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To: Housing Committee

From: Jason Hingley, Division Manager, Planning and Finance, Housing Services  
Aaron Robinson, Senior Policy Advisor, Intergovernment Relations, External Relations

Date: July 24, 2019 Meeting Date: September 11, 2019

Subject: **Metro Vancouver Housing – 2018 Report**

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**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Housing Committee receive for information the report dated July 24, 2019, titled “*Metro Vancouver Housing – 2018 Report.*”

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**PURPOSE**

To inform the MVHC Board about the *Metro Vancouver Housing - 2018 Report*.

**BACKGROUND**

Creating a branding and background document for Metro Vancouver Housing was a key action identified in the 2019 Metro Vancouver Housing Work Plan. The *Metro Vancouver Housing - 2018 Report* highlights Metro Vancouver Housing’s strategic objectives, operational activities, community engagement programs, financial performance and achievements in 2018. The report provides a comprehensive summary of Metro Vancouver Housing’s goals, activities and accomplishments for the year.

**METRO VANCOUVER HOUSING – 2018 REPORT**

The *Metro Vancouver Housing - 2018 Report* highlights Metro Vancouver Housing’s strategic objectives, operational activities, community engagement programs, financial performance and achievements.

The report promotes the organization as a long-standing, trusted, and leading affordable housing provider. It is designed to be read by a wide range of audiences both internally and externally and is intended to raise awareness of the brand among the non-profit housing sector, other orders of government, member municipalities and residents.

The *Metro Vancouver Housing – 2018 Report* will be published on the Metro Vancouver website and made available in print for distribution to key stakeholders including potential partners, member jurisdictions and other orders of government and at tradeshow events, conferences and other public events to educate and build awareness and engagement about Metro Vancouver Housing.

The *Metro Vancouver Housing – 2018 Report* will be used as a guide to align staff efforts and accomplishments with Metro Vancouver Housing’s key overall business objectives.

**ALTERNATIVES**

This is an information report. No alternatives are presented.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Staff time to prepare the document is the only expenditure associated with this report; there are no other anticipated incremental costs.

**SUMMARY / CONCLUSION**

This report introduces the *Metro Vancouver Housing - 2018 Report*, a communications product that was identified as a key action in the 2019 Metro Vancouver Housing Work Plan. The intent of the *Metro Vancouver Housing - 2018 Report* is to communicate Metro Vancouver Housing’s brand narrative to a wider audience while highlighting operational activities, community engagement programs, strategic objectives, financial performance and achievements. The *Metro Vancouver Housing - 2018* report supports Metro Vancouver Housing’s direction to increase its brand exposure, enhance its reputation, and to create opportunities for increased partnerships.

**Attachment**

Metro Vancouver Housing - 2018 report

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# Metro Vancouver Housing 2018



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# Who We Are

The Metro Vancouver Regional District is a federation of 21 municipalities, one Electoral Area and one Treaty First Nation. We provide core utility services to more than 2.5 million people. Our essential services include drinking water, sewage treatment and solid waste management, along with related services like regional parks, air quality monitoring, and affordable housing, which help to keep the region one of the most livable in the world.

The Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation (MVHC) is an incorporated entity wholly owned by the Metro Vancouver Regional District and one of the four entities that make up Metro Vancouver. The entity, which does its business as Metro Vancouver Housing, provides safe and affordable rental homes for more than 9,000 people on 49 sites across the region. Metro Vancouver Housing sites are diverse, mixed-income communities that include families, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Metro Vancouver Housing offers a range of homes, from single-room occupancy units to four-bedroom townhomes. These are offered at below-market rates and rates based on tenant incomes. Supported primarily by our tenant rents, we operate as a non-profit organization that has partnered with tenants, governments and service providers to support healthy and engaged communities since 1974.

Development of housing in the region is guided by strategies and plans like *Metro 2040* and the *Regional Affordable Housing Strategy* the latter of which is undertaken by the Affordable Housing program in the Regional District.





