

## Pillar #4: Encourage Urban Density

According to Statistics Canada, the population of British Columbia currently sits at around 4.6 million people. By 2041, BC Statistics projects that the population will rise to over 6 million—an increase of 25%. Urban areas will experience the majority of this growth: 1.2 million new residents in Greater Vancouver and 200,000 in Greater Victoria.



**BC  
Population  
by  
2041:  
6 million**

To prepare for so many new residents, densifying urban spaces is necessary. In BC, several cities cannot expand outward, as mountains, coastlines and the Agricultural Land Reserve create clear boundaries. We need to invest in smart, community-friendly ways to densify existing communities.

When a “Not In My Backyard” attitude (NIMBY-ism) occurs, it’s generally because homeowners fear that densification will have an adverse effect on their quality of life. On the other hand, gentle densification is a strategic way to increase capacity, while retaining the charm of each urban space.

REALTORS® know British Columbians want more than homes—they want good schools and parks, safe neighbourhoods, a strong economy and good transportation choices. The BC Real Estate Association believes that, through smart densification, these goals can be realized so that renters and homeowners thrive.

## Recommendations for the BC government:



- Increase the supply of smaller, market homes in neighbourhoods using Property Transfer Tax (PTT) revenue to create gentle density in low density neighbourhoods. For example, the province could provide financial incentives to municipalities to permit the sale of laneway homes and the stratification of secondary suites, where the home permits it. Funds could be used to update zoning and to create a system for stratifying suites.
- Increase the supply of affordable, market, ground-oriented, family (three-bedroom) homes along transit corridors in lower density neighbourhoods using PTT revenue. For example, the province could provide financial incentives to municipalities that fast track medium-density projects—townhomes, co-housing and cooperatives—to help defray the costs of accelerated planning and rezoning.
- Counter NIMBY-ism through public education via a “New Neighbours” campaign to increase acceptance of new developments, geared to first-time homebuyers and purpose-built rental developments.

