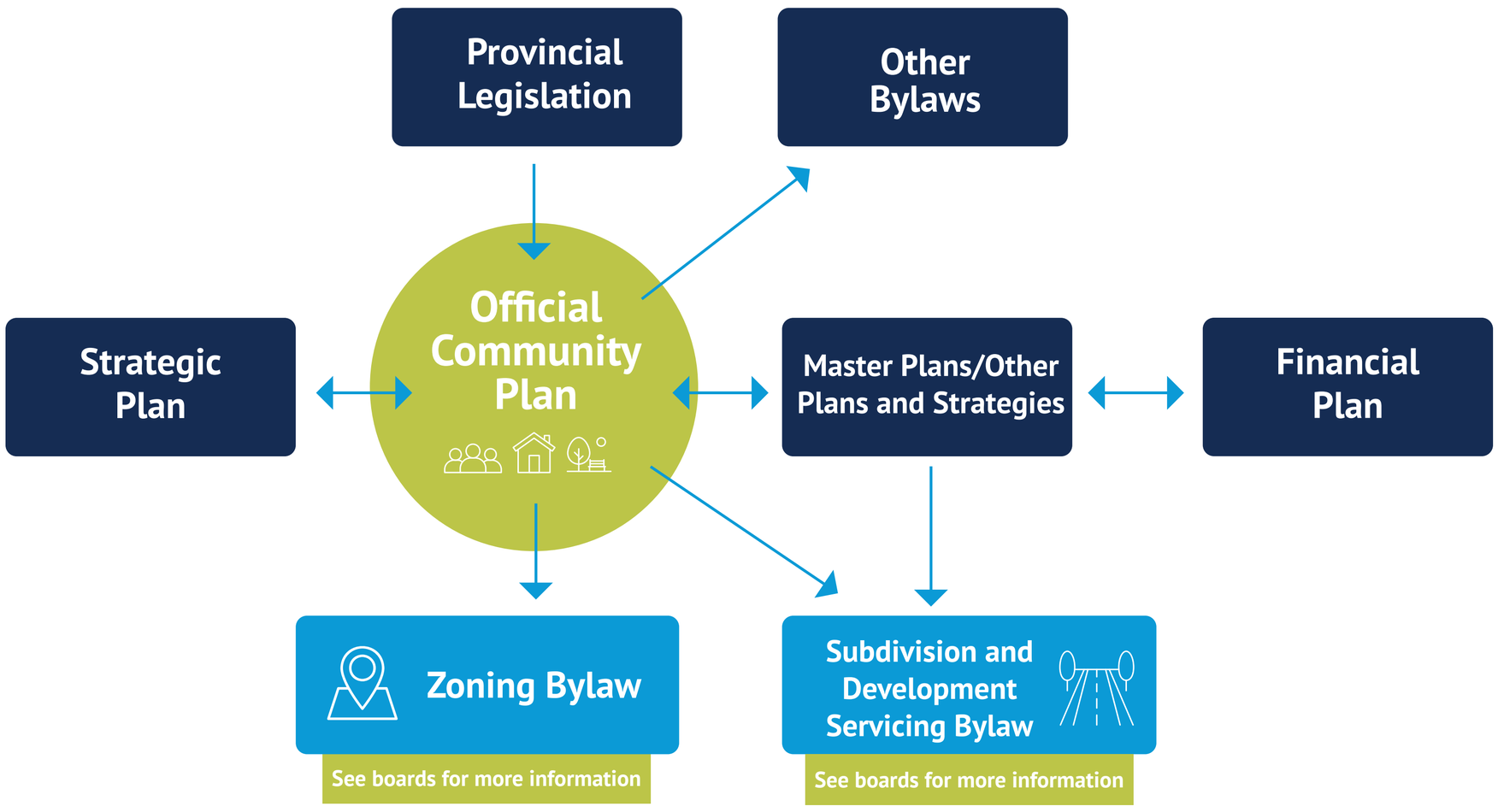
WELCOME!

To the Official Community Plan Open House!
We are glad you are here.

Format of the Open House

We invite you to explore the boards for the Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw, and Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw around the room. These vital documents guide sustainable growth and development in the Town. Your feedback is encouraged.



TOWN OF COMOX

Scan here to visit the Official Community Plan project page or go to comox.ca

VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Vision sets the framework for the entire OCP. It is informed by community input gathered as part of the OCP update process and will guide growth and development in the community to 2045.

VISION

Comox embraces its natural areas and surroundings, recreational opportunities and the unique atmosphere of its seaside setting. The heart of Comox is the Downtown – a compact, pedestrian friendly area with a lively mix of housing, services, and amenities. New development diversifies housing and employment options throughout Comox and is accompanied by concerted efforts to minimize environmental impacts. Mixed-use nodes throughout the community allow residents to safely access education, services, amenities, and employment by walking, rolling, or using public transit. Comox embraces its natural areas and surroundings, recreational opportunities and the unique atmosphere of its seaside setting. The heart of Comox is the Downtown – a compact, pedestrian friendly area with a lively mix of housing, services, and amenities. New development diversifies housing and employment options throughout Comox and is accompanied by concerted efforts to minimize environmental impacts. Mixed-use nodes throughout the community allow residents to safely access education, services, amenities, and employment by walking, rolling, or using public transit.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Guiding Principles add tangibility to implement the Vision. They are intended to help guide decision-making and reinforce key direction. All policies included in the document will align with at least one of the guiding principles.

1. Prioritize integrated community planning, and neighbourhood nodes, with strong links between land use, infrastructure, active transportation, and community amenities.
2. Plan Comox to be a complete community with convenient access to services and amenities linked by multi-modal transportation options for all abilities.
3. Enhance Downtown Comox in partnership with the Comox BIA and other interested community partners.
4. Increase housing diversity, stock, and affordability throughout land inside the Urban Containment Boundary.
5. Continue to build a strong relationship with K'omoks First Nation.
6. Enhance partnerships with agencies, organizations, and regional partners.
7. Protect, restore and enhance the natural environment.
8. Provide a connected and diverse network of parks, trails, and open spaces.
9. Contribute to achieving emissions targets and risk management objectives of the Climate Action Plan and Risk Assessment.
10. Enhance employment and economic development for the Town of Comox.

TOWN OF COMOX

OCP PROCESS TO DATE

The Town of Comox is setting sail on a journey to update its Official Community Plan and we want you to come aboard!

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is an "anchor" document that outlines a municipality's long-term vision for the community and guides future development. The OCP is now 13 years old, making an update essential to ensure that its vision, goals, and policies align with community aspirations.

NEW OCP REQUIREMENTS
Municipalities are now required to review and update their OCPs every 5 years to address current and projected housing needs for the next 20 years.

Project Timeline

TOWN OF COMOX

SURVEY: WHAT WE LEARNED

Phase 1&2 Community Survey

422	2500+	10+	2,669
Survey Responses	Survey Comments	Social Media Posts	Visits on the project webpage

Top 5 Priority Areas

- Future Land Use Planning
- Parks and Trails
- Transportation, Roads, and Connectivity
- Environment
- Muncipal Services: Amenities Recreation

Small Town Charm

What Do You Value About Comox?

Add your thoughts using sticky notes.

Proximity to Nature/Ocean

Walkability and Trails

Safe and Quiet

TOWN OF COMOX

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Change
2016-2021
+5.5%

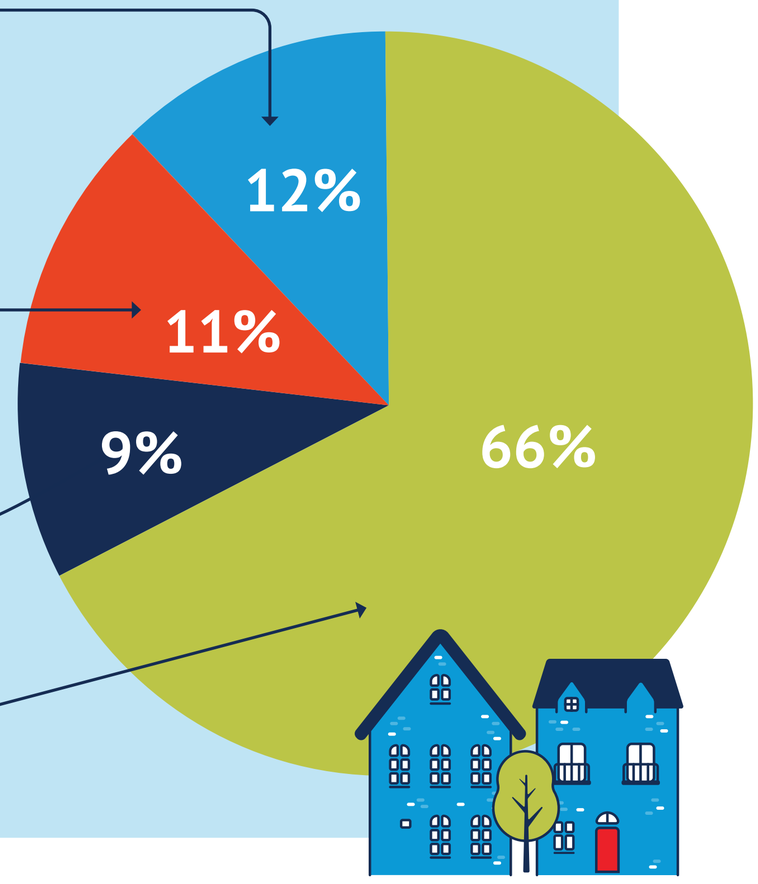
14,806
In Comox

Change
2016-2021
+8.9%

72,445
In Comox Valley
Regional District

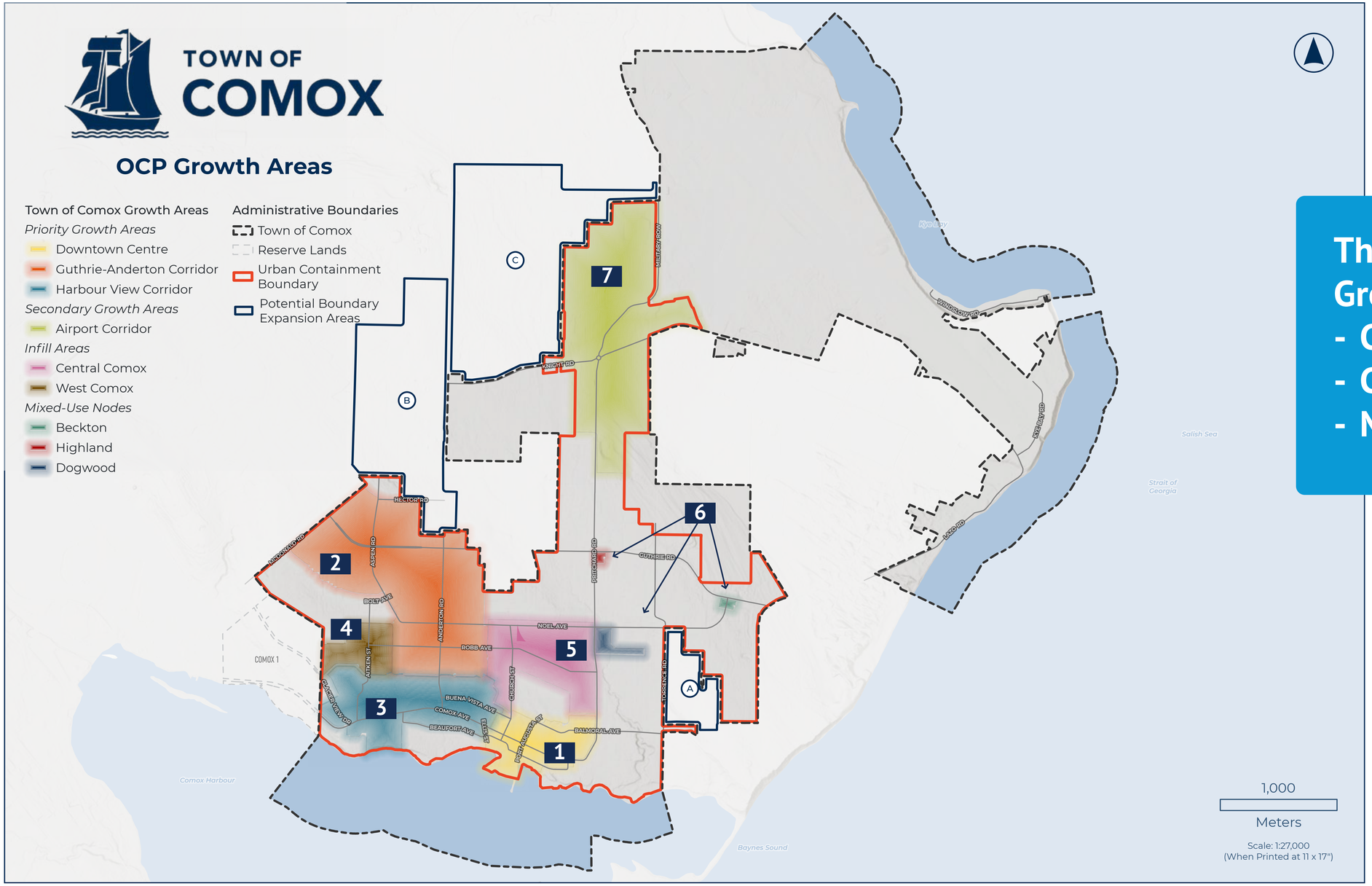
52.4
Median Age
In Comox

Housing Stock
In Comox



TOWN OF
COMOX

GROWTH MANAGEMENT



Three Types of Growth Areas:
- **Centres**
- **Corridors**
- **Mixed-Use Nodes**

For descriptions of the growth areas see board 7.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The following growth areas are numbered 1-7 below and on the corresponding map on board 6.

