

Statistical Review:

Income and Disability Assistance Cases in the Downtown Eastside

Research Branch, SDPR

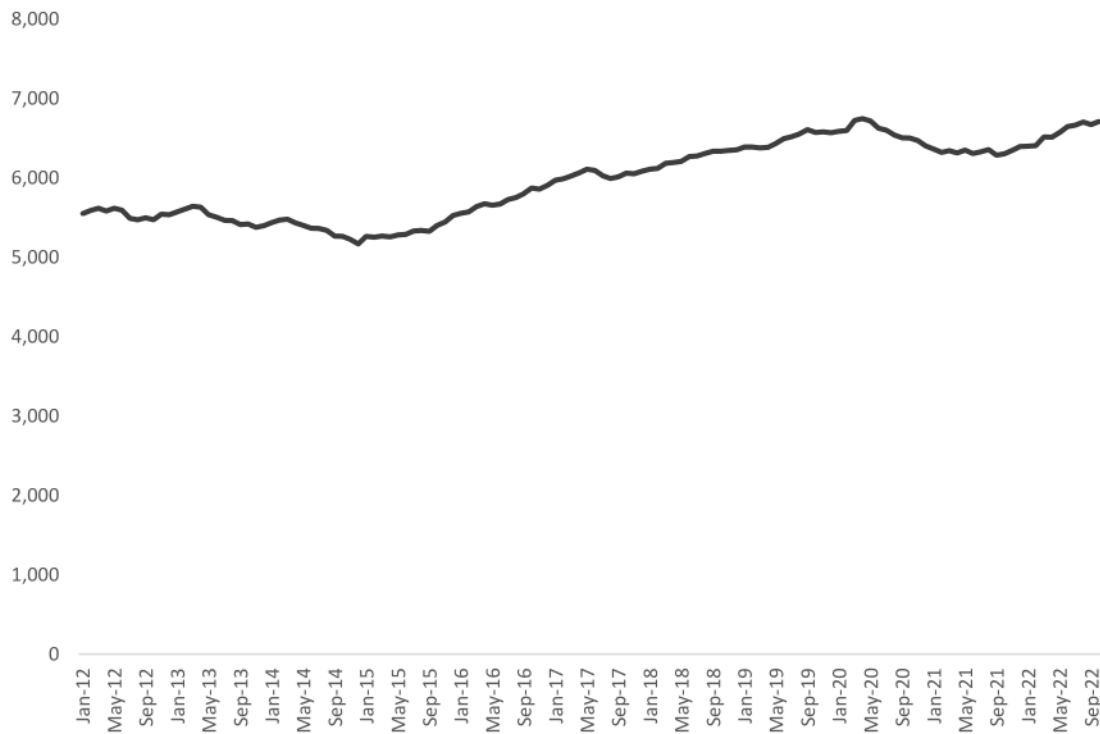
January 4, 2023



Ministry of
Social Development
and Poverty Reduction

BCEA Caseload in the DTES

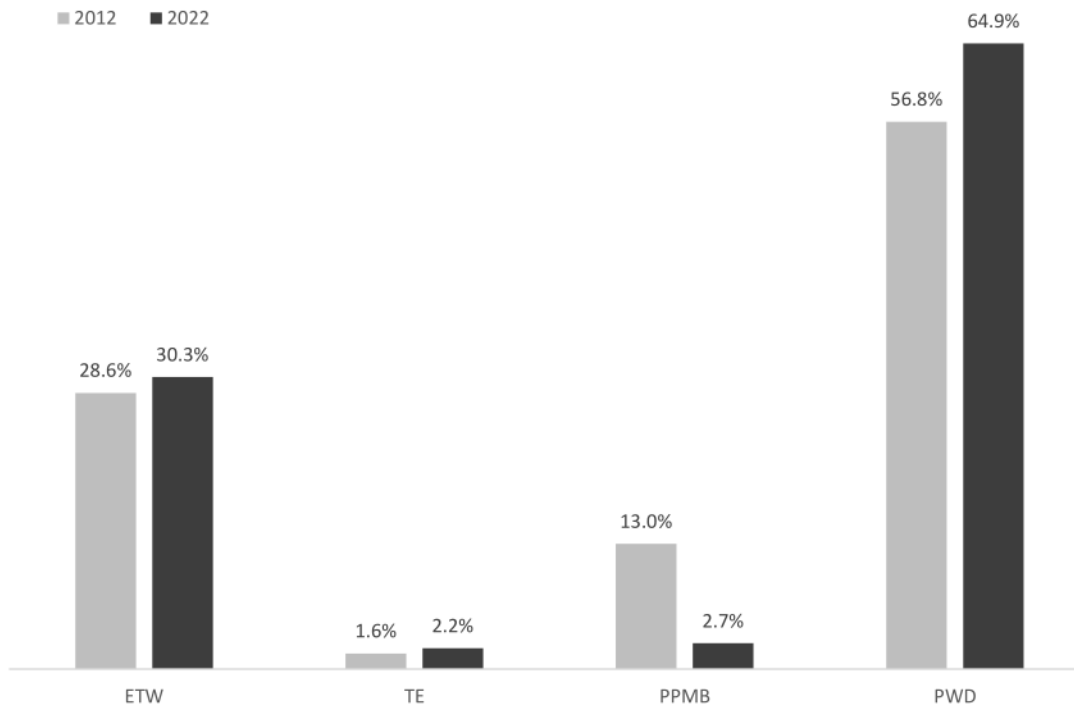
BCEA Caseload in the DTES – January 2012 to October 2022



- The BCEA caseload in the DTES has been on the rise since 2016.
- The caseload declined in 2020 because of federal COVID-19 benefits (CERB, CRB).
- The caseload began to rise after the ending of federal COVID-19 benefits in October 2021.
- By October 2022, there were 6,708 BCEA cases in the DTES.
- The overall prevalence of income and disability assistance use is approximately 10 times higher in the DTES than the rest of Vancouver.
- Total assistance payments to cases in the DTES in 2021/22 was \$89.4 million.

BCEA Program Designation

BCEA Caseload in the DTES by BCEA Program Designation – 2012 and 2022*

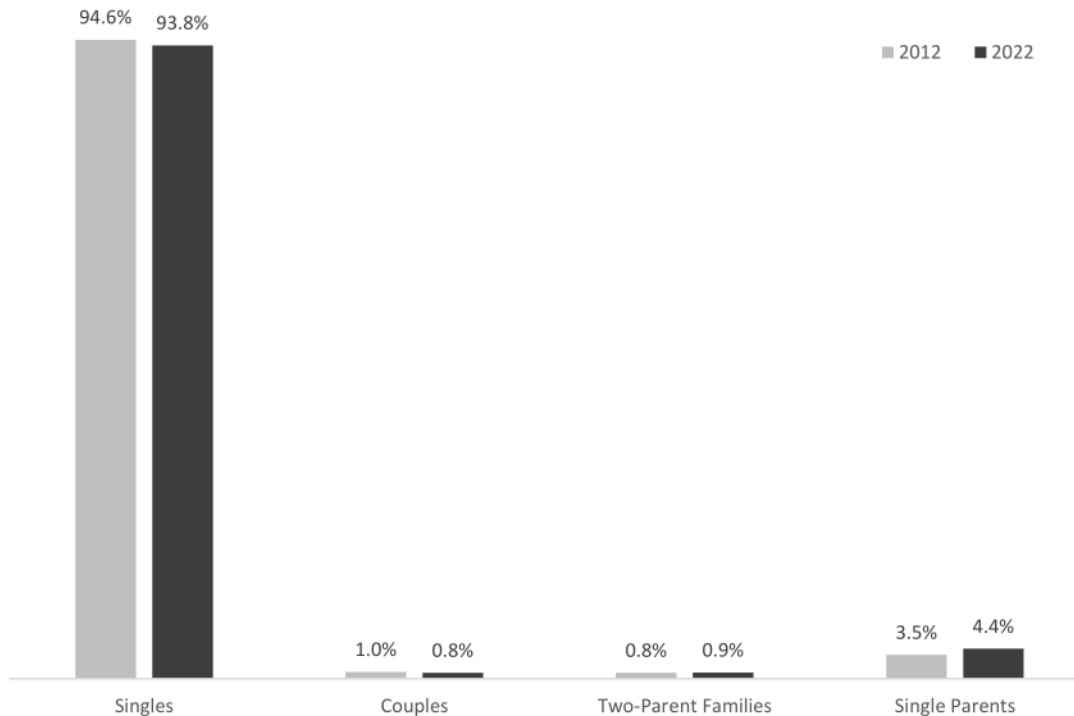


*January to October 2022

- Over the past 10 years there has been an increase in the proportion of the caseload with a Persons with Disabilities designation.
- The proportion of Expected to Work cases has also increased from 28.6% in 2012 to 30.3% in 2022.
- Compared to the entire BCEA caseload, there is a higher percentage of cases with employment obligations (ETW) in the DTES – 30.3% vs 25.2% – and a lower percentage of cases with the PWD designation – 64.9% vs 69.7%.

-
- ❖ ETW – Expected to Work
 - ❖ TE – Temporarily Excused/No Employment Obligations
 - ❖ PPMB – Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers
 - ❖ PWD – Persons with Disabilities

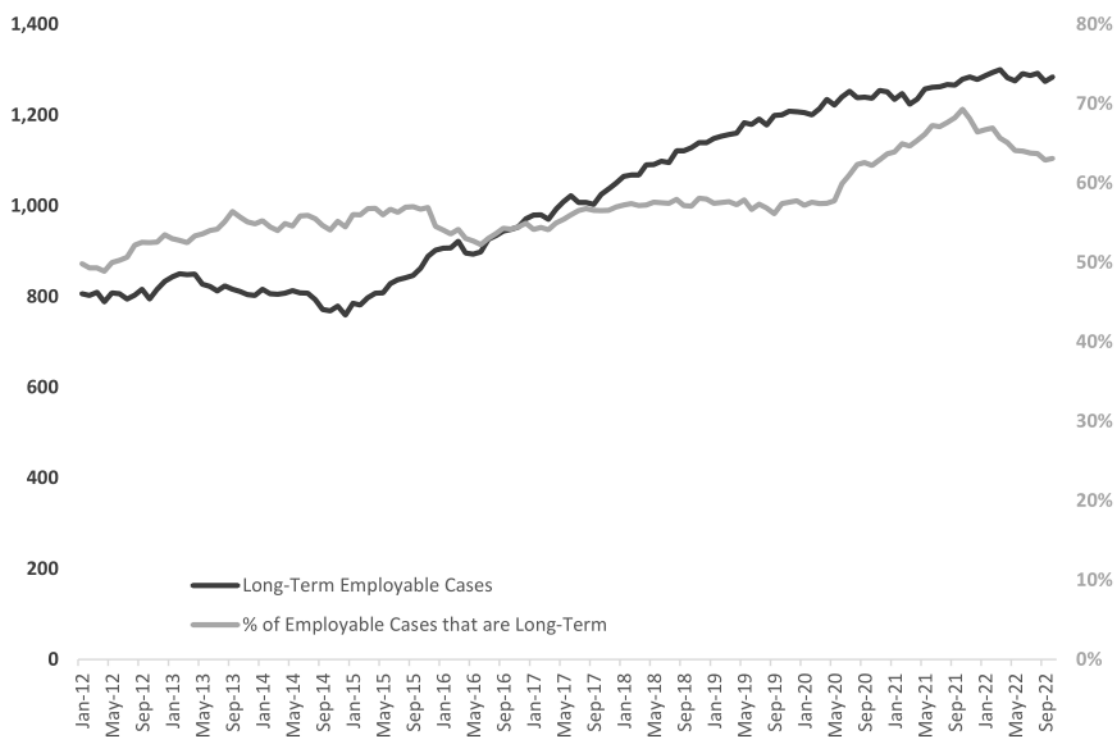
BCEA Family Composition



- Almost 94% of cases in the DTES are singles, down slightly from 2012.
- There has been an increase in single parents in the DTES -- 4.4% of cases in the DTES in 2022 were single parents compared to 3.5% in 2012.
- 69% of single cases were male in 2022, down from just over 75% in 2012.
- For comparison, singles make up 83% of the total BCEA caseload while single parents make up 12.4%.

Long-Term Employable Cases

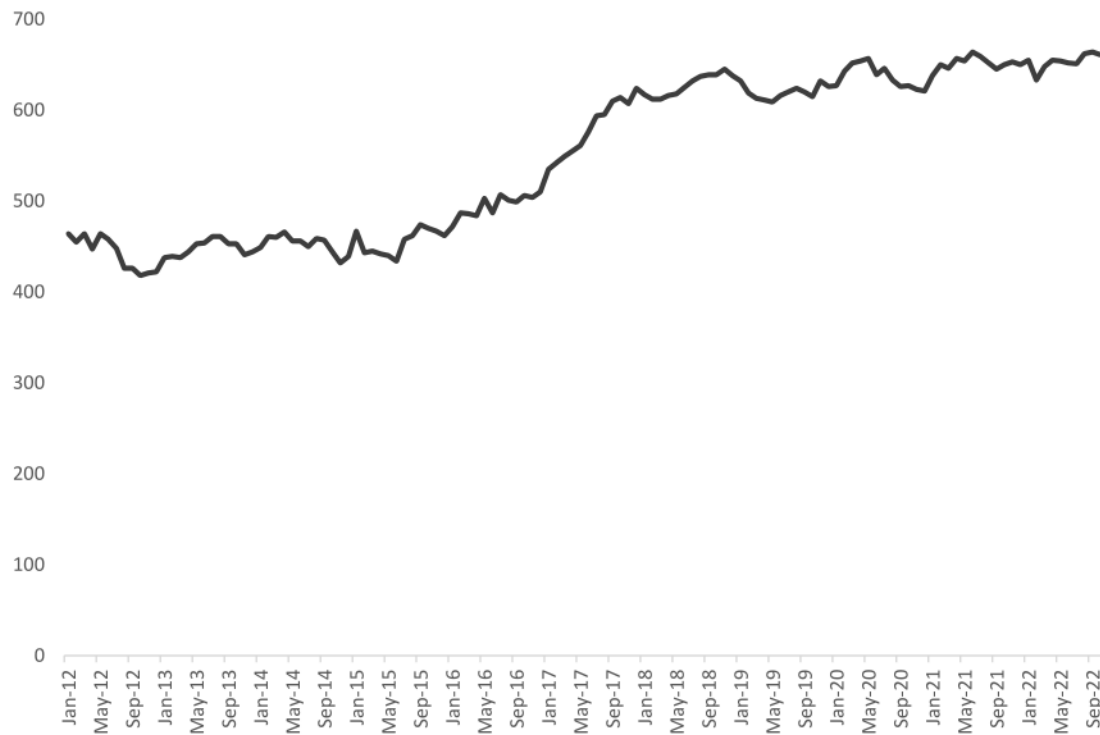
Long-Term Employable Caseload – January 2012 to October 2022



- Employable (ETW) cases are considered long-term if they have been in receipt of assistance for at least 24 out of the previous 30 months -- at this point their exit rates are low and flat.
- The number of long-term employable cases in the DTES has been rising since 2015.
- By 2022, there were 1,287 long-term employable cases in the DTES, or just over 64% of the employable caseload in the DTES.
- For comparison, of the entire BC employable caseload 55% were long-term cases in 2022.

