

# BC Housing [GC report]

## Message:

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## **BC Housing QA – Bula Interview**

Main message:

- BC Housing has expanded significantly under our government as we build record levels of housing for people.
- Unlike the former government, when concerns come to our attention we take action to ensure they're addressed.
- That's what we'll continue to do, as we expanding our efforts to build much-needed housing for people.

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## **BC Housing - Atira QA – Frances Bula Interview**

### **Main message:**

- BC Housing has expanded significantly under our government as we build record levels of housing for people.
- Unlike the former government, when concerns come to our attention we take action to ensure they're addressed.
- That's what we'll continue to do, as we expand our efforts to build much-needed housing for people.

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## Housing Minister KMQA – Swearing In

### Key messages:

- Housing is one of the biggest challenges for people right now. People from all walks of life are struggling to find good housing they can afford.
- I've heard from people who've directly benefited from our efforts so far. But demand for housing has surged in B.C. coming out of the pandemic
  - Long period of low interest rates + record population growth.
- It's clear to everyone there is much more to do.
- While the BC Liberals continue to side with speculators and oppose the measures we're taking to support renters...
- ...I'm looking forward to hitting the ground running to build on and accelerate our work to fight speculation and increase our housing supply so that people can find a good home they can afford.

### *Examples of More to Come:*

- Boosting public investments to build even more affordable housing for low, moderate, and middle-income families
- Rental acquisition fund to preserve rentals and stop affordable rentals getting bought up by big international corporations
- Flipping tax, so people don't have to compete against those wanting to make a quick buck
- New tools to help local governments better regulate short-term rentals

### *Examples of Top Actions to Date:*

- The speculation tax – turned 20,000 empty condos into homes, now expanding to new communities
- New municipal housing targets legislation
- Eliminating strata rental restrictions and most age restrictions
- 36,000 homes open or underway (14,700 open)
- Housing starts at record highs
- Capping annual rent increases below inflation and new protections against illegal renovations

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**From:** Salter, Shannon PREM:EX (Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca)  
**To:** s.17  
**Cc:** Smith, Matt PREM:EX (Matt.Smith@gov.bc.ca)  
**Subject:** FW: Materials for PDE meeting Monday  
**Sent:** 12/02/2022 05:14:41  
**Attachments:** IN\_Hastings Street Encampment\_Nov29.2022.docx, KM\_DTES Encampment\_Dec\_1\_FNL.docx, 634699-AG-MBN-DTES Roundtable Dec 1 2022.docx  
**Message Body:**

For Monday. Let me know if you would like any other information.

**From:** Collins, Teri OHCS:EX <Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** December 1, 2022 6:11 PM  
**To:** Salter, Shannon PREM:EX <Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Marquis, Yvette PREM:EX <Yvette.Marquis@gov.bc.ca>; Madoc-Jones, Sian AG:EX <Sian.MadocJones@gov.bc.ca>; Will, Meghan OHCS:EX <Meghan.Will@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Materials for PDE meeting Monday

Hi there, sending you the materials we have sent through Sian for PDE meeting Monday with providers in DTES. I have shared with Dave/Christine as well.

- This week's Issues Note
- BN for PDE and Ministers for the Roundtable meeting
- KM's from GCPE

**Teri Collins, MA**  
a/Associate Deputy Minister  
Housing, Multiculturalism, & Anti-Racism  
Ministry of Attorney General and Ministry Responsible for Housing  
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**MINISTRY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL AND  
MINISTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSING  
OFFICE OF HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS  
MEETING BRIEFING NOTE**

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

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

**ISSUE:**

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

**KEY MESSAGES:**

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

## **BACKGROUND:**

### **Partner Coordination:**

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

### **Housing and shelters:**

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

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

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

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONSIDERATIONS:**

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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## Key Messages – Vancouver – Hastings encampment response

Last Updated: Dec. 1, 2022

### ***General key messages:***

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

***Short- and long-term indoor shelter and housing options:***

- It is our priority to ensure that people seeking shelter in encampments are connected to services such as health care and hygiene.
- Everyone deserves a safe place indoors with access to support services. While encampments may offer interim shelter and a sense of community, they are not a safe or suitable form of long-term shelter and create significant risks for the well-being of those in them.
- The Province, through BC Housing is bringing its resources to bear to secure safe, accessible, and inclusive spaces for people experiencing homelessness in Vancouver.
- It's estimated that nearly 320 people are sheltering on Hastings Street, including approximately 240 people who have self-identified that they need housing. This is in addition to people in the Downtown Eastside, Crab Park and broader Vancouver area who are also experiencing homelessness and require safe and supported indoor spaces.
- Since the Fire Order was first issued in late July, BC Housing has made more than 400 additional spaces available for people experiencing homelessness in the Downtown Eastside. This includes recently renovated single room occupancy hotel rooms and new shelter spaces.
- Dozens more single room occupancy hotel spaces are being renovated.
- BC Housing is also working with the City of Vancouver and provincial partners to explore other mid- and long-term housing and shelter options with enhanced health and social supports.
- This includes identifying new locations for permanent shelters, leasing and purchasing new buildings, and identifying new locations for additional modular supportive housing.

- The Province and BC Housing are committed to supporting the City and other partners to strengthen cultural- and trauma-informed practices as work continues toward providing safe, indoor spaces for those in need.

***Process to move people indoors:***

- BC Housing and the City of Vancouver will continue to offer indoor options to people sheltering outdoors on East Hastings and the surrounding community, including CRAB Park.
- Housing offers are done based on individual needs assessment and, as spaces become available, are allocated through coordinated access. With winter weather conditions, this work is particularly vital to ensure the continued health and safety of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- This work includes getting to know people who are currently sheltering outdoors or in the shelter and housing system, building trust, understanding their long-term support needs and then transitioning them into supportive homes as they become available.
- As shelter spaces become available, they will be offered to people currently sheltering outdoors on East Hastings, in Crab Park, and more broadly in Vancouver.
- Over the long term, our goal is to ensure we're offering quality housing, with health supports where appropriate, that will sustain people and stop the cycle of homelessness.
- For questions about bylaw enforcement or the fire order, please connect with the City or Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services.

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***Progress and units underway:***

- Since 2018, we've opened more than 1,400 new supportive homes in Vancouver for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, which includes spaces for 300 people during the decampment of Strathcona Park last year.
- We know this is not enough – the most recent count found more than 2,000 people without homes in Vancouver – which is why we have approximately 700 new supportive homes underway in the city.

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**ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Attorney General and Responsible  
for Housing

Updated: Nov. 29, 2022

Minister: Attorney General Murray Rankin

## East Hastings Encampment Response

**ISSUE SUMMARY:**

- Work is underway on two temporary workforce modular sites at 1500 Main and 2132 Ash Street. These two sites will provide 96 units of housing and remain on the sites for three years, with an option to extend for another two years. The anticipated occupancy is March 2023. We are currently waiting for confirmation on timing for a public announcement, would happen at the same time as the development permit is submitted to the City (tentatively scheduled for Dec. 8/9, 2022).
- A new 100-bed temporary winter shelter with Indigenous services (but open to all) is opening on December 15 at 1660 East Hastings, operated by AHMA. This is in addition to the more than 200 temporary winter shelter spaces that opened as of November 1.
- Negotiations continue around potential lease of Chalmers Lodge which would provide 115 self-contained spaces for vulnerable individuals.
- At this time, BC Housing has very limited housing (SRO spaces) available to allocate, discussions are underway with MAG to mobilize on other options while the temporary modulars are constructed.
- s.16; s.17
- In light of the winter weather and snow, MAG, BC Housing and City of Vancouver met to discuss operational readiness and risks for encampment residents and response efforts. CoV briefed partners on their approach to snow removal that mitigates any risks for encampment residents, shared their flyer on warming centers and shelters spaces that they are distributing in community, and clarified that as of the 28<sup>th</sup> they were not anticipating the weather event to change the current operational approach to the encampment for partners.

**BC Housing Update: People and Spaces**

Number of people estimated to be sheltering outdoors overnight on East Hastings:  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	317	As of Oct. 20, 2022  NOTE: Carnegie has connected with 317 unique individuals since July. The situation is fluid; people may leave and come back.
Number of people connected with who have given names and identifying information.  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	279	As of Oct. 20, 2022
Number of people who Carnegie has verified do not have housing  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	156	As of Oct 20, 2022 To date, Carnegie has verified 156 people of the 279 they have identifying information for (56%) are homeless. Work continues to verify the status of the remainder.

Number of people verified as paying rent (i.e., have housing).	49	As of Oct 20, 2022 Individuals verified as paying rent represent 18% of the population. Focus will be on supporting them to return to their housing.
<p>Number of new or newly renovated indoor spaces that <u>have opened</u> since August 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 129+ renovated spaces in various SROs from existing housing stock (permanent housing)</li> <li>• 20 new beds (men only) added to the Terminal Avenue shelter (temporary shelter)</li> <li>• 10 rooms at Jubilee Rooms, 22 Main Street. Permanent housing.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, more than 200 temporary shelter spaces (Extreme Weather Response and temporary winter shelter spaces) have opened as of Nov. 1, including one opening on Dec 15 at 1660 East Hastings that will provide space for 100 individuals. While these are not being opened specifically for East Hastings, they will greatly augment the number of shelter options available across the City. This brings the number of temporary shelter spaces to 300.</p> <p>Source: BC Housing</p>	159 SRO spaces, plus 300 temporary shelter spaces	<p>Note: In addition to these 159 indoor spaces, we secured 25 permanent spaces at The Biltmore (395 Kingsway) which were provided to those displaced in the Princess Rooms SRO fire. Those numbers have been subtracted to keep the focus on the East Hastings decampment specifically.</p> <p>Note: this includes the 100 spaces coming online Dec 15.</p>
Number of SRO spaces actively under renovation or about to get underway. Source: BC Housing	36	<p>Updated: Nov. 22, 2022</p> <p>Note: At this stage, the majority of these spaces are owned and operated by non-profit partners and are not under the direct oversight of BCH. They are being explored as part of a 'round 7' SRO renovation process.</p>
Number of housing allocations/offers in progress Source: BC Housing/Carnegie	18	<p>As of Nov. 29, 2022</p> <p>Allocations: Refers to the process of identifying unsheltered individuals and matching them with available permanent housing units (not shelter beds) based on need, required supports and fit for building. Once an individual is allocated to an available unit, the outreach worker will provide the "housing offer". The process may take a few days to a week. Typically, a housing allocation results in an "accepted housing offer and move indoors, but there are cases where either a housing operator or a prospective tenant may</p>

		reject the allocation. In this case, the individual will be considered for alternate housing.
Number of housing offers, offers accepted and moves Source: BC Housing	64 offers, 57 moves	<p>Reflects period Aug. 29-Nov. 29, 2022</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>
Number of NEW supportive housing applications associated with E. Hastings Street	37	<p>Reflects period: Sep. 19 – Nov. 25, 2022</p> <p>BCH currently has 104 outstanding applications (including pre-existing applications) for supportive housing connected with the E Hastings area. Of those, 37 are new applications associated with outreach from this decampment effort.</p>

#### ISSUES/UPDATES:

##### **Strategic Response Planning THIS WEEK**

- The plan for supporting people and moving coordination is being led by BC Housing with strategic and operational input from the City of Vancouver and partners at the Planning Table, Provincial Coordination Committee, and Provincial Executive Steering Committee.
- A DRAFT V3 Encampment Response Plan, incorporating the CoV's approach, was shared with the Provincial Coordination Committee this week. Provincial partners have been asked to send feedback this week to proceed with seeking endorsement by Provincial Executive Steering Committee members.

### Spaces:

- On December 1, 100 temporary shelter spaces will open at 1660 East Hastings, operated by AHMA. 40 individuals are transferring from a temporary shelter, resulting in 60 net new beds. They will be open to all, but will have an Indigenous focus.
- 151 seasonal spaces opened on Nov. 1 and will remain open until end of March 2023.
  - Gathering Place Community Centre, 609 Helmcken (34 spaces)
  - Tenth Church, 11 West 10th (15 spaces)
  - Osborne Shelter, 27 W Hastings (40 spaces)
  - First Avenue Shelter, 1648 East 1st (20 spaces)
  - Evelyn Saller Centre, 404 Alexander (42 spaces)
- In addition, as of October 15, 50 Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelter spaces opened in three different locations. They will remain open until Apr. 15, 2023.
  - Langara YMCA: 282 West 49 Ave (30 spaces)
  - Cascades Church: 3833 Boundary Rd (10 spaces)
  - Directions Youth Resource Centre, 1138 Burrard (10 EWR spaces, youth under 25 only)
- Both EWR and temporary winter shelter beds are funded by BCH.
- BC Housing and Carnegie meet three times a week to review the application list and identify priority referrals. Priority referrals are based on vulnerability, Indigenous status, gender, age, and those that have expressed a desire to move indoors.
- A Community Access and Assessment (CAA) Table is meeting weekly (each Thursday). Attendees include local shelter & outreach partners from Carnegie, Lookout, PHS, AWRS, APMI and Lu'ma. During the Allocation meeting, the Table reviews the list of priority referrals and units that are available and make decisions, in a collaborative and transparent manner, to match individuals with appropriate housing options.
- BC Housing Real Estate has identified two buildings for their potential utility in response to the East Hastings encampment:
  - **1450 West 12th, Vancouver (Chalmers Lodge):** BC Housing has entered into negotiations around the Chalmers Lodge site (1450 West 12 Ave.). This building would provide 115 self-contained spaces with health supports for vulnerable populations.
  - BCH has submitted the Operational Management Plan to the City for review. BCH is prepared to submit offer to lease but there are some concerns that the requirements that this site be operated as a 'care facility' may be overly prescriptive. BCH is doing due diligence to ensure it is an appropriate solution for our needs. BC Housing will post the RFP for an operator once lease is signed and ExCom funding is approved.
  - s.16; s.17
- City of Vancouver has confirmed two sites for temporary supportive (workforce modular) housing which will provide approximately 96 units: **1500 Main Street and 2132 Ash Street.**
  - BC Housing is meeting with the City of Vancouver weekly on these projects.
  - The new Mayor and Council approved the proposal and license agreement on Nov. 8.
  - Estimated move-in time is March 2023. This will allow for: Approvals, permitting, modular retrofit and deployment, site work and license agreements prior to occupancy.
  - The temporary modulares will be operated under BC Housing's standard supportive housing model, with 24/7 staff, two meals a day, etc. The population that will be prioritized for this

housing is being determined, based on available data. An RFP for the operators is underway and will be posted to BC Bid. Alternatively, a direct award could be considered with Executive approval for the Ash Street site given its proximity to an existing housing site and advantages to using the same operator for both.