1. Downtown Centre:

- As a priority growth area, the Town will prioritize infrastructure that can facilitate development in the Downtown Centre.
- Envisioned as a character-rich, mixed-use centre in the heart of Comox.

2. Guthrie-Anderton Corridor:

- Aligned with the Comox Valley's most frequent Bus Route #1.
- The Airport Zoning Regulation in Comox limits building height in much of this Growth Area to 4 storeys / 15 metres.
- There are development opportunities on large properties that are well-served by daily needs and public transit.

3. Harbour View Corridor:

- Limited Airport Zoning Regulations and potential for buildings up to 6 storeys, and one development with buildings up to 9 storeys.
- Former St. Joseph's Hospital site functions as a mixed-use node.
- Transit-supportive densities to encourage the expanded bus service.

4. West Comox Infill Area:

- Grid road network with parcel sizes and building ages that indicate it may have a greater likelihood for infill small-scale multi-unit housing development compared to other areas of the Town.
- Designated Ground Oriented Residential, which supports a variety of building types up to three storeys in height.
- Provides housing diversity near Corridors and Centres.

5. Central Comox Infill Area:

- Ground Oriented Residential housing up to three storeys near Downtown, Community Centre, and Schools.
- Parcels in the area could be consolidated to facilitate townhouse development beyond four units on a parcel.
- Infill growth in this area will enhance business viability and vitality in Downtown Comox.

6. Mixed Use Nodes:

- The Beckton, Highland, and Creekside nodes are located in east Comox and will increase access to daily needs in primarily residential neighbourhoods.
- Low-Rise Mixed-Use designation to sensitively add commercial services and housing diversity at key intersections in buildings up to four storeys.
- Preferred ground-level commercial uses are those that people use regularly, such as childcare, small grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants, fitness centres, and cafés.

7. Airport:

- Includes a variety of land uses and will function as a node providing commercial services, employment opportunities, and increased housing diversity in North Comox.
- Some of the last remaining greenfield parcels with development potential in the Town.
- Lands owned by the Department of National Defence are included in the Centre to identify the Town's support for continued growth, but this is ultimately up to the jurisdiction of the Department of National Defence.

TOWN OF COMOX

TOWN OF COMOX

OCP Active Transportation Network

Active Transportation Network
- Existing Trail / Multi-Use Pathway
- Future Trail / Multi-Use Pathway
- CVRD AT Network

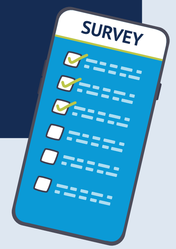
Existing Cycling Network
- Existing Bicycle Lane
- Existing Shared Lane
- Existing Shoulder
- MOTT Buffered Accessible

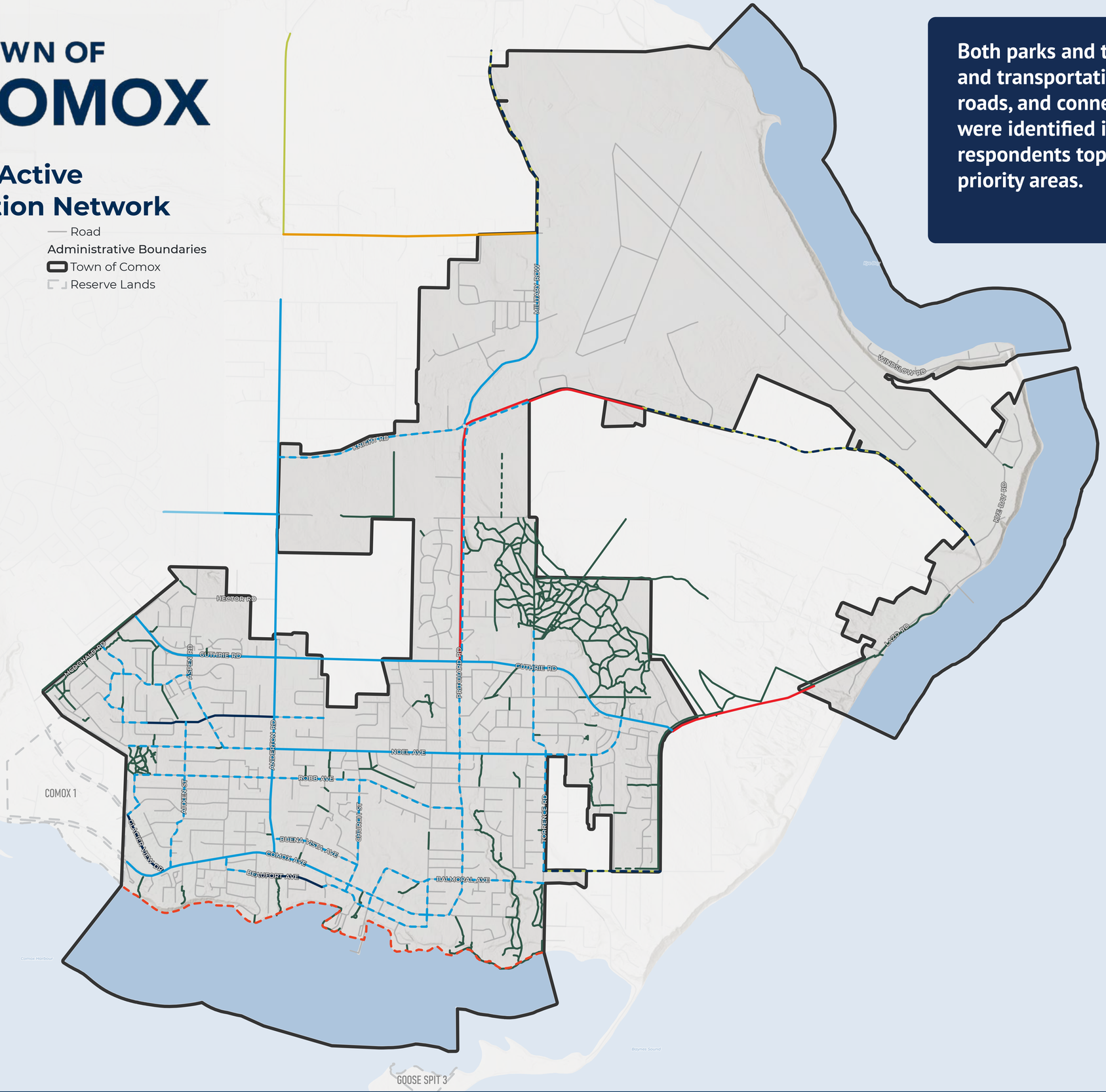
Future Cycling Network
- Future Bicycle Lane
- Future Multi Use Shoulder
- Future Waterfront Pathway

- Road

Administrative Boundaries
- Town of Comox
- Reserve Lands

Both parks and trails, and transportation, roads, and connectivity, were identified in survey respondents top five priority areas.





