



# CHAPTER 8: HOUSING

Port Moody has traditionally been a family oriented community. Based on the 2011 Census, 64% of all census families include children. Overall the number of dwelling units in Port Moody has increased from 10,125 dwelling units in 2006 to 12,989 dwelling units in 2011, a 28% increase during this period and the largest increase noted among cities in Metro Vancouver.

During this same period the mix of housing also continued to change. Once dominated by single family homes, the proportion of single detached dwellings has seen a steady decline from 47% in 2000 and 38% in 2006 to 32% in 2011. The current housing stock is dominated by multi-family housing forms with 31% ground-oriented multi-family (townhouses, rowhouses, duplexes) and 36% apartment (low and high rise units).

Of these units, 2011 Census statistics indicate that 77% are owned and 23% are rental units.

More recent building permit statistics indicate that the proportion of multi-family housing (townhouses and apartments) will continue to increase in the future. In 2009, permits were issued for 26 multi-family units compared to 16 single family dwellings. In 2010, the number of single family dwellings dropped to 11 while the number of multi-family units rose to 185 new units. In the following years, fluctuations continued with permits for 18 and 8 new single family dwellings and 23 and 106 new multi-family units issued in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

It is anticipated that the single family home's share of the total housing mix will continue to decline due to: a dwindling supply of land suited for this form of housing; the promotion of compact growth patterns that support transit and preserve green space; and a desire to maintain housing affordability.

Secondary suites represent an important share of Port Moody's housing stock. Based upon the number of licenses issued in 2012, there are approximately 366 known secondary suite in

the City, with perhaps slightly more than double that number actually in existence. This would suggest that between 9% and 18% of Port Moody's single family homes may have a suite. While many suites are unauthorized, they are prevalent in single family neighbourhoods due to their use as mortgage helpers and the lack of affordable and available rental housing in the community.

## 8.1 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY (INCOME, DEMAND, SUPPLY, CHOICES)

Metro Vancouver is recognized across Canada as the country's most expensive place to buy or rent housing, compared to all other urban areas. A strong economy, continuing migration and the shortage of land available for new housing developments will likely continue to keep land prices high, making all forms of new development relatively expensive.

Because of the region's high prices, many people who would buy a home in another region are forced to continue renting in the Lower Mainland. This places additional pressure on the rental market, keeping vacancy rates low and rents high. This will have an important impact on housing affordability especially for households at the low end of the income distribution.

Even though Port Moody residents were found to be somewhat better off than Metro Vancouver as a whole with regard to household income, the 2011 census indicates that 25% of owners (2428 households) and 40% of renters (1166 households) spent more than 30% of their pre-tax income on shelter. For housing to be "affordable", a household should not have to spend more than 30% of its gross income on shelter.

According to the 2011 Census, 23% of Port Moody households live in rented housing which is lower than the regional average of 35%. Rental units may be conventional apartment buildings, detached houses, townhouses or duplexes, but in recent years they are also likely to be investor-owned condominiums or

secondary suites in detached houses. There are concerns with the diminishing proportion of rental housing in the region, particularly as the existing supply of purpose-built rental housing is aging and vulnerable to redevelopment.

Port Moody currently has approximately 580 units of affordable housing in social housing developments providing housing for families, seniors and those with special needs. Whether rentals or cooperatively owned, these units provide affordable housing for people who cannot afford housing in the marketplace. As well, as of December 2012, 96 households were receiving rent supplements through provincial programs for a total of 676 affordable units.

Since the construction of 86 new units of subsidized housing in the Inlet Centre Residences project, no new subsidized units have been created in Port Moody.

## 8.2 ROLE OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

Most of Port Moody's subsidized housing units were built in the 1970s and 1980s, when the federal government financed two-thirds of the cost of new projects. Federal subsidies through CMHC were phased out in the early 1990s. In 2006, by way of agreement, responsibility for housing was officially devolved to the provincial government from the federal government. To clearly articulate future directions in housing, the province mapped out its housing strategy in Housing Matters BC. While this strategy addresses the entire housing continuum, it focuses primarily on improved access to housing for the most vulnerable citizens and those with low incomes. Among its six strategies are:

- Supported housing for the homeless;
- Improved access to rental housing for low-income households; and
- Home ownership as a means of self-sufficiency.

In keeping with these strategies, the province, through BC Housing, has launched a Homelessness Outreach Program and a Housing Endowment Fund. It also offers a number of programs that provide rent supplements to low income families, seniors, the homeless and mental health clients.

No new subsidized units have been built in Port Moody since the completion of the Inlet Centre Residences in 2003.

## 8.3 ROLE OF REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

As a result of the rising incidence of poverty in the region, low vacancy rates and increasing rents, Metro Vancouver completed a regional Affordable Housing Strategy in 2007. The Strategy has three goals:

- Increase the supply and diversity of modest cost housing;
- Eliminate homelessness across the region; and
- Meet the needs of low income renters.

The strategy focuses on ways to increase the supply and diversity of modest cost housing, enhancing the continuum of housing and supports for those who are homeless, and expanding the supply of affordable rental housing. Proposed actions in the Strategy include specific actions the Region or member municipalities could take and potential partnership opportunities or actions requiring the commitment and support of others including senior levels of government, the non-profit and co-op sectors and the private sector.

## 8.4 MUNICIPAL ROLE

The primary role of funding the capital costs for affordable housing continues to be the responsibility of the federal and provincial governments. Ongoing and adequately funded programs from senior levels of governments are essential to create additional supply of permanent, affordable housing for low and modest income households. However, municipalities can positively influence affordability and assist the creation and retention of affordable housing in their boundaries.

In 2009, the City completed an Affordable Housing Strategy. This Strategy builds upon the work undertaken as part of the 1993 Affordable Housing Study and its 1999 update. It was developed by examining the most recent housing and income data from the City and the region as well as other municipal Affordable Housing Strategies. Public consultation with stakeholders and interested community residents provided valuable feedback on identifying local affordable housing needs and potential strategies. All of this information was used to develop nine new work plan actions to confirm and strengthen the City's continuing commitment to ensure that a broad range of housing options are available in the community to meet the needs of all Port Moody residents.

There are a number of ways the City can address this issue such as by allowing laneway housing units in single family neighbourhoods, providing land on a lease basis for the development of affordable housing, density bonusing, fast-tracking of the approval process for affordable housing projects, municipal affordable housing funds, encouraging the development of adaptable housing, and inclusionary zoning, to name a few.

## 8.5 CHANGING POPULATION, CHANGING NEEDS

In 20 years, Greater Vancouver will have a significantly older population than it does now as baby boomers born in the post war period pass through middle age into the senior demographic. Empty-nesters will leave the detached houses, duplexes and townhouses they raised their children in, seeking smaller, more maintenance-free alternatives. Many will wish

to stay in communities in which they feel rooted, close to friends, neighbours, churches, doctors and social circles.

At the other end of the age spectrum, young adults are much more likely to live alone, or, if married, to put off starting families. These smaller households often cannot find suitable and/or affordable homes in traditional suburban neighbourhoods.

In the next 15 years it is expected that single person households and families without children will make up about 60% of the forecast household growth in Metro Vancouver, while families with children and lone parent families will make up 30% of the forecast growth.

In an effort to accommodate growth pressures within the broader regional context, Metro Vancouver member municipalities adopted the Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping Our Future Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) in 2011. Some of the key goals in the RGS are to promote a pattern and form of development that maintains harmony with nature, fosters community well-being and ensures economic prosperity. By promoting complete and compact communities, the RGS plays a role in influencing the location and form of new housing in the region.

