



Your Voice. Your Home.
Meeting the Housing Needs of Burnaby Residents

MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON COMMUNITY HOUSING

ONE-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

SEPTEMBER 23, 2020





A TRANSFORMATIVE PROCESS

ONE YEAR AGO, THE MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON COMMUNITY HOUSING COMPLETED A PROCESS THAT TRANSFORMED BURNABY'S HOUSING FUTURE.

The Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing ("Task Force") engaged over 2,600 members of the public, the most people ever reached through a City engagement process. Initiated by Mayor and Council in November 2018 in consideration of the urgent need to address affordable housing concerns in Burnaby, the Task Force was created with a mandate to:

Provide recommendations to Burnaby City Council on innovative policies, directions and specific initiatives to increase the supply, diversity and affordability of housing in Burnaby.

With representatives including housing advocates, local unions, co-operative housing organizations, developers, builders, renters, as well as City Council, the Task Force brought together diverse perspectives to provide 18 recommendations and 10 quick starts to expand housing options and improve housing affordability for current and future residents of Burnaby.

Since the release of the Task Force recommendations in July 2019, the City has been making headway in refining and implementing the recommendations and quick starts, as documented in this progress report.

This has been an unprecedented year with the global COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on health, livelihoods and the economy. In addition, important social justice and equity movements have gained renewed attention and momentum. In the face of these issues, creating more equitable, inclusive and affordable housing and

preventing and reducing homelessness have remained top priorities for the City. As the City continues to implement the recommendations and quick starts from the Task Force, the City strives to incorporate best knowledge and practices, and continues to listen to the voices of all residents to create a more inclusive and welcoming community.

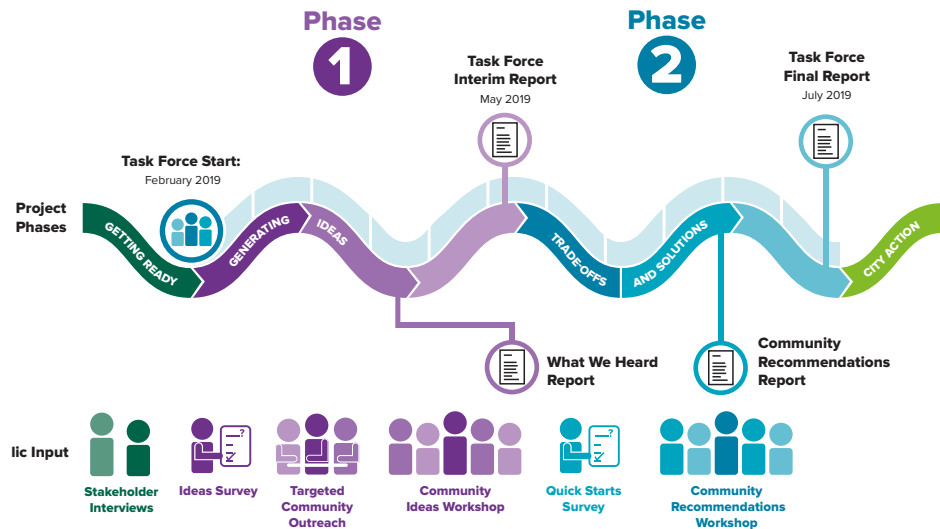
WHY IS THIS WORK IMPORTANT?

Burnaby, like other cities in Metro Vancouver, faces a number of housing challenges. Based on input from the community, housing experts, and City staff, the Task Force identified five key challenges:

1. High cost of homeownership, especially when compared to local incomes.
2. Limited housing choice, particularly ground-oriented multi-family homes.
3. Lack of affordable market rental housing.
4. Insufficient supply of non-market rental and supportive housing.
5. People at risk of homelessness.

Current conditions, including the global pandemic and mental health and addictions crisis, have further highlighted gaps in the City's housing system. Amidst this evolving context, the City has continued to implement the Task Force recommendations, incorporating current and emerging housing challenges into the next phase of housing policy work – the creation of HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

SUMMARY OF MTFCH PROCESS



TASK FORCE PROCESS

Starting in February 2019, the 18-member Select Committee of Council met in a series of 10 meetings, facilitated by the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. With an ambitious timeline, the Task Force meetings were grouped into two phases: **Phase 1 – Generating Ideas** and **Phase 2 – Trade-Offs and Solutions**. Phase 1 concluded with an Interim Report released in May 2019 with 10 quick start recommendations. Phase 2 resulted in the Final Report in July 2019 with 18 final recommendations.

