



PRESENTATIONS

Building to Net-Zero Community of Practice

Build More, Better Homes:
An introduction to the
Housing Design Catalogue

DOWNLOAD



Housing Design Catalogue

February 2026



Housing, Infrastructure
and Communities Canada

Logement, Infrastructures
et Collectivités Canada

Canada



What is the Housing Design Catalogue?

The Housing Design Catalogue is a nationally developed collection of **50 standardized low-rise home designs**. It serves as a practical tool for builders, developers, homeowners, and local governments to support the creation of more housing in **existing** communities across Canada.

The Catalogue promotes gentle density by introducing housing options such as fourplexes and rowhouses.

Benefits on Partnership:

- Reduces time and cost
- Free and open to use “near permit-ready” design packages
- Supports and de-risks infill development
- Offers accessible options
- Promotes energy efficient design

The Catalogue in a Snapshot

50

Home
designs



Diverse
housing
typologies



Focus on gentle
density &
standardization

7 Regions



AB



BC



ON



QC



NB, NL, NS, PE



YT, NWT, NU



SK & MB



Regionally-
informed



Adaptable by
Design



Energy
Performance
and Climate



Financial
Feasibility

Inspired by our History

1947



1957



1967



1977



Today's Housing Design Catalogue

Accessory Dwelling Units



Rowhouses and Townhouses



Fourplexes



Sixplexes



Core Design Principles



**Regionally
Informed**



**Energy
Performance &
Climate**



**Adaptable by
Design**



**Financially
Feasible**



Regionally Informed

Reflecting regional differences

The catalogue reflects regional differences in regional climate zones, housing needs and construction methods.

Designed for compliance

The designs follow local codes and regulations from jurisdictions across Canada, helping to align with local approval processes to help Canadians build more homes, faster.



Adaptable by Design

CMHC collaborated with Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC) on the approach to “accessible-ready” and “enhanced accessibility” in the catalogue.



“Accessible-Ready” designs can be converted to an accessible unit much more easily than homes designed without adaptability in mind.

“Enhanced Accessible” architectural layouts are aligned with principles *CSA/ASC B652-23 – Accessible Dwellings Standard*.

Energy Performance and Climate



All designs target energy efficiency that exceeds building code minimums and allows users to make climate resilient choices.

- Designs meet the minimum National Building Code of Canada (NBC) 2020 Energy Performance **Tier 3** or **Step 4** of the Energy Step Code in BC Region
- **Lifecycle Analysis** (LCA) reporting for each design
- Guidance to support **material selection** and **climate resilient design choices**



Financially Feasible

Construction Cost Estimate Summary | Ontario

The following table outlines an estimated range of hard construction costs anticipated when building from the Housing Design Catalogue. These ranges were informed by Class B construction cost estimates prepared by Vermeulens in Q1-2025 and in consultation with builders familiar with this scale of housing. Ranges are provided to account for differences in site, design selections, finish quality, material costs, and labour rates.

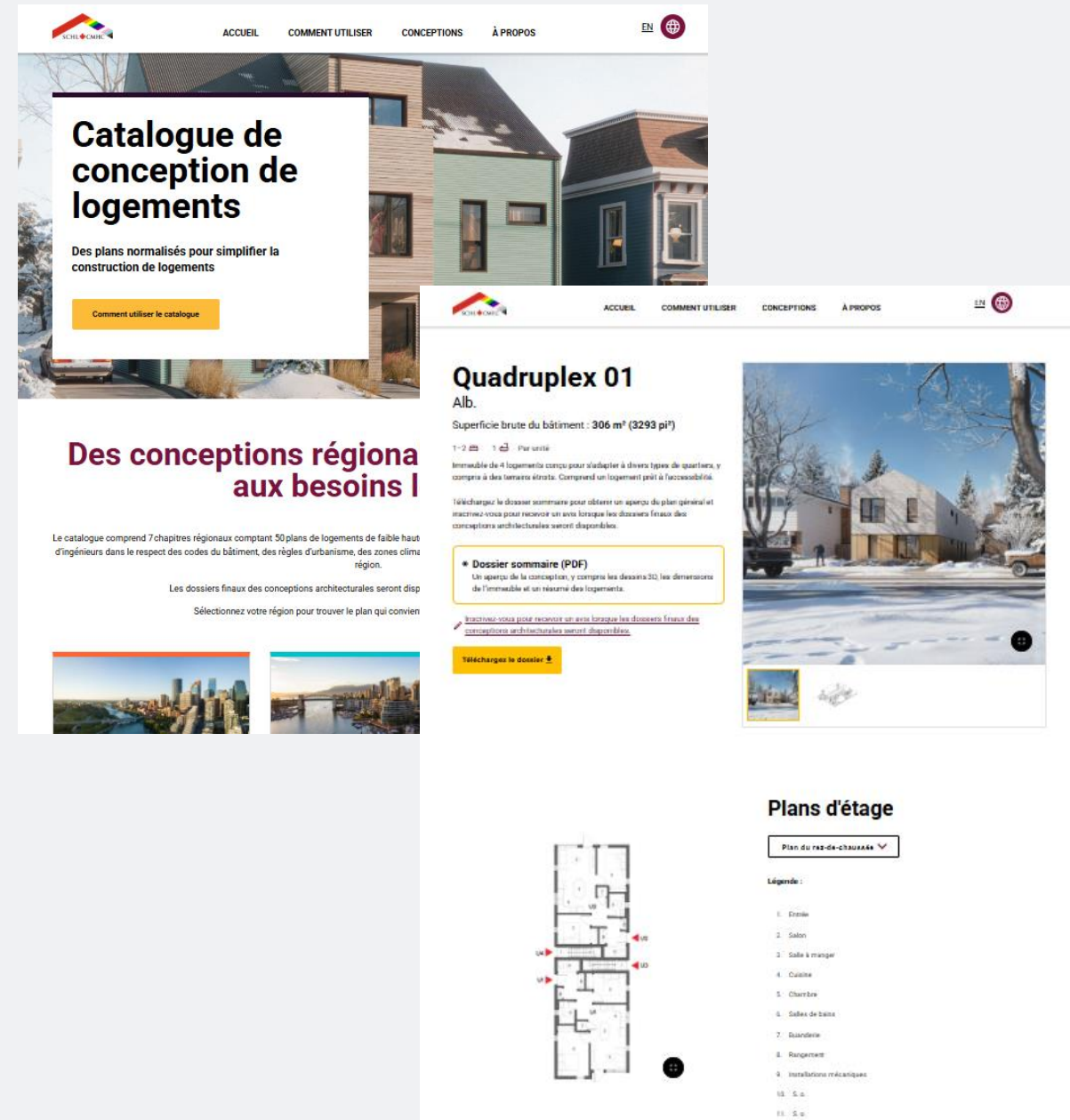
Actual construction costs may vary significantly and are subject to change over time due to a range of factors. Users should refer to the detailed list of assumptions and exclusions to understand what is included in these estimates. It is strongly recommended that users work with a qualified professional, builder and/or consultant when developing a project budget and financial pro forma model.

