

Burnside Gorge Community Commitment

December 1, 2018

BC Housing's Commitment to Burnside Gorge Community

BC Housing commits to working effectively with a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) that includes housing operators, community representatives, government agencies, local businesses and other groups to identify and implement housing solutions that work for the neighbourhood while addressing homelessness in Victoria. The CAC will be responsive to the concerns of the community. This includes using an evaluation framework to determine and mitigate the impact of Rock Bay Landing, Douglas Street Community and the future Tally Ho Inn and Cedar Grove redevelopment on the community. BC Housing recognizes that the community has faced challenges with respect to the supportive housing and shelter sites. This commitment is intended to address existing and potential issues, as well as to be a living document as BC Housing and its partners remains responsive to the community's needs as they emerge. Due to the effective work and regular meetings of the CAC, it was agreed that an interim review on the evaluation framework is not needed.

Burnside Gorge Supportive Housing and Shelter Projects

Coordinated Access and Assessment (CAA) provides access and assessment to supported housing sites funded primarily by BC Housing and/or Island Health and operated by the following agencies: Victoria Cool Aid Society, Pacifica Housing Society, Portland Hotel Society and Island Health in the Burnside Gorge Area. The sites under CAA in the Burnside Gorge include RBL Transitional Housing, Medewiwin Apartments, Waterview Apartments Cedar Grove, Douglas Street Community, and Tally Ho. Through CAA, placement decisions are made in an accountable and collaborative fashion based on matching the most vulnerable clients to the residential program and building design that best meet their identified support needs and offering client choice when possible.

BC Housing has been working closely with the City of Victoria, non-profit housing partners and support service organizations, the Victoria Police Department, Island Health, and members of the community to address Victoria's homelessness population. BC Housing has committed to no additional supportive housing projects and shelters in the Burnside Gorge area beyond the following sites:

Rock Bay Landing is operated by the Victoria Cool Aid Society and provides drop-in services plus 84 shelter beds and 23 units of transitional housing to individuals who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Queens Manor is operated by the Victoria Cool Aid Society and provides 36 supportive housing units.

Douglas Street Community is operated by PHS Community Services and provides 25 supportive housing units and 22 supportive recovery units. A housing shelter opened on December 13, 2017 to provide 50 shelter beds. The site will be redeveloped in the future and, as per the City of Victoria planning guidelines, there will be public consultations on the future use of the property prior to any submission to the City of Victoria.

Burnside Gorge Community Commitment

Tally Ho Inn opened in spring 2018 to provide 52 units of supportive housing to be operated by the Victoria Cool Aid Society. BC Housing and Cool Aid have met with the Burnside Gorge Community Association Land Use Committee on a three-year temporary use permit application for the supportive housing at the Tally Ho. Cool Aid with the support of BC Housing is proposing to redevelop the site in the future to add a mix affordable housing for families, singles and seniors along with a significant component of commercial use. There will be no additional supportive housing on the property. Community consultations for the proposed rezoning are currently underway by Cool Aid prior to the formal rezoning application.

Cedar Grove, a former motel, owned and operated by the Victoria Cool Aid Society, currently provides 21 units of supportive housing, funded by Island Health. Cool Aid has received capital funding from the Regional Housing First Program towards the redevelopment of Cedar Grove. The project is subject to rezoning; a rezoning application has been submitted to the City of Victoria. The project will provide a new purpose built affordable rental housing development for a mix of singles including seniors, working adults and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Mitigating Impact on the Community

Implementing effective solutions that address and mitigate issues related to social disorder in the community requires evidence-based interventions. These include:

- Efforts that promote the use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in the development and operation of housing, commercial enterprises and public facilities and amenities in the community;
- Effective delivery and operation of housing and shelter programs;
- Effective assessment and access systems that support successful and stable housing placements with individuals receiving necessary support services; and
- Successful community development approaches that build relationships among a broad range of residents and direct action toward the health and safety of all people residing in the Burnside Gorge Community.

CAC members will work together to identify and review evidence-based solutions and add local knowledge to recommend approaches that address the unique characteristics of the Burnside Gorge Community. Interventions will include non-profit organizations, government agencies as well as local businesses and community groups working independently or collectively to address identified issues or concerns and implement solutions.

Current Initiatives

Several initiatives are currently underway in the neighbourhood, including:

- Douglas Street Community's housing and shelter design are based on recommendations from Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design completed by the Victoria Police Department. The shelter location at the back of the building, where there are no residential homes, lends itself to minimizing impact on the community. The design also includes an area at the back of the property where individuals can smoke out of the view of Douglas Street. There is also cart storage to accommodate carts of individuals accessing the shelter.

