



VIA EMAIL

Ref: 62641

November 9, 2023

Their Worship Bob Wells
Mayor of the City of Courtenay
Email: bwells@courtenay.ca

Dear Mayor Bob Wells:

RE: New legislation to support local government housing initiatives

Over the past week, I have introduced several pieces of legislation to support local governments to get more homes built faster while enabling updated and new tools to effectively fund the costs of infrastructure and amenities to support increased housing supply and growth. Taken together, these changes are critical to getting more of the right kind of housing built in the right places to provide homes for British Columbians.

Last week, I introduced Bill 44, to support communities to deliver the homes people need quickly by allowing small-scale multi-unit housing across BC. These homes, including townhomes, triplexes, and secondary suites, can generally be built in a reasonable timeframe and blend more seamlessly into neighbourhoods. The legislation will apply to many areas of the province, and we anticipate it will allow up to 4 units in single-detached and duplex zones (or 3 depending on the size/type of lot) and up to 6 units permitted in single-detached and duplex zones close to bus stops with frequent service. It will also allow secondary suites or an accessory dwelling unit on single-detached lots throughout BC.

Bill 44 will also speed up the approvals process by moving away from spot zoning to ensure more comprehensive upfront planning and zoning to meet current and future housing needs. The changes include using a robust, standard methodology for calculating long-term housing needs for all Housing Needs Reports to ensure consistency across the

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province. Municipalities will also be required to update Official Community Plans (OCPs) and zoning bylaws to ensure their communities have sufficient land designated and zoned to meet long-term housing needs and continue to make these updates on a regular basis. The new legislation will also remove the option for local governments to hold public hearings for rezonings for housing projects consistent with OCPs.

Today, I announced new legislation, Bill 47, to support new housing to get built near high-frequency transit, and yesterday Bill 46, to ensure local governments have tools to collect amenity and infrastructure contributions outside of the re-zoning process.

Bill 47 will require local governments to designate areas near high frequency transit stations as 'TOD Areas.' TOD Areas are near SkyTrain stations and busy bus exchanges and are expected to be identified in 29 municipalities in BC. This is different from the 6-unit requirements in the small-scale multi-unit housing legislation which will focus on properties within 400 metres of bus stops with frequent service. TOD areas will include minimum levels of density, size, and dimension prescribed by regulation. Similar to implementing small-scale multi-unit housing requirements, local governments will have a comprehensive provincial policy manual to assist in making bylaw amendments consistent with the TOD legislation. Off-street parking spaces in TOD areas will be determined by the market; local governments will not be able to require off-street residential parking, other than spaces for other uses like commercial, spaces for disabled persons and loading spaces. These changes will help get more of the right kind of housing built in the right places to provide homes for British Columbians. A subsequent letter will notify the identified municipalities in December.

The new legislation will expand the scope of infrastructure for which Development Cost Charges (DCCs) can be collected to include fire protection facilities, police facilities, and solid waste facilities. It also allows local governments to collect DCCs for provincial highway infrastructure projects where there is a cost-sharing arrangement between the municipality and the Province.

The new Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) tool will allow local governments to collect monetary and in-kind contributions for amenities (e.g., community centres, recreation centres, libraries) to support liveable communities in areas where new housing is going. This tool will provide certainty and transparency for local governments and developers.

We are aware that local governments require tools and supports to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing in their communities. We are currently exploring policy options and additional tools, including the potential for inclusionary zoning, and I look forward to sharing more about this in the coming months.

I know that the new housing initiatives announced over the past week will take work to implement and require additional resources for your local government to meet the requirements. We have committed to \$51 million in funding for local governments to support planning and capacity to meet these new requirements. The funding will be allocated based on population and the volume of work needed because there are different requirements for municipalities and regional governments. The funding will be distributed in early 2024.

The Province has also provided another \$10 million for a second intake of the Local Government Development Approvals Program (LGDAP), managed by the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM). This funding is in addition to the \$1 billion provided to local governments through the Growing Communities Fund to support the delivery of infrastructure projects needed to support increasing density.

The Ministry of Housing is committed to working together and supporting every community as we move forward with new approaches and new ways to deliver the housing supply our province needs. In the coming weeks, we will be providing policy manuals detailing the site-level specifications for small-scale multi-unit housing and TOD areas. Further guidance will be coming in the new year to support implementation of the development finance tools and pro-active zoning requirements. Ministry of Housing staff will be in touch with your administration in the coming weeks to provide more detail about the changes and about funding and educational support and opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ravi Kahlon', with a stylized, flowing script.

Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Housing

pc: Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Honourable Anne Kang, Minister of Municipal Affairs
Teri Collins, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Housing
Kaye Krishna, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Okenge Yuma Morisho, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Tara Faganello, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Bindi Sawchuk, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Housing
Kevin Volk, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Geoff Garbutt, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Courtenay
(ggarbutt@courtenay.ca)

Links:

Local Government Housing Initiatives Webpage: [Local government housing initiatives - Province of British Columbia](#)

Bill 44 Announcement: news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023PREM0062-001706

Bill 46 Announcement: news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023HOUS0063-001737

Bill 47 Announcement: news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023HOUS0063-001748