

Survey Responses

225 Russell Street

Have Your Say

Project: 225 Russell Street



VISITORS

32

CONTRIBUTORS

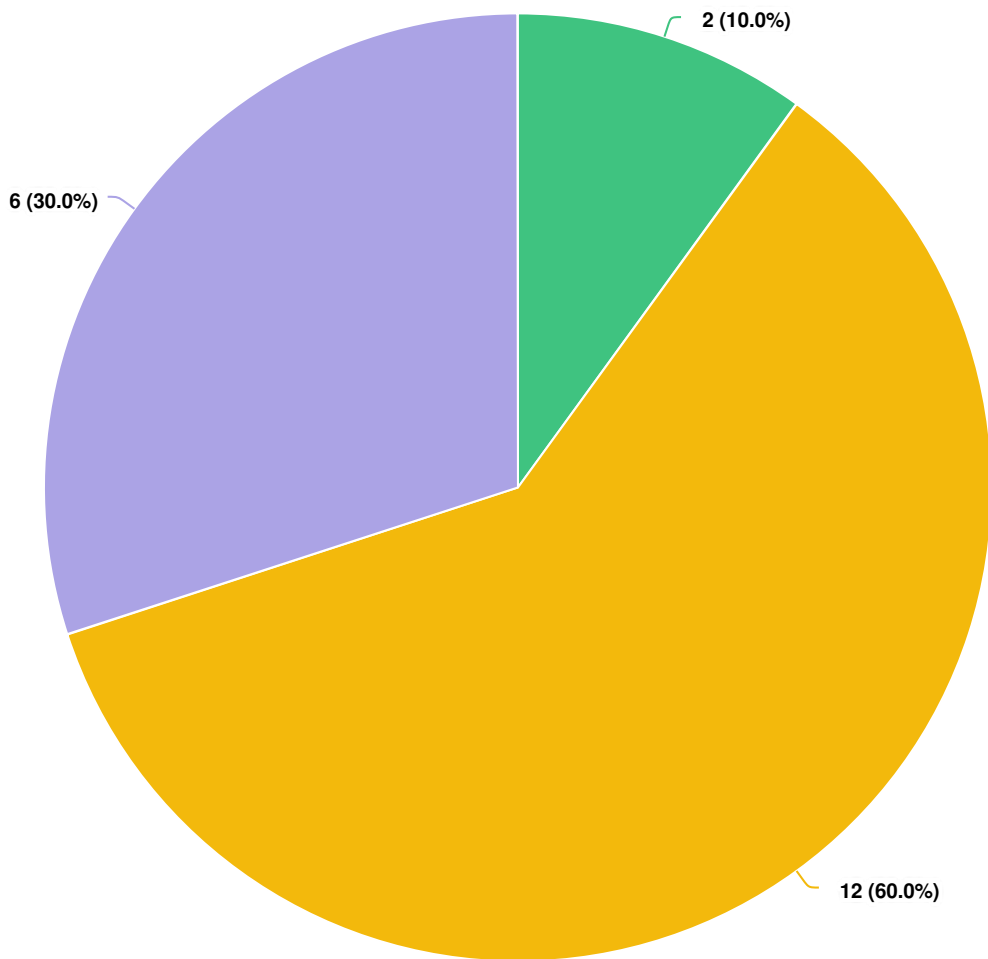
20

RESPONSES

20

0
Registered0
Unverified20
Anonymous0
Registered0
Unverified20
Anonymous

Q1 What is your position on this proposal?



Question options

- Support
- Oppose
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (20 response(s))

Note: Participants may submit multiple responses. See detailed feedback in the following pages.



Respondent No: 1

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 08, 2021 10:36:05 am

Last Seen: Oct 08, 2021 10:36:05 am

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

When the shelter on Russel Street opened May, 10 days later one of the residents lit a fire next to our building at 320 Mary St, causing \$400,000 damage. What are the other negative effects on this neighborhood? What about the families who live on Mary St and Russel Street?