# Metro Vancouver Housing Profile

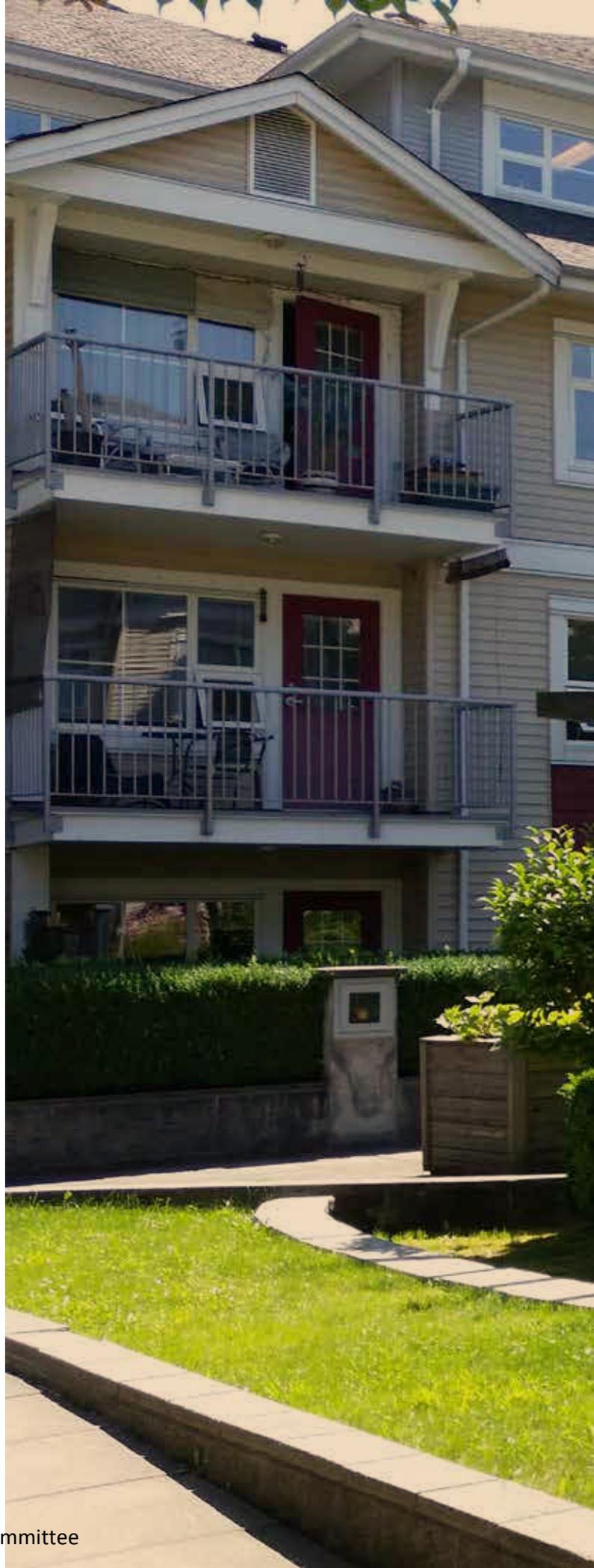
As one of the largest affordable housing providers in British Columbia, Metro Vancouver Housing provides a range of affordable housing options to meet diverse needs across the region.

