

May 13, 2025

Delivered via email: [PLUM@gov.bc.ca](mailto:PLUM@gov.bc.ca)

Jessica Brooks, Executive Director  
Planning and Land Use Management  
Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

Brian Bedford, Executive Director  
Local Government Infrastructure and Finance  
Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs

**RE: Canada Community-Building Fund Requirements: Housing Needs Assessments for Municipalities**

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Sincerely,



Graeme Muir  
Planner III, Community Planning Division  
Development Services Department

Cc: Bruce Irvine, Director of Development Services  
Rob Bremner, Chief Administrative Officer  
Jeffrey Lovell, Director of Finance  
Carly Rimell, Community Planning Manager

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 2

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## **APPENDIX 1: Qualitative Questionnaire for BC Municipalities**

1) Please provide a brief history of how housing in the community has been shaped by forces such as employment growth and economic development, transportation, and migration. Please include any long-term housing challenges the community has faced.

Community Profile

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Page 3

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Port Coquitlam has a population diverse in age groups, ethnicities, languages and lifestyle choices. The median age remains relatively consistent with the regional average at 41. The City is seeing a trend in a higher number of single parent and non-traditional household structures, which is also reflected across the region. These changing demographic trends have impacts on the types of housing, community services, and infrastructure needs. Port Coquitlam has also experienced increased immigration, with 25% of residents considered visible minorities. Between 2011 to 2021 there was an 8% increase in the number of community members who were born outside of Canada.

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Page 4

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Changes in the population and a limited supply of undeveloped residential land have created new challenges for housing with the majority being infill in existing neighbourhoods. While the population is aging, young people will form a higher proportion of the population in the coming years and household size will continue to shrink. Many people want to live in ground-oriented housing but affordability limits opportunity, as such the City needs to work to support greater housing options.

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Page 5

---

## Housing

Housing affordability is becoming a real concern in Metro Vancouver due to increasing population and land costs. There is an increasing number of households spending 30% or more their income on housing. The affordability gap impacts non-census families, such as people living alone, the most. Median-earning lone-parent families are unable to afford a median-priced two or three-bedroom unit without paying more than 30% of their income, while median-earning non-census family households have to pay more than 50% of their income toward rental costs. No median-earning households can

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 6

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currently afford a single-detached dwelling. While townhouses and condominiums are more affordable, couple families (both with and without children) would pay more than 30% of their income toward shelter costs for a townhouse.

The relative percentage of single-detached homes in the City has significantly decreased with the rising supply of multi-family housing such as duplexes, townhouses and apartments. Higher density developments are currently concentrated in the Downtown and near commercial areas, parks and

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Page 7

---

transit services. Future development of new higher density residential will involve lot consolidation and redevelopment.

**Employment and Economic Development**

The number of residents in the labour force far exceeds the number of people who work in the City and a balance in this ratio is desirable so that more residents can work close to where they live rather than having to travel elsewhere in the Region. As the City grows it needs to respond to the changing

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Page 8

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needs of the community and determine what directions to be pursued and what actions to be taken to strengthen and diversify its economy. A healthy economy is needed to remain attractive to potential residents, visitors and investors alike. However, there is a challenge in providing the appropriate services and infrastructure to meet the needs of the community and it is important to ensure that the City promotes an emergent business industry, a wide range of business types and enterprises, an equitable tax base distribution, and the availability of local employment and business opportunities.



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Page 9

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The most significant commercial growth over the last two decades has been in the Dominion Triangle. Most new development in the City will involve the redevelopment of existing sites. Industrial development in the City have increased significantly over the last two decades. The Davies area and Meridian Industrial Parks are developed to capacity and a limited amount of industrial land is left for build-out in the Mary Hill Industrial Estates and Broadway areas. Industrial uses are now being developed in the Dominion Triangle. There are increasing numbers of people who operate home-based businesses, who are becoming a significant part of the local economy.

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Page 10

---

## **Transportation**

The transportation system must meet the mobility needs of the communities attaining cost efficiency and maintaining, or even improving the character and livability of the City. As land is developed and the population and workforce grow, the demand on the transportation system increases. It is crucial that the system match the pace of development so that it functions efficiently and enables us to be mobile in day-to-day activities. Transportation also supports the economy by ensuring the efficient

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Page 11

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movement of goods and services. Metro 2025 supports the City's transportation initiatives through Metro 2050, with similar regional goals of supporting sustainable transportation choices, focusing growth around urban centres and frequent transit development areas, and encouraging multi-modal trip generation.

