



Rendering of proposed supportive housing at 355 Nicol Street.

355 Nicol Street Supportive Housing

Discussion Guide and Feedback Form

 Design Engagement

 April 28 – May 26, 2022

 letstalkhousingbc.ca/nanaimo-355-nicol-street

We want to hear from you



In the summer of 2020, BC Housing engaged with community members in the south end of Nanaimo about supportive housing opportunities in their neighbourhood. Feedback received during that engagement was used to shape and improve on the project designs.

Now that draft designs for supportive housing at 355 Nicol Street are ready, BC Housing is excited to share them with the community and once again collect feedback prior to our rezoning application to the City of Nanaimo. This round of design engagement is being held from **April 28 to May 26, 2022**.

Everyone living in the neighbourhood is invited to view the designs, learn about this supportive housing, and share feedback.

This Discussion Guide provides information about the background of 355 Nicol Street, introduces the operator, and shares draft building designs. It also includes a Feedback Form so you can provide your input on proposed improvements to a strip of City-owned right-of-way land, and design elements for the site.

There is also an opportunity for additional comments.

Please see page 9 for the Feedback Form or complete it online at: letstalkhousingbc.ca/nanaimo-355-nicol-street. You can also scan this QR code.



Ways you can learn more and provide feedback

→ Attend a virtual information session

- 6:00-8:00pm - Wednesday, May 18, 2022
- Please register in advance by visiting the project site below

→ Read the Discussion Guide and complete the Feedback Form online:

- letstalkhousingbc.ca/nanaimo-355-nicol-street

→ Drop off a completed Feedback Form at:

- 668 Centre St, Nanaimo, BC V9R 4Z4

How input will be used



Your feedback is important to us. Input received through this design engagement will help shape the final project design and will be considered by BC Housing, along with technical, socio-cultural, and financial factors, in our rezoning application to the City of Nanaimo.

Project Timeline

July 2020

- BC Housing - City of Nanaimo MOU to deliver new homes

August 2020

- Virtual Neighbourhood Meetings with the community

February 2021

- Samaritan House demolition

June 2021

- BC Housing - Snuneymuxw First Nation MOU to deliver Indigenous housing

May 2022

We Are Here

- Design engagement and operator announcement

June 2022

- Anticipated submission of rezoning application

Spring 2023

- Construction begins* (TBC)

Fall/Winter 2023

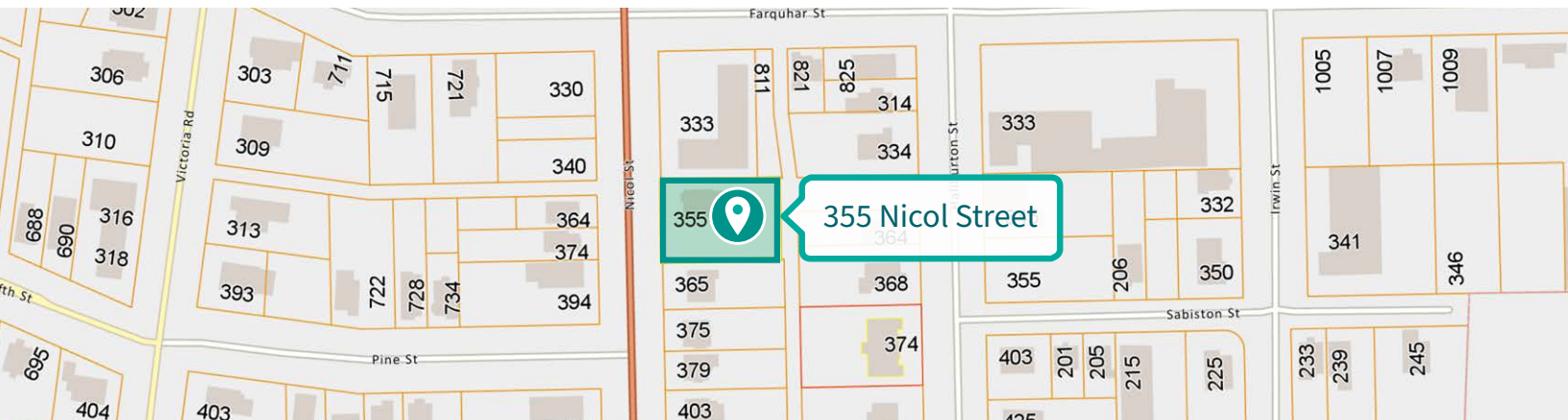
- Residents move into building*

*Construction and project completion schedules to be determined pending rezoning approval.