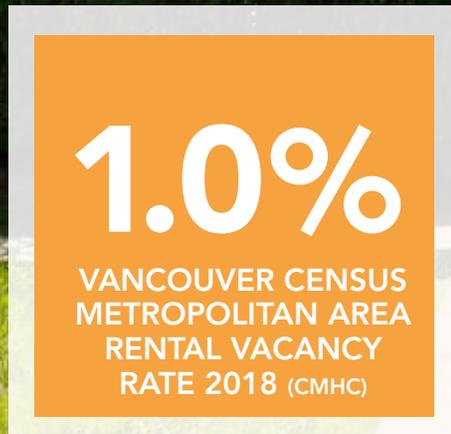
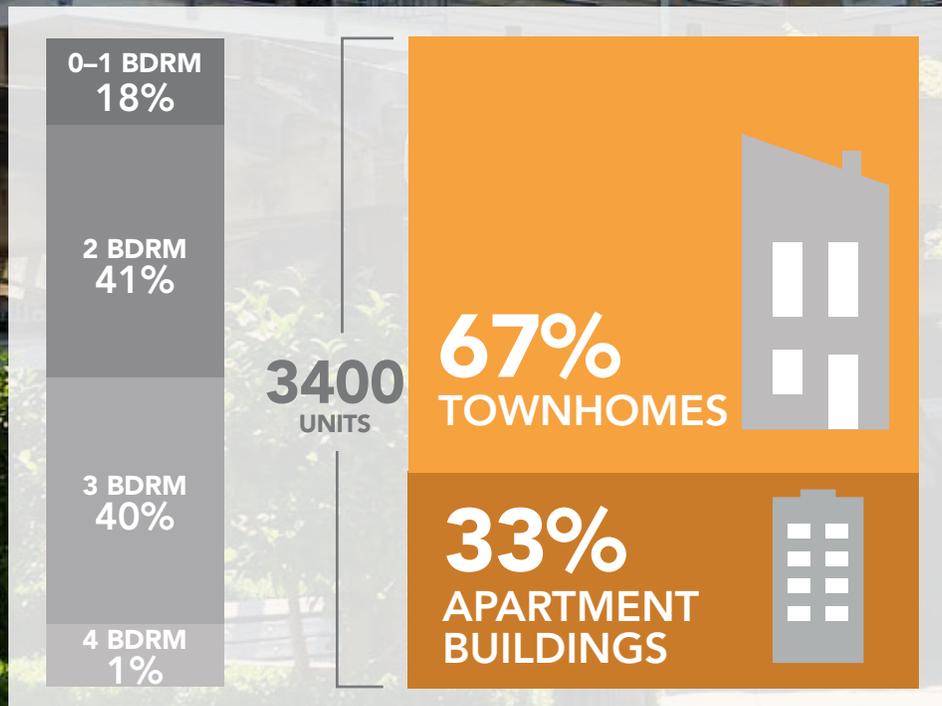
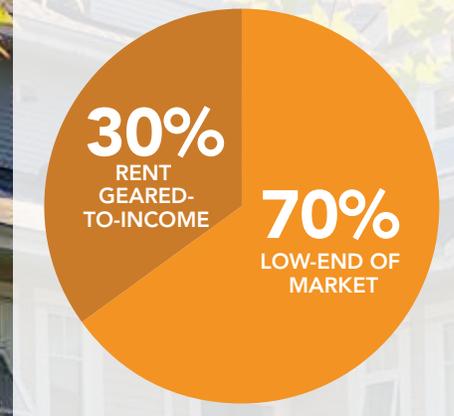
The Metro Vancouver Housing portfolio includes 49 sites spread throughout 11 municipalities. More than 80 percent of the 3,400 units are two- or three-bedroom homes, providing housing stock that can meet the needs of families with children or seniors.

Approximately one-third of Metro Vancouver Housing units are rented out on a rent-g geared-to-income basis to those on the BC Housing registry. The remainder of the portfolio is rented out at below-market rents.

With the oldest building built in 1906, and the newest building built in 2002, Metro Vancouver Housing buildings are 35 years old on average. With an aging portfolio, Metro Vancouver Housing employs an asset management program to maintain acceptable standards of living and evaluate whether redevelopment of a property is the best course of action. While meeting the needs of aging infrastructure can be demanding, the balance of rent-g geared-to-income units and low-end-of-market units enables Metro Vancouver to address those challenges while maintaining affordability across the portfolio.

In 2018, our vacancy rate was 0.4%. This extremely low rate indicates the need for our affordable rental housing services.