In 2021, Port Coquitlam and Coquitlam completed the preliminary design for the Fremont Connector, a 4.7-kilometre new intermunicipal arterial road connecting Port Coquitlam to northeast Coquitlam.

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Page 12

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The proposed alignment follows the Fremont Street road allowance from Victoria Drive south to Lincoln Avenue, continues along segments of Devon Road, Prairie Avenue, and Burns Road before joining the completed segment at Dominion Avenue.

The Fremont Connector project brings important transportation improvements to support substantial growth in Coquitlam's northeast sector and provide relief from increased development related traffic

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Page 13

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that has strained road networks in both municipalities. Construction of the Connector remains an important project in both Cities long-term plans.

**2) Please detail the existing municipal housing policy and regulatory context, including approved housing strategies, action plans and policies within Official Community Plans (OCPs).**

The City has the following policies as it relates to housing:

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Page 14

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- Housing Action Plan (2015)
- Affordable and Family Friendly Housing Policy (2018)
- Density Bonus Policy (2023)
- Official Community Plan (2013) – Section 7.2

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Page 15

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**3) How have population changes in your community impacted your housing market?**

Household size is shrinking; renter households are increasing; owner households are decreasing; higher demand for family-sized units; affordable non-market housing is in demand.

**4) How have employment and labour conditions (e.g., prevalence of precarious employment, temporary or seasonal workforces, reliance on less predictable sectors such as natural resources, agriculture, tourism, etc.) in your community impacted housing supply and demand?**

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Page 16

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Port Coquitlam has several large stable employers such as Saputo, Sysco, School District 43, the City, and CP rail. The majority of employees commute to work from outside of Port Coquitlam. The largest employment sectors include: sales and service occupations, trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations, and business, finance and administration occupations.

**5) Please describe the housing needs and challenges of priority populations in your community, specifically for the 13 groups identified by CMHC: women and their children fleeing domestic violence;**



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Page 17

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women-led households (especially single mothers); seniors 65+; young adults aged 18-29; Indigenous peoples; people with physical health or mobility challenges; people with developmental disabilities; people dealing with mental health and addiction issues; veterans; 2SLGBTQIA+; racialized groups; recent immigrants (including refugees); and people experiencing homelessness.

Please refer to Section 2 – Who is Port Coquitlam? (page 15) and Section 5 – Key Statement of Needs (page 58) within the City's 2024 Housing Needs Report [here](#).

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Page 18

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6) How has your community engaged with priority populations? Please provide an overview of the methodology and assumptions used to conduct engagement with priority groups. Please provide a description of who was engaged, the type of engagement that took place, and the nature of the engagement (e.g. interviews, consultations). If a private individual has been engaged, please anonymize and remove any identifying features from the narrative.

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Page 19

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The City utilizes several different methods of public engagement, depending on the scope and scale of the project. Methods include: online surveys, stakeholder interviews, public open house, information booth at civic events (e.g. farmers market, May Day Parade), as well as presentations and discussions with various working groups and committees (e.g. the Mayors Advisory Roundtable Committee).

Stakeholders that are engaged include: residents, businesses, housing providers, social and community organizations, Business Improvement Association, School District, and Fraser Health.

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Page 20

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There is also engagement at government to government level with the kwikwə'əłəm First Nation and adjacent municipalities.

7) Please describe local factors that are believed to contribute to homelessness in your community (e.g., the closing of a mental health facility, high numbers of refugee claimants, etc.).

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Page 21

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According to the Preventing & Reducing Homelessness Integrated Data Project (IDP), 11,392 individuals across Greater Vancouver were experiencing homelessness in 2021. This amounts to 0.43% of the total population for the region, 2,642,825, based on 2021 Census data. Since Port Coquitlam contains 2.32% of the region's population, the homelessness estimate for Port Coquitlam in 2021 was 264 individuals with an estimated 407 households on the BC Housing waitlist across the Tri-Cities. Households in core housing need would be heavily impacted by job loss or a major unexpected expense such as medical emergencies, major auto repairs, home repairs, pet

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 22

---

emergencies, or unplanned travel. Unexpected job loss was experienced by some workers during the COVID-19 pandemic due to unexpected economic changes. Households in extreme core need are sometimes considered at-risk of homelessness because of the high proportion of their incomes going to housing.

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 23

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8) Please identify temporary and emergency relief resources available for individuals experiencing homelessness in your community (e.g., number of shelter beds, resource centres, transitional beds available). If possible, please indicate whether capacity levels are commensurate with need.

Currently, there are 20 rotating shelter mats, beds, and rooms available for people experiencing homelessness in the Tri-Cities area. City resources include, the Homelessness Task Group, various

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 24

---

churches within the community, BC Housing, Hope for Freedom, Innervisions, and the Ministry of Development and Poverty Reduction.

Based on the recent Housing Needs Report, there is a great need to continue to address the ongoing issue of homelessness and residents at risk for homelessness.

9) Some groups, including students, those in congregate housing, and temporary foreign workers, may be excluded from publicly available core housing need data sources. Communities are



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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 25

---

encouraged to use this section to describe the housing needs of these respective populations to ensure that all groups are represented in their HNR.

The City does not track students or temporary foreign workers data. Please refer to the link [here](#) for data provided by Census Canada.

10) How have average rents changed over time in your community? What factors (economic, social, national, local, etc.) have influenced these changes?

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 26

---

Rents in Port Coquitlam have increased 150% over the last ten years with an average rent of \$1,350. Some contributing factors include population growth, immigration, increased cost of living, and lack of purpose-built housing supply to meet the current housing demand over the last 10-15 years.

**11) How have vacancy rates changed over time? What factors have influenced this change?**

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 27

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Port Coquitlam faces a significantly low vacancy rate of 0.2%. Factors include a low level of new purpose-built rental projects within the community over the last 10-15 years as well as contributing factors listed in the previous response, see question 10.

**12) How have trends in core housing need changed over time between both tenant and owner-occupied households?**

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 28

---

In 2021, 12.8% of Port Coquitlam households were in core housing need. According to the Housing Needs Report (2024) Port Coquitlam requires 15,249 new housing units over the next 20 years. This includes 1,048 units to address extreme core housing need, 264 units for those experiencing homelessness, 1,325 units for suppressed households, 9,966 units to accommodate population growth, and 2,646 units to maintain healthy market demand. This reflects both current housing gaps and anticipated future needs through 2041.

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Page 29

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**13) In the last five years, how many affordable units for low and very low-income households have been built, and how many have been lost? If data is not available, please describe how the loss of affordable housing units may have impacted your community.**

Non-market rental demand has reached historic highs, with 27.5% of renters in core housing need. The City requires 1,136 new non-market units over five years to address affordability challenges. Port Coquitlam has 1,194 non-market housing units, with growing demand for this type of housing,

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 30

---

evidenced by a 74.7% increase in the social housing waitlist between 2018-2023. Currently, there is no data on the number of units that have been lost.

The City has renovation regulations in place within its Business Licence Bylaw as well as a Strata Title Conversion process in order to retain existing rental units within the community. Moving forward, staff will be reviewing a Rental Replacement Policy to strengthen existing policies.

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 31

---

**14) Please describe available affordable and community housing options and needs/gaps currently in your community. Examples can include:**

- a) Are any of these affordable housing units accessible or specifically designed for seniors, including long-term care and assisted living?

The City has a variety of housing types within the community for priority populations and age

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 32

---

demographics. Please see Section 3 – Current Housing Stock and Need (page 24) in the 2024 Housing Needs Report [here](#) for further information.

- b) Does your municipality provide rent supplements or other assistance programs that deepen affordability for households?**

The Tri-Cities has a rent bank that is operated by a housing provider within the community.



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Page 33

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Residents have access to this resource and can apply if they meet the criteria. Other housing providers within the community, such as BC Housing, provide rent supplements and assistance programs.

- c) Is your community in need of supportive housing units with wrap-around supports, such as for those with disabilities?

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 34

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Yes, the senior population is increasing rapidly, with 76% of renters aged 85 and older in core housing need. This demographic requires more downsizing options and supportive housing. The City Housing Needs Report details 59 supportive housing units over the next five years to meet the needs of the community. As of 2023, there are 407 households on the BC Housing Social Housing Waitlist in Port Coquitlam, reflecting the need for more non-market housing in the community.

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 35

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15) This final section aims to determine how your community anticipates using the results and findings captured in the HNR to inform long-term planning, as well as concrete actions that can address identified needs. Please use the following questions to describe how those linkages will be made.

