

**Affordable Housing and Child Care Advisory Committee
Agenda**

**Tuesday, March 8, 2022, 5:30 p.m.
Electronic and in Meeting Room G
Lower Level, City Hall**

We recognize and respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. We acknowledge that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. As a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

	Pages
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</u>	
The Chair will open the meeting and provide a land acknowledgement.	
2. <u>CHANGES TO THE AGENDA</u>	
Additions or deletion of agenda items.	
3. <u>ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</u>	
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3.3. January 11, 2022 Notes	13
4. <u>REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS</u>	
Staff and guest reports and presentations for information, discussion, and/or action	
4.1. Orientation and Oaths of Office	
4.2. Homelessness Action Strategy Engagement	
4.3. Crisis Response Bylaw	
4.4. Seniors Housing Collaborative	
4.5. Artist Mentor Project	
4.6. Community Action Network Recruitment	
4.7. Childcare BC Plan	
4.8. Seamless Day Kindergarten Pilot	

4.9. Election of Alternate Chair

5. NEW BUSINESS

Items added to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

6. END OF MEETING

7. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Remaining scheduled meetings, which take place at 5:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted:

- May 10
- July 12
- September 6

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND CHILD CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AHCCAC)

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

**Meeting held Electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192/2020 and
Open to public attendance in Meeting Room G, Lower Floor, City Hall**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy
Tanis Anderson
Brian Curry
Stephanie Erdelyi
Jennifer Fane
Briana Harris
Hortensia Moreno
Jayne Ogundehinde
Iulia Sincaian
Andii Stephens
Betina Wheeler

- Chair, City Council Member
- Representative, School District 40
- Community Member
- Representative, Child Care Advocacy Organization
- Community Member
- Community Member
- Community Member
- Community Member
- Community Member
- Community Member
- Representative, Homelessness Coalition Society

MEMBERS REGRETS:

Justin Byers
Wes Everaars
Blaine Kane

- Representative, BC Housing
- Community Member
- Representative, Indigenous Advocacy or Social Service Organization

STAFF PRESENT:

Claudia Freire
Anur Mehdi
Nicole Ludwig

- Housing / Social Planner
- Housing / Child Care Planning Analyst
- Assistant City Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. Members of the Committee introduced themselves.

1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions and/or deletions to the agenda.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of the Affordable Housing and Child Care Advisory Committee of June 8, 2021

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the June 8, 2021, Affordable Housing and Child Care Advisory Committee be adopted.

CARRIED.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.
(Briana Harris and Hortensia Moreno absent for the vote)

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Meeting Presentation of the September 7, 2021 AHCCAC

Anur Mehdic, Development Services, provided an overview of the agenda for the evening.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no items.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Integrated Seniors Support Pilot Project and the Hey Neighbour Collective

Anur Mehdic Housing/Child Care Planning Analyst, provided a presentation on emergency preparedness and social connectedness for seniors, including the integrated seniors support pilot project and the Hey Neighbour Collective.

In discussion, Committee members noted the following:

- Would like information on Parks and Recreation programming and whether anything will be done with the raised bed gardens; and,
- It would be beneficial to have shuttle pick up and drop off points for seniors to help them access food from community gardens.

5.2 Overview of Funding Received to Support Vulnerable Populations

Claudia Freire, Housing/Social Planner, provided an overview of funding received to support vulnerable populations. She noted there will be a report to Council on September 13, 2021, which will be shared with committee members when available.

5.3 Sanctuary City Policy and Implementation

Claudia Freire, Housing/Social Planner, provided a presentation on the Sanctuary City Policy, and provided a summary on its implementation.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Freire and Anur Mehdić, Housing/Child Care Planning Analyst, provided the following information:

- The New Westminster Police Department is working on their policy through the fall of 2021 and it is expected to go to the Police Board for approval before year end;
- She will send a link to the website for the Sanctuary City Policy;
- The brochure being created will be translated and information will be shared with non-profit organizations; and,
- The policy also guides the actions of non-profit organizations receiving City grants, contractors, and other organizations who do business with the City.

Committee members expressed enthusiasm about the policy and Ms. Freire also agreed to distribute her contact information for any questions and offers of assistance.

