

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Supportive Housing 3027 2nd Avenue, Port Alberni

June 17, 2026

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### Overview

#### *What is happening at 3027 2nd Avenue?*

- BC Housing is proposing to build a six-storey residential building with 55 new supportive homes at 3027 2nd Avenue in Port Alberni.
- Each studio home would have its own private bathroom and a kitchenette with fridge. Units are fully furnished with basic furniture and items like shower curtains, sheets, towels, etc.
- The building would be accessible. Eight studio homes would be wheelchair accessible with roll-in showers, lowered roll-under countertops, etc. The remaining 47 homes would be adaptable meaning they could be modified if a resident requires.
- The building would also include:
  - Amenity spaces for residents including TV lounge and outdoor area.
  - Central kitchen and laundry facilities (for use by residents and staff only)
  - Reception area and office space for staff
  - Fenced grounds and on-site parking (14 spaces)

#### *What is the need for this housing in Port Alberni?*

- There were at least 180 people experiencing homelessness in Port Alberni according to the 2025 Point-in-Time homeless count—an increase from 167 in 2023.
- As of March 31, 2026, there are 158 people on BC Housing’s Supportive Housing waitlist.
- When vulnerable people have stable housing with a range of supports, they have more opportunity to access things like health care, wellness services and skills training.
- This proposed development is an important step to address the urgent need to offer culturally safe and accessible housing with supports and services to people experiencing homelessness in Port Alberni.
- Communities are healthier, safer and more vibrant when all residents have basic needs met.
- While building these 55 units will not completely address the demand for supportive housing in Port Alberni, it will help provide permanent and stable housing for a

number of people which is expected to reduce street homelessness and contribute to community wellbeing.

### ***How does this project fit in with City of Port Alberni priorities and objectives?***

- City of Port Alberni's Interim Housing Needs Report (2024) identified the need for 176 "deep subsidy and supportive rental" homes by 2029.
- Construction of this housing aligns with priority 5.2 of the City's 2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan which seeks to ensure that "safe and accessible housing options exist for all members of the community."

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## **Supportive Housing Program & Residents**

### ***What is supportive housing?***

- Supportive housing is subsidized housing with on-site supports. Residents are adults (19+) who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. This can include seniors and people with disabilities.
- All residents apply to live in supportive housing, sign tenancy agreements and pay rent.
- To learn more, check out our [Stories from Supportive Housing](#) playlist on YouTube. These short videos show inside several supportive housing buildings. They also share stories from residents, staff and neighbours.

### ***Who would operate this housing?***

- BC Housing selected Lookout Housing and Health Society to operate this housing. Staff would manage the building and provide services to all residents.
- Lookout is a non-profit organization that has been supporting individuals in need for over 50 years. Every day, Lookout supports more than 6,000 people across B.C. Their housing and health programs aim to foster resilience, independence and community well-being.
- On Vancouver Island, Lookout operates housing in Duncan (The Village), North Cowichan (Sq'umul' Shelh Lelum'), Salt Spring Island (Dean Road and Drake Road) and Courtenay (The Junction).
- Learn more about Lookout Housing and Health Society by visiting [lookoutsociety.ca](http://lookoutsociety.ca).

### ***What supports and services would be provided here for residents?***

- Supportive housing provides many onsite support services to residents. Typical supports include:
  - 24/7 staffing
  - Daily meals

- Individualized case planning and resident needs assessment
- Life skills and employment training
- Access to health supports, including overdose prevention and community-based mental health and community-based substance-use programs
- Connections to community services, including assistance with Income Assistance, Pension Benefits, Disability Benefits, obtaining a BC Identification Card, or establishing a bank account
- Lookout would determine other cultural supports based on resident needs, and in consultation with the local Indigenous community. These may include trauma-informed supports to help strengthen Indigenous identity and support people’s physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health
- Some examples used in other supportive housing include land-based healing, cultural programming, traditional foods, Elder mentorship, as well as ceremony and traditional healing.

#### ***How much rent do supportive housing residents pay?***

- Residents of supportive housing pay the shelter rate (\$500) from their Income or Disability Assistance. This rate is set by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction and subject to adjustments.

#### ***Who would live here?***

- Residents would be single adults (19+) of all genders from the local community who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and who need supports to maintain stable housing. This can include seniors, people with disabilities and others.
- Residents would be mainly people currently residing in Port Alberni or, in some cases, people who have close connections with the community and wish to return home.
- We would also work with the Port Alberni Friendship Centre which operates the Walyaqit Tiny Home Village to determine if any people staying there are suited to move into this permanent supportive housing.
- To be considered for this housing, people must have an active application in BC Housing’s Supportive Housing Registry. Community service providers such as outreach workers or shelter staff often help people fill out this application. People can also apply online, by mail, by fax or by visiting a BC Housing office.

#### ***How are residents selected?***

- BC Housing works with community partners through a Coordinated Access and Assessment (CAA) process to offer supportive homes to people based on their individual needs, goals and the services provided. This process also ensures a balanced mix of residents in the building.
- A CAA table is made up of BC Housing representatives, Island Health, the housing operator and local community service providers and partners. In Port Alberni, these

include Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Salvation Army, Kuu-us Crisis Center, Port Alberni Friendship Center and Sage Haven Society. This working group would meet regularly to review supportive housing applications and identify people who would be a good fit for housing.

### ***How would you ensure that supportive housing residents are good and respectful neighbours?***

- BC Housing and Lookout commit to being good neighbours. We would work with residents and neighbours to foster good community relationships. This could include opportunities for engagement activities and volunteer programming (e.g., neighbourhood clean teams, etc.).
- Residents in supportive housing have rights and responsibilities under the Residential Tenancy Act. Supportive housing operators communicate clear expectations to residents regarding respectful behaviour onsite and in the surrounding neighbourhood.
- As a supportive housing operator Lookout will conduct wellness checks to protect both tenants and staff and support an inclusive and safe environment.
- BC Housing requires supportive housing operators to respect and follow all laws and bylaws and work to ensure that staff, residents and visitors do the same.
- BC Housing encourages supportive housing operators in building strong partnerships with emergency services, encouraging them to connect when they notice situations that may involve immediate concerns in or around the property.

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## **Development**

### ***Why this location?***

- The property was selected in consultation with the City of Port Alberni.
- It is important for supportive housing to meet people where they are, in the community where they already live. Supportive housing must also be located close to services, amenities and transit. These things are essential for people who are transitioning out of homelessness and working towards a healthy, stable life.
- Land availability is also a major factor in choosing a location for supportive housing. The property at 3027 2nd Avenue is City-owned, vacant and available.

### ***Did this project require rezoning?***

- Yes, the proposed project required rezoning from C7-Core Commercial to allow to allow for a mid-rise multi-residential building.
- BC Housing submitted a rezoning application on February 3, 2025. This application was approved in January 2026.

- Two sites (3027 & 3037 2nd Avenue) were consolidated as part of the development process. Following consolidation, the address is now 3027 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

***Would this proposed supportive housing project cause property values to go down in the neighbourhood?***

- Research completed in 2019 of 13 B.C. supportive housing sites showed that property values immediately surrounding 10 sites either kept pace or surpassed surrounding municipal trends. Property values for the other three sites were not notably different compared to municipal trends. View this research report at: [bchousing.org/publications/Property-Values-Case-Study-Overview-Report.pdf](https://bchousing.org/publications/Property-Values-Case-Study-Overview-Report.pdf).

***When would this site open?***

- We currently estimate that phased move-ins for residents would start in Spring 2028. This is contingent on building permit approval by Summer 2026.

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## Operations

***How would site safety and security be managed?***

- BC Housing Design and Construction Standards apply Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) practices in all building projects. In this building, security measures would include monitored points of entry, fob access, 24/7 staffed reception, security cameras and lighting.
- We would share a direct phone number for the building with neighbours when it is available. Staff would be on site 24/7 to support residents and provide a point of contact for neighbours.
- Lookout staff commit to working with housing residents and the surrounding community on an ongoing basis to maintain site safety and address concerns quickly and collaboratively.

***How would you address concerns about community safety?***

- Supportive housing is an important part of community safety. Having safe, accessible and low-barrier housing in a community means there are fewer people sheltering outdoors. This increases people's personal safety and well-being and contributes to community safety overall.
- Research shows that supportive housing residents:
  - Have an incarceration rate that was over 6 x less than people identified as experiencing homelessness;
  - Access the emergency department 46.9% less than people identified as experiencing homelessness;

- Have a 31.8% lower rate of hospital admission than people identified as experiencing homelessness.

*(Source: BC Ministry of Housing. 2025. Preventing and Reducing Homelessness: An Integrated Data Project. Government of British Columbia.)*

- BC Housing and Lookout are committed to being good neighbours. We also work openly with those who are best able to address safety issues beyond our housing sites. These include bylaw, law enforcement, or other emergency services for whom public safety is their mandate.
- As in any community, neighbours should connect with and wait for emergency services for any urgent needs.

### ***How would you promote the inclusion of this housing in the community?***

- BC Housing would make formal commitments to the City of Port Alberni to work together to support the inclusion of the supportive housing in the community. These are not yet finalized but often include:
  - Design commitments such as fencing and lighting
  - Operational commitments such as staffing levels and services, dedicated contacts and issues response pathways

### ***Would alcohol and substance use be allowed in this housing?***

- We would not deny this housing to people who may use substances or alcohol.
- Housing is crucial in a person's health journey. After a person has safe, secure housing, washrooms and meals, they are in a much better position to improve their well-being, including accessing health care and substance use treatments.
- If residents choose to use substances on site, staff follow a harm-reduction approach. Staff would also link residents to stabilization and recovery services as appropriate based on their health and wellness goals.
- It is also important to note not all supportive housing residents use substances, and this would not be a substance-use recovery facility.

### ***What is a harm reduction approach?***

- Harm reduction is an important and life-saving health care practice. It aims to educate people about how to keep themselves safe and minimize death, disease and injury from any activity or behavior that involves risk.
- Harm reduction is an important life-saving health care practice, especially in the current toxic drug crisis. People using substances alone or outside does not benefit communities and often leads to tragic outcomes.

- Harm reduction programs and services are proven to not only reduce harms such as infections, injuries and deaths, they have also been proven to increase social and vocational functioning, and to reduce public disruption.
- The operator would work with Island Health in determining best practices to promote health and safety among residents. If and when residents are ready to seek substance-use treatment, staff on site would connect them with the appropriate support services.
- Learn more about the importance of harm reduction and how it works by visiting [islandhealth.ca/our-services/mental-health-substance-use-services/harm-reduction-substance-use](https://islandhealth.ca/our-services/mental-health-substance-use-services/harm-reduction-substance-use).

### ***What training does BC Housing require for operator staff?***

- Staff training, as required by BC Housing, includes, but is not limited to:
  - Crisis prevention training and/or de-escalation training, non-violent intervention
  - First Aid/CPR
  - Indigenous awareness training
  - Mental health first aid training
  - Domestic violence and safety planning
  - Safety for women in co-ed shelters training
  - Substance use awareness and safety training, including Naloxone training
  - LGBT2SQIA+ awareness training
  - Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT) training
  - Trauma-informed practice training
  - Staff self-care training
  - BC Housing database training

### ***Who would be responsible for keeping the building and property clean?***

- Lookout staff will support residents to keep the site clean.
- We would share a direct phone number for the building with neighbours when it is available. Staff would be on site 24/7 to provide a point of contact for neighbours and address any cleanliness concerns quickly and collaboratively.
- The City of Port Alberni would continue to maintain public spaces as in any other neighbourhood.

### ***Would supportive housing have an impact on nearby schools or daycares in my neighbourhood?***

- BC Housing has successfully developed various types of housing with supports across BC. There are over 210 provincially funded sites that operate within 500 metres of a school. More than half of these have been operating for over 10 years.

- Lookout would work closely with neighbours on an ongoing basis to ensure the smooth integration of the supportive housing into the neighbourhood.

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## Community Engagement

### *What outreach has been done to notify and engage with the community about this proposed project?*

- We would share any updates about this project as soon as they are available.
  - **January 29, 2025** – Project announced
    - [Letter](#) mailed to neighbours and local businesses within 200 m
  - **February 25, 2025** – Community Open House invitations sent
    - [Letter](#) mailed to neighbours and local businesses within 200 m
  - **April 1, 2025** – Community Open House at the Best Western Plus Barclay Hotel
    - [Poster Boards](#)
    - [Engagement Summary Report](#) published
  - **February 17, 2026** – City of Port Alberni met in-person with the Right Place, Right Time (RPRP) community group to discuss the proposed project and answer questions.
  - **March 6, 2026** – BC Housing led Port Alberni Mayor and Council on a tour of a representative purpose-built supportive housing site, Orca Place in Parksville
  - In all communications, BC Housing has encouraged neighbours to email any questions and comments about the project to **communityrelations@bchousing.org** and we will reply to the best of our ability.

### *What else is the Province doing to improve housing affordability in Port Alberni?*

- Since 2017, the Province has more than 99,000 homes that have been delivered or are underway, including 684 homes in Port Alberni, 477 of which are open. Some recent examples include:
  - **Citaapi Mahtii, 4210 Cedarwood Drive** - 35 affordable homes, 70% of which is subsidized, opened in Oct. 2025.
  - **OOMIQSU** - Port Alberni Aboriginal Mother's Centre - 16 affordable subsidized homes housing for Indigenous mothers and children, opened in Sept. 2024.
  - **Wiiksahiqu?it** – 22 affordable subsidized homes housing for women and children leaving violence, opened in Nov. 2023.
  - **2866 4th Avenue** – 40 affordable homes by M'akola Housing Society, 70% of which will be subsidized, currently under construction.