





# The City of Grande Prairie **Affordable Housing Strategy**2020 - 2030













This Affordable
Housing Strategy
outlines how the City
will take advantage of
its unique position to
support the creation of
non-market housing
and improve housing
affordability in the
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When assessing housing affordability, housing is considered affordable if shelter costs ... do not exceed 30% of a household's pre-tax income.

### Introduction

Grande Prairie is a rapidly growing community with many young families. The combination of high incomes and low average house prices means that most families are able afford a home. While housing is affordable for the majority of people living here, there are still many households that struggle with housing costs.

In most cases, income is only one of the challenges that households struggling with housing costs face. Many are unable to work because of age or disability. In other cases, it is single-parent families, or persons fleeing domestic violence. There are also people dealing with mental health conditions, or addictions. In some cases, it is a combination of these types of circumstances. While some households may only need temporary support to get back on their feet, others may need supported housing for a large portion of their lives.

Numerous organizations including governments and not-for-profits support households in need. The federal and provincial governments play a strong role in creating affordable housing and funding support programs. Local organizations provide a wide range of services from on-going support for residents with complex needs to leading the development of new non-market housing. As a municipal government, the City of Grande Prairie is in a unique position to work with these organizations to address local needs.

This Affordable Housing Strategy outlines how the City will take advantage of its unique position to support the creation of non-market housing and improve housing affordability in the community.

### **Purpose**

The primary purpose of this strategy is to outline the City's role in alleviating barriers to housing in the community. The focus is on improving access to adequate and suitable housing for low-income households. The strategy provides an updated vision for the City's affordable housing initiatives that builds on the *Affordable Housing Master Plan 2011-2021* and establishes a vision for 2020 to 2030.

### The Housing Continuum

The housing continuum, illustrated in Figure 1, categorizes types of housing based on the level of support that is required. On the far left, there is emergency shelters, transitional housing and supportive housing, which all require both financial subsidies and support services for the residents. In the middle, there is below-market rentals and affordable homeownership, which only require financial subsidies. On the right end are low end of market housing and market housing, which do not require any supports.

The focus of this strategy is on increasing the supply of housing that only requires financial subsidies and on improving access to market housing. Many of the activities proposed in this strategy will also help to improve the supply of housing that requires support services. This strategy is complimentary to *Grande Prairie's Five Year Plan to End Homelessness*, which proposes measures to increase the supply of all the forms of subsidized housing on the continuum.

The intent of the strategy is to facilitate the movement of households along the continuum into market housing. As such, some of the proposed measures apply to market housing. Similarly, many of the proposed measures will also touch on supported types of housing.

**Five Year Plan to End Homelessness** Affordable Housing Strategy **Below-Market** Market Transitional Supportive Low End of Emergency Rental **Market Housing Shelters** Housing Housing Housing **Support Services Required Financial Subsidies Required** 

Figure 1: Housing Continuum

### What Is Affordable Housing?

This strategy uses the term 'affordable housing' in a general sense to refer to housing along the continuum that requires financial subsidies. When assessing housing affordability, housing is considered affordable if shelter costs (rent or mortgage, property taxes, and utilities) do not exceed 30% of a household's pre-tax income. In Grande Prairie, approximately 20% of households are in housing that is not affordable for them.

Affordable Housing in Grande Prairie

Various organizations provide housing related supports in Grande Prairie. This includes the provincial and federal governments, as well as local non-profit organizations and community groups. Programs include rent subsidies, affordable homeownership programs, and permanent affordable housing units, among others.



### The City's Role

Housing policies and regulations are generally the responsibility of the provincial and federal governments. While some initiatives have a broad geographic scope, such as changes to mortgage regulations, many projects are more localized, such as creating new affordable housing units. The governments of Alberta and Canada rely on municipal governments to help plan and administer local projects. For example, the municipal government provides the data that establishes the level of need in the community to support funding decisions and assists with administering funding to local housing and support providers. It also develops business cases for new housing builds and services. The City works with government partners and other organizations to develop projects that will meet local needs.

The municipality is responsible for land use planning regulations, as outlined in the Municipal Government Act. These regulations have a significant impact on housing options in a community. This includes regulating what types of housing can go where and various design standards.

This strategy builds on the City's unique role within the various programs provided by provincial and federal governments, as well as community organizations to maximize the local benefits of these initiatives. The strategy also focuses on the City's ability to influence housing through land use regulations.

### **Relationship with Other Plans**

The Affordable Housing Strategy 2020-2030 replaces the Affordable Housing Master Plan 2011-2021. The previous plan led to a number of initiatives that helped the development of over 100 new affordable housing units in the community. This strategy builds on the 2011 master plan to provide an updated vision for the City's affordable housing initiatives.

There are several other plans that influence affordable housing in the community. The City of Grande Prairie Strategic Plan 2019-22 outlines objectives, values and intended results that drive the City's operations. Under the Infrastructure strategic objective, the result definition states that the City will:

"Act as a catalyst for the provision of affordable and supportive housing alternatives that meet the demands of the community."

This result definition provided the guiding direction for the development of this strategy.

The Municipal Development Plan (2010) (MDP) guides development regulations in the City. One of the MDP's goals is "... to encourage the development of affordable housing". The MDP contains numerous policies intended to increase the diversity of housing options in the community and improve affordability. Some of the actions in this strategy may lead to amendments to the MDP to further that goal.

Grande Prairie's Five Year Plan to End Homelessness 2015-2019 proposes a range of initiatives to improve access to housing and increase the supply of non-market housing. This strategy works in conjunction with the Plan to End Homelessness to provide programming for those in need along the entire housing continuum.

### **Strategy Preparation**

The City developed this strategy based on extensive research and community engagement. Research involved statistical analysis to understand the factors influencing housing in Grande Prairie and the level of need in the community. Engagement was undertaken with the general public, and people working in the housing industry and in the not-for-profit sector to better understand unique local circumstances and personal experiences. Engagement included workshops, a public survey and meetings with stakeholders.

### The Need for Affordable Housing

The City completed a Community Housing Needs Assessment to provide an analysis of factors influencing housing in Grande Prairie to guide this strategy. The needs assessment also provides information about the characteristics of housing need in the community, as well as projections for the number of households in need up to 2030. The assessment focuses on Core Housing Need as a key metric. Core Housing Need measures whether a household has housing that meets its needs and is affordable.

