



The Corporation of the District of North Cowichan

**Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw**

BYLAW NO. 4040

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*A bylaw to amend the Official Community Plan to align Official Community Plan Policy Text with Bill 44 Housing Targets*

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WHEREAS the Council of The Corporation of the District of North Cowichan ("Council") wishes to adopt an official community plan amendment pursuant to Part 14 of the *Local Government Act*;

AND WHEREAS during development of the draft Official Community Plan Amendment Council considered Section 475 of the *Local Government Act*, and in particular the matters regarding providing early and ongoing opportunities for consultation to the persons organizations and authorities regarding consultations set out in subsections (2)(b);

AND WHEREAS during development of the draft Official Community Plan Amendment Council considered Section 475 of the *Local Government Act*, and in particular the matters regarding providing early and ongoing opportunities for consultation to the persons organizations and authorities regarding consultations set out in subsections (2)(b);

NOW THEREFORE the Council of The Corporation of The District of North Cowichan, enacts in open meeting assembled, as follows:

**Title**

1 This Bylaw may be cited as "Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 4040, 2025".

**Amendment**

2 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text under the heading "POPULATION" under section 1.2 and replacing with the following text:

"In 2021, North Cowichan had a total population of 31,990 (Census Canada, 2021). The population has increased almost 50% since 1991 when it had a population of 21,360, and by 11% since 2011. North Cowichan is projected to reach a population of over 50,000 by 2050, which represents a population increase of 57% over the same 30-year timeframe, based on the realization of significant new residential development such as that envisioned within the Bell McKinnon Local Area Plan (see Chapter 3 and Appendix 2)."

3 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting Figure 1.4 under section 1.2 and replacing with the Figure 1.4 as shown in Schedule A, which is attached to and forms a part of this bylaw.

- 4 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the first two paragraphs under the heading "NORTH COWICHAN'S POPULATION" under section 1.2 and replacing with the following text:

"North Cowichan has a higher median age than the provincial average, a trend that is expected to continue. As of the 2021 census, 29% of the population was over 65. Figure 1.5 compares the 2021 age structure with the provincial projection for 2046, noting that total population estimates have been revised by North Cowichan since this age-related analysis.

The chart illustrates the dramatic aging of the population. By 2046, the 80-84 age group is projected to be the largest single cohort, while the 75-89 age range overall shows explosive growth. This represents a significant shift from 2021, when the largest concentrations were in the 55-74 age range. The 80-84 cohort alone is projected to grow by 169%, while the 85+ population will increase by over 400%.

This demographic shift presents both challenges and opportunities. The Municipality needs to work to meet the service, infrastructure, and land use needs of a changing climate and an aging population, while also attracting and retaining young people and families to contribute to a well-rounded, resilient community."

- 5 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting Figure 1.5 under section 1.2 and replacing with the Figure 1.5 as shown in Schedule A, which is attached to and forms a part of this bylaw.

- 6 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text under the heading "Populations, Jobs, and Households" under section 3.0 and replacing with the following text:

"The Cowichan Valley Regional District commissioned a report by Rennie Intelligence to forecast anticipated long-term population and employment growth in the Region to 2050. (Long Range Projections of Population, Housing and Employment in the Cowichan Valley Regional District June 12, 2019).<sup>1</sup> Since then, North Cowichan has generated revised population projections, but still relies on the Rennie Report for employment growth projections.

Revised population projections are markedly higher than earlier ones based on past trends. The COVID pandemic was a significant catalyst for the ongoing housing crisis and marks a break with historical development patterns for a variety of reasons, including acceleration of the remote working phenomenon. Revised projections are now based on housing delivery and the subsequent occupancy of those housing units. This assumes sustained pressure for housing largely by inter- and intra-provincial migrants. This is different from the approach in previous years when it was assumed that local housebuilding would act in response to modest background population growth and the availability of local jobs. The figure below shows the assumed population growth arising from realizing the build-out of growth areas within this OCP ("business as usual") and the potential impact of "Bill 44" changes with permit four-units-as-of-right on all residential urban lots."

