

## FACTSHEET: Temporary Supportive Housing

In response to Nanaimo's housing crisis, BC Housing worked with the City of Nanaimo to establish temporary supportive housing in late 2018. These homes are not typical of supportive housing as it was built very quickly to provide emergency homes for almost 200 people experiencing homelessness. Nanaimo's temporary supportive housing is a short-term solution to offer stability and support to people facing homelessness.

### FACTS ABOUT NANAIMO'S TEMPORARY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

- **Newcastle Place:** BC Housing purchased 250 Terminal Ave. to provide 80 homes, now operated by Island Crisis Care Society.
- **Nikao:** BC Housing leased 2060 Labieux Rd from the City of Nanaimo to provide 90 homes, operated by Pacifica Housing Advisory Association. The buildings were re-purposed units converted into housing.
- Each resident has their own secure unit with a bed, chair and closet. Bathrooms and showers are shared, as are the kitchens, dining rooms, and laundry rooms.
- The properties are managed and supervised 24/7.
- Residents are permitted to use substances on-site so they do not put themselves or others at increased risk of overdose or infection.
- Residents are provided with mental and physical health support through Island Health and other social service agencies.

### SUBSTANCE USE IN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Until people have the stability of a home and don't have to worry about where they'll get their meals every day or sleep every night, it's very challenging to address substance use issues. For that reason, BC Housing does not deny homes to people struggling with substance use but instead supports them in their efforts to improve their health and well-being.

Best practices have shown that the most effective approach is one that is flexible, supportive and involves a range of care including therapeutic interventions. Residents of supportive housing live independently and make their own choices regarding lifestyle while having direct access to the services they need to address substance use issues through supportive housing operators.

## COMMUNITY IMPACT

To address community concerns around the temporary supportive housing sites, Community Advisory Committees have been established by BC Housing and meet regularly. The City of Nanaimo, RCMP, Island Health, and BC Housing work with the committees and the building operators to address health and safety concerns. The Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce continues to consult with surrounding businesses to identify concerns and share them with the City of Nanaimo and the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- The Province of British Columbia announced that BC's second navigation centre will be located in Nanaimo. The approximately 60-bed centre will be referral only and provide integrated clinical health supports, as well as culturally appropriate services of Indigenous peoples.
- A new investment by BC Housing will create over 300 new affordable homes in Nanaimo, including new permanent, purpose-built supportive homes for people experiencing homelessness and new affordable rental homes for individuals, seniors and families
- In May 2019, Nanaimo City Council approved the creation of a City-led Health and Housing Task Force. The Task Force has drafted a five-year Health & Housing Strategy for Nanaimo to give new direction to actions to end the housing affordability and homelessness crisis. It is now undergoing a validation process with engaged community members.

## RESOURCES:

- [Labies & Newcastle Place Fact Sheets](#)
- [Health and Safety Resources](#)
- [Nanaimo's Action Plan to End Homelessness 2018-2023](#)
- [Nanaimo's Affordable Housing Strategy](#)