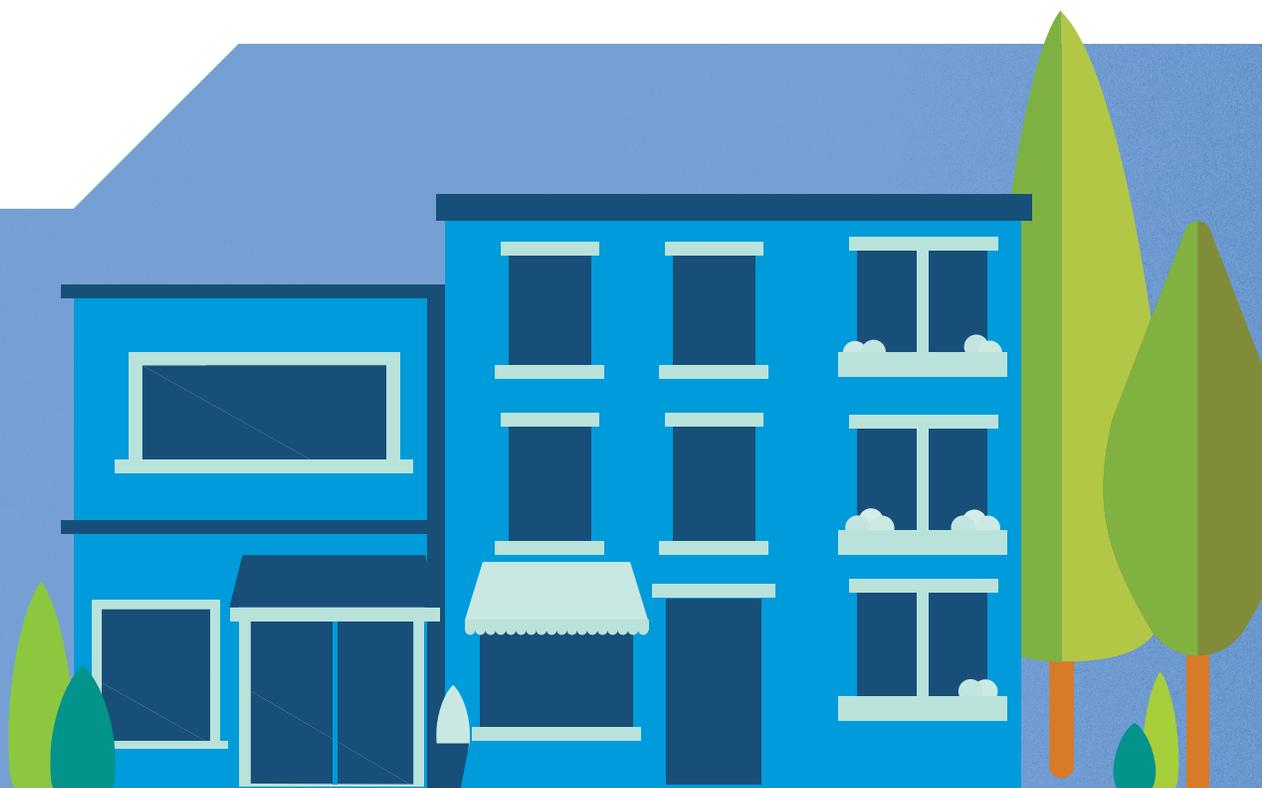




Early Engagement Summary Report

Supportive Housing in Vancouver Southeast Marine Drive at Beatrice Street

April 2022





Early Engagement Summary Report

Supportive Housing in Vancouver Southeast Marine Drive at Beatrice Street

April 2022

Table of Contents

Purpose	3
Background.....	3
Early Engagement Program Goals	4
What We Heard.....	7
Next Steps	9
Appendix: Key Themes and Responses.....	10





Purpose

This Early Engagement Summary Report provides an overview of community and stakeholder engagement activities completed to date. It includes a summary of feedback that was received during the early planning stages for the proposed supportive housing at Renfrew Street at East 14th Avenue in Vancouver.

BC Housing, the City of Vancouver and project partners, began early engagement in March 2022. This early engagement will inform the development of the rezoning application, which is expected to be submitted to the City of Vancouver in Spring 2022.

This level of early engagement is aligned with BC Housing’s best practices for community engagement and exceeds the public consultation requirements of the City of Vancouver’s rezoning process. When a rezoning application is submitted to the City of Vancouver, a further City-led public consultation process will take place.

This report includes a summary of key themes that have emerged from the early community engagement process which included two 90-minute Neighbourhood Dialogues, a four-week Public Comment Period, an ongoing comment form on the BC Housing Let’s Talk webpage, and a Community Liaison available to receive feedback and answer questions by phone or email.

