

Municipal Housing Strategy 2019 - 2025

Lethbridge Municipal Housing Strategy



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PREPARED BY



Acknowledgement

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Project Team

The Lethbridge Municipal Housing Strategy 2019 – 2025 was prepared by SHS Consulting. The consulting team for this project was:

Ed Starr, Partner

Johanna Hashim, Senior Consultant

Jan van Deursen, Research Analyst

Arfeen Qaiser, Research and Financial Analyst

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1.0 Introduction

Lethbridge was incorporated as a town in 1890 and became a City in 1906. However, the area had been populated by a number of Indigenous peoples, such as the Blackfoot, the Cree, the Kutenai, the Sarcee and the Nakoda for many years prior. Lethbridge is the largest city in the south western part of Alberta, and the fourth largest City in the Province. Lethbridge is connected to close by cities such as Calgary via Highway 2 and Medicine Hat via Highway 3. There are two First Nation reserves located west of the City. These are the Blood Tribe reserve and the Piikani Nation reserve.

The City of Lethbridge acknowledges that the community itself is gathered on the lands of the Blackfoot people of the Canadian Plains and pays respect to the Blackfoot people past, present, and future while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs, and relationship to the land. The City of Lethbridge is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III¹.

Lethbridge is the commercial, financial, transportation and industrial centre of southern Alberta. Originally dependent primarily on mining and agriculture, the economy has become more diverse in recent years, including not only agriculture and resource development, but also active and growing manufacturing and high-tech sectors. Half of the workforce is employed in the health, education, retail and hospitality sectors, including a college and the only university south of Calgary.

The City serves as a hub for commercial activity in the region by providing a wide range of services and amenities. At the same time, it has a highly vibrant arts and culture sector, and was designated a Cultural Capital of Canada for the 2004-2005 season.

Purpose of the Study

The primary goal of the Municipal Housing Strategy is to address the need for housing along the entire housing continuum within Lethbridge. This will allow the City to leverage and allocate resources to projects that meet the needs of priority groups while aligning itself with the National and Provincial Housing Strategies.

Study Approach

This study is being undertaken in two phases. The first phase of work involves an assessment of the housing needs and gaps along the housing continuum in Lethbridge. This phase of work also

¹ The City of Lethbridge and the Lethbridge Indigenous Sharing Network (2017). Reconciliation Implementation Plan. Accessed from: [https://www.lethbridge.ca/City-Government/Documents/Reconciliation%20Lethbridge%20-%20Implementation%20Plan%20\(FINAL\).pdf](https://www.lethbridge.ca/City-Government/Documents/Reconciliation%20Lethbridge%20-%20Implementation%20Plan%20(FINAL).pdf)

includes a range of engagement activities which are further described below. The second phase of work involves developing a housing strategy for Lethbridge.

Research Questions

The following research questions were established to guide the development of the strategy.

1. What are the current and emerging housing needs along the continuum in Lethbridge?
2. Who is in greatest housing need?
3. How might we prioritize the key housing needs in Lethbridge to lead to actionable and impactful recommendations for all households along the housing continuum?
4. How might we align with the National and Provincial housing strategies to optimize the use of available resources to meet the greatest needs?

Community Engagement

The desired future outcomes for the housing system in Lethbridge, as well as the corresponding strategies to achieve these outcomes, were developed together with key housing stakeholders and Lethbridge residents through a number of facilitated co-design sessions. A total of six engagement activities have been undertaken as part of this study.

1. Two engagement sessions were conducted with key stakeholders from the private, not-for-profit, and public sectors on November 21st and November 22nd 2018 to present preliminary findings and discuss ideas for addressing the identified housing gaps. A total of 13 persons attended the first session and 14 persons attended the second session.
2. One community workshop was conducted with local residents on November 22nd 2018 to discuss opportunities and challenges related to finding and maintaining housing in Lethbridge as well as design solutions to these housing challenges. A total of three attended the session.
3. One workshop was conducted with vulnerable population groups including people with lived experience of homelessness and individuals with special housing needs such as recent immigrants and seniors. The workshop took place on November 20th 2018. A total of six attended the session.
4. Two interviews were conducted with leaders from the Indigenous community. These interviews took place on November 30th and December 3rd.
5. One workshop was conducted with the Lethbridge Affordable Housing Task Force which included municipal planners, policy developers, City councillors and the Mayor of Lethbridge on March 12th to validate the recommended actions and assign key stakeholders who should lead each action. A total of 10 persons attended the session.
6. One workshop was conducted with key stakeholders from the private, not-for-profit, and public sectors on March 13th to validate the recommended actions and assign key stakeholders who should lead each action. A total of 12 persons attended the session.

Report Format

This report includes the work for the second phase of the study, including the policy framework for developing housing in Lethbridge and the municipal housing strategy which identifies the desired future outcomes as well as an action plan to achieve these outcomes.

2.0 Key Housing Gaps in Lethbridge

A broad range of housing options, including affordable housing, is important to create a healthy, inclusive and complete community. In Canada, housing is considered affordable if housing costs do not exceed 30% of the before-tax income of a household. Research has shown that having a broad range of housing options, including an adequate supply of housing which is affordable to households with low incomes, has positive impacts for the entire community.

Current Housing Needs and Gaps

The following key housing gaps were identified through the housing needs assessment and validated through engagement sessions with Lethbridge residents and other key housing stakeholders.

There is a need for more subsidized rental housing options for households with low incomes as demonstrated by the number of people who are homeless and those who are spending too much on housing costs.

In 2018, there were 223 individuals and families who were homeless. In addition, more than a fifth of households in Lethbridge were facing housing affordability issues and almost 8% were facing severe housing affordability issues. In addition, there are 474 individuals and families waiting for a subsidized housing unit in Lethbridge.

The aging population, number of people with disabilities and mental health issues, and the increasing number of homeless people who require permanent supportive housing indicate a need for more housing units which are program specific and which meet the need for support services and/or accessibility.

In 2016, 16.4% of the population in Lethbridge were seniors over the age of 65 and this number is increasing. In addition, conversations with key stakeholders as well as reports commissioned by the City of Lethbridge show a large proportion of individuals and families who are homeless need permanent supportive housing. Additionally, the HomeBase Housing First program's waiting list of 89 individuals and families who are currently homeless or at risk of homelessness shows existing housing and support providers are operating at maximum capacity. Lethbridge also had a higher share of households with a person with a disability in 2016 compared to the Province of Alberta, including people with physical, cognitive and/or psychological disabilities and people with mental health issues.

Having an adequate supply of supportive housing options as well as support services will allow individuals and families with special needs to remain in Lethbridge and as independently as possible. These supportive housing options should include transitional housing options for

people who only need short-term supports to help them move from homelessness to permanent housing as well as permanent supportive housing options.

There is a need to ensure the existing purpose-built rental housing stock is in good condition to create a viable alternative to the secondary rental market for households who cannot afford homeownership or who choose to rent as shown by the higher rate of rental housing in need of major repairs, the decrease in the number of purpose-built rental housing units, and the relatively high vacancy rate for these units.

From 2006 to 2016, the number of renter households has increased at a higher rate (38.0%) than households overall (22.4%). However, even though renter households increased, the number of rental dwellings in the primary market decreased by 9.6% from 4,239 units in 2006 to 3,831 units in 2017. This decrease may be the result of units being taken off the market due to their condition or conversions to another form of tenure. These trends indicate the growth of rental dwellings occurred entirely in the secondary market where rents are generally higher and tenures less secure. Key stakeholders have pointed out that the primary rental stock, which is generally older, is not of the same quality as the newer supply in the secondary market, causing households to gravitate towards the secondary market. This is supported by the high vacancy rate for rental apartments in the primary market (4.9%) in 2017 and the even higher vacancy rate for older rental apartments (5.7%). In addition, custom tabulation data obtained from Statistics Canada shows a higher proportion of rented dwellings in need of major repairs compared to owned dwellings.

The primary rental market, in general, provides tenants more stable tenures and lower rents and is therefore an ideal alternative for households who cannot afford homeownership in the long term or those who prefer renting over owning. While growth of the secondary market should also be encouraged, ensuring the primary rental stock does not decrease further and is in good condition is important so long-term tenants have a viable alternative to homeownership.

There is a need to further diversify the housing supply as is shown by the shift to smaller households, the higher proportion of households with a physical disability, and the aging population.

Lethbridge is seeing a shift to smaller households as well as an aging of the population yet almost 63.1% of the existing housing stock and 73.1% of building permits issued from January to October 2018 consisted of single detached dwellings, which is generally more appropriate for larger households and families with children. Seniors who attended community engagement sessions noted that they find it difficult to either find suitable units that fit their lifestyle and/or units that they can afford. Single detached dwellings are also, generally, less affordable than smaller dwelling types such as condominium apartments and townhouses. As such, a more diverse housing supply will help meet the broad range of needs of all residents.

Emerging and Future Housing Needs and Gaps

The historical trends in housing need and supply as well as feedback from key stakeholders have identified a number of emerging and future needs in the City of Lethbridge.

The population is aging and the need for appropriate housing options to facilitate aging in place will continue to increase.

The population is aging. Historical trends show the largest increase among those aged 55 to 64 years and those 65 to 74 years. The highest rate of growth in the next ten to twenty years is expected for those aged 65 to 74 and those aged 75 to 84. This indicates a growing need for housing options that are appropriate for seniors. Most of these options will not be long term care beds or retirement homes but, rather, mainstream housing options with elements that facilitate aging in place, such as housing on one level, wider doorways and hallways, grab bars, and other Universal Design features. Incorporating Universal Design features will also ensure that these housing units are suitable for other population groups, including persons with disabilities.

The need for permanent supportive housing is projected to increase further.

Lethbridge's homeless population has grown significantly in the past two years, in part, as a result of the current and ongoing opioid crisis. Lethbridge, as the largest service centre south of Calgary, is likely to continue to attract individuals looking for housing with supports indicating the existing need is expected to continue to grow. Studies have demonstrated a significant proportion of the homeless population in Lethbridge need permanent supportive housing.

Permanent supportive housing would provide a pathway out of homelessness and/or allow individuals to overcome or better manage issues related to developmental disabilities, substance abuse problems, anxiety, and mental health issues. Considering 72.0% of Lethbridge's homeless population is estimated to consist of Indigenous peoples it is important to take cultural differences and sensitivities into account when new permanent supportive housing options are created.

A need for smaller housing units is emerging and will likely continue in the near future.

Currently 64.6% of households in Lethbridge are small containing one or two persons. The share of couples with children as a proportion of all households is decreasing while the share of couples without children and single person families as a proportion of all households is increasing. This trend is expected to continue over the next 20 years.

Smaller units would facilitate increased densities and allow more people to live closer to jobs, services and amenities. Smaller unit sizes would also decrease the challenges related to home maintenance, particularly for the aging population and individuals with a disability. Therefore, the construction of smaller unit sizes should be encouraged to ensure an adequate proportion

of new units are created that are targeted to smaller (one to two person) households with low and moderate incomes.

A shift to rental housing is occurring, increasing pressure on both the primary and secondary rental markets.

Historical trends indicate the number of renter households is increasing significantly faster than households in general and the demographic make-up of households in Lethbridge indicates an increasing need for rental housing options, particularly for seniors, single person households, students, and households with low and moderate incomes.

While vacancy rates are currently above what is considered healthy by CMHC (3.0%), they have been decreasing steadily since 2012, while the housing stock in the secondary rental market has increased rapidly since 2006.

Seniors, single person households and students are, in general, more likely to rent and the expected continued growth of these household types indicates the demand for rental housing is likely to increase further. Key stakeholders and census data indicate a number of older rental apartment buildings in the primary sector need repairs. Therefore, the renovation of existing primary rental units should be encouraged and supported in the near future and once the existing stock has been restored, new construction could be encouraged to ensure an adequate proportion of new units are provided to households with low and moderate incomes.

Estimated Gap in the Number of Affordable Housing Units in Lethbridge

To assist the City and its housing partners in moving forward, the current gap for housing which is affordable to households with low and moderate incomes was estimated. This was done by using the proportions of households in core housing need² (10.1%) as reported in the 2016 Statistics Canada Census, as well as the estimated number of households in Lethbridge in 2019 (39,645 households), it is estimated that about 4,000 households are currently in core housing need. While the case can be made to use the proportion of households spending 30% or more on housing costs as a basis to estimate the number of units needed, a more conservative approach has been taken in using core housing need.

Units for Households with Low Incomes (i.e. earning \$49,991 or less)

Almost all households in core need (an estimated 3,900 households in 2019) have low incomes. These households are predominantly in need of rental housing with rents no more than \$1,249

² According to CMHC, a household is in core housing need if its housing falls below one of the adequacy, suitability, or affordability standards and if it would have to spend more than 30% of its before-tax income to pay the median rent for alternative housing in the area which meets the three standard.

per month³ but the majority of low income households are renters (54.9%). As such, if renter household incomes are used as opposed to the total household incomes, a large proportion of the gap would be for rental housing with rents of no more than \$763 per month⁴.

