

# A.2

## COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

### **2. Ensuring a Net Increase in Dignified Supportive Housing Units by Renewing Leases or Finding New Sites for Temporary Modular Housing While New Supportive Housing is Built**

Submitted by: Councillor Boyle

#### WHEREAS

1. Vancouver is in the midst of a growing homelessness humanitarian crisis, with people who are homeless having about half the life expectancy as housed people in BC.
2. While the 2023 official homeless count has not been released yet, the 2020 Vancouver count identified 2,095 residents who are homeless (these counts are widely understood to be an undercount). Of those 2,095 residents counted:
  1. 84% were living in Vancouver before they became homeless
  2. 23% were seniors (over 55) and the number of homeless seniors has been growing since 2008
  3. 35% were youth in care or had been a child or youth in care
  4. 23% reported having a learning disability or cognitive impairment, 35% had a physical disability, and 26% reported having an acquired brain injury
  5. 39% identified as Indigenous or Aboriginal
3. The Ministry of Poverty Reduction says that approximately 2000 people who use Downtown Eastside social assistance offices receive the \$75 supplement for people with no fixed address. About 1150 more in the rest of the city receive that supplement. This means that approximately 3150 people who receive social assistance in the city have no home, but more are probably homeless and not receiving social assistance.
4. That there are about 1068 social housing units at shelter rate under construction, pending occupancy, approved through rezoning or with issued development permit, or anticipated to come through rezoning or development permit prior to the end of 2027 in Vancouver. The province recently announced that it is buying Chalmers Lodge with 115 units for shelter rate housing. That brings the total additional units to house the current over 3000 homeless people to 1183 by approximately 2030.
5. Vancouver is losing affordable SRO units to rent increases, fires, and habitability issues, at a rate of approximately 150-200 per year. Losing TMH units would make the current situation even more dire. And if

Vancouver sees a net loss in supportive housing units, we will likely have more encampments.

6. There are more than 750 units of Temporary Modular Housing in Vancouver, with leases expiring between 2024 and 2028. Tenants of Larwill Place at Cambie and Dunsmuir (98 TMH units) are moving to other supportive housing in the area this summer as the new Vancouver Art Gallery progresses. Aneki Lodge at Powell and Jackson (39 TMH units) is intended to be redeveloped into a 154 unit new permanent social housing building and community economic development hub, with the redevelopment timeline subject to senior government funding.
7. Research on self-reported health and housing outcomes of TMH tenants demonstrates that these homes have had significant positive outcomes for tenants. For example, these homes have benefited tenants by providing increased housing stability, improved quality of life, improved health, and reduced use of emergency services.
8. Supportive housing costs less than homelessness. Supportive housing residents are 64% less likely than shelter clients to use ambulance services, and the average hospital stay for supportive housing residents is 50% less than shelter clients. Homelessness also adds significant costs to the City budget, including costs of police, outreach workers, sanitation, and shelters.
9. Minister of Housing Ravi Kahlon recently commented on the Larwill TMH housing in saying, "If the City of Vancouver were to offer us an alternative location, we certainly would look at the opportunity."
10. The temporary aspect of Vancouver's Temporary Modular Housing projects to date is the land lease arrangements. The physical buildings are durable and can last for decades, and are capable of being moved. While the cost of moving the buildings is significant, it is lower than the cost of building new. And renewing or extending leases is the least costly option. Given the scale of the housing and homelessness crisis in Vancouver and across BC, both TMH and permanent supportive housing play important roles in the spectrum of housing, and are currently needed.
11. The MOU signed between the City, Park Board and Province on March 31, 2021 says, the role of the city is "to bring forward available land for housing or shelter to expedite land use decisions necessary to rapidly respond to housing need."
12. Now is the time to plan to find sites for all the temporary modular housing so that when their leases expire, the city and people who are homeless don't lose that desperately needed housing.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to work toward renewing or extending existing leases for Temporary Modular Housing, and report back by Q2 2024, to reduce uncertainty for tenants and operators and to ensure no net loss of Temporary Modular Housing units while new permanent supportive housing is being built.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to explore and report back on options for extending the current time limit on Temporary Modular Housing beyond the 10 year limit currently outlined in section 11.3.4.3 of the Zoning and Development By-law.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to explore and report back on new longer-term or permanent sites for Temporary Modular Housing buildings where leases can't be renewed, so that these buildings can continue to contribute to reducing homelessness through a net increase in total units alongside new permanent supportive housing.