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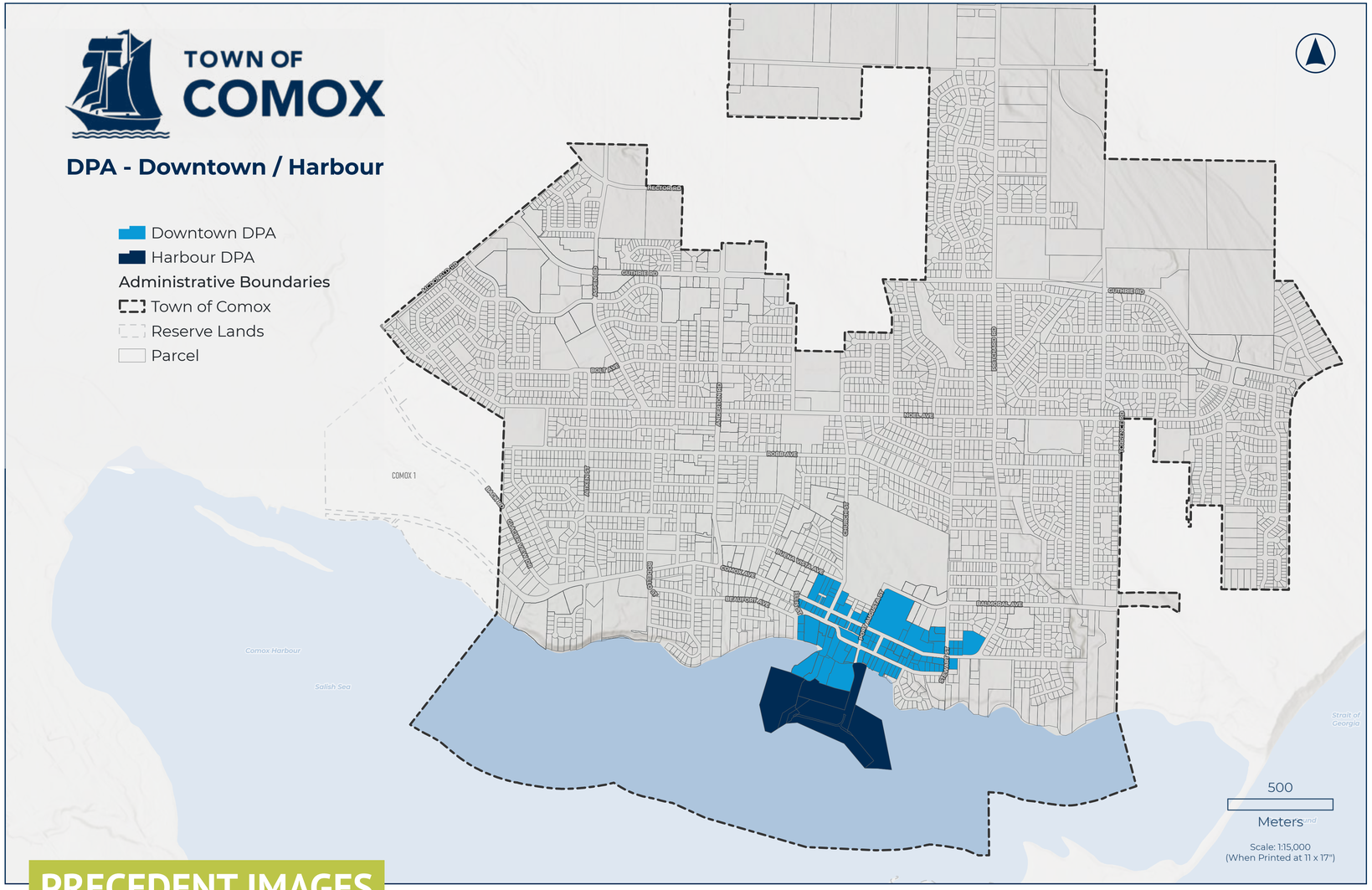
DOWNTOWN COMOX



The Downtown Centre is envisioned as a character-rich mixed-use centre in the heart of Comox. There are many existing commercial services that draw visitors from throughout the Comox Valley, and tourists from beyond the Comox Valley. The Comox Valley marinas are also in Downtown Comox, making it a particularly lively area in the warmer months. Filberg Heritage Lodge and Park is just east of Downtown and functions as a regional and tourist attraction.

Residential and mixed-use development can make Downtown Comox a more vibrant centre during off hours and throughout the year, but it will require attention to detail to be compatible with the character that residents know and love. Buildings fronting Comox Avenue should include retail commercial units on building faces fronting Comox Avenue to create a lively, animated street.

The Downtown Centre is primarily designated Mid-Rise Mixed-Use on the Draft OCP Land Use Map, which supports mixed-use buildings up to six storeys in height. Form and character will be influenced by the Downtown Development Permit Area guidelines.