Housing Type	# of Units ¹	Gross Building Area (sq. ft)	Estimated Range of Total Construction Hard Costs (\$)	Average Range of Costs per Unit (\$/unit)	Average Range of Costs per Building Area (\$/sq. ft)
Accessory Dwelling Unit 01	1	634	\$251,000 to \$314,000	\$251,000 to \$314,000	\$396 to \$495
Accessory Dwelling Unit 02	1	1,017	\$343,000 to \$429,000	\$343,000 to \$429,000	\$337 to \$422
Stacked Townhouse 01 ²	6	6,495	\$1,969,000 to \$2,461,000	\$329,000 to \$411,000	\$304 to \$379
Stacked Townhouse 02 ²	6	7,647	\$2,260,000 to \$2,825,000	\$377,000 to \$471,000	\$296 to \$370
Fourplex 01	4	3,897	\$1,174,000 to \$1,468,000	\$294,000 to \$367,000	\$302 to \$377
Fourplex 02	4	3,264	\$1,108,000 to \$1,385,000	\$277,000 to \$347,000	\$340 to \$425
Sixplex	6	4,842	\$1,510,000 to \$1,888,000	\$252,000 to \$315,000	\$312 to \$390

- **Class B construction cost estimates** establish a reliable basis for financial feasibility and proforma analysis.
- **Standardized plans** reduce the time and cost involved in designing a home and can be used for both rental and ownership scenarios.
- Standardized designs can **support prefab and off-site construction methods** for components such as panelized walls, engineered trusses and bathroom pods.

Initial Release (March 2025)

- Housing Design Catalogue Website launched
- 50 Design Summary Packages released which included:
 - 2D and 3D representations of the final designs and floorplans
 - Key information on building considerations for site planning, accessibility, and building performance.



Full Release (October 2025)

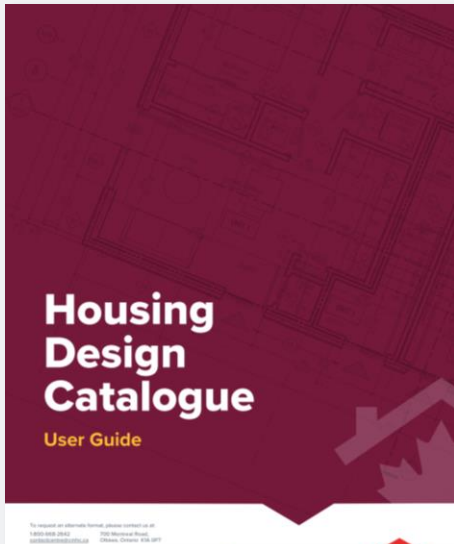
Technical Design Packages

- Architectural and Engineering Drawings for 50 designs (PDF designs, CAD and BIM files)
- Energy model template and guidance
- Design summaries including 2D and 3D images and floor plans

Technical Supports

- User Guide
- Climate Resilience Guide
- Materials Guide
- Cost Estimate Summaries
- Regional Site Plan Examples (*coming soon*)

User Guide



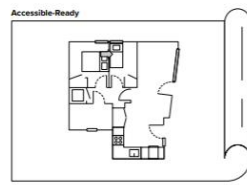
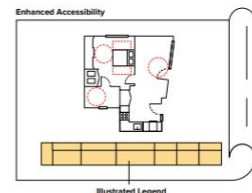
6. Accessibility and Univ

The catalogue designs were developed with accessibility considerations that go beyond code minimum requirements, in collaboration with Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC) and in consideration of British Columbia Building Code 2024 (for BC region only). In regions excluding British Columbia, a percentage of units have been designed as 'Accessible-Ready', and an alternate layout is provided to reflect 'Enhanced Accessibility', allowing users to customize the designs based on their needs. In British Columbia, a number of designs include an 'Adaptable' layout per British Columbia Building Code 2024 to enhance accessibility and accommodate a wider range of occupants' needs through the life of the building. In all regions, ground-oriented units were prioritized, being more suitable for adaptability with minimal effort and lower costs.

'Accessible'
an access
homes de:

'Enhanced'
a detailed
principles inspired with BCBC 2024 - Minimum
Dwellings Standard.

'Adaptable' dwelling units can be adapted into a BCBC Accessible Unit with moderate effort, meaning without significant structural or mechanical modifications, as defined in the British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) 2024.



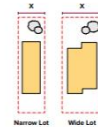
Illustrated Legend

2. Planning and Site Assumptions

Each catalogue design was developed using assumptions about site parameters including lot size, zoning, and site design, with some notable regional variations.