- 7 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting Figure 3.1 under section 3.0 and replacing with Figure 3.1 as shown in Schedule A, which is attached to and forms a part of this bylaw.
- 8 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting from the caption of Figure 3.1 under section 3.0 the following text:  
“(Census, 2021)”
- 9 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting the text under the heading "HOUSING NEEDS" under section 3.0 and replacing with the following text:  
“The 2021 census recorded 13,741 dwellings in North Cowichan, a 7.3% increase on the 2017 figure, roughly consistent with the 6.9% population increase over the same period.  
Following the Housing Statutes Amendments Act which ushered in “four units as of right” on urban lots the Municipality commissioned housing build out projections. For the purposes of infrastructure planning, housing units are projected to increase from 15,187 (2022) to as high as 28,232 in 2053 (an increase of 13,280 or 86%).  
These projections are reflective of the intensive and sustained pressure on the housing market (local, regional and national) in recent years combined with a federal and provincial policy context designed to deliver significant amounts of housing in excess of historical trajectories.”
- 10 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting Figure 3.3 under section 3.0 and replacing with the Figure 3.3 as shown in Schedule A, which is attached to and forms a part of this bylaw.
- 11 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Adding the following text under the heading "HOUSING NEEDS" under section 3.0 to the first sentence of paragraph 1 on page 37:  
“although these projections have not yet been revised in light of changed population and housing unit estimates.”
- 12 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting the text under the heading "Housing Needs Assessment Report" under section 3.0 and replacing with the following text:  
“The 2021 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) and 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report (IHNR) explored both quantitative and qualitative data to help understand the current state of housing and the types of units that will be required in the future.  
With an outlook of 20 years, the IHNR determined 7,083 new units would be required by 2044. The Land Use Designations in this OCP must provide a policy context that would enable this quantity of dwellings without further OCP amendments. Over a shorter term of 5 years, the IHNR identifies a need for 2,172 new units.  
The HNA identified a need for more one-bedroom units, subsidized units for those experiencing homelessness, purpose-built rental units and affordable home ownership options. For more information see Chapter 5: Affordable Living and Diverse Housing Mix.

As required by the Local Government Act, the Housing Needs Assessment and OCP will be updated every five years. North Cowichan will incorporate these updates into land use decisions."

- 13 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the caption of Figure 3.4 under section 3.0 and replacing with the following text:

"Projected occupation numbers by 2050."

- 14 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Adding the following text to the end of the paragraph beneath "3.2.6 Defining Success | Objective" under section 3.2:

"Provincial legislation requires that at least four residential units are permitted on all residential lots >280m<sup>2</sup> inside the UCB."

- 15 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text of policy 3.2.7 b. under section 3.2 and replacing with the following:

"Permit a range of configurations and housing types to allow four units per lot >280m<sup>2</sup>, or three units per lots <280m<sup>2</sup>."

- 16 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the following text under the heading "5.0 Introduction and Context":

"According to the 2016 census, the majority of homes in North Cowichan are single detached dwelling followed by ground-oriented multi-family (duplex/ triplex/ townhouses, apartments) and moveable dwellings (see Figure 5.1). Of these households, 75% own their homes and 25% are renters."

and inserting the following text in its place:

"According to the 2021 census, the majority of homes in North Cowichan are single detached dwelling followed by ground-oriented multi-family (duplex/ triplex/ townhouses, apartments) and moveable dwellings (see Figure 5.1). Of these households, 77% own their homes and 23% are renters."

- 17 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting Figure 5.1 under section 5.0 and replacing with the Figure 5.1 as shown in Schedule A, which is attached to and forms a part of this bylaw.

- 18 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text under the heading "RECENT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT" under section 5.0 and replacing with the following text:

"An analysis of building permit data reveals a significant and accelerating shift in the type of housing being constructed in North Cowichan over the past two decades. While single-family homes were historically the predominant form of new development, recent years have seen multi-family housing become the primary source of new housing units.

A comparison between two key periods illustrates this clear trend:

- From 2000 to 2019, housing development was consistently dominated by single-family

dwellings. During this 20-year period, an average of 118 single-family units were built each year (68% of total units), compared to an average of 56 multi-family units per year (32% of total).