PRECEDENT IMAGES

TOWN OF COMOX

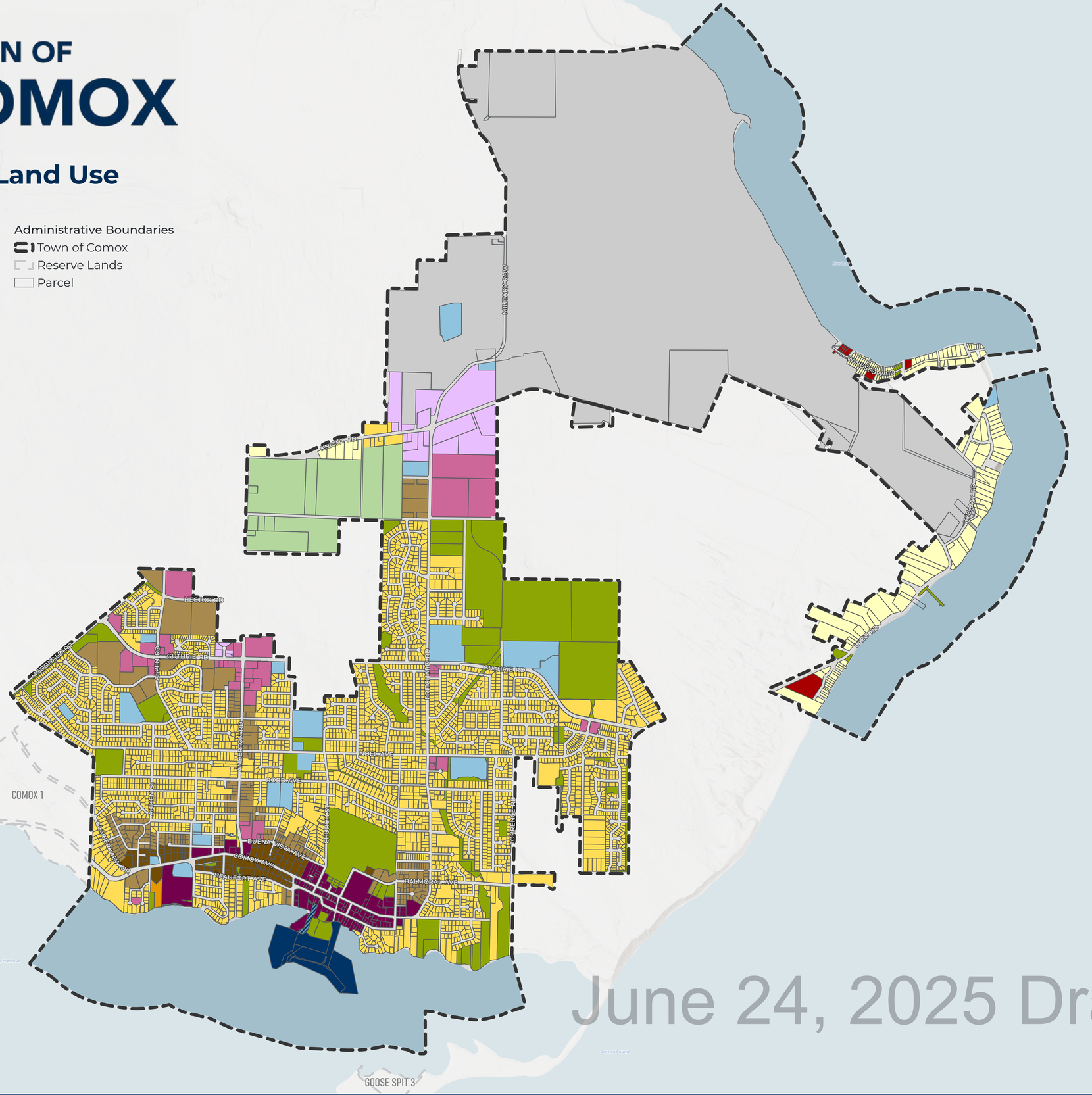
OCP Future Land Use

OCP Land Use (2025)

- 19 Wing Comox / Comox Valley Airport
- Agricultural
- Business Park
- Commercial: Tourist
- Parks, Greenways and Open Space
- Institutional
- Harbour and Marina
- Harbour and Marina Comprehensive Development Area (12-storey)
- Low-Rise Mixed-Use (4-storey)
- Mid-Rise Mixed-Use (6-storey)
- Low-Rise Residential (4-storey)
- Mid-Rise Residential (6-storey)
- High-Rise Residential (9-storey)
- Detached Residential
- Ground Oriented Residential (3-storey)

Administrative Boundaries

- Town of Comox
- Reserve Lands
- Parcel



June 24, 2025 Draft

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LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Detached Residential

Applies to single-detached residential parcels that:

- Do not currently have water or sewer servicing.
- Have considerable servicing constraints and are not anticipated to have water or sewer servicing for the life of the OCP.
- Have constrained servicing that is inadequate for increased density.

Ground-Oriented Residential

- Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing.
- Any residential building type up to 3 storeys permitted.

Low-Rise Residential

- Guides development of low-rise apartments and townhouse up to 4 storeys in height.

Mid-Rise Residential

- Guides development of mid-rise residential buildings up to 6 storeys in height.

High-Rise Residential

- Guides development of mid-rise residential buildings up to 9 storeys in height.

Low-Rise Mixed-Use

- Guides development of mixed-use buildings up to four storeys.

Mid-Rise Mixed-Use

- Guides development of mixed-use buildings up to six storeys in height.

Harbour and Marina Comprehensive Development Area

- Adjacent to the prominent Marina Park, Town Hall, and the character-rich Downtown, the area is highly visible for residents and businesses in Comox, in addition to being visible from Royston and the City of Courtenay across the Comox Harbour.
- Potential for an exceptional contribution to economic development in the region by providing ocean-view hotel space and other tourist-oriented commercial uses.
- Consideration of buildings up to 12 storeys in height.

Business Park

- The Business Park designation will provide more local jobs as Comox grows.
- In addition to light industrial uses, limited commercial uses will contribute to the efficient operation of the Business Park and Comox Valley Airport.
- Development will be sensitive to the surrounding rural context and compatible with adjacent institutional and residential uses.

Commercial: Tourist

- The Commercial: Tourist designation applies to existing tourist accommodation uses in Kye Bay and Point Holmes.
- Intended for continued tourist accommodation use in Comox and functions as an alternative to the use of residential units for short term accommodation.

Parks and Open Space

- The Parks and Open Space designation applies primarily to existing parks but includes one future park southwest of the intersection of Pritchard Road and Cambridge Road. It includes natural conservation areas in addition to active and passive parks.
- The Parks and Open Space Objectives and Policies provide high level guidance to plan for a complete parks and open space network that is incrementally expanded to accommodate a growing population.

Institutional

- The institutional designation applies to existing public, assembly, non-profit, health care, and special needs housing uses.
- As Comox grows, there will be a need to scale up services such as healthcare, education, childcare, parks, community centres, and emergency services.
- Concerted efforts to combine institutional uses will be needed to improve community completeness and the efficient use of land.

19 Wing Comox / Comox Valley Airport

- The 19 Wing Comox / Comox Valley Airport designation applies to lands owned by the Canadian Department of National Defence within the Town of Comox.
- A variety of military housing and services are within the designation, and some services are available for public use, such as the 19 Wing Fitness and Community Centre and Glacier Greens Golf Club.
- The Town of Comox recognizes the regional and national significance of 19 Wing Comox and the Comox Valley Airport and supports continued collaboration with the Department of National Defence and Comox Valley Airport Commission to enhance access and operations.

