

GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND COMMUNITY PLAN

Neighbourhood Planning through Dialogue
Workshop Series

Housing



CITY OF
VANCOUVER

Grandview-Woodland
Community Plan

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INTRODUCTION



Housing is a basic need. The availability of quality, affordable housing to serve a diverse population is a key component of neighbourhood well-being.

Grandview-Woodland has an array of housing - both in its apartment areas, its social housing facilities, its co-ops and heritage homes, as well as in its single-family and duplex zones. But at the same time the neighbourhood also has a well-identified need for both security of tenure and additional housing options along the housing continuum.

In April 2012, the City of Vancouver launched a Community Plan process for Grandview-Woodland. When completed, the plan will set out a series of long-range directions (policies and priorities) for the neighbourhood. The new community plan will update an older plan that dates to 1979-82.

The new Grandview-Woodland Community Plan will cover a range of topics - and housing will be a key part of this. As part of the planning process, we're looking for your help in crafting directions and shaping the future of the neighbourhood.

Among the specific areas of housing-related focus in the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan are:

- Homelessness and supportive housing
- Non-market (Social Housing and co-ops)
- Market Rental Housing
- Secondary Suites, Laneway Houses and Rented Condos
- Home ownership

In each of these sections, we will set out a number of items:

- What we've heard - ideas and input on this subject that we've gathered from the community to date
- Geography - areas of consideration for present and future planning
- What we know - key stats and details pertaining to the neighbourhood
- Key City bylaws, policies and programs currently in place that shape and impact cultural spaces and programs in Vancouver
- Things to think about

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Community Planning and the City's role in transportation: the back-story

Before diving into specific neighbourhood considerations, you may want to know a little more about the community planning process, as well as some more general information about how the City engages with housing issues.

The Grandview-Woodland Community Plan process was launched in the spring of last year - and will unfold in four phases. Phase One (completed in August 2012) involved outreach and engagement, as well as the general identification of assets, issues and opportunities in the neighbourhood (that is, what people love about the community, and areas that they'd like to see changed). Phase Two, which we are in now, is focussed on the development of draft policy directions. This phase will last through to the summer of 2013.

Planning work will focus on six key planning themes, of which Housing is one. The others are:

- Social Issues, Urban Health & Safety
- Parks & Public Space
- Transportation
- Arts & Culture
- Heritage & Character

Other areas of focus - such as local economy, sustainability and green design - are also being incorporated into the process.

The community planning process will develop policy directions for the whole neighbourhood ("neighbourhood wide policy"), as well as key geographic areas of focus ("sub-area policy"). Some of the sub-areas that will be looked at are:

- Cedar Cove (north of Hastings)
- Hastings Street
- Commercial Drive
- Broadway/Commercial

Other geographic areas of focus may include:

- Nanaimo Street
- The area east of the Drive (where there are a high proportion of older residential buildings)
- The area west of the Drive (including apartment and industrial uses)

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When discussing housing in Grandview-Woodland, it's important to keep in mind that this theme is interconnected with many of the other planning themes (for example, the cost of housing affects where one is able to live, which can affect quality of life, health and well-being; housing also relates directly to transportation opportunities, as well as the ability to access community services and participate in the local economy). Housing issues can mean different things in different parts of the neighbourhood (again, because of the proximity to other transportation or services, or because affordability can vary depending on whether a given dwelling is located on a busy arterial or on a quieter residential street).

Finally, it's also important to remember that key housing concepts like affordability can mean different things to different people. It is critical to think about the social context of these considerations - affordable for whom, and at what cost? It is equally critical to recognize that the nature of affordability has changed over time, and that people looking for housing in present day Grandview-Woodland can face entirely different challenges than someone doing so five, ten or twenty years ago.

Housing Glossary - Some Key Terms

Affordable housing - Can be provided by the City, government, non-profit, community and for profit partners and it can be found or developed along the whole housing continuum including SROs, market rental and affordable home ownership. The degree of housing affordability results from the relationship between the cost of housing and household income. It is not a static concept as housing costs and incomes change over time. According to the CMHC, "In Canada, housing is considered affordable if shelter costs account for less than 30 per cent of before-tax household income."

Condominiums - Buildings in which units of property are owned individually, while the common property is owned jointly by all of the owners.

Co-op (or Housing Cooperative) - Non-profit housing co-ops are a form of shared ownership which provides homes to its members who purchase a share and pay a monthly housing charge. Members determine the policies of the co-op, including how much is charged for housing and the manner in which it is assessed. As with all primary co-ops, each member has one vote, regardless of how much they pay. *(Adapted from the Co-op Housing Federation of Canada and the BC Cooperative Association).*

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Emergency Shelters - Temporary accommodation for the homeless; they prevent people from becoming street homeless. **Housing Continuum** - The housing continuum is the range of housing options available to households of all income levels, from emergency shelter and housing for the homeless to affordable rental housing and home ownership.

Rate of Change Policy - Currently, the City's Rate of Change Policy preserves existing rental housing by requiring one-for-one replacement for redevelopment projects involving six or more dwelling units.

Social Housing - Housing for low and moderate income singles and families, usually subsidized through a variety of mechanisms including senior government support. It is housing owned by government, a non-profit or co-operative society. Rents are determined not by the market but by the residents' ability to pay. There are many types of social housing in Vancouver, including: family units, seniors units, singles units and supportive units.

Supportive Housing - Supportive housing is affordable housing that also provides access to support staff. Supports help tenants stabilize their lives, enhance their independent living skills, and reconnect with their communities. The services provided to tenants are flexible, and vary from building to building. Some services are provided by on-site staff, and some services are delivered through outreach programs.

Secondary Suites - Typically additional units within the structure of a principal single family residence, often basement apartments or lockoff suites in townhouses / apartments.

Secure Market Rental / Purpose Built Rental Housing - Apartments and/or buildings that are built with the intent to be rented in the private market. Through regulation, they cannot be separated and sold as separate stratas.

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The City Tool Kit

The City's jurisdiction over housing is defined through the Vancouver Charter - the provincial legislation that outlines the extent of the City's authority. In particular, the Charter gives the City the power to undertake housing development and to zone for, or enter into agreements around, the creation of affordable or special needs housing. More broadly, the Charter also allows the City to undertake social planning, "including research, analysis and coordination relating to social needs, social well-being and social development in the city" (s.202a). Finally, the Charter provides the City with the authority to establish property taxes and collect development levies - both of which play an important part in how many housing and social programs are funded and key community amenities and social infrastructure (such as childcare, community centres, parks) is created and maintained.

