

**DATE:** February 5, 2021

**FILE:** 1700-02/2021/451

**TO:** Chair and Directors  
Regional District Board

Supported by Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

**FROM:** Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

***R. Dyson***

**RE: 2021 - 2025 Financial Plan – Homelessness Supports Service – Function 451**

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### **Purpose**

To provide the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board with the proposed 2021 - 2025 Financial Plan and work plan highlights for the Homelessness Supports service, function 451.

### **Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:**

1. THAT the Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness 2020 Annual Report be received.
2. THAT the Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness' 2021 Housing Plan, including allocations from the 2021 – 2025 financial plan for Homelessness Supports service, function 451 for the following projects, be approved:
  - a. \$100,000 towards Gwax'dzi dsas: Tall Tree Place - 22 modular units for families in Cumberland;
  - b. \$70,000 towards 24 - 40 studio and one bedroom units for Indigenous elders in Courtenay (Wachiay Friendship Centre);
  - c. \$30,000 towards construction of a townhouse in Courtenay (Habitat for Humanity Vancouver Island North); and
  - d. \$35,000 to support the coordinator position and provide honoraria to future participants with lived/ living experience;

AND FINALLY THAT the proposed 2021-2025 financial plan for the Homelessness Supports service, function 451, be approved.

### **Executive Summary**

- The maximum levy for this service is the greater of \$165,000 or \$0.02 per \$1,000 of the net taxable value of land and improvements for regional hospital district purposes. No change is proposed to the maximum levy at this time, therefore the maximum requisition available in 2021 is \$278,471. Revenue is primarily derived from tax requisition.
- Participants in the service are the City of Courtenay, the Village of Cumberland, Part of Electoral Area A (Baynes Sound), Electoral Area B (Lazo North) and Electoral Area C (Puntledge – Black Creek).
- The Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness (the Coalition) recommends three new projects for funding allocation totalling \$200,000 within the proposed 2021 financial plan:
  - \$100,000 towards Gwax'dzi dsas: Tall Tree Place - 22 modular units for families in Cumberland (2, 3, 4 bedroom) in partnership with Dawn to Dawn Action on Homelessness Society (Comox Valley Transition Society);
  - \$70,000 towards 24 - 40 studio and one bedroom units, with some supports, for Indigenous elders on the Wachiay Friendship Centre property (Wachiay Friendship Centre); and

- \$30,000 towards construction of a townhouse – one of three townhouses to be constructed at 1375 Piercy Avenue, Courtenay (Habitat for Humanity Vancouver Island North).
- Staff proposes that \$30,000 be used to help fund the Coalition’s coordinator position as well as an allocation of \$5,000 to the Coalition to assist with supporting individuals with lived/ living experience of homelessness to participate in the service (i.e. provision of honoraria). Funding for these two purposes is consistent with the recommendations of the service review, completed in January 2021.
- The Coalition’s 2021 Housing Plan is attached (Appendix A) as is the Coalition’s 2020 Annual Report (Appendix B).

Prepared by:

Concurrence:

**A. Mullaly**

**S. Smith**

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Alana Mullaly, RPP, MCIP  
Senior Manager of Sustainability and  
Regional Growth Strategy

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Scott Smith, RPP, MCIP  
General Manager of Planning and  
Development Services

**Government Partners and Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)**

Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness	✓
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**Board Strategic Drivers**

Table 1 below notes the degree of influence the drivers have on projects and work plans.

**Table 1: Board Strategic Drivers**

<p><b>Fiscal responsibility:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff will seek out opportunities for grant funding and voluntary amenity contributions at the time of rezoning applications as they arise.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Climate crisis and environmental stewardship and protection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Projects are not significantly influenced by this driver.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community partnerships:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Key partner is the Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness who provides the expertise and leadership to execute projects and works with the various community partners to deliver housing and supports.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Indigenous relations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Wachiay Friendship Centre, representing the interests of urban indigenous citizens, is a member of the Coalition. In 2021, funding is recommended to assist with construction costs of housing for Indigenous elders on the Wachiay site.</li> </ul>

**Rethink Comox Valley / COVID-19 Response and Renewal**


In 2020, the pandemic shone a light on the acute need for safe and affordable housing and supports for those experiencing and/ or at risk of experiencing homelessness in the Comox Valley. This service and the recommendations contained within this report are aligned with the board’s direction to support vulnerable residents in our COVID-19 Response and Renewal efforts.

## Financial Plan Overview

The 2021 - 2025 proposed five-year financial plan for the Homelessness Supports service, function 451, including service establishment information, the requisition summary and the operating budget, is available within the full proposed budget binder, provided in both searchable PDF and e-reader formats, located on the CVRD financial plan web page at [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/currentbudget](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/currentbudget).

Table 2 below summarizes the 2021 proposed budget as compared to the 2020 adopted budget. Significant variances from the 2020 adopted budget will be discussed in the financial plan sections that follow.

**Table 2: Financial Plan Highlights**

 <b>2021 Proposed Budget</b>		<b>#451 CV Homelessness Supports</b>		
<b>Operating</b>	<b>2020 Budget</b>	<b>2021 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	
<b>Revenue</b>				
Requisition	165,000	245,000	80,000	
Prior Years Surplus	77,398	50,000	(27,398)	
Transfer from Reserve	2,474		(2,474)	
	<b>\$ 244,872</b>	<b>\$ 295,000</b>	<b>\$ 50,128</b>	
<b>Expenditures</b>				
Operating	237,452	287,320	49,868	
Contribution to Reserve	1,898	1,509	(389)	
Tsfr Other Functions	5,522	6,171	649	
	<b>\$ 244,872</b>	<b>\$ 295,000</b>	<b>\$ 50,128</b>	

Highlights of the 2021 - 2025 proposed financial plan for function 451 include:

### Revenue Sources

Tax requisition is the primary revenue source. Additional revenue sources and increased revenue generation are the substance of key recommendations of the service review. In 2021, staff is proposing that the \$245,000 tax requisition be used for project allocation, funding for the coordinator position, and the provision of honoraria to individuals with lived/ living experience of homelessness to participate in the service. If the board chooses, there is an option to increase the requisition by 25 per cent in 2021. Such an increase to the maximum requisition, which could be done in accordance with the Local Government Act and the Regional District Establishing Bylaw Approval Exemption Regulation, would result in an estimated new maximum levy equaling the greater of \$348,089 or \$0.025 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value.

### Personnel

There are no CVRD personnel costs attributed to this service. A management fee of \$1,000 is transferred annually to the Regional Growth Strategy service in order to administer the Homelessness Supports service. A part-time coordinator is employed by the Comox Valley Transition Society on the Coalition's behalf. The coordinator is integral to the delivery model of this

service providing both leadership and expertise. In 2020, the City of Courtenay provided one time funding to the Comox Valley Transition Society to assist with funding the position.

Staff suggests that there is significant risk to the sustainability of the service model in the absence of core funding for the coordinator position. This risk was flagged in the service review. The proposed financial plan includes \$30,000 for the coordinator position (beginning in 2021 through to 2025). The coordinator will continue as an employee of the Comox Valley Transition Society and the money for the position will be provided directly to the Comox Valley Transition Society as the employer.

### Operations

In 2020, the service provided \$150,000 in funding toward the following projects (plus carry forward funding to complete 2019 projects):

1. \$5,000 for pre-construction planning for 12 - 24 studio and one bedroom units for Indigenous elders (Wachiay Friendship Centre);
2. \$45,000 towards the purchase of a six bedroom dwelling with supports for women in recovery and their infant children (Comox Valley Transition Society) (subsequently re-allocated through a budget amendment);
3. \$90,000 towards purchase of a three bedroom condominium unit for a family (Dawn to Dawn Action on Homelessness Society);
4. \$10,000 towards construction of two single family dwellings (Habitat for Humanity Vancouver Island North);

In 2021, staff is proposing that \$200,000 be allocated to support those projects recommended by CVCEH with \$30,000 to help fund the coordinator position and \$5,000 to provide honoraria to support participation of individuals with lived/ living experience of homelessness in the service. Funding for the coordinator and the provision of honoraria are recommendations of the service review and are consistent with best practice. The intention being to reduce barriers to participation and to enrich decision-making processes.

