



HOUSING PROGRESS REPORT:

Year One of the Housing
Accelerator Fund



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LET'S TALK ABOUT HOUSING



TOGETHER, WE ARE
BUILDING A **BRIGHTER FUTURE**
FOR OUR CITY.



FOREWORD FROM THE MAYOR

The City of Bathurst has seen significant progress in housing projects during the past year through the Housing Accelerator Fund. Our commitment to laying a strong foundation for accessible and affordable housing has been strengthened considerably, bringing tangible improvements for our community's future growth.

We are fully aware that housing affordability remains one of Bathurst's most pressing challenges. Recent studies have underscored the urgency, identifying an annual housing demand of approximately 165 housing units between 2024 and 2026. Responding proactively, our city has already begun to address this critical issue effectively, demonstrating our dedication to creating a vibrant, inclusive community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

I am particularly proud to acknowledge that Bathurst is one of only 27 municipalities across Canada that qualified for additional funding totaling 10% of our original Housing Accelerator Fund contribution. This achievement reflects the extraordinary effort, hard work, and resilience demonstrated by our city employees, planners, and developers who have consistently shown their trust and confidence in doing business in Bathurst.

Over this past year, the collaboration and dedication shown by our city personnel and local developers have been truly inspiring. Their continued determination and unwavering focus have made significant strides in our housing initiatives possible, laying the groundwork for continued success.

As we reflect on this successful first year, our commitment remains steadfast. We will continue working collaboratively with developers, stakeholders, and community members to ensure that the Housing Accelerator Fund effectively supports those in greatest need, building a stronger and more resilient Bathurst.

Thank you all for your exceptional efforts, dedication, and support. Together, we are building a brighter future for our city.

Sincerely,



Kim Chamberlain
Mayor of Bathurst



“

**WE'RE ESTABLISHING A
STRONG FOUNDATION FOR
LONG-TERM SUCCESS.**

”

FOREWORD FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As Bathurst continues to grow and evolve, our commitment to meeting the housing needs of our community has never been more crucial. With the support of the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) and a clear vision, the City of Bathurst is taking decisive action to address the housing challenges facing our residents and developers.

This document outlines key initiatives designed to drive the growth of our housing sector, from streamlining permitting processes to zoning by-law updates that support higher-density development. Combined with measures like reduced parking requirements, the introduction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and an infrastructure plan built for sustainable growth, we're establishing a strong foundation for long-term success.