Agricultural

- The Agricultural designation applies to Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) parcels in Comox and is intended for long-term farm use to support the local economy and food security.

LAND USE DESIGNATIONS & ZONING

OCP Land Use Designation = 20-year vision

Zoning = How a parcel can be used today

Rezoning / Zoning Amendment = Amending the zoning of a parcel in alignment with OCP Land Use Designation (among other purposes for zoning amendments)

- The OCP determines land use designations, which identify long-term intent.
- The Zoning Bylaw determines parcel zoning, which identifies current permitted uses and parameters of use.
- On land intended for a different future use than permitted by current zoning, the OCP designates land for a different use.
- Land can continue to be used as per existing zoning, but on many parcels, there are opportunities to "rezone" for consistency with land use designation.

Land Use Examples

Examples of the relationship between OCP Land Use Designations and Zoning

1

Single Detached Home

- A parcel with an existing single-detached house is zoned "R1.0 Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing," and a Low-Rise Residential (4-storey) OCP land use designation.
- The parcel can continue to be used as a single-detached property, or for any other use permitted in the "R1.0" zone, or the owner could pursue a zoning amendment ("rezoning") to facilitate development of four storey apartments.

2

Downtown Rezoning

- A parcel in the Downtown area on Comox Avenue currently has a 2-storey commercial building.
- The existing zoning is C4.1, which permits buildings up to 10.0 metres in height (equivalent to about 3 storeys).
- The Draft OCP land use designation is Mid-Rise Mixed-Use (up to 6 storeys).
- For a 6-storey mixed use building to be permitted on the parcel, the owner would need to rezone the property to a different zone that would permit mixed-use buildings up to 6 storeys (typically equivalent to 25 metres).
  - » Council would have discretion on whether to grant the rezoning, and could place conditions on the rezoning.
- If rezoning is approved, prior to submitting a building permit application, the Town would need to approve a development permit application for the Downtown form and character Development Permit Area, which will include extensive design guidelines.

3

Downtown Continued Use

- A parcel in the Downtown area on Comox Avenue currently has a 2-storey commercial building.
- The existing zoning is C4.1, which permits buildings up to 10.0 metres in height (equivalent to about 3 storeys).
- The Draft OCP land use designation is Mid-Rise Mixed-Use (up to 6 storeys).
- The parcel owner has no intention of redeveloping and would like to maintain the tenancies of existing businesses for the unforeseeable future.
  - » This is fully permitted, and the parcel owner need not be compelled to rezone the property based on the OCP land use designation.
  - » The parcel could be bought and sold, and still continue to be used as per the C4.1 zoning.

LAND USE MAP

Let us know what you think!

Share your thoughts about the OCP Future Land Use Map by placing a sticky note on this board with your comments.

TOWN OF COMOX

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

In 2023, the province amended the Local Government Act, resulting in significant changes for land use planning.

Housing Needs

- The province required municipalities to complete Interim Housing Needs Reports by December 31, 2024.
- The provincially required Interim Housing Needs Report must follow a specific methodology to determine 5- and 20-year housing need.
- The housing need period is 2021 to 2041.
- Housing need in Comox for 2021-2041: 3,358 units.

Official Community Plans (OCP)

- Provincial legislation requires local governments to update their OCPs to accommodate 20-year housing need as identified in the Interim Housing Needs Report, by December 31, 2025.
- The Land Use Map and land use designation policies are the main OCP sections that determine how the Town can meet housing needs. However, other policies are important for ensuring that growth happens in a sustainable manner that ensures a high quality of life for residents.
- "Growing up" can facilitate growth without the need to "grow out", allowing for the maintenance of natural areas. It also provides housing diversity, and more affordable options compared to single-detached homes.

Zoning Bylaw

- Provincial legislation requires local governments to update their zoning bylaws to accommodate 20-year housing need as identified in the Interim Housing Needs Report.
- Most developments in Comox will be required to "rezone" for consistency with the OCP land use designation, which will require council approval on a site by site basis.
- In terms of meeting provincial requirements to accommodate housing need, the Town is proposing to focus pre-zoning for townhouses to facilitate the development of ground-oriented housing that is typically more affordable than new single-detached homes.

TOWN OF COMOX

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Your feedback is important to us!

We value your feedback on these initiatives. Should you have any questions or comments for the project team, please use the following methods:

General Questions and Comments

Fill out a comment sheet below and drop it off at the Town Hall by June 30th, email planning@comox.ca, or call 250.339.1118

Official Community Plan

Submit a comment or question on the Projects wepage at: engagecomoxvalley/comoxocp

Fill out a comment sheet below and drop it off at the Town Hall by June 30th.

Scan here to be directed to the project webpage

Zoning Bylaw

Fill out a comment sheet below and drop it off at the Town Hall by June 30th.

TOWN OF COMOX

ZONING BYLAW UPDATE

Comox is updating the Zoning Bylaw to modernize its existing regulations, meet new legal requirements, and make it consistent with the new Official Community Plan.

Project Overview

The Town is undertaking a comprehensive review and update of its Zoning Bylaw, which is 8 years old. A Zoning Bylaw is an important tool that local governments use to govern land use, creating a set of consistent rules for residential, commercial, industrial, and other areas within our community.

This update is happening alongside the Official Community Plan (or OCP) update. The two documents are strongly linked. The OCP sets the long-term vision, goals and policies that guide growth and change in the community. The Zoning Bylaw translates that direction into actionable regulations for land, in the form of zoning.

An important objective of this project will be to amend Comox's Zoning Bylaw to comply with provincial housing legislation (Bill 44). By the end of 2025, all applicable local governments must update their zoning bylaws and OCPs to meet projected housing needs within their communities. This update will fulfill those requirements, among other changes to modernize the Town's approach to zoning.