Frequently asked questions and corresponding responses provided by BC Housing during the engagement period have been included as an Appendix to this report.

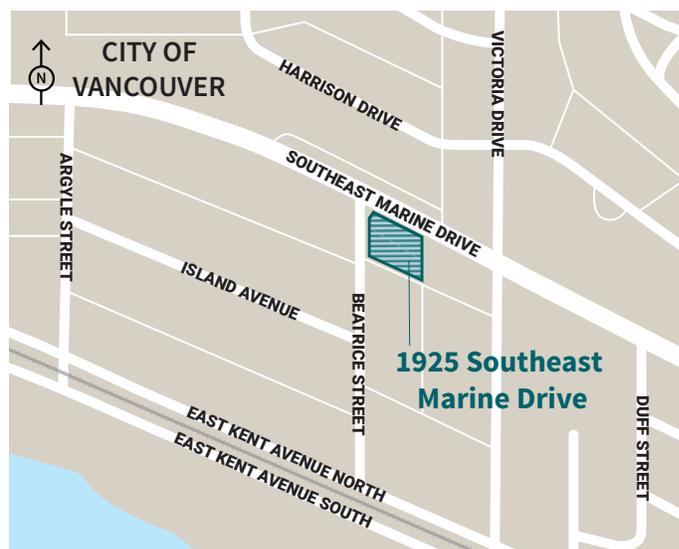
Background

BC Housing is working with the City of Vancouver on a proposal to build new supportive housing at 1925 Southeast Marine Drive. Prior to submitting a rezoning application to the City of Vancouver, BC Housing engaged with neighbours, local groups and the community to introduce the proposed project and listen to feedback.

BC Housing is proposing a building that would offer approximately 72 studio homes with supports for adults, seniors and people with disabilities who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness with a priority for people in the local community. Supports may include mental health care, medical care, education and training, reconnecting to culture, life skills training, substance use services, and help accessing income assistance, disability benefits, pensions, identification or setting up a bank account.

BC Housing is committed to bringing people inside and reducing the number of people outside struggling to survive. When a person chooses to live in supportive housing, they have a warm, safe place to call home, can access the necessities of life such as food, washrooms and laundry, can begin to heal from the damage caused by living outside and can strengthen community connections.

If approved by Mayor and Council, construction is expected to begin in early 2023.





Early Engagement Program Goals

The goals of the early engagement program for 1925 Southeast Marine Drive at Beatrice Street were to:

1. **Provide a variety of opportunities for neighbours, local groups and the community to learn** about the proposed housing and provide feedback.



2. **Build awareness** of the need for housing with supports for people experiencing homelessness in Vancouver.



3. **Explore ways to build an inclusive community** where everyone has an opportunity for a safe and healthy place to live.



4. **Collect feedback** on the proposed design of the site to inform the rezoning application.





Opportunities for Community Feedback

BC Housing reached out to engage residents early in the planning process using a variety of channels to ensure the community had the opportunity to learn about the project and provide comments.

Community members were invited to ask questions and provide input to the project through:

Virtual Neighbourhood Dialogue Sessions



21 community members attended two 90-minute sessions where they viewed short presentations on the topics of homelessness, learned about supportive housing and the project details, and engaged in roundtable discussions with project staff.

Small-group Meetings with Local Organizations



BC Housing and City of Vancouver staff offered to meet with members of local businesses to discuss the proposed supportive housing project and listen to questions and feedback.

Public Comment Period



BC Housing provided a Public Comment Period that was hosted on its webpage from February 21 to March 18, 2022. Community members had an opportunity to submit feedback about the proposed supportive housing directly to the project team. As part of the Public Comment Period, a self-guided presentation with information about the development proposal was available to review.

Let's Talk Housing Webpage



BC Housing invited public feedback through Let's Talk Housing, an online comment form on the project webpage. BC Housing staff continue to receive input through this comment form.

BC Housing Community Liaison Email and Phone



A Community Liaison continues to be available Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 4:00pm, for community members to contact via phone or email. The Community Liaison's contact information was included on all notification and presentation materials so that community members could submit comments and questions on the project and receive responses from BC Housing. BC Housing continues to accept calls and emails through the Community Liaison.



Engagement Activities and Timeline

The table below describes engagement activities related to the project.

