Saugeen Shores

Nodes and Corridor Study +
Community Planning Permit System
Implementation

Briefing Note 2:
What We Heard



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In response to growing challenges with housing affordability, in 2022, the Town of Saugeen Shores undertook a study to examine housing issues and determine if a community planning permit system (CPPS) could address issues of housing supply, variety and affordability.

The study, completed by Hertel Planning, recommended that the Town proceed with the development of the CPPS. The current project will implement this recommendation.

During the 2022 process, the study team undertook significant engagement with the public and interested parties on their experiences with housing. Key messages emerging from that engagement are summarized in the following pages. The Town is looking for feedback on these key messages and whether they still resonate 3 years later.

The lack of attainable and affordable housing in Saugeen Shores is a concern.

The public and stakeholders acknowledge—and are concerned by—the challenges in Saugeen Shores as a result of a lack of affordable and attainable housing.

Many participants mentioned the challenges that young people face in moving to Saugeen Shores, and expressed an urgency in addressing these concerns.

There is a shortage of rental supply and housing types to meet the differing needs along the housing spectrum.

Participants pointed to the shortage of housing, in particular at the low-end of the spectrum, and the impacts across the town.

Seniors and homeowners are often locked in, unable to downsize, while new residents struggle to find suitable options that might meet their needs.

Many choose to travel to the area to work while living elsewhere, as they can’t afford a suitable option in the Town.

Participants indicated that seniors, many of them who own houses, are unable to downsize to something smaller because there isn’t an available supply. As a result, individuals are stuck with “too much house”. If there were enough rental options or smaller housing options, then this might allow for more flexibility and unlock space and value in the existing supply.

Meanwhile, they noted that young families and workers who are trying to move to the area may be kept away as they cannot afford to live in the Town.

Consultation with indigenous communities highlighted affordable housing for the elderly population as a critical priority.

Some felt there is a disconnect between the three wards, Council and the public when it comes to housing development priorities.

Some key stakeholders indicated that they feel vision and plans laid out for the Town are at odds with how the Council approaches the planning and development process. They suggest that differing views on development across each ward and from Council contribute to a disconnect that perhaps limits the housing types being built. For example, the development of apartment buildings is avoided in favour of townhomes to better suit and protect the existing charm and character, rather than prioritizing the demand and need for apartments and a greater variety of housing types.

Survey respondents indicated that apartments and houses (single- and semi-detached) are the most desired housing typologies. However, respondents indicate that they are open to more variety with regards to other building types (apartments, walk-up apartments, and row houses)