



May 14, 2021

To: Mayor and Council, City of Victoria

**Re: Critical Need for Housing Outreach Support Worker**

Dear Mayor Helps and Councillors,

Burnside Gorge Community Association (BGCA) operates a Homeless Family Outreach Program (HFO) that works specifically with families, with children under 19 in their care, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. BGCA's HFO team has encountered an overwhelming rise in the number of single people and couples without children reaching out for support to maintain their housing. This population also does not qualify for services for those who are hard to house.

Quadra Village Community Centre (QVCC) is proposing a pilot Housing Outreach Program to work with adults, singles and couples without children, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to help people navigate the housing system including locating low rent options and seeking long term solutions through waitlists. As well, it will offer the opportunity to provide tailored one to support to folks who don't meet current emergency housing definitions but are in peril of losing access to shelter. QVCC also has the additional support of a practicum student to gather resources.

As you know, Victoria's housing market is extremely difficult. There is limited affordable market housing stock, long waits for affordable housing and a narrow definition of eligibility for emergency housing. It is highly competitive, particularly for those contending with additional challenges like low literacy, limited support, social isolation and moderate anxiety and depression. There is an intense need for additional resources and one-to-one support to find short- and long-term housing options to prevent people from resorting to precarious situations such as living outdoors or in vehicles.

We believe that Quadra Village Community Centre is well situated to provide this service and meet a critical need in our community. The annual cost of service at \$60,000 is a worthwhile investment.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Cole  
Executive Director