

Our Strategic Framework



Mandate, Vision and Values

Our mandate is to fulfill the provincial government’s commitment to the development, management and administration of subsidized housing as reflected in an Order-in-Council under the *Housing Act* establishing the British Columbia Housing Management Commission (BC Housing) in 1967. As of 2010/11 our mandate expanded to include responsibilities for the administration of the *Homeowner Protection Act* including strengthening consumer protection for buyers of new homes and helping bring about improvements to the quality of residential construction.

Our vision is housing solutions for healthier futures.

Our values are integrity, respect, commitment, service and accountability.

HOUSING MATTERS BC – A HOUSING STRATEGY FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA

As set out in the Shareholder’s Letter of Expectations, BC Housing’s priority is to fulfill the government’s commitment to meet the housing needs of British Columbians as set out in the provincial housing strategy, *Housing Matters BC*.

The framework for the evolution of the housing sector, including the business direction for BC Housing, is guided by *Housing Matters BC*. This provincial housing strategy contains six goals, each of which is client-focused. BC Housing is a major contributor in ensuring these goals are met through a variety of programs and partnerships.

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|---|---|
| 1 | The homeless have access to stable housing with integrated support services |
| 2 | B.C.’s most vulnerable citizens receive priority for assistance |
| 3 | Aboriginal housing need is addressed |
| 4 | Low-income households have improved access to affordable rental housing |
| 5 | Homeownership is supported as an avenue to self-sufficiency |
| 6 | B.C.’s housing and building regulatory system is safe, stable and efficient |

Shareholder's Letter of Expectations

The Shareholder's Letter of Expectations (SLE) describes the relationship between BC Housing and the provincial government, and mandates direction from government to BC Housing. The SLE ensures a mutual understanding between the shareholder and BC Housing on governance issues, corporate mandate, core services, public policy issues, strategic priorities and performance expectations.

Our core business areas and services are aligned to fulfill our mandate, shareholder's expectations and policy directions under *Housing Matters BC*. The chart below summarizes key directions established in our SLE and key accomplishments for 2010/11.

SLE HIGHLIGHTS

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The homeless have access to stable housing with integrated support services

- Work with other provincial ministries, health authorities, the non-profit and private sectors, local governments and others to establish long-term housing and support services to respond to the needs of homeless/at risk individuals through the *Provincial Homelessness Initiative*, including supportive housing through Memoranda of Understanding agreements with local governments
- Manage the emergency shelter program and continue the shift to making shelters gateways to stable housing and support services
- Connect homeless people to income assistance, stable housing and community-based health services through the *Homeless Outreach Program* and the *Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program*

- Completed 584 units across the province with a further 535 units under construction for individuals who are homeless/at risk
- Completed fire and life-safety renovations at provincially-acquired single room occupancy hotels and provided housing and support services to individuals who are homeless/at risk
- 7,403 homeless people were housed through the *Homeless Outreach Program*, the *Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program* and through gateway services offered through the *Emergency Shelter Program*

B.C.'s most vulnerable citizens receive priority for assistance

- Work in partnership with provincial health authorities, the non-profit and private sectors, local governments and others to deliver the *Independent Living BC program* for seniors
- Improve access to, and maximizing the use of, government-owned public housing for those with complex housing and health needs through initiatives such as the *Seniors' Rental Housing* and the *Seniors' Supportive Housing* programs
- Provide a continuum of housing options for women and their dependent children fleeing violence including transition houses, safe homes, second stage housing, and strengthening linkages with service providers
- Renovating and retrofitting social housing in greatest need of repair throughout the province through the *Housing Renovation Partnership*
- Manage comprehensive re-development plans for appropriate subsidized housing sites to further the objectives of the provincial housing strategy

- Over 100 units are under construction through the *Independent Living BC program*
- Converted 55 subsidized housing units under the *Seniors' Supportive Housing* program to supportive housing units for low-income seniors who need some assistance to continue to live independently
- Completed over 400 units under the *Seniors' Rental Housing* with over 700 units under construction to provide affordable housing for seniors and people with disabilities in smaller communities across the province
- The *Women's Transition Housing and Supports Program* has completed a review of programs and is working with our partners to implement recommendations to better address the housing and support needs of women and children fleeing violence
- Renovation and renewal projects underway on all of the 101 social housing buildings identified for capital improvements under the *Housing Renovation Partnership* program
- Continued to implement a capital asset management framework to align the public housing stock with current and future housing needs

Shareholder's Letter of Expectations *(continued)*

SLE HIGHLIGHTS

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Aboriginal housing need is addressed

- Support Aboriginal capacity building in the area of housing and transferring administration of additional housing units to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association

- Created 77 new units of affordable housing for Aboriginal individuals and families under the *Aboriginal Housing Initiative*
- Administration of 179 social housing units transferred to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association

Low-income households have improved access to affordable rental housing

- Find innovative ways to deliver on BC Housing's mandate and provide support for innovative projects initiated by others
- Assist seniors and low-income working families who rent housing in the private market with rent subsidies through the *Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters* and *Rental Assistance Program*
- Administer the *Housing Endowment Fund*

- Created 474 new units through the *Community Partnership Initiative*
- Provided 25,188 families and seniors with rent assistance through the *Rental Assistance Program* and the *Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters* program since the programs began
- Found appropriate housing for more than 2,200 applicants in subsidized housing through *The Housing Registry*
- Responded to over 100,000 calls through BC Housing's inquiry line
- Administered the *Housing Endowment Fund*, providing more than 40 innovative housing proposals with more than \$25 million to develop nearly 400 affordable housing units and other unique projects since its inception in 2007

Homeownership is supported as an avenue to self-sufficiency

- Find innovative ways to deliver on BC Housing's mandate and provide support for innovative projects initiated by others

- Created innovative affordable homeownership initiatives for low- and moderate-income households on a pilot basis

B.C.'s housing and building regulatory system is safe, stable and efficient

- Work with the Ministry of Housing and Social Development to effect the transfer of the reconstruction loan portfolio from the Homeowner Protection Office
- Incorporate environmentally responsible construction and management techniques into new builds and existing developments
- Provide leadership in the Wood First initiative by working to maximize the use of wood in provincially-built housing units

- Ensured an effective system of licensing and new home warranty insurance under the *Homeowner Protection Act*
- Promoted sustainability in BC Housing's business activities and more broadly with the housing sector through *livegreen: Housing Sustainability Plan*
- Committed to build new housing to LEED standards with a focus on energy efficiency, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs
- Created units of affordable seniors housing under the *Seniors' Rental Housing* initiative using modular, manufactured housing or site-built wood frame construction to promote B.C. wood product use

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

BC Housing's sustainability strategy, called *livegreen: Housing Sustainability Plan* recognizes the significant role that we can play to promote sustainability in our activities and more broadly within the housing sector. We accomplish this through taking actions in three areas:

- Buildings – striving towards innovation in design, construction and management of social housing buildings;
- Change Agent – guiding and supporting others in taking actions towards sustainability; and
- Integration – integrating financial, social and environmental considerations in decision making.

The *livegreen* plan is aligned with the Province's Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and our carbon footprint, and to become carbon neutral. We report our performance through the "Reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions" performance measure in this Annual Report.

Our significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in public housing buildings and offices contributed to BC Housing becoming carbon neutral in 2010.



Rental Assistance Program Helps Single Mom Move Towards Financial Independence

Leslie isn't afraid of hard work. The Abbotsford single mom cleaned houses while completing a program to upgrade her administration skills. With her schooling complete, she was able to get a part-time job in her field. Every dollar counts and that's why the help Leslie has received from the *Rental Assistance Program* has been so critical in her life.

Leslie looks forward to the day when she no longer qualifies for rental assistance. "That will mean that I'm moving forward and achieving financial independence. I want to be able to stand on my own feet. In the meantime, the program has meant a lot less stress and given me real peace of mind."



"...I'm moving forward and achieving financial independence. I want to be able to stand on my own feet."

BC Housing's *Rental Assistance Program* provides eligible low-income, working families with cash assistance to help their monthly rent payments.

Who We Serve

Government-assisted housing for those in greatest need

About 95,000 households in 200 communities throughout the province were assisted through subsidized housing in 2010/11. This total includes some 800 housing providers – mostly non-profit societies and housing co-operatives – managing about 59,300 of these units and BC Housing managing 7,200 public housing units. Also included are about 28,500¹ households receiving financial assistance to make their rent more affordable in the private market.

The majority of British Columbians are housed successfully in the private housing market. However, there are households that are unable to find suitable housing in the private market. Households spending 50 per cent or more of their income on rent for adequate housing are considered to be in highest need and at risk of economic eviction or homelessness.

The map below shows BC Housing’s service regions. Using 2006 Census data, the table shows the general distribution of households paying 50 per cent or more of their income on rent and those assisted through the current inventory of subsidized housing units and rent supplements. The number of households assisted through subsidized housing is BC Housing data from 2010/11.



