

2024 - 2030

Affordable Housing Principled Action Plan

Target:
**300 new homes open or planned
within 5 years**

Including a mix of below market and low-end-of-market homes

Purpose: This Plan provides clear direction on how Administration will pursue Council's stated priority to "offer a full range of integrated below-market housing options that will allow residents to access housing that is achievable on their income." Once endorsed, the Plan establishes how the municipality addresses the housing shortage by unifying efforts from across the municipal corporation towards achieving Council's vision of achieving a complete, caring community where residents can access appropriate housing now and in the future. The City holds significant power to advance housing solutions through successfully fulfilling roles that impact the housing system. These City roles are:

1. **FUNDER** through contributions to capital projects such as land purchase
2. **PARTNER** through meaningful collaboration with external housing stakeholders including as a Board member of the Rocky View Foundation
3. **REGULATOR** as the steward of municipal policies, regulations development practices, policy and bylaw impacting housing options
4. **OPERATOR** as the sole shareholder of the City's fully owned municipal non-profit corporation, Airdrie Housing Limited

Why are we here?: The increasingly urgent need for more than 2,000 homes serving Airdrie residents who are housing insecure must be addressed. Maintaining secure housing is especially difficult for renter households, people with disabilities, lone parent households, younger people living alone and seniors. Achieving an appropriate supply of housing that serves all residents is important to the social and economic success of the community. Supporting housing diversity builds an inclusive city, strengthens resident purchasing power, attracts employers with a stable workforce and reduces pressures in other areas of public spending such as emergency services. Despite historical under-investment in affordable housing, Airdrie still has the opportunity to avoid the rapidly deteriorating housing situation that is occurring in other cities by dedicating municipal efforts now.

Action Plan Focus: Airdrie is similar to many Canadian cities in that there is a growing unmet need across the entire housing continuum. The extremely low vacancy rate in the *market* rental universe is putting additional pressure on the *below* market housing system, therefore the Plan addresses both below market (subsidized) and market (privately held) housing that serves community members in need, including those with low and moderate income.

Who Needs Housing Most?



