



Community Engagement Report

250 Terminal Permanent Supportive Housing and
Future Affordable Housing - Nanaimo, BC

March 2024

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Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this Summary Report is to provide an overview of the community engagement that took place in Spring 2024 for the permanent supportive housing and future affordable housing development currently in rezoning at 250 Terminal Avenue in Nanaimo. This report details how community members were engaged and key themes that emerged from the engagement.

Background

BC Housing and the City of Nanaimo are working together to build much-needed permanent supportive housing and future affordable housing at 250 Terminal Avenue.

BC Housing is currently proposing to build a 5-storey building with 50 studio homes on this site. These homes would be for single adults experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Nanaimo. BC Housing submitted a rezoning application to the City of Nanaimo for 250 Terminal Avenue on June 8, 2023. In a second (future) phase, BC Housing plans to build another 5-storey building with 44 affordable homes for low-income families, seniors and people with disabilities.

BC Housing will select an operator through a fair and open process to operate the new permanent supportive homes and future affordable homes at 250 Terminal Avenue.

Engagement Goals

Our community engagement goals were to:

1. Share information about the permanent supportive housing plans and associated timelines;
2. Build awareness about the importance and need for supportive housing in Nanaimo in response to 2023 Point-in-Time counts; and
3. Listen and respond to questions and concerns from neighbours of 250 Terminal Avenue and the greater community.

Engagement Overview

BC Housing held an in-person open house on Monday, March 11, from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm with 61 people attending (55 RSVPs on EventBrite).

The open house format was drop-in style, with BC Housing and City of Nanaimo representatives stationed beside poster boards throughout the room to help answer questions and engage with the community through one-on-one conversations.

BC Housing notified the community about the open house through the dedicated webpage for [250 Terminal Avenue](#). The City also encouraged RSVPs via their web page, and a [news article](#) about the development also advertised the event.

Comments and feedback from the Open House

Themes of comments and questions received from participants during the open house include:

- The overall design of the facility
- Safety and security of neighbourhood/community
- Supports and services
- Communication channels for neighbours
- The number of proposed units

Read an overview of some of themes from the conversations and feedback forms collected in [Appendix A](#).

Let's Talk Housing BC Webpage

The dedicated webpage shares information about the permanent supportive housing development planned at 250 Terminal Avenue (as well as the current temporary supportive housing). This webpage invites public feedback through BC Housing's Community Relations email address communityrelations@bchousing.org.

The page includes:

- Project details (including current temporary housing, Newcastle Place)
- Information on supportive housing
- Operator selection process
- Community engagement details
- BC Housing contact information for questions and comments

BC Housing Community Relations Email

All notification and presentation materials provided for this event included contact information for a monitored BC Housing Community Relations inbox. Using this address, community members and key stakeholders can ask questions, provide input on the project, and receive responses from BC Housing staff.

A digital thank-you message was emailed to everyone who RSVP'd through the EventBrite page. This included a request to reach out to BC Housing with any follow-up questions, comments or concerns. Staff will continue monitoring this inbox.

Conclusion

Overall, the session was positive, and community members communicated respectfully. The project team aimed to ensure that folks felt heard and to provide further context and information about development and the decision-making process with regards to the development.

We are confident that the tools used to reach community groups were sufficient. Mechanisms have been set up to continue receiving feedback and responding to questions or concerns. BC Housing will continue to monitor incoming questions and feedback from the community. BC Housing will also continue communicating with the Newcastle Community Association members to ensure ongoing dialogue around design and planning as the project moves forward.

Appendix A: Themes from Comment Cards

Security and Safety Concerns

Several comments expressed concerns about safety and security in the neighbourhood, particularly relating to theft, drug traffic, and crime. Project partners communicated that these will be managed through staffing, controlled access, camera monitoring, program agreements and policies for residents and more. Ongoing success of the housing includes keeping an open channel of communication between the non-profit operator and neighbours. BC Housing and our operators also continually seek ways of integrating the housing residents and staff into the community through volunteer clean teams, gardening projects or other holistic initiatives.