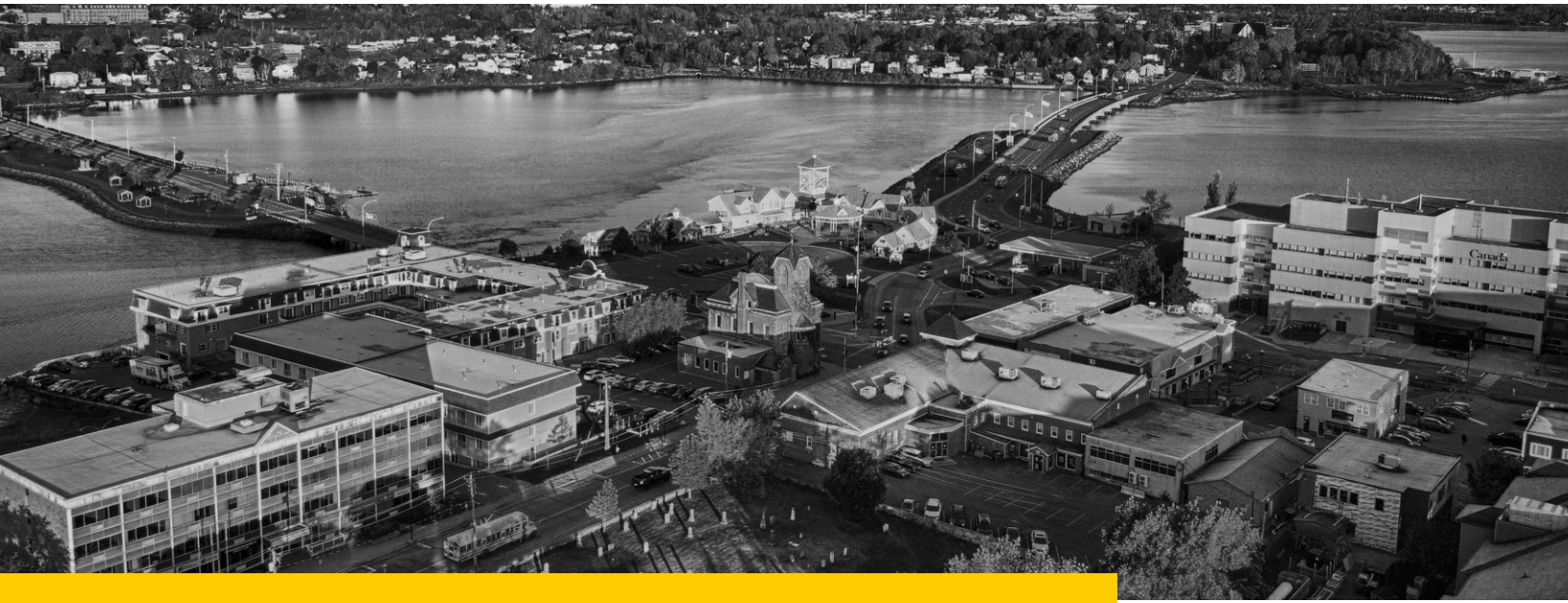
These initiatives take a strategic approach to making Bathurst more livable and resilient. We understand the importance of affordable, accessible housing and the role it plays in supporting our economy and enhancing quality of life. Our goal is to ensure that everyone—whether they are students, young professionals, families, or retirees—can find a place to call home within our city.

This action plan is a testament to the collaborative efforts of city staff and our external partners. Together, we are creating a future where housing development aligns with the values of sustainability, inclusivity, and community well-being. We recognize that bringing these initiatives to life depends on community support. While new development can bring challenges, we are committed to working together to address concerns and ensure that all voices are heard.

We encourage residents and developers to explore these initiatives and join us in shaping the future of housing in Bathurst. Through collaboration, investment, and innovation, we can build a stronger, more inclusive city where opportunities to live, grow, and thrive are available to all.



LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR GROWTH



Bathurst is at a turning point. As our city evolves, so do its housing needs. With population shifts, economic growth, and new opportunities on the horizon, ensuring housing is available at the right time and in the right places is key to sustainable growth.

The City of Bathurst is taking action. With **\$3M** in support from the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)—a federal initiative that incentivizes local governments to implement lasting housing reforms—we’re removing barriers, attracting investment, and making housing development easier.

What does this mean for Bathurst?

- Increasing housing access and improving affordability for all
- Streamlining permitting processes to make development faster and more efficient
- Optimizing the use of existing land and infrastructure to expand housing supply
- Investing in infrastructure to support sustainable long-term growth

The following pages outline seven key initiatives that illustrate the City’s commitment to accelerating housing development. These initiatives, coupled with a target of permitting **160 new housing units** by the end of 2026, represent our commitment to the Federal government in exchange for the funding we’ve received. This plan, built on transparency, efficiency, and sustainability, will help create a stronger, more livable Bathurst for everyone.

THE 7 KEY INITIATIVES

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT GRANT POLICIES



What is it

The Housing Accelerator Fund Grant Policies are designed to support new housing development in Bathurst by providing financial incentives to developers. These grants help offset construction costs, making it easier to build multi-unit housing or convert underused commercial properties into residential spaces.