Children in the DTES

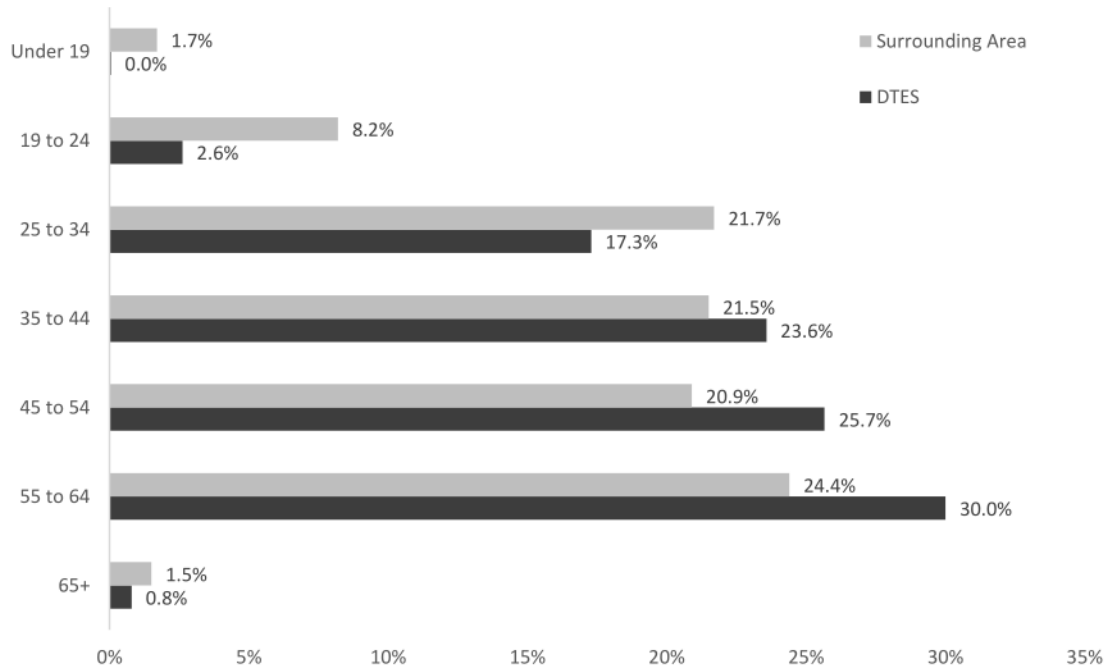
BCEA Children in the DTES – January 2012 to October 2022



- In October 2022 there were 661 children living in BCEA families in the DTES.
- This is an increase of 243 (58%) since 2012, over 2.5 times the growth of adults and cases.
- BCEA children in the DTES are more likely to live in a family receiving disability assistance – 58% compared to the provincial average of 42%.
- 76% of BCEA children in the DTES are living in single-parent families, comparable to the 79% for the entire province.

BCEA Age Distribution

BCEA Caseload Age Distribution in the DTES – 2022*

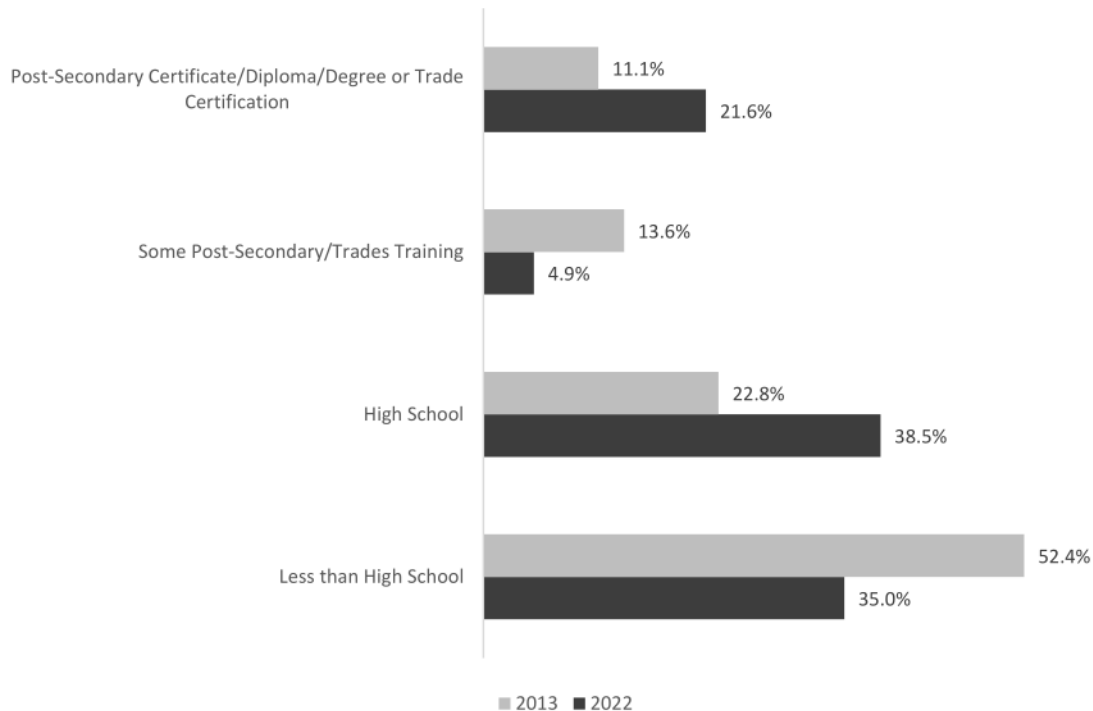


*January to October 2022

- Cases in the DTES are older than those living in other parts of Vancouver.
- In 2022, the average age of DTES cases was 46.2 years compared to 43 years for cases in the rest of Vancouver.
- The DTES has a higher proportion of cases ages 35 to 64 compared to surrounding areas.
- The average age of DTES cases has changed little in ten years – down from an average of 46.9 years in 2012.

Education Levels

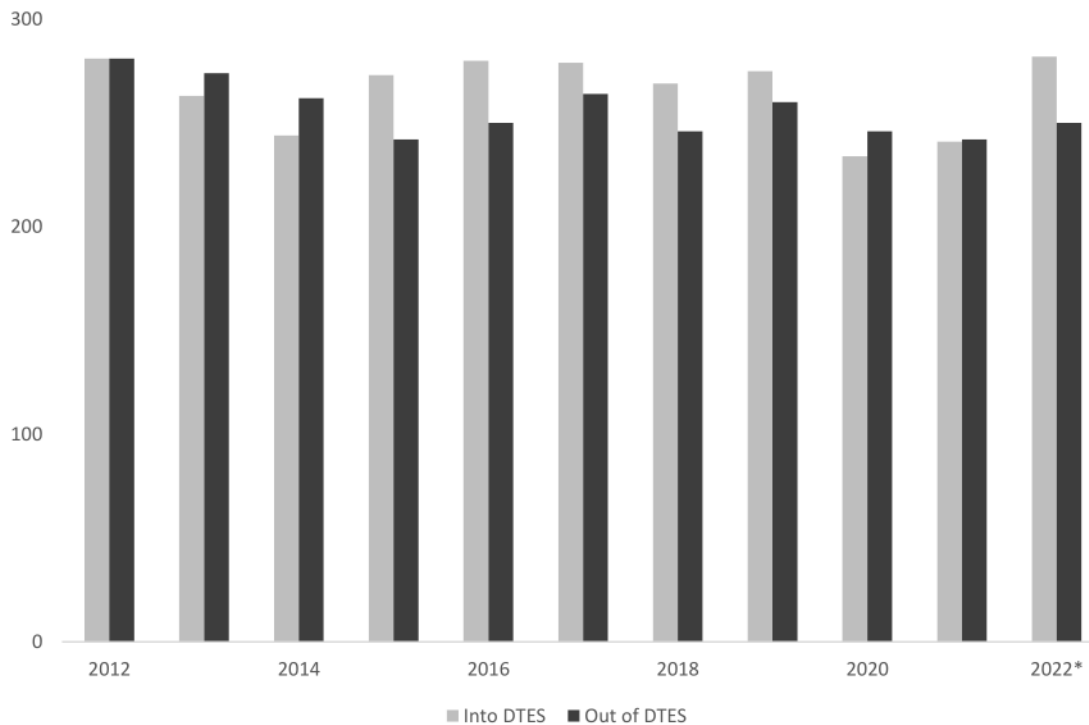
Distribution of BCEA Starting Cases in the DTES by Highest Level of Educational Attainment – 2013 and 2022



- BCEA cases in the DTES are more educated than they were a decade ago, mirroring improvements in the total caseload.
- In 2013, 52.4% of starting BCEA cases in the DTES had not completed high school; by 2022, this dropped to 35%.
- Over the 2013 to 2022 period, the proportion of starting BCEA cases in the DTES that had high school as their highest level of educational attainment rose from 22.8% to 38.5%.
- Those who had completed post-secondary education increased from 11.1% to 21.6%.
- Compared to the total BCEA caseload, cases in the DTES are less educated – 28% of starting cases across BC had not completed high school.

Flows in/out of the DTES

Average Monthly Flow in/out of the DTES – 2012 to 2022*

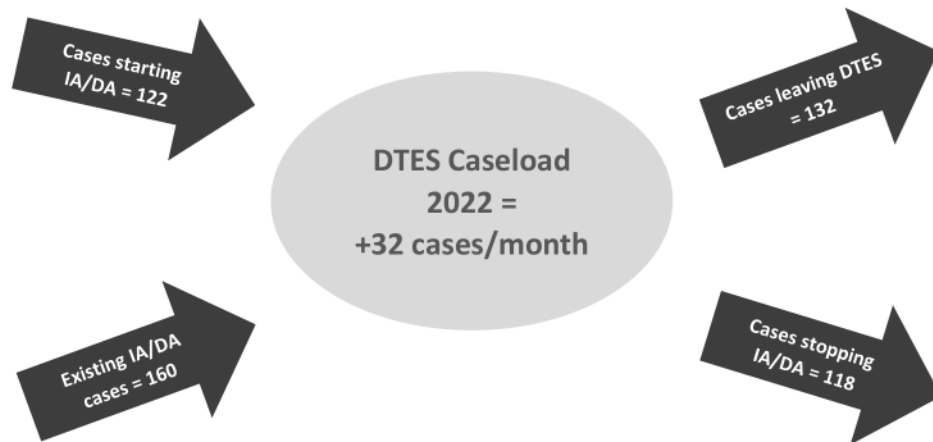


*January to October 2022

- Flows into the DTES consist of either new cases to assistance that start in the DTES or existing assistance cases that move to the DTES.
- Since 2012, 56% of all new cases in the DTES have been existing assistance cases that moved to the DTES.
- Flows out of the DTES consist of either cases that stop assistance or cases that move out of the DTES but continue to receive assistance.
- Since 2012, 55% of all cases that have left the DTES remained on assistance elsewhere in BC.
- There is often only a small difference between flows into and flows out of the DTES – an average monthly difference of 17 cases since 2012.
- 2022 seems to be an exception with 32 more cases into the DTES than out of the DTES each month, the largest difference since before 2002.

Flows in/out of the DTES

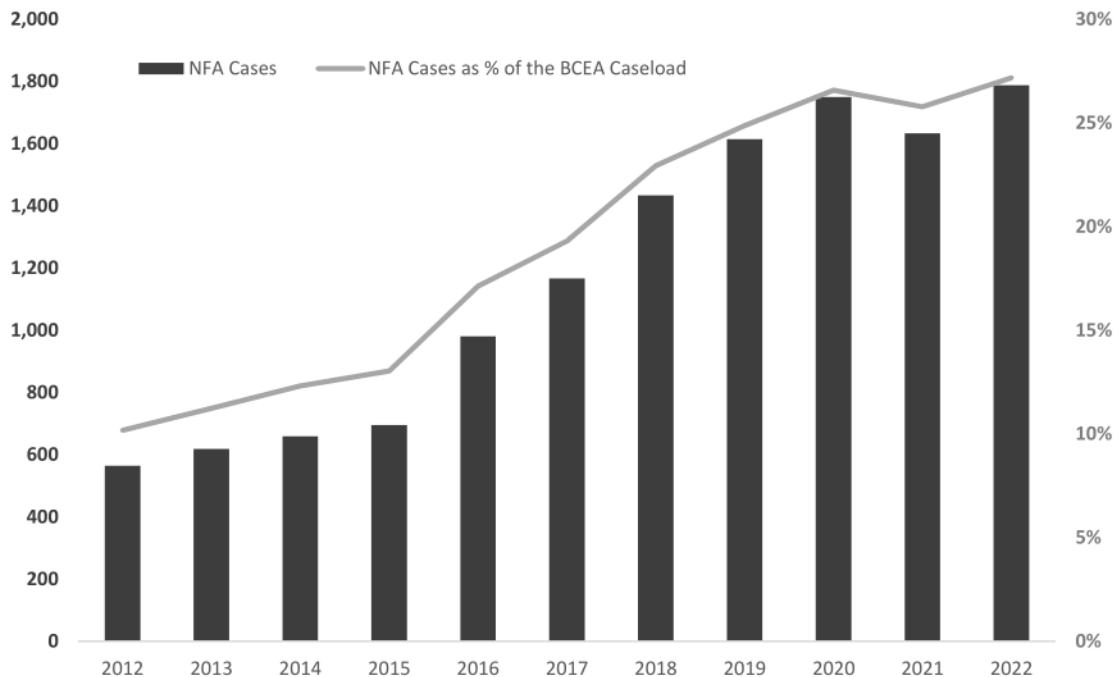
Average Monthly Flow in/out of the DTES - 2022*



- For existing cases that moved to the DTES in 2022, out of an average of 160/month:
 - 61 cases (38%) were NFA before they moved to the DTES.
 - 124 (78%) were NFA in the previous 60 months.
 - 78 cases (49%) had received assistance in the DTES in the previous 60 months.
 - 5 cases (3%) were recently from out of province.
- For cases that started receiving assistance in the DTES in 2022, out of an average of 122/month:
 - 51 cases (42%) had received assistance in the DTES in the previous 60 months.
 - 16 cases (13%) were in a Special Care Facility (paid for by SDPR) in the previous month.
- For cases that moved out of the DTES in 2022 but remained on assistance, out of an average of 132/month:
 - 98 cases (74%) were NFA when they moved out of the DTES.
 - 72 (55%) had received assistance in the DTES for fewer than 12 months in the previous 60 months before leaving.
- For cases that stopped receiving assistance in the DTES, out of an average of 118/month:
 - 15 cases (13%) were in a Special Care Facility (paid for by SDPR) in the following month.
 - 47 (40%) had received assistance in the DTES for fewer than 12 months in the previous 60 months before leaving.

No Fixed Address Cases

NFA Cases and NFA Cases as % of the BCEA Caseload in the DTES – 2012 to 2022*

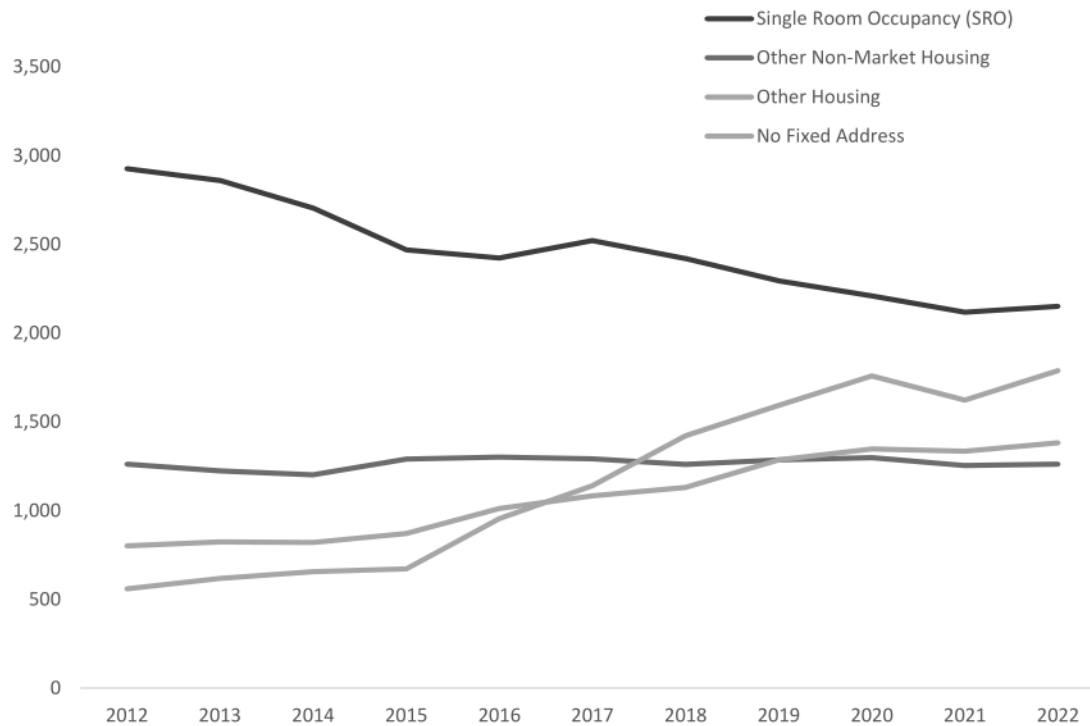


*January to October 2022

- Although the number of No Fixed Address (NFA) cases began to rise in the DTES in 2013, the rate of growth accelerated in 2016.
- In 2021 the NFA caseload in the DTES declined for the first time in nine years.
- The DTES NFA caseload began to rise in late 2021, increasing by 9.5% to 1,788 in 2022.
- The proportion of the BCEA caseload in the DTES that is NFA has increased from 10.2% in 2012 to 27.2% in 2022.
- In contrast, 6.3% of the BCEA caseload in the rest of BC was NFA in 2022.
- NFA cases are over-represented in the DTES with 3.9% of the BCEA caseload residing in the DTES but 14.9% of NFA cases being in the DTES.

