

BC Housing's Response to the City of Maple Ridge Supportive Housing Review

August 2023

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Acknowledgements

BC Housing acknowledges that we deliver our services across the ancestral, traditional, and unceded homelands of hundreds of First Nations, each with their own unique histories, cultures, and traditions. We offer our commitment to working in good relations and to implementing the province's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) in all areas of our mandate.

We would also like to extend our deepest sympathies to the friends and family of those individuals who passed away and whose deaths were the impetus for this review.

We also thank all those who shared their stories and expertise with Harry Cummings and Associates in the development of the review.

Scope of the Review

The review of Coast Mental Health (CMH)'s management of three supportive housing sites located in the City of Maple Ridge was initiated after allegations of misconduct and negligence were made against CMH to then Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing, David Eby, in March 2022.

In response to the allegations, BC Housing was directed to commission an independent review and a scope of work to review the management of all three sites: Royal Crescent (also known as Maple Ridge Modular), Garibaldi Ridge and Alouette Heights. Particular attention was to be paid to the Royal Crescent temporary supportive housing site, which was the subject of most of the concerns raised in the March 2022 letter. BC Housing engaged external consultant Harry Cummings and Associates Inc. (HCA) to conduct the review, with direction given by an Advisory Committee made up of representatives from BC Housing and the City of Maple Ridge administration.

The key objectives of the review were to:

- Examine the extent to which the service provider (CMH) is fulfilling its operating agreement with BC Housing;
- Examine the degree to which the supportive housing sites are operating in a safe and secure manner for both residents and staff;
- Examine the degree to which the services and supports offered at the three supportive housing sites are meeting the needs of residents and the community at large.
- Examine the extent to which the supportive housing sites are operating in a way that is supported by the surrounding community and are in alignment with other existing community supports, services, and programs (e.g., the City's Community Social Safety Initiative, relevant community health and social services including youth services); and,

- Identify barriers and enablers to addressing challenges in delivering services to supportive housing residents and individuals experiencing homelessness, and to inform appropriate responses to these challenges.

Background

Operating Supportive Housing in Maple Ridge with Coast Mental Health

According to the 2021 Census, Maple Ridge had a population of 90,990 people, representing a 10.6% increase from 2016. Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows combined saw a 159% increase in people experiencing homelessness between 2005 and 2020 (from 44 to 114 individuals).¹ The Anita Place encampment formed in May 2017 by the Alliance Against Displacement. Anita Place had approximately 50 residents and was located off the Lougheed Highway at the corner of St. Anne Ave. and 223rd St. Issues at Anita Place included drug overdoses, flood and fire events, and safety concerns within the broader community. In September 2019, Anita Place was closed as residents moved into housing at Royal Crescent and Garibaldi Ridge.

Coast Mental Health (CMH) operates 67 supportive housing sites with 1,444 homes throughout Metro Vancouver. CMH has approximately 800 employees across the organization, with another approximately 170 volunteers who assist clients in daily programming initiatives. Annual funding for all of CMH is approximately \$50 million, of which around 80% comes from provincial and municipal governments. Approximately 60% of CMH's total funding is devoted to housing. Alouette Heights was CMH's first housing site in Maple Ridge, when control was transferred to that provider in 2017. The three supportive housing sites operated by CMH in Maple Ridge collectively provide stable, affordable, and secure housing for a total of 150 people.

Royal Crescent opened in October 2018 as temporary supportive housing and was established as an emergency solution to the former Anita Place encampment. The development, owned by PRHC, is repurposed workcamp-style modular buildings, which were always meant to be temporary. Unlike the vast majority of the Province's supportive housing, it was not built to operate as supportive housing and was always intended as a temporary, emergency solution. The current site will close when a replacement permanent building opens in mid 2024. These will be supportive homes that are easier to operate safely and better able to provide care for residents. Once the Royal Crescent site is vacated, BC Housing will explore new affordable rental housing development options at the site for seniors in the community. Royal Crescent has 53 homes which include necessities such as a bed, mattress and bedding, and a chair, as well as a kitchenette with

¹ Metro Vancouver. (2022). Metro Vancouver Housing Data Book. <https://metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/Documents/metro-vancouver-housing-data-book-2022.pdf#search=%22Metro%20Vancouver%20Housing%20Data%20Book%22>

a mini fridge, microwave and sink. Residents have access to a laundry room with washers and dryers and the building features a full kitchen that provides two meals a day (breakfast and dinner).

