

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the HousingHub?

The HousingHub is a new division within BC Housing, and was established to seek innovative partnerships with local governments, non-profit and co-operative housing organizations, community land trusts, Indigenous groups, faith-based groups, charities, financial institutions and other industries to create affordable rental housing and homeownership options for middle-income British Columbians.

2. What is the mandate for the HousingHub?

The HousingHub will work in partnership with non-profit and for-profit sectors, faith groups, other levels of government, Indigenous organizations and others to confront the most serious barriers to the creation of affordable homes in the province for middle-income earners.

The hub's mandate is to increase the supply of homes in partnership with these groups using BC Housing's extensive technical knowledge in housing development to support the momentum in new affordable housing across this province.

3. What will the HousingHub do? How will the mandate be achieved?

The HousingHub will aggressively partner with non-profit and for-profit sectors, faith groups, other levels of government, and others to find and use or re-use available land to construct and/or redevelop outdated existing housing developments.

It will establish a new affordable owner-purchased housing program allowing prospective new homeowners the benefits of long-term stable and affordable housing, and the opportunity to develop equity in their homes.

It will work with the provincial government to reduce or remove unnecessary barriers created by provincial regulations and policies as well as to identify and develop new, innovative approaches by local governments to support the efficient delivery of affordable homes.

It will also support research to identify and better understand new models for delivering affordable housing including alternate forms of financing such as pension funds and social impact investing, as well as pilot additional community uses such as childcare centres.

It will broker opportunities to leverage affordable housing projects as part of other provincial initiatives including the expansion of public transit and childcare.

4. How will HousingHub be funded? When will funding be allocated?

As part of Budget 2018 and the B.C. government's new 30-point housing plan, the Province is providing approximately \$20 million to establish the HousingHub.

5. How will the HousingHub help build new affordable housing in B.C.?

The HousingHub will actively seek and facilitate new opportunities and partnerships with traditional and non-traditional partners who have land that can be the foundation to create new affordable homes. The HousingHub will provide expertise and a centre for community partners and private industry to collaborate on developing new construction or redeveloping existing sites for affordable housing purposes.

Through these partnerships, the intent is to provide low-cost financing to build new affordable housing that requires no or low-capital equity, or no ongoing operational funding.

Through private and community partnerships, the HousingHub can provide:

- Low-cost financing
- No capital equity
- Expertise to assist in the planning and development process
- Project coordination
- A place for organizations to collaborate
- Access to pre-development funding

6. How does the HousingHub help British Columbians?

The HousingHub is designed to purposefully seek partnerships with private and non-profit sectors to work with all levels of government to achieve the following outcomes:

- Create new affordable rental supply
- Support individuals and families in moving out of rental units and into affordable homeownership

7. Will I be able to afford one of these new affordable homes?

The HousingHub is focused on developing homes for middle-income earners with an average income between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

8. What kind of partners will HousingHub work with?

The HousingHub will be partnering with groups such as prospective housing developers in the non-profit and for-profit sectors, faith groups, Indigenous organizations, and federal and local governments.

A key part of the initiative is partnering with people who have land that is unused or underutilized, but could provide affordable housing for the community.

Through these partnerships, BC Housing will share their extensive knowledge in the development and construction industry to support these groups and build momentum in affordable housing for middle-income earners across our province.

9. Will there be any focus on working with Indigenous communities?

The HousingHub invites all potential partners, including Indigenous communities interested in creating affordable housing on or off reserve.

10. What benefits are there to partnering with HousingHub?

The HousingHub will provide several key tools to help potential partners overcome barriers that have prevented them from developing affordable housing.

First, the HousingHub will offer project development services, including: advice on effective use of land; development modelling; financial pro forma analysis; and partnership support for rezoning.

Second, projects developed through the HousingHub will have access to construction financing through provincial sources, which means costs can be kept low. The HousingHub will also help identify and develop alternative sources of funding for these projects, such as pension funds and social impact capital.

And finally, part of the HousingHub's mandate will be to work with the provincial and local governments to identify opportunities to strengthen or streamline approvals for new developments.

All of these are significant barriers facing non-profits, faith groups and others when they want to use land for affordable housing.

11. When will new units created through this agency be available to rent or own?

The HousingHub was initiated in February 2018. We invite prospective partners to contact us to discuss opportunities to create affordable housing. New units will be made available as projects proceed.

12. Where will projects be located? Will the work of the HousingHub be focused only in the Metro Vancouver area?

No. Many communities throughout the province are experiencing a housing affordability crisis. We will partner in projects anywhere in British Columbia where housing affordability poses challenges to middle income earners and will work towards solutions that are tailored to the specific needs of that community.

13. Will environmental sustainability be considered? If so, how?

B.C. recently introduced the Energy Step Code and the HousingHub's construction guidelines will be the same as those of BC Housing, which requires sustainability standards including: passive design strategies; energy conservation measures; construction, renovation and demolition waste management; sustainable site management; and building material selection. More details can be found [here](#).

14. Does the creation of this agency change BC Housing's mandate of creating social housing?

No, BC Housing will continue to deliver on its commitment of creating housing options for individuals along the housing spectrum. We will continue to provide British Columbians with access to programs and initiatives such as the emergency shelter program, modular housing, and rent subsidies.

The HousingHub is our commitment to ensuring middle-income British Columbians, who have been priced out of housing in communities across the province, will have access to affordable market rental and owner-purchased homes.

By increasing the affordable housing stock throughout the province, this will also free up other housing options along the housing spectrum.

15. Will this create any new jobs?

More construction of new rental and owner-purchased homes will mean more jobs in communities around the province. The HousingHub will have a small staff to support the development of new partnerships and will share office space and common administrative services with BC Housing.

16. Where will it be located?

The HousingHub will be located within BC Housing's main office at 1701 - 4555 Kingsway, Burnaby.