5.4 Welcome Centre Update

Claudia Freire, Housing/Social Planner, provided an update on the Welcome Centre, noting it will include a reception area, a resource library, space for Qayqayt First Nation, flex offices, and multi-purpose spaces. She advised there would be an Opening Celebration on Saturday, October 2, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

5.5 On the Road to Significant Child Care Change in BC: Update and Discussion

Anur Mehdić, Housing/Child Care Planning Analyst, advised there is currently a large amount of discussion about child care, and provided a presentation on the importance of affordable and accessible early learning and child care (ELCC), and reviewed the child care agreement between the Federal government and the provinces.

In discussion, Committee members noted:

- Child care, particularly after-school care, can be difficult to find;
- It would be ideal to have after-school care take place at schools;
- The cost of child care is significant, particularly for women and minorities and could be a barrier to being in the workforce;
- The current plan and path to \$10 per day daycare is what child care advocates have wanted; even if only a few pieces come together it will be an improvement over the current situation;

- Low wages for Early Learning and Childhood Educators (ELC Educators) can make it an unattractive career path; increasing wages should be a priority to draw people to the profession;
- The School District has been trying to add before and after care to schools; part of the difficulty is having people work split shifts;
- The school schedule often does not work well with the labour market; child care is needed at all hours; right now care out of hours is being provided by unlicensed daycares because they are the only ones who will do it; and
- Children with exceptionalities or disabilities, as well as parents who do shiftwork, do not seem to be included in the roadmap.

Mr. Mehdic advised he would be taking these comments back to the working group.

6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

6.1 COVID-19 At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations Task Force Budget Reallocation Request for the Seniors Integrated Support Pilot Project and Enhanced Personal Identification Services (in relation to item 5.1).

See section 5.1 for minutes.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

8.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Certified correct,

COUNCILLOR JAIMIE MCEVOY
CHAIR

NICOLE LUDWIG
ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND CHILD CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

NOTES

Tuesday, November 9, 2021
Electronic and in Meeting Room G
Lower Level, City Hall

PRESENT:

Ms. Andii Stephens	Community Member/Alternate Chair*
Ms. Tanis Anderson	Representative, School District 40*
Mr. Wes Everaars	Community Member*
Ms. Jayne Ogundehinde	Community Member*
Ms. Betina Wheeler	Representative, Homelessness Coalition Society*

ABSENT:

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy	
Ms. Stephanie Erdelyi	Representative, Child Care Advocacy Organization
Ms. Jennifer Fane	Community Member
Ms. Briana Harris	Community Member
Mr. Blaine Kane	Representative, Indigenous Advocacy or Social Service Organization
Ms. Hortensia Moreno	Community Member
Ms. Iulia Sincaian	Community Member

STAFF PRESENT:

Ms. Claudia Freire	Housing and Social Planner
Mr. Anur Mehdić	Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst
Ms. Carilyn Cook	Committee Clerk

*Denotes electronic attendance

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Andii Stephens, Community Member and Alternate Chair, opened the meeting at 5:32 p.m. noting that quorum had not been achieved.

Ms. Stephens recognized that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsundered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples and acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. She

recognized that, as a city, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKERS

This item was not addressed.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions and/or deletions to the agenda.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. September 7, 2021

Procedural note: As quorum was not achieved, adoption of the September 7, 2021 minutes was deferred to the next meeting of the Affordable Housing and Child Care Advisory Committee.

5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a. Arts Empowerment Initiative: Call for Artist Mentor - Photovoice Project

Claudia Freire, Housing/Social Planner, provided a presentation on the Arts Empowerment Initiative and the Call for Artist Mentor for the Photovoice Project which will highlight the importance of home, belonging, and community, through photography and storytelling. Ms. Freire's presentation outlined the following:

- The Call is open to up to five tenants each from Mazarine Lodge, 43 Hastings Street, and the Lookout Housing and Health Society accommodations;
- The background and goals of the Project; and,
- Central themes that will build on "Changing the Conversation," work being done by Dr. Elliot Rossiter, Philosophy and Humanities, Douglas College.

Ms. Freire asked Committee members for their suggestions and/or examples of other innovative ideas to expand and increase the discussion regarding affordable housing, living in poverty, and experiencing homelessness.

In response to a question from the Committee, Ms. Freire advised that the idea of the Project is to facilitate broader discussions about housing insecurity in the community, etc., and build compassion and a deeper understanding for when different affordable housing proposals come to the City.

