

HAF Action Plan Summary – Surrey, 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: Incentive Program for Rapid Transit Development and Affordable Housing

Providing financial incentives to create more housing near rapid transit and deliver new affordable housing (*implementation in 2024*).

- Fee incentives (e.g. discounts on rezoning, engineering site servicing and building permits) will be offered for high-density projects near SkyTrain stations and targeted RapidBus corridors.
- A new affordable housing incentive will offer fee and development cost charge rebates for below-market affordable housing anywhere in the city.

Initiative 2: Expand the Guaranteed Permitting Timelines Program

Introducing faster and transparent timelines for development applications.

- An existing program for single-family homes will be expanded to guarantee timelines for most permit types, e.g. plumbing, electrical, renovation/addition, townhouses, low-rise, high-rise, re-zoning (*implementation in 2024*).
- Performance measures will track application progress and increase transparency, and the City will provide additional guidance to developers on common application deficiencies.
- New policies will promote faster completion of projects and discourage unit vacancy and idle land (*implementation in 2025*).

Initiative 3: Increase the use of Professional Reliance in the Permit Approval Process

Speeding up approvals by increasing the role of certified professionals (architects and engineers) in the development process.

- A review and update to the current Certified Professional program will seek to delegate some decision-making authority to qualified professionals, reducing the need for reviews by City staff (*implementation through 2024 and 2025*).
- These measures will help advance large and complex projects, increase staff capacity to process applications and lower costs.

Initiative 4: Leverage Digital Permitting, including the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Moving to online permitting for all development applications and leveraging AI for better quality submissions and faster approvals (*implementation through 2026*).

- Digital permitting capabilities will be expanded to all permit types.
- A new AI-powered assistant will help applicants understand development requirements, reduce resubmissions by addressing common deficiencies and improve review times.

Initiative 5: Increase the Supply of Multi-Unit Housing Near Transit

Updating regulations and policies to encourage development of multi-family apartments, including rentals, close to transit (*implementation through 2024 and 2025*).

- Zoning bylaw changes will expedite greater density near transit, through creation of a new zone for 6-storey residential buildings and new zones for mid-rise and high-rise mixed-use developments.
- A simplified planning process and reduced parking requirements will apply to new developments near transit.

Initiative 6: Support Creation of Missing Middle Housing

As-of-right zoning changes to facilitate missing middle housing and gentle densification in all existing and new neighbourhoods (*implementation through 2024 and 2025*).

- Planning updates will allow additional dwelling units such as triplexes, quadplexes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and other forms of missing middle housing in areas currently restricted to single family housing.
- The rezoning process for townhomes will be streamlined to accelerate development.
- Pre-approved designs will be introduced for ADUs.

Initiative 7: Increase Below Market Affordable Housing Supply

Removing policy and regulatory barriers to affordable housing (*implementation through 2024 and 2025*).

- The City will explore zoning and fast-tracked approvals for affordable housing delivered by non-profit partners.
- A financial feasibility study will explore how to incentivize the private market to develop below market rental units as part of future developments.
- This initiative will strengthen partnerships with government agencies and non-profit housing providers.