Garibaldi Ridge opened in September 2019 as a purpose built modular and operates as temporary supportive housing. It is also owned by PRHC. Like Royal Crescent, Garibaldi Ridge housed former Anita Place residents. With 51 homes consisting of 48 bachelor units and 3 accessible units, residents are provided with basic necessities such as a bed, mattress and bedding, a chair as well as a kitchenette with a fridge, sink, microwave, and hotplate. Residents have access to a laundry room with washers and dryers and the building features a full kitchen that provides two meals a day (breakfast and dinner).

CMH assumed responsibility for Alouette Heights in March 2017. The building was initially established as a transitional housing project and then repurposed for supportive housing. The City of Maple Ridge, who owns the site, and PRHC entered into a 50-year lease for the purposes of delivering housing. Alouette Heights has 46 homes each including basic necessities such as a bed, mattress and bedding, and a chair, as well as a fridge, sink and stove. Residents have access to a laundry room with washers and dryers. Unlike Royal Crescent and Garibaldi Ridge, BC Housing does not fund Alouette Heights to provide meals to residents under its operating agreement; however, CMH partners with a non-profit to provide modest meals. They currently provide two meals a day (light breakfast and soup and sandwiches for lunch). Meals are prepared by a resident who completed Food Safety training and are paid by CMH for this work.

BC Housing has operator agreements with CMH that cover operations at all three buildings. Under the operator agreements with BC Housing, CMH is required to comply with a suite of requirements, including to:

- Maintain the development (buildings and property) and all related equipment in a state of safe and good repair for the benefits of the residents and the community;
- Provide onsite staff coverage twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days a week at each of the three supportive housing sites;
- Ensure staff have the following training to a level approved by BC Housing:
 - Mental health first aid training;
 - Crisis prevention training and/or de-escalation training, non-violent intervention;
 - Standard First Aid and CPR;
 - Indigenous awareness training and cultural safety training;
 - Domestic violence safety planning;
 - Safety for women in co-ed shelters training;
 - Substance use awareness and safety training, including naloxone training;
 - 2SLGBTQAI+ awareness training;
 - Trauma-informed practice training;

- Staff self-care training;
- Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT) training; and
- BC Housing Databased training.
- Ensure one staff member certified in Standard First Aid and CPR be on duty at all times;
- Conduct wellness checks, which includes room checking when a resident has not been seen or heard from for an extended period, not to exceed forty-eight hours;
- Enter into a Residency Agreement² with each resident and ensuring that all Residency Agreements are in compliance with the governing legislation; and
- Use the Database (Housing Connections) to support the selection of residents.

Additionally, in the Royal Crescent and Garibaldi Ridge operator agreements, CMH is required to:

- Make all reasonable efforts to support and maintain the residency, but is not expected to maintain the residency in the event of extenuating health and safety risks to the resident, staff or other residents (e.g., assaults/threats to residents or staff and/or medical needs beyond what CMH can accommodate);
- Collaborate with other providers in the community to select residents using the Coordinated Access and Assessment (CAA) process, where possible; and
- Provide two meals each day to residents.

Requirements for safety and security measures include provisions to ensure services are resident focused and address residents personal security; to create an atmosphere of dignity and respect for all residents to be maintained; and to maintain a level of staff presence in the development to provide safety and security for residents in the development. Safety and security policies and procedures must be in accordance with current Occupational Health and Safety Regulations contained within the *Workers Compensation Act*.

BC Housing also requires that CMH establish a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for buildings when they are introduced into the community. The intended purpose of a CAC is to help the integration of the building and residents into the community.

Supportive Housing in British Columbia

Supportive housing is defined by BC Housing as subsidized housing with on-site supports for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. This form of housing helps individuals experiencing homelessness move into secure housing to increase their wellbeing and achieve personal goals. Supportive housing provides a range of on-site, non-clinical supports such as: life skills training, connections to health care, mental health or substance-use services. In some buildings staff are on-site 24/7 to provide support, while in others on-site supports are provided by other agencies during specific times. Purpose-

² BC Housing uses 'Residency Agreement' as it includes tenancy agreements and/or program agreements.

built supportive housing developments typically have self-contained units with kitchenettes and private bathrooms, as well as access to communal spaces. Some buildings may also include culturally appropriate communal spaces.

