



## **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

The development of a new purpose-built homeless shelter and transitional housing facility responds to a key recommendation of the Master Plan for Housing the Homelessness in Surrey (the "Master Plan"). It also addresses priorities identified in the: Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents, the Crime Reduction Strategy, and the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2008, the City of Surrey signed an MOU with BC Housing toward the development of supportive housing projects on City-owned land for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Under the terms and conditions outlined in the MOU, the Province of BC provided the funding for the development and operation of the housing facilities; and the City provided a City-owned property for each such project, on a long term lease at a nominal rate, and covered the costs of the municipal fees and charges associated with the project.

The MOU identified two specific housing projects, but noted that the MOU "includes the subsequent provision of additional supportive housing units on other sites in the City of Surrey". To date, three supportive housing projects have been completed under the terms of the MOU with BC Housing. These are described below:

- The YWCA's Alder Gardens project in Newton is a 36-unit facility for single women with dependent children. It was completed in 2012;
- The Quibble Creek Health and Phoenix Transition Housing Centre is located in the hospital precinct. It includes: 15 short-term addictions recovery beds; 52 post-treatment studio apartments; a Sobering and Assessment Centre that can accommodate up to 25 people on mats; and offices for Fraser Health's substance use out-patient services. This facility opened in 2012; and
- The Timber Grove Apartments project in the City Centre was completed in 2011. Operated by Coast Mental Health Foundation, Timber Grove has 52 studio units for men and women who are homeless or at-risk seniors (50+ years) and/or have a disability. Fraser Health provides on-site mental health support services at this facility.

## **DISCUSSION**

The 2011 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count found 400 homeless people in Surrey. Of note is that only about half of Surrey's homeless were found in a shelter bed, with the remainder being unsheltered. Widely recognized to be an undercount of the actual homeless population, the Count demonstrates the urgent need for additional housing and supports for homeless people in Surrey.

## **Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey**

In 2013, Council adopted the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey (Corporate Report No. R134, July 8, 2013). Its purpose is to ensure that future actions taken to address homelessness in Surrey are coordinated and strategic so that resources that are available to apply to issues of homelessness respond to identified priorities and are used to maximum effect.

Surrey's Master Plan is focused on the provision of additional supportive housing units as a response to the homelessness situation. However, it also highlights the need for improvements to the emergency shelters that currently work with certain at-risk groups, namely women, women with children, youth, and Aboriginal people. As an immediate priority for action, the Master Plan identifies the replacement of the Gateway emergency shelter in Whalley with a new purpose-built facility that includes shelter beds and transitional housing units. It notes that the physical conditions of the current shelter no longer meet the expected standards of shelter facilities.

The Master Plan highlights some of the key considerations for the Gateway shelter replacement. The following sections outline the Plan's specific recommendations and/or comments related to the development of a new low or minimum barrier shelter and transitional housing facility.

### ***Whalley Area/Co-Existence***

Homelessness is a community-wide issue and needs community-wide solutions, especially targeted to areas where homeless people tend to already gravitate. For this reason, the new shelter needs to be in the Whalley area. Importantly, it needs to be designed to co-exist with its neighbours. Successful coexistence, given an appropriate design and operational/funding model, has been demonstrated by other facilities in Metro Vancouver. These include the Lookout Society's Yukon Shelter in Vancouver, and the Russell in New Westminster.

### ***Appropriate Design***

Most issues associated with the existing facility can be mitigated and in some cases eliminated through appropriate design and operational models, as demonstrated in newer shelter and transitional housing facilities in the Region. Examples of appropriate design and programming space include interior/private outdoor courtyards, storage for carts, accommodation for pets, and physical separation between the street and on-site activities. Importantly, funding for 24/7 support services is essential to ensure the successful operation of a minimal barrier, "housing first" model.

### ***Key Features***

For shelter users, well-planned features and space configurations support individuals to stabilize, and connect with services. These include single/double rooms, storage space, and flex rooms for couples or trans-gendered individuals. Also, it is important that the shelter includes flexible meeting spaces to ensure that service organizations are able to provide on-site counselling, life skills training, and other health-related services. Space to prepare and serve daily meal service must also be part of early space planning.

### ***Accessibility***

The replacement facility also needs to be accessible to transit, daily shopping needs and community services.

