekeeping, snow removal, and light lawn care, along with other support services. A request from Kitimat CDC for $53,060 was approved by Council during the 2025 budget deliberations.

The reestablished Housing Committee will provide an opportunity for the District and different agencies and stakeholder groups to discuss whether this HAPNA action item has been sufficiently addressed over the past five years, or if additional advocacy work with BC Housing is needed related to rent supplements and funding for the Housing Resource Worker. Staff note that the District recently hired a new Social Development Coordinator who can support Planning staff in these discussions. The scope of the position includes working collaboratively across District departments and liaising with other levels of government, community-based organizations, and social agencies, including but not limited to BC Housing.

Action 16 - Continue to monitor vacancy rates and work with LNG Canada to publish vacancy rate data every three months.

Up until 2020, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) had been conducting an annual rental market survey to determine the vacancy rate for Kitimat. CMHC ceased the survey after 2020 due to Kitimat's population being below their 10,000 population threshold. The last CMHC rental market survey conducted in Kitimat was in October 2020.

Today, one of the only sources of vacancy rate information in Kitimat is Statistics Canada Census Data, which is available every 5 years. The last Census was in 2021 and the next Census is in 2026. To address the data gap, an apartment survey is conducted by LNG Canada's consultants twice annually as part of the preparation of their Housing & Accommodation Indicators Report. For the survey, LNG Canada's consultants contact landlords of rental apartment buildings to request the number of overall units and vacant units, and then the responses are aggregated into an estimated vacancy rate for all apartment buildings in Kitimat. An apartment vacancy rate of 19.75% was reported in the last apartment survey completed by LNG Canada's consultants in January 2025.

In recent years, District staff have been exploring other ways to estimate the community's vacancy rate. One example is using Canada Post data on vacant houses and multi-family units in Kitimat. Staff first explored this approach in November 2020 and learned that Kitimat's vacancy rate for all housing types according to Canada Post data was approximately 16%. Staff requested an update from Canada Post in April 2025 and was informed that the vacancy rate for all housing types is now approximately 14%.

Staff will continue to work with LNG Canada to monitor and report out on vacancy statistics as frequently as possible, including through LNG Canada's Housing & Accommodation Indicators Report and the District of Kitimat's Housing Fact Sheets. Staff have recently inquired with LNG Canada on the possibility of expanding their consultants' apartment surveys to include other housing types and an overall vacancy rate estimate.

3.3 Actions Started and Underway

Action 12 - Discuss the possibility of opening a Community Shed in association with the Kitimat Senior Citizens Association.

The 2020 HAPNA describes Community Sheds as a venue for residents to gather and work on different activities, such as woodworking, and potentially address the lack of residential space available because of downsizing, most commonly experienced by seniors. It was recommended that the District consult with the Kitimat 50+ Society on their capacity and interest in leading the project and identify potential District-owned sites or existing community spaces that would be suitable for a Community Shed.

Staff began working on this action in early 2025, starting with a meeting with the Kitimat 50+ Society to explore the feasibility of undertaking a joint Community Shed project. Level of interest, resources and other topics were discussed. It was identified that staff capacity and funding constraints are barriers to a joint Community Shed project with the Kitimat 50+ Society at this time.

It was noted that the Men's Shed Association of BC recently presented at the Kitimat 50+ Society Centre to provide information on Men's Sheds, including grant funding opportunities. Staff's next task on this item is to contact this Association to learn more about available programs and funding for Community Sheds. Staff will also review if there are any District-owned sites in Kitimat that might be suitable for a Community Shed. The findings of this research will be reported to Council for consideration and further direction.

Action 11 - Facilitate partnerships with UNBC and Coast Mountain College to provide building program students with internships in Kitimat.

The 2020 HAPNA identified that there are a limited number of available building contractors in Kitimat, and that trades students may provide a temporary solution to the shortage.

