



Room 201 – Parliament Buildings
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April 29, 2016

Hon. Premier Christy Clark,
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Hon. Rich Coleman,
Minister Responsible for Housing and Deputy Premier
PO Box 9052, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Premier Clark and Minister Coleman,

We are writing to urge your government to make immediate, long-term investments in affordable housing in Greater Victoria.

Our communities are increasingly concerned with the growing problem of housing affordability in our region, and the impacts of rising homelessness. The most serious illustration at present is the tent city on the grounds of the provincial courthouse in Victoria.

We appreciate the most recent investments by Minister Coleman in funding additional shelter spaces, transitional housing units, and other short-term actions. After years of underfunding, however, these measures simply aren't enough to meet the urgent needs in the community, and are interim measures rather than long-term solutions.

Currently there are 90 individuals on the waitlist for Choices, 70 individuals on the waitlist at My Place, and the waitlist for regional non-profit and public affordable housing is at more than 1,500 families and increasing by 100's each year. The 2016 Point In Time Count Report counted 1,387 homeless individuals in Greater Victoria. Shelters are full every night and turning many people away with nowhere else to go.

Not-for-profit organizations, faith groups, and others in our communities have stepped up to meet the challenge, but they need our help. Now is the time to make a significant investment in long-term housing solutions to ensure that everyone has access to safe and secure housing, and to ensure that situations like the tent city do not happen again.

In December 2015 the Capital Regional District Board voted unanimously to allow the CRD to borrow up to \$30 million to fund affordable or supportive housing. The allocation is subject to the Province matching this

funding and the provincial government contributing sufficient dollars for social and healthcare support services.

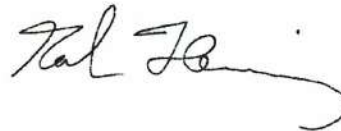
Victoria MP Murray Rankin has written to the federal ministers asking them to commit a further \$30 million in matching funds from the \$2.3 billion allocated for housing in the federal budget. We will also be writing to support this request and encourage your counterparts in the federal government to assist. We would ask you to add your government's support to this request.

We urge your government to pledge these funds immediately so that housing projects can get underway without further delay. The crisis of homelessness and housing affordability will not be solved overnight, but further, long-term investments are urgently needed.

Sincerely,



Carole James, MLA
Victoria-Beacon Hill



Rob Fleming, MLA
Victoria-Swan Lake

cc: City of Victoria Mayor and Council
CRD Directors
Regional Housing Trust Fund Commission
Downtown Service Providers
Murray Rankin, MP
Gary Holman, MLA
John Horgan, MLA
Maurine Karagianis, MLA
Lana Popham, MLA
Andrew Weaver, MLA
Bishop Logan McMenamie
Stephen Hammond