



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Planning Committee
From: John Hopkins
Director, Policy Planning

Date: November 2, 2021
File: 08-4375-03/2021-Vol
01

Kim Somerville
Director, Community Social Development

Re: Housing Needs Report 2021

Staff Recommendations

1. That the staff report titled "Housing Needs Report 2021" dated October 15, 2021 from the Director, Policy Planning and Director, Community Social Development be received for information;
2. That staff be directed to publish the Housing Needs Report on the City of Richmond website, as required by the British Columbia Local Government Act; and
3. That staff be directed to share the Housing Needs Report with key stakeholders.

John Hopkins
Director, Policy Planning
(604-276-4279)

Kim Somerville
Director, Community Social Development
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JH:pw

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER 	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO 	

Staff Report

Origin

The *Local Government Act* was amended in April 2019 to require all local governments in British Columbia to complete and publish a Housing Needs Report by April 2022. The intent of the new requirement is to help local governments and the BC government better understand and respond to housing needs. A Housing Needs Report summarizes factors influencing housing demand, characteristics of the current housing stock, and current and anticipated housing needs.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #6 Strategic and Well-Planned Growth:

6.5 Ensure diverse housing options are available and accessible across the housing continuum.

Findings of Fact

The Province of BC has introduced legislative requirements that require municipalities across the province to complete Housing Needs Reports. The first report must be completed and published by April 2022, after which an update is required every five years. The reports must consider more than 50 sets of data specified by the Province. Legislation requires Council to receive the report at an open meeting, publish it on a freely accessible public website, and consider it whenever updated Official Community Plan housing policy is developed. Housing Needs Reports must include:

- The number of housing units required to meet current and anticipated housing needs for at least the next five years, by housing type;
- The number and percentage of households in core housing need and extreme core housing need;
- Statements about key areas of local need, including: affordable housing; rental housing; special needs housing; housing for seniors; housing for families; and shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness and housing for individuals at risk of homelessness; and
- A standardized summary form.

Housing is a shared responsibility. While the City has achieved significant success in increasing housing options for Richmond residents, housing supply and housing affordability are complex issues that cannot be solved by one level of government alone. In particular, the federal and provincial governments have a key role in advancing critically important measures, including dedicated, sustained sources of funding for affordable housing developments and policy changes to stabilize and re-balance the housing market. Non-profit housing providers and private sector developers are also important partners in increasing housing supply.

Richmond is a recognized leader in the region. The City has a strong housing policy and program framework that enables the provision of diverse housing options for Richmond residents. Key objectives and policies in the Official Community Plan (OCP) include:

- Accommodate anticipated residential growth;
- Support housing densification in appropriate areas such as arterial roads, neighbourhood service centres and the city centre;
- Support a diverse range of housing types, tenure and affordability;
- Protect and helping create market rental housing; and
- Encourage family-friendly and accessible housing units.

Key direction for affordable housing is provided in the City's Affordable Housing Strategy (2017-2027) and Homelessness Strategy (2019-2029). These strategies are supported by the Low End Market Rental program and standalone affordable housing developments secured in partnership with the federal and provincial governments. The City also continues to advocate to other levels of government for increased levels of affordable housing in Richmond.

Extensive consultation has informed all City housing policy and action, paired with technical analysis. Consultation has included on-line surveys and discussion forums, "pop-up" events, open houses, stakeholder workshops, steering and advisory committees, and meetings with housing service providers and development industry representatives. In addition to consulting during drafting of the OCP and housing strategies over the last few years, the City maintains on-going communications with housing service providers and the development industry.

Analysis

The primary purpose of a Housing Needs Report is to capture housing data and communicate key housing needs, in order to inform subsequent policy development. The report will be used to inform the upcoming OCP update as well as other housing policy development. As appropriate, it may also be used to inform housing-related prioritization, progress monitoring and target-setting.

The Richmond Housing Needs Report meets all Provincial requirements. It is based on a combination of statistical data, including demographic and housing demand projections prepared by Metro Vancouver, and consultation with housing service providers and agencies. The process of preparing the Housing Need Report involved:

1. **Data collection:** Metro Vancouver collected and shared standard datasets for each member municipality. These were supplemented with Richmond-specific information from various sources, including internal databases, CMHC, the BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs, BC Stats, local market data providers, and others.
2. **Analysis:** Data was carefully selected, combined and reviewed in order to identify areas of need, describe trends, and establish the scale of need. Needs were estimated for the current population and projected for future years. Methods were consistent with industry practice and aligned with those used by Metro Vancouver.
3. **Consultation:** Representatives of local non-profit housing providers and government agencies active in Richmond were interviewed to validate data-based findings and provide context and qualitative information to complement the data analysis.
4. **Reporting:** The Housing Needs Report was prepared, drawing on data and interviews with agencies and non-profit housing providers to create a clear picture of housing needs in Richmond.

The Housing Needs Report shows that strong housing demand is expected to continue, and that housing affordability is a critical issue and will likely remain one for some time. The key findings are:

- **Housing demand is growing**, from about 1,200 occupied units/year from 2006-2016 to about 1,800/year from 2016-2026.
- **Housing affordability has become critical.** For example:
 - From 2006 to 2016, the median shelter costs for renters increased 4.5 times faster than their median household income. Similarly, the cost to buy a home rose 77% from 2006-2016, while Richmond household incomes were virtually unchanged.
 - About one third of renters are experiencing housing affordability issues. In particular, a disproportionate number of low-income households are experiencing significant challenges in accessing private market housing that meets their financial needs. While many of these households may qualify for affordable housing, there can be lengthy wait times before applicants receive a unit.
 - Home prices are so expensive that if Richmond households were buying for the first time, almost half of them couldn't afford an apartment of any size, and 95% couldn't afford a typical house based on reported income.
- **Substantial non-market and low-end market rental housing is needed.** To meet the needs of households making less than \$70,000, a total of about 7,000 units of affordable housing (subsidized non-market and LEMR) are needed from 2016 to 2026.
- **There is strong demand for market rental:** While it is hard to estimate market rental demand, at least 2,000 units will be needed from 2016-2026. If home ownership remains out of reach for most households, driving interest in rental, the demand could be higher.
- **The need for housing for seniors is growing rapidly.** Seniors (65+) were the fastest growing age group in Richmond from 2006 to 2016, growing by 57% (from 21,000 to 33,000). They are expected to grow a further 16,000 to 2026, by which time they will make up 20% of the population. While many seniors will age-in-place at home or move to a private-market seniors building, other seniors will require access to an affordable housing unit to maintain housing stability.
- **There are many other specific needs in the community for affordable housing,** including:
 - Low-income singles and seniors, typically non-market studio and one-bedroom homes;
 - Low-income lone-parent families, typically non-market homes with at least two bedrooms;
 - Moderate-income families, typically rental homes with at least two bedrooms;
 - People with mental health challenges and/or substance use problems;
 - Recent immigrants; and
 - People with disabilities, especially if they are reliant on government financial assistance.
- **The number of households that are either experiencing homelessness or at risk of being homeless is increasing.** This trend is likely to drive continued growth in the need for housing with supports for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, helping them transition to long-term housing stability.

The housing needs identified by this Housing Needs Report are consistent with the priority groups identified in the Affordable Housing Strategy (2017-2027).

Through implementation of the Affordable Housing strategy, the Homelessness Strategy (2019-2029), and the Official Community Plan, the City has already made substantial contributions to address identified housing needs within its authority/jurisdiction. It also continues to advocate to the provincial and federal governments to secure increased funding for affordable housing in Richmond, and to work with local partners to address housing needs. Highlights of City and partner contributions include:

- **Enabling housing supply:** 12,993 homes have been built since OCP adoption in 2012.
- **Directing housing to transit-oriented, amenity-rich locations:** half of the homes built since the OCP's adoption are in the City Centre.
- **Supporting diverse housing types:** Since OCP adoption in 2012, 8,263 apartments, 1,776 townhouses and 2,954 single family and duplexes have been built.
- **Securing rental housing:** Since 2007, approximately 1,900 units of Market Rental and Low-End Market Rental (LEMR) units have been approved and, of those, approximately 800 units are occupied and approximately 1,100 units are under construction.
- **Collaborating to create non-market housing:** Since 2007, the City has partnered with non-profit housing providers to secure more than 410 new non-market units.
- **Supporting family-friendly and accessible affordable housing:** Since 2018, 57% of all LEMR units secured have been family-friendly (two or three bedroom) and 94% will be built to Basic Universal Housing standards to increase accessibility for seniors and persons with disabilities.
- **Addressing homelessness:** The City and its partners have built 90 emergency shelter beds and 40 supportive housing units, with an additional 40 supportive housing units soon to be constructed.

Table 1 (next page) shows details of how the City has contributed to the provision of shelter beds and affordable and market rental housing options since the adoption of the first Affordable Housing Strategy in 2007.

Table 1: City of Richmond Rental Housing Initiatives

Housing Type	# of Units (as of November 24, 2021)			Comments
	Built/ Occupied	Approved/ Under Development	Under Review (Estimate)	
SHORT TERM ACCOMMODATION				
Emergency Shelter Spaces Temporary accommodation and services for residents experiencing homelessness (e.g. Richmond House Emergency Shelter).	90 beds	N/A	N/A	The City contributed land for the emergency shelter, developed in partnership with BC Housing and operated by The Salvation Army. The City provided temporary use of a City building to BC Housing for the Emergency Response Centre, operated by Turning Point Recovery Society.
AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING				
Supportive Housing Self-contained units with on-site supports for people who have experienced homelessness (e.g. Alderbridge Supportive Housing, Storeys)	78	40	60	The City contributed land for temporary supportive housing, developed in partnership with BC Housing and operated by RainCity Housing. The City contributed land for a second temporary supportive housing site, which is currently under development, in partnership with BC Housing.
Non-Market Housing Rental units for households with annual incomes less than \$40,000 (e.g. Kiwanis Towers, Storeys).	411	0	250	The City continues to explore opportunities to partner with senior levels of government and non-profit organizations to build new non-market housing. For example, the City is partnering with Pathways and BC Housing to add 80 non-market housing units. There are also two projects that are in the preliminary stages that will add additional non-market housing units.
Modest Market Rental Below market rental units for households with an average income range between \$40,000 to \$60,000 (e.g. West Cambie).	0	15	0	Located along Garden City Road, these units are the result of innovative mixed-use, mixed-income policy in the West Cambie Area Plan.
Low-End Market Rental (LEMR) Below market rental units for households with an average income range between \$40,000 to \$70,000 (e.g. Rivermark Apartments).	363	546	650 (incl. 170 in pre-application)	This made in Richmond program secures LEMR units and cash-in-lieu contributions to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund from developments throughout the city.
SUB-TOTAL	852	601	960	
MARKET RENTAL HOUSING				
Secondary Suites and Coach Houses Legal self-contained rental units located in a single-detached house or townhome, and separate rental units in the back yard of a single-detached house.	1,321	163	40	The City requires that all new single family rezonings to have a secondary suite or contribute to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund. Secondary suites are also encouraged in duplexes and townhouses.
Purpose Built Market Rental Units secured in perpetuity as rental units based on market rental rates.	411	568	930 (incl. 240 in pre-application)	Since the adoption of the Market Rental Housing Policy in 2018, there has been a high level of interest in 100% market rental projects. Consideration is being made to have a minimum mandatory market rental requirement in all multi-family residential projects.
SUB-TOTAL	1,732	731	970	

Further information about action by the City and its partners on affordable housing can be found in the annual Affordable Housing Strategy update.

The Housing Needs Report will be used to inform housing components of the OCP update. To support that update, consultation with stakeholders will continue, complemented by engagement with the general public. That consultation will be action-oriented, with a focus on priorities and potential solutions.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Prepared in keeping with new legislative requirements, the Housing Needs Report provides important insights into Richmond's housing needs, which reflect affordability trends common in the region and across the country, as well as conditions unique to Richmond. Council's receipt of the Housing Needs Report and its publication on the City's website will fulfill remaining legislative requirements. The report and the data collected to support its production will be invaluable as the City explores potential solutions with the public and stakeholders, updates OCP housing policy and housing-related strategies, and works with partners to meet identified housing needs.

Overall, the City remains committed to working through partnerships to increase the supply of market and affordable housing in Richmond. With involvement from all orders of government, non-profit housing providers, and the private sector, all Richmond residents can access housing that meets their specific needs.

It is recommended that this report be received for information and that staff be directed to publish the Housing Needs Report on the City of Richmond website, as required by the British Columbia *Local Government Act*.



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Attachment 1: City of Richmond Housing Needs Report



CITY OF RICHMOND
Housing Needs Report
2021

PLN - 47



Acknowledgements

The City of Richmond would like to thank the following organizations and individuals for their contributions to this report:

- Metro Vancouver, for extensive assistance in collecting datasets meeting the Provincial data collection requirements.
- Representatives of agencies and non-profit housing providers, for additional insights into local conditions and needs:
 - Avneek Sanghera, Program Manager of Cadence Second Stage Housing
 - Tabitha Geraghty, Executive Director, Chimo Community Services
 - Cindy Chan, President, Kiwanis Senior Citizens Housing Society
 - Dave MacDonald, Executive Director, Pathways Clubhouse Society of Richmond
 - Emma McGarry, Assistant Manager, Alderbridge Housing
 - Melissa Irving, Director of Supported Living, Richmond Society for Community Living
 - Ahmed Omran, Director of Community Real Estate and Asset Management, SUCCESS
 - Brenda Plant, Executive Director, Turning Point Housing Society
 - Jerod Killick, Operations Manager, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, UBC Housing Research Centre, Statistics Canada, and BC Housing for assistance in locating and obtaining valuable housing data.