Housing Situation

DTES Caseload by Housing Situation – 2012 to 2022*



*January to October 2022

- As the number of NFA cases has risen, the number of cases living in single room occupancy (SRO) units has declined.
- In 2012, 52.7% of cases in the DTES were living in an SRO.
- By 2022, this declined to 32.7%.
- At the same time, the proportion of DTES cases that were NFA increased from 10.2% to 27.2%.
- The decline in the proportion of cases living in an SRO has occurred among both publicly owned and private SROs.
- In 2022, 54% of those living in an SRO were in one that was publicly owned. This proportion was unchanged from 2012.

Affordability

Average Rents of DTES Cases by Housing Type– 2012 and 2022



- Since 2012, average rents in publicly owned SROs in the DTES have remained relatively unchanged, averaging \$393, close to the \$375 maximum BCEA shelter amount.
- In contrast, rents in private SROs in the DTES have been on the rise in the past 10 years with larger annual increases experienced in the last five years.
- Since 2012, the average rent paid by cases in private SROs has increased by 27% from \$414 to \$526.
- Average rents paid by cases in these private SROs were comparable to rents paid by cases in other housing (i.e., market housing and other special housing).

Mortality is Higher and Life Expectancy is Lower

- From 1995-2000, the annual mortality rate in the DTES was 2.9 times higher than the rest of Vancouver at 2% compared to 0.7%.
- The mortality rate dropped to 1% in 2010 before rising again to nearly 1.6% by 2017 (compared to less than 1% for most of the surrounding city).
- Life expectancy (median age at death) has been gradually increasing across much of Vancouver, but not among DTES residents, who tend to live 10-15 years shorter.
- Between 2015-2017, the leading causes of death among SDPR clients in the DTES were preventable in nature: drugs and alcohol were collectively responsible for more deaths in this vulnerable population than any other identifiable cause.
- In contrast, non-SDPR residents of Vancouver (including in the DTES) died more often of age-related conditions (e.g., cancer and heart disease).

Health

- Psychoses, substance use disorders, and affective disorders (e.g., depression and related conditions) are major causes of hospitalization and reasons for visiting health care providers among SDPR clients and non-client men living in the DTES.
- Based on MSP billing totals and estimated hospital costs from 2015-2017, health services for mental health conditions are costing at least an additional \$28.7 million per year (\$4,540 per patient) for SDPR clients who reside in the DTES compared to non-client residents of other parts of Vancouver.

FW: IN_Hastings Street Encampment_March13.2023

From: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>
To: Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: March 15, 2023 10:53:24 AM PDT
Attachments: IN_Hastings Street Encampment_March13.2023.docx

From: Collins, Teri OHCS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 10:37 AM
To: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Collins, Teri OHCS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: IN_Hastings Street Encampment_March13.2023

For PO

ISSUES NOTE

Ministry of Housing
Updated: March 13, 2023
Minister Ravi Kahlon

East Hastings Encampment Response

ISSUE SUMMARY:

- City of Vancouver (CoV) staff continue to work to clear tents, structures, and debris along and around Hastings – where people are either already connected to indoor spaces (as well as storage and supports) or using the space for other purposes such as informal or illegal markets.
- According to the CoV, as of March 7; 74 structures remained along Hastings St. This is an increase of 10 from the previous week and 6 from the week prior.
- CoV staff and Vancouver Police have noted increasing safety concerns and criminal activity in the encampment area, including weapons and violence against women. CoV has identified 'no go' sites where engineering/bylaw staff will no longer attend due to aggressive behavior and/or safety concerns for staff. CoV is mapping these sites so provincial partners are aware of their location to inform front line teams.
- CoV outreach reports fluctuations in the number of people sheltering along Hastings; counting 117 at the end of February – the majority of which are engaged with outreach and want housing 22 are not engaged.
- On the weekend of March 11/12, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services responded to numerous fire calls in the area. Two tent fires occurred, and a woman was found dead in a tent (likely deceased prior to the fire). Propane tanks and hoarding noted as increasing fire risk.
- As of March 15, 2023, the CoV is moving to address medium risk sites where structures are identified as having criminal activity, and will be having VPD join the decamping activities on a risk-based approach.
- Work continues on the two temporary modular housing sites at 1525 Western Street (formerly 1500 Main Street) and 2132 Ash Street:
 - 1525 Western Street (formerly 1500 Main Street) – Development permit issued, pending building permit. RFP by invitation to Indigenous providers closed March 13. Review and selection is underway by BCH procurement.
 - 2132 Ash Street – Pending development permit. PHS selected as operator.
- BCH is finalizing the purchase of Chalmers Lodge (1450 W 12th) which will provide up to 115 self-contained units; some renovations are required. This building will be used for seniors and vulnerable individuals.
- BC Housing continues to renovate SRO units to provide more housing options for individuals sheltering in the encampments. It is expected that an additional 55 units will come online by early April; and a further 200 by September.

BC Housing Update: People and Spaces

Number of new or newly renovated permanent indoor supportive housing spaces that have opened since August 2022:

- 129+ renovated spaces in various SROs from existing housing stock (permanent supportive housing)
- 10 rooms at Jubilee Rooms, 22 Main Street. Permanent housing.

139

In addition, there are more than 1,500 shelter spaces available in the City of Vancouver, a mix of temporary shelter spaces, permanent shelter spaces, and Extreme Weather Response spaces that have opened. While these are not being opened specifically for East Hastings, they augment the number of shelter options available across the City.
Source: BC Housing

		<p>Outreach also offers shelter beds daily. From August 17- Mar. 7., 567 individuals were offered shelter spaces. 129 people have accepted offers of shelter.</p> <p>Source: CoV</p>
<p>Number of housing offers, offers accepted, and moves</p> <p>Source: BC Housing</p>	<p>87 offers, 78 accepted, 78 confirmed moves</p>	<p>Reflects period Aug. 29-Mar. 7, 2023</p> <p>Housing Offer: If an allocation is approved, it becomes a housing offer. Carnegie Outreach will provide the official offer of housing to the individual and the individual has an opportunity to accept or decline the offer. If an individual accepts an offer of housing, outreach workers will support the individual to move into their new housing.</p> <p>“Housing” refers to any offer of permanent housing, which may include an SRO, a supportive housing unit, a subsidized apartment, etc. It may also refer to a market rental unit made attainable with a rent supplement. “Housing” is not used to describe a shelter bed as the stay is temporary in nature.</p> <p>Specific to East Hastings: At this time, BCH only has renovated SRO units so offers being made are currently for SROs. However, this will change over time as new units are brought online and partners learn more about the specific needs of residents on East Hastings.</p>

ISSUES/UPDATES:

Strategic Response Planning:

- Encampment response and operations continue to be guided by the CoV/BC Housing and partner-informed operational approach identified in the Encampment Response Plan – with updates provided at supporting working groups and from operational teams as work has progressed.
- The Provincial Response Plan - Supporting the DTES includes immediate encampment and longer-term actions and has incorporated feedback from ministry, federal, CoV, Indigenous government, Indigenous and community partners. The Plan is being finalized and prepared for public release, likely in mid-April.

Spaces:

- As shelter spaces become available, they are offered to people sheltering outdoors on East Hastings, in CRAB Park and elsewhere. Once people are in the shelter system, it enables staff to get to know guests' individual needs, build trust, and then support them to transition into homes as they become available, matched with appropriate support services based on needs. A shelter 'hold' system has been in place since January allowing people to retain their shelter bed if they wish.

- BC Housing and Carnegie meet regularly throughout the week as needed and, the Community Access and Assessment (CAA) Table meets weekly to review priority Hastings referrals. At this time, priority for housing allocations (typically renovated SRO units) is based around vulnerability and distinct needs such as Indigenous status, gender, age and those who have expressed a desire to move indoors. Note: There is no CAA process to guide allocation of shelter spaces.
- Construction is underway on temporary supportive (workforce modular) housing which will provide approximately 92 units: **1525 Western Street (formerly 1500 Main Street) and 2132 Ash Street.**
 - These are temporary buildings intended as a transitional step, while other permanent housing projects are in development.
 - Modular sites are delayed from the original timeline of March due to site preparation; it is expected they will be operational by end of April (Main) and May (Ash).
 - These temporary buildings will provide residents with access to their own private rooms, showers, and meals, and offers 24/7 staffing, security and on-site health services. 20% of the units will have enhanced health supports for which BCH will be working with VCH to tenant. This will be supportive housing under BCH's model, including payment of rent.
 - Ministry of Housing, BC Housing, CoV and VCH are determining how these 90 units will be allocated. At this time, the criteria being considered is based around: level of vulnerability, demographics representative of community, appropriateness for health supports offered, and individuals who have extended shelter stay history. Criteria will be finalized once the operator for the Main Street site is selected.
 - BCH is close to closing a deal on Chalmers Lodge which will provide an additional 115 units for seniors from the DTES. Occupation date is unknown but BCH is moving as fast as they can.

City of Vancouver update:

- As of March 7, there were 74 remaining structures along E Hastings Street. At the end of February (Feb 22), there were 64 structures.
- CoV's Homelessness Services Outreach staff update:
 - At end of Feb, 117 people were sleeping overnight in the Hastings Area
 - 95 of the 117 people are engaged with Outreach (81%)
 - 70 of the 95 were there in October or prior and are open to shelter/housing options
 - 25 of the 95 are people engaged with city outreach since October and were open to shelter/housing options
 - 22 people (in tents), of the 117, do not want to engage (19%)
- Of note:
 - While the February numbers are similar to October they do not represent all the same people, as people move into housing/shelter, leave, return and come to shelter in this area. Movement is consistent.
- **Recent Community Impacts/Housing Loss (as of December 2022)**
 - March 11/12: Two tent fires, one person found deceased in a tent (likely prior to fire), numerous fire calls and propane/hoarding issues noted.
 - 91 elevator-related relocations in last six months (Portland Hotel, PCA, Sorellas, Hazelwood, Patricia).
 - Feb 22: Fire at the St. Helen's SRO at 1161 Granville St, no injuries reported. Displacement of some residents due to water damage.
 - Jan 17: Fire at Orwell Hotel, 456 E. Hastings Street. 13 individuals needed to be relocated.
 - Dec 16: Three fires at downtown SROs. Damage confined to units of origin.
 - Dec. 13: Fire at 1115 Nelson. One tenant was displaced and in hospital. More than 100 SDPR clients reside at the building.
- **Other parks/areas**
- No update

MINISTRY/Partner Updates & Key Messages:**SDPR Community Integration Specialist Hastings**

Individual Counts	March 3, 2023	# since last update	Total as of Mar 10, 2023
# Individuals approached	193	2	195
# Individuals spoke to CI	153	2	155
Declined	40	0	40
Intakes completed	52	2	54
Crisis Issued	174	6	180
Total individual contacted / case management as of Feb 16 : 149 citizens			

Profile of Individuals at the Camp	March 03, 2023	# since last update	Total as of Mar 10, 2023
Rent in Pay	20	0	20
New to Vancouver in last 12 months	6	0	6

Ministry of Health (MHSU)/Vancouver Coastal Health Update**VCH Outreach Weekly Update Feb 27 to March 9**

Outreach Date:	Total # of people connected with:	Total # of people referred to PC:	Total # of people referred to MH:	Total # of people referred to SU/Addictions:	Total # of people assisted to acute:	Total # of people provided direct care (wound care etc.):	Total # of people referred to IHOT:
Monday, Feb 27/23	63	3	0	2	0	10	2
Thursday, Mar 2/23	70	0	0	3	0	9	1
Monday, Mar 6/23	88	1	0	0	0	8	4
Thursday, Mar 9/23	69	0	0	2	0	6	5
Total	290	4	0	7	0	33	12

- Human-Centered, Intersectional and Trauma-Informed Response:**

- Partners meet to include a trauma and culturally informed response, rooted in feedback from people with lived and living experience of homelessness.
- Women and non-binary people:
 - Women's only drop-in storage is being provided by Atira (currently full).
 - Carnegie/Orange Hall is taking the lead on housing options and will need consideration

for gender response. Women and Gender Diverse drop-in space implementation delayed with Vet's Manor discussions. 320 Alexander currently being used as Downtown Eastside Women's Centre emergency use (due to fire damage at shelter)

- **Indigenous Peoples:**
 - Currently Aboriginal Front Door Society, via support from CoV and BCH, 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
- **Intersectional Community Outreach – Including Racialized and Immigrant communities:**
 - Watari Counselling and Support Services is providing Indigenous Circles at the Astoria, and they continue to provide Youth Outreach services in the community.
- **People Who Use Drugs**
 - CoV and partners continue to support OPS, VANDU and other community-based organizations to support harm reduction response in the area.

Issues Scan for Ministry of Housing

Week of March 13 – for Hastings St. Encampment

Issue: Body found in burned DTES tent at Hastings and Main

Media reported on Monday that the body of a woman was found by Vancouver firefighters who responded to a tent fire around 5:30 p.m. on Sunday night March 12.

Key Points

- **Vancouver Fire Rescue Services said evidence suggests the woman had died prior to the fire starting.**
- **As of March 13, Vancouver Police are working with the BC Coroners Service to identify the woman.**

Issue: Residents of Vancouver SRO demand compensation for time spent without elevator service

CTV reported on a rally by a group of Portland Hotel and member of the Vancouver Tenants Union group asking for PHS Community Services, which manages the Portland Hotel SRO, to compensate the tenants for the five months they lived without an elevator. The elevator was back online as of Feb. 7.

Key Points

- **During the time that the elevator was out of service all tenants were offered alternative housing and most accepted it. Some elected to stay.**

Issue: City of Vancouver to support CRAB Park washroom

Media shared that City of Vancouver would put \$700k or \$750k of its \$2,500,000 grant awarded by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and UBCM Strengthening Communities Services Program towards CRAB Park. The Strengthening Communities Services Program grants are for temporary supports. It is up to the City of Vancouver on how it is used. It was reported by media that the \$700k will go towards park washroom and staff services for those facilities, specifically to support folks who are sheltering outside and CRAB Park.

Key Points

- More than \$700,000 has been earmarked by the provincial government to recover the cost to the city of servicing the camp. Included in that are four full-time park rangers who are assigned exclusively to the park.
- Media asked if BCH is currently aware that people sheltering at CRAB Park are being directed to a certain area at the park.
- Vancouver councillor Peter Meiszner of the ABC party says the city is working to shut the camps eventually, as his slate promised. "I understand people's frustration but unfortunately this isn't something that can happen overnight. But we are working hard on it and we are seeing the encampments on both Hastings Street and CRAB Park reducing in size."

Issue: Narrative for DTES violence continues, man stabbed on March 8

Adult male stabbed at Hastings and Carrall streets on Wednesday evening. He was taken to hospital and expected to survive. Narrative of DTES violence. Woman shot with beanbag and arrested for stabbing with a needle on Feb. 25.

Week of Feb 23 – for Hastings St. Encampment

Issue: Advocates claim housing options are inadequate during Hastings decampment

Advocates and those sheltering in Hastings hold streetside press conference in response to City of latest effort from Vancouver bylaw and crew (with VPD in attendance) to remove structures along Hastings and decamp individuals. Media coverage of advocates sharing concerns that there is a lack of quality housing shelter options for those displaced.

Key Points

- Advocates claiming that despite COV informing and offering shelter or SRO space options to those who had their structures removed that they are not adequate.
- Advocate group Stop the Sweeps says: "The housing is being refused because it's just not suitable or safe.... The standoff yesterday was as city staff again moved in to try to remove some makeshift shelters and belongings built up along Hastings near Columbia."
- DTES advocate Kaylaine Lorraine: "We know these displacements, these so-called street sweeps are violent. They lead to people dying, they lead to people losing everything they have."
- Pivot Legal's Anna Cooper disputes that COV is helping and alleges they have an abusive and undignified approach to homelessness in the DTES, particularly against people along the Hastings Street encampment... She also accuses governments of misleading the public about the quality of available social housing units.

Meeting Name	Purpose	Frequency
Ministry-led		
East Hastings Encampment Check-in	Provincial partner information sharing/updates/issues identification	Weekly (as of Dec 7)
Provincial Executive Steering Committee	Coordinated approach across partners to ensure the health and safety of unhoused people through access to health and social supports and connections to housing, and to prevent entrenched and dangerous encampments	Bi-weekly

BC Housing-Led		
Operations Team Meeting	Touch base for Ops around this topic	2X week
BCH and the Hastings Encampment	3X weekly touch base, info sharing	3X week
Communications Meeting	BCH/GCPE touch base with CoV around Communications	Weekly
Coordinated Access and Assessment Table	Tenancing of indoor spaces – BCH, Carnegie Outreach, COV Outreach and housing providers	Weekly
E Hastings Encampment Response – All Partners Planning Table	(Updated Jan 2023) Brings together BCH, CoV and various provincial and operational partners to develop, refine and adjust the shared encampment response plan and provide strategic updates on implementation. Additional operational implementation meetings convened as needed. NOTE: <i>Partner capacity to engage on longer-term encampment prevention strategies at this table has been limited. Partners are discussing alternate timelines and forums for that critical, future focused work.</i>	Every 2 weeks on Thursday as needed
City of Vancouver-led		
Hastings Street Ops Call	Daily update led by EOC to partners on streams of work and situational updates	Daily
Hastings Leadership Group	Provide EOD update to City Manager/Fire Chief	Daily

FW: Confidential

From: Salter, Shannon PREM:EX <Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca>
To: RE, D PREM:EX <DRE@gov.bc.ca>, Smith, Matt PREM:EX <Matt.Smith@gov.bc.ca>, Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Bain, Don PREM:EX <Don.Bain@gov.bc.ca>, Prince, Jessica PREM:EX <Jessica.Prince@gov.bc.ca>, Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: March 24, 2023 5:09:20 PM PDT
Attachments: COV - Presentation (PESC) - Confidential Draft - Hastings Update.pdf
Detailed slides from COV on Hastings context and plans. Please do not distribute further.

From: Mochrie, Paul <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2023 4:50 PM
To: Collins, Teri OHCS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Confidential

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hi Teri,

As requested and thanks for your commitment to limit distribution.

Best,
Paul

Page 025 of 103 to/à Page 041 of 103

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13 ; s.16

Bi-weekly Provincial Exec Steering Committee Mtg

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Attachments: NR_DTES Update_26 March 23_FINAL.pdf, STRATEGY_DTES Provincial Response Plan_25 March 23_FINAL.pdf, Provincial Executive Steering Committee_Minutes_03.24.23.docx, Agenda_ Provincial Executive Steering Committee_03.29.23_.docx

Good morning everyone,
Please see the attached materials for this afternoon's PESC meeting.
Thanks,
Debbie

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Supporting the Downtown Eastside: Provincial Partnership Plan Working Document



Ministry of Housing

March 2023

Acknowledgement

This Plan acknowledges the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples upon whose land it is set. The area of the present-day Downtown Eastside was once a site where the ancestors of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples lived, utilized, and protected the natural area. We also acknowledge the Métis, Inuit and Indigenous Peoples from other territories who make the Downtown Eastside home. This plan recognizes that definitions of Indigenous homelessness are unique and dimensional, the ongoing impacts of colonization, and government's commitments to Reconciliation including through the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act³.

Our Vision

To see a healthier, hopeful and safer Downtown Eastside, where people from all walks of life can access the housing and wraparound supports they need to establish a positive community and thrive together.

Our approach

The Province is taking a lead role in restoring community health, wellness and safety in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES).

The Supporting the Downtown Eastside: Provincial Partnership Plan will help DTES residents access integrated housing, health, social and cultural supports. It will also resolve and prevent unsafe encampments, improving the community for all residents and visitors.

The Plan is being led by the Ministry of Housing and will require a coordinated and inclusive process and actions resulting in improvements for everyone in the community. Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, and community partners will inform the implementation of the Plan, to ensure it builds on important work and relationships established in the Downtown Eastside.

The Province is taking a "Housing First" approach to homelessness, which recognizes that people are better able to access supports when they have safe, stable shelter and their basic needs are met.

This plan respects people's human rights and agency, while protecting their health and safety and minimizing disruption. It also recognizes that people experience homelessness differently based on their demographics and unique and intersecting needs.

The Province will continue working on a coordinated and inclusive process and actions with all levels of government, Indigenous governments, BC Housing, Indigenous organizations, service providers and community partners. The Province also supports Indigenous-led initiatives.

³ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/new-relationship/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>

The Province recognizes the unique history and culture of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and the value of maintaining community-based affordable housing and honouring established support networks.

Since December 2022, engagements with DTES service providers, representatives from all levels of government and Indigenous leadership have highlighted the need for collaboration, better coordination among government partners, support for community inclusion and the need for Indigenous-led responses to address distinct needs; such as preventing violence against women.

The Plan supports the 2022 mandate to the Minister of Housing to, "Lead government's work to better coordinate services to deliver improved outcomes for people living in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, with support from the Ministers of Mental Health and Addictions, Health, Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and Public Safety and Solicitor General, as well as Indigenous Peoples, external partners, and others."⁴

The Province is prioritizing the dignity, health, and safety of vulnerable people and work to prevent encampments from growing and becoming entrenched long-term. This Plan also supports the City of Vancouver's goal to reduce health and safety dangers to the vulnerable people sheltering outside in the Downtown Eastside and the surrounding community – including all who live, work in and visit the area.

Since July 2022, the Province has worked across ministries and through BC Housing to support the City of Vancouver's efforts to minimize dangers that prompted a fire order from the Vancouver Fire Chief and to assist people sheltering on the streets to move indoors. While some progress has been made, it remains an unsafe and untenable situation for all involved. It is a humanitarian

Distinct Needs

Ministries, Indigenous and community partners recognize the necessity for plans and supports to address the distinct and intersecting needs of people on the Downtown Eastside. This includes:

- Indigenous-led and collaborative planning and supports.
- Addressing specific needs of women at risk of violence, including Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people (in recognition of the National Inquiry into MMIWG Calls for Justice 4.7).
- Addressing specific needs of youth, seniors, 2SLGBTQQ+ people.
- Addressing specific needs of people living with disabilities and those with brain injury.
- Addressing specific needs of racialized and immigrant populations.
- Addressing specific needs of those who face additional barriers to housing security—including pets, family, and community situations.

This work will centre the voices and contributions of people sheltering in the Downtown Eastside, as well as people with lived experiences of homelessness and those who support them, and draw from community-based knowledge such as Red Women Rising: Indigenous Women Survivors in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and the DTES SRO Collaborative

⁴ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/government/ministries-organizations/premier-cabinet/mlas/minister-letter/hous_-_kahlon.pdf

issue which needs all levels of government and community members to come together to improve.

Recognizing that experiences of homelessness are impacted by unique and intersecting needs, this Plan includes demographic considerations and community partnerships that serve:

- Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh (MST) Peoples
- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples and leadership
- Women and families
- Seniors and Elders
- Racialized and immigrant communities
- People living with disabilities, including those with brain injury and cognitive issues
- People with mental health and substance use challenges
- 2SLGBTQIA+ people
- Youth (including those in care, and those with familial connections in the DTES)

Collective Approach: Aligning with the Province’s approach of putting people first, this Plan is grounded in the following principles:

- Person-centered and human rights approach
- Minimize trauma and disruption; prioritize safety
- Indigenous led ceremony, cultural supports, and cultural safety
- Collaborative planning and integrated services delivery
- Inclusive, distinct, and culturally informed transitions
- Housing and shelter options that provide a pathway to improved health and housing stability
- Strong partnerships across the community
- Ensure mental/emotional health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers supporting this work
- Provincially-led with clear roles and oversight

What we’ve learned

The Province believes in the “Housing First” approach to homelessness, which recognizes that people are better able to access health, income, social and other supports when they have the safety and stability of shelter and their basic needs met. Poverty and a lack of suitable housing options are key drivers of encampments, compounded by mental health issues and addictions. By addressing the need for stable housing, this approach seeks to overcome a significant persistent cause of homelessness. The Housing First approach is recognized around the world and has been used by the Province in some form since 2009, with the goal to implement it across settings.

This approach is Housing *First*, not housing *only*, and it is essential to ensure that housing is accompanied by a model of integrated supports that meet individual and intersecting needs. These supports include primary health care, mental health services, addictions and substance use treatment and harm reduction, income and legal supports, as well as housing, social, cultural and basic needs met through coordinated outreach and system navigation.

This approach will integrate learnings from *Red Woman Rising* and acknowledges that women and Indigenous Peoples experiencing homelessness face barriers to Housing First models due to concerns over safety and experiences of hidden homelessness. It requires unique and distinctive supports to both access and find safety and success in housing. Partnerships with community and Indigenous organizations will help inform how to support these populations in a Housing First approach.

The Housing First approach is supported through numerous government initiatives, including the 2018 Homes for BC: 30-Point-Plan⁵, 2019 TogetherBC: Poverty Reduction Strategy⁶, Complex Care Housing Initiative⁷, Youth Transitions⁸ and Budget 2022 and 2023 Homelessness Actions.

In Vancouver, the Housing First approach is supported through a 2021 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)⁹ signed by the Minister Responsible for Housing, the City of Vancouver, and the 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.

Through the MOU, the Ministry commits to provide housing and shelter options, and to act as the provincial liaison through BC Housing to coordinate health, housing, cultural and social supports to address the needs of people sheltering in encampments in parks and public spaces. The City has committed to working with government and community partners to provide outreach, supports and connections, to make land available for housing, to expedite necessary land use decisions, and when suitable spaces are available indoors, to enforce the City of Vancouver's bylaws. The Vancouver Parks Board has committed to working with government and community partners to provide standard amenities and to facilitate outreach and services to unsheltered people, and to enforce Park Board bylaws when suitable indoor spaces are available for people. The Province recognizes that people may need to shelter outdoors when they have no other option, and that they may find a sense of community and safety. However, encampments are not a safe or suitable form of long-term housing. The City is also served by the *Vancouver Charter*¹⁰, which provides unique abilities to manage bylaws, zoning and other responses – including the protection of low-income housing through the Single Room Accommodation Bylaw¹¹ and the City's SRO Revitalization Action Plan¹² and 10-year Housing Strategy.¹³

The Provincial approach to encampments is to prioritize the dignity, health and safety of people sheltering, and to connect them to the integrated supports and housing they need to move forward. We have learned from experience that when encampments grow, become entrenched, and unsafe, the best practice is for partners to work together to implement a decampment and housing transition plan. This experience has led to cross-government development of guidelines and best practices in

⁵ https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/homesbc/2018_homes_for_bc.pdf

⁶ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/poverty-reduction-strategy>

⁷ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/mental-health-support-in-bc/complex-care-housing>

⁸ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/youth-and-family-services/youth-transitions>

⁹ <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021AG0043-000637>

¹⁰ <https://vancouver.ca/your-government/the-vancouver-charter.aspx>

¹¹ <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/single-room-accommodation-bylaw.aspx>

¹² <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/sro-revitalization-action-plan.pdf>

¹³ <https://council.vancouver.ca/20171128/documents/rr1appendixa.pdf>

cooperation with First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and BC Housing, local governments, persons with lived experience and services providers.

We learned from the Vancouver decampments of Oppenheimer Park in 2020 and Strathcona Park in 2021 how best practices resulted in transitions to stable housing for the majority of those sheltering and real-time wrap-around health and social supports available throughout the process. There is acknowledgement that some people may not transition to indoor options or may be challenged to sustain housing due to health, mental health or substance use issues, or individual barriers or circumstances. As such, there is a need to ensure that parks or other outdoor shelter options where shelter is permitted overnight are known to people experiencing homelessness, in alignment with Section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms¹⁴.

With a strong view to Reconciliation, the learnings from previous decampments and best practices were also informed by anti-racist and trauma-trained practices, understanding that addressing encampments must include maintaining individual dignity and self-agency. This has included engaging peer workers, centering Indigenous ceremony, and partnering with Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and Indigenous organizations.

History and Current State

Vancouver's Downtown Eastside has been a diverse, vibrant community with a range of businesses and affordable housing since the 1930s, and has faced numerous waves of gentrification, displacement of low-income residents, health and social crises since. Large encampments have formed in public spaces over the past two decades but only recently have they occurred in multiple numbers each year – and the encampment along Hastings Street is one of the most concerning due to its location and multiple safety issues for those sheltering and the surrounding community.

All levels of government have worked for decades to protect affordable housing in the DTES, like the thousands of SRO hotel rooms, increased shelter and supportive housing spaces. Various levels of government have also provided centralized legal, harm reduction, substance use, primary and mental health services and social supports through various initiatives – such as the Vancouver Agreement¹⁵ and Homelessness Intervention Program¹⁶. While the proliferation of resources for people facing homelessness, and with complex needs, has made the area a hub for supports, it has also resulted in a challenging landscape for people to navigate, find stability in, or move on from. This is compounded by increasing housing affordability challenges in the DTES and surrounding areas of Metro Vancouver, many of which have far fewer resources or choices for vulnerable people. Recent research from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) tracks clients receiving income or disability assistance in the DTES, including those who have no fixed address (NFA). Of the small segment flowing in or out of the DTES, the majority largely come from, or go to, other Metro Vancouver communities, and many cycle in and out – sometimes for years. The overall proportion of

¹⁴ <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/rfc-dlc/ccrf-ccd/checked/art7.html>

¹⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20050316205956/http://www.vancouveragreement.ca/TheAgreement.htm>

¹⁶ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/criminal-justice/corrections/research-evaluation/iom-hip-report.pdf>

those on income and disability assistance is approximately 10 times higher in the DTES than the rest of Vancouver, with nearly 94% of clients being single people. The proportion of NFA income and disability assistance clients in the DTES has more than doubled between 2012 and 2022. At the same time, the number of clients residing in SROs has declined.

Additionally, many of the individuals sheltering and living in the DTES have complex health needs. Addressing the challenges in the DTES requires responses that take into consideration the complexity of those that suffer from chronic, poly-substance use, and often mental illnesses, neuro-developmental disorders and/or cognitive impairment, and often physical health problems. A key challenge is the growing understanding that many now also suffer from acquired brain injury because of repeated overdose treatment and intervention. Now more than ever, treatment solutions need to be individualized as many often experience significant barriers in accessing mainstream services. Over the past three years, the Ministry of Housing has engaged peers and people with lived experiences of homelessness – including those throughout Metro Vancouver – who shared personal insights into challenges faced.

On housing and shelters:

“I brought the street in my home, and those two don't mix, because you can't keep going and getting stuff and stuff and stuff, because that's your addiction, you know...I didn't know how to live, you know, in a home by myself. I found it really hard and lonely. It was more scarier in a home than it was on the street.” – Participant, Vancouver

“And the one thing I remember when I went into that shelter the first night is the compassion, the checking on me, and the food. They fed me that night and they fed me good food. The caring that I didn't feel when I was on the street, I felt that later.” – Participant, Vancouver

On health and social supports:

“It's pretty tough because I didn't have ID, and I didn't have all those things you needed to prove who you are, you know, and it took forever to try and get that stuff, so I just never bothered to get that stuff, because as soon as I would get it, I would lose it.” – Participant, Vancouver

“I couldn't find treatment. I actually went online trying to find places to get help. But between wanting to get more drugs or just not being able to find. I couldn't navigate the system, and I can navigate a lot of stuff. I could not find what I needed to do. I had to get help” – Participant, Vancouver.

The Way Forward

This Plan aims to address the immediate health and safety issues of the DTES and encampments, and to lay the groundwork to support prevention of future encampments and improve the community for all residents and visitors. This work will help resolve encampment issues through municipal maintenance of public spaces, health, safety and accessibility, new housing options and an increased coordination of wraparound supports and services. The Plan includes support for people sheltering along Hastings Street, in Crab Park and in other areas, to stay safe, healthy and connect to indoor

spaces and housing. These supports and services will be modelled off the Integrated Support Framework (ISF), a new system of health, social, cultural, and housing supports for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

We heard from the Downtown Eastside community members and service providers about the need to prioritize safe and suitable housing options, how people are struggling to meet basic daily needs like food and places to rest and connect, the importance of harm reduction, safe supply and treatment, and how organizations are struggling with burnout and trauma. We also heard about the need to support Indigenous-led responses, to support peer-based employment and ensure better access to health services at all hours.