Neighbourhood Business Support

Mixed feedback about neighbourhood disturbances. Some highlight that issues in and around 250 Terminal, including disturbances in the night, damage to buildings, theft and crime, may not be entirely related to the supportive housing development. Some feel that local businesses have not been able to thrive in the area. Individuals highlighted the need for more support to ensure business owners feel safe and that their businesses can thrive.

Housing Placement

Concerns were raised about the placement of affordable housing next to supportive housing and how the two buildings will be integrated together.

Development and Design

Suggestions to improve the architectural design of buildings, requests for more clarity on the decision process around the design, and to find out where, if any, input can be taken.

Community Engagement

Requests for ongoing community engagement to be part of the decision-making process. BC Housing will continue to communicate with the Newcastle Community Association and collaborate wherever possible on issues such as fencing height or outdoor smoking area placement.

Appendix B: Poster Boards

Welcome

Permanent Supportive Housing &
Future Affordable Housing at
250 Terminal Avenue,
Nanaimo, BC

In-Person Open House:
Monday, March 11, 2024 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Join the conversation about:

- 250 Terminal Ave Rezoning
- Housing & Homelessness in Nanaimo
- What is Supportive Housing?

Visit stations around the room and chat with project specialists and representatives from BC Housing. Help yourselves to refreshments.



BC HOUSING

We acknowledge, with gratitude, that the area we are discussing today is situated on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

250 Terminal Avenue

Current Use: Temporary Housing with Supports



- The site is currently home to temporary housing with supports called Newcastle Place, which opened in 2018.
- Current residents will be moving to new permanent supportive housing at Cornerstone, 285 Prideaux Street.
- 50 units at Newcastle Place will re-open to provide additional housing with supports in the community while we work to develop permanent housing on the site.

Aerial photo of the 5 properties comprising the site:
250 Terminal Avenue North, 251 & 255 Mount Benson Street,
266 & 268 Bryden Street.

Proposed Use: Permanent Supportive Housing and Future Affordable Housing

PHASE 1: Permanent Supportive Housing

- 5-storey building with 50 studio homes as permanent supportive housing
- Homes for single adults experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Nanaimo

PHASE 2: Affordable Housing

- 5-storey building with approximately 44 affordable homes
- Homes for low-income families, seniors and people with disabilities
- Details to be confirmed



250 Terminal Avenue

Perspective renderings - Ron Hart Architect Ltd.



Perspective from:
South-West



Perspective from:
South-East



Perspective from:
North



Rezoning Plan - Proposed CD Zone

Note: Staff parking and garbage/recycling for Supportive Housing to be located in Future Affordable Housing underground parking.



250 Terminal Avenue

Fast Facts about Building Design

Proposed building height

- 5 storeys towards the west, facing the Terminal Avenue corridor
- 4 storeys towards Bryden and Benson Streets
- 4 storeys towards the east, facing the residential area

Use of ground floor

- In response to community feedback, we have removed commercial space at the ground floor
- Ground floor will now have the entrance, administration offices and an amenity room for residents
- Access for residents and staff only. There will be **no walk-in services**.



Smoking area

- Located away from private property
- Buffered by the garbage bins, a 6-foot opaque fence and landscaped vegetation

Property buffers

- 6-foot opaque fence along the west property line
- Added vegetation to provide a 1.8-meter landscape buffer
- Outdoor amenity space located 9 meters from neighbouring properties
- Amenity space separated by a 6-foot opaque fence, landscape buffer and bike storage shelter

Lighting

- Designed to minimize cast on neighbouring properties
- Directed only where needed to promote safety and accessibility
- Community considerations for placement, intensity, timing duration and colour