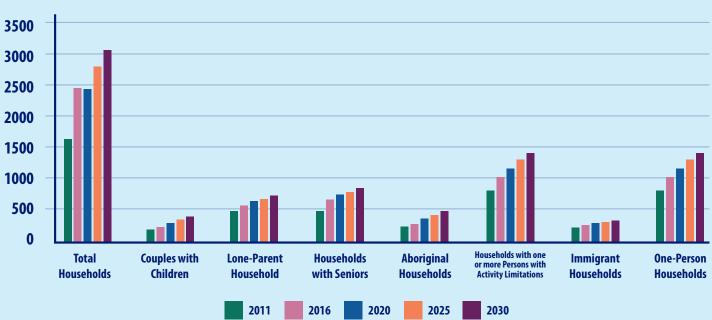
### The measure looks at three criteria:

- Adequacy refers to the condition of the home and whether it requires any major repairs;
- Suitability refers to whether there is an appropriate number of bedrooms for the number and age of people living there; and,
- Affordability refers to whether a household is paying more than 30% of its pre-tax income on shelter costs. If the household fails to meet the adequacy or suitability standards it also assesses whether the household could access a market rate unit that meets those standards without spending more than 30% of the household income.

In 2016, approximately 2,475 households were in Core Housing Need in Grande Prairie. That is 11% of all households. That number is estimated to increase to over 3,000 by 2030. At most, 31% of households in need are provided with support in the form of permanent affordable units. Other households in need may be supported by other programs, such as rent supplements. There are approximately 683 households on waitlists for affordable housing.

The needs assessment identified several household characteristics that stand out among those in need. There is a high prevalence of need among lone-parent households, Indigenous households, seniors (65 and over), and households where someone has an activity limitation (e.g. disability, mental health condition, addiction etc.). In many cases, these characteristics overlap. For example, many Indigenous households in need also have at least one person with an activity limitation. The needs assessment also identified unique challenges to accessing housing faced by certain groups, such as youth.

Affordable housing is crucial for providing a household with stability and ensuring that they are able to meet all their basic needs. In Grande Prairie, many households struggling with housing costs cut spending on other essentials, such as groceries to afford their housing. Further, stable housing is an important determinant in outcomes such as educational attainment, career development and integration into a community.



**Figure 2:** Core Housing Need Projections by Household Characteristic (2011 - 2030)

### The Strategy

The strategy focuses on the unique position that the City holds in the spectrum of housing initiatives and its specific powers for regulating development. There is a broad range of programs from other levels of government, community organizations and the City's Five Year Plan to End Homelessness working towards improving housing affordability in the community. The strategy leverages the City's position as the planning and development regulator, its housing program assets and City staff's community connections to improve access to housing.

### **Targets**

The targets for the strategy were developed as part of the Community Housing Needs Assessment. The targets focus on creating permanent affordable housing units; however, this strategy and other initiatives in the community support households in need and aim to improve housing affordability with a variety of other measures. The current supply of non-market housing (housing reserved for households based on need, such as low income and seniors) provides options for a wide range of household types. As shown in *Table 1*, the majority of the available units are suitable for people living alone and there are fewer options for families. Further, nearly half of all non-market housing is intended for seniors.

The targets propose a level of service based on historical averages. The level of service refers to the percentage of households in need that could be supported by permanent affordable housing units. For example, there are enough permanent affordable units in the City to support 31% of households in Core Housing Need based on 2016 data. The 37% target level of service is based on the historical average. A higher level of service is proposed for seniors' households and households that require accessible units because it is more difficult for these households to find housing that meets their needs in the market. The targets for these types of households are based on maintaining the current level of service.

The targets, shown in *Table 2*, represent the minimum number of new units needed to achieve the desired level of service in 2030. Approximately 359 new units need to be constructed by 2030 to provide units to 37% of households in need. The proposed target for individuals living alone is 0 new units because the existing supply of suitable

**Table 1:** Affordable Housing Inventory

Units by Size	Number of Units	Percentage of Units
Room	16	2.1%
Bachelor/Studio	364	47.5%
1 Bedroom	166	21.7%
2 Bedroom	141	18.4%
3 Bedroom	44	5.7%
4+ Bedroom	3	0.4%
Number of Bedrooms	32	4.2%
Data Missing (Houses)		
Total	766	100%
Specialized Housing Units		
Accessible	57	7.4%
Seniors	374	48.8%

units currently meets the 37% target for the projected number of households in need; however these types of units should still be considered for future projects. Of the 359 new units, 166 should be family housing suitable for households with children. The remaining 193 units will be needed for households of more than one person of varying compositions, such as couples without children, people living with adult children, people living with non-relatives and other types of households. In order to maintain the current levels of service for seniors and accessible housing, 20 of the new units should be accessible and 127 should be for seniors.

These targets establish minimums to help guide the strategy based on available statistics on the needs of the community and projections for future growth. The target populations and unit mix of each project will be refined through work with partner organizations and community engagement.

Targets have also been established for other strategy activities for the purpose of monitoring. They are included in the monitoring section of this strategy.

### **Structure**

The strategy is structured by a hierarchy of four components: goals, objectives, strategies, and actions. Goals refer to the high level achievements that the strategy is aiming for. Objectives are the smaller accomplishments that will help the City reach its goals. Strategies are the approaches that the City will use to achieve its objectives. Actions are the specific tasks that City staff will undertake based on the strategies.

**Table 2:** New Affordable Unit Targets

	Level of Service	Required New Units
Total		359
Individuals Living Alone (Room, bachelor, or 1-bedroom)		0
Households with Children (2 or more bedrooms)	37%	166
Household Composition Unknown		193
Specialized Housing	Level of Service	Required New Units
Accessible	57%	20
Seniors	65%	127

The strategy focuses on the unique position that the City holds in the spectrum of housing initiatives and its specific powers for regulating development.

### **Narrative Summary**

# Goal 1: Be a catalyst for the provision of affordable housing in the community.

In accordance with the City of Grande Prairie Strategic Plan 2019-22, the primary goal of this strategy is to be a catalyst for the provision of affordable housing in the community.

### Objective 1.1: Have permanent City resources working on housing issues

The City will allocate permanent resources to lead housing initiatives in the community. Currently, affordable housing projects are supported by a temporary position funded by a provincial grant. The City undertakes a range of activities related to supporting non-market housing projects that span multiple years and would be better served with more consistent staffing.

