

**ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Attorney General and Responsible  
for Housing

Date: May 16, 2022

Minister: Attorney General David Eby

**BC Housing's top 10  
funded non-profits –  
FOI request****ISSUE SUMMARY:**

A media outlet has requested "the amount of money BC Housing has given to its top 10 non-profit housing organizations over the last five years."

The request originally came into BC Housing's media relations team. Due to the complexity of the request, BC Housing advised the outlet to submit a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to its Privacy and Information Services branch instead. BC Housing estimates that the FOI response will be fully processed and released to the media applicant the week of May 16, 2022.

Once the information has been released to the outlet, BC Housing's communications team plans to follow up to provide context.

**RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:**

s. 13

**BACKGROUND:**

- The funding disclosed through the FOI request includes operating funding and COVID-19 Action Plan funding to open new supportive housing units, shelter spaces and isolation sites, as well as to enhance services at existing projects (i.e., security, enhanced cleaning).
- The funding disclosed excludes any loans the non-profit provider may have received and must repay. The non-profits were not contacted during the compilation of this data but have since been informed about the amount that will be released to the applicant.
- Atira is the non-profit housing provider that receives the highest amount of provincial funding. This is due to several factors, mainly related to their critical role in supporting provincial efforts to house people experiencing homelessness and who require housing with supports.

- At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, several contracts to operate community isolation centres were granted to Atira as one of the only providers that had the capacity and willingness to accept the operating contracts.
- Other non-profit housing providers declined the contracts when offered due to operating capacity constraints.
- The operation of temporary centres transitioned into long-term contracts when several sites were purchased by the Province to become permanent supportive housing.
- BC Housing works closely with Atira to track and evaluate their operational budgets.

**Table 1 – Top 10 non-profit housing providers by operating funding:**

Society	FYE 2017	FYE 2018	FYE 2019	FYE 2020	FYE 2021
Atira Women's Resource Society	\$18,002,913	\$20,626,979	\$26,380,08	\$32,017,818	\$52,246,484
PHS Community Services Society	\$15,537,434	\$17,298,29	\$21,993,69	\$25,961,098	\$33,745,530
Lookout Housing and Health Society	\$16,978,163	\$18,995,70	\$22,821,856	\$25,710,504	\$32,752,446
RAINCITY Housing and Support Society	\$12,832,533	\$13,010,149	\$15,971,458	\$19,841,405	\$21,876,878
Victoria Cool Aid Society	\$9,580,065	\$9,890,844	\$11,603,769	\$12,615,030	\$15,493,003
Coast Foundation Society (1974)	(Not in top 10)		\$6,535,847	\$9,175,102	\$10,343,583
Pacifica Housing Advisory Association	\$5,735,944	\$5,687,985	\$7,105,192	\$8,433,336	\$9,429,285
Affordable Housing Societies	\$10,418,783	\$9,537,770	\$9,398,639	\$8,824,264	\$9,137,592
ASK Wellness Society	(Not in top 10)				\$7,865,391
More Than A Roof Housing Society	(Not in top 10)	\$7,295,333	\$7,200,244	\$7,327,631	\$7,562,865
Motivation, Power & Achievement Society	(Not in top 10)			\$6,624,267	(Not in top 10)
New Chelsea Society	\$4,523,285	\$6,383,086	\$6,578,039	(Not in top 10)	
The Bloom Group Community Services Society	\$5,306,469	\$5,358,308	(Not in top 10)		
Our Place Society	\$4,267,232	(Not in top 10)			

**Table 2 – Top 4 non-profit housing providers by units managed:**

This table lists operating funding provided to BC Housing's largest four housing providers, as well as the total number of units managed. The amounts in the chart exclude COVID-19 funding because BC Housing does not have COVID-19-unit count data available.

Society	FYE 2020	FYE 2021	Change
Atira Women's Resource Society	\$31,902,818 1,956 units \$16,310 p/u	\$40,343,037 2,024 units \$19,932 p/u	+26.46% +3.48% +20.21%
PHS Community Services Society	\$25,851,098 1,256 units \$20,584 p/u	\$31,729,597 1,331 units \$23,838 p/u	+22.73% +5.97% +15.81%
Lookout Housing and Health Society	\$25,662,504 1,119 units \$22,933 p/u	\$26,758,966 1,070 units \$25,008 p/u	+4.28% -4.38% +9.05%
RAINCITY Housing and Support Society	\$19,841,405 872 units \$22,754 p/u	\$20,817,414 912 units \$22,826 p/u	+4.92% +4.59% +0.71%

**Table 3 – Top 4 non-profit housing providers by operating and COVID-19 Action Plan funding:**

Society	FYE 2020	FYE 2021
Atira Women's Resource Society	Ops - \$31,902,818 COVID - \$115,000 <b>Total - \$32,017,818</b>	Ops - \$40,343,037 COVID - \$11,902,811 <b>Total - \$52,246,484</b>
PHS Community Services Society	Ops - \$25,851,098 COVID - \$110,000 <b>Total - \$25,961,098</b>	Ops - \$31,729,597 COVID - \$2,015,933 <b>Total - \$33,745,530</b>
Lookout Housing and Health Society	Ops - \$25,662,504 COVID - \$48,000 <b>Total - \$25,710,504</b>	Ops - \$26,758,966 COVID - \$5,993,480 <b>Total - \$32,752,446</b>
RAINCITY Housing and Support Society	Ops - \$19,841,405 COVID - \$78,000 <b>Total - \$19,841,405</b>	Ops - \$20,817,414 COVID - \$1,059,464 <b>Total - \$21,876,878</b>



**ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Housing

Date: May 1, 2023

Minister: Honourable Ravi Kahlon

**Atira – Women’s Health & Safety  
in SRO housing****ISSUE SUMMARY:**

Atira Women’s Resource Society has developed a report on the safety of women living in Atira-operated SRO buildings, [publishing it on their website](#) on April 26.

The report provides insight on two areas of women’s health and safety in Atira SROs: understanding successful existing practices and identifying improvement areas. The report was drafted through review of existing Atira and external research materials, interviews with seven staff members and through survey questionnaires distributed to 100 women clients residing in Atira SRO buildings.

A number of notable concerns are outlined in the report – many of which assert a general inadequacy of SROs as safe housing due to overcrowding, cultural deficiencies, insecure units (particularly that in-unit washrooms are critical to the safety of women living in SROs), among other concerns – and that living in SRO housing vastly increases risk of exposure to violence, sex work and even sex trafficking.

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- BC Housing is committed to the safety and well-being of the people we serve. This commitment extends to the contracts we have signed with our housing providers, non-profits who oversee day-to-day management, and conditions of social housing buildings owned by the Province.
- It is vital that our buildings are safe for those who call them home, including the physical structure of each building and the services and supports provided within.
- BC Housing recognizes that many SROs are not adequate for the long-term housing needs of residents. Most of these buildings are more than a century old and were designed as temporary accommodations. This is why the Province and the City of Vancouver are committed to developing a long-term plan with the federal government to replace or revitalize SRO buildings.
- BC Housing and the Province are committed to working with community outreach partners to ensure women and other marginalized people at risk of violence are connected to supports, and that shelter and housing spaces are identified specifically for women at risk.
- [s. 13](#)
- Over the past several months, the Province, through BC Housing, has worked with community and government partners to develop and implement a new coordinated response plan to support people experiencing homelessness in the Downtown Eastside. The plan focuses on helping people get off the streets and into homes to resolve

encampments, and on strengthening health, social and cultural supports to make the Downtown Eastside a healthier, safer place for everyone. More information about the DTES response plan is available here:

[https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Strategy\\_DTES\\_provincial\\_response\\_plan.pdf](https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Strategy_DTES_provincial_response_plan.pdf)

- As the report on Women's Safety in APMI Managed Single Room Occupancy Buildings was developed by Atira Women's Resource Society, they would be better equipped to answer questions regarding its creation and specific contents.

## BACKGROUND FOR MINISTRY:

- Atira Women's Resource Society (Atira) is one of the largest supportive housing providers in BC and, according to their own reporting, owns and or manages more than 2,000 rooms in more than 35 buildings, mostly in Downtown Vancouver and the DTES. Management of all its all-gender buildings is subcontracted to Atira Property Management Inc. (APMI). More than 4,000 people live in these buildings when including partners and/or 'permanent guests.'
- Report directly references both Premier Eby's comments on SROs being inadequate housing and estimated waiting times for applicants on the housing registry, indicating the latter can last as much as eight years.
- Report provides significant evidence that those identifying as women and who are experiencing homelessness are at an increased risk of physical and sexual violence due to overall housing conditions, ingrained social misogyny, and criminalization of drugs and sex work.
- In 2014, Atira published a very similar report titled *Preventing Violence Against Women in Atira's SROs*. While this earlier report is not available online, BC Housing staff have  
s. 13
- A summary breakdown of **successes** raised during staff & management interviews includes:
  - Processes and protocols on Critical Incident Reporting system
  - Use of security cameras in SRO buildings
  - Effectiveness of Women's Health & Safety Liaison team, which regularly visits SROs to conduct wellness check, offer accompaniment to medical appointments, coordinate safety plans for those who have experienced violence and offer other services for the women.
  - Signing of women-focused rental agreements in couples tenancies, increasing personal agency for women clients.
  - Hiring of staff with lived expertise.
- A summary breakdown of **concerns** raised during staff & management interviews includes:
  - Women-only floors do not appear to reduce the risk of violence
  - In-room washrooms are important for the safety of women in SROs
  - Covid-19 continues to affect SRO's sense of community
  - Most violent acts against women are perpetrated by men, mostly over

- possessions, sex, and or criminalized drugs
  - Violent crimes perpetrated against women often go underreported in SROs.
  - There is need for increase in emergency communication with tenants and guests.
  - Women in SROs require increased in-person healthcare
  - Security, especially locking mechanisms, in women's SRO rooms are inadequate
  - Limited available space encourages clutter, associated safety risks.
- Notable findings from women-focused questionnaire include, but are not limited to:
  - A significant number of women surveyed rate their living experience in SRO housing as poor (32 per cent) or very poor (two per cent)
  - Only four per cent of those surveyed would choose to stay in their SRO housing if other options were available.
  - 49 per cent of those surveyed indicated they do not feel safe in SRO housing.
  - 84 per cent of those surveyed indicated that most instances of violence and/or arguments witnessed were related to criminalized drugs.
  - 74 per cent of those surveyed indicated private washrooms as very important.
  - 54% of those surveyed indicated desire for their own place to feel safe.
  - Several responses specifically asked for a "padlock or deadbolt on doors," and some women noted that "doors don't lock properly, and people break in."
  - 98 per cent of those surveyed indicated peer support workers would very likely (81 per cent) or likely (17 per cent) help reduce violence in the buildings and make them feel more supported and safer.
- A total of 11 recommendations are made by the report, including (verbatim):
  1. Atira must continue to vigorously advocate for appropriate, affordable SRO replacements that provide self-contained suites for women, and their families, in cities, towns and neighborhoods where women want to live, including the DTES.
  2. Advocate for safe drug dispensing programs in the DTES to support women's safe access to drugs and reduce the risk of violence and exploitation, and increase supervised using spaces within buildings, including the possibility of women-only supervised using spaces.
  3. Atira is encouraged to work with BC Housing, other nonprofits, and those with specific expertise, to review current entry door locks and systems, with a goal to ensure the best available entry locks for SRO buildings are being used, to ensure not only women's safety, but also their feeling of safety.
  4. Atira is encouraged work with BC Housing, other nonprofits and the community to explore options for installing an intercom system to communicate with women tenants in emergency situations, including acts of violence, fire, flood or other emergencies.
  5. Increase the presence of the AWRS Women's Health & Safety Liaison Team within SRO buildings.
  6. Enhance the capacity of the peer support model and ensure they work hand in hand with the AWRS Women's Health & Safety Liaison Team to amplify their support for women and women guests living and staying in SROs.
  7. Continue to provide all APMI SRO staff with trauma-informed, as well as cultural



competency training, promoting a decolonial, Indigenous and trauma-informed support approach that encourages purpose, influence and belonging among SRO tenants and in this case, among women SRO tenants and guests.

