

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

**2020/21 – 2022/23
SERVICE PLAN**

February 2020



Minister Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing 2020/21 - 2022/23 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Robinson', enclosed in a faint rectangular box.

Honourable Selina Robinson
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
February 7, 2020

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Purpose of the Ministry

The [Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing](#) helps make B.C. communities great places to live by providing British Columbians with access to more affordable, safe and functional housing and taking leadership in supporting local governments, not-for-profit organizations and residents to build vibrant and healthy communities that are well governed, liveable, safe, economically resilient and socially and environmentally responsible.

The Ministry oversees two Crown Agencies; the [BC Assessment Authority](#), and the [BC Housing Management Commission](#). The Ministry also oversees the [University Endowment Lands](#) and administers the annual [Property Assessment Review Panel](#) process and supports the [Audit Council](#) for the [Auditor General for Local Government](#). The Ministry partners with [Technical Safety BC](#), and the [Building Officials Association of BC](#) as delegated authorities to deliver services for British Columbians. The Ministry is also responsible for [TransLink](#) legislation and governance.

The effective delivery of the Ministry's mandate relies on key legislation, including: the *Assessment Act* and *Assessment Authority Act*, the *Auditor General for Local Government Act*, the *Community Charter*, the *Vancouver Charter*, the *Local Government Act*, the *Commercial Tenancies Act*, the *Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing Act*, the *Municipal Aid Act*, the *Municipal Finance Authority Act*, part six of the *Gaming Control Act*, the *Islands Trust Act*, the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act*, the *Strata Property Act*, the *Assistance to Shelter Act*, the *Manufactured Home Tax Act*, *Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act*, the *Residential Tenancy Act*, the *Building Act*, the *Building Officials' Association Act*, the *Homeowner Protection Act*, the *Safety Authority Act*, the *Safety Standards Act* and the BC Building, Plumbing and Fire Codes.

Strategic Direction

The Government of British Columbia remains focused on its three strategic priorities: making life more affordable, delivering better services, and investing in a sustainable economy.

Ministries are actively working to provide quality, cost-effective services to British Columbia's families and businesses. By adopting the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens and Business and Economic Implications Framework to budgeting and policy development, Ministries will ensure that equity is reflected in budgets, policies and programs.

Additional key initiatives underpinning lasting prosperity in 2020/21 and beyond are the implementation of:

- *A Framework for Improving British Columbians' Standard of Living* which will provide the foundation for quality economic growth in our province and a pathway to a more inclusive and prosperous society,
- The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, demonstrating support for true and lasting reconciliation, and
- The CleanBC plan, putting B.C. on the path to a cleaner, better future – with a low carbon economy that creates opportunities while protecting our clean air, land and water.

This 2020/21 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will support the government's priorities, including selected action items identified in the July 2017 Minister's [Mandate Letter](#). Over the previous fiscal year, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing made progress on these priorities by:

- Making significant headway on ***Homes for B.C: A 30 Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia***, which represents a \$7B investment in housing over 10 years. Of the total target of 114,000 units, 39,100 units of affordable housing have been planned, of which BC Housing is directly responsible for 29,100. As of December 31, 2019, nearly 23,000 are under construction or have been initiated.
- Supporting BC Housing to complete 2,135 units of supportive housing for people across B.C. who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with an additional 937 units initiated or under construction, through the Rapid Response to Homelessness program, the Supportive Housing Fund and funds committed under the actions on homelessness as part of B. C's Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- Working with local governments to implement policies and strategies to increase housing density and affordable market housing.
- Launching an action plan to further analyze and implement recommendations of the ***Rental Housing Task Force*** endorsed by government. Further, MAH helped support a private members' bill introduced by the B.C. Green Party to help renters escape household violence by providing the ability to end fixed-term leases if staying in the rental unit poses a risk to safety or security (these provisions will come into force by regulation or on May 30, 2020, whichever is earlier).
- Working closely with partners in the Lower Mainland to identify opportunities to strategically link transit, housing and land use planning. For example, the City of Vancouver, the City of Surrey, Metro Vancouver and TransLink established ***Supportive Policies Agreements*** to include increased density and affordable housing measures in the Broadway Subway Project and the first phase of the Surrey to Langley SkyTrain Project.
- Leading a province-wide multi-stakeholder consultation and releasing a final report in September 2019 summarizing the challenges with the local government development approvals process and a wide range of opportunities for their resolution. MAH will be working with Local Governments to review and implement recommendations over the course of the next fiscal plan.
- Significantly advancing the ***Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan*** by launching the Community Culture and Recreation (CCR), the Rural and Northern Communities (RNC) & the CleanBC Communities Fund (CCF) programs with a combined funding allocation of \$292.7M (\$166.9M federal, \$125.8M provincial). Also, approving 14 projects with over \$242 million in combined federal and provincial funding (\$134.7 million federal and \$107.8 million provincial) as part of the Environmental Quality Fund, where projects go a long way to helping communities protect both public and environmental health.
- Providing 5,099 grants through the ***Community Gaming Grants*** program totalling almost \$140 million and supporting over 7,400 programs delivered by not-for-profit organizations in over 260 communities. Of this total, the Capital Project Sector Program provided \$8.2 million to support 88 capital projects undertaken by not-for-profit organizations. These grants were leveraged with \$10.7 million in funds raised by the organizations, for a total investment of \$18.9 million in major capital projects. Community Gaming Grants fund community-based programs that are delivered with the support and leadership of more than 30,000 volunteer board members and 1 million voting members.
- Helping advance innovation in wood buildings through partnerships with industry and introducing new regulations that allow the safe construction of taller (i.e., 12-storey) wood buildings, helping to expedite the supply of housing with faster construction times than

conventional buildings, while supporting wood-products jobs and acting on climate change. Thirteen communities representing 35% of annual residential building numbers have signed on to be early adopters of these tall wood buildings.

- Working closely with BC Assessment to ensure the new iasWorld data information system will be fully implemented for 2020, which will improve the collection, development and distribution of assessment information. This new system will also provide improved data and analysis capabilities to support provincial government priorities and policy development.
- Planning to introduce legislation that will give municipalities the ability to provide property tax relief to small businesses and organizations that they identify as paying high property taxes. These taxes are a result of the combination of years of increasing real estate values and commercial triple-net leases.

The following performance plan outlines how the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will continue to track progress on key mandate letter commitments and other emerging government priorities.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: Safe, Affordable and Functional Housing

Ensuring British Columbians have access to safe, affordable and functional housing is a key priority for the Ministry and addresses the commitment to deliver through partnerships 114,000 units of housing over the next 10 years.

Objective 1.1: Increase supply of affordable market rental, non-profit, co-op, student and supported housing

Key Strategies:

- Work with BC Housing to support affordability through government-funded investments in new housing units.
- Facilitate new community partnerships to leverage investments in affordable housing through BC Housing’s HousingHub.
- Increase affordable housing options for vulnerable people and people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness through effective, co-ordinated provincial programs and services, including rental assistance in the private market.
- Work with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills, and Training to create new affordable student housing (currently 8,000-unit target).
- Support the work of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) in leading the prevention and response to homelessness, and work in partnership to support service integration across ministries and build partnerships between sectors to improve housing outcomes for people with distinct needs.
- Leverage our investments in transit to increase housing density and transit oriented affordable housing.
- Explore opportunities to streamline the municipal development approval process through the Development Approval Process Review.
- Permit municipalities to implement rental only zoning through changes to the Local Government Act.
- Expand the use of municipal and regional district tax revenues for affordable housing.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.1 Number of affordable and supportive housing units completed by BC Housing including affordable rental and social housing. ^{1 2 3}	4,180	3,035	3,500	2,800	2,300

¹ Data Source: BC Housing.

² The 36,700 units target referenced in the 2019/20-2021/22 service plan were comprised of 28,700 Building BC units that are the responsibility of BC Housing plus 8,000 student housing units that are the responsibility of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST). Progress towards building the 8,000 student housing units can be found in the AEST Service Plan. This updated total includes a further 2,000 units through the Regional Housing First Partnership with the CRD. Note that *Budget 2019* and *Budget 2020* also added 400 additional supportive housing units to BC Housing’s target, resulting in a 29,100 unit target. Completed units include legacy programs in addition to those under Building BC.

³ Performance measure 1.1 has been changed since last year’s Service Plan. Please see the discussion section below for an explanation of the change

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

Creating more affordable housing increases housing options for British Columbians who need it most. The targets for completed units are the funded units that represent incremental progress toward building affordable housing under the Building BC program. These units are a subset of the total new supply of affordable housing. The intermittent nature of construction projects results in variable targets between 2019/20 – 2021/22. It should be noted that the 29,100 funded units represent a ten-year commitment. Note the amounts in the table are annual targeted completions, for a cumulative five-year total of 15,815 units by BC Housing by 2022/23.

Discussion:

This indicator has been enhanced as compared to what was reported in the 2019/20 Service Plan. Last year, the new Building BC housing programs that were announced in *Budget 2018* had only existed for one year and therefore the targets by necessity were more aspirational and consisted largely of planned units of construction. However, now that these funding streams have a track record of just over two years, it is more appropriate to focus on the actual “on-the-ground” accomplishments, i.e., units completed under both the Building BC and other funding streams in BC Housing’s base budget. As shown in the table, significant progress has been made and the out-year targets are reflective of continued strong construction activity for BC Housing’s programs.

We have integrated the Key Strategies that fell under Objective 1.2 in the 2019/2020-2021/22 Service Plan into this objective to reflect the importance of our responses to homelessness, and cross-government collaboration to meet the needs of vulnerable populations to the success of the entire housing continuum.

Objective 1.2: Enhance safety, occupant health and accessibility, and sustainability of the built environment

Key Strategies:

- Establish safety standards for technical systems under the *Safety Standards Act*.
- Establish building standards under the *Building Act*, including the BC Building, Plumbing and Fire Codes.
- Support CleanBC by developing a regulatory framework for existing buildings and transitioning the voluntary BC Energy Step Code to a regulated code requirement by 2022.
- Collaborate with partners to establish and support effective governance for buildings and technical systems.
- Enable innovation in technical codes and standards while maintaining public confidence in the health and safety of newly constructed buildings.

Performance Measure ¹		2018/19 Actual ³	2019/20 Actual ³	2020/21 Target ^{3 & 4}	2021/22 Target ^{3 & 4}	2022/23 Target
1.2a	CleanBC: Number of local governments referencing the Energy Step Code in bylaws and policies ²	22	38	59	59	To be reset following 2022 BC Building Code ²
1.2b	New housing starts in communities referencing the Energy Step Code ⁵	44%	61%	69%	69%	To be reset following 2022 BC Building Code ²

¹ Data Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in cooperation with the Energy Step Code Council and member local governments representing the Union of BC Municipalities and the Planning Institute of British Columbia.

² In 2022, the British Columbia Building Code will require higher levels of energy efficiency for all new buildings, matching or exceeding local government requirements under the Energy Step Code and changing the number of local governments voluntarily adopting standards more stringent than the BC Building Code.

³ Excludes City of Vancouver, as it is not regulated under the *Building Act*.

⁴ Forecast assumes that communities that have committed to consulting on the Energy Step Code (ESC) will later reference the ESC in policy, bylaw or through an incentive program.

⁵ New housing starts based on available 2018 data, excluding City of Vancouver.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

This performance measure expands on the measure found in the previous service plan. The combination of this year's measures better reflects the actual impact of the Energy Step Code on new construction. Larger communities that have adopted the Energy Step Code have a greater impact on the number of new buildings that are built at a higher level of energy efficiency than smaller communities. The construction of more energy efficient buildings in communities help meet climate action commitments and enhance sustainability of the built environment.

Goal 2: A Fair Residential Tenancy Framework

By implementing a fair residential tenancy framework, the Ministry is providing stronger protections for renters and improved security for renters and landlords.

Objective 2.1: Enhance tenancy policies and programs to support stability and fairness for renters and landlords in BC

Key Strategies:

- Implement the Rental Housing Task Force recommendations including changes to the *Residential Tenancy Act*.
- Take further steps to assist both landlords and tenants to better understand their rights and responsibilities under B.C.'s tenancy legislation.

Performance Measure		2019/20 Baseline	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
2.1	Number of RHTF recommendations addressed	6	15	20	25

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

The Rental Housing Task Force made 25 recommendations to improve the tenancy framework in BC. Implementation of those recommendations will promote stability and fairness in the system.

One of the key recommendations of the Task Force related to public education and ensuring that both landlords and tenants know where to go for help. The Branch has a comprehensive website, provides information via phone and provides presentations/information in communities. Ensuring that both landlords and tenants understand the rules and know where to access assistance supports the system and helps promote fairness and stability. The ministry developed this new performance measure to report on progress toward modernizing tenancy laws, which is separate from the operational services to landlords and tenants that the ministry provides. Currently we are reviewing potential service plan measures related to access to services, which may be incorporated as a future service plan measure.

Objective 2.2: Create modern, affordable and accessible services for renters and landlords

Key Strategies:

- Continue to transform Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) processes to enhance services and meet increased and evolving demand.
- Continue focus on the RTB’s enforcement role and make greater use of its authority to investigate and levy administrative penalties.

Performance Measure		2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
2.2a	Average wait times: Emergency disputes	7.7 weeks	7 weeks	5 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks
2.2b	Average wait times: Urgent disputes	9.3 weeks	10 weeks	8 weeks	6 weeks	6 weeks
2.2c	Average wait times: Monetary disputes	24.8 weeks	22 weeks	18 weeks	12 weeks	12 weeks

¹ Data Source: RTB Case Management System.

² Performance measure 2.1 has been changed since last year’s service plan. Please see the discussion section below for an explanation of the change.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

Reducing hearing wait times will promote housing stability for landlords and tenants by ensuring tenancy disputes are resolved in a timely, efficient manner, and will boost public confidence in the dispute resolution process.

Service standards include:

- Four weeks to hear emergency disputes
- Six weeks to hear urgent disputes
- Twelve weeks to hear monetary disputes

Discussion:

This service plan has shifted the performance measure of wait times for dispute resolution hearings from the proportion that fall within the service standard to the average hearing wait times. Average hearing wait times provide a more accurate portrayal of service delivery effectiveness. Prior to the

branch receiving additional resources in 2017, average wait times were as high as 28 weeks for monetary disputes, 10 weeks for urgent disputes and 9 weeks for emergency disputes.

For emergency hearings, rules of procedure prevented hearings from being scheduled in less than 22 days, therefore making it very unlikely for the majority of hearings to be within four weeks. Changes to the rules and process have now been made to address this problem.

Goal 3: Strong, Sustainable and Well Governed Communities

By cultivating strong partnerships and delivering services that support sustainable and well governed communities, the Ministry establishes a platform to support improved affordability, accessibility and community infrastructure that benefits all British Columbians.

Objective 3.1: Further a governance system that considers local government and provincial interests and builds strong relationships for the benefit of all people

Key Strategies:

- Work to ensure the annual Union of British Columbia Municipalities Convention provides a comprehensive exchange of ideas and optimizes cooperation and collaboration among the Province, UBCM, individual local governments, and UBCM First Nations members.
- Consistent with government's *Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples*, support local governments in reconciling with First Nations and building respectful relationships.
- Review and enhance the policy, legislative and education framework for local governments where needed, including working with key partners to implement lessons learned from the 2018 local government elections and on furthering responsible conduct among locally elected officials.
- Provide advice, resolve problems and give targeted support and oversight on a range of local and regional governance matters of local government and provincial interest, both directly and in partnership with others.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
3.1 Actively engage with UBCM local governments and UBCM First Nations members with ongoing meetings between elected officials and staff, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of formal meetings held annually between UBCM Executives and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; and • number of meetings held annually between the Ministry, UBCM, individual local governments and UBCM First Nations members during UBCM Convention and throughout the year 	4+	4+	4+	4+
	100+	100+	100+	100+

¹ Data Source: Meeting schedules (calendar meeting invites) and agendas for Senior staff and Minister’s meeting. Informal meetings with staff are not counted.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

The number of formal interactions between the Minister and UBCM Executive is an important indicator that the relationship between local governments and the provincial government is being actively sustained. These meetings create a reciprocal opportunity to better understand the interests of local governments and to ensure policy and programs are meeting the needs of communities.

Objective 3.2: Maintain local governments’ financial sustainability so they can meet the service needs of their communities

Key Strategies:

- Provide advice and statutory approvals on local government finance (revenues and expenditures) to support sound local government financial management practices and stewardship that ensure fiscal viability.
- Continue the ongoing review of the provincial property assessment system and taxation tools available to local governments and consider changes to ensure the assessment system remains fair and equitable and supports the economic viability of existing property types (e.g. retail spaces occupied by small businesses and non-profit/arts and culture organizations).
- Deliver stable, predictable and timely grant funding for professional administration to smaller and rural local governments throughout B.C. through the Small Community Grants and Regional District Grants as well as providing targeted funding to municipalities with over 5,000 people for community safety initiatives, through the Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing Program.

- Support the Municipal Finance Authority (MFA) in obtaining a high credit rating and low rates for borrowing through: overseeing the *Municipal Finance Authority Act*; setting local government borrowing limits; reviewing and approving loan authorization bylaws and setting financial reporting requirements; and ensuring local government financial data is available to the MFA and the broader public.

Performance Measure	Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
3.2 Municipal Finance Authority's Credit Rating	AAA	AAA	AAA	AAA	AAA

¹ Data Source: [Municipal Finance Authority](#) Ratings provided by the Moody's, Standard & Poor's, and Fitch rating agencies

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

A strong credit rating of the MFA reflects the sustainability of the local government financial system. This strong credit rating gives local governments the freedom to engage in capital projects that touch the lives of people in British Columbia every day.

Objective 3.3: Support improvement of community and regional infrastructure and local government planning to further the environmental, economic and social health of communities

Key Strategies:

- Work in partnership with UBCM to implement the Housing Needs Report program to assist local governments in meeting new legislative requirements to have housing needs assessments in place by Spring 2022.
- Encourage strong community planning, fiscal and asset management practices to support the development of sustainable communities.
- Support local governments to make effective, integrated and collaborative choices, through problem solving, guidance and program support for delivery of local and regional services such as water, recreation and economic development, and integrated sustainable land use, resiliency and infrastructure planning.
- Under the CleanBC Communities Fund (CCF) collaborate with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to support infrastructure projects in communities across the province that focus on the:
 - management of renewable energy,
 - access to clean-energy transportation,
 - improved energy efficiency of buildings, and
 - the generation of clean energy.
- Partner with the federal government to develop and implement community capital funding programs for local governments and First Nations that build and upgrade local infrastructure including drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, clean energy, connectivity networks, recreation facilities, community centres and arts and culture spaces.

- Work with Metro Vancouver Regional District to lead provincial engagement with updates to the Regional Growth Strategy and integrated regional land use planning for Metro 2050.
- Work with TransLink and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to support advancement of the Mayors’ Council Ten-Year Vision for transit and transportation in Metro Vancouver, while collaborating with TransLink in the development of its 30-year Regional Transportation Strategy.
- Work with TransLink, Metro Vancouver and local governments on short and long-term regional transit strategies, including cross-ministry integrated land-use planning, to increase density and affordable housing options around transit stations and along new rapid transit corridors in Metro Vancouver.
- Collaborate with ministries and other partners to develop the Integrated Transportation and Development Strategy.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target
3.3 Number of local governments funded under the Housing Needs Reports Program. ²	N/A	120 LGs (based on 61 approved applications)	30	20

¹ Data Source: Housing Needs Reports Program Evaluation Committee approval of funding applications.

² A 2022/23 target has not been included for measure 3.3, because the Housing Needs Reports Program is only intended to run for three years.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

Legislative requirements for local governments to complete housing needs assessments will strengthen their ability to understand and provide for the kind of housing that is most needed at a local level. The three-year, application-based \$5 million Housing Needs Reports Program will support local governments in B.C. who have not begun, or recently completed, a housing needs report. It is anticipated that the number of local governments requiring financial support will decrease over time as the initial three-year deadline to meet the legislative requirement approaches.

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2019/20 Restated Budget ¹	2020/21 Estimate	2021/22 Plan	2022/23 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Local Government²	308,258	110,263	253,472	192,512
Community and Legislative Services³	3,171	3,203	3,245	3,245
Executive and Support Services	7,393	7,512	7,633	7,633
Housing	486,102	505,858	553,716	585,003
Housing Endowment Fund	12,884	12,884	12,884	12,884
University Endowment Lands Administration Account	10,495	10,593	10,690	10,693
Total	828,303	650,313	841,640	811,970
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services	402	361	2	2
University Endowment Lands Administration Account	0	3,900	100	0
Total	402	4,261	102	2
Capital Plan (\$000)				
Housing	247,002	395,819	362,730	314,657
Total	247,002	395,819	362,730	314,657

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2019/20 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2020/21 Estimates.

² Local Government includes University Endowment Lands (UEL)

³ Community and Legislative Services includes Assessment Services, Assessment Policy and Support and Community Gaming Grants

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Appendix A: Agencies, Boards, Commissions Tribunals and Authorities

[Office of the Auditor General for Local Government](#)

[BC Assessment Authority](#)

[BC Housing Management Commission](#)

[Board of Examiners](#)

[British Columbia Safety Authority \(Technical Safety BC\)](#)

[Islands Trust Conservancy](#)

[Property Assessment Appeal Board](#)

[TransLink](#)

[Building Officials Association of British Columbia](#)