

Burnaby 2050 Policy Directions

Housing

Overview

As Burnaby's population grows, it's becoming more challenging for residents to find available and affordable housing. Home ownership and rental housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable, and it's likely that the percentage of people renting homes in the city will increase.

Burnaby needs more rental housing, especially affordable rental housing, to meet the community's needs. In 2021, 38% of renters were spending more than 30% of their income on shelter, the benchmark for whether a household can afford suitable and adequate housing in the community. Some community groups face greater challenges with finding and affording housing, including lone-parent households (especially women who are the only parent in their household), seniors, non-permanent residents, recent immigrants and Indigenous people living in Burnaby.

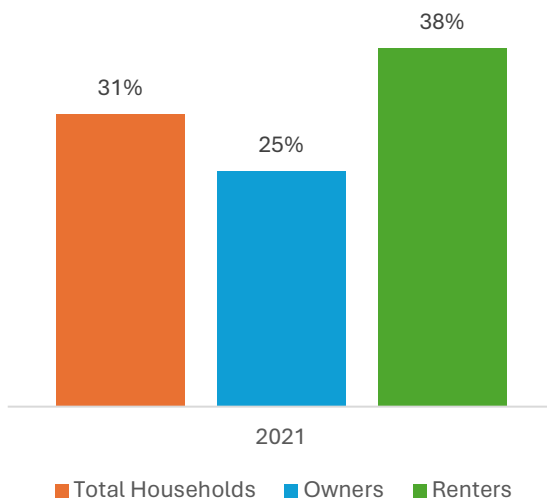


Figure 1: Proportion of Burnaby Households Spending More Than 30% of Their Before-Tax Income on Shelter (Statistics Canada)



Figure 2: Projected Increase in Dwelling Counts in Burnaby by 2050

The proposed housing policies aim to:

- Align with new provincial housing legislation that allows higher densities in certain areas and other plans and strategies, including Burnaby's [Housing and Homelessness Strategy \(HOME\)](#) and the [Metro 2050 Regional Growth Strategy](#).
- Create compact, livable communities that offer different housing options to residents.
- Use the information in the [Housing Needs Report](#) to understand gaps and address current and future housing needs.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges:

- Short time frames to address changes to provincial housing legislation in city policies and bylaws.
- High pressure on housing caused by increased home sale prices and rising rent.
- The cost of owning and renting a home is rising faster than incomes in Burnaby.
- High demand and a long waitlist for subsidized housing.
- Households with lower incomes that don't have cars can't afford to live near rapid transit, making it difficult for them to travel around the city and access jobs and services.
- Most residential buildings in Burnaby are 10 to 70 years old and weren't built with energy efficiency or climate change in mind.

Opportunities:

- New provincial legislation will allow for higher density and more variety in housing types.
- The provincial government is reviewing the BC Building Code to improve accessibility in housing design and opportunities to age in place.
- Building Code requirements foster greater energy efficiency and adaptation to climate change in new residential development.
- Plan housing near transit, amenities, services and job opportunities to reduce isolation, strengthen the local economy, and enable people to bike, walk or roll to instead of drive.

Engagement Findings

- Residents are mostly concerned about not having enough options for housing and not being able to afford housing. This is especially true for new immigrants, young workers and seniors.
- Residents want more affordable housing options and high-density, mixed-use development that supports all ages, incomes and abilities.
- Residents want more family housing, non-profit and co-op housing, and more housing with ground level access such as townhouses and rowhouses.
- Infrastructure, such as roads, streetlights, drainage and more, need to be updated to support more housing.
- Community members want new housing to fit with the character of their neighbourhood.

Policy Directions

Inclusive and Livable Neighbourhoods	
Policy Directions	Why We Are Proposing These Policies
1. Provide opportunities for many different forms of housing, tenures (e.g. ownership, rental, co-operative housing), and affordability in mixed-use areas that are close to transit and have shops and services nearby.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A wider variety housing gives community members more choices that better meet their needs.• Housing that is close to shops, transit and services encourages people to walk, bike or take transit more often, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

<p>2. Help create different types of housing that meet the needs of different community members. This includes, but is not limited to, housing for people with disabilities, low-income households, families, seniors, Indigenous people and immigrants.</p> <p>a) Work with other orders of government and community partners to find ways to create housing that meets the needs of specific groups.</p> <p>b) Develop inclusive design principles.</p> <p>c) Use the development process to help create more accessible housing.</p> <p>d) Work with host Nations and organizations that serve Indigenous people living in Burnaby to create housing for Indigenous people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>2020 Housing Needs Report</i> found that Burnaby needs more housing that is affordable and accessible. • These policies will help create more housing that offers support to different groups, fosters inclusion and encourages accessibility. • In previous phases of engagement, residents shared that they wanted to have a sense of community in their neighbourhood or building. • Housing that encourages people to connect with each other and build relationships will make individuals and communities happier and healthier. • Housing that is more energy efficient helps reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. • Energy efficient buildings that are designed to adapt to climate change are more comfortable, safer and have lower utility fees.
<p>3. Build stronger communities by promoting connection and relationship-building in multi-family buildings. This could be achieved through developing guidelines for building design and amenities or encouraging development of co-operative or cohousing.</p>	
<p>4. Support climate-friendly and sustainable housing development.</p> <p>a) Encourage the development of energy efficient buildings.</p> <p>b) Require buildings to be adaptable to climate change, such as incidents of more extreme weather.</p> <p>c) Use climate-friendly building and design practices in City projects.</p>	

Secure Housing Tenure	
Policy Directions	Why We Are Proposing These Policies
<p>5. Support housing options that provide security of tenure for residents, such as finding ways to make homeownership more attainable and supporting the development of co-operative housing as an alternative to renting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operative housing offers more security of tenure to residents, which reduces the risk of people having to move between rental homes frequently. • Home ownership is the most secure form of tenure. If there are more affordable options for people to own homes, it will reduce pressure on the rental market.

Renter-Friendly Community	
Policy Directions	Why We Are Proposing These Policies
6. Continue to protect and grow the supply of rental housing in Burnaby.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is growing demand for rental housing. The supply of rental housing also needs to grow to keep prices affordable. • Protecting existing rental housing will help keep affordable options available to residents and reduce the environmental impact of demolishing and building new housing. • Tenants are sometimes forced to move when their home is rezoned to enable redevelopment. • Working with developers to make sure that they are providing support to their tenants reduces tenants' stress and cost when they need to find a new home.
7. Continue to support renters that have to move when the building they live in is redeveloped as part of rezoning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue to monitor implementation of Tenant Assistance Policy. b) Encourage developers to provide culturally appropriate support to Indigenous tenants that have to move when their home is redeveloped or rezoned. 	

Supply of Non-Market Housing	
Policy Directions	Why We Are Proposing These Policies
8. Expand the supply and price range of non-market housing (rental housing rented at below market rates). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Update community plans and bylaws to encourage more non-market housing. b) Continue to lease City-owned land for development of non-market rentals and co-operative housing. c) Partner with other orders of government, non-profit housing providers and Indigenous housing providers to increase supply of non-market housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Housing Needs Report</i> found that many residents in Burnaby are struggling to afford rental housing. • Creating more affordable rentals that are below the market price will help residents that can't find homes in Burnaby.

Glossary

Housing forms: different structures of housing, such as single- and two- family housing, apartments, townhouses, rowhouses, laneway homes and more.

Co-operative housing: housing where residents become members of a co-operative and own the building or buildings they live in together. This is often more affordable than owning a home individually and has more security than renting a home.

Co-housing: housing where many families and households live together in a close-knit community. Residents own their individual units and share common spaces.

Non-market housing: rental housing that costs less than market rates for rentals in the area.

Related Plans and Strategies

[*Metro 2050 Regional Growth Strategy*](#)

[*Burnaby Housing and Homelessness Strategy \(HOME\)*](#)

[*Burnaby Housing Needs Report*](#)