Allocation of the \$200,000 for projects is recommended for distribution as follows:

- \$100,000 towards Gwax'dzi dsas: Tall Tree Place - 22 modular units for families in Cumberland (2, 3, 4 bedroom) in partnership with Dawn to Dawn Action on Homelessness Society (Comox Valley Transition Society);
- \$70,000 towards 24 - 40 studio and one bedroom units, with some supports, for Indigenous elders on the Wachiay Friendship Centre property (Wachiay Friendship Centre);
- \$30,000 towards construction of a townhouse – one of three townhouses to be constructed at 1375 Piercy Avenue, Courtenay (Habitat for Humanity Vancouver Island North).

The prior year's surplus of \$50,000, shown in Table 2, has been committed through two 2020 board resolutions to the Comox Valley Transition Society to help support the continued operation of the Connect Warming Centre.

### Capital

There are no capital projects undertaken by the CVRD related to this service.

### Transfers to Other Functions

In 2021, \$5,171 is proposed to be repaid to the feasibility study service as a final repayment stemming from the establishment of this service in 2015.

### Reserves

The service's future expenditure reserve had a balance at the end of 2020 of \$32,030. The service delivery policy allows for funds to be set aside for a future activity, and the board may assign funds to a reserve account.

### Tax Impacts

- Based on the 2021 completed assessment roll, the estimated residential tax rate for this service is expected to be \$0.0152 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value.
- The 2020 residential tax rate for the service was \$0.0107 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value.
- For a residence with an assessed value of \$500,000, the total tax impact is estimated to be \$7.60 (as compared to \$5.35 in 2020).

### 2021 Work Plan

The recently completed service review identified a series of recommendations pertaining to:

- Revenue generation
- Sustainability of the service delivery model
- Evidence-based planning and funding allocation
- Funding application evaluation, and
- Funding decision processes, including participation of individuals with lived/ living experience of homelessness.

Throughout 2021, staff will continue to work with the coordinator and the Coalition's leadership team to identify opportunities and/ or options to implement the findings of the service review and the Five Year Action Plan not otherwise addressed through this proposed budget. Staff will report back to the board with a proposed implementation schedule and recommendations, including a report to specifically address options for the requisition in future years.

### **Citizen/Public Relations**

The CVRD website has a page dedicated to sharing information about the service.

<https://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/services/homelessness-support>

In 2021, per the recommendations of the service review, planning staff will work with communications staff to develop promotional materials to raise the profile and transparency of the service, including communicating how the funds have been used and the total value of the investments that the funding has generated.

Attachments: Appendix A – “Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness – 2021 Housing Plan”

Appendix B – “Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness – 2020 Annual Report”



Alana Mullaly  
 Senior Manager of Sustainability and RGS Planning  
 Comox Valley Regional District  
 770 Harmston Ave  
 Courtenay, BC V9N 0G8

December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Dear Ms. Mullaly,

The Coalition to End Homelessness has 4 strategic directions which guide the work we do.

- Strategic Priority #1: Create Additional Housing & Supports
- Strategic Priority #2: Community Collaboration, Prevention & Education
- Strategic Priority #3: Coalition Capacity Building
- Strategic Priority #4: Funding & Fundraising

This year, we made some changes to the way we report on these strategies.

Our annual update of Strategic Priority #1 accomplishments can now be found in our **Housing Plan** (attached). This includes the CVRD Housing Needs Assessment key findings, housing built since 2016, Homeless Count results, housing funded through the CVRD Homelessness Supports Service as well as other affordable housing projects.

Strategic Priorities 2-4 are related specifically to the work of the Coalition and can now be found in the Coalition's **Action Plan** which is an internal document that will be updated along with our Terms of Reference in early 2021.

Annual updates on other activities and progress can be found in our **Annual Report** (attached). Archived versions of older plans can be found on our website [www.cvhousing.ca](http://www.cvhousing.ca)

The Coalition's recommended projects for the coming fiscal year are listed in 2021: Strategy One in our Housing Plan on page 19.

Our recommendations are based on the two funding scenarios outlined to us and are as follows.

Agency	HSS Funding Scenario 1: \$150,000	HSS Funding Scenario 2: \$200,000
Comox Valley Transition Society	\$75,000	\$100,000
Wachiay Friendship Centre	\$52,500	\$70,000
Habitat for Humanity	\$22,500	\$30,000

- **Comox Valley Transition Society**  
 Gwax'dzi'dsas: Tall Tree Place - 22 modular units for families in Cumberland (2,3,4 bedroom) in partnership with Dawn to Dawn Action on Homelessness Society
- **Wachiay Friendship Centre**  
 24-40 studio and 1-bedroom units for Indigenous Elders with some supports, on the Wachiay site.
- **Habitat for Humanity Vancouver Island North**  
 12 units/3 townhomes being built at 1375 Piercy. This is for the first townhome, under an affordable home ownership model.

Further details on other upcoming housing projects can be found in our Housing Plan starting on page 20.

Please let me know if you have any questions about our new reporting methods or our 2021 HSS Fund recommendations. Our hope is that by separating these reports they are more digestible and easier to read and report on.

I look forward to talking about these projects in more detail at a presentation to the CVRD Board in the New Year, and as always, we thank you for your ongoing support and collaboration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea Cupelli". The signature is stylized with a large initial "A" and a cursive "C".

Andrea Cupelli  
Coordinator, Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness on behalf of the Leadership Team

## 2021- Strategy #1

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS	<b>Build 22 units of affordable housing for single parent-led families in Cumberland</b>	-Families -Youth -Indigenous	Comox Valley Transition Society	Comox Valley Transition Society Dawn to Dawn Village of Cumberland Island Health BC Housing	\$8,700,000	<b>CVRD - \$75,000</b> (Regional funding)  BC Housing - \$8,375,000 (Provincial funding)  CMHC - \$250,000 (Federal Funding)	Housing will consist of 25% of units at Income Assistance Rates, 25% Rent Geared to Income, and 50% at below market rates.  A mix of 2,3- and 4-bedroom units for families  Construction completed and building occupied by Fall 2021
	<b>Build 24-40 studio and 1-bedroom units with some supports for Elders</b>	-Indigenous -Elders -Studio suites	Wachiay Friendship Centre	Wachiay Friendship Centre	\$6,975,000	<b>CVRD – \$52,500</b> (Regional funding)  BC Housing - \$3,000,000 (Provincial funding)	Housing will consist of 25% of units at Income Assistance Rates, 25% Rent Geared to Income, and 50% at below market rates.  Construction completed and occupied by Summer 2022
	<b>Build a total of 12 homes for Habitat for Humanity</b>	-Families	Habitat for Humanity	Habitat for Humanity North Vancouver Island	\$3,400,000	<b>CVRD - \$22,500</b> (Regional Funding)  Co-investment Fund - \$250,000 (Federal Funding)  BC Housing - \$200,000 (Provincial Funding)	First fourplex to be completed by end of 2021



# Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness



## 2021 Housing Plan



COMOX VALLEY  
Coalition To End  
HOMELESSNESS

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# COMOX VALLEY COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

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## WHO WE ARE

The Coalition to End Homelessness is a collective of 31 member agencies who plan, coordinate, recommend, advocate for, and implement community responses to homelessness and increasing affordable housing.

## HOW WE DO IT

### ***We work within a wheelhouse of housing options to address homelessness***

- ✦ A wheelhouse includes a safety net (emergency shelter, short-term supportive housing), housing with supports (long-term supportive housing, subsidized rental housing) and affordable market housing (rental and homeownership).

### ***We believe in the power of collaboration and partnerships***

- ✦ A collaborative systems approach is used to provide the most effective support strategies, while securing adequate resources.

### ***We use a preventative, client-based approach***

- ✦ Supports are delivered with unconditional positive regard, and emphasis will be placed on outreach, frequent contact with clients, relationship building, and individualized services.
- ✦ Ending homelessness requires prevention strategies to ensure more people do not become homeless.

### ***We use our platform to educate, increase public awareness, and build community***

- ✦ A coordinated public awareness program builds community understanding of homelessness.

### ***We make funding recommendations for the Comox Valley Regional District Homelessness Supports Service Fund***

- ✦ In 2015 the CVRD held a binding referendum asking if voters would pay at least \$5 on their annual property tax to support local initiatives to help address homelessness. Courtenay, Cumberland and the three electoral areas of the CVRD voted. Comox, Hornby and Denman Islands were not included.

53% were in favour of creating the Homelessness Supports Service allowing the CVRD to fund local affordable housing initiatives based on the Coalition's Housing Plan. Decisions are approved by the CVRD board on an annual basis. Comox has found another way to support the Coalition's recommendations in the Housing Plan. Since 2015, 78 units of affordable housing have been built and funded in part through this fund.

