

# HAF Action Plan Summary – Comox, BC

## **Explanatory Notes:**

- *The following summary is a high-level overview of the approved Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Action Plan.*
- *Local governments are expected to follow statutory processes and procedures when considering and adopting bylaws and policies, including public notification and input processes. HAF recipients have committed to follow regulatory requirements and to actively pursue the relevant council or other approvals needed to advance these initiatives.*
- *HAF recipients are also required to complete and regularly update a Housing Needs Assessment Report.*

## **Initiative 1: Streamlining Development Approvals and e-Permitting**

Improving the development process to reduce processing timelines and encourage new housing supply with an emphasis on affordable and rental housing (*implementation through 2025*).

- Comox will fast-track priority projects, update bylaws, and streamline internal procedures to reduce complexity.
- The Town will implement an e-permitting system for development and building applications to speed up approvals.

## **Initiative 2: Accessory Dwelling Unit Strategy**

Encouraging accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to promote gentle density Town-wide (*implementation through 2024*).

- Updated zoning regulations will allow both a suite and a coach house on existing low-density residential lots where urban services are not available.
- Comox will evaluate infrastructure servicing capacity, parking, access, and development guidelines to accommodate additional ADUs.

## **Initiative 3: Downtown Master Plan**

Developing a long-term land use plan for Downtown Comox to support housing growth and increase residential density (*implementation through 2025*).

- Comox will use tools such as pre-zoning and density bonusing to encourage higher density development in the downtown core.
- Bylaw amendments will add clarity, streamline approvals, and reduce financial risk for developers.
- The Town will review infrastructure, parks and recreation and other services to ensure there is available capacity to support higher density development.

#### **Initiative 4: Parking Regulation Revisions**

Reducing parking requirements to streamline development approvals and improve financial viability for affordable, rental, and non-market housing developments in the downtown core and near transit (*implementation through 2024*).

- Parking reductions will incentivize increased density and limit the need for site-specific amendments through the rezoning process.
- This initiative includes a review of parking requirements for ADUs as well as opportunities to implement cash-in-lieu of parking for new developments within the downtown and transit corridors.
- Parking regulations updated to allow site and parkade design flexibility.

#### **Initiative 5: Missing Middle Plex Zoning**

Encouraging increased housing density in existing low-density neighbourhoods (*implementation through 2024*).

- Comox will pre-zone low-density residential areas to allow missing middle housing forms, such as plexes, with up to four units per residential lot.
- The Town will assess infrastructure capacity, promote uptake of these zoning permissions, and consider fast-tracked processes for standardized designs and modular solutions.

#### **Initiative 6: Bylaw and Policy Updates**

Updating various policies and regulations to address outdated requirements and fast-track approvals for missing middle housing, transit-oriented development, and affordable housing (*implementation through 2025*).

Updates include:

- A new Amenity Cost Charge Policy will establish a predictable and consistent approach to funding community amenities (e.g. community centres, daycares, libraries) as new housing gets built. This will reduce the need for site-specific negotiations through the rezoning process.
- Comox will delegate authority to staff for minor development variance permits and remove default public hearing requirements for residential rezoning applications that are aligned with the OCP.
- The Town will review the fee structure for comprehensive Development Cost Charges (DCC) to encourage missing middle and multi-unit dwellings and consider DCC reductions for non-market housing.
- The Town will implement and promote financial incentives such as waiving application fees or development cost charges for ADUs.

## **Initiative 7: Transit Oriented Development**

Updating planning rules to pre-zone (as-of-right zoning) a key transit corridor to allow high density buildings and promote purpose-built rental development (*implementation through 2025*).

- A review of land uses surrounding Anderton Road and Guthrie Road will identify opportunities for transit-oriented development.
- Comox will expand multi-family and mixed-use land uses in the Official Community Plan (OCP), review infrastructure capacity, and amend the zoning bylaw to pre-zone identified properties for mid-rise apartments up to 6 storeys and other missing middle housing types.