- From 2020 to 2024, this trend reversed dramatically. Multi-family units (including duplexes, townhouses, and apartments) comprised 58% of all new housing, tripling to an average of 169 units per year. In contrast, single-family home construction remained steady at an average of 124 units per year.

The data highlights a significant evolution in residential development patterns, signaling a clear response to increasing demands for greater housing diversity and density. The recent acceleration in higher-density housing forms - now comprising the majority of new construction - reflects a shifting development context shaped by provincial policy direction, market pressures, and the growing imperative to expand the range of available housing options."

19 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text under the heading "HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT" under section 5.0 and replacing with the following text:

"To address new provincial requirements under Bill 44, the Municipality completed an Interim Housing Needs Report (IHNR) in 2024. This report, prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act, supplements the 2021 Housing Needs Assessment and provides a new projection of local housing requirements.

The IHNR uses a provincially mandated methodology to identify the number of new housing units required to meet the community's current and anticipated needs over the next five and twenty years. The assessment is a foundational document for ensuring the OCP enables the development of sufficient housing to meet future demand.

Based on the 2024 IHNR, North Cowichan must plan for:

- 2,172 new housing units over the next 5 years.
- 7,083 new housing units over the next 20 years.

The land use designations within this Official Community Plan can readily accommodate this projected 20-year housing need, providing opportunities for a variety of housing forms and densities across the community."

20 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text of policy 5.1.2 c. under section 5.1 and replacing with the following:

"Update the Housing Needs Assessment Report and OCP at least every five years. in collaboration with the Cowichan Valley Regional District."

21 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text of policy 5.1.2 o. under section 5.1 and replacing with the following:

"Permit secondary suites in rural residential zones and four units per lot >280m in single family zones inside the UCB."

22 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the second paragraph under the heading "9.1 Water Systems" and replacing with the following:

"Over recent decades, the region's water resources have been strained by a range of factors including drier summers and less snowpack due to climate change. Because some of the watersheds that provide the municipality with drinking water are outside of municipal boundaries, cooperation with adjacent jurisdictions and landowners is essential."

- 23 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text under the heading "Chemainus" under section 9.1 and replacing with the following:

"Historically Chemainus was serviced from a surface water supply. New wells were drilled near to the Chemainus River a number of years ago. Chemainus is supplied from the well source between October 15 and June 15, and from the Holyoak Lake outside that timeframe. For both supplies, chlorine is used to treat the water and to ensure chlorine is present in the water throughout the distribution system."

- 24 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text under the heading "South End" under section 9.1 and replacing with the following:

"The South End system supplies the local areas of Berkey's Corner, Bell McKinnon, Quamichan, Maple Bay, plus portions of South End Centre, Crofton, Rural West and Rural East.

The South End is supplied with water from the Cowichan aquifer via a well field located on the south side of the Cowichan River. Parts of the South End of North Cowichan are also supplied by the City of Duncan from a similar well field south of the Cowichan River operated by the City of Duncan. The water from the North Cowichan well field is disinfected using ultraviolet light and chlorine to ensure chlorine is present in the water throughout the distribution system.

In general, some parts of each collection system will need to be upgraded as growth occurs. Where there is increased densification, additional reservoirs may be required. Continually updating infrastructure modeling as growth occurs and is proposed will enable the Municipality to identify where and when new upgrades are needed.

In Chemainus and the South End, a significant ultimate limiting factor on water capacity is the water extraction license limit, which is determined by the Province."

- 25 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Adding a new policy 9.1.1 d. under the heading "Protect drinking water supply" as follows:

"d. Preserve potable water capacity by refusing connections for agricultural purposes, including crops, commercial animal rearing, wineries, cannabis and plant nurseries."

and renumbering subsequent policies in section 9.1.1 accordingly.

26 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Adding a new policy 9.1.2 b. as follows:

"b. Provide Community Amenity Contributions towards a short-term infrastructure fund as an interim measure in instances where the Development Cost Changes Bylaw does not sufficiently capture a necessary upgrade."

27 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Replacing the word "may" with "will" in the first sentence of the second paragraph under the heading "9.2 SANITARY SEWER SYSTEMS".

28 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the last three paragraphs under the heading "Chemainus" under section 9.2 and replacing with the following:

"The Chemainus STP treats sludges generated at its own site plus those generated at the Crofton STP. These sludges are digested and dewatered prior to being hauled away for land fertilization at a biosolids land application site.