Date	Activity	Description
February 7, 2022	BC Housing and the City of Vancouver delivered postcards to site neighbours	BC Housing and the City of Vancouver hand-delivered postcards to residential and business neighbours within a 2-block radius of the proposed site to introduce the project. The postcards included a link to the Let's Talk Housing webpage, the Community Liaison contact information and an invitation to the Neighbourhood Dialogue meetings in March.
February 7, 2022	BC Housing and the City of Vancouver reached out to local organizations	BC Housing and the City of Vancouver emailed community organizations and other identified stakeholders to provide information about the project and offer virtual meetings with BC Housing and the City of Vancouver staff. Community organizations and stakeholders included child care centres, care homes and facilities, and community centres.
February 7, 2022	BC Housing and City of Vancouver staff visited local businesses with project information	BC Housing and City of Vancouver staff visited local businesses in person with project information to answer any early questions about the supportive housing proposal.
February 7, 2022	Let's Talk Housing Renfrew Street webpage launch	BC Housing launched a webpage to receive input from community members and to share project information https://letstalkhousingbc.ca/vancouver-marine .
February 7, 2022	Joint site announcement by BC Housing and the City of Vancouver	A news release was issued to inform the public about the proposal for the new permanent purpose-built supportive housing site.
February 8, 2022	Fact Sheets delivered to businesses neighbouring the project	BC Housing mailed fact sheets about the housing proposal to residents and businesses within a 5-block radius of the proposed housing.
February 9, 2022	Site Signage	An information sign was installed at the project site.
February 21 to March 18, 2022	Public Comment Period	A four-week Public Comment Period was hosted on the BC Housing Let's Talk webpage where community members could submit feedback about the proposed supportive housing. As part of the Public Comment Period, a self-guided presentation with information about the development proposal was available for review.
March 8 and 9, 2022	Neighbourhood Dialogue Sessions	Two virtual Neighbourhood Dialogues were held with neighbours. BC Housing and City of Vancouver staff provided information about supportive housing and pathways to homelessness. Community members had the opportunity to ask questions about the proposed project and provide input.

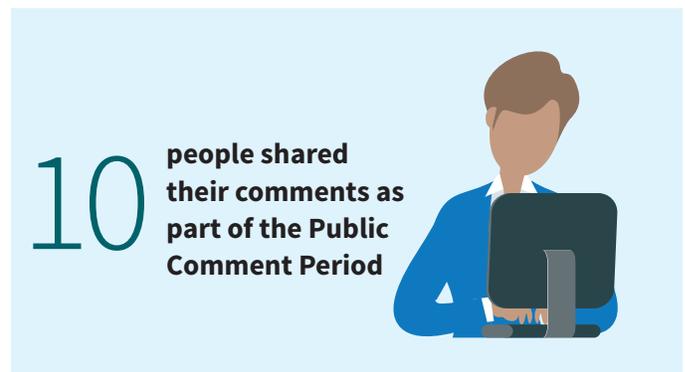


What We Heard

Participant Snapshot

BC Housing and the City of Vancouver worked together to ensure meaningful early engagement with neighbourhood residents through a process that is robust, fair and equitable, aligned with BC Housing’s best practices for community engagement and precedes the public consultation requirements of the City of Vancouver’s rezoning process.

Community members and stakeholders participated in the engagement program in a variety of ways:



Guidelines for Respectful Dialogue

BC Housing wants to hear from everyone who wants to share their perspective in a safe and respectful way.

All conversations — in person, over the phone, and/or online — are meant to be a place where people can share and listen.

We expect everyone will refrain from using language or acting in a way that is discriminating, threatening, abusive, racist or otherwise disrespectful. Discrimination or abusive language of any kind is not tolerated.



Summary of Feedback

The following themes have emerged from community feedback on the housing proposal to date:

Some community members expressed general support for the project. Comments included:

- I am very supportive of this housing project. There are people experiencing homelessness in our neighbourhood who should be provided with housing
- Happy to see this proposal given that there are a lot of people who are struggling and need a home to support their overall well-being

Some community members expressed general opposition to the project. Comments included:

- Please reconsider the location of this housing. We have no amenities here and it's a difficult place to live with limited transit
- This is not a suitable location for the proposed project

A few community members provided comments related to the design of the building and site. Feedback included:

- Suggestions that a six-storey building is too high for the current neighbourhood
- A concern about loss of green space in the neighbourhood
- Concerns about the number of parking spaces included in the proposal and increased traffic in the neighbourhood
- Concerns about lack of sidewalks and placement of new sidewalks, as part of the development
- A suggestion that future residents have an opportunity to personalize their new homes before moving in
- Suggestions for room designs including a raised loft bed or murphy bed and an outside window ledge for plants

Many community members stressed the need to ensure adequate supports are in place for the residents in the building. Feedback included:

- Concerns over lack of amenities in the local area for residents such as convenience stores, grocery stores and restaurants
- Concern over limited transit options in the neighbourhood
- Suggestion that residents should be able to receive support for mental health and addictions
- Concern for the ability for seniors and people with mobility challenges to navigate the hills in the neighbourhood

Some community members expressed a desire to see the building designed for families or seniors rather than individuals. Feedback included:

- Suggestions that the housing would fit better in the neighbourhood if the units were two or more bedrooms and designed for families
- Suggestions that the housing be designed for seniors

Some community members expressed concern over existing community safety issues and neighbourhood cleanliness. Feedback included:

- Ensuring proper disposal of garbage on and around the site
- A concern that current thefts will increase



Next Steps

Upcoming phases of the community engagement process include:





Appendix: Frequently Asked Questions and Responses

The following questions emerged throughout the early engagement period. The responses from BC Housing are provided below.