### ***Transitional Component***

Typically, combining a shelter operation with transitional housing results in staffing and operational efficiencies, especially if the development is in the 70 to 80 bed/unit range. The Yukon Shelter and Transitional Housing (Vancouver) and the Russell Shelter and Transitional Housing (New Westminister) are successful examples of this mix of shelter and transitional housing. One is a new-build solution and the other is a renovated hotel. They are located within thriving business areas in Vancouver and New Westminister, respectively. A combined shelter/transitional housing facility with funding to support 24/7 shelter services would mean that users would not be required to leave the facility in the morning and line up for a bed in the evening. This takes away a significant demand for an associated 24/7 drop-in centre and the issues related to its operation.

### **Partnership with the Province of BC**

The City of Surrey is proposing that a new purpose-built low or minimum barrier shelter and transitional housing facility be developed under the terms and conditions of the City's existing MOU with BC Housing. Under the MOU the City will provide a City-owned site at 9671/9677/9687 – 137 Street located in the Surrey Memorial Hospital precinct, as illustrated on the map attached as Appendix II, if the Province will fund the development and on-going operation of the new shelter and transitional housing facility on the site.

Development of this new shelter and transitional housing facility should begin as soon as possible. Surrey's current low-barrier shelter, the Gateway Shelter, is operating in a building that does not meet expected standards of shelter facilities. In addition, all of the permanent shelters in Surrey are generally operating at full capacity, the number of people using temporary shelters during extreme weather alerts is the highest in the region, and many vulnerable people in Surrey are precariously housed in unregulated "recovery houses". There is clearly a need in Surrey for such a new facility.

### **Operation of the Proposed Facility**

The City is also interested in ensuring that the operator of this new facility is effective in delivering the services offered through the facility while ensuring positive healthy relations with the surrounding development. In this regard, the City is very interested in being engaged in the process that will be followed by the Province in selecting an operator for this new facility.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

A partnership with the Province of BC on the development of a new purpose-built homeless shelter and transitional housing facility is consistent with and supportive of the objectives of the Sustainability Charter; more particularly "Action item SC9: Adequate, Appropriate and Affordable Housing."

## CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council request that the Mayor on behalf of City Council forward a letter, including a copy of this report and a copy of Council's resolution related to this report, to the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing with a request that the Province of BC partner with the City of Surrey on the development of a new purpose-built homeless shelter and transitional housing facility under the terms and conditions contained in the document attached as Appendix I to this report titled "Memorandum of Understanding – BC Housing Management Commission and the City of Surrey - Responding to Homelessness – March 31, 2008" (the "MOU").

*Original signed by*  
Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager,  
Planning and Development

*Original signed by*  
Gerry McKinnon  
Acting General Manager, Engineering

AM:saw

Attachments:

Appendix I    Memorandum of Understanding  
Appendix II    Aerial Photograph of Proposed Facility Site

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**BC Housing Management Commission and the City of Surrey**  
**Responding to Homelessness**  
**March 31, 2008**

**1. Introduction and Purpose**

On October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Premier Campbell announced that the Province of British Columbia through the BC Housing Management Commission (*BC Housing*) would be funding the design, approvals, and other pre-construction work required for the development of supportive housing in several cities in the province. This memorandum sets out the proposed partnership between the City of Surrey and BC Housing to undertake this work with a view to securing construction starts for developments in the City of Surrey in 2008, on lands at 13775/95 - 70 Avenue and 13670 - 94A Avenue (the "Provincial Partnership Project"). It also includes the subsequent provision of additional supportive housing units on other sites in the City of Surrey.

**2. Policy Context and Responding to Need**

In 2004 the *Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions* was created and in 2006 the Province announced its comprehensive housing strategy, *Housing Matters BC*. In 2007 BC Housing announced the expansion of the *Emergency Shelter Program and Supports* including Outreach services.

The province has contributed capital and operating funding to projects in Surrey that include "Hyland House" - 36 shelter beds, 20 transitional housing units and support services, and the acquisition of several other developments which include shelter and supportive housing developments. These developments report a high demand for their accommodation and support services.

Surrey has the second largest homeless population in Metro Vancouver. The Greater Vancouver Homeless Count conducted in March 2005 found 371 homeless people in Surrey, which is generally considered to be an under-representation of the actual number of homeless people. The 2001 census data identified 4,085 renter households in Surrey as being at-risk of homelessness (classified by CMHC as "in need and paying at least half of their income on housing" or INALH). Of Surrey's INALH renter households, 51% are families, 34% are non-family/non-seniors, and 15% are seniors.