Lone-parents



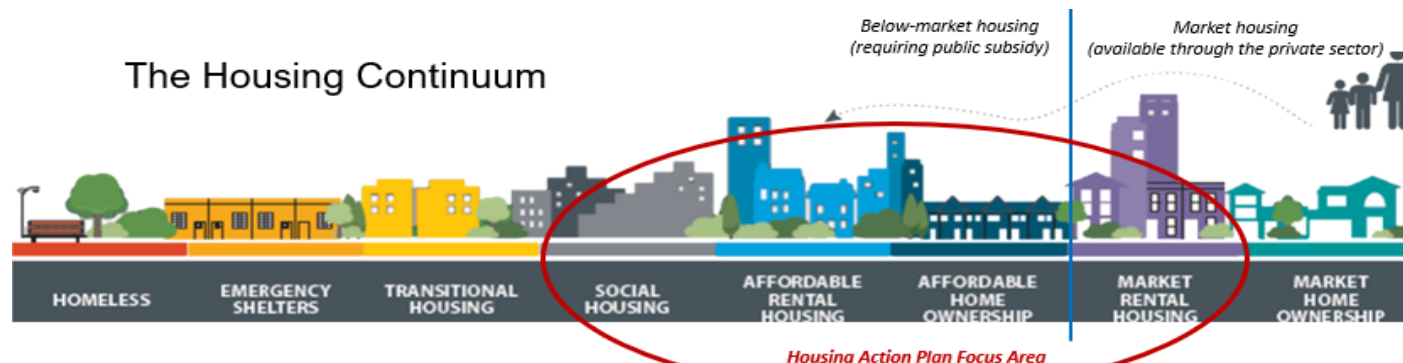
Younger singles



Seniors living alone



Have Mobility
Limitation

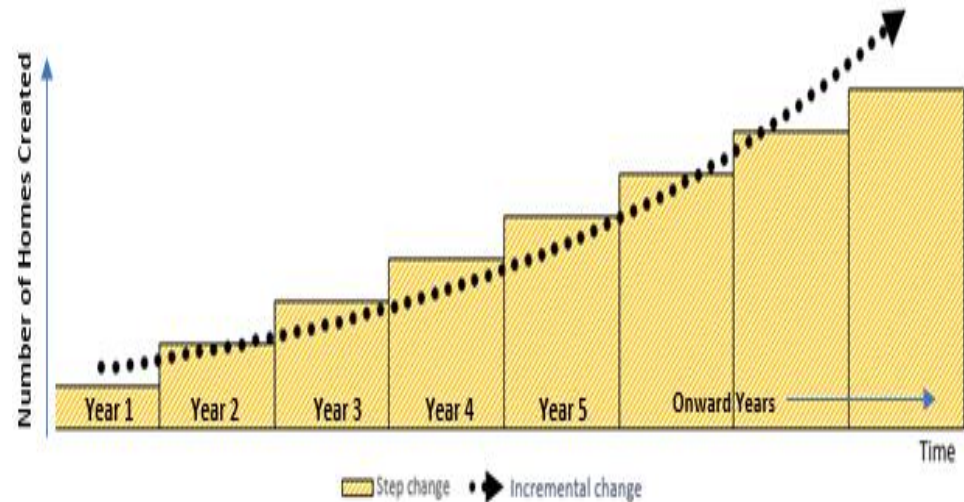


As the municipal foundation is solidified and the presence of social support providers in Airdrie grows, so will the ability to dedicate more efforts to helping very vulnerable people including those experiencing homelessness. Within the timeframe of the five-year Plan, the focus includes:

- Facilitate increased number of homes serving low and moderate income residents participating in the local labor force including affordable and market rentals and exploring opportunities to create more homes for people in need through greater housing diversity (example: more secondary suites, co-op housing, attainable home ownership, etc.).
- Facilitate more social housing (subsidized rent-geared-to-30%-of-income homes) available to individuals and families. Currently a limited number of these homes are provided through the Rocky View Foundation, however they are only available to seniors.

Action Plan Positioning & Implementation: The Plan emphasizes building foundational capacities within the municipal government through an incremental, yet steady approach while concurrently creating new below market and market homes. Once the work of building the foundation is complete, the City will be able to undertake more robust solutions in meeting the community's housing needs as required along Airdrie's path to 100,000. It is important to acknowledge that a significant number of actions that will help achieve the Plan's identified goals and targets are already being pursued by the City through a variety of initiatives including bylaws, City strategies, etc. The Plan complements this ongoing work by providing a formal framework that will focus City efforts.

Resourcing the Plan: Council will be asked to approve resources for implementation of the Plan through the annual budget process brought forward by Administration. Funding requests to enact components of the Plan that fall outside of the regular budget process will be presented to Council for approval as required.



Critical Enabler to the Plan: Although it is not identified in the framework of the Plan, a critical enabler to meeting housing goals now and in the future is **dedicated funds supporting City-established affordable housing priorities** secured through an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund. Reserve funds could be applied toward pre-development costs for capital projects, City acquisition of land or building assets for affordable housing or other capital contributions. The estimated required City contribution to leverage outside funding for capital housing projects is a minimum of 5%, and more commonly closer to 20% or more of total affordable housing project costs.

The Plan is informed through local research completed through the [Housing Landscape Opportunity Analysis](#) project and aligned with the “stepping stone” approach presented in the [2017 City of Airdrie Below Market Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy](#). It is important to note that the targets identified in this Plan should be updated as new information comes online leading to a better understanding of the housing needs of residents.

Plan Objectives: The Plan is organised under six interconnected strategic objectives:

1. Build Municipal Capacity to Advance Affordable Housing Solutions
2. Increase Housing Delivered by Non-Profit Providers
3. Grow Housing Serving Airdrie's Labour Force
4. Accelerate the Success of Airdrie Housing Limited
5. Strengthen Intergovernmental & Community Partnerships
6. Improve Access to City and Community Services

Strategic Objective 1: Build municipal capacity to advance affordable housing solutions

Target: Affordable Housing solutions to create new homes are supported in the City's Corporate Business Plan and Budget

Target: Affordable Housing is represented in the City's corporate long term strategic planning

Target: Affordable housing targets are incorporated in the Municipal Development Plan

Target: Update City infrastructure planning to align with official community plans, growth targets and housing needs assessment

Target: City Boards that have impact on housing (*MPC, CSAB, AHL*) are aligned to Council priorities on housing

Strategic Goals:

- Establish formalized processes for cross-organizational coordination on issues impacting affordable housing
- Use evidence in driving housing responses, including establishing housing unit targets
- Build corporate-wide capacity to apply a housing lens to municipal plans/ actions as informed by social sustainability best practices / principles
- Apply an affordable housing overlay to the Corporate Land Strategy
- Develop Board(s) through strategic planning processes
(Committees and Boards impacting affordable housing: *MPC, CSAB, AHL*)

Strategic Objective 2: Increase Housing Delivered by Non-Profit Providers

Target: 200 non-profit homes opened or planned

Target: Transfer at least two parcels of City land to a non profit housing provider

Target: Achieve at least one new partnership between the City of Airdrie and a non-profit provider

Strategic Goals:

- Leverage publicly held land for affordable housing operated by non-profit providers
- Adopt suite of municipal supports for non-profit affordable housing projects (*example: municipal property tax and fee exemption*)
- Initiate at least one housing pilot project with a non-profit provider to address housing shortages
- Investigate additional municipally owned / supported housing models such as Attainable Home Ownership, Housing Trusts, etc.

Strategic Objective 3: Grow Housing Serving Airdrie's Labour Force

Facilitate Creating More Lower Cost Housing Faster (especially Missing Middle Housing and Rental Housing)

Helping businesses grow & invest in Airdrie by meeting workforce needs

Target: 100 market homes accessible to low/moderate income wage earners opened or planned

Target: Meaningfully reduce barriers to creating more housing serving low and moderate income households **including improvements in parking and sustainable transportation policy**

Strategic Goals:

- **Grow pathways for creating lower cost housing available through the private market**

Goal: Preserve and increase Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) through removing barriers to creating more lower cost housing faster

- **Enact measures to improve the inclusive cost of housing serving low and moderate income households**

- **Align City strategies and affordable housing goals**

Example: contribute to creating better business environment through appropriate housing supply

- **Match housing targets / needs to economic initiatives on labour force attraction and business retention**

Strategic Objective 4: Accelerate Success of Airdrie Housing Limited (AHL)

(Grow AHL leadership of housing solutions within a transitional timeframe)

Target: Open doors at East Lake Apartments project

Target: Achieve new project(s) providing 20 - 50 new homes

Target: Complete AHL Strategic Plan

Target: Maintain a sustainable portfolio

Strategic Goals:

- **Increase organizational capacity of AHL in close coordination with City priorities for affordable housing**
(Strengthen AHL Leadership Capacity)
- **Develop formalized coordination mechanisms between AHL and City**
- **Support preliminary planning work on a subsequent project at the East Lake Apartments site**

Strategic Objective 5: Strengthen Intergovernmental & Community Partnerships

(Focus on collectively-held housing priorities)

Target: Determine at least one regional response to housing insecurity (*Example: Joint project funding / joint public information campaign / coordinated policy response*)

Target: Establish community based housing forum

Target: Achieve formalized regional data sharing on housing need

Target: Rocky View Foundation mandate includes seniors AND community housing serving individuals and families

Target: Create Housing Advocacy Plan built on municipal and community housing priorities

Target: Learn housing needs of urban Indigenous community members to inform culturally appropriate housing solutions and opportunities for partnership in alignment with identified Truth and Reconciliation Actions

Strategic Goals:

- Strengthen coordination mechanisms between City and Rocky View Foundation
- Engage community based organizations and regional municipal governments on coordinated housing action
Key: community outreach and relationship building with community serving organizations; Position Airdrie as a regional hub for leading housing solutions
- Develop relationships with Indigenous community (Nation and Urban) to understand housing needs
- Advocate for meaningful provincial and federal partnerships in addressing housing need

Strategic Objective 6: Improve Access to City and Community Services Impacting Housing Stability

(Build Essential Components of a Complete Community; Improve the Housing System)

Target: Approve at least 1 residential project that achieves sustainable mobility (TOD or Active Transportation)
Note: can be market housing or below market housing

Target: Align City housing program actions with Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities framework
(Especially anti-discrimination measures in housing)

Target: Integrate housing measures in the “Healthy Communities” plan

Target: Align affordable housing initiatives in City climate-resiliency plan

Strategic Goals:

- Increase public understanding of the role of affordable housing in achieving a complete community
- Increase access to social supports/services for vulnerable people
- Pursue social and environmental sustainability measures to improve housing stability and overall affordability
- Align housing initiatives to public and private sponsored sustainable mobility initiatives, projects