Burnside Gorge Community Commitment

- The Douglas Street Community shelter operations are a hybrid of housing and shelter. The model is different than the Rock Bay Landing shelter which provides drop-in services as well as shelter. The Douglas Street Community shelter allocates beds using a waitlist that is maintained by PHS Community Services. Homeless residents can maintain their beds at the shelter, reducing resident turnover, which facilitates stability. Intake of new individuals is done inside the building.
- BC Housing, Victoria Cool Aid and PHS Community Services Society have a strong relationship with the Victoria Police Department and they have assigned a Community Liaison Officer to the shelter at Douglas Street Community. Community Liaison Officers have a strong presence in the Burnside Gorge community. They also regularly confer with our non-profit operators and will continue to regularly attend community meetings. Operational funding to the shelter also includes funding for a “Community Clean Team” that carries out neighbourhood clean-ups and responds to calls from the community.
- Staff is employed 24/7 at the Douglas Street Community shelter to provide essential services (e.g., meal provision), as well as to assist registered clients in obtaining housing, and connecting them to referrals and support services. Support services include services to maintain housing, employment and life skills programs, medical services, addictions treatment, or mental health services among other services. These services are already offered at Rock Bay Landing to both drop in and registered clients. The future Tally Ho supportive housing will also have 24/7 staffing and provide support services to residents who are housed there. This level of support is aimed at both the needs of homeless individuals as well as the needs of the community.
- BC Housing has implemented a pilot program in Victoria in which integrated outreach teams visit encampments to support individuals to find housing opportunities and to ensure encampments do not expand. This model is a targeted approach to address encampments and involve many partners, including BC Housing, City of Victoria, Victoria Police Department, Saanich Police, Island Health, Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction, and non-profit providers.
- The 50 shelter beds at Douglas Street Community are in addition to Our Place Society’s 40 new shelter beds which opened downtown on November 27, 2017 at the former Boys and Girls Club. It is expected that the additional shelter spaces available at both shelters will reduce visible street homelessness and loitering in Victoria.

Evaluation Framework

An evaluation framework to determine the impact of supportive housing and shelter projects in the Burnside Gorge community will be developed in consultation with community representatives through the Community Advisory Council. The draft measures below will be discussed with the Community Advisory Council; community members will have an opportunity to provide feedback.

Burnside Gorge Community Commitment

DRAFT MEASURES

Objective	Strategies	Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure public safety and security • Educate community on reporting options to city, police, operators • Reduce onus on community to monitor problems • Regain trust of community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Victoria Police Department, as well as all housing providers to address community concerns • Continue to attend Community Advisory Committee meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community to monitor the number of police calls to the community including nature of calls using Police “Crimereports.com” to determine level of success of mitigation efforts. • An annual survey of all residents with targeted questions about their quality of life in the neighbourhood.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce street homelessness in the Burnside Gorge area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to use integrated outreach teams to target encampments in the Burnside Gorge area • Monitor the corridor between the two shelter sites at Rock Bay Landing and Douglas Street Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor shelter occupancy rates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of clients who obtain stable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support housing operators in providing gateway and support services to clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of shelter users who obtain stable housing

Commitments

BC Housing commits to:

- Continue consulting with Burnside Gorge residents and businesses as they provide input on the operations of Rock Bay Landing, Douglas Street Community, and the Tally Ho Inn;
- Continue working in partnership with Island Health and non-profit operators to address the complexities of homelessness, including connecting people experiencing homelessness to housing, mental health and addiction services;

Burnside Gorge Community Commitment

- The shelter at the Douglas Street Community will operate initially for a period of 18 months. The continued operation of the shelter will be subject to the shelter achieving successful outcomes in accordance with the measures set out in the evaluation framework;
- Create Neighbour Framework Agreements for Douglas Street Community and the Tally Ho Inn between BC Housing, PHS Community Services/Victoria Cool Aid Society, City of Victoria, Victoria Police Department, all adjacent neighbours and Burnside Gorge Community Association;
- Continue to attend Community Advisory Committee meetings; and
- Engage a broad range of residents and stakeholders in the community regarding new housing opportunities and future uses for Douglas Street Community and the Tally Ho Inn.

British Columbia Housing Management Commission



Authorized Signatory

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Title: CEO

Date: DECEMBER 10, 2018