YOUR VOICE. YOUR HOME. PROCESS

Designed and facilitated by the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, **Your Voice. Your Home.** was a public engagement process seeking ideas, concerns and recommendations on housing issues from members of the public. Engaging through a variety of formats, **Your Voice. Your Home.** received overwhelming attention, engaging the most people ever reached through a City process. Similar to the Task Force process, there were opportunities to generate ideas, as well as consider trade-offs and other options. A Community Recommendations Workshop, attended by 97 representative Burnaby residents and stakeholders, helped to outline the top 42 recommendations. This was shared with the Task Force to shape the final recommendations and quick starts.

SUMMARY OF MTFCH PROCESS

VISION

Burnaby is a community with affordable housing for all of its residents

PRINCIPLES

The City is committed to the following principles:

1. Providing a varied range and mix of **housing opportunities** to accommodate a diversity of household types, sizes, ages, abilities and income levels.
2. Giving priority in its housing programs and projects to create opportunities **for affordable and special needs housing**.
3. Creating collaborative and successful **partnerships** with all levels of government, non-profit societies, and the private sector for programs that will create and support affordable housing.
4. Ensuring that it remains an **inclusive and diverse** community that serves our citizens with dignity, respect and fairness.
5. Creating and sustaining the best **quality of life** with its housing programs to enhance neighbourhood livability and promote compact, complete communities.
6. Ensuring that its housing programs are inclusive and promote wide **community consultation** to involve our citizens in planning the types and location of housing.

7. Creating housing programs and policies that support and improve protections for our citizens who are **tenants**.
8. Protecting **public lands and assets** that have been achieved as a benefit for community housing as a permanent legacy to house and support future generations of our citizens.
9. Continuing to strive to **innovate and lead** in the creation of new programs and opportunities to create and protect community housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force outlined 18 recommendations and 10 quick starts to help expand housing options and improve housing affordability for the people of Burnaby. Collectively, the recommendations are envisioned to frame a new approach to housing, in which the City plays a more direct role in encouraging affordability and choice.

The recommendations build upon existing City policies, or identify gaps where City policy or direction is needed. Some recommendations are pilot projects meant to test an idea or approach, while others call for enduring policy changes. Some ideas have been tried elsewhere and there is value in adapting it to the Burnaby context. Others are novel ideas.

PROGRESS + ACHIEVEMENTS

QUICK START RECOMMENDATIONS

QUICK START	PROGRESS	STATUS
QUICK STARTS FOR RENTAL HOUSING		
1 Create a Modular Housing Strategy	Strategy forthcoming; the City and BC Housing are currently working together to add more supportive modular housing in the City, in addition to creating an Emergency Response Centre on City land.	In Progress
2 Regulate Short-Term Rental Housing	A regulatory and enforcement framework for Short-Term Rental was adopted by Council on 2020 July 6; bylaw amendments forthcoming.	In Progress
3 Adopt a Robust Tenant Assistance Policy	A new Tenant Assistance Policy, based on the approach identified by the Task Force, was adopted by Council on 2020 March 9.	
4 Establish a Rent Bank Using Housing Fund Monies	A temporary Rent Bank was established in April 2020 to support renters in maintaining their housing and preventing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. The City is further working with BC Rent Bank to establish a permanent Rent Bank.	
5 Scale Up/Increase Additional Density for Projects with Below-market Rentals	The finalized Rental Use Zoning Policy, adopted by Council on 2020 March 9, requires new market and below-market units in exchange for an additional density offset.	
QUICK STARTS FOR HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS		
6 Partner with BC Housing, Non-profits, and Private Developers for More Non-Market Housing	The City is partnering with BC Housing, non-profits and private developers to develop new non-market housing units. This includes potentially 1,150 new non-market units supported through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BC Housing.	In Progress
7 Use a Portfolio Approach for the City Lands Program for Non-Market Housing	The City used a portfolio approach in a recent Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek non-profit housing partners to develop and operate non-market housing on four City-owned sites. Using this approach, Council agreed to partner with Catalyst Community Developments for two sites and Vancouver Native Housing Society/ M'akola Housing Society for two sites.	In Progress
QUICK STARTS FOR LAND USE, ZONING AND APPROVALS		
8 Simplify Zoning and Other Requirements to Increase the Number of Homes in More Neighbourhoods	Initiatives are underway to amend the Zoning Bylaw to increase the number of homes in more neighbourhoods, including an in-process amendment to permit market rental developments in the C8 and C9 zoning districts without Comprehensive Development rezoning.	In Progress
QUICK STARTS FOR RESEARCH		
9 Commission a Land Value Capture Study	The City participated in a TransLink and Metro Vancouver study on Land Use Capture. Additional investigation into this potential financial tool will be explored.	In Progress
10 Gather Data on Empty Homes	The City has received 2019 provincial data on the Speculation and Vacancy Tax, and is currently waiting for 2020 data to be released to municipalities. The City has also gathered data on non-resident ownership through the Canadian Housing Statistics Program.	