8. Increase communication between the AWRS's Women's Health & Safety Liaison Team and SRO building staff to facilitate the creation of safety plans for women living in SROs
  9. Implement a secure guest sign-in system to minimize risk of guest violence and threat to women living in SROs, and work with women tenants to identify guests who pose a risk.
  10. Atira is encouraged to explore partnerships and or implement a transformative justice or, where necessary, a rehabilitation program for tenants referred who are perpetrators or have a history of perpetrating violence.
  11. APMI must find ways to increase social activities in SROs, with a particular focus on women, to foster a greater sense of community and belonging.
- The Ministry and BC Housing have put forward the following actions as part of the Provincial Gender Based Violence Action Plan, with decisions on implementation anticipated for fall 2023:
    - Provide one-time funding for Gender-Based Violence Prevention Training and Plans for Shelter, Housing and Homelessness Providers. This funding will assist service providers in establishing training and protocols to identify and respond to gender-based violence in services, shelters and supportive housing through training, materials, engagement and best-practices development. A portion of the funding will be directed for Indigenous-led training and best practices models, inclusive of cultural safety and anti-racist principles.
    - s. 17
  - In 2011/12, in response to violence against women in the DTES, BC Housing issued a Request for Proposals to support renovations and upgrades to increase safe spaces for women in co-ed shelters and provided training development funding to Sheltersnet – since renamed Homelessness Services Association of BC (HSABC) – and BC Society of Transition Houses to improve women's safety in co-ed shelters. This training was subsequently delivered to emergency shelters across the province in 2012.
  - More recently, BC Housing has been working with HSABC to update its requirements to include Safety for Women in Co-Ed Shelters training, mandate for which is applicable to those working in supportive housing and includes SRO projects.
  - BC Housing's operating agreements with non-profit partners also requires service-level training in Women's Health & Safety best practices, including Online Domestic Violence Safety Planning Training.
  - Findings on overall safety of women living in SROs is echoed beyond SRO housing for

those living outdoors within the DTES, with an Atira-coordinated survey ([summarized here](#)) referenced as recently as April 5 via City of Vancouver info bulletin on DTES encampment:

- “The VPD has also identified concerns about sexual violence in the area. This alarming trend is reflected in the results of a recent Atira Women’s Society survey in which all respondents reported feeling unsafe and having experienced violence, including sexual assault.”

**MINISTRY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL AND  
MINISTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSING  
OFFICE OF HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS  
MEETING BRIEFING NOTE**

**PURPOSE:** MEETING Note for Premier David Eby

**MEETING:** Roundtable with Downtown Eastside Providers, on December 5, 2022.

**ISSUE:**

Community-based collaboration to support people experiencing, or at-risk of homelessness in the Downtown Eastside (DTES)

**KEY MESSAGES:**

- The Province is taking a lead role to ensure people facing homelessness in the DTES, including those sheltering along Hastings Street and in Crab Park, have access to more safe and suitable housing as well as social and health supports.
- We are working through BC Housing, in partnership with the City of Vancouver, and Indigenous and community providers to coordinate outreach, open new shelter and housing spaces and deliver wraparound supports.
- Grassroots, community, and peer-based responses are key to success in the DTES neighbourhood. We recognise the value of partnerships with service providers who are part of the community and have trusted relationships with people most in need.
- We know encampments provide shelter and sense of community, but they are not safe or appropriate form of permanent housing.
- The Hastings Street encampment poses fire, health, and safety risks for everyone sheltering there and those working and living in the surrounding area.
- In the coming weeks, the Province, BC Housing, and the City of Vancouver will share more about plans to address encampment safety and help more people transition to shelter and housing with supports.
- We are interested in hearing from community service providers as these plans develop, in how we might work together in a people-centred approach. We would also like to hear your input in how we best communicate these plans across partnerships and with the people we intend to serve.
- Government recognizes that service providers, people with lived experience of homelessness, and Indigenous peoples are experts in the needs of their communities.
- We want to see a healthier and hopeful DTES where people from all walks of life can access the housing and supports they need to establish a positive, safe, healthy community, and thrive, together.



## **BACKGROUND:**

### **Partner Coordination:**

- The Province is working across ministries (MMHA, SDPR, HLTH, MCFD), through BC Housing, with the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA), Indigenous and community partners at leadership and operations-level tables to address the fire order and encampment safety issues, as well as housing and people support needs.
- The City of Vancouver is responsible for decisions and planning regarding its bylaws and facilities.
- In Vancouver, a Housing First approach is supported through a 2021 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing, City of Vancouver, and Vancouver Park Board to establish roles and responsibilities in encampment response and emphasizes a humanitarian and collaborative approach with access to housing and a spectrum of supports.
- Hastings Encampment Response planning includes consideration for a strengthened coordinated outreach approach and additional resources, currently being discussed with ministry partners.

