



THREE HOUSING MYTHS DISPELLED

Here are some common housing myths:

Myth #1: Houses are unaffordable

Many structures are affordable, but the land is unaffordable. For example, a 1960's bungalow on a 10,000 sq ft lot in Saanich was assessed at \$813,300 by BC Assessment in July 2019. The building is only \$82,300 and the land is \$731,000.

Myth #2: There is no land

Land is available but they are often large lots zoned years ago for single detached dwellings. Rezoning to smaller lots or higher density is required, but challenging and expensive.

Myth #3: Builders control prices

Labour, materials, and govt regs/zoning/fees control prices. Lumber increased 161% this year, as have some municipal DCC fees.

Federal, provincial and municipal govts tell builders where and what to build (zoning); when to build (permit approvals); how to build (building code); and how much revenue they require from the project (GST, PTT, DCC's, permit fees, amenity contributions).

Land value determines the type of construction. It is not practical, nor marketable to build a

small affordable home on a large lot in Greater Victoria's core.

In addition, builder profit/loss is subject to economic downturns and rising costs of permit processes, that may take years, if approved at all.

Portland recently passed a blanket bylaw allowing up to six units on single detached lots. Yet in many local municipalities, a simple duplex violates single detached zoning.

More than 100 years ago in James Bay, homes were built on lots under 2,000 sq ft. Many are now heritage homes in a walkable, compact community, however the lot sizes are no longer possible.

Builders can only provide housing permitted by government.

More affordability depends on governments helping to boost supply and meet the needs of future generations.

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