



Small Housing: Unlocking Gentle Density Opportunities

Presentation prepared for PIBC
December 2025



Canada's leading non-profit gentle density accelerator



- **Mission:** Make it easier to build gentle density housing.
- **Why?** Gentle Density represents the most viable path towards more attainable home ownership, while supporting community economic growth nationwide.
- **How?**
 - Strategic advisory and research
 - Technical support to all levels of government
 - Industry and workforce development
 - Education for homeowner-developers
 - Other products & services to fill market gaps



Gentle Density: What is it?



An elegant solution

Why Gentle Density?

76% Canadians agree - not enough affordable homes being built

55% Agree expanding non-market should not come at the expense of market housing supply (11% disagree)

49% Want smaller, attainable homes that people can afford

83% BCers Support for SSMUH redevelopment (72% for mid-rise, 48% high-rise)



Abacus Polling – October 2025
Small Housing & Leger – June 2025



The Challenge

Canada Needs Homes, Fast.

Labour

More than **20%** of construction workers will retire by 2030.

Costs

Residential construction prices are up **54%** since 2020.

Inefficiencies

The industry remains highly fragmented and project-based.

Low
Productivity

Labour productivity in residential construction lags behind industry averages.



*Smallworks
2025



The Challenge

British Columbia **must double its housing production** while navigating rising costs, stricter building codes, and an aging trades talent pool.



Scale of the Opportunity

BC faces a 22,000 unit supply/affordability gap...

Yet, there are over 855,000 single family lots...

And 42% of BC home owners are mortgage-free



Unlocking Trapped Equity

\$1.3 Trillion

Estimated value of mortgage-free, single family land owners by 65+



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Scale of the opportunity:

How 4-plex builds can address the annual housing shortfall

Provincial Estimate - Single-Family Lots	866,000
Housing Shortfall	22,000 units annually
Required Annual Lot Redevelopment (4-plex model, 3 net new units) to meet shortfall	7,333 lots/year
Required Annual Rate of Redevelopment	<u>0.84%</u> of single-family stock/year

Restoring housing affordability is achievable –
but requires coordinated, interdisciplinary action

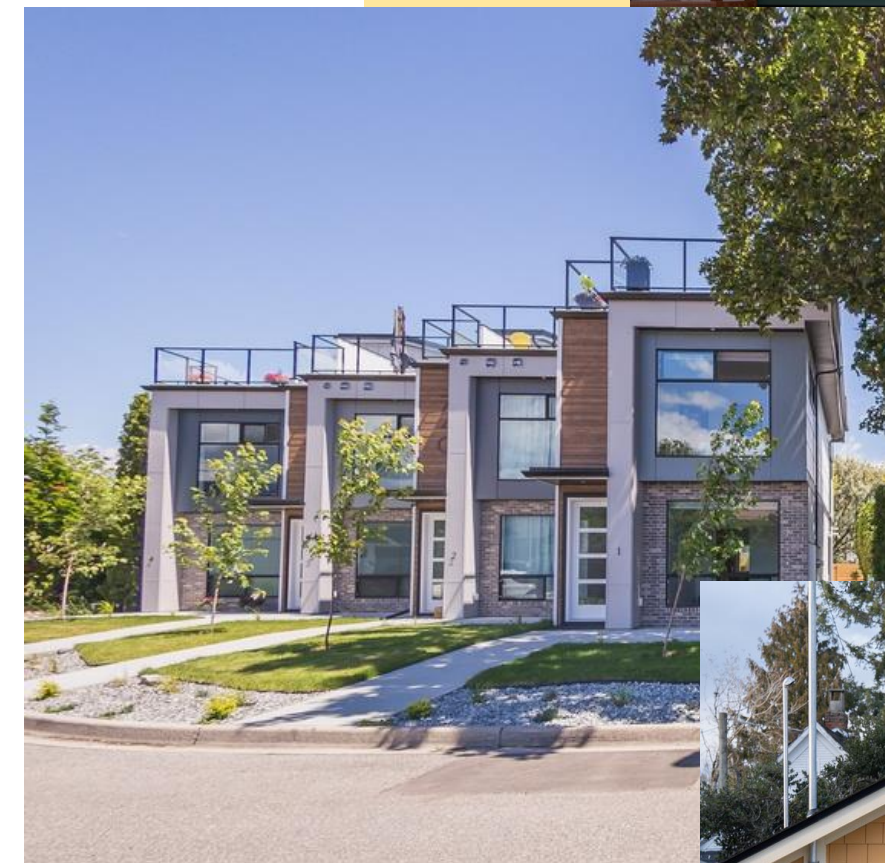
An fast & elegant solution

Standardized Designs

- ✔ Reduces construction timelines
- ✔ Offers cost predictability
- ✔ Lowers costs over time
- ✔ Variation in models, minimal 'cookie cutter' delivery