BC Housing in Nanaimo

Recently completed projects



6010 Hammond Bay Road
53 Homes – Affordable Rental Housing



Cornerstone (285 Prideaux Street)
51 Homes – Supportive Housing



Sunfield Manor (1135 Seafield Crescent)
62 Homes – Affordable Housing for seniors and people with disabilities



Samaritan Place (702 Nicol Street)
51 Homes – Supportive Housing

Selected projects in development

- Women's Transition Housing Fund Projects
- 355 Nicol Street – Opening 2026



Homelessness in Nanaimo

Currently in the community



- 515 people were identified as experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo.*
- At least 6,000 people in Nanaimo are living on the edge of homelessness.**

* Source: 2023 Point-in-Time Count report by the United Way and Canadian Mental Health. Note that the actual number is likely higher, as point-in-time counts do not reflect people who are couch surfing or sheltering in vehicles and who may also urgently need housing.

** Source: Nanaimo's Health and Housing Action Plan (December 2020).

Our response – Housing First



- **STEP 1** – Offer people experiencing or at risk of homelessness **safe, long-term housing** appropriate for their needs.
- **STEP 2** – Provide **supports, services and guidance** to maintain housing and achieve other personal goals.



What is Supportive Housing?

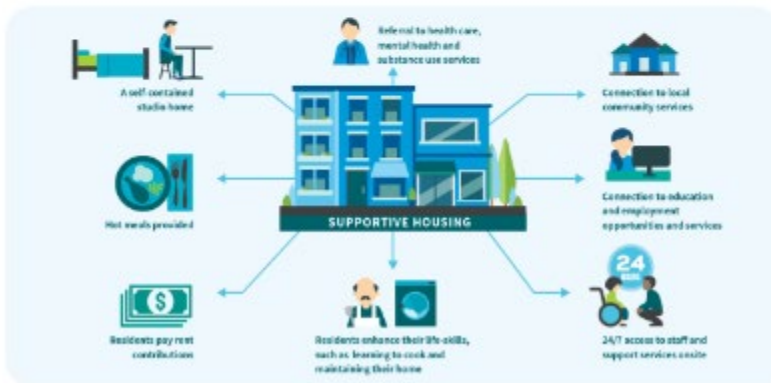
Subsidized housing with on-site supports



Samaritan Place, Supportive Housing at 702 Nicol Street, Nanaimo

- Homes are for local people at risk of or experiencing homelessness
- Typically self-contained studio apartments
- Culturally informed support services and individual case planning

What services are typically available?



Supportive Housing Residents

Who will live here?

- Adults over the age of 19:
 - including seniors and people with disabilities
 - experiencing or at risk of homelessness
 - in need of supports to maintain housing
 - all genders welcome
- Priority given to Nanaimo residents
- All residents pay rent and sign a program agreement around expectations and behaviours

Tenancing process

- Apply via Supportive Housing Registry (BC Housing)
- Assessed with input from local service providers (Coordinated Access and Assessment Table)
- People offered homes with services that best meet their individual needs
- Ensures a balanced resident mix



Safety and Security

BC Housing is committed to building a safe community for residents and neighbours by working with the City of Nanaimo and community partners



Did you know?

Supportive Housing in a community has been shown to:

- Reduce health care and corrections costs by 33%*
- Reduce hospital stays by 50%**
- Reduce ambulance usage by 64%**

*Source: Patterson, Michelle, et al., 2008. Housing and Support for Adults with Severe Addictions and/or Mental Illness in British Columbia, Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction, Simon Fraser University.

**Source: Malatest & Associates Ltd., 2019. Measuring Supportive Housing Outcomes Evaluation.



Timeline



Stay in Touch

We commit to keeping lines of communication open, answering questions and addressing any concerns.

Project webpage

To stay informed, please visit: letstalkhousingbc.ca/
Nanaimo-250-Terminal-Ave

BC Housing inbox

We welcome comments and questions by email to: communityrelations@bchousing.org

