



Seven Considerations for Housing Supply & Affordability in West Prince

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THE NEED IN WEST PRINCE

What is contributing to the housing need in PEI?

- Rapid population growth
- Availability of labour in building and construction
- Financing changes, including interest rates
- Wages not keeping pace with inflation
- Cost of building materials
- What we are building, the cost of those types of dwellings, and the types of dwellings people are looking for
- Availability of serviced land, particularly in urban areas, that can accommodate higher density
- % of owner households in Prince County spending 30% or more on shelter costs: 6.7%, core need: 3.7%
- % tenant households in Prince County spending 30% or more on shelter costs: 27.5%, core need 15.3%, subsidized 20.9%

Range of spending 30% and core housing need:

	Alberton	O'Leary	Tignish	Tyne Valley
% all households in core need	20.7	20	8.8	n/a
Tenants in core need	31.4	23.4	11.1	0
Owners in core need	0	13.8	0	0
% spending 30%+ on shelter combined	20.7	15.8	7.5	29.4
% spending 30%+ on shelter (tenants)	31.4	23.4	14.8	n/a
% spending 30%+ on shelter (owners)	0	0	0	0
% tenant households in subsidized housing	24.3	44.7	25.9	33.3

Between 2016 and 2021, West Prince only increased its total private dwellings by 22 net new units a year. It is estimated that West Prince has an existing structural housing shortage of around **355 units (2016-2021)**. To keep up with projected growth, about 2,138-2,695 new units would be needed by 2031.

By 2031 the region should be aiming to increase its housing stock **by a net 214 to 305 net new units a year over the 2021 figure (6,039 units)**, depending on whether aiming to a) keep up with projected growth to 2021, b) keep up while also addressing structural shortage, or c) to match provincial household formation rates while closing structural shortage.

(Source: Housing Needs in West Prince, 2031, prepared for Develop West Prince by Matthew Pelletier)

Meeting that increase in housing stock will be key for West Prince to maintain its share of the province's population and continue to see population increases over time.

If West Prince doesn't maintain its share of population and/or loses population, there will be impacts on community, labour availability, housing security, and the economy.

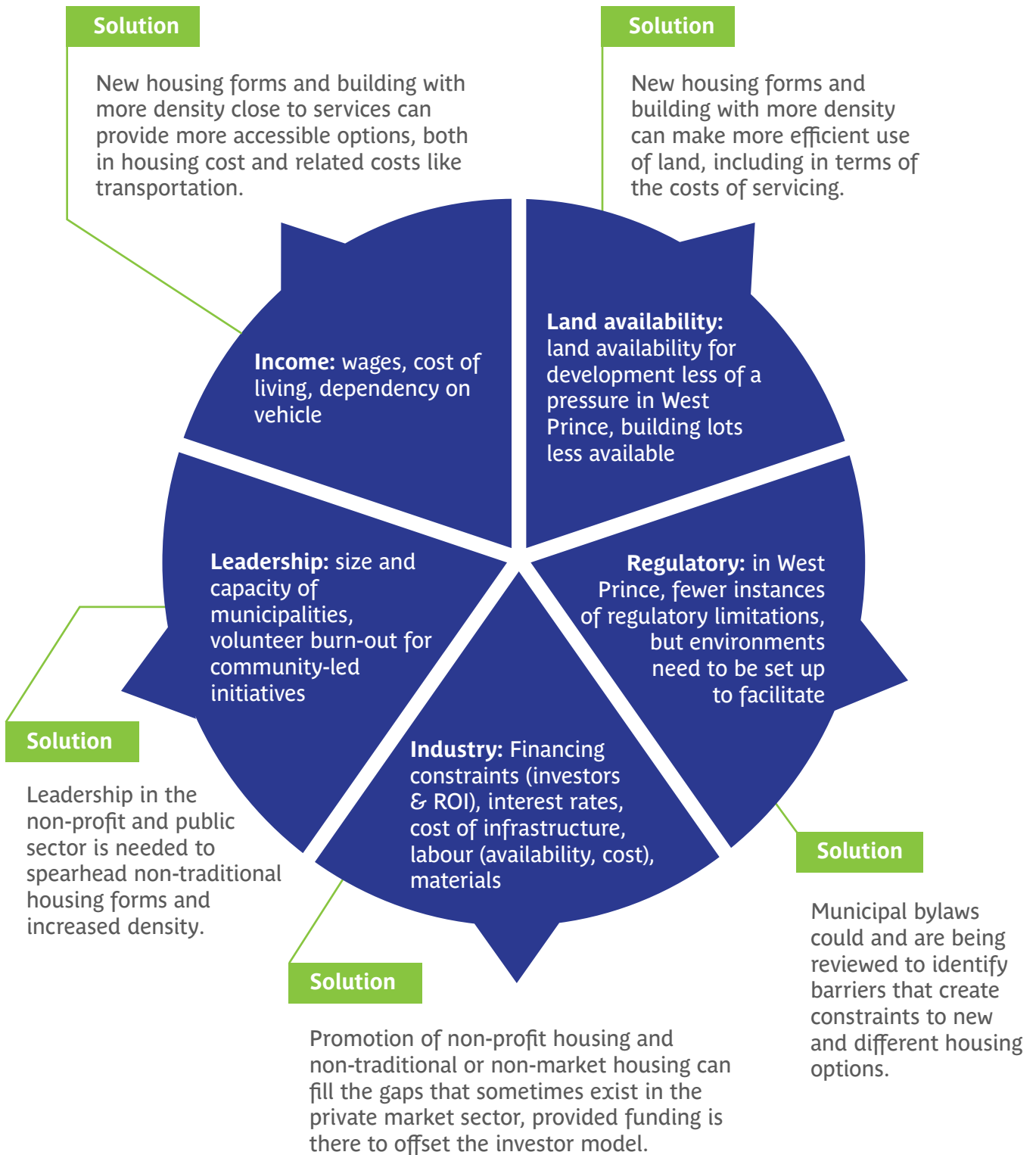
To meet housing need, especially at that rate of development while addressing other goals such as making progress towards net zero, preserving and growing services centres and protecting resource lands, a conversation is needed on shifting towards higher density options and increasing variety.