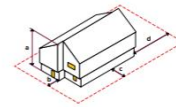
Lot sizes and designs

Based on data analysis of lot sizes across the country, two lot archetypes were defined per typology for which two designs were created. The primary difference between these lot archetypes is width. Most typologies offer narrow and wide options and can accommodate varying lot depths. There are some exceptions, for example, duplex designs are only offered for wide lots due to the scale of the buildings. Similarly, in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut region, site assumptions also account for service type – either municipal services and tanked/trucked services – to accommodate both municipal and rural/remote contexts. There is flexibility for users based on their specific lot size; for example, designs based on a narrow lot can be sited on a larger lot. The assumed property lines are shown in red dotted lines on the Site Plan in the drawing sets.



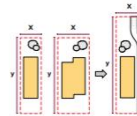
Zoning alignment

Based on zoning research conducted across a sample of municipalities per region, common zoning parameters – such as setbacks and maximum building heights – were analyzed and assumed for in each design. Those assumptions are shown in red in the drawing sets. Users are required to work with their Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to ensure their design meets applicable local zoning bylaws.



Site design

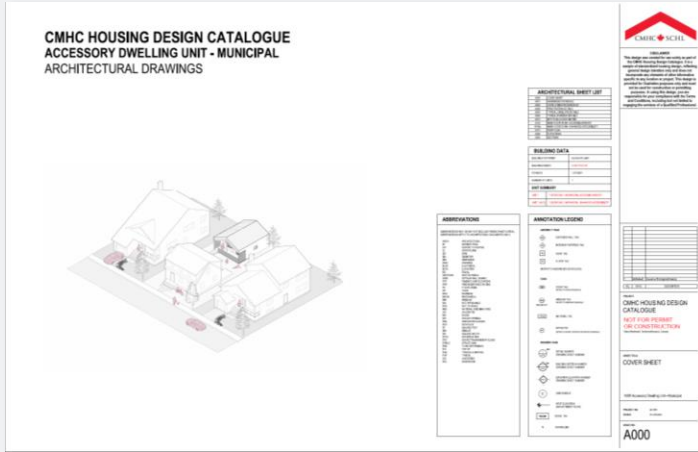
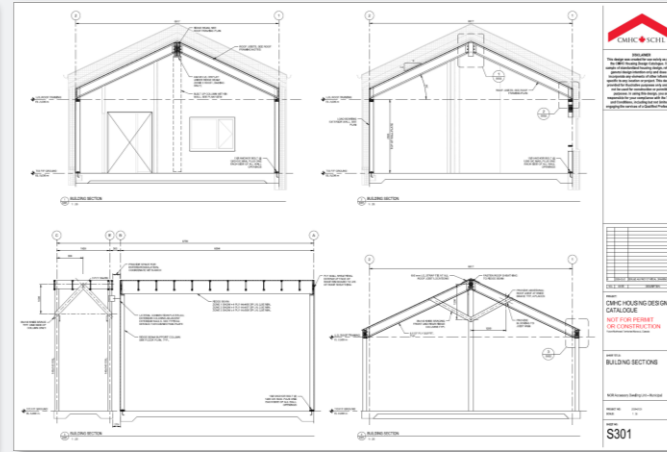
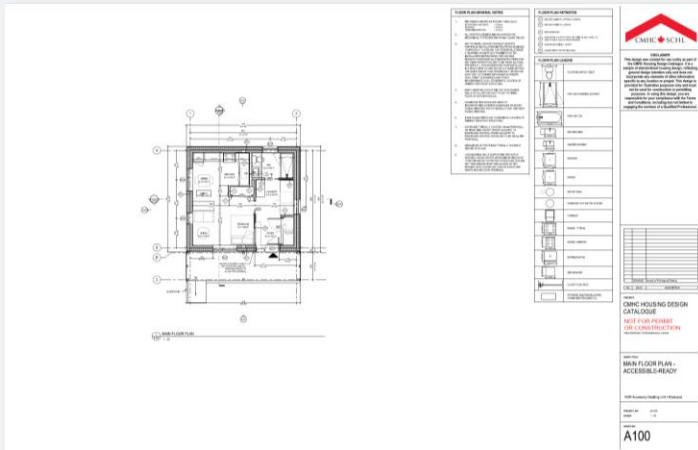
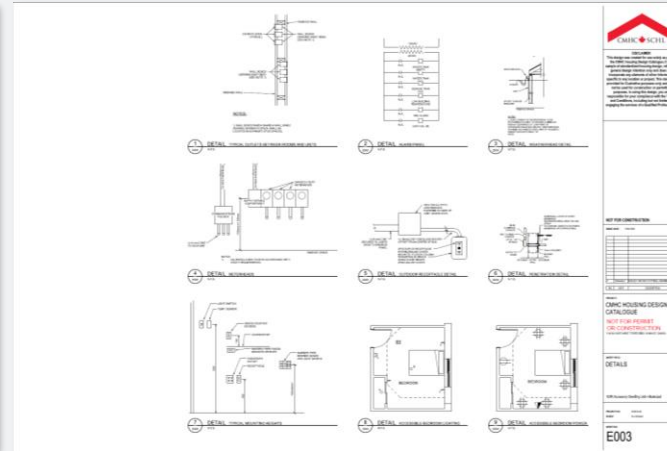
The assumed property lines in the drawing sets do not account for front/rear access, driveways, parking, bike storage, garbage and utility connections. Lot dimensions are intended to be adapted to fit required site elements per municipal bylaws. Designs can be mirrored, rotated or flipped based on site conditions. Strategies to maximize density or site potential can also be considered, such as adding an Accessory Dwelling Unit. Refer to regional Site Design Examples document for sample configurations to guide site selection and design.