### **Housing and shelters:**

- Since July, more than 150 indoor spaces with support services have opened in Vancouver, including recently renovated single room occupancy (SRO) hotel rooms and new shelter spaces, with dozens more SRO rooms being renovated and expected to open in the coming months.
- More than 200 temporary shelter spaces (Extreme Weather Response and temporary winter shelter spaces) have opened as of November 1, 2022, including one opening on December 1, 2022, at 1660 East Hastings with another 100 spaces.
- BC Housing and the City are also working on plans for dozens of additional temporary housing units to be announced in the coming weeks.
- Carnegie Outreach has connected with more than 300 people sheltering on the DTES in recent months, some of which have housing but do not feel safe or comfortable there for various reasons.
- BC Housing and partners are working to understand the needs of people sheltering outdoors and support them to find safe and suitable options indoors.
- Housing allocations are done through coordinated outreach and a collaborative access table. Since July, 57 people have moved into housing and dozens more have accepted shelter offers, been allocated housing spaces, connected to income assistance, health, and other social supports.
- Since 2017, BC Housing has partnered with non-profit housing providers, municipalities, and health authorities to fund and open more than 4,800 new supportive housing spaces throughout BC for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, including more than 2,200 in Vancouver. This includes leased hotel spaces that were opened in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic and remain available to prevent people from being displaced, as well as supportive housing.
- Through provincial investments since 2017, there are more than 36,000 new homes complete or underway throughout the province, including more than 8,400 homes in Vancouver.

### **Health and Social Supports:**

- Community Integration Services (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction) provide outreach-based income support and navigation services to people sheltering outside in the DTES and Crab Park and are co-located with nine service providers in the downtown area.
- Community Integration Services also provide crisis grants to aid in addressing an individual's urgent needs, including funds to return/move to support those wanting to return to their home community.
- VCHA staff provide outreach and referral services for people on the DTES, including harm reduction, overdose prevention, and mental health and substance use supports. Linkages to primary care, urgent and specialized services is also central to the role of VCHA.
- The City of Vancouver provides additional supports include storage at multiple locations and washroom/shower facilities.
  - The City will receive an additional \$4 million in Strengthening Community Services funding for encampment supports this winter. Funding will support services including staff, cleaning, additional park rangers, storage, washrooms, and peer workers and supports.
  - Supports include partnerships with non-profit organizations to meet distinct and intersectional needs such as:
    - Women-only and Indigenous drop-in and storage spaces;
    - Partnerships to support Indigenous people and youth;
    - Partnerships to support peers and people who use substances.
    - This funding can also be used to purchase supplies for individuals sheltering outdoors and in need of cold weather supplies (e.g., blankets) and for fire prevention items.
- There are additional supports for organizations and First Nations responding to homelessness through the Homelessness Community Action Grant Program. These are \$50,000 grants to support community-based research and responses, as part of \$6 million in funding through Budget 2022. This is the second round of funding for this grant program through SPARCBC. The grants have funded things like:
  - Indigenous outreach in encampment response;
  - Cultural food projects;
  - Community voicemail and phone programs;
  - Anti-stigma resources and more.

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Indigenous People are overrepresented in homelessness in Metro Vancouver, making 33 per cent of the 3,634 people counted in the 2020 Homeless Count, and were more likely to be unsheltered when compared to non-Indigenous peoples (51 per cent versus 28 per cent).
- This overrepresentation is the result of the impacts of colonisation and racism, and Indigenous Homelessness has many dimensions beyond a lack of affordable

housing that includes disconnection from community, culture, land, spirituality, and family – with increased risk of systemic harms.

