

1.0 Introduction

BC Housing/ VCH Letter of Intent

1636 Clark Drive and 1321-1395 East 1st Avenue

INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT

Rental affordability in Vancouver has reached a crisis point – more than one in five people in Metro Vancouver spend over 50% of their income on rent, according to data from the Canadian Rental Housing Index. A growing number of families and individuals are at a crisis level of housing spending and are at risk of homelessness. At the same time, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) has been envisioning a plan to build a new withdrawal management centre that will replace its existing detox facility. The existing site is nearly 30 years old and has infrastructure that is failing. It was not purpose-built for the existing use and the design does not support best practices in care. Recognizing that the housing crisis that the City of Vancouver is facing and the health care needs that VCH is trying to provide, the project being proposed is a direct response in addressing access to affordable rental housing and lifesaving recovery services for the people living in Vancouver.

BC Housing, in conjunction with Vancouver Coastal Health and the City of Vancouver is proposing to develop a 'state-of-the-art' multi-use development that integrates a community-based withdrawal management centre with transitional housing, an academic hub, culturally appropriate services, 90 units of affordable rental housing units, and a City-owned social enterprise space focused on Indigenous healing and wellness all within a diverse neighbourhood that already incorporates a mix of industrial land alongside a residential neighbourhood and a transportation corridor. BC Housing is submitting a rezoning application to consolidate the lots located at 1636 Clark Drive and 1321-1395 East 1st Avenue and allow for the proposed uses as well as the proposed building height and density. This project will address the affordable rental housing crisis by increasing supply of affordable rental for individuals and families with low to moderate income, as well as the providing lifesaving recovery services through a state of the art integrated withdrawal management centre. The site will also offer a city-owned social enterprise component with a focus on healing, wellness, and employment support.

PROJECT GOALS

Provide affordable rental housing

- 100% below-market rental housing, offering a range of rents for individuals/families with varying income levels To provide as many affordable units as possible
- To incorporate high-quality design and finish in a well-designed building that meets the needs of the building tenants and the surrounding neighbourhood

Renewal of a community-based state of the art withdrawal management centre

- To provide VCH with a new, larger, and more specialized facility, relocating existing services and allowing for new services to be added
- Allow for integration of several withdrawal management services to enable evidence-based continuum of care within one facility – this integration will support clients in seamlessly navigating the care they need through a central point of access To offer clients targeted services and supports based on their specific needs To create a centrally located academic teaching, research and learning hub to support staff development, knowledge transfer, and the sharing of best practices in withdrawal management

Healing, wellness and employment support

- To provide a culturally inclusive and safe space in the design and delivery of the social enterprise space
- Acknowledge and consider the needs of the urban aboriginal community in the area

WHAT THIS PROJECT WILL PROVIDE

Affordable Housing

The affordable housing is a separate component from the withdrawal management centre and will be operated by a non-profit housing provider. Future affordable housing tenants will be selected from BC Housing's Housing Registry.

The proposed development would include a range of studio, one and two-bedroom units, providing affordable rental housing for low to moderate income families, individuals, people with disabilities, and seniors. Rates will be based on the Housing Income Limits according to CHMH affordability criteria.

Withdrawal Management Continuum of Care Services

There is an urgent need in Vancouver for expanded, state-of-the-art withdrawal management services that is designed for people who want to reduce/eliminate their use of substances. The proposed VCH withdrawal management centre will be a range of integrated services that provides a continuum of care within one facility that will help people navigate the system seamlessly through one central point of access.

The Centre will offer a wide range of state-of-the-art withdrawal services such as:

- 51 inpatient withdrawal management beds;
- Outpatient and home-based withdrawal management services;

- A sobering centre for keeping people safe while they sober up;
- Approximately 20 new beds of short-term housing to provide continued support for clients having completed detox and in transition to longer-term solutions, such as supportive transitional living residences;
- Services that are trauma-informed and culturally appropriate, intended to meet Indigenous and other community members' care needs.
- An academic teaching, research and learning hub to support staff development, knowledge transfer, and sharing best practices in withdrawal management.

clients in need. This should also reduce wait times for inpatient services. Locating services in one place additionally enables VCH to attract top medical talent to work at the facility and makes more efficient use of staff resources.

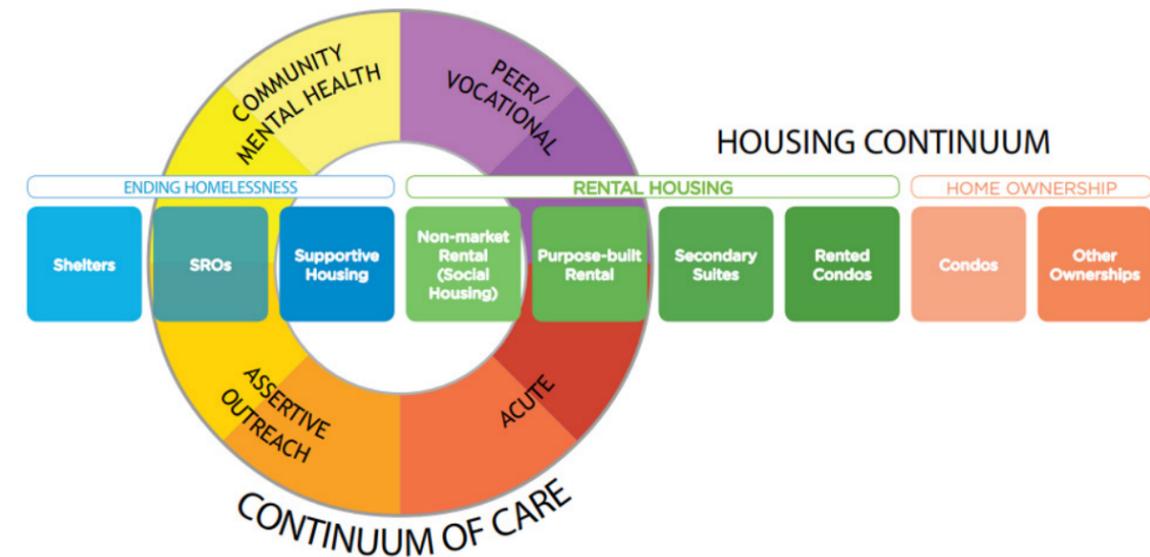
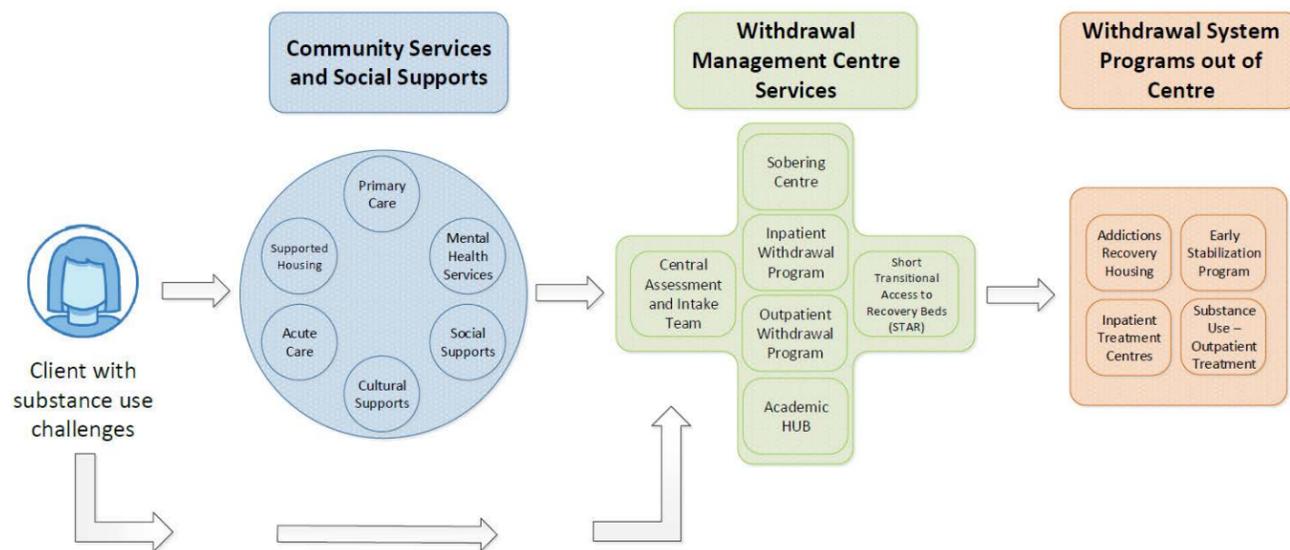
BC Housing and Vancouver Coastal Health are committed to being good neighbours and are confident that the proposed facility will operate successfully and safely within an established residential community.

WHAT ARE THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY?

Access to Housing and Healthcare are two of the most critical needs in the City of Vancouver. A wide variety of metrics, statistics and anecdotes that describe the depth and urgency of these needs are readily available from multiple sources, including City of Vancouver studies.

1636 Clark Drive and 1321-1395 East 1st Avenue brings together 3 public agency partners committed to serving this unique community. The values and goals of this project align with Vancouver Coastal Health's Health System Strategy and BC Housing's commitment to providing a mix of affordable rental housing in the community.

Withdrawal Management Centre Client Pathway



BEST PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed design is based on current academic research on treatment, and Vancouver Coastal Health's decades of experience operating the existing Vancouver Detox Centre at 377 East 2nd Avenue, about 10 blocks from Clark Drive and East 1st Avenue. The withdrawal management centre is a community service that should be located within a community setting that supports people in remaining integrated in a dignified community environment. A successful withdrawal management centre will need sufficient space to accommodate the multiple components of withdrawal management services all working together – outpatient and home-based withdrawal management, sobering, and transitional housing. This model will allow for Vancouver Coastal Health to provide a continuum of care in one facility. An integrated range of services in one location will also help people navigate the system more seamlessly by providing a central point of access, linking clients with the right service at the right time, and improving care for

Alignment with Grandview-Woodland Community Plan Affordable Rental Housing

Affordable Rental Housing

Sections 2 & 7 and Principle 3

- A range of affordable housing options for households of all income levels and family sizes

Policy 6.4 – Britannia-Woodland

- Some of the most affordable rental housing in Grandview woodland is found in this area

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- Current housing stock aging and some can be expected to be at the end of its safe and useful life during this plan's time horizon

Policy 7.1 – Housing Supply and Affordability

- Increasing Housing Options for Vulnerable Community Residents and Ending Homelessness

Health Services

Policy 13.4 – Health and Social Services

- Support health partners in the creation, renewal and expansion of facilities for harm reduction, addiction, and mental health.

Employment Services

Section 10.8

- Access to employment and training services and social enterprise

SITE SELECTION

Why this site?

Provincially and municipally owned properties were considered and assessed for this proposal. Of the sites reviewed, Clark Drive and East 1st Avenue was the best fit and the most appropriate for the project partners' needs. Key considerations included transit access, proximity to downtown, access to services, proximity to the existing Vancouver Detox Centre, and the recently approved community plan for the neighbourhood, which identified affordable housing and addictions treatment facilities as core community needs. Specific details related to the assessment of different sites prior to selecting the Clark Drive and East 1st Avenue location can not be publicly disclosed because the release of confidential information may impact the city or province's abilities to make strategic real estate decisions in a competitive market.