Housing Design Catalogue – User Guide | 6

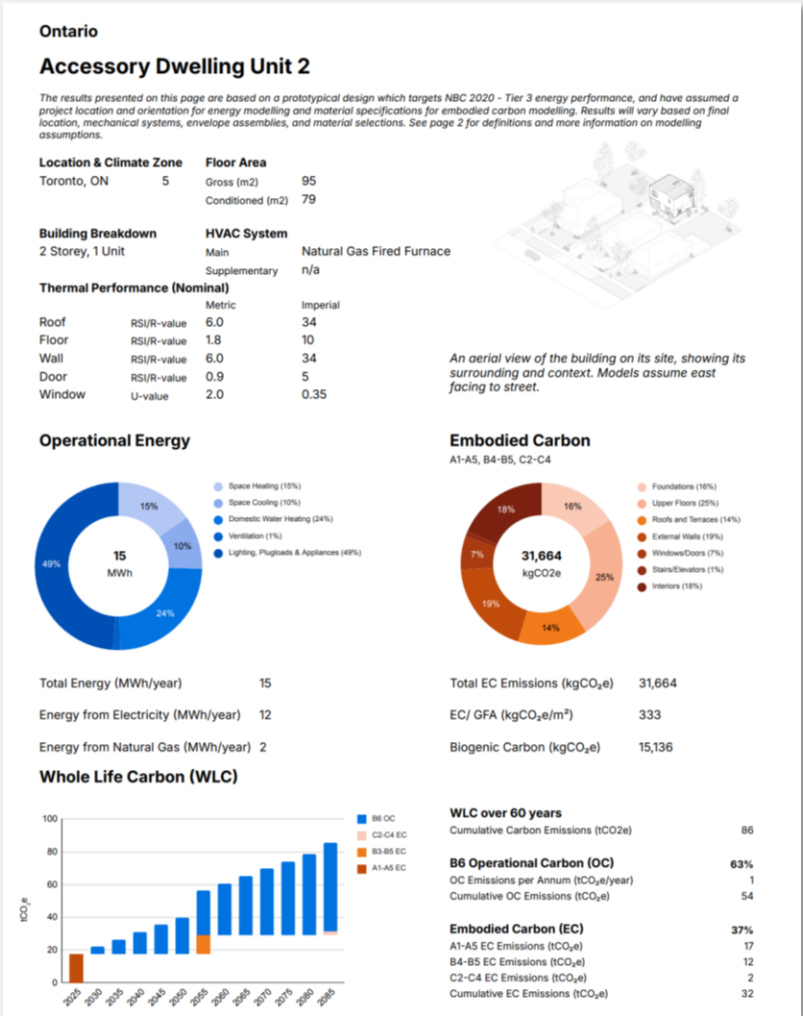
- Provides detailed guidance to users of the catalogue and Qualified Professionals who will be adapting the designs to a specific project and site.
- Included as a part of the Technical Design Packages, downloadable from the catalogue website.

Architecture and Engineering Drawings



- Floor plans (Accessible Ready & Enhanced Accessible)
- Elevations
- Site Plan and Building Code Matrix
- Roof Plan
- Schedules and Details
- Structural drawings (e.g. foundation, ground floor, roof framing, and building section plans)
- Mechanical and plumbing drawings
- Electrical drawings

Building Performance Report (Energy/Carbon)

