



## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: January 5, 2015  
Contact: Abi Bond  
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RTS No.: 11215  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: January 19, 2016

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Chief Housing Officer and Acting General Manager of Community Services

SUBJECT: Actions to Respond to Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council's Aboriginal Housing and Wellness Strategy

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Council receive for information comments from staff on the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council's (MVAEC) report, "Towards an Urban Aboriginal Housing and Wellness Strategy for Metro Vancouver (2015-2020)", and recommendations for further advocacy and action, as attached in Appendix A.
- B. THAT Council agree in principle to the development of a mixed-use project that co-locates a permanent shelter, health services and social housing at 1015 East Hastings; staff will work with partners and report back on the overall project budget, funding strategy, lease terms and required legal agreements.
- C. THAT Council authorize that the \$100,000 capital grant, previously approved by Council on July 25, 2012, for the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society (the "VAFCS") to explore preliminary shelter designs at 946 & 950 Main, be transferred to a new City-owned location at 1015 East Hastings Street (PID: 009-392-815, Lot 181, Block 63, District Lot 181, Plan 21524), thereby allowing VAFCS to engage staff resources to work with the Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency (VAHA) in the exploration of a potential shelter within a mixed-use project; source of funds to be the 2016 Capital Budget for the Grant-VAFCS .
- D. THAT Council agree in principle that 946 Main Street (PID: 005-749-239, Lot 10, Block 24, District Lot 196, Plan 184) and, 2) and 950 Main Street (PID: 005-749-484, Lot 11, Block 24, District Lot 196, Plan 184) previously approved by Council on July 25, 2012 as the shelter site, now be designated for social housing and direct staff to work with BC Housing in partnership with Lu'Ma and

report back on the overall project budget, funding strategy, lease terms and any other required legal agreements.

- E. THAT no legal rights or obligations shall arise hereby and none shall arise or be granted hereafter unless and until all contemplated legal documentation has been executed and delivered by all parties; and,
- F. THAT the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write to the Premier and Prime Minister calling on them to work with partners to maintain and increase the housing and wellness capacity for urban Aboriginal people in Vancouver.
- G. THAT Council authorize a grant of up to \$56,000 to Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) for a staff position to achieve key project milestones for a Native Youth Centre with complementary housing. Source of funding to be the Capital Facilities Reserve. Payment of the grant will be managed within the approved overall 2016 Annual Capital Expenditure Budget.

Approval of recommendations C and G requires a minimum of eight affirmative votes.

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report outlines the City's commitment to support off-reserve projects that deliver Aboriginal housing and cultural services and increase access and diversity of housing options to Vancouver's Aboriginal residents.

The recommendations and next steps outlined in this report respond to Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council's (MVAEC) recently released 5-year regional strategy that includes the following seven immediate calls to action:

- a target for 1,500 social housing units for Aboriginal residents;
- a planning process for a 10-year regional housing strategy;
- increasing core funding support for MVAEC;
- increasing engagement with Aboriginal agencies as well as residents;
- improving data on Aboriginal households; and,
- using partnerships and innovative tools to enable creative project funding (e.g., social purpose real estate, land trusts, etc.).

Finally, principles for engagement with urban Aboriginal partners and longer term recommendations to begin responding to affordable Aboriginal housing and cultural service needs across Metro Vancouver municipalities are also highlighted in MVAEC's report.

Recommendations in this report include a summary of staff's response to MVAEC's *Towards an Urban Aboriginal Housing and Wellness Strategy for Metro Vancouver (2013-2020)*. This includes a transfer of the \$100,000 grant to VAFSC, initially approved by Council in July 2012 to explore the development of a permanent shelter on City-owned land at 946 and 950 Main Street. The intent of transfer is to allow VAFCS to hire resources to work with the Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency (VAHA) to explore a shelter development on a new (City-owned) site at 1015 East Hastings Street. This new

site (1015 East Hastings) is one of VAHA's designated development sites. Exploring this location for the Aboriginal shelter, as part of a strategically important mixed-use project, offers several direct linkages to integrated health services and social housing. BC Housing continues to be a vital partner in these projects and Vancouver Coastal Health will play a key role in service provision onsite at 1015 East Hastings, interested in occupying the ground floor of the project.