Most of Port Moody is located within the Urban Containment Boundary identified in the Regional Growth Strategy. Potential options for accommodating an increasing population include:

- Redevelopment in existing neighbourhoods, particularly in close proximity to proposed Evergreen Line transit stations;
- Encouraging commercial developments to include a significant residential component;
- The continued redevelopment of the Inlet Centre neighbourhood.

## 8.6 DEMANDS FOR NEW FORMS OF HOUSING

The combined forces of population growth, smaller households and higher prices are leading increasing numbers of people to seek housing options other than the detached single family house which is Metro Vancouver's traditional form of housing. Townhouses, apartments, duplexes, small lot houses and detached houses with secondary suites are all sought after. There is also revived interest in traditional urban lifestyles, leading to increasing demand for communities in which housing is closer to shops, services and employment. Design efforts in this regard have included:

- Smaller houses on smaller lots;
- Attention to the pedestrian experience with the inclusion of boulevards with street trees and other sidewalk enhancements;
- The use of traditional architecture including porches;
- Better utilization of back lanes and rear garages;
- The integration of local commercial and social amenities into residential neighbourhoods; and,
- The development of live/work and work/live spaces.

A range of housing choices will continue to be provided for Port Moody's residents in both newly developing areas of the community and redeveloping neighbourhoods.

## 8.7 A COMPLETE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

The City acknowledges the importance of creating a complete and sustainable community where residents can live, work, play and shop. Complete communities provide opportunities for housing, jobs, a better distribution of public services, a more effective transportation network and a reduction in energy use and green house gas emissions. By providing a wide range of housing options, complete communities help create a diverse and vibrant community life and allow residents to stay in their community as their needs change.



In this respect, much of the new housing will, where possible, be clustered in “villages” or neighbourhoods. In planning for new housing, consideration will be given to creating accessible pedestrian oriented developments with the necessary and appropriate amenities, as well as social and cultural facilities to encourage a sense of community and identity. Multi-family developments should, where feasible, include a mix of uses, be pedestrian oriented, add visual interest and identity to the streetscape and be situated in proximity to public transit.

## 8.8 INFILL DEVELOPMENT

The residents of Port Moody continue to take pride in the “small town feel” and character of their community. They appreciate the uniqueness and human scale of their neighbourhood and the preservation of green belts throughout the city. These are qualities which continue to draw new residents to Port Moody who seek not only a place to live, but a community that provides a quality of life and vitality which many traditional suburban communities have lacked. In this respect, infill development resulting from subdivision or redevelopment should be undertaken in a sensitive manner respecting the scale and character of existing neighbourhoods and surrounding development particularly with respect to a building’s pedestrian scale, location, design etc.

Infill development refers to building homes, businesses and public facilities on unused or underutilized land within existing urban areas. They range from the single vacant lot to surface parking lots to the redevelopment of underused buildings and sites and the rehabilitation of historic buildings for new uses.

Successful infill development can offer these rewards for communities:

- Provide housing (both affordable and market rate) near job centres and transit;
- Increase the property tax base;
- Preserve open space at the edge of urban areas;
- Provide new residents to support shopping districts and services;
- Capitalize on community assets such as parks, infrastructure and transit; and,
- Create new community assets such as child care centre, arts districts and shopping areas.

## 8.9 RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

In order to achieve its housing goals, Port Moody has provided for a range of housing forms and densities in this community plan:

### 8.9.1 SINGLE FAMILY LOW DENSITY FORM

This designation includes detached single family homes, single family homes with secondary suites and mews housing. Single family low density housing forms will not exceed that permitted in existing zones, except in cases where secondary suites and mews housing are permitted in an effort to conserve heritage buildings. This form of housing generally consists of one house, or one house with a secondary suite, on a single lot.

Laneway housing may also be considered as part of the low density single family form to allow for a modest amount of infill that preserves the scale and character of existing single family areas.

Laneway housing refers to a detached dwelling unit that is secondary to the primary residence of the property owner and includes a detached rear garage apartment or cottage style structures (also known as “mews housing” or “granny flats”).

