

# Affordable Housing Policy in New Neighbourhoods

Housing Initiatives from the City of Vancouver

*The City of Vancouver's goal is to increase the supply of affordable housing in Vancouver with a broad range of dwelling types to meet the needs of a diverse population. This fact sheet provides information on the Affordable Housing Policy in new neighbourhoods, and is one of five that outline the City's role in housing.*

In the late 1980s, the City began planning 'new neighbourhoods' to increase housing capacity to meet the needs of a growing population. Most of these are built on former industrial lands, such as False Creek North, City Gate, Coal Harbour, East Fraserlands, and South-east False Creek.

The City has worked closely with developers in these areas to produce a housing mix suited to people with a range of incomes, household sizes and lifestyles.

Since 1988, the City has required 20 percent of the units in new neighbourhoods be available for the development of affordable housing. This encourages balanced communities and ensures that people with low and moderate incomes are also able to live in well-planned, conveniently located neighbourhoods.

The 20 percent requirement represented the lowest income households in the region, generally defined by CMHC as 'core need,' households paying more than 30 percent of their income on shelter. At that time, 20 percent of the city's households were at or below 'core need' income thresholds.

## Vancouver's Neighbourhoods with the 20 Percent Policy

The 20 percent policy was developed when there was still substantial federal and provincial funding being provided for the creation of social housing. At that time, roughly 1,800 units of social housing per year were funded in British Columbia with the federal government paying two-thirds and the provincial government paying one-third of the cost. In 1993, the fed-

eral government withdrew funding for social housing. Aspects of federal assistance have been re-introduced since that time on a limited and sporadic basis.

The City's role continues to be creating opportunities by providing development sites, which are partnered with federal and provincial social housing programs. The City does not fund the construction of these projects, but through the rezoning process, requires sites be made available in the long term at a price within the budget limits set by the province through BC Housing.

This 20 percent requirement has created the potential for approximately 3,450 units of social housing in new neighbourhoods, excluding Southeast False Creek which is currently under review. To date, 1,360 units have been built. Not all major projects in new neighbourhoods pro-

## Status of Social Housing in Major Projects January 2010

New Neighbourhoods	Built	Funding to be determined	Total
Pacific GMC	34	-	34
Tugboat Landing	42	-	42
Arbutus Lands	53	-	53
International Village	108	-	108
Bayshore	111	-	111
City Gate	176	-	176
Fraser Lands	194	-	194
Coal Harbour	206	40	246
Pacific Place (Concord)	436	754	1,190
Joyce-Vanness	0	0	0
East Fraser Lands	0	1,303	1,303
Southeast False Creek	under review		
Total	1,360	2,097	3,457



vide 20 percent non-market housing. In some projects, the 20 percent requirement could not be achieved without compromising other public objectives or maintaining the economic viability of the projects.

With the end of federal funding for social housing in 1993, alternate approaches have been utilized. Some social housing projects could not be deferred, as they were part of integrated larger projects, so the City allowed a few of the 20 percent sites to be changed over to market development, utilizing the proceeds to supplement the limited provincial funding for social housing. With limited senior government funding available, it is difficult to achieve development to the full capacity of the policy. Innovative approaches, such as the C-Side Project, are being used to maximize the amount of affordable housing in new neighbourhoods.

### Project Examples



**City Gate Co-op**  
188 Milross Street  
102 units (2002)

City Gate Coop is located at the east end of False Creek and is one example of several co-ops that have been developed in new neighbourhoods targeted for families.



**Yaletown Mews**  
201 Alvin Narod Mews  
60 units (2001)

Yaletown Mews is a family non-profit rental project built over a City-owned parking garage serving the Yaletown heritage district.

#### **Definitions**

*For the purposes of this fact sheet, social housing refers to non-profit rental or co-op housing developed in partnership with senior levels of government.*

*Affordable housing refers more broadly to housing targeted for low to modest-income households*



**Quayside**  
1010 Pacific Boulevard  
93 units (1999)

Quayside is a family non-profit rental project located at the north end of Cambie Bridge. There is a childcare centre located on the ground floor and the parking for the marina at the foot of Davie is located in the parking garage. Quayside demonstrates the growing complexity of projects.



**C-Side**  
1299 W. Hastings Street  
171 units (2002)

C-side is an affordable housing project in Coal Harbour that is a mix of social housing and market rental. All of the units were intended to be social housing, but because there was only funding to develop the family component as social housing, the 171 units for singles or couples were built as market rental housing with the expectation that, as the mortgage is paid off, a positive cash flow will be generated that can be used to subsidize core-need households.

For more information visit our website at [www.vancouver.ca/housing](http://www.vancouver.ca/housing)

The City of Vancouver has been helping Vancouver residents find affordable, suitable housing for more than 50 years.