Project Timeline

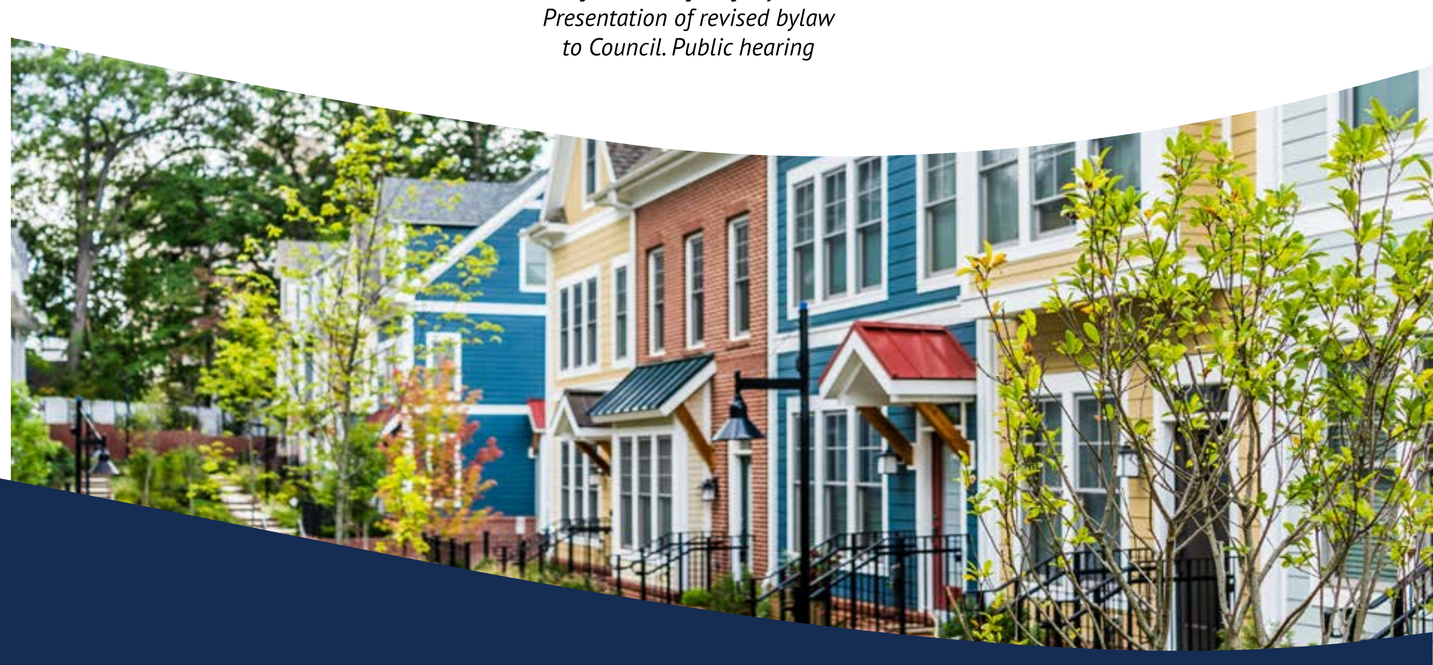
PROJECT LAUNCH — WINTER 2025
Review of existing Zoning Bylaw and identification of areas of focus

DEVELOP DRAFT ZONING BYLAW & ZONING MAPS — SPRING 2025
Development of draft bylaw and Zoning Map

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PERIOD — SUMMER/FALL 2025
Engagement with community on draft bylaw and Zoning Map, including online information and survey

REVISIONS & PRESENTATION — FALL 2025
Referral to external agencies for review and input. Refinement of draft bylaw. Presentation of revised bylaw to Council. Public hearing

ZONING BYLAW ADOPTION — END OF 2025
Adoption of new Zoning Bylaw



TOWN OF COMOX

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Zoning Bylaw?

A Zoning Bylaw regulates the use of land, buildings, and other structures in a community. They divide land into different areas, called zones, and define a set of rules for each. This can include residential, commercial, industrial, and other uses.

Zoning bylaws regulate a number of items, including:

- Use of land, buildings, and other structures
- Density, or the number of homes that can be built on a property
- Minimum and maximum parcel sizes
- Siting of buildings and structures, including height and setbacks from property lines
- Parking requirements for different types of uses, such as restaurants or apartments

How does zoning impact Comox residents?

Simply put, our zoning determines what can and can't be built in the Town. It is the governing set of rules for deciding how our community looks and feels, how easily we get around and find housing, and how the Town creates livable areas that also meet our goals for things like sustainability, heritage conservation, and job creation.

What is the relationship between a Zoning Bylaw and an Official Community Plan?

The OCP vision, goals, and land use policies are implemented by the zoning bylaw. Zoning Bylaws regulate the use of land, buildings and structures and establish boundaries of various zones. These zones outline permitted uses and define a set of rules that land, buildings and structures must follow, such as parcel size, building dimensions, location and height. A zoning map integrates land use categories defined in an OCP land use map such as residential, commercial, and industrial, amongst others.

What is the new Provincial Housing Legislation (Bill 44)?

In the fall of 2023, the provincial government passed Bill 44 to facilitate an increase in housing supply in communities throughout BC. It made changes to the *Local Government Act* as an effort to implement a new housing plan by:

- Requiring local governments to undertake regular housing needs assessments that project a community's 5- and 20-year housing needs;
- Encouraging the construction of small-scale, multi-unit housing (SSMUH) forms such as secondary suites, duplexes, and townhomes through zoning requirements; and
- Facilitating proactive planning processes that reduce the need for rezonings and development application approval times.

As a result of this legislation, by June last year, the Town was required to accommodate up to 3 or 4 units per lot on lots where single detached homes were previously permitted as a primary use in its Zoning Bylaw.

How are Comox's future housing needs determined?

Bill 44 requires local governments to update their Housing Needs Reports using a standard methodology to project 5- and 20-year housing needs from the year 2021-2026, and 2021-2041 respectively. These assessments must be undertaken on a regular basis for a more consistent, robust understanding of local housing needs. OCPs and Zoning Bylaws must then be updated accordingly to ensure that these housing needs can be met.

The first assessment was required to be completed by January 1, 2025. The Town updated its Housing Needs Report in August, 2024.

How is Comox's zoning changing due to Bill 44?

Bill 44 establishes a more proactive, long-term approach to planning, where local governments identify their housing needs, and then zone for the number and type of housing units needed. Local governments must have completed their first review and update of their Official Community Plans based on the 20-year housing need by December 31, 2025. In addition, Zoning Bylaws must pre-zone for this amount of housing on a regular basis.

It is anticipated that the Town will be able to meet its 5- and 20-year housing needs through provision of small-scale, multi-unit housing forms, on-going multi-unit development, as well as pre-zoning land for townhouse-style development. The first Zoning Bylaw update to align with the 20-year housing need discussed in the OCP must be completed by December 31, 2025.

SMALL SCALE MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

Have you heard about Small-Scale Multi-Family Housing (SSMFH in Comox?

- In response to a Provincal mandate, Comox in June 2024 updated zoning to permit up to four dwelling units on most parcels zoned for single-family and duplex use.