Individual households with gross annual income at or below the Household Income Limits (HILs)³ and who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness are eligible for supportive housing. Rent is charged based on a rent geared-to-income basis, or a flat rent rate as agreed upon between BC Housing and the non-profit housing provider, thus ensuring that the rents are affordable.

BC Housing funds 14,555 supportive homes across the province of British Columbia under various supportive housing programs developed by BC Housing and the Ministry of Housing. Partnerships with local governments, municipalities, and non-profit organizations to leverage land and resources are a key part of program delivery. Supportive housing funding streams include a variety of Provincial and Federal sources including: the Provincial Homelessness Initiative (PHI Phase I, Phase II, SROs, MOUs); the Rapid Response to Homelessness (RRH); Building BC: Supportive Housing Fund (SHF) and the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI).

A Supportive Housing Program Framework, updated in 2021, outlines the principles, roles and responsibilities, and other parameters of supportive housing. Support services as set out in this Framework are provided to help residents achieve and maintain stability in housing, enhance access to other community-based supports and services, and foster resilience against homelessness. Support services are outlined in individual operating agreements.

Where eligible, BC Housing will provide an operating subsidy to the non-profit housing provider to cover the difference between the total approved operating expenses and revenues. BC Housing will adjust operating budgets at least annually, or more frequently as needed, to maximize the efficient allocation of operating subsidy. The support services subsidy is based on the staff schedule and annual support services budget approved by BC Housing.

All non-profit housing providers with operating or operator agreements are subject to financial and operational reviews conducted by BC Housing. Financial reviews are conducted annually. Operational reviews generally fall on a three-year cycle but can be conducted at any time.

While the program framework outlines the principles, roles and responsibilities and other parameters for the associated funding programs, these are distilled into operating or

³ The HILs are based on figures established by CMHC and are intended to reflect the minimum income required to afford appropriate accommodation in the private market. The HILs are established by BC Housing annually.

operator agreements signed between BC Housing and individual non-profit housing providers for the property management and support services of specific sites and buildings. Terms and conditions are consistent with the program framework parameters across all operating and operator agreements.⁴ In the latter situations, the operator agreement will also address matters of managing the property.

Operating and operator arrangements are contractual agreements with the non-profit housing provider. Expectations or requirements can also not be increased beyond the funding and strategic direction given to BC Housing by the Ministry of Housing for each program.

Response to Review Recommendations

The report directed recommendations to BC Housing and a number of other partners, including CMH, City of Maple Ridge and other community service providers. BC Housing has provided responses to all of the recommendations in this report, including where BC Housing was not listed as the responsible party in the review.

Operating Agreements

The below recommendations were made specifically to BC Housing with respect to updating its operating agreements with CMH for the three supportive housing sites in Maple Ridge. As such, a unified response is provided for them as a whole.

Recommendations 1 to 5 and 10 for BC Housing	BC Housing Response
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u> The operating agreements and contracts need to ensure that adequate levels of funding are provided to enable operators to provide the relevant services / supports. The operating agreements include an outline of the types of services and programs to be provided by the operator but it's unclear if corresponding funding is specifically being provided by BC Housing for all these services. The operating agreements should acknowledge the importance of providing access to primary</p>	<p><u>Response to Recommendation 1</u> Operating and operator agreements are the contractual means of translating the program framework into legally binding requirements for all non-profit housing providers, including CMH. BC Housing is responsible for providing funding for construction, operating and support services (defined in the Program Framework and listed above) as applicable for the individual site. While operating agreements focus on those aspects, BC Housing remains a committed partner with local health authorities, and the Ministries of Health and Mental Health and Addictions on continuing to strengthen access to healthcare and addictions services. This also report reinforces the Province's approach to complex care housing in noting that there are some individuals who would benefit from additional health and substance supports and services – beyond supportive housing.</p>

⁴ Operating agreements are used when the non-profit housing provider owns or leases the site directly and operator agreements are used when the non-profit housing provider is using a site owned or leased by the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation (PRHC).

healthcare services as well as mental health and addictions services for residents. Funding should be provided through the contract to pay for relevant health professionals (e.g., psychiatrist, nurse practitioner, family physician, hoarding therapist) to work onsite and provide regularly scheduled services each week across the three housing sites.

