



Your Voice. Your Home.

Meeting the Housing Needs of Burnaby Residents

MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON COMMUNITY HOUSING M I N U T E S

Monday, March 1, 2021, 4:00 p.m.

Electronic Meeting

- PRESENT:**
- Councillor Pietro Calendino, Chair
 - Mayor Mike Hurley, Vice Chair
 - Councillor Sav Dhaliwal
 - Councillor Joe Keithley
 - Councillor James Wang
 - Mr. Thom Armstrong, Co-operative Housing Federation of BC
 - Mr. Mike Bosa, Solterra Developments
 - Mr. Patrick Buchannon, New Chelsea Society
 - Ms. Lois Budd, Resident Representative
 - Mr. Paul Holden, Burnaby Board of Trade
 - Mr. Beau Jarvis, Wesgroup Properties
 - Dr. Paul Kershaw, Generation Squeeze
 - Mr. Brian McCauley, Concert Properties
 - Ms. Anne McMullin, Urban Development Institute
 - Mr. Murray Martin, ACORN
 - Ms. Kari Michaels, BC Government and Services Employees' Union
 - Ms. Claire Preston, Resident Representative
 - Mr. Daniel Tetrault, Burnaby Teachers' Association
- SFU STAFF:**
- Ms. Shauna Sylvester, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, SFU
 - Ms. Michelle Bested, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, SFU
 - Ms. Zaria Alibhai, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, SFU
- CITY STAFF:**
- Mr. Dipak Dattani, Director Corporate Services
 - Ms. Lee-Ann Garnett, Assistant Director, Long Range Planning
 - Mr. David Clutton, Long Range Planning
 - Ms. Sarah Crawford, Long Range Planning
 - Ms. Lily Ford, Long Range Planning
 - Ms. Emily Gray, Long Range Planning
 - Mr. Mark Norton, Current Planning

CITY STAFF: Ms. Carla Schuk, Long Range Planning
(cont'd) Mr. Grant Taylor, Current Planning
Ms. Zeralynne Te, Long Range Planning
Ms. Wendy Tse, Long Range Planning
Ms. Blanka Zeinabova, City Clerk
Ms. Eva Prior, Acting Deputy City Clerk

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Councillor Calendino, Chair, called the Open meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and conducted the roll call. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all members of the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing participated electronically.

Councillor Calendino, Chair, recognized the ancestral and unceded homelands of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ and Skwxwú7mesh speaking peoples, and extended appreciation for the opportunity to hold a meeting on this territory.

Ms. Shauna Sylvester, SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, welcomed everyone to the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing.

2. **INTRODUCTION**

2.1 **Opening remarks by Mayor Hurley**

His Worship, Mayor Mike Hurley, welcomed all members of the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing. The following is the text of the Mayor's remarks:

"Thank you Shauna.

As the Executive Director for the SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, you have played an integral role in ensuring the success of this Task Force. We're grateful for your continued involvement in this process.

To all of you with us today: Welcome back, and thank you for being here.

It's been more than two years since we first formed the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing. The diversity of this group was an important feature as we worked towards our vision: a community with affordable housing for all of its residents.

To accomplish that goal, we needed to hear perspectives from across the housing spectrum, because the housing crisis in Metro Vancouver affects all of us. It affects seniors who want to continue living in their neighbourhood as they age, students looking for affordable places to rent. It affects vulnerable individuals who find

themselves without permanent housing, as well as young families looking to set down roots in our city.

As this group came together, we recognized the need to provide real solutions and actions to address to respond to the diverse needs of our community, and you delivered.

After the largest public engagement in Burnaby's history, this Task Force delivered its final report to council on July 29, 2019. The recommendations and quick start actions outlined in that final report have proven to be invaluable as we tackle the housing crisis.

Since the final report was approved by council, Burnaby has adopted one of the most robust and progressive tenant assistance policies in Canada. This policy ensures that people can stay in their neighbourhood at the same rent, even as buildings are redeveloped.

We were also the first municipality in BC to institute a rental-use zoning policy, which requires a minimum of 20 per cent below-market rental housing in most new developments. And at the recommendation of this task force, we are working with the province and non-profit partners to deliver more than 1,150 units of non-market and affordable housing. And by working with BC Housing, we opened two shelters for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and a supportive housing complex at Norland Place.

These are landmark achievements and I am extremely proud to see recommendations made by this Task Force enacted so quickly.