This gap was further broken down based on the household sizes of households with low incomes as reported in the 2016 Statistics Canada Census. Based on this data, it is estimated that, of the 3,900 units needed for low income households, 85% should be dedicated to smaller households (i.e. one- and two-person households) and 15% for households with three or more persons.

Units for Households with Moderate Incomes (i.e. earning \$49,992 - \$93,819)

The estimates also show that 100 units are required for households with moderate incomes who are in core housing need. While these households can generally afford the average market rent as reported by CMHC, the fact that they are in core housing need suggests that there are issues related to finding affordable and appropriate options for this group, particularly considering that the household types who have greater shares facing housing affordability issues include lone parent families, couples with children, immigrants, and persons with disabilities. These households generally require larger units which are also less affordable.

Similarly, estimates have been developed to identify the size of units required based on the household sizes of all households with moderate incomes in the 2016 Statistics Canada Census. This shows that an estimated 70% of these units are required for smaller households (i.e. one- and two-person households) and 30% for households with three or more persons.

Supportive Housing Units

Permanent supportive housing can include housing that is barrier-free and housing with supports to help individuals with disabilities or who require additional supports to live as independently as possible in the community. The needs assessment showed there is a significant need for permanent supportive housing in Lethbridge, especially for individuals and families who are homeless and/or currently living in shelters.

The number of supportive housing units (i.e. housing with supports and/or accessible units) has been estimated based on the proportion of households with a person with a physical disability, cognitive disability, and/or mental health issue. It is estimated that at least 10% of the units for households with low incomes should be supportive housing units (i.e. 390 units). While not everyone who has a disability also faces housing affordability issues, this estimate is also supported by the fact that there were 223 individuals and families who were homeless in 2018 and that there are 89 households who have been assessed through the Housing First Program

³ This maximum rent is estimated based on the estimated household incomes for all households in the 1st to 3rd household income deciles for 2018 and where households spend no more than 30% of their income on rent.

⁴ This maximum rent is estimated based on estimated household incomes for renter households in the 1st to 3rd renter household income deciles for 2018 and where households spend no more than 30% of their income on rent.

but have not been placed as there is currently no capacity among housing partners. In addition, all the non-senior supportive housing beds/units available had occupancy rates over 90% as of May 2018. This indicates the majority of supportive housing units should be targeted towards homeless persons, including non-senior individuals with a cognitive disability and individuals with mental health or substance abuse issues. Most, if not all, of these households would require supportive housing which is also affordable to households with low incomes.

Summary of the Housing Gaps in Lethbridge

The following figure shows an overview of the housing gaps in Lethbridge along the housing continuum, including a summary of the estimated gaps which is discussed in this section⁵. This gap can be addressed in a number of ways, including improving the existing housing stock, adding rent supplement subsidies, or building new supply. Annual targets for new affordable units are provided in section 3.0 of this report. Recommended strategies the City and its housing partners can implement to address these gaps are identified in section 4.0.

Figure 1: Summary of Housing Gaps Along the Housing Continuum: City of Lethbridge

Housing Supply	Low Income Households (\$49,991 or less)			Moderate Income Households (\$49,992 - \$93,819)		High Income Households (\$93,820 or more)
	Emergency and Transitional Housing	Supportive Housing	Community and Affordable Housing	Market Rental	Affordable Ownership	Market Ownership
Number of Households	11,894 households			11,894 households		15,857 households
What they can Afford	rent = \$1,249 house price = \$192,019			rent = \$2,345 house price = \$360,362		rent = \$2,346 + price = \$360,363+
Who is in Need						
Spending 30%+	6,700+ households (56.4%)			1,650+ households (14.0%)		140+ households (0.9%)
Spending 50%+	2,900+ households (24.8%)			70+ households (0.6%)		Immigrants, households with a disability, couples with children, lone parents
Core Need	3,900+ households (32.9%)			100+ households (0.9%)		
Household Types	lone parents, singles, Indigenous, immigrants, individuals with a disability, youth and seniors			Lone parents, couples with children, immigrants, individuals with a		
What Housing is Required	affordable rental, smaller units, units with accessibility features, housing with supports			purpose-built rental, affordable ownership, smaller units, accessible units		family-sized units, housing with supports
Current Gap (Units)						
Total	3,900 units (10.0%)			100 units (0.3%)		Demand is addressed by private market
Smaller Units	3,315 units (85.0%)			70 units (70.0%)		
Family Sized Units	585 units (15.0%)			30 units (30.0%)		
Supportive Units	390 units (10.0%)			0 units (0.0%)		

⁵ Please see the Phase 1: Housing Needs Assessment for a detailed discussion on this.

3.0 Annual Housing Targets

Annual housing targets⁶ have been developed to assist the City and its housing partners in addressing the emerging and future housing need. These annual housing targets are based on the estimated annual increase in the number of households in Lethbridge based on the 2006 and 2016 household counts in the Statistics Canada Census, which equates to 688 households per year.

To check the accuracy of this assumption, data from the City's municipal census was used to determine the annual increase in the number of households. This data shows that the number of households in Lethbridge increased by an average of 794 households from 2017 to 2018 and from 2018 to 2019. Data on building permits show that the City issued an average of 463 permits in 2016 and 2017. As such, it has been assumed that there will be 690 new housing units built each year based on the Statistics Canada data (rounded up) which is a reasonable estimate given the other data points.

Units for Households with Low Incomes

The greatest need in Lethbridge is for housing units which are affordable to households with low incomes. As such, it is recommended that 15% of all new units built be affordable to households with low incomes, which equates to an estimated 105 units built each year. This target is based on the proportion of households with low incomes who are spending 30% or more on housing costs which equates to about 15.0% of all households.

In addition, based on the proportion of households with a member with a disability as well as the significant need for permanent supportive housing units as demonstrated by the number of people waiting for these units as well as people who are homeless who need permanent supports, 30% of the units affordable to low-income households should be supportive housing, most of which should be barrier-free units. This means 30 new supportive housing units built each year.

Units for Households with Moderate Incomes

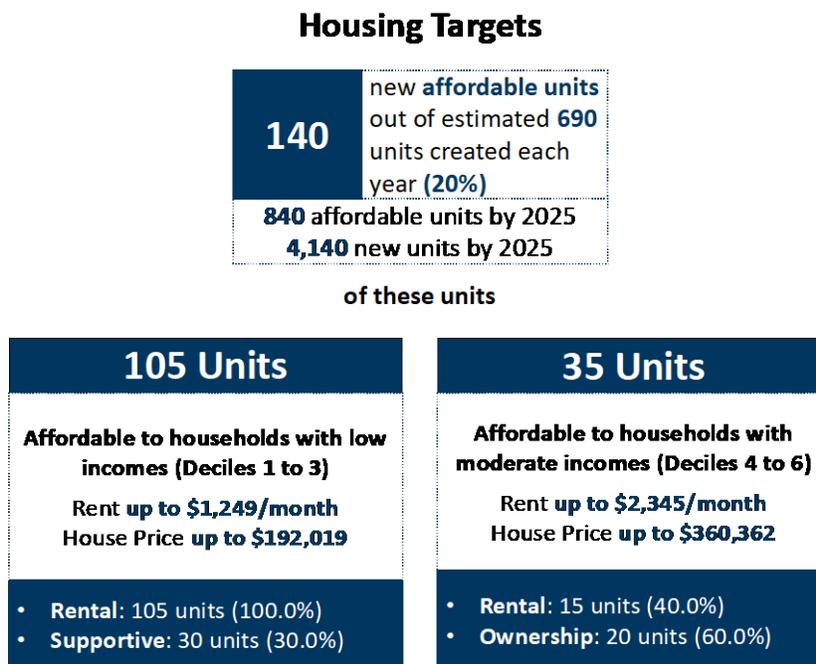
It is also recommended that 5% of all new units built be affordable to households with moderate incomes (35 units per year). This number is based on the proportion of households with moderate incomes who are spending 30% or more of their household income on housing costs, which equates to about 5% of all households.

In addition, at least 40% of these units should be rental housing (15 units). The focus on rental housing for this group is based on the fact that there is a greater proportion of owners with moderate incomes who are facing housing affordability issues compared to renters. This suggests that these households have bought homes which they cannot afford and this is most

⁶ Please note figures have been rounded.

likely due to a lack of choice in the current housing market. As such, ensuring that an adequate supply of purpose-built rental units would provide these households with more options.

Table 2: Recommended Housing Targets for Housing Affordable to Households with Low and Moderate Incomes: City of Lethbridge; 2019-2025



Meeting these housing targets would mean eliminating the current waiting list for subsidized housing in five years (i.e. 2023) and within the lifetime of this Housing Strategy. It would also mean housing the 89 individuals and families in permanent supportive housing in three years. The supportive housing target has been set at a slightly more aggressive level given the current issues related to homelessness and the need for housing for persons with mental health issues in Lethbridge. It is assumed that these targets will be revisited based on the results of the monitoring process as well as when the update of the Housing Strategy is undertaken.

Implementing the Housing Targets

Units for Households with Low Incomes

The majority of the recommended targets for housing for households with low incomes should be rental units and may be new rental units or new rent supplements and housing allowances for existing units in the private rental market. Considering the higher vacancy rates in Lethbridge (4.7% in October 2018), there is currently a good opportunity to meet a large portion of these targets through housing allowances and rent supplements with private landlords.

It is further recommended that these affordable units be provided in a range of dwelling types. The estimated need shows that 85% of these units should be appropriate for one- and two-

person households. As such, these units may be provided as single room occupancy units or micro units in any new multi-residential developments planned or under construction, as rent supplements or housing allowances for existing units in the private rental market, or as secondary suites. Ideally, these units should be located throughout the City to avoid concentration and stigmatization of areas in the City of Lethbridge. These should also, ideally, be located near transit and other basic amenities.

The estimated need also showed that 15% of units should be appropriate for households with three or more persons. As such, these units should be included in new or existing multi-residential buildings as well as in ground-oriented dwelling types, such as townhouses and fourplexes. Similar to the smaller units, the goal is to have these units throughout the City.

Similarly, the recommended supportive housing target of 30% of all units which are affordable to households with low incomes can be provided through building of new supportive units or providing new rent supplements or housing allowances for existing units in the private rental market. Recommended strategies include exploring the feasibility of building supportive housing units through modular homes as well as building supportive housing specifically for Indigenous peoples. The majority of these supportive units would be for smaller households. When deciding on where to locate these units, consideration should be given to the specific needs of the population group served, economies of scale in terms of providing support services, and access to other services, including transit. As such, community agencies should be consulted on the best places to locate these units.

The assumption is that these units for households with low incomes will be provided through partnerships with the different levels of government, the private sector, and the non-profit sector. Recommended actions to this effect have been included in the following section.

Units for Households with Moderate Incomes

The majority of the dwellings to meet the housing targets for households with moderate incomes will be provided by the private market. The City's primary role would be to ensure that the right supply is being built according to the identified need (i.e. 70% for smaller households, 30% family-sized units, and 40% of these units be rental). Actions have also been recommended to incentivize the private sector to meet these targets. It is also recommended that these targets be met through a mix of units in medium-rise and high-rise developments as well as ground-oriented units, such as townhouses and fourplexes.

Monitoring the Targets and the Strategy

It is recommended that the City work with the Housing Management Bodies and other housing providers in Lethbridge to develop an annual Housing Report Card to monitor progress on addressing the identified need and meeting the housing targets as well as the impact of the Housing Strategy overall. The following indicators should be monitored on an annual basis. This will ensure accountability as well as allow for any changes required.

- Number of units in the purpose-built rental universe, average market rent, and vacancy rate by unit size
 - Source: CMHC Housing Information Portal
- Average house price by dwelling type
 - Source: Lethbridge Real Estate Board
- Residential building permits by dwelling type
 - Source: City Planning Department
- Number of subsidized housing units built by unit size
 - Source: funding allocation from Province and/or Federal government and building permit applications from the City Planning Department
- Number of rent supplement units and housing allowances and change from the previous year
 - Source: Housing Management Boards and/or Province
- Number of households housed from the wait list of each housing provider
 - Source: non-market housing providers
- Number of individuals and families who are homeless on the By-Name List and who are housed in permanent housing
 - Source: Housing First Program

It is also recommended that a more fulsome update of the needs assessment be undertaken every five years to coincide with the release of new Statistics Canada Census data. This will allow the City and its housing partners to ensure initiatives and policies are still relevant and appropriate.

4.0 Lethbridge Municipal Housing Strategy

This section presents the recommended strategies to address the housing needs and gaps in the City of Lethbridge which were identified through the housing needs assessment.

Future Outcomes for Housing in Lethbridge

The Lethbridge community identified what they want the Lethbridge housing system to look like in 2025 through a facilitated co-design process with key housing stakeholders from the public, private and non-profit sectors as well as Lethbridge residents. The following shows the current housing gaps in Lethbridge as well as the desired future outcomes.

