

Affordable housing¹: Housing is considered “affordable” if it costs less than 30% of a household’s before-tax income. Affordable housing is a broad term that includes housing provided by the private, public, and non-profit sector and includes all forms of housing tenure: rental and ownership, as well as temporary and permanent housing. The definition of “affordable” varies significantly across households and communities and the City of Leduc is working to better understand what housing affordability means for Leduc residents.

Apartment building: A building that contains three or more dwelling units, arranged either horizontally or vertically, that have a shared entrance through a common vestibule.

Emergency housing / shelters: Facilities that provide temporary short-term accommodation for homeless individuals and families. In some cases, emergency housing includes food, clothing, or other supportive services for people who are homeless or in crisis (e.g., shelters, couch surfing, and hostels).

Garage suite: A separate, self-contained dwelling unit located above a detached garage.

Garden suite: A separate, self-contained dwelling unit in a single storey building that is located on the same property as a single detached dwelling.

Housing spectrum / continuum: A concept used to describe a range of housing options available to help individuals across different demographic groups access attainable, adequate, and safe housing. The housing spectrum is a common standard used to understand available housing options in a given community. It describes a range of housing tenures including emergency shelters, transitional and supportive housing, and non-market and market rental and ownership that can be implemented within various housing forms. Healthy communities have a diversity of housing options along the spectrum to accommodate the unique housing needs of community members.

Housing Spectrum



Housing form: The physical size, shape, and configuration of a residential development, including but not limited to single detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, multi-unit dwellings, and apartment buildings. Different housing tenures (see below) can be found within different housing forms (e.g., an apartment can have market, non-market, and long-term supportive units for rent within a single building).

Housing options: The various combinations of housing forms and housing tenures that can be found, planned, or designed.

Housing tenure: Refers to whether a residence is owned, with or without a mortgage, or rented, with or without fully or partially subsidized housing costs. Tenure applies to all housing forms along the housing spectrum.

¹ As defined by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)

Housing with supports: A term used to describe housing tenures that have integrated supports and services (i.e., long-term supportive housing and below market / subsidized rental or home ownership).

Long term supportive housing: Stable housing that is provided on a long-term basis, specifically designed and operated to provide a safe, secure, and home-like environment with on-site support services such as social services, provision of meals, housekeeping, and social and recreational activities that maximize residents' independence, privacy, and dignity. Accommodation costs in supportive housing facilities may be subsidized, but this is not always the case (e.g., senior living communities and housing for individuals with developmental or other disabilities).

Market housing: Housing that is produced by the private sector that is rented or sold at current market rates. Rental housing refers to residential properties that are rented to tenants in exchange for regular rental payments. Home ownership refers to housing that is privately purchased at market rates, typically involving regular mortgage payments.

Multi-unit dwelling: A building that contains three to six dwelling units that each have separate entrances from the ground level (e.g., triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses).

Non-market housing: Housing that is designed for independent living by individuals or families who cannot afford housing at market rates, or who have needs that are not being met by market housing. Non-market housing units can either be rented, typically made affordable through public and/or non-profit ownership or rent supplements, or owned, typically made affordable through assistance programs that reduce the purchase price or mortgage payments.

Safety net: A term used to describe housing tenures that provide temporary, short-term accommodations for individuals and families who are at risk of housing instability or homelessness (i.e., emergency shelters and transitional housing / short term supportive housing).

Secondary suite: A separate, self-contained dwelling unit located within a single or semi-detached dwelling.

Semi-detached dwelling: A building that contains two dwelling units that share a common wall, each with separate entrances (e.g., side-by-side duplex).

Single detached dwelling: A building that contains one dwelling unit.

Transitional housing / short-term supportive housing: Stable housing provided as a short-term step between emergency housing and long-term housing. Stays are typically between three months and three years. Supports that may be provided include experience, knowledge, tools, and opportunities for social and skill development to help individuals become more independent and self-sufficient.