



Town of Morinville

# Community Housing Plan: *There's No Place Like Home*



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2009



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## i) ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Morinville CHP provides direction on the future of housing in Morinville in an integrated manner and is the result of valuable information and contributions made by numerous staff, volunteers, organizations, professionals and citizens. We gratefully acknowledge their time, expertise and interest in establishing the direction for a continuum of housing needs for Morinville.

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## ii) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Access to safe, affordable housing is fundamental to a community's economic and social well-being. The Town of Morinville endorses this principle and has expressed its commitment to helping provide its community with a wide range of housing choices. In 2008, the Morinville Town Council initiated a preliminary affordable housing review and has built on those findings with the development of this Community Housing Plan (CHP).

Although there are various roles that local governments can play in order to improve the affordability of housing in their municipalities, it is widely recognized that they lack sufficient financial and resource capacity to act alone. For the most effective results, a coordinated and concerted effort between senior governments, the private and non-profit sectors, community support agencies, and municipalities is needed. Ongoing and adequately funded programs to help create additional sources of permanent, affordable housing for low income households are also essential.

Within this context, the Morinville CHP examines the Town's role in addressing housing affordability. The Plan takes a multi-dimensional approach and is underpinned by a vision statement, values and goals.

The CHP takes a comprehensive approach to housing by promoting a diverse mix of housing types and tenures. This broader approach ensures consistency with the unique blend of individuals, families, age groups, income levels, and household characteristics in the community. It also identifies available resources and potential partnerships required to develop a continuum of community housing. The key objectives of the plan include:

1. A long-term vision for the provision of affordable housing in Morinville
2. Specific strategies, actions and financial requirements
3. Implementation plan with roles, responsibilities and timelines
4. A performance measurement and reporting framework

A wide range of strategies are available to address the community housing needs and current situation in Morinville. These methods will assist in reducing barriers and encourage or facilitate the development of affordable, safe, and appropriate housing options. They are:

1. Partnership Development
2. Communication & Education Strategy
3. Central Information Source
4. Rent Supplement Program
5. Land Use and Bylaws Changes

According to the *Capital Region Housing Plan*, 135 renter households are paying more than 30% of their income on rent.

The targets the Town has set to meet the current affordable housing deficit has been split between non- and near-market to market affordable units. The grant allocation will seek to address the following targets:

- 10-15+ market affordable units through partnerships (variable)
- 10-15+ market affordable units through incentives (variable)
- 20-30 near-market and market affordable rental units through secondary suites (assuming the Town grants \$5,000 - \$7,500 per unit)
- 15 non- and near-market units in rent supplement assistance (based on average of \$400 monthly supplements over two years)

**TOTAL: 50-75+ units**

The existing grant available from the Province of Alberta is \$739,884 and will be allocated in the following manner:

Capital Projects through Partnerships	\$433,000
Communication & Education	\$ 5,000
Rent Supplement Program	\$143,000
Secondary Suite Incentive Program	\$148,000
Project Implementation & Administration	\$ 10,884
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$739,884</b>

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Safe, adequate, and affordable housing has been long identified as a basic need for individuals and families. However, Alberta's recent economic history has created challenges for municipalities in making access to housing a reality.

A sustained economic boom fuelled tremendous growth in our province while dramatically increasing regional housing costs. More recently, the cooling of the real estate market and a sustained global economic recession has impacted Morinville's housing needs in a much different manner. Not only are residents confronted with much higher housing costs, but now they are also dealing with increased unemployment and economic uncertainty.

These economic realities demonstrate the need for a comprehensive, municipal plan examining housing issues. The key is to ensure that the community provides a wide variety of housing options that will meet residents' needs regardless of economic conditions. This will ensure that residents will not have to leave the community to find community housing, and will also develop Morinville as an attractive alternative to the larger municipalities of St. Albert and Edmonton for new arrivals to the Capital Region.

The Government of Alberta has also recognized the impacts that a growing population and economy have on local infrastructure and housing needs. In 2007 the Province developed the Municipal Sustainability Housing Program, which provides financial support to municipalities in addressing the affordable housing needs and priorities for families, individuals, seniors, and persons with special needs. The Province identified the Town of Morinville as a priority area and has allocated three-year financial support for affordable housing development.

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

In 2008 the Town of Morinville undertook an assessment of the housing needs and priorities for the community. The resulting document, the *Town of Morinville Preliminary Affordable Housing Report (Appendix A)*, indicated a number of housing gaps in Morinville and demonstrated that further action was required to meet the housing needs of Town residents.

Council endorsed the Preliminary Report on June 24, 2008 and further directed Administration to develop a housing plan that would include specific recommendations, provide implementation timelines, and clarify financial requirements. In order to continue the development of affordable housing programs and services in the Town of Morinville, a Community Housing Plan (CHP) was identified as a key strategic initiative in the *Town of Morinville 2009/2010 Interim Business Plan*.



## 1.2 PLAN SCOPE

This CHP takes a comprehensive approach to housing by promoting a diverse mix of housing types and tenures. This broader approach ensures consistency with the unique blend of individuals, families, age groups, income levels, and household characteristics in the community.

The scope of this plan also encompasses the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of housing, as well as its affordability. This philosophy will ensure that Morinville is positioned to house its current and future workforce and citizens, which will help make the Town more sustainable in the long run.

This CHP uses the *Town of Morinville Preliminary Affordable Housing Report* as its foundation, while providing additional research and detail regarding recommendations from that report. It is designed to provide recommendations for addressing the community's affordable housing needs.

The Plan identifies available resources and potential partnerships required to develop a comprehensive approach to a continuum of community housing. The key objectives of the Plan include:

1. A long-term vision for the provision of affordable housing in Morinville
2. Specific strategies, actions and financial requirements
3. Implementation plan with roles, responsibilities and timelines
4. A performance measurement and reporting framework

The CHP is a research-based document with a consultation process verifying its recommendations and plans for sufficient Administration, Council and community support. There is a significant body of knowledge related to the planning and practice of affordable and community housing that contributed to the development of the CHP. Relevant information was gathered from existing documentation and then evaluated through a filter of local applicability and sustainability.

The development of the CHP was guided by Morinville's corporate project management model. A project team with cross-functional representation was established to conduct research and produce plan deliverables. Overall project governance was provided by the Chief Administrative Officer and the Executive Management Team. For additional information related to the methodology used to guide the project, see the Project Charter in **Appendix B**.

To assist in a consistent approach to the project, the project team identified guiding principles that were used in Plan development and the evaluation of various strategies and initiatives. The principles help to ensure that the direction of the Plan:

- is accountable;

- is collaborative;
- promotes environmental stewardship;
- promotes integrated planning;
- respects local applicability;
- promotes sociability; and
- encourages financial stewardship.

Project principles are outlined in more detail in **Appendix C**.

A consultation plan was developed to guide internal and external stakeholder development in the project. The purpose of the consultation was to verify the local applicability of research-based initiatives to develop housing, assess organizational and community support for different methods and to gauge interest in future partnerships. The consultation plan and its outcomes can be found in **Appendix D**.

## 2.0 COMMUNITY HOUSING PLAN FOUNDATION

### 2.1 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE DIRECTION

Morinville is in the process of developing a Municipal Sustainability Plan, whose principles are integral to the development of the CHP. The effectiveness of sustainability policies can be measured by determining their impacts on the five main dimensions of sustainability, namely Cultural, Environmental, Economic, Governance, and Social. Recommended initiatives are evaluated with a view on their overall impact on the sustainability of the community.

### 2.2 ROLE OF MUNICIPALITY

Community housing is a responsibility of the provincial and federal governments. One method that they use to meet this responsibility is by providing grant funds to municipalities, who are then responsible for providing affordable housing services and promoting housing asset developments for residents. Local governments are then able to plan and develop programs and services that are more responsive to their local context. Municipalities are also where people reside, and the availability of adequate, affordable housing directly affects their sustainability and quality of life. As a result, municipal governments find themselves taking a leadership role regarding housing issues in order to provide efficient and effective use of public funds.

The role of the Town of Morinville in the area of community housing is:

- to identify housing needs in the community;
- determine sustainable initiatives to meet the identified needs; and
- mobilize both internal and external resources to implement the recommendations.

Municipalities in Alberta have a number of tools to promote, encourage, and require the development of Community Housing initiatives in their communities. The Town of Morinville has jurisdiction over the planning and orderly development of its municipality through the authority and responsibility provided by the Municipal Government Act. Statutory Plans such as Municipal Development Plans, Area Structure Plans and Land Use Bylaws may be amended to allow for increased densities, zoning for specific uses, and otherwise permit the development of non-market or near-market homes to meet community housing needs. In addition, municipalities have the ability to advocate strongly to the provincial and federal governments for additional monetary, non-monetary, and legislative tools to better position themselves to meet the housing needs of residents.

Resources available to the Town include:

- corporate monetary and non-financial resources as determined by the Morinville Town Council;
- development and construction companies active in the community;
- social service organizations as partners in service delivery;
- local service clubs and charitable organizations that may contribute volunteers and resources to housing programs;
- provincial and federal Affordable Housing funding programs;
- provincial rent supplement programs;
- neighbouring municipalities and regional partners;
- support from the AUMA and other municipal groups and associations; and,
- charitable community housing organizations.

## 2.3 PLAN VALUES, VISION, and GOALS

The CHP is underpinned by a series of statements and identifies various actions and initiatives that the Town can take on a number of fronts. This plan is based on the following statements:

### 2.3.1 Vision

That all residents of Morinville will be able to live in safe, appropriate housing that is affordable for their income level.

### 2.3.2 Values

1. **Sustainability.** The Town of Morinville is committed to a sustainable community, including affordable and safe housing for its residents.
2. **Diversity.** Affordable, suitable and adequate housing will be delivered in a range of sizes, tenures, types and locations across the community.
3. **Shared community responsibility.** The responsibility for delivering affordable housing units does not fall on the shoulders of any single stakeholder, and each partner assumes a role in that delivery. The Town will collaborate with senior government, its municipal neighbours, the region, the housing industry and community stakeholders in the interests of housing affordability.
4. **Seamless integration.** Every attempt will be made to integrate affordable housing into the existing fabric of the developed community rather than making it visibly distinct. The principle of social integration, of both neighbourhoods and housing developments, underlies the Town's approach to Community Housing.

5. **Regular implementation and monitoring.** The success of this plan will rest upon the ability of the Town to monitor progress over a multi-year period and make adjustments to ensure effectiveness.

### 2.3.3 Goals

To achieve the vision, planning should be based on the following goals:

1. To preserve and increase Morinville's stock of safe, affordable, appropriate housing.
2. To decrease the number of Morinville residents in housing need.
3. To support Morinville residents in moving through the stages of the housing continuum, from homelessness to independent market housing.

## 3.0 DETERMINATION OF NEED

### 3.1 DEFINITION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Morinville CHP establishes that a household is in core housing need if:

...a household cannot find somewhere to live that is modest, in reasonably good condition, and is sufficient to meet their needs without spending more than 30% of their gross household income on rent or mortgage costs.

This definition is consistent with that used by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. When referring to community housing, however, there are additional components to address along with the cost of housing and the ability to pay.

### 3.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

This section provides an overview on the current socio-economic, demographic, and housing profile for Morinville. The housing gap and priority needs are then determined by analyzing this information in conjunction with lifestyle and Community Housing continuums.

For more detailed information on Town socio-economic and demographic characteristics, see **Appendix E**.

#### 3.2.1 Population

Between 2001 and 2006, the population of Morinville has grown by 3.6% (Table 1). This change in population is not as significant as the Province (10.6%) and the City of Edmonton (9.6%). However, compared to other rural municipalities in the region the trend is still positive, e.g. Gibbons (-0.5%), Bon Accord (0.1%).

Between 2006 and 2008 the impact of recent economic growth in the region is readily apparent with a 6.7% increase in population in just two years. Additional growth of 5.6% occurred again in 2009. This growth fuelled a rapid increase in housing costs that has negatively affected their affordability. Housing costs have stabilized more recently, although they remain out of reach of many residents.

**Table 1: Population Growth**

	2009	2008	2006	2001	1996
Morinville Population	7,636	7,228	6,775	6,541	6,226
Population Change (%)	5.6	6.7	3.6	5.1	-

Source: Morinville 2008 Census Report

### 3.2.2 Age Characteristics

In 2006, the median age of residents was 33.7, an increase over the 2001 figure of 31.3 (Table 2). The increase in median age mirrors the national trend toward an aging population.

**Table 2: Morinville Age Characteristics, 1996-2008**

	2008*	2006	2001	1996
% of the population aged 0-14 years	21.8	22.4	26.3	30.2
% of the population aged 15-64 years	71.3	69.7	64.4	64.6
% of the population aged 65 years and over	6.9	8.0	6.3	5.4
Median Age	33.6	33.7	31.3	30.2

Source: Morinville 2008 Census Report

When the median age of Morinville residents is compared with other municipalities in the region a pattern emerges showing that rural communities have a slightly younger population than urban municipalities (Table 3). This indicates the need for housing options supporting young adults and families.

**Table 3: Median Age Comparisons Across the Region**

	Bon Accord	Gibbons	Morinville	St. Albert	Edmonton
Median Age (2006 Census)	33.4	33.1	33.7	38.2	36.1

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census.

### 3.2.3 Low-income Families

Statistics Canada uses Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) thresholds to identify people in a low-income bracket. Table 4 shows the 2006 and 2005 before-tax Low Income Cut-Off for rural communities. According to this information, 5.5% of Morinville residents devoted a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing than the average family would.

**Table 4: 2006 Before-Tax Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) for Rural Communities**

Family Size	LICO 2006	LICO 2005
1 person	\$14,596	\$14,303
2 persons	\$18,170	\$17,807
3 persons	\$22,338	\$21,891
4 persons	\$27,122	\$26,579
5 persons	\$30,760	\$30,145
6 persons	\$34,694	\$33,999
7 or more persons	\$38,626	\$37,853

Source: Statistics Canada, Income Research Paper Series, 2008

The before-tax Low Income Measure or LIM is a second calculation of low income that is available from 2005 Taxfiler information (Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administration Data Division). Boundary alignments between Census Subdivision and Taxfiler information are different, as the Taxfiler data is based on postal code. However, the information is considered to be a reasonable representation of the Town. The 2005 Taxfiler Family Income data shows that 370 Morinville families (16%) made less than \$39,000 in 2005 (Table 5).

**Table 5: 2005 Morinville Family Income, Taxfiler Data**

Family Income	Numbers of Families (2005)	%
Less than &19,999	120	5%
\$20,00 - \$39, 000	250	11%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	320	15%
\$60,000 and over	1,500	68%
Total number of families	2,190	100%
Average family income	\$73,957	
Median family income	\$79,800	

Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division, 2005



### 3.3 HOUSING PROFILE

#### 3.3.1 Ownership Accommodation

A detailed summary of housing tenure, age, condition and supply are included in **Appendix E**. An overview of the housing profile for the Town of Morinville includes:

- 86% of the housing in Morinville is owned and 14% is rental accommodations,
- almost 80% of all private homes are single-detached dwellings, with row housing making up 7% of the dwelling type; and
- the majority of the ownership market is in the \$35,000 - \$449,000 price range

To help understand affordability issues for housing ownership, Table 6 provides a comparison between the household income required to purchase a home, and the current listings of homes available for sale in Morinville.

**Table 6: Housing Affordability: Ownership Accommodations**

Household Income (\$)	Approximate House Price (32% of income) <sup>1</sup>	Current Listings <sup>2</sup> September 11, 2009
15,000-19,999	\$60,116-\$80,152	
20,000-24,999	\$80,153-\$100,204	
25,000-29,999	\$100,205-\$120,231	
30,000-34,999	\$120,232-\$140,267	
35,000-39,999	\$140,268-\$160,604	1 apartment
40,000-44,999	\$160,605-\$180,346	2 apartments, 1 townhome condo
45,000-49,999	\$180,347-\$200,383	1 duplex, 1 apartment
50,000-59,999	\$200,384-\$240,462	1 apartments, 4 single family
60,000-74,999	\$240,463-\$300,578	1 apartment, 1 duplex, 10 single family
75,000-99,999	\$300,579-\$400,767	1 duplex, 21 single family
100,000+	\$400,767+	24 single family

Source: <sup>1</sup>St. Albert Community Housing Strategy 2006, <sup>2</sup>MLS Listing September 11, 2009

#### 3.3.2 Rental Accommodations

According to the 2006 Federal Census, 5% of occupied dwellings in Morinville are apartments in buildings with fewer than five storeys. In early 2009, there were 161 apartment building rental units in the local market.

The strong Alberta economy has had a significant impact on Morinville's apartment rental market. The average apartment vacancy and rental rates for 2004-2008 are listed below in Table 7.

**Table 7: Average Morinville Apartment Vacancy and Rental Rates**

	Dwelling Type	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	% change
Vacancy Rate	All Units	12.8	3.4	0	2.7	2.0	-10.8
	1 Bedroom	12.3	3.1	0	0	2.2	-10.1
	2 Bedroom	13.1	3.6	0	4.8	1.8	-11.3
Average Rent	All Units	648	658	693	815	937	44.6
	1 Bedroom	586	581	616	755	816	39.2
	2 Bedroom	695	710	751	861	993	42.9

Source: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2008.

In March 2009, the Capital Region Board released its *Capital Region Housing Plan*. The Plan indicates that in 2006 there were 135 renter households in Morinville paying more than 30% of their income on rent. This identifies a clear backlog of affordable rental units in the community.

### 3.4 LIFECYCLE HOUSING CONTINUUM

The lifecycle housing continuum is a useful tool to examine the community housing needs for a municipality (Table 8). The model demonstrates that a diverse type of housing must be available in municipalities to ensure that residents have sufficient housing opportunities to meet their needs at various points in their lifecycle.

**Table 8: Lifecycle Housing Continuum**

Life Stage	Typical Housing Need
Childhood	Live with parents or guardians in either a young or established family home.
Young Adult / Student	Apartment rental or dormitory
Young Family	Starter home ownership of either a townhouse or a smaller single family detached home.
Established Family	Larger single family detached home.
Empty Nesters	Smaller townhouse or single family detached home.
Senior Citizens	Apartment or condominium rental/ownership
Elderly Senior Citizens	Senior's Lodge or Assisted Living facilities

For instance, should a shortage of apartments for rental or purchase exist in a community it may result in forcing many young adults or senior citizens to seek housing elsewhere to meet their needs. A lack of townhouses or starter homes will result in young families purchasing homes in other communities. This demonstrates the potential demographic impact of shortages of specific housing types.

### 3.5 COMMUNITY HOUSING CONTINUUM

The Community Housing Continuum depicted below is often cited in illustrating the broad spectrum of housing needs of the many socio-economic groups present in all Alberta municipalities (Table 9).

**Table 9: Community Housing Continuum**

Home Ownership	Home is owned by its residents.
Rental	Home is owned by a landlord and rented by the occupants.
Subsidized Housing	Home is rented by the occupants and the rent is subsidized to enable basic needs are met.
Transitional Housing	Housing of a temporary nature for the purpose of allowing individuals and families to move from a dependent condition to independent living.
Emergency Shelter	Shelter of a temporary nature for persons in medical, domestic, or economic crisis until more permanent housing can be found.
Homeless	Basic housing needs are not met due to the lack of a fixed address.

There are many reasons why an individual or family may move up and down the continuum at various points in their lives. For example, a family may move from home ownership to transitional housing due to a medical crisis, move to rental housing once the crisis has passed, and then potentially return to home ownership once their financial situation has returned to normal. It is essential to remember not only the reasons for movement up and down the continuum, but the fact that in order to sustain a healthy social environment all communities should have identified strategies for meeting the needs of residents at various points along the continuum.

It is also important to note that the presence of the homeless in communities is sometimes not clearly apparent. In Morinville the situation of “squatters” is more common than “the visible homeless”. In this circumstance the homeless individuals or families will live with friends or relatives on a temporary basis. Many simply move from one home to another until either this no longer becomes an option or they are able to secure housing.

### 3.6 TARGETED POPULATION SEGMENTS

After completing the analysis of the socio-economic and demographic information and the housing profile for Morinville, it has been determined that adequate, suitable, affordable housing is not available to the following segments of the population:

- low-income individuals, i.e. those in with core need income thresholds;
- one-person households (13.5% of Morinville’s population);

- young adults (20% of Morinville’s population is 20-34 years old);
- single-parent families; and
- individuals leaving abusive situations; and individuals with physical or mental challenges requiring support services.

## 3.7 HOUSING GAPS IN MORINVILLE

### 3.7.1 Priority Gaps

According to the *Capital Region Housing Plan*, 135 renter households are paying more than 30% of their income on rent. The *Capital Region Housing Plan* further states that, “housing prices have surpassed affordability of many households in the Region due to high construction and land costs. Builders have focused much on larger single detached dwellings rather than on alternative or innovative designs, which has caused part of the problem with affordability. This is particularly true in municipalities outside of Edmonton, forcing many households to move outside of their community in search of affordable housing (pg. 19).”

A further analysis of the data in conjunction with the housing continuums identifies four priority housing gaps for Morinville:

#### 1. Family and Singles-oriented Community Housing:

A number of families and singles are earning income of less than \$19,999 annually. It is unlikely that market ownership housing can be provided at prices these households can afford. Rental accommodations for families within this income bracket are severely limited and rental accommodations for singles earning less than \$19,999 are virtually non-existent.

This target group requires rent-geared to income housing; however, the only housing available of this type in Morinville is for seniors.

#### 2. Near-Market Housing

Near-market housing is based on the lowest end of the entry-level market housing. Rental properties are to be at least 10% below Market Rent and ownership is not to exceed 30% of median income. As of January 2009 there were no listings for housing that would allow for a family making \$39,999 to purchase a home while spending less than 32% of their income on a mortgage.

Near market housing is necessary for singles and families of all ages who are earning lower incomes. This includes resident employed in lower-paying service and manufacturing industry jobs, lone parent, and other single-income households, youth moving out of the family home, and persons on fixed incomes.

According to 2005 Taxfiler Family Income data, 16% of Morinville families made less than \$39,000.