Recommendation 2

The operating agreements and contracts need to ensure that there is an adequate level of funding to support staff training and development and there needs to be a more standardized and better articulated approach to assist operators in implementing their staff training and build out their services and programs.

Recommendation 3

The operating agreements should identify the types of security and safety measures that need to be in place within the building and on the perimeter of the site. The agreements should outline the responsibilities of the operator in collaborating with relevant community agencies to address safety and security concerns in the neighbourhood.

Recommendation 4

The operating agreements should provide a fuller definition of what encompasses an overdose protection site (harm reduction room) in the context of supportive housing.

Recommendation 5

The measured outcomes in the operating agreements typically focus on stability of housing and related benchmarks (e.g., 6 months, 12 months, average length of stay) but other measures should

BC Housing is an eager partner in seeing the realization of complex care housing across the province. Complex care housing is led by health authorities in partnership with non-profit housing providers, First Nations, Indigenous organizations, and other community partners. In November 2022, eight complex care housing spots were launched in Maple Ridge.

Response to Recommendation 2

With respect to staff training and development, BC Housing outlines in operator agreements a list of required training for staff (see above). BC Housing will work with CMH to understand what further training is required or needed for the three supportive housing sites in Maple Ridge. Similarly, BC Housing will work with CMH on security and safety concerns relating to the built environment aspect of the sites. This includes clear site lines for staff, secure entrance for residents and guests, and security cameras.

Response to Recommendation 3, 4 and 5

Operating and operator agreements do not address site safety and security. However, BC Housing is undertaking a Business Transformation Program over the next three years (2023-2026) which will enhance our way of doing work so that we can better deliver on our mandate and meet future challenges. This initiative will address BC Housing's structures, processes and systems, including the measurement of outcomes. BC Housing is also working in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing to develop a new Performance Measurement Framework, which will address Recommendation 5 in particular.

<p>also hold importance including the range of services being offered in supportive housing sites which include a major health component.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 10</u> Undertake a review the <i>Residential Tenancy Act</i> within the context of supportive housing to identify how operating agreements can be better defined and structured to provide a balanced approach to protecting tenant rights while ensuring tenant safety and wellbeing.</p>	<p><u>Response to Recommendation 10</u> The <i>Residential Tenancy Act</i> (RTA) covers supportive housing tenancies at Royal Crescent, Garibaldi Ridge, and Alouette Heights. CMH, like other non-profit housing providers, is expected to follow all applicable legislation, including the RTA as set out in their operating agreements. While non-profit housing providers are also directed to use eviction as a last resort, residency is not expected to come at the expense of the safety of both staff and other residents. BC Housing continues to be available to support CMH if they have any questions about how to fulfil their obligations under their operating agreements regarding residency agreements. The Ministry of Housing will review the issues identified around how the RTA applies to supportive housing.</p>
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Provision of Additional Housing Options

The following recommendations to provide additional housing options within the community were made jointly to BC Housing and the City of Maple Ridge. A unified response is provided for all of these recommendations as a whole below.