Lethbridge Now: 2018	Future Lethbridge: 2025
There is a need for more subsidized rental housing options for households with low incomes.	By 2025, there is an awareness of and a sufficient number of programs and affordable and adequate rental units in the primary and secondary rental market.
The aging population, number of people with disabilities and mental health issues, and the increasing number of homeless people who require permanent supportive housing indicate a need for more housing units which are program specific and which meet the need for support services and/or accessibility.	By 2025, there are a variety of integrated housing options which address individual needs for accessibility and/or supports.
There is a need to ensure the existing purpose-built rental housing stock is in good condition to create a viable alternative to the secondary rental market for households who cannot afford home ownership or who choose to rent.	By 2025, the existing primary rental market is repaired and well maintained and meets the current and emerging housing need.
There is a need to further diversity the housing supply, including smaller options and options with accessibility features.	By 2025, there are multiple medium and high-density housing options.

Role of Housing Partners

Achieving the desired future outcomes for the housing system in Lethbridge cannot be the sole responsibility of one body or agency. Successfully addressing the identified housing gaps in Lethbridge depends on the collaborative efforts of all housing partners.

Lethbridge Residents

The primary role of Lethbridge residents is as advocates for affordable and appropriate housing in their community. In addition, some residents can choose to create rental units within their dwellings in the form of secondary suites or share their homes with other likeminded individuals to increase the supply of housing.

Federal Government

The federal government has taken on a more active role in the non-market housing system in recent years by introducing the first National Housing Strategy in 2017. This Strategy provides the approach to ensuring all Canadians have the housing they need. The Strategy is also tied to funding for specific programs, including a housing benefit, repairs and retrofits of social housing units, funding for supportive housing, and supports to make homeownership more affordable. In addition, the federal government, through CMHC, provides mortgage insurance to homeowners as well as funding and implementing various programs such as the Co-Investment Fund and Rental Construction Financing, to increase the supply of non-market housing.

Alberta Government

The Province is primarily responsible for the non-market housing system in Alberta. The Provincial government is both a funder and owner of non-market housing through the Alberta Social Housing Corporation and owns 41% of all non-market housing units in the province⁷. These Provincially-owned units are managed by independent housing management bodies, including the Lethbridge Housing Authority.

Housing Management Bodies

Housing Management Bodies are established under the Alberta Housing Act. While the Province owns and/or funds the non-market housing units, these bodies are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the units. They determine their local scope of services, manage applications for housing assistance, and select the tenants based on the policies of the Housing Act and supporting regulations. The Lethbridge Housing Authority (LHA) was established in 1995 to provide affordable housing to seniors, individuals, and families. The LHA manages community housing, seniors self-contained, affordable housing, and rent supplement units in the City. The other housing management bodies in Lethbridge are the Treaty 7 Housing Authority, and Green Acres Foundation.

⁷ AUMA/AMSC (n.d.). An explanation of Alberta's non-market housing system. Accessed from: <https://auma.ca/advocacy-services/programs-initiatives/housing-hub/explanation-alberta%E2%80%99s-non-market-housing-system>.

City of Lethbridge Government

While the Province is primarily responsible for non-market housing, the City plays a significant role in facilitating the provision of a range of housing options, including non-market housing. The City encourages the provision of safe and affordable housing through its regulatory and policy framework. It also provides funding and other municipal resources to a range of housing and homelessness programs through its contributions to the housing management bodies. In addition, the City plays a major role in facilitating partnerships with all housing stakeholders, monitors the need for and supply of housing in Lethbridge, and advocates to senior levels of government for housing and homelessness programs⁸.

Non-Profit Sector

The non-profit sector plays a major role in providing non-market housing and/or housing-related support services to Lethbridge residents. This sector also helps to raise awareness of housing need in the community and advocates for housing and homelessness programs.

Private Sector

The private sector provides the majority of housing in Lethbridge, including market ownership and rental housing. Investors and funders also contribute to the construction and operation of non-market housing units.

Housing Strategy

Achieving the desired future outcomes for the housing system in the City of Lethbridge involves thinking, and working, in different and more creative ways with new and existing partners.

Approach to Developing the Housing Strategy

The Lethbridge Housing Action Plan was developed through a review of the policy and planning framework within which housing in Lethbridge is developed to identify opportunities and barriers. An environmental scan of tools and promising practices in Canada and other countries was also undertaken to identify tools and practices which would be applicable in Lethbridge. In addition, future outcomes and actions to achieve those outcomes were the result of several engagement sessions with key stakeholders, including representatives from the private, non-profit, and public sectors as well as with people with lived experience and the Indigenous community in Lethbridge.

Lethbridge Housing Strategy

The recommended actions listed in this section of the report will help guide the City of Lethbridge and its housing partners to address the identified housing needs and gaps in the City and attain the community's desired future outcomes for the housing system. In addition, a

⁸ City of Lethbridge (2015). Affordable Housing and Homeless Policy.

number of case studies of promising practices which may provide additional information on how the following recommended actions can be implemented are included in section 5.0 of this report.

Goals

The following goals were developed based on the desired future outcomes for the housing system in Lethbridge which were identified in the previous section.

- Goal 1: Increase the supply of **rental housing which is affordable to households with low incomes** to decrease the number of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Goal 2: Expand the supply of **supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features** throughout Lethbridge to help address homelessness and increase housing stability.
- Goal 3: Ensure units in the **primary rental market are in good condition** and meet the needs of current and future residents.
- Goal 4: Encourage and support the development of a **diverse housing stock**, including medium and high density options in appropriate locations.

Recommended Actions

The following recommended actions will help guide the City of Lethbridge and its housing partners to address the identified housing needs and gaps in the City and attain the community's desired future outcomes for the housing system. These actions have been organized based on the following categories.

1. Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw Policies and Regulations Actions
2. Program and Funding Actions
3. Education and Awareness Actions
4. Collaborations, Partnerships and Advocacy Actions

Recommended timelines for implementation have also been identified for each recommended action and are as follows.

- Foundational – These actions should be implemented immediately as other actions are dependent on these.
- Short term – These actions should be implemented starting in 2019 and may continue to 2022.
- Medium term – These actions should be implemented starting in 2023 and may continue to 2025.
- Ongoing – These actions will be implemented on an ongoing basis.

The following table also identifies the goal associated with the recommended actions as well as the recommended body who will take the lead in implementing the recommended actions.

Foundational Action: Lethbridge Municipal Housing Strategy (MHS) Implementation Committee

As a foundational action, it is recommended that the City of Lethbridge, together with the key housing stakeholders, establish a committee which will lead the implementation of the Lethbridge Municipal Housing Strategy. This committee should have representation from the City, Province, Lethbridge Housing Authority (LHA), Green Acres, private sector landlords and builders, the Indigenous community, community organizations providing non-market housing and organizations providing housing-related supports. Engagement sessions with key stakeholders re-enforced the importance of including all partners in the decision-making process. The committee can build on the work of the City's current Housing Task Force but should also include other housing partners as addressing the housing need cannot be the sole responsibility of one organization.

Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw Policies and Regulations Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>1.1 Add a definition for affordable housing in the City’s Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and Municipal Development Plan (ICSP/MDP) based on household income and revise the definition for accessible housing to refer to barrier-free housing.</p> <p>The definition should include a definition for households with low and moderate incomes.</p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City Council
<p>1.2 Adopt and implement the following recommended housing targets for housing which is affordable to households with low and moderate incomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% of all new units be affordable to households with low incomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 30% of these units should be supportive and/or barrier-free • 5% of all new units be affordable to households with moderate incomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 40% of these units should be purpose-built rental units. <p>Meeting these targets would include new rent supplements in existing private rental market units, new housing allowances, or new units built through senior government funding in partnership with the private and non-profit sectors. Please see the following section for a detailed discussion of the recommended housing targets, including recommendations for implementation and monitoring.</p>	Short Term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City Council and MHS Implementation Committee

Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw Policies and Regulations Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>1.3 Implement a monitoring process to ensure appropriate progress on the targets and identified future outcomes.</p> <p>Metrics and an annual monitoring process should be implemented based on the recommended process. In addition, the City should consider updating the needs assessment every five years upon the release of Statistics Canada Census data. <i>Please see case studies 11.1 and 11.2.</i></p>	Foundational	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City of Lethbridge Administrative Staff and MHS Implementation Committee
<p>1.4 Consider affordable housing in the decision-making process regarding surplus City-owned land or buildings.</p>	Ongoing	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City Council and Administrative Staff
<p>1.5 Review the Land Use Bylaw to ensure small suites in multi-residential buildings⁹ are permitted in appropriate areas throughout the City, particularly areas close to current and planned public transit lines and amenities.</p> <p>Developing guidelines for these suites would be important to ensure they still meet health and safety standards. <i>Please see the case study 1.6</i></p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City of Lethbridge Planning Department

⁹ **Small** suites are self-contained units (with private bathrooms and kitchen) which are smaller than 320 sq.ft. and may be relaxed down to 250 sq.ft. and are intended for single occupancy. Source: <https://guidelines.vancouver.ca/D015.pdf>

Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw Policies and Regulations Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
1.6 Review the Land Use Bylaw to identify additional opportunities to support the development of affordable and supportive housing, such as including alternative parking standards for affordable and supportive housing developments within close proximity of public transit.	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City of Lethbridge Planning Department
1.7 Review the Land Use Bylaw to ensure temporary and permanent modular homes are permitted in appropriate areas throughout the City, as long as they meet health and safety standards. <i>Please see the case study 2.3.</i>	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	City of Lethbridge Planning Department and Administrative Staff
1.8 Review the Land Use Bylaw to ensure shared housing arrangements, such as single room occupancy, shared housing with supports, and shared ownership arrangements, are permitted in all residential districts throughout the City. <i>Please see the case study 2.5.</i>	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	City of Lethbridge Planning Department and Administrative Staff
1.9 Ensure proper implementation of the property standards bylaw to ensure rental units, including those in the primary and secondary rental market, meet all health and safety standards.	Short term	Goal 3: units in the primary rental market are in good condition	City of Lethbridge Administrative Staff and residents

Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw Policies and Regulations Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
1.10 Explore the feasibility of developing a rental conversion policy to protect the existing rental housing stock.	Medium term	Goal 3: units in the primary rental market are in good condition	City of Lethbridge Planning and Legal Departments
1.11 Review the Land Use Bylaw to ensure that it is not a barrier to the development of medium and high-density residential developments in appropriate locations, such as areas served by public transit and in existing low density neighbourhoods. While the Land Use Bylaw is quite progressive, there are opportunities to permit more innovative and higher density housing forms, such as triplexes, four-plexes, laneway housing, or flexible homes with moveable walls, as of right in certain areas, particularly those close to public transit and/or other amenities.	Short term	Goal 4: diverse housing stock	City of Lethbridge Planning Department and Administrative Staff
1.12 Revising the Land Use Bylaw to permit more ‘gentle intensification’ in the low-density residential districts across the City. Revisions could include permitting new secondary suites and two-unit dwellings as of right ¹⁰ in low density residential districts. These forms would not change the character of the neighbourhood but would help diversify the housing stock.	Short term	Goal 4: diverse housing stock	City of Lethbridge Planning Department and Administrative Staff

¹⁰ As of right refers to the ability to develop without the requirement of a special permit or zoning variance.

Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw Policies and Regulations Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
1.13 Encourage all new multi-residential developments and developments in the medium and high density residential districts to have a good mix of smaller units and family-sized units based on the recommended housing targets.	Ongoing	Goal 4: diverse housing stock	City of Lethbridge Planning Department, MHS Implementation Committee and Lethbridge YIMBY Team

Program and Funding Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>2.1 Consider implementing a Lethbridge Affordable Housing Pilot Program with financial incentives for affordable and supportive housing developments.</p> <p>Consider implementing the Pilot Program in a certain area of the City where developing affordable housing would be appropriate. A program package may be created to provide information on the requirements and the incentives available.</p> <p>Consider evaluating applications based on a point system with higher points and, thus, more incentives, awarded to applicants who achieve deeper affordability levels, projects which meet the housing targets, those who qualify, or have been granted, funding through other</p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City Council and MHS Implementation Committee

Program and Funding Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>programs such as the Co-Investment Fund, Rental Construction Financing Initiative, and/or developments which include a greater number of accessible units than is required by the Building Code and/or funding program.</p>			
<p>2.2 Review successes in other communities and test the feasibility of providing a grant to upgrade an existing secondary suite or develop a new secondary suite if the property owner rents the suite to an eligible household at no more than 80% of the average market rent (AMR).</p> <p>The home owner should be required to enter into an agreement with the City to rent the unit at no more than 80% of AMR (based on CMHC’s AMR) for at least ten years. Eligible households would be households with incomes within the 1st to 3rd household income decile for Lethbridge.</p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City Council and MHS Implementation Committee
<p>2.3 Consider working with housing partners, including private sector builders, to include small rental suites in new multi-residential projects in exchange for incentives as part of the Lethbridge Affordable Housing Program.</p> <p>Rents for these suites should be affordable to households with low incomes. Partnerships with community agencies may also be explored where these agencies will manage the operation of these affordable suites. These units would assist in meeting the affordable housing targets.</p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City Council and MHS Implementation Committee

Program and Funding Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>2.4 Explore the feasibility of implementing an Investment Ready Program for designated residential lands which would be ideal for the development of affordable housing, multi-residential housing, and/or supportive housing to encourage the development of these dwelling types and ensure they are built in appropriate locations.</p> <p><i>Please see case study 1.3.</i></p>	Short – Medium term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City of Lethbridge Administrative Staff and MHS Implementation Committee
<p>2.5 Work with housing partners, including the Federal and Provincial governments and Indigenous organizations, to develop a permanent supportive housing facility for Indigenous individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Ensure the design of the building, support services offered and staff training are all culturally appropriate.</p> <p><i>Please see case studies 2.1 and 2.2.</i></p>	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	MHS Implementation Committee
<p>2.6 Work with housing partners, including private organizations, to explore the feasibility of building temporary container or modular supportive units for individuals and families who are currently homeless or who are at risk of homelessness and require supportive housing.</p> <p>Modular homes can be built at a lower cost and shorter time frame compared to traditional housing units. In addition to City-owned sites, these modular homes could be located on privately owned land where connection to City services are available, but the owner is not ready to build yet or where the owner is willing to lease part of their land for this purpose. <i>Please see case study 2.3.</i></p>	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	MHS Implementation Committee

Program and Funding Actions				
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead	
2.7	Review the City's Secure First Diversion Program to examine the feasibility of broadening this program into a Lethbridge Rent Bank to provide one-time financial assistance which can assist households who are at risk of homelessness to maintain their housing.	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	City Council and Administrative Staff
2.8	Building on the federal Co-Investment Fund for repair and renovation, examine the feasibility of providing a low- or no-interest loan to finance some of the costs currently not covered under these programs (e.g: soft costs) to encourage landlords to renovate existing purpose-built rental units to improve accessibility and energy efficiency of units and ensure these meet current health and safety standards. Landlords who currently have rent supplement agreements or who are willing to enter into rent supplement agreements should be prioritized for this loan.	Short term	Goal 3: units in the primary rental market are in good condition	City Council and MHS Implementation Committee
2.9	Review current municipal taxes and explore the feasibility of providing tax incentives to landlords of purpose-built rental units to upgrade of these rental units.	Short – Medium term	Goal 3: units in the primary rental market are in good condition	City Council
2.10	Review the City's portion of property tax rates for single detached and multi-residential dwellings to encourage medium and high density residential development.	Short – Medium term	Goal 4: diverse housing stock	City Council
2.11	Examine the feasibility of providing financial and non-financial incentives to encourage a more diverse housing supply, including incentives for developments which exceed the barrier-	Short term – Medium term	Goal 4: diverse housing stock	City Council and MHS

Program and Funding Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>free and energy efficiency requirements of the Building Code and incentives for smaller, ground-oriented and barrier-free units for seniors who which to downsize and for persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Consider providing incentives on a sliding scale based on the number of barrier-free units included in the development and energy efficient elements which go beyond the Building Code requirements. Developers who exceed Building Code requirements while also providing affordable housing should be eligible to apply to the Lethbridge Affordable Housing Pilot Program (Goal 1). <i>Please see case studies 4.1, 4.2, 6.1 and 6.2.</i></p>			Implementation Committee

Education and Awareness Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>3.1 Establish a Lethbridge Yes In My Backyard (YIMBY) Team to lead education, awareness and engagement activities.</p> <p>Education and awareness initiatives would include educating residents and other housing partners on the housing need in Lethbridge and the benefits of having a more diverse housing supply and a mix of incomes in all communities.</p> <p>This Team can be the same as the committee which leads the implementation of the Strategy or a different group and it should include members of the public, including youth, seniors, and people representing the Indigenous community in Lethbridge.</p> <p><i>Please see case study 12.1.</i></p>	Foundational	Goals 1 to 4	MHS Implementation Committee
<p>3.2 As part of a landlord engagement strategy and building on the current initiatives of SHIA, work with housing partners to facilitate discussions with landlords to raise awareness about cultural differences and how the City and community agencies can work with landlords to make them more willing to rent to tenants who may be considered hard to house.</p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	MHS Implementation Committee and Lethbridge YIMBY Team
<p>3.3 Work with housing partners to develop a tenant education strategy to ensure tenants, particularly those who were homeless, are 'rent ready' and that they know their rights and responsibilities to avoid discrimination and evictions.</p> <p><i>Please see case studies 3.1 and 3.2.</i></p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	MHS Implementation Committee and Community Agencies

Education and Awareness Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>3.4 Work with housing partners, including private developers, to identify land throughout the City which would be suitable for affordable rental housing, supportive housing, and purpose-built rental housing.</p> <p>Areas identified as part of this initiative might include government-owned and privately-owned land and buildings which would be suitable for development/redevelopment.</p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City of Lethbridge Administrative Staff and BILD Lethbridge
<p>3.5 Building on the Asset Mapping Project, work with housing partners to increase awareness of housing and supports available in Lethbridge to help individuals and families achieve housing stability.</p>	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	Lethbridge YIMBY Team and SHIA
<p>3.6 As part of a landlord engagement strategy, work with private landlords to increase their capacity to better respond to residents' needs, connect residents to required supports, and ensure stable tenancies to avoid evictions.</p> <p><i>Please see case studies 10.1 and 10.2</i></p>	Ongoing	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	MHS Implementation Committee, SHIA and Community Agencies
<p>3.7 Work with housing partners, including Indigenous organizations, to encourage and support initiatives which will increase the capacity of key stakeholders within the housing system.</p> <p>Support may be financial, such as providing grants or loans for training programs, or in-kind support such as providing office or training space</p>	Ongoing	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	MHS Implementation Committee and Indigenous organizations

Education and Awareness Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
or developing a mentoring program. Increasing the capacity of service providers includes training on culturally-appropriate service delivery.			
<p>3.8 Develop a Lethbridge Rental Property Standards Database to encourage landlords to keep their properties in a state of good repair and assist renters to make better decisions about where to live.</p> <p>The database could be included on the City’s website and would include information on the building’s owner and any property standards issues such as fire safety, building safety, maintenance, and pest issues. <i>Please see case study 5.1.</i></p>	Short term	Goal 3: units in the primary rental market are in good condition	MHS Implementation Committee

Collaboration, Partnership and Advocacy Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>4.1 Advocate to senior levels of government to increase rent supplements and to review the current approach to providing these rent supplements to ensure these are more reflective of the current need.</p> <p>While the practice of providing rent supplements directly to the client is often the best approach, in some cases, additional supports may be required to ensure this subsidy goes towards rent.</p>	Ongoing	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	MHS Implementation Committee and Housing Management Bodies
<p>4.2 Advocate to senior levels governments to review the current National Occupancy Standards to ensure they are still reflective of the changing demographic make-up of Canada, which now includes a larger share of Indigenous peoples and new immigrants.</p>	Ongoing	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	MHS Implementation Committee
<p>4.3 Work with housing partners to develop a landlord engagement strategy to increase the number of landlords participating in the private landlord rent supplement program.</p> <p>Current purpose-built rental vacancy rates in Lethbridge indicate a greater supply than demand. This presents an opportunity to increase the supply of subsidized housing units by partnering with landlords with higher vacancies to house tenants who may not be able to afford average market rents. <i>Please see case studies 10.1 and 10.2.</i></p>	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	MHS Implementation Committee and Lethbridge YIMBY Team

Collaboration, Partnership and Advocacy Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
<p>4.4 Building on the CMHC Solutions Lab, consider facilitating partnerships with the University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College to develop a Housing Innovation Lab to advance design thinking and identify innovative approaches to expanding the supply of affordable and supportive housing, including infill options.</p> <p><i>Please see case study 1.5.</i></p>	Foundational	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	City Council and MHS Implementation Committee
<p>4.5 Building on the coordinated access and assessment process, work with housing partners to redesign and implement a new model to access housing and homelessness services to better help people avoid homelessness and achieve stable housing.</p> <p>The new model should include a common application process and centralized waiting list for all subsidized housing units, including supportive housing units, and support services in the City to simplify the process for people in need and for better coordination of services and data collection.</p>	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	MHS Implementation Committee, Housing Management Bodies and Province
<p>4.6 Facilitate partnerships among private builders, private landlords, and community agencies to identify opportunities to include supportive housing units within existing rental housing and new multi-residential developments.</p> <p><i>Please see case study 2.4.</i></p>	Ongoing	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	MHS Implementation Committee

Collaboration, Partnership and Advocacy Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
4.7 Explore opportunities for collaborations among Indigenous organizations, other community agencies, and the City to coordinate services to better serve Indigenous peoples who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including those who are currently living on one of the reserves surrounding the City.	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	MHS Implementation Committee
4.8 Work with the Lethbridge Housing Authority and Green Acres Foundation to explore opportunities to repurpose any vacant subsidized units for seniors into subsidized units for non-seniors with low incomes, particularly those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.	Short term	Goal 1: increasing rental housing for households with low incomes	MHS Implementation Committee
4.9 Encourage and support social enterprises which provide employment and an opportunity to develop new skills for people with disabilities or mental health issues, particularly those who were formerly homeless or at risk of homelessness.	Ongoing	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	Community Agencies
4.10 Work with housing partners, including the University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College, to create a home sharing program to connect seniors who may be over-housed with students, young adults or other seniors who are looking for affordable housing and/or shared housing. <i>Please see case studies 7.1, 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5.</i>	Short term	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with barrier-free features	MHS Implementation Committee and seniors organizations
4.11 Advocate to senior levels of government to enhance funding for supportive housing and supports to help people live independently and with dignity.	Ongoing	Goal 2: increasing supportive housing units and units with	MHS Implementation Committee

Collaboration, Partnership and Advocacy Actions			
Actions	Timelines	Associated Goal	Implementation Lead
		barrier-free features	

5.0 Case Studies and Promising Practices

The following are some case studies of innovative or promising practices which may be applicable to the housing need in Lethbridge.

1. Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing

1.1 City of Toronto Open Door Program – Promising Practice

The Open Door Affordable Housing Program (2016-2020) is an initiative that aims to accelerate the construction of affordable rental and homeownership housing in the City of Toronto. The plan was approved by City Council in July 2016 and will help the City to create 5,000 new affordable rental, and 2,000 new affordable homeownership units between 2016 and 2020.

The plan assists the City to achieve its affordable housing targets set out in the Housing Opportunities Toronto Plan 2010-2020, approved by City Council in 2009.

The program helps private and non-profit developers to reduce the cost and risk of new developments. In return, the units created through the program should conform to the affordability standards as stated in the program criteria. The following incentives are provided by the City:

- Capital funding such as modest capital grants and exemptions from planning fees, development charges and property taxes.
- Fast-tracking planning approvals through the *Open Door Planning service* for projects that satisfy the City's official plan and,
- Making private, public, and non-profit land available for affordable housing. This could include land owned by: Build Toronto, The Toronto Transit Commission, the Toronto Parking Authority and Toronto Community Housing.

For further information: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/8d97-Open-Door-Guidelines-2018.pdf>

1.2 Toronto “Housing Now” Surplus Land – Promising Practice

In December 2018, Toronto City Council unanimously approved the new Housing Now Initiative to activate 11 City-owned sites for the development of affordable housing within mixed-income, mixed-use and transit-oriented communities. The goal of the initiative is to stimulate the creation of complete communities with a range of new mixed-income housing in close proximity to commercial and employment areas and transit hubs. The initiative proposes a minimum of two-thirds of all residential units created on these 11 properties be purpose-built

rental housing with at least 50% of the rental units as affordable rental housing (approximately 3,700 units) with rents set at 80% of Toronto’s average market rent. These units would be in addition to the units created under Toronto’s Open Door Program. The Co-Investment Fund and Rental Construction Financing Initiative administered by CMHC will be taken into account in the business case developed for each of the 11 properties, considering the net benefit of financing through these National Housing Strategy initiatives.

For further information: <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/community-partners/affordable-housing-partners/open-door-program-public-development-sites/>
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.EX1.1>
<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-123663.pdf>

1.3 Ontario Investment Ready Certified Site Program – Promising Practice

The Investment Ready Certified Site Program for industrial lands aims to attract investment by reducing the number of unknowns associated with development. The program helps speed up development by compiling information on a site’s availability, utilities servicing, access, and environmental concerns for prospective buyers and lessors. The provincial government also provides financial and marketing support for those properties which are accepted into the program. Property owners may receive up to 50% of their eligible expenses, up to a maximum of \$25,000, back per site. In addition, the province helps promote these sites as part of their comprehensive international marketing strategy.