### 3. Entry-level Market Housing

Entry-level homes are described as the lowest 25% of homes sold in any given year. The private housing market provides some entry-level housing, but as the price threshold increases this form of housing is unavailable to families making less than \$39,000 per year.

This form of housing is necessary for families and single entering the housing market for the first time, low and moderate income families, empty nesters and seniors looking to downsize.

### 4. Special Needs Housing

Morinville does not currently have special needs housing for individuals with issues related to developmental disabilities, mental health, adolescent treatment, or safe housing for abused women and their children. For the most part these population groups will be best served in larger municipalities such as St. Albert and Edmonton, although some level of transition housing would be beneficial to support current residents requiring short-term housing support.

## 3.7.2 Housing Targets

The targets to meet the current housing deficit in Morinville have been split between non- and near-market to market affordable units. The grant allocation will address the following targets:

- 10-15+ market affordable units through partnerships (variable)
- 10-15+ market affordable units through incentives (variable)
- 20-30 near-market and market affordable rental units through secondary suites (assuming the Town grants \$5,000 - \$7,500 per unit)
- 15 non- and near-market units in rent supplement assistance (based on average of \$400 monthly supplements over two years)

**TOTAL: 50-75+ units**

The remaining backlog of 55 - 85 units plus annual requirements (**Table 10**) would need to be developed over time through other funding options.

**Table 10: Annual Non-Market and Market Housing Requirements by House Type, Town of Morinville, 2009-2018**

House Type	Annual Housing Requirements 2008-2013				Annual Housing Requirements 2013-2018			
	Non Market	Market Afford	Pure Market	Total	Non Market	Market Afford	Pure Market	Total
Single Detached	0	0	21	21	0	0	25	25
Semi/Row	4	4	0	8	6	6	0	12
Apartment	1	1	0	2	2	2	0	4
Manufactured	2	2	0	4	2	2	0	4
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>45</b>

## 4.0 FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING

There are daunting costs associated with developing community housing assets. The increasing costs of land, building materials, and building trades present a significant barrier to the development of affordable housing. Even with a recent modest reduction in the construction market, land values and construction costs are significantly higher than a few years ago. It is important to outline funding options and initiatives for the sustainable development of community housing assets.

Of particular note, however, is that several of the initiatives put forward in the CHP are aimed at improving overall community housing affordability without the large expenditure of capital dollars. Proposed land use incentives, process improvements, and fee relief have been introduced to provide the private sector with the opportunity to improve housing affordability without huge implications for property taxes in the community.

### 4.1 FUNDING OPTIONS

The main revenue streams available for the funding of affordable housing development consist of:

1. Federal and provincial grant programs;
2. Funds from future project partners;
3. Revenues from future housing assets; and
4. Additional funds contributed by the Town of Morinville.

#### 4.1.1 Grant Programs

Grant programs remain the single largest source of affordable housing funding. These programs are governed by the criteria established by the federal or provincial governments that administer them. These two levels of government typically acknowledge having an important role in the provision of affordable housing and establish grant funding programs to help municipalities meet this responsibility. Funding levels and criteria are subject to change. These funds should primarily be used for capital projects, with only a secondary focus on transitional programs.

An example of these programs is the “Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program” (RRAP) for implementing secondary and garden suites. This program is available through CMHC to all Canadians in the form of a grant of up to \$24,000.

### 4.1.2 Partnership Funds

Current grant programs require that 30% of project funding come from sources other than the province. In order to ensure that this requirement does not impact the property tax base, it is recommended that projects only proceed with the addition of funding/resources from an appropriate partner. This will result in increasing the development time of projects due to the additional activities required to recruit an appropriate partner. However, over the long-term community housing assets will be developed and enhanced without additional demands on property tax rates in Morinville.

### 4.1.3 Revenue Generation

Rental fees will be collected from residents of community housing assets. These rental rates will of course be below market rates, and may or may not cover expenses. The revenue being gathered will either contribute to cover any financing costs incurred to construct the dwellings, or to ongoing operational program expenses. This will be a smaller source of funds, but it will remain relatively stable over the lifespan of housing assets, and should assist in covering administrative and operational costs.

### 4.1.4 Additional Municipal Funds

The Town of Morinville may contribute additional funding as determined by Council. These funds may be collected through a variety of methods such as linkage programs (including levies or other special financing options), or may come directly from property taxes as determined by Council.

### 4.1.5 Capital Project Initiatives

An inventory of municipally-owned land completed by the CHP Project Team clearly indicates that many of the municipally-owned properties in the community are community green spaces. The development of green spaces is not recommended in this plan as it will have a longer term negative impact on overall community sustainability by reducing opportunities for leisure and recreation. Additionally, the existence of green spaces contributes to the overall positive quality of life and environment of the community. Any change of use from a green space must be carefully examined to ensure that the loss of space in one area does not result in a net loss of public space in the overall community.

This challenge may be addressed by developing a long-term strategy to change the way in which surplus municipal property is disposed of. In cases where the Town would like to dispose of surplus property, its applicability for community housing should be evaluated before the property is sold or otherwise disposed of.



In light of this shortage, it is advisable that capital projects are undertaken only with an appropriate partner that can provide the 30% matching funds, or land resources equal to or greater than the 30% requirement. Requests for Proposals are recommended to increase the opportunity to develop innovative and sustainable approaches to community housing developments.

## 4.2 EXISTING FUNDING

The grant provided to Morinville from the Government of Alberta is \$739,884:

- 2007 – 2008: \$266,440
- 2008 – 2009: \$184,993
- 2009 – 2010: \$288,451

Morinville’s Long Range Capital Financial Plan includes an allowance of \$200,000 to meet the requirement of 30% of capital project funding from other sources. This has been identified as a precaution in the event that no other sources of funds or partnerships are found. The grant will be allocated in the following manner:

Capital Projects through Partnerships	\$433,000
Communication & Education	\$ 5,000
Rent Supplement Program	\$143,000
Secondary Suite Incentive Program	\$148,000
Project Implementation & Administration	\$ 10,884
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$739,884</b>

## 5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

A wide range of strategies are available to address the community housing needs in Morinville. These methods will assist in reducing barriers and encourage or facilitate the development of affordable, safe, and appropriate housing options.

### 5.1 PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Advocacy for Morinville's housing issues and needs and participation in and support of local, regional and provincial housing initiatives and partnerships will be critical to achieving the vision and goals of the Plan.

Community housing is a complex issue, and partnerships with not-for-profit organizations, private companies, and other orders of government are necessary for success. As the Town of Morinville moves forward on the implementation of the CHP, it will be important to collaborate with other entities, such as the City of St. Albert and its rent supplement program, the Sturgeon Foundation, private developers and other community stakeholders.

According to the block funding agreement with the province, a project may only be 70% funded with money provided by the province. Therefore, the 30% must either come directly from the municipality or an outside funding partner. It is recommended that a private sector (for-profit or not-for-profit) partner be found that can contribute the required 30% in order to keep community housing asset development away from the property tax base.

A further opportunity for additional funding exists in the Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs Affordable Housing Program. This program is committed to developing over 11,000 affordable housing units in Alberta by the year 2012. This program provides some additional funding that will increase the number of affordable units available.

### 5.2 COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION STRATEGY

A Communication and Education Strategy is needed to increase public awareness of housing needs, issues and opportunities for action. This will ensure that the implementation of community housing initiatives proceeds with minimal opposition, and that the existing market of affordable housing is used to its full capacity.

A potentially significant barrier to future affordable housing capital development is the potential for "not-in-my-backyard" opposition that makes the placement of community housing assets difficult. Additionally, many landlords, home builders and developers may be reluctant to participate in affordable housing initiatives due to the negative social stigma attached to affordable housing. Stereotyping of individuals and families that utilize affordable housing unfortunately occurs in many communities and can pose real obstacles

in locating community housing assets, as well as identifying willing partners to participate as landlords in rent supplement programs or other programs and services.

In order for the CHP to be effective, the negative myths associated with affordable housing and the tenants of affordable housing developments must be very directly countered. This is all the more relevant in Morinville, which lacks some existing successful community housing facilities to draw attention to. Many people do not realize that current housing costs make housing a challenge for many middle-class individuals and families. The negative stereotypes of drug use and gang violence in lower-income districts would in large part not apply to Morinville, with the Town's housing initiatives going to support residents who are already living here and who are not involved in criminal activity.

The Communication & Education Strategy will take a social marketing approach to create awareness and alleviate concerns related to "Not In My Backyard" (NIMBY) issues.

### **5.3 CENTRAL INFORMATION SOURCE**

There is currently no central information source for individuals to find housing in Morinville. Interested parties must consult newspapers and websites on their own and contact individual renters directly. Additionally, with no previous affordable housing programs in Morinville, there is no established location for those in need of affordable housing to go. This information gap must be minimized to ensure that residents and potential residents may more easily utilize the existing market of housing to meet their needs.

A central information source is needed to allow for the most effective use of market and public resources in addressing the needs of residents. This information must be made easily accessible and available in a number of different forms. The tools used to develop and distribute information include:

- online posting of information on the Town's website;
- the use of advertisements in the local paper; and
- the development of print pamphlets for distribution at key locations in the community.

### **5.4 RENT SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM**

Rent supplement programs are commonly implemented in many communities as a tool to meet the needs of low income families and individuals. Essentially, such a program would subsidize a qualified applicant's rent by the difference between the normal market rate and a lower rate as established by the program standards. There are a wide variety of methods used to distribute rent supplement funding, from payments directly to tenants, payments to landlords, flat subsidization rates, variable rates, and other variants. Regardless of the method of implementation, the basic concept remains the same. These programs assist in transitioning many families from dependent to independent situations.

Rent supplement programs provide a cost effective method to address community housing without requiring the construction of costly capital assets. Additionally, as the primary resource is rent supplement funding, rent supplement programs are a flexible way to address affordable housing. The criteria for the program can be quickly modified to meet changing economic realities and market conditions. These programs also increase the integration and social inclusion of community housing clients, as the program may be applied to existing rental properties and not tied to specific developments.

The negative aspects of rent supplement programs are that they do not generate revenue to contribute to ongoing sustainability, can result in difficulties for tenants to find accommodations, can create difficulties in setting reasonable supplement rates, and often do not assist with damage deposits. Competition for accommodations can be difficult, especially in high growth markets, and clients reliant on rent supplement programs are placed at a disadvantage in applying for rental accommodations. Landlords are sometimes less likely to accept a tenant known to be enrolled in a rent supplement program due to long-term uncertainty surrounding the tenant's ability to pay.

Market forces can fluctuate rapidly as well, resulting in rent supplement payments that are either too high or too low to appropriately meet the needs of tenants and landlords. High payments will result in an overall reduction in the number of tenants that may be assisted at any one point in time, and payments that are too low may increase the difficulty for tenants to find accommodations.

### **Rent Supplement Criteria**

The following eligibility criteria have been used by other communities to ensure that the primary focus of rent supplement funding is on assisting individuals and families afford reasonably adequate rental accommodations. Examples of criteria include:

- a household income at or below established Core Needs Income Threshold as established by CMHC and Alberta Urban Affairs and Housing;
- be over 18 years of age;
- be Morinville residents for a minimum of six months;
- current address be a fixed address in Morinville;
- currently pay more than 30% of gross income towards rent and heat for their home;
- own less than \$7,000 in assets;
- currently not be collecting other financial assistance related to housing;
- currently not be living in a subsidized housing or residential care facility funded by Alberta Senior & Community Supports;
- currently not be holding a mortgage;
- be living in a dwelling that meets modesty requirements.

Eligibility would be based on priority of need and available spaces. Resource referrals would also be provided to the applicant to assist in obtaining independence. Every effort

would be made to develop partnerships with non-profit organizations that already perform these types of referral services.

## 5.5 LAND USE POLICY and BYLAW

The Town's land use policies and bylaws direct community planning and these can be adapted to change the housing supply in new and existing developments. A review of possible policy and bylaw changes identified secondary suites and market incentives as ways that land use planning could contribute to supplying affordable housing options.

### 5.5.1 Secondary Suites

Many municipalities have adopted land use policy and bylaw changes that permit Secondary Suites in existing and new residential areas. These suites provide a relatively easy and low cost way of quickly increasing the rental unit supply to meet affordable housing goals. The inclusion of Secondary Suites as development option is possible by amendment of the Land Use Bylaw.

Secondary Suites may be implemented in basements, by housing unit partition, "garden Suites" and as rooms set above garages. Legalizing Secondary Suites have many recognised land use benefits including:

- providing an increase in the total rental market inventory of affordable units, and they tend to be more affordable than apartments;
- providing a modest increase of population density without increasing building density which can increase the viability of nearby commercial and public services;
- increasing the likelihood that landlords will report the existence of tenants resulting in more accurate census counts;
- improving access to the home ownership market by generating revenue for a new or lower income homeowner to assist in making mortgage payments;
- improving the ability for seniors and fixed income groups to remain in their homes; and,
- they present an opportunity to provide care for elderly or otherwise dependent family members that would be unable to live independently.

Currently the Secondary Suite use type is defined in Morinville's Land Use Bylaw No. 4/2003 as "...a subordinate self-contained dwelling unit, separate from the dwelling unit in a single detached dwelling, having a common access with the primary dwelling unit." However, the use is not listed in any district as either a permitted or discretionary use, and because of that it is not legally permitted within the Town.

The amendment to the Land Use Bylaw for the legalization of Secondary Suites is a public process, and it can be received negatively by certain segments of the public. However, it is often possible to use special use regulations to ensure these concerns are mitigated recognising the overall benefit. Some examples of mitigation would include secondary suites being limited to parcels of a certain size, having a prescribed distance between

dwellings with suites, and/or other similar regulations intended to prevent ‘too many’ secondary suites in a given area.

### 5.5.2 Market Incentives

The development of new affordable housing units by the private sector is often made difficult due to the developer’s desire to maximise profits on any given project. As new construction is important to addressing community housing needs it is often seen desirable to encourage it by the provision of incentives that provide or enhance developer profitability.

Incentives a municipality may use to encourage developer participation including:

- reducing municipal application and processing fees,
- reducing/streamlining application processing timelines,
- expediting affordable housing development applications; and,
- increasing the development density allowed in a district when providing affordable units.

The effectiveness of these incentives is arguably most beneficial in larger municipalities; however, all of these methods could be considered for their inclusion in Town processes over time.

## 6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION ITEMS

### 6.1 PRIORITY ACTIONS

The following constitutes the priority listing of action items to be undertaken as a part of a comprehensive and coordinated response to providing Community Housing in Morinville.

The Action Items are listed and described in order of their priority and potential to produce results. This potential is expressed as a number of dwelling units for community housing. The last two columns indicate the potential partners who have could participate or lead these actions and the time frame for execution.

Finally, the Funding Source section for each Action Item indicates how it will be funded.

The numbers contained in the Plan are targets that we believe are possible to achieve through the Action Items proposed.

Actions may result in the targets being exceeded in some areas, but activity in these areas may continue if ongoing monitoring indicates that there is an ongoing, demonstrable community need.

Priority Number	Action Item/Policy	Community Housing Units Created	Who?	When?
1.	<b>Build units through partnerships with and within the private and non-profit sectors</b>			
	All sectors of the community should be facilitating and engaging in partnerships and contracts to create Community Housing and employee housing. The Town facilitates construction of units. 1. Town with builders 2. Town with not-for-profit organizations 3. Town with employee housing builders 4. Businesses with employee housing builders	10 – 15+ units	Town of Morinville to lead in establishing partnerships / contracts  Businesses / Builders  Non-Profits	Mid – long term
	FUNDING SOURCE: MSHP Grant allocation \$433,000; Town staff time contribution			

<b>2.</b>	<b>Communication &amp; Education</b>			
	A Communication and Education/ Social Marketing Plan is needed to increase public awareness of housing needs, issues and opportunities for action. This will ensure that the implementation of community housing initiatives proceeds with minimal opposition, and that the existing market of Community Housing is used to its full capacity.	NA	Town of Morinville	Short Term
	FUNDING SOURCE: MSHP Grant allocation \$5,000; Town staff time contribution.			
<b>3.</b>	<b>Create a Central Information Source</b>			
	There is currently no central information source for individuals to find housing in Morinville.  A central information source is needed to allow for the most effective use of market and public resources in addressing the needs of residents. This information must be made easily accessible and available in a number of different forms.	NA	Town of Morinville	Short Term
	FUNDING SOURCE: Town staff time contribution.			
<b>4.</b>	<b>Develop a Rent Supplement Program</b>			
	This program would subsidize a qualified applicant's rent by the difference between the normal market rate and a lower rate as established by the program standards. There are a wide variety of methods used to distribute rent supplement funding, from payments directly to tenants,	15 (supplement over 2 years)	Town of Morinville in partnership with Non-profit organization	Mid Term



	payments to landlords, flat subsidization rates, variable rates, and other variants. These programs assist in transitioning many families from dependent to independent situations.			
	FUNDING SOURCE: MSHP Grant allocation \$143,000; Town staff time contribution.			
<b>5.</b>	<b>Secondary Suite Bylaw and Incentive Program</b>			
	Land Use Bylaw amendments so that regulations related to secondary suites are allowed in most if not all residential land use areas. This will allow for the legalization of existing illegal suites.  Create and implement municipal incentives program to facilitate the creation of new accessory suites.	20 - 30 units	Town of Morinville	Mid Term
	FUNDING SOURCE: MSHP Grant allocation \$148,000 ; Town staff time contribution			
<b>6.</b>	<b>Market Incentives Review</b>			
	Review municipal policy or regulations to consider incentives to developers to provide Affordable Housing units.	10 – 15+ units	Town of Morinville	Mid term
	FUNDING SOURCE: Town staff time contribution			
<b>TOTAL</b>		50 – 75+ Units		

## 6.2 OTHER ACTIONS

These are several action items that have not been assigned any priority, time line, responsibility or resources. It is intended that once action items are completed from the above list, new items can be drawn from the remaining items below, in the manner of a menu. This will avoid the need to comprehensively revisit a new list of action items as the plan is implemented and evaluated. Items can be removed or added as desired during periodic reviews of the Plan.

### 6.2.1 Accessing More Government Funds

Undertake research to discover what affordable housing funding sources and programs are available and then distribute this information.

### 6.2.2 Mixed Use Building Regulations and Incentives

Incentives (non-fiscal) could be introduced through Land Use Bylaw amendments to encourage the construction of affordable housing on the second and third floors above retail and similar commercial uses.

### 6.2.3 Housing Diversity

Review methods that could ensure the construction of a diversity of housing types to address identifiable gaps in the affordable housing supply. This may take the form of incentive programs or policies to encourage rental apartments or other forms of affordable medium or higher density residential units.

### 6.2.4 Model for Businesses to Acquire Housing

Further research on specific financial business models and practices / programs that can be used to assist recipients in finding market or affordable housing, e.g. down payment assistance may be useful in helping businesses find lodging for employees.

### 6.2.5 Evaluation of Alternate Construction Methods

Partnerships and stakeholders should evaluate and test new and innovative methods of construction such as pre-fabricated units, modular construction and manufactured homes that have the potential to substantially reduce the cost of construction per square foot.

### 6.2.6 Investment Model Options

Researching further investment options for investing in affordable housing projects may prove useful

### 6.2.7 Construction of a Hostel

It may be possible to find a location for a hostel facility for short term accommodation / transitional housing for those first arriving in the community. Investigating alternative grant sources may also prove worthwhile.

## 7.0 MEASURING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As part of any CHP, ongoing monitoring and assessment ensures that the outcomes are effectively meeting the original objectives. An annual audit of accomplishments is suggested. The following indicators are suggested as a basis for this annual audit.

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Indicators, measured over time</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
To preserve and increase Morinville's supply of safe, affordable, and appropriate housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of new units by housing type and location</li> <li>• Median price by housing type</li> <li>• Number of new units of non-market housing by housing type, provider and location</li> <li>• Number of small lots created</li> <li>• Number of secondary suites legalized</li> <li>• Number of secondary suites decommissioned</li> <li>• Number of new single detached homes built "suite-ready"</li> <li>• Number of new, purpose-built rental units</li> <li>• Amount of non-market housing (land and units) secured through contract with the Town</li> <li>• Number of rental units lost through conversion to strata titling/demolition</li> <li>• Rental vacancy rate; rental rates</li> </ul>	Town of Morinville  Real Estate Board  Assessment Authority  CMHC
To decrease the number of Morinville residents in need of affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of households in core need</li> <li>• Number of households by type who make less than the median income</li> </ul>	Statistics Canada/CMHC  Statistics Canada taxfiler data

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordability by household type: rental, ownership</li> </ul>	Real Estate Board
To support Morinville's residents in moving through the stages of the housing continuum, from homelessness to independent market housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people who are homeless in Morinville</li> <li>• Number of food bank users</li> <li>• Number of residents receiving income assistance</li> <li>• Number of first-time home buyers</li> </ul>	Regional and local homelessness count data  Local service providers Alberta Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance  Real Estate Board

## 8.0 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Morinville has shown commitment to building a sustainable community that ensures that all who choose to live here can do so affordably. Housing needs remain varied and complex. It takes multiple, sometimes controversial, approaches to make headway on affordability issues, and a strong network of government, community and business partners to help people move through stages of the housing continuum.

The proposed actions of this strategy will make a significant contribution towards maintaining and strengthening community housing in the Town of Morinville.

## GLOSSARY

**Average Market Rent:** The average rent or lease rate for the area, based on Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporate and Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs annual market rental surveys for where the Community Housing Approved Project is located.

**Capital Costs:** The costs to acquire, construct or renovate a capital asset, including material, labour, land, servicing and soft costs, and any cost required to bring a site, building or unit into compliance with all applicable codes and legislation, including environmental legislation.

**Community Housing:** Housing that is modest in terms of floor area and amenities, that meets household needs, and that rents or leases below market rent in the community or area in which the unit is located.

**Core Need Income Threshold:** The maximum income limits used to assess income eligibility for Provincial subsidized housing programs, as set annually and provided by the Minister

**Entry-level Market Ownership Housing:** The lowest 25% of homes sold in any given year for households entering the housing market or downsizing.

