



The WestCoast Native Health Care Society

TSAWAAYUUS • ATAAPIS • HUUPSITAS

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Affordable Housing Needs Handout at Neighborhood Information Meeting
Thursday, June 6, 2024, 7:00 to 9:00pm

This is a summary of affordable housing needs of indigenous elders and other seniors in the City of Port Alberni:

1. Wait list for proposed new project compiled over the past 12 months includes: a total of 54 low income seniors households waiting to move into the new project upon completion; 37 are non-indigenous seniors and 17 are indigenous elders; 53 households are single people and 1 is a couple.
Source: The WestCoast Native Health Care Housing Manager, June 4, 2024.
2. Homeless survey in April, 2021 shows: a total of 125 homeless people in Port Alberni, 18% are seniors, 65% are indigenous, 56% are men and 44% are women, 43% live on the streets without shelter; 73% have lived in Port Alberni for at least 10 years, 98% are on income assistance and 41% lost their housing because of low income.
Source: Homelessness Services Association of BC.
3. The City of Port Alberni published a Housing Needs Assessment in February 2021. This assessment concluded:
 - a) Between 2011 and 2016, there was a 5% decrease in the 25-64 age group and a 5.1% increase in the 65-84 age group;
 - b) Between 2006 and 2016, the number of one-person households increased by 4.1%;
 - c) Percentage of indigenous people living in Port Alberni increased by 5% between 2006 and 2016. In 2016, about 20% of ACRD residents identified as Indigenous. Both Port Alberni and the ACRD have a much higher percentage of Indigenous people living in the community compared to the provincial percentage of 6%;
 - d) People with disabilities had lower incomes. When the rental vacancy rate is low and the housing market is very active, accessible dwellings can be extremely limited, pushing people with disabilities to live in unsafe conditions or homes with inadequate accessibility;
 - e) As of March 2020, there were approximately 380 units of affordable housing in the construction or planning stages proposed by 9 different projects that could accommodate various vulnerable populations. [Of these, 96 units or 25% of the total are targeted to low income seniors. Of these, 48 units are probably the Huupsitas Apartments completed in 2022 on the The WestCoast Native Health Care seniors' campus of care];
 - f) The 65-84 age group is projected to increase the most by 12% in the next 5 years. If, as projected, the fastest growth age group is adults 65 to 84 then there will likely be additional strain on affordable and accessible housing for seniors;
 - g) Based on the Census data from 2016, more than 1,000 additional subsidized dwelling units are needed to provide affordable housing for residents of the City [Even if all 380 units of subsidized housing were built in the last 5 years, that would still leave a deficit of (1015-380) 635 subsidized dwelling units. Our project would only provide an additional 35 units or 5.5% of the deficit];
 - h) It is also important to consider additional housing for seniors, given the projected increase of 608 persons over the age of 65 in the next 5 years.