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**CITY OF VICTORIA
ENCAMPMENT OUTREACH
WITH A HOUSING FOCUS**

EXTENSION PROPOSAL

Submission: December
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SUBMITTED BY:

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1988, Pacifica Housing Advisory Association (Pacifica Housing) has successfully developed and/or operated dozens of projects along the housing continuum, with the key purpose of providing equitable housing and support services for people at multiple entry points in Greater Victoria and Nanaimo. We develop community-based projects that meet people where they are at, helping those who are marginalized exit the cycle of homelessness. Our support services include our Streets to Homes (S2H) program, a Community Services team that supports upwards of 500+ individuals in the private market with rent supplements, non-clinical supports and connections to individualized services, and Indigenous Outreach services that provide culturally appropriate client services and supports to our urban Indigenous community. Through our Victoria Downtown Outreach and Housing Resource Services (DOHRS) program, which provides drop-in advocacy, housing and financial navigation services for those who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, those in need of housing stability have a place to go for assistance.

Our housing and support services are accessible to all people, regardless of ethno-cultural background, religious beliefs, disability, mental health status, gender identity or sexual orientation. Pacifica Housing has extensive experience supporting vulnerable populations, including 2SLGBTQIA+, Indigenous populations, seniors, those who struggle with substance misuse disorder and those affected by domestic violence and physical and/or mental health challenges.

With programs and services delivered across the Greater Victoria region and Nanaimo, and numerous partners, such as BC Housing, Island Health, Reaching Home via the Government of Canada, the Capital Regional District (CRD), City of Victoria and Community Living BC, Pacifica Housing is ideally suited to provide encampment outreach in the City of Victoria with a housing focus.

While there are many different types of outreach services, encampment outreach with a housing focus is a systematic approach whereby assessments and referrals are primarily related to finding suitable housing for vulnerable individuals, while connecting them to the supports and resources needed to maintain long-term stability. Individuals living in encampments need a variety of basic resources to subsist, and those resources are available through other organizations. In the proposed approach, Pacifica Housing will focus on housing.

Pacifica Housing will be the City of Victoria's eyes and ears on the ground and a partner in understanding who the unhoused individuals are and what their needs are. We will also be a collaborative partner as we seek to work alongside City of Victoria, the Province and community partners in accelerating the phasing out of encampments in favor of adequate shelter and housing.

The proposed scope of work would be a continuation of work undertaken on behalf of the City of Victoria since 2023 and each phase would continue to take place concurrently.

I. SCOPE OF WORK

1.1 PHASE I

Pacifica Housing will continue to move systematically through specific parks and public areas in the city of Victoria where encampments are located, and conduct in depth assessments of unhoused individuals. These comprehensive assessments will be done using the Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT). Through these assessments, Pacifica Housing outreach staff will be able to better understand the context around each individual's history of chronic homelessness, what health and other resources they may need assistance connecting to, and what kind of housing is most appropriate for these individuals, in order to attain better long-term outcomes.

This information will help inform what kind of potential housing or shelter is currently available in the city and what the gaps in housing and services are for these individuals. This information and themes will be shared with the City of Victoria to assist in mid to long-term decision-making, while respecting individual's privacy. Pacifica Housing will work with City of Victoria staff to prioritize geographical areas of focus at any given time.

1.2 PHASE II

The information collected will be used to support referring individuals to a variety of resources they may require in order to access housing, including but not limited to ministry services, housing application assistance, and transportation to viewings. Where an individual is considered to have the potential to move into independent-living housing, they will be attached to available rent supplements and a search for rental housing will begin.

Where individuals are in need of supportive housing, Pacifica Housing will work through the Coordinated Access and Assessment system in order to assist in finding appropriate placement. We are committed to working with other community-based organizations including our peer non-profit housing providers, BC Housing and Island Health to identify and advocate for solutions.

1.3 PHASE III

Where housing has been identified, Pacifica Housing outreach staff will support clients to move to the sites and set up their new home. This includes coordinating viewings, liaising with landlords on behalf of clients and case workers, completing application forms, accessing household items such as beds and kitchenware, and assisting with the move.

In addition, our outreach workers will follow individuals for 3 months to support stabilization. The team will work with the landlord and the client to problem-solve and resolve disputes/disagreements and following up with landlords on a regular basis to mitigate potential housing retention issues before they escalate.

Specific actions will include:

- Assisting with intake, community outreach to specialized populations, referrals and paperwork for basic needs and services, and referrals to community resources;
- Providing advocacy, support, and guidance, including crisis intervention;
- Housing referral services such as contacting and meeting landlords, assisting with housing

- applications for market rent, subsidized and supportive housing;
- Interim non-medical case management services during the period of assessment and placement into housing; and,
- Ongoing support services in areas such as financial, personal, and home care.

Pacifica Housing Outreach staff will:

1. Directly engage clients where they are situated;
2. Complete intake, consent form and assessment of each client;
3. Offering a support plan for each client;
4. Referring clients to appropriate housing options;
5. Referring clients to income assistance and support services as identified by their individualized support plan;
6. Clients are provided with a rental supplement where appropriate;
7. Tenancy support and skills training are provided to support housing stability and independence as required; and,
8. Follow up and ongoing support to resident is provided as appropriate for a period of 3 months once housed.

2 TIMELINE AND REPORTING

Pacifica Housing would conduct the above-noted activities in a concurrent manner for a period of 12 months for up to 25 clients. This will allow for sufficient time to assess individuals, identify housing as well as gaps in availability, while the Province identifies additional sites and completes sites currently under construction. Pacifica Housing will provide monthly updates on activities, progress and barriers.

We unfortunately, cannot commit to finding housing for every single person, as there are many factors we cannot control. However, we commit to being strong advocates, that the needs of the clients are understood, and that gaps in resources are clearly identified so that we may collaboratively advocate for them to be delivered. We also commit to working with community and Provincial partners in order to seek effective solutions.

3 INVESTMENT

\$100,000, plus GST.

The proposed investment amount includes assigning a minimum of one staff member and maximum of two as required at any given time to conduct VATs and support individuals in a way that ensures safety while in the community. It includes undertaking all activities noted in the scope including household set up, as well as administrative costs related to accessing Pacifica's infrastructure in order to do the work for the period of 12 months for up to 25 clients.