# COMOX VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT 2020 HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In 2018, the province introduced legislation requiring all local governments to review local housing needs and consider them when creating policy and development decisions. Local governments need to collect data to understand housing supply and demand within the housing wheelhouse. This information helps communities identify gaps and address factors that may be impacting housing supply.

In the Comox Valley, the CVRD, the Village of Cumberland, the Town of Comox and the City of Courtenay partnered under the Regional Growth Strategy to undertake the regional housing needs assessment. The findings will help to meet Goal #1 of the Regional Growth Strategy: Ensure a diversity of affordable housing options to meet evolving regional demographics and needs.

The Coalition was proud to be a partner in this important project. The following key findings on housing needs in the Comox Valley have been incorporated into our Housing and Action Plans and will help guide our future advocacy.

## KEY FINDINGS

### People are struggling

- ✚ The Comox Valley is host to an aging population and seniors nonmarket housing is needed
- ✚ Younger people and young families experience major challenges in finding appropriate, affordable housing
- ✚ Individuals living alone are struggling the most to find or maintain housing
- ✚ Equity-seeking groups are more often in Core Housing Need (spending more than 30% of their income on housing)
- ✚ There is a lack of accessible housing options
- ✚ New housing must be connected to public transportation options

### There is a severe lack of studio units available

- ✚ Studio units can often provide affordable housing options for vulnerable individuals.

### There is disparity between renters and homeowners

- ✚ 29.9% of renters in the Comox Valley fall into Core Housing Need (spending more than 30% of their income on housing)
- ✚ 14% of renters in the Comox Valley fall into Extreme Housing Need (spending more than 50% of their income on housing)
- ✚ Renters are 6 times more likely than homeowners to experience Extreme Core Housing Need

### The private housing market alone cannot meet housing needs. Non-market housing and supports are needed.

- ✚ Rent subsidies are not keeping up with rising housing costs
- ✚ The BC Housing waitlist for subsidized units in the Comox Valley had 270 applications as of January 2020

# HOMELESSNESS IN THE COMOX VALLEY

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the Coalition in partnership with BC Housing and the Homelessness Services Association of BC conducted our 3<sup>rd</sup> Homeless Count as part of a coordinated response to measure homelessness across BC.

Homeless counts represent only those individuals identified during a 24-hour period and are therefore undercounts of homelessness in a community. This is because not everyone experiencing homelessness can be found and not everyone who is found consents to be surveyed. While homeless counts are an accepted methodological tool, the numbers are understood to be the minimum number of people who are experiencing homeless on a given day in that community.

The Coalition knows there are many people experiencing hidden homelessness and also those who are precariously housed in the Comox Valley. As this count was conducted just days before the COVID-19 global pandemic was announced we also anticipate due to a variety of economic factors that more people (some for the first time) are experiencing homelessness in our community.

The Homeless Count is an important tool (but not the only tool) in our advocacy toolbox.

## Comparative Analysis of Comox Valley Homelessness over Time

24-hour period	2016	2018	2020
# of individuals experiencing homelessness	101	117	132
# of unsheltered individuals	60	68	74
# of sheltered individuals	41	49	58
% of respondents who identified as indigenous	43%	32%	20%
% of respondents who identified as male	49%	52%	59%
% of respondents who are between the ages of 25-54	66%	65%	69%
% of respondents who are seniors (aged 55+)	17%	29%	17%

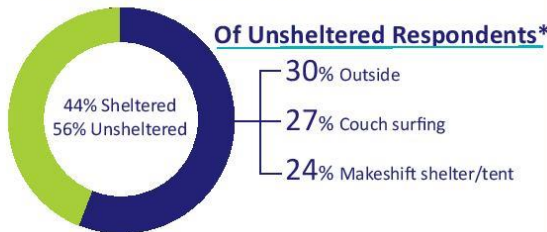
# Comox Valley - 2020 Homeless Count



The 2020 Point in Time homeless count occurred in the Comox Valley on the evening of March 10 and the day of March 11 to help provide an overall snapshot of homelessness in the community.

**132** People were identified as experiencing homelessness compared to 117 in 2018.

Where did individuals stay the night of the count?



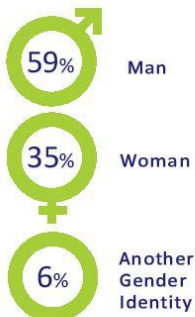
### AGE BREAKDOWN



**40%** Experienced homelessness for the first time as a youth

**30%** Had been in foster care, a youth group home, or under a youth agreement

### GENDER



### SEXUAL ORIENTATION

**13%** of respondents identified as 2SLGBTQIA+

### TRANS EXPERIENCE

**5%** of respondents identified as having trans experience

### RACIAL IDENTITY

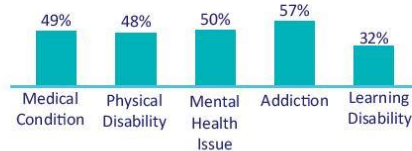


Not listed includes respondents who selected 'Not listed' and may have provided a write-in answer, e.g. nationality, ethnicity or religious group.

### INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

**20%** of respondents identified as Indigenous  
Compared to 6% of the general population (2016 Census)

### HEALTH CONCERNS



**33%** Reported an acquired brain injury

**68%** Reported two or more health concerns

### LENGTH OF TIME HOMELESS

**33%** Under 6 months

**53%** 1 year or more

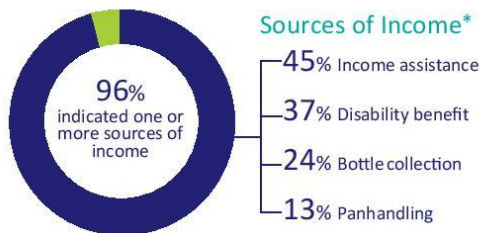
**78%** of respondents had been in the community for at least 1 year

**55%** of respondents had been in the community 10 years or more

### REASONS FOR HOUSING LOSS\*



### INCOME



### SERVICES ACCESSED\*



\* Top responses highlighted

# THE HOUSING WHEELHOUSE



**The Housing Wheelhouse from the City of Kelowna. Source: The Housing Wheelhouse, City of Kelowna (2017)**

The housing continuum (used in previous Coalition housing plans) is the range of housing types available in a community — from emergency shelters on one end, all the way to homeownership on the other. This model supposes that people start somewhere on the continuum with homeownership being the ultimate goal.

The City of Kelowna’s Wheelhouse concept is a circular model, reflecting the reality that people’s housing needs are changing as they go through their lives. It is not a linear progression and no one level or type of housing is greater or more important than another.

By de-emphasizing homeownership in favour of a more diverse and evolving approach, the Wheelhouse allows a more efficient, effective, and just way to address people’s changing housing needs.

According to the 2020 Comox Valley Regional Housing Needs Assessment, The Wheelhouse is a tool to collectively envision and build a housing system that includes all forms of housing, rather than focusing solely on homeownership. This is reflected in Goal #1 of the Coalition’s Housing Plan.

# THE COMOX VALLEY WHEELHOUSE



Emergency shelter in the Comox Valley includes Salvation Army’s Pidcock House and Comox Valley Transition Society’s LILLI Shelter. Short-term supportive housing includes transitional housing (time-limited housing with supports). As of 2020, there is only one long-term supportive housing building in the Comox Valley – The Junction, operated by John Howard Society of North Vancouver Island. Subsidized rental housing includes sites such as the BC Housing operated Washington Apartments, seniors housing and housing for individuals with disabilities. On the market side of housing, there are some affordable (tenants not paying more than 30% of income on rent) rentals, with more expected to come online in 2021. Habitat for Humanity provides homes under their affordable home ownership model.