Why it's important

- Encourages infill development by transforming vacant or underused commercial properties into housing
- Helps offset construction costs, making it easier to build multi-unit housing, including more affordable options
- Strengthens the city's tax base, supporting investments in infrastructure and services
- Promotes higher-density housing in key areas, supporting local businesses

What we're doing

To support new housing development, we've introduced two targeted grant policies to support multi-unit construction and building conversions. The grants start at \$15,000 per unit, with up to \$20,000 per unit for developments located within a 20-minute walk of three strategic locations: the CCNB College Street campus, Chaleur Regional Hospital, and downtown Bathurst. These areas were identified as having the greatest need for new housing in the Chaleur Region Housing Needs Assessment. By reducing financial barriers, these grants will attract investment, encourage faster construction, and help deliver much-needed housing to Bathurst's residents.

Timeline



June 2024

Non-Residential Building Conversion Grant Policy P2024-07 Adopted



June 2024

New Construction Grant Policy P2024-06 Adopted



July 2024

Launch of Grant Application Form



By working together, developers and the city can transform underused spaces into vibrant homes, meeting urgent housing needs while strengthening Bathurst's future.

- Todd Pettigrew P.Eng., Chief Administrative Officer



DISPOSITION OF MUNICIPAL LAND POLICY & SURPLUS MAP

What is it

Bathurst's Disposition and Acquisition of Municipal Land Policy guides how the City identifies and sells surplus land at fair market value. This policy ensures that land sales are equitable, transparent, and aligned with community needs.

To further support development, we are launching an online tool that highlights available surplus land opportunities. These properties create opportunities to accelerate housing development by reducing land costs.

Why it's important

- Ensures a fair and transparent process for selling surplus municipal land
- Reduces land costs, making it easier to build new homes
- Introduces an online tool for developers and the public to explore available properties
- Helps align land use with Bathurst's long-term growth and infrastructure plans

What we're doing

This policy was built on fairness and transparency—plain and simple. With this new policy now in effect, city staff proceeded with a comprehensive review of all city-owned properties to identify those suitable for development and potential surplus declaration. The review is complete, and formal surplus declarations are now in progress. Once properties are officially declared surplus, they will be featured on an interactive online map, providing detailed information and the City's vision for development. This tool will keep developers and community members informed and engaged in new housing developments.

Timeline



November 2024
Disposition and Acquisition of Municipal Land Policy P2024-08 Adopted



Summer 2025
Launch of Online Map



Making the most of our city-owned developable land and ensuring its availability to developers is fundamental.

– Simon Boudreau, Economic Development Manager



INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

What is it

The City of Bathurst's Infrastructure Plan is a ten-year blueprint for investments in roads, utilities, and public services to support current and future housing needs. By mapping out when and where infrastructure projects will occur, the plan highlights Bathurst's commitment to sustainable growth and instills confidence in developers.

Why it's important

- Provides a clear roadmap for future investments in roads, utilities, and public services
- Gives developers confidence by outlining when and where upgrades will take place
- Supports sustainable growth by ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with housing needs
- Improves essential services to accommodate a growing community

What we're doing

We've launched an interactive map detailing infrastructure investment over the next decade. Each project listing includes brief descriptions of scope and expected impact, making it easier for developers, residents, and businesses to understand our infrastructure priorities.

The plan will be regularly updated to reflect shifts in demographics, economic priorities, and housing strategies. By focusing on improving utilities and transportation infrastructure, we're laying the groundwork for attracting investment, ensuring sustainable growth, and building a resilient, future-ready city.

Timeline



November 2024

Presented to Council and PAC



December 2024

Council Accepts the Infrastructure Plan as Presented



March 2025

Launch of Online Map



The City of Bathurst's infrastructure plan lays a framework for financially sustainable, data driven infrastructure spending, it takes into account the complex needs of the community and ensures our citizens enjoy the highest possible level of service for years to come.

– Matthew Abernethy P.Eng.,
City Engineer



REDUCED PARKING REQUIREMENTS



What is it?

Bathurst has updated its zoning by-law, reducing the minimum parking requirement for new housing developments from 1.5 spaces per residential unit to 1. This change removes a key barrier to development, freeing up land once dedicated to parking and creating space for more housing.