Q3. **Your Full Name** David Egles

Q4. **Your Street Address** 320 Mary St

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 2

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 08, 2021 19:16:40 pm

Last Seen: Oct 08, 2021 19:16:40 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

Hello Mayor and Council for the City of Victoria, Re: Proposed development at 225 Russell Street I feel that Victoria West already has a significant amount of subsidized and low income housing. Are there not other Victoria neighbourhoods that could benefit from this opportunity? I am a home owner on Maitland Street so I am very familiar with the BC Housing locations in our area. I am adamantly opposed to this development. Regards, Michelle Moore

Q3. **Your Full Name** Michelle and Frederick Moore

Q4. **Your Street Address** 505-325 Maitland Street, Victoria, BC V9A 7E9

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 3

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 10, 2021 14:39:58 pm

Last Seen: Oct 10, 2021 14:39:58 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

Anything to do with half-way housing, shelters, homeless shelters etc I adamantly oppose until this city comes up with a constructive SOLUTION. Right now all this city does is bandade maintenance of a huge overgrown problem the simply encourages more and more such housing but never gets rid of the problem.

Q3. **Your Full Name** Doug Reglin

Q4. **Your Street Address** 402, 325 Maitland Street

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 4

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 15, 2021 09:17:39 am

Last Seen: Oct 15, 2021 09:17:39 am

Q1. What is your position on this proposal?

Other (please specify)

Just have questions (below)

Q2. Comments (optional)

Who will be living in the 40 supportive housing units? What will happen to the people now living there in its "temporary shelter" mode? Will there be any screening for drug use, criminal behavior, etc? Will there be an operator for this facility and if so, who is it? This is a quiet neighborhood across from a coop with children resident. I don't know .of a lot of trouble from the current shelter (barring one arsonist) and know that people living on the streets need to be housed, but some screening to prevent the horrible scene in the 800 block Johnson Street should be mandatory.

Q3. Your Full Name

Karen Muntean

Q4. Your Street Address

1-242 Robert St

Q5. Your email address (optional)



Respondent No: 5

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 16, 2021 10:21:38 am

Last Seen: Oct 16, 2021 10:21:38 am

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Support

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

not answered

Q3. **Your Full Name** Anthony B Green

Q4. **Your Street Address** 1-242 Robert St

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 6

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Oct 16, 2021 12:55:09 pm

Last Seen: Oct 16, 2021 12:55:09 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

I appreciate the attempts to make this new design fit into the community, but have we not learned that SRO style shelter sites is not the way to support people out of homelessness? Years of horrid living environments in the DTES, similar circumstances occurring in the Victoria sites over the last 3 years, and significant research evidence from the At Home/Chez Soi study (and subsequent studies) showing that scatter site housing has the best outcomes. And yet in Victoria, we continue to build SROs... that are shelter - not housing, and built where ever BC Housing can find space versus thoughtful and appropriate community planning. The rooms that are created in this design are sleeping spaces, there is no 'living' space - appropriate housing is more than having a roof to sleep under. Very sad we are still in this place in our housing strategy in Victoria. I have much appreciation for the housing providers who do their best to support folks, but until we take an evidence-based approach to homelessness, we will continue to dissatisfied neighbourhoods such as mine with what is trust upon us versus developed with us.

Q3. **Your Full Name** Monica Flexhaug

Q4. **Your Street Address** 333 Robert St

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 7

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 03, 2021 21:04:39 pm

Last Seen: Nov 03, 2021 21:04:39 pm

Q1. What is your position on this proposal?

Other (please specify)

Conditional Support.

Q2. Comments (optional)

As a former provider of homelessness services, I support the project. But I have strong reservations about the applicant. BC Housing has shown it can warehouse people, but it has not demonstrated any capacity to effectively intervene with its residents and provide supports for their pathway out of housing insecurity. Congregating clients into a single setting may look appealing as an answer to homelessness but it is not a strategy in itself. As a resident, I am also very concerned about their inability to ensure that they respect the neighbourhood, in particular, by taking active and sustained efforts to make sure that their facilities blend well into the area and its norms. I am thinking of the street front presentation, flows of pedestrian traffic, typical quiet times, waste management, and other social relations. In part this is because the applicant does not live in the area and is multiple degrees removed from the neighbourhood, located in offices far from the area. The operators in turn are professional providers who are orientated more to meeting contract deliverables and serving clients than integrating those clients into the area. I would ask that Council defer approval until the applicant has shown both a commitment to robust programming in the facility, and has done more to connect itself and its potential residents into the neighbourhood. An email comment submission form with room for a few paragraphs is not remotely close to the kind of connections and immersion that is required for us to play our role as residents in helping others live a stable housed existence. Cheers Charles Horn