**Low Income Cut-Off (LICO):** Income thresholds, determined by analysing family expenditure data, below which families will devote a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family would. To reflect differences in the costs of necessities among different community and family sizes, LICOs are defined for five categories of community size and seven of family size.

**Low Income Measures (LIMs):** Relative measures of low income, set at 50% of adjusted median family income. These measures are categorized according to the number of adults and children present in families, reflecting the economies of scale inherent in family size and composition.

**Market Housing:** Housing within the community that rents or leases at rates at or near average market rent.

**Near-Market Housing:** The lowest end of the entry-level market housing Rental properties is at least 10% below Market Rent and Ownership is not to exceed 30% of median income.

**Non-Market Housing:** Housing provided for individuals or families unable to attain reasonable housing without paying in excess of 30% of their gross income.

**Ownership Costs:** The costs incurred in paying for housing, including payments for mortgage principle and interest, property taxes, and payments for utilities such as water, fuel, and electricity. Such costs also include condominium fees, where the dwelling is a condominium (CMHC).

**Project Rent:** The rate(s) charged for affordable and transitional housing units that is less than average market rent for similar accommodation in the community and reflects the target household's ability to pay.

**Rental Costs:** Housing costs including rent and payments for utilities such as water, fuel, and electricity, where they are paid separately from rent (CMHC).

**Special Needs Housing:** Stable, supportive housing for those in need of ongoing support or services.

**Subsidized Housing:** Housing provided on a rent-geared-to-income basis with government subsidies covering a proportion of the costs.

**Transitional Housing:** Short-term housing that is safe and secure and enables families and individuals to achieve a higher level of sustainable independence.





Background Report  
**PRELIMINARY  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
REPORT**

**Contextualizing affordable housing in Morinville and providing initial recommendations for the Community Housing Plan.**

**June 2008**

**Part of a series of CHP background reports and studies.**



**Town of • Ville de  
Morinville**

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this report are for informational purposes only, and do not reflect the official policy or position of either the Town of Morinville or the Morinville Community Housing Plan Project Team.



# Town Of Morinville



## Affordable Housing Preliminary Report



Prepared for: Community Services  
Prepared by: [www.communityconsulting](http://www.communityconsulting.com)

June 2008



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Deanna Lewis	Chamber of Commerce
Dianne Johnstone	Home Builders Association
Gary Pool	Rendez-Vous Club
Gilles Boudreau	St. Vincent de Paul
Jim Newman	Sturgeon Regional Economic Development
Karen Gusak	Morinville United Church
Marguerite Bosvik	Sturgeon Foundation
Nicole Church	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

## 1.0 Introduction

In recent years, the Province of Alberta has experienced strong economic and labour market conditions, resulting in net in-migration and rapid population growth. This trend brings both opportunities and challenges for municipalities. Addressing affordable housing shortfalls and meeting the needs of individuals and families are key issues in many communities in Alberta.

Some of the specific challenges facing Morinville include a rise in housing costs (both home ownership and rental prices), the general rise in the cost of living (e.g., utilities, food and transportation), and low vacancy rates. In recognition of these challenges, Council made a commitment to being “flexible and responsible in accommodating the housing demand” (Town of Morinville 2007 Business Plan).

The Government of Alberta also recognizes that a growing population and economy trigger service delivery and infrastructure challenges at the municipal level. In 2007, *The Alberta Affordable Housing Task Force Report* was completed and funding was announced. Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing initiated a three-year Municipal Sustainability Housing Program and a one-year Capital Enhancement Grant Program to specifically help municipalities address immediate housing needs and increase the supply of affordable housing. The Program is a component of the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI), which provides municipalities with capital funding until 2017.

In May 2007, the Town of Morinville was notified that it qualified for “category two” block funding through this Program. In order to receive the grant, an Affordable Housing Plan, which identifies and addresses the housing needs and priorities for families, individuals, seniors and persons with special needs, must be approved by the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs.

To understand the specific housing needs and issues for Morinville, Council requested that the Community Services Department draft a preliminary report on affordable housing. The firm www community consulting was engaged to complete research and compile a report with the following objectives:

- identify predominant affordable housing issues facing the Town of Morinville;
- provide an inventory of strategies for addressing affordable housing issues;
- complete an analysis of the strategies (financial and non-financial); and
- make initial recommendations.



## 2.0 Background

### 2.1 Context

Historically, affordable housing is a provincial and federal responsibility. However, local governments are more in touch with citizens than higher levels of government, and municipalities are directly affected if there is not enough affordable, safe, and suitable housing. As a result, municipal governments find themselves taking a leadership role regarding housing issues.

Housing has always been a foundation for building strong, healthy communities. “Where and how people live not only affects individual health, but the well-being and character of the whole community” (AUMA Affordable Housing Tool Kit, 2003). Potential benefits of affordable and adequate housing include stability for individuals and families, social inclusion, and positive health outcomes.

Lack of affordable housing also has a direct impact on local economic development: inordinate rent or mortgage costs mean less disposable income to spend on other goods and services; the local workforce becomes less stable; businesses may be deterred from locating to the region; and some resident may feel there is no choice but to move either further north or into Edmonton.

### 2.2 Definition of Affordable Housing

According to the *Municipal Sustainability Housing Program and Capital Enhancement Program Conditional Grant Funding Agreement*:

“Affordable Housing means housing that is modest in terms of floor area and amenities, that meets household needs and that rents or leases below market rent in the community or area in which the unit is located.”

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation uses the term “core housing need” in defining affordable housing.

“Households are in core housing need if they cannot find somewhere to live that is in reasonably good condition and is big enough for their household without spending more than 30% of their household income.”

The main difference between these two definitions is the focus on *below-market cost* in the first definition and a stronger focus on *income level and ability to pay* in the latter definition. Some communities, such as Strathcona County, narrow the CMHC definition to include, “without spending more than 30% of gross income on housing, *where income is below 80% of Strathcona County’s median income*” so that lower income individuals will be targeted.

The most crucial aspect of an affordable housing strategy is determining the community definition of affordable housing. As the Town moves forward in its planning, a clear definition, developed for the Morinville context, will be required. This will clarify the range of housing needs and potential strategies required to ensure the successful development and implementation of a community plan. A Glossary of Terms is included in Appendix A.

### 2.3 Barriers to Affordable Housing

A number of economic and market-related factors have made affordable housing an issue for many Alberta municipalities. As well, significant budget cuts to social housing and federal and provincial downloading of housing responsibilities has exacerbated the situation.

At a local level, barriers to affordable housing include:

- availability of land, in particular municipal-owned land;
- high costs of construction material and labour;
- high water, electricity, and heating costs which increase the total cost of home ownership;
- lack of long-term vision;
- not-in-my-backyard opposition;
- restrictive bylaws;
- lack of regulations that encourage infill developments within existing neighbourhoods;
- limited zoning incentives;
- inactivity of the private sector to construct new rental housing; and
- free-market development, that focuses on the bottom line, does not meet the needs of everyone.

### 3.0 Morinville Socio-Economic Profile

This section highlights key population and socio-economic characteristics for the Town of Morinville. Unless noted otherwise, the source for the data is Statistics Canada, 2006 Census.

#### 3.1 Population Growth

Since 2006, the population of Morinville has grown by 6.7% (Table 3.1). This change in population is substantial in comparison to the five years preceding the 2006 federal census (3.6%). Using the 2006 figures to compare across the region, Morinville's population trend is positive, e.g. Gibbons (-0.5%), Bon Accord (0.1%).

**Table 3.1: Population Growth, 1996-2008**

	2008*	2006	2001	1996
Morinville Population	7,228	6,775	6,541	6,226
Population Change (%)	6.7	3.6	5.1	

\*Source: Morinville 2008 Census Report

#### 3.2 Age Characteristics

In 2008, the median age of residents was 33.6, although similar to 2001 an increase over the 2001 figure of 31.3 (Table 3.2a). The increase in median age mirrors the national trend toward an aging population.

**Table 3.2a Age Characteristics, 1996-2008**

	2008*	2006	2001	1996
% of the population aged 0 – 14 years	21.8	22.4	26.3	30.2
% of the population aged 15-64 years	71.3	69.7	64.4	64.6
% of the population aged 65 years and over	6.9	8.0	6.3	5.4
Median Age	33.6	33.7	31.3	30.2

\*Source: Morinville 2008 Census Report

When the median age of Morinville residents is compared with other municipalities in the region a pattern emerges (Table 3.2b); rural communities have a slightly younger population than urban municipalities.

**Table 3.2b: Median Age Comparisons Across the Region (2006)**

	Bon Accord	Gibbons	Morinville	St. Albert	Edmonton
Median Age (2006 Census)	33.4	33.1	33.7	38.2	36.1

### 3.3 Families and Household Characteristics

This section compares changes in families and households between 2001 and 2006. The definitions below distinguish between the terms *family* and *household*.

- A census *family* refers to couples, with or without children, as well as lone parents with children living in the same dwelling.
- A *household* refers to a person or group of people who occupy the same dwelling, whether they are married or not.

Almost 74% of families residing in Morinville are married-couple families. Between 2001 and 2006, a shift occurred from married couples to common-law couples (Table 3.3a). The number of lone-parent families has remained fairly stable over the same period.

**Table 3.3a: Family Characteristics in Morinville, 1996-2006**

	2006		2001		1996	
Total number of census families	1, 955		1,780		1,650	
Number of married-couple families	1,445	(73.9%)	1,385	(77.8%)	1,500	(90.9%)
Number of common-law-couple families	245	(12.5%)	135	(7.6%)		
Number of lone-parent families	255	(13 %)	235	(13.2%)	150	(9.1%)
Female	175		190			
Male	80		45			

Changes in household characteristics are highlighted in Table 3.3b. There has been a significant reduction in the number of households with children; declining from 51.4% to 43%. Increases were seen in both one-person households and couple households without children. The average household size in Morinville was 2.9 people in 2006, down slightly from the 2001 Census.

**Table 3.3b: Household Characteristics in Morinville, 1996-2006**

	2006	2001	1996
Total private households	2,290	2,025	1,885
% one-person households	13.5	10.4	10.6
% of households containing a couple with children	43.0	51.4	55.2
% of households containing a couple without children	28.4	23.5	24.1
Average household size	2.9	3.2	3.3

### 3.4 Mobility and Migration

Although the Province has experienced increased migration over the past five years, Morinville increases are not significant. The percentage of people who moved from a different province/territory to Morinville has actually decreased, going from 11.6% in 2001 to 9.5% in 2006 (Table 3.4). The most significant mobility occurs *within* the Town as Morinville as residents move from one home to another. The slight in-migration is primarily from individuals who lived outside of Canada.

**Table 3.4: Mobility and Migration in Morinville, 1996-2006**

	2006	2001	1996
% who lived at same address 5 years ago	51.3	53.5	50.8
% who moved within the same census subdivision (CSD)*	14.9	12.7	12.9
% who moved within the province from a different census subdivision (CSD)	21.3	21.3	27.2
% who moved from a different province/territory	9.5	11.6	8.2
% who lived outside Canada	1.3	0.9	1.1

\* A census subdivision is the term used to describe municipalities

### 3.5 Income

Using the affordable housing definition from CMHC, as identified in background information (section 2.2), income level is a fundamental determinant regarding affordability issues. Median income refers to income in the middle of the group—exactly half of the reported incomes are greater than or equal to the median income and the other half are less than or equal to the median amount.

Table 3.5a compares median income by household type. Although referenced in the 2006 Census, the data reflects 2005 income figures. In 2005, married-couple families had a median income of \$85,986—more than twice the median income of lone-parent families (\$39,519). Within the lone-parent family category, female-headed families (\$38,833) earned almost a third less than male-headed families (\$57,905).

For comparison purposes, the 2005 median income for Alberta families has been included. Morinville's families have a median income of \$79,432, approximately 7.5% higher than the Province (\$73,828). These differences are not very significant when compared to the more affluent family incomes of St. Albert families (\$98,401).

**Table 3.5a: Comparison of Median Income by Family Type, 2001 – 2006 Census Year**

	2006	2001	Alberta (2006)
Total Number of Families	1,995	1,470	
All Census Families	\$79,432	\$60,851	\$73,823
Married-couple Families	\$85,986	\$66,266	\$83,046
Common-Law Families	\$73,379	n/a	\$67,184
Lone-Parent Families	\$39,519	\$35,000	\$40,397
Female	\$38,833		\$37,469
Male	\$57,905		\$55,205

Table 3.5b compares 2005 median incomes based on household characteristics. Not unexpectedly, the statistics show that couple households have significantly higher income than one-person households, particularly when comparing couple households with children (\$92,179) to one-person households (\$32,047). Also note the decrease in median income (17%) for one-person families over the last five years.

**Table 3.5b: Comparison of Median Income Based on Household Characteristics, 2001-2006**

	2006	2001
Total number of households	2,285	2,025
All private households	\$73,288	\$58,363
Couple households with children	\$92,179	n/a
Couple households without children	\$63,925	n/a
One-person households	\$32,047	\$38,951

### 3.5.1 Low-income Families

Statistics Canada uses Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) thresholds to identify people in a low-income bracket. Table 3.5c shows the 2005 before-tax Low Income Cut-Off for rural communities. According to this information, 5.5% of Morinville residents devoted a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing than the average family would.

**Table 3.5c: 2005 Before-Tax Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) for Rural Communities**

2005	LICO
1 person	\$14,303
2 persons	\$17,807
3 persons	\$21,891
4 persons	\$26,579
5 persons	\$30,145
6 persons	\$33,999
7 or more persons	\$37,853

Source: Statistics Canada, Income Research Paper Series, 2006

The before-tax Low Income Measure or LIM is a second measure of low income that is available from 2005 Taxfiler information (Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administration Data Division). Boundary alignments between Census Subdivision and Taxfiler information are different, as the Taxfiler data is based on postal code. However, the information is considered to be a reasonable representation of the Town. The 2005 Taxfiler Family Income data shows that 370 Morinville families (16%) make less than \$39,000 in 2005 (Table 3.5d). 2006 data will be available at the end of June.

**Table 3.5d: 2005 Family Income, Taxfiler Data**

Family Income	Numbers of Families (2005)	%
Less than &19,999	120	5%
\$20,00 - \$39, 000	250	11%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	320	15%
\$60,000 and over	1,500	68%
Total number of families	2,190	100%
Average family income	\$73,957	
Median family income	\$79,800	

Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division, 2005

### 3.6 Population Impacts of Up-grader Development

Nichol Applies Management has been contracted to gather data and review the potential impacts that up-grader development will have on the mobile workforce (construction and operation) for the Alberta Industrial Heartland. Although the figures are estimates, the region will likely be looking at 5,000 mobile workers coming into the area over the next 10 years with numbers peaking at 8,000 – 10,000.

The implications for the Town of Morinville could be minor or considerable, depending on the Town's desire and ability to attract the mobile workforce and their families. Levels of community services, housing prices, and closeness to family are factors which influence the willingness of workers to move to a specific municipality.

In response to the potential boom, the municipalities of Morinville, Legal, Bon Accord, Gibbons, and Redwater have formed the Sturgeon Regional Economic Development Committee. The Committee is exploring a range of housing opportunities and has passed a motion "whereby the Sturgeon Regional Economic Development Committee and the Up-grader Industries work together to investigate a legacy program....around mobile workers' accommodations."



## 4.0 Housing Supply

This section profiles the current housing supply in Morinville including dwelling type, age and condition of housing, and housing tenure. Information on rental accommodation, seniors' housing, and special needs' housing is provided, along with a look at ownership housing.

### 4.1 Dwelling Type

In Morinville, 79.9% of all private homes are single-detached dwellings (Table 4.1). This percentage is high in comparison to Edmonton (50.2%) and the Province (63.4%); however, it is low in comparison to rural communities in the area.

**Table 4.1: Occupied Private Dwelling Type, 2006 (as a percentage of total occupied private dwellings)**

	Morinville	Bon Accord	Gibbons	St. Albert	Edmonton	Province of Alberta
Single-detached	79.9	84.9	85.7	75.3	50.2	63.4
Semi-detached houses	4.4	1.9	2.1	5.4	4.2	4.8
Row houses	7.0	9.4	1	7.9	2.6	7
Apartments, duplex	0.4	0.0	1	.7	2.8	2.6
Apartments in buildings with fewer than five storeys	5.0	1.9	3.7	10.1	23.4	14.7
Apartments in buildings with five or more storeys	0.0	0.0	0.0	.5	8.9	4.4
Other dwellings	3.1	1.9	6.8	0.0	.8	3.1
Total private dwellings occupied by usual residents	2,290	530	955	20,560	297,725	1,256,200

#### 4.2 Age and Condition of Housing

In comparison to other small municipalities, Morinville's housing is relatively new, with 31.2% of the housing stock built in the last 20 years (Table 4.2). However, in Edmonton, close to 50% of the housing was built in the same timeframe. The condition of the housing in Morinville is slightly better than Edmonton and the Province, with 4.8% of the dwellings identified as requiring immediate repairs. Yet Morinville doesn't fair so well in comparison with Gibbons (1.6%) and St. Alberta (3.7%).

**Table 4.2: Comparison of Age and State of Repair of Housing Stock, 2006**

	Morinville	Bon Accord	Gibbons	St. Albert	Edmonton	Province of Alberta
Dwelling built pre-1986	1,575 (68.8%)	445 (84%)	755 (79%)	11,080 (54%)	210,760 (71%)	785,200 (62.5%)
Dwellings built post-1986	715 (31.2%)	85 (16%)	200 (21%)	9,480 (46%)	86,965 (29%)	470,995 (37.5%)
Total	2,290	530	955	20,560	297,725	1,256,200
% requiring major repairs	4.8%	4.7%	1.6%	3.7%	6%	6.7%

#### 4.3 Housing Tenure

Almost 86% of the housing in Morinville is owned, with the other 14% providing rental accommodations (Table 4.3). This proportion is likely to get even higher considering the new ownership housing built in Morinville in the last two years. (See section 4.6). Once again, comparisons differ between smaller municipalities and Edmonton, where the rental tenure is 37%.

**Table 4.3 Housing Tenure Comparison by Municipality, 2006**

	Morinville	Bon Accord	Gibbons	St. Albert	Edmonton	Province of Alberta
Owned	1,960 (85.8%)	455 (86%)	875 (91.6%)	18,120 (88.15%)	187,290 (63%)	917,905 (73%)
Rented	325 (14.2%)	75 (14%)	80 (8.4%)	2,435 (11.8%)	110,435 (37%)	330,275 (27%)

#### 4.4 Rental Accommodation

The strong Alberta economy has had a significant impact on apartment vacancies and rental rates since 2004 (Rental Market Report, Edmonton CMA, 2007). The Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) provide information on apartment vacancy rates and rental costs. The apartment vacancy rate across the Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) increased from 1.2 % in October 2006 to 1.5% in October 2007. The Edmonton CMA reports that the average monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment in new and existing structures was \$958 in 2007, up from the \$808 average reported in 2006. The Edmonton CMA information establishes the “average market rent” under the Municipal Sustainability Housing Program.

Detailed rental market data is not available for Morinville as this information is captured in the Edmonton CMA Rental Report under Zone 14. This zone also includes the municipalities of Devon, Fort Saskatchewan, Leduc, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, and Strathcona County. CMHC provided apartment vacancy rates and average rental rates for Morinville, but these do not include secondary suites, rented houses, and condominium units that are not managed by a property management firm (Table 4.4a). A secondary rental market may emerge through the rental of investor-owned and rented condominiums; however, data on this trend is not available at this time.

**Table 4.4a: Average Apartment Vacancy and Rental Rates, 2004-2007**

	Dwelling Type	2004	2005	2006	2007	% change
Vacancy Rate	All Units	12.8	3.4	0	2.7	-9.4
	1 Bedroom	12.3	3.1	0	0	-9.2
	2 Bedroom	13.1	3.6	0	4.8	-9.5
Average Rent	All Units	648	658	693	815	25.8%
	1 Bedroom	586	581	616	755	28.8%
	2 Bedroom	695	710	751	861	23.9%

The data paints a grim picture for people looking for rental accommodations in Morinville. Since 2004, vacancy rates have decreased from 12.8% to 2.7% for all units; and the average rent increased by 25.8% to an average of \$815 for all units. When comparing these rental costs to the median income information presented in section three, we see that increases in rental costs are far out-pacing increases in income, especially for lone-parent families and one-member households.

An informal inventory of rental accommodation in Morinville confirms that the Town has a limited supply of rental housing, particularly for families and young adults (Table 4.4b).

**Table 4.4b: Rental Accommodations in Morinville**

Apartment Complex	Number of Units	Average Rental Cost	Characteristics
Deville Estates	83	1 bedroom \$845 2 bedrooms \$1056 (utilities included)	One building reserved for adults
Ivory Arms	24		
Notre Dame Dev.	38	1 bedroom \$800-\$900 2 BR (utilities extra)	Adults 35+
Villa Tina	16		
Total Units	161 units		

#### 4.5 Seniors' Housing

The Sturgeon Foundation provides management services to publicly funded housing projects for seniors in Morinville and the surrounding municipalities of Bon Accord, Gibbons, Legal, Redwater and St. Albert. Facilities in Morinville include Heritage Place Lodge, Heritage Place, and Lions Manor. Table 4.5 shows a breakdown of dwelling type and number of units.

**Table 4.5 Seniors' Publicly Funded Housing in Morinville**

Dwelling Type	Number of Units	Rental Rate
Heritage Place Lodge	45 units (196 sq. ft.)	30% of gross monthly income + \$600
Heritage Place, Self-contained	6 one bedroom (480 sq. ft.)	30% of gross monthly income
Lions Manor, Self-contained	8 one bedroom (480 sq. ft.)	30% of gross monthly income

According to the Sturgeon Foundation, all individuals living in these housing units have a fixed, low income. The self-contained apartments offer an affordable, social setting for seniors who are downsizing from single-detached housing. The apartments currently have a wait-list. Heritage Lodge becomes a housing choice when additional services are required, e.g., housekeeping, meals, and 24-hour non-medical staffing. Typical residents in the Lodge are older than those in the self-contained apartments. The Lodge is at capacity, but no wait-list exists.

