



December 12, 2023

To: **Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing; Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Mental Health & Addictions; Honourable Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development & Poverty Reduction; Honourable David Eby, Premier of BC**

CC: MLA Michele Babchuk, City of Campbell River Mayor & Council, MP Rachel Blaney

Dear Ministers Kahlon, Whiteside, Malcolmson, and Premier Eby;

By this time, you will have seen the 2023 Point in Time Count results and will have noticed the trend of increasing homelessness across each community that participated in a provincially-supported PiT Count. I'd like to thank the Province for your support of this crucial data.

This letter is to bring your attention to a few key observations from Campbell River specifically, in the hope of encouraging future funding for housing development and homelessness support in this community. Campbell River serves as a hub for a vast rural and remote region and, as such, requires significant investment.

Based on Campbell River's 2023 PiT Count results, as well as data from local agencies, we would like to propose a number of recommendations for Campbell River:

- WHEREAS a 70% increase in homelessness was seen in a two-year period (*Source: 2023 PiT Count*)
 - **We recommend funding for rapid emergency transitional housing (ex. City of Campbell River currently proposed tiny home village) while other housing options are developed**
- WHEREAS 50% of respondents identified as Indigenous (77% of these folks identified as having lived or generational experience with residential schools) (*Source: 2023 PiT Count*) and WHEREAS Campbell River does not currently have Indigenous-led low-barrier supportive or transitional housing (*Source: CRDCEH Homelessness System Inventory 2023*)
 - **We recommend investment into Indigenous-led supportive and transitional housing with built-in cultural and land-based programming, including multi-year funding for Indigenous-led organizations to build capacity**
- WHEREAS 60% of respondents reported 2 or more major health concerns (of physical or learning disability, addiction, mental health concern, medical condition, and acquired brain injury) (*Source: 2023 PiT Count*)
 - **We recommend significant investment in “complex care housing” directly in Campbell River.** While we congratulate the Province on investing in complex care housing, it is our view that the amount and locations proposed will not be of significance for our community
- WHEREAS 68% of respondents identified as having an “addiction” (*Source: 2023 PiT Count*)
 - **We recommend investment in second and third-stage housing for people who have completed treatment programs (ex. proposed Willis Road project, Campbell River, Turning Point Recovery - <https://www.campbellriver.ca/your-city-hall/news/news-detail/2022/06/30/new-treatment-options-coming-to-campbell-river>)**
- WHEREAS youth under 25 made up 18% of the respondents, 40% of respondents experienced homelessness for the first time as a youth (*Source: 2023 PiT Count*), and Campbell River has only 5 units of youth independent housing (*Source: CRDCEH Homelessness System Inventory 2023*)
 - **We recommend funding the expansion of housing options for youth experiencing homelessness in Campbell River**

- WHEREAS there was a 12% increase in the percentage of seniors experiencing homelessness compared to 2021 (*Source: 2023 PiT Count*) and service providers have noted a vast increase in seniors accessing homelessness supports, including 43% of people accessing rental subsidies being over the age of 50 (*Source: John Howard Society North Island*)
 - **We recommend investment into senior’s affordable housing and evaluation of the SAFER grant and other subsidy amounts to ensure seniors can afford to remain housed, as well as expanding eligibility criteria for subsidy programs**
- WHEREAS few housing providers exist or have capacity to develop housing in Campbell River (*Source: CRDCEH Homelessness System Inventory 2023*)
 - **We recommend multi-year non-project-based funding for non-profit housing providers to build administrative capacity**

Of interest, “not enough income” was cited as the top reason for housing loss (*Source: 2023 PiT Count*). This is the first year that we have seen poverty as a top reason for housing loss in our PiT Counts.

We’d like to congratulate the Province for making significant strides towards policy changes that will support housing development and affordable housing. The announcements that have been made over the past year are very encouraging. At the same time, we offer these recommendations as your community partner in preventing and reducing homelessness in Campbell River.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Hendrickson
Coordinator, Campbell River & District Coalition to End Homelessness (CRDCEH)
with support of the CRDCEH Coordinating Circle

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