The City supports non-market housing initiatives with various activities including managing a supply of land and a reserve fund, as well as leading the development of non-market housing. Creating an arm's-length entity will allow the organization to more effectively apply these resources to projects and respond more quickly to requests for support.

# Strategy 1.1.1: Develop an internal City resource to work on housing initiatives

Have a dedicated position to work on housing initiatives and direct the execution of this strategy.

### Action 1.1.1.A: Create a permanent affordable housing coordinator position

Create a permanent affordable housing coordinator position to lead the City's affordable housing activities and direct the execution of this strategy. The position will administer the City's affordable housing programs and work with other departments to coordinate the activities outlined in this strategy. The affordable housing coordinator will also help to shape collaboration with other organizations, governments and industry.



# Strategy 1.1.2: Develop an entity that takes on projects that require greater autonomy

The City currently assists in the creation of affordable housing by maintaining a supply of land and a reserve fund for projects. It also provides support by partnering with other organizations and applying for grants. The City owns several buildings and occasionally develops new ones for affordable housing. These tasks involve a large number of different City departments and require going through various internal processes.

In order to take advantage of opportunities from provincial and federal programs and to make the best use of the City's housing resources, there needs to be a dedicated team working on these projects. Creating an autonomous entity will give this team the ability to act more quickly due to a simplified structure and will make it easier for them to develop private-public-partnerships.

# Action 1.1.2.A: Collaborate with the community to establish the best form of autonomous entity

Work with community partners to determine the best type of autonomous entity to help address housing issues in the community.

### Objective 1.2: Understand community needs and anticipate future demand

The City will monitor housing needs in the community and undertake studies of specific housing issues to improve housing initiatives and policies.

### Strategy 1.2.1: On-going monitoring

The City shall conduct on-going monitoring of housing needs in the community to better address current needs and to understand the impact of various initiatives.

### Action 1.2.1.A: Regularly update needs assessment

Update the community housing needs assessment as new data becomes available.

# Action 1.2.1.B: Monitor the progress of the Affordable Housing Strategy Monitor the progress of this strategy in accordance with the monitoring plan.

# Action 1.2.1.C: Conduct more specific studies related to housing issues and populations in need

Conduct studies related to specific housing issues and populations in need. These studies will provide a better understanding of particular issues and unique needs to improve housing programs.



# Strategy 1.2.2: Collaborate with community organizations to better understand the needs of their service populations

Work with other organizations in the community to better understand the needs of the populations that they serve and to identify opportunities for collaboration.

### Action 1.2.2.A: Meet regularly with community partners

Meet regularly with community partners to understand the needs of the populations they serve, keep up-to-date on their services and identify opportunities for collaboration.

### Action 1.2.2.B: Organize knowledge sharing and networking events

Organize networking and knowledge sharing events with community organizations and people from the housing industry to share information.

### Action 1.2.2.C: Partner with organizations on studies and assessments

Collaborate with other organizations on studies and assessments for common areas of interest.

# Objective 1.3: Advocate for local needs with organizations that play a larger role in housing

Housing programs and policies are typically developed and administered by provincial and federal agencies. These policies and programs cover broad service areas. In order to assist these agencies with developing and improving these policies and programs, it is important for them to have information about local needs.

# Strategy 1.3.1: Communicate with agencies responsible for housing policies and programs to provide information about local needs

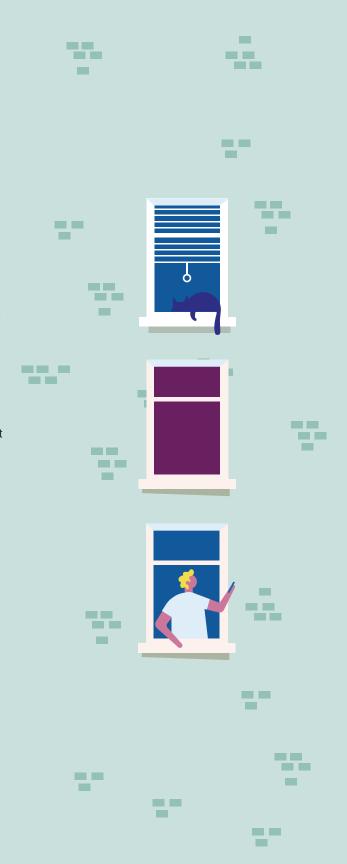
Communicate and work with organizations that are responsible for housing policies and programs, such as provincial and federal agencies, to advocate for local needs. Build on the existing relationships with these agencies and develop new ones to facilitate information sharing.

# Action 1.3.1.A: Provide information on local needs to provincial and federal housing agencies

Communicate with housing agencies to provide information on local needs and participate in engagement on housing programs.

# Action 1.3.1.B: Collaborate with other community stakeholders to advocate for local needs

Coordinate with other local organizations to provide information to other levels of government about local needs.



### Goal 2: Increase the supply of affordable housing

Increase the supply of permanent affordable housing units to support households in need.

# Objective 2.1: Incentivize the inclusion of affordable units in new development

Develop incentives to encourage private development to include designated affordable units.

### Strategy 2.1.1: Utilize land use incentives

Utilize land use regulation based incentives to encourage private development to include affordable units.

### Action 2.1.1.A: Review current land use incentives

The City currently has two land use based incentive programs: density bonusing and inclusionary zoning. These programs have not been utilized. They should be reviewed to develop more effective incentives based on the local development context.

### Action 2.1.1.B: Promote and coordinate these incentives

Promote the incentives to ensure that the development community is aware of them. Provide support so it is easy to participate in these programs.

### **Strategy 2.1.2: Explore financial incentives**

Explore options for utilizing financial incentives for including affordable rental units in private development.

### Action 2.1.2.A: Engage with industry to consider financial incentives

Engage with industry stakeholders to explore potential financial incentives for the inclusion of affordable units in private development.

### Objective 2.2: Facilitate the development of affordable housing

Provide support and improve processes to make it easier to develop affordable housing.

### Strategy 2.2.1: Reduce regulatory barriers

Reduce regulatory barriers to developing affordable housing.

### Action 2.2.1.A: Review LUB policies related to non-market housing

Review Land Use Bylaw policies related to non-market housing to reduce barriers. Currently, the Land Use Bylaw policies require Direct Control zoning for some forms of non-market housing. This creates a major obstacle for projects. Reviewing the Land Use Bylaw to determine districts where these forms of housing could be accommodated as permitted or discretionary would simplify the development process and provide greater certainty when choosing a location for a proposed project.

### Strategy 2.2.2: Reduce costs of developing affordable housing

Develop exemptions to reduce costs associated with developing and maintaining affordable housing.

### Action 2.2.2.A: Waiver of fees

The City will continue to waive permit and other development fees for affordable housing projects. Waiving these fees reduces some of the cost of developing affordable housing.

### Action 2.2.2.B: Tax exemptions

Continue to provide municipal tax exemptions for affordable housing. Exempting permanent affordable housing from municipal property taxes helps to reduce the annual costs for this type of housing, which can improve the long-term viability of projects.

### Strategy 2.2.3: Guide organizations through the development process

The development process involves working with various City departments, agencies and utility providers, and acquiring a wide range of permits and approvals. The City also offers various incentives for affordable housing projects. Navigating this process can be challenging for organizations that do not work in development on a regular basis. Providing support through the process to organizations working on affordable housing can help to make it easier to develop a project and prepare the organizations for all the requirements.

# Action 2.2.3.A: Create a development guidelines document for non-market housing

Create a document outlining the development process and available incentives for affordable housing.

# Action 2.2.3.B: Guide organizations through the development process and available incentives

City staff will help to guide organizations through the development process and applying for the various incentives. The staff member responsible for affordable housing will also help with engaging appropriate City departments.

### Objective 2.3: Create housing that meets the needs of the community

The Community Housing Needs Assessment highlighted that many households struggling with shelter costs face a range of challenges beyond income. This includes factors such as mental health, physical disabilities and aging. As such, it is important that new affordable housing is developed with consideration for the range of needs in the community.

### Strategy 2.3.1: Collaborate with other organizations to develop housing

Work with other organizations that are providing services to people with different types of needs to develop housing that meets the needs of these groups and that is coordinated with the necessary supports.

# Action 2.3.1.A: Partner with other organizations to develop housing that meets the needs of their service population

Collaborate with other organizations during the planning and design process for new projects to ensure that the housing meets the needs of the intended tenants. Work with other organizations to coordinate support services into operations of the facility.

# Strategy 2.3.2: Utilize a co-design process with intended residents for new affordable housing projects

Co-design is an approach to design that involves working with the intended tenants to create a facility that meets their needs.

### Action 2.3.2.A: Work with residents to design new housing projects

Utilize a co-design process by working with potential tenants when developing affordable housing.

### Objective 2.4: Lead the development of affordable housing

Take a lead role in the development of affordable housing.

### Strategy 2.4.1: Leverage assets to get affordable housing built

Utilize existing housing initiative assets to develop more affordable housing.

### Action 2.4.1.A: Manage land for affordable housing projects

Manage the City's current supply of land that is designated for affordable housing projects and acquire land as needed for new projects.

### Action 2.4.1.B: Create a strategy for the Public Housing Reserve

Develop a long-term strategy for the housing reserve with consideration for future investments and asset management.

# Strategy 2.4.2: Utilize private-public-partnerships to develop affordable housing

Partner with other organizations and housing developers to build affordable housing.

### Action 2.4.2.A: Leverage partnerships to apply for grants

Many grant programs give greater consideration to applications with multiple parties involved. Partnering with other organizations on grant applications can help improve the likelihood of approval.

### Action 2.4.2.B: Partner with other organizations to build affordable housing

Work with community organizations and housing developers to develop affordable housing projects. Partnerships can help with bringing a range of expertise to a project, sharing resources and reducing risk.

### Strategy 2.4.3: Develop affordable housing

Act as the main proponent in affordable housing projects.

# Action 2.4.3.A: Collaborate with the community to establish the best system to support the development of affordable housing

Work with community partners to establish a system to support affordable housing and address the asset management of existing units, managing a land supply and reserve fund, and leading the development of new non-market housing.

# Action 2.4.3.B: Partner with community organizations for housing management

There are several established organizations in the community that operate non-market housing. The non-profit housing corporation should focus of asset management and developing new units, and partner with other organizations for facility operations.

### Objective 2.5: Preserve the existing supply of non-market housing

Proactively work to prevent the loss of affordable housing units. While it is important to develop new units, it is also crucial to maintain the existing supply of units to avoid losing affordable housing.

### Strategy 2.5.1: Support the maintenance of existing affordable housing

Maintain the City's affordable housing assets and provide support to other housing providers.

# Action 2.5.1.A: Support affordable housing providers with their asset management

Support affordable housing providers with their asset management, such as assistance with asset management plans or support for grant applications.

# Action 2.5.1.B: Create an asset management plan for City owned affordable housing

Create an asset management plan for City owned affordable housing for maintenance and replacement.

### Objective 2.6: Foster community support for affordable housing projects

Work with the community to foster support for affordable housing projects. Public opposition is often a major obstacle for affordable housing projects. In order to address this, it is important to provide information about the need for affordable housing and to work with the community to address their concerns as projects move forward.

# Strategy 2.6.1: Communicate with the public about affordable housing projects and community needs

Communicate with the public about affordable housing. This includes informing people about the need for affordable housing and engaging with the public when developing new affordable housing.

# Action 2.6.1.A: Create a public awareness campaign on the benefits of affordable housing

Develop information campaigns to create public awareness of the benefits of affordable housing and the need in the community.

# Action 2.6.1.B: Involve the community in development of affordable housing projects

Involve the community in the planning process for new affordable housing projects to ensure that the project is suited to the neighbourhood. This can help reduce opposition by addressing concerns upfront. It also helps in integrating the project with the community and ensuring that it is designed to mitigate any concerns.

### Goal 3: Improve access to market housing

Market housing is affordable for the majority of Grande Prairie residents. Reducing development costs and regulatory barriers may allow for a wider range of housing options in the market for low-income households. Reducing costs and regulatory barriers may lead to market products that are affordable for even more residents.

### Objective 3.1: Reduce cost of developing housing

Look for ways to reduce costs associated with developing housing.

# Strategy 3.1.1: Look for opportunities to improve application processes (permits etc.)

Review policies, processes and standards for potential improvements and cost reductions.

### Action 3.1.1.A Review City processes for possible improvements

Review processes, such as development permitting and service agreements, for possible improvements. Potential improvements may include reducing the number of required approvals, or reducing processing times.