Need has particularly been identified among:

- Young families – need for affordable homes with 3+ bedrooms
- Youth - need for affordable homes, 1 and 2 bedroom for new households starting out. Lack of housing impacts household formation and renewal.
- Individuals needing social services and supportive housing – limited resources and supports. Women's shelter in Lennox Island, Life House in Summerside. Transition housing is bottlenecked due to housing supply.
- Newcomers – greater interest in shared housing options, larger families, quality and option gaps, isolation, affordability – options impact sense of community, long term retention and community renewal
- Students - availability, cost, and available transportation to school and work are important for students, short supply of student housing – keeping or retaining students can impact long term population retention and permanent household formation.

Some individuals or households may fall into more than one of these categories.

FACTORS IMPACTING HOUSING NEED

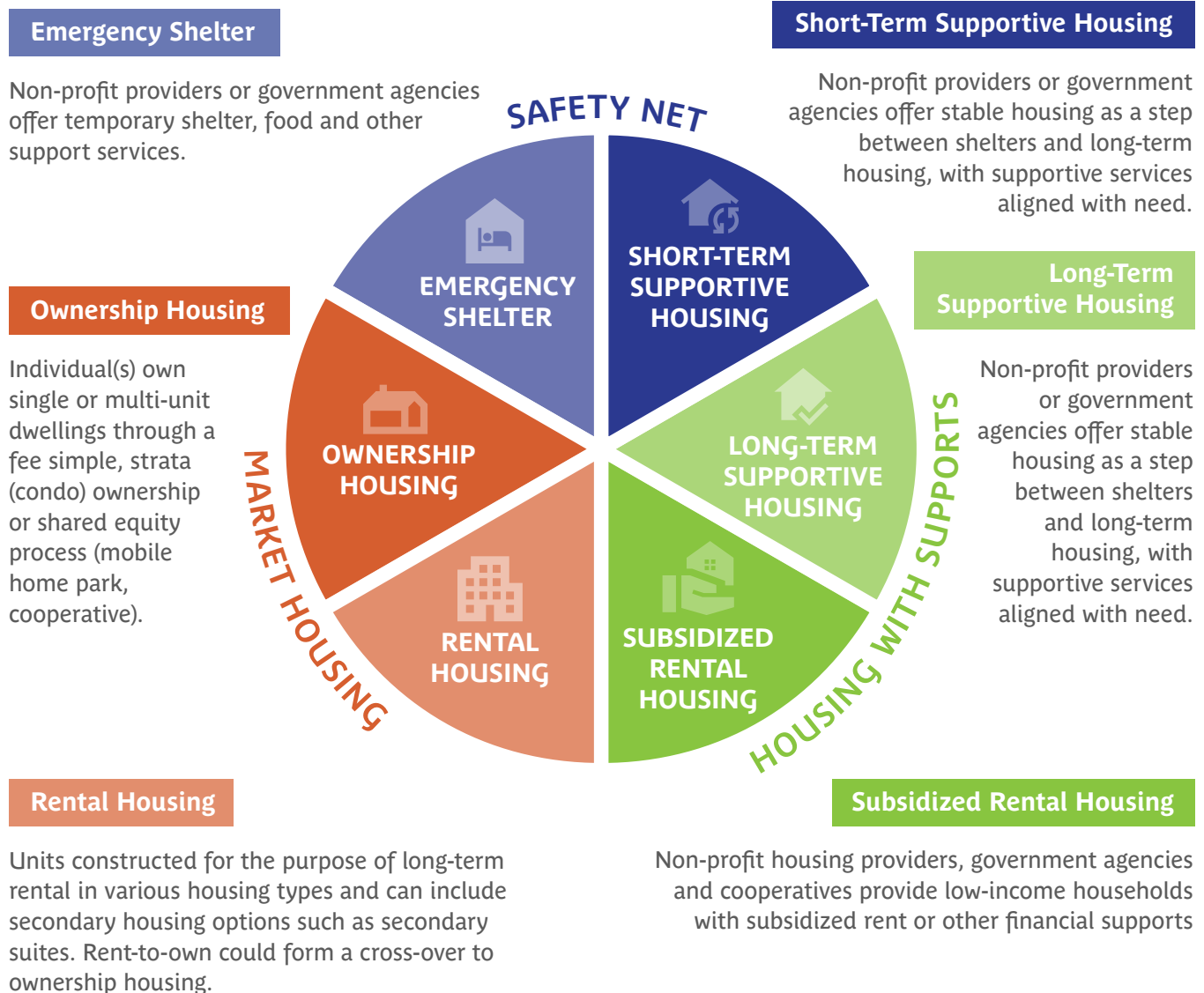


CONSIDERATIONS FOR MEETING THE HOUSING NEED

- 1 What type of housing do we need and what influences that need?
- 2 What does it look like – size of buildings, design, layout of neighbourhood or project?
- 3 Who builds it – who is responsible for creating housing?
- 4 Who owns the housing and who lives there?
- 5 What is permitted under the local zoning bylaw or development standards regulations?
- 6 What does it cost to build and maintain?
- 7 Who pays – especially the gap between affordability and cost of building?