Addressing homelessness and housing affordability issues is a priority as they are directly related to the social sustainability of the community. Surrey's Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents, adopted by Council in February 2006, identifies key housing gaps that include an estimated need for additional: shelter beds (125-150 beds); transitional and supportive housing units (500 units); and housing for low income families and singles (5,000 units).

The City of Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy, released in February 2007, also identifies housing as key component of the strategy and includes recommendations for: the establishment of a sobering centre; transitional and supportive housing; and homeless outreach workers.

The City of Surrey is proactively responding to the issue of homelessness. In September 2007, it committed its Affordable Housing Reserve Fund of over \$9 million to establish the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund. The City has also proposed to use City-owned land for the creation of affordable and supportive housing for people living in Surrey who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

### **3. Housing Priorities**

Within this context, the City of Surrey and the Province of British Columbia through BC Housing will, in partnership with non-profit housing providers, facilitate the development of new housing developments and the acquisition and renovation of some existing housing stock in Surrey to accommodate the homeless and those at risk of homelessness who are living on Surrey's streets, in its shelters and in other at-risk circumstances.

### **4. The Projects**

#### **13670 – 94A Avenue the "Provincial Partnership Project Site"**

Subject to Surrey Council approval, the City of Surrey will make available an approximately 2438 m<sup>2</sup> site to be developed with:

- a sobering centre (20 spaces);
- outreach addictions and mental health clinic;
- stabilization and transitional living residence (24-30 units); and
- supportive housing units (35-40 units).

Priority will be given to people who live in Surrey and require drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation and/or are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The services and housing will be available to both men and women.

A non-profit Sponsor for the housing component of this project will be selected through an Expression of Interest that will be administered by BC Housing.

The City of Surrey has undertaken the soil assessment for the site and no further testing or remediation is required. The soils assessment reports will be provided to the Sponsor.

#### **13775/95 - 70 Avenue**

The City of Surrey will make available a site at 13775/95 - 70 Avenue for a new social housing project for single women with dependent children, who live in Surrey, and are at-risk of homelessness and/or in core housing need. The project will comprise approximately 36 self-contained supportive housing units. The building will have at-grade parking with three storeys of housing above. It will include a community kitchen, space for meetings, community social events and resident support services, group laundry, and an outdoor play area and patio. An in-house Community Development Coordinator will assist residents to stabilize their lives and develop stronger financial, work and social skills.

The City of Surrey has undertaken the soil assessment for the site and no further testing is required. The soils assessment reports will be provided to the Sponsor.

The YWCA Vancouver has been selected as the Sponsor for this project conditional upon the submission of a satisfactory operating proposal to BC Housing and the execution of a lease satisfactory to the City of Surrey and BC Housing.

## **5. Eligible Tenants**

Each project will target a specific homeless or at-risk population group or groups. Eligible tenants for the housing units at 13775 - 95 70 Avenue will be single mothers with dependent children who are homeless or in core housing need (having to pay more than 30% of their income to rent in the private market). Eligible tenants for the Provincial Partnership Project at 13670 - 94A Avenue will be people who are receiving addictions treatment services, as well as low-income singles that are homeless, at-risk of homelessness, or living in a shelter or SRO. Priority for both projects will be given to people living in Surrey. Any further agreements will incorporate provisions that this housing is for people living in Surrey who meet the other eligibility criteria.

## **6. Programming and Support Services**

Tenants of the projects will be connected and referred by government or non-profit providers of social and health services. Programming and support services will be in place at the time of occupancy for each project. Support services are intended to be integrated and client-centred consistent with the direction of both the City of Surrey's Crime Reduction Strategy and Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents and BC Housing's Emergency Shelter Program.

## **7. Building Program**

New construction projects for individuals will generally consist of self contained studio units complete with a bathroom and basic kitchen. Units for families with children will contain separate bedrooms. The buildings will include common amenity and administration spaces to support the provision of services to residents. Where existing buildings are to remain for use, they will be upgraded to ensure that they meet the requirements of the BC Building Code and are safe, secure and energy efficient.

## **8. Sustainability**

The Province of British Columbia is committed to sustainability. Accordingly, all new affordable housing funded by BC Housing will be carbon neutral and achieve LEED Gold Certification or equivalent as BC Housing may determine. Any existing building purchased to preserve or create supportive housing will be renovated to optimize its energy efficiency. BC Housing's commitment to minimize Green House Gas emissions and to achieve LEED® Gold certification or equivalent is their initiative and is not a requirement of the City of Surrey.

