

# City's housing crunch still 'rampant'

## 'Severe shortage' of affordable units sparks new policy

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Winnipeg still has a persistent, severe shortage of affordable housing thanks in part to condo conversions and rent hikes in newly renovated buildings.

The city is in the midst of developing a new city-wide housing policy, and is working to draft new recommendations to address the slim number of affordable housing units.

Project manager Kathryn Graham told the city's housing steering committee on Monday there is still a "severe shortage" of affordable rental units as more apartments are converted to condos and rents are raised in buildings that have been recently renovated.

The city recently sought input from community groups and housing experts, and expects a draft report will be complete by early fall. Graham said stakeholders have raised concerns there is not enough rental unit capacity for recent immigrants with large families, and current homeowners don't have affordable options when they find they can no longer maintain their property.

Housing committee chairwoman Coun. Jenny Gerbasi (Fort Rouge) said she would like to see broader consultations done before the final housing policy report is presented to council in December. She said the city housing policy focuses on improving areas in the inner city, and the new strategy needs to focus on the entire city and find the best way to address the need for affordable options.

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