*For a full inventory of housing types and operators, please see Appendix A.*

# AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUILT/SECURED IN THE COMOX VALLEY 2016-PRESENT

Year	Units	Housing Type	Lead Agency	Financial Supporters	Notes
2016	2 units	Transitional Housing	Amethyst House	Comox Valley Transition Society BC Housing <b>CVRD</b>	2 units for women in recovery
2016	4 units	Subsidized Housing	Comox Valley Transition Society	Comox Valley Transition Society BC Housing <b>CVRD</b> Town of Comox	Four 2-bedroom units. Rent geared to income
2017	2 units	Subsidized Housing	Dawn to Dawn	Dawn to Dawn <b>CVRD</b> Town of Comox	2 condos secured for low barrier nonprofit housing.
2017	13 units	Supportive Housing	Mental Health & Substance Use	MHSU BC Housing VIHA	13 units at Ryan Hill Apartments for those participating in the MSHU program.
2017	6 units	Transitional Housing	Salvation Army	Salvation Army BC Housing	6 transitional units built at Pidcock House
2018	34 units	Subsidized Housing	Wachiay Friendship Centre	M'akola Housing BC Housing <b>CVRD</b> City of Courtenay	34 units of affordable mixed housing (rent geared to income)
2018	46 units	Supportive Housing	John Howard Society	John Howard Society BC Housing City of Courtenay	46 units of housing with 24/7 onsite support staff
2018	11 units	Transitional Housing	John Howard Society	John Howard Society City of Courtenay BC Housing <b>CVRD</b>	11 units for youth with supports
2018	5 units	Transitional Housing	Amethyst House	CV Transition Society <b>CVRD</b>	5 units for women in recovery
2018	4 units	Affordable Home Ownership	Habitat for Humanity	Habitat for Humanity <b>CVRD</b> Town of Comox City of Courtenay	4 homes for families (2 occupied in 2018)
2019	1 unit	Subsidized Housing	Dawn to Dawn	Dawn to Dawn <b>CVRD</b>	1 3brdm condo secured for low barrier nonprofit housing
2019	8 units	Subsidized Housing	Comox Valley Transition Society	Comox Valley Transition Society BC Housing <b>CVRD</b>	Eight 2-bedroom units. Rent geared to income
2019	4 units	Affordable Home Ownership	Habitat for Humanity	Habitat for Humanity <b>CVRD</b> Town of Comox	4 homes for families (4 occupied in 2019)
2020	2 units	Affordable Home Ownership	Habitat for Humanity	Habitat for Humanity <b>CVRD</b> Town of Comox	2 homes for families (occupied in 2020)
2020	1 unit	Subsidized Housing	Dawn to Dawn	Dawn to Dawn <b>CVRD</b>	1 2-bedroom condo secured for low barrier nonprofit housing
2020	3 units	Subsidized Housing	Dawn to Dawn	Dawn to Dawn Comox Rotary	3 container homes built and occupied
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>146 units</b>				



# THE PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

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The Coalition to End Homelessness has 4 strategic directions which guide the work we do.

The CVRD Housing Needs Assessment key findings, and housing funded through the CVRD Homelessness Supports Service Fund as well as other affordable housing projects within our community can be found in Strategic Priority #1: Create Additional Housing & Supports.

Other strategic priorities related specifically to the work of the Coalition can be found within the Coalition's **Action Plan**. Annual updates on the Coalition's progress can be found in our **Annual Report**.

In this **Housing Plan** we outline what we recently accomplished as well as what is upcoming for Strategic Priority #1: Create Additional Housing & Supports. This plan is updated annually and is a living document.

Archived versions of the plan can be found on our website [www.cvhousing.ca](http://www.cvhousing.ca)

# What We Accomplished in 2020

**Strategy #1:**  
**Create Additional Housing & Supports**

## 2020- Strategy #1: What We Accomplished

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Develop plans for 22 units of affordable housing for single parent-led families in Cumberland</b>	-Families -Accessible -Subsidized rent - Connected	Comox Valley Transition Society	Dawn to Dawn Village of Cumberland Island Health BC Housing	TBD	<b>CVRD - \$45,000</b> (Regional funding)  BC Housing Community Housing Fund (Provincial funding)	Housing will consist of 25% of units at Income Assistance Rates, 25% Rent Geared to Income, and 50% at below market rates.  Plans developed and application submitted to BC Housing December 2020
	<b>Build 24-40 studio and 1-bedroom units with some supports for Elders</b>	-Indigenous -Elders	Wachiay Friendship Centre	Wachiay Friendship Centre	\$6,975,000	<b>CVRD – \$5,000</b> (Regional funding)  CMHC Seed Funding \$98,000 (Federal funding)	Worked with development consultants, plans build  Municipal approvals as required  Plans developed and application submitted to BC Housing December 2020
	<b>Purchase condo for family</b>	-Families -Equity-seeking groups	Dawn to Dawn	Dawn to Dawn	\$250,000	<b>CVRD - \$90,000</b> (Regional Funding)  Dawn to Dawn - \$150,000	One permanent multi-bedroom condo purchased for a single parent led family and occupied in 2020
	<b>Create a total of 10 homes for Habitat for Humanity</b>	-Families	Habitat for Humanity	Habitat for Humanity North Vancouver Island	\$2,100,000	<b>CVRD - \$10,000</b> (Regional Funding) Town of Comox - \$30,000 (Municipal Funding) CMHC - \$15,000 (Federal Funding) BC Housing - \$150,000	Final phase of Lake Trail (2 units) built and occupied in 2020

## 2020- Strategy #1: What We Accomplished

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Establish and operate Warming Centre (Connect)</b>	-Homeless -Precariously housed -Indigenous -Seniors -Youth	Coalition to End Homelessness (Coordination)  Comox Valley Transition Society (Fiscal Host and operator)	City of Courtenay CVRD Division of Family Practice Dawn to Dawn Wachaiy AVI Indigenous Women's Sharing Society Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction	\$278,000	<b>CVRD - \$60,000</b> for capital costs (Regional Funding)  \$58,000 Local grants & fundraising  \$50,000 SPARCBC (Provincial Funding)  \$12,600 City of Courtenay for lease and utilities (Municipal Funding)	Site secured, minor renovations complete, operational and behavioural protocol established, staff hired, programs built and operational by January 2020  Strict health protocols and physical distancing measures in place. COVID-19 symptom screening and education, washroom, cell phone charging, access to wi-fi, coffee, hygiene supplies, warm clothing, and outdoor gear.  Staff fill out income assistance forms, pandemic crisis funds, Vulnerability Assessments, provide referrals to other agencies & access to living supports  Physician attending Connect weekly to assist people on-site  License to Occupy extended until October 2021

## 2020- Strategy #1: What We Accomplished

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Develop and operate Shower Program</b>	-Homeless -Precariously Housed	Comox Valley Transition Society	Coalition to End Homelessness City of Courtenay		\$7500 Comox Valley Community Foundation (Local Funding)  \$11600 United Way  City of Courtenay (Municipal Funding)	Provide a shower program at the Lewis Centre 3 mornings a week for people experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness
	<b>Create Pandemic Housing Proposal</b>	-Homeless -Indigenous -Seniors -Youth	Coalition	CVRD City of Courtenay Village of Cumberland Town of Comox		BC Housing	Collaboratively created a pandemic housing proposal for 50 units for a temporary emergency response centre and 100 units of supportive housing  Multiple meetings with BC Housing and municipal leadership  Proposal endorsement from municipalities  Sent to BC Housing December 2020

## 2020- Strategy #1: What We Accomplished

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Establish Pandemic Response Motel Rooms for those experiencing homelessness</b>	-Homeless -Indigenous -Seniors -Youth	Comox Valley Transition Society	BC Housing Coalition to End Homelessness		BC Housing (Provincial Funding)  CVRD – \$23,179 (Local Funding)  Comox Valley Community Foundation – \$22,000 (Local Funding)  Comox Valley Community Health Network – \$20,000 (Local Funding)  United Way - \$18,000 (Regional Funding)	In response to pandemic 42 units with wrap around support services, security and meals developed and occupied  Outreach van purchased to drive occupants to appointments, and to deliver meals
	<b>Plan 40 units of second stage housing for women led families who have experienced violence</b>	-Families	Comox Valley Transition Society		TBD	BC Housing	Second Stage Housing for Women and their children, for up to three years  Worked with BC Housing on plans and re-zoning process with City of Courtenay.