We certainly faced challenges, including the disruptive nature of a global pandemic, but we continued to push forward. The work of this Task Force has already led to meaningful change which will make a difference in the lives of Burnaby residents, present and future. And I'm excited about the work ahead. That's why I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with all of you again, even in this virtual setting.

Last month, I had the pleasure of sitting in on the reconvening of resident workshop. It was a pleasure to sit among our residents and listen to them, they were a little frustrated, but overall what was shared is that they like the direction we are going and appreciate what we are doing. It was wonderful to get the feedback, which we appreciated and fully understood.

And tonight I look forward to hearing your perspective on the work we've accomplished thus far. Thank you, once again, for joining us today.

With that, I would like to turn the mic over to our Chair, Councillor Pietro Calendino.”

2.2 Opening remarks by Councillor Calendino, Chair

Councillor Calendino delivered the following opening remarks:

“Thank you, Your Worship.

I would also like to start by expressing my sincere gratitude to you Shauna, for all the work you have done to help facilitate this process. SFU has been a valued partner throughout this whole process. Staff with the J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue provided us with a vital connection to the community by designing and facilitating the Your Voice. Your Home. public engagement campaign.

As the Mayor mentioned, this was the largest public engagement in our City’s history. More than 2,600 members of the public participated in the process, and helped to generate more than 1,500 ideas and comments.

More than two years ago, I had the distinct pleasure of being named chair for this Task Force. Despite our diverse perspectives, our role was to collaborate to make recommendations to address the urgent housing issues in Burnaby. Our group worked through dozens of proposed policies and strategies, and differences of opinion naturally emerged. But we worked through this process in good faith and in democratic fashion. And we achieved consensus as we developed a comprehensive final report to deliver to City Council.

Recognizing the urgent nature of the housing crisis, the City has already started to take action on a number of the 18 recommendations we included in the report.

I am honoured to have the chance to work with you all once again as we revisit and reflect on the progress we’ve made since we submitted our Final Report. And I’m excited to share details of how our recommendations have already begun to reshape how people access housing in Burnaby.

Reconvening this group also allows us to discuss the challenges that are still ahead of us, and our priorities for the coming years. I want to thank you all for everything you have contributed already to this community. And I look forward to having the opportunity to work with you again today.

Thank you.”

2.3 Overview of the Agenda, Logistics and Opening Round by Shauna Sylvester

Ms. Shauna Sylvester, Executive Director, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, welcomed the public and thanked the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing (Task Force) members for their willingness to re-convene.

Ms. Sylvester reviewed the Terms of Reference, and reiterated the following from the Task Force Final Report:

'In the spirit of collaboration, the Task Force requests that the City follow-up within 16 months of receiving this report, with a progress report on the implementation of these housing initiatives. We would support re-convening as a Task Force to review this progress. We have appreciated the opportunity to work together and learn from each other on how to make Burnaby a better place for all its citizens. Task Force members will continue to advise, educate and advocate for measures that are in the spirit of our recommendations.'

Ms. Sylvester initiated an introductory round asking Task Force members 'What is one question you would like answered tonight?'

The following is a summation of the questions raised by the Task Force members:

Progress

- How fast are we going to be moving on the next set of priorities?
- Are we going to try and speed things up to get back on track?
- How satisfied is everyone with reconvening?
- What is the feedback from stakeholders and the community?
- Are Council and staff pleased with the number of units being built?

When

- When will we be welcoming the first residents into the new homes resulting from the Task Force initiatives?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted progress and how will we recover from it?
- Timing? How long will it take for us to cut the ribbon on the first building?
- How fast can we move forward?

Data

- Number of units in process, number of units not built?
- Housing prices have continued to escalate, other actions?
- How many homes have been approved, how many have been withdrawn?
And what has Council's response been to these?

Tenant Relocation Policy

- What is the number of units emptied, and what is the number of people using the Tenant Relocation Policy?
- What has been happening with tenant relocations?

Working Families

- What is being done for working families within Burnaby?
- What progress is being made on different housing forms, such as laneway housing and more?

Challenges and Gaps

- Pandemic aside, what other challenges or gaps are being encountered?

3. PRESENTATION

3.1 Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing Update

Ms. Lee-Ann Garnett, Assistant Director Long Range Planning, presented an overview of the accomplishments of Task Force, resulting in 18 Recommendations and 10 Quick Starts which will expand housing options and improve housing affordability in the City.

Ms. Garnett advised that at the commencement of the work process, assistance for the City's vulnerable residents was prioritized. Through Council support, the following initiatives were achieved: adoption of the Tenant Assistance and Rental Use Zoning Policies; use of City-owned land in partnerships with BC Housing, non-profit housing operators, the private sector and other levels of government to encourage affordable housing development; and working with the Lower Mainland Purpose Society to support a permanent Burnaby Rent Bank. The subsequent Housing Needs Report and Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (the HOME Strategy) have advanced foundational policies.

In conclusion, Ms. Garnett advised that the direction provided by the Task Force Quick Starts and Recommendations have been instrumental in advancing the initiatives achieved thus far, and will continue to guide staff in meeting the needs of the City's residents.

4. SUPPORTING MATERIALS

4.1 Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing Progress Report

The report was submitted to provide a summary of achievements, current progress and next steps in regard to the 10 Quick Starts and 18 Recommendations made by the Task Force.

4.2 Burnaby Needs - Housing Profiles and Personas

Burnaby housing profiles and personas reflect the diverse housing experiences of the City's residents. The SFU Centre for Dialogue developed composite housing profiles of fictional residents based on survey and interview responses. Task Force members were each assigned a persona and requested to reflect on whether the needs of that persona had been met through the Housing Progress Report.

4.3 Resident Reconvening Workshop: What We Heard Report

The What We Heard Report was independently prepared by SFU's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue to provide an overview of participant input and discussions at the Your Voice. Your Home. Resident Reconvening Workshop held on 2021 February 11.

At the Resident Reconvening Workshop, 13 resident representatives that had originally attended the Your Voice. Your Home. Community Recommendations Workshop held in 2019 May, were requested to evaluate progress made by the City on community housing.

The information provided in this report was shared with the Task Force at the meeting, was posted on the City's website at www.burnaby.ca/yourvoice-housing, and will support the spring 2021 HOME Strategy engagement process.

5. SESSION 1

5.1 Review of the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing Recommendations - Needs of Burnaby Residents

The Task Force members were each assigned a persona and requested to prepare a pre-assessment evaluation. The responses provided were from the perspective of the assigned persona, based on information from the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing Progress Report.

The Task Force members were requested to enter into break-out rooms and share their responses to the evaluation: 'Have the needs of your persona been met?' and 'Are there any gaps?'

Mr. Mike Bosa left the meeting at 5:10 and did not return

6. **SESSION 2**

6.1 **Review of the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing Recommendations - Forms and Function**

During Session 2, Task Force members were once again asked to join a pre-determined breakout group, and rotated through discussions on the following topics:

- Low-Income Rental Housing and Homelessness;
- Community and Non-Profit Housing, including Co-Operatives;
- Workforce and Missing Middle Housing; and
- Market Housing and Town Centers.

The information gathered from this activity will be summarized in the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing Reconvening Meeting: What We Heard Report. This report will be presented at a future Council meeting.

7. **SESSION 3**

7.1 **Review Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing Recommendations - Progress Survey**

The Task Force members were requested to complete a survey to evaluate the progress of the Task Force Quick Starts and Recommendations.

The survey was comprised of the following questions:

Quick Start Feedback

1. Considering both the powers and constraints facing the City, how satisfied are you with the progress the City has made to date in advancing the Quick Start recommendations?
2. Looking to the future, what level of confidence do you have with the direction the City of Burnaby is taking to advance the Quick Start recommendations?
3. To what degree have the needs of Burnaby residents been met by the progress made on the Quick Starts recommendations?

4. In your opinion, which Quick Start recommendations have seen the most progress? Please select as many as you wish.
5. In your opinion, which Quick Start recommendations need the most attention and priority? Please select as many as you wish.

Recommendations Feedback

6. Considering both the powers and constraints facing the City, how satisfied are you with the progress the City has made to date in advancing the Task Force Recommendations?
7. Looking to the future, what level of confidence do you have with the direction the City of Burnaby is taking to advance the Task Force Recommendations?
8. To what degree have the needs of Burnaby residents been met by the progress made on the Task Force Recommendations?
9. In your opinion, which Task Force Recommendations have seen the most progress? Please select as many as you wish.
10. In your opinion, which Task Force Recommendations need the most attention and priority? Please select as many as you wish.

The information gathered from this survey will be included in the Mayor's Task Force on Community Housing Reconvening Meeting: What We Heard Report. This report will be presented at a future Council meeting.

8. SESSION 4

8.1 What's Next?

Ms. Michelle Bested, Engagement and Social Enterprise Manager, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, provided the Task Force with key observations from the Progress Survey.

Priorities Moving Forward

The Task Force members were requested to provide a response to 'Looking forward, what do you think the priorities should be for the City in advancing community housing?' The following are the responses grouped by themes:

Progress

- Enormous progress has been made, we are hopeful, but work remains.
- Continue to pursue additional partnerships.
- City is heading in the right direction, stay the course.

- Working staff really hard – market housing, affordable housing (for those that need assistance), homelessness (subsidized), sustainable incentives (funding, discounted mortgage rates), advocacy (Provincial, Federal).
- City has taken leadership with their own sites (initiated rezoning, executing).
- Do more, faster. It can take up to 9-10 years from start to finish for new projects.
- Housing is our first priority.
- Priorities moving forward, partnerships with unions and developers, City has contributed \$128 million in property, we need others to come to the table.

Senior Government Support

- Senior levels of government need to coordinate their programs.
- Can't do it alone. We need increased support from the Provincial and Federal governments.

Communications

- Let residents know about the progress being made, particularly on rental housing.
- Need additional support from Provincial and Federal governments.
- The City is moving forward full-tilt.

Looking Forward

- Need to be realistic and recognize the obstacles.
- There is a structural issue – housing prices continue to rise faster than earnings, even during a pandemic. COVID hasn't stopped the housing crisis. Not enough has been done. We need to do more.

Rentals and Rental Stock

- Rental stock is aging (most is 40-50 years old, some about 100 years old).
- Tenants and landlords have to talk things through, review situation and be progressive.
- When will we see the first few new buildings?

Land Use Policy

- Experience from other areas like Victoria, Metro Vancouver, Kelowna tells us there is benefit in linking municipal tools together – link OCP update to the Housing Needs Report – identify where the units will land, pre-zone the land (to speed things up).

- Need to review funding models – density bonus is leaving 700-800 units behind, we can't make sense of it, time to check-in and review it.
- Pursue densification in all areas like four-plexes, six-plexes.

9. **SUMMARY**

9.1 **Closing Round by Shauna Sylvester**

To close the meeting, Task Force members were asked to respond to following prompt: 'What is one line you want captured in our summary of this meeting?'

Specific comments from each Task Force member are included below, grouped by the following themes:

Progress

- Grateful for the many contributions made by the Task Force and the UBCM award.
- Breadth of work, good for all, community-wide body of work.
- City of Burnaby is totally committed to a complex issue.
- City is taking the lead regionally – Tenant Assistance Policy, homelessness, partnerships.
- HOME Strategy will cover the next 10 years, confident about the future.
- We have done a lot.
- Great start, looking forward to more affordable housing.

Senior Government Support

- All three levels of government are needed. (2 members)
- Need additional Provincial and Federal support. (2 members)

More, Faster

- Need to speed things up and expedite processes.
- Problem is acute, ingrained, so much more to do.
- Be bolder, faster, more ambitious.
- More, faster, keep working, work harder, increase supply.

Communications

- We have done a lot and we need to work to get the message out.
- More education about the work that has been done. We need to get everyone involved.
- Continued communications and leadership will be required to bring about change in communities.
- Need to get out in front of the issue.

Change

- We have to reimagine decades of existing housing policy. Things done here will inspire change in the City and beyond, leadership will be required, criticism may come, leverage, be bold, benefit residents the most.
- Challenges of affordability, developers, non-profits, missing middle, work force housing.
- We have been adapting to large changes during the pandemic. Restoring housing affordability is easier than what we have done to respond to COVID. It is possible. Let's get on with it.

Market Housing

- We have seen the destruction of market housing.
- We need the decommodification of housing.

Ms. Shauna Sylvester thanked the Task Force members for their willingness to reconvene and their contributions to the meeting. Ms. Sylvester recognized the tremendous amount of work that has been accomplished by Council and staff.

9.2 Closing Remarks by Mayor Hurley

His Worship, Mayor Mike Hurley, thanked the Task Force members and staff for the time and effort they have contributed to the process.

9.3 Closing Remarks by Councillor Calendino

Councillor Calendino thanked the Task Force for their insight, professionalism, expertise and commitment to the process.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY MS. KARI MICHAELS

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR JOE KEITHLEY

THAT this Open Committee meeting do now adjourn.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Open Committee meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

CHAIR

CITY CLERK