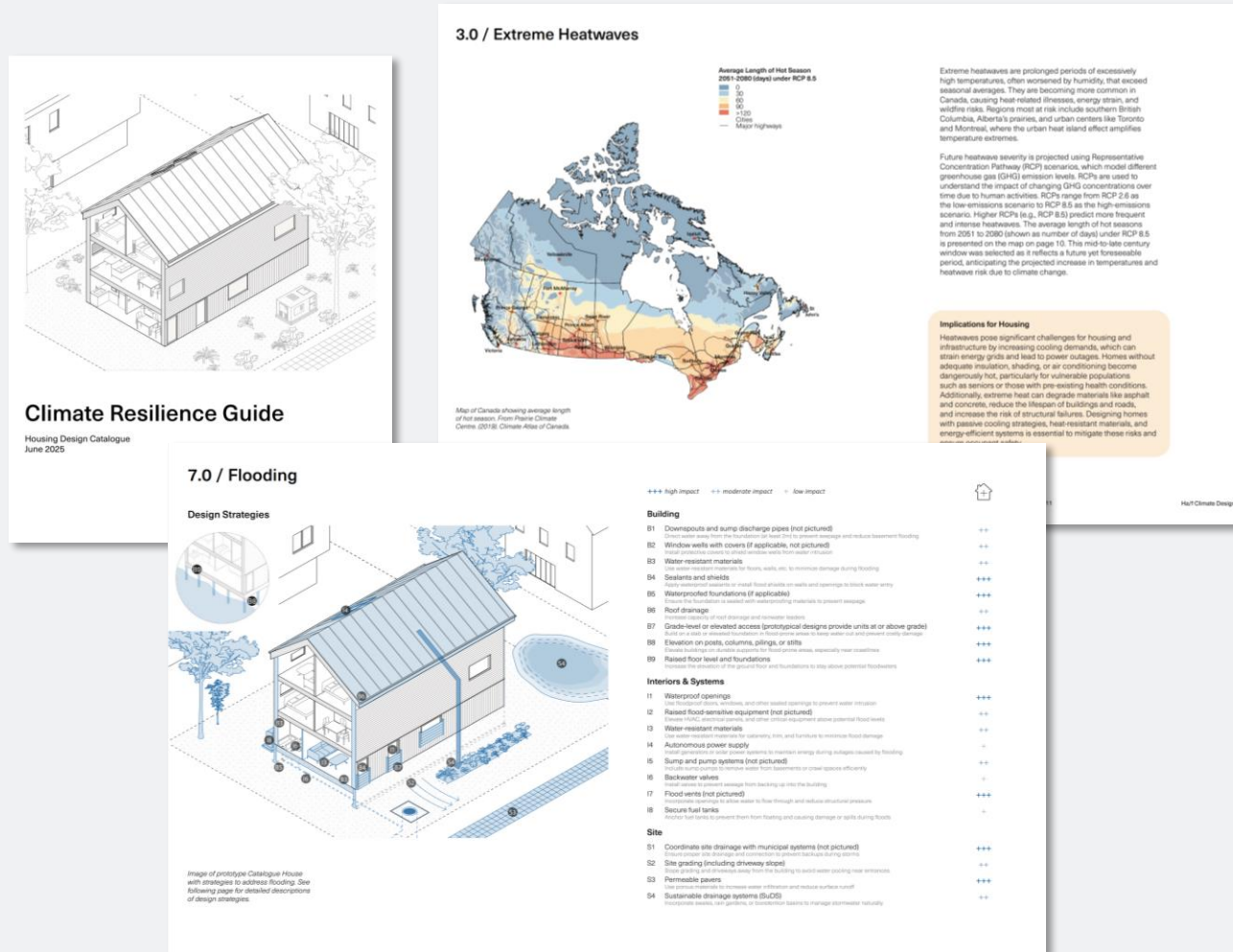


Based on a prototypical design with an assumed location which targets NBC 2020 – Tier 3 energy performance (Step 4 in BC Step Code).

Provides modelled results for:

- Operational Energy Consumption
- Embodied Carbon
- Whole Life Carbon (WLC)

Climate Resilience Guide



Provides building and site design strategies to improve climate resilience for HDC designs for regional climate risks including:

- Heatwaves
- Wildfires
- Drought
- Permafrost thaw
- Flooding
- Storms

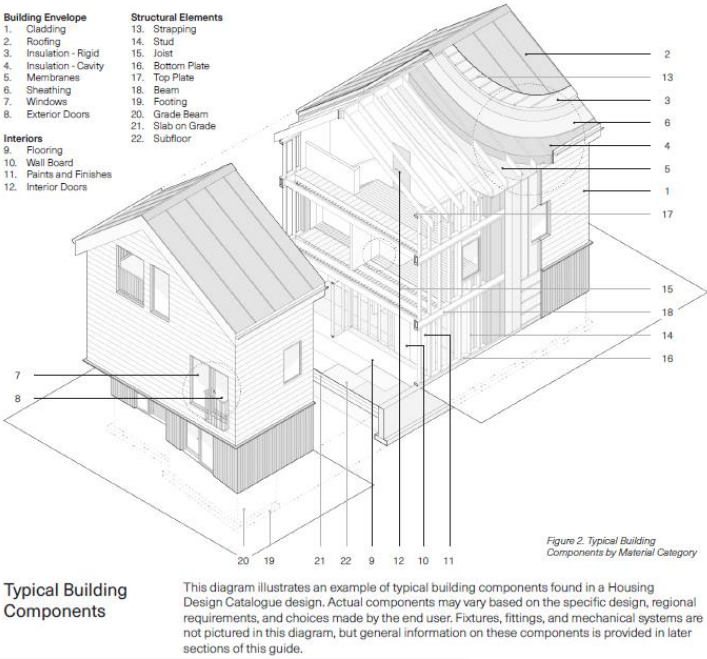
Materials Guide

The Materials Guide provides users with data on cost, durability, and environmental impact when selecting materials for their project. It includes material selection design elements such as:

- Cladding
- Roofing
- Insulation
- Membranes
- Sheathing
- Windows
- Exterior Doors



2.0 / Material Selection



Material Category & Product Name	Thickness (mm)	Embodied Carbon Intensity (kgCO ₂ e/m ²)	Biogenic Carbon Intensity (kgCO ₂ e/m ²)	Relative Upfront Cost (\$ - \$\$\$\$)	Expected Life Span (years)	Relative Life Cycle Cost (\$ - \$\$\$\$)
1/ Cladding						
Includes only the exposed exterior cladding material and typical method of attachment; does not include underlying components such as insulation, air barrier, or sheathing. The EIFS system includes a finish layer, stucco, drain screen, sealants, and EPS insulation.						
Treated Pine	19mm	4.2	17.9	\$	60	\$
Thermally Modified Wood	19mm	6.2	15.7	\$\$\$ - \$\$\$\$	60	\$\$\$
Fibre Cement Plank or Panel	19mm	13.7	-	\$	60	\$
Prefinished Steel	1-5mm	15.1	-	\$ - \$\$	60	\$
Natural Stone Panels	32mm	18.0	-	\$\$\$\$	60	\$\$\$ - \$\$\$\$
Painted Cedar	13mm	22.0	6.1	\$	60	\$
Vinyl Siding	1-5mm	25.6	-	\$	25	\$ - \$\$
Aluminium	1-5mm	53.2	-	\$	60	\$
Brick (including mortar)	90mm	59.9	-	\$\$\$	60	\$\$ - \$\$\$
EIFS	150mm	82.5	-	\$\$	25	\$\$\$\$
Terracotta Tile	40mm	133.6	-	\$\$\$\$	60	\$\$\$\$

referenced in the following tables are based on research. These values are indicative only and may vary based on the specific requirements, performance, code compliance, and pricing of the materials used. Users are advised to consult with a professional for more detailed information.

Ha/i Climate Design

How does it work?

Catalogue designs are “near permit-ready,” not pre-approved. Working with qualified professionals, the designs can easily be adapted for details such as:

- Zoning compliance (lot coverage, setbacks, etc.)
- Parking, access, bike storage and waste management
- Grading and drainage
- Foundations, basements and crawlspaces
- Building orientation and siting
- Services and utilities requirements
- Cladding and material selection
- Energy performance, climate and structural requirements

A user's licensed qualified professional must finalize the design to create a 'Derived Design' and take on liability before making a building permit application.