Executive Summary

The 2021 Housing Needs Report describes current and projected housing needs in Richmond through analysis of key demographic and housing statistics and consultation with housing service providers. The Province of BC requires all local governments to complete their first Housing Needs Report by April 2022 and update it every five years. The purpose of the Housing Needs Report is to provide robust information as a foundation for development of City housing strategies, policies and action.

A Shared Responsibility: Housing is widely recognized as a critical issue across Canada. The crux of the issue is that the housing supply has not met the needs of all residents, leaving many unable to afford a suitable, adequate home. Success in solving this complex problem will require the combined efforts of the City, non-profit housing providers and the private sector, as well as funding to increase the supply of affordable housing and policy changes to stabilize and re-balance the housing market on the part of Provincial and Federal governments.

A City Priority: In Richmond, affordable housing has become a key priority for the City as rising housing costs have outpaced increases in income. The Official Community Plan (2012), Affordable Housing Strategy (2017–2027) and Homelessness Strategy (2019–2029) describe how Richmond aims to work with its partners to address housing needs.

Key Findings from Analysis and Consultation: The Housing Needs Report considers the full spectrum of housing needs, from emergency shelters through different kinds of affordable, rental and ownership housing. It estimates needs of existing Richmond households from the most recent Census (2016) and related data, and future needs on the basis of past trends and projected growth, complemented by consultation with local housing providers. The following are the key findings from the analysis and consultation:

- **Housing demand is growing**, from about 1,200 occupied units/year from 2006–2016 to about 1,800/year from 2016–2026.
- **Affordability has become critical.** For example:
 - From 2006 to 2016, the median shelter costs for renters increased 4.5 times faster than their median household income. The cost to buy a home rose 77% from 2006–2016, while Richmond household incomes were virtually unchanged.
 - About one third of renters are experiencing housing affordability issues. In particular, a disproportionate number of low-income households are experiencing significant challenges in accessing private market housing that meets their financial needs. While many of these households may qualify for affordable housing, there can be lengthy wait times before applicants receive a unit.
 - Home prices are so expensive that if Richmond households were buying for the first time, almost half of them couldn't afford an apartment of any size, and 95% couldn't afford a typical house.
- **Substantial non-market and low-end market rental housing is needed.** To meet the needs of households making less than \$70,000, a total of about 7,000 units of affordable housing are needed from 2016 to 2026.

- **There is strong demand for market rental:** While it is hard to estimate market rental demand, at least 2,000 units will be needed from 2016–2026. If home ownership remains out of reach for most households, driving interest in rental, the demand could be higher.
- **The need for housing for seniors is growing rapidly.** Seniors (65+ years) were the fastest growing age group in Richmond from 2006 to 2016, growing by 57% (from 21,000 to 33,000). This demographic is expected to grow a further 16,000 to 2026, by which time seniors (65+ years) will make up 20% of the population. While many seniors will age-in-place at home or move to a private-market seniors building, other seniors will require access to an affordable housing unit to maintain housing stability.
- **There are many specific needs in the community for affordable housing,** including:
 - Low-income singles and seniors, typically non-market studio and one-bedroom homes;
 - Low-income lone-parent families, typically non-market 2+ bedroom homes;
 - Moderate-income families, typically 2+ bedroom rental homes;
 - People with mental health challenges and/or substance use problems;
 - Recent immigrants; and
 - People with disabilities, especially if they are reliant on government financial assistance.
- **The number of individuals that are either experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness is increasing.** This trend is likely to drive continued growth in the need for housing with supports for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, helping them transition to long-term housing stability.

Informing Policy and Joint Action: These findings will inform consultation on and development of updated housing policy and strategies, and support action by the City and its partners.

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Introduction

Housing is widely recognized as a critical issue across Canada. In Richmond, it has become a key priority for the City as rising housing costs have outpaced increases in income, and income disparities have increased. Responding to this growing crisis, considerable housing policy has been adopted in the last 20 years through the updated Official Community Plan (OCP) in 2012, an Affordable Housing Strategy originally developed in 2007 and substantially updated in 2017, and a Homelessness Strategy developed in 2002 and updated in 2019. Specific policies, procedures and regulations have implemented these strategies.

The crux of the housing issue is that the housing supply has not met the needs of all residents, leaving many unable to afford suitable, adequate housing. This issue is a product of a complex system encompassing social, macroeconomic, technological, regulatory, taxation and other interrelated factors. As a result, both supply- and demand-side action is required for effective change, and success can only be achieved through the combined efforts of the City and its partners: other orders of government, non-profit housing providers, and the private sector.

Housing Needs Report Requirements

A shared understanding of the situation is an essential foundation for aligning the efforts of public, private and non-profit sectors. In 2019, the Province adopted requirements that local governments prepare and publish Housing Needs Reports to better understand their current and future housing needs, and help identify existing and projected gaps in housing supply. The first Housing Needs Report must be published no later than April 2022.

Reflecting the value of a strong understanding of housing needs to guide effective action, Housing Needs Reports must be:

- Based on collection of 50+ specified sets of data;
- Received by Council at a meeting open to the public;
- Published on-line on a public and freely accessible site;
- Considered when developing an Official Community Plan (OCP) and when amending OCP housing policies; and
- Updated every 5 years.

Purpose and Use

Flowing from the Provincial requirements, the purpose of this report is to communicate the City's understanding of current and anticipated future needs, based on a combination of data analysis and input from knowledgeable people and organizations active in the field. The report will inform Richmond's housing policy priorities and specific housing policies. The production of the first Housing Needs Report may also:

- Support progress measurement and target-setting in relation to the OCP, Affordable Housing Strategy, and Homelessness Strategy;
- Identify needs for qualitative information to fully understand how to address housing gaps;
- Make it possible to identify gaps in City policies and programs across the housing continuum; and
- Support efficient production of subsequent Housing Needs Reports.

Housing Continuum

Every household should have access to housing that is affordable, adequate, and suitable for their incomes, household size, and specific needs. The Housing Continuum (below) provides a useful framework that identifies the spectrum of housing options from emergency shelters to market homeownership, and illustrates housing types for all income levels.

Table 1: Richmond's Housing Continuum

Housing Continuum						
Short-Term Accommodation	Affordable Housing				Market Housing	
Emergency Shelters	Housing with Supports	Non-Market/ Social Housing	Low-End Market Rental Housing	Affordable Home Ownership	Market-Rate Rental	Market Home Ownership
Shelters for individuals temporarily needing accommodation.	Short- and long-term housing with on-site supports for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.	Rental units managed by BC Housing, Metro Vancouver Housing, or another non-profit made available at low rental rates.	Below market rental units, including units secured through the City's Low End Market Rental program.	Units at below market value for purchase by moderate income households.	Units rented at market rates, including "primary" purpose-built units (e.g. rental apartments); and "secondary" units (e.g. rented condos & secondary suites).	Units purchased at market value.
Target Groups: Individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.	Target groups: Very low to moderate income households.				Target groups: Moderate to high income households.	

* Adapted from the 2017 Affordable Housing Strategy

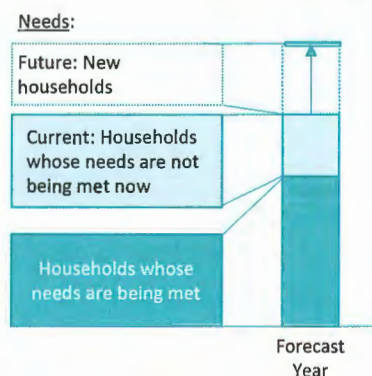
See *Appendix A: Glossary* for definitions of housing categories and other key terms in this report.

Estimating Housing Needs

This report estimates current and growth-related housing needs for Richmond in terms of the number of units, their size, affordability, and associated design features and service supports (Figure 1). Generally, "current" needs are based on information from 2016, the most recent year for which Census data is available. This report provides a 10-year projection of needs from 2016, equivalent to a 5-year projection from the date of this report. All projections are based on historical trends. There is considerable uncertainty in any projections. For example, Metro Vancouver provides +/- 15% estimates for base population projections.

Data sources include the 2006, 2011 and 2016 Censuses, including the 2011 National Household Survey and the short and long form Census data; housing market data from CMHC and the Greater Vancouver Real Estate Board; Metro

Figure 1: Understanding Housing Needs.



Source: City of Richmond

Vancouver housing projections¹ and other similar sources. Findings are limited by the availability and quality of each data source. The data analysis and estimates are supplemented with qualitative knowledge of housing experts and other stakeholders.

A Brief History of Housing in Richmond

Richmond has been an important part of the Musqueam territory for thousands of years, providing sites for villages and sources of food in the rich estuary. In 1879, the City was incorporated as a municipality. Early days saw diverse residents, with notable settlements of Japanese in Steveston and Finns along the South arm of the Fraser. People were drawn to Richmond for relatively inexpensive land with easy access to the region's centre via the interurban tram from Steveston to downtown Vancouver. In 1949, the First Comprehensive Town Plan was created, dividing Richmond into districts and establishing residential, commercial, industrial and rural land use regulations.

In 1950, Richmond was still a small agricultural community, but auto-oriented suburban development began in the 1950s and drove a rapid transformation from small town to medium-sized city. Central Richmond was dominated by shopping malls and large business and industrial areas.

Beginning in the 1990s, the City saw a rapid increase in cultural diversity that has enriched the community today and made Richmond an exciting and unique place in the region. In the 21st century, Richmond has seen another dramatic shift, with the rapid emergence of an urban centre along the Canada Line, which opened in 2009.



¹ These projections are the latest available for Richmond at the time of publication of this report.



Partners and Roles

Figure 2: Partners in Housing Provision



Source: City of Richmond Affordable Housing Strategy (2017–2027)

Local governments like the City of Richmond are one of five partners that work together to shape housing supply and demand (Figure 2).

Federal Government: The Federal Government plays critical roles. On the demand side these include mortgage finance regulations, tax exemptions and homeowner incentives as well as regulation of tax evasion, fraud and money-laundering. On the supply side, these include the construction, financing and operation of social housing. In 1993, funding for social and co-operative housing was drastically cut back, however funding for housing was expanded starting in 2017 and a partnership-based National Housing Strategy was adopted in 2019.

Provincial Government: Like the Federal Government, the Province has substantial influence on housing and has adopted a recent strategy: the 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability. Its role includes taxation such as the property transfer, speculation and foreign buyers' taxes; property tax deferrals; regulation of short-term rentals; and grants like the homeowners' grant. On the supply side, the Province has committed funding for new social housing which BC Housing develops, manages and administers.

Local Government: Both regional and local governments play active roles in housing.

- **Metro Vancouver:** Metro Vancouver maintains the Regional Growth Strategy and the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy and it provides affordable housing through the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation.
- **The City of Richmond:** Key roles are land use planning and regulation, and infrastructure and amenity provision. Its role has grown and now includes the use of municipal land, affordable housing requirements and incentives, policy, education and advocacy.

The private sector: This sector includes landowners, developers and builders, investors, and landlords, including operators of private seniors' homes and private providers of support services. The sector is responsible for the supply of housing and related services.

Non-profit housing providers: These organizations create and manage housing units that rent at low-end of market and below market rates and may also provide support services.

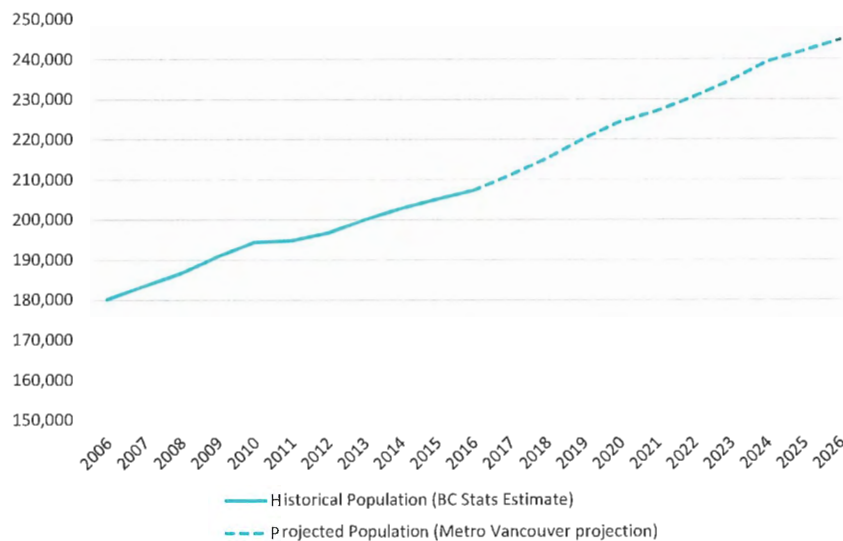


Factors Shaping Housing Demand

A number of key factors have shaped Richmond’s mix of households. In particular, the population is continuing to grow, and households are aging, getting smaller and becoming less equitable.

Richmond will continue to grow over the next decade, with another 37,000 (+/- 5,600) residents moving here between 2016 and 2026 (Figure 3). The population is also aging, with the proportion of seniors (over 65 years) projected to grow to 1 in 5 residents by 2026. As seniors downsize and need supports, this shift will affect housing needs.

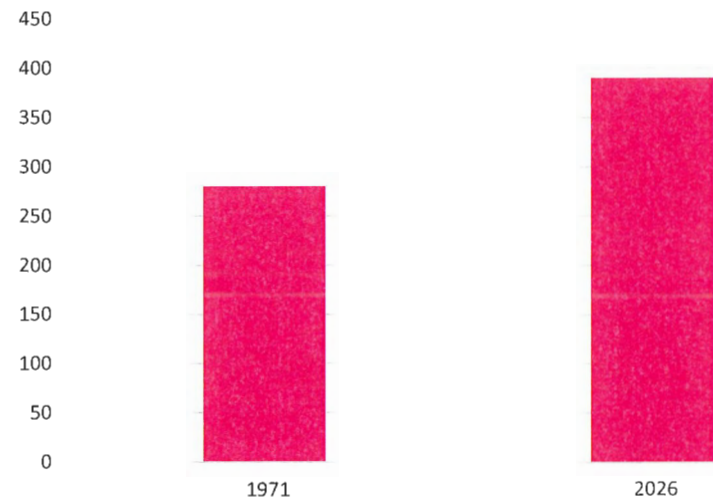
Figure 3: Population Growth, 2006–2026



Source: BC Stats, Metro Vancouver population projection for Richmond, December 2020

Households are getting smaller, shifting from 3.6 people per home in 1971 to a projected 2.6 in 2026 (Figure 4). This shift means that more homes are needed to accommodate the same number of people. For example, 280 homes in 1971 would have accommodated 1,000 people, but in 2026, it will take 390 homes to accommodate them. This trend means that the number of households will grow more quickly than the population in the coming years.

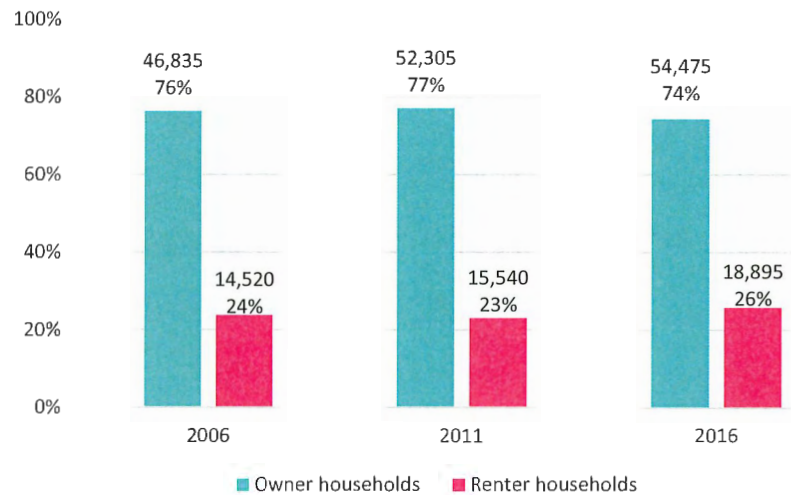
Figure 4: Number of Homes to House 1,000 People, 1971 and 2026



Source: Census, 1971 and Metro Vancouver population and household projections, December 2020

From 2006 to 2016, the number of renter households grew by 30% (14,520 to 18,895), about twice as fast as owners 46,835 to 54,475, 15% (Figure 5). Richmond had 26% renter households in 2016 and is slowly approaching Metro Vancouver's distribution (36%).

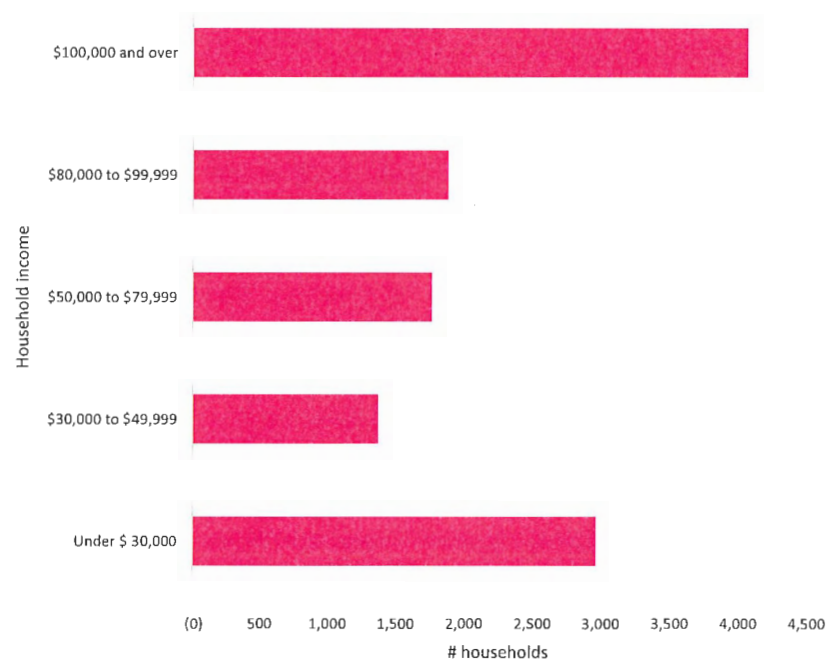
Figure 5: Households by Tenure, 2006–2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006–2016

A combination of high-paying professional and low-paying service jobs are dominating employment growth. As a result, incomes are diverging, with relatively fewer middle-income households (Figure 6). This implies a trend in demand towards more high-end homes and affordable housing units.

Figure 6: Change in Richmond Household Income Distribution, 2006–2016, Constant 2015 \$

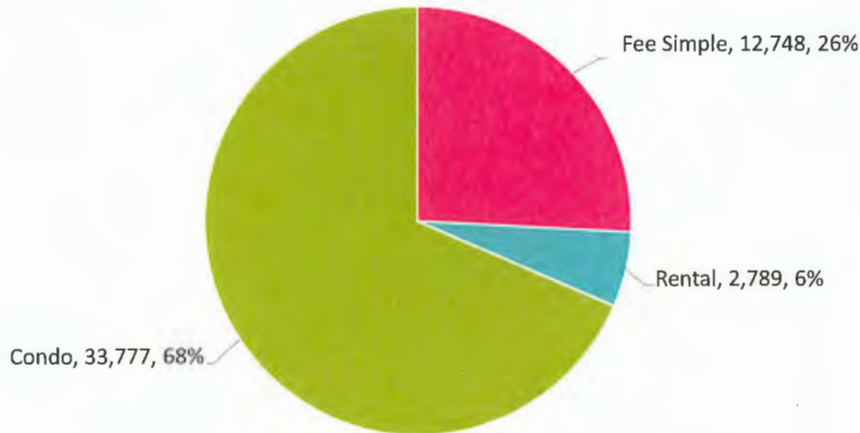


Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006–2016

Current Housing Stock

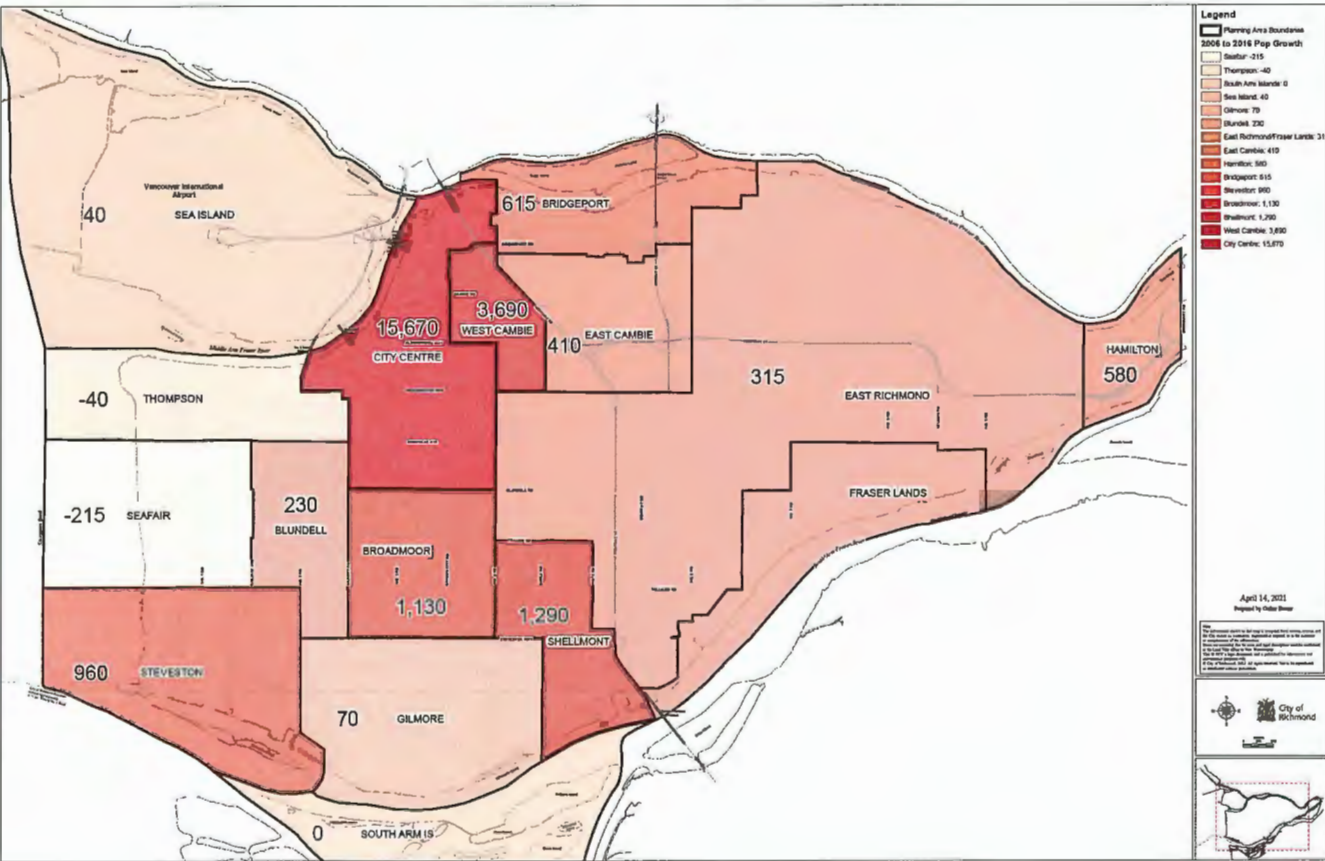
Once dominated by single-family housing, Richmond has changed dramatically in the last 10 to 15 years as most of the growth has been in the form of apartments and townhouses in the city centre (Figures 7 and 8). In keeping with the Official Community Plan (OCP), this growth of less expensive forms of housing located close to rapid transit have enabled residents to lower both housing and transportation costs.

Figure 7: Housing Units Completed, 1990–2020



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006–2016

Figure 8: Total Population Growth by Planning Area: 2006 to 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006–2016

Construction of about 13,100 new units between 2006 and 2016 kept up with demand as households got smaller. However, only 6% of units built since 1990 has been purpose-built rentals, resulting in persistently low vacancy (Figure 9) and a market dominated by less secure secondary rentals (i.e. secondary suites and condos, of which about 30% are rented²), which made up 85% of all rental units in 2016.

Figure 9: Rental Vacancy Rate, 2006–2020

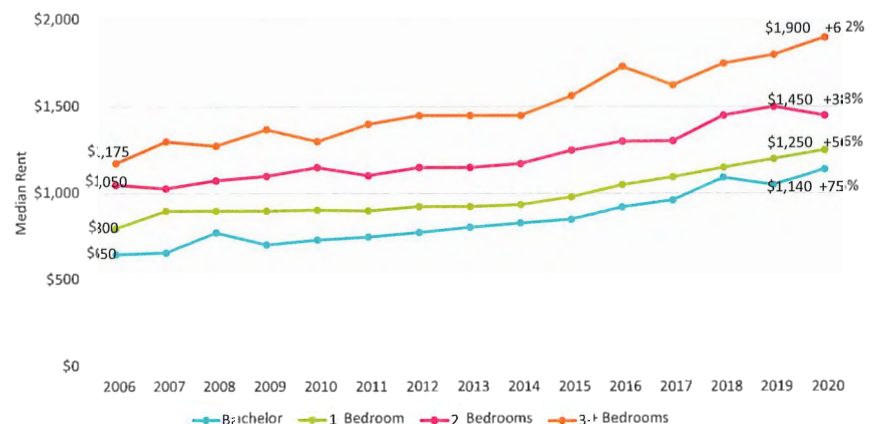


Source: CMHC, 2020 Rental Market Report

Despite increased supply, Richmond has seen a significant increase in housing costs for both renters and owners.

Alongside low rental vacancy rates, average rental rates have increased significantly over the past ten years from \$945 in 2006 to \$1,395 in 2020 (Figure 10). While rental rates for all unit sizes have increased, rates for 2-bedroom units have seen the slowest increase. Newer constructed market rental units also generally charge higher rental rates than older units. For example, rental units constructed between 1960 and 1979 had an average rent of \$1,370 per month in 2020. In contrast, units constructed since the year 2000 have an average rent of \$1,730.

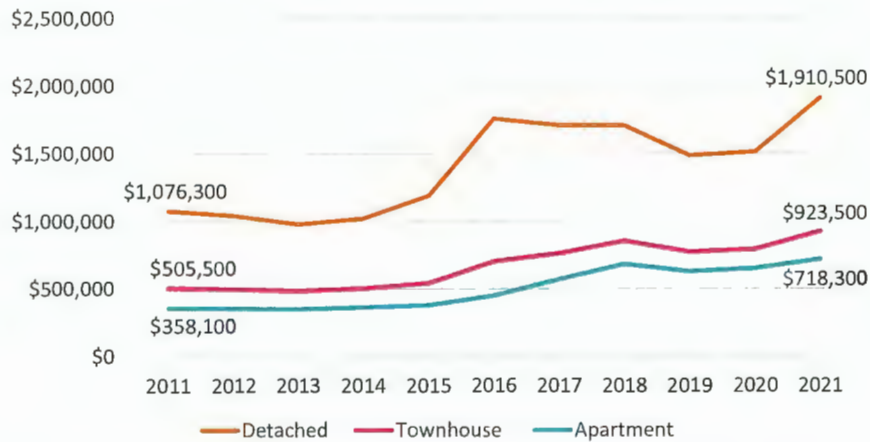
Figure 10: Primary Rental Market Median Rent, 2010–2020



Source: CMHC, 2020 Market Rental Report

Similarly, the cost of buying a home in Richmond rose significantly from 2011 to 2021 (Figure 11). The highest proportional increase occurred in the lowest cost housing type: prices increased most for apartments (100%), growing faster than row homes (83% increase) and single detached homes (78%). Increasing apartment prices have disproportionately affected households with moderate incomes who cannot afford more expensive homes. At the same time, single detached homes saw the highest dollar value increase, putting this type of home even further out of reach.

Figure 11: Richmond Benchmark Prices by Structure Type, 2011–2021



Source: MLSLink, Housing Price Index (HPI)





Overall Housing Needs

Affordability-Related Needs

Driven by increasing home prices and rental rates documented in the Current Housing Stock section, affordability worsened considerably from 2006 to 2016, and is now widely considered a crisis. Two common measures of affordability are used to describe the affordability challenge. The first is the Shelter-to-Income Ratio (STIR). Using this measure, the federal government's guideline is that housing costs should not exceed 30% of a household's annual before-tax income. The second is Core Housing Need, which focuses on households that are in housing that is considered unacceptable because it is unaffordable and/or too small and/or in poor repair and cannot afford an alternative acceptable home. Where STIR measure includes all households, Core Housing Need measures only lower income households (see Appendix A for income ranges used in this report).

Shelter-to-Income Ratio (STIR)

Current Status: 19,000 Richmond households were over the 30% STIR threshold in 2016, about 25% of all households (Figure 12). Affordability is primarily a concern for low to moderate income households (below \$80,000 a year before-tax): about 17,000 of these households were over the 30% threshold.

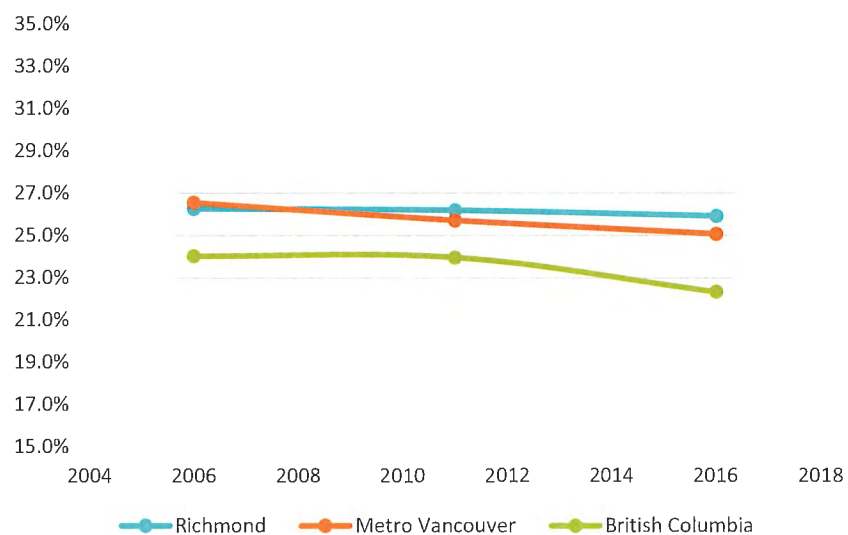
Figure 12: Number of Households Spending 30% to < 100% Income on Shelter, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Trends: As with all of Metro Vancouver, the proportion of households spending more than 30% of before-tax income on housing remained high (about a quarter of all households) in Richmond from 2006 to 2016 (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Percent of Households Spending 30% to <100% Income on Shelter, 2016

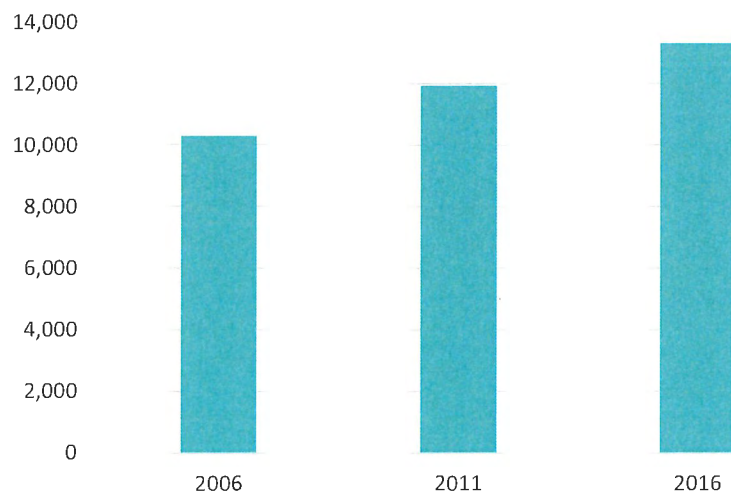


Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Core Housing Need

Affordability worsened for lower income and renter households from 2006 to 2016, based on Core Housing Need³ (Figure 14). In 2006, 10,280 households (18% of all Richmond households) were in Core Housing Need; by 2016, the number was 13,290 (20% of all Richmond households), an increase of over 3,000 households in 10 years.

Figure 14: Number of Households in Core Housing Need, 2006–2016



Source: CMHC, Housing Information Portal

³ Core housing need assesses households living in private residences. It doesn't include farms, reserves or owner- or renter- households with incomes less than \$9,800 and shelter-cost-to-income ratios of 100% or more.

Renters

Current Status: About one third of renters (6,460 households) spent over 30% of their income on rent in 2016; most of these had low or very low incomes (5,225 households) (Figure 15). Stand-out needs include some 1,775 one-person households with incomes below \$30,000, needing studio or 1 bedroom housing units, and 1,050 households (families with children) making \$30,000 to \$50,000 a year, needing 2 bedroom or larger units, depending on the make-up of the family.

Figure 15: Number of Renter Households Spending 30% to <100% Income on Shelter, 2016



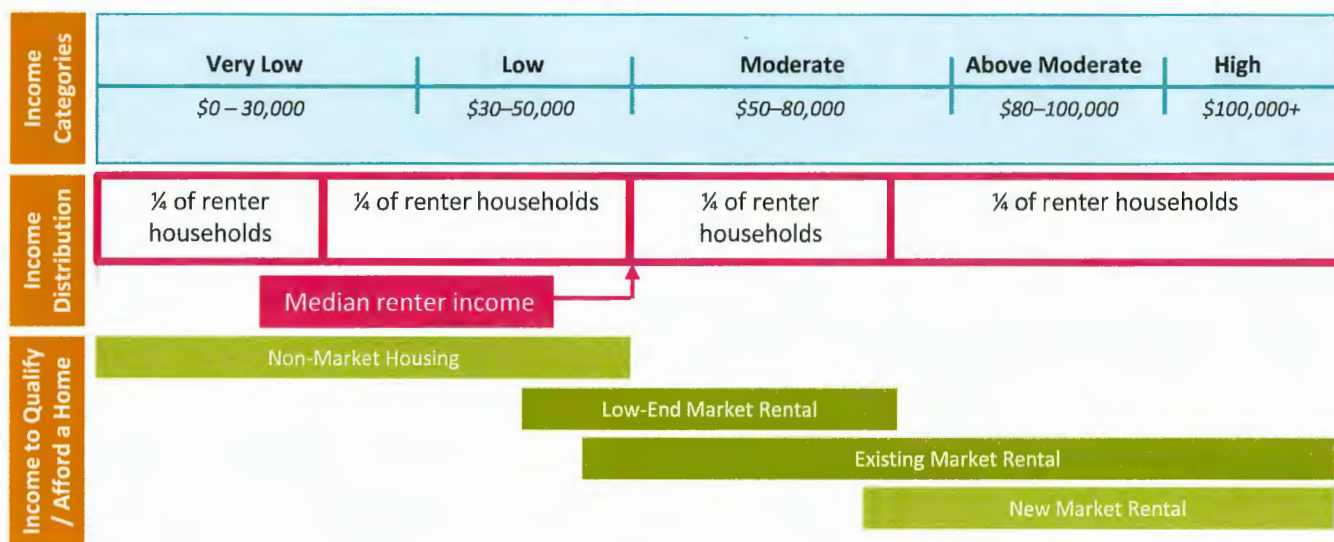
Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Using the 30% STIR threshold, comparing housing costs with incomes makes the scale of Richmond's affordability challenge clear (Figure 16):

- Half of current renters could not afford most market rentals. By 2021, the median renter household could not afford the median priced studio apartment, let alone a larger unit.
- An income of \$72,000 was needed by June 2021 to afford rent for a typical 1-bedroom unit: for the half of Richmond renter households making less than \$49,000 a year, renting a typical 1-bedroom would be difficult.
- If households in market rentals had to move, almost half of them could not afford any rentals advertised on the market in 2021⁴. For comparison, the non-market and low-end market rental (LEMR) housing they could afford make up only 16% of all rentals.

⁴ Based on a scan of 1-bedroom units advertised for rent in June 2021, the least expensive 1-bedroom unit was \$1,130/mo, affordable (at 30% before-tax income) to households making at least \$47,500. 45% of renters in market rentals made less than \$50,000 in 2021 (income projected from 2016 based on historical growth in incomes).

Figure 16: Affordability for Renter Households

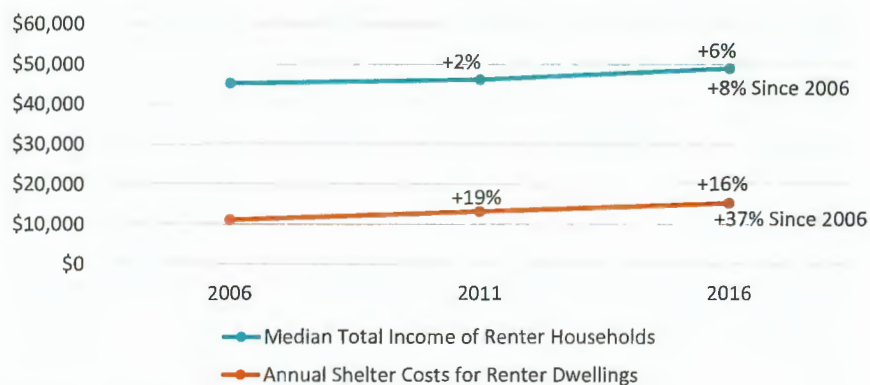


Data Sources:

- Household income: 2016 Census
- Non-market Rental: 2021 Housing Income Limits (HILs) to Qualify for BC Housing Unit + BC Housing
- Low-end Market Rental (LEMR): 2021 Current LEMR tenant incomes
- Market Rental: CMHC Housing Information Portal, median purpose-built rent, Oct 2020; market rental scan, rentals.ca, June 2021; Canadian Rental Housing Index shelter costs (data from 2016 Census custom tabulation)

Trends: From 2006 to 2016, the median shelter costs for renters increased 4.5 times faster than their median household income (Figure 17). However, rental rates increased more slowly than the price of homes, which may increase demand for rental units as home ownership becomes less affordable.

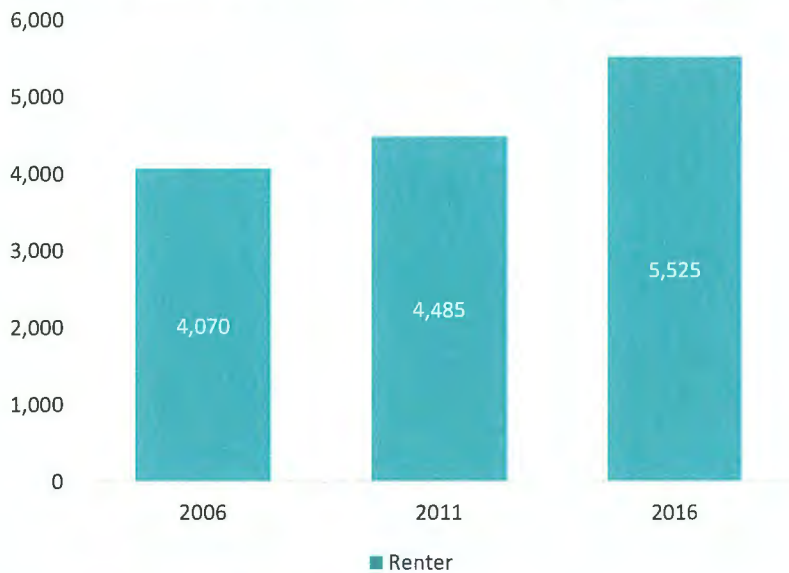
Figure 17: Renter Shelter Costs vs. Renter Household Income, 2006–2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006–2016

Affordability concerns are growing for lower income households (below \$50,000/year), with an increase of 1,500 renter households in Core Housing Need from 2006 to 2016 (Figure 18). Seniors living alone, women living alone (of any age category), and lone-parent families were the three renter households most likely to be in Core Housing Need in 2016⁵.

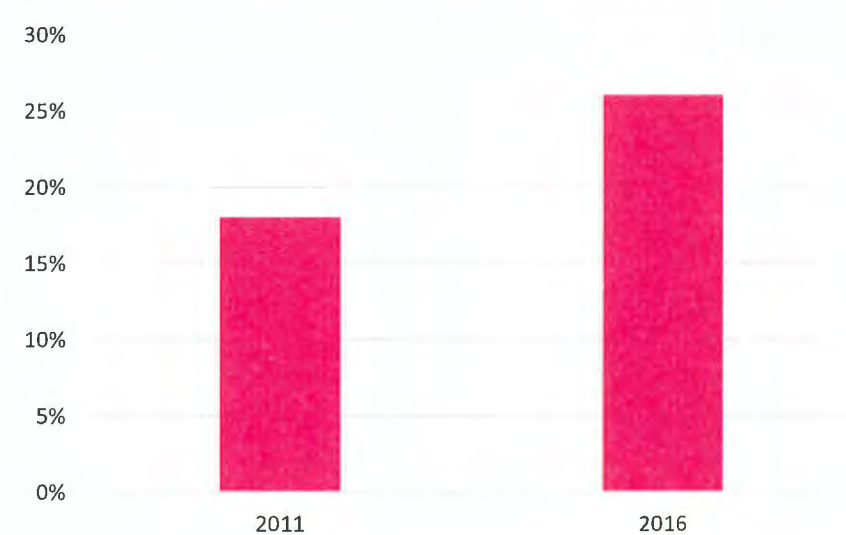
Figure 18: Number of Renter Households in Core Housing Need, 2006–2016



Source: CMHC, Housing Information Portal

Affordability concerns are also moving up the income spectrum: of middle-income renters (with \$50,000-\$80,000 annual income), only 18% spent more than 30% of their income on housing in 2011, but by 2016 that figure grew to 26% (Figure 19). A third of these 1,040 households were families with children who require two bedroom or larger units.

Figure 19: Moderate Income Renter Households with Affordability Challenges, 2011 & 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2011 and 2016

Vulnerability: In Richmond's current rental market, renters are quite vulnerable to losing their home, needing to overspend on housing or having to move to a home that is too small or in poor condition. Most renters live in units rented by individual homeowners (e.g. secondary suites or rented condos), so they may have to move if their landlords decide to occupy their unit or to renovate it and then increase the rent. Low vacancy rates and rising rents mean renters who need to move are likely to face higher costs and competition for a new rental. In 2016, 3,650 renters in market units were spending more than 30% of their

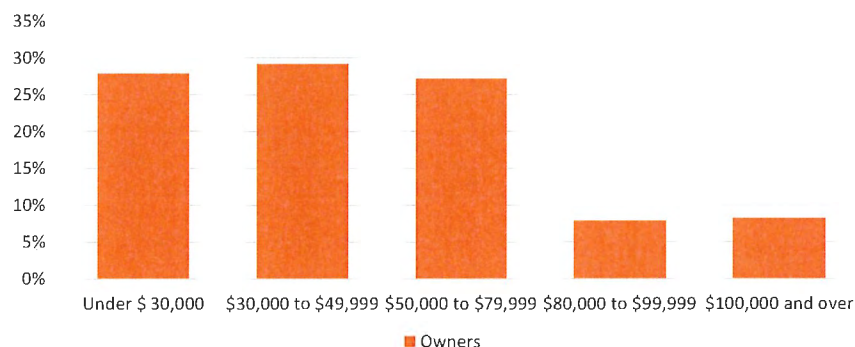
income on housing and had incomes below \$50,000. These households would have a hard time finding alternative housing in the city if they had to move and could be at risk of homelessness or have to move into unsuitable housing or to another community.

Owners

Affordability for Households that Already Own a Home:

Current Status: Many households already in the market are struggling to afford the homes they are in: about one quarter of owner households, or 12,550 households, are spending 30% or more of their income on shelter costs in 2016 (Figure 20). A large number of these households are singles with very-low and low incomes (2,500 households). Families with children in low- and moderate-income ranges are another important group in need (3,550 households). Owners in Core Housing Need include recent immigrants, lone-parent households, young adults and senior women living alone⁶.

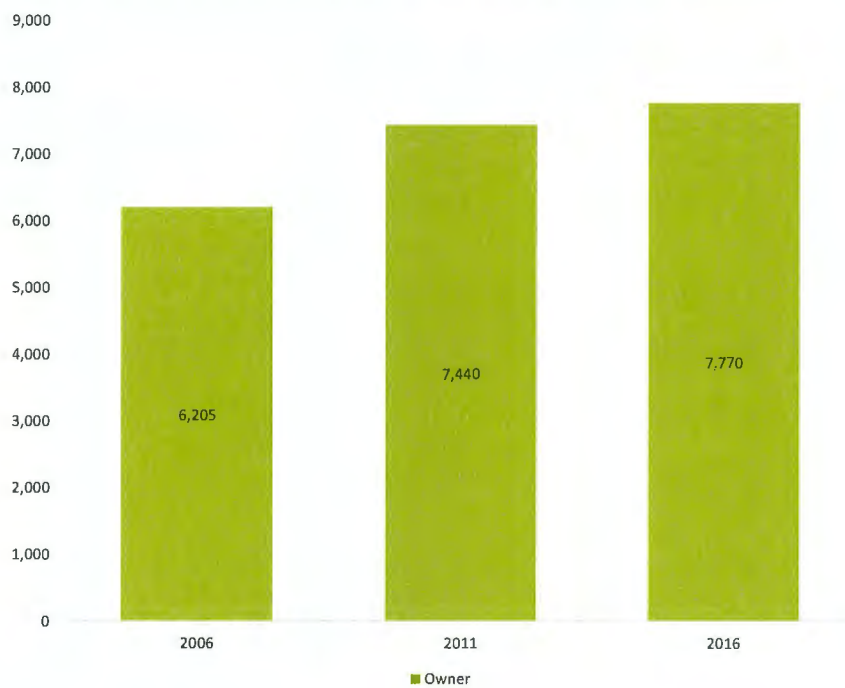
Figure 20: Percent of Owners Spending 30% to <100% Income on Shelter, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Trends: In 2016, 1,500 more owner households were assessed as being in Core Housing Need than in 2006 (7,770 vs. 6,205), an increase from 14% to 16% of all households (Figure 21). More lower income owner households find it hard to cover mortgage, utilities, maintenance and taxes—either because these costs rose or because their incomes dropped.

Figure 21: Number of Owner Households in Core Housing Need, 2006–2016



Source: CMHC, Housing Information Portal

Vulnerability: Owners are generally less vulnerable than renters (see Key Information box). However, if interest rates increase or home prices drop significantly (putting a mortgage “underwater”), owners with mortgages could be forced to sell their homes. In 2016, 5,320 of these homeowners had incomes below \$50,000 and were spending more than 30% of their income on housing.

Key Information

Compared to renters, owners have additional financial security because they own their home, even when they spend 30% or more of their income on shelter costs. When faced with significant affordability challenges, owners have the choice to sell or reverse mortgage their home and use the proceeds to help pay for housing. This makes common income-based affordability measures less useful for homeowners. Examples of owner households who may be overspending on housing but not be facing affordability challenges include retirees with low fixed income but large savings and young professionals who are entering the housing market for the first time and who expect their income to grow.

City Contributions

Since the 1990s, City policies have supported townhouse development throughout Richmond's neighbourhoods. As a result, approximately 20% of Richmond's current housing stock is made up of townhouse units, well above 10% for all of Metro Vancouver. This has provided a larger pool of housing units that are about half the cost of single-family houses.

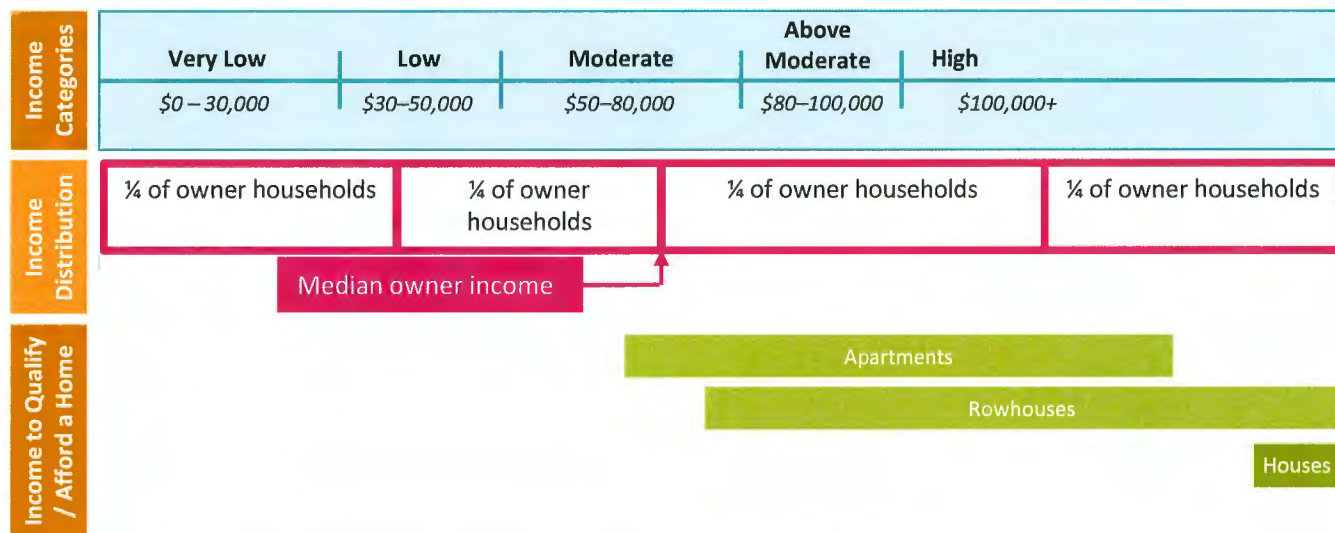
Affordability for Households Wanting to Buy a Home

Current Status: As shown in Figure 22, if current homeowners hadn't already bought a home by 2021, about half of them could not have afforded to buy a studio apartment⁷: homes are too expensive for many first-time buyers. While there is a range of prices in the market, the Real Estate Board's Home Price Index (HPI) describes a typical home, providing a useful benchmark.⁸ The 2021 HPI home prices were:

- Apartment: \$720,000, affordable to households making at least \$130,000 and out of reach for more than 80% of Richmond households.
- Rowhouse: \$925,000, affordable to households making at least \$170,000, out of reach for more than 90% of Richmond households.
- Single detached home: \$1,900,000, affordable to households making at least \$290,000, out of reach for more than 95% of Richmond households.

Notably, prices have risen 70% for the typical apartment since 2016, when the benchmark price was \$424,000, affordable on an income of \$79,000.

Figure 22: Affordability for Households Wanting to Buy a Home



Data Sources:

- Household income: 2016 Census. Affordability assumes 30% of income is spent on shelter. Shelter costs include taxes, insurance and utilities.
- Home Prices: MLS Home Price Index benchmark home prices, 2021; rew.ca market scan June/Aug 2021
- Mortgage Calculation: 20% down payment; 3% interest; 25 year amortization. Ratehub.ca calculator.

Trends: As home prices continue to increase much faster than incomes (77% vs 2% from 2006 to 2016), more and more prospective owners are being priced out of the housing market (Figure 23). The shift in the mix of homes towards less expensive apartments and townhouses is helping to moderate the effect of increased housing prices; however, even these are already too expensive for most.

⁷ Based on the lowest priced homes on the market advertised on www.rew.ca in June 2021.

⁸ The MLSLink Housing Price Index is used by the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver to track home sales in the Metro Vancouver region. It measures benchmark or typical home prices with consistent features. Thus, the HPI measures typical price change, while excluding low and high end homes that may not be representative of the market overall.

Figure 23: Median Housing Prices vs. Median Owner Household Income, 2006–2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006–2016

Core and Extreme Core Housing Need

Key Information

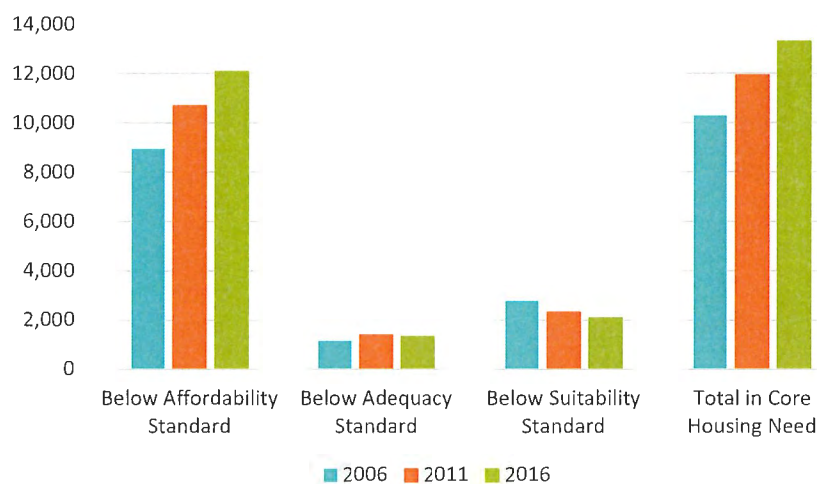
Core Housing Need identifies households that are living in housing that is not in a good state of repair (adequacy), that does not have enough bedrooms (suitability) and/or where the household income is more than 30% of shelter costs (affordability), and where the household cannot afford to move to a median-priced, suitable, adequate home, i.e. the household is stuck in housing that does not meet their needs. Examples include a single parent and child renting an “unsuitable” one bedroom apartment because they are unable to afford a two-bedroom unit, or a family with children who rent a house in disrepair and are not able to afford a similar place in better condition.

While Core Housing Need as a whole measures affordability challenges, it also provides insights into the types of households most likely to be in Core Housing Need and what is driving trends:

- Households choosing a home in poor condition because they cannot afford one in good condition;
- Households choosing a small home because they cannot afford one that is large enough; or
- Households choosing to spend over 30% of their income to secure a suitable home in good condition.

Overspending to secure an acceptable unit drove an increase in the number of households in Core Housing Need from 2006 to 2016. In contrast, there were fewer households living in homes that were too small, and the number living in homes in a poor state of repair increased only slightly (Figure 24).

Figure 24: Number of Households in Core Housing Need, 2006–2016



Source: CMHC, Housing Information Portal

Renters are more likely to be in Core Housing Need than owners, and the proportion of renters in Core Housing Need is increasing (Figure 25).

Figure 25: Proportion of Richmond Households in Core Housing Need by Tenure, 2006–2016

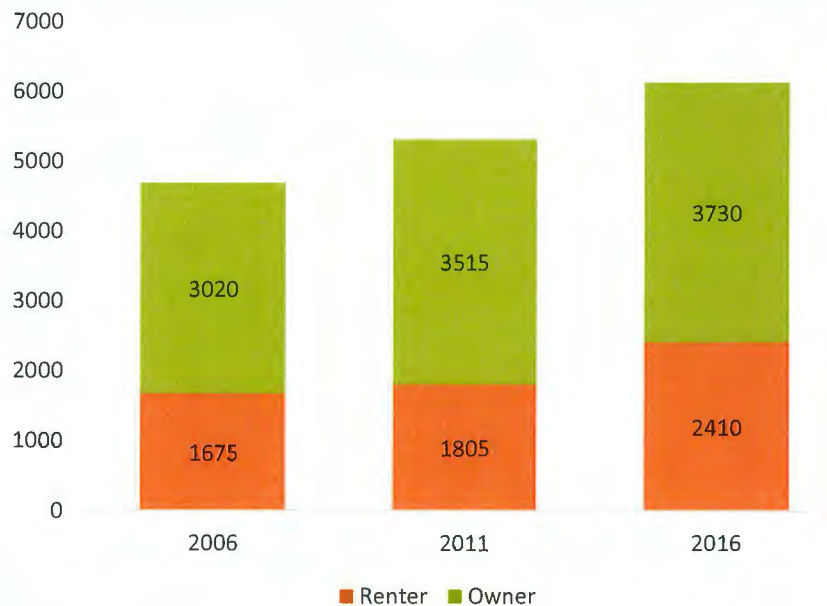


Source: CMHC, Housing Information Portal

Extreme Core Housing Need

Households in Extreme Core Housing Need spend more than 50% of their income on shelter, making them highly vulnerable to housing instability, i.e. putting them at risk of homelessness. In 2006, there were 4,695 households in extreme Core Housing Need; by 2016, this number had increased by almost 1,500 to 6,140 households, an increase from 8% to 9% of Richmond households (Figure 26).

Figure 26: Number of Households in Extreme Core Housing Need by Tenure, 2006–2016



Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs – Planning and Land Use Management, Census 2006–2016

Overall Housing Demand

Metro Vancouver's most recent projection model estimated that Richmond had about 76,100 households in 2016 and would grow to be about 94,000 households by 2026. (Note: All projections are based on assumptions and include a margin of error. These are provided with +/- 15% estimates, suggesting that actual demand will fall within that range). Overall housing demand is driven by this growth as well as the needs of the current population.

Growth-Related Need: Richmond has grown by 8,700 households to 2021, and another 9,200 are projected by 2026 (Table 2).

Projections indicate an increased pace of demand: 17,000 new households are expected from 2016 to 2026, about 50% more than the growth of 12,000 households Richmond experienced between 2006 and 2016. So far, supply has kept up, with 9,000 units built between 2016 and 2020.

Table 2: Projected Housing Needs, 2016–2026

	Projected Need, 2016–2020		Projected Need, 2021–2026	
	Units	%	Units	%
Total Units	8,700	+/-15%	9,200	+/-15%
Studio/1 Bedroom	5,500	63%	5,200	57%
2 Bedroom	1,400	16%	1,800	19%
3+ Bedroom	1,800	20%	2,200	24%

Source: Internal City of Richmond projections; Metro Vancouver population projections, 2021.

Together, current and growth-related projections indicate a need to accelerate housing supply, and to ensure that the supply is affordable.



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Specific Housing Needs

Affordable Housing Needs

Affordable housing typically accommodates households making less than \$70,000 a year and refers to non-market (incomes below about \$50,000 a year) or low-end market rental housing (annual incomes from \$40,000 to \$70,000). Some households are also accommodated in market rental housing through rental assistance programs. In 2016, about 4,000 Richmond households lived in non-market housing in Richmond, and another 1,500 households were receiving rental assistance from BC Housing.

Current Need: About 4,500 households not in subsidized housing made less than \$70,000 and were spending over 30% of their income on shelter in 2016. Based on household composition, Table 3 estimates the distribution of these units by type and income range.

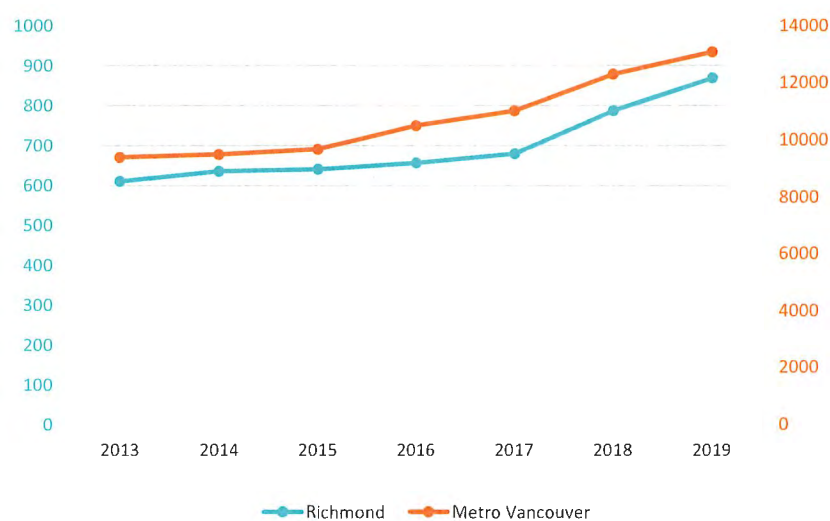
Table 3: Current Affordable Housing Unit Demand

Unit Type	Income \$0–\$40,000	Income \$40,000–\$70,000
Studio/1 Bedroom	1,800	600
2 Bedroom/3 Bedroom	1,100	1,000

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Trends and Growth-Related Needs: Available measures point to a substantial increase in need for affordable housing. One way to estimate future need is based on household growth projections: around 3,200 new renter households with incomes below \$70,000 a year are expected between 2016 and 2026.⁹ These households will likely struggle to acquire housing in the private market that meets their financial needs.

Figure 27: Number of Households on the BC Housing Waitlist in Richmond Compared to Metro Vancouver, 2013–2019



Source: BC Housing, July 2013, June 2014, June 2015, June 2016, June 2017, July 2018–2019, June 2020

City and Partner Contributions

489 non-market and 363 LEMR units have been built since the adoption of the first Affordable Housing Strategy in 2007 through the combined efforts of the City and its partners.

⁹ Ranges is based on Metro Vancouver demographic projections, which provide for a +4–15% upper and lower bound

A complementary measure of affordable housing demand is the trend in the number of renter households in Core Housing Need. This grew by 1,500 from 2006–2016 and could be expected to do much the same from 2016–2026. A third indicator of demand, the waitlist for the BC Housing Registry increased by about 40% from 2013 to 2020, similar to Metro Vancouver (Figure 27).

Together, these indicators suggest that the need for affordable housing will have grown to roughly 7,000 by 2026. The need for more affordable housing, particularly for Richmond's most vulnerable populations, was underlined during engagement with local non-profit housing providers. Consistent with available data and with the priority groups identified in the City's Affordable Housing Strategy (2017–2027), housing for households on social assistance, individuals with disabilities, individuals and couples earning minimum wage, single parent households and seniors were highlighted.

City Contributions

The Official Community Plan (OCP) Market Rental Housing Policy was adopted in 2018. As a result, by 2021, 568 market rental units had been secured through zoning and/or housing agreements.

Market Rental Housing Needs

Market rental housing is an important part of Richmond's housing stock. It accommodates a broad section of the community and may be preferred by households that currently need flexibility, cannot afford to buy or are not interested in owning a home. Only 2,800 purpose-built rental units have been developed since 1990, leaving condominium owners to fill the gap: Richmond's market rental stock is now dominated by the secondary rental market (e.g. rented condos and secondary suites) representing about 85% of the market. Secondary rentals are often considered to be less secure than purpose-built rentals as owners can decide to sell or occupy the unit themselves; on average, secondary rental rates are higher than primary rental rates¹⁰.

It is difficult to estimate the need for market rental units because it depends on the supply and affordability of competing housing such as below-market rentals and low-end homeownership in Richmond, and housing supply and costs elsewhere in the region. However, the available measures indicate strong and continued demand for rental housing, and also suggest worsening affordability:

- In 2016, Richmond had a much lower proportion of renters than the rest of the region (26% vs. 36%);
- Much like the rest of the region, Richmond has seen consistently low vacancy rates for at least 10 years (1.4% average);
- While the median income of renters in the private market was about \$56,000 a year in 2021,¹¹ \$72,000 a year was needed to afford an average new 1-bedroom unit; and
- Median purpose-built rents increased by 27% from 2006 to 2016, 4.5 times faster than the increase in renter incomes. By 2020, median purpose-built rents had increased another 16%, and rents in the secondary market were substantially higher.

Using \$70,000 as an approximate minimum income threshold to afford a new market rental unit, at least 2,000 rental units will be needed over the next ten years to meet demand. If home ownership remains out of reach for most households, driving interest in rental, the demand could be much higher. Together with the needs estimated for affordable rental housing, this demand is

¹⁰ CMHC Rental Market Report – Fall 2017 Release

¹¹ Estimated from 2016 data using the overall 2006–2017 household income trend for Richmond

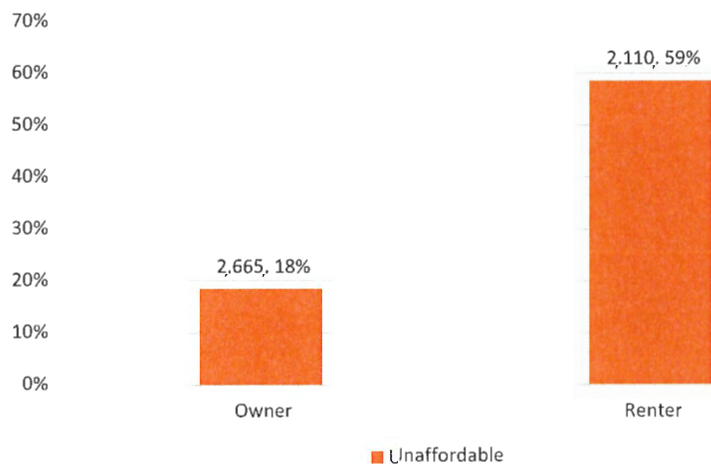
likely to put more pressure on rents, reinforcing the need for rental housing that is affordable to Richmond households across the income spectrum.

Needs for Housing for Seniors

Seniors (age 65+ years) live in a wide range of housing, from active seniors in their own homes to seniors in independent living facilities and those who need to be housed in facilities with extensive support services. Housing with extra supports (e.g. emergency response, meals, recreation, at-home care aide) in Richmond are provided by the private sector and non-profit organizations, either alone or in partnership with other levels of government and agencies, including semi-independent and assisted living housing options.

Current Needs: While some senior households will have housing options in the market, there is substantial need for affordable rental housing for seniors in Richmond. In 2016, renter households made up 20% of senior-led households but were three times more likely than owners to experience housing affordability challenges (Figure 28). Senior-led renter households had a median household income of \$30,136, much lower than the Richmond median household income of \$65,370, and 59% of senior-led renters (2,110 households) spent more than 30% of their income on shelter costs.

Figure 28: Percent of Seniors in Unaffordable Housing by Tenure, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Other indicators of current housing need include:

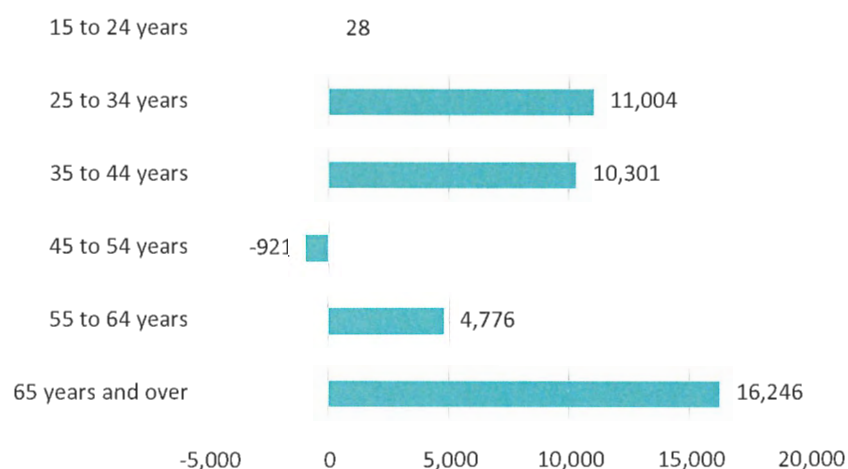
- As mentioned in the Affordable Housing section, there were 448 senior households on the BC Housing Registry waitlist in June 2020 for non-market housing.
- In 2019, the vacancy rate was at or near zero for seniors rental housing (including market and non-market units) in Richmond (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2019).

Non-profit housing providers also reported a growing number of precariously housed seniors who struggle to find affordable housing. They shared that vulnerable groups include single seniors living alone, those who are not fluent in English, as well as seniors who lack family supports.

Most of the seniors housing in Richmond is located near the City Centre or in Steveston, and 12 of 21 sites are within 400 m of at least two of the following: frequent transit, retail areas and community centres, providing good car-free access to common destinations.

Trends and Growth-Related Needs: Seniors (65+) were the fastest growing age group in Richmond from 2006 to 2016, growing by 57% (from 21,000 to 33,000). They are expected to grow a further 16,000 to 2026, increasing from 17% of Richmond's population to 20% (Figure 29).

Figure 29: Projected Population Growth by Age Groups, 2016–2026



Source: Internal City of Richmond projections; Metro Vancouver population projections, 2021

A key need for seniors is increased supports as they age. Non-profit housing providers reported that some seniors in independent housing require additional supports to enable aging in place. Such supports are also needed for seniors in independent housing who are waiting to be admitted into assisted living or medical facilities. The cost of extra supports can exacerbate affordability challenges for seniors with health conditions: those who overspend on shelter and related supports may have little income left for other necessities.

As seniors are particularly vulnerable to heat, an emerging need is greater protection from climate change-driven extreme heat events¹². This is most relevant for older units with less insulation and without air conditioning. As older buildings are often more affordable, this impact of climate change will be inequitably experienced by lower income residents.

Available data and information from non-profit housing providers point to strong and growing need for more affordable housing for seniors, including independent housing with supports. While it is difficult to estimate, 500 to 2,000 affordable units may be needed in the near future (based on current waitlists and the number of senior renter households in unaffordable housing), along with a growing need for related supports as seniors age.

Special Housing Needs

Richmond's housing needs are as diverse as its community. While affordability, household type and age capture most needs, other needs are also important.

¹² BC Housing, 2019. *Special Housing in the New Climate* and BC Housing, 2017. *Climate Adaptation Framework*.

However, reliable data can be hard to obtain. This section provides some detail about people with disabilities, and captures information from local housing service providers about other special housing needs.

Individuals with Disabilities

An individual with a disability may require a housing unit that is affordable and/or with specific supports. Individuals with disabilities have physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities that may limit their daily activities¹³. As there is a wide range of abilities and diverse needs among individuals with disabilities, a range of housing options are needed to meet the individual's needs (e.g. housing adaptations, housing accessibility, independent living with supports, group homes). BC Housing provides 220 affordable housing units dedicated to individuals with special housing needs in Richmond as of March 2020.

Current Needs: Housing affordability is an important component as individuals with disabilities often have restricted incomes. According to the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability, more than 6 million Canadians aged 15 years and over have a disability and less than 60 per cent of those aged 25 to 64 years are employed. While Canadians with milder disabilities earn on average 12 per cent less than Canadians without disabilities, Canadians with severe disabilities earn 51 per cent less than Canadians without disabilities. Those whose earning capacity is strictly limited may rely on Provincial disability benefits and associated rental supplements provided by Vancouver Coastal Health, which total up to \$1,750 a month to cover their household's housing, clothing, food, travel and other necessities. This is not enough to afford an independent home: non-profit housing providers serving people with disabilities report that many have to live with roommates, rent housing that is in poor condition, or live with their parents well into adulthood.

For individuals with disabilities seeking affordable independent housing, there are 79 individuals registered on the BC Housing Registry waitlist in Richmond as of June 2020. At that time, there were an additional 32 individuals in Richmond registered for a wheelchair accessible unit¹⁴.

Trends and Growth-Related Needs: Because the prevalence of disability increases with age (Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017), the demand for adaptable housing is expected to grow as Richmond's population continues to age. Richmond is also experiencing an increased demand for services to support individuals with disabilities city-wide.

Overall, there is a growing need for more housing for individuals with disabilities, and this housing needs to be affordable for individuals on lower incomes including those who are reliant on government benefits.

City Contributions

Richmond policy encourages Low-End of Market Rental apartments secured market rental units to meet Basic Universal Housing standards so that they can be adapted for accessibility. This ensures that new rental units can be used by individuals with accessibility needs with only minor adaptations.

¹³ For example, they could experience difficulties carrying out daily activities such as personal self care, meal preparation, daily shopping, mobility inside and outside of the home, use of transportation, and management of finances.

¹⁴ This is likely to be an undercount, as individuals with disabilities may not be on the waitlist because BC Housing does not provide additional supports for people with disabilities, the long waitlist acts as a disincentive, individuals with disabilities often live with their parents well into adulthood, or people with disabilities may be undiagnosed or may not self-report on the BC Housing application.

Other Special Housing Needs

Non-profit housing providers interviewed for the Housing Needs Report identified the following housing needs:

- Housing and related support services for individuals with mental health concerns, including brain injury, and substance use disorders. Needs include subsidized group homes, as well as housing suited to people who have more significant support service needs because of combined mental health and addiction challenges.
- Housing and related programs for recent immigrants, as well as services to help them access housing programs.

City Contributions

To support family-friendly housing, City policy requires all market rental housing developments to have a minimum of 40% of units with two or more bedrooms, and encourages this standard for all multi-family developments.

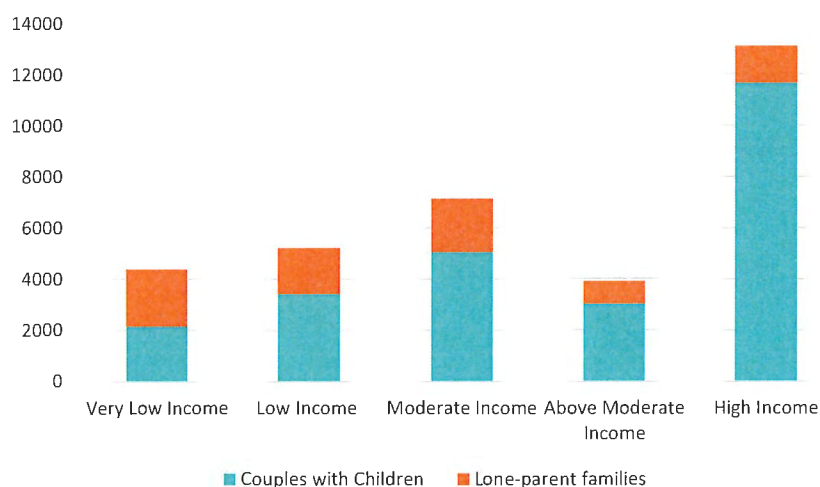
Needs for Housing for Families

In Richmond in 2016, about 45% of households were families. They are well-represented across the entire income spectrum (Figure 30). About 75% of families were couples with children, with the remainder lone parent families, who have lower incomes on average. Half of families with children lived in single-family homes, a quarter in rowhouses and another quarter in apartments. About 75% of families owned their homes.

Current Needs: In 2016, the median income renter couple with children could afford a median 3-bedroom rental, while a lone parent making a median income could not afford to rent the 2-bedroom home needed to give their children a separate room.

Most couples with children have moderate and higher household incomes. This suggests that more family-friendly two and three bedroom units are needed in ownership and market rental housing than in non-market housing.

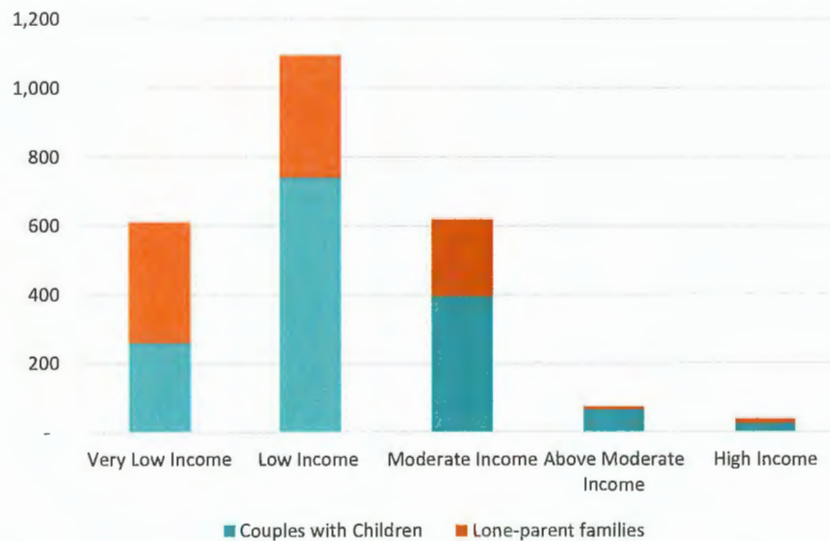
Figure 30: Number of Families by Income Category, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Among renter families with children making less than \$50,000, 1,700 (33%) were facing affordability challenges in 2016, including 700 lone-parent families in 2016 (Figure 31).

Figure 31: Number of Renter Families Experiencing Affordability Challenges by Income, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Trends and Growth-Related Needs: Families are expected to continue to make up about 45% of households, contributing to a projected need for almost 7,000 2+ bedroom units between 2016 and 2026 to accommodate growth. Market development will likely meet this demand; however, with rents and home prices rising to the point where many families cannot currently afford a suitable home, the new supply may not be affordable for many.

Needs for Individuals Experiencing or at Risk of Homelessness

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, and permanent housing or the immediate means and ability of acquiring it. It can result from factors such as a lack of affordable housing, discrimination and other societal barriers. It can also be connected to financial, mental, behavioural or physical challenges. Each experience of homelessness is unique and can include a wide range of living conditions, such as people living on the street, in emergency shelters, or temporarily living with a friend or family.

Key Information

Homelessness may be divided into four categories:

- **Unsheltered or absolutely homeless:** people living on the streets, parks or in other places not intended for human habitation.
- **Emergency sheltered:** people staying in emergency shelters.
- **Provisionally accommodated:** people whose accommodation is temporary or lacking in security of tenure (i.e. staying with friend or family but without permanent and secure housing).
- **At risk of homelessness:** people who are not homeless, but whose economic or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards.

Source: The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

City Contributions

In 2019, the City of Richmond partnered with the Province of BC and RainCity Housing to open the temporary Alderbridge Supportive Housing, which provides 40 units of housing with on-site supports for Richmond residents who have experienced homelessness. Scheduled to open in 2022, the temporary Bridgeport Supportive Housing building will provide an additional 40 units of supportive housing for Richmond residents.