1. WHAT TYPE OF HOUSING IS NEEDED?

Housing is a human right, but the type of housing an individual needs varies depending age, stage of life, income, preferences, and more. People may access different types of housing at different points in their life. Affordability needs to cross all types and categories of housing.



This diagram has been transformed from the original developed by the City of Kelowna.

1. INFLUENCES ON HOUSING NEED

Housing is a human right, but the type of housing an individual needs varies depending age, stage of life, income, preferences, and more.

DESIRE OR NEED FOR LOTS OF SPACE

INTEREST IN OR ABILITY TO TAKE ON A MORTGAGE

NEED FOR PHYSICAL OR OTHER SUPPORTS, INCLUDING WRAP-AROUND SUPPORTS

HAVING A SMALL CARBON/ RESOURCE FOOTPRINT

ACCESSIBILITY TO AMENITIES

INTEREST IN COMMUNAL LIVING OR SHARED HOUSING

PROXIMITY TO SERVICES, EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, FAMILY AND FRIENDS

SIZE OF FAMILY/ HOUSEHOLD, NUMBER OF GENERATIONS LIVING TOGETHER

ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY NEEDS

LACK OF INTEREST IN PROPERTY UPKEEP AND MAINTENANCE

AFFORDABILITY

PREFERENCE OR DEPENDENCE ON PUBLIC TRANSIT AND/OR WALKING/CYCLING

LIFESTYLE

People often prefer what they are used to, which for many in Canada is single dwelling units. However, no single housing type works for everyone. Communities need a broad range of housing types and sizes that are affordable to attract and retain a diverse population. All communities generally need a mix of non-market and market housing to be affordable for everyone and meet all needs throughout their lives.

