

Increase Engagement

Action	Update/Timeline
<p>Convene a Partnership Forum Bring diverse stakeholders together to publicly sign on to the Business Plan targets.</p>	<p>Forums with builders and faith communities were hosted in November 2014. As a result, faith communities are exploring avenues to repurpose land and buildings for housing projects. The City of St. John’s (CSJ) also helped the Coalition to run their Faith Forum 2 in May 2015 – to engage more faith communities in concrete action. We remain connected and up to date on the work of the Faith & Housing Coalition (Furniture Bank, Cochrane United Church Development, etc.).</p> <p>The City of St. John’s Affordable Housing Business Plan (AHBP) has an overall target of 500 homes by 2017 and is broken down into four priority areas. One of these areas includes a target of 200 Affordable Rental Homes. In 2015, we decided to take the lead in convening a meeting of social and supportive housing providers; providing space for a valuable networking opportunity; a place where practitioners can meet; and a forum for learning and information sharing, especially useful for groups new to providing supportive housing.</p>
<p>Craft a Social Media Campaign Design a campaign that engages the public to generate and take part in practical, local housing solutions.</p>	<p>Due to the reality that NIMBY (Not-In-My-Backyard) has been clearly identified as a major barrier to the development of more affordable housing options by a broad range of stakeholders, the City partnered on developing a <i>Building “Yes”! A Not-In-My-Backyard Toolkit</i> for housing proponents. The City of St. John’s is interested in having a social marketing strategy developed as an opportunity to attempt to change the behavior among residents (among those most opposed) and fight the NIMBY syndrome which can lead to the resistance of affordable housing projects. Through consultations with CSJ’s Communications team and the Canadian Home Builders Association NL (CHBA NL), in 2016, we developed an RFP to hire a consultant to develop a 2-3 year Affordable Housing Social Marketing Strategy & Implementation Plan. The completed multi-phase Social Marketing plan will be used to deal with the Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) syndrome and help inform the public of key messages within the Affordable Housing Business Plan, which will hopefully encourage the creation of more, much-needed affordable housing in St. John’s. The project should be completed by February 2017.</p> <p>We are also exploring the possibility of creating a video highlighting the NIMBY Toolkit.</p>
<p>Cultivate a Base of Landlords willing to rent to those seeking affordable housing (including those who may require supports) based on models like Calgary’s Community Partnership Housing Program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workshop via teleconference was held with Boulder County Housing, recognized as a municipal best practice on landlord engagement. • In Q2 of 2016 we convened a Landlord Engagement Sub-Committee of the Rental Team which reports to the AHWG. • In Q4 of 2016 the City of St. John’s coordinated a survey of landlords in partnership with the Rental Team of the Affordable Housing Working Group. All landlords and property managers with rental property in St. John’s were encouraged to visit engagestjohns.ca page to take the survey which addresses barriers, obstacles and opportunities of achieving a successful tenancy. For the purposes of the survey a ‘landlord’ is anyone who receives payments to have individuals reside at a property they own or manage. The short survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete and participants were entered in a random draw for a \$500 home improvement gift card. The survey was open until October 17. <i>We had over 300 respondents!</i> • The results of the Landlord Survey will be used by the Landlord Engagement Sub-Committee and the Rental Team to frame our Landlord Engagement plans moving forward as well as identify strengths, challenges and opportunities. • The City, in partnership with stakeholders, hosted an Affordable Housing Forum with a focus on Landlord Engagement on November 22, 2016. • We have applied to the Federal Innovative Solutions to Homelessness (ISH funding) for a pilot Landlord Engagement Coordinator/Landlord Mitigation Fund. • The Landlord Newsletter will continue as a point of contact and we will work to recruit more landlords.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS

<p>Engage multiple stakeholders in the creation of new policy and program models to address under-reporting of property standards violations in rental housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will start to plan landlord information/ education sessions for 2017. <p>The Rental Team of the Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG) as well as CSJ staff continue to work with landlords and other partners to ensure compliance on standards in all rental properties in the city. We have also reached out to other stakeholders (RNC, Residential Tenancies, Social Service providers, Children Seniors & Social Development (CSSD), Advanced Education Skills & Labour, the Courts, etc.) for collaboration and information sharing on this issue. CSJ’s Supervisor of Inspection Services has been delivering a presentation to many of these stakeholders entitled, “City of St. John’s Inspection Services, Residential Property Standards Guidelines”.</p>
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Inform Action

