

ATTACHMENT A

Excerpt from the Adaptable Unit Housing Study Executive Summary

Costs associated with development of Adaptable units in new buildings:

Key findings are that aging demographics are trending toward a greater need for adaptable units. Also, that the costs for constructing a basic adaptable unit is generally not much more than a typical unit. However, meeting the accessibility needs of a specific individual can be expensive, thus it is recommended to follow a basic adaptable unit design standard (in accordance with the B.C Building Code) that easily allows for a future conversion and individualized upgrades to meet the specific accessibility needs of a tenant, resident or owner.

Preliminary consultation with Nanaimo real estate and development professionals:

The Nanaimo development community acknowledges that there is a market demand for adaptability in housing units, and the BC Building Code already provides basic guidelines for adaptable units. They also advise that the costs are not significant for a basic adaptable unit, however they recommend having one provincial standard so that there are not different requirements for each jurisdiction. Developers do not want to be required to construct units that cannot be easily sold in the market, or to create an over-supply of adaptable units, which given holding costs, could have a negative impact on both revenues and profits for the development community.

Review of best practices in other jurisdictions:

Below is a high-level overview of what is required in the Zoning Bylaw of other B.C municipalities with regard to the percentage of basic adaptable units required in a new multi-unit development. Other municipalities have set targets to negotiate for adaptable units at the time of a rezoning application. While some jurisdictions have created their own set of design guidelines for an adaptable unit, others have relied on the B.C. Building Code requirements.

Required % of basic adaptable units in a multi-unit development as required by Zoning Bylaw	
The District of North Vancouver	100%
Port Moody	50%
Chilliwack	50%
City of New Westminster	40%

Recommendations for adaptable units in Nanaimo:

It is recommended that the City of Nanaimo require that 50% of new multi-family units meet the BC Building Code's guidelines for adaptability. Also, as an incentive, similar to those offered by other jurisdictions, allow for a modest density exemption of 1.85m² from the Floor Area Ratio for each adaptable unit. In addition, the City may wish to consider a grant program for tenants wishing to make specific modifications to their adaptable unit to meet the accessibility needs of an individual. Also, recommended is further consultation with the development community on the proposed requirements.

[Link: Nanaimo Family Friendly and Adaptable Housing Study \(Mulholland Parker Land Economists Ltd. Report - May 2023\)](#)