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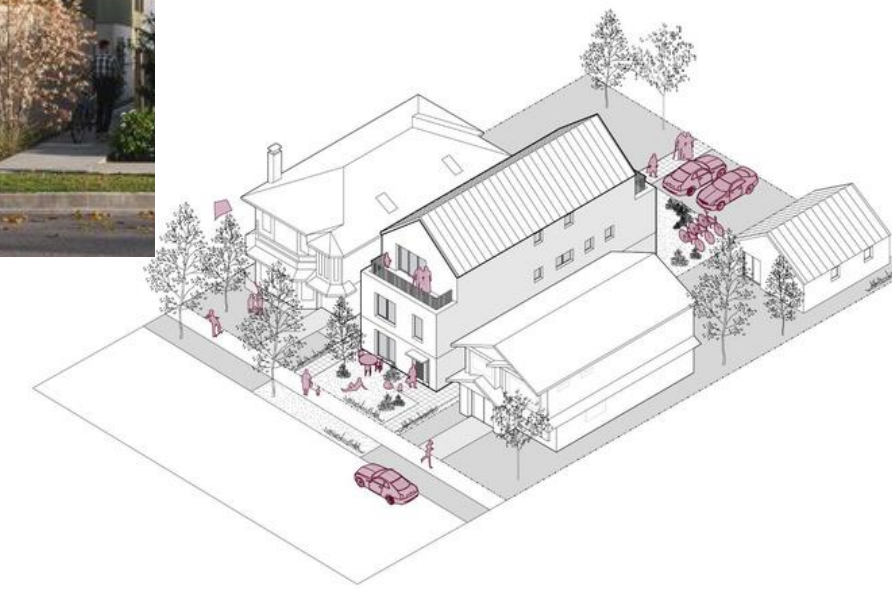


Small Builder Benefits A Community Solution

- ✓ No land assembly, variance permits
- ✓ Minimal professional services
- ✓ Access a wider partner pool
- ✓ Less risk, more scale
- ✓ Easier to fund & finance



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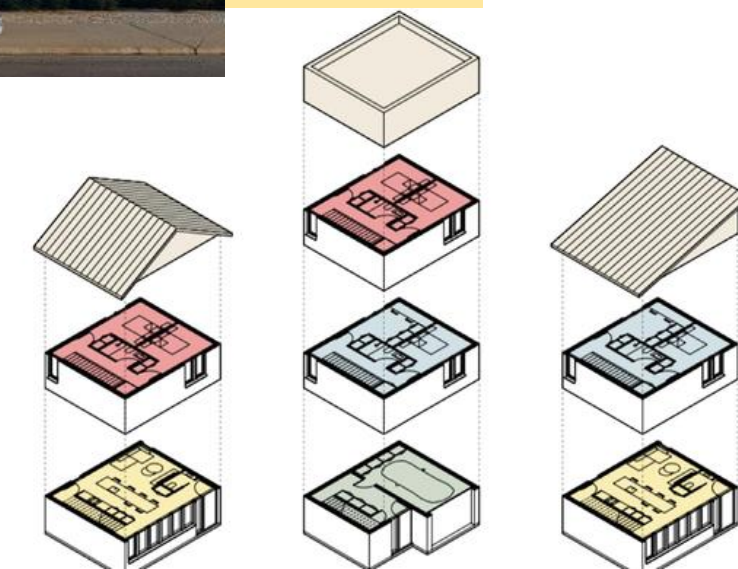


What's Needed Enabling Delivery

- ✓ Clarity on CRP / Professional Sign off
- ✓ Industry incentivization
- ✓ Standardized regulations regionally
- ✓ Clear guidance, checklists, plain language
- ✓ Risk mitigation programs (early stage)

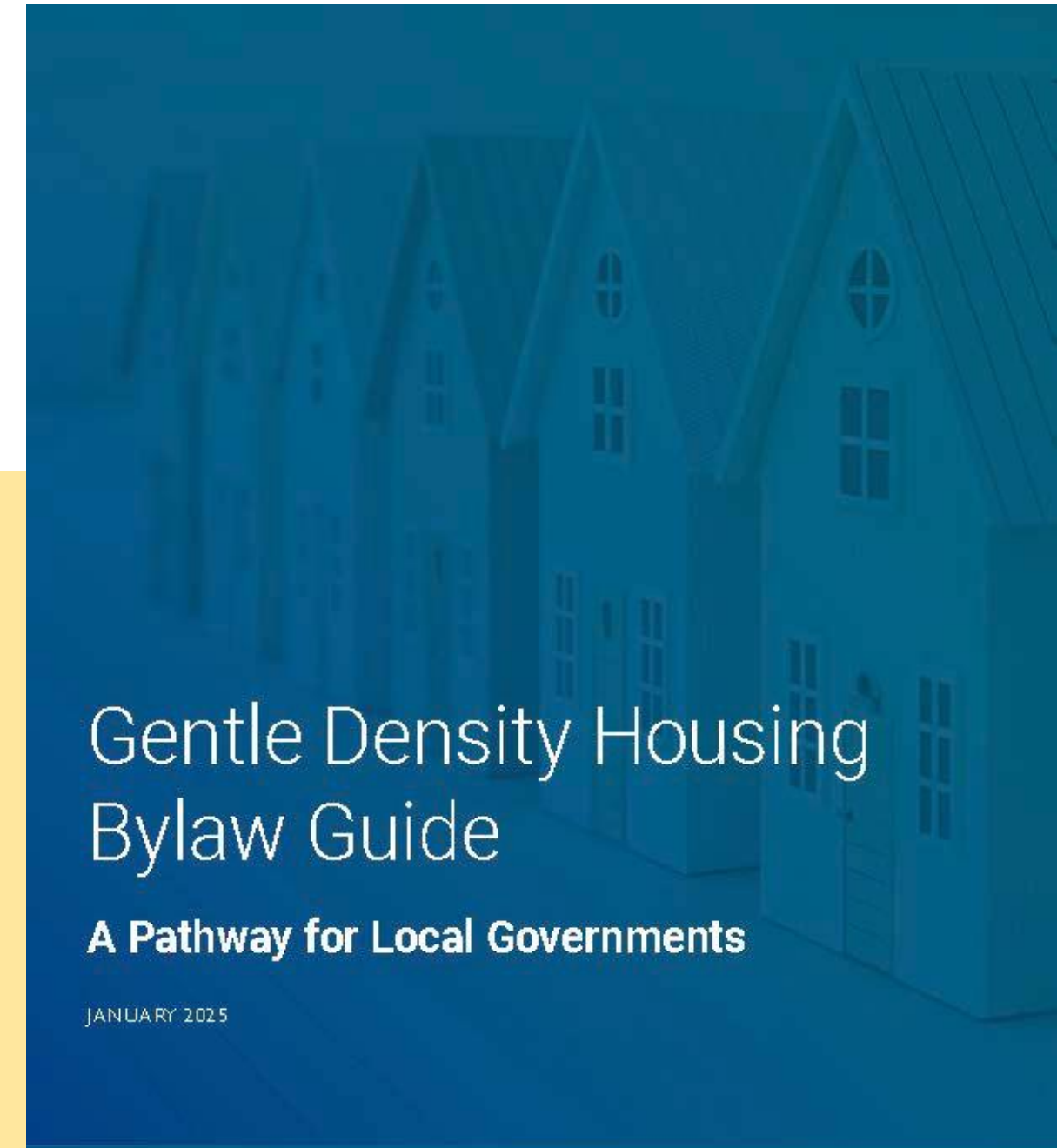


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Writing the Implementation Playbook

1. Citywide rezoning (Calgary, AB)
2. Parking requirements (Edmonton, AB)
3. Inclusionary zoning and affordability (Kitchener, ON)
4. Permitting and development support (Winnipeg, MB)
5. Infill fast-tracking and designs (Kelowna, BC)
6. Communications (Guelph, ON)
7. Activating gentle density (City of Whitehorse, YT)



Stay in touch!

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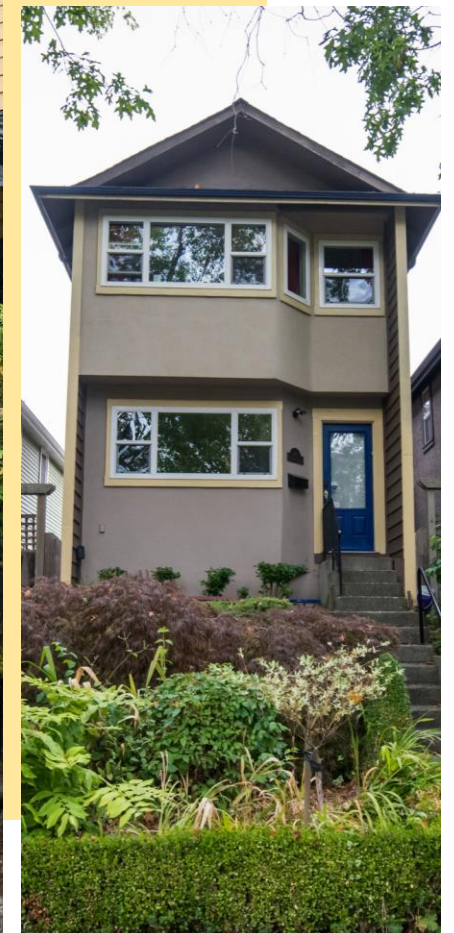
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Gentle Density
Bylaw Guide



Gentle Density
Toolbox



Free training for builders

Dec 11 -
12

- GDH Basics
- The Business Case for Builders
- Designing for Community and Code
- Building Science Considerations
- Proformas, feasibility and financing
- Scaling internal project management



*Approved for 6.0 CPD by
BC Housing*



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