Action	Update/Timeline
<p>Conduct a Seniors Housing Market Survey Design and implement a comprehensive survey of seniors housing needs and emerging market opportunities. Publish findings widely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey/research is completed. Council approved the Seniors Housing Research project and the 20 recommendations included in it. Disseminated key findings and encouraged innovative and affordable seniors housing options to meet our target of 100 age friendly homes by 2017. There was a Builder’s Breakfast held at the Holiday Inn in June of 2015. This was co-hosted with the CHBA-NL. The results of the research were also shared with participants at the Seniors Housing Forum, held in December 2015. An update on the 20 research recommendation was completed and went to Council for review in Q1 of 2016. A Seniors Affordable Housing Sub Committee (of the AHWG) was formed in April 2016. We will continue to work with City staff and partners to implement many of the research recommendations. We have been working with the Co-op Housing Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (CHANAL) to access Seed Funding to create a business plan that could explore the possibility of creating a foundation in partnership with the Seniors Resource Centre (SRC). The business plan will explore the possibility of building co-op units for seniors in the province (ideally starting in Mount Pearl and St. John’s). Housing Transition information sessions for seniors are being planned for Q1 of 2017.
<p>Convene an Innovative Housing Workshop Invite local and national experts to share practical and innovative housing designs that meet emerging market needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A workshop series on affordable housing related topics and innovative housing options will be created with the Harris Centre. Affordable Housing Lunch and Learn Survey: The City of St. John's Affordable Housing team is launching a survey in conjunction with the Harris Centre to determine topics that will be most valuable to stakeholders as a part of the Affordable Housing Business Plan. The survey will run until January 11, with sessions beginning in the New Year. Workshops to start in Q1/Q2 of 2017. It is anticipated that these sessions will also provide a great opportunity for information sharing and networking among participants The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has a new Innovation Fund for the creation of innovative affordable housing rental projects (\$208 million over 5 years in the fund). CMHC will be included in these workshops and we are planning to have a CMHC representative as a speaker in one of the workshops to explain this program.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS

Align the City and NL Housing Waiting Lists into a single list; and work with the province to *Create a City Wide Housing Registry* based on models like [London](#) and [Waterloo Region](#)

- Discussions concerning how to streamline programs offered by the City and the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) have been ongoing for many years. In 2015, local stakeholders at senior levels were convened for practical discussions on the creation of a coordinated housing intake system and a local housing registry.
- The City of St. John’s partnered with NLHC to conduct a feasibility study on how to create a Central Wait List in the short term and a Central Housing Registry over the longer term, both of which would assist in streamlining the aforementioned programs. A detailed Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a Consultant to complete a feasibility study on a Central Waitlist was completed in partnership with the NLHC and was released in February 2016. Vigilant Management Inc. were the successful company and the feasibility study was completed in Q3 of 2016. The next step will be to explore the report findings with NLHC and then release the report to the public.

Revitalize Policy

Action	Update/Timeline
<i>Adopt Alternative Development Standards</i> Complement the new Municipal Plan with comprehensive and flexible regulations that enable and encourage housing innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Municipal Plan and the new Development Regulations are currently being reviewed. • Suggestions were submitted to the regulations committee in spring 2015 in the form of a Best Practices document: Alternative Development Standards: A Tool to Promote Housing Affordability. • Several new ideas are being proposed in the development regulations, including: affordable housing in institutional zones downtown requiring less parking as well as multi-use zones that allow for a mix of housing types. • We will continue to research and document best practices in this area.

Unlock Resources

Action	Update/Timeline
<i>Create an Inventory of Land for Potential Redevelopment as Housing</i> Identify opportunities where underutilized land can be used for housing and approach the owners about creative possibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A staff team has been working to identify City owned land that could be suitable for the development of a variety of affordable housing options. • The City’s Real Estate Division is approaching the Province and the School Board to discuss provincially owned land.
<i>Establish a Housing Catalyst Fund</i> With the City providing the initial investment and inviting partners to help it grow, this fund can leverage significant resources for innovative housing solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small team of staff and some external stakeholders were assembled to research best practices and develop a concept paper for Council review. • CSJ Council approved \$50,000 for a pilot Housing Catalyst Fund for 2016. This Initiative allows the City to be a catalyst for practical and collaborative projects that produce tangible housing solutions for people. The City’s role through this pilot fund is to work collaboratively with community groups and others such as builders and developers to facilitate and plan housing solutions that will enhance the quality for life for individuals and families, and build a healthier community. Anyone with an affordable housing project or program idea can apply for up to \$10,000 per project. Priority areas

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS

- include: Senior’s housing, Affordable rentals, Mixed Use or medium density projects, Brownfield and vacant lot redevelopment and Energy efficiency retrofits. The application for the fund was launched in October 2016 and submissions have been evaluated.
- A Housing Catalyst Fund is included in the 2017 CSJ Budget (\$50,000)