- These two sites represent a capital investment by the Province of approximately \$6.9 million, as well as operating funding of approximately \$100,000 a month, per site.
- Timing of the public announcement on these two buildings is pending. If one takes place, it needs to be timed to align with submission of the Development Permit to the City (anticipated early December).
- City of Vancouver, VPD and VFRS
  - CoV is working to develop an enforcement, structure removal approach and timeline.
  - City of Vancouver staff are still working to reduce the amount of combustible material and problematic structures on the outside of buildings.
- Services (Storage, Washrooms, Showers, Food)
  - The City will receive \$4M in Strengthening Community Services funding for encampment supports. Funding will support services including staff, cleaning, park rangers, storage, washrooms, and peer workers and supports.
  - Storage is available at:
    - 390 Main Street, operated by Aboriginal Front Door Society (drop-in space, washrooms, and programming onsite, 'food first, culture first' approach).
    - 987 Cordova. Operated by City of Vancouver.
    - 101 East Cordova. Operated by Atira Women's Resource Society. Currently full.
  - City staff continue to engage with residents of the Miyotehew second stage housing around a proposed peer-staffed mobile trailer with washrooms that could be installed at Hastings and Gore (trailer is for washrooms only, full-service hygiene trailer may be considered in the future).
  - The Hastings/Gore mobile washroom trailer is one of a suite of expanded washroom efforts, including:
    - Pigeon Park - Reactivation of the Automated Public Toilet with peer employment washroom attendant program (Operated by OPS). Hours are 9am-9pm.
    - Main/Hastings Comfort Stations – Extended hours for almost 24-hour period until end of October.
    - Main/Hastings 390 Main Drop-In – Indoor and accessible washrooms open from 7am-11pm, including overdose monitoring and safety protocol (Operated by Aboriginal Front Door).
    - Astoria Washroom Trailer Program – Ongoing daytime/evening program at 369 Hawks to serve (Operated by RainCity)
  - There are currently free shower and laundry facilities at the new Evelyn Saller Centre (404 Alexander Street) and The Gathering Place Community Centre (609 Helmcken Street). Both centers are funded by BC Housing.
  - Work is underway by the City to activate a drop-in space with shower program at the old Evelyn Saller Centre (320 Alexander Street), with funding from BCH. This site will be open 16 hours a day and will be operated by Watari. The City had advised it would be operational the week of Nov. 14. However, they have found that further repairs are needed before it can open. Watari will be partnering with other non-profits and the site will be geared towards women, 2SLGBTBWW people and Indigenous men.
  - Various area service providers are providing water and food as part of their outreach and support efforts.
  - City of Vancouver is providing regular updates to 311 call centre line as new services come online.

- Recent Community Impacts/Housing Loss
  - Nov. 29: Fire at Flint Hotel, 1516 Powell. Operated by Atira. 12 units have been impacted. Vancouver's Emergency Support Services (ESS) have been deployed to assist the residents evacuated from the building.
  - Oct. 28: Fire at Street Church (176 East Hastings St), neighbouring Balmoral and Maple Hotels. This is the second fire at Street Church this year.
  - Oct 27: a fire occurred at Murray Hotel (1119 Hornby, owned and operated by Atira and funded by BC Housing). While only one room was impacted by the fire, water damage has impacted other units. This building is part of the SRO renovation project and had several units waiting to be tenanted by East Hastings campers. The fire and need for renovations has delayed the ability to allocate the rooms.
  - Oct. 23: Small fire at Orwell Hotel (456 E Hastings St). Limited to one unit, cause unknown.
  - Oct 23: Tent fire on Hastings led to two people in hospital with 2nd/3rd degree burns; 2 individuals were in the tent. This was the 23rd tent fire in 2022, according to VFRS.
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#### Key Points

- A VANDU executive disagrees with that assessment, however, and says the group fulfilled "110 per cent" of its commitments under the "Our Streets" program.
- The program started in July this year, before residents of the tent encampment on Hastings Street in the Downtown Eastside were evicted in August.
- According to the city, VANDU's portion of that contract — worth \$50,000 per month — was cancelled a month early. The contract ends in January 2023.
- VANDU said the city was failing Downtown Eastside residents by expecting clean sidewalks despite not providing places for people to live.
- The city cited another reason for ending the contract: VANDU's meetings regarding the civic election. VANDU says those meetings were not aimed at swaying the election, but a way to inform residents of their voting rights and options.

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- In a statement, the Vancouver Police Department said officers used a beanbag gun on the suspect, and that they used "lawful, measured, and appropriate use of force."
- Cait Spence, community organizer with Our Streets — a VANDU initiative — says she witnessed what happened and that police could have de-escalated the situation. She says the man wasn't given immediate access to medical care.



- According to police, the man resisted arrest after falling to the ground, and a police dog was released "to gain full control so the man could be handcuffed." Police said the suspect, who remains in custody, was treated for the dog bites.
- The incident is the latest in a number of violent altercations involving Vancouver police. In August, 42-year-old Ojibway man Chris Amyotte died after police shot him with beanbag rounds.

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Nearly three years after two new 60-bed navigation centres were promised in the February 2020 B.C. budget, the province has still not delivered on the enhanced shelters with 24-hour support for people experiencing homelessness.

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- The government announced in August 2020 that it would be partnering with the City of Vancouver to launch B.C.'s first-ever navigation centre while a month later, it revealed it was working with the city of Nanaimo, through BC Housing, to open a second navigation centre.
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s.14

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s.14 ; s.22

Page 42 of 84 to/à Page 45 of 84

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.14



**From:** Bailey, Sarah PREM:EX (Sarah.Bailey@gov.bc.ca)

**To:** Bain, Don PREM:EX (Don.Bain@gov.bc.ca); Marshall, Simka PREM:EX (Simka.Marshall@gov.bc.ca); Smith, Matt PREM:EX (Matt.Smith@gov.bc.ca)

**Subject:** Materials for Monday's DTES Meeting

**Sent:** 12/02/2022 17:04:31

**Attachments:** IN\_Hastings Street Encampment\_Nov29.2022.docx, KM\_DTES Encampment\_Dec\_1\_FNL.docx, 634699-AG-MBN-DTES Roundtable Dec 1 2022.docx

**Message Body:**

Hi Matt, Don, and Simka,

Please see the attached materials for PO for the DTES meeting.

Thanks,

Sarah

**ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Attorney General and Responsible  
for Housing

Updated: Nov. 29, 2022

Minister: Attorney General Murray Rankin

## East Hastings Encampment Response

**ISSUE SUMMARY:**

- Work is underway on two temporary workforce modular sites at 1500 Main and 2132 Ash Street. These two sites will provide 96 units of housing and remain on the sites for three years, with an option to extend for another two years. The anticipated occupancy is March 2023. We are currently waiting for confirmation on timing for a public announcement, would happen at the same time as the development permit is submitted to the City (tentatively scheduled for Dec. 8/9, 2022).
- A new 100-bed temporary winter shelter with Indigenous services (but open to all) is opening on December 15 at 1660 East Hastings, operated by AHMA. This is in addition to the more than 200 temporary winter shelter spaces that opened as of November 1.
- Negotiations continue around potential lease of Chalmers Lodge which would provide 115 self-contained spaces for vulnerable individuals.
- At this time, BC Housing has very limited housing (SRO spaces) available to allocate, discussions are underway with MAG to mobilize on other options while the temporary modulars are constructed.
- s.16; s.17
- In light of the winter weather and snow, MAG, BC Housing and City of Vancouver met to discuss operational readiness and risks for encampment residents and response efforts. CoV briefed partners on their approach to snow removal that mitigates any risks for encampment residents, shared their flyer on warming centers and shelters spaces that they are distributing in community, and clarified that as of the 28<sup>th</sup> they were not anticipating the weather event to change the current operational approach to the encampment for partners.

**BC Housing Update: People and Spaces**

Number of people estimated to be sheltering outdoors overnight on East Hastings:  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	317	As of Oct. 20, 2022  NOTE: Carnegie has connected with 317 unique individuals since July. The situation is fluid; people may leave and come back.
Number of people connected with who have given names and identifying information.  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	279	As of Oct. 20, 2022
Number of people who Carnegie has verified do not have housing  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	156	As of Oct 20, 2022 To date, Carnegie has verified 156 people of the 279 they have identifying information for (56%) are homeless. Work continues to verify the status of the remainder.

Number of people verified as paying rent (i.e., have housing).	49	As of Oct 20, 2022 Individuals verified as paying rent represent 18% of the population. Focus will be on supporting them to return to their housing.
<p>Number of new or newly renovated indoor spaces that <u>have opened</u> since August 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 129+ renovated spaces in various SROs from existing housing stock (permanent housing)</li> <li>• 20 new beds (men only) added to the Terminal Avenue shelter (temporary shelter)</li> <li>• 10 rooms at Jubilee Rooms, 22 Main Street. Permanent housing.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, more than 200 temporary shelter spaces (Extreme Weather Response and temporary winter shelter spaces) have opened as of Nov. 1, including one opening on Dec 15 at 1660 East Hastings that will provide space for 100 individuals. While these are not being opened specifically for East Hastings, they will greatly augment the number of shelter options available across the City. This brings the number of temporary shelter spaces to 300.</p> <p>Source: BC Housing</p>	159 SRO spaces, plus 300 temporary shelter spaces	<p>Note: In addition to these 159 indoor spaces, we secured 25 permanent spaces at The Biltmore (395 Kingsway) which were provided to those displaced in the Princess Rooms SRO fire. Those numbers have been subtracted to keep the focus on the East Hastings decampment specifically.</p> <p>Note: this includes the 100 spaces coming online Dec 15.</p>
Number of SRO spaces actively under renovation or about to get underway. Source: BC Housing	36	<p>Updated: Nov. 22, 2022</p> <p>Note: At this stage, the majority of these spaces are owned and operated by non-profit partners and are not under the direct oversight of BCH. They are being explored as part of a 'round 7' SRO renovation process.</p>
Number of housing allocations/offers in progress Source: BC Housing/Carnegie	18	<p>As of Nov. 29, 2022</p> <p>Allocations: Refers to the process of identifying unsheltered individuals and matching them with available permanent housing units (not shelter beds) based on need, required supports and fit for building. Once an individual is allocated to an available unit, the outreach worker will provide the "housing offer". The process may take a few days to a week. Typically, a housing allocation results in an "accepted housing offer and move indoors, but there are cases where either a housing operator or a prospective tenant may</p>

		reject the allocation. In this case, the individual will be considered for alternate housing.
Number of housing offers, offers accepted and moves Source: BC Housing	64 offers, 57 moves	<p>Reflects period Aug. 29-Nov. 29, 2022</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>
Number of NEW supportive housing applications associated with E. Hastings Street	37	<p>Reflects period: Sep. 19 – Nov. 25, 2022</p> <p>BCH currently has 104 outstanding applications (including pre-existing applications) for supportive housing connected with the E Hastings area. Of those, 37 are new applications associated with outreach from this decampment effort.</p>

#### ISSUES/UPDATES:

##### **Strategic Response Planning THIS WEEK**

- The plan for supporting people and moving coordination is being led by BC Housing with strategic and operational input from the City of Vancouver and partners at the Planning Table, Provincial Coordination Committee, and Provincial Executive Steering Committee.
- A DRAFT V3 Encampment Response Plan, incorporating the CoV's approach, was shared with the Provincial Coordination Committee this week. Provincial partners have been asked to send feedback this week to proceed with seeking endorsement by Provincial Executive Steering Committee members.

### Spaces:

- On December 1, 100 temporary shelter spaces will open at 1660 East Hastings, operated by AHMA. 40 individuals are transferring from a temporary shelter, resulting in 60 net new beds. They will be open to all, but will have an Indigenous focus.
- 151 seasonal spaces opened on Nov. 1 and will remain open until end of March 2023.
  - Gathering Place Community Centre, 609 Helmcken (34 spaces)
  - Tenth Church, 11 West 10th (15 spaces)
  - Osborne Shelter, 27 W Hastings (40 spaces)
  - First Avenue Shelter, 1648 East 1st (20 spaces)
  - Evelyn Saller Centre, 404 Alexander (42 spaces)
- In addition, as of October 15, 50 Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelter spaces opened in three different locations. They will remain open until Apr. 15, 2023.
  - Langara YMCA: 282 West 49 Ave (30 spaces)
  - Cascades Church: 3833 Boundary Rd (10 spaces)
  - Directions Youth Resource Centre, 1138 Burrard (10 EWR spaces, youth under 25 only)
- Both EWR and temporary winter shelter beds are funded by BCH.
- BC Housing and Carnegie meet three times a week to review the application list and identify priority referrals. Priority referrals are based on vulnerability, Indigenous status, gender, age, and those that have expressed a desire to move indoors.
- A Community Access and Assessment (CAA) Table is meeting weekly (each Thursday). Attendees include local shelter & outreach partners from Carnegie, Lookout, PHS, AWRS, APMI and Lu'ma. During the Allocation meeting, the Table reviews the list of priority referrals and units that are available and make decisions, in a collaborative and transparent manner, to match individuals with appropriate housing options.
- BC Housing Real Estate has identified two buildings for their potential utility in response to the East Hastings encampment:
  - **1450 West 12th, Vancouver (Chalmers Lodge):** BC Housing has entered into negotiations around the Chalmers Lodge site (1450 West 12 Ave.). This building would provide 115 self-contained spaces with health supports for vulnerable populations.
  - BCH has submitted the Operational Management Plan to the City for review. BCH is prepared to submit offer to lease but there are some concerns that the requirements that this site be operated as a 'care facility' may be overly prescriptive. BCH is doing due diligence to ensure it is an appropriate solution for our needs. BC Housing will post the RFP for an operator once lease is signed and ExCom funding is approved.
  - s.16; s.17
- City of Vancouver has confirmed two sites for temporary supportive (workforce modular) housing which will provide approximately 96 units: **1500 Main Street and 2132 Ash Street.**
  - BC Housing is meeting with the City of Vancouver weekly on these projects.
  - The new Mayor and Council approved the proposal and license agreement on Nov. 8.
  - Estimated move-in time is March 2023. This will allow for: Approvals, permitting, modular retrofit and deployment, site work and license agreements prior to occupancy.
  - The temporary moduls will be operated under BC Housing's standard supportive housing model, with 24/7 staff, two meals a day, etc. The population that will be prioritized for this

housing is being determined, based on available data. An RFP for the operators is underway and will be posted to BC Bid. Alternatively, a direct award could be considered with Executive approval for the Ash Street site given its proximity to an existing housing site and advantages to using the same operator for both.

- These two sites represent a capital investment by the Province of approximately \$6.9 million, as well as operating funding of approximately \$100,000 a month, per site.
- Timing of the public announcement on these two buildings is pending. If one takes place, it needs to be timed to align with submission of the Development Permit to the City (anticipated early December).
- City of Vancouver, VPD and VFRS
  - CoV is working to develop an enforcement, structure removal approach and timeline.
  - City of Vancouver staff are still working to reduce the amount of combustible material and problematic structures on the outside of buildings.
- Services (Storage, Washrooms, Showers, Food)
  - The City will receive \$4M in Strengthening Community Services funding for encampment supports. Funding will support services including staff, cleaning, park rangers, storage, washrooms, and peer workers and supports.
  - Storage is available at:
    - 390 Main Street, operated by Aboriginal Front Door Society (drop-in space, washrooms, and programming onsite, 'food first, culture first' approach).
    - 987 Cordova. Operated by City of Vancouver.
    - 101 East Cordova. Operated by Atira Women's Resource Society. Currently full.
  - City staff continue to engage with residents of the Miyotehew second stage housing around a proposed peer-staffed mobile trailer with washrooms that could be installed at Hastings and Gore (trailer is for washrooms only, full-service hygiene trailer may be considered in the future).
  - The Hastings/Gore mobile washroom trailer is one of a suite of expanded washroom efforts, including:
    - Pigeon Park - Reactivation of the Automated Public Toilet with peer employment washroom attendant program (Operated by OPS). Hours are 9am-9pm.
    - Main/Hastings Comfort Stations – Extended hours for almost 24-hour period until end of October.
    - Main/Hastings 390 Main Drop-In – Indoor and accessible washrooms open from 7am-11pm, including overdose monitoring and safety protocol (Operated by Aboriginal Front Door).
    - Astoria Washroom Trailer Program – Ongoing daytime/evening program at 369 Hawks to serve (Operated by RainCity)
  - There are currently free shower and laundry facilities at the new Evelyn Saller Centre (404 Alexander Street) and The Gathering Place Community Centre (609 Helmcken Street). Both centers are funded by BC Housing.
  - Work is underway by the City to activate a drop-in space with shower program at the old Evelyn Saller Centre (320 Alexander Street), with funding from BCH. This site will be open 16 hours a day and will be operated by Watari. The City had advised it would be operational the week of Nov. 14. However, they have found that further repairs are needed before it can open. Watari will be partnering with other non-profits and the site will be geared towards women, 2SLGBTBWW people and Indigenous men.
  - Various area service providers are providing water and food as part of their outreach and support efforts.
  - City of Vancouver is providing regular updates to 311 call centre line as new services come online.