Land-Use	<p>In general, the City is granted the ability to generate land-use designations, zoning & related considerations; design guidelines; development and rezoning processes. Land-use and design considerations are used to support a variety of housing policy objectives. The Zoning & Development bylaw sets out parameters around building height, set-backs, permitted floor space (usually described in terms of a FSR or Floor Space Ratio), permitted and conditional uses and more.</p> <p>The Zoning and Development bylaw also contains direct or indirect provisions governing the nature of development change. For example, in multi-family zoned areas, Rate of Change considerations require one-for-one replacement of demolished <i>rental</i> units in redevelopment projects involving six or more dwelling units.</p>
Taxation & borrowing	<p>The power to collect property tax - which is then used to finance an array of City services. Borrowing powers (& debentures) can also be used to finance capital projects - including those related to social amenities (e.g. a community centre). <i>Most</i> property tax revenues are needed for operating costs, not capital costs. Furthermore, most capital expenditures are for maintenance, replacement, and safety. Only a small portion of capital expenditures (10-25%) are for new amenities or facilities.</p>

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Bylaws

A bylaw is a legally enforceable regulation (or “ordinance”) created by the municipality. A variety of bylaws pertain to housing issues, including:

- **Building Bylaw** - regulates the design and construction of buildings, as well as the administrative provisions related to permitting, inspections, and the enforcement of these requirements. The Vancouver Building Bylaw is based on the 2006 British Columbia Building Code
- **Single Room Accommodation (SRA) Bylaw** - regulates conversion or demolition of single room accommodation
- **Standards of Maintenance Bylaw** - prescribes standards for the maintenance and occupancy of building sites within the City of Vancouver to ensure that such buildings and sites are free from hazard and are maintained continuously in conformity with accepted health, fire and building requirements
- **Untidy Premises Bylaw** - a by-law to prevent the existence of untidy premises within the City of Vancouver
- **Heritage Bylaw** - designates certain buildings, structures and lands as heritage buildings, structures and lands

Policy Development

A policy sets out a statement of position, or a preferred approach, to a particular subject. City staff, following direction from City Council, develops policy on a wide range of items - be they social, economic, or environmental - over which the municipality has a role or responsibility. These policies, in turn, guide decision-making, shape the allocation of resources, and provide a lens through which to evaluate current and emerging issues.

Key policy documents that relate to housing issues and social well-being include: the **Housing & Homelessness Strategy (2012)**, **Bold Ideas Towards An Affordable City**, **Mayor’s Taskforce on Housing Affordability (2012)** and the **Healthy City Strategy** (currently in development).

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Construction and Maintenance	<p>The City in partnership with developers or other levels of government can facilitate the construction of key social infrastructure. For example, in the last five years the City has partnered with BC Housing on the creation of several supported housing sites - where the City's contribution has been a combination of land and expedited development permitting and the Province contributed capital for construction and operating costs.</p>
Development & Rezoning	<p>The development and rezoning processes can support housing objectives through a number of means.</p> <p>Development undertaken within the parameters of existing zoning can generate new housing supply; whereas rezoning can potentially allow additional height or floor space to be utilized for housing purposes. In this latter case, negotiations around the increased value of the development site allow the city to negotiate CACs – which can in turn support other housing objectives (see below).</p> <p>As noted above, development also helps to finance the creation of various types of public amenity through a number of mechanisms - including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development Cost Levies (DCLs) - are collected from development help pay for facilities made necessary by growth. Facilities eligible for DCL funding include: replacement housing (social/non-profit housing), parks, child care facilities, transportation infrastructure, and other engineering infrastructure (e.g. sewer, water, drainage).• Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) - are in-kind or cash contributions provided by developers when City Council grants additional development rights through rezonings. CACs can help address the increased demands that may be placed on City or surrounding community. Cash contributions are used for transportation improvements, parks and childcare and other amenities (such as libraries, community centres, cultural facilities and neighbourhood houses). In-kind CACs support the creation of park space and child care facilities. <p>In addition to these tools, the City reviews development and rezoning applications for a range of architectural, public realm and urban design considerations.</p>

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Design Guidelines	<p>The City produces design guidelines to further shape neighbourhood growth, development and sustainability. Depending on the subject, guidelines provide recommended approaches to various aspects of design (e.g. Accessible Design Guidelines, View Protection Guidelines) and/or can act as a source of additional guidance on matters of architecture or neighbourhood character.</p> <p>Some guidelines pertain to a particular type of building (e.g. Laneway Housing, Community Care Facilities Guidelines), while other pertain to zoning district, or portion thereof. (For example, in Grandview-Woodland, there are Design Guidelines for the Britannia/Woodland and Broadway Station RM (Multiple Dwelling) zoned areas west of Commercial Drive, the RT (Two family) area to the east of Commercial Drive, and various parts of the RS (single-family zones) west of Nanaimo).</p>
Licenses & Permits	<p>Through its licensing and permitting processes, the City further regulates key social services and facilities. For example, approving temporary permits for winter response shelters (social service centres) each winter.</p>
Funding, Grants & Awards	<p>City grants are used to support organizations working on housing-related objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A limited number of housing grants are provided to non-profit providers to assist with funding short-falls• The City also helps to promote the Province's Home Owner Grant Program which provides a property tax rebate for eligible home-owners• Various grants and rebates are available via the City (and partners like BC Hydro and Vancity) to support energy retrofits and other green building initiatives• Social Policy Grants (Core Funding) provide a contribution to staffing costs for a number of non-profit organizations that work on issues related to housing (such as the Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre), outreach to homeless and street-involved individuals (e.g. Kettle Friendship Society), and more generally on the provision of services to low-income individuals and families

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Programs and Service Delivery	<p>The City operates (or is involved in) a number of housing programs. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold/wet weather shelters that provide four low-barrier shelters (160 spaces) for homeless individuals. Shelters, such as the one at Victoria Drive and E 10th, are a collaboration with non-profit housing providers and are funded through the Province • Non-market housing - the City operates over 1,000 units of non-market housing for low-income singles. The majority of these facilities are located in downtown and the downtown eastside, and at present there are no City-operated non-market housing units in Grandview-Woodland • The City's homelessness outreach team - which works to connect homeless and street-involved individuals with available services.
Civic Advisory Boards	<p>A number of Civic Advisory Boards - Council-appointed arms-length agencies, boards and committees - have mandates that are connected to housing matters. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability (recently completed) - mandated to examine barriers to the creation of affordable housing, the steps necessary to protect existing affordable housing, and to identify opportunities for increasing affordable housing in Vancouver • Urban Design Panel - advises City Council and staff on development proposals and policies, and reviews all civic building projects • Vancouver City Planning Commission - advises City Council on planning and development issues in Vancouver • Vancouver Heritage Commission - advises City Council about heritage matters, and makes recommendations to Council about heritage buildings, structures, and lands in Vancouver <p>A number of other Committees have mandates whose work involves them in housing issues, including the Aboriginal Persons Committee, the Persons With Disabilities Committee, and the Seniors Advisory Committee, among others.</p>
Connecting & Convening	<p>The City can play a role in bringing stakeholders together, supporting the work of community organizations, or fostering partnerships (leveraging the interests of other agencies, organizations and levels of governments to advance or address a particular issue or topic).</p>
Advocacy	<p>On key issues - particularly those with a larger regional, provincial or national "reach" - the City can play a role in advocating with senior levels of government (and other stakeholders) for a given position.</p>

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A Note on Jurisdictions:

Responsibility for housing issues spans a number of levels of government. Notwithstanding the various tools that are described above, the City's primary role relates to regulating land-use - through which the location and type of housing is established across Vancouver. It is through this that many of the opportunities for development-generated affordable and non-market housing opportunities are created. However, that's only one dimension of the response needed. Attending to the homelessness and affordability crises that Vancouver faces requires the involvement of all levels of government.

The following outlines some of the roles and responsibilities of regional, provincial and federal governments.

Regional (Metro Vancouver)

Metro Vancouver's role is primarily a mixture of advocacy and service delivery. The latter is realized through the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation (MVHC) - an entity which owns and operates more than 50 affordable rental housing sites throughout the region. MVHC housing is offered for a "mixed range of incomes" and "rents vary from competitive market rates to assisted rents for those with lower incomes." There is one Metro Vancouver housing site in Grandview-Woodland, Semlin Terrace, located in the north end of the neighbourhood.

Metro Vancouver also supports the work of the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, and works with BC Housing to support the needs of low-income renters.

Provincial government

The Province, via the **Ministry of Energy, Mines and Natural Gas and Responsible for Housing**, has primary responsibility for a variety of housing-related matters, working on them both directly and through crown corporations such as **BC Housing**.

For example, the Ministry's **Building and Safety Standards Branch** is responsible for developing and implementing the Building Code (and related legislation) which governs aspects of safety, design and construction for new and existing buildings. Similarly, the Ministry's **Homeowner Protection Office** administers the *Homeowner Protection Act*, which is intended to strengthen consumer protection for buyers of new homes, improve the quality of residential construction and support research on residential construction. The HPO is also responsible for "licensing residential builders and building envelope renovators, administering owner builder authorizations."

The Ministry also develops provincial **housing policy, strategies and programs** covering homelessness, social housing, special needs housing and community care facilities (operated through the Ministry of Health), Aboriginal off-reserve housing, and strata properties.

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Homelessness and affordable housing matters are also part of the BC Housing portfolio, which both operates, funds or supports (via transfers to non-profits, health authorities and community groups) a number of housing facilities - providing **subsidized (social and/or supportive) housing** to approximately 95,000 households across the province. Other Provincial support is provided via **tax credits for social housing**, targeted **rent supplements** for low to moderate income working families, **rebates** and **grants** such as the First Time Homebuyers Bonus and the Seniors Home Renovation Tax Credit.

The Ministry directly, and through the **Aboriginal Housing Initiative**, “works in partnership with Aboriginal groups, other provincial agencies and the federal government to support and improve off-reserve Aboriginal housing for First Nations and Aboriginal people” and also has programs specifically aimed at creating “culturally-appropriate housing for youth, women, elders, and those who are struggling with addiction.” (Note: as of February 2013, Aboriginal social housing has now been transferred from BC Housing to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA). This transfer includes Aboriginal Housing units, emergency shelters and the Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program.)

Two other areas of Provincial responsibility are worth noting. For renters and landlords, the Province’s **Residential Tenancy Branch** administers the Residential Tenancy Act and provides information and dispute resolution services. For homeowners, legislation - via the Strata Property Act - governs the management and operation of approximately 30,000 **strata-titled** buildings in BC.

Federal government

The Federal government’s role in housing has changed since the 1970s, largely through the withdrawal of funding for social, supportive and co-op housing programs, and the concomitant ‘assigning’ of these programs to lower (provincial) levels of government. Even though responsibility for these programs has been ‘devolved’ the federal government is still responsible for a number of long-term funding and operating agreements, at least for the next few years. This is particularly the case with housing cooperatives, and Grandview-Woodland has a number of co-ops that have federal operating agreements that will be expiring within the next two decades.

At present, the federal role in housing role is primarily realized via the **Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC)** - which provides mortgage loan insurance and mortgage-backed securities, and undertakes housing research. Various tax and rebate programs undertaken by the federal government also support the development of purpose-built rental buildings.

The Federal government also provides a limited amount of direct funding for housing projects through the **HPI (Homelessness Partnering Initiative)** grants). For example, in 2012, a total of \$19 million was funded (via a transfer to Metro Vancouver) to “enable local organizations to develop transitional, supportive and emergency housing and to support services for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness” in the region for a period ending in 2014.

HOUSING IN GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND

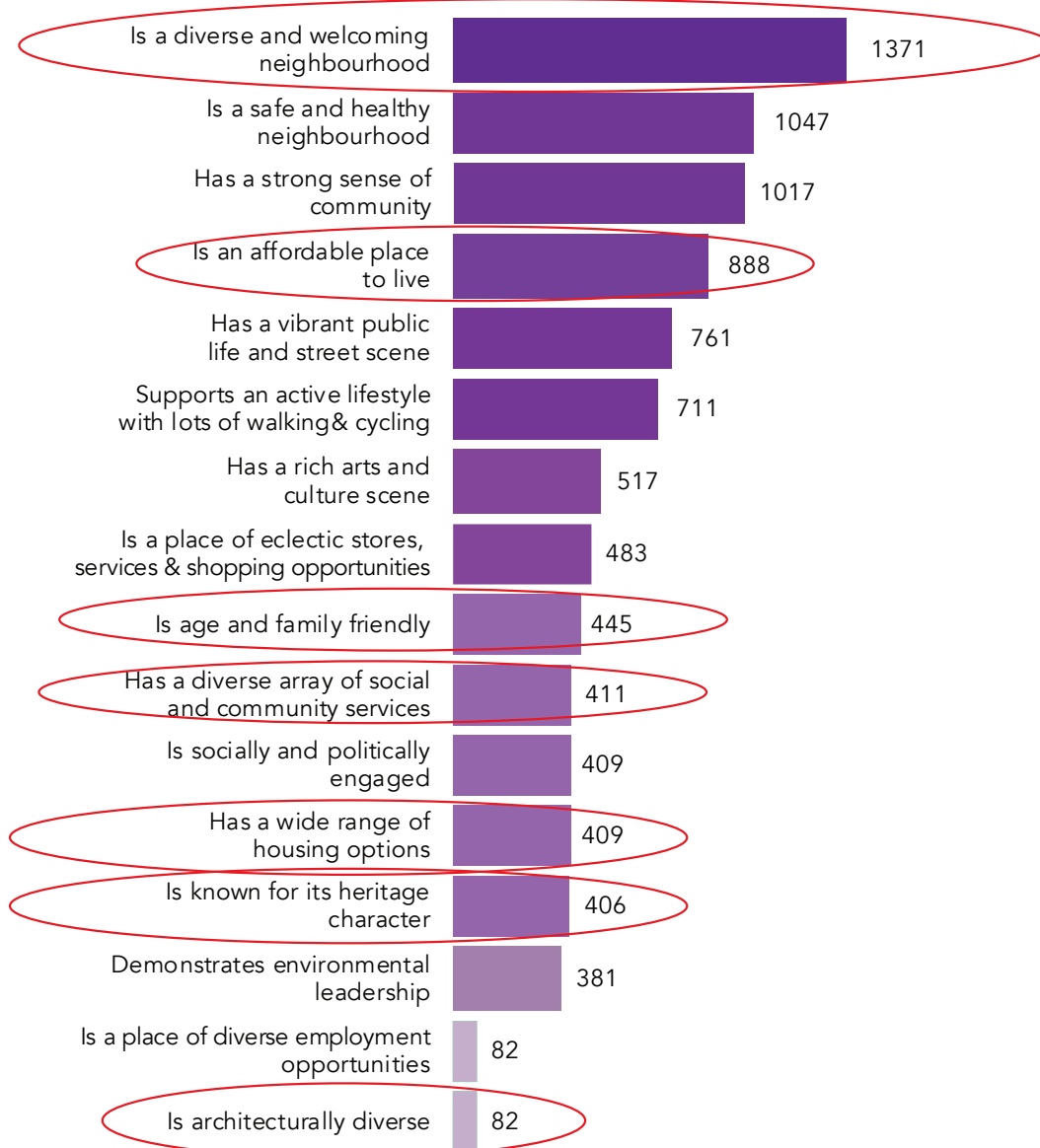
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Neighbourhood Values

As part of the planning work to date, we conducted a questionnaire that invited participants to rank the key characteristics and values they associated with Grandview-Woodland. Several of these characteristics relate to transportation and the public realm.

What is your ideal picture of the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood? What sort of neighbourhood should we be striving for?

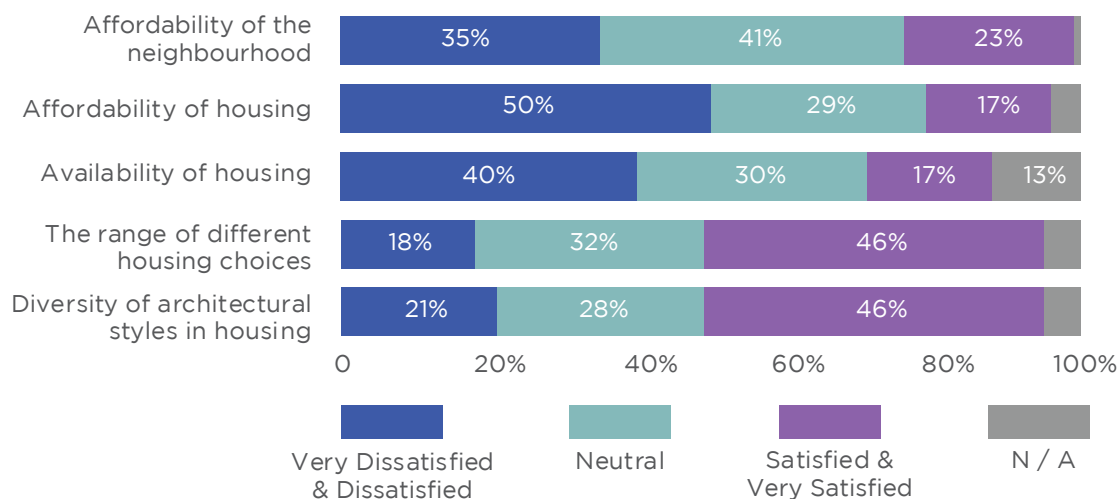
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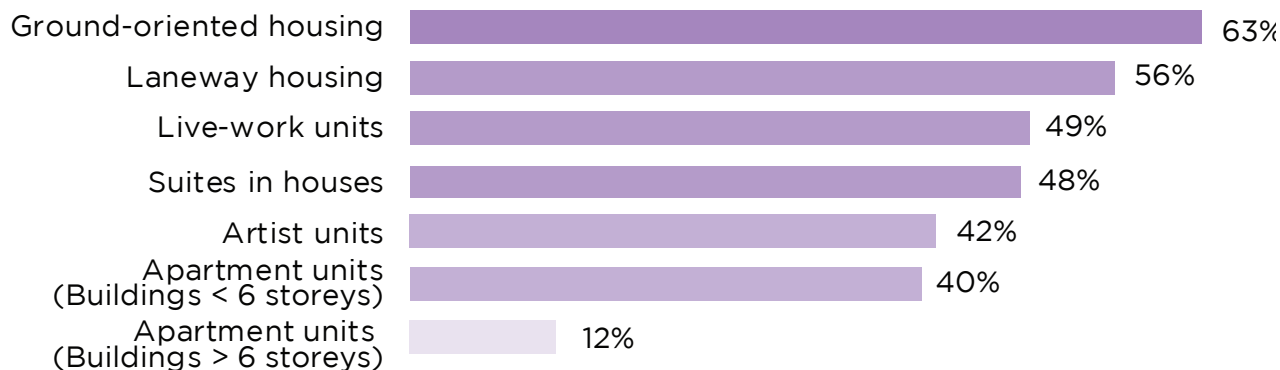
HOUSING IN GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND

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We also asked people to assess their degree of satisfaction with key components of the neighbourhood:



We then asked participants about the type of houses they felt were needed.

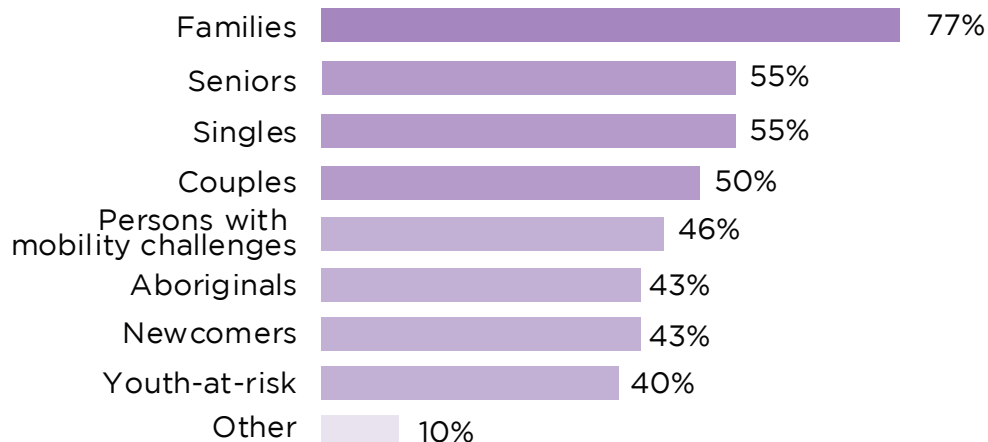


Note: participants could select multiple answers.

HOUSING IN GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND

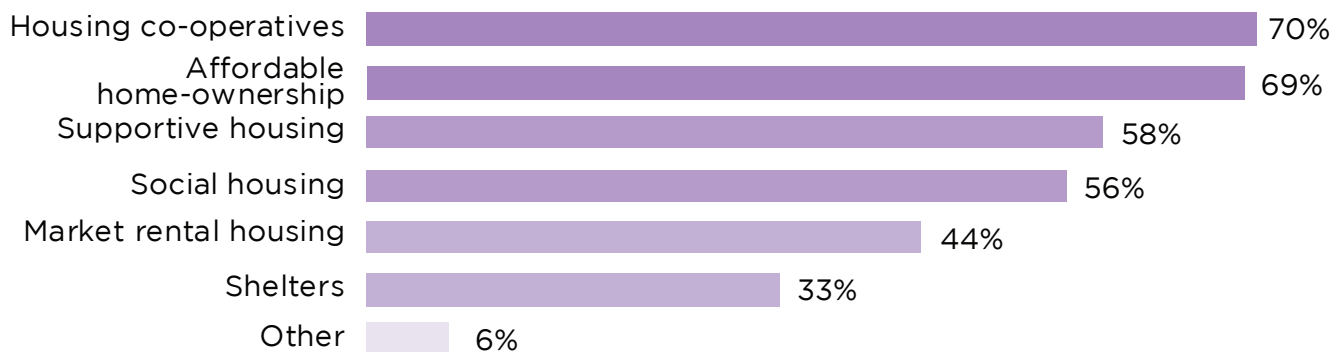
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And about peoples perception of the community members that were most in need of housing.



Note: participants could select multiple answers.

And about the perceived delivery system, tenure or model that was most needed



Note: participants could select multiple answers.

Based on the feedback we received in our initial community planning discussions, the present backgrounder aggregates the continuum of housing into five sub-sections pertaining to (1) homelessness and supportive housing, (2) non-market rental social housing (including co-ops), (3) market rental housing (4) secondary suites, laneway houses and rented condos, and (5) affordable home ownership.

HOUSING IN GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND

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Cross-cutting issues and considerations

In addition to considerations specific to the five sub-themes, a number of issues cut across more than one (and sometimes all) housing categories.

Affordability, gentrification and displacement

- Concern that the increasing cost of housing in Grandview-Woodland is making it harder for low, modest and middle-income people (in particular: low and modest income newcomers, Aboriginals, artists, youth, students, families, seniors) to locate housing in the neighbourhood, or stay in the neighbourhood; (related: concern that current residents are in danger of being 'priced out' of the area)
- Discussion about neighbourhood change - worry that the character of the housing market is changing, as well as other aspects of the neighbourhood (e.g. changing retail composition, cost of goods, etc.)

Neighbourhood character, including the role of heritage, guidelines, etc.

- Neighbourhood character was a common theme in discussions - and was seen as a combination of quality of life, built-form, neighbourhood composition, social and cultural features, natural heritage and more. There is strong interest in ensuring that the 'feel' of the neighbourhood is maintained as part of the Community Plan process
- In addition to broader discussions about heritage, there is a desire to see the role of heritage buildings and features recognized as an important component of the community, as well as a key source of housing (both rental accommodation, large houses subdivided into many small units, as well as ownership opportunities). While there is considerable debate around whether new buildings need to recreate a 'heritage look', there is general recognition that many older buildings (principally those built pre-WW2) are an important community asset
- Related to this, specific concerns were identified about the loss of rental housing located in heritage buildings - via their (re)conversion from apartments with multiple rental units into larger, strata-titled ownership units
- Other questions were raised around the nature of 'newer' heritage, the opportunities for different types of architectural expression, the role of low-rise and commercial buildings as components of neighbourhood heritage, the role of design guidelines in supporting character issues, and the need to recognize both specific buildings and the current 'mix' of housing types, as part of neighbourhood character

HOUSING IN GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND

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Scale, form, proportion, building typologies

- Questions and commentary around the scale and type of current and future buildings has been a key part of community planning discussions. As with other cross-cutting themes, community opinions on these subjects vary - and key themes are noted below
- Of particular concern to participants: the possibility that there could be a proliferation of 'high rise' forms of development throughout the neighbourhood. (Note that what people meant by 'high rise' - i.e. height and/or number of storeys - often varied considerably)
- Additional concern around the nature of materials, and the question of how new buildings can fit within a neighbourhood that has a high proportion of heritage
- General recognition that some sites (in particular: Broadway/Commercial station area, sites on high volume arterials) represent opportunities for change. Various discussions have taken place around how people imagine these areas in the future, the role that the sites might play, the sort of housing, public realm and community objectives that need to be part of the thinking on these sites.
- Specific concerns have been registered around maintaining the current character and feel of Commercial Drive, noting that the street has its own challenges around scale (particularly in how the street width varies north and south of E 1st). Recognition that the Drive has some opportunities for new development
- General support for low-rise forms of development in existing apartment areas; some willingness to consider modest increases to current building height, where appropriate
- Some disagreement about the potential for mid-rise forms of development. Potential application in key sites needs to be balanced against desire to maintain the character and feel of the neighbourhood
- Some disagreement over role of in-fill and gentler forms of density. General acceptance of these forms of development; however, desire to ensure that older heritage buildings are not lost at the expense of infill opportunities

A photograph of a person sitting on a stone wall. The person is wearing a dark grey hoodie, dark grey sweatpants, and white sneakers with red accents. They are sitting with their hands clasped in their lap. To the left of the person is a dark grey, textured wall. To the right is a stone wall made of large, irregular grey stones. In the background, there are trees, a green chain-link fence, and a building with a blue-tiled roof. A green utility pole is visible near the person. A small, clear plastic cup is on the ground near the person's feet.

HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Photo [detail] by Barry Skillin

HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

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Neighbourhood Values

Increasing the supply of supportive housing is critical to achieving the City's goal of ending street homelessness by 2015. In addition to rent subsidy, supportive housing also includes ongoing and targeted support services to residents who cannot live independently due to health problems or other disability.

What We Heard

- Concern about street homelessness in Grandview-Woodland - and a strong desire to see 'housing for all.' Support for broader goals of social inclusion, poverty reduction and provision of services to low-income and homeless individuals and families
- Recognition that Grandview-Woodland is home to a number of supportive housing facilities; general support for existing facilities and for service providers (many service providers described as 'neighbourhood assets' in early asset-mapping work)
- Desire for more information about 'what supportive housing means' - and about the different types of supportive housing available
- Support for additional housing options for a variety of needs; in particular support for accessible, mobility-friendly housing options for seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons with mental health concerns

Geography - Areas of Consideration for Present and Future Planning

- Street homelessness is most visible in Grandview-Woodland around the Broadway Commercial Skytrain station, and along Commercial Drive. Individuals who are 'sleeping rough' also do so in commercial and industrial-zoned areas in the neighbourhood
- Existing Supportive Housing sites in Grandview-Woodland are distributed throughout the neighbourhood
- Current City policy is to locate supportive housing throughout the City. Supportive Housing developments are allowed in all apartment zones in the City

What We Know

- Across the city the number of homeless has increased nearly three-fold in the last 10 years and stabilized in the last 2 years. In March 2012, there were 1,296 people sleeping in Vancouver shelters and 306 street homeless
- In March 2012 there were 20 homeless individuals counted in Grandview-Woodland. (Note that this figure represents, at best, an 'index' of homelessness in the neighbourhood. The homeless population is often transient and local service providers note estimate 15-20 "regular" and 15-20 transient homeless individuals at any one time)

HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

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- Homeless individuals face a myriad of health and mental health challenges. Housing is a first step to stabilizing many of these concerns; oftentimes, many other dimensions of support are needed
- There are a number of organizations in the area that serve the homeless population including The Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society, The Kettle Friendship Society, Britannia Community Services and others
- Grandview Calvary Baptist Church provides a meal for the homeless every Thursday night, and previously provided shelter services one night per week
- A winter response shelter was opened this year immediately outside of the Grandview-Woodland boundary at Victoria Drive and E 10th to serve the local homeless population. The 40 beds at this shelter filled up almost immediately
- A yearly service fair is put on by Under One Umbrella to serve the homeless population in Grandview-Woodland
- There 81 buildings containing a total of 3,730 supportive housing units in Vancouver, with the majority of units are concentrated in the Downtown area. In Grandview-Woodland there are six supportive buildings (with a total of 120 supportive housing units) in Grandview-Woodland. Grandview-Woodland has about 3% of the city's supported housing stock. All supportive housing buildings in the neighbourhood target individuals living with mental health issues

