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January 19, 2017

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
Victoria City Hall
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing in my capacity as Regional Director of BC Housing to support the Victoria Police Department's request to add two additional officers to the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams.

BC Housing's non-profit housing and service partners work alongside police officers on ACT teams to serve clients who face complex challenges related to health, housing and poverty. I strongly believe ACT teams are an asset to communities by providing tailored support to clients.

BC Housing has enjoyed a positive relationship with the Victoria Police Department. I understand there are currently four ACT teams servicing 320 people in Victoria, and only one police officer assigned. Expanding the capacity of the current ACT teams in Victoria to include two additional officers will further support a population that far too often faces barriers in accessing existing health and social services. Officers play a critical role on ACT teams by providing crisis prevention, public safety, expertise and resources to serve clients. Officers are also able to identify individuals who require care early on, support health care workers with assessments and, when required, apprehensions under the Mental Health Act.

I encourage you to give the Victoria Police Department's request strong consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like any further details.

Yours truly,

Heidi Hartman
Regional Director, Vancouver Island

cc: Del Manak, A/Chief Constable, Victoria Police Department