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City of Campbell River and BC Housing collaborate on supportive housing

To support vulnerable people struggling to find suitable housing options, the City of Campbell River is working to establish approximately 50 supportive housing units within the next two years.

The City and BC Housing have signed an agreement to develop supportive housing units, with funding coming from the B.C. government's *Building BC: Supportive Housing Fund*.

"Supportive housing will fill a gap in current housing options by offering integrated support that goes beyond providing shelter. Support includes help with securing jobs, as well as counselling and health services so that vulnerable people have both long-term shelter and services as needed to help in other aspects of their lives," said Mayor Andy Adams. *"The City and BC Housing have a long history of partnership, and we greatly appreciate the opportunity to work with BC Housing to support people at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness in a comprehensive way."*

The BC Housing supportive housing model is based on small self-contained dwellings, meal programs, onsite staffing around the clock, and access to support services such as employment training, counselling and health services.

According to the agreement with BC Housing, the City's responsibility is to explore property options and facilitate development-related application processes. BC Housing is responsible for construction of the project, and ongoing operational funding. Next steps include finding a suitable location where site selection considerations will include ready access to community services, amenities and transit.

"It is fantastic to see the City and BC Housing move quickly to respond to this important housing need in our community," said Adrian Moskal, part of the leadership team of the Campbell River and District Coalition to End Homelessness. *"We are eager to assist with the project wherever we can."*

The Strathcona Regional Housing Needs Assessment completed in 2018 identified a number of trends affecting housing in Campbell River, including low rental vacancy rates and rising rental costs that put pressure on the region's most vulnerable citizens. An April 2018 survey identified at least 81 people experiencing homelessness in Campbell River.

Supportive housing has been identified as a top priority by the City of Campbell River Council. The Campbell River District Coalition to End Homelessness and numerous other social service agencies also share this priority and see supportive housing as a vital initial step to help address homelessness.

For more information on Building BC and supportive housing, please visit bchousing.org.

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