Key City Bylaws, Policies and Programs

- **Housing & Homelessness Strategy:** The new strategy contains a number of goals and objectives related to homelessness and supportive housing:
 - » End street homelessness by 2015 (affirming previous City goal)
 - » Create 2,900 units of supportive housing by 2021
 - » Expedite completion and occupancy of supportive housing units across city & ensure they house local homeless
 - » Map the homeless to their chosen locality and ensure shelters / supportive / social housing are located in these neighbourhoods
 - » Identify opportunities with all levels of government to increase housing supply and diversity
 - » Work with partners to establish a Rent Bank to prevent evictions due to short-term financial crisis
 - » Ensure shelter capacity to meet the needs of street homeless
 - » Protect, update and enhance existing SRO, supportive, social, and purpose built rental housing
 - » Continue to provide outreach services to facilitate access to housing
- **Street and Traffic Bylaw:** Regulates traffic and the use of streets in the City of Vancouver
- **Park Bylaw:** Regulates the use of City parks

HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

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Things to Think About

- What are the key issues around homelessness that you feel need to be addressed in your community? How can these issues best be addressed?
- Do you feel your Grandview-Woodland needs a shelter? If yes, what kind? (e.g. winter response and/or seasonal, year round, or just more housing?)
- What are your thoughts on expanding supportive housing in your community and where should supportive housing be located?
- What other supports for homelessness are needed? What is the best way to provide them?



NON-MARKET RENTAL HOUSING (SOCIAL HOUSING AND CO-OPS)

*Photo [detail] from the Paloma Housing
Co-operative Website*

NON-MARKET RENTAL HOUSING

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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. Social housing plays an important role in achieving this goal.

What We Heard from the Community

- Recognition that Grandview-Woodland is home to a significant number of social housing facilities; general support for existing facilities and for service providers; recognition that these services need to expand
- Recognition of the significant role played by Aboriginal housing providers in the neighbourhood; recognition that these services also need to expand
- Strong support in Grandview-Woodland for co-ops (both rented and equity, or 'owned') - and desire to see the co-op model strengthened and/or expanded; concern about the impending expiry of co-op operating agreements (with the federal government)
- Non-profit housing providers and co-ops face a number of challenges, including: rising cost and lack of support for maintaining aging buildings; lack of income/funds to cover costs of aging buildings, staff, and support services; uncertainty about ability to continue subsidies for lowest income clients
- Awareness that upgrades required by current social housing and co-op providers will require significant capital investment - and that needed investment creates acute challenges for providers
- Recognition that additional social housing is needed to meet the needs of present and future residents of Grandview-Woodland
- Potential ideas to address the pressures faced by non-market housing or co-ops? Consolidating co-ops; increased density or infill as part of redevelopment; ensuring protection for affordable rental (i.e. not allowing private redevelopment when operating agreements expire); additional subsidies or funding from government

Geography - Areas of Consideration for Present and Future Planning

- The majority of non-market housing is found within the neighbourhood's apartment zones (RM-3 and RM-4) - in particular, (1) the area west of Commercial Drive between Broadway and Venables, (2) the area east of Commercial Drive between Venables and Hastings, and (3) in the Cedar Cove area, west of Nanaimo and north of Hastings
- Non-market housing is permissible in all apartment (RM) zones in the City
- Key arterial streets have been noted as opportunity areas for a combination of housing, transportation and public realm improvements (in particular: Dundas Street, Hastings Street, East 1st Ave, Broadway, Nanaimo Street)

NON-MARKET RENTAL HOUSING

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What We Know

- In 2006, 37% of renters in Grandview-Woodland were spending more than 30% of their income on housing (versus 34% of renters city-wide). According to CMHC, the cost of adequate shelter should not exceed 30% of household income
- There are approximately 60 non-profit, social housing, or co-op buildings in Grandview-Woodland, providing approximately 2140 units of housing (9% of city stock)
- 944 units (or 44%) of social housing units in Grandview-Woodland are geared toward providing family housing (compared to the city average 34%)
- 740 units (or 35%) of social housing units in the neighbourhood are for seniors (the same proportion as the city-wide average)
- 456 (21%) of units are for a combination of other (non-family, non-senior) residents
- There are 14 co-op housing providers in the neighbourhood
- Federal Government operating agreements with co-op housing providers will expire over the next 20 years

Key City Bylaws, Policies and Programs

- **Housing & Homelessness Strategy:** The new strategy contains a number of goals and objectives related to social housing:
 - » Enable 5,000 additional social housing units by 2021
 - » Expand and amend planning and regulatory framework to expedite and enhance supply of affordable housing units, including a focus on low density residential neighbourhoods
 - » Work with partners to establish a Rent Bank to prevent evictions due to short-term financial crisis
- **Mayor's Taskforce on Housing Affordability:** Contains recommendations that support the protection of existing non-profit, social and co-operative housing that may be under threat using the community planning process
- **Major Projects Rezoning:** City Policy for Requiring 20% Social Housing in Major Projects. Since the mid-1980s, the official development plan by-laws for new neighbourhoods in Vancouver have included a requirement for 20% social housing (e.g. False Creek North, Coal Harbour, East Fraser Lands)
- **Guidelines:** RS-1 and RS-4 (Single-Family) Guidelines are intended to help achieve good-quality multiple accommodation in a buildings not originally designed for such use. RT and RM Design Guidelines draws attention to the character of older-buildings in the neighbourhood and aim to ensure that new development is compatible with this.

NON-MARKET RENTAL HOUSING

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Things to Think About

- In the absence of senior government funding what are your ideas to strengthen existing (or support new) non-market housing? Thinking of the array of tools identified in the early pages of the backgrounder, are there particular measures (e.g. taxation, debentures, land-use or zoning-related) that you favour?
- Many operating agreements between housing co-operatives and the federal government will be expiring in the next two decades - at a time when many of these facilities also face the need to make significant capital investments for renovations. How best can the new Community Plan support co-operatives in Grandview-Woodland?
- Co-locating housing with other facilities – such as community spaces, libraries, etc. – is one way to achieve ‘economies of scale’ when building non-market housing. Are there opportunities to co-locate any facilities in Grandview-Woodland?



MARKET RENTAL HOUSING



MARKET RENTAL HOUSING

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Market rental housing is essential to a healthy and vibrant neighbourhood and city. Students at various institutions; artists; retailers, service-workers, professionals such as firefighters, police, nurses; recent arrivals from other parts of Canada or the world; youth, families, seniors... these are just some of the many people that rent in Vancouver.

What We Heard

- Recognition that Grandview-Woodland is one of the more affordable places to live in the city - relative to other neighbourhoods
- Concern about increasing costs of rent in Grandview-Woodland, and the impact that this is having (and could have) on current and future residents. Particular concern about key populations (including, but not limited to, newcomers, youth, students, seniors, families, Aboriginals, artists, and others)
- Concern about loss of rental stock via conversion to strata/ownership housing, or other, higher priced rental upgrades (e.g. "renovictions")
- Many residents - in particular students - have room-mates; shared accommodation is common, even in studio and one-bedroom apartments. Support for a variety of living arrangements & shared accommodation needs to be factored into community plan work. (A related note? The lack of pet-friendly buildings emerged a number of times within conversations)
- Concern that the quality of some rental accommodation is poor - but lack of clarity about how these issues of quality can be dealt with
- Concern about a limited number of "problem buildings" in the neighbourhood - where crime and safety issues are a concern
- Heritage homes noted as an important source of rental housing

Geography - Areas of Consideration for Present and Future Planning

- Duplex and single family area to the east of Commercial Drive - which contains an array of additional housing via scattered apartments, heritage conversions, legal and unregistered secondary suites, and laneway housing
- Commercial high streets (Commercial Drive and East Hastings) - where a number of apartments can be found above shops and services
- The majority of the purpose built rental stock is concentrated in apartment-zoned areas - located both to the west of Commercial Drive and in the Cedar Cove area to the north of Hastings
- Laneway houses are permitted in Vancouver's RS-1 and RS-5 single family neighbourhoods (which in Grandview-Woodland is the area roughly east of Templeton Drive)
- Key arterial streets have been noted as opportunity areas for a combination of housing, transportation and public realm improvements (in particular: Dundas Street, Hastings Street, East 1st Ave, Broadway, Nanaimo Street)

MARKET RENTAL HOUSING

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What We Know

- In 2006 66 % of Grandview-Woodland dwellings were rented (versus 52% city-wide). In 1986 the figure was 73% rental (versus 58% city-wide)
- In Grandview-Woodland, 60% of market rental housing is over 35 years old (across Vancouver the figure is 77%)
- There has been limited development of new purpose built rental stock in recent decades. While 77% of Grandview-Woodland's rental stock was built between 1960 and 1989, only 10% of the rental stock was built between 1990 and the present
- There are 4,156 market rental apartments in Grandview-Woodland (8% of city stock); 60% of these apartments were built before 1975 (source: CMHC)
- CMHC research in 2011 noted that rents in Grandview-Woodland are currently below the city average, (as are rent increases). At this time, the average studio was renting at \$830 (versus \$881 across the city), the average 1-bedroom at \$833 (versus \$1049 city-wide); the average 2-bedroom at \$1068 (versus \$1511 city-wide); the average 3+ bedroom at \$1177 (versus \$1914 city-wide). The average rental rates across all types reflect this difference: \$869 in Grandview-Woodland versus \$1112 city-wide
- Average rents over a 10 year period (2001-2011) increased by 29% in Grandview-Woodland compared to 43% in the City overall
- In 2006, 37% of renters in Grandview-Woodland were spending more than 30% of their income on housing (versus 34% of renters city-wide). According to CMHC, the cost of adequate shelter should not exceed 30% of household income

Key City Bylaws, Policies and Programs

- **Housing & Homelessness Strategy:** The new strategy contains a number of goals and objectives related to market rental housing:
 - » The City will enable 5,000 new purpose built market rental housing units by 2021
 - » Work with partners to establish a Rent Bank to prevent evictions due to short-term financial crisis
- **Rate of Change Regulations:** The Zoning and Development By-Law preserves rental housing by requiring one-for-one replacement for redevelopment projects involving six or more dwellings
- **Secured Market Rental Housing Policy:** The purpose of the Rental 100: Secured Market Rental Housing Policy is to encourage the development of projects where 100% of the residential units are rental. Under the policy, all rental units created will be secured for 60 years, or for the life of the building, whichever is greater

MARKET RENTAL HOUSING

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- **Interim Rezoning Policy for Affordable Housing:** The goal of the Interim Rezoning Policy is to encourage housing developments that include a strong level of affordability, and (1) offer 100 percent rental units, or are sold at 20 percent below market value; and (2) are up to six storeys high on an arterial street (served by transit), or 3.5 storeys high within 100 metres of an arterial street. At present a maximum of 20 rezoning applications will be considered throughout the city prior to re-evaluation by Council. Only two projects are permitted within 10 blocks of each other on any arterial street. No projects are currently being considered in Grandview-Woodland
- **Mayor's Taskforce on Affordable Housing:** The City will use the current community planning programs to increase the supply of affordable housing; Evaluate the City's rental protection regulations; and Explore opportunities to renew and expand the existing rental housing stock
- **Guidelines:** RS-1 and RS-4 (Single-Family) Guidelines are intended to help achieve good-quality multiple accommodation in a buildings not originally designed for such use. RT and RM Design Guidelines draws attention to the character of older-buildings in the neighbourhood and aim to ensure that new development is compatible with this

MARKET RENTAL HOUSING

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Things to Think About

- The City's priority is on the protection and maintenance of existing rental stock. What are your thoughts on rental housing in Grandview-Woodland? What do you think the City should do to help preserve and maintain this stock?
- How can the City best meet the affordability challenges faced by renters in Grandview-Woodland?
- What are your ideas to better support tenants in the neighbourhood?
- What can the City do to encourage *new* rental housing in the neighbourhood? Are there particular (geographic) areas where we should be focussing our efforts? (e.g. existing apartment areas, arterials, key intersections?)



SECONDARY SUITES, LANEWAY HOUSES
AND RENTED CONDOS

SECONDARY SUITES, LANEWAY HOUSES AND RENTED CONDOS

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Secondary suites, laneway houses, rented condos and rented houses comprise what is known as the “secondary rental market”. These forms of housing serve an important role in the city by adding to rental supply and providing unique options for renters (e.g. ground-oriented family housing in older neighbourhoods).

What We Heard

- Many residents - in particular students - have room-mates; shared accommodation is common, even in studio and one-bedroom apartments
- General support for secondary suites in the neighbourhood (both as a means to achieve additional density, as well as a mechanism to support home-owners). Recognition that safety and quality of housing are important
- Considerable interest in laneway housing and a desire to see opportunities for such housing extended to RT (duplex) zones. Some concerns registered that this form of housing could impact the nature of - or other opportunities associated with - rear-yards or lanes (e.g. lanes as a form of reasonably continuous open space, lanes as pathways and ‘secondary routes’)
- Interest in potential for laneways to function as site of increased artist studio space (including, but not limited to live/work)
- Limited concern about impact of laneway housing on neighbourhood parking, or on neighbourhood character; general support for laneway housing where it enables retention of existing heritage building
- General support for condo (i.e. strata-titled) buildings - for rent or ownership - provided they are developed in a form that fits with the neighbourhood. (Note: some conflation of “condos” with high-rise buildings; also, question of “fit” means different things to different people)
- Support for accessible, mobility-friendly housing options for seniors, persons with disabilities, and others.

