

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BC Housing Management Commission and the City of Victoria
Responding to Homelessness
December 5th, 2007

1. Introduction and Purpose

On October 12th, 2007, Premier Campbell announced that the Province of British Columbia through *BC Housing* would be funding the design, approvals, and other pre-construction work required for the development of supportive housing in several cities in the province. This memorandum sets out the proposed partnership between the City of Victoria and BC Housing to undertake this work with a view to securing 2008 construction starts for developments in the City of Victoria on lands at Humboldt Street and Ellice Street. It also includes the subsequent provision of additional supportive housing units through the conversion of *Streetlink*.

2. Policy Context and Responding to Need

In 2004 the *Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions* was created and in 2006 the Province announced its comprehensive housing strategy, *Housing Matters BC*. In 2007 BC Housing announced the expansion of the *Emergency Shelter Program and Supports* including Outreach services. The Province has since contributed capital and operating funding to projects in Victoria that include "Our Place" - 45 supportive housing units and support services, and the acquisition of three apartment buildings for low income singles.

The Mayor of Victoria has commissioned a *Task Force on Breaking the Cycle of Mental Illness, Addictions and Homelessness - A Victoria Model*. It recently reported and recommended a housing first approach with targets for new housing and a reconfiguration of support services. The City of Victoria has also proposed to use City owned land to relocate and expand the services of the existing *Streetlink* emergency shelter.

Within this context, the City of Victoria and the Province of British Columbia through BC Housing will, in partnership, facilitate the development of two new housing developments and conversion of a third within Victoria that will be targeted at meeting the needs of homeless persons.

3. Proposed Sites and Development

3.1 Humboldt Street

BC Housing will make available a 2,423 m² social housing site on Humboldt Street to be developed as permanent affordable housing with supportive services for homeless persons. The site is currently occupied by 14 outdated social housing units and will be redeveloped at a density consistent with its zoning for approximately 53 apartments. The preliminary mix of self-contained apartments will consist of 45 studios of 33.4 square metres and 8 one bedrooms 51.4 square metres in area. Additionally there will be space for supportive services. The building is anticipated to be four storeys in height.

3.2 Ellice Street

The City of Victoria will make available a site on Ellice Street in Rock Bay for a new Emergency Shelter for homeless persons comprising approximately 80 shelter beds and 24 self-contained transitional housing units. Space for programming use will be included and will be designed to convert into an additional 20 temporary bed spaces for extreme weather conditions. The detailed program mix for this building will be developed by Cool Aid. Special attention will be paid to the building design so that the shelter bed space can be adapted in the future to supportive housing as new permanent housing replaces the need for shelter space. The building will be four storeys and include a kitchen, dining room and supporting facilities. The shelter is to be designed to convert over time to permanent supportive housing. The new shelter will

operate with a variety of support services designed to both meet the immediate needs of homeless persons - safe accommodation, nutrition and hygiene, and those services that will facilitate their movement to permanent housing, support services and where possible, employment.

The Ellice Street site is currently a park site of 2,006 m² and the City will remove the park designation.

3.3 Streetlink and Swift House, Store Street

The Ellice Street Shelter, when completed, will replace the *Streetlink* shelter facility operated by the Victoria Cool Aid Society on Store Street. The *Streetlink* facility, which was originally constructed to provide 55 beds for homeless persons has been modified to accommodate 80. *Streetlink* shares its current location with *Swift House*, which is comprised of 26 supportive housing apartments. The existing *Streetlink* facility will be converted to provide approximately 15 new studio apartments of supportive housing to be included as an expansion of *Swift House*. The kitchen and dining facility will be retained as support services to serve the enlarged *Swift House* that will eventually total 41 units.

4. Design, Program Development and Approvals Funding

BC Housing will pay all costs to design the projects through to the issuance of Development and Building Permits for each project. These costs will include all consultant fees, disbursement and permit fees. Legal fees or other costs associated with the change from park use of the Ellice Street site will be the responsibility of the City of Victoria.

5. Capital and Operating Funding

Capital and operating funding will be arranged through BC Housing and may include contributions from other partners.

6. Leases

BC Housing, through its agency the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation, will lease Humboldt Street to the selected operator for a period of 60 years and for a consideration of \$10. The City of Victoria will lease the Ellice Street site for a period of 60 years to the Victoria Cool Aid Society for a consideration of \$10.

7. Development Cost Charges and Municipal Permit and Fees

The City of Victoria will meet the costs of all Development Permit Fees, Development Cost Charges and other municipal fees and charges for these projects.

8. Municipal Approvals

Notwithstanding this Memorandum of Understanding, both BC Housing and the City of Victoria recognize that the City of Victoria retains the unfettered right to approve or refuse the applications for rezoning or development permits or development variance permits for parking and other items for both new developments. Applications for the rezoning and development permits and variances for the Ellice Street development will be undertaken by Cool Aid and its consultant team. The selected operator will undertake all approvals for Humboldt Street.

The City will designate a City employee to ensure that the approval process through all City departments is expedited on a fast track basis. The individual will be responsible for facilitating the resolution of any issues within City Hall with regard to the approval process.

The City of Victoria will provide permission to permit Cool Aid's Consultants to access Ellice Street, with notification prior to the execution of a lease.

9. Property Taxes

The City will exempt both the Ellice Street and Humboldt Street projects from property taxes as long as the developments operate to provide housing and services for homeless persons. The City will continue to exempt *Swift House/Streetlink*.

10. Existing Tenancies

BC Housing will notify the existing residents at the Humboldt Street site and will make arrangements to re-house these residents in appropriate alternative and affordable housing.

11. Soil Conditions

BC Housing will pay for an environmental consultant to review the Ellice Street site for soil contamination. In event of soil contamination, the City will pay all reasonable costs to remediate the site.

12. Programming and Support Services

Programming and Support Services will be planned to be in place at time of occupancy for all three developments. Support services are intended to be integrated, client-centred and provided through the new housing developments, consistent with the direction of both the Mayor's Task Force and BC Housing's Emergency Shelter Program. Support services will be provided or access coordinated by the non-profit service providers operating the developments.

13. Sustainability

The Province of British Columbia is committed to sustainability and intends that both Ellice Street and Humboldt Street developments will be carbon neutral and achieve LEED Gold Certification or equivalent as BC Housing may determine.

14. Consultants and Legal Counsel

BC Housing will fund the proponents for a team of consultants to undertake this work. BC Housing have selected the project managers to coordinate this work. Architects and sub consultants will be selected by the Cool Aid Society for the Ellice Street project and for the conversion of Streetlink. The selected operator will chose the architect and sub consultants for the Humboldt Street project.

BC Housing and the City of Victoria will appoint legal counsel with their mutual agreement, to act on the Ellice Street site with regard to the preparation of a lease and other legal documents.

15. Selection of Operators

Victoria Cool Aid as the operator (non-profit service provider) of the existing *Streetlink* facility will be selected to operate the Ellice Street development, subject to the approval of their Board of Directors, the submission of a satisfactory operating proposal to BC Housing and the execution of a lease satisfactory to the City of Victoria and BC Housing.

Selection of a non-profit service provider for the Humboldt Street building will be subject to a request for proposals to be conducted by BC Housing. The selected service provider for each development will be responsible for the programming, planning, design and approvals for the development.

16. Selection of Contractors

The selected operators will choose contractors in advance of construction to act as construction managers and utilize their expertise during the design and costing of the two new developments and the conversion.

17. Public Consultation

Public consultation will occur on the new developments consistent with the City of Victoria’s established policies and practices for development permit applications and rezoning. There may be additional consultation subject to the agreement of both the City of Victoria and BC Housing. Additional information regarding the two new developments will be available on a web site with access linked via the City of Victoria and BC Housing websites.

18. Communications

BC Housing and the City of Victoria agree that all public communications with regard to this Memorandum of Understanding will be the subject of review and concurrence by both parties.

19. Implementation

BC Housing and the City commit to work jointly throughout the implementation of these projects to make sure that support services (appropriate to clients needs), “good neighbour agreements” and other elements are put into place to ensure the success of the projects.

20. Outline Schedule

Humboldt

Operator/ Consultant selections	December 2007/January 2008
Design and Specifications	January - August 2008
Development Permit Approvals	April - July 2008
Resident Relocation	June 2008
Permits/Final Approvals	September 2008
Construction	October 2008 - December 2009

Ellice Street

Consultant Selections	December 2007/January 2008
Design and Specifications	January - August 2008
Municipal Approvals (zoning, dev permit, park)	April - September 2008
Permits/Final Approvals Construction	October 2008
Construction	November 2008 - March 2010

Streetlink/ Swift House Conversion

Construction	April 2010 - November 2010
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Preliminary Development Summary

Ellice Street Development	80 emergency shelter beds 24 transitional apartments
Humboldt Street	53 supportive apartments
Additional Swift House	15 supportive studio apartments
Total beds/apartments	172

For: BC Housing

For: the City of Victoria