Q3. Your Full Name

Charles Horn

Q4. Your Street Address

325 Maitland Street

Q5. Your email address (optional)



Respondent No: 8

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 03, 2021 21:17:26 pm

Last Seen: Nov 03, 2021 21:17:26 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?**

Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

First off, I think it's outrageous that the city is not having a public meeting or a zoom conference. This acts to minimize feedback from the community, and means that individual submissions happen in a total vacuum -- there is no ability for community members to find out what others are thinking and expressing, and minimizes the value of the community input process.; We own in the townhouse complex directly across from 225 Russell, and now have considerable experience with the fallout from a homeless shelter being located across the street. The problem is that both the building and the location are unsuitable to the purpose. Russell Street is a narrow, dead end street, and cannot absorb the impact of the shelter. Our home is less than 50 meters from the shelter and is greatly affected by sound, the intense security lighting, the HVAC system and the frequent arguments and police attendance. Social Disruption There are regular verbal fights, with screaming, threats of physical violence, crying and screaming. I have called both the emergency and non-emergency police numbers numerous times. There seems to be no ability by staff to control the confrontations or to at least get the parties inside. Fights or confrontations can happen at any time of the day or night, and can last indefinitely. Once your limbic system is activated by a fight, you've lost any sense of security or peace for rest of the day (or night). There has to be zero tolerance by shelter staff for people hanging out on the street. One of the biggest fears we have is of Russell turning into "Little Pandora". I called the shelter when three people were sitting on the sidewalk right outside the property line, and was told by a worker at the shelter that "he didn't have a problem with it, that they were friends of people in the shelter and that everyone deserved to have friends." Within about 10 minutes, the people were smoking crack. I had to call the police, who attended quickly and moved the people away. The shelter staff didn't act to support community needs, and we suffer from the sense of entitlement and empowerment given to shelter residents. Sound The shelter has been built in a natural amphitheatre, with the brick walls of a warehouse to the side and the back, and a duplex on the other side. Even conversations at a normal speaking volume can penetrate my office glass doors, located at the ground floor level. Unfortunately, loud blow-outs are common, with screaming and obscenities clearly audible in our bedrooms and living room. Even when residents are not fighting, their way of socialization is often loud and chippy, and we're often not sure if they're having a fight or having a good time. It often means we go out to check and see if we need to get involved and call the police. It requires constant action on our part to try and safeguard our sense of security and attempt to set some boundaries for acceptable behavior. When trying to find out whether the staff is intervening in an argument, we've been told that "they're just having a conversation, and they're working it out". Security guards and staff get acclimatized to that type of social interaction, but the standards that should be applied to a residence like this should be reasonable residential community standards, not life-on-the-street standards. On several occasions, I've had to go out and ask shelter staff to turn down boom boxes being played in the courtyard. That sound gets projected out by the amphitheatre-like walls of the surrounding building, and booms directly into my office when I'm on the phone with colleagues and customers. Another major concern about noise is the HVAC system. The HVAC system was installed just a couple of meters from the property line at the front, and the low-frequency pulse of the powerful generator is broadcast 24 hours a day. The shelter should never have been located in a building that required an external HVAC unit to be installed. The unit causes a resonance with our building structure and you can hear the pulse of the motor if you put your ear to our mattress. The thrumming sound is identical in tone to the float planes idling at the Harbour Air dock. It is invasive and unceasing, and disturbs our peace. Russell Street used to be a very quiet street, and now it's humming with activity 24 hours a day. The plan for the building shows an outdoor lounge area right across from our townhouse. Again, we will be affected by the noise coming from this lounge, and that many of the residents keep a 24-hour schedule, so that means we can expect social gatherings there during the night. The street is too narrow and residences too close together to absorb this kind of social activity. Lighting The prison-style security lighting that was placed on the front of the building is totally unsuitable to the neighbourhood. The lights should be dimmer and they should be shaded to direct the light down to the within the property itself. They are no shades on them at all and the project out 180 degrees. We get the intense security lighting coming directly into our bedroom and living room windows. Again this type of prison-style lighting is unsuitable to a residential

neighbourhood. We are all aware that this is a done deal, and that the city is powerless to prevent the provincial government from installing the shelter on our street -- in spite of the fact that, even after the renos, it is a building and a location completely unsuited to the intention function. We can only hope that the city will act to ameliorate the worst impacts of the shelter. We now have more than 6 months experience with the shelter across the street, and can state without any exaggeration that the shelter has greatly diminished our quality of life, sense of peace and security, and the simple enjoyment of our living space and neighbourhood.