Recommendations 1 to 5 for BC Housing and City of Maple Ridge	BC Housing Response
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u> Provide additional affordable housing options in the community to enable individuals who have the desire and ability to transition from supportive housing to appropriate next stage housing.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 2</u> Expand the number of shelter options in the community and ensure that existing shelter providers are not over capacity in terms of what their infrastructure and personnel can effectively manage. Specialized shelter options are needed for individuals with complex care and behavior challenges.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 3</u> Ensure that planning for the Emergency Weather Response shelter is completed and a site confirmed well in advance of the onset of winter weather.</p>	<p><u>Response to Recommendations 1, 2 and 5</u> Housing options across the spectrum of housing types are critical for the health of a community's housing system and to respond to housing challenges. The housing spectrum ranges from shelters, to supportive housing, women's transition housing, subsidized housing, affordable rental housing, and near market housing.</p> <p>BC Housing recognizes the housing pressures felt by communities across the province, including in the City of Maple Ridge. For this reason, it has been working closely with the Ministry of Housing in the implementation of the Belonging in BC homelessness plan and the Homes for People housing plan.</p> <p>The Homes for People action plan will speed up delivery of new homes, increase the supply of middle-income housing, fight speculation and help those who need it the most. Alongside Homes for People, the Government of BC is implementing Belonging in BC, a plan to prevent and reduce homelessness. The plan adds 3,900 new supportive housing</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 4</u> Establish youth shelter services and expand youth housing options in the community.</p>	<p>units and 240 complex care spaces province-wide, and creates multidisciplinary regional response teams designed to rapidly respond to encampments to better support people sheltering outdoors to move inside.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 5</u> A broader range of provincially funded supportive housing options need to be established in Maple Ridge. Housing for targeted client groups could potentially include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low barrier transitional /supportive housing including access to relevant health professionals (e.g., psychiatrist, nurse practitioner, family physician, hoarding therapist) and supports (e.g., harm reduction, support workers including peer support). • Supportive / recovery housing that serves individuals who are transitioning from a treatment facility (i.e., alcohol and drug free living). Include relevant support services (e.g., mental health support, peer support and other addiction recovery aids). • Supportive housing that serves individuals who are able to live independently or relatively independently with some assistance from primary care health workers and support workers. • Supportive / specialized care housing that serves individuals who are dealing with complex care issues (e.g., physical and mental health issues, brain injuries, addictions). Include access to relevant health professionals and support workers. 	<p>BC Housing has been working to expand housing options in Maple Ridge and across the province. A Women’s Transitional Housing project is under construction in Maple Ridge. When the residents of Royal Crescent move into the newly built supportive housing building, a new housing complex with 96 homes will be built on the existing site. Discussions continue with the City of Maple Ridge with respect to other potential opportunities for development. BC Housing will be issuing another call under the Community Housing Fund later this year. The City of Maple Ridge will be invited to participate in the call by identifying land for the development of additional housing.</p> <p><u>Response to Recommendation 3</u> BC Housing is currently reviewing the Emergency Weather Response (EWR) program. BC Housing’s role with EWR shelters is to support the municipality and the non-profit housing provider they have engaged to manage the shelter. As the EWR Program is an annual program, communities can proactively plan for the EWR Season. Some communities around the province proactively initiate an end of season review and planning session in late spring or early summer.</p> <p><u>Response to Recommendation 4</u> Youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness are recognized as a vulnerable population. The operating agreements signed with non-profit housing providers restricts housing to those 19 years and older unless otherwise approved by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). However, BC Housing continues to participate in “A Parent’s Duty Cross-Ministry Action Plan” to support youth aging into independence.</p>

Coordinated Access and Needs Assessments

The below recommendations were made specifically to BC Housing with respect to coordinated access and needs assessments. A unified response is provided for them as a whole.

<p>Recommendations 6 to 8 for BC Housing</p>	<p>BC Housing Response</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 6</u> Review the Coordinated Access and Assessment process to ensure that</p>	<p><u>Response to Recommendations 6 and 7</u> As defined by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH), “Coordinated access systems are designed to streamline the</p>

<p>service providers have sufficient guidance and related tools in preparing a comprehensive application for candidates.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 7</u> Review the findings from the BC Indigenous Homelessness Strategy to ensure that relevant considerations are included in the Coordinated Access and Assessment process.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 8</u> Review the Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT) to ensure the language used in the VAT is not insulting or offensive for applicants.</p>	<p>process for people experiencing homelessness to access the housing and support services needed to permanently end their homelessness. By standardizing the intake and assessment process, sharing information in real-time within a community, adopting uniform prioritization policies and coordinating referral processes, coordinated access systems connect people to the right housing and supports as efficiently as possible based on their preferences and level of need. This ensures communities get the most out of limited resources and we can more rapidly and effectively prevent and end homelessness for those in greatest need.”⁵</p> <p>BC Housing is currently reviewing the Coordinated Access process established by BC Housing with the goal of ensuring it better aligns with other Coordinated Access tables (such as those established under federal Reaching Home funding) and can support the new initiatives such as HEART and HEARTH under Belonging in BC. This is being done in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and external engagement with non-housing providers, Community Entities under Reaching Home, and the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA).</p> <p>Additionally, BC Housing has a HIFIS Community Deployment project underway. HIFIS is the Homeless Individual and Families Information System developed by the Government of Canada as a tool to enable coordinated access and reporting on homelessness outcomes. Over this past year, BC Housing has been collaborating with Community Entities of the Designated Communities stream of the federal Reaching Home Program to make HIFIS available to the community regardless of funding source. As HIFIS is now available to those non-profit shelter providers receiving funding directly from BC Housing, this expansion of access will create better mechanisms for coordinated access across the entire group of homelessness supports and services in a community.</p> <p><u>Response to Recommendation 8</u></p> <p>BC Housing will also be convening sector partners, including non-profit housing providers and associations, to review the Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT). This review will include determining how the tool can be more trauma-informed and culturally safe. The VAT is used to determine the vulnerability of clients to continued housing instability.</p>
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⁵ Source: Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness. (2023). What is a Coordinated Access System? [CAEH - What is a Coordinated Access System?](#)