Why it's important

- Lowers development costs and frees up space for more housing
- Supports walkable neighborhoods and a more efficient use of land
- Encourages alternative transportation options and supports future public transit planning
- Enables higher-density housing while maintaining a balanced urban design

What we're doing

By reducing parking requirements, the City is helping developers build higher-density housing that aligns with Bathurst's long-term vision for people-centered, sustainable growth. This change not only reduces construction costs tied to parking but also encourages the creation of diverse housing options and community spaces.

We're also exploring public transit opportunities as part of our long-term growth strategy. If public transit becomes a reality, residents will have reliable, affordable ways to get around Bathurst without relying solely on personal vehicles—further supporting reduced parking requirements in future developments.

Timeline



April 2024
Presented to Council and PAC



May - June 2024
First, Second and Third Readings



June 2024
Enactment of By-Law 2024-07z



Reducing parking requirements opens the door to more housing and more affordable development across our city.

– Chris Legacy, Director of Economic Development



DELEGATE APPROVAL AUTHORITY



What is it?

The City of Bathurst is streamlining the permitting process by transferring certain approval powers from the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) to the Director of Planning and appointed Development Officers. This change removes unnecessary steps, accelerates development, and reduces costs for developers.

Why it's important

- Empowers planning officials to approve minor changes, reducing unnecessary delays
- Shortens approval times for select permits, accelerating development
- Lowers costs for developers, as developments progress faster
- Improves responsiveness of the planning department, making Bathurst more developer-friendly

What we're doing

We've updated our zoning by-law to allow the Director of Planning to appoint Development Officers with the authority to approve select requests without requiring PAC review. This includes extending temporary approvals from one year to two, allowing minor deviations from standard zoning requirements, and permitting early construction of accessory buildings (such as sheds for tools and materials) before work begins on the primary structure.

By granting planning staff more authority, we're expediting housing development and making Bathurst an even more attractive place to invest.

Timeline



September 2024
Presented to Council and PAC



November - December 2024
First, Second and Third Readings



December 2024
By-Law Enacted



Delegating approval authority fosters trust, efficiency, and shared responsibility for success.

Pass the key, unlock the way.
Stronger together, we lead the day!

- Nahyssa Rose Rabé Harou,
Junior Urban Planner



INTRODUCTION OF ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)

What is it?

The City has updated its zoning by-law to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and detached accessory dwelling units (DADUs) on single-family lots, creating more housing options. By embracing gentle density—small, incremental housing increases within single-family neighborhoods—we can expand housing stock and improve affordability without changing neighborhood character. Homeowners will now have the opportunity to generate rental income and increase their property value. For private landowners developing new subdivisions, this change allows up to four residential units per lot as-of-right—permitted by default—offering greater flexibility and the potential for higher returns on investment.

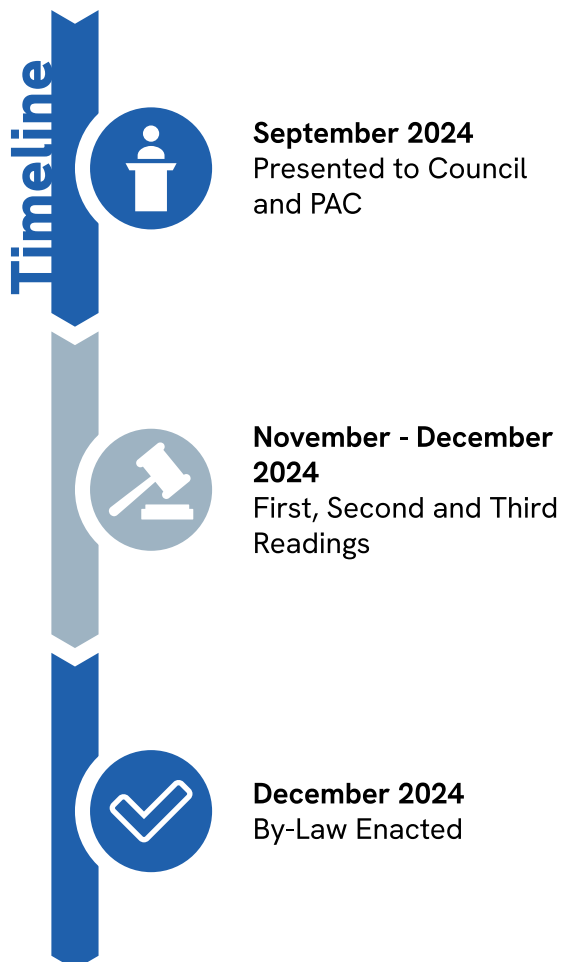
Why it's important

- Allows homeowners to create additional living spaces on their properties
- Supports multigenerational living and provides rental opportunities for homeowners
- Increases housing options without significantly altering neighborhood character
- Maximizes existing land use and infrastructure, offering a cost-effective way to grow housing supply

What we're doing

We've updated residential zoning rules (R1-1, R2-1, and R2-2) to allow attached ADUs as-of-right and permit detached ADUs as a conditional use, subject to Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) approval. These changes help integrate gentle density into both new and established neighborhoods, offering more diverse housing solutions.

The City remains committed to preserving neighborhood character while increasing housing options. Moving forward, we will monitor the impact of ADUs and refine zoning rules as needed.



A great opportunity to help our community solve the housing crisis.

- Donald McLaughlin,
Development Officer



INCREASED HOUSING DENSITY

What is it?

Bathurst has revised its zoning by-law to increase housing density across all residential zones. By adjusting building heights, reducing setback requirements, and allowing more residential units on a single lot, developers now have greater flexibility to create higher-density housing throughout the city. These changes help Bathurst accommodate growing housing demands.

Why it's important

- Allows for increased housing density in both residential and commercial zones
- Attracts more investment, boosting economic activity
- Maximizes the use of existing infrastructure, improving service efficiency
- Streamlines the permitting process with more permissive zoning, saving developers time and money

What we're doing

The City has updated its zoning bylaw to allow taller buildings, reduced setbacks, and greater housing density. Height limits have been increased across most residential zones, including allowing buildings of up to eight storeys in the downtown area. Additionally, new zoning rules make it easier to develop residential buildings in commercial zones.

Another key change is the introduction of housing complexes as a conditional use in medium- and high-density residential zones (R3-1 and R4-1). Housing complexes allow multiple residential buildings on a single lot, with up to four buildings per lot and each containing up to 12 units. These developments require Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) approval to ensure proper planning oversight.

While increasing density is essential for meeting Bathurst's housing needs, we are committed to ensuring that growth is balanced with thoughtful urban planning. These zoning changes are designed to complement existing neighborhoods while providing more diverse housing options.

Timeline



September 2024
Presented to Council and PAC



November - December 2024
First, Second and Third Readings



December 2024
By-Law Enacted



Greater density means greater opportunity—more homes, stronger communities, and a city that grows smarter, not just bigger.

– Marc Bouffard, Director of Municipal Planning



THE

ROAD

AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

The City of Bathurst's housing strategy is, above all, about people. We envision a future in which every resident enjoys safe, affordable, and thoughtfully designed housing. Through clear planning and decisive action, we are building communities that make this vision possible.

At the same time, we are creating an environment that empowers developers, builders, and partners to act with confidence and clarity. Our streamlined processes, transparent policies, and targeted grant programs remove barriers and build momentum—momentum that has resulted in the permitting of **125 new housing units** in the first year of the HAF program. Together, we see Bathurst becoming a welcoming city where investment flourishes and new homes rise for everyone.

Want to be part of Bathurst's growth?

If you're a developer, investor, or homeowner interested in grant opportunities, available land, or new housing initiatives, we'd love to hear from you.

Email: growth@bathurst.ca

Website: bathurst.ca/haf

Follow us on Facebook @cityvillebathurst

Together, we're building the future of housing in Bathurst.

