



Staff Report For Information

TO: Committee of the Whole – September 9, 2025

AUTHOR: Rory Hromadnik – Director of Development Services

SUBJECT: Imagine Invermere OCP – Interim Housing Needs Alignment and Update

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the proposed changes to the Imagine Invermere Official Community Plan (OCP) in response to the Interim Housing Needs Report 2024 (HNR), and the next steps for consultation. Municipalities are required to amend their OCPs to ensure that maps, policies and statements will provide sufficient capacity to meet future housing needs as expressed in their Housing Needs Reports by the end of 2025.

SUMMARY

The proposed changes to the OCP are intended to accommodate future housing needs in Invermere as expressed in the HNR. Changes include updates to statistical information, additional objectives and policies, and amendments to existing policies, to generally increase the amount of housing that may be permitted in residential areas throughout Invermere and providing greater land use flexibility. The proposed changes also include adding definitions to land uses, changing some of the land use names and, in cases of redundancy, amalgamating land uses. Land use designation maps contained in the OCP are proposed to be updated to reflect the changes.

These OCP changes are presented to Council for discussion, questions and revisions. Following this meeting, staff will hold a public open house to gain the public's input on the proposed changes before presenting an OCP amendment bylaw to Council for First Reading.

The list of proposed changes to the OCP is provided in **Attachment A**.

BACKGROUND

In December 2024, the District of Invermere adopted the Interim Housing Needs Report (HNR). The HNR listed the following key housing needs for Invermere:

- 190 new housing units needed by 2026 and 723 new units needed by 2041
- Affordable rental housing for families and individuals
- Supportive housing
- Homelessness
- Seniors' housing
- Affordable ownership opportunities
- Lack of market rental housing and impacts of short-term rentals
- Housing near transit and active transportation

Invermere has engaged WSP to make updates to the OCP as required. This entailed a review of relevant documents including the HNR, the OCP and the Zoning Bylaw, plus a comparison with

OCPs and Zoning Bylaws in other jurisdictions in BC's interior.

Stakeholder Engagement

In May, June and August, we held workshops and one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders, including local First Nations. Participants and a summary of discussion points are listed in **Attachment B**.

The following summarises the key implications for the OCP derived from the stakeholder engagement process:

1. Formalise housing embedded with light industrial land use (e.g. live/work, rental accommodations for seasonal workers).
2. Provide greater policy flexibility to allow more types of housing in more locations, particularly in areas with good infrastructure.
3. Retain flexibility in Form and Character DPAs, allowing character to change over time.
4. Plan infrastructure *with* development.
5. Upgrade mapping for zoning and infrastructure to better facilitate planning.
6. Support more purpose-built rental accommodation.
7. Consider increasing residential building height limits (up to 6 storeys) in key locations.
8. Consider limits on number of short-term rentals and locations, taking into consideration seasonal servicing.
9. Allow accessory suites and secondary suites in duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes in areas with adequate infrastructure capacity.
10. Actively promote accessory suites and secondary suites by providing resources and support to interested residents and builders.
11. Encourage builders to include accessory suites and secondary suites in their plans/ to "rough-in" suites.
12. Better facilitate subdivision and development of smaller detached dwellings on small lots.
13. Investigate opportunities to support non-traditional housing options including tiny homes and container homes.
14. Support mobile home parks in key locations.
15. Support non-profit housing providers to help fill the gap in affordable housing through leased land.
16. Support the provision of good quality, affordable housing options for seniors.
17. Support a temporary emergency shelter.
18. Explore built-in fire-fighting solutions for taller buildings that may not be accessible by fire truck ladder.
19. Consider parking reductions in all types of residential development, integrated this with improvements in other transportation options.
20. Explore the benefits of a boundary expansion of land east of Lake Windermere.
21. Revive the Invermere Housing Corporation.
22. Consider increasing Development Cost Charges to ensure infrastructure is adequately funded.

23. Implement the Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan.
24. Build on existing relationships with neighbouring local governments, Shuswap and Akisq'nuk First Nations and housing providers to address shared housing needs regionally.
25. Consider addressing increasing or impending homelessness regionally.

Public Survey

A public survey was posted on the Invermere website from May 30 to June 27, 2025 and received over 90 responses. The questions and a summary of responses are provided in **Attachment C**.

The following summarises the key implications for the OCP derived from the public survey:

1. Housing affordability is a significant concern.
2. Availability of rental housing is a significant concern.
3. Greater zoning flexibility is required.
4. Infill development is broadly supported.
5. Most people indicated a single detached dwelling between 500 and 2,000 square feet would best meet their needs; however, more housing models that accommodate diverse needs (from families to seniors) are required.
6. More visible and effective municipal action to enable multi-unit and mixed-use development is called for.
7. Barriers to new accessory dwelling units should be removed.
8. Collaboration with provincial and federal governments, developers, and non-profits is needed to address housing needs.

The information gathered by key stakeholders and the public generally confirmed the Housing Needs Report findings but also provided valuable insight for how housing needs may begin to be addressed through the OCP.

The proposed changes to the OCP are provided in **Attachment A**.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

OPTION 1 – Staff Recommended Option

To endorse the proposed changes to the OCP in principle and proceed with an open house to gain early public feedback on the proposed changes.

Pros: Initiates public engagement; allows for changes to be made to the draft in response to public input and before First Reading; aligns with provincial requirements and the deadline.

Cons: None identified at this stage.

OPTION 2

Refer the proposed changes to a future committee meeting for additional review and discussion.

Pros: Provides more time for Council deliberation.

Con: Postpones decision-making and public input.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Amending the OCP to consider the 20-year housing need is a legislated requirement under S. 473.1 of the *Local Government Act*.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The work is not specifically addressing the current Council Strategic Objectives but is implementing the Interim Housing Needs Report, completed and accepted by Council in December 2024.

TIMELINE

September 9: Committee of the Whole meeting to introduce proposed OCP changes.

October 1: Public open house (drop-in format).

October 14: Council meeting – First and Second Readings of OCP amendment bylaw.

Week of November 10: Public Hearing for OCP amendment bylaw.

November 25: Council meeting – Third Reading of OCP amendment bylaw.

December 9: Council meeting – Adoption.

Following adoption of a final OCP amendment bylaw, staff will begin work on amendments to the Zoning Bylaw to align with the OCP. These will be brought to Council for information and discussion at a later date.

COMMUNICATIONS

Internal:

The proposed OCP changes were referred internally to Development Services, Public Works and Operations, Building Services and Community Development.

External:

The proposed OCP changes have not been reviewed externally.

ATTACHMENTS: A – TABLE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO OCP
 B – KEY STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS AND DISCUSSION
 C – WHAT WE HEARD REPORT: PUBLIC SURVEY
 D – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Reviewed By	Role	Approval Y/N	Initials
Director	Departmental Review		
CFO	Financial Review		

Corporate Officer	Legislative Review		
CAO	Final Review		