Ensuring culturally appropriate housing commitments for Indigenous Peoples

Recommendation 9: Ensure that housing commitments made to people who identify as Indigenous are being met by housing operators.

BC Housing is strongly committed to reconciliation and ensuring housing is culturally appropriate for Indigenous Peoples across the province. As part of this commitment, BC Housing's Board of Commissioners directed the development of a Reconciliation Strategy. The *Moving Forward Together* report released in 2021 is the first step of this journey. Presently, BC Housing is undertaking engagement with community to inform the strategy and next steps, with sessions planned with Indigenous and non-Indigenous housing providers in July and August of 2023. The strategy will outline the actions needed to ensure BC Housing commitments are decolonized, culturally appropriate and build capacity within the community housing sector to provide enhanced services and supports for Indigenous clients and communities. For more information about our Reconciliation Strategy, see [Reconciliation Strategy | BC Housing](#).

Communities of Practice

Recommendation 11: There are good examples of operators working collaboratively and sharing knowledge, but the community of practice was somewhat disconnected during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it would be beneficial for BC Housing to bring agencies together at least once or twice a year to discuss pressing issues and topics including opportunities for training. It would be beneficial to include BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA) in these meetings to ensure the housing agency perspective is engaged.

BC Housing will look to re-establish the community of practice in Maple Ridge.

Coast Mental Health Focused Recommendations

The below recommendations were made to CMH directly, but BC Housing has provided a unified response in recognition that it plays an important supporting role to its non-profit housing provider partners.

Recommendations 1 to 25 for Coast Mental Health	BC Housing Response
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u> Improve security measures in the buildings to ensure there is controlled access to the buildings and that banned individuals are not gaining entry.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 2</u></p>	<p><u>Response to Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 6 to 25</u> BC Housing is committed to supporting CMH in addressing these recommendations.</p> <p>BC Housing will work with CMH on addressing the security measures. Several changes have been implemented and align with recommendations related to improving building safety, health services and tenant supports, including:</p>

<p>Ensure that the rules for banning visitors from the buildings are fairly and consistently applied within each building and across the buildings.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 3</u> In the spirit of building greater transparency and trust, family members and immediate caregivers for residents should have an opportunity to view the tenancy or program agreement to better understand the responsibilities of the signing partners and the scope of services and supports that are being provided.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 4</u> Ensure that the program agreements provide allowances for individuals to extend the agreement based on their circumstances (e.g., ongoing complex physical and/or mental health issues).</p> <p><u>Recommendation 5</u> Ensure that evictions when warranted are carried out in a fair and timely manner.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 6</u> Explore ways for making the suite inspections less stressful for those residents that experience anxiety over the inspections.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 7</u> Ensure that residents are aware of the benefits of using the harm reduction rooms in the buildings.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 8</u> Continue to encourage residents to inform staff when they plan to use drugs in their rooms and initiate additional wellness checks accordingly.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 9</u> Consult with residents and parents/caregivers where applicable to ensure that the frequency of wellness checks is adequate for the resident based on their health complications and need for additional supervision.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 10</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair of perimeter fencing. • Adding additional fencing around the inner courtyard • Increased wellness checks from every 48 hours to every 24 hours. More frequent wellness checks are available in discussion with individuals. • Introduction of the Assertive Community Treatment team, Intensive Case Management team, and Integrated Homelessness Action Response Team delivered through Fraser Health. • Delivery of complex care housing services in the community. • Consistent nursing hours provided seven days a week across all three sites. • Launch of the Decolonizing Coast Working Group and an Indigenous liaison worker hired. • Transport of clients to medical appointments and other support services in the community with the addition of a Coast Mental Health van. <p>Discussions with the leadership team at CMH are being initiated to understand and identify funding pressures that arise from these recommendations, as well as which recommendations require additional guidance from BC Housing. While BC Housing does not prescribe policies for non-profit housing providers, it is able to provide direction and guidance as needed.</p> <p><u>Response to Recommendation 3</u> Like other non- profit housing providers, CMH managed supportive housing sites must comply with the RTA and privacy legislation. This means that subject to any guardianship or trusteeship arrangements in place, only the resident can provide consent to having the tenancy or program agreement shared with family members or immediate caregivers.</p> <p><u>Response to Recommendations 5 and 6</u> CMH must also comply with the legal requirements set out for evictions and conducting unit inspections. While measures may be taken to make them less anxiety producing, those requirements cannot be disregarded.</p> <p><u>Response to Recommendations 1 to 25</u> With respect to oversight of housing providers such as CMH, BC Housing is strengthening its mechanisms to work with housing providers on expectations set out in operating agreements through the Operational Review Process Review. A new process was launched as a pilot in April 2023 and introduces the new PartnerHub for information to better</p>
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Provide opportunities for residents to share their input and feedback on safety and security measures and ensure that the rationale for any changes being considered are clearly presented. Ensure that any changes, once implemented, are applied consistently.

Recommendation 11

Ensure that residents are informed about deaths in the building in a timely and sensitive manner. Ensure that grief counselling is provided to residents and staff in a timely and appropriate manner and that deceased residents are honored and memorialized in a timely and appropriate manner. Ensure that the belongings of the deceased are treated with respect.

Recommendation 12

Ensure that supportive housing staff have adequate trauma informed practice training, supplemented with other ongoing training (e.g., casework training, responding to mental health emergencies).

Recommendation 13

Ensure that peer support workers have training in a variety of strategies that clients can potentially use to help them make changes in their life.

Recommendation 14

Provide opportunities for peer support workers to be involved in developing and delivering activities and programs for residents.

Recommendation 15

Explore and operationalize measures to reduce staff turnover and promote staff continuity (e.g., promote collaborative and respectful work arrangements between management and staff, enable staff to work to their full scope of practice, ensure that staffing capacity is adequate for the workplace requirements/demands – at least three staff onsite at any time, ensure that mental health workers and peer support workers have a manageable case load, provide staff with appropriate supports to

flow between non-profit housing providers and BC Housing on operational and financial matters. A financial review process for non-profit housing operators will begin in Fall 2023. For more information about the revised operational review process, see [Financial & Operational Reviews | BC Housing](#). Updates to the financial review process will be made public on this website as well. For more information about the revised operational review process, see [Financial & Operational Reviews | BC Housing](#). Updates to the financial review process will be made public on this website as well.

cope with workplace stressors, ensure that new staff have adequate orientation).

Staff continuity is important for enabling the development and maintenance of successful, trusting relationships with residents. This is also an important factor for facilitating better communication with residents and knowing their whereabouts which will contribute to limiting the times police have to be informed of a missing person.

Recommendation 16

Expand psychiatric care capacity across the three housing sites (e.g., one psychiatrist working five days a week, spread across the three housing sites).

Recommendation 17

Provide opportunities for residents to meet with a hoarding specialist/therapist.

Recommendation 18

Continue to develop closer relations with Fraser Health and work towards integrating more primary care services in the supportive housing sites (e.g., establish a nurse practitioner and/or family physician at each of the housing sites at least two days a week or more).

Recommendation 19

Continue to expand the group activities offered at the three housing sites and explore additional opportunities for engaging FRIS and other relevant community service providers to facilitate workshops where appropriate.

Recommendation 20

CMH should strengthen its internal capacity to provide culturally relevant activities for housing residents who self-identify as Indigenous (e.g., hire qualified full-time staff who will be able to work closely with the residents and other staff on a continual basis). If CMH prefers to engage with external organizations to provide culturally relevant services, it should ensure that adequate funding is dedicated to bringing