Local authorities can pre-review the prototypical Catalogue plans for general building code and zoning compliance.

4 Steps to Become a Local Partner

- Select which Catalogue designs to promote, at least 1 Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) and 2 multi-unit options (i.e. Row/Town/Plexes). Supporting all designs is encouraged where possible.
- Review prototypical Catalogue plans for “as-of-right” Zoning and Building Code compliance.
- Promote the pre-reviewed designs with builders, homeowners and the public.
- Identify opportunities to streamline the approvals process. Start tracking building permits using the Catalogue and other standardized designs.



Select Designs



Pre-review designs for “as-of-right” zoning + Code compliance



Promote Designs



Streamline Approvals + Track Uptake

Local Partners



Visit the local government page on the Catalogue website for an up-to-date list

Province / Territory	Municipality	Website	Supported Designs
British Columbia	City of Burnaby	Municipal Website	BC ADU 01, ADU 02, Duplex, Rowhouse, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02, Courtyard Sixplex
British Columbia	City of Kelowna	Municipal Website	BC ADU 01, ADU 02, Duplex, Rowhouse, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02, Courtyard Sixplex
British Columbia	City of Vancouver	Municipal Website	BC Duplex, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02, Courtyard Sixplex
Alberta	City of Edmonton	Municipal Website	AB ADU 01, ADU 02, Rowhouse 01, Sixplex
Saskatchewan	City of Regina	Municipal Website	SK/MB ADU 01, ADU 02, Rowhouse, Triplex, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02, Sixplex
Ontario	Town of Ajax	Municipal Website	ON ADU 01, ADU 02, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02
Ontario	City of Kitchener	Municipal Website	ON ADU 01, ADU 02, Stacked Townhouse 01, Stacked Townhouse 02, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02, Sixplex
Ontario	City of Mississauga	Municipal Website	ON ADU 01, ADU 02, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02
Ontario	City of Ottawa	Coming soon	Coming soon
Ontario	City of Toronto	Municipal Website	ON ADU 01, ADU 02, Stacked Townhouse 01, Stacked Townhouse 02, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02, Sixplex
New Brunswick	City of Saint John	Municipal Website	NB/NL/NS/PE ADU 01, ADU 02, Stacked Townhouse 01, Stacked Townhouse 02, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02, Sixplex
Nova Scotia	Halifax Regional Municipality	Municipal Website	NB/NL/NS/PE ADU 01, ADU 02, Stacked Townhouse 01, Stacked Townhouse 02, Fourplex 01, Fourplex 02, Sixplex
Yukon	City of Whitehorse	Coming soon	YT/NWT/NU ADU – Municipal, Rowhouse – Municipal, Fourplex – Municipal, Sixplex – Municipal
Northwest Territories	City of Yellowknife	Municipal Website	YT/NWT/NU ADU – Municipal, ADU – Tanked, Rowhouse – Municipal, Fourplex – Municipal, Sixplex – Municipal

Audience Questions:

1. What are you hearing from your local builder community on opportunities for gentle density and the use of standardized designs?
2. Do you see any barriers to pre-reviewing designs from the Housing Design Catalogue? How can we address them?
3. How do you see climate-resilient and energy-efficient home design evolving in your municipality over the next decade?
4. What ideas do you have that the Catalogue could consider to further support your goals toward climate resilience?
5. Do you have any other feedback or advice?

Contact info:

Daniel Rubinstein, Advisor, Housing Policy
and Programs

drubinst@cmhc-schl.gc.ca

Vanessa Sun, Specialist, Municipal
Relations

vsun@cmhc-schl.gc.ca

General Catalogue inquiries

catalogue@cmhc-schl.gc.ca



Housing, Infrastructure
and Communities Canada

Logement, Infrastructures
et Collectivités Canada

Canada



Implementing the Housing Design Catalogue

A Small-Town Capacity Building & Climate Strategy

Town of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

Martin Beck, LPP, MCIP | February 2026



Yarmouth - Nova Scotia

- Historic coastal community (est. 1760s)
- Regional service centre for Southwest Nova Scotia
- Population <7,000 (town); ~60,000 regional catchment
- Aging housing stock & infrastructure
- Housing Accelerator Fund community



HAF Commitments

Gentle density zoning reform

- Greater flexibility in use & form

Faster approvals of residential projects

- Expanded Site Plan Approval (SPA) pathway
- Reduced reliance on Development Agreements