The report further recommends that the originally proposed shelter site (946/950 Main St.) be developed as social housing and includes reference to future lease agreements and other legal agreements required to enable the project with BC Housing and Lu'Ma Native Housing Society ("Lu'Ma").

The report also recommends a \$56,000 grant to UNYA to support business plan update and other development planning work for a new Native Youth Centre, including a social housing component in partnership with VAHA and the City. This project is in the initial planning stages and is complex given the number of partners and the scope of the project. This project will create a full service Aboriginal youth service hub to address social, recreational, spiritual, educational and health needs as well as a range of housing solutions targeting Aboriginal youth and their families. This project involves a City-owned site on East Hastings Street at Commercial Drive.

### ***COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS***

Addressing the housing and wellness needs of the off-reserve or urban Aboriginal population has also been a key focus for the City in the implementation of:

- Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021 (2011)
- Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability (2012)
- Downtown Eastside Plan (2014)
- Healthy City Strategy (2014)
- City of Reconciliation (2014)
- Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions, Caring for All: Priority Actions to Address Mental Health and Addictions (2014)

### ***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

Vancouver was founded on the unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. Vancouver is strengthened by Aboriginal culture and values, lived and practiced by both on- and off-reserve Aboriginal residents. The City has intensified intention and commitment to strengthening relationships with both on- and off-reserve Aboriginal partners through City of Reconciliation initiatives, including MOUs with First Nations and the Metro Vancouver Executive Aboriginal Council (MVAEC), establishing Council-to-Council meetings and working under the advisement of the Urban Aboriginal People's Advisory Committee.

As the urban Aboriginal population grows, the City remains dedicated to addressing the short and long-term needs of Aboriginal residents in partnership with Aboriginal agencies. Housing and wellness for Aboriginal residents remains a key focus as part of

the City's implementation of the Healthy City Strategy and Housing and Homelessness Strategy as well as the Downtown Eastside Plan and the Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions, and strengthening a sense of belonging and cultural connection is a key priority for a City of Reconciliation and a Healthy City for All. The City anticipates signing an MOU with MVAEC that will formally establish working relationships with urban Aboriginal agencies. The City is the only government that currently provides core funding to MVAEC; the City will continue to advocate for increased core funding from other levels of government and other funding agencies.

Links to other City initiatives relevant to MVAEC's call to action and the recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action report are also highlighted in this report (see Appendix A). In January 2016, Council will receive updates on the City of Reconciliation initiative, Vancouver response to Truth and Reconciliation, and staff recommendations on Metro Vancouver's Regional Affordable Housing Strategy. In Spring 2016, an update on actions to respond to the BC Representative for Children and Youth report, 'Paige's Story: Abuse, Indifference and a Young Life Discarded ("The Paige Report")' as well as an update report on the on-going work being undertaken in the DTES following the approval of the Local Area Plan last year on cultural place-making, opportunities for housing particularly inter-generational housing integrated with wellness as well as understanding the concept for a wellness centre. Together, these reports demonstrate both an urgency and timeliness for collective action, reflecting an acknowledgment of the past and a commitment for both the present and the future.

The Acting City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

## **REPORT**

### ***Background/Context***

Conservative estimates indicate that there are over 50,000 Aboriginal residents living off-reserve in Metro Vancouver municipalities as of 2011, with over 12,000 or 23% living in Vancouver. Statistics available demonstrate the ongoing inequities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents, with additional socio-economic inequities more prominent in Vancouver, than the region as a whole. The average household income for Aboriginal households in the city of Vancouver (2010) was approximately 20% lower than the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal income average (\$55,500 vs. \$69,223) and 31% lower than the average non-Aboriginal income in Vancouver.<sup>1</sup> For additional information on the Statistics Canada information on the Aboriginal population, see Appendix B.