## 2020- Strategy #1: What We Accomplished

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Redevelop D'Esterre Gardens from 16 to 55 units of affordable housing for seniors</b>	-Seniors -Studio suites	Comox Valley Affordable Housing Society	Comox Valley Affordable Housing Society	TBD	BC Housing	Worked with development consultants on plans  Rezoning and permits acquired  Residents relocated  Plans developed and application submitted to BC Housing
	<b>Develop plans for 16-20 units of mixed rental housing for adults with developmental disabilities and rent geared to income seniors housing</b>	-Accessible -Seniors -Equity-seeking groups -Subsidized -Connected	L'arche Comox Valley		TBD		Worked with development consultants on project design
	<b>Plan 8 new units of affordable seniors housing</b>	-Seniors	Denman Community Land Trust Association	Denman Community Land Trust Association	\$1,000,000	Fundraising \$80,000	Funds for land purchase raised  Worked on details of land purchase  Work with CMHC and other funders on housing potential in 2021

## 2020- Strategy #1: What We Accomplished

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>North Island College Student Residences for 188 individuals</b>	-Youth -Families -Studio units	North Island College		\$30,000,000	Provincial funding	NIC conducted schematic design with architect  Project approval from Ministry expected in 2021
	<b>Develop relationship with co-op housing working groups</b>	-Families -Seniors -Youth -Individuals	Comox Valley and Cumberland Co-op Housing City of Courtenay	CVRD Village of Cumberland Town of Comox Glacierview Lodge			Relationship development with co-op housing working groups  Regional meetings held to discuss opportunities
	<b>Continue with Seniors Housing Needs Assessment</b>	-Seniors	Coalition Glacierview Lodge Community Health Network	Glacierview Lodge Vancouver Island University Community Health Network Coalition			Open House & Design Charette in January 2020  Final findings, communication out to public in May 2020  Planning Committee at GVL continues
	<b>Offer housing-related feedback for City of Courtenay's OCP</b>	-Seniors -Indigenous -Youth -Families -Homeless	City of Courtenay	Coalition			Encourage creation of laneway, secondary suites, coach houses and nonmarket housing stock



## 2020- Strategy #1: What We Accomplished

STRATEGY #1: CREATE	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS	<b>Comox Valley Housing Needs Assessment</b>	-Seniors -Indigenous -Youth -Families -Homeless	CVRD	CVRD Coalition Community Health Network			Assisted with focus groups including people with lived/living experience  Provided information and assisted with communications as necessary

# Housing Planned for 2021

## Strategy #1: Create Additional Housing & Supports

## 2021- Strategy #1

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS	<b>Build 22 units of affordable housing for single parent-led families in Cumberland</b>	-Families -Youth -Indigenous	Comox Valley Transition Society	Comox Valley Transition Society Dawn to Dawn Village of Cumberland Island Health BC Housing	\$8,700,000	<b>CVRD - \$75,000</b> (Regional funding)  BC Housing - \$8,375,000 (Provincial funding)  CMHC - \$250,000 (Federal Funding)	Housing will consist of 25% of units at Income Assistance Rates, 25% Rent Geared to Income, and 50% at below market rates.  A mix of 2,3- and 4-bedroom units for families  Construction completed and building occupied by Fall 2021
	<b>Build 24-40 studio and 1-bedroom units with some supports for Elders</b>	-Indigenous -Elders -Studio suites	Wachiay Friendship Centre	Wachiay Friendship Centre	\$6,975,000	<b>CVRD – \$52,500</b> (Regional funding)  BC Housing - \$3,000,000 (Provincial funding)	Housing will consist of 25% of units at Income Assistance Rates, 25% Rent Geared to Income, and 50% at below market rates.  Construction completed and occupied by Summer 2022
	<b>Build a total of 12 homes for Habitat for Humanity</b>	-Families	Habitat for Humanity	Habitat for Humanity North Vancouver Island	\$3,400,000	<b>CVRD - \$22,500</b> (Regional Funding)  Co-investment Fund - \$250,000 (Federal Funding)  BC Housing - \$200,000 (Provincial Funding)	First fourplex to be completed by end of 2021

## 2021- Strategy #1

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Purchase house for a family</b>	-Families	Dawn to Dawn	Dawn to Dawn	\$480,000	Town of Comox - \$30,000 (Municipal Funding)	Purchase home for family in Comox, preventing current tenants from being evicted into homelessness
	<b>Redevelop D'Esterre Gardens from 16 to 55 units of affordable housing for seniors</b>	-Seniors -Studio suites	Comox Valley Affordable Housing Society	Comox Valley Affordable Housing Society	TBD	BC Housing	Housing will consist of 25% of units at Income Assistance Rates, 25% Rent Geared to Income, and 50% at below market rates.  Construction to begin Winter 2021 and residents to move back in January 2022
	<b>Build 1 unit of shipping container micro homes</b>	-Homeless -Studio suites	Dawn to Dawn	Comox Rotary	\$20,000	Comox Rotary - \$20,000 (Local funding)	1 unit to be built and occupied in 2021
	<b>Build 40 units of second stage housing for women led families who have experienced violence</b>	-Families	Comox Valley Transition Society	Comox Valley Transition Society	TBD	BC Housing  Women's Transition House	Second Stage Housing built and occupied for women and their children, for up to three years
	<b>Continue to provide Pandemic Motel Self-Isolation Room Response</b>	-Homeless -Indigenous -Seniors -Youth	Comox Valley Transition Society  Wachiay Friendship Centre	Coalition to End Homelessness  Division of Family Practice		BC Housing (ongoing) (Provincial Funding)	Continue motel pandemic response 42 units with wrap around support services, security, medical care, and meals

## 2021- Strategy #1

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Create space for emergency overflow shelter or Emergency Response Centre</b>	-Homeless -Indigenous -Seniors -Youth	Coalition			BC Housing	Explore options to create an 'overflow' emergency shelter for 20 individuals during pandemic or an official Emergency Response Centre for up to 50 individuals
	<b>Develop plans for 8 new units of affordable seniors housing</b>	-Seniors	Denman Community Land Trust Association	Denman Community Land Trust Association	TBD	Fundraising  CMHC  BC Housing	Funds for land purchase raised  Work with CMHC and other funders on housing plans in 2021
	<b>Build North Island College Student Residences for 188 individuals</b>	-Youth -Families -Studio suites	North Island College		\$30,000,000	Provincial funding	Continue relationship with NIC to support development of student residence  NIC conducted schematic design with architect  Project approval from Ministry in 2021  Occupancy goal of September 2022
	<b>Build 21 units of mixed rental housing for adults with developmental disabilities</b>	-Youth -Equity Seeking groups	L'arche Comox Valley		TBD	Fundraising  CMHC	Working with development consultants  Construction completed and occupied by June 2022

## 2021- Strategy #1

	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>STRATEGY #1: CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Develop plans for co-op housing</b>	-Seniors -Families -Youth -Indigenous -Equity Seeking groups	Comox Valley and Cumberland Co-op Housing	City of Courtenay	TBD	TBD	Co-op Housing groups identify land and funding opportunities  Work with developer on plans
	<b>Develop plan for Phase 1 of affordable housing for seniors</b>	-Seniors	Glacierview Lodge		TBD	TBD	Work with developers, City, and partners to create plans for Phase 1 of housing
	<b>Develop plan to build 100 units of supportive housing</b>	-Homeless -Studio suites	Coalition	Coalition	TBD	BC Housing	Work with BC Housing, municipalities, and non-profit agencies to develop 2 buildings (50 units each) of supportive housing by 2022
	<b>Explore opportunities to develop affordable housing on local church land</b>	-Homeless -Seniors -Youth -Indigenous -Equity Seeking groups -Studio suites	Coalition	Comox Valley Churches			Meet with local churches, non-profit housing providers, and municipal representatives to discuss and plan for opportunities to build affordable housing  Plans made

## 2021- Strategy #1

STRATEGY #1:	GOAL	HOUSING NEEDS	LEAD AGENCY	COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES	COST	POTENTIAL FUNDER	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>CREATE ADDITIONAL HOUSING AND NECESSARY SUPPORTS</b>	<b>Explore opportunities to develop affordable housing on SD71 land</b>	-Homeless -Seniors -Youth -Indigenous -Equity Seeking groups -Studio suites	Coalition	SD71			Meet with SD71 representatives, non-profit housing providers and municipal and provincial representatives to discuss and plan for opportunities to build affordable housing  Plans made

***Questions about our Plan? Please contact us!***

**Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness**

Email: [comoxvalleyhousing@gmail.com](mailto:comoxvalleyhousing@gmail.com)

Website: [www.cvhousing.ca](http://www.cvhousing.ca)

Find us on Facebook! [www.facebook.com/cvcoalitiontoendhomelessness](http://www.facebook.com/cvcoalitiontoendhomelessness)



## APPENDIX A: NONMARKET HOUSING INVENTORY 2020

**EMERGENCY SHELTERS**

Salvation Army Pidcock Shelter:	18 units
CV Transition Society LILLI House:	14 units

**SHORT-TERM SUPPORTIVE/TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**

Dawn to Dawn Action on Homelessness Society:	39 units
CV Transition Society Amethyst House:	7 units
Salvation Army Pidcock Shelter transitional units:	6 units
Stepping Stones Recovery House:	8 units
John Howard Society - The Station:	11 units
Comox Valley Recovery Centre:	11 units
Mental Health & Substance Use Ryan Hill Apartments:	13 units

**LONG-TERM SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

John Howard Society - The Junction:	46 units
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**SUBSIDIZED RENTAL HOUSING**

M'akola Housing	54 units
Lions Valley	32 units
New Horizons	9 units
Casa Loma	125 units
Kiwanis	64 units
Seniors Village	206 units
Quadra Gardens	28 units
Union Square	28 units
Centennial Place	125 units
L'arche Comox Valley	6 units
Braidwood	6 units
CV Transition Society	12 units
Washington Apartments	102 units

**AFFORDABLE MARKET**

Avalanche Hotel	35 units
Maple Pool Campground	52 units
Braidwood	28 units
Habitat for Humanity	20 homes



# COMOX VALLEY COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS



# ANNUAL REPORT

2020



COMOX VALLEY  
Coalition To End  
HOMELESSNESS

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# 2020: A Year in Review – Our Annual Report

2020 was a year no one is soon to forget. A global pandemic, the opioid crisis, racial tensions, extreme weather and so much more. This year has been about overcoming immense obstacles, and together, as a Coalition, we have.

During the pandemic, the Coalition and our agencies pivoted many of our responses to help protect those who needed it most. Throughout the year, we've been advocating for our member agencies, the people we serve, and our collective needs – you can read more about these many responses in detail throughout this report.

This year we planned and implemented a Homeless Count supported by 60+ volunteers, donations from small businesses, and even hosted a Self-Care Day featuring chiropractors, massage therapists, free haircuts, and a BBQ onsite at Connect. Sadly, this year results from the Count show a 13% overall increase in homelessness from 2018.

We are truly in this all together. Our Coalition member agencies quickly adapted to our monthly meetings moving from in-person, to virtually with 30-40 people attending each month. We welcomed 5 new member agencies to the Coalition.

Not only that, but this was also a busy year with our partners at the Comox Valley Regional District with the Regional Housing Needs Assessment being released, the work of the Regional Poverty Reduction Plan starting, and a review of our Homelessness Supports Service Fund. Oh! And there was also a Provincial Election!

2020 was the year we officially opened the Connect Warming Centre, which was quickly proven to be a much-needed cornerstone service in our community – especially during the first few months of the pandemic. Through Connect we started a Shower Program at the Lewis Centre 3 mornings a week, and even purchased a van for Outreach Workers to assist their clients, drive them to appointments, deliver hot meals, pick up donations and much more.

While the pandemic highlighted the disparities between those who have and those who do not, it also brought community together in meaningful ways from deliveries of hot meals, to donations of warm clothing and outdoor gear for those experiencing homelessness, to outdoor internet cafes and handwashing stations.

Besides working with our partners the Comox Valley Community Health Network on Seniors Housing, the Coalition also made some new partnerships including having a seat on the CVRD Emergency Operations Centre to advocate for the needs of our community's most vulnerable, and being a key partner in the Division of Family Practice Community Wellness Collaborative where we worked with physicians, nurses and clinicians leading to the much needed establishment of a physician outreach program where doctors meet vulnerable people where they are at whether it be motels, Connect, or in encampments.

This year, our programs and operations of the Coalition were kindly supported by funders such as the Comox Valley Community Foundation, United Way Central and North Vancouver Island, Homelessness Prevention Service: Rural & Remote, SPARCBC, BC Housing, CVRD, City of Courtenay and community donors.

Thank you to all our member agencies, advisors, municipal leaders, donors, funders and caring citizens of our community for all of your efforts in ending homelessness in the Comox Valley during this very challenging year.

# Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness

## WHO WE ARE

The Coalition to End Homelessness is a collective of 31 member agencies who plan, coordinate, recommend, advocate for, and implement community responses to homelessness and increasing affordable housing.

## HOW WE DO IT

### ***We work within a wheelhouse of housing options to address homelessness***

- ✦ A wheelhouse includes a safety net (emergency shelter, short-term supportive housing), housing with supports (long-term supportive housing, subsidized rental housing) and affordable market housing (rental and homeownership).

### ***We believe in the power of collaboration and partnerships***

- ✦ A collaborative systems approach is used to provide the most effective support strategies, while securing adequate resources.

### ***We use a preventative, client-based approach***

- ✦ Supports are delivered with unconditional positive regard, and emphasis will be placed on outreach, frequent contact with clients, relationship building, and individualized services.

- ✦ Ending homelessness requires prevention strategies to ensure more people do not become homeless.

### ***We use our platform to educate, increase public awareness, and build community***

- ✦ A coordinated public awareness program builds community understanding of homelessness.

### ***We make funding recommendations for the Comox Valley Regional District Homelessness Supports Service Fund***

### ***The Coalition to End Homelessness has 4 strategic directions which guide the work we do.***

- ✦ Strategic Priority #1: Create Additional Housing & Supports
- ✦ Strategic Priority #2: Community Collaboration, Prevention & Education
- ✦ Strategic Priority #3: Coalition Capacity Building
- ✦ Strategic Priority #4: Funding & Fundraising

Our annual update of our Strategic Priority #1 accomplishments can be found in our **Housing Plan**. This includes the CVRD Housing Needs Assessment key findings, housing built since 2016, Homeless Count results, housing funded through the CVRD Homelessness Supports Service as well as other affordable housing projects initiated.

Strategic Priorities 2-4 are related specifically to the work of the Coalition and can be found within the Coalition's **Action Plan**. Annual updates on other activities and progress can be found within this **Annual Report**.

Archived versions of the plan can be found on our website [www.cvhousing.ca](http://www.cvhousing.ca)

# HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE TEAM

The Homelessness Response Team (HRT) is a street outreach team coordinated by the Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness and consists of frontline outreach workers from a wide range of nonprofit agencies, as well as partnerships with Island Health, City of Courtenay, RCMP, Island Health and the Ministry of Poverty and Social Development.

The HRT meets weekly to identify gaps in the system of care to support homeless individuals, provide updates, ideas and share knowledge, resources, referrals, and support.

During outreach, HRT members engage with and support homeless persons on the street, parks, and at encampments, motels etc. Meeting people where they are at is particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic as many community services have been cancelled or reduced in hours. The HRT provides COVID-19 screening and education, agency referrals and income assistance support, hygiene supplies, and living supports. The HRT also identifies and prioritizes homeless persons who are medically fragile, or otherwise highly vulnerable and connects them to health services and physicians.

Through the Coalition the HRT also brings forward concerns and advocates for the needs of those experiencing homelessness. The HRT also provides education to the public to raise awareness, break stigma and build understanding on issues related to homelessness.

*“I have nothing but good things to say. Everyone has been super awesome. When I first got here, I was in rough shape emotionally and the outreach team helped me. Made sure I have groceries and anything I need. I could not have asked for more help. The team really works together to provide a non-judgemental, down to earth, ‘easy to talk to’ vibes. They also helped me move, and in the middle of a pandemic. That is true dedication. I will always be grateful. You really are earth angels. Thank you so much and God bless.”*

– *feedback from outreach client*



HRT OUTREACH WORKERS STARTING THEIR SHIFT DOWNTOWN COURTENAY

# PANDEMIC COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

In September we met with our partners from the Comox Valley Community Health Network for a conversation with outreach workers about their experiences during the dual public health emergencies: BC's Opioid Crisis and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Few of us would have ever imagined that we would live through a global pandemic in our lifetime. The Comox Valley Community Health Network recognized in the early days of the pandemic that we are all experiencing a significant life event that is impacting people's physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health. The Health Network started the Pandemic Community Conversations to help people see and find their role to play in helping to build health, connection, vibrancy, and resilience for our communities. The Pandemic Community Conversations were designed for people to connect with each other by having meaningful conversations. Conversation participants shared their experience of the pandemic, made sense of the times, and shared ideas about how people in our community might support the health and wellbeing of people and the environment during the next phases of the pandemic.

A [report](#) was written that reflects what was heard and the recommendations from the Pandemic Community Conversations with community frontline outreach workers.



# CONNECT WARMING CENTRE

The Connect Warming Centre (Connect) is a Coalition initiative, operated by the Comox Valley Transition Society that provides a safe, welcoming space for vulnerable individuals experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness. People can escape inclement weather, temporarily store, or dry out belongings, access washrooms, refreshments, and other immediate supports.

Connect also aims to improve self-sufficiency by providing assisted access to housing opportunities, social connection, literacy and education or volunteer opportunities, referrals to community social service agencies, as well as food and living supports.



