



## Attachment 5

### *Draft Growth Management and Housing OCP Chapters*

# New Westminster Context

## Growth Management: The Next 25 Years

### GROWTH IN THE CONTEXT OF THE METRO VANCOUVER REGION

Metro Vancouver 2050, the regional growth strategy, is a land use plan aimed at advancing the region's livability and sustainability while managing anticipated growth. Metro 2050 sets out goals and strategies to guide the future growth of the region and provides the land use planning framework for transportation, economic development, housing, utilities (water, liquid waste and solid waste), environment and climate change.

The Metro 2050 population projections recognize that people are moving to and staying in Metro Vancouver because it is an attractive place to live, work, play and learn. Metro 2050 policies and the regional land use designations within the strategy direct growth to the right places, such as in mixed use areas well-served by transit, and protect important agricultural, conservation, recreation, and industrial lands from urban residential development. Map 4 shows the regional land use designations for New Westminster.

Metro 2050 includes regional overlays that are key to achieving the five goals of the Regional Growth Strategy. This includes Urban Centre and Frequent Transit Development Area (FTDA) overlays, which enable higher density residential and commercial development in urban areas of the region. Map 5 shows the boundaries of New Westminster's Urban Centre and three Frequent Transit Development Areas.

Urban Centres are intended to be priority locations for a mix of higher density housing, employment, services and amenities. Downtown is designated as a Regional City Centre, one type of Urban Centre. A Regional City Centre is intended to serve a Metro Vancouver sub-region with regional-scale employment, services, business and commercial activity.

Frequent Transit Development Areas are additional priority locations for concentrated growth along the Frequent Transit Network, where transit service runs at least every 15 minutes in both directions throughout the day and into the evening, every day of the week. Two of New Westminster's FTDA's are focused around the city's SkyTrain stations: one around 22nd Street Station, and a second combined area around Sapperton and Braid stations. Uptown is also identified as a FTDA as this area provides local-serving commercial activities, a mix of housing types, and good access to frequent transit.

#### REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Metro 2050 is a shared commitment by Metro Vancouver and member municipalities to work together to achieve five fundamental goals:

**Goal 1:** Create a Compact Urban Area

**Goal 2:** Support a Sustainable Economy

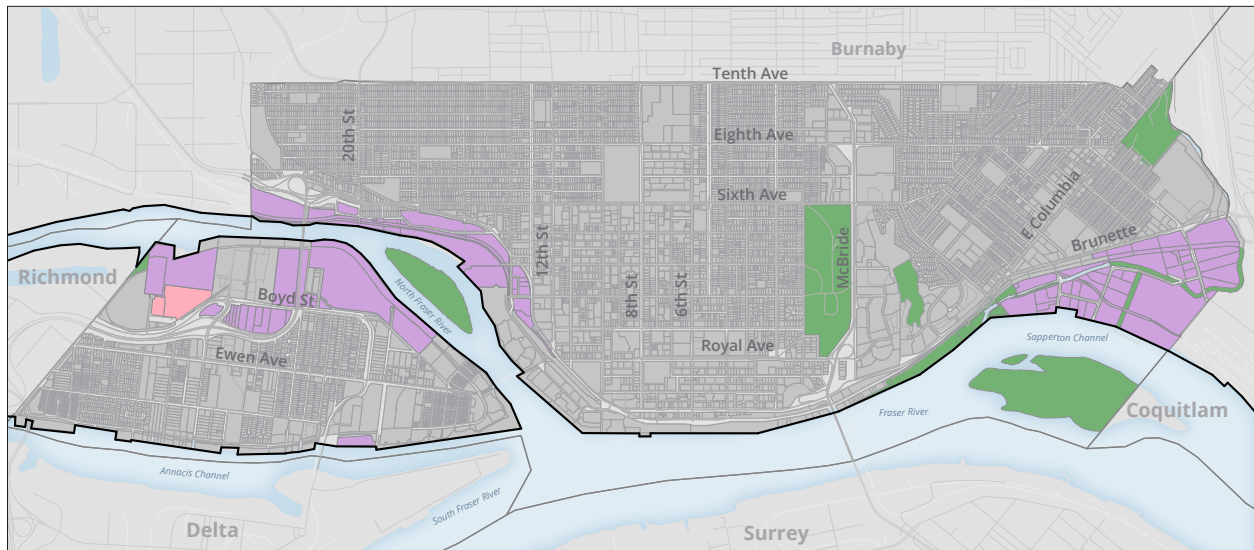
**Goal 3:** Protect the Environment, Address Climate Change, and Respond to Natural Hazards

**Goal 4:** Provide Diverse and Affordable Housing Choices

**Goal 5:** Support Sustainable Transportation Choices

The Regional Context Statement outlines how this Plan aligns with the Metro 2050 goals and strategies. The Regional Context Statement is reviewed and approved by Metro Vancouver. The City cannot adopt an Official Community Plan without this approval.

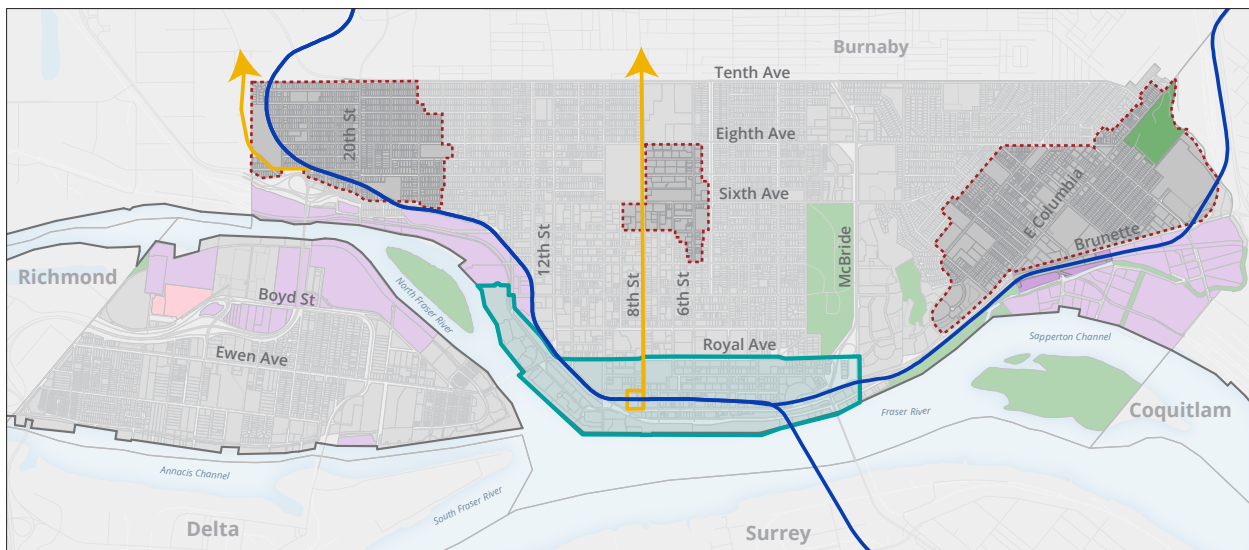
**Map 4. Regional Land Use Designations**



**KEY:**

- Metro 2050 Urban Containment Boundary
- Metro 2050 General Urban Designation
- Metro 2050 Industrial Designation
- Metro 2050 Conservation and Recreation Designation
- Metro 2050 Mixed Employment Designation

**Map 5. Regional City Centre and Frequent Transit Development Areas**



**KEY:**

- Regional City Centre
- Frequent Transit Development Areas
- SkyTrain Route
- Major Transit Network

**WHAT ARE GROWTH PROJECTION SCENARIOS?**

Population projections assist in the management of community growth. They help to determine how many people are expected to live in the community in the future based on past data trends and other factors. Determining this helps identify the community's needs for housing, services and amenities through the lifespan of an official community plan. Population projections are not targets and do not set a cap for community population growth.

Metro Vancouver completed a 2024 update of regional growth projections. This update is presented under three scenarios:

**Medium Growth:** represents a base or reference scenario of projections.

**High Growth and Low Growth:** are developed by modifying assumptions related to immigration and fertility rates.

Dwelling unit and employment projections are also informed by the three scenarios of population projections with the same assumptions.

Metro Vancouver's growth projections estimate the magnitude of growth, based on past trends and assumptions for the future, as well as the distribution of this growth among municipalities. Metro Vancouver's updated regional growth projections include forecasts (from 2021 to 2050) for population, dwelling units, and employment, presented under three growth scenarios (low, medium and high growth).

Figure 1 outlines the medium growth scenario for New Westminister. Under the Medium Growth scenario, Metro Vancouver anticipates New Westminister will grow to a population of 142,790 by 2050. This indicates the city will need to accommodate approximately 59,850 new residents and 28,840 new homes between 2021 and 2050. Also during this period, it is projected that an additional 23,860 new local jobs will be created. A balanced and sustainable plan is needed to manage this projected growth locally and regionally.

In 2025, as part of the Official Community Plan review, the City completed a residential development capacity analysis. This analysis took into account land available for residential development based on the Land Use Designation Map, recent development trends, and assumptions regarding the likelihood of future development of sites. This analysis confirmed that the Land Use Designation Map includes enough capacity for the anticipated 142,790 New Westminister residents by 2050.

Medium Growth Scenario	2021	2030	2040	2050
Population	89,940	106,580	127,390	142,790
Dwelling Units	37,910	49,360	59,300	66,750
Employment	34,660	44,610	52,690	58,520

**Figure 1. New Westminister's Medium Growth Scenario**

*Source: Metro Vancouver Regional Planning's Growth Projections, June 2024*

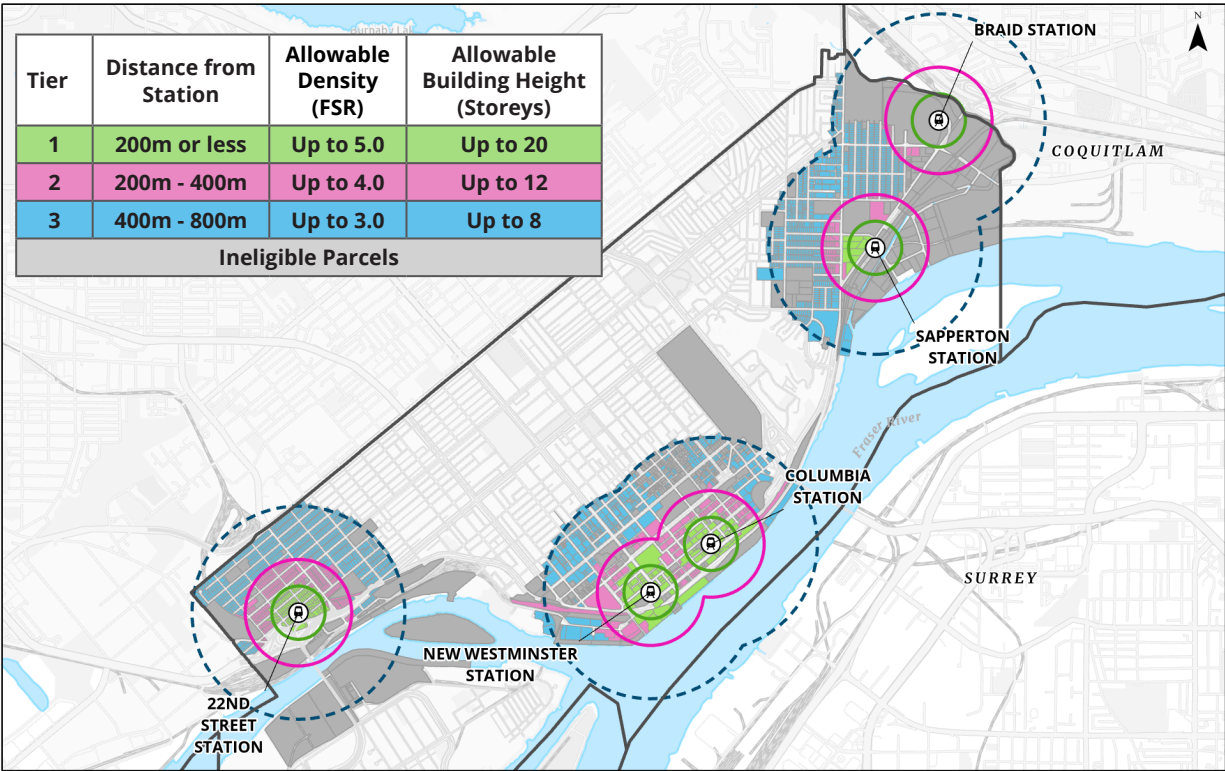
**TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

Five Transit Oriented Development Areas were identified by the Province for New Westminster. In New Westminster, Transit Oriented Development Areas are defined by the Province as residentially zoned land within 800 metres of a SkyTrain station. These areas are intended to enable high-density, mixed-use development within walking distance from frequent transit services. These areas will incorporate a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial (such as grocery stores and retail) and community amenities (such as childcare and parks). Due to this Provincial housing legislation, the City of New Westminster land use designations need to enable eligible projects that meet the minimum height and density allowed by the Province.

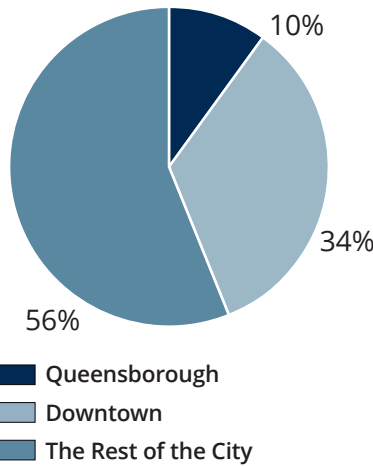
The City's Frequent Transit Development Areas around 22nd Street, Sapperton and Braid Skytrain stations, align with the Transit Oriented Development Areas. The Downtown Community Plan, which covers the City's Regional City Centre, covers the core area of the Transit Oriented Development Areas surrounding the Columbia and New Westminster stations.

**Map 6. Transit Oriented Area Development Tiers in New Westminster**

Source: City of New Westminster



Note: This Map does not confer development rights. The map illustrates parcels located 200m, 400m, and 800m from SkyTrain Stations.



**Figure 2.**  
**Share of Projected Housing Growth (2024-2049)**

Source: Coriolis Consulting Corp, City of New Westminster Population and Housing Forecast – 2024 to 2049

**PAST HOUSING GROWTH**

New Westminster has experienced steady population growth, increasing from 43,585 people in 1991 to 78,916 in 2021 – the equivalent of 1,178 new people per year. In the same timeframe, 16,542 new housing units were built in the city. This reflects many large new developments during this period, including the Quayside neighbourhood and Victoria Hill. Apartments continue to be the main form of dwelling units in New Westminster’s housing stock, as was the case in 1991. The proportion of ground oriented housing and townhouse units has increased slowly, though these forms are still a much smaller proportion of the total housing stock.

Source: Statistics Canada

**ACCOMODATING PROJECTED HOUSING**

A share of the residential development in the city will be absorbed in Downtown and Queensborough. The Community Plans for these two areas allow sufficient development capacity to accommodate the housing demand forecasted for these neighbourhoods. This Plan focuses on allocating the remaining anticipated growth outside of these two neighbourhoods.

The City’s forecasts indicated a population increase of close of 24,097 to 30,474 housing units for the areas outside of Downtown and Queensborough which will generate a demand of close to 11,886 to 14,982 new housing units. The Land Use Designation Map in the Plan enables that this new housing to be accommodated, and located in the right places by identifying where different housing forms will be permitted.

A significant portion of growth is anticipated to occur within two of the City’s Frequent Transit Development Areas: Sapperton and Braid, and 22nd Street stations. These areas will include a mix of medium- to high-density residential, as well as office and retail uses, open space, and community serving facilities. The areas will be seamlessly connected to the SkyTrain stations, bike routes and greenways.

The next highest number of new housing units will be located in Uptown, which has also been identified as a Frequent Transit Development Area. This area will include a mix of medium- to high-density residential, office and local serving retail uses, open space, and community-serving facilities that are connected to the pedestrian-oriented transit corridors of Sixth and Eighth streets. Growth in this area is intended to encourage public transit use and support local businesses.

Outside of these areas, this Plan focuses on increasing housing choice by allowing ground oriented housing forms, such as multiplexes, rowhouses and townhouses, in areas that were previously predominantly single detached dwellings and duplexes.

## EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

There will be a need for additional retail, office, industrial and institutional floor space city-wide. This will correspond with an estimated growth in employment of over 21,000 new jobs by 2041.

**Retail and Service Commercial Floor Space** – The City's 2013 forecast anticipates that New Westminster could support over 65,000 square metres (approximately 700,000 square feet) of neighbourhood-serving retail and service space by 2041. However, to better support existing commercial nodes and avoid market dilution, this Plan has a reduced amount of land designated for retail and service commercial. This will help to ensure that existing commercial nodes within the city, including Great Streets such as East Columbia Street, are vibrant and successful. This additional floor space is projected to translate into an additional 4,200 jobs.

**Office Floor Space** – The City's 2013 forecast anticipates that New Westminster could add close to 200,000 square metres (over 2.0 million square feet) of office floor space by 2041. Some of this floor space will be accommodated in the upper floors of mixed-use buildings located in Downtown, Uptown, and Connaught Heights, and along transit-oriented corridors such as Twelfth Street. The majority of this new space, however, will be accommodated in major developments such as Sapperton Green.

The City will also encourage additional office space within a five-minute walk of Royal Columbian Hospital. For this reason, the area has been identified as a Special Employment Area, recognizing the regionally significant role of the hospital to the city.

The forecasted growth in office floor space across New Westminster will have a significant impact on employment in the city: over 11,300 new office-based jobs are projected by 2041.

**Industrial Floor Space** – The city could see an additional 200,000 square metres (over 2,000,000 square feet) of industrial floor space by 2041. The increase in industrial floor space will be achieved by protecting and better utilizing existing industrial land since no new industrial land is being added. This new floor space is projected to result in almost 3,000 new industrial-based jobs by 2041.

**Institutional Floor Space** – The majority of the increase in institutional floor space is anticipated to occur through the intensification of existing institutions such as Royal Columbian Hospital, the Justice Institute of BC and Douglas College. These institutions are major employers in the city and combined they are projected to add over 2,600 new jobs by 2041.

**Figure 3.  
Anticipated Additional  
Neighbourhood-Serving  
Retail and Service Space by  
Area (2011-2041)**

Source: Coriolis Consulting Corp, City of  
New Westminster Urban Development  
Forecast – 2013 to 2041

Area	Additional Neighbourhood-Serving Retail and Service Space (2013 to 2041)	
The Rest of the City	25,560 sq.m.	(275,131 sq. ft.)
Downtown	28,133 sq.m.	(302,818 sq. ft.)
Queensborough	12,425 sq.m.	(133,738 sq. ft.)
<b>City Wide</b>	<b>66,118 sq.m.</b>	<b>(711,688 sq. ft.)</b>

**Figure 4.  
Anticipated Additional  
Office Floor Space by Area  
(2011-2041)**

Source: Coriolis Consulting Corp, City of  
New Westminster Urban Development  
Forecast – 2013 to 2041

Area	Additional Office Space (2013 to 2041)	
The Rest of the City	120,203 sq. m.	(1,293,858 sq. ft.)
Downtown	47,913 sq. m.	(515,729 sq. ft.)
Queensborough	21,263 sq. m.	(228,874 sq. ft.)
<b>City Wide</b>	<b>189,379 sq. m.</b>	<b>(2,038,461 sq. ft.)</b>

**Figure 5.  
Summary of Anticipated  
Additional Floor Space  
and Employment Growth  
(2011-2041)**

Source: Coriolis Consulting Corp, City of  
New Westminster Urban Development  
Forecast – 2013 to 2041

	Additional Floor Space (2013 to 2041)		Employment Growth (Jobs)
Retail/Service	135,000 sq. m.	(1,500,000 sq. ft.)	4,230
Office	190,000 sq. m.	(2,000,000 sq. ft.)	11,325
Industrial	200,000 sq. m.	(2,200,000 sq. ft.)	2,945
Institutional	Not Available		2,685
<b>Total</b>	<b>525,000 sq. m.</b>	<b>(5,800,000 sq. ft.)</b>	<b>21,185</b>

Note: The Urban Development Forecast did not include a forecast for Institutional Floor Space.

## Housing Need: The Next 20 Years

### THE CITY OF NEW WESTMINSTER HOUSING NEEDS REPORT: 2024 - 2044

A standardized Provincial methodology was used to determine the City’s 5- and 20-year housing needs. It is made up of six components that are added together, as shown in the table below. Using this method, the Interim Housing Needs Report identifies that New Westminster will need 8,137 new housing units by 2029 and 27,523 new housing units by 2044. This Plan’s Land Use Designation Map provides for the 20-year total number of housing units required to meet anticipated housing need.

**Figure 6.**  
New Westminster’s  
Projected Housing Need  
for 5 and 20 Years

Source: New Westminster Interim Housing Needs Report, 2024

Components of the Standardized Methodology	5-Year Housing Need (2024 - 2029)	20-Year Housing Need (2024-2044)
<b>A: Supply of Units to Reduce Extreme Core Housing Need</b> Accommodates households paying more than 50% of income on housing.	642	2,569
<b>B: Supply of Units to Reduce Homelessness</b> Permanent housing for those experiencing homelessness.	171	341
<b>C: Supply of Units to Address Suppressed Household Formation</b> Accommodates those unable to form an independent household due to market conditions, since 2006.	429	1,718
<b>D: Supply of Units to Meet Household Growth</b> Accommodates an increasing population.	6,251	20,321
<b>E: Supply of Units Needed to Meet at least a 3% Vacancy Rate</b> Housing units needed to create sufficient rental unit vacancy to support a healthy, well-functioning rental housing market.	85	341
<b>F: Supply of Units Needed to Meet Local Demand</b> Accommodates additional housing demand, beyond minimum units needed to adequately house current and anticipated residents.	558	2,233
<b>Total Units Needed</b>	<b>8,137</b>	<b>27,523</b>

### WHY DID THE CITY CREATE A HOUSING NEEDS REPORT?

Since 2019, the Provincial Government has required municipalities and regional districts across British Columbia to complete Housing Needs Reports. The Reports identify projected housing need for the next 5 and 20 years, calculated using a standard method established by the Province.

Housing Needs Reports also identify existing and projected gaps in housing supply using data about local demographics, the economy, housing stock, and future growth, and by listening to the perspectives of residents, businesses, and housing-related interest groups.

Housing Needs Reports ensure local policies, plans, and development decisions are based on recent evidence.

New Westminster's 2024-2044 Housing Needs Report was endorsed by City Council on December 9, 2024. A new Housing Needs Report will be prepared in 2028, and every five years thereafter.

The Housing Needs Report identifies housing needs specific context in New Westminster, including:

**1. Shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness** – From the 2023 Point-in-Time Homeless Count, 203 people in New Westminster were counted as sheltered or unsheltered – an increase of 80 people since 2020. Additional shelter beds are needed.

**2. Supportive housing** – Supportive housing is deeply affordable and provides on-site supports and services, such as daily meals, life and employment skills building, and referrals to other services in the community, to residents who cannot live independently. Key interest group interviews highlighted a pressing need for more supportive and transitional housing for vulnerable populations, particularly for those who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

**3. Below and non-market rental housing** – Below and non-market housing serve as essential housing options for very low-income (below \$35,000 per year) households, low- and moderate-income households, and especially for those relying on income or disability assistance. The need for these housing types continues to grow.

**4. Housing for single persons** – Single person households in New Westminster face significant housing challenges due to their limited purchasing power with a single income.

**5. Seniors' housing** – Seniors are the fastest growing segment of New Westminster's population, and are the second largest group on BC Housing's waitlist for non-market housing in New Westminster.

**6. Indigenous housing** – Reconciliation is a key priority as the City learns and builds relationships with the people on whose lands New Westminster is situated. Indigenous households have the highest incidence of low-income status. Indigenous people also disproportionately experience core housing need and homelessness.

**7. Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) households** – Data specific to BIPOC households is often buried within broader Census categories, limiting the ability to identify other culturally-specific housing needs. The lack of detailed data makes it difficult to quantify and estimate the needs of these households accurately. Consultation with community members suggested concerns about discrimination and stigmatization of racialized and immigrant populations, alongside housing adequacy and security issues.

**8.Housing for persons with disabilities** – Persons with disabilities, whether physical or otherwise, face significant barriers in the housing market due to low-incomes and/ or the need for wheelchair-accessible units. Addressing these needs requires a targeted approach to increase the availability of accessible housing units and allow persons with disabilities to have equitable access to housing that meets their specific requirements.

**9.Market rental housing** – Despite City policies encouraging growth in the supply of market rental housing, vacancy rates in New Westminster remain at an unhealthy low of 0.8%.

**10.Family friendly housing** – Households with children face significant challenges in finding available, affordable, and suitable housing across the Housing Spectrum. The rental market has few large units suitable for big families, with a vacancy rate of just 0.8% for units with three or more bedrooms. Low-income families, particularly single parent households earning one income, struggle to find affordable and suitable housing.

**11.Housing in close proximity to transportation infrastructure** – There is a need for affordable and accessible housing options near transportation infrastructure that supports walking, bicycling, public transit, and other alternative forms of transportation.

# 8.0 Housing

**DRAFT** January 2026 Version



*A low rise apartment building.*

Living in stable, affordable and appropriate housing is one of the most important aspects of one’s life, affecting many other factors such as work, physical and mental health, social connections, financial well-being and overall quality of life. High housing costs, along with other circumstances, prevent many residents in the city and region from obtaining and maintaining housing that meets their needs.

To meet local housing needs, the City must enable housing options that are diverse in terms of cost, location, number of bedrooms, tenure and type in each neighbourhood. Addressing housing need is guided, in part, by the City’s Housing Needs Report, which is used to strengthen understanding of current and future housing needs, and ensure local policies, plans, and development decisions are based on recent evidence.