Grant & surplus lands programs



**Housing
Accelerator Fund
(HAF)**

**Planning
Amendments**

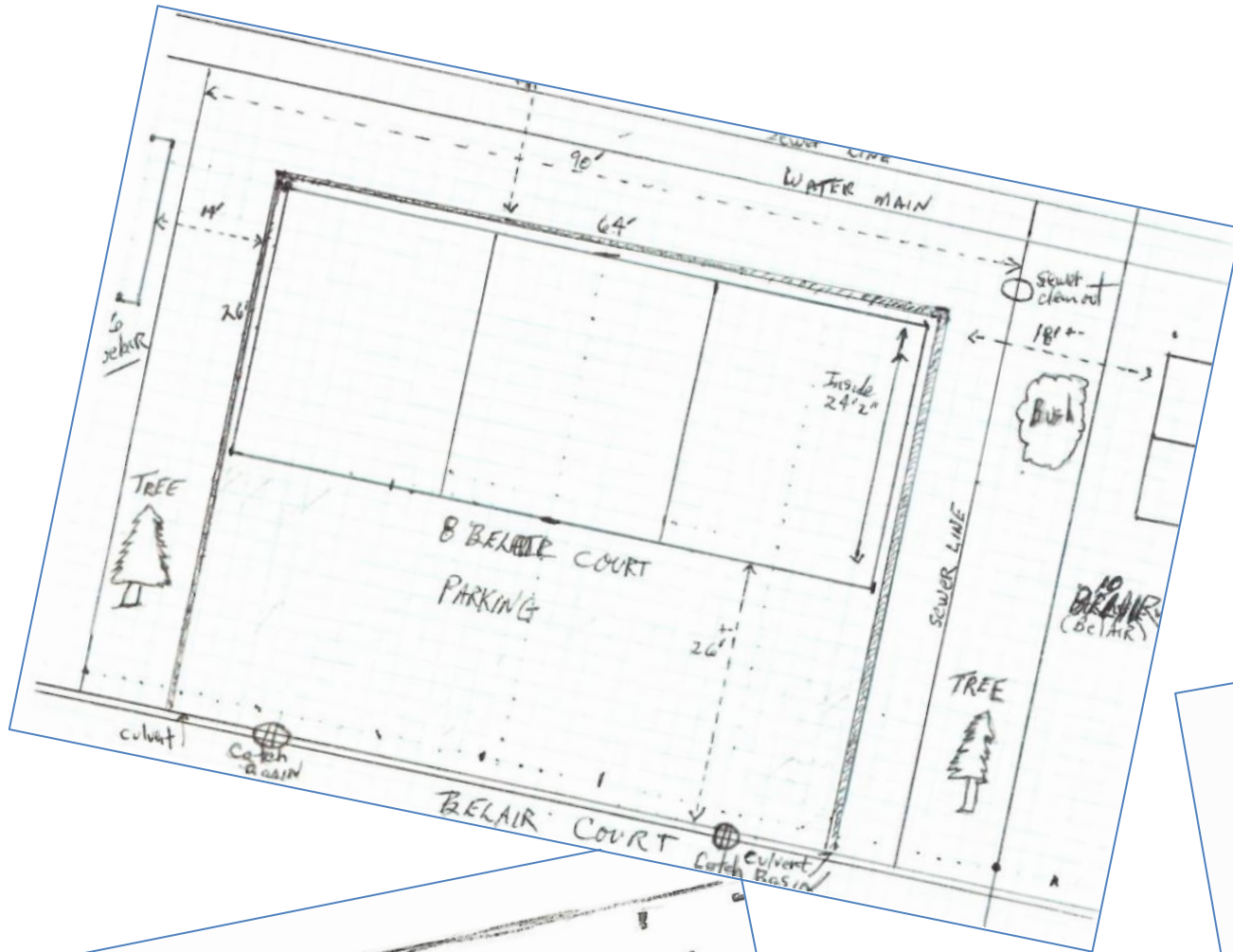
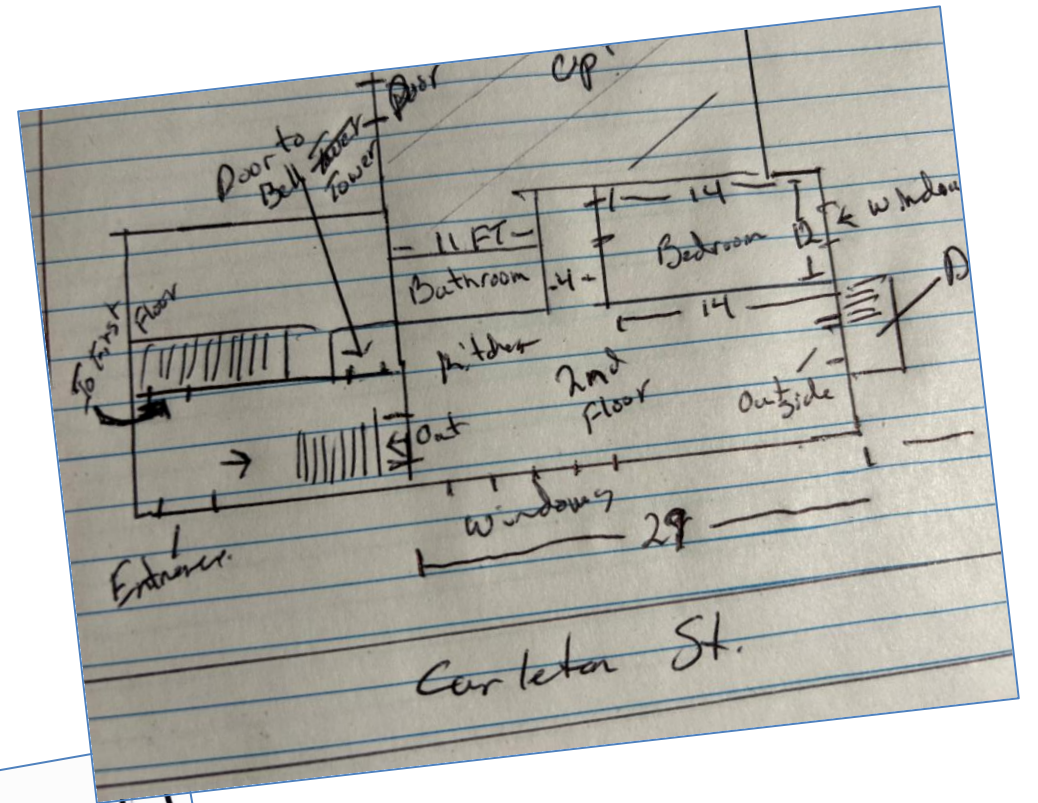
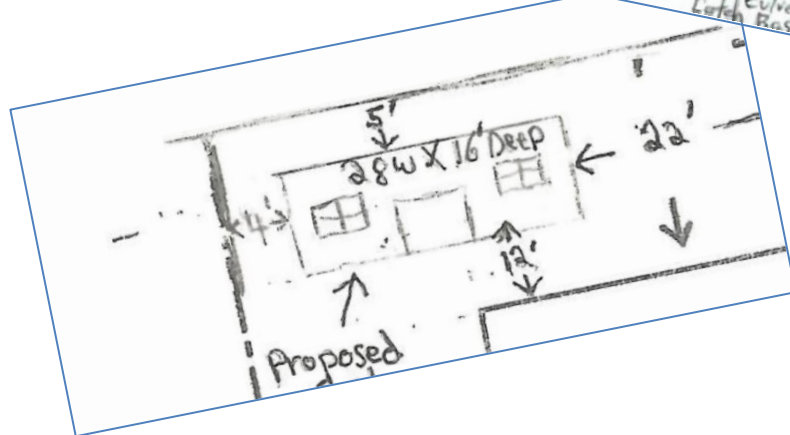
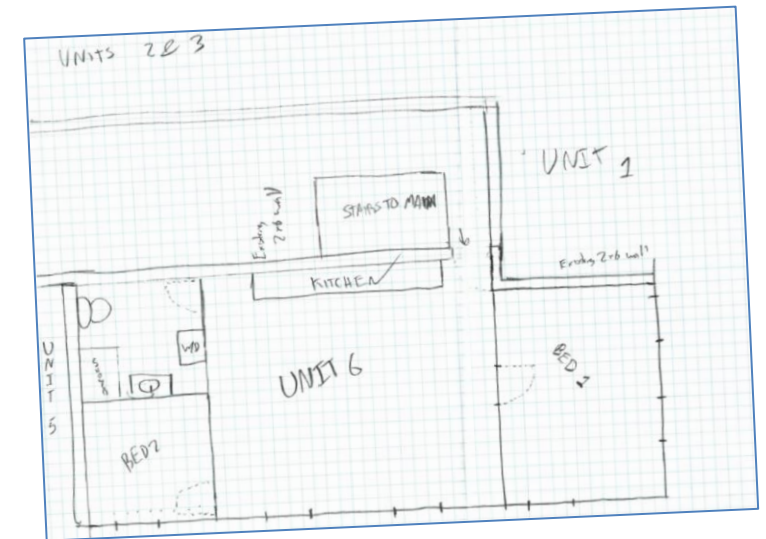
Zoning & Process Reforms Were Necessary - But Not Sufficient