- Recent Community Impacts/Housing Loss
  - Nov. 29: Fire at Flint Hotel, 1516 Powell. Operated by Atira. 12 units have been impacted. Vancouver's Emergency Support Services (ESS) have been deployed to assist the residents evacuated from the building.
  - Oct. 28: Fire at Street Church (176 East Hastings St), neighbouring Balmoral and Maple Hotels. This is the second fire at Street Church this year.
  - Oct 27: a fire occurred at Murray Hotel (1119 Hornby, owned and operated by Atira and funded by BC Housing). While only one room was impacted by the fire, water damage has impacted other units. This building is part of the SRO renovation project and had several units waiting to be tenanted by East Hastings campers. The fire and need for renovations has delayed the ability to allocate the rooms.
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- BC Housing said Vancouver's navigation centre is still "early in the planning stage" and it is engaged in ongoing discussions with the city to determine an appropriate location.

## Key Messages – Vancouver – Hastings encampment response

Last Updated: Dec. 1, 2022

### ***General key messages:***

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

***Short- and long-term indoor shelter and housing options:***

- It is our priority to ensure that people seeking shelter in encampments are connected to services such as health care and hygiene.
- Everyone deserves a safe place indoors with access to support services. While encampments may offer interim shelter and a sense of community, they are not a safe or suitable form of long-term shelter and create significant risks for the well-being of those in them.
- The Province, through BC Housing is bringing its resources to bear to secure safe, accessible, and inclusive spaces for people experiencing homelessness in Vancouver.
- It's estimated that nearly 320 people are sheltering on Hastings Street, including approximately 240 people who have self-identified that they need housing. This is in addition to people in the Downtown Eastside, Crab Park and broader Vancouver area who are also experiencing homelessness and require safe and supported indoor spaces.
- Since the Fire Order was first issued in late July, BC Housing has made more than 400 additional spaces available for people experiencing homelessness in the Downtown Eastside. This includes recently renovated single room occupancy hotel rooms and new shelter spaces.
- Dozens more single room occupancy hotel spaces are being renovated.
- BC Housing is also working with the City of Vancouver and provincial partners to explore other mid- and long-term housing and shelter options with enhanced health and social supports.
- This includes identifying new locations for permanent shelters, leasing and purchasing new buildings, and identifying new locations for additional modular supportive housing.

- The Province and BC Housing are committed to supporting the City and other partners to strengthen cultural- and trauma-informed practices as work continues toward providing safe, indoor spaces for those in need.

***Process to move people indoors:***

- BC Housing and the City of Vancouver will continue to offer indoor options to people sheltering outdoors on East Hastings and the surrounding community, including CRAB Park.
- Housing offers are done based on individual needs assessment and, as spaces become available, are allocated through coordinated access. With winter weather conditions, this work is particularly vital to ensure the continued healthy and safety of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- This work includes getting to know people who are currently sheltering outdoors or in the shelter and housing system, building trust, understanding their long-term support needs and then transitioning them into supportive homes as they become available.
- As shelter spaces become available, they will be offered to people currently sheltering outdoors on East Hastings, in Crab Park, and more broadly in Vancouver.
- Over the long term, our goal is to ensure we're offering quality housing, with health supports where appropriate, that will sustain people and stop the cycle of homelessness.
- For questions about bylaw enforcement or the fire order, please connect with the City or Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services.

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***Progress and units underway:***

- Since 2018, we've opened more than 1,400 new supportive homes in Vancouver for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, which includes spaces for 300 people during the decampment of Strathcona Park last year.
- We know this is not enough – the most recent count found more than 2,000 people without homes in Vancouver – which is why we have approximately 700 new supportive homes underway in the city.

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

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

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

**ISSUE:**

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

**KEY MESSAGES:**

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

## **BACKGROUND:**

### **Partner Coordination:**

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

### **Housing and shelters:**

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

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

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

### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONSIDERATIONS:**

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

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

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

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

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

**PREPARED BY:**

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

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

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s.14

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022

T 604 681 4437  
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E [info@atira.bc.ca](mailto:info@atira.bc.ca)

201, 190 Alexander Street  
Vancouver, BC V6A 1B5

Honourable David Eby  
Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing  
Room 232 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC  
V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Eby:

I am enclosing a copy of Atira's Critical Incidents Analysis Report for fiscal year 2022. Critical incidents are serious or unusual events that involve people accessing services at Atira. Please note, there were 1,304 "serious or unusual" incidents reported across Atira in 2021-22, averaging 3.5 critical incidents every single day. The report provides some context for Atira's work and notes that the vast majority of critical incidents occur in supportive housing. They include but are not limited to acts of violence, floods and fires, drug poisoning reversals, and deaths. The report highlights the most common critical incidents, and concludes with recommendations, most but not all of which are externally facing. We will be posting this report publicly, including on social media. I am also requesting a meeting with you to discuss findings and recommendations. In the meantime, I am happy to respond to any questions that arise. My phone number is 604.331.1420 and my email is [janice\\_abbott@atira.bc.ca](mailto:janice_abbott@atira.bc.ca). Thank you, in advance.

Sincerely,  
Atira Women's Resource Society



Janice Abbott  
Chief Executive Officer

Encl.

**ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Housing  
Updated: Jan. 3, 2023  
Minister Ravi Kahlon

## East Hastings Encampment Response

**ISSUE SUMMARY:**

- Work is underway on two temporary workforce modular sites at 1500 Main and 2132 Ash Street that will provide approximately 90 units of housing, as part of the Province's DTES homelessness response. Occupancy is expected for March 2023. BCH has officially secured the two modulares for the 1500 Main St. site. (The modular for the Ash St. site is available and does not need to be secured.)
- A new 100-bed temporary winter shelter with Indigenous services (but open to all) is scheduled to open this week following minor delays. It is located at 1660 East Hastings, operated by Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Society and funded through Aboriginal Housing Management Association.
- BC Housing has reached out to non-profit providers in DTES to get counts for how many SRO units need to be renovated. This work will get underway in 2023. BCH will assist in coordinating the renovations if the non-profit is unable to complete in a timely manner.

**BC Housing Update: People and Spaces**

Number of people estimated to be sheltering outdoors overnight on East Hastings:  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	317	As of Oct. 20, 2022  NOTE: Carnegie has connected with 317 unique individuals since July. The situation is fluid; people may leave and come back.
Number of people connected with who have given names and identifying information.  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	279	As of Oct. 20, 2022
Number of people who Carnegie has verified do not have housing  Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	156	As of Oct 20, 2022 To date, Carnegie has verified 156 people of the 279 they have identifying information for (56%) are homeless. Work continues to verify the status of the remainder.
Number of people verified as paying rent (i.e., have housing). Source: COV/Carnegie Outreach	49	As of Oct 20, 2022 Individuals verified as paying rent represent 18% of the population. Focus will be on supporting them to return to their housing.
Number of new or newly renovated indoor supportive housing spaces that <u>have opened</u> since August 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 129+ renovated spaces in various SROs from existing housing stock (permanent supportive housing)</li> <li>• 10 rooms at Jubilee Rooms, 22 Main Street. Permanent housing.</li> </ul> In addition, there are more than 1,500 shelter	139	Note: In addition to these 139 indoor spaces, BC Housing secured 25 permanent spaces at The Biltmore (395 Kingsway) which were provided to those displaced in the Princess Rooms SRO fire. Those numbers have been subtracted to keep the focus on the East Hastings decampment specifically.

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		
Number of housing allocations/offers in progress Source: BC Housing/Carnegie	25	As of <u>Dec. 13, 2022</u> Allocations: Refers to the process of identifying unsheltered individuals and matching them with available permanent housing units (not shelter beds) based on need, required supports and fit for building. Once an individual is allocated to an available unit, the outreach worker will provide the "housing offer". The process may take a few days to a week. Typically, a housing allocation results in an "accepted housing offer and move indoors, but there are cases where either a housing operator or a prospective tenant may reject the allocation. In this case, the individual will be considered for alternate housing.
Number of housing offers, offers accepted, and moves Source: BC Housing	64 offers, 55 moves	Reflects period Aug. 29-Dec. 13, 2022 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.  "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.  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.
Number of NEW supportive housing applications associated with E. Hastings Street	37	Reflects period: Sep. 19 – Dec. 2, 2022  BCH currently has 104 outstanding applications (including pre-existing applications) for supportive housing connected with the E Hastings area. Of those, 37 are new applications associated with outreach from this decampment effort.

## ISSUES/UPDATES:

### Strategic Response Planning

- The Encampment Response Plan, being led by BC Housing with strategic and operational input from CoV and partners at the Planning Table, Provincial Coordination Committee, and Provincial Executive Steering Committee, will continue to guide implementation and further feedback will be sought through these tables as implementation proceeds.
- The Ministry will facilitate a shift to medium and long-term planning, including partner engagement, through the PESC. This includes key Indigenous, federal and city partner working groups and meetings in January 2023.

### Spaces:

- By early January 2023 100 temporary shelter spaces were expected to open at 1660 East Hastings, operated by Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society, funded through AHMA. 40 individuals are transferring from another temporary shelter, resulting in 60 net new beds. The spaces will be open to all, but there is an Indigenous focus. BCH to update.
- As of Nov. 30, there are 574 temporary shelter spaces that have opened.
- In addition, there are 88 Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelter spaces (which open when a community issues an extreme weather alert) located at:
  - Langara YMCA: 282 West 49 Ave (30 spaces)
  - Cascades Church: 3833 Boundary Rd (10 spaces)
  - Directions Youth Resource Centre, 1138 Burrard (10 EWR spaces, youth under 25 only)
  - The Salvation Army Belkin House: 555 Homer Street (20 spaces)
  - The Osborn: 27 West Hastings Street (18 spaces)
- Both Emergency Weather Response and temporary winter shelter beds are funded by BC Housing.
- BC Housing and Carnegie meet three times a week to review the housing application list and identify priority referrals. Priority referrals are based on vulnerability, Indigenous status, gender, age, and those that have expressed a desire to move indoors.
- The Community Access and Assessment Table meets weekly (each Thursday). Attendees include local shelter & outreach partners from Carnegie, Lookout, Portland Hotel Society (PHS), Atira Women's Resource Society (AWRS), Atira Property Management (APM) and Lu'ma. During the Allocation meeting, the Table reviews the list of priority referrals and units that are available and make decisions, in a collaborative and transparent manner, to match individuals with appropriate housing options.
- BC Housing Real Estate is exploring a number of locations/buildings for their potential utility in response to the East Hastings encampment.
  - **1450 West 12th, Vancouver (Chalmers Lodge):** In December, BCH was planning to submit an offer to purchase. This site would provide 115 self-contained spaces with health supports for vulnerable populations.
  - s.16; s.17



s.16; s.17

- BC Housing Real Estate team is also considering two other sites for potential utility as an interim homeless navigation centre, while we work to active a longer-term or permanent site.
- Work is underway on temporary supportive (workforce modular) housing which will provide approximately 90 units: **1500 Main Street and 2132 Ash Street.**
  - The new Mayor and Council approved the proposal and license agreement on Nov. 8.
  - Estimated move-in time is March 2023. This will allow for: Approvals, permitting, modular retrofit and deployment, site work and license agreements prior to occupancy.
  - The temporary moduls will be operated under BC Housing's standard supportive housing model, with 24/7 staff, two meals a day, etc. The population that will be prioritized for this housing is being determined, based on available data. An RFP for the operators is underway and will be posted to BC Bid. Alternatively, a direct award could be considered with Executive approval for the Ash Street site given its proximity to an existing housing site and advantages to using the same operator for both.
  - s.12
- The Development Permit was submitted to the City on Dec 16, 2022.
- BC Housing currently has only five SRO spaces under active renovation. There are a number of units that have been identified as needing renovation. This work is expected to get underway in the New Year, after funding is confirmed through BCH exec.
- **City of Vancouver, VPD and VFRS**
  - CoV staff are continuing to reduce the amount of combustible material and problematic structures on the outside of buildings.
- **Services (Storage, Washrooms, Showers, Food)**
  - CoV will receive \$4M in Strengthening Community Services funding for encampment supports. Funding will support services including staff, cleaning, park rangers, storage, washrooms, and peer workers and supports.
  - Storage is available at:
    - 390 Main Street, operated by Aboriginal Front Door Society (drop-in space, washrooms, and programming onsite, 'food first, culture first' approach).
    - 987 Cordova. Operated by City of Vancouver.
    - 101 East Cordova. Operated by Atira Women's Resource Society. Currently full.
  - CoV staff continue to engage with residents of the Miyotehew second stage housing around a proposed peer-staffed mobile trailer with washrooms that could be installed at Hastings and Gore (trailer is for washrooms only, full-service hygiene trailer may be considered in the future). Ministry staff have requested an update from CoV on this engagement and potential alternative options given continued delays to operationalize.
  - The Hastings/Gore mobile washroom trailer is one of a suite of expanded washroom efforts, including:
    - Pigeon Park - Reactivation of the Automated Public Toilet with peer employment washroom attendant program (Operated by OPS). Hours are 9am-9pm.
    - Main/Hastings Comfort Stations – Extended hours for almost 24-hour period until end of October.
    - Main/Hastings 390 Main Drop-In – Indoor and accessible washrooms open from 7am-11pm, including overdose monitoring and safety protocol (Operated by Aboriginal Front Door).
    - Astoria Washroom Trailer Program – Ongoing daytime/evening program at 369 Hawks to serve (Operated by RainCity)
  - There are currently free shower and laundry facilities at the new Evelyne Saller Centre (404

Alexander Street) and The Gathering Place Community Centre (609 Helmcken Street). Both centers are funded by BC Housing.

- Work is underway by CoV to activate a drop-in space with shower program at the old Evelyne Saller Centre (320 Alexander Street), with funding from BCH. This site will be open 16 hours a day and will be operated by Watari. CoV had advised it would be operational the week of Nov. 14. However, they have found that further repairs are needed before it can open. Watari will be partnering with other non-profits and the site will be geared towards women, 2SLGBTQ+ people and Indigenous men.
- Various area service providers are providing water and food as part of their outreach and support efforts.
- CoV is providing regular updates to 311 call centre line as new services come online.
- Recent Community Impacts/Housing Loss
  - 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 by apartment fire. More than 100 SDPR clients reside at the building.
  - Nov. 29: Fire at Flint Hotel, 1516 Powell. Operated by Atira. 12 units have been impacted. Vancouver's Emergency Support Services (ESS) have been deployed to assist the residents evacuated from the building.
  - Nov. 20: Tenant death (suspected homicide) at Tellier Tower, 16 East Hastings Street, operated by PHS. Staff are cooperating with police and provide details, electronic entry records and video footage as requested.
  - Oct. 28: Fire at Street Church (176 East Hastings St), neighbouring Balmoral and Maple Hotels. This is the second fire at Street Church this year.
  - Oct 27: a fire occurred at Murray Hotel (1119 Hornby, owned and operated by Atira and funded by BC Housing). While only one room was impacted by the fire, water damage has impacted other units. This building is part of the SRO renovation project and had several units waiting to be tenanted by East Hastings campers. The fire and need for renovations has delayed the ability to allocate the rooms.
  - Oct. 23: Small fire at Orwell Hotel (456 E Hastings St). Limited to one unit, cause unknown.
  - Oct 23: Tent fire on Hastings led to two people in hospital with 2nd/3rd degree burns; 2 individuals were in the tent. This was the 23rd tent fire in 2022, according to VFRS.
  - Oct. 8: A man was shot in the chest with a crossbow near East Hastings and Carrall Streets.
  - Oct. 8: Three people were stabbed in Crab Park, where up to 100 people shelter in designated and overnight-only spaces.
  - Oct. 6: an individual died in a unit fire at Oppenheimer Lodge (450 E. Cordova). The building is owned by BC Housing and operated by City of Vancouver. The fire was restricted to a single unit and no residents were displaced. Police are investigating and cause of fire is unknown.
  - Oct. 2: a tent fire in an alley caught a natural gas line against a building and triggered a sprinkler system leading to evacuation and temporary displacement, or shelter in place, of 100+ residents.
  - Sep. 29: a fire at Hazelwood Hotel (344 E. Hastings, operated by Atira and funded by BC Housing) temporarily impacted 15 rooms. All but one resident (relocated to another SRO) have now returned.
  - Sep. 24: a fire occurred at Sereena's Place, home to 54 women (143 Dunlevy Ave., owned and operated by Atira and funded by BC Housing). All residents have moved back, except for eight. Those women have been relocated to other Atira sites, as their rooms require more extensive remediation.
- Other parks/areas
  - CRAB Park:
    - As of Jan. 3, City has advised approx. 50 tents are inside the designated area, with 12 outside of the area.

- CoV Park Rangers are distributing information on shelters and warming centres daily to campers.
- A large coordinated clean up day organized by CoV took place Dec. 7. Another clean up will take place in January – Jan. 17 (TBC).
- Transformer box has been vandalized and left in a dangerous condition. As a result, power is shut off and park residents do not have electrical access. City is sourcing a new electrical box.
- Two full time cultural outreach workers have started working at the site five days a week.
- Staff have distributed flyers to campers regarding the temporary modular housing that will be made available to those who are staying in shelters.
- A large tent structure caught fire on Saturday Dec 17. No one was injured. Fire believed to have been caused by unattended candles. Campers tried to extinguish fire using fire extinguishers on site, but Fire Department ultimately handled the fire.

### MINISTRY/Partner Updates & Key Messages:

- SDPR Community Integration Specialist Hastings

Individual Counts	Dec 28, 2022	# since last update	Total as of Dec 29, 2022
# Individuals approached	160	3	163
# Individuals spoke to CI	120	3	123
Declined	40	0	40
Intakes completed	25	3	28
Crisis Issued	80	0	80
<b>Total individual contacted / case management as of Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> : 123 citizens</b>			

Profile of Individuals at the Camp	Dec 28, 2022	# since last update	Total as of Dec 29, 2022
Rent in Pay	20	0	20
New to Vancouver in last 12 months	6	0	6

### Vancouver Coastal Health, Ministry of Health

#### VCH Outreach Update Week of December 19 and 26):

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 we assisted to get to acute:	Total # of people who we provided direct care to (e.g. wound care etc.):	Total # of people referred to IHOT:
Monday, Dec 19/22	46	1	0	0	0	5	1
Thursday, Dec 22/22	59	2	0	1	1	2	2
<b>Total</b>	105	3	0	1	1	7	3

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 we assisted to get to	Total # of people who we provided direct care to (e.g.	Total # of people referred to IHOT:
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					acute:	wound care etc.):	
<b>Monday, Dec 26/22</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Thursday, Dec 29/22</b>	34	1	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	34	1	0	0	0	1	1

- **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 taking 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. Engagement with Indigenous Women's Organizations pending. 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 connections

- **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.

### Cross-Ministry and Inter-Governmental Coordination

All partners are working to enhance response on the 100 Block of East Hastings. As of August 30, additional coordination and reporting structures have been identified and implemented by the Ministry.

Meeting Name	Purpose	Frequency
<b>Ministry-led</b>		
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
<b>BC Housing-Led</b>		
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
100 Blk Encampment - People Support/Moving Planning Table	<p>Bring together BCH, CoV and various provincial and operational partners to develop the shared moving plan.</p> <p>As of October:</p> <p>Tuesday meetings only involve CoV and BC Housing/AHMA at CoVs request. In order to support planning integration, these meetings have had to shift to more frequent cadence in November (2-4 times per week).</p> <p>Thursday meetings involve all provincial partners for updates and discussion of specific topics. Partner capacity to engage on longer-term encampment prevention strategies at this table has been limited. BC Housing, MAG and partners are discussing alternate timelines and forums for that critical work.</p>	<p>2X week.</p> <p>Tuesday</p> <p>Thursday</p>
<b>City of Vancouver-led</b>		
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

## Issues Scan for Ministry of Housing

### Week of Jan. 3 – for Hastings St. Encampment

#### Issue: Drug decriminalization experiment aims to help stem deadly overdose tide

The Crosstown Clinic, North America's only facility offering medical-grade injectable heroin, is open in East Hastings. Nearby is Canada's first supervised injection site has been a sanctuary across the street since 2003. Both places operate on a harm-reduction model that aims to reduce the risk of overdose.

### **Key Points**

- Families whose loved ones fatally overdosed have increasingly joined drug users calling for decriminalization of small amounts of drugs for personal use as a way to reduce the stigmas associated
- On Jan. 31, B.C. will become the first jurisdiction in the country to start what will be a three-year experiment on decriminalization allowing drug users aged 18 and over to carry a combined 2.5 grams of opioids such as heroin and fentanyl, as well as cocaine, methamphetamine and MDMA, also known as ecstasy.
- The federal government is currently reviewing an application by the City of Toronto, but it does not include any thresholds.
- Mike Serr, co-chair of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, said: We did not want to see drug dealers or organized crime take advantage of any of the good intentions of decriminalization. We know dial-a-dope and groups like that will potentially take advantage of that.
- Laura Shaver, spokeswoman for the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users, said decriminalization is one small but important step of an overall harm-reduction plan to save lives, adding: Homelessness, mental illness related to trauma and lack of doctors willing to prescribe safer alternatives are other big issues that must be addressed.

### **Issue: DTES SRO hotels on heritage watchlist**

Heritage Vancouver is calling on the city to consider the preservation of the single-room occupancy hotels and those who occupy them in its oldest neighbourhood, SRO Hotels in the Downtown Eastside:

### **Key Points**

- More than 100 Downtown Eastside SROs near the end of their structural lifespans, the organization released its 2022 watch list last week. Its top concern was the century-old hotels.
- Forty-five per cent of the SROs, all of which were once privately owned, are now under non-profit or government ownership as part of a multi-level government strategy to address homelessness.
- In the next two decades, the city's stated DTES plan is to redevelop 5,000 of the rooms into self-contained social housing.
- One privately owned SRO, the Cobalt Hotel at 917 Main St., was sold to a hotelier last year.
- DTES uprisings occurred in response to the proposed Project 200 freeway and Expo 86 when more than a thousand residents were kicked out of their SROs in order to accommodate World's Fair tourists.
- Heritage Vancouver Director Jurian ter Horst said neglect of DTES started in 1970s: The first heritage program of the city saw a lot of money go towards the districts of Gastown and Chinatown to conserve buildings in those areas.
- Ter Horst said: We are not necessarily pro-demolition of these buildings or against the demolition of them. We would like to see the city consider the community in its heritage decisions about the buildings.

### **Issue: Premier commits to ending residential hotels in DTES**

Premier David Eby stated his party's new year priorities as the same as those of B.C. residents: affordability, cost of living, public safety, health care and housing, with a focus on DTES and the end of residential hotels.

**Key Points**

- Eby: For the Downtown Eastside, specifically, our immediate goal is the closure of the encampments in CRAB Park and along Hastings Street in a way that respects the human dignity of the people who are living outside.
- Eby: When we're able to get through that phase, we'll be looking at the long-term future of the neighbourhood, the elimination of residential hotels as a housing type.

**Issue: Vancouver Fire Dept threatens to fine Hotel Canada for 9-1-1 calls**

In a now deleted tweet Vancouver Fire Dept said it may fine the Hotel Canada (operated by Atira) for bylaw offences, for 500 calls to 9-1-1.

**Key Points**

- CKNW reported Vancouver Fire Dept as saying the process could take months and it is as a last resort.
- CEO Janice Abbott of Atira Women's Resource Society, which operates Hotel Canada, said alarms work differently in SROs. In many buildings, you have two stages and you have sort of 60 seconds for someone to determine that an alarm is false. Whereas in SROs it's one stage and it goes directly to the Vancouver Fire Department and I think they're required to respond.
- Abbott said 80% of the building's tenants are smokers or users and the alternative to compliance is eviction, though she says the situation has no real solution.
- Abbott said: They have window restricters that make sure their windows don't open more than six inches so it's just kind of a recipe for false alarms.
- Abbott said: Since the building is owned by the province and the taxpayer funded fire service is fining them, one part of the government doing another part is not an efficient use of time and resources.

**From:** Janice Abbott (janice\_abbott@atira.bc.ca)  
**To:** Minister, AG AG:EX (AG.Minister@gov.bc.ca)  
**Cc:** Salter, Shannon AG:EX (Shannon.Salter@gov.bc.ca); Cooke, Angela AG:EX (Angela.Cooke@gov.bc.ca); Wanamaker, Lori PREM:EX (Lori.Wanamaker@gov.bc.ca); Collins, Teri OHCS:EX (Teri.Collins@gov.bc.ca); May, Cheryl FIN:EX (Cheryl.May@gov.bc.ca); Sieben, Mark PREM:EX (Mark.Sieben@gov.bc.ca)  
**Subject:** Atira Critical Incident Analysis Report  
**Sent:** 05/20/2022 00:09:36  
**Attachments:** image001.png, image003.jpg, image005.jpg, image007.jpg, image009.png, image011.png, image013.png, image015.png, image017.png, image002.png, image004.jpg, image006.jpg, image008.jpg, image010.png, image012.png, image014.png, image016.png, image018.png, Letter to Hon David Eby - Atira CIR Report.pdf, Atira Critical Incidents Analysis Report FY 2021-2022.pdf  
**Message Body:**

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

Dear Minister Eby,

Attached is a copy of Atira's Critical Incidents Analysis Report for fiscal year 2022.

The report highlights the most common critical incidents, and concludes with recommendations, most but not all of which are externally facing. We will be posting this report publicly, including on social media, likely early next week.

I am also requesting a meeting with you to discuss findings and recommendations. In the meantime, I am happy to respond to any questions that arise.

Kukstemc,

**Janice Abbott**

Chief Executive Officer, Atira Group of Women Serving Agencies

help end violence against women and children



Atira Women's Resource Society

#201 - 190 Alexander Street. Vancouver BC, V6A 1B5

[www.atira.bc.ca](http://www.atira.bc.ca)

-

**T:** 604 681 4437 ext 101 | **D:** 604 331 1420

We acknowledge and honour the herstory of this land. Since the beginning of time, this unceded and occupied territory has been home to the Coast Salish People including the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Səlilwətaʔ/Səlilwítlh (Tsleil-Waututh), kwikwəłəm (Kwikwetlem), SEMYOME (Semiahmoo), and qʷa:n̓ʼən (Kwantlen) people.

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May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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201, 190 Alexander Street  
Vancouver, BC V6A 1B5

Honourable David Eby  
Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing  
Room 232 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC  
V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Eby:

I am enclosing a copy of Atira's Critical Incidents Analysis Report for fiscal year 2022. Critical incidents are serious or unusual events that involve people accessing services at Atira. Please note, there were 1,304 "serious or unusual" incidents reported across Atira in 2021-22, averaging 3.5 critical incidents every single day. The report provides some context for Atira's work and notes that the vast majority of critical incidents occur in supportive housing. They include but are not limited to acts of violence, floods and fires, drug poisoning reversals, and deaths. The report highlights the most common critical incidents, and concludes with recommendations, most but not all of which are externally facing. We will be posting this report publicly, including on social media. I am also requesting a meeting with you to discuss findings and recommendations. In the meantime, I am happy to respond to any questions that arise. My phone number is 604.331.1420 and my email is [janice\\_abbott@atira.bc.ca](mailto:janice_abbott@atira.bc.ca). Thank you, in advance.

Sincerely,  
Atira Women's Resource Society



Janice Abbott  
Chief Executive Officer

Encl.



ATIRA WOMEN'S RESOURCE SOCIETY & ATIRA PROPERTY MANAGEMENT INC

# CRITICAL INCIDENTS ANALYSIS REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022

May, 2022

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Atira Women's Resource Society (AWRS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting women and children affected by violence by offering safe and supportive housing and by delivering education and advocacy aimed at ending all forms of gendered violence. Specifically, Atira Women's Resource Society operates a variety of supportive housing types including women-only Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels, modular housing, second-stage transition houses, transition houses, and shelters. AWRS also offers a variety of related support programs including employment initiatives, early childhood education (daycares), legal advocacy, housing outreach as well as other outreach programs, short and long-term projects, and community engagement work, all to support women, including trans femmes, and their children who are or have been affected by gendered violence and misogyny.

AWRS owns a social enterprise, Atira Property Management Inc. (APMI), which among other diverse market and nonmarket portfolios operated 25 supportive housing programs including one modular building and 24 Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotels during the fiscal year (FY) 2021-2022. The majority of SROs were built between 1908 and 1913 and were intended as temporary accommodation for seasonal workers coming into Vancouver. Though designed more than 100 years ago as temporary lodging, seasonal resource workers often settled in for the long term after they retired. SROs continue to serve as long-term affordable and increasingly, supportive housing. All the SROs operated by APMI are all gender (tenants include people who identify as male, female, transmasculine, transfeminine, queer/non-binary and/or two-spirit).

In FY 2021-2022, AWRS provided housing and support to 1,591 women and 412 children and to an estimated 645 permanent guests, and visitors; and APMI provided housing and support to 2,405 tenants and an estimated 1,202 permanent guests, and visitors, for a total, across both organizations, of 6,255 tenants/residents, their accompanying children, and their permanent guests/visitors. This does not include those served by Atira's non-residential programs.

This report describes the critical incidents within AWRS and APMI supportive and transitional housing during the 2021-2022 FY, which represents April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Critical incidents include but are not limited to drug poisonings, deaths, acts of violence, and fires and floods. This report includes critical incidents from AWRS's three overdose prevention sites, but otherwise does not include information about non-residential programs.

Critical incident reports (CIRs) not only provide a record of an organization's action with respect to their accountability, they are also a measure for monitoring the quality and appropriateness of an organization's service delivery. Monitoring CIRs allows Atira Women's Resource Society to assess its performance in reporting and management, as well as its needs in terms of resources, practices, policies and procedures, and training.

The report utilizes the principles of a systematic, descriptive, quantitative research approach. It focuses on the process of collecting and analyzing numerical data to find patterns and averages, make predictions, when possible, test relationships, and generalize results to wider populations or the organization as a whole. The report uses 2021-2022 fiscal year (FY) data from Atira's critical incidents' reporting system. Excel and *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) were used to organize and analyze the data and to summarize key findings. This report separately delineates the total critical incidents within AWRS and APMI, and the highest months for overall critical incidents, deaths, drug poisonings, acts of violence, and fires and floods. Socio-demographic factors such as age, gender/identity, and race/ethnicity, as well as the housing program, are also assessed for each selected month with the highest number of critical incidents. Lastly, the report provides recommendations based on the observations, using evidence from the literature.

