

Attachment 2 – Engagement Feedback Summary

Engagement Summary – UDI Workshop

On September 5, 2025, staff held a workshop with members of the Urban Development Institute (UDI) to seek input on topics identified through the City’s Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) program. Discussion focused on incentives to improve project viability, the potential role of pre-approved building plans, approaches to rental use zoning, and related regulatory tools to accelerate the delivery of housing.

Participants emphasized that the most important factors for project success are certainty, predictability, and streamlined approvals. Developers stressed that when municipal staff have authority to make timely decisions and accept professional reports without re-analysis, projects can move forward more efficiently.

Feedback on incentives highlighted that Development Cost Charge (DCC) waivers/reductions, partnerships involving low-cost or free land, and simplified engineering/off-site requirements provide the greatest impact. Revitalization Tax Exemptions (RTEs) are also important for rental projects, in particular helping reduce new building operation costs which supports project viability. Fast-tracking approvals and pre-zoning aligned with the OCP were strongly supported, though some participants cautioned that pre-zoning could increase land costs if not carefully managed. Participants were less supportive of rental-only zoning, preferring instead to encourage rental development through flexible incentives rather than new regulatory requirements.

Other feedback focused on parking and design standards. Developers recommended a balanced approach to parking, with a “sweet spot” of about 1.1–1.5 stalls per unit, recognizing West Kelowna’s car-dependence, while also suggesting opportunities for flexibility such as counting on-street parking. Feedback on municipally-pre-approved building designs was indicated to be less practical for larger developers, but potentially useful for small builders or carriage house projects if tied to predictable costs. Overall, there was a clear message that cost relief, fast-tracking, and regulatory certainty are the key levers to accelerate housing. Lastly, it was highlighted that alignment between staff policy and Council’s political direction is also key to the certainty the industry seeks.

A detailed summary of the feedback received is provided in Appendix A.

Engagement Summary – Not-for-Profit Meeting

Staff held a meeting with a not-for-profit organization to discuss potential financial incentives, and the following key takeaways were heard:

- Reduction of up-front costs (e.g. dcc waivers, land) helps make projects more appealing to other government funders (CMHC, BC Housing) by showing various levels are contributing, and helps leverage those monies to go further and make a project more viable.

- There is strong support for the Permissive Tax Exemption, which as opposed to the Revitalization Tax Exemption, is not time limited (i.e. 10 years), which is more stable in the long run.
- Predictability, and clear communication of requirements and technical considerations at the outset, or in advance of a project is very important, so that not-for-profits can plan accordingly. Relaxations or other concessions or financial incentives also need to be communicated well in advance.
- Flexibility is often needed as non-profit operators typically have different services and needs they provide and these don't always align with standard requirements (e.g. amenity space requirements).
- Requiring ground floor commercial is challenging for not-for-profit projects, because making income as a charity is problematic with the Income Tax Act.
- Suggestion for providing additional incentives if parking minimum requirements are provided.