Wes Everaars, Community Member, noted that when Lookout Housing and Health Society opens new sites such as shelters, they reach out to the various interest groups, Business Improvement Associations, and those interested in the service through a community advisory committee. He advised that as a project moves forward, a lot of advocacy work is done, including myth buster campaigns.

b. Crisis Response Bylaw Amendments Update

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, provided a presentation on the Crises Amendment Bylaw Update in which the City will bundle three closely related projects in the interest of more quickly responding to urgent needs in the community and meeting current and near-future funding deadlines. The intent of these amendments is to enable more urgent and time-sensitive response efforts relating to the pandemic, recent fires and heat waves, the opioid crisis, the homelessness crisis, and any other future crises to be met more readily by successful adoption of bylaw amendments. The projects include:

- City-wide crisis response bylaw amendments;
- 60-68 Sixth Street Supportive Housing Project; and,
- 350-366 Fenton Street Affordable Housing Project.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Freire provided the following comments;

- Regarding the proposed new 52 supportive housing units at 68 Sixth Street, staff will provide information to the Committee regarding the process to select an operator for the site, once it is available; and,
- Staff leading the Sixth Street project will be made aware of the Committee's suggestion to address resident and business concerns in the downtown area.

In discussion, Committee members noted that engagement and education with the community with respect emergency and supportive housing needs and how it will ultimately benefit the community must be undertaken.

c. Homelessness Action Strategy

Anur Mehdi, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, provided a presentation on the Homelessness Action Strategy to address the increase in homelessness in the City, which outlined the following:

- Homelessness population numbers;
- Factors that contribute to homelessness;
- The impact that homelessness has on organizations, businesses, and neighbourhoods; and,

- Current and future actions that the City is taking to address homelessness.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Mehdic and Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, provided the following comments:

- Many lessons were learned from the Emergency Response Shelter at the Massey Theatre which had to be moved to the Cliff Block, including supports that need to be in place;
- A report regarding 68 Sixth Street will be going to Council on November 15, 2021, with the goal of having the project completed in 2022;
- The free-standing modular toilets would be located in accessible spots where those most likely to use them congregate, such as Downtown, but also in consideration of the availability of underground services for installation of the washrooms. Additionally, underutilized washrooms at SkyTrain stations may also be made more available;
- After-hours access to parks washrooms has been identified as a possible opportunity to provide additional washrooms options; however, overnight security would have to be implemented at these sites. This opportunity will be brought to the Engineering and Parks and Recreation Departments for further investigation;
- Community Action Network (CAN) leaders with living and lived experience with poverty and homelessness, as subject matter experts are compensated for their work at a living wage level;
- Provision of an emergency shelter on the lower floor of the old Army and Navy store located at 502 Columbia Street is being worked on with BC Housing. The facility would be run by the Lower Mainland Purpose Society; and,
- The City continues work to provide 52 supportive housing units at 68 Sixth Street.

In response to staff's request for feedback on the Homelessness Action Strategy, Committee members noted the following:

- Simple pieces of infrastructure need to be added and/or increased such as public trash cans since it can be very hard for people to find receptacles for rubbish disposal;
- The approach being taken to include CAN graduates to engage with the unsheltered population is a great way to interact with and get feedback from people; and,
- It is important to engage with people to find out which programs are working for them and which are not, as well as to include the Police in this process from a community engagement aspect.

d. School Age Child Care in Queensborough

Anur Mehdic Housing/Child Care Planning Analyst, provided a presentation on School Age Child Care in Queensborough including information about the creation of a COVID-19 Child Care Working Group sub-committee to explore options for school-age childcare spaces in Queensborough.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Mehdic provided the following comments:

- Parental work hours may be different now than pre-COVID, necessitating the need for irregular childcare hours;
- The development at the Quay, which is still in the discussion stages, includes a large childcare aspect;
- A recent successful rezoning that allowed for up to 37 childcare spaces in an existing single detached house may pave the way for more group childcare applications in single family neighbourhoods ; and,
- Child Care Benefits information could be shared through the COVID Task Forces' weekly email, and brought back to a future meeting of the of the Affordable Housing and Child Care Advisory Committee as there is some confusion with other benefits and resources.

