

Fact Sheet 2

Housing



The information on this Fact Sheet comes from the Background Report and the What We Heard Report. To view these documents, [please click here.](#)

Affordability

Spending more than 30% of household income is considered the threshold of housing affordability. Colchester was considered more affordable on average than the province in 2021.

Proportion of households living in unaffordable housing

Province	Colchester
15%	10%

Proportion of single-family homes

Province	Colchester
64%	79%

65% of public survey respondents said it was difficult to find housing

Top 3 areas of priority to address local housing challenges

Diversify housing options

Increase the local housing stock

Improve access to housing

What We Heard

The province has experienced rapid growth since 2021, and housing needs are changing quickly. From public feedback received during the initial engagement phase, access to affordable housing was one of the top priorities addressed. Young people, low income individuals and seniors are disproportionately affected.



Plan It
Colchester

Proposed Changes to the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB)

The **MPS** is the primary planning document for the Municipality, it establishes the vision, goals, and policies for growth and development in the near future.

The **LUB** is the companion document to the MPS, and puts the vision, goals, and policies into action through specific regulations that have to do with development activities, such as zoning.

Relaxed Requirements for Housing

LUB standards affect how easy it is to build new housing, and at what density that housing can be built. The drafts propose relaxing some requirements for housing to help reduce costs and make more efficient use of infrastructure. These include:

- ▶ Reducing minimum lot sizes in sewer-serviced areas. For example, the draft LUB has a minimum lot size of 450 square metres (4,844 square feet) in the Double Dwelling Unit (R-2) Zone, compared to 600 square metres (6,458 square feet) in the existing Central Colchester LUB.
- ▶ Increasing the threshold for when a development agreement is required (a more onerous process) in the Residential Medium Density (R-3) Zone from four units on a lot to eight units on a lot. Developments of five to eight units would now go through the Site Plan Approval process, which still allows strong oversight but is less onerous.
- ▶ Discharging the Land Lease Community By-law and regulating these developments through the MPS and LUB.
- ▶ Treating modular housing the same as site-built dwellings.

Wide Permission for Accessory Dwellings

One approach to increase housing options without drastically altering existing neighbourhoods is to enable “accessory dwellings”. This housing option can take the form of a subsidiary apartment within the main dwelling, or as a standalone accessory structure.



The draft documents permit accessory dwellings in all zones that permit single-unit dwellings, and the accessory dwelling does not count towards the total number of dwelling units on the lot.

In order to ensure accessory dwellings remain as “gentle density”, the draft LUB contains provisions that:

- ▶ Limit them to one per lot
- ▶ Limit their size to 100 square metres (1,076 square feet), or 50% of the main dwelling floor area, whichever is larger
- ▶ Limit their height
- ▶ If they are a separate, detached structure, require them to be in the side or rear yard.