QUICK START HIGHLIGHTS



The **Your Voice. Your Home.** public engagement process, led by SFU's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, was named runner-up for a Core Values Award for Creativity, Contribution and Innovation in the Field by IAP2 Canada, a national association focused on excellence in the field of public participation.

The **Your Voice. Your Home.** process also received an honourable mention for Excellence in Governance for the Union of British Columbia Municipalities 2020 Community Excellence Awards.

QUICK START 4



In partnership with BC Rent Bank, the City provided a grant of \$30,000 from the new Operating Housing Reserve to establish a temporary rent bank for Burnaby renters, in April 2020. The temporary rent bank is operated by the Lower Mainland Purpose Society.

QUICK START 1

The City opened 52 modular supportive housing units for homeless individuals in October 2019 with funding from BC Housing with another 45 units currently in the development approvals process.



QUICK START 3 5

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 10 12

The City's new Tenant Assistance Policy is the first of its kind in Canada, requiring monthly rent top-ups to be paid to displaced tenants to ensure their rent stays the same while awaiting replacement housing. In addition, the City's Rental Use Zoning Policy gives displaced tenants the right of first refusal for a new unit on the redeveloped site, at similar rents as they paid before.



PROGRESS + ACHIEVEMENTS

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

THEME 1 – CREATE LIVABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS		
RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS	STATUS
1 Develop a plan for introducing new housing forms and family-oriented housing in a variety of neighbourhoods	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
2 Create sustainable and accessible communities, with a range of amenities and services, in and around arterials and transit corridors.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy and Transportation Plan, and will be incorporated in the new Official Community Plan.	In Progress
3 Launch an education and advocacy campaign to increase community acceptance of new housing forms.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
THEME 2 – INVEST IN HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS		
4 Review the City's land assets to identify suitable sites to pilot a portfolio development opportunity.	Underway and incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
5 Create a program to facilitate redevelopment of under-utilized land for affordable housing.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy and will be incorporated in the new Official Community Plan.	In Progress
6 Review the mandate and allocation of the City's Housing Fund to maximize its support for Task Force recommendations.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
7 Negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BC Housing and CMHC to establish terms for partnerships.	MOU with BC Housing complete; working closely with CMHC on partnership opportunities.	In Progress
8 Build on the City's Homelessness Response to create more homes for people experiencing homelessness.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
9 Co-locate affordable housing with community facilities such as community centres, firehalls, schools, libraries, and other suitable public facilities.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy and will be incorporated in the new Official Community Plan.	In Progress

THEME 3 – SUPPORT RENTAL HOUSING AND TENANTS

10 Adopt a robust tenant relocation policy.	A new Tenant Assistance Policy, based on the approach identified by the Task Force, was adopted by Council on 2020 March 9.	
11 Explore incentives and accountability for the maintenance of older rental buildings.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
12 Increase the supply of affordable rental housing.	The finalized Rental Use Zoning Policy was adopted by Council on 2020 March 9, which requires new market rental and below-market rental in new developments; additional actions to increase the supply of affordable rental housing will be incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress

THEME 4 – PROMOTE INNOVATIVE HOUSING POLICY AND BUILD CAPACITY

RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS	STATUS
13 Consider increasing the percentage of density bonus funds allocated to housing.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
14 Establish a housing department to coordinate housing work.	A Housing Team has been established with five staff, including a full-time Tenant Assistance Planner.	In Progress
15 Increase staff and review regulations to speed housing approvals.	Two new staff in Current Planning have been hired to speed up housing approvals.	In Progress
16 Support the development of more housing co-operatives.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
17 Pursue innovative financing mechanisms for non-market housing, such as land value capture.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress
18 Adopt ways to support affordable home ownership.	Incorporated into HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy.	In Progress

QUICK START 5

FINAL RECOMMENDATION 12

The finalized Rental Use Zoning Policy, adopted by Council in March 2020, provides the framework for how the City will enable both the replacement and increase of rental housing at a variety of affordability levels.

The City was the first municipality to adopt rental tenure zoning following a provincial legislation change in May 2018.



NEXT STEPS



BURNABY'S HOUSING + HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

HOME: BURNABY'S HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

Building upon the success of the Task Force and **Your Voice. Your Home.**, the City is now working on **HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy**, a comprehensive policy document that incorporates the Task Force recommendations and quick starts into a framework to address challenges and opportunities across the entire housing system, including reducing homelessness. This will be Burnaby's first housing and homelessness strategy.

HOME will identify specific action items and guide City decisions on housing for the next 10 years. It will be informed by a Housing Needs Report (see sidebar) which will highlight the number and type of housing units that are needed in Burnaby now and into the future.