Our individual preferences and needs for different types of housing are further affected by shared interests and needs:

PROTECTION OF RESOURCES LANDS

NET-ZERO OBJECTIVES AND CHANGES TO BUILT FORM AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

CLIMATE ADAPTATION TO REDUCE THREATS TO PEOPLE AND PROPERTY

PROTECTION OF FOOD SOURCES, INCLUDING AGRICULTURAL LANDS

ECONOMIES OF SCALE FOR SERVICES SUCH AS TRANSIT, WATER AND SEWER UTILITIES AND SHARED SERVICES,

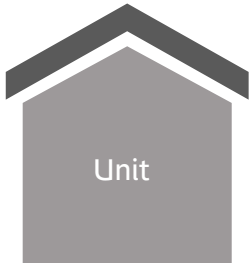
PROTECTION OF VIEWSCAPES AND SENSE OF PLACE

PROTECTION OF NATURAL AREAS AND HABITAT

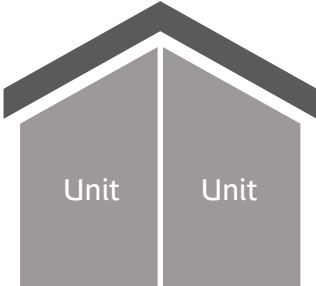
ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS (RURAL, SUBURBAN SPRAWL, COMPACT COMPLETE COMMUNITIES, RURAL SERVICE CENTRES AND TOWNS).

1. WHAT DOES HOUSING LOOK LIKE

Housing can come in a lot of different shapes and sizes.



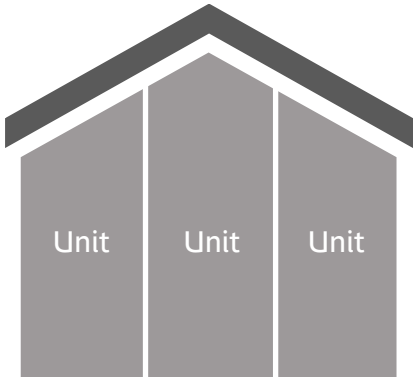
Single-Detached



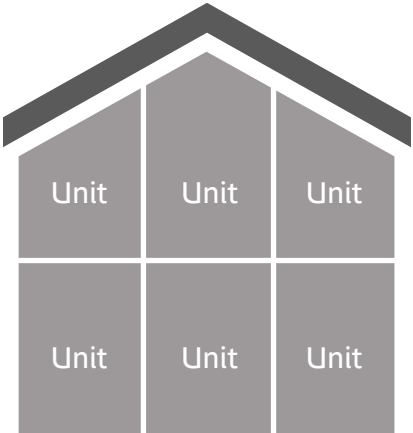
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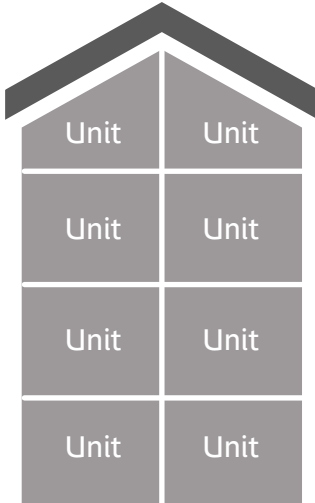
Duplex



Townhouse



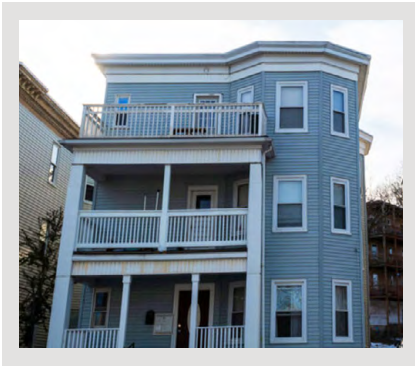
Stacked Townhouse



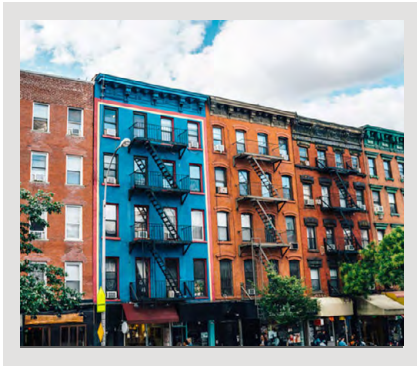
Apartment

Multiple Attached Dwellings

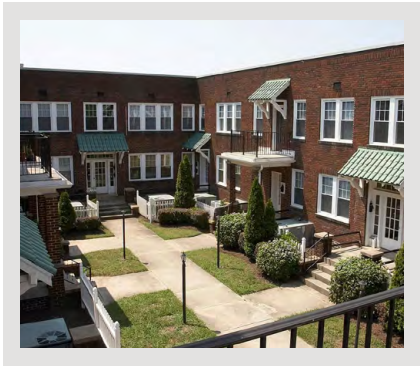
Housing can come in a lot of different shapes and sizes, in addition to what we have traditionally built in PEI.