Q3. Your Full Name

Stephen (and Denise) Zmetana

Q4. Your Street Address

2 - 216 Russell Street

Q5. Your email address (optional)



Respondent No: 9

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 03, 2021 23:05:11 pm

Last Seen: Nov 03, 2021 23:05:11 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

These facilities should not be in residential areas.

Q3. **Your Full Name** Rick Homer

Q4. **Your Street Address** 655 Griffiths street

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 10

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 03, 2021 23:44:14 pm

Last Seen: Nov 03, 2021 23:44:14 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Support

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

I believe this development is vital for our community. Permanent supportive housing is vital for our region and I am unequivocally happy to support this one in my neighbourhood. I plan to make a submission and speak at the public hearing in support.

Q3. **Your Full Name** Jeremy Schmidt

Q4. **Your Street Address** 814 - 160 Wilson st

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 11

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 00:12:51 am

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 00:12:51 am

Q1. What is your position on this proposal?

Other (please specify)

I support this if there is 24 hour onsite security. If there is not I am opposed.

Q2. Comments (optional)

not answered

Q3. Your Full Name

Nick Osmond-Jones

Q4. Your Street Address

250 Russell street

Q5. Your email address (optional)



Respondent No: 12

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 00:14:18 am

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 00:14:18 am

Q1. What is your position on this proposal?

Other (please specify)

I am only supportive if there is 24 hour onsite security. Otherwise, I oppose.

Q2. Comments (optional)

not answered

Q3. Your Full Name

Sarah Hiscox

Q4. Your Street Address

250 Russell st.

Q5. Your email address (optional)



Respondent No: 13

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 06:59:14 am

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 06:59:14 am

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

not answered

Q3. **Your Full Name** Sarah Duhamel

Q4. **Your Street Address** 508 Springfield street

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 14

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 07:50:45 am

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 07:50:45 am

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

Since the arrival of the shelter my car has been broken into, they stole fuses from my engine and made my car in-drivable. I had to get it towed and it cost me over \$500 to repair and reinstall the fuses they stole. The mechanic said they take the fuses so they can get into the car without the alarm sounding. I don't sleep from all the noise during the night, constant yelling and screaming. I've had the homeless enter my yard and wander around my property obviously looking for something to steal. I used to walk around the neighborhood after dinner and now it's too dangerous with all the homeless and their cohorts roaming the blocks where I live asking for cigarettes and/or money. Im afraid I may have to move because I can't afford to keep repairing my vehicle, going without sleep and being afraid. This neighborhood was quiet and safe and now it's like living on Pandora street, this shelter has ruined my neighborhood. Friends don't want to come visit and leave their vehicles on the street because of the shelter. I'm begging you please don't approve this shelter in this location. Please place them somewhere else. I also feel lied to because I was told this would be temporary and now it's be proposed as permanent. I deserve quality of life in my home and I don't have it with this shelter placement. Please don't approve this when 99% of the residents do not want it. Thank you for your time and consideration. Kind Regards, Kathryn

Q3. **Your Full Name** Kathryn Burns

Q4. **Your Street Address** 25 - 250 Russell Street

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 15

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 10:00:04 am

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 10:00:04 am

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?**

Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

1. Parking: The street was often full before the shelter but now it is worse. Parking should be provided for the residents of the supportive housing, visitors, care workers, staff, counsellors, ambulances, etc. 2. We have concerns about retrofitting a 1970's warehouse. It was obvious the shelter at 225 ran into problems not anticipated, after the addition of a ventilation system which has made the seniors home next store almost uninhabitable because of the vibration and the noise. 3. Zero lot clearance on three sides. How is maintenance going to be done without access to neighboring properties? The ideal situation would be to remove the building and design something like the Co-Op across the street which has provided affordable housing for over 30 years. 4. Also, the Co-Op is a Family oriented building. Will the residents of the new building be compatible with the children? I know children have witnessed drug deals through the fence of the homeless shelter, overdoses, and screaming people being arrested. 5. This is a dead-end street, so in emergency situations the rest of the residents have been locked in. There have been multiple situations where this has happened recently. An example of what can go wrong was on 223 Robert Street. On April 2020, the heritage house was ablaze and I watched firetrucks try to access Robert Street by driving down Russell. I heard the firemen say they could not effectively fight the fire without an additional truck and several were parked on Esquimalt Road because there was no access. We would prefer Russell Street to join to Robert Street because Russell Street is often blocked by ambulances, fire trucks, or delivery vans. At the very least there should be an emergency access the fire trucks or ambulance could use.

