OUR CITY, OUR HOMES

Engagement Snapshot

Introduction

The City is updating its Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw to align with several housing initiatives and new Provincial housing legislative changes. The updates aim to enable well-located and diverse housing that meets the needs of the growing community while continuing to advance Council's 2023 – 2026 Strategic Priorities Plan. In particular, the City is working on four key initiatives:

Transit Oriented Development Areas: The Province identified five Transit Oriented Development Areas in New Westminster at 22nd Street, New Westminster, Columbia, Sapperton, and Braid SkyTrain stations. These areas are now required to be designated for greater density.

Townhouses: Today, townhouses are allowed in the city in limited locations and require approval by City Council through a rezoning application. In an effort to see more townhouses built, the City is exploring more locations and reduced development approvals processes.

Infill Housing: This initiative explores allowing up to six units to be built on properties in the city that currently only allow single detached houses, duplexes, secondary suites, and laneway/ carriage houses.

Non-Profit Affordable Housing: The goal of this program is to reduce barriers to non-profit housing providers to build affordable rental housing by streamlining development approvals processes.

How We Engaged

A variety of methods were used to build understanding and awareness of the *Our City, Our Homes* initiatives and provide opportunities for the public to share feedback. From February 22 to March 9 2025, we engaged community members across the City to hear questions and seek feedback about the housing initiatives. Engagement activities included:

1,600 webpage visits

245 survey responses

259 open house attendees

26 online attendees

BEHEARD WEBPAGE

Launched February 22, 2025

Be Heard New West is an online platform where residents can learn about City projects, share feedback and ideas with the City. As of March 9, over 1,600 participants visited the webpage.

ONLINE SURVEY & QUESTIONS PAGE

Be Heard New West, Feb 22 – Mar 9, 2025

245 survey responses, 24 online questions and 9 email enquiries

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSES

March 1, March 5, and March 8, 2025

Three open houses at three locations: Sapperton Pensioners Community Hall (99 attendees), Century House (98 attendees), Qayqayt School (62 attendees).

ONLINE ZOOM EVENT

March 6, 2025

One Zoom event with 26 attendees



What We Heard

During the engagement events, participants were asked a range of questions, including questions about general hopes and concerns about the future of housing, and more specific questions about each housing initiative. This page summarizes some results from select questions. See the full report for a summary of every question response.

TOP 3 HOPES FOR THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN NEW WESTMINSTER

More **variety of housing types** *(e.g. apartments, townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, multi-plexes, secondary suites, laneways, etc.)*

More **affordable housing**

More **family-friendly housing** *(e.g. sufficient size for multiple bedrooms, storage, etc.)*

TOP 3 CONCERNS FOR THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN NEW WESTMINSTER

Not enough **community amenities** to support more people *(e.g. schools, parks, community centres)*

Not enough **infrastructure** to support more people *(e.g. roads, sewers, etc).*

Won't be able to stay in New Westminster because of the **cost of housing**

Participants were asked a range of specific questions about emerging directions for the Our City, Our Homes housing initiatives. Overall, most participants supported the City's initial directions.

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AREAS

General support for:

- Allowing **infill housing, townhouses and apartments** in Tiers 2 and 3 of TOD Areas (73% support)
- Allowing **townhouses and apartments** in Tiers 2 and 3 of TOD Area (71% support)
- **Extending the TOD Area boundaries** when certain principles apply (70% support)

Not as much support for:

- **Allowing only apartments** in Tier 2 and 3 of the TOD Areas (54% did not support)

TOWNHOUSES

General support for:

- Allowing **3 storey townhouses** (72% support)
- **Pre-zoning** areas for townhouses (73% support)
- Allowing townhouse units to have **secondary suites** (64% support)
- **Maximizing opportunities for townhouses** in the city, when shown different land use scenarios (61% support for scenario 3)
- Requiring **1 off-street parking space** per townhouse (55% support)

INFILL HOUSING

General support for:

- **Streamlining approvals** and permitting processes for infill housing (70% support)
- Allowing a **sliding scale of building floor area** based on the number of units provided (66% support)

NON-PROFIT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

General support for:

- Allowing **affordable housing rental** projects in the City's Transit Oriented Development Areas (75% support) and in locations proposed for townhouses (63% support)