In December 2019, we hired coordinators, outlined operational and behavioural protocols, and signed the license to occupy agreement with the City of Courtenay who provides our space in-kind. We acquired furniture, supplies and everything we needed to open our doors and set the space up. We started 2020 exceptionally strong with the opening of the Connect Warming Centre on January 16th. If permanent housing is not available, then at minimum, being able to provide a space for people to go during the day can make a huge impact on people's well-being. The space quickly proved to be a safe, welcoming place for folks experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness and welcomed approximately 50-60 people daily.

## The pandemic's impact on Connect

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the closure and reduction of many services in the downtown Courtenay core, the Connect Warming Centre pivoted to respond to the needs of and to protect our most vulnerable populations. Hours of operation increased from Monday – Friday afternoons to 7 days a week. With strict health protocols and physical distancing measures in place Connect offers COVID-19 symptom screening and education, a washroom, hand hygiene, cell phone charging, access to wi-fi, coffee and hygiene supplies such as soap, hand sanitizer and masks. Staff remain available to help fill out income assistance forms, administer Vulnerability Assessments for supportive housing, and offer referrals to other agencies & access to living supports such as bus tickets, laundry tokens, grocery gift cards etc. Through our partnership with the Comox Valley Division of Family Practice, we now have a physician attending Connect regularly and assisting people on-site. Since opening, Connect has had nearly 7000 visits.

Our current partners include, AVI, Wachiy Friendship Centre, Dawn to Dawn Action on Homelessness, Ministry of Poverty and Social Development, Nursing Centre, Island Health Mental Health & Substance Use, Indigenous Women's Sharing Society, Division of Family Practice, and continues to grow.

*"I come here to get out of my isolation. It gives me hope."*

*"I like coming here because there's friendly staff and people. It's a real nice place to hang out."*

*"I have mental health issues and sometimes I have to go to Connect for support. Sometimes I don't trust myself. It's frightening. This place helps me feel like support is never far away."*

*"It's a great place to come and relax and connect with good people."*

*"Through Connect I can get in touch with so many different resources to get my needs met."*

*"This place has been a big help in connecting me in a financial support worker that is helping with reintegration and rent for housing. You have been more than kind with me, and I appreciate it."*

*"A safe place to be that includes mutual respect, mutual dignity, caring and friendship."*

*"If I'm not able to calm myself down, you can help and if you can't, you connect me with someone who can and you're there to introduce, which helps me feel comfortable."*

## SHOWER PROGRAM

Since April 6th, 2020 Connect has also been operating a shower program based out of Lewis Centre 3 mornings a week. The City of Courtenay provides the space in-kind. We know in the face of this pandemic how important hygiene is and without this service, many unhoused people would not have access to a shower. At the Lewis Centre, there are 2 staff (one for men's and one for women's showers). Staff not only monitor safety and proper usage of the showers, but act as an additional health screening checkpoint and provide education and information about COVID-19 and other resources

*"I would be dirty without these showers. Keeps me healthy. I'm happy this is happening – where I live there is no water- it's hard to wash with no water. Thank you!"*

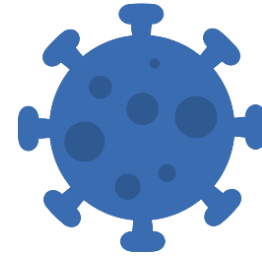
*"Thank you, God, that this is happening for us. We can get clean; we have no worries. You guys are amazing. I appreciate the clean clothes. It doesn't exist anywhere else; we are very lucky."*

*"When I wash my ear, I feel so good cause I can finally hear."*

*"When my toes are twinkling from the nice soap you supply, I feel like dancing and saying thank you! When I brush my teeth (what's left of them now) I know I'll crunch food again."*

*"Personally, I don't think I would've survived without you guys."*

# COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND HOMELESSNESS



On March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 60 volunteers in our community surveyed 132 homeless people for our 2020 Point in Time Homeless Count.

That same evening the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, Dr Bonnie Henry declared a public health emergency here in BC. The message echoed out throughout BC was to “Stay home, wash your hands, and practice physical distancing”.

As soon as COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic the Coalition and its member agencies worked around the clock to respond to the new needs of our community’s most vulnerable – many who felt isolated, fearful, uncertain, and unable to follow the advice to stay home, self-isolate, wash hands and practice physical distancing. Many social services shut down, hours were reduced, or services were moved online creating barriers to accessing support. Emergency shelter spaces were reduced to adhere to pandemic safety regulations. The Coalition and its member agencies advocated for public washrooms to be re-opened, transitioned food programs from inside to outside, built hand washing stations, increased hours at Connect with COVID safety protocols in place and worked with the City of Courtenay to have showers opened at Lewis Centre.

Coalition agencies worked with BC Housing to provide 42 motel rooms for those experiencing homelessness. These motel rooms include 2 meals a day, daily support visits from outreach, onsite security, and weekly visits from physicians. There is a waitlist to get into these motel rooms. *(For a comprehensive timeline of the Coalition’s pandemic response please see Appendix A)*

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a spotlight on the housing and support service deficiencies for so many of our vulnerable populations. While we have collectively (Coalition’s member agencies with municipal support, and the province) done a lot in the past 5 years, there is clearly much more to do as the demand for safe, affordable, housing continues to grow during these unstable times. As a Coalition we see a very real need to provide more support throughout the pandemic and beyond. We are encouraged to see what is being accomplished in other communities across BC and we believe that the Comox Valley must take immediate action to address the continuing and growing impacts the pandemic is having on our vulnerable populations.



CONNECT STAFF DURING THE PANDEMIC



# THANK YOU TO OUR MUNICIPAL PARTNERS

Comox Valley Regional District  
City of Courtenay  
Town of Comox  
Village of Cumberland

# THANK YOU TO OUR COALITION MEMBERS & ADVISORS

Affordable Housing Vancouver Island Society  
AVI Health & Community Services  
Comox Bay Care Society (Care-a-van)  
Comox Valley Affordable Housing Society  
Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Comox Valley Community Health Network  
Comox Valley Early Years Collaborative  
Comox Valley Family Services Association  
Comox Valley Head Injury Society  
Comox Valley Lions Club  
Comox Valley Recovery Centre  
Comox Valley Regional Chapter of Nurses & Nurse Practitioners  
Comox Valley Seniors Support  
Comox Valley Seventh Day Adventist Church  
Comox Valley Social Planning Society  
Comox Valley Transition Society  
Cumberland Community Housing Society  
Dawn to Dawn: Action on Homelessness  
Downtown Courtenay Business Improvement Association  
Eureka Support Society  
Glacierview Lodge  
Habitat for Humanity  
Indigenous Women's Sharing Society  
L'arche Comox Valley  
LUSH Valley Food Action Society  
Salvation Army  
St. George's United Church  
Stepping Stones Recovery  
StrongCentre  
The Views at St. Joseph  
United Way Central and Northern Vancouver Island  
Upper Island Women of Native Ancestry  
Wachiay Friendship Centre

# THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 FUNDERS

BC Housing  
City of Courtenay  
Comox Valley Community Foundation  
Comox Valley Community Health Network  
Comox Valley Regional District  
United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island  
SPARCBC

# Questions about our Annual Report? Please contact us!

## ***Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness***

Email: [comoxvalleyhousing@gmail.com](mailto:comoxvalleyhousing@gmail.com)

Website: [www.cvhousing.ca](http://www.cvhousing.ca)

Find us on Facebook! [www.facebook.com/cvcoalitiontoendhomelessness](https://www.facebook.com/cvcoalitiontoendhomelessness)



**COMOX VALLEY  
Coalition To End  
HOMELESSNESS**

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# APPENDIX A

## PANDEMIC RESPONSE TIMELINE FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

### March 2020

- ✦ **March 11** – World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a global pandemic
- ✦ **March 15** – Coalition begins to share real-time COVID-19 service agency closures, hour changes, and other emergency updates via social media, our website and email
- ✦ **March 16** – Sonshine Lunch Club no longer offering indoor lunch service, access to washrooms, begins bagged lunch program. Warming Centre is temporarily closed
- ✦ **March 17** - Public health emergency is declared in B.C. City of Courtenay washrooms are closed, no public washrooms or running water source for homeless community
- ✦ **March 18** – water taps are turned on at LUSH Valley’s downtown community garden – the only source of water. EWR mats at Pidcock Shelter are extended beyond the usual Mar 31<sup>st</sup>.
- ✦ **March 19** – Coalition begins to meet daily with CVRD Emergency Operations Centre to inform team on pandemics impact on homeless community
- ✦ **March 20** – City of Courtenay public washrooms are reopened
- ✦ **March 21** – Division of Family Practice Vulnerable Populations Working group started, Coalition participates weekly
- ✦ **March 24** – Emergency funding request to City of Courtenay for Careavan, LUSH Valley, CVTS and Food Bank submitted. Food Bank closes its doors. Connect Warming Centre reopens with new safety protocols. Coalition drafts an emergency plan to house vulnerable populations in empty public facilities
- ✦ **March 25** – Coalition submits Vulnerable Populations Emergency Housing Options Report to EOC. Province announces support for renters and City of Courtenay reaches out to Coalition to start a shower program. Lifelong Learning Centre starts outdoor handwashing stations and internet café
- ✦ **March 26** – Coalition sends appeal letter and our emergency plan to MPs, MLAs and local government re: need for emergency housing supports for homeless
- ✦ **March 27** – PREOC sends directive for municipalities to work with BCH and Health Authorities to create homelessness emergency response plans, including municipal owned facilities that could be used for emergency purposes such as shelters.
- ✦ **March 31**– City of Courtenay approves shower program for homeless individuals at Lewis Centre