Many Aboriginal people commute to Vancouver to access cultural and community connections and opportunities, including services and programs offered through the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society, Native Education College and the Urban Native Youth Association. Staff recommend supporting unique approaches to further our understanding of Aboriginal needs and ways to meet these within Vancouver's urban

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<sup>1</sup> National Household Survey, Census 2011

environment, including but not limited to strengthened partnerships, data collection, culturally relevant practices and outcome measures (see Appendix A).<sup>2</sup>

### *MVAEC 'Call to Action'*

MVAEC's strategy outlines seven guiding principles for the development and delivery of service and the ways in which they are designed, implemented and managed. MVAEC encourages a respectful approach to engagement, including culturally appropriate housing and services, considering the social determinants of health and wellness provided to all urban Aboriginal residents. MVAEC recommends strategies, policies and direct housing and service planning to be developed in consultation with Aboriginal residents/or by Aboriginal agencies, with a clear monitoring and evaluation plan to provide transparency and accountability.

MVAEC's strategy outlines two key objectives: to strengthen Aboriginal housing leadership and capacity and to increase access and diversify housing options for off-reserve Aboriginal residents. The recommendations and next steps outlined in this report respond to MVAEC's call for immediate actions while longer term strategic planning is completed.

### *Location for Permanent Aboriginal Shelter*

In July 2012, Council approved a \$100,000 grant to VAFCS to engage a consultant to develop preliminary designs for a permanent Aboriginal shelter at 946 and 950 Main Street. The new shelter was to replace the existing 100 bed temporary shelter operated by VAFCS at 201 Central which was opened in response to recommendations from the Homelessness Emergency Action Team (HEAT) in 2008. The initial HEAT shelters were the first low-barrier shelters opened in partnership with the Provincial government to ensure individuals had an opportunity to come inside during the cold winter months and get connected to health and housing services. 201 Central has remained open as partners have sought to develop a permanent, purpose built shelter required to better serve the needs of shelter clients.

In 2012, Council also directed staff to enter into a MOU with the VAFCS that set out the framework for developing the shelter, and an MOU between VAFCS and Lu'Ma for the inclusion of social housing above the shelter. As staff worked with VAFCS, Lu'Ma and BC Housing to develop the project, persistent design challenges emerged in trying to accommodate both the functional programming of the shelter and social housing above - the site was not ideal in terms of operational efficiency and spatial design given its 50' frontage.

As a result, staff are recommending that Council approve in principle that 1015 E. Hastings be designated as the shelter site with the co-location of both social housing and integrated health services, and that the \$100,000 grant, originally approved in 2012 to

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<sup>2</sup> Data on housing characteristics and social indicators are likely even more under-estimated in recent years due to the shift from the Canadian Census to the National Household Survey to a voluntary survey with a the lower response rate compared to the 2006 Canadian Census. In addition, those of Aboriginal identity living off-reserve were sampled as part of the general population, and may have not been chosen as frequently to complete the survey.

VAFCS, be transferred to enable VAFCS to work with VAHA to conduct planning and design work on the new site, which was included in the VAHA Development Plan.

The report further recommends that Council approve in principle that 950 & 946 Main Street be designated as a social housing project. Approving these recommendations to support in principle the use of the two sites for the above noted purpose is important in that it will allow staff to work with partners to move these projects forward, as well as apply for potential funding such as from the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. Staff will report back with the overall project budget, funding strategy, and terms of the leases for both sites, as well as any other legal agreements that will be required to secure the various uses on each of the sites.

This report also recommends that Council approve a grant to UNYA for the development of a new Native Youth Centre with complementary housing. The Urban Native Youth Association has provided leadership and advocacy for this project for over a decade and their stewardship and participation in furthering the project development will be key to its success. The grant will assist UNYA in allocating staff resources for this complex project to complete key project milestones including overseeing business plan update and functional program plan completion, partnership and fund development, and to begin design development and stakeholder consultation.

### ***Strategic Analysis***

#### **City's Response to MVAEC's 'Call to Action'**

Staff have reviewed MVAEC's "Towards an Urban Aboriginal Housing and Wellness Strategy for Metro Vancouver (2015-2020)" and have made several comments and recommendations to respond to their 'call to action' through three key initiatives:

- Housing and Homelessness Strategy
- Healthy City Strategy and
- City of Reconciliation.

Implementation of the Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions emphasizes three priority actions to further the City of Reconciliation work, including designing an Urban Aboriginal Wellness Strategy, signing memoranda of understandings with MVEAEC and the First Nations Health Authority to strengthen working relationships with Aboriginal agencies, and convening an advisory group to create models for Aboriginal healing and wellness in Vancouver. Appendix A outlines our response and recommendations to MVAEC's overall call to action.

Staff are recommending both short and long term housing and wellness projects to respond to the call. The first phase of recommended action, within the beginnings of a Vancouver Aboriginal Housing and Wellness framework, is to work with key partners to develop four sites (approximately 600-700 new social housing units) for Aboriginal households in accordance with the Downtown Eastside Plan (2014) and pursuant to the recommendations from the public engagement in the Grandview Woodland Plan (draft plan expected to be completed in Spring 2016).

Projects in this first phase include:

- City-owned site at 946 and 950 Main Street for the development of an estimated 30 new social housing units (anticipated completion within the next 3 years);
- City-owned site at 1015 East Hastings for the development of a permanent Aboriginal shelter, co-located with approximately 175-220 units of new social housing (early estimates) and integrated health services (anticipated completion within the next 5 years); and,
- Social service-led projects that currently include a mix of partner, City and private sector owned sites that include housing with a focus on Aboriginal youth, families and elders (anticipated completion within the next 5 years).

Approval in principle by Council for the first two projects, 946 & 950 Main and 1015 East Hastings, will allow for the facilitation of next steps, including design work and leveraging funding that will work towards development process and finalizing lease terms and other legal agreements. Public engagement will be part of the formal development process for each project and each project is described in more detail below.

#### *946 and 950 Main Street and 1015 East Hastings*

Shifting the proposal for the development of the Aboriginal shelter from 946 and 950 Main to 1015 East Hastings offers several advantages: the site frontage of 150' and approximately 22,000 square feet of space allows for more efficient shelter operations and fits BC Housing's requirements for 'best practice' in terms of shelter design. Preliminary discussions with Vancouver Coastal Health indicate 1015 East Hastings presents a unique opportunity to implement the objectives of their Downtown Eastside Second Generation Strategy through the location of integrated health services. Consideration for alignment to the social housing that will be provided above also offers a unique opportunity for this site.

This report recommends transfer of the \$100,000 grant to VAFCS from the original Main Street location to this new location so that VAFCS can support shelter design and development, working with VAHA. BC Housing has notionally agreed to provide capital and operating funding for the shelter at 1015 East Hastings to replace the temporary shelter at 201 Central.

Earlier plans for 1015 East Hastings considered a mixed-use building with social housing above and commercial/retail at grade, with commercial rents subsidizing the social housing component under VAHA's overall Development Plan. This new proposal for a mixed-use project that co-locates the replacement shelter, integrated health services and social housing is part of the City's response to the "call to action" from our Aboriginal partners and this site presents an excellent opportunity to deliver a unique project, that meets several needs of Aboriginal residents. The proposed relocation of the Aboriginal shelter to this site may require additional project funding and so, if Council approves in principle the relocation of the shelter to this site, staff will work with BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health and other housing partners to identify potential partnership funding and report back to Council on the overall project costs and funding strategy.

The report also recommends 946 and 950 Main be designated for social housing with a capital contribution notionally approved by BC Housing. Should recommendations in this

report be approved, BC Housing is then able to activate the Project Development Funds (PDF) to Lu'Ma to begin designs on the Aboriginal social housing project at 946 & 950 Main.

It is important to that a minimum of one-third of the social housing units at 946 & 950 Main Street are targeted to assist with the flow of clients from the VAFCS shelter as discussed with all partners. An additional target to meet the highest percentage of units at income assistance to the efficiency of housing operations has also been discussed, to increase the flow through from the VAFCS shelter above the minimum, all to be confirmed through the lease and any other legal agreements.

BC Housing has confirmed a notional commitment for \$4.6M in capital funding towards the construction at 946 & 950 Main Street. BC Housing is moving ahead to finalize the allocation of funding for the social housing, in addition to the transfer of operational funding from the existing Aboriginal shelter at 201 Central to 1015 East Hastings and the allocation of the capital funding accordingly.

*Service-led projects focusing on housing and wellness for Aboriginal youth, families and elders*

The Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) and the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society have plans to redevelop 1670-1680 E. Hastings St. and 1607 E. Hastings St. respectively, pending the finalization of the Grandview-Woodlands Plan. These two sites form both a 'gateway' to the urban Aboriginal population in the East Hastings and Commercial Drive area, as well as forming an important cultural heart of Vancouver's urban Aboriginal community.