The Province commits to deliver this plan centred on Indigenous collaboration and peer inclusion – which aligns with Government’s commitments under the *Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA), the principles of Reconciliation, and the “Path Forward” responses to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) Calls for Justice¹⁷. For example, in Vancouver this includes a commitment to regular and ongoing engagement through working groups and advisory tables with Indigenous partners such as Lu’ma Native Housing Society and the Aboriginal Housing Management Association and others, people with lived experiences of homelessness, partnership with Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations as well as other Indigenous, Metis and First Nations leadership, cultural supports and Indigenous outreach and housing providers. Indigenous ceremony has been a powerful tool in centering community and health throughout encampment responses; and the Province supports Indigenous partners in developing culturally supportive models and providing an Indigenous-lens to planning and actions. This plan will work to support Indigenous-led initiatives, knowledge and data sharing, housing and support actions and strategic planning through regular and continued engagement.

Goals:

The Province will work in partnership with BC Housing, the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, Federal government, Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh governments, Indigenous and Community Partners, to achieve the following goals:

Goal One: Engaged Community: Clear, coordinated, and regular communication with people sheltering outdoors in the Downtown Eastside, MST communities, Indigenous partners, advocates, and community members to reduce fears, encourage engagement and bring together the community in support of those most vulnerable. This includes:

- **Increased communication and transparent planning:** The City of Vancouver, BC Housing and partners will share resources for people sheltering in public spaces to access safer

¹⁷ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/about-bc-justice-system/inquiries/mmiw/mmiwg-status-update-2022.pdf>

indoor options, health, social and cultural supports, as well as pathways to housing, and best practices when sheltering outdoors.

- **Coordinated supports:** BC Housing will work with ministry and community partners to share information where people can continue to access housing, health and social supports.
- **Public accountability:** The Ministry of Housing will work with the City of Vancouver, BC Housing and partners to ensure information about actions within the plan, including housing, as well as progress are shared regularly and that community engagement sessions are ongoing.

Goal Two: Safe Communities: Transition the DTES back to a safe and manageable area where all community members can thrive. This includes:

- **Safety of marginalized people** – The City of Vancouver and Vancouver Police Department will work to ensure community safety measures prioritize those at higher risk of violence and predators such as women and Indigenous women, girls, LGBTQ and Two-Spirit people.
- **Women at risk** – BC Housing, ministry and community outreach partners will work 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.
- **SRO safety** – To ensure people are better able to use available Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing spaces, the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services and BC Housing will work to address SRO safety issues, track fire data, address fire code violations, provide fire prevention supports and education, utilize and train peer captains, and increase health and safety inspections.
- **Encampment response** – To support resolution of the Hastings encampment, the City of Vancouver, in consultation with provincial partners, is implementing an Encampment Response. The City of Vancouver and the Province will support BC Housing, MST governments, Indigenous organizations, and community partners to explore alternative shelter models, such as tiny homes and culturally aligned supports, recognizing space is constrained in the DTES and downtown core.

Goal Three: Integrated Health and Social Services: Help people sheltering outdoors, and in shelters, with coordinated transition to indoor spaces and housing and provide access to integrated health, social and community services, pre-employment and employment services, across Metro Vancouver communities.

- **Coordinated services** – the Province will work with Community Service Providers to implement a multidisciplinary team dedicated to serving those needing supports in the Downtown Eastside. This coordinated DTES team will bring together the City of Vancouver, BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, Community Integration Specialists, Indigenous governments and organizations, peers and community service providers. The team will operate seven days a week and work to identify the needs of people facing homelessness so they can quickly access health, mental health, addictions and social services, and support

transitions to indoor spaces as a pathway to appropriate housing options. The team will coordinate outreach and assessment through a healing-informed lens – so people sheltering can connect with a single contact and are not required to share traumatizing stories repeatedly and that every door will be the right door.

- **Expanding Community Integration Specialist services** – to support individuals residing on Hastings St. with on-the-spot intake assessments, housing and health referrals, low-barrier employment opportunities, family reunification benefits, assistance to obtain identification and fire safety education.
- **Continuity of health supports and services** – Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, BC Housing and partners are ensuring that supports move with people to interim and long-term spaces (wound care, mental health services, substance use support, safe supply and more).
- **Treatment options** – the Province’s recently announced Safer Communities Action Plan¹⁸ lays out concrete steps at the provincial level to make communities safer, including expanded treatment and intervention services. These will support those in the DTES through:
 - Expanding mental-health crisis response teams into more communities so police can focus on crime, and people in crisis are met early on by health-care workers and community members.
 - Creating a new model of addictions care at St. Paul’s Hospital so people can seamlessly move from crisis response in the emergency room, to detox, to treatment services, in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health and Providence Health Care, with plans to expand this model in the future.
- **Transition supports** – Vancouver Coastal Health will provide health supports, mental health and harm reduction transition planning to ensure a standard of harm reduction, safe supply and other supports follow from encampments to indoor spaces and housing.
- **Support for service providers** – The Province will assist in providing additional support for service providers to address funding gaps and staffing challenges, including administrative support. Partners will also work to support community providers to facilitate community inclusion, wellness, skills and employment supports for people facing homelessness.
- **Enhanced crisis supplements** – To help individuals with unexpected needs, supplements will be provided for food and clothing.
 - SDPR will partner with local community organizations to facilitate access to pre-employment and employment services, as well as access to work experience and peer employment grants for DTES residents who are ready for supported low-barrier employment opportunities with local employers.
 - SDPR will use the full range of income and disability assistance, and pre-employment and employment services through local community organizations.
 - Low-Barrier employment with service partners like the Open Door Group, the Lookout Society and EMBERS/Eastside Works.

¹⁸ <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/safer-communities/>

- Providing increased access to work experience and peer employment grants for DTES residents who are ready for supported low-barrier employment opportunities with local employers.

Goal Four: Accessible Shelter & Housing Options: Coordinated access to a range of interim and permanent housing options to meet people’s needs.

- **Transitioning indoors** – BC Housing, in collaboration with the City of Vancouver, MST governments, Indigenous and community partners will continue to help people transition to indoor spaces with supports as a pathway to moves to stable, permanent housing options.
- **Regional housing approach** – The Province, BC Housing, City of Vancouver, Federal partners, MST government, and First Nations will work collectively to leverage potential spaces and opportunities for temporary and permanent housing options – including a regional approach that takes into account that individuals have diverse housing needs.
- **SRO Revitalization Plan** – The Province, BC Housing, City of Vancouver, and community partners will continue the work of the City of Vancouver SRO Revitalization Plan, in recognition of the key role SRO’s play in housing stock for the DTES.
- **Expansion of year-round shelters** – The Province, through BC Housing, will work to expand year-round shelter access and work to ensure the shelter system better provides access to adequate housing and supports and identify barriers to access and address existing gaps to improve shelter access for all shelter guests.
- **More indoor options** – To provide shelter and housing to support people as they transition indoors. This includes recently acquired or coming spaces:
 - 139 new or renovated SRO spaces (since July 2022) and more undergoing renovations.
 - 330 homes to open between now and the end of June 2023, for a total of over 460 new homes to support people in the Downtown Eastside.
 - Included in the 330 homes, are two new modular supportive housing buildings in the Downtown Eastside that will provide 89 homes by Spring 2023.
 - The Province is working with the City of Vancouver to ensure there is sufficient shelter space to help people move indoors and transition to more permanent housing when available.
 - The Province will also work with the City of Vancouver and surrounding First Nations and local governments to increase housing and supports across the region to reduce inflows of people to the DTES for services they cannot access elsewhere.
 - The Province will also leverage existing programs and initiatives to support the response efforts:
 - New Supported Rent Supplement Program – provides for up to 150 individuals to live independently with supports in Vancouver. Indigenous people and areas with significant encampments are prioritized.
 - Vancouver Coastal Health has six Assertive Community Treatment teams accessible to the DTES population that provide client-centred, recovery-oriented services that facilitate community living support and psychosocial

- rehabilitation for persons with severe and persistent mental illness, and/or substance use disorders.
 - Support access to housing through increasing the maximum shelter rate by \$125 across the Province, effective August 1, 2023.
 - Support for community-based, peer based and Indigenous governments and organizations to lead services, engagement, and outreach through Homelessness Community Action Grants (\$6M announced as part of Budget 2022).
 - Identify opportunities to leverage existing programs to support community-based, peer workforce and life skills training.
- **Family reunification** – support family and community reunification when requested through transportation and travel assistance provided through the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.
 - **Community coordination** – BC Housing will lead a Coordinated Access and Assessment Table with ministry and community partners to inform indoor placement options for people experiencing homelessness. This includes supports for people with distinct needs (couples, seniors, youth, racialized, Indigenous, women, 2SLGBTQ+) and creating flow in supportive housing buildings – including with supported rent supplements funding through Budget 2022.

What's Next - Medium & Long-term Plans:

Encampments across the province are indicative of the continuing impacts of the toxic drug and housing crises, poverty, crime, discrimination, mental health issues and stigma against those that are most vulnerable, all of which has been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prevention of encampments, response, and long-term resolution of homelessness in the province will require policies and programs that address the underlying root causes.

The Ministry of Housing is developing a Provincial Encampment Framework with partners to respond to and address unsafe encampments with a Housing First and person-centered approach to achieve the following:

- Housing loss prevention, and a shelter diversion plan where indoor options are pathways to permanent housing.
- Increased funding and support for Indigenous and community-led programs and housing.

Additionally, there is a need for medium to longer-term strategic planning for the Downtown Eastside. The unique context of the history and population that resides in the community must be honored and receive consideration when working to prevent future unsafe encampments from forming and sustaining the long-term health and wellness of the community. This preventative planning will include:

- Preserving and increasing dignified and appropriate social and affordable housing, including through an SRO Strategy, in partnership with community providers and the Federal Government.
- Partnering with the City of Vancouver and MST governments in re-visioning and community engagement for an updated Downtown Eastside Plan (including redevelopment of Balmoral and Regent blocks).
- Continuing investments in new supportive housing, shelters, supported rent supplements, acquisitions and complex care across Vancouver. This is in recognition that, for many, self-contained modular units with supports are preferable to SROs or shelter options.
- Systems-mapping of existing supports and services in the DTES to streamline and improve service provider capacity, integration, coordination, skills, and training.
- Taking action to address climate change adaptations and needs, especially into Spring 2023 to prevent displacement of SRO residents during extreme weather events in the Spring and Summer.

The Provincial Encampment Response Framework and the Supporting the Downtown Eastside: Provincial Partnership Plan will complement the Provincial Homelessness Plan, a component of the Housing Action Plan.



**Ministry of Housing
Provincial Executive Steering Committee**

Minutes

Friday, March 24, 2023

3:45-4:45 pm

MS Teams

Attendance

BC Government:

Premier's Office (PO)

Shannon Salter, Deputy to the Premier
Matt Smith, Chief of Staff
Don Bain, Deputy Chief of Staff
Jessica Prince, Assistant Deputy Minister
Kelly Newhook, Director
Craig Jones, General Counsel

Commented [WMO1]: Need titles pls

Ministry Responsible of Housing (HOUS)

Teri Collins, Deputy Minister
Meghan Will, a/ADM, Homelessness, Partnerships & Housing Supports
Sarah Petrescu, Director
Clay Suddaby, Communications Director, GCPE
Nina Karimi, Ministerial Advisor
Sian Madoc-Jones, Senior Ministerial Advisor
Sarah Marriot, Director
Jennifer Miller, A/Executive Director

Attorney General (AG)

Barbara Carmichael, A/Deputy Attorney General
Kate Saunders, Supervising Counsel
Michael Kleisinger, Legal Counsel
Amelia Hill, Ministerial Advisor
Katherine Reilly, Legal Counsel
Maya Engelbrecht, A/Director Executive Operations

Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (EMCR)

David Boone, Assistant Deputy Fire Commissioner
Brian Godlonton, Fire Commissioner

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)

Carolyn Kamper, Assistant Deputy Minister

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA)/ Ministry of Health (HLTH)

Christine Massy, Deputy Minister

Maureen O'Donnell, Associate Deputy Minister

Daryl Sturtevant, Assistant Deputy Minister

Theresa Ho, Chief of Staff

Seamus Wolfe, Ministerial Advisor

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG)

Glen Lewis, Assistant Deputy Minister

Matthew Brown, Executive Director

Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR)

David Galbraith, Deputy Minister

Raymond Fieltsch, Assistant Deputy Minister, Service Delivery Division

City Of Vancouver (CoV)

Paul Mochrie, City Manager

Sandra Singh, General Manager Arts, Culture and Community Services

Mellisa Morphy, Acting Chief of Staff

Taryn Scollard, Deputy General Manager Engineering

Lon LaClaire, General Manager Engineering Services

City of Victoria

Jocelyn Jenkyns, City Manager

Park Board

Betty Lepps, Director Urban Relationships

Vancouver Police Department (VPD)

Howard Cho, Deputy Chief Constable

Vancouver Fire Rescue Services (VFRS)

Karen Fry, Fire Chief

BC Housing (BCH)

Vincent Tong, Interim Chief Executive Officer

Dale Mcmann, Vice President Operations

Heidi Hartman, Associate VP Operations

Allison Dunnnett, ED Homelessness

Sara Goldvine, VP Communications

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCH)

Vivian Eliopoulos, President and CEO

Bob Chapman, VP

Shannon Mc Carthy, Executive Director Indigenous Health

First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)

Darius Pruss, Regional Advisor

Delaram Farshad, Regional Planner

Meeting Summary

Welcome, Introductions and Action Item Log – DM Collins

DM Collins welcomed new members, confirmed minutes. Updated on tentative announcement Sunday to release DTES plan with Minister Kahlon and Mayor Sim. Noted that the situation on the ground changes daily.

DM Collins advised that we will be moving away from the IN and into weekly situation report with progress and actions.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

March 24, 2023

Page 4 of 5

VCH

6 units in each modular site targeted for high needs, but the supports are available to everyone in the building. Supports include mix of personal care aids, nursing (LPN), peer supports, in-reach, overdose prevention and MAP.

s.16

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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3. Partner Roundtable:

No time for roundtable.

4. Communications

Clay Suddaby shared that there will be a noon news conference with Minister Kahlon and Mayor Sims, and they are working on common messaging. Releasing the Plan/Strategy (calling it a working document), with the overall message that all partners have been working the plan as we go. Reinforcing the message is the safety and security of people on the street and people living working in the community.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2023HOUS0022-000392
March 26, 2023

Ministry of Housing

Downtown Eastside response plan drives co-ordinated efforts to improve access to housing, supports

VANCOUVER – The Province has provided an update about ongoing work with its partners to create a comprehensive Downtown Eastside response plan, including 330 new homes by the end of June.

“Everyone in the Downtown Eastside deserves a safe, stable and supportive place to call home,” said Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing. “Over the past several months, we’ve led work with Indigenous, community and government partners to develop a co-ordinated response plan to help people get off the streets and into homes, and make the Downtown Eastside a healthier, safer and more hopeful place for everyone. As safety concerns increase, we are urging people to take up the offers of indoor spaces that are available right now as we continue to open long-term housing.”

In July 2022, the Vancouver Fire Rescue Service issued an order to remove tents and structures along East Hastings Street. Since then, the Province has been working with a variety of partners – including all levels of government, service providers and Indigenous and community organizations – to develop and implement a comprehensive Downtown Eastside response plan.

Through this plan, more than 90 people sheltering outside on East Hastings Street have accepted housing offers and moved into safe homes. The Province is working with partners to open an additional 330 units of housing for people in the Downtown Eastside by the end of June 2023.

There are currently approximately 117 people sheltering outside on East Hastings Street, 70 of whom have expressed a desire for housing. Offers of indoor spaces have been made to a majority of people sheltering outside on East Hastings Street. The number of structures along East Hastings Street has been reduced from 180 to 74 since July 2022.

“The challenges we see in the Downtown Eastside are real and significant— today marks an important step forward,” said Ken Sim, mayor of Vancouver. “I know that by working together, we will secure quality housing for our city’s most vulnerable residents and deliver a better future for the Downtown Eastside.”

In anticipation of new homes opening, the Province is working with the City of Vancouver to ensure there is sufficient shelter space to help people move indoors and transition to more permanent housing when it's available.

