



Neighbourhood Communications Summary Report

Burnaby – 3020 Gilmore Diversion
New Permanent Shelter Project

April – May 2025

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides a summary of the neighbourhood communication efforts for the new permanent shelter project at 3020 Gilmore Diversion in Burnaby, B.C.

BC Housing purchased the two-storey building at 3020 Gilmore Diversion in March 2025. The plan is to create a new permanent shelter that will host up to 80 semi-private sleeping pods across two floors. BC Housing is renovating the building and expects to open the shelter in spring 2026.

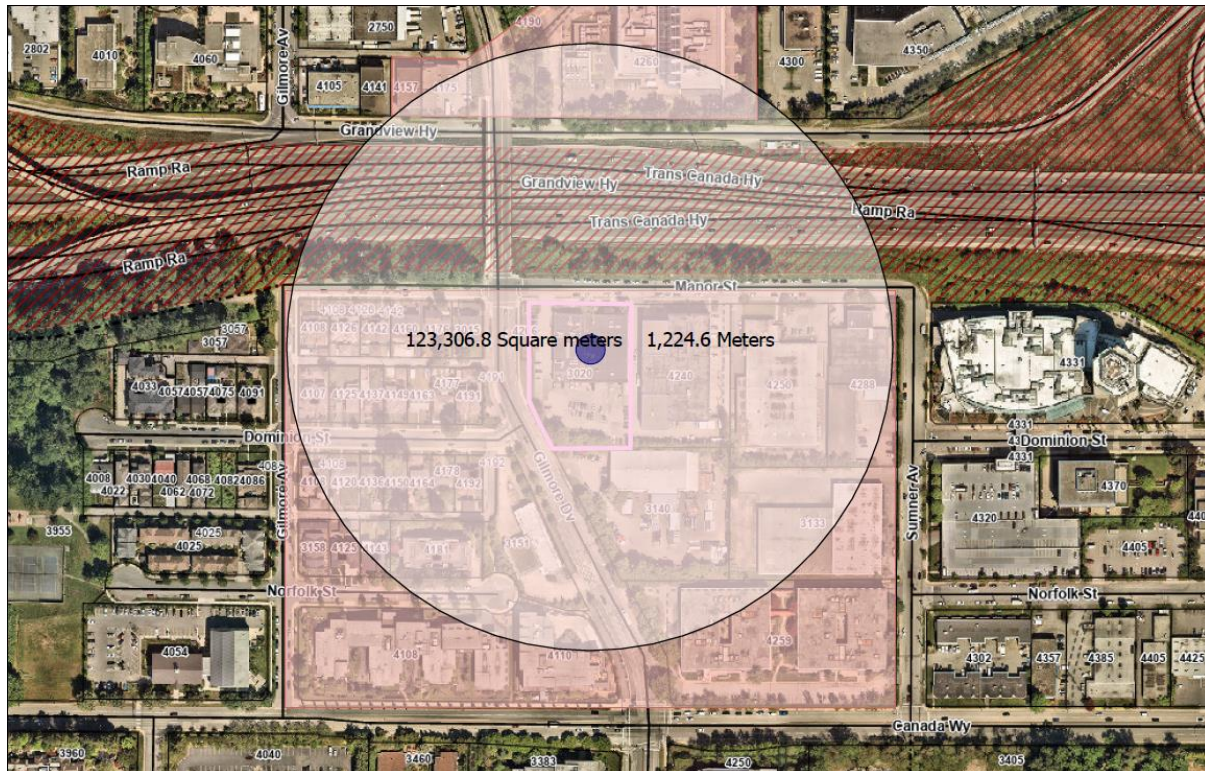
The new shelter will be open 24/7, year-round. It will provide safe, secure spaces and supports for shelter guests and help connect them to permanent housing and community-based services.

The City of Burnaby does not require rezoning for this use and there will be no public hearing related to land use for this project. Even so, BC Housing has committed to being a good neighbour, keeping the community updated about this project and answering questions.

NEIGHBOURHOOD NOTIFICATION

Letter to neighbours

On April 14, 2025, BC Housing mailed a letter (**Appendix A**) to the owners and occupants of properties within the area in red in the map below (**348** addresses).



This letter included:

- An introduction to the new permanent shelter project
- A description of the new shelter and the services to be provided
- A link to the project webpage and direct email address for questions
- A postcard inviting people to register for an online information session on May 7, 2025

Email to Interested & Affected Parties

On April 14, 2025, BC Housing sent an email to **23** interested and affected parties (IAPs) in the local community including Burnaby Fire Hall No.7, Ismaili Centre Vancouver, BCIT, Burnaby School District Office, Grand Villa Casino Hotel, as well as local businesses, community groups and other agencies.

The content of this email was mirrored the letter to neighbours, plus an offer for the IAPs to book a meeting with the BC Housing project team to further discuss the project and ask questions. A business owner and a service provider accepted this offer. BC Housing hosted meetings with these IAPs online on May 2 and May 20.

Project Webpage

BC Housing has published a [project webpage](#) on April 14, 2025. Since then, the webpage has been regularly updated with the latest information about the project.

ONLINE INFORMATION SESSIONS

Registration for the May 7 online information session was full (with 50 registrants) soon after invitations were shared with neighbours and IAPs. An additional session was scheduled for May 15 for those who could not register for the May 7 session. Details of the additional session were shared with those who emailed the Community Relations inbox. They were also posted on the project webpage.

After the sessions, the presentation slides (**Appendix B**) and a [video recording](#) of the May 15 presentation were made available for download via the Let's Talk Housing BC project webpage.

Event Name and Date:	Burnaby Gilmore Shelter Online Info Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Session #1 – May 7, 2025 at 5:30pm-7:00pm○ Session #2 – May 15, 2025 at 5:30pm-7:00pm
Location	Online (Zoom)
First Nations Territory:	Katzie, Kwantlen, Kwikwetlem, Qayqayt, Semiahmoo, Skwxwú7mesh, Tsawwassen, Tsleil-Waututh, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm
Organizers:	BC Housing
BC Housing Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aliya Tejani, Senior Manager, Regional Development• Louise Sallai, Supportive Housing Advisor• Sandy Stenning, Coordinated Access & Assessment Manager

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jason Lee, Senior Advisor, Project & Community Engagement • Alexia Diablo, Senior Specialist, Project & Community Engagement (Session #1 only) • Shirley Le, Specialist, Sector Engagement & Partnerships (Session #2 only)
Other Event Representatives	Facilitator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deanna Cummings – Planning Associate, EcoPlan International, Inc
Event Audience:	Interested parties, neighbours and wider community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters with invitations mailed to neighbours within a 200 m radius of the project site • Emails sent to interested and affected parties within a 500 m radius of the project site
Number of Attendees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session #1 – 27 attendees (50 registrants) • Session #2 – 31 attendees (51 registrants)
Event Summary:	Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a good neighbour by keeping the community updated about this project and answering questions Format: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation, followed by a moderated Q&A Tone & common themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions and comments were mostly respectful, but a considerable number of attendees were vocal in their concern/opposition to this project. • Most of the questions related to community safety, site selection, lack of consultation/public hearing and substance use policy. • A few attendees questioned the absence of representatives from the City and RCMP at the sessions.

WHAT WE HEARD – SUMMARY

Concerns about the Location

Community members expressed concerns about the shelter's proximity to:

- Residential areas with young families
- Daycares, parks and schools
- Seniors' housing
- A nearby casino

Response: Permanent shelters are urgently needed in Burnaby for people who are experiencing homelessness in Burnaby. The most recent Point-in-Time Homeless Count identified over 200 people experiencing homelessness in Burnaby.

We selected the site at 3020 Gilmore Diversion because it is available and close to transit, services and amenities. These are essential for people transitioning out of homelessness and working towards a healthy, stable life.

We welcome ongoing dialogue with neighbours and nearby businesses to address any concerns about the shelter. We will share a direct phone number for the shelter with neighbours when it is available. We will continue working with guests, staff and the surrounding community on an ongoing basis to address any safety concerns.