Q3. **Your Full Name**

Tom & Linda Bown

Q4. **Your Street Address**

215 Russell Street

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 16

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 10:04:28 am

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 10:04:28 am

Q1. What is your position on this proposal?

Other (please specify)

This type of housing, 40 or 70 homeless people in a family oriented neighbourhood should be discouraged. Please ask the neighbours not how they felt about it but what the facts are about the changes in the community that have transpired because of the present initiative.

Q2. Comments (optional)

Please rethink the concept, move it to a less vulnerable area or provide more services than are now available.

Q3. Your Full Name

Not ready to disclose

Q4. Your Street Address

Russell, Robert, Maitland neighbourhood.

Q5. Your email address (optional)



Respondent No: 17

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 16:53:25 pm

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 16:53:25 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

Only if the very required on-going funding and supports can be guaranteed for years would this be even a possibility for this area. It is adjacent to the Songhee Walkway. We don't need this area to also be another fearful place for the public to avoid, as I'm afraid downtown is becoming known. Many folks refuse to risk the arts/theatres/musicals/ and major community events that have been the main draws to our once world case destination. Do consider what you may be creating. Thanks.

Q3. **Your Full Name** David Hansen

Q4. **Your Street Address** 417-630 Seaforth St.

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 18

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 18:13:48 pm

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 18:13:48 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?** Oppose

Q2. **Comments (optional)**

I am writing to express my opposition to the rezoning application for 225 Russell St. The location is wholly unsuitable for the proposed purpose. The current use of the space has resulted in not only the decreased feelings of safety of the existing residents but an increase in crime, trespassing, public urination, violence and threats of violence, open drug use, and open drug dealing. I strongly encourage you to look at the exponential increase in police calls compared to last year and the year before. It is asinine to think that a change in architecture while housing the same people with the same complex health care needs will result in a change to this.

Q3. **Your Full Name** Heather Doyle

Q4. **Your Street Address** 24-250 Russell St

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**



Respondent No: 19

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 22:11:09 pm

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 22:11:09 pm

Q1. What is your position on this proposal?

Other (please specify)

Support with a reduction in the number of living units and denying the requested variance for reduced number of parking spaces.

Q2. Comments (optional)

While I generally support the proposed development I am concerned about three elements: lack of adequate parking, the high density of residents and the probability of excessive noise. Regarding parking, the requested variance should be denied. There does not appear to be any consideration of the number of parking spaces required for the development's on-site staff nor other workers that attend the site on scheduled or ad hoc appointments (occupant load stated at 11 office workers). Russell Street parking has already become problematic with a lesser number of shelter residents...primarily as a result of staff parking on the street throughout the day. Regarding the high density of residents, 40 resident spaces is too many for the small lot size, equal to two residential lots. It is suggested that the residential units be reduced in number, thereby allowing larger living units and more communal space, including parking spaces. Regarding the probability of excessive noise, neighbourhood experience to date with the temporary sheltering of approximately 30 residents has shown that evening and night time noise continues to be problematic despite 24 hour staffing and security personnel. An increase in the resident population on the site will only make things worse. As recommended above, a reduction in the number of residential units would have a positive effect on limiting excessive noise. Such a change would provide a more relaxed interior environment for residents and reduce the number of loud outside activities which have consistently been an issue with the shelter.

