

Introduction to Housing Policy and Actions Regional Recommendations March 2021



PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT



HUDSON'S
HOPE
PLAYGROUND OF THE PEACE



City
Dawson Creek
"The Capital of the Peace"



Agenda

- The Project to Date
- Key regional housing issues
- Role of Local Government
- Regional level housing goals & policy recommendations
- Next Steps

About the Process

3

About the Process

- Project Initiation and Data Collection
- Engagement Phase #1
- Draft Housing Needs Reports
- Engagement Phase #2
- Finalization of Housing Needs Reports
- Best Practices Review and Recommended Actions <- We are here
- Submission of Reports to UBCM

4

Best Practices Review and Recommended Actions

- Reviewed best practices in comparable communities, including Fraser-Fort George, Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Cariboo Regional District, City of Terrace, City of Prince George and other communities
- Developed a range of DRAFT recommendations:
 - Regional level recommendations
 - Focused recommendations for municipalities based on discussions with staff
 - Electoral Area recommendations
- Today's focus is on Regional Recommendations

5

Key Regional Housing Challenges

1. Lack of aging in place options (regional) including the following:
 - ALR land use limitations create issues with inter-generational opportunities for farming (and aging in place)
 - Limited options for downsizing for seniors in municipalities
 - Limited affordable housing and assisted living options for seniors
 - Seniors, particularly in remote areas, have less access to supports for aging in place
2. The impact of the shadow population is strongly felt, but not necessarily easily quantified

6



Key Regional Housing Challenges

3. Limited rental housing in larger municipalities.
4. Affordability pressures on some renters in municipalities.
5. Home ownership is out of reach for some household types.
6. Homelessness (and hidden homelessness) is an issue in Chetwynd and Dawson Creek, though was also raised as a growing issue in Pouce Coupe.
7. Slow to little population growth expected in Pouce Coupe, Hudson's Hope, and Chetwynd

7



Roles of Local Government in Addressing Housing

8

Role of Local Government

OPPORTUNITIES



AGENCIES / ORGANIZATIONS

Local Governments

Indigenous Governments

Non-profits

Developers and Builders

Senior Government

Multi-Sectoral Cooperation

ROLES IN HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



Local governments enable the development of appropriate housing across the continuum through a range of tools.

9

Role of Local Government

THE HOUSING CONTINUUM



10

Draft Regional Level Housing Objectives for the PRRD

1. Strengthen Regional Governmental Coordination between PRRD electoral areas and municipalities.
2. Strengthen mechanisms for information sharing and partnership with neighbouring First Nations, local governments and non-profit housing providers.
3. Develop a better understanding of the impacts of the shadow population on housing and service provision.
4. Advocate and explore opportunities for additional housing resources and supports.

11

Objective #1

Strengthen Regional Governmental Coordination between PRRD electoral areas and municipalities.

Recommendations:

- Develop mechanisms for coordinated information sharing about housing actions across all PRRD jurisdictions
- Study the feasibility of implementing a region-wide housing function to support the development of affordable and priority housing

12



Increased Cooperation

- Formalized housing committee to share information at the elected official level, with key stakeholder engagement
- Quarterly meetings with Regional District and all partner municipalities staff to discuss needs, initiatives, new developments, and opportunities

**What Might
that Look
Like?**

13



Example: Regional Housing Service

The Cowichan Valley Regional District adopted a bylaw to provide annual financial contributions to the Cowichan Housing Association to establish a Regional Housing Service which aims to increase capacity of local communities in developing affordable housing projects.

The Regional Housing Service funding supports the Cowichan Attainable Housing Strategy.

**What Might
that Look
Like?**

14

Objective #2

Strengthen Mechanisms for Information Sharing and Partnership with Neighbouring First Nations, Local Governments and Non-Profit Housing Providers.

Policy Recommendations:

- Engage with First Nations communities regularly regarding housing issues and trends they are experiencing
- Explore opportunities to support First Nation's housing projects through existing or new MOUs
- Liaise with neighbouring local governments (Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, Saddle Hills County)
- Work to engage non-profit housing providers on a regular basis both formally and informally (e.g. Salvation Army, Associations for Community Living, Silver Willows Court, Surerus Place, Abbeyfield, etc.)

15

Example MOUs, Servicing and/or Protocol Agreements

- PRRD and Saulteau First Nations Memorandum of Understanding
- The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG) has established Memoranda of Understanding and protocols on communication and cooperation between RDFFG, Lheidli T'enneh First Nation and McLeod Lake Indian Band.
- Among other partnership initiatives, service agreements between the RDFFG and First Nation communities have been established to provide coordinated and joint services.

**What Might
that Look
Like?**

16

Objective #3

Develop a better understanding of the impacts of the shadow population on housing and service provision.

Policy Recommendations:

- Explore the possibility of deeper research into the shadow population, including the resource requirements of a regional census.
- Work to identify and support vulnerable individuals through regional advocacy.
- Work with the natural resource sector to identify opportunities to mitigate the impacts of industry on housing issues

17

Example: Conducting Regional Census

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo completes a municipal census every three years to update the permanent and shadow official population figures. This enables the Regional Municipality to have the shadow population included in official census results, which are then used to allocate population-based funding for various programs.

**What Might
that Look
Like?**

18

Objective #4

Advocate and explore opportunities for additional housing resources and supports.

Policy Recommendations:

- Advocate to senior government for greater funding to the Better at Home Program
- Advocate to the federal government for increased funding to the Home Adaptation Supports Initiative for PRRD seniors
- Work with all PRRD jurisdictions to advocate for affordable housing investments in the region.
- Advocate for additional resources for ongoing Housing Needs Report reviews and updates.
- Work with non-profit housing providers to support their efforts in seeking grant funding for affordable housing projects.

19

Next Steps

- Presentations to EADC and municipal Councils for focused recommendations
- Incorporate staff and elected official feedback into objectives and policy recommendations
- Undertake virtual round table or other engagement with stakeholders
- Develop draft Policy Recommendation Report to be used by PRRD & local municipal staff in updating policy documents
- Return to PRRD Board with a comprehensive document for review and input across all recommendations

20



**Thank You to Directors, Staff, and
Stakeholders.**

Questions?