In response to staff's request for feedback on childcare in Queensborough and city-wide, Committee members noted the following:

- It is concerning and frustrating being on one or more childcare waitlists and not knowing where you are on the list(s) or how long the wait will be; some parents may not add their name to a waitlist if they think there is no point to it;
- Additional information that could be sought out in a survey for parents could include:
 - How many childcare waitlists people are on as this may increase the accuracy of the numbers;
 - The specific needs of immigrant families and those that care for kids within their families;
 - Times needed for childcare that may be outside of regular hours;
 - Families that moved to a specific catchment area in order to have access to childcare; and,
 - If the lack of access to after-school care has affected parental work schedule and/or availability, particularly that of single parents.
- Childcare hours are being shortened due to lack of staff who should be better compensated for their work given the education they have and the expectations that are upon them;

- It would be beneficial for the City to have a centralized daycare waitlist implemented for ease of access to information;
- There is concern regarding the lack of childcare available in more densely populated neighbourhoods such as Downtown and Sapperton;
- A topic for further discussion could be affordable housing and childcare impacts on children living in poverty. This could be looked at in tandem; and;
- Information must be shared with parents regarding the Child Care Benefit as many do not know what they are qualified for.

6. NEW BUSINESS

There were no items.

7. END OF MEETING

On MOTION, the meeting ended at 7:14 p.m.

8. UPCOMING MEETINGS

To be determined.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND CHILD CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

NOTES

Tuesday, January 11, 2022
Electronic and in Meeting Room G
Lower Level, City Hall

PRESENT:

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy	Chair*
Ms. Tanis Anderson	Representative, School District 40*
Mr. Blaine Kane	Representative, Indigenous Advocacy or Social Service Organization*
Ms. Hortensia Moreno	Community Member
Ms. Iulia Sincaian	Community Member
Ms. Betina Wheeler	Representative, Homelessness Coalition Society*

ABSENT:

Mr. Wes Everaars	Community Member
Ms. Jennifer Fane	Community Member
Ms. Stephanie Erdelyi	Representative, Child Care Advocacy Organization
Ms. Briana Harris	Community Member
Ms. Jayne Ogundehinde	Community Member
Ms. Andii Stephens	Community Member/Alternate Chair*

STAFF PRESENT:

Ms. Claudia Freire	Housing and Social Planner
Mr. Anur Mehdić	Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst
Ms. Carilyn Cook	Committee Clerk

*Denotes electronic attendance

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Councillor McEvoy, Chair, opened the meeting at 5:37 p.m. noting that quorum had not been achieved.

Councillor McEvoy recognized that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples and acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a city, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 September 7, 2021

3.2 November 9, 2021 Notes

Procedural note: As quorum was not achieved, adoption of the September 7, 2021 and November 9, 2021 minutes was deferred to the next meeting of the Affordable Housing and Child Care Advisory Committee.

4. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Homelessness Action Strategy Update

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, commenced with the first part of the PowerPoint presentation update on the Homelessness Action Strategy which outlined the contributing factors to homelessness and the City's previous, current, and planned actions to address homelessness in the city.

In response to a question from the Committee, Anur Mehdić, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst advised that staff have been working closely with Community Action Network (CAN) leaders who have lived and living experience around homelessness. He noted that the need for upstream supports, those that address the problem at its root, has become very apparent, as short-term actions do not help the long-term homelessness issues, and that the pandemic has brought many issues to the forefront.

In response to the questions, "What are your observations with regard to the homelessness situation in New Westminster?" and, "What factors do you believe are contributing to the increase in homelessness in New Westminster?" Committee members noted the following:

- There are noticeably fewer people on the street since the Emergency Response Centre opened;
- Although the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) put more money in people's hands, they may still be behind on their rent due to ingrained habits. Some people have lost their jobs but still try to maintain a certain lifestyle which they can no longer afford;
- The price of everything is going up, pushing those who were on the poverty line before the pandemic, over the edge;
- Participation in the subsidized lunch programs at schools has doubled in the last year;
- Homelessness has noticeably increased over the years;
- Months ago many organizations thought we may be coming out of the pandemic and did not plan for where we are now;
- A long-term plan needs to be in place for when shelters are unable to operate at full capacity;
- The Fraser Health Authority has been very challenged during the pandemic;
- There is a real need for a presence on the street with the increase in drug issues, as it is much worse than it was previously;
- There is a feeling of hopelessness and isolation on the street that was not there before with the added fear of transmission of the virus, especially for those who are already vulnerable and at risk; and,
- The lack of mental health outreach on the street is evident and must be addressed soon.