Lead Innovation

Action	Update/Timeline
<p>Encourage Energy Retrofits Bring partners together to create collaborative projects to reduce heating costs and increase housing affordability; with a view to applying lessons learned throughout the city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City will play a role as convenor and catalyst, bringing partners together to discuss innovative options. We plan to reconvene an Energy Efficiency Sub-Committee (of the Affordable Housing Working Group) by 2017. • The City is exploring the possibility on completing energy retrofits on some of our Non-Profit Housing units. A team of diverse stakeholders will be convened for practical discussions on retrofit opportunities and the role that each party can play in making them happen. • In light of Honourable Perry Trimper’s Mandate letter which speaks of developing pay-as-you-save programs for energy retrofits, CSJ staff have met with the province’s Office of Climate Change & Energy Efficiency to learn more about their Department and any possibilities for collaboration and opportunities to partner in raising awareness and sharing information on energy efficiency in residences and buildings. • CSJ staff have also met with Newfoundland Power to determine how the City of St. John's can partner/promote their many programs to assist with retrofits to aged and inefficient energy systems. takeCHARGE staff participated in our Seniors Housing Forum (2015) & Senior’s Day (2016) and Landlord Forum (2016) events.
<p>Facilitate an Affordable Home Ownership Pilot Project A project that uses City land and private sector innovation to create medium density home ownership possibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An RFP process was used to select a proponent to develop the attainable subdivision on City owned land in Shea Heights. This project will be a testing ground for innovative affordable home ownership approaches. • The City has selected a proponent to develop the attainable subdivision on City owned land in Shea Heights. The proponent hosted a community information meeting in Shea Heights about the development. Talks are still in progress around this development. Once a proposal is put forward by the homebuilder, the City can consider its involvement in the proposed program. • NLHC launched their Down Payment Assistance Program (DAP) in October 2015 which directly contributes to affordable home ownership in the City.
<p>Facilitate a Housing Design Competition An open competition with awards for designs that incorporate affordability as well as other important features to meet the needs of our changing population.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A concept paper has been drafted for Council review. This paper grew out of discussion at the ‘Make Room in the Boom’ Housing Forum in November 2013. It was proposed that this design competition would work well with the land inventory: once land is identified, the City could issue a call for innovative housing designs to fit the identified land. • This will be looked into again once the City-owned land has been identified. • CMHC will also be approached to provide Seed Funding to winning proponents for this purpose.
<p>Promote Mixed Use Development Identify an opportunity to incorporate affordable housing into a commercial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed use developments are encouraged in the new draft Municipal Plan. • In the follow-up report on the Seniors Housing Research Project, Council acknowledged the potential of mixed use development as a means to create affordable housing options for seniors. • Incorporating mixed use development into seniors housing was also discussed and encouraged at the Seniors Housing Forum (December 2015)

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS

construction project (e.g. hotel, mall, office) and work with developers to facilitate it.

Promote an Affordable Condominium Pilot Project

Invite an experienced non-profit developer like [Creating Homes](#) to build an affordable condo project and grow local capacity to build more.

Facilitate a Housing First pilot initiative

Earmark some City-owned housing (as it becomes available) to help people most in need to get out of the cycle of homelessness.

The City will play a catalyst role: not building a condominium project but rather creating the conditions and engaging the partners to help it happen. This initiative may fit into the Shea Heights project, was mentioned in the Seniors Housing Research proposed pilot project (an affordable seniors' condominium project) or could be considered in the land inventory and housing design projects. Successful candidate could possible qualify for CMHC Seed Funding as well.

- The City will work with the St. John's Community Advisory Committee on Homelessness as they develop and implement their 2014- 2019 Community Plan to end homelessness.
- The City identified 3 Non-Profit Housing (NPH) units to be used for Housing First. A tender was released in February 2016 for furniture for these units. The units were furnished and ready for occupancy in March 2016.

Build Capacity

Action	Update/Timeline
<p>Create a St. John's Housing Initiatives Partnership (SJHIP) A non-profit, independent entity that provides capacity and expertise to affordable housing initiatives – modeled after SHIP Saskatoon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJHIP would play a role of facilitator – helping identify opportunities and the potential for collaboration to create projects with better outcomes in terms of design, affordability, and distribution across the city. SJHIP would also be a capacity builder and technical assistance provider; a one-stop-shop for affordable housing project development. • Several other cities including Saskatoon and Calgary have created similar organizations. The development of a proposed model will begin with a teleconference with cities that have been identified as best practices. The vision is to create a diverse board of directors that brings organizations together to form collaborations to do what no one organization can accomplish alone. • The City of St. John's Advisory Committee structure review is now complete. The first step is to create a small working group to guide the development of this initiative. Next steps in this area need to be determined. Costs depend on the model chosen: this requires more research.