# Financial Highlights

Metro Vancouver Housing is a unique affordable housing provider in that we are primarily funded by our tenant rents. The balance of low-end-of-market units with rent-gear-to-income units allows the organization to maintain financial sustainability in operations with minimal assistance from external funding sources while maintaining affordable rents across the portfolio.

Metro Vancouver Housing ran a net surplus in 2018. The surplus funds were committed to reserves to fund future capital maintenance and to be reinvested in the redevelopment of the housing portfolio.

In 2018, Metro Vancouver Housing paid out five mortgages across the portfolio. This led to decreased debt servicing. Thirty mortgages are still on the books.

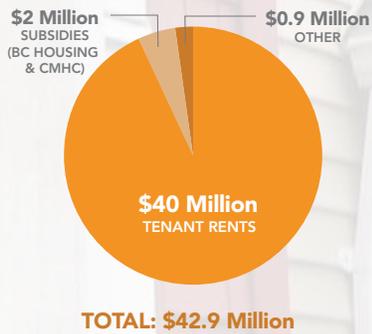
Metro Vancouver Housing's umbrella agreement with BC Housing ended on December 31, 2018 after six years. The umbrella agreement provided consolidated subsidy and mortgage assistance for 38 housing sites. Moving forward, Metro Vancouver Housing will continue to partner with BC Housing on eight housing sites operated under the Homes BC and Homelessness At Risk programs.

Metro Vancouver Housing invested in a number of major maintenance projects to preserve the long-term availability of affordable housing. Metro Vancouver Housing has applied for federal funding for some of these projects, including the major building envelope funding for the Kelly Court housing site through CMHC's co-investment repair fund.

2018 REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES



2018 REVENUE



2018 MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURES



2018 DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES





# Strategic Directions

The 2015-2018 Board Strategic Plan outlined two Strategic Directions for Metro Vancouver Housing:

1. Evaluate diversifying revenue sources for MVHC
  - Examine the potential for partnerships involving Metro Vancouver and members regarding the expansion of affordable housing stock in the region.
2. Develop and implement an asset management strategy for the maintenance and replacement of existing MVHC housing stock.

In addition, there are four budget drivers that guide priorities for Metro Vancouver Housing:

- **Regional Growth:** The region's increasing population, projected to grow by about 35,000 people per year, will require core utility services and regional services, like Housing, to expand and optimize to respond to new growth.
- **System Stewardship:** Critical regional infrastructure must be sufficiently maintained or replaced to meet current and future service needs and to be resilient to impacts from seismic events, wildfires, power failures, and natural disasters.
- **Environmental Protection and Climate Change:** Our region is dependent on healthy, functioning ecosystems and requires actions to reduce pollutants, including greenhouse gases, to prevent waste and to conserve our natural ecosystems.
- **Regulatory and Legislative Environment:** Core utility services and regional services will anticipate and meet regulatory requirements and respond to legislative change.

Finally, we also provide a high level of service for our tenants through Tenant Associations and tenant programs.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	Evaluate ways to diversify revenue sources for Metro Vancouver Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnered with BC Housing for the redevelopment of Heather Place and Kingston Gardens</li> </ul>
	Develop and implement an asset management strategy for the maintenance and replacement of existing MVHC housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed site and building assessments</li> <li>Implemented new comprehensive approach to tracking and assessing capital maintenance requirements</li> <li>Approved new Metro Vancouver Housing Asset Management Policy</li> </ul>
BUDGET DRIVERS	Regional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Started construction on Heather Place Building A</li> <li>Started design phase for Kingston Gardens Building 1 redevelopment</li> <li>Assessed and planned for the redevelopment of Welcher Avenue properties</li> <li>Began portfolio review for opportunities to expand housing supply on Metro Vancouver Housing sites</li> </ul>
	System Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented materials standards for unit renovations and repairs to improve durability and sustainability of units</li> <li>Applied for CMHC funding for renewal of Kelly Court</li> </ul>
	Environmental Protection and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established a greenhouse gas emissions baseline for Metro Vancouver Housing infrastructure</li> <li>Introduced standards for electric vehicle charging infrastructure implemented in new building designs</li> <li>Assessed feasibility for the addition of electric vehicle charging stations in existing facilities</li> </ul>
	Regulatory and Legislative Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented Metro Vancouver <i>Sustainable Infrastructure and Building Policy</i></li> <li>Implemented new <i>Cannabis Cultivation at Metro Vancouver Housing Sites Policy</i></li> </ul>
TENANT SERVICES	Tenant Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of active tenant associations from 28 to 30</li> </ul>
	Tenant Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Piloted a successful new wellness program</li> <li>Started engagement with local government waste coordinators to implement new recycling programs</li> <li>Renewed continuation of crime prevention programs</li> </ul>