INTERIOR

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|---|---------|
| Total number of households | 269,100 |
| Households spending > 50% of their income on rent | 8,700 |
| Households assisted through subsidized housing | 13,545 |

FRASER

| | |
|---|---------|
| Total number of households | 514,100 |
| Households spending > 50% of their income on rent | 18,200 |
| Households assisted through subsidized housing | 27,613 |

VANCOUVER COASTAL

| | |
|---|---------|
| Total number of households | 419,400 |
| Households spending > 50% of their income on rent | 23,300 |
| Households assisted through subsidized housing | 33,222 |

VANCOUVER ISLAND

| | |
|---|---------|
| Total number of households | 297,800 |
| Households spending > 50% of their income on rent | 12,100 |
| Households assisted through subsidized housing | 15,779 |

NORTH

| | |
|---|---------|
| Total number of households | 100,300 |
| Households spending > 50% of their income on rent | 2,600 |
| Households assisted through subsidized housing | 4,864 |

¹ This figure includes households in the private market receiving rent assistance, with or without support services.

Who We Serve *(continued)*

Many of our programs and initiatives are designed to address the needs of those who require affordable housing in combination with support services to maintain successful tenancies, lead healthier lives and participate more fully in their communities. The following is a summary of some of the groups in greatest housing need.

Individuals Who Are Homeless

Homelessness is a concern for many communities throughout B.C. Some reports estimate the cost of homelessness to the health, social, and justice systems to be over \$55,000 per person per year (Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health & Addiction, Simon Fraser University).

Challenges to finding appropriate housing for people who are homeless are multi-faceted. They may be housing-related, such as affordability, availability or suitability, or a combination of life events, including disabilities, health and mental health issues, addictions, social exclusion, joblessness or a breakdown of relationships.

Frail Seniors and Individuals with Special Needs

The population of seniors will increase from 15 per cent of B.C.'s population in 2009 to 24 per cent in 2036, putting pressure on social housing. The age 80+ senior population will grow from four per cent in 2009 to seven per cent in 2036 (BC Stats).

People who require special-needs housing include those with severe physical disabilities or mobility issues, chronic mental illness, those living with HIV/AIDS, and drug and alcohol dependencies. Frail seniors and individuals with special needs require a range of support services to help them achieve more stable lives, and supportive housing allows them to live independently.

Aboriginal Individuals and Families

Aboriginal people are disproportionately represented among those who are homeless.

More than 22.3 per cent of off-reserve Aboriginal households are in core housing need compared to 14.2 per cent for non-Aboriginal households (Statistics Canada 2006).

Women and Children Fleeing Violence

From 1999 to 2004, it is estimated that more than 100,000 women in B.C. were victims of spousal violence (Statistics Canada 2006). Women and children fleeing violent relationships require immediate access to safety, shelter, food, crisis intervention and social service referrals.

Low-Income Households

Approximately 64,900 households in British Columbia are unable to find housing that is suitable in size and in good repair without spending 50 per cent or more of their income on rent (Statistics Canada 2006).

Adding to this challenge is the extremely low vacancy rate in many areas.

New Home Buyers

Through our Homeowner Protection Office branch, BC Housing serves buyers of new homes and people arranging for new homes to be built, homeowners (particularly owners of homes with warranty insurance), developers, residential builders, building envelope renovators and owner-builders.

In 2010/11 there were more than 5,300 licences issued to residential builders (new and renewals), nearly 2,900 owner-builder authorizations issued (single detached homes) and nearly 24,000 new homes enrolled in home warranty insurance for the benefit of the buyers.

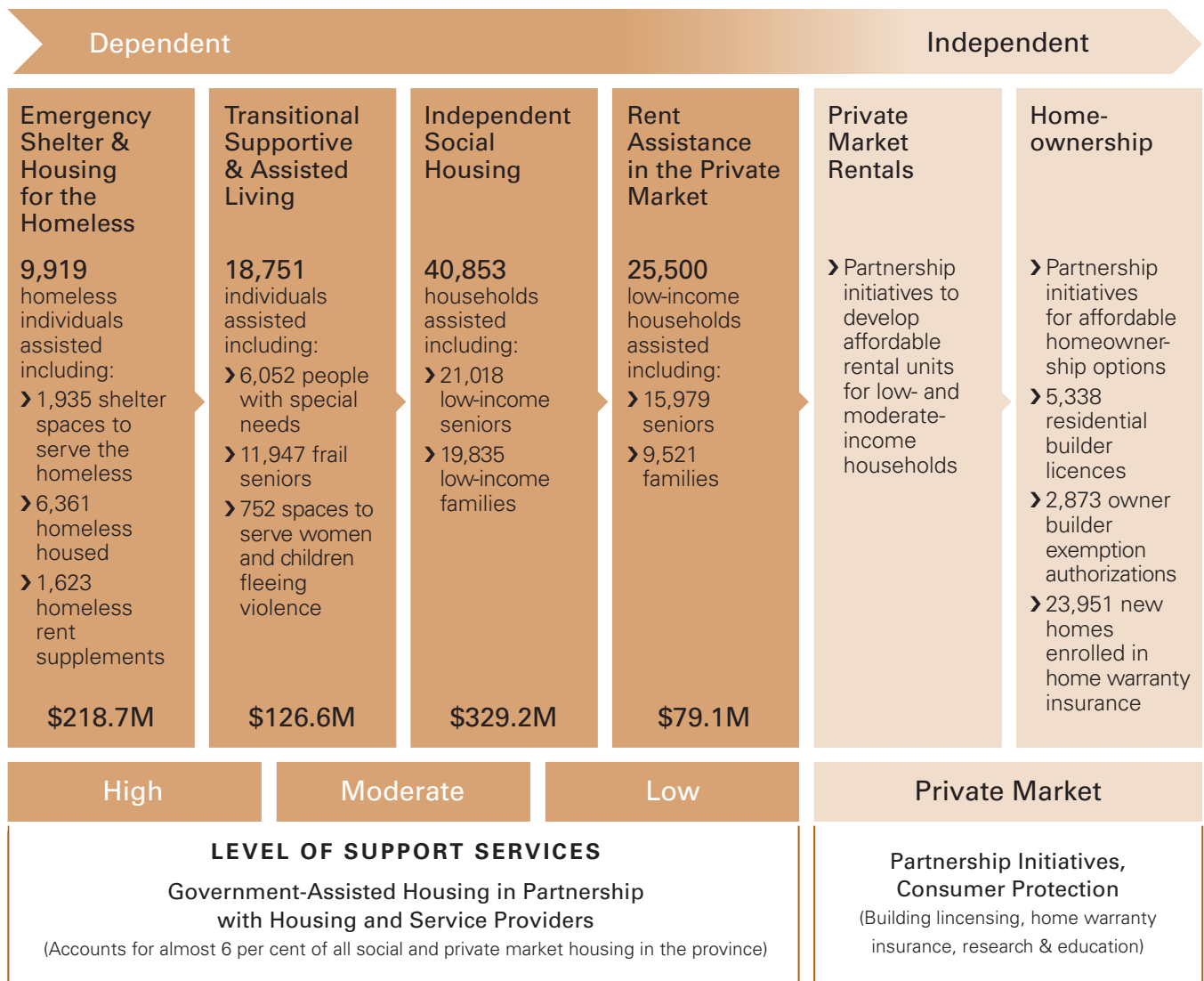
Research and education initiatives continue to be a cornerstone of consumer protection through creating partnerships for leading edge research, delivering Building Smart educational seminars for Licensed Residential Builders province-wide, and producing a range of publications on best practices in residential construction of the building envelope in multi-unit residential buildings for strata corporations.

BC Housing's Role in the Housing Continuum

BC Housing's role is to assist British Columbians in greatest need of affordable and appropriate housing by providing options along the continuum. The housing continuum extends from emergency shelter and housing for the homeless through to affordable rental housing and homeownership. Where there are gaps in the housing continuum, they are addressed through the creation of new housing options, adapting existing housing or through programs providing financial assistance in the private market.

Through new responsibilities under the *Homeowner Protection Act*, BC Housing also plays an important role at the homeownership end of the housing continuum by licensing residential builders, administering owner-builder authorizations, overseeing the third-party home warranty insurance system and carrying out research and education to improve the quality of construction of new homes.

The diagram below illustrates BC Housing's role within this continuum in 2010/11, including the portion that is government assisted with differing levels of support services as well as the development of rental and homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.



How We Serve British Columbians

Every aspect of BC Housing's business is centered on our clients. We create relationships with key partners to work together to deliver our services. Below are descriptions of how we do business in partnership.

Delivery Partners

Housing assistance is provided through public, non-profit and co-operative housing, as well as through rent assistance to people living in the private rental market. We work in partnership with more than 800 non-profit housing societies, housing co-operatives and group home operators throughout the province to provide safe and affordable housing for people in need. We also partner with private operators to provide rent supplements for low-income seniors and people with disabilities living in private assisted living facilities.

Service Partners

BC Housing engages in innovative service partnerships that integrate housing and support services to meet tenants' needs and ensure stable tenancies. These service partnerships involve other levels of government, health authorities and service providers.

Contributing Partners

The investment required to create new social housing necessitates a partnership model. A public-private partnership model combines funds from all levels of government and leverages private, non-profit and charitable sources. Municipal governments can contribute through expediting approval processes, waiving development construction costs and offering reduced property taxes, as well as making land available. The federal government can contribute capital funding to support new and existing social housing. Funding for the ongoing delivery of government-subsidized housing comes from a number of different partners including BC Housing, other provincial ministries and the federal government.

Industry and Regulatory Partners

BC Housing works with a wide range of industry partners to strengthen consumer protection for buyers of new homes. Partners include Licensed Residential Builders and Building Envelope Renovators, warranty insurance providers, insurance brokers acting as agents for warranty providers, industry associations, other regulatory agencies such as the Financial Institutions Commission, educational organizations and building officials. A joint service delivery model involving other partners minimizes program costs.

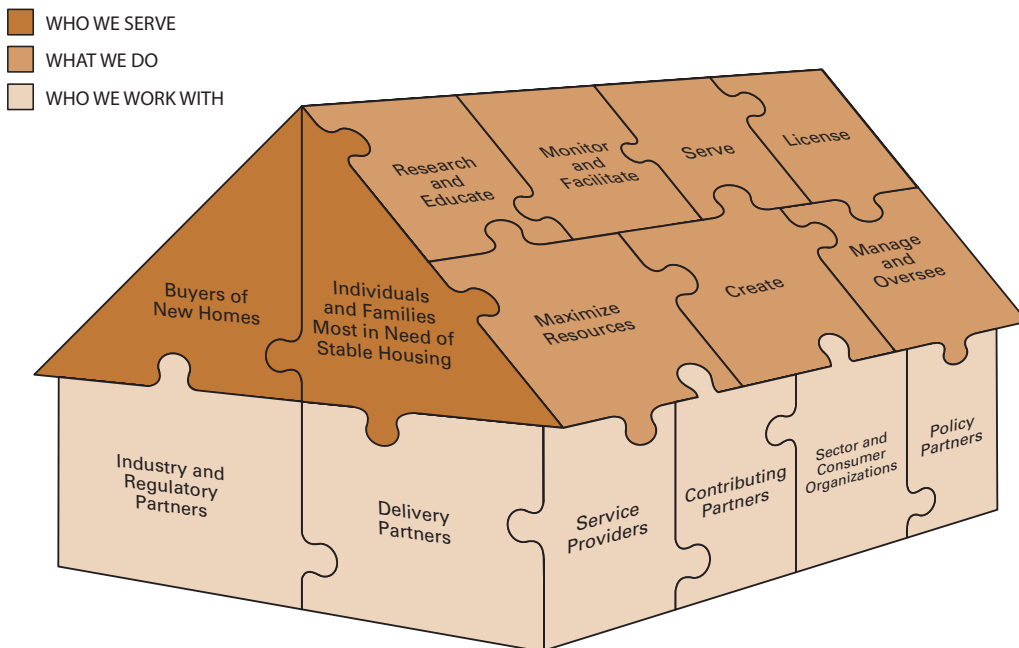
Research and education activities to improve the quality of residential construction continue to be funded primarily by builder license fees and owner-builder authorizations. However, BC Housing works with key industry groups and other levels of government to lever and attract additional funding for cost effective research and education initiatives in the residential construction sector.

Policy Partners

Our policy partners within the Ministry of Energy and Mines are responsible for provincial housing policy, building and safety standards and residential tenancy matters. By working collaboratively, government is able to ensure that BC Housing's programs and services are integrated and aligned with the provincial housing policy. Our partners across government also include the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Health Services, and the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.

Sector and Consumer Organizations

BC Housing works collaboratively with housing sector and consumer organizations to create better outcomes and build stronger communities. Organizations include BC Non-Profit Housing Association, the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC, Shelternet BC, BC Society of Transition Houses, and consumer organizations such as the Condominium Home Owners' Association of BC.



Key Relationships

This diagram illustrates BC Housing's relationships with our key partners and how we work together to provide housing options and strengthen consumer protection.

Building Smart

During 2010-2011, more than 2,600 licensed residential builders and construction industry professionals attended the Homeowner Protection Office's Building Smart seminars (44 seminars held in 21 communities across the province) to learn about changes to the BC Building Code and emerging green technologies. These seminars also explored more stringent energy performance requirements for new homes, including the need to provide building envelope performance suitable to support future, renewable energy solutions and technologies. Building Smart seminar series provides practical information on the most pressing issues, trends and topics in the residential construction industry.



Builders and construction industry professionals attend the Homeowner Protection Office's Building Smart seminar.

“Building Smart seminar series provides practical information on the most pressing issues, trends and topics in the residential construction industry.”