BC Housing and the shelter operator will also be committed to working with partners who are best positioned to address issues beyond the shelter, such as the RCMP and bylaw officers who support neighbourhood and street safety.

Lack of Public Hearing or Community Input

Community members expressed frustration that:

- There was no public hearing due to recent zoning bylaw changes
- The shelter decision appears to have been made without community input
- There has been little involvement from City of Burnaby officials or the RCMP in meetings

Response: BC Housing and the City have been working together on securing a location for a permanent shelter to replace the temporary shelter at Douglas Road. The zoning bylaws for the City of Burnaby already allowed shelter use in any zone if the land is owned or leased by the City. The City proactively took action to update their bylaw to create more flexibility for BC Housing and service providers to provide necessary shelter for the community.

We recognize that many neighbours would like to be informed in advance of BC Housing purchasing a property. However, it is not possible to disclose or publicize real estate transactions until they are concluded. There are several reasons for this, but the most important is that it could potentially jeopardize the transaction. This would inhibit BC Housing's ability to do our work of providing safe, quality, accessible and affordable housing options for people in BC.

BC Housing is committed to keeping the community updated about this project and answering questions even though there will be no public hearing. Since April 2025, we have mailed letters, met with local businesses, held two online information sessions, and created a project webpage to share information and hear feedback. We will also publish Neighbourhood Communications Summary Report on the project webpage and share it with the City of Burnaby. We plan to reach out to the community again in fall 2025 to introduce the shelter operator and share more details about the shelter operations.

Safety and Crime

Community members raised concerns about:

- Increases in crime, drug use and vandalism
- Impacts on nearby parks, schools, daycares and public transit hubs
- RCMP capacity to respond adequately
- Whether clients will be screened for violent histories

Response: Homelessness affects people, families, neighbourhoods and communities. As such, shelters are an important part of community safety. Having shelter spaces in a community means there are fewer vulnerable people sheltering outdoors. This increases people's personal safety and well-being and contributes to community safety overall.

The new shelter at 3020 Gilmore Diversion will apply Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) practices, including fenced grounds, access control, security cameras and lighting. The shelter operator will have staff on site 24/7. Shelter staff will conduct regular perimeter checks around the shelter site.

As part of our commitment to being a good neighbour, BC Housing and the operator will take responsibility for maintaining the site and addressing any issues related to cleanliness, safety, or loitering. We will provide a direct contact number for the shelter once it is available, so that any concerns can be reported and addressed quickly and collaboratively.

BC Housing and the shelter operator will also be committed to working with partners who are best positioned to address safety concerns beyond the shelter, such as the RCMP and bylaw officers who support neighbourhood and street safety.

Shelter Services, Capacity and Oversight

Community members asked about:

- What types of services will be offered on site
- Whether people will use drugs on site or in public spaces
- Who the operator will be, and how they will be held accountable
- How clients will be selected
- What happens when the shelter is full

Response: Support services for shelter guests typically include meals, storage, laundry and washroom and shower facilities. The operator will also help connect shelter guests to community-based services and permanent housing.

No illicit or illegal substances will be supplied at the shelter. However, we do not deny shelter to people who may use substances. If guests choose to use substances on site, we follow a harm-reduction approach and provide linkages to mental health and use recovery services as is appropriate based on the person's health and wellness goals.

BC Housing will select a non-profit operator through a fair and open process. Once an operator has been selected, we will work closely with them on confirming the specifics of the shelter's operations. We plan to reach out to the community again in fall 2025 to introduce the shelter operator and share more details about the shelter operations.

Call for a Pause or Reassessment

Some community members called for:

- An immediate pause on the project
- Consideration of alternate sites farther from homes and sensitive uses
- A full public hearing and transparent decision-making process

Additionally, BC Housing is aware of a petition with more than 2,000 signatures calling for an immediate pause on the project.

Response: This shelter project is a response to an urgent need to address homelessness in Burnaby, as more than 200 people are experiencing homelessness in the community, with many sleeping outdoors. Offering safe, indoor shelter spaces increases people's personal safety and well-being and contributes to community safety overall.

While no public hearing or Council vote is required for this project, we are committed to continuing the ongoing dialogue with the community. This includes providing accurate information and timely updates, listening to feedback and working collaboratively with neighbours to address any concerns. A caring community can contribute greatly to the success of shelter guests on their journey into stable housing. We look forward to building strong relationships with neighbours and businesses as the shelter becomes part of the neighbourhood.

COMMUNICATIONS OUTCOMES

The combination of direct communication to neighbours and IAPs, a publicly accessible webpage and email inbox, and two online information sessions gave community members ample opportunity to learn more about the project and provide feedback.

In Total

- We reached out to **348** neighbours and **23** IAPs – by either direct mail or email – with project information and direct invitations to our online information session.
- These invitations resulted in **58** people attending the two sessions to ask questions or voice concerns about the project.
- As of May 30, 2025, the Let's Talk Housing BC project webpage has logged approximately

3,900 visits from more than **3,100** visitors.

- As of May 30, 2025, BC Housing's Community Relations inbox (communityrelations@bchousing.org) has received more than **40** emails relating to the project.
- Some of the emails are supportive of the project, some neutral and inquisitive, and others unsupportive or critical.

Overall, BC Housing aimed to produce communications and project information that was simplified in format and language to provide equitable, accessible and inclusive opportunities for learning, asking questions and voicing concerns.

These communication efforts have allowed BC Housing to build relationships with neighbours and the surrounding community, as well as to open lines of communication about the project and its ongoing development.



April 14, 2025

Neighbourhood Update

3020 Gilmore Diversion, Burnaby

Dear Neighbour,

We are writing to share that BC Housing recently purchased the 2-storey office building at 3020 Gilmore Diversion. We are planning to create a new permanent shelter at this site.

Learn more about this project below. See attached for details about an online information session and see reverse for contact information for questions.

THE NEED

The latest Point-in-Time Homeless Count identified 209 people experiencing homelessness in Burnaby. HOME: Burnaby's Housing and Homelessness Strategy and the final report of the Mayor's Task Force on Unsheltered Community Members also highlighted the need for more shelter spaces in Burnaby.

Shelters provide an important step in a person's transition out of homelessness and into stable housing. Opening more shelters also means there will be fewer people sheltering outdoors in Burnaby. This will improve cleanliness and safety in the community overall.

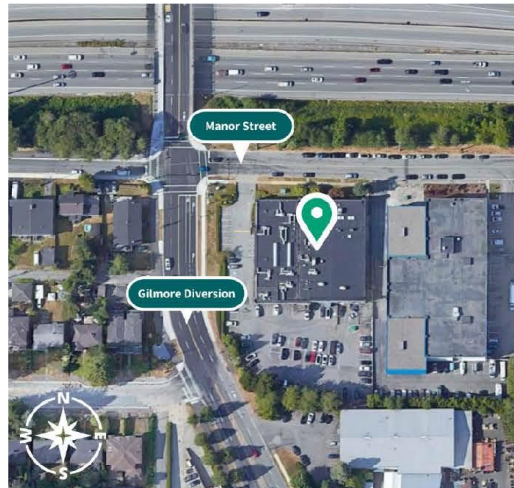
THE NEW SHELTER

The new shelter at 3020 Gilmore Diversion will host up to 80 semi-private sleeping pods across the two floors. There will also be staff offices, indoor amenity space and programming space.

The City of Burnaby does not require rezoning for this use. We are renovating the building and expect to open the shelter in spring 2026.

The new shelter will be open 24/7, year-round. It will provide safe, secure spaces and supports for shelter guests and help connect them to permanent housing and community-based services.

BC Housing will select a non-profit operator through a fair and open process to operate the new shelter. We will reach out to neighbours again in fall 2025 to introduce the shelter operator.



Location of the new shelter

The operator will have staff on site 24/7 to manage the building and provide services to shelter guests. Support services will typically include meals, storage, laundry, and washroom and shower facilities.

There will also be safety and security features for the benefit of shelter guests as well as the surrounding community. These include:

- Staffing: Staff will be onsite 24/7 and be available to respond directly to any concerns that arise in a timely manner.
- Design features: The new shelter will incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design practices such as fenced grounds, access control, security cameras and lighting.
- Perimeter checks: Staff will conduct regular sweeps of the property and immediate area to ensure cleanliness.