<p>in and maintaining these services in a meaningful way.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 21</u> Promote closer working relationships between supportive housing staff and shelter staff to support the transition of clients who move between the facilities.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 22</u> Establish a dedicated transport service to support residents attending offsite appointments with health and social service providers.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 23</u> Provide clear communication to residents on the timing of repairs and maintenance in the building and units (i.e., when repairs will be initiated and completed).</p> <p><u>Recommendation 24</u> Identify measures to mitigate the poor ventilation issues in the buildings.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 25</u> Use the Community Advisory Committee meetings to provide more information (more stories) on what the supportive housing sites are achieving and the different ways that residents are being positively impacted (e.g., residents receiving access to primary health care, residents going into addictions treatment, residents connecting with family members, residents accessing income assistance benefits). Provide more information on how programs and activities at the supportive housing sites are benefiting residents, what factors are impacting participation in programs, and what approaches are being used to encourage participation. Include more direct representation from residents in the meetings if residents are willing to participate.</p>	
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Broader Community Services and Supports Recommendations

The below recommendations were made to the broader community service providers within the City of Maple Ridge. Although many of these recommendations fall outside the

mandate of BC Housing, each corresponding ministry will be best suited to respond to recommendations under their mandate, a response is provided below.

Recommendations 1 to 11 for Other Community Services / Supports	BC Housing Response
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u> Explore opportunities for using virtual primary care consultation to supplement access to health care providers (e.g., provide a private room and computer in the supportive housing building and shelter that allows the client and the primary care provider to interface).</p> <p><u>Recommendation 2</u> Explore opportunities for establishing electronic health records for supportive housing and shelter residents and enable designated health providers to access, review and record relevant information for clients to enhance continuity of care.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 3</u> Continue to support funding for the ACT, ICM and IHART teams in Maple Ridge and monitor the outcomes for these resources to understand their effectiveness and ensure that the teams are adequately resourced.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 4</u> Monitor outcomes for the new complex care housing services in Maple Ridge to understand their effectiveness and ensure that the services are adequately resourced.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 5</u> Expand mental health service capacity in the community (e.g., additional outreach workers and a psychiatrist position to support outreach workers).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities for improving the intake process for those in need of immediate access. • Explore and apply best practices that encourage and facilitate treatment options for those who require involuntary treatment. <p><u>Recommendation 6</u></p>	<p><u>Response to Recommendations 1 to 11</u> BC Housing will support actions to better facilitate access to community and health supports and services, and will prioritize continued discussions with partners on how to implement processes that have shown success in other regions. This includes supporting work lead by the corresponding provincial Ministry (e.g. Ministry of Housing, Mental Health and Addiction, Health, MCFD, etc).</p>

Establish detox and rehab (treatment) options in the community and ensure that the services are integrated (e.g., the process for transitioning from detox to rehab should be convenient and timely).

- Explore opportunities for improving the intake process for those in need of immediate access.
- Explore and apply best practices to support clients once in rehab to reduce the risk of clients leaving treatment early.

Recommendation 7

Explore opportunities with Fraser Health to have mental health professionals (psychiatric nurse) support police on mental health calls.

Recommendation 8

Consider extending the HUB hours to provide greater coverage during the day (i.e., opening earlier in the day and running later in the afternoon) and integrating more services at the HUB that have cultural relevance for some people (e.g., smudging ceremonies and other related Indigenous healing practices).

Recommendation 9

Expand the number of CSOs working in the community to ensure that officers are always working in teams of two.

Recommendation 10

Support the expansion of youth outreach services in Maple Ridge.

Recommendation 11

Consider establishing a supervised consumption site in the community to provide a safe, clean space for people to bring their own drugs to use, in the presence of trained staff.

Conclusion

BC Housing appreciates the recommendations provided as part of the review of the supportive housing sites managed by CMH in the City of Maple Ridge. This review has provided recommendations that pertain to the specific situation and challenges facing those three sites in that city, as well as recommendations that are broader in scope.

The housing affordability and supply crisis compounded with the toxic opioid crisis and COVID-19 pandemic have created new and additional challenges for the housing system and individuals. It takes an all-of-community approach to better understand, respond to, and prevent homelessness in British Columbia. BC Housing is committed to supporting CMH and working with our provincial partners in addressing these recommendations to better meet the needs of residents and the community at large. We recognize the importance of ensuring supportive housing sites are operating in a way that promotes community inclusion and safety and is in alignment with other existing community supports, services, and programs.

As the Crown agency responsible for delivering community housing in British Columbia, BC Housing looks to leverage these recommendations to continue to deliver the forms of housing services and supports needed in the City of Maple Ridge and across the province and will use these recommendations to inform planning and budgeting going forward.