#### **4.6 Additional Housing Resources**

This section highlights housing that offers considerably more support services including continuing care facilities, special needs housing, transitional housing, and emergency shelters. The housing at this end of the continuum is very limited in Morinville. For example, the Capital Region Corporation has close to 5,000 publicly-owned housing units—none are located in Morinville.

The primary resource in Morinville is Aspen House, an Assisted Living accommodation. Assisted Living is a continuing care program for frail, older seniors or people with disabilities who require health services and assistance with personal care. The Assisted Living program promotes resident independence and is not intended to provide constant care or supervision. Security features are in place for individuals with dementia.

Currently, alternative housing for individuals with development disabilities, mental health issues, adolescent treatment, or safe housing for abused women and their children is not available in Morinville.

#### 4.7 Ownership Housing

As mentioned, 85.5% of housing in Morinville is owner-occupied, and single-detached homes are the primary housing type (79.9%). For the most part, new development sustains this homogenous housing model. However, recent trends reveal more higher-density housing such as semi-detached and row style condos (Table 4.7a and Table 4.7b). In the near future, no new rental development is under construction or planned for.

**Table 4.7a: Housing Activity by Submarket and Intended Market, January – April 2008**

	Freehold		Condominiums		Rental		Total	
	YTD 2008	YTD 2007	YTD 2008	YTD 2007	YTD 2008	YTD 2007	YTD 2008	YTD 2007
Housing Starts	15	48	32	0	0	0	47	48
Completions	38	36	0	43	0	0	38	79

Source: Housing Now, Edmonton CMA May 2008, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Despite the provincial housing market slow-down, Morinville experienced a 45% increase in housing under construction from April 2007 to April 2008.

**Table 4.7b Comparison of Housing Under Construction, April 2007 – April 2008**

	Free hold		Condominium			Rental		Total
	Single	Semi	Single	Row & Semi	Apt. & Other	Single, semi	Apt. & Other	
April 2008	116	0	0	71	108	0	0	295
April 2007	104	14	0	0	85	0	0	203

Source: Housing Now, Edmonton CMA May 2008, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

#### 4.7.1 Cost of Housing

The average price of a single-detached home absorbed in the first quarter of 2008 rose by 21.5% for the same period in 2007, going from \$349,950 to \$421,400 (Table 4.7c).

**Table 4.7c: Average Price of Single-Detached Units**

Absorbed Single-Detached Units	Total Units	Median Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)
Year-to-date 2008	24	421,400	434,858
Year-to-date 2007	30	349,950	357,840

Source: Housing Now, Edmonton CMA May 2008, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation  
As a cautionary note, the selling price of most of these homes would have been agreed to at the time of sale several months prior. Therefore, the price gains are not an accurate picture of the current buyer's market. In fact, the biggest challenge for builders is the state of the existing resale market during the prime selling season of April, May, and June. Inventories of resale homes are high, putting downward pressure on home prices in recent months.

## 5.0 Affordable Housing Gap Analysis

Every community has a unique blend of individuals and families, with diverse age groups, income levels, and household characteristics. Therefore, housing in a community should ideally include a diverse mix of housing types and tenures to complement the various family and household characteristics.

This section will assess the current affordable housing gap using four criteria: housing availability, affordability, adequacy, and suitability.

### 5.1 Housing Availability

A housing continuum, as depicted in Table 5.1 illustrates the broad spectrum of housing needs, choices or options. Morinville's housing supply is assessed against the affordable housing continuum.

**Table 5.1: Assessment of Housing Availability on the Affordable Housing Continuum**

Affordable Housing Continuum				
Emergency, Transitional Housing	Supportive Housing	Subsidized Housing	Rental Housing	Home Ownership
Short term housing that is safe and secure until families and individuals can become more independent	Housing that provides social and/or medical supports to their clientele	Housing provided on a rent-geared-to-income basis; no social supports required	An alternative for households unable to afford and/or unable to take on the responsibilities of home ownership	Entry-level, lower-cost homes
Current Housing Availability				
Emergency shelter and transitional housing is non-existent.	Limited supply for seniors  *Aspen House provides services to seniors and persons with disabilities, but is not considered affordable housing	Not available for the general population Seniors' lodges and apartments are subsidized. Currently at capacity.	Short supply of apartment rental units; vacancy rates are low. A percentage of buildings cater to adults 35+. All units are at market rent.	Majority of housing stock is owner-occupied, single family dwellings. Recent development of multi-family dwellings. Very limited supply of entry-level or lower-cost homes.



In summary, the housing supply in Morinville is quite homogenous, with owner-occupied, single family dwellings marketed towards the middle to upper class. Affordable rental accommodations and entry-level ownership housing is limited. This situation is a concern, as “maintaining and investing in a diverse stock of housing is critical to creating a high quality of life for all residents, and building communities that remain sustainable over the long term (Building the Future, Canada West).

The unavailability of housing has implications for a number of populations segments in Morinville:

- one-person households (13.5% of Morinville’s population):
- young adults (20% of Morinville’s population is 20-34 years):
- lone-parent families;
- low-income individuals;
- individuals leaving abusive situations; and
- individuals with physical or mental challenges, requiring support services.

### 5.2 Housing Affordability

Housing affordability relates to a household’s ability to acquire and maintain accommodation. Using the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation definition, housing is affordable if it costs no more than 30% of a household’s gross monthly income for rental accommodation or no more than 32% for home ownership. Utilizing this formula, Table 5.2a has been developed which aligns household income with affordable rental payments and actual rental costs.

**Table 5.2a: Housing Affordability: Rental Accommodations**

Household Income (\$)	Max. Monthly Rental Rate* (30% of income)	Average Rent 2007	Actual Rental Costs May 2008
15,000 – 19,999	\$500		\$845: one bedroom water & heat included \$800/900: one bedroom, utilities extra \$995/1056: two bedroom, water & heat included
20,000 – 24,999	\$625		
25,000 – 29,999	\$750	\$755 - one BR	
30,000 – 34,999	\$875	\$861 - two BR	
35,000 – 39,999	\$1,000		
40,000 – 44,999	\$1,125		
45,000 – 49,999	\$1,250		
50,000 – 59,999	\$1,500		
60,000 – 74,999			
75,000 – 99,999			
100,000 +			

\*includes utilities and heat

Census information from 2006 lists the median monthly payments for rented dwellings at \$806 and the median monthly payments for owner-occupied dwellings at \$1,132. Table 5.2b aligns household income with approximate affordable house prices and current listings.

**Table 5.2b: Housing Affordability: Ownership Accommodations**

Household Income (\$)	Approximate House Price (32% of income) <sup>1</sup>	Current Listings <sup>2</sup> June 15, 2008
15,000 - 19,999	\$60,116 – \$80,152	1 mobile home
20,000 - 24,999	\$80,153 - \$100,204	
25,000 -29,999	\$100,205 - \$120,231	
30,000 - 34,999	\$120,232 - \$140,267	
35,000 - 39,999	\$140,268 - \$160,604	1 condo
40,000 - 44,999	\$160,305 - \$180,346	
45,000 - 49,999	\$180,347 - \$200,383	
50,000 - 59,999	\$200,384 - \$240,462	8 condos, 1 single family
60,000 - 74,999	\$240,463 - \$300,578	8 town home condo 12 single family
75,000 - 99,999	\$300,579 - \$400,767	3 town home condo 54 single family
100,000 +	\$400,768	51 single family

Source: <sup>1</sup> St. Albert Affordable Housing Strategy 2006, <sup>2</sup> MLS Listing June 15, 2008

In April 2007, the year-to-date median selling price of homes in Morinville was \$349,000. In the same month in 2008, the median selling price was \$421,400, an increase of almost 21%. As reported in section three, 120 Morinville families are earning less than \$19,999 annually, and 5.5% of individuals are considered low-income residents based on LICO measurement.

Based on this data, rental and ownership housing costs are well beyond the affordability range of many residents, making housing choices very limited to low-income residents. The population segments facing affordability challenges mirror those having availability issues:

- individuals just starting out in the workforce;
- Assured Income for Severely Handicapped and Supports For Independence recipients;
- one-person households; and
- female lone-parent families.

As well, individuals on fixed income will also find challenges due to increased taxes, water and heat costs.

### 5.2.1 Core Need Income Thresholds

The Province has established Core Need Income Thresholds (CNIT) to identify households that may qualify for subsidized housing. Households with total annual incomes equal to or less than CNIT are said to have insufficient income to afford ongoing costs of suitable rental units in their area. Table 5.2c provides the CNIT figures for Morinville. Currently, subsidized housing in Morinville is only available for seniors.

**Table 5.2c: 2007 Core Need Income Thresholds (CNIT), Morinville**

Bedroom Size	Max Annual Income
Bachelor	\$23,500
1 Bedroom	\$26,500
2 Bedroom	\$33,500
3 Bedroom	\$45,500
4 Bedroom	\$50,500

Source: Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs web-site

### 5.3 Housing Adequacy and Suitability

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation defines *adequacy* as the physical safety of a dwelling, primarily focusing on the level of repairs required. *Suitability* refers to a family’s ability to afford the type of housing necessary to meet their needs. The *Alberta Housing Act* stipulates the number of bedrooms relative to the size of the family. In Morinville, census data tells us that almost 5% of homes are in need of major repairs, but the assessment of adequacy is subjective, and is a limited view of “physical safety.” Likewise, suitability is a difficult criterion to measure.

Rather than providing additional statistics, a more subjective analysis of housing adequacy and suitability follows. These anecdotes were shared by individuals who attended a stakeholder focus group. Detailed notes and focus group membership are available on request.

- Anecdote One: A local pastor arrived at church one morning to find an individual sleeping on the couch.
- Anecdote Two: An abused woman was recently put up in the local hotel, La Maison Inn, as an “emergency shelter” because no other alternatives were available.
- Anecdote Three: An individual receiving the Assured Income for Severely Handicapped (AISH) is living with relatives that want her out of the house. Support workers cannot find affordable or suitable housing in Morinville.
- Anecdote Four: A man and his 10-year-old son were homeless, living in a tent and then moving to a Jeep when temperatures dropped. Through the efforts of the local Family and Community Support Services office and a local not-for-profit organization, a trailer was purchased and renovated and given to the family. Improvements in the boy’s behavior and academic performance were seen almost immediately.

## 5.4 Implications

Fortunately, the last story has a happy ending. However, the availability, suitability, and adequacy of affordable housing in Morinville have significant implications for the community.

- Residents are moving further north or back into Edmonton. The cost of gas is a compounding variable as some commuters can no longer afford to live in Morinville and drive to Edmonton.
- Local business owners are finding it difficult to attract and retain qualified staff due to housing availability and suitability. The mobile workforce encounters no vacancies, and do not have the money to pay damage deposits.
- Employees are using the local camp ground as short-term housing.
- Families are re-mortgaging their houses.
- Multi-generational housing is increasing. Young adults are living at home longer or are moving back home because they can't afford housing and other expenses.
- Many houses are over-crowded.
- Individuals requiring continuing care programs are required to leave the community.
- Lack of affordable housing may make it difficult to attract new residents.

## **6.0 Strategic Direction**

Section five identifies numerous gaps in the affordable housing continuum. However, it is unrealistic to think that an affordable housing strategy can address the housing needs of all households. As well, given the limited amount of financial and non-financial resources available a narrower, but consistent, approach is necessary. This section recommends two focus areas.

### **6.1 Primary Focus**

It is recommended that Morinville focus its affordable housing plan on individuals and families whose income prevents them from obtaining long-term, adequate housing in terms of the size, safety, and needs of the family. The intent of selected strategies is to help citizens establish, maintain, or advance their position on a housing continuum.

- **Subsidized Housing:** Residents are able to pay a portion of housing costs, but need financial assistance to cover total costs.
- **Market Rental Housing:** Housing that is created or managed in a way to provide housing with costs below general market costs.
- **Entry-level Market Housing:** The lowest 25% of homes sold in any given year for entering the housing market or downsizing.

Individuals and families with sufficient income that allows them access to a broad range of housing alternatives will not be a priority area.

### **6.2 Secondary Focus**

Given rapid growth, the negative impact of the economic boom, and a minimal supply of affordable housing options, it is recommended that Morinville provide a secondary focus on transitional housing for a diverse set of individuals and families.

- **Transitional Housing:** Short-term housing for individuals requiring safe, affordable accommodations until they can become independent.

Although the focus group identified a tertiary need for supportive housing with social and medical supports, emergency shelters, and housing for at-risk youth, this type of housing will not be a focus area.

## 7.0 Strategies

A multitude of strategies and tools are available to address affordable housing issues, and a successful approach will need to combine a variety of strategies. The intent of this section is to present a limited number of options that address the affordable housing gaps identified in the previous section. An inventory of strategies was compiled and shared with the focus group and the Advisory Committee. Utilizing an evaluation matrix, the Advisory Committee provided input and analysis to recommend direction. A more thorough catalogue of approaches is available upon request.

### 7.1 Evaluation Criteria

**Infrastructure Sustainability:** reduction of infrastructure costs in the short and long term. This includes buildings, streets and sidewalks, as well as “social infrastructure” such as community and emergency services.

**Partnerships:** collaboration, resources and/or assistance from other orders of government, community organizations, the private sector, and not-for-profit agencies is essential

**Resources:** availability of resources including funding, personnel, and management obligations required to implement the strategy.

**Risk:** minimize financial and non-financial risk to the Town of Morinville and its partners.

**Timelines:** a mix of strategies which will have impact in the short and long term.

Short Term: within the first year of implementation

Medium Term: within the three-year agreement

Long Term: within the six-year requirement to dispense grant funding

**Triple Bottom-Line:** the selection and implementation of strategies should consider economic, environmental, and social impacts.

## 7.2 Recommended Approaches

Six broad approaches are presented, which include eight specific recommendations or options. Each action includes a description, approximate timelines, and resources. Examples are provided where available.

### Education and Advocacy

Recommendation One	Develop a communication and education strategy to inform existing or potential citizens of housing resources and programs and to dispel the myths surrounding affordable housing.
Description	There is no single information source regarding local rental accommodations (rental costs and vacancies), housing programs, or funding opportunities. This can create a very frustrating process for individuals interested in relocating, cause difficulties in making decisions, and cause under-utilization of available funding programs, e.g., Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program.
Timeline	Short-term
Resources	Minimal

### Municipal Housing Corporation

Recommendation Two	Explore the development of a community housing corporation in partnership with Sturgeon Foundation.
Description	Sturgeon Foundation is the local housing management body, mandated through the Alberta Housing Act. Historically the Foundation has been responsible for managing seniors' lodges and apartments in Morinville, as well as other municipalities within Sturgeon County. The Executive Director and Board of Sturgeon Foundation are very interested in expanding their role to incorporate broader affordable housing initiatives. A community housing corporation would be responsible for leadership and management of affordable housing developments and initiatives.
Timeline	Short-term
Resources	Staff time, negotiation of administrative dollars

Examples:

- a) Cochrane Society for Housing Options is a registered non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging the development of a range of affordable housing options.
- b) The Central Edmonton Community Land Trust (CECLT) is a non-profit corporation formed to acquire land and housing to provide affordable housing for families with limited resources. To keep units affordable, the land is held in trust in perpetuity. Units are leased to tenants on a "rent-to-own" basis. These properties are purchased by the Trust with funding under the City of Edmonton Low-Income Housing Capital Assistance Program (LIHCAP). These properties also receive funding for renovations under the federal RRAP Program.

**Financial Support**

Recommendation Three	Develop a rent-supplement program for low-income individuals. This could be an initial project for a community housing corporation.
Description	The provincial government has two rent-supplement programs. Under the Regular Rent Supplement Program, local housing management bodies pay private landlords a rent supplement to subsidize the difference between a negotiated market rent and 30% of a household's adjusted income. Under the Direct to Tenant Rent Supplement Program, a subsidy is paid directly to an eligible tenant. Subsidy amounts and subsidy payments are delivered by local management bodies.
Focus Area	Subsidized Housing, Transitional Housing
Timeline	Short-term. The need is quite critical, so ideally a program should be established as soon as possible.
Resources	Minimal or significant depending on targets. The Municipality or community housing corporation could also decide to purchase rental accommodations.

## Examples:

- a) The Capital Region Housing Corporation manages 4,900 publicly owned housing units and administers rent programs for low-income families and individuals throughout the Capital Region.
- b) The City of Edmonton has developed a pilot project that will provide a Fixed Rate Rent Supplement for up to 400 existing private rental housing units in Edmonton over the next five years, beginning in 2007.

Recommendation Four	Facilitate connection between CMHC and developers to consider home ownership flexibility in mortgage loan insurance (MLI) for home buyers.
Description	CMHC offers a variety of flexible loan insurance options such as a Sweat Equity Program (which can cover up to 100% of the required down payment); grants or down payments from government agencies, sponsor groups or non-profit organizations; and a Rent to Own Proposal. CMHC will work directly with developers.
Focus Area	Entry-level Home Ownership
Timeline	Short- to mid-term
Resources	Minimal to moderate depending if the Municipality wants to provide grants.

## Examples:

- a) Home at Last (HAL) in London, ON partnered with the London Home Builders' Association, CMHC, and many other partners to provide homeownership opportunities to households that can afford a small mortgage.
- b) Through its FirstHome program in Toronto, ON, the Daniels Corporation provided condominium units at below-market prices, reduced the down payment for qualified buyers, and also offered a loan program. The developer's loan program was supplemented with funds from CMHC and the province of Ontario.



**Remove Barriers**

Recommendation Five	Modify zoning permissions and encourage specific housing types, e.g., secondary suites, modular homes, etc.
Description	Currently zoning does not allow for the development of legalized secondary suites. Many municipalities are encouraging secondary suites as a low-cost alternative that supports infill strategies. Agreements made to ensure the suites are affordable for a minimum of 15 years. Encourage sustainable, green development.
Focus Area	Market Rental Accommodations, Transitional Housing
Timeline	Short-term
Resources	Staff time. Capital costs if Municipality or community housing corporation decides to provide incentive grants to develop suites.

## Examples:

- a) The town of Canmore has recently encouraged the development of legal, secondary suites in a number of residential neighbourhoods. The increased supply of rental accommodation has provided a source of affordable rental accommodation for residents and temporary employees of Canmore. The development of secondary suites within homes makes them “doubly affordable,” by not only providing rental accommodation but by also providing a revenue stream to the home owner. The zoning of secondary suites is accomplished through RIB
- b) zoning that permits the inclusion of secondary suites as part of a single-family detached dwelling.
- c) The town of Canmore approved a bylaw that designated a 133-lot subdivision for a Manufactured Home Family Residential District. The lots have a minimum lot width of 12 meters and maximum site coverage of 40%.

**Incentives: Density Bonus**

Recommendation Six	Provide incentives to developers through a “density bonus.” Expedite approvals for an affordable rental housing component.
Description	A density bonus allows for the development of more units or floor space in return for affordable housing. The timing is right given planned residential development for multi-family units.
Focus Area	Market Rental Accommodations, Subsidized Housing, Entry-level Housing
Timeline	Short- to mid-term
Resources	Staff time. Capital costs if municipality or Community Housing Corporation choose to purchase

## Example:

Salmon Arm's medium-density residential zone is structured to permit an increase in the maximum height of the principal building if a special amenity is outlined in an accompanying table. The maximum density permitted is generally 40 dwellings per hectare (16 dwelling units per acre), which can be increased to a maximum of 50 dwelling units per hectare (20 units per acre) in accordance with the provision of each amenity. These amenities include commercial child care, affordable rental housing, and rental housing with a housing agreement.

**Embrace Local Opportunities for Partnerships**

Recommendation Seven	Assist Morinville United Church in developing an affordable housing proposal by providing staff support, grants, and loans.
Description	Morinville United Church has a vacant lot adjacent to church property. They are interested in an affordable housing development such as a fourplex or sixplex.
Focus Area	Market Rental Accommodations, Subsidized Housing, Entry-level Housing
Timeline	Mid-term
Resources	Staff time, capital investment. The value of the land can be used to match the provincial grant limit of 70% of capital costs.

## Examples:

- a) The City of Red Deer Social Planning Department has assisted the community in addressing affordable housing needs through financial assistance and staff support.
- b) Delta is a suburban municipality in the southwest portion of the Greater Vancouver region. Augustine House is an initiative of the St. Augustine Council of the Knights of Columbus. The Council formed a non-profit organization to build accessible and affordable housing on land donated by the parish. Although the residence resulted from the commitment of the Knights of Columbus, Augustine House is non-denominational.

Recommendation Eight	Active involvement in the Sturgeon Regional Economic Development Committee Legacy Housing Initiative
Description	Up-grader development in Alberta's Industrial Heartland is expected to require an extensive mobile workforce. Employee housing can take many forms, for example, worker lodges. Morinville could partner with up-grader companies to develop an employee housing district. An agreement would be made which sees the employee housing become affordable rental housing once up-grader construction is completed. One option for development might be a small hotel, with pool facilities that could be used by community residents.
Focus Area	Market Rental Accommodations, Subsidized Housing,
Timeline	Mid- to long-term
Resources	Staff time. Capital investment could be significant depending on negotiated agreement. Municipal land would be a definite asset.

## Example:

The Town of Canmore has encouraged the creation of employee housing districts (EHD) within its jurisdiction. To date, two developments, located at Montane Village adjacent to Bow Valley Trail, have been built. The developments are condominium complexes, with zoning restrictions that require only Bow Valley Residents to live in the units.