Many projects still stall

- Limited vision & inspiration
- Submission quality inconsistent
- Incomplete structural & energy details
- Limited access to architects & drafting services
- Code & energy compliance often secondary

"Just tell me how thick you want me to build it (the wall) and I'll build it."





Housing Design Catalogue: A Capacity Multiplier

Supports smaller builders with
limited design capacity

Professionally prepared baseline
drawings

- Code-compliant starting point
- Energy-conscious layouts
- Reduced soft costs & review friction



Why This Matters in Yarmouth

- Improves submission quality
- Normalizes better envelope standards
- Raises energy performance awareness
- Positions municipalities ahead of provincial Energy Tier progression



Our Successes

24-unit Passive House-level MURB
Former Town-owned land
(predates HAF and HD Catalogue)

- 40kW solar PV installed day one
- Modular construction | Net-zero energy
- Zero on-site parking | On-site LID

Approval timeline: 12 months (then)
3–4 weeks today under SPA



Local Implementation Model

Integrating the HDC into our Surplus Lands for Housing program

Using public land as a lever

- Encouraging higher performance outcomes
- Reducing land-cost barriers in exchange for design quality



Positioned for Success

- The Housing Design Catalogue is now formally supported in Yarmouth
- It is early to measure results but the alignment with our local constraints and needs is strong

The screenshot displays the CMHC+SCHL Housing Design Catalogue website. The navigation bar at the top includes links for HOW IT WORKS, DESIGNS (highlighted), RESOURCES, LOCAL PARTNERS, and ABOUT. The main heading is "Explore the Designs". Below this, a paragraph states: "The Housing Design Catalogue includes a range of designs for different housing types and site conditions in each region. Several design aspects can be modified and customized, including cladding, roofing, interior finishes and other aesthetic considerations. Renderings provided as illustrative examples only." Another paragraph mentions: "Three additional designs are being developed and will be shared here in the coming months. These include 2-storey fourplexes for wider lots in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and the Atlantic regions, as well as a 2-storey garage suite for the Northern territories." Below the text are two dropdown menus: "All Types" and "NB, NL, NS, PE". A button labeled "7 House Models Found" is visible. To the right, there are filters for "All Units" (with a toggle switch) and "Sort A-Z". The main content area shows three design listings, each with a 3D rendering, a "Technical package available" banner, the design name, the regions (NB, NL, NS, PE), the square footage, and icons for the number of units and bedrooms.

Explore the Designs

The Housing Design Catalogue includes a range of designs for different housing types and site conditions in each region. Several design aspects can be modified and customized, including cladding, roofing, interior finishes and other aesthetic considerations. Renderings provided as illustrative examples only.

Three additional designs are being developed and will be shared here in the coming months. These include 2-storey fourplexes for wider lots in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and the Atlantic regions, as well as a 2-storey garage suite for the Northern territories.

All Types NB, NL, NS, PE

7 House Models Found All Units Sort A-Z

Accessory Dwelling Unit 01
NB, NL, NS, PE
59 sq. m. (638 sq. ft)
1 1

Accessory Dwelling Unit 02
NB, NL, NS, PE
78 sq. m. (840 sq. ft)
2 1

Fourplex 01
NB, NL, NS, PE
361 sq. m. (3886 sq. ft)
1-3 1

THANK YOU

Martin Beck, LPP, MCIP
Town of Yarmouth

martin.beck@townofyarmouth.ca

www.townofyarmouth.ca