A photograph of a living room. In the foreground, a green plastic toy bin sits on a light-colored carpet. Scattered around the bin are various colorful plastic building blocks in red, yellow, blue, and green. In the background, a dark metal coffee table is visible, with a yellow stuffed animal underneath it. Further back, there is a light-colored sofa and a tall wooden bookshelf filled with books. The room is warmly lit, suggesting an evening or indoor lighting.

**Metro Vancouver provides safe and affordable rental homes for thousands of residents.**

**Our sites house diverse communities that include families, seniors, and people with disabilities.**

# Building More Affordable Homes

Metro Vancouver Housing has been exploring ways to increase the amount of affordable homes within our portfolio, reflecting the goals and objectives set out in the *Metro 2040* Regional Growth Strategy and the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy. In 2018, we initiated work on two projects that will help move towards this objective: Heather Place in Vancouver and Kingston Gardens in Surrey. These redevelopment projects are the first key steps towards providing more affordable housing in the region. Our tenants living in properties slated for redevelopment are offered relocation to other units in our portfolio and first right of refusal in the new buildings.

## Heather Place

Metro Vancouver Housing is undertaking the redevelopment of Heather Place in Vancouver. Built in 1983, it is an 86-unit complex of one-, two- and three-bedroom townhomes that occupies most of the entire block between Heather Street on the east, Willow Street on the west, 13th Avenue on the north and 14th Avenue on the south.

The project will replace 86 aging housing units with 230 new rental homes. The units will be oriented to a diverse population of families, couples, singles and seniors with a mix of incomes and will include disabled-accessible homes.

Partnering with BC Housing, construction on Phase 1 of the LEED Gold Heather Place Redevelopment started in March 2018. Phase 1 includes 67 homes of varying sizes, from studios to three-bedroom homes. Many of these homes will have rent geared to tenant incomes with rents starting as low as \$380 per month. The remaining will be low-end market rentals. This phase is expected to be completed in 2020.

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/housing/projects/heather-place/>

## Project at a glance

\$	Cost: \$28.5 million
📅	Estimated Completion: 2020
🏠	New Rental Homes: 67

**Redevelopment projects allow us to collaborate with member jurisdictions, the provincial and federal governments to provide even more high quality, affordable rental housing to the residents of Metro Vancouver.**

– SAV DHALIWAL, BOARD CHAIR, METRO VANCOUVER



### **Kingston Gardens**

Kingston Gardens, built in 1981, is a 192-unit townhouse development in Surrey that occupies just over 10 acres bound by 152 Avenue and 154 Avenue on the east and west, and 99 Street and 100 Street on the north and south. The complex consists of two- and three-bedroom homes.

In 2018, approval was given to move forward with the redevelopment of 24 units within the complex to create a new building with 85 new affordable rental homes. In partnership with BC Housing, these new units will offer one-, two-, three-, and four-bedroom units and will include accessible units. Many of these homes will have rent geared to tenant incomes with rents starting as low as \$380. The remaining will be low-end market rentals.

In 2018, we started the relocation of tenants within our portfolio and construction work will start on the redevelopment in fall 2019 with an expected completion date of 2021.