## 8.0 Concluding Remarks

The AUMA Affordable Housing Toolkit states that “the need and opportunity for municipalities to develop coherent, pro-active approaches to the provision of affordable housing have never been greater.” As Municipal leaders, the affordable housing pressures facing the community have been recognized; the difficult decision is to decide the municipality’s role in the affordable housing enigma. The following learnings are presented for consideration:

- 1) Develop a transparent community vision for Morinville. Reflect on what the municipality will look like in the future: does it have a small-town feel where citizens are engaged in the community? is it emerging as a city? are diverse populations groups attracted to the town? Once the vision is confirmed, ask yourselves about the types of housing required to accommodate this vision.
- 2) Link strategic documents to the Vision, e.g., Municipal Development Plan, Municipal Sustainability Framework, Affordable Housing Plan. Ensure the key documents align with each other.
- 3) Establish an Advisory Board or Steering Committee if development of an Affordable Housing Plan is to move forward. This improves transparency in the community, provides a wide-spectrum of information and increases the likelihood of successful implementation.
- 4) An Affordable Housing Plan needs to establish clear principles and measurable goals and objectives (such as program targets).
- 5) The municipality roles and responsibilities for housing should be transparent.
- 6) Availability of municipal land is an important asset in providing the 30% capital funding requirement. Ensure the inventory of municipal-owned land, surplus provincial land, and crown land is exhaustive.
- 7) Continue contact with the Community Development Centre, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Staff is assigned to work with municipalities to develop Affordable Housing Plans.

## References

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- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, web-site: Project Profiles, Renovation and Grant funding programs
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- Building the Future: Public Policy Considerations for Affordable Housing in Canada*, Canada West Foundation, 2008
- City of Edmonton: *Edmonton Cornerstones Plan Initiatives, Building the Capital Partnership*
- City of Red Deer, Affordable Housing Strategy, December 2006
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- Community Plan on Housing and Homelessness in Kingston, 2006
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- St. Albert Affordable Housing Strategy, January 2005
- St. Albert Community Housing Plan, 2006
- Seniors Housing Guide 2008; Seniors Housing Guide of Greater Edmonton
- Strathcona County, Housing Needs Assessment, January 2008
- Sustainable Community Planning*, CMHC
- The 8 Pillars of a Sustainable Community*; Summary Paper, Mark Holland
- The 10 Secrets to Effective Affordable Housing Policy*, Robert Roach, April 2008

## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

**Affordable Housing:** housing that is modest in terms of floor area and amenities, that meets household needs and that rents or leases below market rent in the community or area in which the unit is located.

**Average Market Rent:** average rent or lease rate for the area, based on Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporate and Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs annual market rental surveys for where the Affordable Housing Approved Project is located.

**Capital Costs:** costs to acquire construct or renovate a capital asset, including material, labour, land, servicing and soft costs, and any cost required to bring a site, building or unit into compliance with all applicable codes and legislation, including environmental legislation.

**Core Need Income Threshold:** the maximum income limits used to assess income eligibility for Provincial subsidized housing programs, as set annually and provided by the Minister

**Entry-level Market Ownership Housing:** the lowest 25% of homes sold in any given year for households entering the housing market or downsizing.

**Low Income Cut-Off (LICO):** income thresholds, determined by analysing family expenditure data, below which families will devote a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family would. To reflect differences in the costs of necessities among different community and family sizes, LICOs are defined for five categories of community size and seven of family size.

**Low Income Measures (LIMs):** relative measures of low income, set at 50% of adjusted median family income. These measures are categorized according to the number of adults and children present in families, reflecting the economies of scale inherent in family size and composition.

**Market Housing:** housing within the community that rents or leases at rates at or near “Average Market Rent”.

**Ownership Costs:** include payments for mortgage principle and interest; and property taxes; and payments for utilities (water, fuel, and electricity); as well as condominium fees, where the dwelling is a condominium (CMHC).

**Project Rent:** the rate(s) charged for affordable and transitional housing units that is less than average market rent for similar accommodation in the community and reflects the target household’s ability to pay.

**Rental Costs:** include rent and payments for utilities (water, fuel, and electricity) where they are paid separately from rent (CMHC).

**Special Needs Housing:** stable, supportive housing for those in need of ongoing support or services.

**Subsidized Housing:** housing provided on a rent-geared-to-income basis with government subsidies covering a proportion of the costs.

**Transitional Housing:** short-term housing that is safe and secure and enables families and individuals to achieve a higher level of sustainable independence.

# Background Report

# PROJECT CHARTER

**Defining the Community Housing Plan's purpose, scope and project management for developing the Community Housing Plan.**

**January 2009**

**Part of a series of CHP background reports and studies.**

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this report are for informational purposes only, and do not reflect the official policy or position of either the Town of Morinville or the Morinville Community Housing Plan Project Team.



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## TOWN OF MORINVILLE

### PROJECT CHARTER

**Project: Community Housing Plan**

**Date Initiated: November 10, 2008**

**Project Manager: Joan Agnew, Strategic Initiatives Manager**

**Project Sponsor: Milad Asdaghi, CAO**

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### PROJECT DEFINITION

#### Background:

- On June 24, 2008 a Town of Morinville, Affordable Housing Preliminary Report was presented at a regular meeting of Council. Direction was provided to Administration to “develop a plan, provide some clarification on financial support, develop time lines, etc.”
- On July 24, 2008 the Affordable Housing Preliminary Report was forwarded to Housing and Urban Affairs. In addition, short-term and mid/long term strategies were identified and aligned with expected expenditures.
- On August 28, 2008 the Affordable Housing Program Funding Agreement for 2008/09 was endorsed by Housing and Urban Affairs and the Town of Morinville.

#### Objectives:

Develop a Community Housing Plan which will:

- promote a diverse supply of suitable, affordable, and adequate housing for the municipality;
- establish the municipality’s roles and responsibilities for housing;
- identify measurable goals and objectives;
- prioritize specific recommendations;
- includes an implementation plan that assigns responsibilities and timelines;
- a performance measurement and reporting framework to monitor the Plan’s success

#### Linkage to Business Plan:

A Community Housing Plan is a key objective of the 2006 Town of Morinville Business Plan.

#### Scope:

The Community Housing Plan will align with key dimensions of sustainability and should integrate with land use, transportation and amenity planning. However, specific land-use by-laws, residential development and growth management policies are out of scope of this project.

#### Assumptions:

- The Community Housing Plan will be anchored in the research, findings, and recommendations of the Affordable Housing Preliminary Report.
- Housing and Urban Affairs will provide funding for the Municipal Block Funding and Conditional Grant Funding Agreement (2008-2009) as outlined in the Letter of Agreement signed August 28, 2008.
- The Affordable Housing Strategy will meet financial and reporting conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement as well as internal processes and requirements.

#### Constraints:

The Housing Plan will be developed in parallel with the Municipal Sustainability Plan. Any delays in the MSP may have impacts on the affordable housing project being delivered on time and within budget.

#### Project Completion Criteria:

The Community Housing Plan is approved by Council.

#### Project Success Criteria:

- The Plan can be easily integrated into the Corporate Business Plan and Department annual plans for implementation.
- The Community Housing Plan aligns with other Corporate and Department plans and strategies.
- Financial commitments align with Town operating and capital budgets.

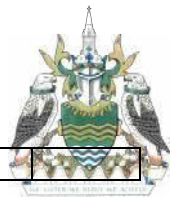


# TOWN OF MORINVILLE



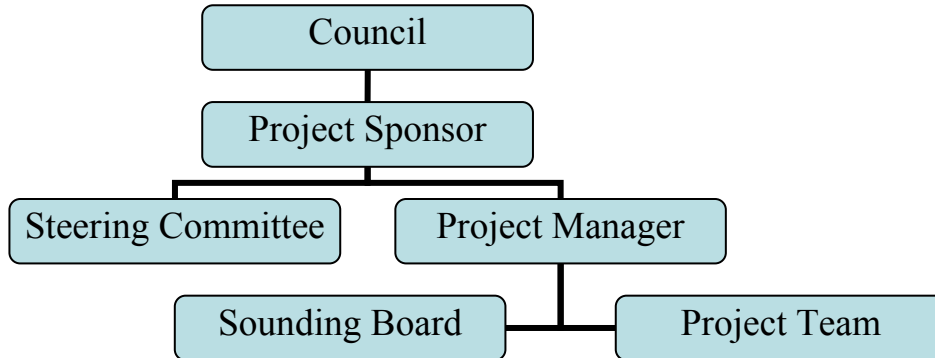
## Project Schedule:

Deliverable/Activity	Start Date	End Date	Effort (hr)
<b>Concept Phase – Define Project Charter</b>			
Confirm project objectives	October 31, 2008	December 9, 2008	2 days
Develop stakeholder consultation plan			
Determine role and involvement of CMHC			
Determine project staffing approach			
Define governance structure			
Determine integration points to the Municipal Sustainability Plan			
Develop project schedule, project budget			
Approval of Project Charter			
<b>Development Phase</b>			
Establish project team	December 9, 2008	December 31, 2008	2 hours
Recruit sounding board members	December 29, 2008	January 5, 2009	2 hours
<b>Conduct Research</b>			
Liaise with primary stakeholders, e.g. development community, Sturgeon Foundation, United Church	November 25, 2008	January 2009	2.5 days
Participate on Regional Capital Board Affordable Housing working committee, integrate information into Morinville Strategy	October 2008	January 2009	6 days
Review Preliminary Report: modify economic, demographic, and building and development statistics to reflect current state	January 5, 2009	January 31, 2009	2 days
Additional research on approaches as required	February 9, 2009	February 23, 2009	2 – 3 days
Review recommended approaches based on current state and determine the suitability and efficacy of the approaches. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop detailed descriptions and/or business cases</li> <li>Develop evaluation criteria, aligning with sustainability principles</li> <li>For approaches with a minimal budget impact, action can begin prior to plan completion, e.g. housing brochure</li> </ul>	March 2, 2009	March 16, 2009	3 days
Review external affordable housing strategies/plans; determine structure of Community Housing Plan, e.g. table of contents	March 17, 2009	March 24, 2009	1 day
Developed detailed stakeholder strategy	March 24, 2009	March 31, 2009	1 day
Develop draft Plan	March 25, 2009	April 17, 2009	6 days
<b>Conduct Consultation</b>			
Review Plan with Corporation/Council	May 2009	May 2009	1.5 days
Conduct Stakeholder & Public Review	May 2009	June 2009	2 days
Final Document written, edited, published		July 2009	2 days
Plan Approved by CAO, Council		August 2009	1 day
<b>Implementation Phase</b>			
Develop training and implementation approach	September 2009	September 30, 2009	2 days
Transfer action items to appropriate Department	October 5, 2009	October 15, 2009	.5 days
Document project and activities in corporate business plan and appropriate department operational plans	October 15, 2009	October 28, 2009	.5 days
Schedule project updates in keeping with corporate and council guidelines.			
<b>Termination Phase</b>			
Complete Post-Implementation Review		October 30, 2009	1 day



Close out project: archive relevant project documentation		
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**Project Organization/Roles & Responsibilities:**



Role	Responsibilities & Accountabilities
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, implement and track project charter</li> <li>Co-ordinate work to ensure expected outcomes are achieved. Chair Sounding Board and Project Team meetings</li> <li>Manage overall process</li> <li>Manage expectation of sponsor, internal and external stakeholders</li> </ul>
Project Sponsor (CAO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure identified resources are made available to complete project</li> <li>Approve project plan and change requests</li> </ul>
Steering Committee (Executive Committee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and provide critical feedback on project charter, research documents, tools and strategies</li> <li>Provide input at key milestones</li> </ul>
Sounding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide content knowledge on research topics, specific actions and strategies</li> <li>Temperature check for sentiments of stakeholders</li> <li>Terms of Reference developed</li> </ul>
Project Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete research, provide content expertise.</li> </ul>
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide political guidance</li> <li>Approval of Strategy</li> </ul>

**Project Staffing Requirements:**

Resource	Role	Effort (h)
Strategic Initiatives Manager	Project Manager	1 day per week
Contract	Project Support	1 day per week
Planner, FCSS Coordinator, Finance Manager	Project Team	10 – 12 hours
Executive Team	Steering Committee	6 – 8 hours

**Financial Requirements:**

Item	Cost
Community and stakeholder consultation	\$2100
Newspaper notices	\$300
Professional writing services: editing, graphic design	\$1500
Source of Funding:	



**Risks & Contingencies:**

<b>Risk Factor</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation Strategy</b>
Development Industry not supportive of recommended strategies	Med	Med	Transparent process, inclusion in consultation
Reaction from residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not in My Back Yard</li> </ul>	High	Med	Education, transparent process, inclusion in consultation
Volatile market and economic conditions	Med	Med	

**Stakeholder Identification and Involvement Strategy:**

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Key Interests/Objectives</b>	<b>Proposed Level of Involvement</b>	<b>Involvement Strategy</b>
Citizens	Education, NIMBY	Consultation, Information Sharing	Open House, Survey Electronic Forum
Chamber of Commerce	Housing for employees Economic development	Consultation	Forum Sounding Board
Clubs (e.g. Lions, Rotary)	Partnership opportunity	Consultation, Active Participation	Forum Sounding Board
Development, Home-Builders Industry	Partnership opportunity Information source	Consultation Active Participation	Forum Sounding Board Sub-committee
Faith Community	Partnership opportunity Targeted citizens	Consultation, Active Participation	Forum Sounding Board
Home Builders Association	Partnership opportunity	Consultation	Sounding Board
Local Social Service Organizations	Partnership opportunity Targeted citizens	Consultation	Forum Sounding Board
Media	Key messaging aligned with Town objectives	Information	Media Release
MLA Constituency	Awareness of issues	Information	Press Release
Rental Property Owners	Partnership opportunity Information source	Consultation	Forum Sub-Committee
Seniors' Organizations	Partnership opportunity Targeted citizens	Consultation	Sounding Board
Sturgeon County	Partnership opportunity Information source	Consultation Active Participation	Sounding Board
Sturgeon Foundation	Partnership opportunity Targeted citizens	Consultation Active Participation	Sounding Board Sub-committee
Targeted Citizens: Citizens with affordable housing needs	Information Potential Clientele	Consultation	Interviews, Focus Group

**TOWN OF MORINVILLE**



**Outcomes and Evaluation Approach:**

- The Affordable Housing Strategy will include expected outcomes, targets and an evaluation framework.
- Key indicators will align with those developed for the Municipal Sustainability Plan.

**Potential Operational Impacts:**

- Policy and By-law additions, amendments
  - Grant program, assessment criteria
- 

**APPROVAL**

Approved:

Deferred:

Defer Date:

Cancelled

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: *Milad Asdagh*

Date: *Jan 9/09*



# Background Report

# PROJECT PRINCIPLES

**Establishing the guiding principles  
for the Community Housing Plan.**

**February 2009**

**Part of a series of CHP background  
reports and studies.**



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## **Morinville Community Housing Plan Guiding Principles**

### **Accountable**

Community Housing operations should be governed by elected representatives or by those directly appointed by elected bodies. This will ensure that:

- funding is utilized according to priorities established by the elected representatives of the community
- any governing body established to manage community housing resources is viewed as a legitimate arm of local government.

### **Collaborative**

Regional collaboration should be sought as opportunities become available to leverage resources and ensure that programs active in neighbouring communities are not counter productive or competitive.

Inclusive plan development methods must be used to ensure the involvement of private and not for profit partners.

### **Environmental Stewardship**

- incorporating and protect natural features in any community housing project
- focusing on the efficient use of energy (eg. To LEED construction standards)
- preserving community green spaces
- contributing to the development of land incorporating a variety of housing types with increased density to provide adequate landscaping and green space while ensuring proximity to amenities.

### **Integrated Planning**

The Community Housing Plan must be linked to other social policies and planning documents to ensure its compatibility with existing and future strategic plans and that it is consistent with corporate objectives.

### **Local Applicability**

Recommendation should reflect housing and development priorities for Morinville while respecting the functioning of the local market. Such as:

- support a diversity of housing options to allow citizens to remain in the community and ‘age in place’;
- utilize existing infrastructure or infill developments to reduce or eliminate the costs of servicing any parcels of land for community housing uses;
- developments created under the auspices of the plan must be consistent with the character of existing neighbourhoods;



### **Sociability**

Actions undertaken must meet social needs of residents by:

- creating inclusive, healthy and vibrant communities for all residents;
- respecting the dignity and confidentiality of those accessing services;
- dispelling myths and negative connotations of affordable housing and individuals requiring affordable housing;
- accessible and barrier-free development;
- “human scale” developments (development focused on human needs and creating a walkable, open environment with less imposing structures).

### **Financial Stewardship**

Responsible use of limited resources through:

- planning proactively for the long term rather than reacting to the current backlog of need;
- prioritize cost effective projects;
- setting a high quality standard for projects regarding long term suitability;
- leveraging public dollars wherever possible;
- favouring mixed use developments to generate offsetting revenue.

# Background Report

# CONSULTATION PLAN

**Process and results for consulting with internal and external stakeholders of the Community Housing Plan.**

**June 2009**

**Part of a series of CHP background reports and studies.**



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# Community Housing Plan Consultation Plan

## 1.0 Introduction

The development of a Community Housing Plan (CHP) for the Town of Morinville will have a number of significant impacts on the community. As a result it is necessary to conduct a consultation process to inform, educate, and involve a number of diverse stakeholders in the plan. The consultation plan will address primarily how both internal and external stakeholders will be involved and consulted during the course of the project.

### 1.1 Project Plan Overview

Consultation is a key component of any project with potential impacts on the overall community, and this project is no exception. Project success is dependent on effective and timely consultation with stakeholders. The development of the CHP will occur in these major phases:

<u>Phase</u>	<u>Primary Activities</u>
Concept Phase	Develop Project Charter
Development Phase	Review and Update Preliminary Plan Conduct Project Research - Recommendations Develop Plan Format Develop Draft Plan <b>Conduct Consultation</b> Develop Final Plan
Implementation Phase	Transfer Plan implementation to Departments Update Business and Operational Plans Establish Implementation Monitoring
Termination Phase	Post Implementation Review Project Close Out

This overview places the primary consultation activities in the context of the overall project and establishes the requirements of the process. Although stakeholders will be involved throughout the project in all phases, the major focus on gathering feedback and input from external stakeholders will occur in the Development Phase following the completion of a research-based draft plan.



## 2.0 Project Stakeholders

There are both internal and external stakeholders involved in this project. Internal stakeholders are defined as those working either directly or indirectly for the Town of Morinville and include local government officials, regular employees, temporary employees and contractors. External stakeholders are defined as stakeholders external to the corporation and include groups and individuals such as developers, builders, community groups, residents of Morinville and others.

This plan will outline how and when each stakeholder will be communicated with during the various project phases, and what the outcomes of this communication will be.

### 2.1 Internal Stakeholders

Major internal stakeholders in this project are listed below:

Town Council  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Executive Leadership Team  
Corporate Services Staff  
Town of Morinville Employees

#### 2.1.1 Town Council

Town Council is the primary decision maker regarding the final contents of the CHP. Council will be consulted at key project milestones, and also perform review functions for both the draft and final version of the CHP.

Project Milestone	Involvement	Method	Timeline
Draft CHP Complete	Review and amendment of document	Individual interviews	May 2009
Final CHP Complete	Review and amendment of document	Committee of the Whole Meetings and Regular Council Meeting	August 2009

Council will also receive quarterly project updates as per the existing practice.

#### 2.1.2. Chief Administrative Officer and Executive Leadership Team

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) has been identified as the project sponsor for the CHP development. The primary responsibility of the sponsor is to secure overall organizational support for project completion and the dedication of any required resources.

The Executive Leadership Team will also be involved in the ongoing monitoring and review of project progress. In order to prevent the duplication of information, the involvement of the Executive Leadership Team has also been included in this table, as CAO involvement is typically achieved through Executive Leadership Team regular weekly meetings.

Project Milestone	Involvement	Method	Timeline
Approval of Project Charter	Review and approval	Administrative	December 2009
Regular Project Updates	Executive Leadership Team review	Executive Leadership Team Meetings	As Required
Draft CHP Complete	Review and amendment of document	Executive Leadership Team Meeting	May 2009
Final CHP Complete	Review and amendment of document, and recommendation for Council Approval	Executive Leadership Team Meeting	August 2009
Corporate Business Plan Additions	Review and recommendation for Council Approval	Administrative and Executive Leadership Team Meeting	October 2009
Post-Implementation Review	Review and approval of analysis	Administrative	October 2009

### **2.1.3. Corporate Services Staff**

This internal stakeholder group will have a key role in assessing some of the fiscal impacts of CHP recommendations and implementation activities. It is of high importance to inform and gather feedback directly from key Corporate Services staff responsible for the financial planning of the Town. Recommendations of the CHP must be reviewed for their potential impact on the municipal capital and operational budgets to ascertain their feasibility. These stakeholders will be directly targeted through informal and formal meetings to quantify financial cost/benefit of CHP recommendations.

### **2.1.4. Town of Morinville Employees**

The final implementation of the CHP will impact an number of Town Employees in various departments, primarily in the Community Services, Corporate Services, and Planning and Development departments. Employee feedback will assist in developing feasible recommendations and implementation strategies. The primary method for consulting this group of stakeholders will be to hold employee focus group sessions to present the draft CHP and gather feedback.

### 3.0 External Stakeholders

Major external stakeholders in this project can be categorized as follows and are listed below:

<b>Potential Resource Partners</b>	<b>Direct Interest Stakeholders</b>	<b>Indirect Interest Stakeholders</b>
Faith Community	Chamber of Commerce	Residents of Morinville
Home Builders	Residents with Affordable Housing Needs	MLA Constituency
Home Builders Association	Potential Neighbours	Media
Land Developers	Senior's Organizations	Condominium Association Boards
Landlords	Preliminary Plan Focus Group	
Local Service Clubs	Youth	
Local Social Service Organizations		
Sturgeon County		
Sturgeon Foundation		

#### 3.1 Potential Resource Partners

Potential Resource Partners are defined as individuals, groups, or businesses that could potentially be a future partner in the development, construction, or management of physical community housing infrastructure, or a future partner in the provision of community housing programs and services. There are two types of Potential Resource Partners, Construction and Development Partners, and Service Provision Partners. Although the reference point will be different for these two groups, the objective is the same: to provide feedback and input on the Corporate Housing Plan.