The Chemainus STP has a very high compliance level, and it is not anticipated that registration will be problematic, although some relatively minor upgrades may be required in the near term.

Given the population growth projections completed for sanitary model updates, a new capacity assessment will need to be done to determine roughly when future upgrades will be required."

29 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:

Deleting the text under the heading "Crofton" under section 9.2 and replacing with the following:

"Wastewater in Crofton is collected and treated at the Crofton STP. Crofton also treats sewage from the Tussie Reserve (Penelakut) and Halalt Reserve (Halalt) First Nations.

Treated effluent is discharged to Osborne Bay/Stuart Channel through an outfall pipe/diffuser. The effluent discharged from the STP is regulated by the Province through a permit. In the near future, as flows to the treatment plant increase, the Province will require that the Crofton STP be registered under the Municipal Waste Regulation (MWR) after which it will be regulated under that legislation.

The Crofton STP has a very high compliance level. It is not anticipated that future registration under the MWR will be problematic although some upgrades will be required to meet regulations once the treatment plant is registered. A capacity assessment study completed in 2017 concluded that once the said upgrades are implemented, this facility is expected to have capacity to accommodate growth out to 2053 based on historical growth rates within the Crofton Sanitary Sewer Service Area. Given the population growth projections completed for sanitary model updates, a new capacity assessment will need to be done to determine roughly when future upgrades will be required."

- 30 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting the fourth paragraph under the heading "South End" under section 9.2 and replacing with the following:  
"Due to the fact the JUB STP serves five jurisdictions, the capacity of the facility is allocated amongst the five jurisdictions using an equivalent residential unit (ERU) system. North Cowichan holds approximately 54% of the ERU capacity. Based on the average growth rate over the last 10 years it is estimated North Cowichan has ERU capacity out to 2040. However, if growth is focused in the serviced areas of the South End more than has traditionally been the case, then North Cowichan will tend to consume its units more rapidly than what is projected based on the growth patterns occurring over the last 10 years."
- 31 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Adding the following words to the last sentence of numbered list item 2. in the fifth paragraph under the heading "South End" under section 9.2:  
"... should the Province be willing to adjust the permit requirements for a more favourable discharge environment."
- 32 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting numbered list item 3. in the fifth paragraph under the heading "South End" under section 9.2 and replacing with the following:  
"3. Additional aeration units (equivalent to 50% more than what is currently installed) can be added to Cell 1 to provide further increase in the facility's capacity."
- 33 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting the following subtitle under the heading "9.2.1 The Municipality will strive to:" under section 9.2:  
"Provide wastewater disposal and treatment services"
- 34 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Deleting the text of policy 9.2.1 f. and replacing with the following:  
"f. Not support the extension of Municipal sanitary sewer service to rural areas, unless connection can be achieved from parcels adjoining the existing system without extending mains, and where such connection would not facilitate significant additional density or subdivision."
- 35 Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3900, 2022 "Schedule A", be amended by:  
Adding new policy section 9.2.3 after policy section 9.2.2 under section 9.2 as follows:  
"9.2.3 The Municipality will ask developers and landowners to:  
a. Provide Community Amenity Contributions towards a short-term infrastructure fund as an interim measure in instances where the Development Cost Charges Bylaw does not capture a necessary upgrade."

Notice that a public hearing is scheduled for this bylaw was posted to the municipality's public notice board and on the municipality's website on \_\_\_\_\_, 202\_, and advertised on the municipality's social media site on \_\_\_\_\_, 202\_, and in the Cowichan Valley Citizen and the Chemainus Valley Courier on \_\_\_\_\_, 202\_.