In Richmond, various housing options and supports are available to help people in crisis avoid or transition out of homelessness. These resources include the Alderbridge Supportive Housing, Richmond House Emergency Shelter, additional shelter spaces made available to women and children feeling domestic violence, and a range of programs delivered by local service providers and Vancouver Coastal Health.

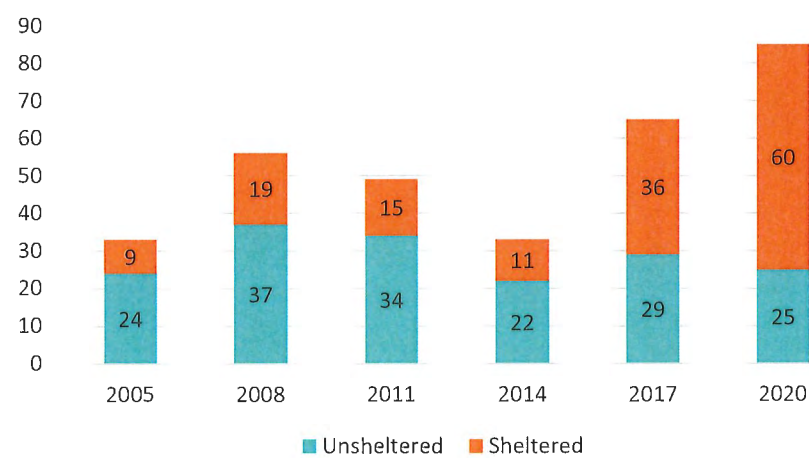
Current Needs: Because homelessness is so varied, it is difficult to accurately assess the current number of Richmond residents experiencing it. For example, many people become temporarily or episodically homeless over the course of a year and are not counted in a 24-hour homeless count. Other individuals may be experiencing “hidden homelessness” as they are staying with friends or family, but do not have a permanent or secure home.

There are multiple estimates of homelessness in Richmond. For example, the 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver recorded 85 people in Richmond in a 24 hour period. A complementary measure of homelessness is an estimate by local service providers that at least 193 Richmond residents experienced homelessness between June 2018 and April 2019.

In addition to the ongoing need for individuals experiencing homelessness, Richmond non-profit housing providers identified a significant need for those who are ready to transition to permanent housing. For example, temporary accommodation is available for women fleeing violence at the Richmond House Emergency Shelter and Nova House, but additional affordable housing units are needed for people who are ready to transition to permanent housing. For people with more complex support service needs or who have experienced longer term homelessness, supportive housing can be required to enable a transition to housing stability.

Trends and Growth-Related Needs: As with most comparably sized municipalities in Metro Vancouver, Richmond’s homeless population has increased significantly between 2005 and 2020, nearly tripling from 33 to 85 in 15 years (Figure 32). A number of factors, including rising housing costs, persistent low vacancy rates, and limited affordable housing options, are thought to contribute to increases across Metro Vancouver. Opening the Richmond House Emergency Shelter in 2019 has kept pace with this rising demand: at the time of the 2020 Homeless Count, about 7 out of 10 individuals surveyed were sheltered, compared to 6 out of 10 in 2017.

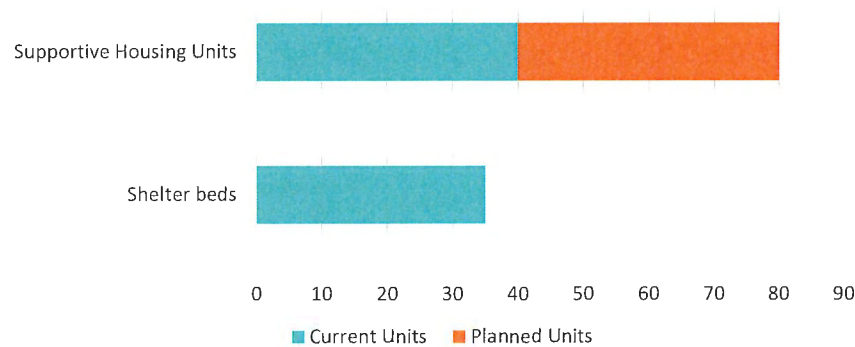
Figure 32: Number of Sheltered and Unsheltered Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in Richmond, 2005–2020



Source: BC Non-Profit Housing Association, 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver Final Data Report, 2020

The factors driving increases in homelessness are expected to remain into the foreseeable future, so needs for related housing and supports are anticipated to grow at a similar or higher rate than they have over the last five years.

Figure 33: Number of Shelter Beds and Supportive Housing Units for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in Richmond, 2021



Source: City of Richmond records, 2021



Summary

The analysis of housing needs in Richmond revealed the following findings:

Housing demand is growing: Richmond is growing, and households are getting smaller. Combined, this creates a growing need for housing, with about 1,800 new households/year projected between from 2016–2026 compared with an average of 1,200/year from 2006–2016.

Affordability has become critical: One quarter of Richmond's households were in unaffordable housing in 2016, a proportion that remained stubbornly high over the previous ten years. In that decade, the situation worsened for lower income households, with the number of households in Core Housing Need growing by 3,000. Affordability statistics are startling, for example:

- From 2006 to 2016, the median shelter costs for renters increased 4.5 times faster than their median household income. The cost to buy rose 77% in the same period, while incomes were virtually unchanged.
- If renter households had to move, 25% of them could not afford any market rentals in 2021. By comparison, the non-market and low-end market rental (LEMR) housing they could afford make up 16% of all rentals in Richmond.
- Home prices are so expensive that if Richmond households were buying for the first time, almost half of them couldn't afford an apartment, and 95% couldn't afford a typical house.

Substantial non-market and low-end market rental housing is needed:

- To meet the needs of households making less than \$70,000, a total of about 7,000 units of affordable housing (non-market and low-end market rental (LEMR)) will need to be provided from 2016 to 2026. At a third to half of the projected total housing demand for the same period, these numbers may seem high, but they are consistent with the fact that this is the only type of housing affordable to the 50% of households making less than the median income.
- Social housing waitlists are growing longer for almost all types of households, including seniors and people with disabilities.

There is strong demand for market rental: It is hard to estimate market rental demand, because it depends on competition from non-market and ownership housing in Richmond, as well as housing elsewhere in the lower mainland. At rates affordable to households making \$70,000+ a year, at least 2,000 units will be needed from 2016–2026. If home ownership remains out of reach for most households, driving interest in rental, the demand could be higher.

There are many specific needs in the community for affordable housing, including:

- Housing for low-income singles and seniors, typically non-market studio and one-bedroom homes;
- Housing for families:
 - Low-income lone-parent families, typically non-market 2+ bedroom homes;
 - Moderate-income families, typically 2+ bedroom rental homes.

The need for housing for seniors is growing rapidly. Seniors (65+ years) were the fastest growing age group in Richmond from 2006 to 2016, growing by 57% (from 21,000 to 33,000). They are expected to grow a further 16,000 to 2026, by which time they will make up 20% of the population. While many seniors will age-in-place, with formal and informal supports at home, 500 to 2,000 units of affordable housing will be needed from 2016 to 2026, especially for single seniors. There is also a need for independent housing with supports, and for supports for seniors transitioning from independent to more supportive housing.

Individuals with disabilities struggle to afford independent housing, especially if they are reliant on Disability Assistance and Vancouver Coastal Health rent supplements. These are intended to cover all basic expenses but together total less than rent for a typical 1-bedroom apartment in 2021.

Other special housing needs include people with mental health disorders and/or substance use problems, and recent immigrants.

The number of individuals that are either experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness is increasing: The point-in-time homeless count is increasing, as is the number of households in Extreme Core Housing Need, which grew by 1,500 between 2006 and 2016, to 6,140. This trend is likely to drive continued growth in the need for housing with supports for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, helping them transition to long-term housing stability.

The housing needs identified by this Housing Needs Report are consistent with the priority groups identified in the Affordable Housing Strategy (2017–2027): families, low- and moderate-income households, low- and moderate-income seniors, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable populations.



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Next Steps

Housing needs identified in this report will inform the development of new and updated City programs and policies aimed at ensuring a range of housing choices are available in Richmond for individuals and families of all ages, abilities and incomes. It will also support City and partner action to address housing needs.





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Appendix A: Housing Needs Report Glossary

Term	Definition
Adequate housing	Housing that doesn't need major repairs. Typically assessed on the basis of self-reporting by residents through the Census.
Affordability standard	Based on whether shelter costs are equal to or less than 30% of total before-tax household income, as defined by Statistics Canada.
Affordable housing	Housing units that are prioritized for households that earn less than median income and cannot afford rental rates within the private market. Generally secured through regulatory approaches, such as inclusionary zoning, or with capital or operating funding from federal, provincial or local governments.
BC Housing Registry	A centralized database used to manage applications for social housing.
Core Housing Need	Housing that does not meet one or more standards for housing adequacy (repair), suitability (crowding), or affordability (no more than 30% of income spent on housing) and where the household would have to spend 30 per cent or more of its before-tax income to pay the median rent (including utilities) of appropriately sized alternative local market housing.
Emergency shelters	Year-round shelters for individuals temporarily in need of housing.
Extreme Core Housing Need	Households that meet the same criteria as households in Core Housing Need, except that shelter costs account for more than 50% of total household income.
Family housing	Housing that meets the needs of families including units with enough bedrooms to accommodate all members of a family household.
Household Types	Categories of households defined by their composition.
▪ Census family	A married couple and the children, if any; a couple living common law and the children, if any; or a lone parent of any marital status with at least one child living in the same dwelling.
- Couple with children	A census family that contains a married couple or a couple living common law and at least one child.
- Couple without children	A census family that contains a married couple or a couple living common law with no children.
- Lone-parent households	Families containing only one parent with her or his child(ren).
- Multiple family households	A household in which two or more census families (with or without additional persons) occupy the same private dwelling.
- Other census family	A combined category that includes census families with additional persons, for example, a family who also rents a spare room to a renter, as well as multi-generational families that live in the same household.
- Non-census family	One person living alone or a group of two or more persons who live together but do not constitute a "census family," e.g. roommates.
Income categories	<p>The following five income categories used throughout the report are consistent with the approach used in the Metro Vancouver Regional Affordable Housing Strategy, and are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very low: Household income below \$30,000 ▪ Low: Household income between \$30,000 and \$50,000 ▪ Moderate: Household income between \$50,000 and \$80,000 ▪ Above moderate: Household income between \$80,000 and \$100,000 ▪ High: Household income over \$100,000

Term	Definition
Low End Market Rental (LEMR) housing	Rental housing units secured through the City's Low End Market Rental program. These units are offered at below market rental rates and are intended for low to moderate income households.
Market rental housing	Rental housing units provided by the private market. This includes purpose-built rental housing as well as rental housing delivered through the secondary rental market such as secondary suites, rental condominium units, or other investor-owned units. These units are offered at market rental rates and are typically affordable to households with moderate to high incomes.
National Occupancy Standard	A standard developed by CMHC to determine the appropriate number of bedrooms a household requires based on household size and composition.
Non-market housing	Rental units managed by BC Housing, Metro Vancouver Housing, or another non-profit housing providers. These units typically provide rent geared to income or below market rental housing and are intended for very low to moderate income households. This housing type is also referred to as social housing, community housing and rent geared to income housing.
Rental assistance	Subsidies provided by BC Housing for households (primarily low income seniors and working families) so that they can afford to rent in the private market.
Rental market, primary	Housing units or buildings that specifically serve as permanent rental housing, may also be referred to as purpose built rentals.
Rental market, secondary	All rental units that are not purpose built, including rented condominium apartments, houses, duplexes and townhouses, as well as secondary suites, granny flats and carriage houses.
Social housing	See <i>Non-market housing</i> .
Special needs housing	Housing that meets the needs of individuals with disabilities. An individual with a disability may require a housing unit that is affordable and/or with specific supports.
Suitable housing	Housing that has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of the household. This is measured according to the National Occupancy Standard (NOS).
Supportive housing	Long-term housing with on-site supports for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
Tenure	Refers to whether the household owns or rents their private dwelling. Rental housing includes cooperative housing and housing provided with reduced rents.

Appendix B: Housing Needs Summary Form

This Appendix contains the Summary Form required by Provincial Legislation to accompany a Housing Needs Report. Consistent with the report, “current” needs are estimated based on 2016 information, the most recent year for which Census data is available. It provides a 10-year projection of needs from 2016, equivalent to a 5-year projection from the date of this report.

Appendix C: Core and Extreme Core Housing Need

The following table provides details of Core and Extreme Core Housing Need from 2006 to 2016, overall and by tenure.

		2006		2011		2016	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
Core Housing Need	Renter	4,070	31.6%	4,485	33.3%	5,525	33.6%
	Owner	6,205	14.2%	7,440	15.5%	7,770	15.7%
	Total	10,280	18.2%	11,930	19.4%	13,290	20.2%
Extreme Core Housing Need	Renter	1,675	13.0%	1,805	13.4%	2,410	14.7%
	Owner	3,020	6.9%	3,515	7.3%	3,730	7.5%
	Total	4,695	8.3%	5,320	8.7%	6,140	9.3%



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