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## INTRODUCTION

Atira Women's Resource Society (AWRS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting women and children affected by violence by offering safe and supportive housing and by delivering education and advocacy aimed at ending all forms of gendered violence. Specifically, Atira Women's Resource Society operates a variety of housing that includes women-only SROs, modular housing, supportive housing, second-stage transition houses, transition houses and shelters. AWRS also offers a variety of related programs including employment initiatives, early childhood education (daycares), legal advocacy, housing and other outreach programs, short and long-term projects, and community engagement work to support women and children who are or have been affected by violence. During the 2021-2022 FY, AWRS managed and operated a total of 31 housing programs that included shelters, supportive housing, second-stage housing, transitional housing, and shelters with a total of 726 units, which housed 1,591 women and 412 children.



AWRS owns a social enterprise, Atira Property Management Inc, (APMI), which among other diverse market portfolios operates and manages 25 supportive housing programs including 24 Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels, with a total of 1,926 units/rooms. Most SRO hotel rooms

are about 120 square feet in area and the vast majority do not have private washrooms or cooking facilities.

There is typically one bathroom for every 12 – 15 rooms and some, but not all, have shared cooking and laundry facilities. All the SROs operated by APMI are all gender (tenants include people who identify as male, female, transfeminine, transmasculine, queer/non-binary and/or two-spirit). During the 2021-2022 FY, a total of 2,405 tenants were housed in these 1,926 units/rooms however, this number is not the total number of people served by APMI as it does not include permanent guests (who live with tenants) and visitors (who often come for overnight stays, to use the bathrooms and shared using spaces, and to access services). Adding permanent guests and visitors increases this number by approximately 50% meaning the total number of people housed and/or supported in APMI-operated SROs is closer to 3,600. APMI also operates two, modular housing supportive housing programs, Sarah Ross House, and Nora Hendrix Place, representing 104 units of supportive housing, and adding an additional 110 tenants plus approximately 156 permanent guests/visitors.

”

*During the 2021-2022 FY, a total of 2,405 tenants were housed in these 1,926 units/rooms however, this number is not the total number of people served by APMI as it does not include permanent guests (who live with tenants) and visitors (who often come for overnight stays, to use the bathrooms and shared using spaces, and to access services).*

“

Included in its FY 2022 SRO portfolio are a number of buildings that are a century or more old, privately owned, and have only been minimally renovated. Atira agreed to operate these buildings initially on a temporary basis (three years) to provide housing for tenants displaced by the provincial government's P3 renovation project. The ongoing and worsening housing crisis necessitated they remain open. These buildings tend to be in poorer repair than provincially owned buildings and because they are not in Atira's or the government's control, renovations are patchwork, rarely resolving the underlying issues inherent in 100+-year-old buildings. These buildings tend also to be housing of last resort for people whose other housing options are limited or nonexistent.

*Critical Incidents are serious or unusual events that involve individuals accessing services provided by Atira.*

Finally, and for additional context, Atira agreed to take on two, large, old hotels as part of the decampment strategy for Oppenheimer and Strathcona Parks, as well as some temporary, pandemic-related programs, three of which terminated operations in FY2022.

#### CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

Staff went to check on tenant because she knew tenant had just received a large sum of money and found it strange that tenant's guest was now going 'shopping' while tenant slept.

Staff found tenant on the floor not breathing. Staff called 911 and administered two doses of naloxone and one dose of intranasal naloxone and began chest compressions and rescue breathing. Paramedics arrived and checked tenant out. Tenant did not want to leave so staff checked on her every two hours for rest of shift.

Critical Incidents are serious or unusual events that involve individuals accessing services provided by Atira. Atira policies and training clearly identify procedures that must be followed whenever a critical incident takes place. Atira requires staff to officially document all critical incidents. These include, but are not limited to, incidents where outside intervention has been sought (for example, police, ambulance, fire, emergency service, etc.), an act of physical violence has occurred or violence has been threatened, in the event of a death, or drug-poisoning.

Beyond the above noted incidents and because Atira operates in a crisis environment and the potential types of critical incidents are endless, staff is expected to exercise judgment as to when to fill out critical incident forms. As per policy, staff are required to provide as much factual detail as possible, and stay away from judgments and opinions when writing a CIR.

In 2020, Atira created a tracking system that complements its documentation system for CIRs. The tracking system is a way to ensure that Atira is able to effectively analyze information provided in the CIRs and support Atira's leadership in deciding if any

actions are needed and/or on how best Atira can increase health and safety measures in a certain program.

This analysis report was based on data provided in the tracking system, which Atira regularly updates to reflect learning in data management within the organization.



That said and despite the success of the system in tracking and documenting CIRs, it must be noted that the system is still facing some limitations including but not limited to:

- Not all staff react in the same way to incidents of violence/threats so while some may report a certain incident as critical, others may not consider the same incident critical.
- We know many drug poisonings occur behind closed doors, in tenants' rooms, where tenants and/or their guests intervene.
- We also assume many other incidents we consider critical occur behind closed doors (assaults, sexual assaults, thefts, etc.), and are never reported to anyone for fear of community reprisals and/or fear staff will call the police and/or because the incidents are so commonplace people have grown accustomed to them.
- Atira has a system for tracking non-critical incidents in which staff and managers document incidents that do not fall under the definition of a critical incident. This secondary system is important to ensure tracking of all incidents that take place within Atira programs however, staff sometimes report a critical incident as non-critical, mainly because staff get used to experiencing/witnessing certain types of incidents to the point they believe something is non-critical. Atira management regularly reviews the non-critical reports (NCIRs), contacts managers whenever a case is suspected to be a critical incident and asks for resubmission.



This report is divided into three main sections including one for AWRS and one for APMI. Each of these sections provides a summary of the analyzed data for the 2021-2022 FY and offers an interpretation of the data. The final section provides some recommendations on the way forward.

As this is the first time Atira has produced this kind of a report, looking at similarities and/or trends with previous years is not possible. Atira is planning to produce this report on a yearly basis, and it is expected that in the 2022-2023 FY year a more detailed analysis of trends will be explored and reported.

#### CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

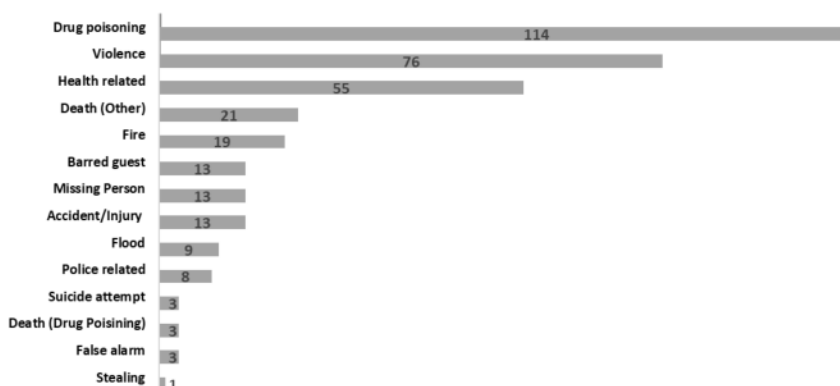
Tenant called front desk to report her sister's (another tenant) boyfriend is being abusive towards her. Said he tried to assault her, stole money from her room, and tried to blackmail her into killing her mother, who is also currently a guest. She wanted him barred. Staff called 911 and attended room. "Boyfriend" had left room, and staff looked for him while awaiting VPD. Offered support to tenants.

# ATIRA WOMEN'S RESOURCE SOCIETY (AWRS)

“For the 2021-2022 FY, AWRS had 351 total critical incidents reported.”

## 1.1 Total Critical Incidents

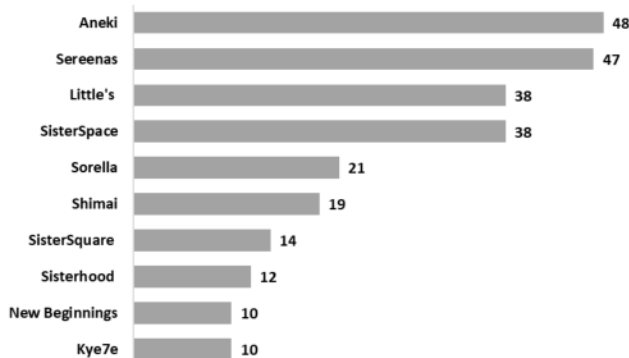
For the 2021-2022 FY, AWRS had 351 total critical incidents reported. Of these critical incidents, 32% were drug poisonings, 22% were violence related, 16% were health-related, 7% were deaths, and 5% were incidents of fire. The graph shows the breakdown of the type and number of critical incidents for the fiscal year.



The demographic data for the total critical incidents indicated that 29% of critical incidents involved people who were between the ages of 31 and 40, 19% between 20 and 30, and 18% between 41 and 50. Concerning gender identity, 80% identified as female and 7% as male. Lastly, 40% identified as Indigenous, 38% as white and 3% as Black.

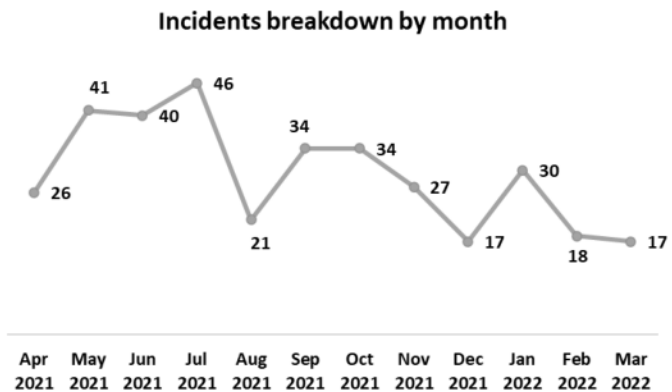
Looking specifically at AWRS programs, we notice that out of 53 different programs operating across AWRS including 31 residential and 29 non-residential programs, the ten programs with the highest number of critical incidents reported are: Aneki, Sereena's, SisterSpace, Little's, Sorella, Shimai, SisterSquare, Sisterhood Shelter, Kye7e, and New Beginnings. Each of the highest ten programs reported a minimum of 10 critical incidents in the fiscal year. Only 10 out of the 53 programs did not report any critical incidents, while all other programs were ranging between one and eight critical incidents throughout the fiscal year.

Programs with the highest number of incidents



As for the months reporting the highest number of critical incidents, May, June and July were on top of the list with 41, 40 and 46 incidents respectively. Despite those months being associated

with the weather getting warmer perhaps resulting in more movement and therefore a higher number of interactions between people, we cannot confidently say that this is the reason for the increase in the number of incidents in those months. In August 2021, for example, only 21 incidents were reported, so it was one of the four months with the least number of critical incidents throughout the fiscal year. Further reports for 2022-2023 FY and beyond will explore trends (if any) when it comes to month of the year and number of critical incidents.

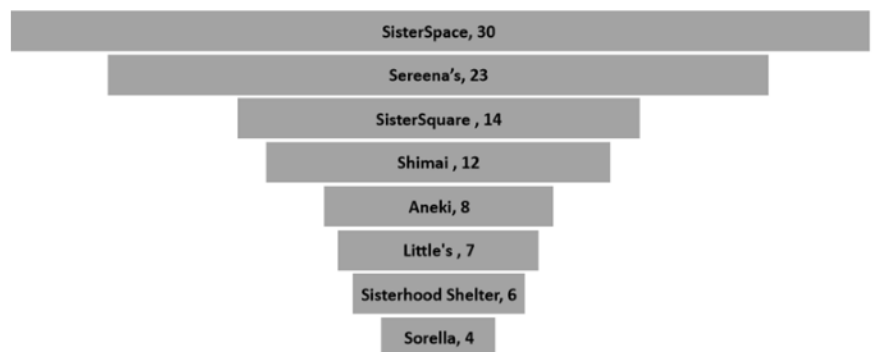


The next sections will look deeper into the top five incident types reported in the 2021-2022 FY and provide a more detailed analysis on each of those incidents.

## 1.2 Drug Poisoning Incidents

Drug poisoning was the highest reported incident in 2021-2022 FY with 32% of all incidents reported being drug poisonings. 17 programs, including the three overdose prevention programs (i.e., SisterSpace, SisterSquare, and Shimai), reported high incidents of drug poisonings with a total of 352 naloxone doses administered. Drug poisoning incidents reported within the system refers to incidents where

**Drug Poisoning Incidents (highest programs)**



lives were saved due to staff intervention by administering naloxone and often calling 911 to support the tenant or program participant. Of the total 114 drug poisonings, it is notable that 30 were reported within SisterSpace, 23 within Sereena's Housing for Women, 14 within SisterSquare and 12 within Shimai (*please refer to Appendix A- Table 1*).

July is the highest month when it comes to drug poisoning incidents with a total of 18 incidents, followed by September and October with 17 and 14 incidents respectively.

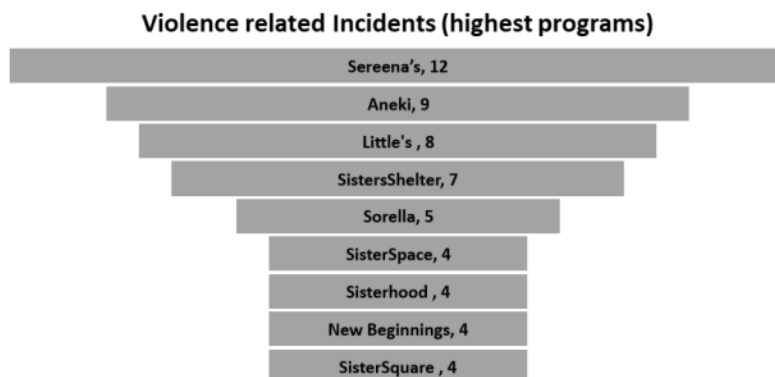
Of the 114 drug poisoning incidents, 44% of those involved identified as Indigenous, 28% as white, 33% were between the ages of 20 and 30, 28% were between 31 and 40, and 22% were between 41 and 50. Lastly, 95% of drug poisoning incidents at AWRS were experienced by people who identified as female.

*Drug poisoning was the highest reported incident in 2021-2022 FY with 32% of all incidents reported being drug poisonings*

### 1.3 Violence Related Incidents

A total of 76 (23%) incidents of violence were reported during the fiscal year. The highest number of incidents of violence were reported in May, with a total of 10 incidents reported. The months of May, June and July are the highest when it comes to incidents of violence, which is consistent with the overall trend for these three months for being the highest when it comes to the number of incidents in general.

Approximately half of AWRS programs (25 programs) reported at least one violence-related incident during the fiscal year, with an average of three incidents per program. As shown in the graph, Sereena's Housing for Women contributed the most with 19 (16%) of the total number of incidents, followed by Aneki Housing for Women, and Little's Place, with nine (12%) and eight (11%) incidents respectively. The predominant race/ethnicity identified by those involved in incidents of violence was white at 36%, with Indigenous at 31%, and Black at 10%. Additionally, 69% were between the ages of 31 and 40, and 8% were between 20 and 30. Pertaining to gender, 85% identified as female and 15% as male. Of the total violence-related incidents:



- 56% (43) of assaults were reported between tenants, all of whom identify as women.
- 33% (25) of assaults were reported between tenants and guests including 35% (9) from a male guest towards a female tenant (almost all barred guests trying to forcibly enter a building following in a women/tenant); 16% (4) from a female tenant towards a male guest (almost all over money owed to the tenant); 30% (7) from a female tenant towards a female guest; and 19% (5) from a female guest towards a female tenant.
- 11% (8) of assaults were reported from a tenant to a staff

Please refer to Appendix A-Table 2 for more details of violence incidents.

### 1.4 Health Related Incidents

Ranked as the third highest type of incidents reported, health related incidents represent 16% (55) of total incidents reported in the fiscal year. Aneki reported the highest number of incidents in this category with 20% (11) of the total number of incidents. Health-related incidents are considered a CIR if the incident involves a major health issue (e.g., stroke, giving birth, heart attack). Of the 55 health-related incidents, 58% of those involved identified as Indigenous and 24% as white. 31% were over age 60, and 12% were between the ages of 50 and 60.

