Address Affordability and the Housing Crisis

Overall, our goal is to ensure that housing in Vancouver supports residents of all incomes now and into the future. We have taken significant action in recent years to address the affordability crisis in our city, and to address issues of homelessness. This has included the implementation of the Empty Homes Tax, with all net revenue from the program allocated to affordable housing initiatives. Delivery of more housing, including social and low-income housing, is a collaborative effort across the City’s operations and there are also dependencies on financial support from other levels of government.

Total Investments in 2020 Budget

In response to Council’s identification of their priorities for the 2020 Budget, every division and department reviewed their existing and planned initiatives in their operating budgets. City staff looked for opportunities to better align existing and ongoing activities and investments to these priority areas, and also made sure there was strong alignment for the proposed new initiatives. Capital plan investments shown here reflect the work and costs included in the 2020 Budget from the multi-year approved capital plan. The total dollar investment includes specific initiatives and their associated costs that have been included in the 2020 Budget and are directly aligned to this priority. It is important to recognize that there is ongoing, everyday work across the City’s entire operations that can be difficult to capture but that also reflects the increased focus on this priority.
Existing and Ongoing Activities in 2020 Budget (examples) – Estimated $29 million

**Advance new affordable housing projects** by working with provincial, federal and community housing partners on a variety of new projects including a new phase of modular homes, the Women Deliver Legacy Project, 58 West Hastings, the seven City sites in partnership with the Community Land Trust and new homes for trans, gender diverse and Two-Spirit (TGD2S) people. Advance work with senior partners on the renovation of the Regent and Balmoral Hotels to provide more social housing. (ACCS)

**Complete the temporary modular housing research project with BC Housing**, examining the impact of temporary modular housing on three main areas: residents, the neighbourhood and broader society. (ACCS)

**Expedite affordable housing and lower-income rental projects** by implementing Phase 2 of process improvements. (DBL)

**Improve conditions in Single Room Occupancy hotels (SROs) and in social and supportive housing sites.** (DBL, VFRS, ACCS, VPD)

**Improve affordability and diversity in housing** with initiatives supporting a wider range of housing options, including SRO Revitalization Action Plan; secondary suites program; temporary modular housing program; securing affordable housing on major project sites; support to VAHA and VAHEF; implementing the newly approved Community Housing Incentive Program. (PDS, ACCS, Legal)

**Continue to process affordable housing applications** under the Moderate Income Rental Housing Pilot program, and social housing applications under the SHORT Program. Continue to link the implementation of affordable housing policy to rezoning applications filed through the policy. (PDS)

**Continue to improve the land use regulatory framework** to streamline permit processing and facilitate public access, including amendments to outdated or superseded policy and guidelines, in co-ordination with land use policy work being addressed through other priority projects such as city-wide planning. (PDS, Legal)

**Develop a new incentive program to encourage the creation of affordable housing** and other community-serving assets on lands owned by non-profit societies, co-ops and faith-based organizations. (PDS)

**Implementation of a new suite of rental incentives** (pending Council approval in 2019), including writing new rental zones and implementing new rezoning policies to achieve deeper affordability. (PDS)

Continue to support the **Public Bike Share equity program** to improve access to affordable transportation. (ENG)
New Initiatives in 2020 Budget (examples) - $4 million

**Expand services for renters within the city** through the implementation of a new Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy, introducing grants for renter-serving organizations, advancing the work of the Renter Advocacy and Services team, and working towards the opening of a Renter Centre in 2021. (ACCS) – $1 million

**New funds to support the City’s on-going work with the Province on homelessness**, including increased year-round shelter space and the protection of existing, low-income housing. (ACCS) – $2 million

**Evaluate multiple affordable housing regulations and develop a recommendation back to Council around proposed approach, timing, and budget needs for improvements** (PDS) – $0.2 million, including:

- Regulatory enhancements to increase and improve the stock of affordable housing (e.g. secondary suites, collective housing)
- Affordable home ownership policies
- Assessment of policy and by-law definitions of affordability to align with outcomes of current policy work (e.g. rental incentive review, Vancouver Affordable Housing Endowment Fund)
- Support for the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC) in developing a regional Indigenous housing strategy.

**Funding for staff working on affordable housing projects** in multiple departments across the city. (VAHA, PDS, ACCS, REFM) – $0.6 million

Major Capital Initiatives in 2020 Budget - $32 million*

**Implement new Community Housing Incentive Program** to increase grant contributions to non-profit and co-op housing projects offering deeper levels of affordability e.g., more homes renting at income assistance and at BC Housing Income Limits, where rent is geared to income. (ACCS) – $17 million

**Support building repairs for co-op and non-market housing** on City land, in partnership with senior levels of government. (ACCS) – $2 million

**Internal research team** to support implementation and delivery of affordable housing capital projects. (ACCS) – $1 million

**New temporary modular housing site** at Vanness Avenue. (VAHA) – $3 million
Feasibility study for non-market housing. (ACCS and REFM) – $0.1 million

Replacement of furniture, fixtures and equipment at various non-market housing facilities. (ACCS and REFM) – $0.7 million

Replacement of City-owned single room occupancy buildings (SROs) and grants to support both tenant relocation, and maintaining affordability in the redeveloped buildings. (ACCS and REFM) – $1 million

Design for the renewal and expansion of the childcare component of the Marpole branch library. (ACCS and REFM) – $2 million

New childcare facility (74 preschool spaces) at West Fraser Lands. (ACCS and REFM) – $3 million

Renewal and expansion of the 45-space Marpole Oakridge daycare and preschool childcare component of the community centre at Oak Park. (ACCS and REFM) – $1 million

Renovations program to keep childcare facilities for preschool children (ages 0-4 years) functional. (REFM and ACCS) – $0.2 million

Feasibility study for childcare facilities. (ACCS and REFM) – $0.8 million

Planning and related operational costs for delivery of childcare projects and social infrastructure plan. (ACCS) – $0.03 million

Ongoing maintenance of City-owned, non-market housing buildings e.g. roofing, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, etc. (REFM) – $0.4 million

Access to Water project to promote the quality of filtered tap water, increase the number of fountains and water access locations within the City, and provide funding to build temporary fountains for extreme heat events. (ENG) – $0.1 million

In addition to the funding that is included in the budget, the 2019-2022 Capital Plan includes 1,200 to 1,600 new non-market rental housing units delivered through development and secured through voluntary in-kind Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) and inclusionary zoning at an estimated value of $400 million.

* This list represents the major projects and does not include all capital investments included in the budget.

For more details about the City’s work supporting this priority, please refer to the associated Service Plans in the Budget Book.

Legend:

ACCS – Arts, Culture and Community Services  VPL – Vancouver Public Library
PDS – Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability VAHA – Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency
DBL – Development, Buildings and Licensing ENG – Engineering Services
REFM – Real Estate and Facilities Management Legal – Legal Services
FRS – Finance, Risk and Supply Management