
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2023HOUS0059-000851
May 31, 2023

Ministry of Housing

Housing targets expected to deliver more homes faster, first communities selected

VANCOUVER – As part of the actions government is taking to deliver homes for people faster, the first cohort of municipalities for housing targets have been selected, paving the way for building more good homes in areas with the greatest need throughout British Columbia.

“The housing crisis is hurting people and holding back our economy, and we’re taking action with our partners to cut red tape and get homes built faster for people. Municipalities are our critical partners in addressing the housing crisis and building healthy, economically viable communities,” said Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing. “Our government is eager to work with this first cohort of municipalities to get shovels in the ground faster and ensure the homes people need get built.”

The Housing Supply Act gives the Province the authority to set housing targets in municipalities, starting with those with the greatest need and highest projected growth. The targets will encourage municipalities to address local barriers to construction so that housing can get built faster, including updating zoning bylaws and streamlining local development approval processes.

The selected municipalities are:

- City of Abbotsford
- City of Delta
- City of Kamloops
- District North Vancouver
- District of Oak Bay
- City of Port Moody
- District of Saanich
- City of Vancouver
- City of Victoria
- District of West Vancouver

While many communities throughout the province are facing significant housing needs, the Province has selected these municipalities using an objective and data-based process. An empirical index was developed, based on work with economists and experts in the field, to identify municipalities according to multiple dimensions of housing need. The index relies on measures that prioritize the urgency of local housing needs, the availability of the right housing supply, including land availability and unrealized potential for more homes, and housing affordability.

Over the summer, the Province will consult with the selected municipalities and set the final

housing targets. All communities will be encouraged to take the action needed to speed up local processes. Many already have.

Once targets are set, the Province will monitor progress and work with municipalities to help address any barriers. To support implementation, the Province will continue to help local governments speed up local approval processes through the continued implementation of the development approvals process review, as well as the Province's work accelerating and streamlining provincial permitting across multiple ministries and developing a new digital permitting process.

"The housing challenges we see today aren't just limited to one municipality, they impact our region and province as a whole. It's great to see the provincial government taking an increased leadership role in ensuring the delivery of more housing across the province," said Ken Sim, mayor, Vancouver. "In the last six months, Vancouver has made significant headway in breaking down long-standing barriers to housing approval and construction. We hope our progress can inspire other communities across British Columbia to take bold action on housing."

The act enables compliance options as a last resort, should municipalities struggle to create the conditions that are necessary to ensure housing gets built.

A second group of eight to 10 municipalities will be selected and notified in late 2023.

The Housing Supply Act is part of the Province's Homes for People action plan to deliver more homes in B.C., building on B.C.'s \$19-billion housing investment and the introduction of effective tools to tackle speculation and increase the number of rentals.

Quotes:

Marianne Alto, mayor, Victoria –

"We welcome being part of a first wave of communities challenged to accelerate building homes for people. These targets reflect the city's own commitment to housing current and future Victorians."

Meghan Lahti, mayor, Port Moody –

"Port Moody welcomes the opportunity to provide the number of housing units necessary to keep pace with demand. We recognize that there are opportunities to diversify our housing stock with affordable and seniors housing, as well as accessible and family-friendly units. We look forward to working with the Province to set housing targets and help ensure the right kind of homes are being built here."

Dean Murdock, mayor, Saanich –

"This is a positive step toward creating more homes for more people to live in Saanich. We look forward to working with the Province to set targets and welcome their support to achieve our housing goals."

Jill Atkey, CEO, BC Non-Profit Housing Association –

"The announcement today ensures that housing supply gets approved quickly in communities

where we need it most. What’s more, it goes beyond supply by considering local incomes and setting targets for affordable housing and couldn’t come at a more critical time.”

Thomas Davidoff, director, UBC Centre for Urban Economics and Real Estate –

“The Housing Supply Act recognizes that municipalities may make land-use decisions based not just on maintaining local built character or amenity, but also in the broader provincial interest of allowing households to choose the location and type of housing that serves them best. In determining which municipalities would benefit from additional help in making land-use decisions, I was pleased to see that the Province was receptive to feedback from professionals in the field of housing and implemented a screening mechanism that was based on objective and, I believe, reasonable standards.”

Neil Moody, CEO, Canadian Home Builders’ Association of BC –

“The selection of this first round of communities is a welcome next step toward implementing the resources and guidance that have long been needed to reduce red tape and speed up approval processes to boost housing stock across B.C. Our members share a common goal with the Province and the selected municipalities to facilitate the development of these much-needed new homes once the targets are revealed later this summer.”

Learn More:

For a backgrounder detailing municipality selection index indicators, visit:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Selection_Index_Indicators.pdf

To learn more about the Housing Supply Act, visit:

<https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/bills/billsprevious/3rd42nd:gov43-1>

To read the Homes for People action plan, visit:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Homes_For_People.pdf

To learn more about the Permitting Strategy for Housing, visit:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023WLRS0003-000033>

To learn more about new investments in digital permitting, visit:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023HOUS0019-000496>

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