Questions about **who would live in the building**



A

The homes are proposed to be permanent supportive housing which is designed for adults who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. They can be young people, seniors, people with disabilities and anyone who has experienced trauma, poverty or struggled with the high cost of housing.

If approved, the non-profit housing operator, The Kettle Society, and its partners will work together to create a healthy and inclusive community inside the building and ensure future tenants are connected with supports that best meet their needs.

All residents in supportive housing have made a choice to live there, pay rent, and are able to access the supports provided by non-profit housing operators, health care professionals and other community-based programs.

Questions about **support services**



A

If approved, the building's supportive housing program for residents would be managed by The Kettle Society. The Kettle Society brings professional building management experience and expertise providing customized supports tailored to meet the unique needs of each resident. The supports may include mental health care, medical care, education and training, reconnecting to culture, life skills training, substance use services, and help accessing income assistance, disability benefits, pensions, identification or setting up a bank account.

Supportive housing offers residents a vital connection to programs and services to support their health and wellbeing. Supportive housing is for young people, seniors, people with disabilities, and anyone who has experienced trauma, poverty, or struggled with the high cost of housing.

Some supports may be offered in the building, while others are offered in the local community.



Questions about **building height**



A

BC Housing and partners aim to make the most efficient use of space at any given site and provide housing to as many people as possible when building supportive housing. In this specific area and under specific rental housing policies in Vancouver, this building qualifies for additional zoning height up to six-storeys.

This site requires a rezoning through the City of Vancouver where building design elements, such as height, will be considered. Once a rezoning application is submitted to the City of Vancouver, there will be a further City-led public engagement process followed by a public hearing and decision by Vancouver City Council.

Questions about **parking**



A

The parking spaces included in this proposal would cover the parking needs for operating this site. Typically, residents of supportive housing do not own vehicles and do not require a parking space. The final number of parking spaces would be determined by the City of Vancouver as part of the rezoning process.

Questions about **location of the proposed building and how it was selected**



A

There are more than 2,000 people experiencing homelessness in Vancouver. When funding is available, BC Housing and partners look for locations to build supportive housing in neighbourhoods all across the city. This location is a good option for supportive housing as it is close to transit, services and amenities — all of which promote the community connection that supportive housing residents need to lead healthier lives.

Questions about **supervised consumption services on site**



A

There will not be a public supervised consumption or “safe injection site” at this building.

BC Housing takes a harm reduction approach, which means staff are available to support residents who live in the building who may be in various phases of substance use. When residents are ready to make a change, staff on-site will connect them with the appropriate support services.



Questions about the **public consultation process**



A

BC Housing is reaching out to the community early in the development process of this proposed supportive housing. Feedback collected during this early engagement will inform the rezoning application that will be submitted to the City of Vancouver for review by City Council. When a rezoning application is submitted, a further City-led public engagement process will be held including an open house and eventually a public hearing. Following the public hearing, Vancouver City Council will decide on if the project will proceed or not.

During this early engagement, there are multiple ways people can provide feedback including:

- Attending a Neighbourhood Dialogue
- Submitting a comment during the Public Comment Period on the Let's Talk Housing website
- Submitting a comment anytime on the Let's Talk Housing website
- Phoning or emailing the Community Liaison

Questions about **why the proposed site is not designated for families and children**



A

BC Housing works to address critical gaps in housing. The proposed new homes at Southeast Marine Drive at Beatrice Street are being designed for adults who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness because that is an area of significant need. BC Housing is also creating thousands of new homes across the province for families, women fleeing violence, seniors and people with disabilities.

For more information on the range of housing BC Housing builds, please see the summary of homes created here: <https://www.bchousing.org/about/our-organization>.

Questions about **neighbourhood safety**



A

People who are at risk of or are experiencing homelessness are not all the same. They can be young people, seniors, people with disabilities, and anyone who has experienced trauma, poverty, or struggled with the high cost of housing. Many people living in supportive housing are already living in the local neighbourhood.

There is no evidence to suggest that people who live in supportive housing pose a greater risk to a local community than those living in other housing types. There will be policies and supports in place with these buildings to foster safety of both the residents and the surrounding community.