## 1.5 Deaths

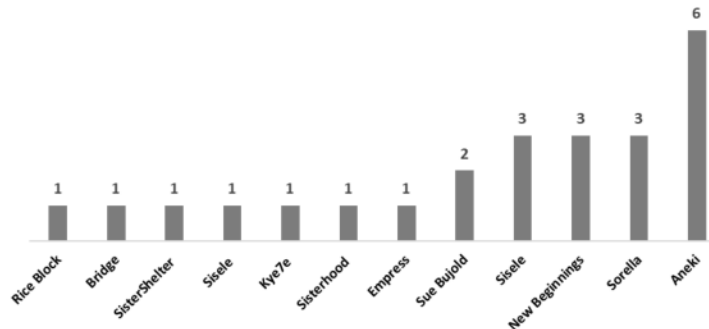
A total of 24 deaths were reported. Six (25%) were at Aneki Housing for Women, four (17%) at *Sísele*, and three deaths at each of *Sorella* and *New Beginnings*.

The data shows that 83% of all deaths were due to chronic health conditions, mostly poverty related, while 13% (three) were due to drug poisonings, and 4% (one) was unknown (by AWRS). The

predominant race/ethnicity of those who died was Indigenous at 63%, followed by white at 29%. Additionally, 8% were between the ages of 20 and 30, 13% were between 31 and 40, 16% between the ages of 41 and 50, 29% between the ages of 51 and 60, and 34% over age 60.

Two out of the three deaths associated with drug poisonings happened at the two shelters (*SistersShelter* and *Sisterhood*) while the third death was at *Sísele*.

Deaths breakdown



## 1.6 Fires and Floods

During 2021-2022 FY, there were a total of 19 fires (excluding three false alarms) and nine floods (associated with fires). Of the total 19 fires reported, four were within Aneki Housing for Women, and three were within each of Sereena's Housing for Women, Empress Rooms, and Little's Place (please refer to Appendix A- Table 3). Breaking the fire events down into sociodemographic characteristics indicates that 70% of those involved identified as female, 45% identified as Indigenous and 25% as white. Given the age, 40% were between the ages of 31 and 40 and 15% between 41 and 50. On average, AWRS dealt with 1.6 fires every month throughout the fiscal year, which may be considered high, especially when knowing that 89% of these fires were caused by tenants (maybe intentional) while only 11% had an unknown cause. Finally, 79% of fires happened during weekdays compared to only 21% over the weekends.

## Discussion

Based on the data reported, the most common critical incidents within AWRS in the 2021-2022 FY were drug poisonings with 114 reported. The three programs that had the highest number of drug poisonings were: *SisterSpace* (30), *Sereena's Housing for Women* (23) and *Shimai* (12).

### CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

Staff noticed resident head down on table outside in backyard gazebo.

Staff yelled for co-workers and did sternum rub and resident did not respond. Staff loaded naloxone and co-worker injected into woman. Staff called 911 while co-worker grabbed a mask. Resident regained consciousness upon first naloxone administered. Woman did not need a second dose as she started to breathe normally; she was just very emotional.

Resident declined ambulance, so it was cancelled. No rescue breaths required. Staff stayed with resident to support.

SisterSpace, established in 2017 and located in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, is the world's first women-only and community-accessible overdose prevention site. Open seven days a week and currently accommodating up to seven women at a time, SisterSpace uses a supervised harm reduction approach including providing a safe and supportive injection site and clean equipment, all in the presence of staff and peer support workers trained in drug poisoning prevention. Similarly, the Shimai Drop-in program operates as part of Shimai Transition House, a first-stage transition house for women in Surrey who struggle with their use of substances and is considered a critical program for reaching women who remain outside of the prevention, testing, and treatment cascade.



Given that two of the programs reporting the highest number of drug poisonings are overdose prevention sites and the housing program is AWRS's lowest barrier program, the high reporting of drug poisonings in these programs is not surprising. Ultimately, the goal of establishing supervised injection sites is to reduce drug poisoning mortality, disease transmission and hospitalizations. The data analysis conducted shows no deaths due to drug poisonings reported at any of the three sites (SisterSpace, Sereena's, and Shimai Drop In). Comparing the three drug poisoning deaths within AWRS to the 484 drug poisoning deaths in British Columbia among females, suggests the positive, if imperfect, effect of AWRS's drug-poisoning prevention strategy.

## ATIRA PROPERTY MANAGEMENT (APMI)

“For the 2021-2022 FY, APMI had 953 total critical incidents reported.”

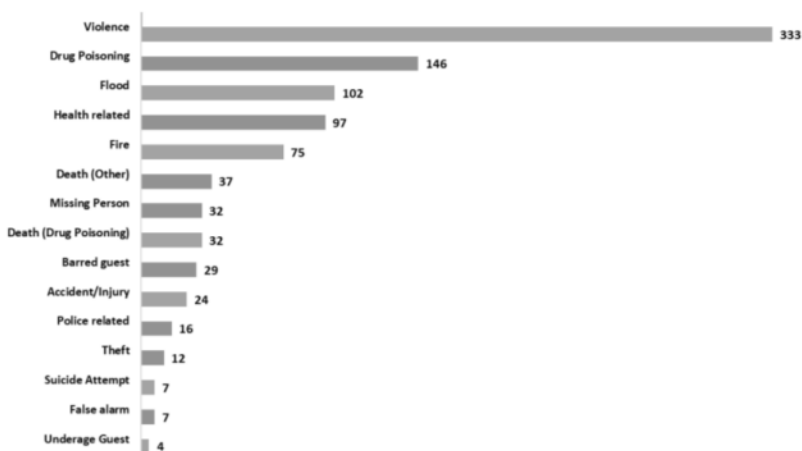
### 2.1 Total Critical Incidents

For the 2021-2022 FY, APMI had 953 total critical incidents reported, which is 2.7 times higher than what was reported within AWRS during the same period. This significant difference reflects the many differences between AWRS and APMI programs, including that APMI is all-gender housing. The APMI- SRO tenant gender breakdown is: 61%, identify as male, 34.5% identify as female, 1.5% identify as transgender, and 3% preferred not to identify.

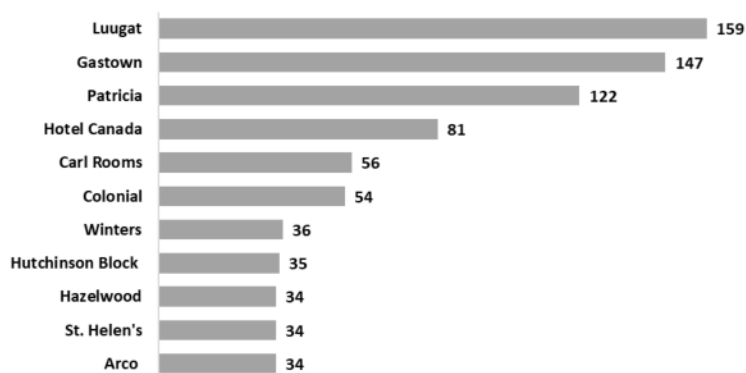
Of the 953 critical incidents reported, 35% were violence related, 15% were drug poisonings, 11% were floods, 10% were health-related, 8% were fires, and 7% were deaths. The graph shows the breakdown of the type and number of critical incidents for the fiscal year.

As for the demographic statistics of the total critical incidents reported, 27% of people involved were between the ages of 31 and 40, 23% between 41 and 50, 13% between ages 51-60, and 12% between 20 and 30. Concerning gender identity, 35% identified as female and 53% as male. Lastly, 55% identified as white, 24% as Indigenous, and 2.3% as Black.

Looking specifically at APMI programs, 22 out of 25 supportive housing programs operated by APMI reported critical incidents. The number of critical incidents were significantly higher within three programs (Luugat, Gastown, and Patricia) exceeding 100 CIRs for the FY, which represents approximately one critical incident every three days. Each of the highest ten programs reported an average of 75 critical incidents in the fiscal year. Only two out of the 25 supportive housing programs did not report any critical incidents (Asia and Cosmo) (please refer to Appendix B- Table 1).



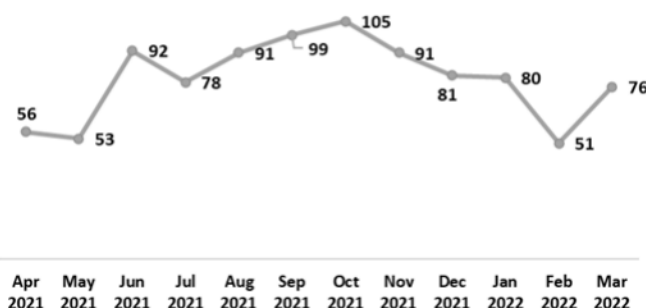
Programs with the highest number of incidents



As for the months reporting the highest number of critical incidents, October, September, and June were on top of the list with 105, 99 and 92 incidents respectively. Despite those months being associated with the weather getting better perhaps resulting in more movement and therefore a higher number of interactions between people, we cannot confidently say that this is the reason for the increase in the number of incidents in those months. The data does not show any clear trends when looking at winter vs summer months for example. Further reports for 2022-2023 FY and others will explore trends (if any) when it comes to month of the year and number of critical incidents. The next sections will look deeper into the top five incident types reported in the 2021-2022 FY provide more detailed analysis on each of those types of incidents.

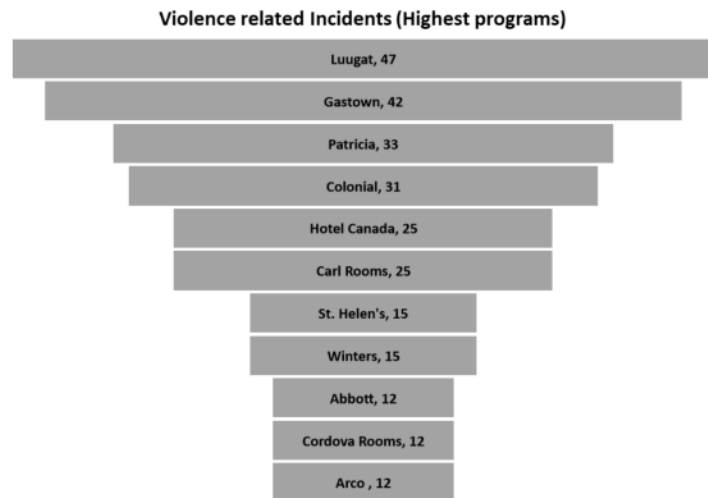
“The number of critical incidents were significantly higher within three programs (Luugat, Gastown, and Patricia) exceeding 100 CIRs for the FY, which represents approximately one critical incident every three days.”

Incidents breakdown by month



## 2.2 Violence Related Incidents

Violence was the highest type of incident reported in 2021-2022 FY with 35% (333) of all incidents reported as being violence-related incidents. The highest number of incidents of violence were reported in August, with a total of 39 incidents reported. The months of June, August, and November are the highest when it comes to violence incidents which is consistent with the trend for overall incidents, as June is one of the highest three months in terms of the overall number of critical incidents.



88% of APMI SROs reported at least one violence-related incident during the fiscal year, with an average of 17 incidents per program. As shown in the graph, Luugat had 14% of the total number of incidents (47), followed by the Gastown and the Patricia with 13% (42) and 10% (33) respectively. The predominant race/ethnicity identified by those involved was white at 48%, and Indigenous at 30%. Additionally, 38% were between the ages of 31 and 40 and 18% were between 20 and 30. Pertaining to gender, 55% identified as male and 28% as female. Of the total violence-related incidents:

- 48% (160) of assaults were reported between tenants, 62% (99) of which were between male tenants, 25% (40) between female tenants, 10% (16) from a male tenant towards a female tenant, and 3% (5) from a female tenant towards a male tenant.
- 26% (86) of assaults were reported between tenants and guests including: 27% (23) from a male guest towards a male tenant; 20% (17) from a male tenant towards a male guest; 17% (15) from a female guest towards a female tenant; 14% (12) from a female tenant towards a female guest; 13% (11) from a male guest towards a female tenant; and 9% (8) from a female tenant towards a male guest.
- 11% (37) of assaults were reported from a tenant to a staff.
- 9% (30) of assaults reported between guests.
- 6% (20) of assaults were reported from a guest to a staff.

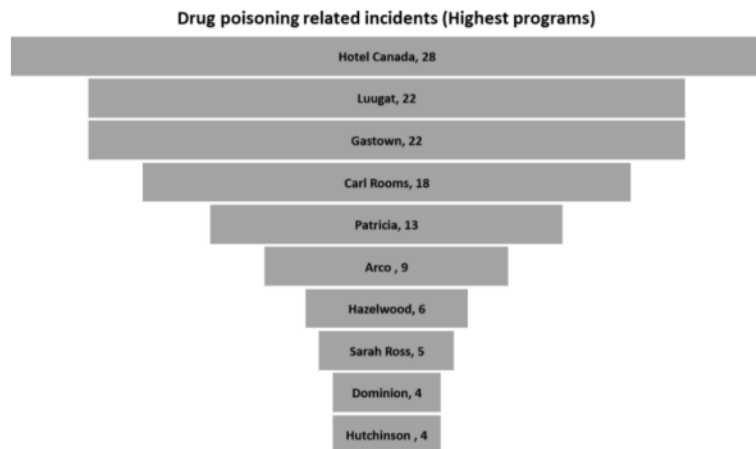
*Violence was the highest type of incident reported in 2021-2022 FY with 35% (333) of all incidents reported as being violence-related incidents.*

Please refer to Appendix B- Table 2 for more details of violence incidents.



## 2.3 Drug Poisoning Incidents

Drug poisoning was the second highest incident to be reported in 2021-2022 FY with 15% (146) of all incidents reported as being drug poisoning incidents. 18 programs reported incidents of drug poisoning with a total of 394 naloxone doses administered. Drug poisoning incidents reported refers to cases where lives were saved due to staff intervention by administering naloxone and often calling 911 to support the tenant or guest. Of the total 146 drug poisonings, it is notable that 28 were reported from Hotel Canada, 22 from Luugat and the Gastown each, and 18 from Carl Rooms (*please refer to Appendix B- Table 3*).



”

*88% of APMI SROs reported at least one violence-related incident during the fiscal year, with an average of 17 incidents per program.*

“

July is the highest month when it comes to drug poisoning incidents with a total of 18 incidents, followed by September and October with 17 and 14 incidents respectively.

Of the 146 drug poisoning incidents, 59% the people involved identified as white and 33% as Indigenous; 28% were between the ages of 31 and 40, 25% between 20 and 30, and 31% were between 41 and 50. Lastly, 67% of drug poisonings were experienced by people who identified as male while 29% identified as female.

## 2.4 Fires and Floods

During the 2021-2022 FY, there were a total of 75 fires (excluding seven false alarms) and 102 floods (some are associated with fires). Of the total 75 fires reported, 12 were within each of Luugat and Patricia and 11 were within the Gastown (*please refer to Appendix B- Table 4*). Breaking the fire events down into sociodemographic characteristics indicates that 66% of those involved identified as male and 25% as female; 55% identified as white and 35% as Indigenous. Given age, 39% were between the ages of 31 and 40 and 15% between 41 and 50. On average, APMI dealt with one fire every five days throughout the fiscal year, 83% of which were caused by tenants and only 22% of which appear to be accidental, while 61% were likely intentional (17% unknown). Finally, 71% of fires happened during weekdays compared to 29% over the weekends.