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/housing/projects/kingston-gardens/>

### **Project at a glance**

\$	Cost: \$29 million
Calendar icon	Estimated Completion: 2021
House icon	New Rental Homes: 85

# Operations & Maintenance

Metro Vancouver Housing's asset management program is critical to address the challenges of aging infrastructure. Over the past year, we have modernized the operations and maintenance of our housing properties through two initiatives: a new asset management policy and new maintenance tracking software.

Our new asset management policy brings greater value by allowing upgrades to occur across the portfolio instead of planning site by site. This integrated approach brings greater efficiencies by grouping projects across the portfolio.

New asset management software supports the policy by providing greater consistency in data and the ability to better plan and prioritize both regularly scheduled maintenance to our sites.

While all sites have regularly scheduled maintenance projects, there were 12 sites that saw major projects in 2018:

- Chateau de Ville (*Coquitlam*) – Boiler replacement, energy upgrades and domestic hot water replacement
- Earle Adams Village (*Vancouver*) – Landscaping and fencing replacements
- Guildford Glen (*Surrey*) – Exterior lighting replacements (new LEDs)
- Hemlock Court (*Vancouver*) – Roofing replacements
- Kingston Gardens I (*Surrey*) – Roofing replacements
- London Square (*New Westminster*) – Roofing replacements; exterior lighting replacements (new LEDs); exterior painting
- Maple Vine Court (*Richmond*) – Roofing replacements
- McBride Place (*New Westminster*) – Exterior painting
- Moffat Park (*Richmond*) – Roofing replacements
- Moray Place (*Port Moody*) – Parking improvements
- Somerset Gardens (*Surrey*) – Exterior lighting replacements (new LEDs)
- Strathearn Court (*Vancouver*) – Balcony improvements





# Tenant Associations

Tenant Associations keep tenants connected with their neighbours and the broader community. They also provide a way for tenants to work with us in an advisory capacity on matters affecting their housing community. We encourage tenants to organize associations at each of our sites, and work with the representatives that they elect.

Tenant Associations are key in determining community priorities and organizing events that foster community spirit. This is done through holiday events, community block parties and educational seminars. Staff meet with tenant associations regularly to address the needs of their communities and support them in engaging the neighbourhood.

Metro Vancouver Housing worked with 30 tenant associations in 2018.

## Active Tenant Associations

- Adelaide Court (Richmond)
- Cedarwood Place (Richmond)
- Chateau de Ville (Coquitlam)
- Crown Manor (New Westminster)
- Earl Adams Village (Vancouver)
- Epsom Downs (Surrey)
- Evergreen Downs (Delta)
- Fraserwood (Maple Ridge)
- Greystone Village (Burnaby)
- Guildford Glen (Surrey)
- Habitat Villa (Vancouver)
- Heather Place (Vancouver)
- Hemlock Court (Vancouver)
- Inlet Centre (Port Moody)
- Kingston Gardens (Surrey)
- London Square (New Westminster)
- Lynden Court (Delta)
- Malaspina Village (Coquitlam)
- Maple Vine Court (Richmond)
- McBride Place (New Westminster)
- Moray Place (Port Moody)
- Ozada Village (Coquitlam)
- Park Court (Coquitlam)
- Pinewood Place (City of North Vancouver)
- Ran Beamish Place (Burnaby)
- Somerset Gardens (Surrey)
- Strathearn Court (Vancouver)
- Sutton Place (Surrey)
- Tivoli Gardens (Vancouver)





## Tenant Engagement

Metro Vancouver Housing works to engage tenants in meaningful ways to build supportive and inclusive communities. Over the last year, Metro Vancouver Housing has worked with our tenant associations to better understand community priorities and help tenant associations run events and programming that support the needs of our tenants. Our tenants have consistently identified community safety and healthy living as priorities. Additionally, Metro Vancouver Housing is encouraging energy conservation to support greater affordability.

