

## Attachment 4

### *Staff Letter to Businesses and Residents*

May 23, 2023

Dear business person or resident:

**Re: Rezoning Application for Proposed Supportive Housing  
Development at 422 Sixth Street, New Westminster**

Based on a preliminary review of the *Be Heard New West* survey results related to the proposed supportive housing development at 422 Sixth Street, there appears to be some misunderstanding about what is being proposed. Some respondents are equating supportive housing to a minimal-barrier emergency shelter or an overdose prevention or supervised consumption site. There are significant differences between these three uses, and we hope that the following will help to clarify them, while providing additional information on what is being proposed.

**The proposed rezoning is to permit up to 30 supportive housing units.**

This housing is intended for individuals with low-incomes who have experienced or who are at-risk of homelessness. These individuals benefit from supports to assist them with their successful tenancy and to transition to more independent living. Supports include services related budgeting and life skills, counselling and health, education and employment readiness, meal preparation and nutrition, and community connections and referral. Individuals go through an intake process as to their suitability, including their comfort living in a communal setting, their receptivity to engage in supports, and their willingness to sign a commitment as to these and other expectations. This housing is not designed or intended to accommodate individuals who may be active in their addiction.

**Supportive housing is very different from an emergency shelter.**

Supportive housing provides longer-term housing (e.g., for a year or longer, and sometimes permanent) whereas an emergency shelter provides short-term, temporary housing (e.g., during an extreme weather event, nightly, or 24/7). Supportive housing also incorporates an intake and assessment process, and

requires a commitment on behalf of the resident to a set of expectations or rules whereas an emergency shelter generally accepts individuals on a first-come, first-serve basis. Further, supportive housing offers a range of supports whereas an emergency shelter, depending on the type, provides limited to no supports. Additionally, supportive housing typically consists of individual units whereas an emergency shelter often consists of a dorm or shared bedroom arrangement.

**Supportive housing is very different from an overdose prevention or supervised consumption site.**

Supportive housing is residential housing intended for individuals who have made the decision to move into a more stable place and are receptive to engaging in supports. An overdose prevention or supervised consumption site provides a short term service for individuals who are active in their addiction and who are looking to reduce the harm associated with their drug use. Further, supportive housing provides supports for the individuals who are resident of the building whereas an overdose prevention or supervised consumption site serves the larger community.

There are many supportive housing developments throughout Metro Vancouver, including Mazarine Lodge in Queensborough, and these developments have generally not proven to be problematic and have, for the most part, seamlessly fit into the neighbourhoods in which they are located.

For more information, please go to *Be Heard New West*, which can be accessed at: <https://www.beheardnewwest.ca/422-sixth-st>

You can also forward any comments to the Climate Action, Planning and Development Department at [devfeedback@newwestcity.ca](mailto:devfeedback@newwestcity.ca)