### Strategy 3.1.2: Conduct cost-benefit analysis of standards

Utilize cost-benefit analysis to determine if practices and standards have provided benefits that outweigh the added cost to a home.

# Action 3.1.2.A: Conduct a cost-benefit analysis when considering new standards

Conduct a cost-benefit analysis when considering a new standard or practice to determine if the benefits will outweigh the added costs to a home.

### Action 3.1.2.B: Review implemented standards

After a new standard or practice has been implemented and has been in place long enough to have a measurable impact, conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine if the added benefits are worth the extra cost.

### Objective 3.2: Encourage development of a range of housing options

Having a diversity of housing types in the market can provide a broader range of price options. Adjusting some policies and standards may facilitate the creation of a wider range of housing types.

### Strategy 3.2.1: Reduce barriers to lower cost forms of housing

Review policies to reduce barriers to forms of housing that cost less than typical single-detached development.

### Action 3.2.1.A: Review secondary suite policies

Secondary suites provide inexpensive rental units and help alleviate housing cost burdens for homeowners. The City recently implemented new standards for secondary suite development to address issues arising from the proliferation of suites. The new standards addressed specific issues and as a result also restricted secondary suite development. Once enough time has passed for these policies to have had an impact on development, they should be reviewed to look for opportunities for improvements.

### Action 3.2.1.B: Review limits on small lot development

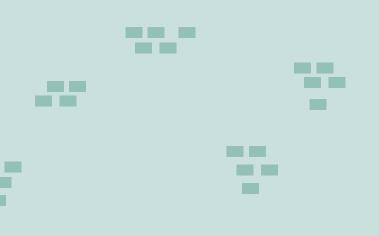
Reducing minimum lot sizes can reduce the cost of a property and increase density, which can help reduce the cost of a home. Minimum lot size restrictions address things such as drainage, snow storage, on-street parking and greenspace. Reviewing the restrictions on small lot development may provide opportunities to reduce housing costs.

# Action 3.2.1.C: Look for opportunities to accommodate alternative types of housing

Review best practices and case studies to identify alternative types of housing that may be accommodated in Grande Prairie. This may include low cost forms of housing such as tiny homes or micro-apartments. It may also include other tenancy models such as housing cooperatives.

### Strategy 3.2.2: Encourage development of the 'missing middle'

The term 'missing middle' refers to forms of housing that fall between single family homes and high density apartments, such as townhomes and smaller apartment buildings. They are often referred to as missing, because there is not a large supply of these types of housing. These middle products provide a greater diversity of price points for housing for both rentals and ownership.





### Action 3.2.2.A: Develop infill policies that support 'missing middle' housing

Create policies that support 'missing middle' types of housing for infill development. This may include new or revised policies in the Land Use Bylaw intended to support infill, such as the Residential Transition district. It may also include policies in other plans.

# Action 3.2.2.B: Accommodate blended densities in new Area Redevelopment

Area Redevelopment Plans provide an opportunity to accommodate new housing options in an established neighbourhood. Often, these plans designate areas to remain low density, single-family housing, with pockets for higher density infill. Future plans should accommodate a broader range of densities to support the development of 'missing middle' housing.

# Action 3.2.2.C: Review LUB policies for opportunities to facilitate 'missing middle' development

Review Land Use Bylaw policies for opportunities to make it easier to develop 'missing middle' types of housing.

### Objective 3.3: Address issues causing volatility in the housing market

Grande Prairie experiences housing market volatility following its economic cycles. Periods of economic growth are accompanied with rising housing costs. During economic decline vacancies increase and rents decrease. The volatility makes housing less stable for lower income households. It also affects the housing industry, such as increasing the risk associated with large multi-family projects.

### Strategy 3.3.1: Develop measures to address the City's shadow population

A shadow population is the people who come to the community for extended periods of time, but have their permanent residence somewhere else. This is typically people who come to the area for work. This population can have a significant impact on the housing market.

### Action 3.3.1.A: Conduct a shadow population study

Conduct a study to better understand the City's shadow population and the impact that it has on housing. It may be valuable to expand the scope of the study to understand the impact that this population has on resources such as health care, policing and other services

# Action 3.3.1.B: Create strategies to address the impact of the shadow population

Develop strategies to address the impact that the City's shadow population has on the housing market.

### Objective 3.4: Support affordable homeownership programs

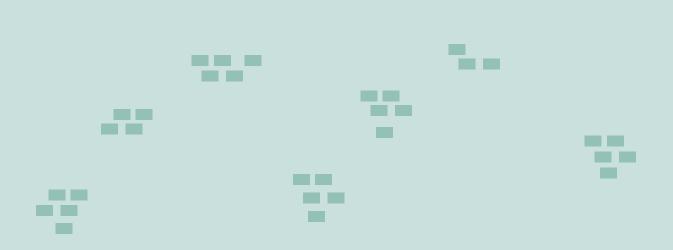
Affordable homeownership programs can provide low income families with greater housing stability and an opportunity to have equity in their own home. The City can offer support and resources to help these programs in the City.

# Strategy 3.4.1: Partner with organizations that provide affordable homeownership

Partner with organizations that specialize in affordable homeownership programs to develop projects in Grande Prairie.

# Action 3.4.1.A: Provide partner organizations with support and resources for affordable homeownership programs

Provide support to organizations administering affordable homeownership programs. This may include partnering on grant applications, providing land for projects or other types of support depending on available resources.



**City of Grande Prairie:** Affordable Housing Strategy 2020-2030

# Appendices

# Summary Tables

The summary tables provide a quick reference summary for the strategy goals, objectives, strategies and activities.

Table 3 Summary of Goal 1

Goal 1: Be a catalyst for the pro	ovision of affordable housing in t	he community
Objective	Strategy	Action
1.1 Have permanent City	1.1.1 Develop an internal City	1.1.1.A Create a permanent
resources working on housing	resource to work on housing	affordable housing coordinator
issues	initiatives	position
	1.1.2 Develop an autonomous	1.1.2.A Collaborate with the
	entity that takes on projects	community to establish the best
	that require greater autonomy	form of autonomous entity
1.2 Understand community	1.2.1 On-going monitoring	1.2.1.A Regularly update Needs
needs and anticipate future		Assessment
demand		1.2.1.B Monitor the progress of
		the Strategy
		1.2.1.C Conduct more specific
		studies related to housing
		issues and populations in need
	1.2.2 Collaborate with	1.2.2.A Meet regularly with
	community organizations to	community partners
	better understand the needs of	1.2.2.B Organize knowledge
	their service populations	sharing and networking events
		1.2.2.C Partner with
		organizations on studies and
		assessments
1.3 Advocate for local needs	1.3.1 Communicate with	1.3.1.A Provide information on
with organizations that play a	agencies responsible for	local needs to provincial and
larger role in housing	housing policies and programs	federal housing agencies
	to provide information about	1.3.1.B Collaborate with other
	local needs	community stakeholders to
		advocate for local needs

Table 4 Summary of Goal 2

Goal 2: Increase the supply of a	affordable housing	
Objective	Strategy	Action
2.1 Incentivize the inclusion of affordable units in new development	2.1.1 Utilize land use incentives	2.1.1.A Review current land use incentives (inclusionary zoning and density bonusing) and develop incentives appropriate for Grande Prairie
		2.1.1.B Promote and coordinate these incentives
	2.1.2 Explore financial	2.1.2.A Engage with industry to
	incentives	consider financial incentives
2.2 Facilitate the development of affordable housing	2.2.1 Reduce regulatory barriers	2.2.1.A Review LUB policies related to non-market housing
	2.2.2 Reduce costs of developing affordable housing	2.2.2.A Waiver of fees
		2.2.2.B Tax exemptions
	2.2.3 Guide organizations through the development process	2.2.3.A Create a development guidelines document for non-market housing
		2.2.3.B Have an Affordable Housing Coordinator available to guide organizations through the development process and available incentives, as well as assist with engaging appropriate City departments
2.3 Create housing that meets the needs of the community	2.3.1 Collaborate with other organizations to develop housing	2.3.1.A Partner with other organizations to develop housing that meets the needs of their service population
	2.3.2 Utilize a co-design process with the intended residents for new affordable housing projects	2.3.2.A Work with residents to design new housing projects.
2.4 Lead the development of affordable housing	2.4.1 Leverage assets to get affordable housing built	2.4.1.A Manage land for affordable housing projects
		2.4.1.B Create a strategy for the Public Housing Reserve
		2.4.2.A Leverage partnerships to apply for grants

	2.4.2 Utilize private-public- partnerships to develop affordable housing	2.4.2.B Partner with other organizations to build affordable housing
	2.4.3 Develop affordable housing	2.4.3.A Collaborate with the community to establish the best system to support the development of affordable housing.
		2.4.3.B Partner with community organizations for housing management
2.5 Preserve the existing supply of non-market housing	2.5.1 Support the maintenance of existing affordable housing	2.5.1.A Support housing organizations with their asset management
	2.5.2 Maintain City owned affordable housing assets	2.5.1.B Create an asset management plan for City owned affordable housing

# Table 5 Summary of Goal 3

Goal 3: Improve access to mark	ket housing	
Objective	Strategy	Action
3.1 Reduce cost of developing housing	3.1.1 Improve City application processes (permits etc.)	3.1.1.A Review City processes to look for possible improvements
	3.1.2 Conduct cost-benefit analysis of standards	3.1.2.A Conduct a cost-benefit analysis when considering new standards
		3.1.2.B Review implemented standards, including a costbenefit analysis
3.2 Encourage development of a range of housing options	3.2.1 Reduce barriers to low cost housing forms	3.2.1.A Review secondary suite policies
		3.2.1.B Review limits on small lot development
		3.2.1.C

	3.2.2 Encourage development of the 'missing middle'	3.2.2.A Develop infill policies that support 'missing middle' housing
		3.2.2.B Accommodate blended densities in new Area Redevelopment Plans
		3.2.2.C Review LUB policies for opportunities to facilitate 'missing middle' development
3.3 Address issues causing volatility in the housing market	3.3.1 Develop measures to address the City's shadow population	3.3.1.A Conduct a shadow population study
		3.3.1.B Create shadow population strategy
3.4 Support affordable homeownership programs	3.4.1 Partner with organizations that provide affordable homeownership	3.4.1.A Provide partner organizations with support and resources for affordable homeownership programs

# Implementation Plan

The implementation plan outlines an approximate timeline for when the strategy activities will be completed. It also describes what departments or organization are responsible and a general description of the resources required for the activity.

Table 6 Implementation of Goal 1

Action	Description	Responsibility	Resources	In- Progress	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
1.1.1.A	Create a permanent affordable housing coordinator position	Community Social     Development	• Funding												
1.1.2.A / 2.4.3.A	Collaborate with the community to establish the best form of autonomous entity	Community Social     Development	<ul><li>Funding</li><li>Staff time</li><li>Legal services</li></ul>												
1.2.1.A	Regularly update needs assessment	Community Social     Development	Staff time												
1.2.1.B	Monitor the progress of the Affordable Housing Strategy	Community Social     Development	Staff time												
1.2.1.C	Conduct more specific studies related to housing issues and populations in need	<ul> <li>Community Social         Development     </li> <li>Planning &amp;         Development     </li> </ul>	<ul><li>Funding</li><li>Staff time</li></ul>												
1.2.2.A	Meet regularly with community partners	Community Social     Development	Staff time												
1.2.2.B	Organize knowledge sharing and networking events	Community Social     Development	<ul><li>Funding</li><li>Staff time</li></ul>												
1.2.2.C	Partner with organizations on studies and assessments	<ul> <li>Community Social         Development     </li> <li>Planning &amp;         Development     </li> </ul>	<ul><li>Funding</li><li>Staff time</li></ul>												
1.3.1.A	Provide information on local needs to provincial and federal housing agencies	Community Social     Development	Staff time												

1.3.1.B	Collaborate with other	<ul> <li>Community Social</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Staff time</li> </ul>					
	community stakeholders to	Development						
	advocate for local needs							

# Table 7 Implementation of Goal 2

Action	Description	Responsibility	Resources	In- Progress	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
2.1.1.A	Review current land use incentives	Planning &     Development	Staff time												
2.1.1.B	Promote and coordinate these incentives	<ul> <li>Community Social         Development     </li> <li>Planning &amp;         Development     </li> </ul>	Staff time												
2.1.2.A	Engage with industry to consider financial incentives	Planning &     Development	Staff time												
2.2.1.A	Review LUB policies related to non-market housing	Planning &     Development	Staff time												
2.2.2.A	Waiver of Fees	Various Departments	<ul><li>Staff time</li><li>Lost revenue</li></ul>												
2.2.2.B	Tax exemptions	Assessment	<ul><li>Staff time</li><li>Lost revenue</li></ul>												
2.2.3.A	Create a development guidelines document for non-market housing	<ul> <li>Community Social         Development     </li> <li>Planning &amp;         Development     </li> </ul>	Staff time												
2.2.3.B	Guide organizations through the development process and available incentives	<ul> <li>Community Social         Development     </li> <li>Planning &amp;         Development     </li> </ul>	Staff time												
2.3.1.A	Partner with other organizations to develop housing that meets the needs of their service population	Community Housing Entity	Staff time												

2.3.2A	Work with residents to design new housing projects	Community Housing     Entity	Staff time					
2.4.1.A	Manage land for affordable housing projects	Community Housing Entity	<ul><li>Funding</li><li>Staff time</li></ul>					
2.4.1.B	Create a strategy for the public housing reserve	<ul><li>Community Social Development</li><li>Community Housing Entity</li></ul>	Staff time					
2.4.2.A	Leverage partnerships to apply for grants	Community Housing     Entity	Staff time					
2.4.2.B	Partner with other organizations to build affordable housing	Community Housing Entity	<ul><li>Funding</li><li>Staff time</li></ul>					
2.4.3.A / 1.1.2.A	Collaborate with the community to establish the best system to support the development of affordable housing	Community Social Development	<ul><li>Funding</li><li>Staff time</li></ul>					
2.4.3.B	Partner with community organizations for housing management	Community Housing Entity	Staff time					
2.5.1.A	Support affordable housing providers with their asset management	Community Housing Entity	Staff time					
2.5.1.B	Create an asset management plan for City owned affordable housing	Community Housing Entity	Staff time					
2.6.1.A	Create a public awareness campaign on the benefits of affordable housing	<ul> <li>Community Social Development</li> <li>Communications &amp; Citizen Engagement</li> <li>Community Housing Entity</li> </ul>	Staff time					
2.6.1.B	Involve the community in the development of affordable housing projects	Community Housing Entity	Staff time					

Table 8 Implementation of Goal 3

Action	Description	Responsibility		Resources	In- Progress	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
3.1.1.A	Review City processes for possible improvements	<ul> <li>Continuous         <ul> <li>Improvement</li> <li>Committee</li> </ul> </li> <li>Various Departments</li> </ul>	•	Staff time												
3.1.2.A	Conduct a cost-benefit analysis when considering new standards	Various Departments	•	Staff time												
3.1.2.B	Review implemented standards	Various Departments	•	Staff time												
3.2.1.A	Review secondary suite policies	Planning &     Development	•	Staff time												
3.2.1.B	Review limits on small lot development	Planning &     Development	•	Staff time												
3.2.1.C	Look for opportunities to accommodate alternative types of housing	Planning &     Development	•	Staff time												
3.2.2.A	Develop infill policies that support 'missing middle' housing	Planning &     Development	•	Staff time												
3.2.2.B	Accommodate blended densities in new Area Redevelopment Plans	Planning &     Development	•	Staff time												
3.2.2.C	Review LUB policies for opportunities to facilitate 'missing middle' development	Planning &     Development	•	Staff time												
3.3.1.A	Conduct a shadow population study	Community Social     Development		Staff time Funding												
3.3.1.B	Create strategies to address the impact of the shadow population	Community Social     Development	•	Staff time												

3.4.1A	Provide partner organizations	•	Community Social	•	Staff time						
	with support and resources for		Development								
	affordable homeownership	•	Community Housing								
	programs		Entity								

# Monitoring Plan

The monitoring plan outlines the indicators that will be used to measure the progress of the strategy. It includes targets for the indicators, measurement frequency and sources for external data. Monitoring should be summarized in an annual report and used to improve the strategy and related activities.

Table 9 Monitoring of Strategy Purpose

Purpose					
Item	Description	Indicator	Targets	Measurement Frequency	Sources
Purpose	Improving access to adequate and suitable housing for low-income households	Reduced prevalence of Core Housing Need	<ul> <li>Reduce the prevalence of Core Housing Need to below 8.9% of households</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>When census data becomes available: 2021, 2026 and 2031</li> </ul>	Statistics Canada census
		Reduced waitlists for affordable housing	Reduce housing waitlists by 40%	Monthly data (collected twice annually)	<ul> <li>Grande Spirit Foundation</li> <li>Canadian Mental Health Association</li> <li>YMCA</li> <li>Other community organizations</li> </ul>

### Table 10 Monitoring of Goal 1

ltem	Description	Description Indicator		Measurement Frequency	Source
Goal 1	Be a catalyst for the provision of affordable housing in the community	<ul> <li>Indicated by the completion of the tasks outlined in the strategy. Reported by providing a summary of major accomplishments.</li> </ul>	Accomplish the tasks described in the Affordable Housing Strategy	Annually	• N/A
1.1.1.A	Create a permanent affordable housing coordinator position	Position is created	One position	Annually	• N/A
1.1.2.A / 2.4.3.A	Collaborate with the community to establish the best form of autonomous entity	Entity type defined	Determine the type of entity to develop	Annually	• N/A
1.2.1.A	Regularly update needs assessment	Annual review and updates	Review and updates complete	Annually	• N/A

1.2.1.B	Monitor the progress of the Affordable Housing Strategy	Annual reporting complete	Report annually	Annually	• N/A
1.2.1.C	Conduct more specific studies related to housing issues and populations in need	Studies initiated and completed	<ul> <li>No specific targets. Report on projects initiated and progress</li> </ul>	Annually	• N/A
1.2.2.A	Meet regularly with community partners	<ul> <li>Staff meets regularly with partners (Report generally on activities)</li> </ul>	• N/A	Annually	• N/A
1.2.2.B	Organize knowledge sharing and networking events	Number of events	Two or more events per year	• Annually	• N/A
1.2.2.C	Partner with organizations on studies and assessments	Studies initiated and completed	<ul> <li>No specific targets. Report on projects initiated and progress</li> </ul>	Annually	• N/A
1.3.1.A	Provide information on local needs to provincial and federal housing agencies	<ul> <li>(Report generally on activities)</li> </ul>	• N/A	Annually	• N/A
1.3.1.B	Collaborate with other community stakeholders to advocate for local needs	(Report generally on activities)	• N/A	Annually	• N/A

## Table 11 Monitoring of Goal 2

Goal 2: Increase the su	ipply of affordable housing				
Item	Item Description Indicat		Targets	Measurement Frequency	Source
Goal 2	Increase the supply of affordable housing	Number of new permanent affordable units created	• 359 new units (approximately 36 units per year)	Annually	• N/A
2.1.1.A	Review current land use incentives	<ul> <li>Completed review and new programs adopted</li> <li>(Once new incentives are created, monitoring should be revised to include targets for use of incentives)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>New incentives adopted</li> <li>Activity completed in accordance with implementation timeline (by 2021)</li> </ul>	• Annually	• N/A
2.1.1.B	Promote and coordinate these incentives	Number of participants in incentive programs	• N/A	Annually	Planning & Development

2.1.2.A	Engage with industry to consider financial incentives	potentia  (Once no created, be revise	ed review of I incentives w incentives are monitoring should d to include targets if incentives)	•	Activity completed in accordance with implementation timeline (by 2021)	•	Annually	•	N/A
2.2.1.A	Review LUB policies related to non-market housing	Review a	and bylaw nents complete	•	Activity completed in accordance with implementation timeline (by 2021)	•	Annually	•	N/A
2.2.2.A	Waiver of Fees		of projects where e waived	•	N/A	•	Annually	•	Planning & Development Inspection Services
		Value of	fees waived (\$)	•	N/A	•	Annually	•	Planning & Development Inspection Services
2.2.2.B	Tax exemptions		of properties g exemptions	•	N/A	•	Annually	•	Assessment & Taxation
		<ul> <li>Value of</li> </ul>	exemptions (\$)	•	N/A	•	Annually	•	Assessment & Taxation
2.2.3.A	Create a development guidelines document for non-market housing	Guidelin complet	es document e	•	Activity completed in accordance with implementation timeline (by 2021)	•	Annually	•	N/A
2.2.3.B	Guide organizations through the development process and available incentives	• N/A		•	N/A	•	N/A	•	N/A
2.3.1.A	Partner with other organizations to develop housing that meets the needs of their service population		tion activities generally on	•	N/A	•	Annually	•	N/A
2.3.2A	Work with residents to design new housing projects	• Consulta	tion activities	•	Co-design process implemented	•	Annually	•	N/A
2.4.1.A	Manage land for affordable housing projects	Land ma	nagement strategy	•	Completed land management strategy	•	Annually	•	Community Housing Corporation
2.4.1.B	Create a strategy for the public housing reserve	• Complet	ed reserve strategy	•	Completed reserve strategy	•	Annually	•	Community Housing Corporation
2.4.2.A	Leverage partnerships to apply for grants		of grant applications partnerships	•	N/A	•	Annually	•	Community Housing Corporation

2.4.2.B	Partner with other organizations to build affordable housing	Number of projects involving partnerships	• N/A	Annually	Community Housing     Corporation
2.4.3.A / 1.1.2.A	Collaborate with the community to establish the best system to support the development of affordable housing	System for supporting affordable housing determined	Determine the type of system to implement	• Annually	• N/A
2.4.3.B	Partner with community organizations for housing management	<ul> <li>Housing assets managed by partner organization (Report generally on activities)</li> </ul>	• N/A	Annually	Community Housing     Corporation
2.5.1.A	Support affordable housing providers with their asset management	Assistance provided to other organizations, such as advising or grant application support (Report generally on activities)	• N/A	• Annually	Community Housing     Corporation
2.5.1.B	Create an asset management plan for City owned affordable housing	Completed asset management plan	Completed plan	Annually	Community Housing     Corporation
2.6.1.A	Create a public awareness campaign on the benefits of affordable housing	Campaign developed and implemented	Targets to be established as the campaign is developed	Annually	• N/A
2.6.1.B	Involve the community in the development of affordable housing projects	<ul> <li>Engagement activities (Report generally on activities)</li> </ul>	Engagement strategy     implemented for every     affordable housing project	Annually	Community Housing     Corporation

### Table 12 Monitoring of Goal 3

Goal 3: Improve access to market housing									
Item	Description	Indicator	Targets	Measurement Frequency	Source				
Goal 3	Improve access to market housing	<ul> <li>Indicated by the completion of the tasks outlined in the strategy. Reported by providing a summary of major accomplishments.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Accomplish the tasks described in the Affordable Housing Strategy</li> </ul>	• Annually	• N/A				
3.1.1.A	Review City processes for	Completed review	Review complete	Annually	Continuous Improvement				
	possible improvements	<ul> <li>Process changes</li> </ul>			Committee				

			Process change implemented		
3.1.2.A	Conduct a cost-benefit analysis when considering new standards	Cost-benefit analysis implemented in new standard review	Process implemented	Annually	Various departments
3.1.2.B	Review implemented standards	Retroactive review of implemented standards	Process implemented	• Annually	Various departments
3.2.1.A	Review secondary suite policies	<ul><li>Review completed</li><li>Policy changes resulting from review</li></ul>	Review completed	Annually	Planning & Development
3.2.1.B	Review limits on small lot development	<ul><li>Review completed</li><li>Policy changes resulting from review</li></ul>	Review completed	Annually	Planning & Development
3.2.1.C	Look for opportunities to accommodate alternative types of housing	Policy reviews New policies Policy amendments	• N/A	Annually	Planning & Development
3.2.2.A	Develop infill policies that support 'missing middle' housing	Policy reviews New policies Policy amendments	• N/A	• Annually	Planning & Development
3.2.2.B	Accommodate blended densities in new Area Redevelopment Plans	Blended densities accommodated in new ARPs	Blended densities     accommodated in all new     ARPs	Annually	Planning & Development
3.2.2.C	Review LUB policies for opportunities to facilitate 'missing middle' development	Policy reviews New policies Policy amendments	• N/A	• Annually	Planning & Development
3.3.1.A	Conduct a shadow population study	Study completed	Completed study	Annually	• N/A
3.3.1.B	Create strategies to address the impact of the shadow population	Indicators will be developed as part of the strategies	• N/A	• N/A	• N/A
3.4.1.A	Provide partner organizations with support and resources for affordable homeownership programs	Support activities (Report generally on activities) Resources provided	• N/A	• Annually	<ul><li>Various departments</li><li>Community Housing Corporation</li></ul>