Staff began working on this action in early 2025, starting with meetings with staff at Coast Mountain College's Terrace campus to investigate the issue and understand what role there might be for the District of Kitimat in a potential partnership. Staff also researched the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) website and found that they do not currently offer building trades programs, with the most relevant program being a Bachelor of Applied Science in Civil Engineering available at their Prince George campus. Given that this action item is intended to address the shortage of available contractors in Kitimat, Coast Mountain College has become the initial focus of staff's research as they offer a variety of trades programs. Also, although the action speaks to "internships", staff's focus has shifted to "apprenticeships" as it has been confirmed by Coast Mountain College that this is more common terminology in building trades.

From initial conversations with the Dean of Trades, First Nations Fine Arts & Workforce Training at Coast Mountain College, staff learned that the building trades programs at the Terrace campus are well subscribed and that obtaining local apprenticeships in northwest BC is not a current challenge faced by students. An offered suggestion was to consider ways to increase awareness with youth on the career opportunities and positive community impact a career in building trades can provide, as well as the educational opportunities available locally; for example, the Youth Work in Trades program available through Coast Mountain School District No. 82 for students in grades 11 and 12.

Staff will continue conversations with Coast Mountain College and School District No. 82, as well as initiate conversations with local trades professionals in the community to explore ways the District can facilitate partnerships in keeping with Action 11 in the HAPNA. The findings of this research will be reported to Council for consideration and further direction.

3.4 Actions Upcoming

Action 9 - Support policies and practices that allow renters to keep pets.

The 2020 HAPNA recommends that the District consult with the Province of BC regarding potential revisions to the *Residential Tenancy Act* regarding pets in rental housing. The *Residential Tenancy Act* outlines tenants' and landlords' rights and responsibilities. Division 2, Section 18(1) of the *Act* states that a tenancy agreement may include terms or conditions that prohibit pets, or restrict the size, kind or number, as well as governing a tenant's obligations in respect of keeping a pet.

Staff conducted preliminary research on Action 9 as part of the preparation of this report. Based on this review, it was identified that municipalities in BC have used the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) annual convention to advocate for change in the *Residential Tenancy Act* to allow renters to keep pets. For example, in 2023, the City of Port Moody put forward a motion regarding Advocacy for Pet Friendly Housing which resulted in a response from the Ministry of Housing. Their response cited the Rental Housing Task Force that was appointed in 2018 to review potential changes to modernize BC's tenancy laws, including pet policies. It was noted that the Housing Task Force decided against requiring all housing providers to allow pets, as it may not be fair for housing providers or renters who want or need to live in pet-free buildings.

Another example is the City of Vancouver, who passed a motion in April 2025 to advocate for pet-friendly rental housing to the province through UBCM. As part of this motion, the City of Vancouver will be advocating for amendments to the *Residential Tenancy Act* to eliminate no-pet clauses and better protect renters with pets. The upcoming UBCM convention is scheduled for September 22 to 26, 2025.

Moving forward, staff will report to and seek direction from Council as to whether Council wishes to add this action item to a future list of advocacy topics for a UBCM convention, like the examples cited above.

Optional supplemental task – Review options with the Kitimat Humane Society to augment their existing program that provides emergency shelter for pets

If Council wishes to consider a further task in relation to Action 9, staff could undertake research, identify options, and report to Council seeking direction on ways to support the Kitimat Humane Society's existing program providing emergency shelter for pets when owners face homelessness, hospitalization or detention, or are fleeing abuse.

Action 3 - Establish a Revitalization Tax Exemption (RTE) program to incentivize property owners to make property improvements without transferring cost to renters.

Section 226 of the *Community Charter* provides authority to exempt property from municipal property taxes for up to 10 years to encourage economic, social or environmental revitalization within a community. To use this authority, a municipal Council must establish a revitalization program (with defined reasons for and objectives of the program), enter into agreements with property owners, and then exempt their property from taxation once all specified conditions of the program and the agreement have been met. Municipal revitalization tax exemptions do not trigger exemptions from school and other provincial property taxes.

