



BRITISH COLUMBIA

May 29, 2025

Reference: 186562

Dear Mayors and Board Chairs:

On June 30, 2025, we will pass the one-year anniversary when most local governments implemented the Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) requirements. As I reflect on this historic change, I want to thank you and your staff for the hard work you have undertaken to achieve this important zoning reform. We are now starting to see a range of housing types in the planning and building stages advance across the province to deliver diverse options in what were traditionally restrictive single-family neighbourhoods.

We have been monitoring progress on implementation and are seeing many local governments championing SSMUH by speeding up or waiving unnecessary processes and requirements and creating or adopting standardized housing designs. In these communities, we are starting to see strong uptake of SSMUH.

However, monitoring has also identified ongoing barriers to building SSMUH, including inconsistency in how some local governments have applied the requirements and site-level conditions. In places, restrictive and excessive site standard requirements are adding additional costs, time, and uncertainty to SSMUH development. Areas that did not fully adopt SSMUH as intended and communities with onerous, ambiguous, or subjective form and character development permit requirements are reducing the viability of building new small-scale multi-unit housing. As a result of these barriers, it is still easier to build single-family homes in many communities, and the diversity of housing needed by people in our communities is still not being met.

I am writing today to encourage you to review your bylaws and requirements for alignment with the guidelines in the SSMUH Provincial Policy Manual and Site Standards. Specifically, please ensure you have progressive site standards for three-to-six-unit developments by allowing building heights of 3 storeys and 11 metres, aligning with the policy manual site standards packages for lot coverage.

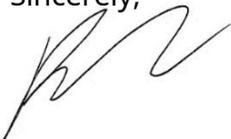
Page 1 of 2

Communities should also enable all housing configurations and types and should not use form and character development permit area requirements for small-scale multi-unit housing, as they can cause delays that interfere with the viability of projects. For three-to-four-unit projects, you should consider aligning with the recommended one parking space per unit in your parking minimums, leaving it to home builders to determine if more parking is appropriate for the location. And for those of you that have areas in your community that don't yet comprehensively allow for it, I ask that you ensure that your zoning allows SSMUH on all lots that allow single family residential, duplexes, and houses with a secondary suite and accessory dwelling unit.

People in our province need the greater diversity of housing that these changes are designed to unlock, and our government has a responsibility to act where these needs remain unmet. If all local governments do not align with the guidelines and intent of the legislation, it is my intention to continue to strengthen the legislated requirements to ensure more consistent standards are established across the province. Greater alignment with the requirements and guidelines will help encourage SSMUH development and increase the supply of the homes that people in our communities need, and moving forward in earnest now will minimize your future work to align with any forthcoming legislative changes.

I recognize that the vast majority of communities have been taking action and are seeing the benefits of their action in new housing coming forward in their communities. To those who continue to demonstrate leadership by enabling the conditions for these homes to be built, I offer my sincere appreciation for the work that you and your staff are undertaking.

Sincerely,



Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Link: Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing Provincial Policy Manual and Site Standards:
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/housing-and-tenancy/tools-for-government/local-governments-and-housing/ssmuh_provincial_policy_manual.pdf

CC: Teri Collins, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs