

While housing affordability is important for all New Westminster residents, six population groups have been identified as priority groups who are particularly affected by housing issues in the City.

Renters

Lower income renter households have limited options in the local rental market due to the low vacancy rates and the lack of affordable or suitable units. Individuals with pets and other housing barriers (e.g. lack of rental references; mobility limitations; or behavioural problems related to mental health issues) often have the least choice in the rental market.

Concerns for tenants' rights have been raised in the case of poor building management, particularly for young families or immigrant families who may not be aware of what the standards are or who may not have the confidence to take their landlords to task. Equally, landlords have reported having difficulty dealing with problem tenants.

Low-Income Households

Couch surfers and households in substandard or unstable housing are among the "hidden homeless" that are present in most communities in the region.

Youth are often noted to be among the group of low-income households and those facing difficulties in finding affordable or adequate rental housing.

Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

There are concerns that seniors who are homeowners may choose to leave New Westminster seeking ground-oriented housing options elsewhere due to the limited stock of townhouses and duplexes in the city.

With the aging of the population, the level of demand is expected to increase for seniors housing, particularly for supported and assisted living forms.

Housing that is designed for persons with mobility limitations was identified as an area of future housing need. In particular, as the population ages, more seniors will be looking for housing options that allow them to age in place.

Aboriginal Households

Aboriginal people living off-reserve are often at a disadvantage for access to information and opportunities for homeownership. Increasing the capacity of Aboriginal households to find stability through homeownership has been noted.

Stereotypes and discrimination are regarded as continuing barriers for Aboriginal renters.

Immigrants & Refugees

Some new immigrant families and refugees face multiple barriers in finding housing such as language barriers, discrimination and a lack of familiarity with the rental application process.

A shortage of apartments or suites that accommodate large families is often a concern for immigrant and refugee families.

Moderate-Income Households and Homeowners

There are few first-time buyer properties in New Westminster. Many homeowners have reported a shortage of transition properties between apartments and single detached units that allow existing owner-occupiers to step up the housing ladder.

