

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS: NON-MARKET HOUSING



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Britannia Renewal Master Plan directs project partners to seek opportunities to incorporate non-market housing on site to provide critically needed homes for community members. However, project partners understand that there is no consensus in the community regarding the addition of non-market housing through the Britannia Renewal.

Recognizing the diversity of voices and opinions in the neighbourhood, project partners are hosting additional community dialogue sessions regarding non-market housing. These conversations will take place over two rounds of engagement:

- The first round (June 2021) will focus on listening to community members to understand opportunities and concerns around the addition of non-market housing on site. These events will also provide information about what was decided through the Master Plan.
- The second round (fall 2021) will focus on discussing specific considerations relating to height, density and the potential number of units of non-market housing.

Will non-market housing be included in the Britannia Renewal?

The Britannia Master Plan was unanimously approved by Vancouver City Council in July 2018, and provides direction to incorporate non-market housing on-site. Project partners have agreed to seek opportunities to include non-market housing in the redevelopment of the Britannia site. There have been no decisions made regarding height, density, or the number of units at this time.

Britannia Community Services Centre Society (BCSCS) Board of Management supported the Master Plan with the expectation of continued dialogue on the suitability of non-market housing for the site. [Read BCSCS's response to this.](#)

Building on the work and engagement completed to date on the Master Plan, the project team is now working with community to develop site options including non-market housing in preparation for the rezoning application. During this phase of work, we are seeking input on housing needs in the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood and surrounding areas. We are also looking for feedback on what project partners need to consider to successfully integrate non-market housing with community facilities on the Britannia site.

**What is non-market housing?
Is it the same as social housing?**

Non-market housing is a general term that refers to housing owned by a government entity (federal, provincial/territorial, municipal), not-for-profit organization and/or a housing co-operative. Non-market housing is not part of the private market (strata or rental).

The City of Vancouver’s *Zoning and Development By-law* defines “social housing” as rental housing in which at least 30% of the dwelling units are occupied by households with incomes below Housing Income Limits, as set out in the current Housing Income Limits (HILs) table published by BC Housing; which is owned by a non-profit corporation, non-profit co-operative association, or by or on behalf of the City, the Province of British Columbia, or Canada; and which is secured by a housing agreement or other legal commitment.

The City typically secures this particular definition as a minimum affordability requirement through the regulatory (rezoning and/or development permit) process for projects including social housing.

What are examples of other levels of affordability (rent types) in social housing projects?

The following four affordability categories are the most common rent levels found in social housing projects in the city.

Shelter Rate: the amount allocated to shelter costs for individuals living on income assistance (or fixed income such as pension, PWD). This rate is set by the provincial government.

Housing Income Limits (HILs): residents living in HILs units pay 30% of their income towards rent (rent-geared-to-income model) and must fall under BC Housing’s maximum income threshold (Housing Income Limits). As there is not a fixed rent amount per unit, the rents shown below represent an average monthly rent for a HILs unit (by using 70% of HILs).

Low-End Market (LEM): rents based on 90% of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s (CMHC) average market rents for the area/neighbourhood.

CMHC Average Market Rent: average market rent for the area/neighbourhood published through CMHC’s annual Fall Market Rental Survey. These rents represent the primary rental housing stock, and do not include units rented in strata/private homes (secondary rental).

AFFORDABILITY CATEGORIES (MONTHLY RENT)

Unit Type	Shelter Rate	Housing Income Limits (HILs) at 70%	Low-End Market (LEM)*	CMHC Average Market Rents†
Studio	\$375	\$971	\$1,197	\$1,330
1 Bedroom	\$375	\$971	\$1,186	\$1,318
2 Bedroom	\$570	\$1,181	\$1,604	\$1,782
3 Bedroom	\$660	\$1,365	\$1,809	\$2,010

*Numbers are based on 90% of the Average Market Rents in the East Hastings Zone

†East Hastings Zone (CMHC Fall 2020 Market Rental Survey)

Britannia Community Services Centre Society (BCSCS) would like to ensure that any and all housing on the site would be occupied by households under BC Housing definition as “affordable”—Housing is considered affordable when 30% or less of household’s gross income goes towards housing costs. [Read BCSCS’s Housing Principles to learn more.](#)

What has already been decided regarding the inclusion of non-market housing in the Britannia Renewal?

Project partners have agreed to seek opportunities to include non-market housing in the redevelopment of the Britannia site. There have been no decisions made regarding height, density, or the number of units at this time. Project partners are committed to working with the community during the ‘Site Development Options phase’ of the rezoning process to understand what the best fit (height, density and number of units) is for this site.

How many units are being considered for the site?

There have been no decisions made on the total number of units to be located on site. The Master Plan estimated that approximately 200-300 units could be accommodated on the site. However, Project partners are not using this number as a target, and have committed to working with the community throughout the rezoning process to understand what number of housing units works best on this site. Considerations around form of development, urban design requirements, housing unit mix (e.g. more family units) and funding models will also determine how many units could be developed.

How many units of non-market were estimated to be delivered through the Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Plan? How many have been delivered to date?

The City has a 10-year target to add 12,000 social, supportive and non-profit co-operative housing units to Vancouver’s housing stock by 2027. The charts below identify what has been achieved to date.

The Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Plan identifies 1,400 social, supportive and co-op housing units as a target in the community. To date, 342 units have been approved in four projects (not yet under construction).