- Indigenous peoples are the experts in their own communities' needs and healing – the Province supports Indigenous-led solutions and actions towards supporting Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness, and commits to continuing to work to build relationships with Indigenous organizations and Nations.
- Partners engaged in the provincial response to the encampments are committed to a trauma and culturally-informed response, rooted in feedback from people with lived and living experience of homelessness.
- Currently Aboriginal Front Door Society, via support from the City and BC Housing, is supporting community outreach, storage, food provision, cultural supports, and partnership development with other agencies.
- All Nations outreach is working with SDPR Community Integration Services in Crab Park and Watari Counselling and Support Services is providing Indigenous Circles at the Astoria, and they continue to provide Youth Outreach services throughout the community.

**GBA+ OR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS:**

- Women are at increased risk of violence in the DTES; Indigenous, Black, transgender, and Two-Spirit women are at greater risk of violence and negative outcomes due to the legacy of colonialism, racism, stigma, and a lack of appropriate services and supports.
- For fear for their safety and the safety of children, women experiencing homelessness are more likely to avoid accessing services, particularly mixed-gender spaces; instead, women experience “hidden homelessness”, staying in unsafe or overcrowded housing and shelter situations and/or engaging in survival sex work.
- Budget 2022 provides \$100,000 for research into women’s homelessness, to better understand women’s experiences and how they can be supported.
- Men are more likely to experience street homelessness, and more likely to die as a result of the toxic drug crisis (in 2022 78 per cent of lives lost to toxic drugs were male).

**PREPARED BY:**

Brynn Warren  
Senior Policy Analyst  
Homelessness Partnerships and Policy Branch  
778-698-9399

**APPROVED [DATE] BY:**

Teri Collins  
a/Associate DM  
Housing, Multiculturalism, & Anti-Racism  
250-952-2569



#### **APPENDIX 1: Community Organizations Invited**

- DTES Women's Centre
- Atira Women's Resource Society
- OPS
- Raincity - Housing First ACT Team
- VPL, Carnegie Branch
- SRO Collaborative
- Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre
- WISH Drop-In Centre
- Aboriginal Front Door
- First United Community Ministry Society
- UNYA
- Lookout Society
- The Bloom Group
- Carnegie Community Centre
- Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society
- (Vancouver Native Health)
- VANDU
- PHS
- BC Housing
- Mission Possible
- LUMA Native Housing

This document may contain information that is protected by solicitor client privilege. Prior to any disclosure of this document outside of government, including in response to a request under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Ministry in possession of this document must consult with the lawyer responsible for the matter to determine whether information contained in this document is subject to solicitor client privilege.

## ATIRA CRITICAL INCIDENTS ANALYSIS REPORT

### SUGGESTED RESPONSE:

- s. 13
- 
- BULLET
- The Province believes in a Housing First approach to homelessness. This means we first make sure people have a safe place to stay or live so that they can then better access health, social, income and community supports to become stably housed.
- Through Budget 2022 government is investing \$633 million to help prevent and reduce chronic homelessness in the province. New initiatives include:
  - A wraparound support rent supplement program for 3,000 people over three years to provide more housing options and flexibility.
  - More than doubling the current number of community integration specialists to help people experiencing homelessness navigate government programs and available supports throughout the province.
  - \$264 million over three years for a permanent housing plan to ensure the approximately 3,000 people who were temporarily housed during the COVID-19 pandemic do not return to homelessness.
  - \$164 million over three years to expand government's complex-care housing program, to help people with complex health, mental health, and substance use challenges who may need enhanced supports that extend beyond what the current model of supportive housing provides.
- We know there's more to do -- that's why we are working across government on a Homelessness Strategy to reduce and prevent homelessness. This Strategy includes

working with government, Indigenous and community partners, including people with lived experience, to address service gaps, coordination and to better understand the drivers of homelessness in BC and to better respond.

- More information on the Strategy will be shared in the coming months.