## **9. Parking**

Relaxation of parking requirements will be determined for each specific project and will be based on the needs of the residents to be housed in the project, number of support staff, and location of the site relative to transit services, all subject to Council approval. Parking for any other uses included in the projects will be provided in addition to the requirements for the social and supportive housing components.

## **10. Design, Program Development and Approvals Funding**

BC Housing will pay all costs to design the projects through to the issuance of Development and Building Permits for each project. These costs will include all consultant fees and related disbursements.



## **11. Capital and Operating Funding**

During the pre-construction and construction phase, BC Housing will arrange for capital funding for the projects. All appropriate project-related costs are included in the capital budget. Operating costs will also be arranged by BC Housing and the non-profit society (Sponsor). Contributors of funding to cover operating costs may include BC Housing and/or other funding partners.

## **12. Leases**

City of Surrey will lease both the "Provincial Partnership Project" site and the site at 13775/95 70 Avenue to non-profit Sponsors, for a period of 60 years, for a consideration of \$10, but subject to the City of Surrey being satisfied as to the credibility of the non-profit Sponsor and the terms and conditions of the lease, acting reasonably. Included in the Lease is the right of the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation (PRHC) to assume the obligations of the non-profit Sponsor in the event of a default. In the case of a default, BC Housing, through the PRHC, will assign the remainder of the lease to another non-profit Sponsor for a consideration of \$10, subject to the City of Surrey being satisfied as to credibility of the non-profit sponsor, acting reasonably.

## **13. Development Cost Charges and Municipal Permit and Fees**

The City of Surrey will waive or otherwise meet the following municipal fees and charges for the projects:

- Development Application Fee
- Engineering Processing Fee - Servicing Agreement
- Engineering Rates – Building Permit Review
- Balance of Building Permit Fee
- Surrey Development Cost Charges
- Damage Deposit
- NCP Amenity Contributions

## **14. Municipal Approvals**

Applications for rezoning and development permit approval and any applications for variances to accommodate the projects *will* be undertaken by the selected Sponsor, all of which approvals are subject to City Council approval and are at the absolute discretion of City Council.

The City will appoint a City employee to ensure that the approval process for the projects through all City departments is expedited in a timely fashion. The individual will be responsible for facilitating the resolution of any issues that arise during the City's review and approval of the projects.

The City of Surrey will permit BC Housing, the non-profit Sponsor and Consultants to access the Provincial Partnership Project and YWCA Project sites in advance of the commencement of the lease for the purpose of due diligence and surveys, on condition that the sites are returned to the condition they were in prior to the due diligence and surveys. Demolition (if applicable), and construction mobilization will require an agreement with the City of Surrey that complies with the *Community Charter and Local Government Act*.

**15. Property Taxes**

The non-profit Sponsor for each project may choose each year to make application for a tax exemption for the respective project. Each year Council will review such application and decide whether an exemption will be granted for the project and if granted, whether it will be a partial or full exemption.

**16. Soil Conditions**

The City of Surrey has contracted an environmental consultant to review the Provincial Partnership Project Site at 13775/95 - 70 Avenue for soil contamination. The report that was the product of this contract indicates that there is no soil contamination on either site. The report will be made available to the selected Sponsor for each site. Despite the above, in the event that soil contamination is discovered, the City reserves the right to withdraw the site from further consideration or to remove any hazardous materials and remediate the site at its cost.

**17. Consultants and Legal Counsel**

BC Housing will contract with and pay for a team of consultants to undertake all necessary design, project management, construction review and administration and legal work for each project. BC Housing has selected the project managers to coordinate this work. Architects and related sub-consultants will be selected by the non-profit Sponsor(s) for the YWCA project. BC Housing has selected the architects and sub-consultants for the Provincial Partnership project.

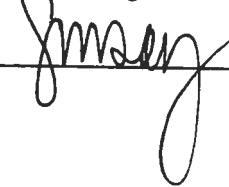
**18. Public Consultation**

Public consultation will occur for the projects consistent with the City of Surrey's established policies and practices in relation to applications for rezoning and development permit approval.

**19. Communications**

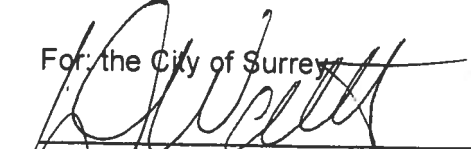
BC Housing and the City of Surrey will make a joint announcement regarding this Memorandum of Understanding. The wording and format of this announcement must be agreeable to both parties before it is released.

For: BC Housing



---

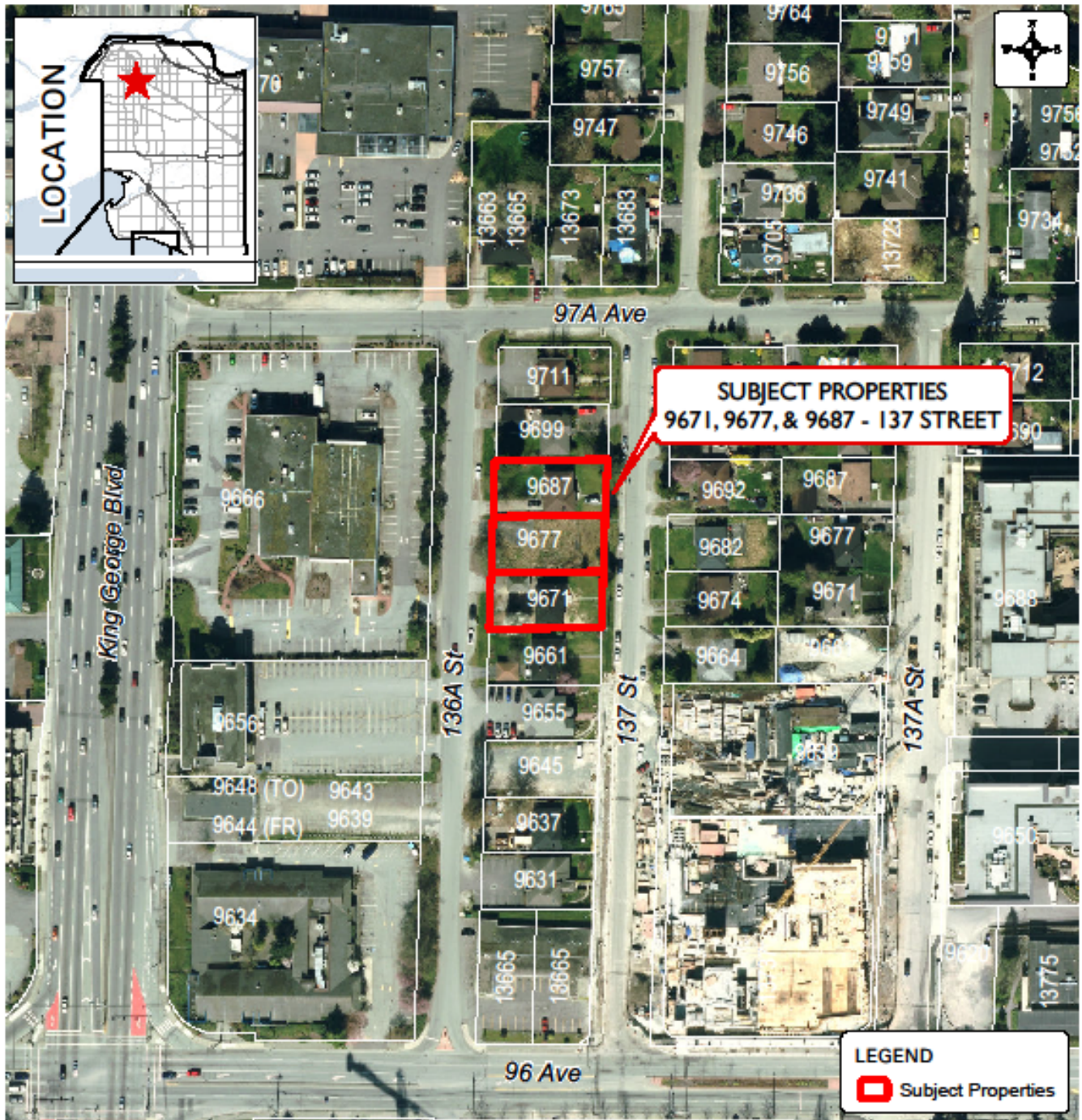
For: the City of Surrey



---

DIANNE L. WATTS  
MAYOR

# APPENDIX II AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF SITE



Produced by GIS Section January-24-14, aw8



**9671, 9677, &  
9687 - 137 STREET**

**ENGINEERING  
DEPARTMENT**

The data provided is compiled from various sources and is NOT warranted as to its accuracy or sufficiency by the City of Surrey.  
This information is provided for information and is not intended as a guarantee.  
Lot sizes, legal descriptions and encumbrances must be confirmed at the Land Title Office.

Source: G:\MAPPING\GIS\Mapa\Corporate\Regal\Real\AW-9671&9677&9687-137ST-AF.mxd