The services between the organizations are both unique and complementary. The VAFCS provides programs in health, income assistance, social services, human rights, culture, education, recreation and equality for all Urban Aboriginal people. With over 50 years of providing essential services to the urban Aboriginal community, the VAFCS has helped families, youth, adults, elders and children maintain their cultural ties and values while also helping to access education, housing needs and support for families.

As the only full-site Friendship Centre in Metro Vancouver, the services VAFCS currently provide are at maximum capacity, servicing Aboriginal residents in Vancouver, across the region, and from all other parts of the province. The redevelopment of the VAFCS-owned site at 1607 East Hastings envisions building on existing services, as well as enhancing services with a focus on elder wellness support services and housing delivery.

The Urban Native Youth Association has upheld a vision to develop an innovative, state-of-the-art youth centre for over a decade, to meet the expanded needs of Aboriginal youth, outside of the Downtown Eastside. This is especially important in light of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and final report and the Paige Report, and given the urban Aboriginal community is one of the fastest growing and youngest populations in Vancouver. Council has supported this vision through funding from capital plans and innovation grants. The site at 1670 East Hastings St. was purchased by the City to contribute to the project. On December 16, 2015, Council approved a \$15,000 social policy grant for the purposes of conducting an update to the UNYA business plan and functional programming.

Currently, it's expected that VAHA will play a key role in supporting the delivery of these two projects in partnership with Social Policy for completion in the next 5 years. Staff will bring forward separate reports to Council for these sites and projects.

### *Summary*

Vancouver is currently home to 23% of the region's urban Aboriginal population. Although these projects are still in early stages, staff anticipate the housing generated from these four sites will make up about 40%-45% of the 1,500 new social housing unit target set for the Metro Vancouver region.

Other recommended actions that staff will bring forward to Council to address the need for urban Aboriginal Housing and Cultural Services include:

- signing an MOU with the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council,
- advocate for increased core funding for the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council from other levels of government and other funding agencies,
- advocating to the Metro Vancouver Housing Committee for the inclusion of a 10-year regional Aboriginal housing & wellness strategy,
- advocating to senior levels of government for funding for enhanced, culturally relevant data collection on Aboriginal households, as well as infrastructure and operational dollars for Aboriginal housing, wellness and cultural services in Vancouver.

### ***Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)***

#### ***FINANCIAL***

The City uses a variety of enabling tools to leverage affordable housing in partnership with senior governments and private and/or non-profit housing partners:

#### **Capital:**

*City Land Contributions* - The City leases land to housing partners at below market rent for 60 years or longer, who then design, build, finance, operate and maintain the housing project at prescribed affordability over the lease term.

*Capital Grants* - The City allocates grants to non-profit partners to conduct feasibility study, design and/or enhance viability and affordability of non-market housing projects.

*Development Cost Levies (DCL's) Waivers/Exemptions* - Social housing projects are exempt from DCLs.

#### **Operating:**

Consistent with Council policies on non-market housing projects, the proposed housing projects in this report are expected to be self-sustaining and do not require further operating subsidies, property tax exemptions, and/or financial guarantees from the City.

*946 - 950 Main Street:*

The City's contribution to this social housing project will be a minimum of a 60-year ground lease, currently valued at ~\$1.9 million (75% of freehold market value of \$2.5 million). In addition, the City will contribute an anticipated \$500k for remediation costs, and staff will provide an update on these costs as part of the report backs to Council.

BC Housing has confirmed a notional capital commitment to this project of \$4.6 million and other funding options such as the Federal Homelessness Partnership Strategy will be pursued by the non-profit partners to ensure viability and maximize affordability in the social housing units.

Subject to further discussions with partners, staff will report back with the overall project costs (including soil remediation), funding strategy, final lease terms and any other legal agreements required for Council consideration.

