

## Attachment 10

### *2025 Budget Departmental Memo - Planning and Development*

## Memorandum

To: Lisa Spitale  
Chief Administrative Officer

Date: November 25, 2024

From: Jackie Teed, Director,  
Planning and Development

File: 2607422

**Subject:** Planning and Development Department: 2024  
Accomplishments and Highlights, and 2025 Corporate Priorities

### **2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS**

To align with Council's Strategic Priorities Plan, and respond to changes in provincial housing legislation, in 2024 the Planning and Development Department implemented the following key changes, as identified in the department's November 20, 2023 memo "2024 Budget – A Housing Division to Expedite Housing Permits and Units":

- Created and completed 75% of staffing for a new Land Use and Housing Division, using existing reallocated positions, and new regular and temporary positions funded under the Housing Accelerator Fund through 2026.
- Supported the process to move the Climate Action Team into a new Energy and Climate Action Department to better align with the Strategic Priorities Plan.
- Launched the Crises Response Team, a non-clinical outreach team working in the field to directly assist those with living experience of the three crises in connecting to support services, as well as other basic daily needs. This team is a component of the Crises Response Pilot Project which is co-sponsored with the Engineering Department, Office of the CAO.
- Initiated review of the function and structure of Integrated Services, the City's bylaw enforcement team. This project is co-sponsored with the Engineering Department, which includes the City's parking and animal enforcement functions.

In further support of the departmental role as primary lead on delivering housing of all types: a) the department has been organized under two deputies – the Deputy Director of Planning (responsible for land use and housing, social, and development planning), and the Deputy Director of Building (responsible for building/plumbing permits and inspections); and, b) a department-wide Systems Team has been established, as a direct outcome of the Development Application Process Review which identified a clear need for ongoing innovation and oversight of the processes used by the department in housing planning and approvals.



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This restructuring, which is anticipated to be completed in 2025, has allowed the department to better focus on our core service of housing planning and approvals, implementing provincial legislation changes, and advancing work in support of the 7 Bold Steps and other Council Strategic Priority Plan areas which the department contributes to, such as through the Social Planning team. Some highlights of the department's accomplishments are included below.

### **Housing and Land Use Planning**

- Created the Land Use and Housing Division to help expedite delivery of housing and align with housing needs and priorities set out by senior governments. This team develops, revises, and implements housing policy and initiatives, and supports affordable housing development applications, such as the 602 Agnes Street supportive housing project, which will break ground in 2024.
- Successful recipient of \$11.5M Housing Accelerator Fund, enabling 7 City initiatives to improve the housing approval process, increase housing supply, and expand housing choice, all underway.
- Advanced related projects including: brought for adoption the updated Family Friendly Housing Policy to ensure that residential multi-unit buildings meet the needs of households with children; and, launched the infill housing accelerator project, which will pre-zone to permit up to six residential units in single detached dwelling zones in alignment with direction from the Province, and pre-zone lands for townhouse development.
- Implemented provincial legislative changes, including: designated Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Areas around the five SkyTrain stations; and amended the Zoning Bylaw to remove residential parking requirements in TOD Areas, and to allow small-scale, multi-unit housing on 160 eligible properties.
- Advanced the 22nd Station Vision for a net zero, transit oriented, master planned neighbourhood, to be presented to Council for endorsement in December 2024.
- Launched work to remove barriers to new affordable housing projects that are owned and operated by non-profits by pre-zoning residential properties already envisioned in the Official Community Plan for six story apartment buildings.

### **Social Planning**

- Advanced work related to homelessness, mental health and substance use, such as: participated in the Crises Response Pilot Project Advocacy and Outreach component; advanced implementation of the Homelessness Action Strategy; and supported Homelessness Action Week activities in partnership with the New Westminster Homelessness Coalition Society.



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- Added 10 mats and up to 25 beds in a temporary extreme weather emergency shelter.
- Advanced work to support vulnerable residents, such as implemented training related to Sex Worker Safety Policy, and launched Tenant Protection Policy.
- Advanced other community supportive work, such as launched Citywide Public Toilet Strategy, with a focus on the unhouse, and coordinated the 'New to New West' Intercultural Festival and Information Fair.
- Realized senior government funding and launched work for: Age Friendly Community Strategy update, and Food Security Action Plan update.
- Managed provincial child care grants related to the Queensborough Community Centre and the tēmōsewtx<sup>w</sup> Aquatic and Community Centre, and worked to help stabilize four existing child care facilities facing possible closure.

### **Development Planning**

- Launched the Financing Growth Review to establish a strategy for funding the infrastructure and amenities needed to support community growth.
- Advanced new policy for Council endorsement, including: Interim Development Application Review Policy, Interim Density Bonus policy, and Policy for the Review of New Unit Additions in Existing Rental Buildings.
- Completed the Development Application Process Review (DAPR) and presented implementation actions for Council endorsement.
- Launched the Lower Twelfth Street Area Plan, and Inclusionary Housing policy update which will enable the delivery of affordable rental units.
- Achieved Third Reading for the Columbia Square Master Plan a development that is proposing 3,000 units, 4% affordable housing and upwards of \$60 million in density bonus funding, enabling launch of the master planning process.

### **Building & Plumbing**

- Streamlined permit approval processes in support of provincial legislation, digitization, faster response times, and reduced backlog, including: enhanced permit tracking with dashboard reporting; record digitization with updated and expanded regulatory maintenance and storage protocols.
- Enhanced Business License inspections and Bylaw enforcement supports.
- Expanded Cross Connection Program supporting safety and water quality protection.
- Implemented staff training to align with legislative requirements, including: Energy and technical Code training supporting higher levels of Energy and



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Carbon Step Code and new 2024 Building Code requirements; and achieving required Building & Plumbing technical staff BOABC certifications.

### **Integrated Services**

- Investigated and resolved 872 complaints regarding bylaw violations, including complex matters supporting tenant health and life safety.
- Participated in Crises Response Pilot Project as part of Operations Support Team component, including supporting compassionate compliance, and hiring/on-boarding/training of the Crises Response Team.
- Senior Property Use Coordinator awarded 2024 Bylaw Officer of the Year by Local Government Compliance and Enforcement Association.

### **Crises Response Team**

- Created team and completed 100% of hiring/onboarding/training.
- Developed and nurtured rapport with unsheltered population.
- Developed partnerships and with key non-profit, faith-based, and provincial organizations and teams.
- Outreach completed 450+ interactions with clients since May 2024.
- Outreach facilitated 1100+ referrals to non-profits, faith-based, and provincial organizations and teams since May 2024.

### **Planning and Development Systems Team**

- Created the department-wide Systems Team to help expedite the delivery of housing and align with housing needs and priorities set out by senior governments, as a direct outcome of the Development Application Process Review. The team oversees, improves, maintains, and innovates the many systems used in planning, development and building/plumbing approvals work.

## **2025 CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

The department leads or is a co-sponsor in three 2025 corporate priorities: 1) Implementation of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Station Vision (lead); 2) developing a financing growth strategy (co-sponsor); and 3) the Crises Response Pilot Project (CRPP, co-sponsor). The City is also the lead in all work related to (4) housing delivery, including continuing to implement provincial housing legislation and the City's Housing Accelerator Fund projects. A summary of (1) Implementation of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Station Vision is included below. Updates on (2) the financing growth strategy, and (4) advancing housing delivery are included in separate memos as part of this Council agenda. An update on (3) the CRPP was presented at the Council Workshop on November 18, 2024.



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In addition to the priorities listed above, the Planning and Development Department will: continue to streamline and advance improvements to housing approvals processes, such as digital permitting; carry out our core functions of housing approvals, and Building and Plumbing code compliance; and continue to support community livability through bylaw enforcement, and ongoing social planning initiatives, such as to support food security and child care opportunities.

### **22<sup>nd</sup> Station Vision Implementation**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Street Station Vision will guide growth and change over the long-range in the area surrounding the station for generations to come. The vision is anticipated to be presented to Council for consideration of endorsement in December 2024.

Should Council endorse the vision, the City will then launch the implementation phase, which will require significant inter-departmental analysis and additional planning work. This will include: further examining transportation and access to and within the area, and nearby connections to Queensborough; determining infrastructure requirements to service the growth; establishing public amenities to be achieved through the plan to support ongoing community livability; establishing a financing growth approach for the neighbourhood to fund the costs for the infrastructure and amenities, including the funding expected from development; developing tools to support achieving the plan, such as parcel consolidation and tower location plan; creating regulations, programs and incentives for achieving the strategies in the vision, such as related to the City's climate action priorities; developing and implementing land use designations and related design guidelines.

As part of the implementation process, the City will continue to seek engagement with First Nations on the project, in our ongoing work to advance Reconciliation, and improve the way the City carries out planning and development on the lands now known as New Westminster.

In addition, the City will undertake additional engagement with external agencies and senior government bodies, such as New Westminster Schools, BC Hydro, Metro Vancouver, TransLink, related provincial ministries, and the City of Burnaby.

This extensive work must be undertaken to determine and implement the policies and regulations against which future development applications would be evaluated, and the framework under which the necessary infrastructure and amenities would be provided and funded, including the rate of charges for development applications. Most significant development applications would be considered premature until this work is complete.

This work will involve all City departments, with extensive involvement by Parks and Recreation, Engineering, Energy and Climate Action, Finance, and Planning and Development.