THE PROPOSED VISION OF HOME IS:

A HOME FOR EVERYONE
A place where everyone can find a home, afford a home, and feel at home

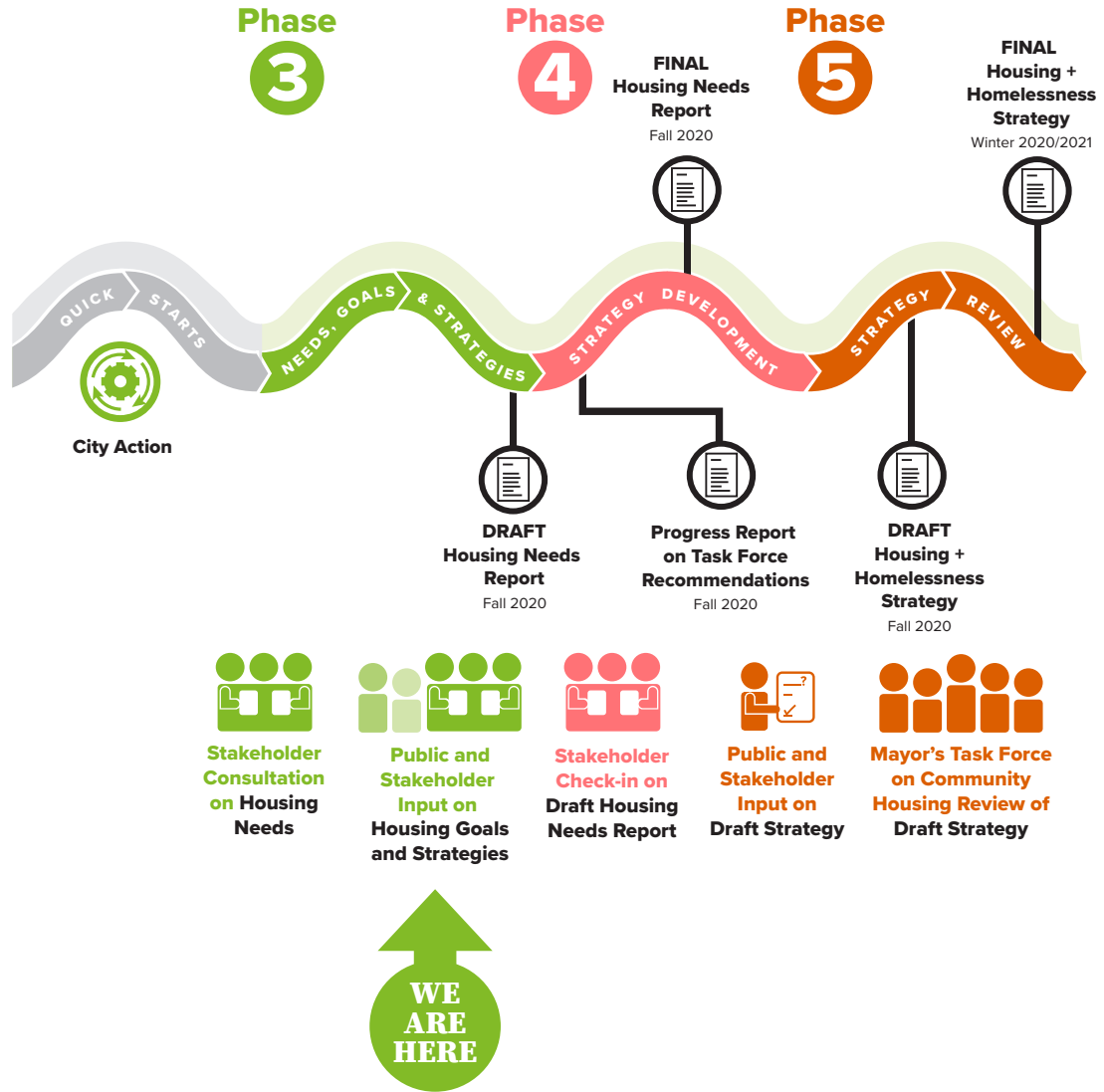
WHAT IS A HOUSING NEEDS REPORT?

In 2019, the province amended the Local Government Act to require all local governments to complete a Housing Needs Report by 2022. These reports look at a combination of statistical data—from sources such as Statistics Canada, CMHC, BC Housing, and others—and community and stakeholder input to create a comprehensive picture of housing and homelessness needs in a community. Once completed, they must be updated every five years.

THE PROPOSED GOALS FOR HOME ARE:

1. Inclusive and Livable Neighbourhoods
2. Options for Home Ownership
3. A Renter-Friendly Community
4. A Healthy Supply of Non-Market Housing
5. Homelessness that is Rare, Brief, and One Time

HOME TIMELINE



HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy will help build upon the City's Climate Action Framework with a focus on resilient neighbourhoods and low-carbon housing.