The consultation methods utilized for this group of stakeholders will be (as described in the next section of the plan):

- Focus Group Meetings
- Targeted Consultation
- Education/Promotional Campaign



### **3.1.1 Construction and Development Partners**

#### **3.1.1.1 Home Builders**

Private home builders are also key potential partners in the development of a community approach to affordable housing. The involvement of builders is essential in contributing to the available inventory of non-market and near-market homes in Morinville. Approaches being considered include incentives to construct affordable new homes in town to assist in meeting community needs. The input of local home builder will be key in developing incentives that achieve objectives.

#### **3.1.1.2 Home Builders' Association**

Local or regional Home Builders' Associations often have members with practical experience in the application of community housing initiatives in a municipal context. This experience and knowledge of what has and has not worked in other communities around the province will be of value in developing the CHP.

#### **3.1.1.3 Land Developers**

Land developers may potentially play a large role in moving forward with future community housing initiatives. These companies are the primary vehicle for the opening up of new subdivisions for development. One alternative being considered as part of the Community Housing Plan is developing incentives or regulations to increase the dedication of serviced land for future community housing proposals. The consultation of local developers will be important to creating workable opportunities for a shared commitment to community housing.

### **3.1.2 Service Provision Partners**

#### **3.1.2.1 Faith Community**

Morinville has a number of faith-based organizations that have become involved in the provision of some social supports in the community, as well as at least one local church that has expressed some interest in contributing some resources to the establishment of a community housing resource. Those that express or have expressed interest will potentially be the subjects of a targeted consultation.

#### **3.1.2.2 Landlords**

There are several different types of landlords that will be targeted during the consultation process. The first type is the owner of large apartment developments in the community. The second is the owner of smaller scale rental properties such as an investment single family home, fourplex, or duplex. The third type of landlord is the owner of a primary residence that contains a (currently illegal) secondary suite that is rented out.

### **3.1.2.3 Local Service Clubs**

There are a number of organizations in Morinville that should be consulted regarding the development of community housing programs and developments. The primary purpose of consultation with these groups will be to determine if any suitable partners may be attracted to assist in funding or assisting in the operation of programs and developments. Key groups include the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, and the Knights of Columbus.

### **3.1.2.3 Local Social Service Organizations**

There are some local service organizations that provide support and programs for low income residents of Morinville. The Midstream Support Society plays a significant role in assisting individuals in need locally, as well as groups such as the Teen Centre, Victim Services, and others. These groups are often “first responders” in cases of the provision of community social supports and their involvement will greatly enhance access to services by those in need. Some of these organizations will be subjects of targeted consultation methods.

### **3.1.2.4 Sturgeon Foundation**

The Sturgeon Foundation is an organization mandated with the provision of seniors housing in the region. This organization has much of the knowledge, expertise and capacity required to provide both lodge style and independent living environments and may be a natural partner in the management of community housing efforts and resources in the community. This stakeholder is a prime candidate for targeted consultations.

## **3.2. Direct Interest Stakeholders**

Direct Interest Stakeholders are defined as stakeholders that will directly benefit from the provision of Community Housing programs and services in the community. These stakeholders will be consulted through:

Focus Group Sessions  
Educational Advertising Campaign

### **3.2.1 Chamber of Commerce**

The Chamber of Commerce represents the larger business interests of the local economy. During the recent period of economic growth a major challenge experienced by many businesses was the retention of staff due to the increases in the cost of housing. Community housing provides a direct benefit to employers in terms of providing access to housing for residents to live and work locally. The local Chamber of Commerce may be a strong local advocate for the provision of these services, as well as a key partner in communicating this direct benefit to the larger community.

### **3.2.2 Potential Neighbours**

Potential Neighbours of Community Housing assets are a direct interest stakeholder group that warrants some mention. This group will not be clearly identifiable until potential Community Housing locations are determined, and it will be desirable to consider the needs of this stakeholder group in developing consultation methods and education/promotion campaigns.

### **3.2.3 Residents with Affordable Housing Needs**

The Consultation process will be incomplete without the input and feedback of the demographic groups that will access the Community Housing programs and services in the future. The CHP must present alternatives that are responsive to the needs of the individuals and families that it is intended to support. Typically it can prove difficult to contact and engage this demographic group, as many feel powerless to resolve their housing challenges and often do not participate in consultation processes, especially those that will identify them as low income or in need of social supports.

### **3.2.4 Senior's Groups**

Senior Citizens are a demographic group that relies more heavily on community housing programs. The reality is that many Senior Citizens live on a fixed income while battling constantly increasing housing costs. There are some local groups and organizations that represent this demographic group and would be an excellent source of information for developing community housing alternatives to accommodate the needs of local senior citizens.

### **3.2.5 Sturgeon County**

Sturgeon County is the rural municipality in which Morinville is located. While the housing needs of a rural municipality may differ from a more urban setting, there are obvious connections in terms of service delivery. Additionally, the County is often the lynchpin in the development of regional approaches to common challenges amongst the other urban centres in the region.

### **3.2.6 Preliminary Plan Focus Group**

This focus group was established for the purpose of gathering feedback during the development of the Preliminary Affordable Housing Plan. This group will provide valuable contributions in terms of capturing some of the issues and concerns brought forward during the Preliminary Plan development and ensuring that the feedback is carried through to the final implementation plan.

### **3.2.7 Youth**

Young adults often experience difficulties in locating residences within Morinville upon striking out on their own. Many become students of post-secondary institutions and experience difficulties in covering expenses related to housing due to the monetary demands of obtaining an education. Others struggle to cover the rent in entry level positions or, lacking work experience, take an untrained position in the retail or service sector to pay the bills. The youth demographic will be consulted in order to develop initiatives to address the issue of affordable housing for youth and young adults. The primary tool for contacting and consulting youths will be through local schools and youth groups, e.g. Teen Centre.

### **3.3 Indirect Interest Stakeholders**

Indirect Interest Stakeholders are those that will benefit indirectly through the offering of community housing initiatives in the community. These indirect benefits include:

- Enjoyment of a more socially sustainable community
- Reduction in the negative impacts resulting from a lack of adequate affordable housing in the community
- Economic benefits realized through the presence of additional human resources to support the local economy through affordable housing programs
- The economic benefits of additional development (or redevelopment) of community housing assets in the community.

These stakeholders will be engaged through:

Focus Group Sessions (Open Houses)  
Education Advertising Campaign

#### **3.3.1 Media**

The local and regional media would have an interest in reporting the progress of the CHP to the community and play a significant role in the dissemination of information to the general public.

#### **3.3.2 Residents of Morinville**

The development of a community housing program in Morinville is a first for the community. This plan represents the beginning of the municipal involvement in affordable housing and as such particular attention must be paid to the attitudes to and public perception of community housing initiatives. The political will to continue to accept provincial funds for community housing will depend largely on the acceptance of the general public. Should a significant proportion of residents oppose the use of public funds for this purpose there will be pressure on local elected representatives to forego the funding and eliminate the provision of these services. A component of the development of the Community Housing Plan must be to educate the community regarding the positive

impacts of these developments, and to dispel the many myths surrounding individuals and families requiring affordable housing.

### **3.3.3 MLA Constituency**

This stakeholder group presents an easily identifiable physical and geographic boundary of the regional community. The provision of affordable housing programs in Morinville will provide regional residents with an additional choice for remaining in the community and prevent many regional residents from leaving the community to find more affordable housing options. The consultation must examine the regional impacts of community housing opportunities in Morinville, as regional needs will impact the level of service delivery required. Additionally, the awareness of the CHP development at the level of provincial representation will allow the needs of Morinville and area to be presented to the regional MLA for his consideration and support.

## **4.0 Consultation Methods**

This section will outline the consultation methods utilized to consult with the various stakeholders in this project. These include:

Focus Group Meetings;  
Targeted Sessions; and  
Educational Advertising Campaign.

### **4.1 Focus Group Meetings**

A series of focus group meetings will be held to gather additional information from key stakeholders in the community. There will be at least two major focus group sessions held at different times. One session will be held with Potential Resource Partner groups resulting in a mixture of Construction and Development Partners and Service Provision Partners, and the second with a mixture of Direct and Indirect Interest Stakeholders. The combining of stakeholder groups in focus group meetings is intended to facilitate the raising and discussion of issues to provide high quality feedback. In addition, a meeting will be held with the same groups and individuals that participated in the development of the Preliminary Affordable Housing Plan developed in 2008. The participation of this group is vital to ensuring that the final implementation plan reflects the ideas presented in the Preliminary Plan.

#### **4.1.1 Potential Resource Partner Focus Group Session**

The main purposes of this Focus Group Session are to:

- Receive input and feedback on the Community Housing Plan.
- Identify stakeholders that may be willing to commit to a future partnership during the implementation of CHP.

The individuals attending the meeting will have diverse and perhaps vested interests, as reflected in the goals below:

- Inform Construction and Development Partners regarding the many options for the provision of affordable housing and some of the regulatory changes being proposed to remove barriers to the creation of non-market and near-market homes;
- Inform Service Provision Partners regarding the planned rent supplement program and other services as part of the Community Housing Plan, feedback to improve program provision, and to initiate partnerships with willing stakeholder; and

Tools that will be utilized to meet these objectives are:

- A presentation on the CHP,
- Facilitated session on specific aspects of the Plan as they relate to the targeted audience.

#### **4.1.2 Direct and Indirect Interest Stakeholder Focus Group Session**

The main purpose of this Focus Group Session is to:

- Receive input and feedback on the Community Housing Plan
- Inform Direct Stakeholders of the opportunity for involvement in various aspects of the Community Housing Plan and its future implementation,; and
- Inform Indirect Stakeholders regarding the alternatives being proposed in the Community Housing Plan, educate residents concerning the many myths regarding community housing.

Tools that will be utilized to meet these objectives are:

- Informative presentations related to the above objectives.
- Facilitated session on specific aspects of the Plan as they relate to the targeted audience.

These focus groups will ensure that many of the major external stakeholders will have the opportunity to present feedback and be consulted regarding the various alternatives and options being proposed as part of the Community Housing Plan.

#### **4.1.3 Preliminary Affordable Housing Plan Focus Group**

The main purpose of this Focus Group Session is to:

- Allow additional feedback from the focus group established to inform the Preliminary Plan development; and
- Ensure that the new CHP adequately addresses issues identified in the Preliminary Plan.

Tools that will be utilized to meet these objectives are:

- Informative presentations related to the above objectives.
- Facilitated session intended to identify issues or concerns left unaddressed in the Draft CHP.

## **4.2 Targeted Sessions**

Invitations to specific individual or corporate stakeholders for meetings with Town Officials discussing issues relating to the CHP will be sent to some Potential Resource Partners where appropriate. Some CHP recommendations may be specific to individual stakeholders and require some consultation to assess partnership potential. An example would be the Sturgeon Foundation which is a regional body that operates a number of senior's housing developments in communities across Sturgeon County and St. Albert.

This organization possesses the capability to manage housing developments and may make a natural resource partner in the development and formation of a Community Housing Corporation. These sessions are not intended to begin the negotiation of partnerships, but to assess the potential of forming future partnerships during CHP implementation.

## **4.3 Educational Advertising Campaign**

The following methods will be utilized to inform the general public throughout the project:

- Advertisements informing of open public meetings
- Advertisements dispelling negative perceptions of Community Housing
- Brochures/information flyers educating the public regarding Community Housing
- Community message boards advertising specific events
- Newspaper stories through contacting the local media
- Website postings of project events and planned milestone dates
- Press releases as required

In order for any consultation process to be successful, the general public and other external stakeholders must be made aware of the Plan development and the consultation events occurring as part of the project.

# Community Housing Plan Stakeholder Consultation Session

June 17 & 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Prepared By:  
Community Housing Plan Project Team

## Introduction

- Preliminary Affordable Housing Report released in June of 2008
  - Efforts should focus on individuals and families in need of safe, affordable housing
  - Secondary focus on transitional housing (short-term housing to assist in becoming independent).
- Gaps in Morinville Housing Availability Include:
  - Emergency/Transitional Housing is non-existent
  - Limited supply of affordable housing for seniors
  - Subsidized housing/rent supplement programs not available for the general population
  - Short supply of apartment rental units and low vacancy rates

2

June 17 & 18, 2009

## Introduction

- Capital Region Housing Plan Notes:
  - 135 rental households paying more than 30% of their income on rent
  - From 2009-2013 Morinville will require 7 additional Non-Market Units and 7 Affordable Market Units
  - From 2014-2018 another 9 Non-Market Units and 9 Affordable Market Units will be required

3

June 17 & 18, 2009

## Definition of Affordable Housing

- Households are in need of affordable housing if they cannot find somewhere to live that is modest, in reasonably good condition, and is large enough to accommodate themselves and their family without spending more than 30% of their household income.

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Morinville Needs Affordable Housing

- Costs of housing have risen
  - Recently real estate values have dropped, yet they still remain significantly higher than just a few years ago
- Limited rental accommodations: 161 units, low vacancy rates (decreased by 9.4% since 2004)
- Majority of housing is owner-occupied (80.8%), single detached housing (79.9%)
- Limited supply of entry-level homes
  - What was once entry-level now presents cost barriers
- 5.5% low-income based on LICO
- 370 families have an income of <\$39,000 (LIM)

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Housing Continuum

Emergency Shelter  
Transitional Housing  
Social Housing  
Subsidized Accommodation  
Affordable Home Ownership  
Lifespan continuum-workforce, "growhome"

6

June 17 & 18, 2009



## Consultation Stage

- Initiative Proposals Have Been Drafted
  - Currently looking for feedback on proposed recommendations, Council reviewing as well
- Feedback to be Integrated into Final Plan Draft
- Inform Stakeholders of Proposed Initiatives
  - Inform of potential for future partnerships+
- Research based

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Community Housing Plan Scope

- Provincial and Federal Responsibility
- Municipalities in Leadership Role
- More Than Just Provincial Funding
  - Land Use Incentives, Encouraging the Market Creation of Affordable Units, Sustainable Development, Rent Supplement Program, etc.
- Three Year Implementation Plan
  - How can we meet residents' housing needs sustainably now and in the future?

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Today's Activities

- Present a recommended community housing initiative or component of the CHP
- After each brief presentation break into 2 groups
  - Gather feedback using gradients of agreement scale
  - General group discussion
- Move on to the next recommended initiative or component
  - Total of six presentations

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Objectives of the CHP

1. Promote a diverse supply of suitable, affordable, and adequate housing for the residents of Morinville by:
  - a. Increasing the non-market supply of housing through the development of social and transitional housing assets and programs;
  - b. Increasing the market supply of rental units; and,
  - c. Increasing the market supply of entry-level homes.

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Financial Market Incentives

- Tax Exemptions to qualified developers and/or builders during construction phase of affordable housing units
  - On condition of passing savings to future owner
- Permit and Development Fee Rebates
  - On the construction of affordable units

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Planning Process

- Expedited administrative review processes
  - Affordable developments given higher priority
- Increased variance powers to Development Officer
  - Reduced process times and costs

June 17 & 18, 2009

## Secondary Suites

- Amend the Land Use Bylaw to allow secondary suites as a permitted or discretionary use in selected zones
- Establish "Amnesty" Period for existing units
- Facilitate connection with CMHC funding program
  - Up to \$24,000 to upgrade secondary suites
- Provide a portion of provincial funding to provide additional incentives to upgrade existing suites or develop new ones
- Intent to increase inventory of affordable rental units

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Land Use Incentives

- Increase allowable number of units per hectare of development for affordable housing units
- Allow relaxations for mixed use developments, infill, and intensification involving affordable units
  - Variances or relaxations to development regulations
  - To encourage the market creation of affordable housing
  - Mixed commercial and residential uses
- Voluntary Inclusionary provisions
  - Encourage developers to include affordable housing options as part of all developments
  - Currently mandatory provisions not enforceable

14

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## Partnership Development

- Funding is insufficient to meet immediate affordable housing needs
- Partners are essential to leveraging public funds
- Private or Not-for-Profit partners with innovative ideas will be sought
- Current barrier is lack of municipally-owned land

15

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## Transitional Housing Options

- 20% of provincial funding required for transitional housing
- Transitional Housing is defined as:
  - Short-term housing that is safe and secure and enables families and individuals to achieve a higher level of sustainable independence
- Programs to transitional households due to:
  - Sudden loss of employment
  - Family crisis
  - Medical situation

June 17 & 18, 2009

## Rent Supplement Program

- Program intended to provide relief from unaffordable market rates in cases where rent is in excess of 30% of income.
- Benefits include:
  - Does not require intense capital development
  - Flexible as not tied to specific dwellings
  - Improves integration with community
- Constraints
  - Does not generate revenue to offset costs
  - May create difficulties for tenants apply for rental units
  - Doesn't address root causes

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June 17 & 18, 2009

## Questions?????

Final Plan scheduled for an August 2009 release

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June 17 & 18, 2009

# Results of Consultations

## Results – Community Housing Plan Consultation Session 1 Results

### Feedback Slide 1 Responses – CHP Objectives

#### Group 1

	Scores	Group 1 Total
Agree (2)	10	19
Neutral (1)	4	
Disagree (1)	3	
Strongly Disagree (2)	2	

#### Group 2

	Scores	Group 2 Total	Session Total
Absolutely Agree (1)	7	38	57/84=68% Support
Strongly Agree (1)	6		
Agree (4)	25		

### Flipchart Notes

#### Group 1

Cost of lots has dropped – there is “bang for you buck”

Definition/Statistics regarding affordability required – 30% medium vs. low end

-can they even afford low-income housing?

-other factors are important as well – i.e. overall cost of living, lifestyle conditions

#### Group 2

Entry level costs have increased

-due to building costs and land costs

Market needs support of grants. Etc to produce affordable units

-in order for the private sector to participate there has to be a profit margin

-costs must be covered, with profit

Everyone needs to cooperate

Tends to be too many people involved in the development process

-Regulators, developers, builders, contractors, buyers

-make it difficult to achieve results/changes

Property Taxes are also an issue regarding affordability

Tough to develop assets in existing neighbourhoods due to public perception and NIMBY

Strong and disciplined leadership required (may have to approve unpopular development)

Negative public perception must be defeated

Dynamic approach required, not just non-market solutions

Must have more than one target to accommodate rapid changes to fluctuating markets

## Feedback Slide 2 Responses – Financial Incentives

### Group 1

	Scores	Group 1 Total
Strongly Agree (1)	6	19
Agree (1)	5	
Disagree (1)	3	
Strongly Disagree (2)	4	
Absolutely Disagree (1)	1	

### Group 2

	Scores	Group 2 Total	Session Total
Strongly Agree (1)	6	30	49/84=58% Support
Agree (4)	20		
Neutral (1)	4		

### Flipchart Notes

#### Group 1

Everything helps

Concern that landlords and developers would be subsidizing future competitors

May be better to subsidized existing units – maybe affordable is not available

Who is to be targeted?

-will it work for targeted group(s)

May just make it more affordable for all

– maybe those that can afford will buy and not just those who can't afford

Reverse calculation required for low income levels

-perhaps affordability cannot be built by the market

What is the need? Ownership units? Rental Units?

Currently rental projects uneconomical – can't even break even at market rates

Rough calculation – 30% of 39,000 is about \$975/month

Changing conditions must be accommodated

Calculate the effect of potential savings to ensure positive impacts on affordability

Morals questions as to who should be targeted –young adults vs. one parent families? Etc

-criteria needs to be established to set targeted groups

Different needs will require different methods

Affordable rents hard to find...although units are available

Provincial rent supplement programs – 3 to 6 months wait, must be in a legal suite

-HEP fund recently cancelled

#### Group 2

How much would this add up to? Developers see very little benefit is what may be offered

Levies vs. permits (investigate these as well) – levies are much more costly to the initial developer – costs of building and development permits are minor comparatively

Multi-family savings more noticeable than single family savings due to project size

Relief vs. rebate – conditions to make sure savings are passed on

How would very low income be targeted?

Better suggestion would be to partner in a long-term finance re: land, servicing, levies, and fees to be paid off over time – these are the biggest costs, as well as costs for paving new roads and parking lots

Consumer-driven market and expectations - preference to own >2000 s.f. single detached dwelling and vehicle or two in a homogenous community (not everyone wants the “Planner’s Paradise”)

### Feedback Slide 3 Responses – Processing Improvements

#### Group 1

	Scores	Group 1 Total
Absolutely Agree (3)	21	33
Neutral (2)	8	
Strongly Disagree (2)	4	

#### Group 2

	Scores	Group 2 Total	Session Total
Absolutely Agree (4)	28	39	72/91=79% Support
Strongly Agree (1)	6		
Agree (1)	5		

### Flipchart Notes

#### Group 1

Assumption seems to be new developments are needed

-that may not be true (currently a lot of rental vacancies)

Clarification of terms “affordable developments” too broad

Land uses may be better – secondary suites, more types, fewer restrictions

Public perceptions of affordable housing is negative

May be density concerns from existing residents

Options should be prioritized

Building code is building code, no variations

Often contradicting arguments/concerns from developers and municipalities

LUB builds in costs

Must be flexibility for creative ideas (DC zoning for innovative projects)

Specific demographics must be handled differently

-Who targeted?

Pre-determined criteria should be established

-will also speed up process (types of projects clearly defined ahead of time)

If suites don't meet criteria of programs they should not be an option for affordable housing

## Group 2

Terminology used may be better appropriately labelled "Attainable" vs. "Affordable"  
Address all sides at once up front –admin, public, etc.

- teamwork, collaboration required

- "round table" discussion

- best way to "speed up the process" is to get all interested parties together at once and "speak now or forever hold your piece" [not exactly how the MGA has it structured...]

Social issues –increased variance powers having adverse affects

NIMBY – where valid planning considerations are brought forward

Transportation – low income groups having access to work, medical services, etc. and the availability of these in Morinville vs. Edmonton/St. Albert – public transit may ghettoize low income groups – population diversity vs. segregation

## Feedback Slide 4 Responses – Secondary Suites

### Group 1

	Scores	Group 1 Total
Absolutely Agree (3)	21	35
Strongly Agree (1)	6	
Neutral (2)	8	

### Group 2

	Scores	Group 2 Total	Session Total
Agree (1)	5	21	56/84=67%
Neutral (3)	12		
Disagree (2)	4		

## Flipchart Notes

### Group 1

Simple, quick way to get units

Existing units are out there

Must be a bureaucratic process to "mainstream units"

Perhaps a tax assessment adjustment to homes with suites

Inventory of existing units needed? – are more units required

What price point?