Key measures in the response plan include:

- Since July 2022, 139 new or renovated single-room occupancy (SRO) units have opened,

with an additional 330 homes to open between now and the end of June, for a total of more than 460 new homes to support people in the Downtown Eastside. The 330 homes opening include the 89 units from the two temporary supportive housing projects opening this spring (1525 and 1535 Western St. and 2142 Ash St.), and a mix of renovated SRO units and other supportive housing units.

- Access and co-ordination will be strengthened for health, mental-health and addictions services for people in the Downtown Eastside, including through:
 - establishing a new multidisciplinary team that will work to identify the needs of people facing homelessness so they can quickly access health and social services and support transitions to indoor spaces as a pathway to appropriate housing options;
 - expanded addiction treatment options, such as the new Road to Recovery model of addictions care at St. Paul's Hospital; the first 45 beds are expected to open by fall 2023; and
 - expanded mental-health crisis response teams.
- Community organizations will get help to improve and expand services, such as drop-in centres and outreach services.
- A new Community Connections Hub at Orange Hall (341 Gore Ave.) will be established so people have a centralized place to access referrals and information about housing and services.

The plan recognizes that people are better able to access supports when they have safe, stable shelter and their basic needs are met. The plan respects people's human rights and agency, while protecting their health and safety and minimizing disruption. It also takes an anti-racist, trauma-informed and culturally safe approach, including recognizing the unique history and culture of the Downtown Eastside.

Quick Facts:

- Since 2018, the Province, through BC Housing, has opened more than 1,400 new supportive homes in Vancouver for people experiencing homelessness, with nearly 900 more underway.
- The Province has also opened more than 800 affordable rental homes since 2018, with more than 3,100 more underway.

Learn More:

To view the Downtown Eastside response plan, visit:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Strategy_DTES_provincial_response_plan.pdf

Contacts:

Ministry of Housing
Media Relations
236 478-0251

Taylor Verrall
Director of Communications
Office of the Mayor
City of Vancouver
604 404-5651
Taylor.Verrall@vancouver.ca

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect



Agenda

Provincial Executive Steering Committee East Hastings and Encampment Response

March 29, 2023, 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

#	ITEM	LEAD	MATERIAL
1.	Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of minutes – March 24 	Deputy Minister, Teri Collins	Verbal
2.	Provincial Plan: Supporting the DTES: Update	Deputy Minister, Teri Collins	Verbal
4.	Partner Roundtable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC Housing City of Vancouver Vancouver Fire Rescue Services Vancouver Police Department Vancouver Coastal Health Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Community Integration Services – SDPR Emergency Management BC Office of the Fire Commissioner Ministry of Health Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions Ministry of Children and Family Development Public Safety and Solicitor General First Nations Health Authority City of Victoria 	All	Verbal
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Update 	BC Housing, GCPE	Verbal
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing comments 	All	Verbal

RE: Stakeholder Report - April 6

From: Thomson, Sarah C PREM:EX <Sarah.Thomson@gov.bc.ca>
To: Bain, Don PREM:EX <Don.Bain@gov.bc.ca>, Brewer, Lia PREM:EX <Lia.Brewer@gov.bc.ca>, Caul, Doug D PREM:EX <Doug.Caul@gov.bc.ca>, Chan, Alex PREM:EX <Alex.Chan@gov.bc.ca>, Farmer, Susan PREM:EX <Susan.Farmer@gov.bc.ca>, Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>, Hrenyk, Alyssa PREM:EX <Alyssa.Hrenyk@gov.bc.ca>, Kouri, Rosa PREM:EX <Rosa.Kouri@gov.bc.ca>, Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>, Marshall, Simka PREM:EX <Simka.Marshall@gov.bc.ca>, McNish, James PREM:EX <James.McNish@gov.bc.ca>, Milne, Gala PREM:EX <Gala.Milne@gov.bc.ca>, Girn, Naveen PREM:EX <Naveen.Girn@gov.bc.ca>, Porter, Jorge PREM:EX <Jorge.Porter@gov.bc.ca>, Prince, Jessica PREM:EX <Jessica.Prince@gov.bc.ca>, Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>, Salter, Shannon PREM:EX <Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Wilde, Naomi PREM:EX <Naomi.Wilde@gov.bc.ca>, Hampson, Ashley PREM:EX <Ashley.Hampson@gov.bc.ca>, Watson, Amanda PREM:EX <Amanda.Watson@gov.bc.ca>, Thomson, Sarah C PREM:EX <Sarah.Thomson@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 6, 2023 2:08:38 PM PDT

Good afternoon – In anticipation of the long weekend, we are sending out additional stakeholder items received since this morning's report:

s.3

NR

Thank you and have a great long weekend!

Sarah Thomson (she/her)
A/Correspondence Coordinator | Office of the Premier
P: 250-704-3065 | e: sarah.thomson@gov.bc.ca

From: Watson, Amanda PREM:EX <Amanda.Watson@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 9:41 AM

To: Bain, Don PREM:EX <Don.Bain@gov.bc.ca>; Brewer, Lia PREM:EX <Lia.Brewer@gov.bc.ca>; Caul, Doug D PREM:EX <Doug.Caul@gov.bc.ca>; Chan, Alex PREM:EX <Alex.Chan@gov.bc.ca>; Farmer, Susan PREM:EX <Susan.Farmer@gov.bc.ca>; Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>; Hrenyk, Alyssa PREM:EX <Alyssa.Hrenyk@gov.bc.ca>; Kouri, Rosa PREM:EX <Rosa.Kouri@gov.bc.ca>; Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>; Marshall, Simka PREM:EX <Simka.Marshall@gov.bc.ca>; McNish, James PREM:EX <James.McNish@gov.bc.ca>; Milne, Gala PREM:EX <Gala.Milne@gov.bc.ca>; Girn, Naveen PREM:EX <Naveen.Girn@gov.bc.ca>; Porter, Jorge PREM:EX <Jorge.Porter@gov.bc.ca>; Prince, Jessica PREM:EX <Jessica.Prince@gov.bc.ca>; Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>; Salter, Shannon PREM:EX <Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Thomson, Sarah C PREM:EX <Sarah.Thomson@gov.bc.ca>; Wilde, Naomi PREM:EX <Naomi.Wilde@gov.bc.ca>; Hampson, Ashley PREM:EX <Ashley.Hampson@gov.bc.ca>; Watson, Amanda PREM:EX <Amanda.Watson@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Stakeholder Report - April 6

Hello everyone, here is today's report:

The Coordinated Community Response Network, Exchange Inner City, and Vancouver Urban Core Frontline Worker's Association – An open letter from Vancouver DTES coalitions to PDE, Minister Kahlon, MP Jenny Kwan, Mayor Sim and Vancouver City Councillors communicating concern regarding the City of Vancouver's approach to the Hastings Street Encampment. DTES coalitions are calling on the City and Province to prioritize housing and support services rather than displacing individuals. We will reach out to HOUS and PSSG as to which is best to lead response and send an acknowledgement, **unless otherwise advised.**

NR

Office of the Federal Housing Advocate (Canadian Human Rights Commission) – CC, A letter to Vancouver Mayor Sim communicating grave concern regarding the City of Vancouver's approach to the Hasting Street Encampment and that the City's approach does not honour international human rights standards. They ask the City to uphold UNDRIP and recognize their obligation to respect the human rights of those sheltering on Hasting Street as defined by the National Housing Strategy Act. The Federal

Housing Advocate outlines five requests including immediately ceasing the forced evictions. They express their office would welcome opportunity to engage and support the City in implementing a human rights-based approach to the encampments. As HOUS is cc'd on the incoming we will share with PSSG as an FYI and file.

Thanks,

Amanda Watson, MLIS
Correspondence Officer | Office of the Premier
(778) 698-8211 | pronouns: she/her

Open Letter from DTES coalitions re: Hasting St. Decampment

From: Hope Hart <hope@communityimpactrealestate.ca>
To: CLRBlight@vancouver.ca, CLRBlye@vancouver.ca, CLRCarr@vancouver.ca, CLRDominato@vancouver.ca, CLRFry@vancouver.ca, CLRKirby-yung@vancouver.ca, Sim, Ken <Ken.Sim@vancouver.ca>, CLRklassen@vancouver.ca, CLRmeiszner@vancouver.ca, CLRMontague@vancouver.ca, CLRzhou@vancouver.ca, HOUS.minister@gov.bc.ca, premier@gov.bc.ca, jenny.kwan@parl.gc.ca, alyssa.hrenyk@gov.bc.ca, Minister, HOUS HOUS:EX <HOUS.minister@gov.bc.ca>, Hrenyk, Alyssa PREM:EX <Alyssa.Hrenyk@gov.bc.ca>, OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX <Premier@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Doherty, Conor <conor.doherty@vancouver.ca>, Mellisa Morphy <mellisa.morphy@vancouver.ca>, Leahy, Kathleen <kathleen.leahy@ubc.ca>, Michelle Lackie <michelle@exchanged.com>
Sent: April 5, 2023 11:51:56 AM PDT
Attachments: image001.jpg, image003.png, image002.jpg, Open Letter from DTES coalitions.pdf

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hello Premier Eby, Ministers, Mayor & City Councillors,

As a coalition of networks in the Downtown Eastside we are sending this open letter regarding the City of Vancouver's current actions of decampment on Hastings St. The CCRN, Exchange Inner City, and Urban Core represent a diverse group of DTES organizations, non-profits, social enterprises, and residents in the neighbourhood. We are concerned about current actions and call on the City of Vancouver and the Province of British Columbia to prioritize the provision of adequate housing and support services for those in need first, rather than displace individuals and continue to perpetuate negative relationships on Hastings St.

Regards,

Hope Hart (she/her) | CED Program Manager | CCRN Coordinator



Communities where all residents can prosper and live full and rewarding lives.

T: 604 416 0318 Ext 2 C: 778-839-4620 | 56 East Cordova St., Vancouver, BC



CIRES is located on the unceded, traditional and ancestral xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and salilwataʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) territories.

Open Letter from DTES coalitions

RE: The City of Vancouver's action on the Decampment of Hastings St.

Unceded xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Swx̣ wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliilw̓ ətaʔt̓ (Tsleil-Waututh) Territories

The Coordinated Community Response Network (CCRN), Exchange Inner City, and Vancouver Urban Core Frontline Worker's Association are deeply troubled by the recently leaked documents and current actions from the City of Vancouver outlining a shift in approach to the Hastings Street Encampment. We believe that the City's change of approach, which prioritizes displacing residents over providing adequate housing, is misguided and will only continue to perpetuate current tensions on Hastings St. and in surrounding neighbourhoods.

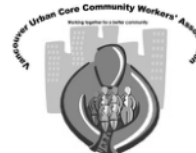
We understand the complexities of an encampment and it is also our goal to not have individuals sleeping on city streets, but we know that the solution to these concerns is a compassionate and holistic approach that prioritizes providing stable and appropriate housing to those in need and not forcibly displacing individuals to insufficient shelter.

We believe in supporting initiatives that enhance accessibility on the streets, ensure the safety of women and gender-diverse individuals, and promote fire safety to foster a healthy and inclusive community. However, the escalation plan for decampment, without providing suitable housing and support, fails to address these critical concerns in a sustainable, dignified, or compassionate manner.

The plan will only serve to further traumatize the community, perpetuate tensions between police, city workers, and DTES residents, and potentially lead to conflict. **Moreover, the 89 units of housing that the City and Province have promised are not currently available, making the planned decampment a Band-Aid solution that will result in more individuals being forced back onto the streets or relocated to other areas of the city.**

We call on the City of Vancouver and the Province of British Columbia to prioritize the provision of adequate housing and support services for those in need first, rather than displace individuals and continue to perpetuate negative relationships on Hastings St. We urge the City and Province to work with communities, DTES organizations, and residents to find sustainable solutions and adequate housing for citizens living on Hastings St.

Signed,



Media Contact: Steve Johnston | 604-368-0017

Correspondence from the Federal Housing Advocate

From: Office of the Federal Housing Advocate / Bureau du défenseur fédéral du logement <housing-logement@chrc-ccdp.gc.ca>
To: ken.sim@vancouver.ca
Cc: CLRbligh@vancouver.ca, CLRboyle@vancouver.ca, CLRcarr@vancouver.ca, CLRdominato@vancouver.ca, CLRfry@vancouver.ca, CLRkirby-yung@vancouver.ca, CLRklassen@vancouver.ca, CLRmeiszner@vancouver.ca, CLRMontague@vancouver.ca, CLRzhou@vancouver.ca, paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca, Premier@gov.bc.ca, HOUS.minister@gov.bc.ca, OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX <Premier@gov.bc.ca>, Minister, HOUS HOUS:EX <HOUS.minister@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 6, 2023 7:07:58 AM PDT
Attachments: COR_Concern_re_Encampments_Vancouver_230404.pdf

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Dear Mayor Sim,

Please find attached correspondence for your attention sent on behalf of Marie-Josée Houle, Federal Housing Advocate.

Best regards,

Office of the Federal Housing Advocate
Canadian Human Rights Commission

Bureau de la défenseure fédérale du logement
Commission canadienne des droits de la personne

344 Slater Street | 344, rue Slater
Ottawa ON K1A 1E1



Canadian
human rights
commission

Commission
canadienne des
droits de la personne

April 5, 2023

His Worship Ken Sim
Mayor of Vancouver
3rd Floor, City Hall
453 West 12th Ave
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

BY EMAIL: Ken.Sim@vancouver.ca

Dear Mayor Sim,

I write to express my grave concerns about the plan reported in the media to escalate the decampment of East Hastings Street. The process does not conform to international human rights standards and I urge you and City Council to explore other alternatives while ensuring meaningful engagement with encampment residents. As you do so, I urge City Council to uphold inherent Indigenous rights as per the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

I want to draw your attention to the City's obligations to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of encampment residents. The National Housing Strategy Act (2019) recognized that housing is a fundamental human right and that housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of the person. I want to underline that all Canadian municipalities have a responsibility to uphold the human rights of people living in encampments.

The Act also created the mandate of the Federal Housing Advocate which includes monitoring the right to adequate housing in Canada, and conducting reviews of systemic housing issues.

Last August, I sent a letter to your predecessor Mayor Stewart outlining my concern around reports of decampment activities on East Hastings Street that included a heavy police presence. After my visit to Vancouver at the end of August, I met with Mayor Stewart on September 16th to discuss the City's human rights obligations to encampment residents as well as the challenges and successes the City was having in balancing its' responsibilities for keeping people safe. I note that the approach outlined in the leaked documents of April 3rd is a departure from the prior policies of engagement with encampment residents and collaboration with peer-based community organizations.

.../2

344 Slater Street / 344, rue Slater
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 1E1
www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca

On February 23rd, I launched a [national review focused on homeless encampments](#). This review offers a framework for encampment residents, advocates and all orders of government to share their perspectives and work together to identify recommendations to ensure the promotion and protection of the human rights of people living in encampments. The review is based on the assumption that all levels of government have a role to play in finding solutions and mobilizing the needed resources. The review will also be an opportunity to promote the application of the human rights principles contained in [A National Protocol for Homeless Encampments in Canada](#)¹.

I am concerned that the proposed approach outlined in Vancouver's latest plan to escalate the decampment of East Hastings Street risks making the situation worse. I note that international human rights law clearly states that forced evictions of encampments, including forcing people to move from an encampment to a shelter, SRO, or "supportive" housing which is not adequate according to international human rights law, constitute a violation of human rights, including Indigenous rights as per UNDRIP. I am also concerned about the proposal to form "work zones" which would prevent residents from accessing services, and legal observers from witnessing any decampment activities taking place.

Following up on what I learned both during and subsequent to my visit to Vancouver in August 2022, I call on you and City Council to:

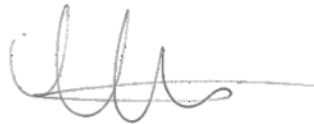
1. Immediately cease the forced eviction of encampment residents;
2. Adopt a human rights-based approach to dealing with encampments, guided by the former UN Special Rapporteur's *National Protocol*;
3. Undertake a meaningful process of engagement with the encampment residents, community organizations and stakeholders before adopting any decisions that affect them;
4. Provide encampment residents with access to basic services such as clean water, sanitation facilities, electricity and heat; and
5. Cease reliance on law enforcement as the primary response to encampments.

I recognize that homeless encampments pose many complex challenges for municipalities. Solutions require the federal and provincial governments to work with and provide resources to municipalities so that housing is affordable, accessible and appropriate for everyone. Adopting a human rights-based approach provides the best road map for finding sustainable solutions while upholding the human dignity of people experiencing homelessness. In the meantime, I encourage you, members of Council and the City employees, to review the *National Protocol* and apply its principles in your dealings with homeless encampments.