Ms. Freire continued with the second part of the PowerPoint presentation update on the Homelessness Action Strategy, which addressed the purpose, and key objectives of the Strategy, key partners, the three phases of the Strategy, and proposed timeline.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Freire and Mr. Mehdic provided the following comments:

- Information and engagement opportunities will be accessible on the city's Be Heard website in the near future and the City's Manager of Public Engagement will engage the wider community; and,
- Staff are striving to keep the human touch in engagement for the Strategy and will have more one on one interviews with those that have lived and living experience with homelessness, and possibly develop surveys, all of which is being undertaken with CAN leaders.

A Committee member advised of the importance of receiving feedback from those currently living on the street in order to determine what is really needed to support

them; therefore, an outreach strategy must include engaging as many segments of the community as possible.

4.2 Climate Change Repercussions for Unsheltered and Vulnerable Populations

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, provided a PowerPoint presentation on Climate Change Repercussions for Unsheltered and Vulnerable Populations which outlined the various challenges that have arisen due to climate change, and key findings and proposed policy considerations.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Mehdic provided the following comments:

- This issue highlights that more systemic approaches, especially around housing, need to be implemented;
- The approach taken to address these issues must be multi-jurisdictional as cities will not be able to address them alone;
- Some of the policies that staff were working on prior to these recent extreme events, such as the Community Energy and Emissions Plan, address these issues and the impact that climate change will have on the vulnerable; and,
- The COVID-19 At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations and COVID-19 Seniors and Persons Living with Disabilities Task Forces were created at the onset of the pandemic and, during the extreme heat event, the City was able to utilize those contacts to respond to those crises. The City's relationships with the faith-based and non-profit organizations on those Task Forces has strengthened throughout the pandemic.

Discussion ensued, and Committee members provided the following comments:

- It would be ideal if organizations could stock up on resources such as water and other goods in order to be prepared for the next extreme event; however, that takes funding and space to store the supplies which many organizations do not have;
- Some of the unsheltered population come to New Westminster as they find it to be safer;
- The vulnerable population are the ones that suffer the most and this has been a particularly difficult year and a half for them;
- The opening of Skwo:wech Elementary School has been hindered due to the delay in the arrival of supplies;
- The School District is also working on a climate action plan;

- The City may be able to look to churches to provide more localized cooling facilities during future extreme heat events;
- A cooling site is needed in the Brow of Hill area of the City as it was hit particularly hard during the heat wave; and,
- The churches that are currently going through the redevelopment process anticipate being able to help, be engaged, and be accessible to the broader community and the City should support these goals in any way they can.

4.3 Seniors Integrated Support Pilot Project at Ross Tower - Overview of the Emergency Preparedness Component

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, shared a PowerPoint presentation on the Seniors Integrated Support Pilot Project and the Hey Neighbour Collective, both of which will address emergency preparedness and social connectedness for seniors.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Mehdic provided the following comments:

- It is hoped that strong evaluation and documentation of the Project will secure further funding and create a case to apply learnings to other buildings, although, currently, it is challenging with the pandemic as to how things can move forward; and,
- The City is in the process of printing waterproof and pocket-sized Survival Resource Guides that list the locations of shelters and food resources. These will be shared in the community.

Discussion ensued, and Committee members provided the following comments:

- Every building would benefit from this kind of program which will teach people the importance of building neighbour relations and taking care of each other; and,
- We must consider how to manage when disaster events happen concurrently such as the extreme heat event that took place during the pandemic.

4.4 Overview of Child Care Supports

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, shared a PowerPoint presentation which provided an overview of Child Care Supports including the Affordable Child Care Benefit, the Child Care Operating Funding – Base Funding, the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative, the Early Childhood Educator Wage

Enhancement, the Childcare BC Maintenance Fund, and start up grants that are available for those interested in opening a licensed child care facility.

Discussion ensued, and Committee members provided the following comments:

- People should be made aware of the Affordable Child Care Benefit calculator which can be used to determine what you are entitled to;
- School age child care is a real need and, unfortunately, a lot of benefits do not apply for kids in this category;
- It is important to, in communication documents, explain the monetary aspect of things by showing people the different levels of funding and how they may be affected by them;
- Many people are unaware of the monetary supports that they are qualified to receive; and,
- Affordable child care issues include meeting the needs of disabled children and continued prioritization of child care amenities in new developments.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

6. **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

March 8, 2022

7. **END OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 7:09 p.m.

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy

Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk