

Metro Vancouver Housing Naming Framework

The [Metro Vancouver Housing 10-Year Plan](#) (2019) provides a vision to guide how Metro Vancouver Housing will **provide**, **preserve**, and **expand** its portfolio of affordable housing over the next decade. Naming housing sites is a way to celebrate the Metro Vancouver region’s unique history and diversity, and Metro Vancouver Housing’s tenant communities. Metro Vancouver’s practice is to name assets in a way that is consistent with geographical, topographical, historical, or cultural features of the local area and community.

PURPOSE

This framework provides general direction for the naming or renaming of Metro Vancouver Housing (MVH) housing sites.

NAMING PRINCIPLES

- **Names should celebrate the diversity of the Metro Vancouver region and MVH’s tenant communities** – MVH will select names that celebrate the uniqueness of our region, and MVH’s diverse, mixed-income tenant communities. Consideration will also be given to the housing site’s target population (i.e. additional consideration is warranted where the targeted tenant population is women, seniors, minority groups, persons with disabilities or Indigenous peoples).
- **Names should highlight features of local significance** – MVH will select names that promote a sense of place and belonging through geographical, historical, and/or cultural characteristics.
- **Names should reflect meaningful consultation and engagement** – MVH will integrate engagement and consultation into any naming or renaming process, and ensure that the input received is considered as part of decision-making.
- **Names should not be political, corporate, or discriminatory in nature** – MVH will not select names that are discriminatory or that have any political or corporate affiliation (e.g. naming after an elected official currently in office or for-profit company). MVH reserves the right to rename a housing site should the substance of an existing name no longer align with these naming principles.

DEFINITIONS

“Housing site” refers to existing, new, or redeveloped housing developments, buildings, or facilities owned or operated by Metro Vancouver Housing;

“Naming” means giving a housing site a name;

“Renaming” means replacing a current name with a new name (e.g. during redevelopment of an existing housing site); and

“Support” means, in relation to an individual’s name, a letter of support from that person or their family (if deceased), and, in relation to an Indigenous language name, a council resolution (or

equivalent) in support of the Indigenous language name from the First Nation or First Nations whose territories include the housing site.

PROCESS

This framework outlines the general process to be used by MVH when naming housing sites. MVH will work in collaboration with its staff and tenant communities, local First Nations, member jurisdictions, and other relevant audiences to ensure that there are opportunities to learn about the naming process and to inform decision-making. Engagement and consultation will ensure that housing site names reflect the local area, its residents, and Metro Vancouver Housing's mandate to provide safe and affordable rental homes.

Consideration of Renaming Existing Housing Sites

The process for existing housing sites will differ from that of new housing sites, given the importance of the housing site to the existing tenant community, many of whom may choose to return following redevelopment. Because of this, existing tenants, along with MVH staff will be a priority audience for engagement, to evaluate the benefits of renaming, and if applicable, be highly involved in the renaming process. While other audiences may also be engaged in renaming processes, existing tenants and staff would be the primary participants, particularly when renaming housing sites due to redevelopment.

Naming New Housing Sites

Naming new housing sites provides an opportunity to reflect and celebrate the local area and community. Within this context, research and engagement with a range of audiences will help to explore opportunities for meaningful naming of housing sites, that best reflects the geographical, historical, and/or cultural characteristics of the location, while carefully balancing a diverse range of perspectives. In certain contexts (e.g. partnership with an Indigenous housing provider, culturally-significant sites), there could be opportunities to explore Indigenous naming in support of reconciliation, guided by Metro Vancouver's Indigenous Relations Department.

Process

1) Research and Engagement

- a) Initial research will be undertaken in order to develop a preliminary list of potential names and/or characteristics that reflect the housing site's unique attributes, history, and location. Research may include methods such as historical, archival, or demographic research, interviews, and/or Indigenous and cultural knowledge.
- b) Research will be used to guide engagement activities which could include:
 - Internal engagement to gather feedback and suggestions from existing MVH tenants, MVH staff and other Metro Vancouver departments (e.g. using a range of techniques such as contests, surveys, tenant newsletters, etc.); and,
 - External outreach to gather feedback and suggestions from the member jurisdiction, community or cultural groups, and local First Nation(s), as appropriate;
- c) A preliminary list of names based on the results of research and engagement activities will be provided to the Naming Advisory Committee for further consideration.

2) Naming Advisory Committee

- a) For each housing site requiring naming or renaming, and once a site concept has been approved by the Housing Committee and MVHC Board, MVH will strike an *ad hoc* advisory committee which will include representatives from Metro Vancouver Housing (Planning & Policy, Operations, Maintenance & Project Delivery), and other departments as appropriate;
- b) The Naming Advisory Committee will review the preliminary list of names provided by MVH and propose a short list of names for further consultation.

3) Consultation

- a) MVH will lead a consultation period using the short list of names selected by the Naming Advisory Committee and summarize the input for the Committee's consideration when making their final recommendation;
- b) Consultation will take place with the following groups as appropriate:
 - i) **Community or cultural groups:** In cases where the Naming Advisory Committee is recommending a name with meaning or significance to a community or cultural group, MVH will consult with representatives from those communities;
 - ii) **First Nations:** In cases where the Naming Advisory Committee is recommending an Indigenous language name or a name with Indigenous meaning or significance, MVH will consult with the appropriate First Nation or First Nations and adhere to appropriate Indigenous practices or protocols for proposed names of housing sites;
 - iii) **Member jurisdictions:** MVH will consult with relevant departments in the applicable member jurisdiction to ensure that short listed housing site names fit well within the neighbourhood context (i.e. do not conflict with nearby place or street names), support wayfinding, support emergency response, etc.
- c) Where an individual's name or an Indigenous language name is recommended for naming or renaming of a housing site, such action must include support from the individual, family, or First Nation(s).

4) Naming Recommendation

- a) The Naming Advisory Committee will consider feedback received from research, engagement, and consultation and put forward its final naming recommendation to MVH senior management in a memo that includes the Naming Advisory Committee's decision-making rationale.

5) Communication

- a) Metro Vancouver Housing will publicly communicate the selected housing site name via the MVHC Board once MVH senior management has selected and approved naming or renaming of the housing site and the project has received a Development Permit or equivalent from the applicable local government.
- b) Following the update to the MVHC Board, a one-year transition period will begin. During the transition period, the site name will be written as "New Name (formerly Old Name)" or "New Name (Old Name)" across all touchpoints, including website, signage, reports, tenant notices,

internal documents, and project partner materials. A short description of the new name will be added in a highlight box at the top of the project web page.

- c) When the transition period ends, all touchpoints will be updated to show the new name only. A short history of the site name will be added near the bottom of the project web page, if required.