

# Using the Build Homes Not Barriers Letter Generator

The Letter Generator is a free and easy-to-use tool to help people voice their support for the development of non-market housing projects.

The BHNB letter generator was built on a template by Abundant Housing Vancouver <http://www.abundanthousingvancouver.com/>. Find more information here: <https://www.reillywood.com/blog/housing-projects/>.

It was inspired by activists working to protect Vancouver's Chinatown: <http://savechinatownheritage.org/105-keefe-development-open-house/>

## Who can use the letter generator

The letter generator is free to organizations advocating for or developing new affordable non-market housing in BC.

The tool is primarily intended to make it easier for supporters to submit letters of support during rezoning/public hearing processes.

It can also be used during other engagements and decision-making processes that align with the goal of creating access to more affordable housing and reducing barriers such as (i.e.):

- Submissions to Government on specific policy issues related to housing demand or supply (i.e. Provincial budget submissions), bylaws affecting people experiencing or at risk of homelessness (i.e. panhandling or RV bylaws)
- Submissions to community-based organizations holding land that could be used for affordable housing (i.e. school boards, churches, etc)

## How to set up a new letter generator for an upcoming project

To use the tool we require some lead time (ideally up to two months prior to the decision) and some information on the project. The information requested includes:

- Project Name (max 60 characters)
- Location (community and neighborhood)
- Project description (200 words max): Describe your project in a few paragraphs (300-400 words ideally), incl. links to any official project websites, Q&As and supporting documentation. The description should be succinct and outline why this project is important,

who will benefit from it, how many units are proposed at which rent levels and any special circumstances important to know for your supporters.

- Image: Incl one high-resolution image reflecting the proposed design
- Recipient email addresses: identify who should be receiving the letters of support

## How it works

We will use the provided information to create a specific site on [www.buildhomesnotbarriers.ca](http://www.buildhomesnotbarriers.ca) after contacting you to discuss the details of your project.

Once the site is finalized the letter generator will be made active and supporters can use it to indicate why they support the project.

Based on their selections a unique letter of support will be created.

The structure of the letters is pre-defined. It includes the following sections:

- introduction
- letter author's relationship to the project, neighbourhood, community
- list of the reasons why the author supports the project
- list of suggestions for improvement
- closing paragraph

Once the letter is generated, however, the user is given the opportunity to customize the letter and no longer has to conform to that structure.

The letter generator will be made active as long as letters of support are accepted by the recipients (i.e. the municipality/council/board or another identified recipient).

### Your relation to the project (choose all that apply)

- I would like to live in the neighbourhood someday
- I currently live nearby
- I work nearby
- I grew up nearby
- I have friends and family who live nearby

Other (use full sentences)

### Why do you support this project? (choose all that apply)

- I want to move to this neighbourhood
- I don't want to be priced out of the neighbourhood
- I want my friends and family to be able to live in this neighbourhood
- This project will make the neighbourhood more vibrant
- I want more homes in central, walkable neighbourhoods
- I want more homes with easy access to transit
- I want more below-market/social homes in Metro Vancouver

+ Add other reason

### What do you think could be improved? (choose all that apply)

- The project could have more homes
- The project could have more family-friendly homes
- The project should have been allowed without a rezoning

+ Add other suggestion