Triplex: Stacked



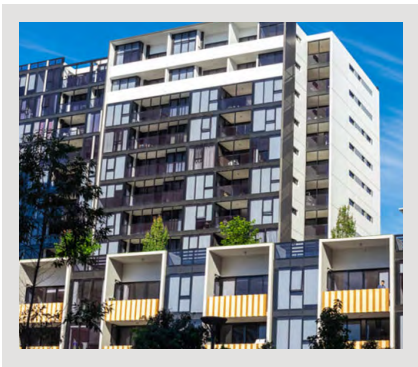
Live-Work



Courtyard Apartments



Cottage Court



Mid-Rise

Housing and households can take many physical forms beyond what we are used to seeing in PEI:

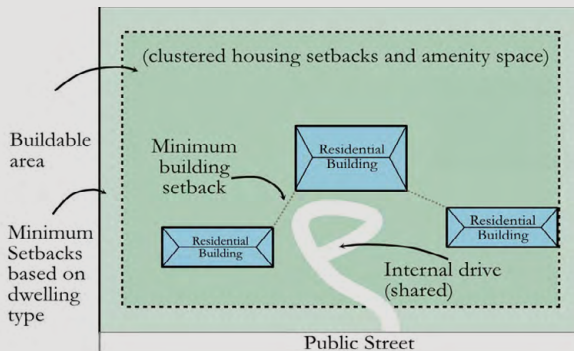
- **Accessory Dwelling Units** – secondary suites (aka basement apartments) and garden suites (extra, smaller dwelling, usually in rear yard, could be over the detached garage)
- **Courtyard houses or courtyard architecture:** a type of architectural design where a building or a group of buildings enclose an open courtyard or central space. This style of construction has been used in various cultures and historical periods. Benefits include social interaction among the occupants and central courtyard as a communal space where family members, neighbors, or residents can gather, play, or engage in various activities.
- **Cottage Courts:** Cottage court housing, also known as pocket neighborhood housing, is a type of residential housing with a cluster of smaller scale housing arranged around a central courtyard or shared green space. This concept emphasizes community and a sense of belonging while offering a more intimate and scaled-down living environment that promotes a sense of community and encourages interaction among residents. More likely to require shared services and a condominium or cooperative structure to manage ownership of common spaces and shared amenities.
- **Cohousing:** Cohousing combines the autonomy of compact self contained private dwellings with the benefits of shared, spacious community amenities that typically include a large dining room, kitchen,

recreation spaces, meeting rooms, children's play spaces, guest rooms, workshops and gardens. Cohousing neighbourhoods can be more focused on a pedestrian orientation with lower vehicle use than conventional neighbourhoods. Ownership is often organized in the form of a condominium but is sometimes set up in a co-op or share structure.

For more information, see cohousing.ca.

Housing in PEI tends to range from single detached, duplexes and semi-detached, and apartment buildings. There are a larger number of options available.

Clustered housing with multiple buildings on same parcel (Can include any number of residential form, including mobile homes, tiny homes, cottage courts, multiple townhouse buildings, even multiple single detached.)



Shared services often required, sometimes set up as a cooperative or condominium structure. Can create community and more efficient use of land.

Townhouses and stacked townhouses



Shared services often required, can be individually owned, rented, or sometimes set up as a cooperative or condominium structure.

Alternative styles of apartments



Note: buildings can have as many as five or six units, but look like a single detached, potentially with more space between. Parking is accessed in rear.

Can be designed to look like a single detached dwelling, similar to conversions from single houses to apartments.

Image source: Google Street View

3. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSING IN PEI?

Housing and the housing supply tend to be a shared responsibility.

- Federal: CMHC, direct building and ownership of housing, funding programs, tools and resources, interest rates
- Provincial: Emergency housing, affordable and social housing (direct ownership), financial support (rent supplements and mobile vouchers), funding programs, policy, land use planning
- Municipal: where planning exists, rules and zoning. Sometimes own subdivisions or incentives for private development
- Private Market: market housing through subdivision, building of housing, private rentals, owner-occupied housing, and equity housing co-ops (where members each make an economic contribution to purchase shares. Those shares bring with them the right to occupy residential units—these tend to be less organized than traditional non-profit housing co-ops).
- Non-profit: community housing, supportive housing, financing (Habitat for Humanity)

Some solutions may be shared as well, especially in the public and non-profit sectors: creating land trusts, ensuring the rules around development are appropriate, funding programs, creating housing at cost.