Results had better help target population rather than add competition

Market can't produce rental units for less than \$1,000/month

Bridge gap between market and affordable – subsidy

Building codes exist for suites

Criteria for program should be established

Certain secondary suites could be built into new developments to assist new home buyers  
-perhaps not even require funds/grants as 50% of rental rate is counted as income

Should be a qualification process

- additional dollars to bring up to code
- at the right price point for target groups
- certain \$ for a set time period for set target people

Edmonton has or is establishing criteria

Secondary suites make housing affordable for two –renter and owner

Must be targeted

## Group 2

Easy to do, but not a lot of uptake – suite-ready homes are the developer’s favourite choice in providing affordable units – but not many homeowners actually rent suites

Existing vs. new homes (conversion vs. suite-ready and associated costs) – adequate supply already – build new suites or legalize and renovate old ones?

Who really needs it in Morinville? – originally viewing the town as a “family-oriented bedroom community” and very few suites would actually be made, but discussion of people who already live here let to need from:

- singles with or without children
- seniors
- youth/young adults

## Feedback Slide 5 Responses – Land Use Incentives

### Group 1

	Scores	Group 1 Total
Absolutely Agree (1)	7	29
Agree (2)	12	
Neutral (2)	8	
Disagree (1)	2	

### Group 2

	Scores	Group 2 Total	Session Total
Strongly Agree (2)	12	37	66/91=73%
Agree (5)	25		

### Group 1

How much of density increase will make a difference? Should answer this question

Land costs are lower, which is a factor

In Vancouver an affordable unit could be a 300 sq. ft. unit

- must keep local applicability in mind

Incentives should be specifically targeted

Other options are deferring \$ in lieu or offsite levies off the property

Market is correcting itself – will make housing more affordable  
 UDI has concerns with increased densities  
 Mixed use more applicable in larger market (city)  
 -big cities have larger market support for these developments  
 Due to land availability it is cheaper to build horizontally  
 Is increased density locally desirable?  
 Must look at compatibility of use  
 Modular housing offers affordable options  
 Other requirements excessive, landscaping, etc – perhaps these could be looked at

## Group 2

Mixed use doesn't sell well (particularly ground-level commercial), especially in Morinville (people prefer a private, secluded living environment)  
 Could vary lot types and sizes within neighbourhoods and create the allowance to do so – builder's concern over all lots being 45-55 ft. wide – no allowance for variety of building footprint (i.e. forces garage to front)  
 Cost of fencing, parking etc also contribute to costs [affordability a negotiable term of a development agreement, same as these mentioned costs]  
 Increased density is a good approach - developer's always want to be able to create higher density as a better return on land investment

## Feedback Slide 6 Responses – Partnership Development

### Group 1

	Scores	Group 1 Total
Absolutely Agree (3)	21	35
Agree (2)	10	
Neutral (1)	4	

### Group 2

	Scores	Group 2 Total	Session Total
Absolutely Agree (2)	14	42	77/91=85% Support
Strongly Agree (4)	24		
Neutral (1)	4		

### Group 1

Only way to go the way things are going cost-wise  
 Government and Partners allow bringing two strengths  
 Partnerships getting routine to meet needs  
 Government can't execute due to limited flexibility – but has the funds  
 Private sector can't subsidize - but can execute  
 Private sector sees market changes quickly (right now!)  
 Partnerships needed to achieve objectives  
 Not-for-Profit can do a lot with limited funding



- more in touch with those in need
  - take action where needed and they have the correct motivation
- Caution, as Habitat for Humanity has to generate “profit” from its units to sustain its operations
- Take a lot at existing developments
- in the past some units were built with provincial funding \$ for affordable housing
- The market can kill you
- boom/bust cycle

Group 2

Town’s role – what do they give back? Bottom line is cost – if Town wants affordable units, they have to contribute to upfront costs such as buying the land (“You buy the land, then give it to me...”) – goes back to long-term financing under finance incentives

Land Banking not feasible in foreseeable future as Town has little leverage having little land supply

Where does money come from? – upfront costs are always going to be there and the only way to reduce it is to subsidize – but taxpayers not willing to increase their rate to provide municipal funding towards subsidies

Examine outward growth (sprawl) vs. redevelopment (using existing infrastructure cheaper) – the type/location of land is key component

Feedback Slide 7 Responses – Rent Supplement Program

Group 1

	Scores	Group 1 Total
Strongly Agree (3)	18	32
Agree (2)	10	
Neutral (1)	4	

Group 2

	Scores	Group 2 Total	Session Total
Strongly Agree (1)	6	34	66/91=73% Support
Agree (4)	20		
Neutral (2)	8		

Group 1

Supplement programs mean paperwork, but for landlords this is a part of the business

Never had to turn away someone that qualifies

Concerns around tenants focus more on maintenance costs and potential damage

Seniors are looking for these options

What income level is too high? 30% of what?

Means test and apply modesty

No other methods will address root causes – this just deals with housing

Human rights commission prevents discrimination against renters

- discrimination can be very difficult to prove
- Social stigma – successful landlords will take those on program –fills up units
- Targets should be on low income and low cost housing if supplement to be effective
- If units available this would help, but if not available you have a different problem
- Awareness important
  - need to make connection
- Youth housing – a site manager/”den mother” would assist with guidance and youth issues
  - landlords are unwilling to pay for mistakes youth make sometimes
  - small proportion of youth population cause issues
  - one possible solution is a co-signed lease to reduce concerns
    - this is what one parent did to help find rental housing

## Group 2

The developer has limited role – it is a social/political matter, not a capital project  
 Financing is difficult: lack of a long-term solution, management in a volatile economy, unsustainable finance (perpetual loss)  
 What about going forward – 3 years – source of funding and role of taxpayer  
 Assists in diversification of income groups – location is not a factor  
 Good to assist in transitional housing –keeps it out of a single “project”

## **Results – Community Housing Plan Consultation Session 2 Results**

### Feedback Slide 1 Responses – CHP Objectives

#### Agreement Level

	Scores	Session Total
Absolutely Agree (1)	7	13/14=93% Support
Strongly Agree (1)	6	

#### Flipchart Notes

Issues of mental health and other supervised assisted living facilities
 

- available funding and partnership with mental health admin
- may be partnership opportunity
- for example La Maison is not adequate for transitional housing

#### Group housing

How do we get developers to participate?

Market housing – R-2 zones, not enough land on narrower lots
 

- where can you grow a garden?

Other municipalities success in interspersed SDD’s & manufactured homes as opposed to “trailer park” ie. MHP district

### Feedback Slide 2 Responses – Financial Incentives

### Agreement Level

	Scores	Session Total
Agree (1)	5	8/21=38% Support
Strongly Disagree (1)	2	
Absolutely Disagree (1)	1	

### Flipchart Notes

What is “qualified”? Must ensure savings not developer profit!

How would savings be passed on?

Tax exemptions to developers in large parcels to reduce costs to develop serviced lots

- Should they get it? [Aware of what a “developer” is? i.e. raw land developers vs. smaller serviced lot developers]

### Feedback Slide 3 Responses – Processing Improvements

#### Agreement Level

	Scores	Session Total
Agree (0.5)	2.5	7/21=33% Support
Disagree (0.5)	1.5	
Strongly Disagree (1)	2	
Absolutely Disagree (1)	1	

\* One respondent agreed with expedition but disagreed with variance powers

### Flipchart Notes

Too much power - processes exist for a reason

Rush vs. due diligence

### Feedback Slide 4 Responses – Secondary Suites

	Scores	Session Total
Neutral (2)	8	9/21=43%
Absolutely Disagree (1)	1	

### Flipchart Notes

As long as suites meet code

Excellent for safety of community – if done right

-some concern for inspection services done properly

Primary dwellings should be homeowner-occupied

### Feedback Slide 5 Responses – Land Use Incentives

#### Agreement Level

	Scores	Session Total
Disagree (1)	2	4/21=19%

Absolutely Disagree (2)      2

### Flipchart Notes

Concern over higher densities

- Increase in crime due to poor sightlines
- Lack of green space and trees and active areas

[common misconception that density leads to crime – crime may increase proportionately to population but per capita crime rates do not increase. Proper design is important – allowing for eyes on the street, etc. and using design theories such as CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)]

[higher densities allow for the development of more green space (higher land dedication) and a mixture of uses includes more interspersed parks. Again a design issue regarding building siting, streetscape, pathway networks, etc.]

### Feedback Slide 6 Responses – Partnership Development

#### Agreement Level

	Scores	Session Total
Agree (1)	5	9/14=64%
Neutral (1)	4	

One respondent did not provide a score due to lack of information

### Flipchart Notes

No jobs in town

- low income people need jobs!

Most commute, are reasonably well off to contribute to community

How to help those in need?

Not-for-profit partnerships favoured over private sector partnership

### Feedback Slide 7 Responses – Rent Supplement Program

#### Agreement Level

	Scores	Session Total
Neutral (1)	4	6/14=43%
Strongly Disagree (1)	2	

One respondent did not provide a score due to lack of information

### Flipchart Notes

Does conditional transitional definition include assisted living on a more permanent basis?

Housing Co-ops supported! Payments geared to income and caps

Landlords control rent value – discretion to increase rent if low income rent supplement provides individuals seek accommodation – thereby causing them to pay market rent regardless

Property taxes affect affordability! Taxes are too high for many on fixed incomes and many just can't pay it. How can this be addressed?

Households – low-income qualified individuals signed the lease, but who all is actually living in a unit (i.e. squatters) – abuse of program

#### Question/Comment Period

Overall the presentation presented a lack of specific criteria from the objectives

There was insufficient info to allow participants to respond

More research into actual numbers needed

“Million Dollar Idea”: construct a 3<sup>rd</sup> floor on the community centre for transitional housing units

- regarding community centre, where's community involvement in decision making process? People want a pool, who's really going to use it as a multi-purpose facility, especially if there are no decent hotels in Town?

Where should our priorities really lie?

- No new schools are being planned

- Transportation issues – no new bus routes, lack of transit (i.e. LRT/BRT) to Edmonton

- Condo issues – they provide little green space, have no rec centres, pay only some of the taxes – where do condo fees go? The Board's reserve fund

- Planning – new sidewalks and streetlights – especially along 100 St. N

- Tying into existing school resources (why spend money on community centre when we can use high school gym, playing fields, etc.?)

“Think about who's living here now!”

“Don't subsidize our future!”

#### **CHP Consultation Metadata**

##### CHP Scope – Council Only

Council – (6 of 7 respondents) 46/48 = 95% Support

Notes: Council feedback is very strong in supporting the need to look at more than just how to spend the provincial funding. Additional comments include references to the need to integrate plans with overall community vision, that efforts should be targeted and prioritized, and that clear distinctions must be made between provincial and municipal responsibilities.

##### CHP – Definition of Affordable Housing – Council Only

Council – 39/48 = 81% Support

Notes: Main comment to improve the definition would be to include some mention of modesty to ensure that those who qualify for assistance would have modest accommodations. There was mention that the 30% level could be higher, and another comment related to creating a maximum income level.

### CHP – Role of Municipality – Council Only

Council – 31/48=65% Support

Notes: General support exists for “arms length” operation of affordable housing programs however there is some concern regarding the duplication of administration or the creation of an additional level of government. There is some concern with moving forward with the Sturgeon Foundation as the only option due to different mandates.

### CHP Objectives

Council – 33/48 = 69% Support  
Session 1 – 52/84 = 62% Support  
Session 2 – 13/14 = 93% Support

Notes: Council comments include the intent to maintain a separation from the property tax base, that the town is not in the business of building homes, and that efforts should be targeted and consistent with overall strategy. Tools should be provided to the market to produce affordable housing units. Session 1 respondents felt that the market cannot produce affordable units without public funding. There are too many interests involved in the development process (town, developer, builder, owner). Negative public perception of affordable housing units must also be combated. In Session 2 it was noted that there is a great deal of overlap with social/health issues, and that some communities intersperse different housing types in the same neighbourhood.

### Rent Supplement Program

Council – 36/48 = 75% Support  
Session 1 – 66/91 = 73% Support  
Session 2 – 6/14 = 43% Support

Notes: Council comments focus on the fact that rent supplement programs do not generate revenues to offset expenses. Additionally many members of council would like to see a method of “breaking the cycle” of dependence on the program by clients. Support remains higher for other methods, but the necessity of such a program is recognized. Session 1 comments include that the rent supplement program would not address root causes. Additionally, a landlord stated that rent supplement programs would not make it more difficult for tenants to find a place as successful landlords will take clients in order to fill suites – makes good business sense. Efforts should be specifically targeted. Youth housing requires more specific needs/support. Program is a political decision and developers/builders do not have any input. In session 2 it was noted that

housing cooperatives were supported to a greater degree, as abuse of the system is possible. Also noted was the increasing impact of property taxes on affordability.

### Financial Incentives

Council – 39/48 = 81% Support  
Session 1 – 49/84 = 58% Support  
Session 2 – 8/21 = 38% Support

Notes: Council has some concerns about making affordability perpetual rather than a “first in wins” outcome. In most cases a case-by-case approach to incentives seems to be favoured more strongly. In Session 1 it was noted that current residents, landlords, developers, and builders would be subsidizing future competition. Efforts need to be targeted. Rental properties are not economical even at market rates. Additionally noted was that there are significant wait times to access provincial programs and additional resources are needed. These incentives would favour large multi-family projects. Better idea may be to focus on partnering with long-term financing. Session 2 comments included a lot of scepticism regarding the passing on of savings to buyers. Incentives should not go towards profit.

### Secondary Suites

Council – 46/48 = 96% Support  
Session 1 – 56/84 = 67% Support  
Session 2 – 9/21 = 43% Support

Notes: Council support very strong for this initiative. Cautions regarding non-owner occupied units were noted, as well as the need to ensure suites meet code. Session 1 comments included that secondary suites are a quick, fast way to bring units online, and that these units help improve both renting and purchase affordability. Subsidized units must be targeted to specific uses. It was also noted that there may not be much market uptake of suites developed in newly built homes. Session 2 participants noted that this was a good idea for the safety of existing units, and that the main dwelling should be owner-occupied, but concerns were noted regarding impact on neighbourhoods.

### Purchase of Land – Council Only

Council – 37/48 = 77% Support

Note: There was not much support for purchasing land specifically for affordable housing uses and only with municipal dollars. The high support score indicates that members of Council do recognize that it may be a necessary evil.

### Land Use Incentives

Council – 30/48 = 63% Support

Session 1 – 66/91 = 73% Support

Session 2 – 4/21 = 19% Support

Notes: Individual scores of Council indicate that there is a split on Council. Those not in support indicated that municipal government is not “smarter than the market” and should exercise care in incenting specific outcomes. Others in opposition are not in favour of dense developments. Those in support noted that partnership possibilities exist and that denser developments means the existing land base may support more residents. Session 1 respondents commented that calculations to determine how increased density will affect things should be completed. Mixed uses more applicable in large markets, and is increased density locally desirable, as these may not sell well. Lot sizes could be varied within neighbourhoods to increase density. Session 2 participants noted that higher densities are not desirable due to increased crime, and other public misconceptions.

#### Linkage Programs – Council Only

Council – 33/48 = 69% Support

Notes: There is a mixture of components in this category and support differs based on which item is identified. More work will need to be done in this area to develop specific initiatives that will have the support of Council.

#### Partnership Development – Sessions 1 and 2 Only

Session 1 – 77/91 = 85% Support

Session 2 – 9/14 = 64% Support

Notes: Session 1 respondents indicated that Private sector can execute more efficiently, but the Government has funds but cannot execute with flexibility. Partnership is best. Bottom line is cost and the market cannot built affordable units without funding to offset loss in profitability. In Session 2 partnerships with not for profits were favoured over private sector partners.

#### **Council Support Rankings**

Secondary Suites 96%

Scope 95%

Definition/Financial Incentives 81%

Land Purchase 77%

Rent Supplement 75%

Linkage Programs/CHP Objectives 69%

Municipal Role 65%

Land Use Incentive 63%

#### **Session 1 Rankings (Potential Resource Partners)**



Partnership Development 85%  
Rent Supplement/Land Use Incentives 73%  
Secondary Suites 67%  
CHP Objectives 62%  
Financial Incentives 58%

### **Session 2 Rankings (Indirect Stakeholders)**

CHP Objectives 93%  
Rent Supplement/Secondary Suites 43%  
Financial Incentives 38%  
Land Use Incentives 19%  
Partnership Development 64%

### **Combined Score Analysis**

CHP Objectives (69+62+93) = 224 (75% average)  
Secondary Suites (96+67+43) = 206 (69% average)  
Rent Supplement (75+73+43) = 191 (64% average)  
Financial Incentives (81+58+38) = 177 (59% average)  
Land Use Incentives (63+73+19) = 155 (52% average)

### **Recommendations**

#### General Notes

A copy of the Council interview package was circulated to members of administration, however only one response was received. The data was therefore not included in this analysis.

#### CHP Objectives

The stated objectives of the CHP are sound and have solid support from all stakeholder groups and council. No change recommended.

#### Secondary Suites

This initiative enjoys very high Council support, with reasonable support from the potential resource partner stakeholder group. Main concern regarding this item is that there is some general public concern regarding non-owner occupied units, and some potentially negative impacts on existing neighbourhoods. Any funding provided by the municipality should be targeted to ensure it assists those in need and not just create units to compete with existing rental units.

#### Rent Supplement

This initiative should have more detailed criteria established to ensure funds are targeted and to reduce potential for abuse of the program. There should be an investigation as to the possibility of providing additional support to clients to assist in their reaching independence.

### Financial and Land-Use Incentives

There is some general public scepticism regarding the passing on of savings to buyers and whether or not this will occur. The public input received was very low regarding these incentives and any initiative including these incentives should provide solid justification for their provision, particularly incentives that increase development densities. Research is required to determine the potential impact of the proposed incentives on affordability. The potential resource partner group felt that incentives will help, but the major concern was that the private sector cannot produce affordable units without public dollars. Additionally there was strong support from some members of Council to examine incentives on a case-by-case basis to ensure that all projects meet objectives and will provide value for the community.

### CHP Scope

The scope of the plan received overwhelming council support and no changes are recommended to the scope.

### Affordable Housing Definition

Support is good although the inclusion of some mention of modesty or connection to an income level cap would increase council support.

### Land Purchase

The purchase of land should be managed without impact on the property tax base (only using grant/partner dollars) and involve some sort of partnership rather than simply having the municipality purchase property specifically for affordable housing use. The support for this would be increased by ensuring that land would only be purchased for a specific project, with partners, and not just “land banked” for future use.

### Linkage Programs

There was some support for linkage programs, but the support varied regarding specific programs and additional Council feedback may be required to determine the most favoured approach.

### Municipal Role

There is strong support for an arms length approach to community housing operations on Council. There is some concern regarding the duplication of administration, as well as

some concern regarding discussions with the Sturgeon Foundation only. The formation of a separate and independent society/organization is recommended.

### Partnership Development

There is strong support for the development of partnerships in developing/constructing/operating community housing assets. The general public would most likely be more supportive of a partnership with a not-for-profit partner than a private partner, however.

### Additional Research Required

The concept of a housing cooperative should be investigated regarding its potential for the community.

# Background Report **STATISTICS**

**An update of statistics provided in the Preliminary Affordable Housing Report.**

**July 2009**

**Part of a series of CHP background reports and studies.**



**Town of • Ville de  
Morinville**

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this report are for informational purposes only, and do not reflect the official policy or position of either the Town of Morinville or the Morinville Community Housing Plan Project Team.



## 1.0 Morinville Socio-Economic Profile

This section highlights key population and socio-economic characteristics for the Town of Morinville. Unless noted otherwise, all data is from the 2006 Census conducted by Statistics Canada.

### 1.1 Population Growth

Between 2001 and 2006, the population of Morinville has grown by 3.6% (Table 3). This change in population is less than the increase from 1996 to 2006 (5.1%), and not as significant as the Province (10.6%) and the City of Edmonton (9.6%). However, in compared to other rural municipalities in the region the trend is still positive, e.g. Gibbons (-0.5%), Bon Accord (0.1%). Between 2006 and 2008 the impact of the recent economic growth in the region is readily apparent with a 6.7% increase in population in just two years. This growth fuelled a rapid increase in housing costs that has negatively affected its affordability. More recently housing costs have stabilized yet costs remain out of reach of many residents.

**Table 3: Population Growth**

	2009	2008	2006	2001	1996
Morinville Population	7,636	7,228	6,775	6,541	6,226
Population Change (%)	5.6	6.7	3.6	5.1	-

### 1.2 Age Characteristics

In 2006, the median age of residents was 33.7, an increase over the 2001 figure of 31.3 (Table 4). The increase in median age mirrors the national trend toward an aging population.

**Table 4: Age Characteristics, 1996-2008**

	2008*	2006	2001	1996
% of the population aged 0-14 years	21.8	22.4	26.3	30.2
% of the population aged 15-64 years	71.3	69.7	64.4	64.6
% of the population aged 65 years and over	6.9	8.0	6.3	5.4
Median Age	33.6	33.7	31.3	30.2

\*Collected in Municipal Census

When the median age of Morinville residents is compared with other municipalities in the region a pattern emerges (Table 5); rural communities have a slightly younger population than urban municipalities.

**Table 5: Median Age Comparisons Across the Region**

	Bon Accord	Gibbons	Morinville	St. Albert	Edmonton
Median Age (2006 Census)	33.4	33.1	33.7	38.2	36.1

### 1.3 Families and Household Characteristics

This section compares changes in families and households between 2001 and 2006. The definitions below distinguish between the terms family and household. For purposes of analysis, a *census family* refers to couples, with or without children, as well as lone parents with children living in the same dwelling, while a *household* refers to a person or group of people who occupy the same dwelling, whether they are married or not.

Almost 74% of families residing in Morinville are married-couple families. Between 2001 and 2006, a shift occurred from married couples to common-law couples (Table 6). The number of lone-parent families has remained fairly stable over the same period.