*1015 E Hastings Street:*

Earlier plans for 1015 East Hastings site considered a mixed use building with social housing on top and commercial/retail at grade with commercial rents subsidizing the social housing component under VAHA's overall Development Plan. This new proposal for a mixed-use project that co-locates the replacement shelter, health services and social housing at this site presents an excellent opportunity to deliver a unique project that better meets the needs of Aboriginal residents. The proposed relocation of the Aboriginal shelter to this site may require additional project funding. Should Council approve in principle the relocation of the shelter to this site, staff will work with BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health and other housing partners to identify potential partnership funding and report back with the overall project costs, funding strategy, final lease terms and any other legal agreements required for Council consideration.

Should Council approve recommendation C, the City will transfer the previously approved grant of up to \$100,000 to the VAFCS to explore shelter design and development at this site; source of funds to be the 2016 Capital Budget for Grant-VAFCS.

*1670-1680 E Hastings Street:*

Funding for the recommended grant of up to \$56,000 to Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) is to be the Capital Facilities Reserve, from income earned from the property at 1670 East Hastings that was purchased in the past by the City for contribution to the UNYA Native Youth Centre project. Payment of the grant will be managed within the approved overall 2016 Annual Capital Expenditure Budget.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL**

Environmental conditions for 946 and 950 Main Street were assessed in 1998, and contamination associated with former site operations (pipe storage and metals fabrication) was identified in soil and groundwater. Further environmental assessment would be required to fulfill current regulatory requirements. The estimated costs to complete all environmental work required to: obtain regulatory approval to develop the property, remediate the site, and

obtain regulatory approval required for site occupancy is \$450,000. This estimate is based on the assumption that remediation is completed concurrent with site redevelopment, and that the proposed redevelopment includes commercial operations on the ground floor with multiple levels of residential above, and one level of underground parking.

Environmental conditions for 1015 E. Hastings were assessed in 1992 and identified contamination associated with former site operations (scrap metal yard) and impact from neighbouring properties. Further environmental assessment would be required to fulfill current regulatory requirements. Until such time as redevelopment plans are developed, all future environmental costs cannot be calculated at this time, but can be estimated to range from \$100,000 - \$1.5M.

### ***CONCLUSION***

The City's response to the Metro Vancouver Executive Aboriginal Council 'call to action' aligns with several priority action areas.

As part of the initial action, the Chief Housing Officer and General Manager of Community Services Group recommends that Council approve the transfer of up to \$100,000 grant to the VAFCS to work with the Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency to support the development of a new permanent shelter, previously linked to 946 & 950 Main, to be now linked to 1015 East Hastings with the co-location of integrated health services and social housing. 946 & 950 Main Street are recommended for social housing. A grant of up to \$56,000 is also recommended for the Urban Native Youth Association to support the development of the Native Youth Centre and housing project on East Hastings Street at Commercial Drive.

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Staff comments on the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council’s report, Towards an Urban Aboriginal Housing and Wellness Strategy for Metro Vancouver (2015-2020), and recommendations for further advocacy and action

<p>The 5-year Aboriginal Housing and Wellness Strategy was created by MVAEC in response to the clear need for Aboriginal housing and cultural services across Metro Vancouver. Through partnerships and the acknowledgement of the unique housing needs of this demographic, the strategy looks to promote access to long-term, culturally reflective, and affordable housing for all metro Vancouver urban Aboriginal residents. There are two key objectives that provide high level direction for priority areas of housing governance, policy, development, and implementation.</p>	
Long-Term Recommendation	CoV Staff Comment
<p><b>1. STRENGTHEN HOUSING LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY</b></p>	
<p><b>1.1 Agency Collaboration</b> Recommendation: Improve agency collaboration among Aboriginal organizations, non-profit organizations, the private sector and all levels of government.</p>	<p>Seek opportunities to convene Aboriginal non-profit agencies through project delivery, research, and policy-making.</p> <p><i>Relevant Areas: Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy, Healthy City Strategy, Mayor’s Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions, City of Reconciliation</i></p>
<p><b>1.2 Aboriginal Representation</b> Recommendation: Ensure Aboriginal representation at all levels of decision-making for every project that affects Aboriginal residents, from initial discussion to evaluation post completion.</p>	<p>Enhance project planning and delivery processes to reflect principles outlined by MVAEC – in recognition of historical and ongoing effects of colonization; with consideration to social determinants of health and wellness; culturally appropriate and respectful; is accessible to all off-reserve Aboriginal’s regardless of status; in consultation with Aboriginal tenant and service users as well as agencies for the delivery; with a clear monitoring and evaluation plan.</p> <p><i>Relevant Areas: Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy, Healthy City Strategy, Mayor’s Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions, City of Reconciliation, City of Vancouver Urban People’s Advisory Committee, City of Vancouver response to Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action</i></p>

<p><b>1.3 Funding</b> Recommendation: Explore all funding options in order to meet the housing need.</p>	<p>Identify ‘best practices’ and advocate to senior levels of government for an infusion of infrastructure and wellness funding for off-reserve projects.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy, Healthy City Strategy, Mayor’s Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions, City of Reconciliation, City of Vancouver Urban People’s Advisory Committee</i></p>
<p><b>1.4 Municipal Policies</b> Recommendation: Refine and Adapt Municipal Policies to improve the efficacy of municipal housing projects.</p>	<p>Work through the Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency (VAHA) to streamline project delivery processes.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy, Mayor’s Task Force on Housing Affordability (VAHA)</i></p>
<p><b>1.5 Long-Term Strategy</b> Recommendation: Develop a long-term urban Aboriginal housing strategy that is required to effectively meet the long term housing demand.</p>	<p>Advocate to Metro Vancouver (Housing Committee) to expand/align the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy with Aboriginal housing and wellness goals and objectives; and support the planning and development of an Urban Aboriginal Housing &amp; Wellness Strategy (see Immediate Action 6 below).</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy</i></p>
<p><b>2. INCREASE ACCESS AND DIVERSIFY HOUSING OPTIONS</b></p>	
<p><b>2.1 Diverse Demographics</b> Recommendation: Address the needs of diverse demographics, including elders, youth, single-parent families and those experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>Support specialized research and data collection on urban Aboriginal populations.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy, Healthy City Strategy</i></p>
<p><b>2.2 Health and Wellness Integration</b> Recommendation: Integrate health and wellness into Aboriginal housing through partnerships with health agencies and through health-focused housing and service design.</p>	<p>Advocate for senior government funding for culturally appropriate health and wellness within Aboriginal housing and service projects.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy, Healthy City Strategy, Mayor’s</i></p>

	<p><i>Task Force on Mental Health &amp; Addictions, City of Vancouver response to Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action</i></p>
<p><b>2.3 Social Housing</b> Recommendation: Meet immediate social housing need for both transitional and long-term tenancy, including for most vulnerable and under-housed populations.</p>	<p>Continue to work with Aboriginal partners, BC Housing and other levels of government to expand four site approach for Aboriginal Housing and Wellness.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy, Mayor’s Task Force on Housing Affordability (VAHA)</i></p>
<p><b>2.4 Existing Housing Stock</b> Recommendation: Maintain and improve existing housing stock for urban Aboriginal housing projects, including through renewed federal funding for operating agreements and through redevelopment.</p>	<p>Advocate to senior governments to renew operating agreements and provide rehabilitation funding to ensure long-term affordability.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy</i></p>
<p><b>2.5 Culturally Relevant Housing</b> Recommendation: Build culturally relevant housing through partnerships with Aboriginal organizations, architects and planners.</p>	<p>See 2.3 &amp; 2.2</p>
<p><b>2.6 Diverse Housing</b> Recommendation: Diversify new housing stock for Aboriginal residents that reflect need, including co-operatives, purpose-built rental apartments and homes, and mixed-use and/or mixed-income buildings.</p>	<p>See also 2.3</p> <p>A range of housing, from temporary and supported housing to affordable homeownership, are needed to address the full range of Aboriginal housing and wellness needs in Vancouver.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy, Healthy City Strategy</i></p>