About 355 Nicol Street

The **355 Nicol Street** supportive housing project is part of a partnership between BC Housing, the Snuneymuxw First Nation, and the City of Nanaimo. Once completed, the new permanent supportive homes at 355 Nicol Street would provide long-term housing for Snuneymuxw members and other Indigenous people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

355 Nicol Street is the former site of Samaritan House, a building owned by Island Crisis Care Society that provided shelter and transition housing to women experiencing or at risk of homelessness. As of March 2022, residents of the former Samaritan House have moved to the newly-build Samaritan Place at 702 Nicol Street.



Located on the traditional territories of the Snuneymuxw First Nation, the building would have five floors, with 35 studio apartments, four of which would be fully accessible. It would be integrated with Snuneymuxw cultural supports and prioritize Snuneymuxw members first, followed by other First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people.

Collaborative Approach

355 Nicol Street is part of BC Housing's two separate Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Snuneymuxw First Nation and the City of Nanaimo respectively. Together, these landmark MOUs represent a concerted effort to build new housing in the community, with a focus on delivering housing for Snuneymuxw members and other Indigenous people experiencing homelessness.

These partnerships are a commitment to act on housing needs in Nanaimo, and the unique housing challenges facing Snuneymuxw members.

Zoning

355 Nicol Street is currently zoned at *CS1: Community Service One*, which allows for use as supportive housing. Following the completion of further site planning and in recognition of the urgent need for homes, BC Housing added a floor to the design of the building.

The added floor space would allow us to make efficient use of the site by creating more homes while meeting lot coverage requirements. These changes to density and height will require a rezoning application to the City of Nanaimo. As part of that application, we welcome community input that will shape our final designs and submission.

What is supportive housing?

Supportive housing is an opportunity for people to leave the streets and shelter system for safe and stable housing that will contribute to an improved quality of life.

At 355 Nicol Street, residents would have a self-contained studio home with supports provided on-site to ensure they can achieve and maintain housing stability. Supports typically include cultural supports, 24/7 staff presence, wellness checks, life skills training, employment assistance, and connection to other services. All residents sign a program agreement and pay rent.

In addition to the typical supports provided in all supportive housing, 355 Nicol Street will also have integrated cultural supports, provided by SFN, the operator.

Meet our operator



We are proud to announce that Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN) will be the operator of this new purpose-built housing. SFN is best positioned to operate 355 Nicol Street as they have the relationships, experience, and knowledge needed to make this housing a success. SFN currently own and operate over 100 homes across their four reserves and oversee capital projects representing almost \$40 million, with housing projects currently under development worth another \$50 million. They also manage an effective Snuneymuxw homeless outreach program.

Cultural support

Under the operational leadership of Snuneymuxw First Nation, residents would have access to the SFN Longhouse Learning + Healing Framework (LLHF). The framework includes what is needed to support physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional health, and includes the use of traditional foods, medicines, teachings, and access to ancestral cultural knowledge. SFN and BC Housing know the LLHF is instrumental in supporting Snuneymuxw street-entrenched community members transition into permanent housing. The LLHF is holistic, perpetual, and proven over thousands of years.



Rendering of east entrance to 355 Nicol Street.



Prioritizing Snuneymuxw members and Indigenous peoples

Snuneymuxw people are over-represented among Nanaimo's local homeless population. In Nanaimo, data suggests that more than one third of people experiencing homelessness self-identified as having Indigenous ancestry, despite making up only 8% of the general population. To help address that, the housing will prioritize Snuneymuxw members first, followed by other First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people. If any vacancies remain, SFN will work with BC Housing to identify potential non-Indigenous residents.



24/7 staffing

As with all supportive homes, staff would be on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 355 Nicol Street. They would be supported by a manager, who would be on-site Monday to Friday, in addition to various other staff who will provide on-site services to residents.