CONSIDERED at a Public Hearing on

READ a third time on

APPROVED by Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on

ADOPTED on

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CORPORATE OFFICER

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PRESIDING MEMBER

# Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 4040, 2025 "Schedule A"

Figure 1.4 / 3:1:

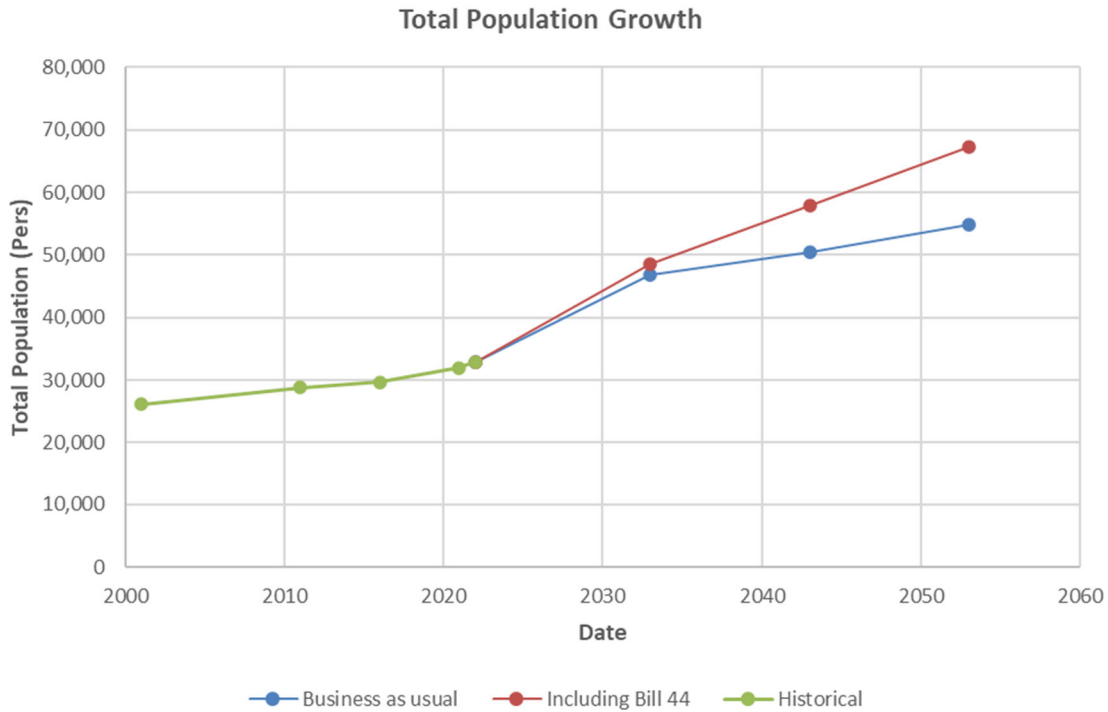


Figure 1.5:

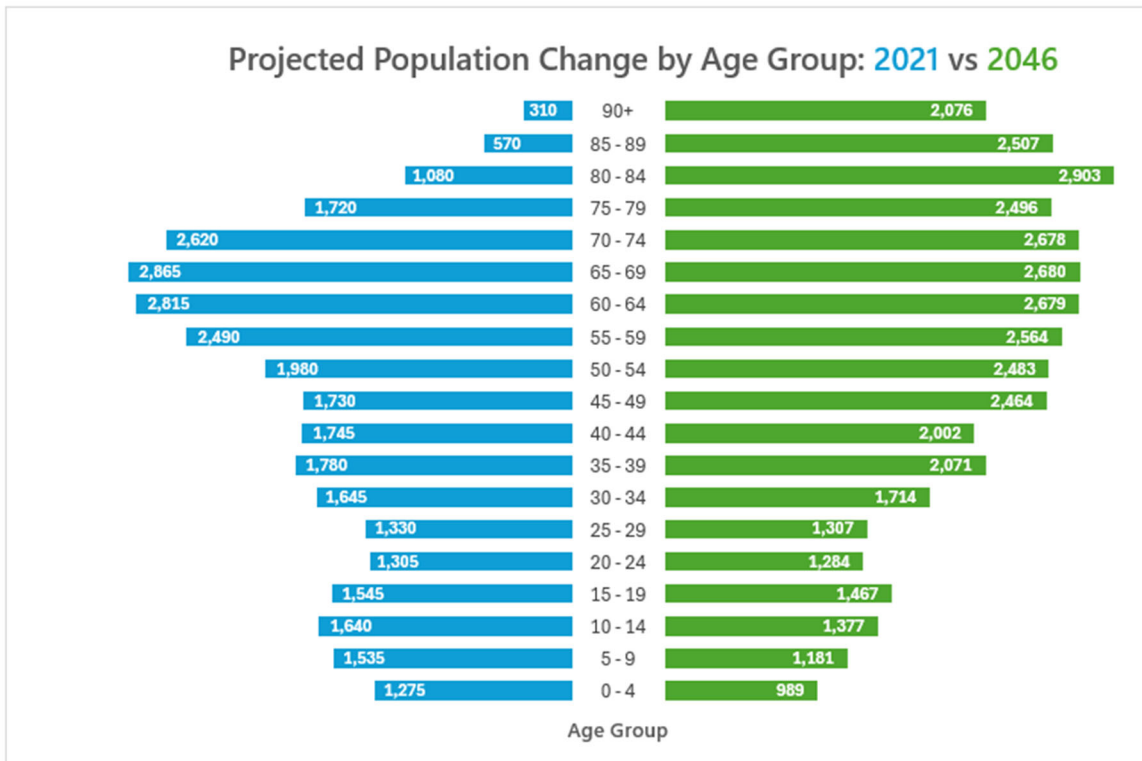


Figure 3.3:

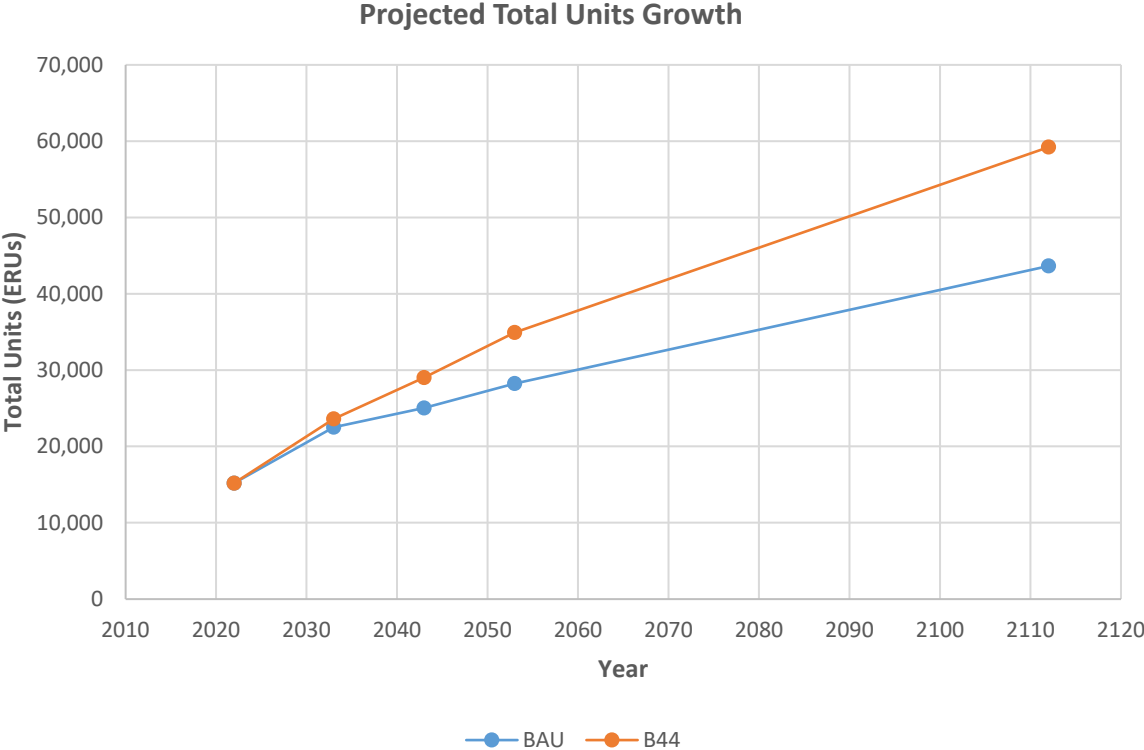


Figure 5.1:

Housing Types of North Cowichan	Single Detached	Apartments	Ground Oriented Multi-Family	Moveable	Total
Quantity	8,590	1,750	2,795	610	13,745
	62%	13%	20%	4%	