**Aboriginal Housing and Wellness Strategy: Suggestions for Immediate Action**

<p>MVAEC envisions a region where urban Aboriginal residents are afforded opportunities for accessible housing in the municipalities they call home. While the emerging strategies to achieve this are part of a long term vision, there are some potential immediate actions municipalities can take to begin working to find solutions to urban Aboriginal housing needs.</p>	
Suggestion for Immediate Action	CoV Staff Comment
<p>1. <b>Secured Core Funding</b> Suggestion: Support MVAEC’s leadership and capacity through secured core funding contributions.</p>	<p>Work to leverage City support increasing core funding contributions to MVAEC and advocate to other levels of levels of government, private funders to match City contributions.</p>
<p>2. <b>Aboriginal Housing Organizations</b> Suggestion: Invite Aboriginal housing organizations to the table so they can own and manage housing development projects for their own communities.</p>	<p>See 2.3</p>
<p>3. <b>Data Gaps</b> Suggestion: Fill the data gaps around the housing needs of urban Aboriginal residents, including information around land ownership, population and projected growth.</p>	<p>See 2.1</p>
<p>4. <b>Funding</b> Suggestion: Find funding through creative and all available funding sources to support Aboriginal housing plans.</p>	<p>See 1.3</p>
<p>5. <b>New Social Housing Unit Construction</b> Suggestion: Create an immediate plan to construct 1500 new social housing units across Metro Vancouver by 2020 to begin to address immediate demand and initiate learning and reconciliation through action.</p>	<p>Identify four sites in the first phase of a Vancouver Aboriginal Housing &amp; Wellness Initiative to yield approximately 600-700 social housing/affordable housing units and 100 shelter beds for Aboriginal residents, complemented by culturally-appropriate housing and service programming reflecting the social determinants of health.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing &amp; Homelessness Strategy</i></p>

<p>6. <b>10-year Regional Aboriginal Housing and Wellness Strategy</b> Suggestion: Launch the planning process for a 10-year regional housing strategy for Metro Vancouver that is integrated alongside the Metro Vancouver Affordable Housing Strategy and includes specialized methodologies and partnership frameworks for meeting the needs of urban Aboriginal residents.</p>	<p>Advocate for the addition of urban Aboriginals' housing and wellness needs in the 10-year Regional Housing Strategy for Metro Vancouver and propose that Metro Vancouver, municipalities, and the non-profit and private development sector each play a role:</p> <p>Metro Vancouver: Through regional planning role, partner with urban Aboriginal agencies to implement an Urban Aboriginal Housing Action Plan that considers specialized methodologies and partnership frameworks to address the long-term needs of Aboriginal residents.</p> <p>Municipalities: Through plans, policies and programs, consider innovative ways to develop and promote Aboriginal wellness through housing in partnership with Aboriginal agencies and residents.</p> <p>Non-profit and private sector development partners: Bring forward innovative development applications that meet the needs of families and Aboriginal residents using alternate forms, densities and tenures.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Housing and Homelessness Strategy</i></p>
<p>7. <b>Engagement Efforts</b> Suggestion: Continue engagement efforts to include Aboriginal residents in all aspects of housing planning.</p>	<p>Seek specialized engagement plans with Aboriginal residents in current development processes, and housing and wellness planning.</p> <p>Relevant Areas: <i>Local Area Plans, City of Reconciliation, Healthy City Strategy, Housing and Homelessness Strategy</i></p>

## Aboriginal Housing & Wellness - Demographic Information

The Aboriginal population is one of the fastest growing populations in Canada, with many people moving to urban areas to pursue the many opportunities that urban life offers, including employment and education. The Aboriginal population has grown by 30% in Metro Vancouver from 2006-2011 compared to the non-Aboriginal population with an increase of 9%.<sup>3</sup>

In 2010, the average unemployment rate for Aboriginal people in Metro Vancouver was 13%, compared to Vancouver where the average unemployment rate of aboriginal people was 15% and more than double the City's overall average of 7%. A high poverty rate is also reflected in the Aboriginal population – 27% of the Aboriginal population in Metro Vancouver are earning below the low-income measure. In Vancouver, the poverty rate is even higher for Aboriginal households at 35%, 15% higher than the poverty rate of the City's general population.

A rapidly growing Aboriginal population and large proportion of low-income residents is influencing a greater need for adequate and affordable housing. As of 2011, over 50% of Aboriginal renter households were spending more than 30% or more on housing (51% in the region, 53% in Vancouver). The 2014 regional homeless count found that 31% of the homeless population in Metro Vancouver, and 36% of the homeless population in Vancouver identified as Aboriginal. Of note, 44% of Metro Vancouver Aboriginal residents owned their own home compared to 23% in Vancouver.

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<sup>3</sup> National Household Survey, Census 2011