¹ Farha, Leilani and Schwan, Kaitlin, The Shift, April 30, 2020 <https://www.make-the-shift.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/A-National-Protocol-for-Homeless-Encampments-in-Canada.pdf>

I would welcome an opportunity to engage in further dialogue and explore how my office and the ongoing review can contribute to the City of Vancouver implementing a human rights-based approach to encampments.

Yours sincerely,



Marie-Josée Houle
Federal Housing Advocate

c.c.: Rebecca Bligh, City Councillor, CLRbligh@vancouver.ca
Christine Boyle, City Councillor, CLRboyle@vancouver.ca
Adriane Carr, City Councillor, CLRcarr@vancouver.ca
Lisa Dominato, City Councillor, CLRdominato@vancouver.ca
Pete Fry, City Councillor, CLRfry@vancouver.ca
Sarah Kirby-Yung, City Councillor, CLRkirby-yung@vancouver.ca
Mike Klassen, City Councillor, CLRklassen@vancouver.ca
Peter Meiszner, City Councillor, CLRmeiszner@vancouver.ca
Brian Montague, City Councillor, CLRmontague@vancouver.ca
Lenny Zhou, City Councillor, CLRzhou@vancouver.ca

Paul Mochrie, City Manager, paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca

Hon. David Eby, Premier
Province of BC, Premier@gov.bc.ca

Hon. Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing
Province of BC, HOUS.minister@gov.bc.ca

Page 075 of 103 to/à Page 078 of 103

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.3

RE: PDE speaking notes

From: Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>
To: Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>, Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>, Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Smith, Jimmy PREM:EX <Jimmy.Smith@gov.bc.ca>, Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 6, 2023 5:19:17 PM PDT
Attachments: image001.jpg
Ah gotcha – understand. No concerns from me with that approach.

From: Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 5:19 PM
To: Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>; Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>; Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Smith, Jimmy PREM:EX <Jimmy.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: PDE speaking notes

I think the reasons you gave are very similar to why I think we should hold (in addition to this week's actions). Even just giving a week in between I think is helpful. *IF* we had a clear date, I would say get it out asap.

From: Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 5:13 PM
To: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>; Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Smith, Jimmy PREM:EX <Jimmy.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: PDE speaking notes

Yeah I agree with Sian – it could be a long time before we have a more concrete date

From: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 5:12 PM
To: Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>; Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Smith, Jimmy PREM:EX <Jimmy.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: PDE speaking notes

Okay I can ask but I doubt we're going to get more concrete on an opening date + s.13
s.13 They told me June but I'm more comfortable saying late summer with some qualifications - like we're doing the due diligence.

I know Minister would like this out so if we want to postpone (which I'm not opposed to) I just need a good rationale.

Siân

Siân Madoc-Jones *she/her*
Chief of Staff to
The Honourable Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Housing
Cell: 778-867-6774

From: Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 4:57:39 PM
To: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>; Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>; Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Smith, Jimmy PREM:EX <Jimmy.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: RE: PDE speaking notes

Let's hold on this until we can be more concrete about an opening date.

From: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 4:49 PM

To: Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>; Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Smith, Jimmy PREM:EX <Jimmy.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Re: PDE speaking notes

Hi folks,

Unrelated (or maybe related) to your prep. MRK mentioned to Matt earlier that we can announce on Tuesday that we have purchased Chalmers Lodge in Vancouver (Heyman's riding) which has up to 115 self contained units for people experiencing homelessness.

It needs renovations so won't be open until summer/early fall but the plan was to house seniors from the DTES.

I wanted to get your take on whether I should move on that release for Tuesday or if you have other timing in mind because of other announcements that day.

Let me know what you think.

Sian

Siân Madoc-Jones *she/her*

Chief of Staff to

The Honourable Ravi Kahlon

Minister of Housing

Cell: 778-867-6774

From: Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 4:45:40 PM

To: Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>; Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Smith, Jimmy PREM:EX <Jimmy.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: RE: PDE speaking notes

What's IA and DA?

Meghan Sali

Director of Special Projects

Office of the Premier | Government of British Columbia

740 – 999 Canada Place

250-880-1225

From: Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 4:45 PM

To: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>; Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Smith, Jimmy PREM:EX <Jimmy.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>; Howlett, Tim GCPE:EX <Tim.Howlett@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: RE: PDE speaking notes

Sharing with you all.

Re-orged some bullets to make it clearer what's Crab park and what's Hastings, and added some info about SDPR Community Integration Specialists who were on the ground.

From: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 4:29 PM
To: Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>; Sali, Meghan PREM:EX <Meghan.Sali@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Fwd: PDE speaking notes

Siân Madoc-Jones *she/her*
Chief of Staff to
The Honourable Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Housing
Cell: 778-867-6774

From: Collins, Teri HOUS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 4:26:44 PM
To: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Collins, Teri HOUS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: PDE speaking notes

For Sara M PDE notes

- We have moved over 90 people indoors since June.
- Community outreach has been engaging with people continuously since June to make offers of housing, supports and services.
- In the last two days with the CoV decampment, 10 people have accepted offers to move indoors (shelters)
- The latest Situation Report from the City of Vancouver at 1:00 pm notes:
s.16

- SDPR Community Integration Specialists have been on site, available to assist individuals from an outdoor tent in a safe area outside of the decampment zone. Yesterday the team estimates connecting with ~120 individuals, all of them noted being on IA or DA. No new intakes were completed, or crisis grants requested. SDPR heard that the drinks, snacks, and rain ponchos that the CISp handed out we greatly appreciated. Folks also stated that knowing that the CISp's were there to connect with and will be there for "aftercare" helped ease some anxiety.
- CoV has advised their approach post Hastings decampment is to initiate Quick Response Teams that will consist of CoV staff (bylaw, engineering and perhaps VPD, as necessary) that will rapidly respond to daily structures that are erected to provide outreach services and enforce the bylaw. HOUS have asked CoV for confirmation on approach to maintain the street over the long weekend.
- Last estimates of numbers in the designated areas of Crab park are holding at 41 tents, with approximately 15-20 people. There are additional people that shelter overnight in the non-designated area of the Park of which the Park Board does enforce the bylaw and require individuals pack up and move along during the day. The Park has regular outreach and supports provided.
- Regarding the injunction, the Park Board could go back at any time and seek an injunction to enforce its initial order, the Ministry is not aware of any plans to do so at this time.
- As of April 6th, SDPR Community Integration Specialists note a few more tents at Crab Park this morning but said they are seeing more people displaced from the encampment dispersing into alleys around the DTES;

From: Collins, Teri HOUS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: Thursday, April 6, 2023 2:11 PM

To: Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Will, Meghan HOUS:EX <Meghan.Will@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: PDE speaking notes

Importance: High

Hi,

PDE (through Shannon) has asked for the following be added to his bullets for this evening.

- # ppl moved indoors (from summer and for last two days)
- What is the city's plan now that all structures are removed
- What is the status of the court injunction and plan for Crab Park?

Meghan will get you this detail.

He has also asked for someone (gov't staff) to confirm on the ground over the weekend that the modulares are in fact already being craned into the site, **and** that Gastown is actually open and ready to go. Perhaps this one we can discuss the best way forward.

Teri Collins (she/her)

Deputy Minister

Ministry of Housing

Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca

Ph: 250-952-2569/Mobile: 250-216-2218



Page 083 of 103 to/à Page 087 of 103

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.14

Materials for this afternoon's Provincial Exec Steering Committee Mtg

From: Newman, Debbie HOUS:EX <Debbie.Newman@gov.bc.ca>
To: Carmichael, Barbara AG:EX <Barbara.Carmichael@gov.bc.ca>, O'Donnell, Maureen HLTH:EX <Maureen.O'Donnell@gov.bc.ca>, Bain, Don PREM:EX <Don.Bain@gov.bc.ca>, Petrescu, Sarah HOUS:EX <Sarah.Petrescu@gov.bc.ca>, Galbraith, David J SDPR:EX <David.Galbraith@gov.bc.ca>, Scott, Douglas S PSSG:EX <Douglas.S.Scott@gov.bc.ca>, Engelbrecht, Maya AG:EX <Maya.Engelbrecht@gov.bc.ca>, Godlonton, Brian EMCR:EX <Brian.Godlonton@gov.bc.ca>, XT:HLTH Eliopoulos, Vivian <Vivian.Eliopoulos@vch.ca>, Massey, Christine MMHA:EX <Christine.Massey@gov.bc.ca>, XT:Chapman, Bob HLTH:IN <bob.chapman@vch.ca>, Grewal, Preet GCPE:EX <Preet.Grewal@gov.bc.ca>, XT:Matthews, Laura GCPE:IN <lmathews@bchousing.org>, Bond, Allison MCF:EX <Allison.Bond@gov.bc.ca>, Warren, Brynn HOUS:EX <Brynn.Warren@gov.bc.ca>, Fieltsch, Raymond SDPR:EX <Raymond.Fieltsch@gov.bc.ca>, XT:O'Donnell, Maureen HLTH:IN <modonnell@phsa.ca>, Moraes, Josh AG:EX <Josh.Moraes@gov.bc.ca>, Lewis, Glen PSSG:EX <Glen.Lewis@gov.bc.ca>, Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Mariott@gov.bc.ca>, Gold, Crystal HLTH:EX <Crystal.Gold@gov.bc.ca>, Williams, Julie AG:EX <Julie.Williams@gov.bc.ca>, hhartman@bchousing.org, Sturtevant, Darryl MMHA:EX <Darryl.Sturtevant@gov.bc.ca>, Madoc-Jones, Sian HOUS:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>, Salter, Shannon PREM:EX <Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca>, Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>, Dowler, Thea HOUS:EX <Thea.Dowler@gov.bc.ca>, Godfrey, Samuel SDPR:EX <Samuel.Godfrey@gov.bc.ca>, Wolfe, Seamus MMHA:EX <Seamus.Wolfe@gov.bc.ca>, Ho, Theresa HLTH:EX <Theresa.Ho@gov.bc.ca>, Boone, David EMCR:EX <David.Boone@gov.bc.ca>, Copeland, Alison HLTH:EX <Alison.Copeland@gov.bc.ca>, paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca <'paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca'>, Armin.Amrolia@vancouver.ca <'Armin.Amrolia@vancouver.ca'>, Donnie.Rosa@vancouver.ca <'Donnie.Rosa@vancouver.ca'>, Adam.Palmer@vpd.ca <'Adam.Palmer@vpd.ca'>, Howard.Chow@vpd.ca <'Howard.Chow@vpd.ca'>, Patricia.Daly@vch.ca <'Patricia.Daly@vch.ca'>, Tanya.whysker@vpd.ca <'Tanya.whysker@vpd.ca'>, Don.chapman@vpd.ca <'Don.chapman@vpd.ca'>, jjenkyns@victoria.ca <'jjenkyns@victoria.ca'>, Fry, Karen <Karen.Fry@vancouver.ca>, Kim.Brooks@fnha.ca <'Kim.Brooks@fnha.ca'>, Dale McMann <dmcman@bchousing.org>, Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca <'Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca'>, neil.monckton@vancouver.ca <'neil.monckton@vancouver.ca'>, Lauren.Reid@vancouver.ca <'Lauren.Reid@vancouver.ca'>, Lepps, Betty <Betty.Lepps@vancouver.ca>, Prince, Jessica PREM:EX <Jessica.Prince@gov.bc.ca>, Amrolia, Armin <Armin.Amrolia@vancouver.ca>, Kim Brooks <Kim.Brooks@fnha.ca>, Rosa, Donnie <Donnie.Rosa@vancouver.ca>, Bonshor, Leslie [VCH] <Leslie.Bonshor@vch.ca>, Smith, Matt PREM:EX <Matt.Smith@gov.bc.ca>, Suddaby, Clay GCPE:EX <Clay.Suddaby@gov.bc.ca>, WHYSKER, Tanya <tanya.whysker@vpd.ca>, Newhook, Kelly PREM:EX <Kelly.Newhook@gov.bc.ca>, HARTY, Matthew <matthew.harty@vpd.ca>, kconnors@bchousing.org, sallen@bchousing.org, adunnet@bchousing.org, mellisa.morphy@vancouver.ca, McCarthy, Shannon [VCH] <shannon.mccarthy@vch.ca>, Brown, Matthew G PSSG:EX <Matthew.G.Brown@gov.bc.ca>, Will, Meghan HOUS:EX <Meghan.Will@gov.bc.ca>, Miller, Jennifer E SDPR:EX </o=BCGOVT/ou=Exchange Administrative Group /cn=Recipients/cn=d699e943b9aa488c8bf83996f449d25a-Miller, Jennifer>, Singh, Sandra <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>, vtong@bchousing.org, BCH Meeting Calendar (ministrymeetings@bchousing.org) <ministrymeetings@bchousing.org>, Karimi, Nina HOUS:EX <Nina.Karimi@gov.bc.ca>, CHAPMAN, Don <don.chapman@vpd.ca>, McNish, James PREM:EX <James.McNish@gov.bc.ca>, Farrell, Lindsay [VCH] <lindsay.farrell@vch.ca>, Miller, Jennifer E SDPR:EX </o=BCGOVT/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=d699e943b9aa488c8bf83996f449d25a-Miller, Jennifer>
Cc: Hay, Lorna AG:EX <Lorna.Hay@gov.bc.ca>, Monteiro, Rowan HOUS:EX <Rowan.Monteiro@gov.bc.ca>, Willms, Lori HOUS:EX <Lori.Willms@gov.bc.ca>, King, Indiana HOUS:EX <Indiana.King@gov.bc.ca>, Harbottle, Cassidy HOUS:EX <Cassidy.Harbottle@gov.bc.ca>, Levesque, Starr HOUS:EX <Starr.Levesque@gov.bc.ca>, Papadopoulos, Nikki HOUS:EX <Nikki.Papadopoulos@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: April 12, 2023 10:55:53 AM PDT

Attachments: Provincial Executive Steering Committee_Minutes_03.29.23.pdf, Agenda_Provincial Executive Steering Committee_04.12.23_.pdf

Hi everyone,

Please see the attached for this afternoon's meeting.

Thanks,

Debbie

Debbie Newman

Manager, Executive Operations

Deputy Minister's Office

Ministry of Housing

4th Floor, 614 Humboldt Street

Victoria, BC V8W 1A4

Phone: 250-893-2273



**Ministry of Housing
Provincial Executive Steering Committee**

Minutes

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

3:00-4:00 pm

MS Teams

Attendance

BC Government:

Premier's Office (PO)

Not in attendance

Ministry Responsible of Housing (HOUS)

Meghan Will, a/ADM, Homelessness, Partnerships & Housing Supports

Nina Karimi, Ministerial Advisor

Jennifer Miller, Executive Director, Engagement and Encampment Response Branch

Brynn Warren, Senior Policy Analyst

Attorney General (AG)

Maya Engelbrecht, A/Director Executive Operations

Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (EMCR)

David Boone, Assistant Deputy Fire Commissioner

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)

Not in attendance.

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA)/ Ministry of Health (HLTH)

Maureen O'Donnell, Associate Deputy Minister

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (PSSG)

Not in attendance.

Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR)

Dana Jensen, Executive Director

City Of Vancouver (CoV)

Sandra Singh, General Manager Arts, Culture and Community Services

Donnie Rosa, General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

C O N F I D E N T I A L

City of Victoria

Not in attendance.

Park Board

Betty Lepps, Director Urban Relationships

Vancouver Police Department (VPD)

Don Chapman

Vancouver Fire Rescue Services (VFRS)

Not in attendance.

BC Housing (BCH)

Vincent Tong, CEO

Dale McMann, Vice President Operations

Heidi Hartman, Associate VP Operations

Allison Dunnett, ED Homelessness and Strategi Advisor

Laura Matthews, Communications

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCH)

Bob Chapman, VP

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Director Indigenous Health

First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)

Darius Pruss, Regional Advisor

Meeting Summary

Welcome, Introductions and Action Item Log – ADM Meghan Will

ADM Meghan Will welcomed new members, confirmed minutes. Noted that the situation on the ground changes daily so we opted to proceed with the meeting today.

3. Partner Roundtable:

BC Housing

Question- how components of the original encampment response plan developed between BCH and CoV will be integrated into the new response, including having an emergency plan with a muster station given the challenges flagged re: fires. CoV committed to follow-up off-line.

