

In November 2023, the provincial government passed legislation intended to increase housing supply and improve affordability in all BC municipalities. To achieve this goal, the BC government has made changes to allow more homes and offer different types of housing across the province.

As part of our ongoing commitment to keeping our community informed and engaged, we've created a go-to resource for understanding the current and upcoming housing initiatives in Pemberton. This Housing Initiatives FAQ was designed as a comprehensive guide to provide a deeper understanding of how we're working to enhance housing accessibility and affordability in Pemberton.

Whether you're a long-time resident, a new resident or simply interested in the development of our town, we encourage you to explore this document and learn about our efforts in this vital area.

How will the new housing legislation, passed by the province, impact the Village of Pemberton?

There are several areas where the Village must immediately enact changes in zoning and procedures for development approvals, plus a series of policy change to come over the next few years.

- Pemberton must adopt zoning amendments to allow a secondary suite or an accessory dwelling unit (like a carriage home) on all properties in its single-family neighbourhoods.
- Public hearings are now prohibited when a proposed zoning amendment is consistent with the official community plan.
- Pemberton's Housing Needs Report must be updated to include a 20-year housing needs target, based on a format to be provided by the province.
- The Official Community Plan must be updated to establish a housing target based on the 20-year projection in the needs report, and the zoning bylaw updated to proactively permit enough housing units to achieve the target in the OCP.
- The housing needs report, housing target in the OCP, and the zoning bylaw then must be updated every five years thereafter.

Will the community have opportunities to comment and provide input on new development applications when public hearings are prohibited?

Village staff will be reviewing and updating its Development Procedures to account for when public hearings are still required, when they are discretionary, and where they are prohibited. Opportunities for public input will be heavily weighted to the official community plan, where significant community engagement occurs when setting housing priorities and housing targets. The Village will continue to require applicant-led public information meetings and opportunities for public comments, when appropriate early in the application process.

What is the Housing Accelerator Fund?

The Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) is a federal program that required the Village of Pemberton to submit a series of initiatives in an action plan (currently in development) that, when completed, will grant \$2.7 million for the Village to invest in developing housing, housing-related infrastructure, and other community services that support housing.

What are the Village's initiatives that make up the action plan that must be completed as part of the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)?

1. Implement and Incentivize Infill Housing
2. Develop and Implement a New Housing Strategy
3. Planning for Housing-related Infrastructure, Facilities, and Services
4. Pre-Zoning for higher Densities to permit new housing development
5. Incentivize New Purpose-Built Rental Development
6. Explore and Promote Innovative Housing
7. Explore Revisions to Parking Minimum Requirements to Encourage New Housing
8. Implementing a New E-Permitted System to Improve Approvals Processes

How will the initiatives accelerate housing?

The initiatives for both the new provincial legislation and the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) are meant to improve the development process by removing barriers for faster approvals, greater certainty for developers and investors who build housing, and improves tools available to the Village to provide more housing.

When will the new initiatives be completed?

There are multiple projects that are already underway that aim to complete most of the initiatives by the end of 2024. The community should expect to see updates through council agendas throughout the year, and news about community engagement opportunities as work progresses and more information becomes available.

How many new homes will be created with these initiatives?

The Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) initiatives are estimated to permit nearly 100 new housing units above the average rate of development, over the next three years.

Will there be any community engagement related to the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) initiatives?

Several engagement opportunities are being developed including a community open house and other engagement activities that are being planned for later in 2024.

How do the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) initiatives relate to the changes in the provincial legislation?

While the provincial legislation and the HAF are separate programs, both sets of initiatives have the common goal of improving municipal approval systems to facilitate housing development.

How will the \$2.7 million from the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) be spent?

HAF dollars must be spent in three eligible categories; investments in affordable housing, investment in housing-related infrastructure, and investment in community facilities and services that support housing. Funds must be spent within the term of the HAF program (3 years).

Will the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) dollars fund new affordable housing projects?

The primary focus of the HAF is not to directly finance individual housing projects. Decisions on the allocation of these funds will be made annually through the Village's budget process, prioritizing the most impactful use of the funds.

Will the new housing be dedicated for local residents and local workers?

Some of the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) initiatives will focus on specific needs like providing housing for local residents and workers. These objectives are generally more difficult to regulate for local governments. All options will be explored with recommendations towards how to best solve the need for housing for specific residents.

Will the housing initiatives impact the OCP Review that is currently paused while the Village engages with Lílwat Nation?

The Village remains committed to working with Lílwat Nation to develop a new protocol agreement and continue to grow the relationship between our communities. Lílwat Nation will continue to be engaged throughout this process as a significant development proponent.

How will the Village ensure that municipal infrastructure (water/sewer/roads/services) keeps up with a growing community?

Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Initiative #3 provides funding for the Village to complete a series of studies and infrastructure planning projects that will address this concern. The results will allow the Village to prioritize investments to upgrade and replace existing infrastructure to meet the increasing demand for services.

Will the housing initiatives lead to increases in health care, education, transit, and other services that are necessary to support the community?

Services, including health care and education, are not in the Village's jurisdiction and therefore there are limited opportunities to influence these services that are important to local residents. The opportunity for the Village is to establish priorities to advocate for more services that are controlled by senior levels of government.