### Community Safety

Providing safe communities is always a high priority for housing providers. Metro Vancouver Housing fosters relationships between our tenants and local police departments through Block Watch programs, where tenants attend training sessions by their local police departments, and through the Crime Free Multi Housing (CFMH) Program. CFMH is an internationally recognized program designed to help property managers and residents of multi-unit rental properties to work with police and other agencies to keep illegal and nuisance activity off the property. Currently, half of Metro Vancouver Housing sites have received a CFMH designation.

### Healthy Living

Metro Vancouver Housing facilitates opportunities for healthy living alongside tenant associations through several programs, but the most visible is our community gardens. Community gardens benefit tenants in a number of ways, including promoting health and wellness, community engagement and connection to the environment. Gardening encourages food security by allowing participants to grow their own food and/or donate what they have grown. Additionally, gardening provides an outlet for physical activity, stress relief and creation of friendships through community involvement. There are currently 321 community garden plots at 29 Metro Vancouver Housing sites.

## Energy Conservation

In 2018, Metro Vancouver Housing partnered with FortisBC to promote energy conservation through an energy competition. Three Metro Vancouver housing sites in the North West Area competed to see who could reduce their heat and hot water consumption the most compared with the previous year. Kicked off in June, the competition ran until the end of May 2019. The building with the greatest reduction in consumption from the previous year won. Each household in the winning building received a \$25 gift card. Promoting energy conservation helps make sure that energy bills for tenants stay low and affordable while also promoting environmental consciousness.

## Community Wellbeing Pilot Project

Last year, Metro Vancouver Housing began a successful pilot for a Community Wellbeing Program at one of our seniors' housing sites in Richmond. Based on needs identified by residents, workshops and info sessions were organized in collaboration with community organizations. One series of sessions, accessible through Diabetes Canada, was Food Skills for Families, a six-week healthy eating program where participants met weekly to prepare, cook and share a meal together and strengthen their connections with their neighbours.





# Partnership & Collaboration

Metro Vancouver Housing recognizes the opportunity and need to increase the amount of affordable housing in the region and is pursuing development and redevelopment opportunities within the Metro Vancouver Housing portfolio and with its partners. We are also working to meet the challenges of aging infrastructure while meeting the increasing demand for affordable housing.

Metro Vancouver Housing has worked with many different partners over the years to build and operate 49 affordable housing sites across our region, including the federal and provincial governments, municipalities and not-for-profit organizations.

Partnerships with the following organizations have been an essential element of our success:

- BC Housing
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Vancouver Native Housing Society
- PHS Community Services Society
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Fraser Health
- MPA Society
- McLaren Housing Society
- Atira Women's Resource Society
- Downtown Eastside Women's Centre
- Vancouver Resource Society

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In addition, numerous collaborations with local community organizations are key to providing services for our tenants in the pursuit of supportive and inclusive communities. In 2018, we worked with these organizations and others to deliver services and information to tenants:

- Alzheimer Society of BC
- BC Hydro
- BC Non-Profit Housing Association
- Burnaby RCMP
- Chimo Community Services
- City of Surrey
- City of New Westminster
- City of Port Moody
- City of Richmond
- Diabetes Canada
- Fortis BC
- Immigrant Link Services Society
- Immigrant Services Society of BC
- Journey Home Community
- Minoru Place Activity Centre
- New Westminster Police Department
- Place Maillardville and Jumpstart
- Richmond Fire Department
- Richmond RCMP
- Richmond Cares Richmond Gives
- Richmond Public Library
- Surrey RCMP
- Vancouver Police Department









Metro Vancouver is a federation of 21 municipalities, one Electoral Area and one Treaty First Nation that collaboratively plans for and delivers regional-scale services in the greater Vancouver region of British Columbia. Its core services are drinking water, wastewater treatment and solid waste management. Metro Vancouver also provides affordable housing, regulates air quality, plans for urban growth and manages a regional parks system.

[www.metrovancover.org](http://www.metrovancover.org)

Housing Committee