

Xaxli'p First Nation

FIVEPLEX



Community Background

Geography

St'at'imc is an Interior Salish Nation located in the Central Interior-Fraser Canyon region, along the Fraser Canyon and southern Coast Mountains. Xaxli'p is 15 kilometres North of Lillooet, BC.

Land Governance

Reserve Land (Governed under the Indian Act)

Timeline *2021-2022*

Xaxli'pmec have lived within Xaxli'p traditional territory since time immemorial. To Xaxli'p, the Fountain Valley and adjacent lands are the basis for their survival. The land is part of who they are; the people and the land cannot be separated. The land, animals, fish, trees, water, air, and people are all Xaxli'p.

Xaxli'p First Nation started to develop a Land Use Plan in 2019 to provide direction for long-term growth and development for Xaxli'pmec to live in the territory, connected to the land. The Land Use Plan identified an increasing housing shortage for Xaxli'pmec to live affordably in community, with no new multi-family housing built on Reserve Land in the past 18 years.

Xaxli'p began a Rapid Housing Initiative in 2021 to provide safe, affordable, and appropriate housing for Xaxli'pmec families in need. Since then, Xaxli'p completed a family-based fiveplex, with five rental units, and welcomed Xaxli'pmec families into the new homes in February 2022. The fiveplex provides a home to a single father with children, a single mother with two sons, an elderly couple, a family previously experiencing homelessness, and an independent living Elder.

In moving forward, Xaxli'p First Nation have two multiplexes planned and in the process of being built in community.

Xaxli'p

Xaxli'p First Nation is one of eleven communities that make up the St'at'imc Nation/Territory, whose name means “the brow of the hill” as the main village is at the brow of the hill.



Community champions

The project was led by Theresa Michel, Housing Manager, with support from Chief and Council

Funder

The project received \$ 1,659,000 from the CMHC Rapid Housing Initiative D— Projects Stream.

Other Partners

Builders World

General Description and Policy Context

Gentle Density Type(s)

Fiveplex (1 built; 2 in progress)

Community Plans and Policies

Land Use Plan (In Progress) and Draft Housing Policy (March 7, 2021)

Process

Xaxli'p First Nation started to develop a Land Use Plan in 2019 to provide direction for long-term growth and development. Community planning has since involved information gathering and analysis, and preparing and evaluating options and land use concepts. Land use planning also identified the need for about 31 ha of rural land and 2 ha of village land to accommodate new housing for a growing Xaxli'pmecc community by 2040.

Xaxli'p First Nation is also drafting a Housing Policy, currently under review by Xaxli'p Chief and Council. The Housing Policy is helping the Xaxli'p Housing Team understand specific community housing needs.

Xaxli'p has over 1,300 Xaxli'pmecc members, with 344 members living on Reserve, in only 128 housing units available. With a growing housing shortage and overcrowding in current housing, the Xaxli'p Housing Team set the goal to "bring our people home" by providing safe, comfortable and affordable housing to as many Xaxli'pmecc as possible. In 2020, a Construction Trade Sampler course supported students to build two tiny houses in the community as an example of what is possible. In moving forward, the Xaxli'p Housing Team identified multi-family housing as a good option for housing as many Xaxli'p as possible, within the currently limited available band owned land.

In 2021, Xaxli'p First Nation applied to the CMHC Rapid Housing Initiative for funding to rapidly increase the housing supply. Once funded, Xaxli'p decided to develop a family-based fiveplex on band-owned land for Xaxli'pmecc families in need. The CMHC Housing Initiative requires housing to be provided rapidly, to get people into homes in a short time frame. From planning to construction, the Xaxli'p Housing Team developed the fiveplex with all units occupied in under one year, with direction, guidance and feedback from Xaxli'pmecc members throughout, mainly through one-on-one conversations.





Outcomes

2 Fiveplexes

1 Completed

5 RENTAL UNITS

Units are in a row, with the 3-bed units on the outside ends of the row

two 3-bed units | three 2-bed units

2-bed units are **\$500/month** + utilities

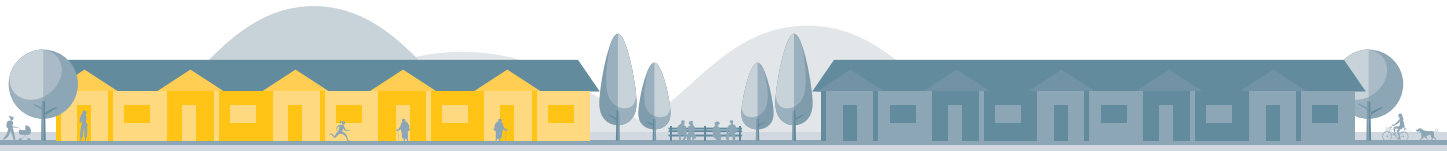
3-bed units are **\$600/month** + utilities

2 Currently in progress

To prioritize single people and Elders currently living in overcrowded housing

Units are in a row, with the 2-bed units on the outside ends of the row for Elders

1-bedroom units will be in the middle for single people to encourage helping Elders and community connection



Strengths

Overall, Xaxli'pmec members have been happy with the fiveplex project. The following are the top three practices that made the project successful:

- **Facilitate Community Connection:** The Xaxli'p Housing Team designed the fiveplex with larger units at the end of the rowhouse and smaller units on the inner side of the rowhouse to support an active community. This is intended to inspire Xaxli'pmec neighbours to visit each other, and younger tenants to help Elders with their needs. The completed fiveplex is also home to a community garden, which brings families together while gathering, planting and harvesting on the land.
- **Enhance Accessibility:** The Xaxli'p Housing Team designed the fiveplex to accommodate the accessibility for those with limited mobility. For instance, the housing units have doorways wide enough for Xaxli'pmec with walkers and wheelchairs, there are no exterior steps to reach front and back doors, and a concrete pad extends all the way to the front door to minimize variable terrain. The unit interiors are designed with an open concept for Xaxli'pmec to easily move around and navigate their home with mobility devices.

- **Create Housing for all Xaxli'pmec:** The Xaxli'p Housing Team understands that all Xaxli'pmec have unique lives and circumstances, which can make their housing needs unique. The Xaxli'p Housing Team is seeking to create a range of housing choices for all Xaxli'pmec. For instance, they built the fiveplex for families in need and are also considering homes for single individuals (particularly men), and homes for students returning home. They are also considering a range of housing forms, such as dome houses, passive homes, and traditional houses.

Surprises

- The fiveplex units were designed with an open concept, which has supported family unity and provided space for Elders to move and exercise.
- Future multi-family projects will have a 10x10 ft area in the back of each unit on a concrete pad rather than rocks to accommodate the accessibility needs of those with limited mobility.



Next steps

The next steps for housing in Xaxli'p include:

- ✓ Finalize the Housing Policy
- ✓ Develop a Housing Plan with a snapshot of the current housing situation and future housing needs
- ✓ Build a 6-10 unit multiplex with BC Housing (CHF) funding
- ✓ Explore the housing concept of a cluster of 4-5 small homes for singles with a communal area
- ✓ Repurpose the Day School on band owned land for housing

“Our community in general is communal, we watch out for each other”

“There's nothing better than the joy of housing people and getting them their homes. This is where they'll start their lives. They feel rooted, and will start to excel”

“I'm always told to bring the people home”



Resources

[Canada Supports Rapid Housing Projects for First Nations in British Columbia \(newswire.ca\)](https://www.newswire.ca)