- a) How will this HNR inform your OCP, housing policies and/or actions going forward? For example, if the HNR identifies specific needs in your community across the housing spectrum – such as housing needed for priority populations, units for large households in denser form

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 36

---

**factors, more diverse structural types such as missing middle housing, or more affordable and higher-density housing near transit – how could actions and changes in policy and planning help address those needs?**

As part of the City's OCP update to align with Provincial legislation the City will revise housing policies and associated planning processes. This will also include updating other existing housing policies such as the Affordable Family-Friendly Policy to align with current housing

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 37

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needs, while working with housing providers in the community to better understand how the City can help facilitate housing for priority populations and the need to different housing choices for different ages and abilities.

Refining the City's small-scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH) of duplexes, triplexes, secondary suites, and accessory dwelling units will be a priority in order to expedite the development approval process for ground-oriented housing. Advancing transit-oriented development,

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 38

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including creation of the Frequent Transit Development land use designation and area specific guidelines is also a priority in order to focus growth in areas where increases in density are appropriate based on context, proximity to transit and neighbourhood scale.

The HNR was also a key baseline report for the approved action plan for the Housing Accelerator Fund. The approved action plan included seven initiatives: 1. Development Approvals Process Review; 2. Increase Process Efficiency Through Use of New Technologies;

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 39

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3. Activate City Lands for Development and Explore Partnerships; 4. Eliminate Restrictions and Add Flexibility to Multi-Family Housing through a Comprehensive Density Bonusing Review; 5. Develop Grant Opportunities to Activate Housing Development; 6. Implement Pre-zoning to Activate Multi-family Housing Development; and 7. Identify Areas for Further Parking Reductions.

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Page 40

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**b) How will data collected through the HNR help direct those plans and policies as they aim to improve housing locally and regionally, and how will this intersect with major development patterns, growth management strategies, as well as master plans and capital plans that guide infrastructure investments?**

Many of the regional trends seen throughout Metro Vancouver are reflected at the local level within Port Coquitlam. The City actively works with various levels of government to ensure



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Page 41

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awareness of new data, housing resources and grant programs. As part of the City's OCP update, staff will review development patterns, strategic economic planning for amenities and infrastructure investments.

c) Based on the findings of this HNR, and particularly the projected housing needs, please describe any infrastructure gaps that may potentially limit the ability of your community to support forecasted growth unless they are addressed, or that could facilitate more complete

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 42

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and resilient communities. This can relate to any type of enabling infrastructure needed for housing, including fixed and non-fixed assets, as well as social, community or natural infrastructure. Communities are encouraged to illustrate how infrastructure gaps impact their housing systems and growth. Examples of types of enabling infrastructure may include:

Public Transit

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 43

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Through the Master Transportation Plan, the City aims to identify routes and existing infrastructure to support travel by various modes to key destination points, and determine how they can be improved or built on to expand the network. Another priority is identifying related projects that can be constructed together for cost efficiency, construction coordination, and connectivity; while avoiding projects with implementation challenges such as: high costs, private land, conflicts with other infrastructure.

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 44

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Water/Wastewater Systems

Ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place for future growth within the City is critical to increasing the supply and diversity of housing. The introduction to SSMUH has created an infrastructure servicing gap for areas of the City. The City has identified areas where anticipated growth is projected and have re-examined workplan priorities for infrastructure improvements, as well as areas where development will likely have to pay for upgrades to

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 45

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services. It is critical that the Provincial and Federal Governments provide support and partnerships with Local Government in order to address service gaps within the community and ensure that development is not stalled by delays in infrastructure capacity. Through the Housing Accelerator Fund, one of the initiatives will attempt to help bridge the gap between the financial burden for infrastructure on new infill development through an Infrastructure Grant Program that will allow applicant to apply for DCC waivers.

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 46

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Roads and Bridges

Ongoing capital works projects are prioritize based on critical need and remaining life of existing infrastructure.

Schools, Parks, Community or Recreational Centres

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Canada Community-Building Fund  
Page 47

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The City actively meets with School District 43 to discuss future growth within the community and areas where schools are at/under capacity, and where new schools might be proposed in the future.

Broadband Service and Access

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Page 48

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The City actively works with local telecommunications providers on extensions and upgrades to broadband service.

Climate Risks/Impacts

The City is currently working on a new Climate Action Plan to address climate resiliency for the next 20 years.



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Page 53

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**APPENDIX 2: Port Coquitlam Housing Needs Report (2024)**

<https://www.portcoquitlam.ca/media/file/2024-housing-needs-reportpdf>