



May 16, 2018

Ref: 235058

Her Worship Mayor Lisa Helps  
City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria BC V8W 1P6

VICTORIA, B.C.

Dear Mayor Helps:

Thank you for your letter regarding homelessness and affordable housing in Victoria. I apologize for the delay in responding.

I appreciate the work that the City of Victoria is doing to address homelessness, increase adequate housing supply and supports in the community. These issues are complex and require dedication, innovative thinking and partnership among governments and community groups.

The Province of British Columbia, through BC Housing, has been working closely with the City, non-profit housing partners, the Victoria Police Department, Island Health and members of the community to assist those struggling with homelessness. I am pleased that through these partnerships we have worked together to take action to create additional housing with supports and expand shelter access.

As you know, the former Tally Ho Inn on Douglas Street, operated by the Victoria Cool Aid Society, recently opened with 52 units of supportive housing. This housing is in addition to 50 new shelter beds that opened at PHS Community Service Society's Douglas Street Community and the new beds that opened at Our Place Society's My Place Shelter. The Province has also extended funding for one more year at the First Metropolitan Shelter.

In addition to shelters and supportive housing, the Province is collaborating with the Capital Regional District to redevelop Cedar Grove, a new purpose-built affordable rental housing development of 82 units for a mix of singles applicants including seniors, working adults and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Building the homes British Columbians need and addressing homelessness are top priorities for our government. Budget 2018 included a historic \$7 billion investment in affordable housing over a 10-year period and introduced *Homes for BC: A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia*.

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The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has a joint mandate with the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to conduct a province-wide homeless count and develop a Homelessness Action Plan. This work is underway and it will provide a framework to address homelessness—including measures to help prevent people from becoming homeless, as well as immediate actions. The Plan, when combined with the Poverty Reduction, Housing, Mental Health and Addictions and Childcare plans and strategies, will form a larger vision to assist British Columbians in need.

I am confident the City will continue to be a key partner in creating more affordable housing and supports for our most vulnerable citizens. I look forward to your innovative ideas and collaborating with the City on future projects.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SR', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Selina Robinson  
Minister

pc: Honourable John Horgan, Premier