As for floods, the same three buildings with the highest number of fire incidents, also reported the highest number of floods, with 42 incidents at Luugat, 21 within the Patricia, and 16 within the Gastown. The data regarding floods shows that there is an average of 8.5 floods every month.

## 2.5 Health Related Incidents

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*On average, APMI dealt with one fire every five days throughout the fiscal year, 83% of which were caused by tenants and only 22% of which appear to be accidental, while 61% were likely intentional (17% unknown).*

“

Ranked as the fourth highest type of incident reported, health related incidents represent 10% (97) of total incidents reported in the fiscal year. The Gastown, Patricia and Luugat reported the highest number of incidents in this category with 36 (37%), 14 (14%), and 13(13%) respectively. Health-related incidents are considered a CIR if the incident involves a major health issue (e.g., stroke, giving birth, heart attack). Of the 97 health-related incidents, 57% of those involved identify as Indigenous and 35% as white. 36% were over age 60, and 16% were between the ages of 50 and 60. Looking at data from both AWRS and APMI, we notice that more than half of the health- related incidents (average 58%) involved people who identify as Indigenous.

### CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

At approximately 12:30 <room number's> smoke detector went off. Staff immediately went upstairs to check the room for a fire and found tenant holding a flaming broomstick. Tenant was delusional, saying there were people being murdered above her suite. Staff stomped out the fire and checked upstairs for any sign of anyone being hurt, and there was none.

When the fire department arrived, staff reported tenant's delusional behavior and fire department reported the incident to police, to have tenant taken to hospital for a psychiatric evaluation. Staff reported to Fire Rescue, who completed an investigation and cleared out the panel and re-set the system. Staff submitted a statement to police, so police can take tenant in for a psychiatric evaluation. Minor damages to the room.

## 2.6 Deaths

A total of 69 deaths were reported, 12 (17%) were at Hazelwood, nine (13%) at Hotel Canada, and six (9%) at the Colonial.

The data shows that 46% (32) were due to drug poisonings, while 54% (37) were due to other reasons including 76% due to chronic health conditions.

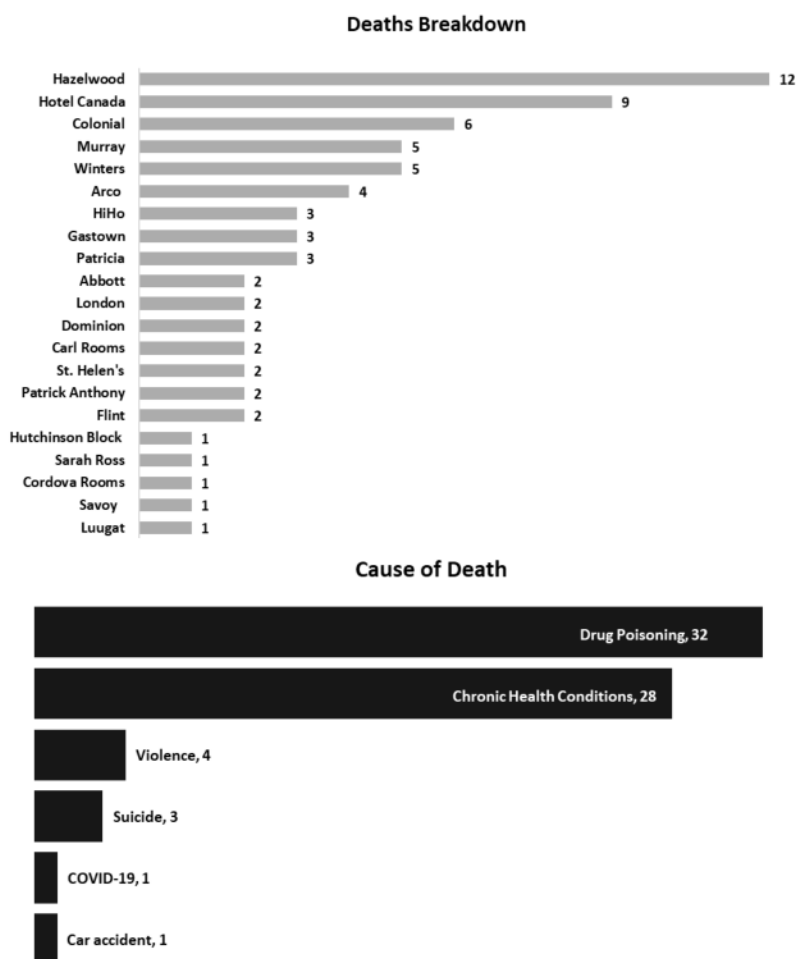
The predominant race/ethnicity of those who died was Indigenous at 63%, followed by white at 35%. Additionally, 8% were between the ages of 20 and 30, 14% were between 31 and 40, 17% between the ages of 41 and 50, 28% between the ages of 51 and 60, and 33% over age 60.

Looking at data from both AWRS and APMI, we note that more than half of the deaths (average 63%) were for people who identified as Indigenous.

## Discussion

Based on the data reported, the most common critical incident reported within APMI in the 2021-22 FY was violence, with 333 incidents. The three housing programs that had the highest number of acts of violence were: Luugat (47), the Gastown Hotel (42) and the Patricia (33). The three buildings were also on top of the list for many of the other critical incident types, except for deaths in which Hazelwood, Colonial, and Winters were on top of the list. Luugat, the Gastown Hotel, and the Patricia are all-gender Single Room Occupancy Hotels (SROs) and are three of the larger SROs that APMI manages with a total of 381 units with 485 tenants plus an additional 242 guests supported during the fiscal year. The three SROs provide tenants (e.g., low-income earners, people whose substance use is made problematic by current government policy, people with health and mental health concerns and/or disabilities, people who have experienced chronic or episodic homelessness) with short-term or long-term accommodation in single rooms.

Luugat, previously operated as a Howard Johnston Hotel, is a 110-room supportive housing program with 24/7 staffing for the security of the building residents and surrounding neighbourhood. Each room has a private bathroom but no cooking facilities. The housing program also provides services such as meals, support with substance use, harm reduction and health care, and housed people primarily from the homeless encampment at Oppenheimer



Park. Similarly, Gastown Hotel provides 91 rooms just four of which have a full kitchen and private bathroom (designed for couples). This SRO was the first building to be completed in BC Housing's SRO Renewal Initiative (SRI) to renovate and restore 13 provincially owned SROs. Lastly, the Patricia has 192 rooms with private bathrooms but no kitchens, and housed people primarily from the homeless encampment in Strathcona Park.

APMI's SROs are male dominant and according to the incidents reported in 2021, 53% of the tenants involved identify as male and 35% as female. In terms of incidents of violence, at Luugat, 53% involved people who identified as male and 38% as female. Similarly, 56% of incidents of violence within the Gastown Hotel involved people who identified as male and 41% as female. Lastly, within Patricia, 52% of people involved identified as male and 35% as female.

“Based on the data reported, the most common critical incident reported within APMI in the 2021-22 FY was violence, with 333 incidents. The three housing programs that had the highest number of acts of violence were: Luugat (47), the Gastown Hotel (42) and the Patricia (33).”

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is intended to provide Atira (and its funder and partners) with a better understanding of critical incidents happening throughout its programs. This report concludes that while it is evident that Atira deals with a high number of critical incidents (1,304 across both AWRS and APMI), it is important to look at this number from a contextual perspective.

Atira adopts a harm-reduction approach and is working at the center of five convergent health crises: homelessness, poverty, the global COVID-19 pandemic, the drug poisoning epidemic, and chronic gender-based and institutional violence. The report will not look at each of these crises specifically however, each of these five crises in and of themselves brings significant complications and challenges to Atira's work; together, they make the work profoundly complex.



“This report concludes that while it is evident that Atira deals with a high number of critical incidents (1,304 across both AWRS and APMI), it is important to look at this number from a contextual perspective.”

#### CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

When doing rounds, I noticed tenant in the washroom. I asked him if he was ok. He replied he was just dope sick, and OK.

I completed my rounds, came back to the office, at which time I was asked by co-worker to call an ambulance. I ran upstairs to find tenant still on the toilet, coherent, but in distress. I was on the phone with 911, waiting for the ambulance to arrive, asking tenant if he needed anything, keeping an eye on him. I was called down to the other end of the hall for less than a minute, and by the time I got back to the bathroom he had lost consciousness. I ran all the way down the stairs to be advised that the paramedics had just gone upstairs. I returned to the bathroom to find them working on him. He passed. Officer arrived to take information and wait for coroner.

Tenant had cancer and had been refusing treatment. Celebration of life is being planned.

Atira is a low-barrier organization which means that tenants housed and/or participants supported by Atira have faced multiple systemic intergenerational traumas and injustices. Many are survivors, or children/grandchildren of survivors, of the residential school system, which separated First Nations children from their families and communities. Many have lost custody of and access to their children. Many are survivors of violence in their homes. Many face extreme poverty and many live in tiny rooms without access to private toilets and cooking facilities (e.g., SROs). Because some buildings purchased by BC Housing and/or those leased from private owners have not been renovated, they are in poor repair and so are difficult to maintain. SRO housing is, by its nature, overcrowded, noisy and difficult. Lifetimes of trauma and violence have led to struggles with substance use and mental wellness. Responses to the growing drug poisoning epidemic, like safe supply services, have been stalled by political inertia and COVID-19, to devastating effect. Social services have had to cut back during the fiscal year covered by this report due to COVID-19, and there has been considerable staff attrition. Fatigue as well as absences due to illness contributed to high rates of turnover (33%, up from an average of 24% in the three years prior), as was the case for all

social service and health care organizations. In fact, according to Statistics Canada, there were 915,500 unfilled positions in the fourth quarter of 2021, up 63% compared to 2020. Jobs are also staying vacant longer, with almost half of vacancies remaining unfilled for 60 days. This labour shortage will continue to have a negative impact on Atira, and the sector.

”  
*SRO housing is, by its nature, overcrowded, noisy and difficult.*  
“

It is important to note and while acknowledging that one preventable death is one death too many, given the high number of our tenants who use criminalized drugs (estimated 81%) relative to the general population (in 2019, about 4% of Canadians reported having used at least one criminalized drug, according to StatsCan) and the relatively few numbers of drug poisoning deaths across our portfolio, Atira is doing a lot of things right when it comes to supporting tenants and their guests who use drugs.

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

1,304 critical incidents were reported within Atira in one fiscal year. This number represents 3.5 critical incidents every day, with the actual number assumed to be much higher (refer to limitations listed in the introduction). This total does not include incidents reported as non-critical, but which still required staff attention (e.g., allegations of theft, conflict between tenants and between tenants and their guests, issues with pets, non-critical health issues, calling 911 as per a tenant request, etc.).

The job description of a support worker, as an example, includes tasks as diverse as the day-to-day work of helping tenants with a wide array of emotional and practical supports. Activities range from active listening/one-to-one support and group support, making resource referrals, providing accompaniments and advocacy, assisting with moving in and moving out, supporting people to keep rooms clean, facilitating community kitchens where cooking facilities are available, organizing communal meals and celebrations, preparing and delivering food, assisting with medication and health care, including administration of naloxone, responding to emergency situations, and keeping accurate records, files, log notes and statistical information as per Atira's practice & policies.



*A better recognition of the multifaceted tensions between offering support and managing buildings is needed.*

In addition, staff are expected to manage guests and building security, ensure buildings meet occupancy standards, confiscate and dispose of tenants' belongings left in hallways, which create hazards in terms of emergency evacuation, monitor and replace smoke alarms and automatic door closers when tenants remove them, manage conflict between tenants over noise, money, theft, violence; and address neighbourhood complaints about tenants, guests, and those assumed to be tenants or guests.

The "management" of buildings often leads to conflict between tenants and staff and anger towards staff and management, and erodes trust, which makes it difficult to also offer support.

The easy response is often increased surveillance and/or security, including involving the police, which also undermines staff efforts to build trusting and supportive relationships with tenants.

A better recognition of the multifaceted tensions between offering support and managing buildings is needed. To adequately support people living in supportive and low-income housing it is critical to draw attention to the harms of drug prohibition and law enforcement, the social control of people living with mental illness, the socio-economic roots of poverty, the impact of colonization, and the human rights of populations made vulnerable where measures of regulation and control become normalized. The need for more comprehensive community support at all-levels is crucial and can only be achieved through increased and continuous advocacy efforts.

**Recommendation 2: Advocate for government to conduct a contextual assessment to better understand its supportive housing program and in doing so, better support tenants/residents and its nonprofit partners.**



Atira provides housing and support for people who face multiple systemic intergenerational traumas and injustices, applying a non-judgmental emotional and practical support approach. While this approach empowers equity and inclusion and prevents homelessness, it has limitations. For example, referrals are made through a coordinated access system, which means Atira typically has little, if any, information about histories of eviction, violence, health, or mental health concerns. While this information should never be used to deny a person housing, lack of it prevents Atira from adequately preparing for and supporting all tenants. Both Luugat and Patricia, for example, were tenanted entirely from homeless encampments from Oppenheimer and Strathcona Parks respectively, where the focus was on appeasing the communities negatively affected by the encampments rather than on housing that best served the campers. Luugat and the Patricia are also two of the three buildings that experience the highest number of fires and floods, and highest number of critical incidents, overall (they are also both large buildings with 110 and 192 rooms respectively). Whether there is a correlation between the decampments, lack of information about tenants, and the number of critical incidents is unknown, but better understanding will not only enable Atira and the system to better prepare for and support tenants, it will also assist in informing how we can better adopt a rights-based approach in managing homeless encampments.

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*Both Luugat and Patricia, for example, were tenanted entirely from homeless encampments from Oppenheimer and Strathcona Parks respectively, where the focus was on appeasing the communities negatively affected by the encampments rather than on housing that best served the campers. Luugat and the Patricia are also two of the three buildings that experience the highest number of fires and floods, and highest number of critical incidents, overall.*

“

### **Recommendation 3: Continue advocating for more funding to address housing needs, especially for women and gender-diverse individuals.**

Loss of affordable housing options for very low-income individuals and families, as well as three decades of decreasing funding and leadership from senior levels of government in social housing and health policy (until recently) have led to an increasing number of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness across the Lower Mainland and perhaps most acutely in Vancouver. Women and gender-diverse individuals remain at greatest risk as their homelessness is often invisible and therefore under reported. Women's bodies remain undervalued, objectified, and made vulnerable to all forms of gender-based violence; this is aggravated by low-incomes, race/racism, disabilities/ableism, struggles with mental health and/or with substance use and the criminalization of sex work. More housing, including more housing options that keep women, children, and gender-diverse individuals at the centre, are critical.

*Women and gender-diverse individuals remain at greatest risk as their homelessness is often invisible and therefore under reported.*

### **Recommendation 4: Step up work with Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services (VFRS), and include BC Housing, the City of Vancouver, local health authorities and other relevant housing providers, to determine how best to resource and/organize all of the elements of fire safety in supported housing; to mitigate risk and impact on people struggling with substance use, mental wellness, and ongoing trauma.**

*Between AWRS and APMI, Atira experienced 111 floods and 94 fires in FY 2022, averaging one flood every three days and one fire every four days.*

Between AWRS and APMI, Atira experienced 111 floods and 94 fires in FY 2022, averaging one flood every three days and one fire every four days. Further, VFRS reports that it responds to one fire in the Downtown Eastside every single day. This is extraordinary, the significance of which is only amplified by the devastating fire at The Winters' Residence on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022. It is evident from Atira's data that most floods and fires are linked directly to tenants, primarily caused intentionally. It is also evident that the

more complex and larger the building, the greater the risk of floods and fires. We know anecdotally that many tenants respond negatively to some elements of fire safety (for example smoke detectors and automatic door closers) and so we must work to understand how fire safety elements influence tenants' daily lives, including their response/reaction to fire safety elements, and risk created. This requires Atira, and its partners, to explore ways to not only accurately track the causes of floods and fires, but also the impact of fire safety elements on tenants and if/how those impacts influence tenant behaviour, including the reasons tenants cause floods and fires and how to best support them to reduce risk.