Municipalities are required to prepare objectives and policies within their five-year financial plans in relation to the use of permissive tax exemptions. Exemptions may apply to the value of land or improvements, or both. A revitalization program may apply to a small area or areas, a certain type of property or properties, a particular activity or circumstance related to a property or properties, or an entire municipality.

The 2020 HAPNA recommends that the District undertake an internal working session to determine the parameters of an RTE program and complete a financial analysis of the program's feasibility. Moving forward, staff will first initiate internal workshops based on two different example scenarios as outlined below, then report to Council for consideration and further direction prior to undertaking financial analysis.

The first scenario is an RTE program specifically for multi-family rental properties (e.g., rental apartments, rental townhouses and multiplexes, etc.) for improvements above a certain amount. This scenario would require a partnering agreement similar to the District's existing Secondary Suite Incentive Program, to ensure that improvements to the property don't result in an increase cost transferred to renters.

The second scenario is an RTE program that would apply more broadly to all residential property owners in Kitimat. This would address the issue of the aging housing stock in need of revitalization raised in 2019-2020 when the HAPNA was developed. This issue continues to be an item raised by the community in 2025; for example, during the recent public engagement conducted for the Complete Community Study project in early-2025, many residents expressed concern about the aging housing stock and the suitability of the existing housing to meet their needs.

Action 7 - Promote demonstration initiatives with local builders, developers, and homeowners to showcase the ability to create housing options through renovations to older housing stock.

The 2020 HAPNA identified that although there is available housing in Kitimat, it is not always suited to residents' needs. It was recommended that a call for proposals be undertaken for builders, developers and homeowners interested in working on an innovative housing pilot project.

Staff conducted preliminary research as part of the preparation of this report to identify viable ways to implement the intent of Action 7. Based on this review, two options were identified for further exploration. The first option is to design and launch a contest to showcase external and internal renovations done in the community over a specified period. This could include but not be limited to renovations that were completed in recent years as part of LNG Canada's employee home renovation grant program. The contest could include multiple streams, such as one for residents who may have undertaken their own renovations (i.e., "DIY projects"), and one for builders or contractors who wish to showcase their professional work in Kitimat. The contest could include prizes and/or publicity (e.g., District communications) for the winning submissions. Examples of potential eligible renovations include internal and external aesthetic improvements, landscaping improvements, and accessibility and/or energy efficiency improvements.

The second option is to explore the possibility of offering "pre-approved design plans" for certain types of projects. This option is inspired by work being undertaken in other small BC municipalities such as Quesnel and Nelson, who have started offering pre-approved ADU plans to residents for no charge or a reduced fee, and an expedited building permit process. Larger cities are also offering pre-approved plans, such as the City of Kelowna which offers different designs for infill housing on eligible lots. The City of Kelowna notes that Development Permit and Building Permit applications can be approved within 10 business days if a developer is working with one of the City's pre-approved multiplex designs.

As part of the second option above, a survey of Kitimat residents and/or builders could be undertaken to gauge interest in the District offering pre-approved designs, such as for ADUs, as well as the design styles that may be considered. Based on the feedback provided, the District could then explore the feasibility of creating a program of incentives based on pre-approved designs, such as reduced fees, faster processing times and others.

Moving forward, staff will conduct additional research regarding the two identified options and then report to Council for consideration and further direction.

4.0 Next Steps

This report has outlined the implementation status of the 17 action items recommended in the 2020 HAPNA document and identified a program of next steps to serve as a guide until a new Housing Needs Report is completed by the end of 2028 to comply with provincial legislation. Efforts were made to highlight work completed to date by the District in keeping with the action items and overarching intent of the 2020 HAPNA while identifying further actions that can be taken to help address Kitimat's housing gaps.

The recommended HAPNA Workplan for 2025-2028 (Attachment B) has been drafted for Council's consideration. The Workplan summarizes the recommended actions based on the content of this report and indicates an anticipated timeline for each action.