### April 2020

- ✦ **April 1** – Coalition receives funds from CVRD for motel self-isolation rooms for homeless individuals.
- ✦ **April 2** - \$300 crisis supplement for vulnerable people announced by province
- ✦ **April 7** –Coalition receives funds from CVCHN for motel self-isolation rooms for homeless individuals. Coalition begins working on motel response and COVID-19 testing response with Island Health
- ✦ **April 21** – Coalition receives funding from CVCF for motel self-isolation response
- ✦ **April 22** – First draft of Coalition/Island Health self-isolation motel response published/shared
- ✦ **April 27** – COVID-10 Resource document for outreach workers published.

### May 2020

- ✦ **May 1** – Provincial Financial Aid Program Opens. Coalition is awarded emergency response funding from HPS Rural & Remote for motel rooms, and other supports for those experiencing homelessness
- ✦ **May 4** - City of Courtenay Council unanimously passes resolution. *“Whereas there continues to be a significant homeless population in the Courtenay area whose presence in unsupported settings and unsanctioned campsites creates risks related to health and safety, including fire, environmental hazards and unhygienic conditions that, according to health officials, increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission; Therefore, be it resolved that the City of Courtenay work with the Coalition to End Homelessness to present a proposal to the provincial government for funding to address these risks through the provision of temporary housing and related support services.”*
- ✦ **May 6** - With the number of new COVID-19 cases continuing to drop, the province lays out its plans to gradually reopen.
- ✦ **May 12** – Coalition receives funds from CVCF for shower program. Concern from community mounting about use of motel rooms in Comox for vulnerable homeless individuals
- ✦ **May 15 - Vulnerable Populations Working Group** – Physicians Outreach program is funded. 3 physicians provide care to vulnerable individuals at the motels and Connect

### June 2020

- ✦ **June 9** – Coalition and City of Courtenay send letter to BCH and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing requesting increased response for individuals experiencing homelessness
- ✦ **June 23**– Coalition receives funding from CVCF for Connect to purchase supplies. City extends shower program lease. Coalition submits a request to the City to extend the license to occupy at 685 Cliffe Ave for Connect.
- ✦ **June 25** –BC Housing sends a response letter indicating they are researching opportunities to assist our vulnerable population and will be reaching out. Around this time, BCH agrees to fund 32 motel rooms in Courtenay including funds for outreach staff, security, and meals.

### July 2020

- ✦ **July 1** - Motel rooms for homeless individuals are already full and waitlisted. Outreach providing daily support and meals to residents
- ✦ **July 3** – Coalition receives March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Homeless Count preliminary data. Shows that homelessness has increased by 13% since 2018 despite the construction of 46 units of supportive housing
- ✦ **July 7** –City of Courtenay agrees to extend Connect License to Occupy until Sept 30 and directs staff to write a report on a one-year extension
- ✦ **July 13** - Municipal leaders and Coalition Leadership Team meet to discuss next steps on advocating for emergency and permanent housing for vulnerable population.
- ✦ **July 21** – Funds are awarded to Connect and for the purchase of an outreach van through United Way

### August 2020

- ✦ **August 7** –\_Coalition creates a housing proposal to be presented to local municipal leaders and and BC Housing.
- ✦ **August 20** –\_Federal government announces the transition from CERB to EI to begin Sept 28

### September 2020

- ✦ **September 2** – Coalition provides feedback at HSABC's regarding "Unintended consequences of the pandemic on vulnerable populations"
- ✦ **September 16** – Coalition begins to write an official housing proposal including temporary and permanent housing

### October 2020

- ✦ **October 7** – Coalition acquires feedback on our Housing proposal from outreach workers and our member agencies
- ✦ **October 20** – City of Courtenay approves a one-year extension to the license to occupy for Connect

### November 2020

- ✦ **November 1** – Coalition begins to look into a temporary overflow shelter program as there are still many homeless individuals not able to access emergency shelter
- ✦ **November 20** – Coalition is awarded funding by CVCF for the continued pandemic coordination of the Coalition
- ✦ **November 25** – Coalition's Housing Proposal is finalized and sent to municipal leaders for endorsement
- ✦ **November 27** – As cases of COVID-19 rise, Island Health updates its mobile COVID-19 testing process for people experiencing homelessness. CVRD endorses the Coalition's Housing Proposal to be sent to BC Housing
- ✦ **November 30** – Coalition received full results of our 2020 Homeless Count [www.cvhousing.ca/2020-point-in-time-count/](http://www.cvhousing.ca/2020-point-in-time-count/)

### December 2020

- ✦ **December 1** – Coalition requests HSS funds previously earmarked for capital costs at Connect are reallocated to operational funds to keep Connect doors open during the pandemic
- ✦ **December 7** – City of Courtenay endorses the Coalition's Housing Proposal to be sent
- ✦ **December 21**- City of Courtenay approves staff to work with Coalition to find a temporary Overflow Emergency Shelter space

## APPENDIX B: COALITION IN THE MEDIA

- Jan 7, 2020: <https://www.mycomoxvalleynow.com/62738/seasonal-warming-shelter-opening-in-courtenay/>
- Mar 10, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/business/courtenay-downtown-bia-working-to-keep-community-safe-and-vibrant/>
- Mar 12, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/data-from-community-counts-support-british-coumbians-experiencing-homelessness/>
- Mar 31, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/shower-facilities-to-be-made-available-in-courtenay-during-coronavirus-pandemic/>
- Apr 1, 2020: <https://www.mycomoxvalleynow.com/65328/comox-valley-regional-district-providing-148279-for-local-covid-19-efforts/>
- April 30, 2020: <https://www.mycomoxvalleynow.com/67899/courtenay-mayor-says-city-pushing-to-move-homeless-into-hotel-rooms/>
- May 5, 2020: <https://www.mycomoxvalleynow.com/68061/courtenay-pursuing-options-to-help-homeless-during-pandemic/>
- May 19, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/warming-centre-helps-vulnerable-comox-valley-residents/>
- Jun 6, 2020: <https://fb.watch/2x0tlvGb48/> - VIDEO: Connect and Shower Program
- Jul 6, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/community/comox-valley-community-foundation-allots-more-covid-19-emergency-response-money/>
- Jul 7, 2020: <https://www.mycomoxvalleynow.com/70373/comox-valley-looking-undertaking-poverty-assessment-and-reduction-strategy1/>
- Jul 7, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/courtenay-council-praises-warming-centre-for-service/>
- Jul 13, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/point-in-time-count-indicates-homelessness-on-rise-in-comox-valley/>
- Jul 27, 2020: <https://www.mycomoxvalleynow.com/71261/comox-valley-community-foundation-dishing-out-another-121850-for-local-organizations/>
- Oct 7, 2020: <https://youtu.be/svUxKKfpOul> VIDEO: Keynote at CVCF Gala re: Coalition pandemic response
- Oct 20, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/courtenay-council-approves-lease-extension-for-warming-centre/>
- Nov 26, 2020: <https://youtu.be/JCQrJANDe2s> VIDEO: Coalition Coordinator - anti-stigma
- Dec 1, 2020: <https://www.mycomoxvalleynow.com/74242/comox-valley-coalition-to-end-homelessness-pitches-permanent-housing-for-vulnerable-populations/>
- Dec 7, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/comox-valley-organization-calls-for-more-housing-for-the-vulnerable/>
- Dec 14, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/courtenay-emergency-shelter-hits-capacity-in-cold-weather/>
- Dec 16, 2020: <https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/news/comox-valley-directors-discuss-regional-parks-service/>