Geography - Areas of Consideration for Present and Future Planning

- Secondary suites - City now permits suites in every detached single- and multi-family home in Vancouver with the RS, RM, and RT zones
- Laneway housing - Single Family (RS) Zones - (currently the only ones in Grandview-Woodland that allow laneway houses, though there is interest in expanding laneway housing into other, primarily duplex zones)
- Rented condominiums - Primarily found in Multi-family (RM) or Commercial (C) zones in Grandview-Woodland

SECONDARY SUITES, LANEWAY HOUSES AND RENTED CONDOS

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What We Know

- In 2006, 37% of renters in Grandview-Woodland were spending more than 30% of their income on housing (versus 34% of renters city-wide). According to CMHC, the cost of adequate shelter should not exceed 30% of household income
- There are approximately 540 secondary suites in Grandview-Woodland (2% of city stock)
- RS-zoned properties in Grandview-Woodland are more likely to have a secondary suite compared to the city average (59% vs. 35%)
- 5 permits have been issued for laneway houses in Grandview-Woodland
- There are 3,324 strata condominium units in Grandview-Woodland. On average across the city, approximately 30% of condominiums are rented out (CMHC)
- There are about 300 rented single family houses in Grandview-Woodland. The proportion single family houses that are rented is higher in Grandview-Woodland than in the city overall (19% vs. 12%)

Key City Bylaws, Policies and Programs

- **Housing & Homelessness Strategy:** The new strategy contains a number of goals and objectives related to secondary suites and rented units:
 - » Contains goals and targets centred on the creation of 6,000 new secondary market rental housing units by 2021
 - » Work with partners to establish a Rent Bank to prevent evictions due to short-term financial crisis
- **Mayor's Task Force on Affordable Housing:** Contains a recommendation (now approved direction) that the City expand laneway housing to additional single family zones; and expand zoning districts and housing forms for secondary suites (e.g. row houses)
- **Secondary Suite Policies:** Secondary suites have been permitted in all of Vancouver's single family areas since 2004. In 2009, Council approved zoning changes to enable full-size basements and more livable basement suites in all single family areas. Principle Dwelling Unit Combined with a Secondary Dwelling Unit Guidelines are intended to encourage functional and livable secondary dwelling units which are designed in combination with a principal dwelling unit
- **Laneway Houses:** Laneway housing has been permitted in Vancouver's RS-1 and RS-5 zoned single-family neighbourhoods since 2009. Laneway House Guidelines focus on creating neighbourly relationships with adjacent properties, a positive lanescape, and enhanced environmental performance of the site overall

SECONDARY SUITES, LANEWAY HOUSES AND RENTED CONDOS

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- **Zone-specific Guidelines:** RS-1 and RS-4 (Single-Family) Guidelines are intended to help achieve good-quality multiple accommodation in a buildings not originally designed for such use. RT and RM Design Guidelines draws attention to the character of older-buildings in the neighbourhood and aim to ensure that new development is compatible with this.
- **Rate of Change regulations:** Require one-for-one replacement of demolished rental units in redevelopment projects involving six or more dwelling units

Things to Think About

- What elements of the secondary rental market work well in Grandview-Woodland (e.g. secondary suites, laneway housing? Rented condominiums?) Are there particular types of support needed for any of these forms of secondary rental?
- What locations in Grandview-Woodland work best for this type of housing?
- Secondary suites, laneway housing and lock-off suites are forms of 'gentle densification', in what ways can the city ensure there is limited impact on the neighbourhood? (e.g. form of laneway housing, reduced parking requirements, etc.)



HOME OWNERSHIP

Photo: Jerrill by Aaron Eberhardt

HOME OWNERSHIP

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Vancouver is an attractive place to live and work. Ownership costs are the highest in Canada. Many households have incomes far below those required to purchase a home.

The gap is widening - since the late 1970s, real household incomes have increased by 9% while condo prices have increased by 280%.

What We Heard

- Strong concern about increasing unaffordability of home-ownership in the neighbourhood
- Desire for a broad-array of affordable ownership housing for residents; in particular, desire more affordable ground-oriented housing (e.g. duplex, triplex, fourplex, villas, row-house, town-house, low-rise - noting that not every participant favours every type of housing)
- Concern about loss of existing rental stock via conversion to strata/ownership housing
- Concern about loss of existing heritage buildings and replacement with other forms of ground-oriented housing
- Particular concern around decreasing numbers of children and youth in the neighbourhood - and desire for affordable housing for families with children
- Desire for affordable housing forms that allow for extended, multi-generational families
- Interest in equity co-ops and co-housing options, as well as other 'non-traditional' models of housing

Geography - Areas of Consideration for Present and Future Planning

- Single family and Duplex (two-family) zones are concentrated east of Commercial Drive from Broadway down to East Hastings Street
- Other townhouse and duplex developments are spread throughout the single family and purpose built rental housing areas
- Multi-family (apartment) zoned areas are found to the west of Commercial Drive (Broadway to Venables), west of Victoria (Venables to Hastings), and in Cedar Cove (north of Hastings, between Victoria and Nanaimo)
- Key arterial streets have been noted as opportunity areas for a combination of housing, transportation and public realm improvements (in particular: Dundas Street, Hastings Street, East 1st Ave, Broadway, Nanaimo Street)

HOME OWNERSHIP

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What We Know

- Vancouver has the highest house prices in Canada and the vast majority of renter households have incomes far below those required to purchase a home
- In 2006, 26% of owners in Grandview-Woodland were spending more than 30% of their income on housing (versus 23% of owners city-wide). According to CMHC, the cost of adequate shelter should not exceed 30% of household income
- The average price of home ownership in Grandview-Woodland is less than the average price of home-ownership the City. According to CMHC, in 2011, the cost of a studio was \$207,000 (versus \$293,500 city-wide); the cost of a 1-bedroom home was \$274,000 (versus \$375,000 city-wide); the cost of a 2-bedroom home was \$392,000 (versus \$560,000 city-wide); the cost of a 3+ bedroom home was \$661,500 (versus \$791,300 city-wide)
- In Grandview-Woodland, the median price of strata properties jumped from \$310,500 in 2008 to \$365,500 in 2011 (an increase of 18%). In the same period, the median price across the city increased from \$423,800 to \$460,000 (or 9%)

Key City Bylaws, Policies and Programs

- **Housing & Homelessness Strategy:** The new strategy contains a number of goals and objectives related to ownership housing:
 - » Enable 20,000 new market ownership units by 2021
 - » Ensure housing needs of our diverse population are considered through city-wide & neighbourhood planning processes
 - » Develop research on innovative models of affordable housing (e.g. equity co-ops, condominiums on lease hold land)
- **Mayor's Taskforce on Housing:** The City will increase supply and diversity of affordable housing in strategic locations across the city; implement an interim rezoning policy that increases affordable housing choices in Vancouver neighbourhoods; and create opportunities for the development of more co-housing projects
- **Guidelines:** RS-1 and RS-4 (Single-Family) Guidelines are intended to help achieve good-quality multiple accommodation in a buildings not originally designed for such use. RT and RM Design Guidelines draws attention to the character of older-buildings in the neighbourhood and aim to ensure that new development is compatible with this Laneway House Guidelines focus on creating neighbourly relationships with adjacent properties, a positive lanescape, and enhanced environmental performance of the site overall. **Principle Dwelling Unit Combined with a Secondary Dwelling Unit Guidelines** are intended to encourage functional and livable secondary dwelling units which are designed in combination with a principal dwelling unit

HOME OWNERSHIP

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Things to Think About

- How can the City help make ownership more accessible to home buyers in this community? (e.g. allowing coach houses or laneway houses in more areas? Other ideas?)
- Are there other forms of ownership that would work well in Grandview-Woodland (e.g. equity-co-op, affordable home ownership, co-housing)? If yes, why?
- Residents have identified the need for more ground-oriented/multifamily developments in Grandview-Woodland. What features are important (or necessary) to meet the needs of existing and future residents? (e. g. Access to outdoor space, number of bedrooms, etc.)
- Affordable ownership opportunities are most likely to be achieved via multi-family development. Are there particular areas that would be best suited to new multi-family development? (e.g. existing apartment-zoned areas? Key arterials? Particular intersections? Other locations?)

