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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council"](#)

Date: 5/26/2026 4:23:22 PM

Subject: Memo to Council - Social Housing Initiate motion and SHORT program update

Attachments: PDS - Social Housing Initiative Motion Response - Council Memo . pdf

Mayor and Council,

Please see attached memo with respect to the motion arising from the Social Housing Initiative item in December 2025 on expediting social housing projects in the SHORT program.

Thank you,

Josh White M.Pl.

General Manager | Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability

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MEMORANDUM

May 26, 2026

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Dan Garrison, Director, Housing Policy and Regulation
Annie Mauboules, Assistant Director, Housing Policy and Regulation

FROM: Josh White
General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

SUBJECT: Vancouver's Social Housing Initiative Motion Response

RTS #: N/A

The purpose of this memo is to inform Council of steps staff are taking to respond to the following motion approved December 9, 2025 regarding Vancouver's Social Housing Initiative (SHI):

THAT Council direct staff to report back by the end of March 2026 with proposed improvements to the Social Housing or Rental Tenure (SHORT) Program to reduce the current end-to-end approval timeline for eligible projects to achieve maximum possible time reductions in order to ensure projects are "shovel" ready for senior-government funding and to help meet City, Provincial, and Federal housing targets and commitments;

FURTHER THAT the Housing Accelerator Fund and the Empty Homes Tax be identified and, where eligible, allocated as funding sources to support this work.

SOCIAL HOUSING OR RENTAL TENURE (SHORT) PROGRAM

The SHORT program was launched as a pilot in 2017, implementing direction in the Housing Vancouver Strategy to expedite municipal approvals processes for the most-needed affordable housing. Eligible projects included new build and redevelopment of existing social housing buildings, First Nation-led projects, and city-led capital projects. As of the end of 2025, projects expedited through the SHORT program went from Rezoning Application to Development Permit approval in approximately 15-17 months compared to approximately 20-27 months for non-SHORT projects.

EXPEDITING PRIORITY SOCIAL HOUSING PROJECTS

Given the extraordinary volume of rezoning applications proceeding to Council in the first half of 2026, it is not possible to make structural changes to approval processes in the short-term. Instead, Staff had planned to focus resources this year on prioritizing implementation approaches within the existing system to speed up priority projects to meet funding deadlines. At the time of motion approval, there were four projects on city land with conditional Provincial funding which required them to reach construction by the end of 2027. The City had further provided letters of support for eight non-profit led social housing projects which, if successful in their funding applications would have had the same time requirements. In addition, there were several in-stream social housing projects which had received funding through previous calls with their own funding deadlines.

The Provincial budget announcement in February 2026 re-allocated previous funding commitments for social housing creating uncertainty and removing the time requirements for some of these projects. Should projects impacted by the funding announcement proceed, staff will process them through expedited processes. However, given the removal of timing pressures around funding requirements and the volume of rezoning applications tracking to a limited number of Council meetings, staff are not allocating additional resources to further expedite these projects currently.

There are several projects which had either received CHF through the previous funding call or through other funding streams which were not re-allocated through the budget. Staff will continue to prioritize these in-stream projects using existing municipal tools including shortened internal review timelines, dedicated staff support and concurrent rezoning and development permit application processes. Staff will also work with the Province to find solutions to allow priority projects impacted by the budget announcement to proceed.

In late fall 2026, staff will seek to incorporate this work into a work program with appropriate resources dedicated to a more fulsome response to the motion which will incorporate lessons learned from current work to expedite in-stream social housing projects. Staff will review the end-to-end development approvals process to find meaningful ways to achieve maximum time reductions for social housing and identify potential uses for funding from the Housing Accelerator Fund and Empty Homes Tax to assist this work. Pending full scoping of the work program, this could include exploring policy changes, relaxations, fee reductions, and additional staff resources, as well as actions with partners to align funding to achieve shortened timelines and greater affordability.

If Council has questions, please feel free to contact me directly at josh.white@vancouver.ca or Dan Garrison (dan.garrison@vancouver.ca).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J White', with a stylized, cursive script.

Josh White
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