Confirmation BCH is meeting with Carnegie and continue to work through CAA to allocate available units.

City of Vancouver

Sandra Singh shared there are 84 structures on East Hastings.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Vancouver Fire Rescue Services

Not in attendance.

Vancouver Police Department

Confirmed that the VPD operational Plan for de-structuring is 90% completed. Have met with CoV staff re: their members and their equipment needs. Robust comms plan established. Met with Chief Fry to confirm fire order is in effect. Confirmed VPD will provide on the ground live updates.

Vancouver Coastal Health

Confirmed that VCH outreach staff have been continuing street walks and pop-up primary care clinics. Noted that they have mobilized backup teams re: any activity/action planned.

Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation

Observed an increase in people in CRAB Park – total of 59 tents, 10 tent increase over weekend, all within the designated areas. Parks is working with people to connect them to services and move indoors.

Social Development and Poverty Development

SDPR is happy to support and has a couple offices in close proximity to the encampment site that could be a resource for people who are in the area. Noted that safety of staff is paramount, and they have quietly put in extra security.

Ministry of Health/Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

Not in attendance.

Ministry of Children and Family

Not in attendance.

City of Victoria

Not in attendance.

Emergency Management BC/OFC

Identified that fire safety equipment has been distributed on E. Hastings, and the need to be mindful to ensure items are not thrown out.

First Nation Health Authority

Darius advised FNHA has a new Director of Mental Health and Wellness, and they are connecting with VCH in support of this work.

PSSG

Not in attendance.

4. Discussion re: Supporting the DTES Plan

Agreement among the group that there is a need to strengthen coordination of the Plan.

5. Communications

BCH is looking for CoV to provide key messaging to members re: deconstructing.

C O N F I D E N T I A L



Agenda

Provincial Executive Steering Committee East Hastings and Encampment Response April 12, 2023, 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

#	ITEM	LEAD	MATERIAL
1.	Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of minutes – April 12 	Deputy Minister, Teri Collins	Verbal
2.	Provincial Plan: Supporting the DTES: Update	Deputy Minister, Teri Collins	Verbal
4.	Partner Roundtable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC Housing City of Vancouver Vancouver Fire Rescue Services Vancouver Police Department Vancouver Coastal Health Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Community Integration Services – SDPR Emergency Management BC Office of the Fire Commissioner Ministry of Health Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions Ministry of Children and Family Development Public Safety and Solicitor General First Nations Health Authority City of Victoria 	All	Verbal
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Update 	BC Housing, GCPE	Verbal
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing comments 	All	Verbal

FW: Urgent request regarding East Hastings evictions

From: Salter, Shannon PREM:EX <Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca>
To: Marquis, Yvette PREM:EX <Yvette.Marquis@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 11, 2023 4:21:51 PM PDT
Attachments: 2022-12-09 - Joint Letter from PIVOT and BCCLA - Urgent response regarding evictions at the Hastings Street Encampment MM.pdf

From: Collins, Teri OHCS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2023 5:21 PM
To: Salter, Shannon PREM:EX <Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Urgent request regarding East Hastings evictions

Fyi

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Will, Meghan OHCS:EX <Meghan.Will@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2023 5:06 PM
To: Collins, Teri OHCS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Campbell, Tracy AG:EX <Tracy.Campbell@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Urgent request regarding East Hastings evictions

Afternoon - in follow up to the flag below,^{s.14}
s.14

- s.14

-

-

I have also connected with CoV^{s.16}
s.16

Thanks,
Meghan

From: Will, Meghan OHCS:EX
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 9:18 AM
To: Campbell, Tracy AG:EX <Tracy.Campbell@gov.bc.ca>; Collins, Teri OHCS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Urgent request regarding East Hastings evictions
Importance: High

The attached letter is cc'd to MRK and the Premier –
s.14

From: Allison Dunnet <adunnet@bchousing.org>

Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 9:02 AM

To: Dale McMann <dmmcmann@bchousing.org>; XT:Goldvine, Sara GCPE:IN <sgoldvine@bchousing.org>; Kate Begent-Connors <kconnors@bchousing.org>; Heidi Hartman <hhartman@bchousing.org>; Will, Meghan OHCS:EX <Meghan.Will@gov.bc.ca>; Petrescu, Sarah OHCS:EX <Sarah.Petrescu@gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Will Valenciano <wvalenci@bchousing.org>; Esther de Vos <edevos@bchousing.org>

Subject: FW: Urgent request regarding East Hastings evictions

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

For Awareness – The attached letter came to those who have attended the CoVs Community Table for E Hastings Street.

s.14

Page 096 of 103 to/à Page 097 of 103

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.14

December 9, 2022

Mayor Ken Sim

Chair of Vancouver Police Board

Chief Constable Adam Palmer

Vancouver Police Department

Vancouver Police Board Members

Vancouver City Councillors

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Re: Urgent response regarding evictions at the Hastings Street Encampment

Dear Mayor Sim, Chief Constable Adam Palmer, Vancouver Police Board Members and Vancouver City Councillors:

Last week, during the middle of an extreme weather alert due to the cold and falling snow,¹ the City of Vancouver ("the City") and the Vancouver Police Department ("VPD") evicted people from their shelters – their best and generally only housing option – on the 100-Block of East Hastings Street (the "Evictions"). These shelters were part of what community members refer to as the Hastings Street Encampment (the "Encampment"). The BC Civil Liberties Association ("BCCLA") and Pivot Legal Society ("Pivot") have serious concerns about the constitutionality of these actions and in particular the City's unnecessary deployment of police officers.

Evictions have constitutional consequences

As found by the BC Court of Appeal in *Adams*,² where there was insufficient indoor shelter space, people had "a right to be free of a state-imposed prohibition on the activity of creating or utilizing shelter, a prohibition which was found to impose significant and

¹ ECCC Weather British Columbia, "A major winter storm is arriving on the coast today! Please watch out for strong winds, heavy snow, blowing snow & wind chill. Be careful on the roads & have your emergency kit handy in case of power outages. Warnings: <http://ow.ly/6IE850LQhuB> #BCStorm @DriveBC", (29 November 2022 at 9:25 AM) online: *Twitter* <<https://twitter.com/ECCCWeatherBC/status/1597642819757379586>>.

² *Victoria (City) v Adams*, 2009 BCCA 563 [*Adams*].

potentially severe health risks on one of the City's most vulnerable and marginalized populations."³ This health risk is particularly acute when there is a risk of hypothermia.⁴

In *Adams*, that prolonged exposure to the cold weather causes life-threatening effects was uncontested.⁵ Since *Adams*, courts in British Columbia have reiterated that this danger to people's lives will raise an associated threat to Section 7 *Charter* rights, when the enforcement of bylaws results in exposure to the elements.⁶ Residents of the Encampment are now facing significant risks to their lives and safety, as a result of the City's recent Evictions.

To uphold the application of recent court decisions,⁷ the City and its delegates must duly consider the constitutional and human rights of people in encampments prior to taking action to enforce a bylaw. Furthermore, the City must make the decisions related to bylaw enforcement to evict people in encampments in accordance with procedural fairness principles. This includes the provision of notice and an opportunity to be heard on the matter.⁸

Pivot and the BCCLA's conversations with legal observers present during the Evictions indicate that these constitutional and procedural fairness entitlements were not fulfilled by the City. Crucially, no opportunity to be heard was provided to those evicted. These requirements are also essential for public transparency and accountability.

The City's failure to duly consider the constitutional and human rights of the Encampment residents is particularly egregious during extreme weather alerts, when the housed shelter in their homes and the Encampment residents struggle to retain heat in their tents or other makeshift shelters. These acts of displacement only move potential City concerns such as visible clutter to elsewhere within the City, and they do so at the cost of human safety and wellbeing. When people's lives are put at increased risk of death for no logical benefit, the City has grievously failed to demonstrate an appropriate balancing of interests to constitute a justified infringement on the evicted residents' *Charter* rights.

³ *Ibid* at para 100.

⁴ *Ibid* at para 28.

⁵ *Ibid* at para 102.

⁶ *Adams* at para 75; see also *Bamberger v Vancouver (Board of Parks and Recreation)*, 2022 BCSC 49 at para 4 [Bamberger]; *Prince George (City) v Stewart*, 2021 BCSC 2089 at paras 89 & 91 [Stewart].

⁷ *Bamberger*, *supra* note 6 at paras 62-63.

⁸ See *ibid* at paras 64 & 69.

Heavy police presence and use of force along the Encampment

Legal observers posted along Hastings Street have witnessed a heavy VPD presence and use of force recently and during the Evictions. Witnesses also described VPD officers enforcing the seizure of people's belongings by City delegates, using aggressive behaviour to scare bystanders, threatening to arrest Encampment residents, using routine arrests as a tactic to disperse and essentially evict people from the Encampment, and arresting people residing along Hastings Street with excessive force. For example, videos captured police officers using violent dispersal tactics along the Encampment in August 2022.⁹

In the BCCLA's previous letter of December 1, 2021, to the Vancouver Park Board regarding the use of police to evict people from the CRAB Park encampment, we stated:

“We find this heavy-handed approach completely inhumane, unnecessary and contrary to the City of Vancouver's commitment to decriminalizing poverty and supporting community-led safety initiatives. The latter includes not relying on the police to address matters of homelessness.”¹⁰

We are disheartened by the continued and heavy use of police with regard to encampment evictions, and we strongly urge the City to prohibit the deployment of such cruel and unnecessary tactics against a highly vulnerable community.

From forced evictions and criminalization to respect for human rights

The City's actions are a prime example of anti-homelessness bylaws expressly being “used to punish people who are visibly poor and have no choice but to spend their time in public spaces”, as articulated by the 2022 report recently commissioned by the Office of the Federal Housing Advocate (the “OFHA Report”).¹¹

In the same document, the OFHA Report recommends that rather than criminalizing encampment residents, governments need to “recognize those experiencing homelessness

⁹ Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users, “TODAY at 2:45PM: @vancouverpd constables attacked and violently arrested DTES residents, VANDU and @pivotlegal organizers after a day of peaceful observation of the Hastings Tent City decampment.” (9 August 2022 at 6:02 PM), online: [Twitter <https://twitter.com/VANDUpeople/status/1557170436336603136?cxt=HHwWgMCqid-Ql5wrAAAA>](https://twitter.com/VANDUpeople/status/1557170436336603136?cxt=HHwWgMCqid-Ql5wrAAAA).

¹⁰ British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, “Letter to Vancouver Park Board re CRAB Park Injunction”, (1 December 2021), online (PDF): BCCLA <<https://bccla.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Letter-to-Vancouver-Park-Board-re-Crab-Park-Injunction.pdf>>.

¹¹ Alexandra Flynn, Joe Hermer, Caroline Leblanc, Sue-Ann MacDonald, Kaitlin Schwan, Estair Van Wagner. 2022. *Overview of Encampments Across Canada – Executive Summary*. The Office of the Federal Housing Advocate at 8 [OFHA Report].

as human beings claiming their rights within failed systems and fulfill their obligations to respect human dignity”.¹² As part of a right to housing approach, the OFHA Report’s recommendations to governments include the following:

- Prohibit forced evictions while de-centring policing and law enforcement;
- Ensure the meaningful participation of encampment residents;
- Ensure that encampment conditions meet basic human rights requirements; and
- Ensure that outcomes and actions are compliant with the human rights of encampment residents, including Indigenous human rights.¹³

The City has entirely failed to take a human-rights approach with respect to the eviction process. Instead, these latest Evictions accompanied by a generally heavy police presence demonstrate a callous disregard for the human rights, constitutional rights, and general welfare of Vancouver residents.

Contextualizing winter Evictions and Indigenous displacement

People who are being evicted from the Encampment have no adequate place to go for proper housing. This is the stark reality of the ongoing housing crisis, which is particularly acute in Vancouver.¹⁴ The City’s emergency sheltering locations are only open for a limited time during the night, which leaves people exposed to the elements throughout the day. Pivot and the BCCLA reiterate our concerns expressed in the letter cited below, prepared by Pivot Legal Society (“Pivot”) and signed by the BCCLA, describing the inadequacy of the City’s current Winter Housing Plan.¹⁵ We also refer you to Pivot’s press release regarding the Evictions.¹⁶

Moreover, the emergency sheltering locations are not housing. Numerous court cases have now recognized that shelter beds are not accessible or “suitable” for many people living outside.¹⁷ Unhoused people frequently cannot access shelter beds even where they are

¹² *Ibid* at 11.

¹³ *Ibid* at 11-17.

¹⁴ OFHA Report, *supra* note 11 at 5.

¹⁵ See attachment: Pivot Legal Society, “RE: Winter Housing Plan for People Who Shelter in Public Space”, (22 November 2022), online: Pivot Legal Society

<https://www.pivotlegal.org/winter_housing_plan_for_people_who_shelter_in_public_space>.

¹⁶ Pivot Legal Society, “Hastings Tent City Residents Decamped While City Under Weather Warning”, (29 November 2022), online: Pivot Legal Society

<https://www.pivotlegal.org/hastings_tent_city_residents_decamped_while_city_under_weather_warning?fbclid=IwAR0kNPzwYavpe08yLX2s6ialtb7V8S4IUoPWQLJqiy1BJ3MoBj5uSZHSUXQ>.

¹⁷ See *Bamberger*, *supra* note 6 at para 151; *Stewart*, *supra* note 6 at paras 69-74; *Abbotsford (City) v Shantz*, 2015 BCSC 1909 at paras 81-82.

empty because these spaces are high-barrier, unsafe, or otherwise do not meet their needs. No housing was offered to those residents evicted from the Encampment. In the words of one evicted resident who was interviewed by legal observers, “They don’t care where we go, they just don’t want us here.”

A mat on a floor, or a chair in a “warming center”, is not sufficient to fulfil a government’s obligations to unhoused and inadequately housed community members. The Mayor and Council of this City must embrace the right to “adequate” housing as set out in international law, and as now recognized under the federal *National Housing Strategy Act*. This includes, among other features, the right to: security of tenure, affordability, habitability, accessibility, and cultural adequacy.¹⁸

It is essential to contextualize the deliberate removal and displacement of people from a public space situated on the unceded and un-surrendered lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaʔl (Tsleil-Waututh) nations. As has been recognized in the OFHA Report, encampments are directly connected to ongoing colonial violence and Indigenous people are over-represented in encampments in Vancouver.¹⁹ The British Columbia Supreme Court also recognized this reality.²⁰

Indeed, the many Indigenous residents of the Hasting Street Encampment should not be subjected to further state-enforced displacement. The City’s actions demonstrate a violent pattern of ongoing colonialism without addressing the root causes of why people are living in the Encampment. How can the City claim to be a “City of Reconciliation”²¹ and to be taking action to implement the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples²² when it continues to actively use violence and displacement against Indigenous people?

Pivot and the BCCLA urge the City to act with compassion, human rights accountability, and transparency. We implore the City to immediately cease the Evictions of all people sheltering at the Encampment and to act swiftly to implement the recommendations of the OFHA Report. Until such time that the City can fully demonstrate that suitable and accessible alternative housing has been provided to each and every individual evicted, and

¹⁸ National Housing Strategy Act (SC 2019, c 29, s 313) S 49(a), online: <<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-11.2/FullText.html>>.

¹⁹ OFHA Report, *supra* note 11 at 5.

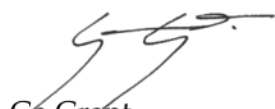
²⁰ Stewart, *supra* note 6 at paras 69-71.

²¹ City of Vancouver, “City of Reconciliation”, (8 July, 2014), online: <<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/city-of-reconciliation.aspx>>.

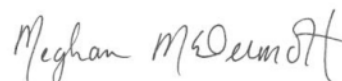
²² City of Vancouver, “Council approves groundbreaking UNDRIP strategy for Vancouver”, (25 October, 2022), online: <<https://vancouver.ca/news-calendar/council-approves-groundbreaking-undrip-strategy-for-vancouver.aspx>>.

that such evictions are done in compliance with the constitutional and procedural fairness rights of all individuals, the BCCLA and Pivot Legal Society will continue to stand in solidarity with the Encampment residents, who are fighting on the street for their survival and dignity.

Sincerely,



Ga Grant
Staff Litigation Counsel
BC Civil Liberties Association



Meghan McDermott
Policy Director
BC Civil Liberties Association



Anna Cooper
Staff Lawyer
Pivot Legal Society

CC: The Honourable David Eby, Premier of British Columbia

The Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing and Government House Leader