SSMFH in Comox includes:

- Single-family dwellings
- Secondary suites
- Coach houses
- Two-family dwellings (duplexes)
- Townhouses

SSMFH Zones include:

*Zoning Bylaw update will further consolidate SSMFH zones to simplify and increase clarity.

- R1.0 Small-Scale Multi-Family Housing
- R1.2 Mobile Home Small-Scale Multi-Family Housing
- R1.3 Single-Family – 1100 m2
- R3.3 Single-Family Large Lot (except properties in Kye Bay)
- CD 5 Comprehensive Development 5: Lazo March – Single Family
- CD 18 Comprehensive Development 18: Single Family 560 Colby Road

Exceptions:

- Only a single-family dwelling and either a secondary suite or coach house are permitted on parcels without water or sewer service, and parcels over 4050 m^2 (~1 acre).
- Parcels zoned R1.1 on the Western Foreshore (south of Comox Avenue between Rodello Street and Ellis Street, and on Manor Place and Manor Drive).
- Parcels in Kye Bay.

For more information and to find out if your property is in a SSMFH Zone, visit the SSMFH webpage, which includes a guide to SSMFH.

Scan here or go to comox.ca

TOWN OF COMOX

HOME SUITE HOME

Accessory Dwelling Unit Incentive Program

The Accessory Dwelling Unit Incentive Program will consider ways to incentivize the creation of new accessory dwelling units (ADU) and the legalization of unauthorized ADUs, based on Council's Housing Accelerator Fund commitment.

What are Accessory Dwelling Units?

Accessory Dwelling Units in Comox are secondary suites and coach houses. Coach houses are detached dwelling units typically located in the rear yard, and limited in size to be smaller than a single-family home.

Stay updated by checking in on the Town's Secondary Suites webpage

Scan here or go to comox.ca

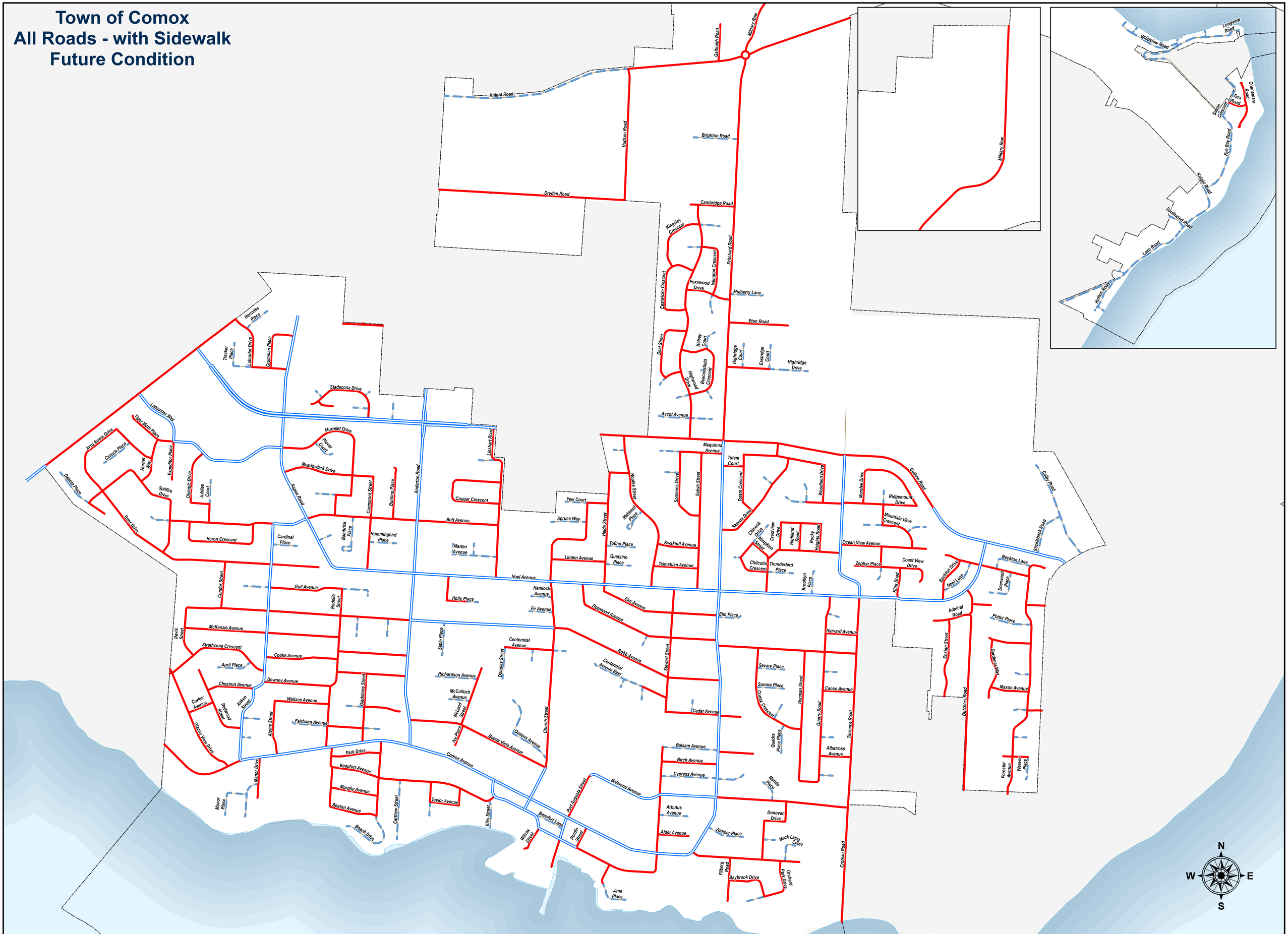
Why provide incentives?

- A healthy rental market typically has a vacancy rate of 3-5%. The vacancy rate in Comox was 0.5% or lower from 2021-2023 and the average vacancy rate over the past 20 years has been 0.8%. Low vacancy rates typically lead to high rental price increases.
- ADUs benefit the community by adding much-needed rental housing. They can also reduce the cost of home ownership by functioning as "mortgage helpers".
- The BC Building Code has health and safety requirements for ADUs, and therefore, building permits are required for them.
- There are many unpermitted ADUs in Comox that are providing rental housing but may not meet health and safety requirements. The Town wants to ensure that new and existing ADUs are safe for renters and homeowners.

HOME SUITE HOME

TOWN OF COMOX

Town of Comox
All Roads - with Sidewalk
Future Condition



TOWN OF COMOX

No Sidewalk

Sidewalk - One Side

Sidewalk - Two Sides

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NAD83 UTM Zone 10
Map Updated: June 12, 2025
Map By: Town of Comox Municipal Works