Q3. Your Full Name

Randy Cairns

Q4. Your Street Address

207 Russell Street

Q5. Your email address (optional)



Respondent No: 20

Login: Anonymous

Responded At: Nov 04, 2021 22:54:40 pm

Last Seen: Nov 04, 2021 22:54:40 pm

Q1. **What is your position on this proposal?**

Oppose

Q2. Comments (optional)

My name is Wayne Yercha. I live in a small strata complex directly across from the entrance to the Russell Street shelter. As a member of the Russell Street CAC (Community Advisory Committee), I have now had the opportunity to observe both the severe negative impact that the shelter has had on the community, and the level of concern (or lack thereof) displayed by the rezoning applicant (BC Housing). Unfortunately, it has become abundantly clear that BC Housing has neither the motivation nor the willingness to conduct meaningful engagement with the community. In my opinion, the true purpose of the CAC is for BC Housing to maintain a facade of engagement that is useful for governmental reporting or media inquiries. CAC meetings are consistently used to negate/diminish/cast-doubt-on community concerns ranging from noise, to drug use affecting children and families, to intrusion and intimidation. Sadly, I have never heard BC Housing's directors/representatives express sincere concern, offer apologies, or even display an understanding of the real-life impact of their actions. Instead, they employ a disingenuous strategy of public civility...while at the same time, refusing to acknowledge the damage being done, or BC Housing's responsibility for it. For this reason alone, I have no faith that BC Housing will provide the necessary resources or operate the proposed supportive housing unit in any manner conducive to being a good neighbour. In addition, from a purely operational standpoint, BC Housing has shown itself to be unwilling/unresponsive/incapable of adequately addressing even a fixable community problem such as ongoing noise from an HVAC machine...noise that continues to cause health concerns for adjacent neighbours. What possible faith can we have that future problems will be adequately addressed...especially when the facility location is clearly (and unalterably) unsuitable? In conclusion, the current facility was poorly planned (at best), and the rezoning is clearly not in the best interest of the Russell Street community. One needs to look no further than the fact that BC Housing itself has confirmed that no studies have ever been done to evaluate the suitability or impact on the Russell Street community...nor do they intend to conduct them relative to the proposed facility. If the City of Victoria has any care or concern for the very citizens who fund and sustain this city, it will immediately carry out an independent evaluation sincerely asking for feedback...and will be willing to advocate on behalf of the Russell Street community. Unfortunately, the opposite seems to be occurring. Today, work took place to increase the size of the storm/water/sewage pipes for the new development (according to city workers). This work was being done prior to the written comment period ending, and long before rezoning approval. It begs the question: does the city sincerely wish to receive community concerns/comments...or is the outcome predetermined and this process simply a sham? Two final points to illustrate the impact of BC Housing's ongoing disrespect for the people of our community: • Earlier this week, an elderly neighbour living adjacent to the shelter phoned me in a panic. A man (believed to be a resident of the shelter) had been pounding on her front door. When she opened it, he accused her of hiding someone in her living room, who he claimed was selling cocaine to kids. She told him that no one was there, and that she didn't know what he was talking about...and then fortunately, was able to slam the door shut. She was extremely upset and fearful. I advised her to call the police...which she did. I also advised BC Housing of the situation. No comment or contact from BC Housing regarding the matter has been forthcoming. This afternoon, she phoned me again. The same individual had just gone on to her property, opened her gate, and was been looking around her backyard. In an email she sent to MLA Grace Lore and the Mayor and council, she says, "I am upset because I live alone, I am not feeling safe or secure. I want this to stop and not be afraid every time I go out for a walk. Please I need help." Angie Miller - 219 Russell Street Angie is the same vulnerable senior who has needed to visit a doctor to deal with the unrelenting and damaging impact of the noise from the HVAC machine...still unresolved by BC Housing (despite many requests). • I had hoped to attach a short audio file recorded from inside a home in the Co-op across the street from the shelter, however there was no ability in your system to attach it. It represented just one of many disturbing incidents which have been brought to the attention of BC Housing. Evidently, even racial slurs and the threat of "gutting" someone (being heard by children) does not rise to the level of being addressed by BC Housing at a CAC meeting. If it were your children or family who were affected, would you consider this to be an acceptable situation? I think not. In conclusion, everyone wants the homeless to be housed and the addicted to be helped...but one does not strengthen a community by sowing distrust and weakening its stability, and one does not help the homeless by alienating and disrespecting the very people who must welcome them into their community. The mayor of Penticton, in a letter to Premier Horgan, concerning BC Housing, wrote, "Solving problems for one group should never bring harm or risk of safety to another." I couldn't agree more. Sincerely, Wayne Yercha

Q3. Your Full Name

Wayne Yercha

Q4. **Your Street Address**

6 - 216 Russell Street

Q5. **Your email address (optional)**