**Recommendation 5: Formalize partnerships with the First Nations Health Authority, Vancouver Aboriginal Health, Kílala Lelum Health Centre, Vancouver Coastal Health Aboriginal Health, Indigenous Wellness Program at Providence Health Care, Fraser Health Aboriginal Health Program, and other Indigenous led health organizations.**

”

*Looking at data from both AWRS and APMI, we note that those who identified as Indigenous represented the highest percentage of some of the main critical incidents during the fiscal year. For example, more than half of all deaths (average 63%) were people who identified as Indigenous, and more than half of all health-related critical incidents (average 58%) involved people who identify as Indigenous.*

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Looking at data from both AWRS and APMI, we note that those who identified as Indigenous represented the highest percentage of some of the main critical incidents during the fiscal year. For example, more than half of all deaths (average 63%) were people who identified as Indigenous, and more than half of all health-related critical incidents (average 58%). Numbers may actually be higher as Atira relies on self-identification for the purposes of our reporting and some Indigenous people may choose not to disclose Indigenous status/identity due to fear of being stigmatized/treated differently and poorly.

Therefore, Atira is encouraged to enhance and nurture and where it makes sense, to formalize partnerships with indigenous- led health organizations as a way to improve its support to First Nations, Metis and Inuk residents, tenants and others who access services at Atira.



## Recommendation 6: Expand safe supply program and continue to advocate for an accessible safe supply and an end to prohibition.

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*Atira is encouraged to explore possibilities to expand its safe supply interventions both through the MySafe Project (more drug vending machines) as well as through other strategic collaborations.*

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Atira is a partner with the MySafe Project, a safe supply initiative formed in response to the drug poisoning crisis — providing people with a safer, regulated supply of opioids and other currently criminalized drugs to prevent poisoning and death. Atira manages and operates two MySafe drug vending machines at Luugat and at the Carl Rooms. Both machines are currently providing access to safe supply to a total of 57 tenants. The program has been showing success and a full evaluation report of the project is being conducted by the BC Center for Substance Use. It is expected to be finalized in the coming months. The evaluation will guide MySafe on how to improve the program, which will also be helpful for Atira to better support its tenants. Atira must explore possibilities to expand its safe supply interventions both through the MySafe Project (more drug vending machines) as well as through other strategic collaborations, including advocacy for ethical drug policy and an end to prohibition.

## Recommendation 7: Continue to adapt to the evolving drug poisoning crisis.

As noted above, Atira is doing a lot of things right when it comes to supporting tenants and their guests who use drugs. That said, the drug poisoning crisis is evolving and along with a significant increase in the concentration of fentanyl detected by the coroner in criminalized-drug deaths, more benzodiazepines (benzos) are being detected in testing of fentanyl/down. Naloxone has no effect on benzos and at present there are no antidotes for benzos available in the community. Atira must not only increase drug checking across its programs, including checking for the presence of benzos, it must also offer robust training, including regular refreshers, to its staff to better be able to recognize when benzos might be involved in a poisoning incident, and how to respond effectively. Atira's health team, including its drug policy advisor, must also stay on top of the evolving drug poisoning crisis and adapt as the situation changes, ensuring it is always adopting promising and best practices when responding to the crisis.

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*Atira's health team, including its drug policy advisor, must also stay on top of the evolving drug poisoning crisis and adapt as the situation changes, ensuring it is always adopting promising and best practices when responding to the crisis.*

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#### CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

At approximately 1 a.m. a guest named M. came in with a shotgun hidden in his track pants. Staff did not recognize him as someone who has been in before. When he attempted to sit down on a chair, the gun discharged, severely injuring M., affecting his leg from the knee down. No one else was injured.

Staff immediately radio'd front desk requesting a 911 call while he accessed medical supplies and attended gunshot victim. While attending the gunshot, some of the people in the space were able to get their hands on the shotgun and remove it from the scene before police arrived. Staff radio'd for assistance and performed first aid until paramedics arrived, then helped clean area after victim was transported to hospital.

We are unsure why this person had a gun in his possession; however, the gang conflict has been spilling into this neighbourhood as of late. Multiple people are fighting for control of drug trafficking as reported by VPD. Police closed down the space as a crime scene for the duration of the night.

### **Recommendation 8: Improve and expand organizational supports for peer workers.**

Peer support workers are at the forefront of Atira's drug poisoning response programs. These are people with current or previous history of substance use, in which most have shared experiences with the people who access support at Atira programs. Several studies indicate that working in drug poisoning response settings can be stressful and traumatizing in which individuals experience lasting emotional, social, and mental health impacts. Although drug poisoning response health care professionals (e.g., nurses, paramedics) have access to counselling and support through their employers, peer workers often lack such support. It is found that a single exposure to a fatal or non-fatal drug poisoning can lead to significant stress, burnout, and drug poisoning-related compassion fatigue. Atira recognizes the demanding work done by peer workers; thus, further research to determine specific stressors peer support workers face at Atira to inform the development of various support initiatives can help address the emotional, physical, and mental health impacts faced by peer workers. In addition, providing robust peer training and skill development, guided, and designed by peer workers themselves, may equip peer workers with the necessary skills and knowledge for their success, and for the success of programs.

”  
*Atira recognizes the demanding work done by peer workers; thus, further research to determine specific stressors peer support workers face at Atira to inform the development of various support initiatives can help address the emotional, physical, and mental health impacts faced by peer workers.*  
“

## Recommendation 9: Better acknowledge program differences through a program-by-program assessment.



Atira currently divides its programs between residential and non-residential, which while technically correct, does not adequately capture the uniqueness of each residential program. Even two shelters, as an example, have unique layouts, different staff, and can attract significantly different user groups. Therefore, when making decisions, Atira leadership must consider the differences between not only types of programs but also different types of residential programs (e.g., SROs, second-stage housing, shelters, and transition housing), paying attention to location,

community, tenant/resident populations, staff, layouts, etc. In identifying and understanding these very specific and unique needs, Atira can better respond to critical incidents, support residents/program users, and staff. Individual assessments can start with those programs that had the highest number of critical incidents as per this analysis report.

## Recommendation 10: Update report on women's health and safety.

### CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

Main fire alarm went off. Staff ran upstairs and saw smoke coming from <room #> and attempted to locate source of smoke, 911 called. No source found. Staff cleared building and waited outside for fire department. Tenant eventually confirmed source of fire was a laundry detergent pod she had lit on fire. Both fire department and staff requested she avoid setting things on fire in future. Contractor called to replace fire extinguisher on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Follow up conversation had with all at resident meeting.

In December 2013, in partnership with the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning, Atira produced a report that looked at women's health and safety practices within Atira's SROs, which resulted in a policy document: *Preventing Violence Against Women in Atira's Single Room Occupancy Hotels*. However, and while the reported incidents of violence in FY 2022 are primarily between men, much has changed since 2013 especially considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's safety and wellbeing. Also, and only anecdotally this year, we are seeing an increase in violence between women. It is important that Atira explores those changes through an updated version of this report and a review and update of its *Preventing Violence Against Women in Atira's Single Room Occupancy Hotels* protocols.

## **Recommendation 11: Review the critical incidents reporting system and explore ways to improve data collection and analysis practices.**

As this is the first report to analyze a full year of critical incidents, it is important that Atira continues this practice in the coming year. One major analysis aspect that Atira must consider is looking at trends. Data trends will allow Atira to spot patterns and even predict future events, which is important in planning and managing programs. The CIR system should also expand on existing data documented and analysed, for example in future reports it would be interesting to look at:



- Number of tenants involved in multiple incidents and so identify percentage of tenants who engage in ongoing risky behavior.
- Number of tenants who struggle with their mental wellness and who are involved in critical incidents.
- Number of referrals done internally (e.g., Atira Women's Health and Safety team) to support tenants involved in incidents of violence.

### CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORT

At approximately 14:40 a guest came into the office and asked for harm reduction gear. A few minutes later a tenant alerted staff that the guest was unconscious in the using room. Staff rushed over and observed guest unconscious and unresponsive. Guest had strong pulse, but he was only breathing once every 16-20 seconds. Staff called 911, administered four doses of intramuscular naloxone and began CPR.

Paramedics arrived roughly 10 minutes later and administered oxygen and additional naloxone. VFD was called to scene and continued providing oxygen.

Roughly 10 minutes later guest regained consciousness. Guest refused to go to hospital despite paramedics and staff advising him to do so. Staff agreed to monitor guest for next few hours until he became more alert as he was extremely drowsy. Staff sat in the using room and watched over/supported guest for an hour and a half until he became more alert. Guest was okay. Staff ensured to watch him until he became more alert. Staff advised guest not to use any more of the drugs he had previously used, and advised him not to use alone.

## APPENDIX A (AWRS)

**Table 1: Drug poisonings within AWRS programs**

Program	# of Drug poisoning
SisterSpace	30
Sereena's	23
SisterSquare	14
Shimai	12
Aneki	8
Little's	7
Sisterhood Shelter	6
Sorella	4
Sísele	3
Bette's	2
New Beginnings	2
SistersShelter	2
Wabaan	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>

**Table 2: Violence within AWRS programs**

Program	# of Violence incidents	Program	# of Violence incidents
Sereena's	12	Bridge	2
Aneki	9	Empress	2
Little's	8	Bette's	2
SistersShelter	7	Katherine's	1
Sorella	5	Office 101	1
SisterSpace	4	Miyotehew	1
Sisterhood	4	Kye7e	1
New Beginnings	4	MW Shelter	1
SisterSquare	4	Koomseh	1
Shimai	3	EWMA	1
Secord	3	Imouto	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>76</b>

**Table 3: Fires within AWRS programs**

Program	# of fire incidents
Aneki	4
Sereena's	3
Little's	3
Empress	3
MW 2nd Stage	2
Secord	1
Sísele	1
Imouto	1
Rice Block	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>

**Table 4: Floods within AWRS programs**

Program	# of flood incidents
Sorella	2
Little's	2
Bridge	2
Sereena's	1
Imouto	1
Katherine's	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

## APPENDIX B (APMI)

**Table 1: Total incidents within APMI programs**

Program	# CIRs	% CIRs
Luugat	159	17%
Gastown	147	15%
Patricia	122	13%
Hotel Canada	81	8%
Carl Rooms	56	6%
Colonial	54	6%
Winters	36	4%
Hutchinson Block	35	4%
Arco	34	4%
St. Helen's	34	4%
Hazelwood	34	4%
Sarah Ross	28	3%
Abbott	27	3%
Dominion	24	3%
Murray	21	2%
Cordova Rooms	21	2%
HiHo	16	2%
London	10	1%
566 Powell	5	1%
Flint	5	1%
Patrick Anthony	3	0%
Savoy	1	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Table 2: Violence related incidents within APMI programs**

Program	Number	Program	Number
Luugat	47	Arco	12
Gastown	42	Sarah Ross	11
Patricia	33	Dominion	11
Colonial	31	Murray	9
Hotel Canada	25	Hazelwood	8
Carl Rooms	25	HiHo	8
St. Helen's	15	London	2
Winters	15	566 Powell	2
Abbott	12	Patrick Anthony	1
Cordova Rooms	12	Flint	1
Arco	12		
<b>Total</b>			<b>333</b>

**Table 3: Drug Poisonings within APMI programs**

Program	Number	Program	Number
Hotel Canada	28	Hutchinson Block	4
Luugat	22	Winters	3
Gastown	22	St. Helen's	3
Carl Rooms	18	Murray	2
Patricia	13	Colonial	2
Arco	9	Abbott	2
Hazelwood	6	Cordova Rooms	1
Sarah Ross	5	London	1
Dominion	4	HiHo	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>146</b>

**Table 4: Fires within APMI programs**

Program	Number	Program	Number
Luugat	12	St. Helen's	2
Patricia	12	Hutchinson Block	2
Gastown	11	Abbott	2
Colonial	7	London	2
Hotel Canada	6	HiHo	2
Sarah Ross	4	Flint	1
Arco	4	Hazelwood	1
Murray	3	Carl Rooms	1
Dominion	3		
<b>Total</b>			<b>75</b>

**Table 5: Floods within APMI programs**

Program	Number	Program	Number
Luugat	42	Carl Rooms	2
Patricia	21	London	2
Gastown	16	St. Helen's	2
Hotel Canada	6	Hutchinson Block	1
Colonial	4	Flint	1
Arco	3	Cordova Rooms	1
		Hazelwood	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>102</b>

**Table 6: Health- related incidents within APMI programs**

Program	Number	Program	Number
Gastown	36	St. Helen's	3
Patricia	14	Sarah Ross	2
Luugat	13	Hotel Canada	2
Winters	6	Abbott	2
Dominion	3	Murray	2
Carl Rooms	3	Hazelwood	2
Colonial	3	566 Powell	1
Cordova Rooms	3	Hutchinson Block	1
		HiHo	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>97</b>

**Table 7: Deaths within APMI programs (excluding drug poisonings)**

Program	Number	Program	Number
Hazelwood	12	St. Helen's	2
Hotel Canada	9	Carl Rooms	2
Colonial	6	Dominion	2
Winters	5	London	2
Murray	5	Abbott	2
Arco	4	HiHo	1
Patricia	3	Savoy	1
Gastown	3	Cordova Rooms	1
Luugat	3	Sarah Ross	1
Flint	2	Hutchinson Block	1
Patrick Anthony	2		
<b>Total</b>			<b>69</b>

**ISSUES NOTE**

Ministry of Attorney General and Responsible  
for Housing

Date: May 16, 2022

Minister: Attorney General David Eby

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

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

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

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

**RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:**

s.13

**BACKGROUND:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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As we discussed, it is BC Housing's expectation that you will take urgent and substantive action to address the issues identified, s.13  
s.13

In our view, given the investigation's findings, the current leadership is not s.13 to make these significant changes. I reiterate our view that leadership renewal is required for Atira to work with BC Housing in a manner consistent with its operating agreements, as well as government financial policies and requirements which are designed to ensure accountability over public funds, and s.13 service delivery to those in need of housing across the province. In addition, we strongly request that Atira create a board position for a s.13 to ensure greater transparency and communication s.13.

As I explained in our conversation, while we expect these actions will be taken urgently, we will also be taking several measures, effective immediately, to ensure appropriate and closely monitored oversight of BC Housing's operating agreements with Atira, and we expect the full cooperation and support of your leadership team.

BC Housing will be exercising its full audit rights under the Operator and Operating Agreements with Atira including:

- Reviewing Atira Women's Resources Society (AWRS) and Atira Development Society (ADS) and its financial transactions with related entities, pursuant to applicable BC Housing operating and operator agreements;
- Restricting any new funding to AWRS and ADS until the operational review is completed and concerns are addressed.
- Suspending the renewal of all AWRS operating and operator agreements until the review is complete; and
- Physically inspecting all Atira operated buildings, beginning May<sup>s.1</sup><sub>3</sub> 2023.

As you are aware, BC Housing has not considered Atira for new funding calls or to manage new buildings for some time. This policy will continue until BC Housing's operational review of Atira is complete.

Atira is an important housing provider to some of the most vulnerable residents in British Columbia, and we will take all measures necessary to ensure that Atira clients under operating agreements with BC Housing are protected.

Given the urgency of these issues, we request a response no later than Friday, May 5, 2023. We look forward to working with you on these important issues.



Sincerely,

Allan Seckel

Board Chair, BC Housing

DRAFT