
MEMORANDUM

February 5, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, Acting City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Maria Pontikis, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office

FROM: Gil Kelley
General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

SUBJECT: Follow-Up Memo to Council on *Recalibrating the Housing Vancouver Strategy Post-Covid 19*, RTS 013971

PURPOSE

This memo is a follow-up response to the motion *Recalibrating the Housing Vancouver Strategy Post Covid 19*¹, approved by Council on May 27th, 2020, calling on staff to report back with “transparent data to serve as the basis of subsequent analysis, and then policy recalibration as part of the Vancouver Plan process and the associated Regional Growth Strategy update,” as well as a series of requests for annual historical and current data related to development, population and dwelling growth, and rental housing.

In a [memo](#) dated July 31st, 2020, Staff provided an initial response to Council's motion, which included:

- Aggregated data and analysis on development approvals since 2010 and upcoming applications across ownership, rental, and social housing;
- Aggregated data and analysis on population and dwelling growth from Statistics Canada;
- Aggregated data on the net change in rental and social housing units over time;
- Information on the affordability assumptions in *Housing Vancouver*;

¹ For the final approved motion, see p. 14 of the minutes from the May 27th meeting of the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities:

<http://council.vancouver.ca/20200527/documents/pspc20200527min.pdf>

- Information on how the City uses zoning and development capacity models in community planning;
- Aggregated data on the secondary rental market from CMHC;
- A complete itemized list of approved social/supportive and rental housing developments since 2010

DISCUSSION

As noted in the July 31st memo, Staff were able to fulfill many of the requests made in the original Council motion. However, as noted in the original memo, certain data elements could not be provided in the timeframe specified in the motion or because they are not currently tracked systematically.

In response to subsequent Council requests, this memo includes additional project level information related to historical and current development applications; detail on the City's existing market rental and non-market inventories; and Census data on population and dwelling growth. Appendix A includes a summary of the data being provided in relation to the requests in the original motion. Appendix B includes a spreadsheet containing City of Vancouver data on historical and current development applications. Appendix C includes data from the Census on population and dwelling growth in the City of Vancouver since 2010. Appendix B and C are provided in Excel table format.

The City's development data is drawn from several different trackers used during the development process and is based on a point in time metric that is not always updated over the course of individual applications. Because of this, some of the data provided may have issues with data quality or completeness, and caution must be used in analysis. Specific issues are noted in the metadata tab in the Appendix B spreadsheet.

CLOSING REMARKS

In response to Council's motion, Staff are looking to incorporate a focus on recalibration of housing targets and transparent data and analysis into several upcoming work programs:

1. Understanding Current and Future Housing Need: Review of Housing Vancouver targets in the Vancouver Plan and coordination with the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Update

As part of the Vancouver Plan, Staff are evaluating existing data on housing need, growth, and development in order to inform an understanding of current and future housing need. This work will intersect with Vancouver Plan emerging directions to inform scenarios and options for the type of city we want to be, with an initial report on progress in spring/summer 2021.

This process will include coordination with the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy update (*Metro 2050*) and consultation with an expert working group, and will involve clear documentation of the methodology and data used. Work is set to begin in early 2021, with an initial report on progress to accompany the Housing Vancouver Annual Progress Report in spring/summer 2021.

As well, staff are actively involved in the technical review of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and anticipate a draft RGS Update approximately mid-2021 with consideration of the proposed updated Strategy by member municipal Councils later in 2021. Staff are coordinating this work with the Vancouver Plan process and will be reporting to Council at key milestones including strategic directions in Q3, 2021.

2. PDS and DBL public use data initiatives

PDS and DBL have identified enhancing public-use data on residential development as a priority, but have also noted that progress on this front would require a significant multi-year commitment of budget for staffing and resources. As a first step, Staff have submitted an application to the CMHC Housing Supply Challenge for funding to support modernization of the City's housing data systems for internal and external users, including augmenting tracking for complete data sets. If the application is successful, Staff would have until October to submit a detailed application for further funding.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at gil.kelley@vancouver.ca

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gil Kelley', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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Appendix A: Description of Data Provided in Relation to Council Motion

Data Requested in Part B of Council Motion	Who owns the data	Data Provided in January 2021
<p>Annual historical data since 2010 to present for rezoning and development permit applications for new housing development, listed by project, including data on the actual or estimated number and type of housing units, and the status of each project (approved; modified; rejected; in progress; construction started; occupancy permit)</p>	<p>City of Vancouver</p>	<p>Attached spreadsheet in Appendix B includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social and Supportive Housing Approvals 2010-2019 - Purpose-built Rental Housing Approvals, 2010-2019 - Condo Approvals, 2010-2019 - Townhouse Approvals, 2010-2019 - Building Permits issued in Low-Density Areas, 2010-June 2020 <p>For record-level data on issued building permits, please visit the City of Vancouver Open Data portal: https://opendata.vancouver.ca/explore/dataset/issued-building-permits/table/</p> <p>For data on accessible units in the existing non-market housing stock, please visit the Open Data portal: https://opendata.vancouver.ca/explore/dataset/non-market-housing/table/</p> <p>For affordability assumptions, see the July 31st memo response Section 5: https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/memo-housing-policy-recalibrating-housing-vancouver-targets.pdf</p> <p>Data on rejected applications and the current status of approved condominium and townhouse projects is not currently tracked.</p>
<p>Census Data since 2010 for Annual Population and Dwelling Growth</p>	<p>Statistics Canada</p>	<p>Attached spreadsheet in Appendix C includes tables the following data drawn from the Census for the City of Vancouver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population Growth (1921-2016) - Population vs. Dwelling Growth (2001-2016) - Dwelling Growth (2001-2016) - Household Growth (2001-2016) - New Household Growth by Tenure (2001-2016) <p>Data on recent immigration and population growth since 2016 will be available after the next Census in 2022</p>

<p>Estimated or actual on the number of units lost through rezoning or redevelopment and net changes in affordability</p>	<p>City of Vancouver and CMHC data</p>	<p>Attached spreadsheet in Appendix B includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City of Vancouver Purpose-Built Rental Housing Inventory as of December 2018 - Changes to Purpose-Built Rental Inventory since 2009 - City of Vancouver Non-Market Housing Inventory as of December 2020 - Changes to City of Vancouver Non-Market Housing Inventory since 2009 <p>Data on loss of secondary suites and ownership housing due to redevelopment is not collected in a systematic way by the City at this time.</p> <p>Data on loss of affordability for individual projects is not currently tracked. Information on affordability of existing rental housing is collected and reported by CMHC via the CMHC Housing Information Portal and was provided in aggregate the previous July 31st Staff memo to Council, Figure 3.3 (p. 31): https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/memo-housing-policy-recalibrating-housing-vancouver-targets.pdf</p> <p>The data provided in Appendix B on renovations and redevelopment impacting existing rental stock is likely incomplete. This is because the city's permit application system does not allow for systematic tracking of renovations impacting existing rental housing taking place under development and building permit applications, nor does it capture work taking place without permits.</p>
<p>List of rezoning and development projects, including the project status with estimated timelines, proposed form of development, unit numbers and type of housing and ballpark breakdown of household incomes required to afford each unit, as well as accessibility data for each project</p>	<p>City of Vancouver</p>	<p>Attached spreadsheet in Appendix B includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social and supportive housing in-application as of June 2020 - Purpose-built rental housing in application as of June 2020 - Condominium housing in-application as of June 2020 - Townhouse units in-application as of June 2020 - Information on low-density housing forms in-application is not currently tracked at the record level in a systematic way. <p>The data provided does not include estimated timelines and form of development, since these could not be aggregated in a format appropriate for public use at this time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For rezoning projects, information on individual applications including project status, timelines, and form of development is available on the City of Vancouver rezoning centre website: https://rezoning.vancouver.ca/applications/index.htm - Affordability for individual development projects is not documented systematically, however for the purposes of tracking Staff use the affordability assumptions outlined in the July 31st memo response Section 5: https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/memo-housing-policy-recalibrating-housing-vancouver-targets.pdf

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessibility information is not tracked systematically for individual projects. All projects must be in compliance with the accessibility requirements in the Vancouver Building By-Law. Non-market housing projects typically include 5% accessible units.
<p>Estimated zoned capacity, broken down by each zone and by neighbourhood, numbers and types of units, with estimated total and annual build-out</p>	<p>City of Vancouver</p>	<p>Record-level data on zoned and development capacity cannot be provided at this time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoned capacity by district and neighbourhood cannot be fully calculated in a precise manner at this time. Some zoning district schedules do not contain density information and are dependent on urban design, site, height considerations e.g. certain CD-1s, BCPED, FCCDD, HA districts. Other zoning district schedules have variations for maximum density depending on the choice of use(s), while other zoning districts depend on land use policies to provide density information. These layers of complexity are reasons why development capacity modeling is the City's standard approach for estimating growth. • The City's development capacity is reflected in the Regional Context Statement (RCS) ODP, 2013 which identifies the linkage between City policies and plans to align with the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). As part of the RGS Update and the Vancouver Plan process, staff are updating development capacity estimates based on approved policies and community plans and information will be provided in updates and reports to Council as well as in public engagement materials. Following adoption of an updated RGS, the RCS will require updating and approval by Council and the Metro Board.
<p>Existing data (where available) on the city's secondary rental market (nonpurpose-built rentals such as condos, secondary conversions or unauthorized suites) the number and type of rental units, monthly rent, and vacancy rate</p>	<p>BC Assessment/Statistics Canada/CMHC</p>	<p>CMHC data on vacancy rates, rents, and the universe of the secondary rental market (i.e. rented condominiums) in Vancouver is collected by CMHC, not the City, and is available via the CMHC Housing Information Portal. Staff provided aggregated information on rented condominiums in the July 2020 memo to Council, see Section 7 (p. 42): https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/memo-housing-policy-recalibrating-housing-vancouver-targets.pdf</p> <p>There is not currently complete information collected on the number, type, monthly rent, and vacancy rate in secondary suites. The City estimates the number of secondary suites in the City based on BC Assessment data and permit applications, which were reported on in the July 2020 memo to Council, see Section 7 (p. 42): https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/memo-housing-policy-recalibrating-housing-vancouver-targets.pdf</p> <p>The City's BC Assessment data is third-party data that can't be released publicly at this time; however Staff can provide further updates to Council as part of regular Housing Data Book publications.</p>