**Table 6: Family Characteristics in Morinville, 1996-2006**

	2006		2001		1996	
Total number of census families	1, 955		1,780		1,650	
Number of married-couple families	1,445	(73.9%)	1,385	(77.8%)	1,500	(90.9%)
Number of common-law-couple families	245	(12.5%)	135	(7.6%)		
Number of lone-parent families	255	(13 %)	235	(13.2%)	150	(9.1%)
Female	175		190			
Male	80		45			

Changes in household characteristics are highlighted in Table 7. There has been a significant reduction in the number of households with children; declining from 51.4% to 43%. Increases were seen in both one-person households and couple households without children. The average household size in Morinville was 2.9 people in 2006, down slightly from the 2001 Census.

**Table 7: Household Characteristics in Morinville, 1996-2006**

	2006	2001	1996
Total private households	2,290	2,025	1,885
% one-person households	13.5	10.4	10.6
% of households containing a couple with children	43.0	51.4	55.2
% of households containing a couple without children	28.4	23.5	24.1
Average household size	2.9	3.2	3.3

### 1.4 Mobility and Migration

Although the Province has experienced increased migration over the past five years, Morinville increases are not significant. The percentage of people who moved from a different province/territory to Morinville has actually decreased, going from 11.6% in 2001 to 9.5% in 2006 (Table 8). The years between 2006 and 2008 most likely have seen an increase in migration from different provinces or territories, unfortunately data is will not be available until the next federal census. The most significant mobility occurs within the Town as Morinville as residents move from one home to another. The slight in-migration is primarily from individuals who lived outside of Canada.

**Table 8: Mobility and Migration in Morinville, 1996-2006**

	2006	2001	1996
% who lived at same address 5 years ago	51.3	53.5	50.8
% who moved within the same census subdivision (CSD)*	14.9	12.7	12.9
% who moved within the province from a different census subdivision (CSD)	21.3	21.3	27.2
% who moved from a different province/territory	9.5	11.6	8.2
% who lived outside Canada	1.3	0.9	1.1

\* A census subdivision is the term used to describe municipalities

### 1.5 Income

Using the previously-noted affordable housing definition from CMHC, income level is a fundamental determinant regarding affordability issues. Median income refers to income in the middle of the group—exactly half of the reported incomes are greater than or equal to the median income and the other half are less than or equal to the median amount.



Table 9 compares median income by household type. Although referenced in the 2006 Census, the data reflects 2005 income figures. In 2005, married-couple families had a median income of \$85,986—more than twice the median income of lone-parent families (\$39,519). Within the lone-parent family category, female-headed families (\$38,833) earned almost a third less than male-headed families (\$57,905).

For comparison purposes, the 2005 median income for Alberta families has been included. Morinville’s families have a median income of \$79,432, approximately 7.5% higher than the Province (\$73,828). These differences are not very significant when compared to the more affluent family incomes of St. Albert families (\$98,401).

**Table 9: Comparison of Median Income by Family Type, 2001 – 2006 Census Year**

	2006	2001	Alberta (2006)
Total Number of Families	1,995	1,470	
All Census Families	\$79,432	\$60,851	\$73,823
Married-couple Families	\$85,986	\$66,266	\$83,046
Common-Law Families	\$73,379	n/a	\$67,184
Lone-Parent Families	\$39,519	\$35,000	\$40,397
Female	\$38,833		\$37,469
Male	\$57,905		\$55,205

Table 10 compares 2005 median incomes based on household characteristics. Not unexpectedly, the statistics show that couple households have significantly higher income than one-person households, particularly when comparing couple households with children (\$92,179) to one-person households (\$32,047). Also note the decrease in median income (17%) for one-person families over the last five years.

**Table 10: Comparison of Median Income Based on Household Characteristics, 2001-2006**

	2006	2001
Total number of households	2,285	2,025
All private households	\$73,288	\$58,363
Couple households with children	\$92,179	n/a
Couple households without children	\$63,925	n/a
One-person households	\$32,047	\$38,951

### 1.6 Low-income Families

Statistics Canada uses Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) thresholds to identify people in a low-income bracket. Table 11 shows the 2006 and 2005 before-tax Low Income Cut-Off for rural communities. According to this information, 5.5% of Morinville residents devoted a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing than the average family would.

**Table 11: 2006 Before-Tax Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) for Rural Communities**

Family Size	LICO 2006	LICO 2005
1 person	\$14,596	\$14,303
2 persons	\$18,170	\$17,807
3 persons	\$22,338	\$21,891
4 persons	\$27,122	\$26,579
5 persons	\$30,760	\$30,145
6 persons	\$34,694	\$33,999
7 or more persons	\$38,626	\$37,853

Source: Statistics Canada, Income Research Paper Series, 2008

The before-tax Low Income Measure or LIM is a second measure of low income that is available from 2005 Taxfiler information (Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administration Data Division). Boundary alignments between Census Subdivision and Taxfiler information are different, as the Taxfiler data is based on postal code. However, the information is considered to be a reasonable representation of the Town. The 2005 Taxfiler Family Income data shows that 370 Morinville families (16%) make less than \$39,000 in 2005 (Table 12). 2006 data will be available at the end of June.

**Table 12: 2005 Family Income, Taxfiler Data**

Family Income	Numbers of Families (2005)	%
Less than &19,999	120	5%
\$20,00 - \$39, 000	250	11%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	320	15%
\$60,000 and over	1,500	68%
Total number of families	2,190	100%
Average family income	\$73,957	
Median family income	\$79,800	

Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area and Administrative Data Division, 2005

## 1.7 Population Impacts of Up-Grader Development

Nichol Applies Management has been contracted to gather data and review the potential impacts that up-grader development will have on the mobile workforce (construction and operation) for the Alberta Industrial Heartland. Although the figures are estimates, the region will likely be looking at 5,000 mobile workers coming into the area over the next 10 years with numbers peaking at 8,000 – 10,000.

The implications for the Town of Morinville could be minor or considerable, depending on the Town's desire and ability to attract the mobile workers and their families. Levels of community services, housing prices, and closeness to family are factors which influence the willingness of workers to move to a specific municipality.

In response to the potential boom, the municipalities of Morinville, Legal, Bon Accord, Gibbons, and Redwater have formed the Sturgeon Regional Economic Development Committee. The Committee is exploring a range of housing opportunities and has passed a motion "whereby the Sturgeon Regional Economic Development Committee and the Up-grader Industries work together to investigate a legacy program...around mobile workers' accommodations."

## 2.0 Housing Supply

This section profiles the current housing supply in Morinville including dwelling type, age and condition of housing, and housing tenure. Information on rental accommodation, seniors' housing, and special needs' housing is provided, along with a look at ownership housing.

### 2.1 Dwelling Type

In Morinville, 79.9% of all private homes are single-detached dwellings (Table 13). This percentage is high in comparison to Edmonton (50.2%) and the Province (63.4%); however, it is low in comparison to rural communities in the area.

**Table 13: Occupied Private Dwelling Type, 2006  
(as a percentage of total occupied private dwellings)**

	Morinville	Bon Accord	Gibbons	St. Albert	Edmonton	Province of Alberta
Single-detached	79.9	84.9	85.7	75.3	50.2	63.4
Semi-detached houses	4.4	1.9	2.1	5.4	4.2	4.8
Row houses	7.0	9.4	1	7.9	2.6	7
Apartments, duplex	0.4	0.0	1	.7	2.8	2.6
Apartments in buildings with fewer than five storeys	5.0	1.9	3.7	10.1	23.4	14.7
Apartments in buildings with five or more storeys	0.0	0.0	0.0	.5	8.9	4.4
Other dwellings	3.1	1.9	6.8	0.0	.8	3.1
Total private dwellings occupied by usual residents	2,290	530	955	20,560	297,725	256,200

## 2.2 Age and Condition of Housing

In comparison to other small municipalities, Morinville's housing is relatively new, with 31.2% of the housing stock built in the last 20 years (Table 14). However, in Edmonton, close to 50% of the housing was built in the same timeframe. The condition of the housing in Morinville is slightly better than Edmonton and the Province, with 4.8% of the dwellings identified as requiring immediate repairs, although the Town fares less well in comparison with Gibbons (1.6%) and St. Albert (3.7%).

**Table 14: Comparison of Age and State of Repair of Housing Stock, 2006**

	Morinville	Bon Accord	Gibbons	St. Albert	Edmonton	Province of Alberta
Dwelling built pre-1986	1,575 (68.8%)	445 (84%)	755 (79%)	11,080 (54%)	210,760 (71%)	785,200 (62.5%)
Dwellings built post-1986	715 (31.2%)	85 (16%)	200 (21%)	9,480 (46%)	86,965 (29%)	470,995 (37.5%)
Total	2,290	530	955	20,560	297,725	1,256,200
% requiring major repairs	4.8%	4.7%	1.6%	3.7%	6%	6.7%

### 2.3 Housing Tenure

Almost 86% of the housing in Morinville is owned, with the other 14% providing rental accommodations (Table 15). This proportion is likely to get even higher considering the new ownership housing built in Morinville in the last two years. (See section 4.6)XXXXX. Once again, comparisons differ between smaller municipalities and Edmonton, where the rental tenure is 37%.

**Table 15 Housing Tenure Comparison by Municipality, 2006**

	Morinville	Bon Accord	Gibbons	St. Albert	Edmonton	Province of Alberta
Owned	1,960 (85.8%)	455 (86%)	875 (91.6%)	18,120 (88.15%)	187,290 (63%)	917,905 (73%)
Rented	325 (14.2%)	75 (14%)	80 (8.4%)	2,435 (11.8%)	110,435 (37%)	330,275 (27%)

### 2.4 Rental Accommodation

The strong Alberta economy has had a significant impact on apartment vacancies and rental rates since 2004 (Rental Market Report, Edmonton CMA, 2007). The Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) provides information on apartment vacancy rates and rental costs. The apartment vacancy rate across the Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) increased from 1.2 % in October 2006 to 1.5% in October 2007. The Edmonton CMA reports that the average monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment in new and existing structures was \$958 in 2007, up from the \$808 average

reported in 2006. The Edmonton CMA information establishes the “average market rent” under the Municipal Sustainability Housing Program.

Detailed rental market data is not available for Morinville as this information is captured in the Edmonton CMA Rental Report under Zone 14. This zone also includes the municipalities of Devon, Fort Saskatchewan, Leduc, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, and Strathcona County. CMHC provided apartment vacancy rates and average rental rates for Morinville, but these do not include secondary suites, rented houses, and condominium units that are not managed by a property management firm (Table 16). A secondary rental market may emerge through the rental of investor-owned and rented condominiums; however, data on this trend is not available at this time.

**Table 16: Average Apartment Vacancy and Rental Rates**

	Dwelling Type	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	% change
Vacancy Rate	All Units	12.8	3.4	0	2.7	2.0	-108%
	1 Bedroom	12.3	3.1	0	0	2.2	-91.8%
	2 Bedroom	13.1	3.6	0	4.8	1.8	-125.6%
Average Rent	All Units	648	658	693	815	937	44.6
	1 Bedroom	586	581	616	755	816	39.2
	2 Bedroom	695	710	751	861	993	42.9

The data paints a grim picture for people looking for rental accommodations in Morinville. Since 2004, vacancy rates have decreased from 12.8% to 2.0% for all units, while the average rent increased by 44.6% to an average of \$937 for all units. When comparing these rental costs to the median income information presented in section three, it is clear that increases in rental costs are far out-pacing increases in income, especially for single-parent families and one-member households.

An informal inventory of rental accommodation in Morinville confirms that the Town has a limited supply of rental housing, particularly for families and young adults (Table 17).

**Table 17: Rental Accommodations in Morinville**

Apartment Complex	Number of Units	2008 Average Rental Cost	2009 Average Rental Cost	Characteristics
Deville Estates	83	1 bedroom \$845 2 bedrooms \$1056 (utilities included)	1 bedroom \$810 2 bedroom \$910 (utilities included)	One building reserved for adults
Ivory Arms	24	N/A	1 bedroom \$823 2 bedroom \$910 (utilities included)	
Notre Dame Dev.	38	1 bedroom \$800- \$900	1 bedroom \$800- \$975 2 bedroom \$1150 (utilities included)	Adults 35+
Villa Tina	16	N/A	1 bedroom \$750 2 bedroom \$825	
Total Units	161			

## 2.5 Seniors' Housing

The Sturgeon Foundation provides management services to publicly funded housing projects for seniors in Morinville and the surrounding municipalities of Bon Accord, Gibbons, Legal, Redwater and St. Albert. Facilities in Morinville include Heritage Place Lodge, Heritage Place, and Lions Manor. Table 18 shows a breakdown of dwelling type and number of units.

**Table 18 Seniors' Publicly Funded Housing in Morinville**

Dwelling Type	Number of Units	Rental Rate
Heritage Place Lodge	45 units (196 sq. ft.)	30% of gross monthly income + \$600
Heritage Place, Self-contained	6 one bedroom (480 sq. ft.)	30% of gross monthly income
Lions Manor, Self-contained	8 one bedroom (480 sq. ft.)	30% of gross monthly income

According to the Sturgeon Foundation, all individuals living in these housing units have a fixed, low income. The self-contained apartments offer an affordable, social setting for seniors who are downsizing from single-detached housing. The apartments currently have a wait-list. Heritage Lodge becomes a housing choice when additional services are required, e.g., housekeeping, meals, and 24-hour non-medical staffing. Typical residents in the Lodge are older than those in the self-contained apartments. The Lodge is at capacity, but no wait-list exists.

## 2.6 Additional Housing Resources

This section highlights housing that offers considerably more support services including continuing care facilities, special needs housing, transitional housing, and emergency shelters. The housing at this end of the continuum is very limited in Morinville. For example, the Capital Region Corporation has close to 5,000 publicly-owned housing units—none are located in Morinville.

The primary resource in Morinville is Aspen House, an Assisted Living accommodation. Assisted Living is a continuing care program for frail, older seniors or people with disabilities who require health services and assistance with personal care. The Assisted Living program promotes resident independence and is not intended to provide constant care or supervision. Security features are in place for individuals with dementia.

Currently, alternative housing for individuals with development disabilities, mental health issues, adolescent treatment, or safe housing for abused women and their children is not available in Morinville.

## 2.7 Ownership Housing

As mentioned, 85.5% of housing in Morinville is owner-occupied, and single-detached homes are the primary housing type (79.9%). For the most part, new development sustains this homogenous housing model. However, recent trends reveal more higher-density housing such as semi-detached and row style condos (Tables 19 and 20). In the near future, no new rental development is under construction or planned for.

**Table 19: Housing Activity by Submarket and Intended Market, Jan-Nov 2008**

	Freehold		Condominiums		Rental		Total	
	YTD 2008	YTD 2007	YTD 2008	YTD 2007	YTD 2008	YTD 2007	YTD 2008	YTD 2007
Housing Starts	55	174	32	33	0	0	87	207
Completions	128	120	16	43	0	0	144	163

Housing Now, Edmonton CMA December 2008, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Morinville has experienced a 17.6% decrease in housing under construction from November 2007 to November 2008 which is indicative of a strong market experiencing a period of stabilization in the latter part of 2008.



**Table 20: Comparison of Housing Under Construction, Nov 2007-Nov 2008**

Under Construction	Freehold			Condominiums			Rental		Total
	Single	Semi	Row, Apt. & Other	Single	Row & Semi	Apt. & Other	Single, Semi	Apt. & Other	
November 2008	56	6	4	0	55	108	0	0	229
November 2007	158	2	0	0	10	108	0	0	278

Source: Housing Now, Edmonton CMA December 2008, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

## 2.8 Cost of Housing

The average price of a single-detached home absorbed in the first quarter of 2008 rose by 21.5% for the same period in 2007, going from \$349,950 to \$421,400 (Table 4.7c).

**Table 21: Average Price of Single-Detached Units**

Absorbed Single-Detached Units	Total Units	Median Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)
Year-to-date 2008	95	415,000	427,911
Year-to-date 2007	89	424,000	411,799

Source: Housing Now, Edmonton CMA December 2008, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

## 3.0 Affordable Housing Gap Analysis

Every community has a unique blend of individuals and families, with diverse age groups, income levels, and household characteristics. Therefore, housing in a community should ideally include a diverse mix of housing types and tenures to complement the various types of family and households present within the community.

This section will assess the current affordable housing gap using four criteria: housing availability, affordability, adequacy, and suitability.

### 3.1 Housing Availability

A housing continuum, as depicted in Table 22 illustrates the broad spectrum of housing needs, choices or options. Morinville's housing supply is assessed against the affordable housing continuum.

**Table 22: Assessment of Housing Availability on the Affordable Housing Continuum**

<b>Affordable Housing Continuum</b>				
Emergency, Transitional Housing	Supportive Housing	Subsidized Housing	Rental Housing	Home Ownership
Short term housing that is safe and secure until families and individuals can become more independent	Housing that provides social and/or medical supports to their clientele	Housing provided on a rent-gear-to-income basis; no social supports required	An alternative for households unable to afford and/or unable to take on the responsibilities of home ownership	Entry-level, lower-cost homes

<b>Current Housing Availability</b>				
Emergency shelter and transitional housing is non-existent.	Limited supply for seniors Aspen House provides services to seniors and persons with disabilities, but is not considered affordable housing	Not available for the general population Seniors' lodges and apartments are subsidized. Currently at capacity.	Short supply of apartment rental units; vacancy rates are low. A percentage of buildings cater to adults 35+. All units are at market rent.	Majority of housing stock is owner-occupied, single family dwellings. Recent development of multi-family dwellings. Very limited supply of entry-level or lower-cost homes.

In summary, the housing supply in Morinville is quite homogenous, with owner-occupied, single family dwellings marketed towards the middle to upper class. Affordable rental accommodations and entry-level ownership housing are severely limited. This situation is of great concern, as “maintaining and investing in a diverse stock of housing is critical to creating a high quality of life for all residents, and building communities that remain sustainable over the long term (*Building the Future*, Canada West Foundation).

The unavailability of housing has implications for a number of populations segments in Morinville:

- one-person households (13.5% of Morinville’s population):
- young adults (20% of Morinville’s population is 20-34 years):
- lone-parent families;
- low-income individuals;

- individuals leaving abusive situations; and
- individuals with physical or mental challenges, requiring support services.

### 3.2 Housing Affordability

Housing affordability relates to a household's ability to acquire and maintain accommodation. Using the definition provided by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing is affordable if it costs no more than 30% of a household's gross monthly income for rental accommodation or no more than 32% for home ownership. Utilizing this formula, Table 23 has been developed which aligns household income with affordable rental payments and actual rental costs.

**Table 23: Housing Affordability: Rental Accommodations**

Household Income (\$)	Max. Monthly Rental Rate* (30% of income)	Average Rent 2007	Actual Rental Costs May 2008	Actual Rental Costs January 2009
15,000-19,999	\$500		\$845: 1 bedroom water & heat included \$800/900: 1 bedroom, utilities extra \$995/1056: 2 bedroom, water & heat included	\$725/975: 1 bedroom water & heat included \$825/1150: 2 bedroom water & heat included
20,000-24,999	\$625			
25,000-29,999	\$750	\$755-1 bedroom		
30,000-34,999	\$875	\$861-two bedroom		
35,000-39,999	\$1,000			
40,000-44,999	\$1,125			
45,000-49,999	\$1,250			
50,000-59,999	\$1,500			
60,000-74,999				
75,000-99,999				
100,000+				

\*includes utilities and heat

Census information from 2006 lists the median monthly payments for rented dwellings at \$806 and the median monthly payments for owner-occupied dwellings at \$1,132. Table 3.3.2b aligns household income with approximate affordable house prices and current listings.

**Table 24: Housing Affordability: Ownership Accommodations**

Household Income (\$)	Approximate House Price (32% of income) <sup>1</sup>	Current Listings <sup>2</sup> January 16, 2009
15,000-19,999	\$60,116-\$80,152	
20,000-24,999	\$80,153-\$100,204	
25,000-29,999	\$100,205-\$120,231	
30,000-34,999	\$120,232-\$140,267	
35,000-39,999	\$140,268-\$160,604	
40,000-44,999	\$160,605-\$180,346	2 condo
45,000-49,999	\$180,347-\$200,383	3 townhome condos 2 single family
50,000-59,999	\$200,384-\$240,462	5 townhome condos 5 single family
60,000-74,999	\$240,463-\$300,578	17 townhome condos 12 single family
75,000-99,999	\$300,579-\$400,767	1 duplex 33 single family
100,000+	\$400,767+	27 single family

Source: <sup>1</sup> St. Albert Affordable Housing Strategy/20/06/2006, <sup>2</sup> MLS Listing January 16, 2009

In April 2007, the year-to-date median selling price of homes in Morinville was \$349,000. In the same month in 2008, the median selling price was \$421,400, an increase of almost 21%. As reported in section three, 120 Morinville families are earning less than \$19,999 annually, and 5.5% of individuals are considered low-income residents based on LICO measurement.

Based on this data, rental and ownership housing costs are well beyond the affordability range of many residents, making housing choices very limited to low-income residents. The population segments facing affordability challenges mirror those having availability issues:

- individuals just starting out in the workforce;
- Assured Income for Severely Handicapped and Supports For Independence recipients;
- one-person households; and
- female lone-parent families.

As well, individuals on fixed income will also find challenges due to increased taxes, water and heat costs.

### 3.3 Core Need Income Thresholds

The Province has established Core Need Income Thresholds (CNIT) to identify households that may qualify for subsidized housing. Households with total annual incomes equal to or less than CNIT are said to have insufficient income to afford ongoing

costs of suitable rental units in their area. Table 25 provides the CNIT figures for Morinville. Currently, subsidized housing in Morinville is only available for seniors.

**Table 25: 2008 Core Need Income Thresholds (CNIT), Morinville**

Bedroom Size	Max. Annual Income (\$)
Bachelor	27,000
1 Bedroom	32,500
2 Bedroom	40,000
3 Bedroom	51,000
4 Bedroom	54,500

Source: Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs web site