#### **IF ASKED WHY WE CONTINUE TO FUND SROs:**

- There is a clear need for more housing options for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. This includes supportive housing, complex care housing and rent supplements with supports.
- The 2020 Vancouver Homeless Count found 2,095 people in Vancouver who identified as experiencing homelessness, either living on the street, in shelters or other places with no fixed address.
- We know single room occupancy hotels (SROs) provide much-needed housing spaces for vulnerable people but they are not always the most suitable form of housing.
- We're working closely with the City of Vancouver to provide suitable housing and supports to vulnerable people.
- Since 2018, the Province, through BC Housing, has opened more than 1,400 supportive housing units in the City of Vancouver.
- Over the next two years, more than 700 spaces for people experiencing homelessness will open in the city.
- We're making the largest investment in housing in B.C.'s history and working with partners to deliver 114,000 affordable homes over 10 years.
- Nearly 34,000 homes are already completed or underway throughout the province.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Atira Women's Resource Society (AWRS) and Atira Property Management Inc. (APMI) will be releasing its first annual report titled, "Atira Critical Incidents Analysis Report," which details the 1,304 critical incidents that occurred between April 1, 2021, and March 31, 2022, at its housing operations. This includes Single Room Occupancy hotels (SROs), modular housing, second stage transition housing, transition housing, shelters and supportive housing projects.

The report makes 11 recommendations, two of which are for the BC Government:



## ISSUES NOTE: Attorney General 2022-05-24

### 1. Continue to advocate for increased resources and support from the healthcare and supportive housing systems, and the BC Government, including support for specialized staff.

- The report states that a total of 1,304 critical incidents were reported at Atira operations in 2021/22. That number doesn't include all of the non-critical incidents that staff must attend to.
- Staff are expected to manage guests and building security, ensure buildings meet standards, confiscate belongings, replace smoke alarms and locks, manage disputes between tenants over violence, theft, money and noise, and address neighbourhood complaints.
- A better recognition of the multi-faceted tension between offering support and managing the complexity of building operations is needed.

### 2. Advocate for government to conduct a contextual assessment to better understand its supportive housing program and in doing so, better support tenants/residents and its non-profit partners.

- The report states that Atira provides housing and supports for people who face multiple traumas. Atira rarely knows the histories of its tenants (e.g. violence, mental illness, eviction, health), and the lack of knowledge prevents Atira from preparing for and supporting all tenants.
- The report says the Luugat and Patricia hotels were housed entirely from the decampment of Oppenheimer and Strathcona parks, with a focus on appeasing the neighbourhoods, rather than providing housing that best suited the campers. The Luugat and Patricia are also two of three hotels that experience the most violence, fires and floods. The report states that better tenant information will help Atira to better support their needs.

Another recommendation that references BC Housing (among others):

### 3. Step up work with Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services, and include BC Housing, the City of Vancouver, local health authorities, and other relevant housing providers, to determine how best to resource/organize all of the elements of fire safety in supported housing; to mitigate risk and impact on people struggling with substance use, mental wellness and ongoing trauma.

- The report states that women and gender-diverse individuals remain at greatest risk as their homelessness is often invisible and therefore under-reported.
- More housing, including housing options that keep women, children and gender-diverse individuals at the centre, are critical.

### Critical Incident Data

The report provides a variety of statistics about 1,304 critical incidents at Atira managed properties, including: deaths, drug poisonings, fires, floods and violence, among others.

**In 2021/22, AWRS managed 31 housing programs including shelters, supportive housing, transition and second stage housing, with a total of 726 units, which housed 1,591 women and 412 children (AWRS is women and children only).**

- AWRS had 351 critical incidents reported: 32% drug poisonings (114 incidents), 23% violence-related (76), 16% health-related (55), 7% deaths (24) and 5% fire (19).
- A total of 352 naloxone doses were administered to tenants.
- The three programs with the highest number of critical incidents were: Aneki, Sereena's and Little's.

**AWRS' social enterprise, APMI, manages 25 supportive housing programs, 24 SROs with a total of 1,926 rooms that housed 2,405 people (which doesn't include permanent guests...which would increase the number to about 3,600 people).**

- APMI had 953 critical incidents reported (APMI is all-gender housing): 35% violence-related (333), 15% drug poisonings (146), 11% floods (102), 10% health-related (97), 8% fires (75) and 7% deaths (69).
- The deaths were predominantly Indigenous (63%) and white (35%). The highest number of deaths occurred at Hazelwood, Colonial and Winters hotels.
- The critical incidents were significantly higher within three housing programs at the Luugat, Gastown and Patricia, exceeding 100 critical incidents, which represents one incident every three days.

Program Area	Deputy / ADM		GCPE
Laura Mathews, BCH – May 25/22 Alanna Dixon – May XX/22 – xx/22	– xx/22		T. Schollen – xx/22 E. Berndt – xx/22