OVERALL CITY-WIDE HOUSING TARGETS (AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2020)		
Housing Type	10-Year Target	Units Approved Towards Targets
Social, Supportive, and Co-op Housing Units	12,000	5,784
Purpose-Built Market Rental Housing	20,000	5,565

GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND EXISTING RENTAL AND SOCIAL HOUSING STOCK (AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2020)		
Grandview-Woodland	# of Properties	# of Units
Purpose-built rental	675	7,013
Non-market housing (Social, supportive and co-op)	69	2,225
Social and supportive housing (excludes co-ops)	48	1,788

**APPROVED SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS IN GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND
(AS OF MARCH 31, 2021)**

Address	Non-profit Owner/Operator	Development Status	Total Non-Market Housing Units	Approved Year
1636 Clark and 1321 - 1395 East 1st Avenue	BC Housing/ Vancouver Coastal Health	Approved	90	2019
2025 E 12th Ave and 2776 Semlin Drive	Inclusionary - Operator TBD	Approved	104	2020
1766 Frances Street	VNHS	Approved	84	2021
1885 East Pender Street (CLT)‡	CLT	Approved	64	2021

‡This application was recently approved at the June 17, 2021 Public Hearing

Are there other opportunities to develop non-market/social housing in the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood?

There are limited opportunities to get significant numbers of non-market/social housing in the neighbourhood. The City does not have many sites available for development in Grandview-Woodland, and most applications are not large enough to deliver social housing through inclusionary housing policies. There are increasing opportunities for non-profit redevelopment; however, many organizations may also be relying on successful funding from other levels of government to make their project viable.

How will the types of tenants be selected?

From the Master Plan and Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Plan, Project partners know that seniors, artists and Indigenous families and youth are in need of affordable, non-market housing. One of the things that makes the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood so unique is its diverse population. Unfortunately, due to the increasing cost of housing throughout Vancouver, many community members are struggling find affordable accommodation within their community.

There could be a mix of rent levels to meet a diverse range of household incomes and needs, and as determined by funding opportunities from other levels of government. Project partners will engage

with the community, BC Housing and/or CMHC throughout the rezoning process to understand what type of housing would be most appropriate for the Britannia site.

Has a non-market housing operator already been selected?

No. At this time, Project partners are working with the community to better understand opportunities and challenges regarding the integration of non-market housing on site. Once the project starts moving through regulatory process, the City would typically lead a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to select an appropriate and interested operator.

How will the future non-market housing operator build positive relationships with community?

Non-market housing operators will be selected through a City Request For Proposal (RFP) process, and experience with building strong partnerships with community is one of the key criteria that will be ranked. Operators will be asked to demonstrate how they have collaborated or developed relationships in their communities. Opportunities for project partner involvement through the RFP can be explored, as well as discussions around development of a *Good Neighbour Agreement* where a set of shared values/principles can be agreed upon on how to live together.

Britannia Community Services Centre Society would like to ensure a commitment of the project partners to community leadership that supports ongoing resident engagement in their tenancy and in the broader Britannia site. Housing should be managed in strong collaboration with Britannia site partners to develop and maintain symbiotic relationships between the community amenities, resources and housing. The Societies Housing Principles may be viewed [here](#).

How will the non-market housing be funded?

Creating and developing affordable housing requires partnerships with other levels of government. The City will seek funding opportunities from BC Housing and CMHC. Each funding program will either be a mix of capital and ongoing operating funding, or an upfront capital contribution. Rent levels will be dependent on which funding program this project may receive, and will have to meet the identified affordability requirements. Some examples of funding programs include:

- **CMHC Co-Investment Fund**—CMHC typically uses affordability requirements set by the provinces or municipalities
- **BC Housing Indigenous Housing Fund (IHF)**—100% of the units renting at HILs
- **BC Housing Community Housing Fund (CHF)**—20% of units renting at shelter rate; 50% renting at HILs; 30% renting at LEM/market rents

The non-market housing component must meet the City's definition of social housing as a minimum requirement—project partners are committed to seeking as many funding opportunities as possible to achieve the deepest level of affordability for this site.

What are the opportunities with co-location of housing and community services?

The co-location of non-market housing with civic facilities, including community centres and libraries can provide tenants with improved access to important community amenities, such as childcare, health and wellness services, education, recreation and training opportunities.

At Britannia, the inclusion of non-market housing would provide critically needed homes for community members who currently face housing affordability challenges to remain in their neighbourhoods.

What community feedback have project partners already heard regarding non-market housing so far?

Project partners understand that there is no consensus in the community regarding the addition of non-market housing through the Britannia Renewal. Many community members have expressed their support for non-market housing and the opportunities this could provide for community members who currently face housing affordability challenges to remain in their neighbourhoods, including seniors, artists, and Indigenous families and youth. Community members have expressed concerns about the addition of non-market housing, and the potential this could have for creating privacy concerns for users of the community centre, limiting views from the site, affecting the legacy of land stewardship and creating increased pressure on public green space.

How will divergent community perspectives regarding non-market housing be considered during the decision making process?

Project partners are committed to presenting all perspectives, including concerns, opportunities, general support/non-support of housing and ideas for integrating housing on-site. Feedback will help shape different options which will be brought back to community for further input; a preferred site option will eventually form part of the rezoning application that will be advanced to project partners and final Council approval.

How does the rezoning process work and what will be presented during this phase?

Decisions around form of development, including heights and densities, and housing unit mix/ numbers and affordability are presented for Council consideration of approval at rezoning. There will be further opportunities for engagement around detailed design and programming during the development permit phase, as well as initiating discussions around the operating model and potential housing provider. The diagram below illustrates the City’s rezoning process, and what happens once a formal application is submitted.



QUESTIONS?

Email the project team: BritanniaRenewal@vancouver.ca

Find out more about the renewal at: shapeyourcity.ca/britannia-renewal