The City’s 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report identifies the housing needed across the housing spectrum. The Report identifies that the city needs 8,137 new housing units by 2029, and 27,523 new housing units by 2044. The City has conducted further analysis to understand this need by type of housing (Figure 13). This breakdown allows for progress tracking as well as advocacy to senior levels of government, which is needed to fund shelter beds, and supportive, below-, and non-market housing types.

**Figure 13**  
**Breakdown of housing units needed by housing type between 2024 and 2029**

*Source: New Westminster Interim Housing Needs Report, 2024*

Housing Type	5 Year Housing Need (2024- 2029)	Annual Housing Need
Shelter beds / units	58	12 / year
Supportive / transitional housing units	352	70 / year
Affordable rental units (below- and non-market)	2,311	462 / year
Market rental units	3,280	656 / year
Market ownership units	1,647	330 / year
Subtotal	7,613	1,523 / year
Units required to foster a healthy market (no tenure)	558	112 / year
<b>Total 5-Year Units Needed</b>	<b>8,137</b>	<b>1,628 / year</b>

# Housing in the Official Community Plan

**Goal 8: New Westminster’s neighbourhoods are great places to live and have diverse housing choices that meet the needs of the community.**

- Policy 8.1: Facilitate the creation and maintenance of housing that offers options for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Policy 8.2: Facilitate access to affordable, below- and non-market housing for low- to moderate-income households.
- Policy 8.3: Foster a rental housing stock in which tenants have adequate opportunities to live in healthy, safe and secure housing.
- Policy 8.4: Create neighbourhoods with housing options for people of all ages, abilities and household types to meet their changing needs.
- Policy 8.5: Design housing to be livable and to foster social cohesion and connectivity.
- Policy 8.6: Provide housing to meet the needs of the projected population in ways that ensure growth contributes positively to the neighbourhood context.

***This Plan...***reflects the findings of the City’s 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report, which uses an evidenced based approach to understanding local needs across the housing spectrum. This Plan also reflects the many different housing policies and strategies, such as the Affordable Housing Strategy, Family Friendly Housing Policy, Inclusionary Housing Policy, and Secured Market Rental Housing Policy.

Through the Land Use Designation Map, this Plan allocates the highest number of new housing units within the Frequent Transit Development Areas, which include the areas surrounding 22nd Street, Sapperton and Braid stations, and Uptown. These areas are envisioned to include a mix of housing, retail and commercial services, and community amenities. Outside of these growth areas, townhouses are planned along pedestrian oriented transit corridors such as Eighth and Sixth Avenues and as a transition between Frequent Transit Development Areas and lower density housing forms. Single detached dwelling and duplex properties have the opportunity to increase housing choice by adding infill housing forms such as laneway or carriage houses, triplexes, quadplexes and other forms of multiplexes. This housing allocation is consistent with the strategies included in Metro Vancouver’s Regional Growth Strategy (Metro 2050). The Land Use Designation Map accommodates a population forecast of 142,790 residents in New Westminister by 2050, which is also consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. The Land Use Designation Map can also accommodate 27,523 new housing units by 2044 to meet the 20 year total housing need identified in the 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report.

## Policy 8.1: Facilitate the creation and maintenance of housing that offers options for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

*In 2024, New Westminster had 506 units of supportive housing, 104 emergency shelter beds, and 35 extreme weather mats.*



*Rhoda Kaellis Residence includes 11 units of supportive apartments and 13 non-market, independent apartments.*

Addressing and preventing homelessness have both individual and community level impacts. Access to emergency shelter and supportive housing improves mental and physical health and overall well-being for people experiencing homelessness, and reduces incidences of emergency department visits and hospitalization, resulting in improved public health and cost savings for government. Based on the 2023 Point-in-Time Homeless Count, 203 people in New Westminster were counted as unhoused – an increase of 80 people since 2020, or a 65% increase. The 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report identifies that the Point-in-Time count findings are likely an undercount for understanding the true extent of homelessness, as they do not capture people who are couch surfing, living outdoors, or temporarily residing with family and friends. Estimates from the 2021 Integrated Data Project, which combines data from BC's Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Citizen's Services, and BC Housing, suggests that the actual number is at least 341 individuals in New Westminster.

The City is actively involved in efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness. The City funds and participates in the New Westminster Homelessness Coalition Society. The goal of this Society is for all New Westminster residents to have access to safe and affordable housing and supports and for no one to be homeless. The city is fortunate to have a strong network of organizations that provide supports and housing to people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The City continues to partner with other levels of government, charitable foundations, faith-based groups and non-profit organizations to address homelessness and develop income, supports, and a spectrum of housing options. These include increasing the availability of emergency shelter beds, as well as permanent supportive housing, or non-market housing options.



**Emergency shelters** are temporary but immediate places to stay for persons who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

**Transitional Housing** is a type of housing for residents to stay temporarily (between 30 days to three years), with supports as needed. It aims to transition individuals into permanent housing.

**Supportive Housing** is a type of housing that provides on-site supports and services to residents who cannot live independently. This type of housing can also be located in private rental.

**Figure 14**  
**Emergency Shelter, and Transitional and Supportive Housing Need**

Source: *New Westminster Interim Housing Needs Report, 2024*

**PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

Permanent supportive housing includes embedded services as well as wrap-around 24/7 supports that aim to support residents to maintain their tenancies and foster positive health and well-being. Permanent supportive housing units serve a variety of groups, including people who are unhoused, people requiring mental health or substance use supports, people transitioning out of the criminal justice system, and people with disabilities. Best practice components supportive housing include:

- **Permanence and Affordability** – housing is secure and rents are affordable, which provides stability and allows residents to rebuild connections, improve their health and well-being, and work towards self-identified goals.
- **Purpose Designed** – designing buildings for their intended use and with their intended occupants in mind can maximize benefits for residents, foster community within the building, reduce external impacts on the community, and facilitate cohesion with neighbours and the broader community.
- **Embedded Services and Wrap-around Supports** – services and resources that are included as part of the housing – such as meal programs, peer support programs and 24/7 on-site support staff – and individualized wrap-around supports help residents to maintain their housing and work towards self-identified goals.
- **Community Building Initiatives** – opportunities for socializing and community building through design and/or programming reduces isolation and fosters community both within and outside the housing.

## Actions

### **The City should...**

- 8.1a** Develop a communications strategy to clearly outline the benefits of affordable housing development.

### **The City should continue to...**

- 8.1b** Update the Homelessness Needs Assessment.
- 8.1c** Implement the Homelessness Action Strategy, in partnership with the New Westminister Homelessness Coalition Society.
- 8.1d** Develop and implement the Community Poverty Reduction Strategy and Food Security Action Plan.
- 8.1e** Participate in Metro Vancouver homelessness and housing policy initiatives and be represented on associated committees.
- 8.1f** Participate in and support the efforts of the New Westminister Homelessness Coalition Society.
- 8.1g** Implement the Five-Year Prevention, Support and Transition Services Plan, which is aimed at addressing the immediate needs of people experiencing the three concurrent and inter-related crises of homelessness, mental health and substance use with the goal of stabilizing their lives.
- 8.1h** Implement the Ten-Year Supportive Housing and Wrap-Around Services Plan, which recommends actions and timing priorities for the provision of shelter beds and supportive housing units.

## Policy 8.2: Facilitate access to affordable, below- and non-market housing for low- to moderate-income households.

When there is a lack of affordable housing, families and individuals may end up spending most of their income on housing costs with little left over for other expenses such as food, clothing and transportation. To reduce housing costs, households may end up living in overcrowded housing or housing in very poor condition. A lack of affordable housing supply can contribute to poor health and quality of life.

In a region as expensive as Metro Vancouver, market housing options are often not affordable to low- and moderate-income households. Non-market housing and rent subsidies are needed to help these households meet their housing needs. Many vulnerable populations, including newcomers, persons with disabilities, single parents and seniors, benefit from these units. A healthy housing system should offer a variety of housing choice along the housing spectrum to suit the diverse needs of the community, from emergency shelters all the way to home ownership.

The Affordable Housing Strategy, the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund, and Inclusionary Housing Policy have been established to support the development of affordable housing projects. Changes have also been made to streamline the approval process for affordable housing projects. This included removing the requirement for qualifying projects to be rezoned.

The City actively advocates for and supports affordable housing projects but continues to remain reliant on partnerships and secured funding from Provincial and Federal agencies to realize new units. The City encourages the development and implementation of additional measures from senior governments that would assist in the creation, retention and maintenance of affordable housing.

### THE NEED FOR BELOW- AND NON-MARKET HOUSING

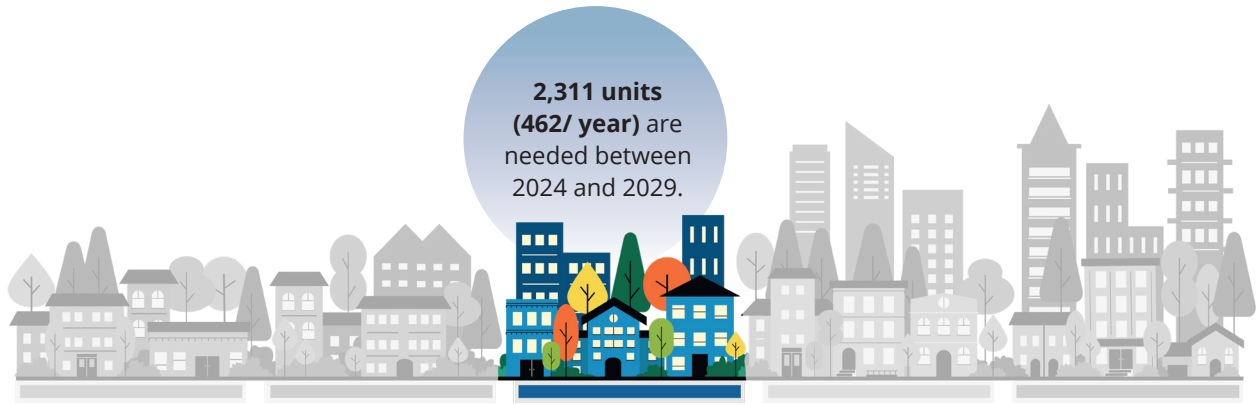
Below- and non-market housing serve as essential housing options for very low income (below \$35,000 per year) households, low- and moderate-income households, and especially for those relying on income or disability assistance.

In 2021, roughly a third of renter households (28.9%) spent more than 30% of their income on shelter, exceeding the affordability standard for shelter costs.

Further, data from BC Housing and Metro Vancouver shows that the number of households in New Westminister waiting for social housing increased from 564 to 952 households from 2018 to 2024.

*Source: New Westminister Housing Needs Report, 2024*

*In 2024, only 7% of New Westminister's housing stock was non- or below-market rate housing – far lower than what is needed.*



**Below-Market Housing** is a type of housing with rents 10% below the currently reported Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) rental market median rent, all years, for New Westminster.

**Non-Market Housing** is a type of affordable housing that is subsidized by government, where rent or mortgage payments are not determined by the market but the ability to pay, and eligibility criteria determine who is accommodated. Most non-profit and co-operative housing is a form of non-market housing.

**Figure 15**  
**Below and Non-Market Housing Need**

Source: *New Westminster Interim Housing Needs Report, 2024*

## Actions

### The City should continue to...

- 8.2a** Implement the Inclusionary Housing Policy to ensure new strata residential developments seeking additional density contribute to the affordable rental housing supply.
- 8.1b** Implement the Affordable Housing Strategy.
- 8.2c** Partner with senior governments, charitable foundations, faith groups and non-profit organizations in the development of affordable and non-market housing, to help meet the objective for most of these new units to be located in or near Frequent Transit Development Areas.
- 8.2d** Partner with Metro Vancouver to implement the Metro Vancouver Housing 10-Year Plan, and to seek opportunities to partner with Metro Vancouver Housing and others to expand affordable rental housing in the city.

# Policy 8.3: Foster a rental housing stock in which tenants have adequate opportunities to live in healthy, safe and secure housing.

Rental housing accommodates diverse residents, including families, newcomers, post-secondary students, couples, single person households and seniors. Rental housing can take many forms, including below-market housing, cooperative housing, purpose built market rental housing, secondary suites and individual apartments rented by owners. As of 2024, the city has 3,153 secondary suites, 4,632 renter occupied condominiums and 9,956 purpose built market rental housing units.

High housing prices across the region mean that home ownership is not a viable option for many households, making rental housing particularly important. The city has a high proportion of rental households compared with the region and a long history of rental housing, notably in Brow of the Hill, Sapperton and Uptown.

Although there is a diversity of rental housing forms in the city and region, renter households still face challenges, such as persistently low vacancy rates, poor housing conditions in some rental buildings, and loss of rental units to redevelopment. The City has a number of policies in place to help deal with these challenges, including: the Standards of Maintenance Bylaw, to enforce maintenance of rental housing by building owners; the Secured Market Rental Housing Policy, to protect and enhance existing rental housing and to incentivise the construction of new secured market rental units; and tenant assistance policies, to ensure that tenants evicted due to demolition receive assistance from building owners above and beyond what is required in the Residential Tenancy Act.

*Using incentives under the Secured Market Rental Housing Policy, 1,723 new secured market rental housing units have been built (as of February 2024).*

### SINGLE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS

Single person households in New Westminster face significant housing challenges. Their incomes are typically half those of larger households, yet they face similar rental costs.

Single person households make up the largest group with housing affordability challenges. More than 41% of all households paying more than 30% of their income on shelter costs were single person households.

*Source: New Westminster Housing Needs Report, 2024*

**Figure 16**  
**Market Rental Housing Need**  
*Source: New Westminster Interim Housing Needs Report, 2024*

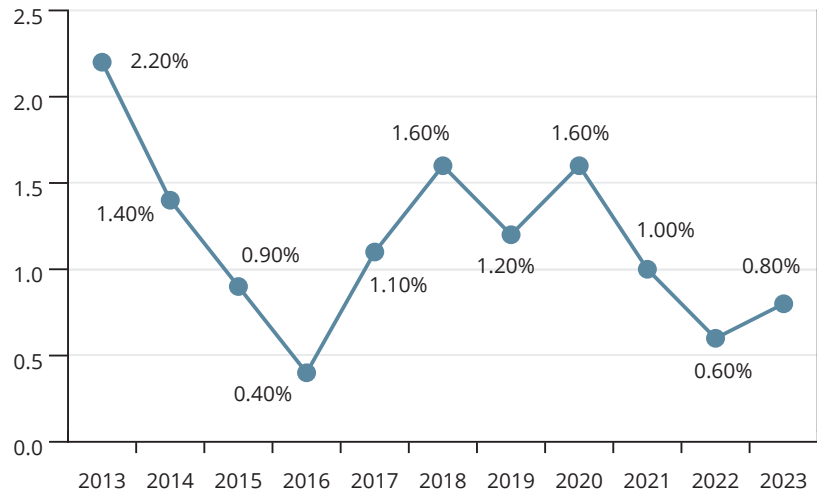
**3,280 units (656/ year)** are needed between 2024 and 2029.



**Market Rental Housing** - also referred to as purpose built or secured market rental housing - is multi-unit housing constructed for the purpose of long-term rental tenure and is not subsidized into co-op, strata condominium, or fractional ownership arrangements.

**Figure 17**  
**New Westminster Rental**  
**Vacancy Rate (2013 - 2023)**

Source: CMHC Rental Market Survey,  
 2013-2023



*Between 2013 and 2023, median rents rose by \$683 (81%), with the largest increases in 2019 and 2023.*

*- New Westminster Housing Needs Report, 2024*

Despite City policies encouraging growth in the supply of market rental housing, New Westminster's rental vacancy rate has been below the healthy rate every year since 2011. A healthy vacancy rate is considered to be at least 3.0%; however, the city's rental vacancy rate was only 0.8% in 2023 (Metro Vancouver's vacancy rate was 0.9% in 2023).

This indicates that the city has experienced a long-term shortage of rental housing units. Low availability leads to higher demand, which can result in higher rental rates. It is crucial for the City to support the development of rental housing and protect the existing rental stock to improve the overall supply of rental units.

## Actions

### The City should...

- 8.3a** Complete the Rental Replacement Policy to ensure that redevelopment of older purpose built market rental buildings does not lead to the untimely loss of affordable rental housing, and to add to the supply of affordable rental in New Westminster.
- 8.3b** Update the Tenant Relocation Policy (2018), which assists tenants of purpose built market rental housing displaced by redevelopment.

### The City should continue to...

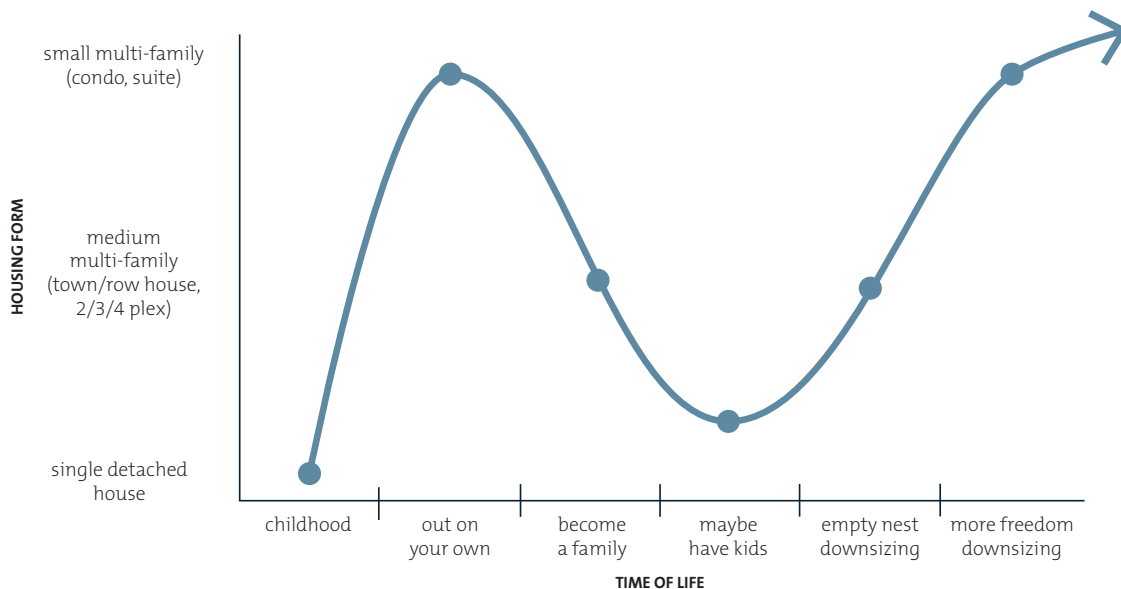
- 8.3c** Facilitate new rental housing construction and protect existing rental housing through the continued implementation of the Secured Market Rental Housing Policy.
- 8.3d** Seek necessary resources to support the enforcement of the Standards of Maintenance Bylaw to ensure buildings are maintained to a livable standard.
- 8.3e** Encourage the development and implementation of additional measures from senior governments that assist in the creation, retention, maintenance and revitalization of rental housing.

## Policy 8.4: Create neighbourhoods with housing options for people of all ages, abilities and household types to meet their changing needs.

In 2021, single detached dwellings and apartments made up more than 94% of the city’s housing stock, resulting in limited housing options appropriate for people of all abilities, ages and household types. Allowing a wider variety of ground oriented housing types in each neighbourhood provides more options for households in New Westminster in addition to single detached dwellings and apartments. A ground oriented dwelling unit has a separate exterior entrance directly accessible from a street or open space. Examples of ground oriented units include single detached dwellings, carriage and laneway houses, duplexes, triplexes, rowhouses, and side-by-side townhouses.