All staff would have the appropriate training and skills necessary to support residents. As required by BC Housing, these include crisis prevention training; First Aid/CPR; mental health first aid training; domestic violence and safety planning; substance use awareness and safety training; and trauma-informed training.



Walking together

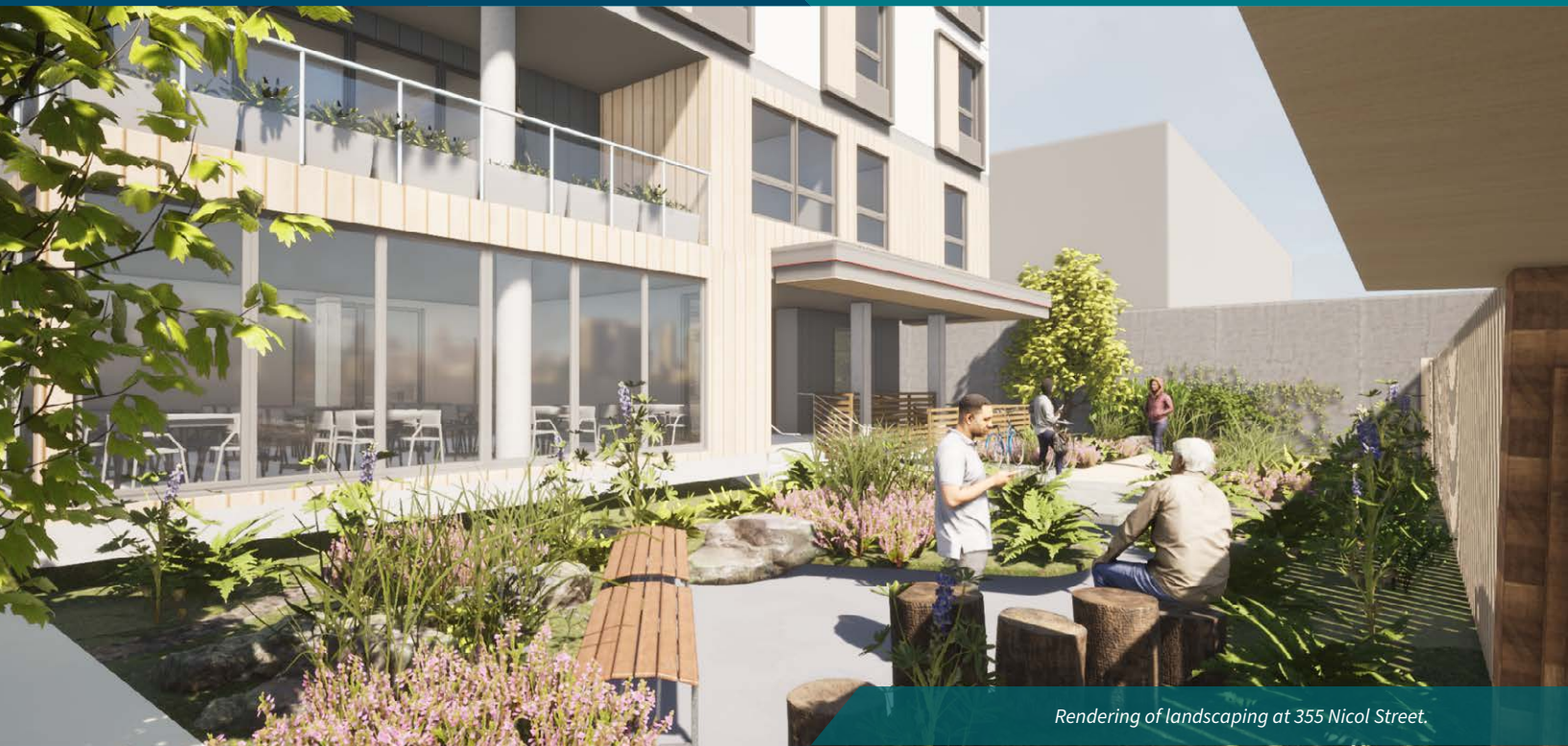
BC Housing is committed to walking alongside Snuneymuxw First Nation and working with the south end community to ensure the success of this new permanent, purpose-built supportive housing building.

Did you know?

Snuneymuxw First Nation and BC Housing would work with local partners and first responders to help foster a neighbourhood that is safe for all. While staff will be on-site 24/7, their primary focus will be to ensure that residents are safe and supported. Just like any other residence, issues outside the property may involve other authorities like City bylaw and the RCMP.

Prior to opening, we will share a list of key contacts you can call, depending on the situation.





Rendering of landscaping at 355 Nicol Street.

Building design and values

The building has been designed in partnership with SFN to provide a healing space that is safe, welcoming, and connected to the land and the greater community.

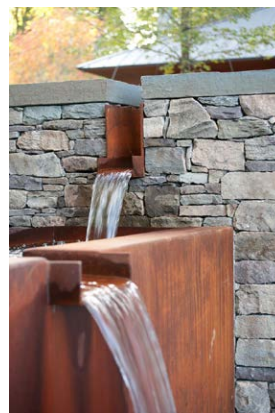


Culturally appropriate housing

355 Nicol Street would be a permanent, purpose-built supportive housing for Snuneymuxw members and other Indigenous people. The housing would be culturally appropriate and designed with Snuneymuxw values at its core. This is intended to complement the on-site support services that would help people transition off the streets permanently and heal.

Culturally appropriate elements include:

- ➔ A building design that is connected to the natural world
- ➔ Natural building materials where possible
- ➔ Landscape design centred on native and traditional medicinal plants
- ➔ Incorporating a sensory experience into the design elements, allowing residents to be seen, felt, and heard (For example, the landscape design includes a running water feature that will be visible and heard from the communal space within the building, providing a connection to the natural world.)
- ➔ Thoughtful spaces that promote physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional wellbeing



Quick stats

22,393
square feet

5
floors*

35 units,
4 fully
accessible

Indoor
program room

Outdoor
gathering space

*Subject to rezoning application

Parking and sustainability



We recognize that parking is an ongoing concern for residents in the south end community. At the same time, due to the limited footprint of the site, our designers have prioritized living and green spaces, believing that investing in such spaces would have a better impact on residents and the community.

We continue to work with SFN and the City to arrive at a final project design that balances parking and living spaces.

Sustainable solutions

Through the careful design of 355 Nicol Street, sustainable features have been incorporated into the building to incentivize active transportation and the use of existing public transportation networks. SFN will also work with the City and other partners to develop creative and sustainable solutions to the community's parking challenges.

1. Cycling facilities:



The building would have secure bicycle parking and a bicycle repair station.

2. Encouraging transit use:



SFN would encourage residents to utilize transit through programs such as shuttles and transit passes. These programs would be finalized as the building opens.

3. Existing parking facilities:



SFN would work with service providers to make use of existing SFN parking facilities nearby to reduce the number of vehicles on-site.



Traffic impact assessment

BC Housing is conducting a traffic impact assessment as part of our rezoning application. The findings from this assessment will help us work with SFN and the City to better understand the movement of traffic around the site and identify other potential solutions.

Feedback

This section of the Discussion Guide includes information on the topics for feedback and an opportunity for you to provide general input.

**Please provide your feedback by:
Thursday, May 26, 2022.**




Submitting your feedback

To provide your feedback online, please scan this QR code, or visit:

letstalkhousingbc.ca/nanaimo-355-nicol-street



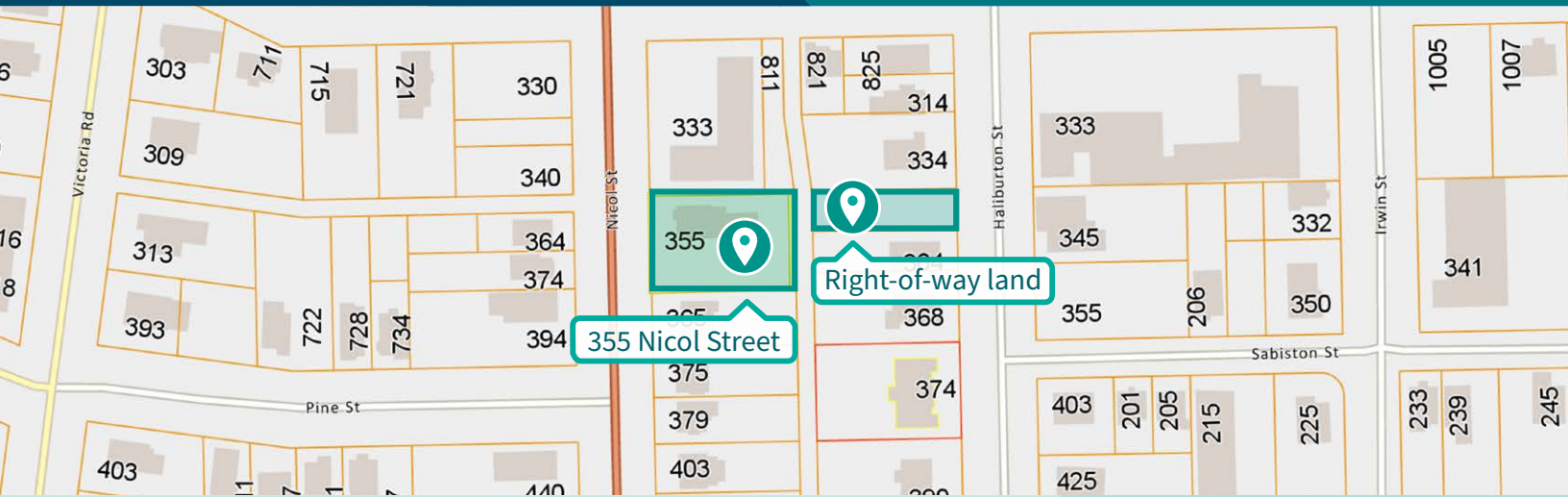
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Right-of-way improvements

The limited footprint of 355 Nicol Street meant that designers had to maximize every square foot and add another floor to create the units needed for the community.

At the same time, it was important that residents have a safe outdoor space where they can gather for programs, connect with the land, and benefit from native and traditional medicinal plants.

That's why BC Housing and SFN are proposing to improve the City-owned property (right-of-way land) adjacent to the east side of 355 Nicol Street (see map) for the benefit of residents and the community.

In recent years, this right-of-way has been used as a food forest. As part of this project, we are proposing improvements to landscaping and design that would make it a secure outdoor space for residents and a cared-for, family-friendly community space for the south end neighbourhood.

Improvements to the right-of-way would include:

- ➔ Enhancing the food forest with traditional medicinal plants
- ➔ Privacy fencing
- ➔ Addition of native plant species and a tree
- ➔ Rainwater features
- ➔ Seating
- ➔ Snuneymuxw art pieces

In our proposal, the outdoor space would be fenced to provide privacy for residents who are benefiting from the healing properties of the space. We envision a secure space where residents can participate in Indigenous, land-based cultural programming. This space would also be made available to the community for gatherings and events and to further their own healing. To balance the needs of both residents and the community, we welcome your input on how the outdoor space can best serve all our needs.



Question 1: How do you feel about the proposed improvements to the right-of-way?

1 – very supportive

5 – not supportive at all 1 2 3 4 5



Question 2: Do you have any feedback you'd like to provide about the proposed improvements to the right-of-way?

Design elements

While major features of the building's design have been fixed due to the project's advanced stage in development, we welcome your feedback on certain design elements.



Question 3: What design elements are most important to you? Choose all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use of native, fruit bearing, or medicinal plants | <input type="checkbox"/> Community art |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy fences | <input type="checkbox"/> Seating and gathering areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water features | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting around the building | _____ |



Question 4: Why are these design elements important to you and how would you like them to be part of the design?

So, what do you think?



Question 5: After reviewing the designs and information provided, how do you feel about the 355 Nicol Street project?

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 – very supportive | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 – not supportive at all | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |



Question 6: Do you have any additional feedback you'd like to provide about the project?

Deadline for feedback: May 26, 2022

→ To provide your feedback online, please scan this QR code.



→ You can also visit letstalkhousingbc.ca/nanaimo-355-nicol-street

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BC Housing collects personal information in accordance with sections 26 (c) and (e) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Your personal information is collected for the purpose of the 355 Nicol Street Project. If you have any questions about your privacy, please contact BC Housing's Privacy Office at fippa@bchousing.org.