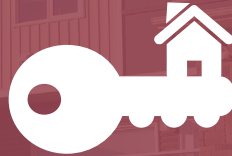


PUTTING THE HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND INTO ACTION FOR SASKATOON



\$41.325M in
Government of
Canada funding



Up to 900 new
homes expected



Over three years

HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUND - FOUR STOREY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT AREA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

An initiative outlined in the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) application is to permit four storey development within the [Transit Development Area](#).

What is happening?

Changes to the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw are being proposed to permit four storey development within the Transit Development Area (TDA). Four storey residential development with five or more units will only be permitted in Residential Zoning Districts (except districts for mobile home courts), Institutional Zoning Districts, the MX1 Zoning District and in all commercial districts except the B3 and B4 zoning districts.

Development standards will be subject to the Official Community Plan (OCP) Land Use Designation and underlying Zoning District tied to the site.

Why are these changes being made?

HAF is requiring municipalities to undertake transformational initiatives, in particular by encouraging missing middle housing and ending exclusionary zoning.

- Missing middle housing can be defined as the gap between single family homes and mid-rise apartment buildings and consists of buildings up to four storeys. Missing middle housing is an important consideration as it provides for increased housing options which add to the overall housing stock, while providing more options along the spectrum of affordability; and
- Exclusionary zoning is a type of regulation that excludes or does not permit certain types of

housing. Exclusionary zoning can preserve the existing form in a neighbourhood; however, this can result in economic and social segregation as the regulations can result in increasing the cost of housing, making it unaffordable for some.

Why are these changes needed?

These changes will make it easier to build various types of homes in our communities. More people will have access to stable and affordable housing, with walkable services and nearby public transit and active transportation opportunities.

- 14,000 people moved to Saskatoon in 2023, but there are only an average of 2,600 new housing units built in the city annually.
- According to the [CMHC Rental Market Report – January 2024](#):
 - The purpose-built rental apartment vacancy rate fell from 3.4 per cent (2022) to 2 per cent (2023). In the North, Northeast and Southeast zones of the city, the vacancy rates fell below 1 per cent.
 - Rent costs increased 9 % from October 2022 to October 2023 with the average two-bedroom rent being \$1,360.
 - Available units for low-income families remain scarce, with only 5 per cent of rental stock affordable to families in the lowest income quartile.

At the same time, inflation and other pressures are making it harder for people to pay the bills, including their rent, and more people are at risk of losing their housing. The balance between housing supply and demand influences price and availability. There is an urgent need to build more housing, quickly. It needs to be as simple as possible, for as many people as possible, to build housing.

Increasing housing options also supports the City achieving actions in the [Climate Action Plan](#) by building complete and compact communities through infill development and increasing the number of multi-family buildings.

Do these changes align with the City's current practices?

The City has already started the process of densifying certain areas of the city through its [Corridor Planning Program](#), which is looking at how to make Saskatoon's major transportation corridors into livable places. HAF is an extension of this, not a complete shift in the work we have already been doing.

How will allowing more units on a site impact the Residential Parking Program?

Some residential areas in Saskatoon experience significant on-street parking congestion, usually generated by nearby businesses or institutions. The [Residential Parking Program](#) minimizes this congestion by limiting non-resident parking to a maximum amount of time.

Currently, all dwelling units including secondary suites, garden and garage suites, and up to four-unit dwelling units are eligible for up to three permits per dwelling unit plus one visitor permit. New multiple-unit dwellings over four-units are not eligible for permits under the RPP.

The City will be exploring potential policy considerations to deal with the potential for increased on-

street parking pressure.

What can we expect will happen when the changes are implemented?

The initiatives in the Action Plan are a generational shift in what housing looks like in Saskatoon. They will make it easier to build various types of homes in our communities which will provide more people access to stable and affordable housing, with walkable services and nearby public transit and active transportation opportunities.

There is a significant difference between what housing development is allowed and what housing development will actually be built, which will be up to landowners and developers. Any changes from the HAF initiatives are expected to occur gradually across the city. Development will depend on many factors including economic feasibility, infrastructure capacity, market demand and availability of materials.

What is missing middle housing?

CMHC defines missing middle housing as multi-unit housing characterized as missing middle refers to ground-oriented housing. This includes garden suites, secondary suites, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, row houses, courtyard housing, and low-rise apartments (4 storeys or less). Missing middle refers to the type of housing available.

How do these changes support affordable housing?

The tools for this project – land use and zoning – do not directly dictate the affordability of new developments. However, by opening up new zoning rules that allow for the development of more housing units, more opportunities will be available to organizations wanting to build new affordable housing developments.

What Are the Next Steps?

The proposed amendments require City Council approval. We expect that amendments would be brought forward for Council's consideration in June 2024.

How Can I Provide My Input?

Please email your comments to zoningbylaw@saskatoon.ca.

How Can I Stay Informed?

To receive regular updates on this and other Housing Accelerator Fund topics, we have an newsletter that you can subscribe to. Please visit saskatoon.ca/housingactionplan and click on the "Subscribe for Project Updates" button at the top of the page.