CONNECT WITH US

A caring community can contribute greatly to the success of shelter guests on their journey into stable housing. BC Housing will keep lines of communication open throughout this project.

There will be no public hearing relating to land use for this project, as no rezoning is required. We will nevertheless make ourselves available to answer questions and hear any concerns.

We are inviting interested neighbours to join us at an **online information session** to learn more about the project, meet the BC Housing team and ask questions. Please see the attached invitation for dates, times and RSVP links.

You can also learn more about the project and get information session details by visiting letstalkhousingbc.ca/burnaby-gilmore-diversion or scanning the QR code:

We also welcome questions and comments by email to communityrelations@bchousing.org.

Sincerely,
BC Housing



Online Information Session

Permanent Shelter Project

3020 Gilmore Diversion, Burnaby

May 15, 2025

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm



Photo: Google StreetView



Territory acknowledgment

We acknowledge, with gratitude, that the area we are discussing today is situated on the ancestral and unceded territories of the hə́ŋqəmí̄nə́m and Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh Sníichim speaking peoples.



Housekeeping

Recording of Session

This presentation is being recorded until the start of the Q&A

Follow up

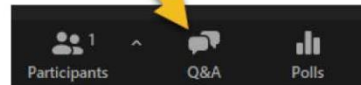
We welcome further questions and comments by email to:
communityrelations@bchousing.org

Note-keeping

We will be taking notes of all feedback and preparing an engagement summary report at the end of the engagement period. We will share the report with the City of Burnaby and the community.

Q&A Function

To ask a question during the Q&A, please use the Q&A function on zoom.



Introductions

Deanna Cummings

Facilitator,
EcoPlan International, Inc

Aliya Tejani

Senior Manager,
Regional Development,
BC Housing

Louise Sallai

Supportive Housing
Advisor,
BC Housing

Sandy Stenning

Coordinated Access &
Assessment Manager,
BC Housing

Jason Lee

Senior Communications
Advisor,
BC Housing

For our time together,
We commit to:



Come together in the
spirit of community



Share information openly
and transparently



Balance time for sharing
information and answering
questions

For our time together,
We ask that all participants:



Use respectful,
people-first language



Ask brief, genuine questions
and allow space for answers

Agenda

- Homelessness & Housing in Burnaby
- New Permanent Shelter at 3020 Gilmore Diversion
- Q&A

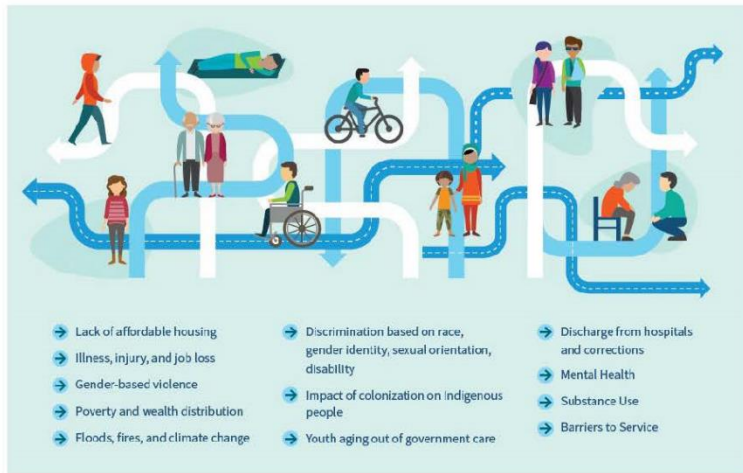
Homelessness in Burnaby

- **209 people** were identified as experiencing homelessness in Burnaby.
(Point-in-Time Homeless Count, April 2023)
- This is a **69% increase** in people experiencing homelessness since the last Point-in-Time count in 2020.
- City of Burnaby's *HOME: Housing and Homeless Strategy* and the Mayor's Task Force on Unsheltered Community Members also highlighted **the need for more shelter spaces** in Burnaby



Photo: Burnaby NOW

Pathways to Homelessness



Purpose of a Shelter - As a Gateway to Housing



Unsheltered
People without shelter are often only able to focus on basic survival needs.