### 8.9.2 MULTI-FAMILY FORMS

#### **a. Low Density Multi-family Forms (2-3 storeys)**

This designation provides for two-family homes (side-by-side and up-and-down duplexes), tri-plexes, four-plexes, townhouses (side-by-side or stacked), row housing and cluster housing on individual or common lots. Buildings will in most cases be two to three storeys in height.

#### **b. Medium Density Multi-Family Form (up to 6 storeys)**

This designation provides for higher densities that may include townhouses (side-by-side or stacked), apartments or a combination, including apartments over townhouses in mid-rise building forms. Buildings will typically be four to six storeys in height dependent upon area specific policies.

#### **c. Medium Density Mixed Use: Mid-Rise (6 to 12 storeys)**

This designation provides for medium density residential development predominantly in the form of mid-rise apartments that range from 6 to 12 storeys in height.

#### **d. High Density Multi-Family Form: High Rise (up to 26 storeys)**

This designation is limited to the the Inlet Centre Station Transit-Oriented Development Area and provides for high density residential development predominantly in the form of apartment buildings. Building heights are generally limited to 26 storeys.

#### **e) High-Density Multi-Family Form: High Rise (up to 38 storeys)**

This designation is limited to the Oceanfront District and provides for high density residential development predominantly in the form of apartment buildings. Building heights are limited to 38 storeys.

# POLICIES

Port Moody's housing goals will be achieved by the following policies:

1. The future housing needs of the City will be met through a variety of housing types and forms and tenures, providing residential accommodation ranging from affordable to affluent to serve the needs of a wide range of people, including families, singles, seniors and those with special needs.

2. Residential development in new and established neighbourhoods shall:

- Enhance the quality of the community by providing opportunities for social interaction between residents;
- Be sited, designed and landscaped in a manner which respects the character of the neighbourhood, including social and physical infrastructure and minimizes possible negative impacts;
- Provide a gradual transition of scale and density through the stepping down of a building towards, and setbacks from, existing lower density residential areas;

- Results in neighbourhoods which are energy efficient, minimize greenhouse gas emissions and are pedestrian and bicycle oriented;
- Include, where possible, back lanes with rear detached garages, boulevards with street trees, walkway/cycling connections to parks and open space; and,
- Be designed in a manner sensitive to lands with high environmental value.

3. Residential development or redevelopment, including infill, will be evaluated for its suitability according to whether it:

- Creates the physical attributes of a village-like community, helping to strengthen the sense of place and the social fabric of an area;
- Results in buildings and spaces which encourage the interaction of residents of all physical abilities and the development of a sense of community;
- Minimizes the impact of and reliance on the automobile in terms of subdivision layout, building design, parking requirements and public transit planning by the use of community energy planning principles;
- Results in neighbourhoods which are energy efficient, minimize greenhouse gas emissions and are pedestrian



- and bicycle oriented;
  - Incorporates green building technology such as alternative forms of energy use and methods of reducing water consumption, waste production and stormwater runoff;
  - Provides appropriate landscaping, clustered tree retention and replanting and contributes its fair share to the open space of the surrounding community, as part of a comprehensive approach to the creation and maintenance of a natural environment for the enjoyment of all residents; and
  - Maintains view and migratory corridors, where possible.
4. The location and type of residential developments shall be as set out in the Overall Land Use Plan – Map 1 of this OCP.
  5. Parcels already zoned for multiple family residential (RM) use shall generally continue to be used for this purpose when redeveloped.
  6. In commercial areas, mixed use developments incorporating a residential component shall generally be encouraged, subject to the criteria in Housing Policies 3 and 4 above being satisfied.
  7. To encourage the conservation of buildings with heritage value, the City will consider commercial or mixed residential and commercial uses within residential buildings. Additional building floor area, including the restoration of existing floor area or adding new compatible floor area, either to the existing building, or as a separate building on the same property (e.g. laneway housing or garden suites) will also be considered when associated with heritage conservation.
  8. All multi-family and infill developments in the City, including two-family developments, shall be subject to a development permit and/or a development authorization.
  9. In the design of multi-family development, the needs of households with children will be considered as well as the opportunity to provide ground oriented units.
  10. Consideration of measures to address the maintenance of existing affordable housing units and the continued development of new affordable housing as outlined in the City's Affordable Housing Strategy, including:
    - Requiring affordable housing as a condition of the sale of City-owned land, where appropriate;
    - Exploring the feasibility of establishing an affordable housing "land bank";
    - Encouraging the development of partnerships among community groups, non-profit organizations, the business community, professionals, the school district and all levels of government to provide affordable/ special needs housing;
    - Consideration of an inclusionary housing policy and/or density bonus provisions as a means of encouraging new affordable rental and/or ownership housing stock as part of new residential or mixed use projects. Implementation of these measures will involve further work to determine appropriate requirements regarding the provision of affordable housing units or cash-in-lieu contributions to the City's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund;
    - In the case of the redevelopment of existing rental accommodation, exploring requirements for the replacement of existing rental units or cash-in-lieu contributions to the City's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund;
    - Developing a set of policies to protect the existing affordable market rental housing stock from either demolition or conversion to strata title;
    - Reviewing the current secondary suite policy in order to encourage the development of new suites in appropriate zones;



- Consideration of a Standards of Maintenance bylaw to provide the City with the ability to enforce minimum maintenance standards on the landlords of rental housing;
- Streamlining the regulatory and approval process for developments which include affordable housing units;
- Developing partnerships with community groups, not-for-profit housing organizations and for-profit developers as well as all levels of government to encourage the development of a range of affordable housing;
- Encouraging laneway housing in all single family areas;
- Consideration of future small-house/small-lot developments, cluster housing and detached secondary dwelling units (such as laneway housing and garden suites) through amendments to the zoning bylaw;
- Encouraging adaptable housing in multi-unit buildings to help people remain at home as their mobility declines with age, illness or injury;
- The identification and pre-zoning of appropriate sites for supportive housing and treatment facilities for persons with mental illness and addictions;
- Ensuring that affordable housing is allocated across the community, with all neighbourhoods considered appropriate for such housing;
- Investigating the potential of garden suites to provide additional small scale affordable infill housing within single family areas; and
- Tracking, on a regular basis, key affordability indicators to monitor the achievements of the City's Affordable Housing Strategy.

11. Residential land shall be pre-zoned where it is considered to be in the community interest to do so in order to promote affordability or achieve other public benefits.

12. Consideration will be given to allowing residential parking variances associated with mixed commercial/residential and other residential developments when broader community benefits can be realized. The variances will be considered by Council on a case-by-case basis where supported by an approved traffic and parking analysis prepared by the project proponent and the provision of amenities to encourage alternatives to single occupant vehicle use (e.g. bicycle parking spaces, bicycle storage space, car sharing or co-operative auto network spaces, subsidized transit passes).

13. Review and update the current Zoning Bylaw to reflect new housing trends, a wider range of densities and improved site design requirements.

14. Encourage the provision of housing and services to meet the diverse needs of seniors and allow them to age in place within their community.

15. Encourage a mix of rental, strata and freehold housing units in proximity to transit stations.



16. Encourage the location of low income, affordable and seniors' housing units near transit stations and transit corridors to support transit-dependent individuals.

17. The use of a density bonus provision, to allow owners to develop at a higher density in return for provision of community amenities, will be permitted throughout the City where lands are rezoned to permit higher density residential development.

Potential amenities to be provided include:

- Community facilities
- Parks and Recreation Facilities
- Environmental Enhancements
- Arts and Cultural Facilities
- Public Art
- Streetscape and/or Pedestrian Related Improvements
- Affordable or special needs Housing or Contributions to the Affordable Housing Reserve