4. WHO OWNS THE HOUSING AND WHO LIVES THERE?

The shape of the building does not dictate the ownership of for-profit or non-profit structure or household features. For example:

- A house can be rented or owned
- A multi-unit apartment building could involve private rentals, units individually owned through a condominium, a co-op run by the tenants, public or non-profit ownership of rentals, or more.
- A long-term care facility can be publicly owned or run by a for-profit organization.
- Merged Household – multiple families or household groups sharing the same dwelling, often for cost-saving measures
- Multi-generational Household – multiple generations of the same family living together – either in the main dwelling, or using accessory dwelling units to provide independent dwellings within close proximity. The physical building can have any type of ownership.

Ownership and tenure of housing can also vary:

- Rent-to-own: Rent-to-own housing is a housing arrangement where a tenant rents a property for a specified period of time with the option to purchase the property before the lease expires. This arrangement combines elements of a traditional rental agreement with an eventual opportunity for the tenant to buy the property.
- Co-operatives: tenant-owned co-ops is shared ownership of the housing, while in other co-op models, the shareholders are not necessarily the tenants.
- Condominium: a building or complex of buildings containing a number of individually owned dwelling units or houses. All owners contribute to monthly costs for maintain common spaces and shared infrastructure, regulated through a condominium corporation.



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Example of Cottage Court

5. WHAT DOES ZONING ALLOW

- Zoning and development regulations do not always permit all types of housing, particularly non-traditional forms.
- Housing options that feature multiple units are generally better suited to areas with at minimum central sewer, if not both sewer and municipal water. Where there are on-site services, central or shared services may be required.
- Other matters such as ownership structure and services such as roads and access need to be considered.
- Not all non-traditional housing options are necessarily lower cost but might meet other social goals.
- Many communities are looking to change their rules and approaches.

6. WHAT DOES IT COST TO MAINTAIN?

- Building closer together, and in many cases, higher is a current shift getting a lot of attention.
 - » Land is a finite resource, and larger lots and lower density is consuming agricultural land at an accelerated rate (PEI is reportedly losing an average of 39 acres of farmland per day.)
 - » Building closer together can make the cost of infrastructure more affordable, bringing development costs (and therefore housing costs) down. For example, more dwellings on the same stretch of road makes the per/unit cost of building and maintaining that road or sidewalk lower.
 - » Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is a key component of climate action (mitigation) and with transportation being a significant contributor of GHGs, building more compactly is important for reducing travel time and distance and making transit and active transportation more viable forms of commuting.
- Density allows for more variety of housing type, making it easier to meet a wide range of needs, for seniors or empty nesters looking to downsize, new households just forming, those looking to reduce housing costs or not looking to own, or those looking to share housing.
- Density is more dependent on shared servicing, particularly sewer.
- As density increases, quality public spaces and amenities become more and more important.

6. OTHER COSTING CONSIDERATIONS

- In addition to efficient use of land through density, other factors can affect the cost of building housing
 - » The number of amenities required adds cost to the project (sidewalks, play equipment, etc.)
 - » The design features affect cost, including siding materials, shape of building, etc.
 - » Some per unit costs remain the same, regardless of unit size (a studio apartment and 3-bedroom apartment both require bathroom and kitchen facilities)
 - » Building bigger housing than is needed can put households in situations of paying for space they don't need, increasing housing cost.
 - » The availability of municipal services that can support additional numbers of units and smaller lots, such as municipal sewer and water.

7. WHO PAYS

- The private market is unlikely to meet all housing needs, particularly for the lowest cost housing.
- Requirements on the private market can sometimes increase the costs:
 - » The number of amenities required adds cost to the project (sidewalks, play equipment, etc.).
 - » The design features affect cost, including siding materials, shape of building, etc.
 - » Some per unit costs remain the same, regardless of unit size (a studio apartment and 3-bedroom apartment both require bathroom and kitchen facilities).
 - » Building bigger housing than is needed can put households in situations of paying for space they don't need, increasing housing cost.
 - » Zoning limits and long processes can add to cost and uncertainty.

CONCLUSION

- Even with all initiatives in place to reduce the cost of building housing, private housing will be out of reach for some households, not all of whom will qualify for social housing or social assistance, creating the need for community-based alternatives or creating the opportunity to explore different ownership options or building types.
- Exploring new housing building types and non-traditional housing ownership can provide additional options to meet the housing need.