

September 14, 2022

To: Mayor and Council, City of Victoria

Re: Continued Support for Housing Outreach Support Worker

Dear Mayor Helps and Councillors,

Burnside Gorge Community Association (BGCA) is writing in support of Quadra Village Community Centre's (QVCC) request for continued funding to support their Housing Outreach Program.

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 seen a consistent increase 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's (QVCC) Housing Outreach Program fills a gap in service for this population, working 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. This program is also critical to support to folks who don't meet current emergency housing definitions but are in peril of losing access to shelter. The program has had tremendous success through their pilot, working with more than 260 individuals in housing crisis.

As you know, Victoria's housing market is becoming increasingly difficult. Limited affordable market housing stock, long waits for affordable housing and a narrow definition of eligibility for emergency housing all contribute to alarming levels of need. 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 continued support for this program is a worthwhile investment and meets a critical need in our community.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Cole
Executive Director