



February XX, 2025

Our File: SPP00101
Your Reference: 69694

Honourable Ravi Kahlon, MLA
Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Via email: HOUS.minister@gov.bc.ca
PO Box 9074 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Kahlon

Re: District of North Cowichan SSMUH Compliance Notification

Thank you for your letter dated January 10, 2025, and for your acknowledgement of our ongoing commitment to addressing the housing needs in our community.

Please be reassured that, as required by legislation, we carefully considered the "Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing Policy Manual and Site Standards" in preparation of our Bill 44 SSMUH zoning amendments. Although tailored to our community's context, we used the guidelines as a basis for making changes to site standards for many of our low-density residential zones including by:

- Removing maximum floor space ratios,
- Reducing minimum setbacks and permitting additional encroachments into front setbacks,
- Increasing maximum parcel coverage, and,
- Reducing minimum parking requirements in many of our low-density residential zones.

The changes to our zoning provisions were informed by detailed "stress testing" (information enclosed) to ensure our site standards are flexible enough to reasonably accommodate the permitted number of units in our typical neighbourhoods, without need for bylaw variances. We also made other practical changes to our bylaw, such as expanding permissions for factory-built homes, to remove other barriers to housing development in North Cowichan.

The public enquiries and building permit applications we are receiving show that local property owners and developers are making use of the new permissions. In particular, by adding detached accessory dwelling units to existing properties and by constructing additional units in new homes.



As a follow up to our 2024 Bill 44 SSMUH zoning review, we are working to streamline our development permit requirements for multi-family housing to further reduce the barriers to these types of small-scale development.

With all that said, we are also currently working on a comprehensive review of our zoning bylaw. As part of that process, we would be happy to complete further review of any provisions you identify as being of concern. Can you please provide more information about what specifically in our zoning provisions prompted your letter? Please reach out if a meeting with our staff would be helpful.

Despite severe infrastructure constraints, we are also reviewing our Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw to ensure that we can accommodate a twenty-year supply of housing in our zoning bylaw by the legislated deadline at the end of this year.

We will be in touch again soon to submit our first interim report on the Housing Target Order that came into force for North Cowichan on August 1, 2024. I'm happy to report that we are so far on track to meet that target, with 95 housing completions at the six month mark out of the 191 targeted for our first year.

Sincerely,

Rob Douglas,
Mayor of North Cowichan

Mayor@northcowichan.ca

Enclosure

cc: Teri Collins, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Bindi Sawchuk, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Ted Swabey, City Administrative Officer, District of North Cowichan
Amanda Young, Director, Planning and Building, District of North Cowichan