Homeless Outreach and Service Provider Referrals



Shelters
When we bring people indoors and connect them with services and supports, it helps stabilize their lives and supports them to a pathway of permanent housing.

Coordinated Access & Assessment Process



Transitional/permanent housing with supports



Subsidized housing



Market rentals with supported rent supplements

The Housing Ecosystem



↑
3020 Gilmore Diversion

3020 Gilmore Diversion



Why this location?

- Permanent shelters are urgently needed in Burnaby for people who are experiencing homelessness in Burnaby.
- This site is available.
- This site is close to services, amenities and transit. These are essential for people who are transitioning out of homelessness and working towards a healthy, stable life.

New Permanent Shelter



Shelter Features

- Up to 80 semi-private sleeping pods across two floors
- Washrooms, kitchen and laundry facilities
- Staff offices, indoor amenity space, programming space
- Fenced grounds, access control, security cameras and lighting

Is rezoning required?

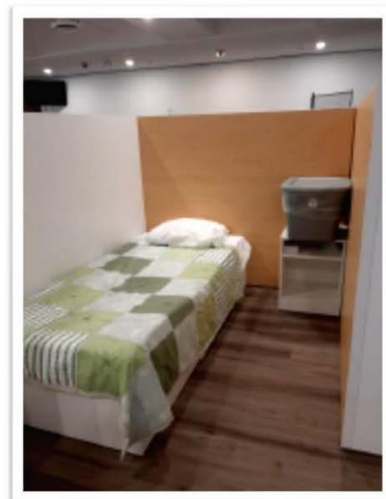
- The City of Burnaby **does not require rezoning** for shelter use if the land is owned or leased by government agencies including BC Housing.
- BC Housing and the City have been **working together** on securing a location for a permanent shelter to replace the temporary shelter at Douglas Road.
- The City proactively took action to update their bylaw to create more flexibility for BC Housing to **provide necessary shelter for the community**.

Project Timeline



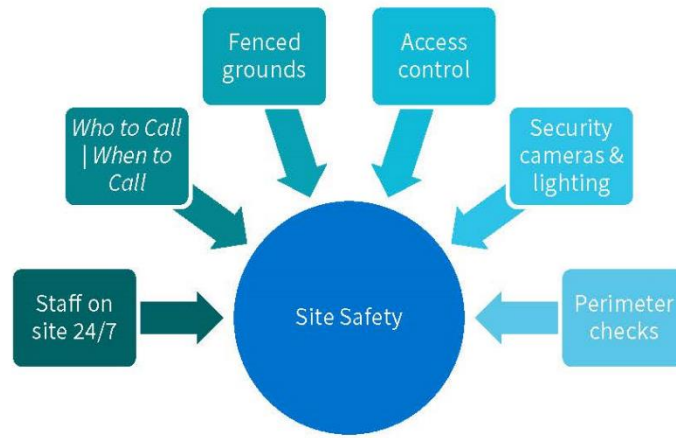
Shelter Operations & Services

- Staff on site 24/7 to manage the building and provide services to shelter guests
- Meals, storage, laundry, washroom and shower facilities
- Connection to permanent housing and community-based services
- BC Housing will select a non-profit operator through a fair and open process



*Semi-private sleeping pod
(Lighthouse Shelter in Abbotsford)*

Site Safety



Community Integration & Safety

BC Housing and the shelter operator will be committed to:

- Answering questions and addressing concerns **quickly and collaboratively**
 - **Direct phone number** will be shared with neighbours
 - We welcome **ongoing dialogue** about any issues with the shelter
- **Working with partners** who are best positioned to address safety issues beyond the shelter, such as **the RCMP or bylaw officers** who support the neighbourhood and street safety

Please use the Q&A function to ask questions.



Thank you for participating.

For more information about the project, please visit letstalkhousingbc.ca/burnaby-gilmore-diversion

We welcome questions or comments by email to communityrelations@bchousing.org