Increasing the city’s housing options in all neighbourhoods will allow households to meet their changing needs, enable empty nesters and seniors to downsize and remain in familiar surroundings, facilitate newcomers locating in the city, and help support young families and professionals who are getting started in the housing market. This Plan’s Land Use Designation Map creates opportunities for all of these housing forms throughout the city.

**Figure 18**  
Housing form changes as we age and our life circumstances evolve



With increasing housing prices and a lack of housing options, more and more families with children are considering either moving further out into the Fraser Valley or living in apartment units. Three bedroom-family units are attractive to families with children but multiple unit housing with three or more bedrooms is in short supply.

In response, the City adopted the Family Friendly Housing Policy, which requires minimum percentages of two and three bedroom units in new multiple unit buildings.

Persons with disabilities, whether physical or otherwise, face significant barriers in the housing market due to low-incomes and/ or the need for housing specifically designed for accessibility. Addressing these needs requires a targeted approach to increase the availability of such units. Adaptable housing is built for those with limited mobility due to age, disability or illness, enabling individuals to function in their homes with relative independence even as their needs change over time. In 2011, the City adopted an Adaptable Housing Policy, which requires 40% or more of all new single story, multiple unit buildings to be adaptable, exceeding the requirements of the British Columbia Building Code (BCBC).

The City's Housing Needs Report identified that as the fastest growing segment of New Westminster's population, seniors contribute to the growing need for additional assisted living, long term care and other supportive housing options, as well as supports to allow for aging-in-place in their current housing.

**Figure 19**  
**Existing Housing Stock by**  
**Structure Type in 2021**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021

Dwelling Type	Units	Percent
Single Detached Dwellings (including suites)	8,660	24%
Semi-detached (Duplexes)	215	<1%
Townhouses	2,060	6%
Apartment (less than 5 storeys)	12,565	35%
Apartment (5 or more storeys)	12,525	35%
Other	65	<1%
<b>City Wide</b>	<b>36,090</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Actions

### The City should continue to...

- 8.4a** Implement and monitor the Adaptable Housing Policy.
- 8.4b** Implement and monitor the Family Friendly Housing Policy.
- 8.4c** Explore opportunities to increase the variety and stock of ground oriented infill housing such as duplexes, triplexes, rowhouses, and multiplexes.

# Policy 8.5: Design housing to be livable and to foster social cohesion and connectivity.

Strong social relationships and connections can be a source of enjoyment, belonging, happiness and a foundation for community resilience in the face of crises – the entire neighbourhood is home. People who feel connected are more likely to develop a sense of belonging, participate in and take care of their community, live healthier lives, and trust each other. It is increasingly recognized that social connectedness and belonging are one of the strongest resources we have to chart a more sustainable, resilient path forward.

*In a survey of 320 New Westminster parents in 2014, 41% felt connected with their neighbours—they knew their names, picked up their mail when they were away, their kids play together.*

Social connectivity has become an increasingly important theme in city planning, with housing recognized as being critical for creating opportunities for positive neighborly interactions. For example, the design and location of common spaces in multi-unit housing – including common amenity spaces, circulation spaces, and outdoor areas – can provide opportunities for connections with neighbours, for children to play together, and for people of different abilities, ages, cultures, and identities to interact. The design of multi-unit residential buildings is guided by Development Permit Areas and related guidelines, with the latter facilitating design that fosters social connectivity. These guidelines are also used to improve the livability of units by considering the impact of noise from adjacent major roads or non-residential uses.

Surrounding social infrastructure such as parks, community gardens, and public gathering spaces also play a role in social cohesion and connectivity, and can be designed in a way that fosters liveability. These spaces are places to relax, socialize or interact with fellow community members. Small design details can have a big impact. For example, having benches that face each other can allow for people to more easily start a conversation with a person sitting on another bench.

## Actions

### The City should...

**8.5a** Create a city-wide Noise Attenuation Program that includes development permit guidelines for mitigating noise in residential units to help new development meet CMHC noise reduction targets.

### The City should continue to...

**8.5b** Collaborate with Hey Neighbour Collective to develop and implement tools that encourage more socially connected, inclusive, and resilient communities for all.

## Policy 8.6: Provide housing to meet the needs of the projected population in ways that ensure growth contributes positively to the neighbourhood context.

### FREQUENT TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT AREAS (FTDAS)

FTDA is a term identified in Metro 2050 – Metro Vancouver’s Regional Growth Strategy. These areas are located along frequent transit networks and are characterized by higher density forms of residential, commercial and mixed uses, and may contain community, cultural and institutional uses. Urban design for these areas promotes transit oriented communities where transit, cycling, walking, and rolling are the preferred modes of transportation.

New Westminster is an attractive, centrally located place to live, learn, play and work, which means that more people will continue to move to the city. One of the most important roles of an official community plan is to ensure that this new growth goes in the right places.

This Plan ensures that most new residences outside of Downtown and Queensborough will be located within Frequent Transit Development Areas which will be mixed use, pedestrian oriented nodes well served by transit. The next highest number of housing units will be located along transit oriented corridors, such as Twelfth Street, Sixth Avenue and Eighth Avenue. The Plan also enables additional ground oriented units such as townhouses and multiplexes to be located in residential neighbourhoods across the city. This allocation of growth maximizes the opportunity for residents to easily access services by foot, bike or public transit.

As New Westminster grows, the infrastructure, services and amenities needed to maintain community livability must also grow. This Plan provides the framework for the City to plan for expanding community needs, such as water and sanitation, parks and open space, fire and police services, and arts and culture amenities. This Plan is also used by New Westminster School District, which is independently responsible for schools planning and development.



*Walking towards the 22nd Street SkyTrain Station.*



**Market Ownership Housing** refers to housing that is privately owned by an individual (or a company) who generally does not received direct subsidies to purchase or maintain it. Prices for this type of housing are set by the private market.

**Figure 20**  
**Market Ownership Housing Need**

Source: *New Westminister Interim Housing Needs Report, 2024*

*By 2050, the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy projects that New Westminister will have 66,750 dwelling units, an increase of approximately 28,840 new units over 2021.*

**Actions**

**The City should continue to...**

- 8.6a** Use the City’s development approvals authority to ensure development locates in the right place in the city.
- 8.6b** Partner with the New Westminister School District in advocating for future schools identified in the New Westminister Schools’ Long Range Facilities Plan.
- 8.6c** Use the Housing Needs Report findings to strengthen understanding of current and future housing needs and ensure local policies, plans, and development decisions are based on recent evidence.
- 8.6d** Use the Official Community Plan to guide planning of municipal infrastructure, services and amenities, and a sustainable financing growth strategy.