For further information: <https://www.investinontario.com/certified-sites>

1.4 Grant Funding for Secondary Suites – Edmonton, Alberta – Best Practice

The City of Edmonton Grant Funding Program is designed to provide funding to assist property owners in constructing a new or upgrading an existing secondary suite. The grant can cover up to half the cost of upgrading or developing a new suite to a maximum of \$20,000. In exchange, the home owner must enter into an agreement to rent the suite to eligible tenants for five years. Eligibility is based on the City’s Household Income Limits. Eligible costs include required servicing, building materials, qualified labour for construction to meet minimum health and safety code requirements for secondary suites, and development and construction permits. This grant funding program is part of the City’s Cornerstone Plan (2006-2016) which resulted in creating and upgrading of 553 secondary suites.

For further information: https://www.edmonton.ca/residential_neighbourhoods/grant-funding.aspx

1.5 Boston Housing Innovation Lab – Best Practice

The Boston Housing Innovation Lab (iLab) was established in 2015 through start-up funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies Innovation Grant. The City committed to funding the Lab in 2017 to ensure continuation of this work. The Innovation lab prioritizes people, engages collaborators, and takes a prototype approach to policy making. Its projects include compact living which is a residential development with shared common spaces, Plugin Housing Initiative, which shows the possibilities of backyard homes and smaller living to provide affordable housing, Housing with Public Assets, which explores the possibility of building housing on top of, or next to, City buildings such as libraries and community centres, and Intergenerational Homeshare Pilot, which offers affordable housing to graduate students while helping local home owners.

For further information: <https://www.boston.gov/departments/new-urban-mechanics/housing-innovation-lab>

1.6 Micro Dwelling Policies and Guidelines – Vancouver, BC – Promising Practice

Micro dwelling units are new self-contained units with a private bathroom and kitchen, which are smaller than 320 square feet and may be relaxed down to 250 sq.ft. and are intended for single occupancy. Vancouver has developed policies and guidelines to encourage the creation of these affordable micro dwelling rental units in certain parts of the City. The preference is that they be located in buildings with a variety of unit sizes and located in close proximity to open green space, commercial, and community and recreational facilities. As part of the development permit process, the intention is that the City will enter into an agreement with the developer which will be registered against the title of the property to ensure that these micro units are secured either as non-market or market rental units for 60 years or for the life of the building, whichever is greater.

For further information: <https://guidelines.vancouver.ca/D015.pdf>

2. Supportive Housing

2.1 Hillside Avenue Supportive Housing for Indigenous Women – Victoria, BC – Promising Practice

BC Housing is planning to build 21 supportive housing units for First Nations, Metis and Inuit women in Victoria who are homeless or precariously housed. Indigenous women over the age of 19 who have a history of homelessness and who need additional support services to maintain housing and who are Victoria residents will be prioritized.

The project is funded by the Province and is currently in development and is expected to be completed in Fall 2019. This project is being built on BC Housing-owned land and will be modular homes with supports. The site is part of an existing subsidized housing project but the site itself is vacant after a fire damaged the units that were located on it. Each self-contained studio unit will be about 350 sq.ft. with rents at the provincial shelter rate of \$375 per month.

The Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) will be responsible for property management, operations management, and tenant selection. Once residents move in, staff will be on-site 24/7 to provide culturally appropriate supports to residents.

For further information: <https://www.bchousing.org/partner-services/public-engagement/projects/victoria-hillside-avenue>
<https://www.timescolonist.com/news/local/modular-housing-to-provide-21-homes-for-vulnerable-indigenous-women-in-victoria-1.23395782>

2.2 Ambrose Place – Supportive Housing for Indigenous Peoples – Promising Practice

Ambrose Place uses a Housing First approach to provide housing and support services to Indigenous individuals and couples who are homeless in a culturally sensitive environment. There are 24 studio suites, 14 one-bedroom suites, and 3 two-bedroom suites. Each suite is self-contained with a bathroom and kitchen. All suites are wheelchair accessible and can be modified for assistive devices. The building includes a therapy tub for assisted baths, medication room, and private nurse's triage room for assessment of tenants' status, wound care, to administer injections, and to perform physical assessments.

Fourteen of the units on the fourth floor are available for those who need safe, affordable housing while the rest of the units are supportive housing. Having both supportive housing units and affordable housing units within the same building offers the opportunity for residents to move from supportive housing to independent living while remaining within their existing community.

Monthly rents are \$1,168 for studio suites, \$1,328 for one-bedroom suites, and \$1,528 for two bedroom suites. These costs include three meals per day, all utilities, and access to all the supports and services offered onsite. The suites are also fully furnished.

Culturally based programming includes men's sharing circle, men's traditional teachings, women's sharing circle, women's traditional teachings, women's new moon pipe ceremony, sweat lodges, night lodges, and morning smudge. As part of staff training, each staff member is invited to a two-day land and classroom based training which teaches the history of the

Indigenous peoples and the impacts of colonization on previous and current generations. This training also incorporates traditional teachings.

Stakeholders noted that while Ambrose Place has been quite effective in meeting the needs of Indigenous peoples, it does require significant operating funding as well as training and capacity among staff. As such, this should be taken into account if this case study is being considered for replication.

For further information: <https://niginan.squarespace.com/welcome-to-ambrose-place/>

2.3 Temporary Modular Supportive Housing – Vancouver, BC – Promising Practice

In September 2017, the government of British Columbia announced a funding commitment of \$66 million to build 600 units of temporary modular housing in Vancouver. The housing can be constructed more quickly than permanent housing and provides immediate relief to hundreds of people who are currently homeless. As part of the program, people living in these housing units are given supports such as life skills training as well as health and social services. They are also provided with two meals a day and opportunities to connect with community groups, volunteer work, and social events. A total of 606 single units were built or under construction as of October 9, 2018.

In addition to these units, 40 social housing units were created on City-owned land with funding from the federal government and Vancity at 220 Terminal Avenue. While this development does not offer support services, it offers affordable units for low-income residents. All the homes are self-contained with a private bathroom and kitchen. Four suites were designed to accommodate persons with accessibility requirements and feature customized layouts and a user-friendly adaptive design, such as lower light switches and fully accessible bathrooms. Each is about 250 sq.ft and designed for a single person. The advantage of using modular housing is that these units can be picked up and transferred to another site if necessary.

There were initially some concerns about these units, particularly related to increased crime rates but an examination undertaken a year later shows that these concerns have been unfounded and that the project was a success.

For further information: <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/temporary-modular-housing.aspx>
<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/220-terminal-avenue.aspx>
<https://bc.ctvnews.ca/fears-unfounded-over-vancouver-modular-housing-project-one-year-in-1.4303562>

2.4 Cambridge STEP Home Collaborative – Waterloo, Ontario – Best Practice

The Region of Waterloo, in collaboration with four service providers, has taken a systematic approach to eliminating chronic homelessness. This pilot program serves people from the PATH (Priority Access to Housing Services) list, a by-name list of people experiencing homelessness in Waterloo Region, who have the most complex co-occurring issues that impact housing stability, including mental health and addiction issues.

The program uses portable rent supplements to house people in units of their choice. Most of these units are with private landlords although some units are in non-profit housing. Tenants sign a lease directly with their landlord and Cambridge Step Home helps them become “document ready” to find housing and helps them with signing their lease and moving in. Once a person moves into a unit, a support coordinator helps them to maintain their housing through a five stages of recovery from homelessness work plan.

For more information: <https://amho.ca/wp-content/uploads/CS-01-Cambridge-Step-1.pdf>

2.5 Markham Official Plan: Shared Housing Policy – Promising Practice

The City of Markham introduced definitions and policies related to shared housing in their 2014 Official Plan. One of the goals of this initiative was to remove the stigma associated with group homes, rooming and boarding houses, and supportive housing. While Zoning By-law regulations still have to be developed to support the implementation of this policy, City staff have reported that there have been no negative impacts to date in implementing this policy and it has supported the goal of removing the stigma associated with certain dwelling types.

Shared housing, as defined in Markham’s Official Plan, is a form of housing where individuals share accommodation either for economic, support, long-term care, security or lifestyle reasons. The Markham Official Plan identifies a number of different types of shared housing.

- Shared housing small scale is a form of housing where 3 to 10 persons share accommodation with or without support services.
- Shared housing large scale is a form of housing where more than 10 persons share accommodation with or without support services.
- Shared housing long term care is a form of housing where people who need 24-hour nursing care in a secure setting shared accommodation.
- Shared housing supervised is a form of housing where people who need 24-hour supervision in a secure setting share accommodation.

Policies in the Official Plan include developing housing targets for shared housing and developing a monitoring process for these targets, allocating a portion of the affordable housing targets to shared housing, supporting the equitable distribution of affordable and

shared housing across neighbourhoods, and locating shared housing in proximity to rapid transit and accessible to other human services.

For further information:

<https://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/home/business/planning/official-plan/01-official-plan>

3. Keeping People Housed

3.1 Breaking Ground – New York, USA – Best Practice

In New York, an organization called Breaking Ground is looking beyond the housing first model and extends housing as a centre piece for the social determinant of health into supportive and regular affordable housing. In doing so the organization is integrating the roles of street outreach, supportive housing, transitional housing and affordable housing within one non-profit organization.

Founded in 1990, the holistic approach has been part of the organization since the beginning. The organization runs street outreach teams to contact homeless individuals, employs lawyers and case workers to process the individuals who wish to transition out of homelessness into the system and make them “ready” for housing. In addition, Breaking Ground offers wraparound supports through case workers and employment councillors to ensure the formerly homeless remain housed. Part of these wraparound supports are delivered through a mixed community model where Breaking Ground offers affordable housing to individuals in need such as actors, artists and working-class families struggling in the harsh conditions of the New York housing market. This mixed community is encouraged to engage with one another through building design and staff, to provide support if possible or alert professionals when necessary.

The mixed community approach with integrated supports has allowed Breaking Ground to ensure a 95% retention rate among all tenants and a 1% eviction rate. A strong development pipeline has enabled the organization to grow from one building on Times Square in 1990 to 19 buildings across New York housing 3,530 households.

For further information: <https://breakingground.org/our-results>

3.2 Homeward Trust – Edmonton, AB – Best Practice

Homeward Trust is the organization that together with the government of Alberta and the City of Edmonton executes Edmonton’s strategy to end homelessness. The trust disseminates funding, administers City’s co-ordinated access system and builds connections in the community among service providers to ensure homeless individuals are housed and supported. If existing agencies cannot provide the required supports, the organization will provide the services themselves. The organization stands out because of its focus on Indigenous peoples

and its ability to maintain people housed. One of the learnings the organization had was that tenants, after they were housed, often got evicted for various reasons. By implementing additional home visits to catch issues before they became problematic it was able to reduce evictions and improve relations with landlords.

For further information: <http://homewardtrust.ca/what-weve-learned/reports-publications/>

3.3 Flexible Tenure – Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust – Best Practice

The Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust operates a shared ownership model which allows owners to change the percentage of property ownership if their personal finances improve or worsen. Flexible tenure allows the right to ‘staircase up’ by buying more shares in an owned property; ‘staircase down’ to reduce their share for those struggling with mortgage payments; and the release of equity to pay for care of major repairs. This program has been in place for nearly twenty years and while the organization has investment almost £2.4 million in repurchasing equity shares, this investment has been covered by proceeds from equity sales, i.e. receipts from staircasing up. The organization also did an analysis of the impact of this program and found that flexible tenure not only prevented households from being homeless due to job loss, general debt issues, relationship breakdown, or health-related issues, it has also ensured that the community is more stable and sustainable.

For more information: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/how-flexible-tenure-can-prevent-mortgage-repossessions>

4. Accessible Housing

4.1 Daniels Corporation Accessibility Designed Program (ADP) - Promising Practice

Daniels launched its Accessibility Designed Program in late 2017 at the Wesley in Mississauga, DuEast in Regent Park, Toronto, and all its future projects. Suites offered through this program exceed the accessibility standards set by the Ontario Building Code, and follow the principles of universal design. Daniels offers standard layouts which include accessible features such as:

- Roll-in shower
- Roll-out balcony with swing door
- Power operated entry door rough-in
- Handheld shower faucet
- Grab bars in the shower
- Under-sink knee clearance
- Wider doors throughout
- Additional clearance in the washroom.

These accessible features are provided at no extra cost if the purchaser opts for an ADP suite. In addition, the purchaser can work with Daniels to further upgrade their suite to meet their specific accessibility needs. While this option is currently only available at two of Daniels' projects, the goal is to have this in all Daniels' high rise buildings.

This case study demonstrates the ability of a private developer to include accessibility features as a standard option while keeping the project financially feasible. It also highlights an opportunity for provincial and municipal policy makers to encourage or require private and non-profit developers to include accessibility features which exceed Building Code requirements.

For further information: <https://danielshomes.ca/media/DAN17009-Accessibility-Brochure.pdf> and <http://accessabilityadvantage.ca/adp/>

4.2 Bridgwater Project, Winnipeg, Manitoba – Promising Practice

Bridgwater is a housing development project initiated by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation in 2006 and is expected to be completed by 2021. It is one of the first neighbourhood plans in Canada which includes a large proportion of homes to be built as VisitAble homes. The vision for the development is a walkable neighbourhood with a diversity of housing suitable for people of all ages.

The project includes four neighbourhoods: Bridgwater Forest, Bridgwater Lakes, Bridgwater Trails, and Bridgwater Centre with a mix of townhouses, multi-family homes, and single-family homes. Approximately 1,000 homes will be VisitAble.

The basic features of the VisitAble homes are that they provide easy access on the main level for everyone, regardless of physical abilities. They have a no-step entrance, wider doorways and clear passage, and a main floor bathroom that can be used by someone with a mobility device. The lots were also pre-engineered to accommodate the no-step entrance and drain to a pathway at the rear yard.

This case study shows private and non-profit developers the value of incorporating visitable and accessible elements from the design stages of a project. It also shows opportunities to create visitable neighbourhoods which are walkable and have a mix of housing options for different types of households and ages.

Additional Information:

<https://bridgwaterneighbourhoods.com/>

<http://visitablehousingcanada.com/visitable-housing/best-practices/>

<http://visitablehousingcanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/PPP-Bridgwater-Project.pdf>

http://visitablehousingcanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/VisitAble_Housing_magazine.pdf

5. Protecting and Maintaining Rental Housing

5.1 Vancouver Rental Property Standards Database – Promising Practice

The Vancouver rental property standards database is an online searchable database of rental apartments in Vancouver. The purpose of the database is to help renters make better decisions about where they live and to motivate property owners and landlords to keep their properties in good condition for renters. The database contains publicly available information that the City collects, including the building's owner, any outstanding work orders, or any property bylaw issues, such as fire safety, building safety, and maintenance.

For further information: <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/rental-standards.aspx>

6. Diverse Housing Supply

6.1 Your Choice Homes and Piikani Nation Tiny Homes - Alberta – Promising Practice

Your Choice Homes is an organization that teaches high school students construction skills for high school class credit, apprenticeship hours and a pay cheque while also developing life skills and promoting empowerment. The organization partnered with the Piikani Nation on a pilot project funded by a \$250,000 grant from Indigenous Services Canada to build tiny homes to help address the severe housing shortage experienced by this southern Alberta First Nation. Each tiny home will have one bedroom and will be allocated to a local elder. This is the first project of its kind in Alberta although the concept has already been tested in Saskatchewan.

For further information: <http://www.yourchoicehomesinc.com/construction-worker-101/>
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/students-build-tiny-homes-to-tackle-alberta-first-nation-s-housing-crisis-1.4615659>

6.2 Bungalows for Seniors – La Crete, Alberta – Promising Practice

These ground-level bungalows are part of a condominium development and are priced at the lower end of market rate homeownership. While the bungalows are not specifically for seniors, they have features to facilitate aging in place. In addition, the lower prices are meant to appeal to seniors who are selling their farms and single detached homes to downsize while still remaining homeowners. There is a small condominium fee which pays for landscaping, snow clearing and the maintenance of the external elements of the bungalows. Each home has two bedrooms and two bathrooms with the master bath having a walk-in shower stall. Doors are wider to accommodate a wheelchair in the future. The entire home is on one level without a step-up to enter the home. While there is no age requirement to purchase these condominiums, the design of the home is specifically geared to seniors who are still independent but who are starting to make long term plans.

6.3 Beacon Hill Village, Boston – Best Practice

Beacon Hill Village is a member-driven non-profit organization for residents 50 years and older from the Boston neighbourhoods of Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Downtown/Waterfront, Fenway/Kenmore, Midtown, and the North, South, and West Ends of Boston. The organization provides programs and services so members can age in their own homes and neighbourhoods.

Members pay \$675 per year (\$975 for a couple) to have access to seven staff members who help them get the services they need, including finding handymen, help getting groceries, rides from appointments, and health care providers. There are also social activities, such as weekly coffee conversations and monthly lectures, which help members avoid social isolation.

As many of the members have incomes below the median income, there are discounted membership fees of \$125 for one person or \$175 for a couple which are offered to about a fifth of Village members. Membership fees do not cover all of the costs so fundraising is an important component of the model.

The Boston “virtual village” is credited with launching a network of similar enterprises in neighbourhoods across the U.S. A key feature of the concept is the ability of individuals to tap into local physical assets (such as main street shopping) and leverage access to amenities and services through on-line connections to volunteers. This is an important concept for provincial and municipal policy makers because it highlights the opportunity to leverage community assets as a way to stretch tax dollars by avoiding or at least mitigating the need to develop publicly funded programs to support aging in place. For private and non-profit developers, the concept suggests ways to create niche market opportunities to complement existing housing options.

Additional Information:

<http://www.beaconhillvillage.org/>

<https://www.citylab.com/life/2015/09/why-seniors-are-forming-villages-to-age-in-place/405583/>

7. Home Sharing and Multi-Generational Housing

7.1 Multi-Generational Housing, Netherlands – Promising Practice

Two agencies in Beekmos, Houten, Netherlands have partnered to develop a housing project which combines seniors with young women, some of whom have children and social issues. The goal of the project was to create affordable housing options while building social relationships and providing additional services.

There are 17 housing units in the project. Of these, 13 are dedicated to the young mothers or young women who cannot live with their families. The other four units are reserved for elderly residents who act as coaches for the young women. The seniors bring their life experience and

can offer useful advice to the young women while the young women offer companionship and provide an opportunity for the seniors to add a sense of meaning to their lives.

The building was purposely located in the city center to provide easy access to services and amenities. The seniors live on the ground floor while the young women live in the upper floors. There is also a rooftop terrace and meeting spaces to encourage intermingling.

For further information:

<https://internationalsocialhousing.org/2015/01/06/innovative-program-in-the-netherlands-combining-elderly-and-young-women/>

7.2 Orange Tree Village, Regina, Saskatchewan – Promising Practice

Orange Tree Village is an intergenerational building which is designed to intentionally facilitate relationships across generations and to foster a village-like environment. The facility has five parts – an early learning centre for young children, university student living quarters, a licensed personal care home, assisted living suites, and general public facilities.

There are three options for seniors, including assisted living suites where services, such as light cleaning and linen washing, are offered, units for independent seniors, and units for people who have dementia or Alzheimer's. These options provide the flexibility to accommodate seniors' changing requirements for their housing. There are also affordable options for university students who can pay a reduced rent in exchange for doing 30 hours of work a month in the building. The early learning centre has about 90 licensed spots as well as a before and after school program.

There are also amenities which are open to both residents and to the general public. These include an art studio, yoga and movement room, multipurpose room with cooking facilities, meeting rooms, library, and daily programming.

For further information: <http://www.orangetreevillage.ca/>
<http://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/intergenerational-living-in-harbour-landing>

7.3 HomeSharing Program, Northumberland County, Ontario – Promising Practice

As illustrated by the most recent Census results, many older women living alone encounter financial challenges after their spouse or partner has passed away. Other challenges with living alone are the potential for isolation, and, in some instances, are compounded by concerns about an ability to maintain their homes in a state of good repair.

The HomeSharing program in Northumberland addresses these issues by connecting women aged 55 years and older who are willing to share their homes with other women living in the community. Participants benefit from companionship and are able to share living costs and household responsibilities.

Interested women participate in a five-step admission process, the basis of which is used to identify suitable candidates willing to share their homes (sharers) as well as finding suitable candidates (shares).

The process includes contacting the HomeShare Coordinator and submitting an application; an interview; background and reference checks; searching for a match; and, once a potentially suitable match had been found, a two-week trial period. If the trial period is a success, an agreement is drawn up which outlines individual preferences, accommodation costs, household responsibilities and other aspects. The Coordinator provides ongoing support to both the homesharer and the homeowner through regular contact.

Accommodation costs range from \$250 to \$400 per month.

For further information:

<http://cornerstonenorthumberland.ca/home-share/>

<https://www.northumberlandnews.com/news-story/7247197-northumberland-s-homeshare-program-to-bridge-gap-in-affordable-housing/>

7.4 Sistershare – Toronto, Ontario – Best Practice

A three-storey house in a residential neighbourhood in Toronto was converted into a six-bedroom house for single women 50 years and older. Each resident has their own private bedroom but there are common rooms on each floor as well as an outdoor garden that residents share.

The home was purchased and converted under Toronto's Singles Housing Opportunity Program (SHOP) which aimed to respond to the need for more affordable housing stock for low income singles. The City's non-profit housing agency purchased and converted 15 single family homes into houses which could be occupied by single non-related individuals. The maximum number of units allowed within each house was seven. The houses were then leased to non-profit organizations to operate, with the City providing property management services. The community organizations were responsible for all aspects of tenant relations, support to tenants, and working with tenants on maintenance issues.

For further information: East York East Toronto Family Resources and the Rooming House Working Group (2008). Shared Accommodation in Toronto: Successful Practices and Opportunities for Change in the Rooming House Sector.

7.5 Alberta Rose Lodge, Lethbridge, Alberta – Promising Practice

Alberta Rose Lodge offers independent living for seniors within walking distance to shopping amenities and a bus stop. There are 47 rooms for singles and couples, including barrier-free

spaces. In addition to housing for seniors, Alberta Rose Lodge offers student housing as it is within walking distance to Lethbridge College. Each suite has a private ensuite bathroom, basic furnishings, and students have access to a shared kitchenette and laundry facilities.

For further information: <https://www.greenacres.ab.ca/residence-type/short-term-housing/>
<https://www.greenacres.ab.ca/residence/alberta-rose-lodge/>

8. Identifying Land Appropriate for Residential Development

8.1 Saskatoon Land – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan – Best Practice

The City of Saskatoon established the Land Bank in 1954 to acquire land for future development. Today, Saskatoon Land’s mandate has evolved from just providing an adequate supply of serviced land to also initiating creativity and innovation in urban design, generating profits for allocation to civic projects and programs, and influencing urban growth.

Saskatoon Land is one of the largest self-financed municipal land development programs in Canada. It is self-financed as the cost of all business operations is covered by the revenue generated by land sales and not through property taxes collected by the City. Every year, Saskatoon Land offers a variety of residential, commercial and industrial zoned properties. Revenues from these land sales can be used to purchase additional land while profits, interest and lease revenues can be used to help finance priority capital projects and general operating expenses. The City of Saskatoon also monitors all the land that is available in the City and maintains inventories of all residential, commercial and industrial land available.

For further information: <https://www.saskatoon.ca/business-development/land-development/about-us>

9. New Ways of Securing Investments

9.1 Social Impact Bonds – Promising Practice

In some cases, sufficient government funding for a project cannot be obtained through regular channels. This can result in a local government being unable to make a community investment it wants to make. An alternative in this scenario is to issue a social impact bond. This financial vehicle is more common in the US and Europe and does not occur frequently in Canada. In essence, it allows a jurisdiction to use its credit rating to offset the risk of innovation to the private sector while maintaining in control of the outcomes. If the project is successful portions, or all, of the money will be returned to the investors plus interest over time.

The Province of Ontario has recently started experimenting with the Social Impact Bond and has been going through a process to identify service providers who could be eligible for such a bond and is currently doing feasibility analyses of the proposed projects to assess their viability.

One of the front runners through this process is Mainstay Toronto who proposes to build a 100-bed housing facility to help chronically homeless transition out of homelessness. The program focuses on individuals struggling with mental illness who have been homeless for five years or more. Mainstay's proposal is using the best practices from the Housing First model. The model aims to improve the efficiency of the existing social-housing stock to serve homeless people who are often the most difficult to house.

For further information: <http://www.socialventures.com.au/work/social-impact-bond-case-studies/>

10. Housing for Students

10.1 University of Brighton Student Accommodation Strategy – Promising Practice

The University of Brighton developed a Student Accommodation Strategy to help ensure that their students find housing. The University's goal is to offer a place in purpose-built student accommodation either owned and/or managed by the University or commercial providers to 90% of new first year full-time undergraduate students and provide head-leased accommodation in the private rented housing sector for 10% of level one and 50% of returning level two students. The objectives of the strategy include working in partnership with landlords, letting agents and other stakeholders to ensure the supply of high-quality and well-managed private rented housing for students, additional partnership arrangements with the private rented housing sector through head leases and the Unihomes model of student housing, developing new purpose-built student accommodation away from neighbourhoods which already have large concentrations of students, and accelerating plans for the refurbishment of University-owned and managed accommodation.

For further information: https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/SP070%20University%20of%20Brighton%20Accommodation%20Strategy_0.pdf

11. Engaging Private Landlords

11.1 St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador – Best Practice

As part of its strategy to eliminate homelessness through Housing First in St. John's, the City embraced a landlord engagement strategy. The strategy was executed by the City's Rental Team. This is a team dedicated to maintaining relationships with the landlords and the construction industry.

At first, a survey was launched and the Rental Team was assigned to reach out to landlords in order to fill out the survey. Between September and Mid October, they were able to collect 300

responses gathering data on issues landlords were facing. In addition, they had collected contact information from the landlords so they could be contacted in the future. Then, the Rental Team hosted a landlord engagement forum and started setting up a newsletter for landlords to share information. They obtained over 160 subscriptions.

For further information:

<http://www.stjohns.ca/sites/default/files/files/publication/What%20We%20Heard%20-%20Landlord%20Survey%20Report%20-%202016.pdf>

<http://www.stjohns.ca/sites/default/files/files/publication/Landlord%20Forum%20Report%20-%20November%202016.pdf>

11.2 Winnipeg Rental Network – Best Practice

The Winnipeg Rental Network (WRN) is a city-wide inter-agency initiative. The WRN addresses affordable rental issues and works with tenants, landlords and service agencies regarding tenure security. The WRN oversees the Housing Plus program which provides centralized housing procurement and tenant/landlord supports for Winnipeg’s Housing First programs. The agency reaches out to landlords and property management firms to secure rental units. To encourage landlords to participate, intensive supports are offered to the program participants, including regular visits to the rental unit and eviction prevention planning when participants move it. Landlords are assisted in getting the money they are owed, including coordinating with Employment and Income Assistance and Rent Subsidies when applicable. In addition, educational and training opportunities are made available to the landlords. Furthermore, service providers work with both the landlord and tenant to find the best housing fit. As such, if they feel the housing placement is not a good fit, they help the tenant move, which avoids then lets landlords avoid the hassle of initiating the eviction process. Also, if the tenant is unable to make repairs for damages causes, Housing Plus will intervene to repair the property to ensure the condition of the unit is the same as it was when the tenant moved in.

For further information: <https://www.housingplusprogram.ca/>

12. Measuring Progress

12.1 Housing Our Future 2017 Report Card – Simcoe County, ON – Best Practice

Simcoe County publishes an annual update on their 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. The report card identifies accomplishments under each of the five strategic opportunities identified in the 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy.

For further information and samples of the progress reports:

<https://www.simcoe.ca/SocialHousing/Documents/Our%20Community%2010->

[Year%20Affordable%20Housing%20%202017%20Report%20Card.pdf](#) and <https://www.simcoe.ca/ourahhps>

12.2 Housing Solutions 2017 Progress Report – York Region, ON – Best Practice

The Regional Municipality of York developed their 10-Year Housing Plan in 2014 called Housing Solutions: A Place for Everyone. The plan focused on four goals: increasing the supply of rental housing, sustaining the existing rental supply, supporting home ownership, and strengthening the homelessness and housing stability system. To measure progress on the objectives and goals identified in the Plan, the Region collects data and publishes an annual progress report which includes new affordable housing projects and initiatives to support the goals and objectives of the housing plan. The progress reports also include data on the number and type of housing units built with prices below the identified affordable thresholds (i.e. affordable to households with low and moderate incomes).

For further information and samples of the progress reports:

https://www.york.ca/wps/portal/yorkhome/yorkregion/yr/plansreportsandstrategies/housingsolutionsaplaceforeveryone!/ut/p/a0/04_Sj9CPykyssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfGjzOI9Hd09PTY8Dbz8TSycDRwN_B29jMwtDCy8zfULsh0VAc66hOY!/#.XGclqOhKjyQ

13. Education and Awareness

13.1 Bruce County YIMBY Team – Bruce County, ON – Best Practice

The Bruce County YIMBY Team was created in 2010 as part of the work on the County’s Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy to promote affordable housing throughout Bruce County. The team has 15 members including a private developer, representatives from Public Health and community agencies providing housing-related supports, a Councillor, church pastor, media editor, realtor, an Affordable Housing Board member, County Planner, and County Housing staff members. The members work to encourage other stakeholders to play a part in a coordinated community effort to ensure everyone has a place to call home. The YIMBY Team has undertaken a number of initiatives to raise awareness and educate people on the need for a diverse housing supply, including affordable housing. These include contributing to the County’s biannual newsletter, website and Facebook page, participating in public meetings and presentations, presenting annual awards to community members who have made significant contributions to addressing housing needs, developed a Youtube video on the value of affordable housing, made presentations to local municipalities, and held workshops with planners, building officials other community service agencies and the development industry on the goals and objectives of the Long Term Housing Strategy.

For further information: <https://brucecounty.on.ca/living/yimby> and <https://brucecounty.on.ca/sites/default/files/file-upload/business/Bruce%20County%20Long%20Term%20Housing%20Strategy%202013.pdf>

6.0 Conclusion

Addressing the identified housing gaps in Lethbridge and achieving the community's desired future outcomes for the housing system requires collaboration among a wide range of housing partners. It also requires approaching the issues in new and innovative ways while working with new and existing partners. Although the provision of non-market housing is the responsibility of senior levels of government, the City, non-profit and private housing partners, and residents themselves have important roles to play in achieving the desired future outcomes.

A total of 43 recommended actions, including policy, regulatory, financial, educational, and partnership-building actions, have been developed as part of this housing strategy with the goal of addressing the key housing needs and gaps in Lethbridge. However, housing need evolves as the demographic and economic make up of a community evolves. As such, this housing strategy should be seen as a living and organic document which will evolve over time. This makes it vital to continue to monitor the housing need in the community and evaluate progress toward the desired future outcomes.

7.0 Appendix: Housing Policy Framework

Housing in Canada operates within a framework of legislation, policies and programs. This section provides an overview of the planning and housing policies and strategies which influence the development of housing in the City of Lethbridge.

Federal and Provincial Policies and Strategies

National Housing Strategy, 2017

The National Housing Strategy identifies a vision for housing in Canada: *Canadians have housing that meets their needs and they can afford. Affordable housing is a cornerstone of sustainable, inclusive communities and a Canadian economy where we can prosper and thrive.*

The National Housing Strategy also identifies the following housing targets.

- 530,000 households removed from housing need
- 385,000 households protected from losing an affordable home and another 50,000 benefitting from an expansion of community housing
- 300,000 existing housing units repaired and renewed
- 50% reduction in estimated number of chronically homeless shelter users
- 100,000 new housing units created
- 300,000 households provided with affordability through the Canada Housing Benefit

These targets will be met through a more than \$50 billion joint investment provided through the following programs and initiatives.

- \$27.15 billion through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund (including the Rental Construction Financing and Affordable Housing Innovation Fund)
- \$4 billion* for the Canada Housing Benefit
- \$2.2 billion for the Homelessness Partnering Strategy
- \$9.1 billion* for the Community Housing Initiatives
- \$2.5 billion* for the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Housing Partnership
- \$9.8 billion for existing agreements
- Down payment support for first time homebuyers

**This includes cost-matching with the provinces and territories.*

For further information: <https://www.placetocallhome.ca/>

Alberta Municipal Government Act, 2018

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) is the law under which all Alberta municipalities are empowered to shape their communities. The MGA and its associated regulations recently underwent several changes to better reflect the needs of municipalities and as a result of extensive consultations. Most of the changes came into force on October 26, 2017 with the remaining amendments and regulations coming into force on January 1, 2018 and April 2018. Some of these changes include increased flexibility for municipalities to identify timelines to review development applications as well as increased opportunities for collaboration with Indigenous peoples. The following review is based on the December 11, 2018 office consolidation of the MGA.

The MGA includes policies on planning and development within municipalities (Part 17). Within this section, statutory plans are identified and include the intermunicipal development plan, municipal development plan, area structure plans, and area redevelopment plans. The MGA also identifies the requirements for each of these statutory plans. The MGA also identifies the hierarchy of these plans and what legislation they have to conform with.

Section 639 of the MGA also requires all municipalities to pass a land use bylaw which will regulate and control the use and development of land and buildings in the municipality.

The MGA also provides municipalities with the ability to require a development applicant to enter into an agreement with the municipality to construct or pay for the construction of public infrastructure or pay an off-site levy or redevelopment levy as a condition for issuing a development permit (Sections 647(1), 648(1), and 650(1)).

The MGA also states that proposed subdivision developments are required to provide, without compensation, land for roads and public utilities, environmental reserve, municipal and school reserve, or money in place of any or all of these reserves or a combination of land and money (Section 661). In addition, the MGA states that community services reserves may be used by the municipality for a non-profit senior citizens facility; a non-profit special needs facility; and municipal facility providing service directly to the public; and affordable housing (Section 671(1)).

For further information: <https://mgareview.alberta.ca/> and <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/mga-implementation-fact-sheets>

Alberta Land Stewardship Act

The Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA) was adopted in October 2009 and provides the basis for regional land use planning in Alberta. The Act provides a means to coordinate decisions related to land use planning, including human settlement, natural resources, and the environment. The December 11, 2013 office consolidation was used for this review.

The ALSA sets out the requirements for establishing and amending regional plans and the elements which need to be included in a regional plan (Sections 4-8). In addition, Part 4 of the Act outlines the regional planning process, including the process to amend or review a regional plan.

The ALSA requires all local government bodies (Section 20(1)) and decision-making bodies (Section 21(1)) to review their regulatory instruments and make any necessary changes required to comply with the regional plan.

The ALSA also includes policies related to transfer of development credit schedules (Section 48(1) – 50(1)) and the required components of a TDC scheme.

For further information:

<https://www.landuse.alberta.ca/Governance/ALSA/Pages/default.aspx>

Alberta Housing Act

The Alberta Housing Act was adopted to enable the efficient provision of a basic level of accommodation for people who, due to financial, social or other circumstances, require assistance to obtain or maintain their housing. The January 1, 2019 office consolidation was used for this review.

Sections 5 and 6 of the Act include policies related to the establishment of housing management bodies and the powers and duties of these management bodies. Section 7 of the Act also provides these management bodies with the ability to requisition funds from municipalities to which the management body provides lodge accommodation.

Sections 17 through 25 of the Act contain policies related to the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation and its powers.

The Act also includes policies on setting standard lodge rates (Section 33.1) annually based on the consumer price index (CPI) as well as ensuring that each member of the senior household who is 65 years or older is left with a monthly disposable income. The monthly disposable income for 2019 is \$322 (Schedule 1).

For more information: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/a25>

Provincial Affordable Housing Strategy

Alberta's Provincial Affordable Housing Strategy was introduced in June 2017 as a guide to governments for providing safe and suitable affordable housing for households with low incomes. The Strategy has the following vision:

Albertans have access to appropriate housing and related supports.

The Strategy has the following five strategic directions and corresponding actions and targets.

1. Investing now and for the future

The Provincial government is investing \$1.2 billion over five years to build more affordable housing units with a target of 4,100 new and regenerated affordable housing units completed by 2021. In addition, the Strategy identifies a target of maintaining a Facility Condition Index rating of "Good" or "Fair" for more than 95% of government-owned and supported housing stock.

2. Integrated housing and supports

The Province aims to increase access to tenant support workers and strengthen relationships among all housing partners. The Strategy identifies a target of 100% of seniors and tenants in affordable housing having access to a tenant support worker by 2020-2021.

3. Successful transitions and aging in the community

The Provincial government aims to make transitions through affordable housing easier by increasing the asset limit to \$25,000 and providing increased supports for graduates of Housing First. In addition, the Province aims to support seniors to age in their community by investing in renovations to seniors' lodges.

4. Fair and flexible

The Province is changing the housing system to make it more flexible, such as introducing mixed-income models which allow tenants the option of staying in their existing home even as their incomes increase. In addition, the Provincial government is exploring options to allow Albertans to apply for affordable housing programs with one application. The target identified for this strategic direction is an increase in the percentage of Albertans in mixed income buildings who believe the model is responsive to their housing requirements as measured through improved data collection.

5. A sustainable system

The Province aims to make the housing system more financially sustainable by decreasing operating costs through mixed income models and capital investments, including investments in improving energy efficiency of buildings. The target identified is 100% of new government-owned and supported units in 2020-2021 meet industry standards for environmentally friendly and energy efficient design.

Outcomes have also been identified as part of the Strategy and these are: integrated, housing stability, quality, sustainable, easily navigated, and adaptive.

The Province is continuing to work with partner organizations to gather input on the implementation of the Affordable Housing Strategy.

For further information: <https://www.alberta.ca/affordable-housing-strategy.aspx>

A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years

The Province's plan to end homelessness was completed in October 2008. This Plan is based on the goal of ending homelessness in Alberta by 2019. It sets out a series of actions based on a Housing First philosophy of ending homelessness. Using this philosophy, investments are focused on three key areas:

- Rapid re-housing of homeless Albertans
- Providing client-centered supports to re-housed clients
- Preventing homelessness through emergency assistance and providing adequate and accessible government programs and services.

A total of 17 strategies have been identified to achieve the vision of ending homelessness in Alberta by 2019. In addition, investments of \$1.2 billion in capital funding and \$2 billion in operating funding were identified.

For further information: <http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/homelessness/14601.html>

Municipal Policies and Strategies

Lethbridge Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS)

The Integrated Growth Management Strategy was undertaken in October 2013. The goal of the IGMS was to identify how the vision-based outcomes of existing planning policy can manifest from current development patterns into future development opportunities and patterns over the next 100 years. The IGMS includes recommended sequence and suitable locations for urban development and infrastructure within the City of Lethbridge and its neighbours.

Section 5 of the IGMS includes growth projections, including household and housing projections for the City and County. The IGMS estimates that the number of dwellings in the City will increase to 49,631 dwellings in 2032 and to 97,778 dwellings in 2112. It is also estimated that approximately 3,586 hectares of land would be required for residential purposes in the next 100 years.

The IGMS recommends a phased in approach to growth in the area. In Phase 1: 2012-2032, residential growth in the City is primarily allocated to areas in West Lethbridge where existing planning documents provide the means for accommodating growth for the next twenty years.

For further information: <https://www.lethbridge.ca/Doing-Business/Planning-Development/Planning/Pages/IGMS.aspx>

City of Lethbridge Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and Municipal Development Plan (ICSP/MDP)

The ICSP/MDP was adopted by bylaw on July 5, 2010. The purpose of this Plan is to provide a framework for Council and the community to address the changes occurring as a result of the City's continued growth. This document combines the requirements of an ICSP with those of an MDP as per the Municipal Government Act.

While affordable housing is not defined in the ICSP/MDP, accessible housing is defined as housing that meets the needs of households who earn less than the median income for their household size and are spending 30% or more of their gross annual household income on shelter.

Six dimensions of sustainability have been developed, including social sustainability. The ICSP/MDP states that achieving a socially sustainable community includes supporting services that enable all residents to fully participate in community life and assisting in the provision of accessible housing.

Section 4.4 notes that, based on an occupancy rate of 2.4 persons per home, it is estimated that 19,000 new housing units, or 470 units per year, will be needed to 2050. New residential development will be encouraged in all areas of the City with West Lethbridge accommodating the majority of residential development.

Section 5 of the Plan includes the vision statement, which is

We will continue to work together to ensure that Lethbridge is a leader in environmental stewardship, innovation and active leadership. We are recognized as being safe, healthy, vibrant prosperous, economically viable and a place where all people can fully participate in community life.

The Plan also identifies five key principles to guide the achievement of the City's vision. In addition, goals have been identified which are directly tied to the key principles. A number of goals are related to housing, including the following.

- To ensure that recreation, transportation, housing, education and employment opportunities are economically and physically accessible to all residents.
- To provide opportunity for a high standard of living and excellent quality of life for all residents throughout the community.
- To promote and encourage the development of cultural and social services that benefit all residents within the City.
- To accommodate population growth using responsible and balanced strategies that recognize the benefits and costs of growth.

Section 6 of the Plan contains the policies developed to support the overall vision and goals of the Plan. Section 6.2 includes policies directly related to housing and states that one of the basic principles of the Plan is to ensure that everyone in Lethbridge has access to safe and accessible housing. The Plan also states that the City is committed to the provision of a range of housing types in different locations throughout the City to meet the varying physical needs and economic circumstances of residents. Another housing principle in the Plan is that steps are taken to make it easier for seniors to remain in their homes as long as possible.

Section 6.2.1 contains the policies developed to ensure everyone has safe and accessible housing in Lethbridge. The policies are as follows. There are also six example actions to support these policies.

1. Collaborate with all levels of government and housing organizations to provide safe and accessible housing options.
2. Integrate a range of housing types throughout the City.
3. Encourage and facilitate the adequate supply of housing for all income groups.
4. Develop accessible housing units in areas where ancillary neighbourhood facilities are currently available or will be developed in the future.
5. City services encourage and promote programs that assist seniors to remain in their homes as long as possible.

Section 6.4 of the Plan contains policies related to the mix and density of land uses and identifies a number of ways to increase densities within already established low density neighbourhoods to ensure these retain their character with increasing opportunities to accommodate growth. The Plan also notes the opportunity for mixed-use developments and increased residential densities in the downtown and near post-secondary institutions. Policies in Section 6.4.1 which are related to housing are as follows.

1. Increase residential densities in future neighbourhoods in relation to existing built-up areas.

2. Increase residential densities in existing areas in a manner that respects built form and character.
5. Target Downtown as a primary location for mixed-use redevelopment.
6. Increase transit-oriented development into land use planning.

Section 6.4.4. of the Plan includes policies to ensure that the City is expanding in a responsible way. Policies in this section which impact the development of housing include the following.

4. Encourage and promote an adequate supply of land that is planned and available for servicing to meet market demand.
7. Provide Municipal Reserve, School Reserve, and Municipal and School Reserve pursuant to the requirements of the City of Lethbridge.

Section 6.4.5 has policies which are meant to create quality urban design. Some of these policies are directly related to housing, including the following.

1. Encourage and promote the design of live, work, shop and play land uses in proximity to one another.
2. Encourage and promote mixed-use development and a mix of land uses in employment areas.
6. Encourage and promote a diverse range of housing that is incorporated in all new neighbourhoods.
7. Encourage and promote mixed-use development in residential neighbourhoods.
12. Ensure the physical accessibility needs of residents are met throughout the City where the City has ownership and control.

For further information: <https://www.lethbridge.ca/Doing-Business/Planning-Development/Planning/Pages/ICSP%20MDP.aspx>

City of Lethbridge Land Use Bylaw 5700

The current Land Use Bylaw came into effect on September 1, 2011 and the version used for this review includes amendments to October 29, 2018. This bylaw sets out the rules for what types of uses are permitted in the different zones or districts throughout the City. The bylaw also includes the process for applying for and obtaining a development permit, including identifying the time for reviewing the application for completeness (21 days) and the time when the development authority has to make a decision on the application (40 days).

Permitted Uses

Rules for each of the districts include permitted uses as well discretionary uses. The following table identifies where residential uses are permitted.

District	Permitted Use	Discretionary Use
Downtown Commercial	mixed-use apartments	apartments and townhouses, boarding houses, all categories of seniors housing, supportive housing
General Commercial		mixed-use apartments, all categories of seniors housing
Highway Commercial		apartments, mixed-use apartments, all categories of seniors housing
Local Commercial		mixed-use apartments
Neighbourhood Commercial		apartments, mixed-use apartments
Shopping Mall Commercial		apartments, all categories of seniors housing
Public Building		apartments accessory to education facility or medical and health facility; single detached dwelling accessory to child care facility; seniors housing; boarding houses, group homes, supportive housing
Comprehensively Planned Low Density Residential	single detached dwellings	group homes
Comprehensively Planned Medium Density Residential	single detached, apartments with a maximum of 4 units each, pre-planned two-unit, townhouse with a maximum of 4 units each, two-unit dwelling, seniors housing in an apartment, single detached, townhouse or two-unit dwelling	group homes
Low Density Residential	pre-planned two-unit, single detached, pre-existing secondary suite	two-unit dwelling, new secondary suites (house and garage suites only), group homes
Mixed Density Residential	pre-planned two unit, single detached, townhouse, two-unit, new secondary suites (house and garage suites only)	group homes, supportive housing
Manufactured Home District	manufactured home	single detached, group homes
Restricted Low Density Residential	single detached	group homes
Small Parcel Low Density Residential	single detached	group homes
Medium Density Residential	apartments, pre-planned two unit, townhouse, two unit	single detached, boarding houses, group homes, all categories of seniors housing

District	Permitted Use	Discretionary Use
High Density Residential	apartments, townhouses	boarding houses, group homes, all categories of seniors housing
Low Density Flexible Residential	four-plex, single detached, townhouse, two-unit, group homes, new secondary suites (including house, garage and garden suites)	
Future Urban Development		additional dwellings, two unit dwellings, group homes

Mixed-Use Developments

Section 9.4 of the bylaw states that mixed-use developments are eligible for an increase in residential density up to 50% higher than the maximum density described in districts where dwellings, apartments, mixed-use is a permitted or discretionary use providing the following criteria are met:

- 15% of the residential units are retained for rental use only, and
- the main entrance of the subject building is served by a transit stop within 100 m.

Minimum Size/Area

Section 9 of the bylaw identifies the density requirements for residential developments in all districts throughout the City. This section also identifies set back requirements and amenity space requirements.

Secondary Suites

The bylaw differentiates between pre-existing and new secondary suites. A pre-existing secondary suite is a self-contained dwelling unit located within a previously approved single detached dwelling where both dwelling units are registered under the same land title and where the suite has been in existence prior to December 31, 2006 which can be verified by the owner to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.

A new secondary suite is a self-contained dwelling unit located on a parcel in which the principal use is a single detached dwelling. New secondary suites may take the following forms:

- House Suite, which is a suite incorporated into a single detached dwelling and may be located in the basement, on the main storey or an upper storey, or a combination thereof.
- Garage Suite is a suite incorporated into a garage accessory building, and may be located at grade or above grade, or a combination thereof.
- Garden Suite is a stand-alone suite located in the rear or side yard of a parcel containing a single detached dwelling.

Secondary suites are generally permitted in residential districts but only one suite is allowed per parcel of land. In addition, one parking stall must be provided onsite. The secondary suite must have a separate access either through entryway from the exterior of the dwelling or through a separate entrance within a common landing. Additionally, the secondary suite shall not be subject to separation from the principal dwelling through a condominium conversion.

Group Homes

The bylaw defines a group home as a development using a dwelling for a residential social care facility providing rehabilitative, and/or supportive care for 4 to 10 persons who, by reason of their emotional, mental, social or physical condition, require a supervised group living arrangement. This includes seniors' group living arrangements and may include staff accommodation. The bylaw also states (Sec. 9.10) that the development permit for a group home should specify the number of clients accommodated, number of staff employed, and submission of a plan that describes how communication with neighbours will be carried out and how neighbourhood compatibility issues are to be resolved.

Boarding Houses

The bylaw defines a boarding house as a dwelling with a maximum of 15 sleeping rooms which provide accommodation for compensation for five or more people.

Supportive Housing

The bylaw defines supportive housing as accommodation for 8 to 25 residents with associated support programs meant to foster self-sufficiency and can include common kitchen and dining facilities, bathrooms, training rooms, relaxation areas, laundry facilities, and offices and accommodation for staff.

Senior Citizen Housing

The bylaw includes definitions of four types of senior citizen housing. An independent living facility is an apartment-style accommodation with in-suite kitchens for seniors who are able to live independently. Assisted/Supportive living is an apartment-style accommodation which may have in-suite kitchens and a communal dining facility for residents who require varying needs of support and assistance, medication management and assistance with activities of daily living. A long term care facility is accommodation for residents who require ongoing medical care on a daily basis beyond what an assisted living facility can provide. A congregate living facility means any combination of senior citizen housing which may include multiple, physically linked buildings allowing for aging in place.

Parking Standards

Section 9.22 outlines parking and loading requirements. In general, dwellings, including secondary suites, with less than two bedrooms require one parking space per unit while units

with two or more bedrooms require two spaces per unit. The bylaw notes that for dwellings in mixed-use developments, the Development Authority has the discretion to require fewer spaces if the main entrance to the building is within 100 m of a transit stop.

A boarding house requires two spaces per dwelling unit plus 1 space for every two additional rentable bedrooms in all districts other than the Downtown Commercial (C-D) District.

A group home requires one space for each dwelling unit plus one space for each staff member for the maximum number of staff present at any one time.

A manufactured home, which is defined as a dwelling consisting of one factory-built dwelling unit designed specifically to be transported on a chassis and installed on a site, requires two spaces for each dwelling unit.

All senior citizen housing requires five employee spaces and one visitor space for every ten beds. In addition, independent living facilities require 1 – 1.25 spaces per unit for units with fewer than two bedrooms and 1.25 – 1.5 per units for units with two or more bedrooms. Assisted/Supportive living facilities require one space per two units. Long term care facilities require one space for every five beds.

There are no parking requirements for supportive housing in a C-D District while other districts require one space for each member of staff plus an additional 10%.

There are also requirements for barrier-free parking spaces, where up one barrier-free space is required for up to ten regular spaces; two are required for 11 – 25 regular spaces; three are required for 26 – 50 spaces; four are required for 51 – 100 spaces; and one additional barrier-free space is required for each additional 100 regular spaces.

For further information: <https://www.lethbridge.ca/Doing-Business/Planning-Development/Development/Pages/Land-Use-Bylaw-5700-Draft.aspx>

Affordable Housing and Homeless Policy

The City's Affordable Housing and Homelessness Policy came into effect on July 20, 2015. The purpose of this policy is to provide the City with a framework and guidelines to facilitate the development of an adequate supply of affordable housing opportunities in Lethbridge and defines the City's roles in this area.

The policy states that while the provision of affordable housing is the responsibility of many housing partners, the City will facilitate the development of affordable housing by leveraging dedicated resources to increase the supply of affordable housing units within the City. The

policy also describes the City's roles with regard to administration, planning and regulation, direct funding and development, research and monitoring, strategic partnerships, community development and education, and advocacy.

The policy also defines affordable housing as housing which adequately suits the needs of low and moderate income households at costs below those generally found in the Lethbridge market. It also notes that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) states that housing is affordable if the household is not spending more than 30% of its gross income on shelter costs. The policy notes that the highest priority for affordable housing is "core need households" who spend more than 50% of their income on shelter.

