

**November 7, 2025**

**Honourable Christine Boyle**

Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs  
Government of British Columbia  
Victoria, BC

**Honourable Josie Osborne**

Minister of Health  
Government of British Columbia  
Victoria, BC

**Honourable Sheila Malcolmson**

Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction  
Government of British Columbia  
Victoria, BC

**Re: Urgent Call for Balanced and Evidence-Based Housing and Support Service Planning in Sechelt**

Dear Minister Boyle, Minister Osborne and Minister Malcolmson,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the growing concentration of multiple housing and support services within a one-square-block area of Sechelt and the significant risks this presents to both the individuals accessing those services and the broader community.

Within this small area, a shelter, an overdose prevention site (recently established without consultation), an existing encampment, and a supportive housing complex are now co-located—without the necessary balance of supports, consultation, or long-term planning. The cumulative impact is visible every day: open drug use, assaults, property damage, and community distress. This will be the view from the bedrooms of the children who will be moving into our new housing for women and women with children who have been impacted by violence. This new building is a partnership between Sunshine Coast Community Services (SCCSS) and BC Housing and has been under development for 8 years.

With the recent BC Housing announcement to add 2 new facilities to this same square block, one for supportive housing and one for complex care units all without community consultation, we can expect to see this impact escalate.

This situation is not sustainable, not safe, and not consistent with best practice. It risks undermining public confidence in community housing solutions and, most importantly, the safety and recovery of those the system is meant to help.

Sunshine Coast Community Services Society has long been a partner in advancing the province's housing and social equity goals. We fully support the need for shelter, supportive housing, and harm-reduction services. But these must be implemented strategically, collaboratively, and in accordance with evidence-

based practice—not clustered in one small area without the necessary wrap-around supports, workforce capacity, or pathways to recovery and stability.

Currently, there is no clear continuum of care for individuals moving from shelter to stability. Our region continues to lack detox and 90-day recovery beds, sufficient mental-health treatment options, and operational funding to sustain front-line staff. At the same time, local recruitment and retention challenges—driven by the cost of housing, limited childcare, and wage pressures—further weaken our collective ability to deliver effective support.

It does not have to be this way. I am aware of four suitable sites in Sechelt and Gibsons that could accommodate affordable, mixed-income, and inclusive housing aligning with the Sunshine Coast Housing Needs Assessment. These opportunities would distribute resources more evenly, support healthier integration, and reflect the model that research and experience show works best: housing that is affordable, diverse, and connected to community.

By contrast, concentrating a high number of people with complex needs in a single area—particularly close to a second-stage transition house for women and children—is counter to best practice and risks retraumatizing vulnerable residents. It also places unsustainable pressure on local emergency, health, and community service systems.

I am urging your ministries to take immediate action to rebalance this approach. Specifically, I am requesting:

1. **A pause and review** of current siting and density decisions in 1 square block of Sechelt.
2. **Meaningful engagement** with local service providers, community members, and municipal leadership to design an evidence-based, distributed housing strategy; and
3. **Investment in the full continuum of supports**—including detox, recovery, and mental-health services—to ensure housing stability and community well-being.

To help move this conversation forward, I wish to share several locally informed options for consideration and discussion and I acknowledge these might not be THE solution but it is a place to start the community conversation.

- Explore the four available sites mentioned and work with the DOS, and the community on form and function.
- Relocate the existing shelter and repurpose the land for mixed-income, affordable workforce housing that fosters diversity and community vitality.
- Work with VCH to move the Overdose Prevention Site to the hospital grounds, making it more accessible, less stigmatized, and better integrated into the health system.
- Integrate residents living with mental health and addictions into the broader community through mixed-income developments, rather than isolating or concentrating vulnerability.
- Establish the proposed 40 units of supportive housing to the available Gibsons site and consider mixed-use housing with social services located on the bottom level.

- Reconsider the establishment of 20 complex care beds on Ebbtide located in direct proximity to second stage housing for women and children escaping violence and 35 long term homes for women and women with children impacted by violence.
- Consider establishing 6 units of complex care in the building next door to existing and successful prevention, support and housing services for people living with mental health and addictions. Expanding the support and prevention services on the ground floor underneath the 6 news units.
- Establish workforce mixed income, diverse housing in one of 3 locations available on Trail and Cowrie Avenues in Sechelt.
- Provide programing dollars to support local non-profits to build program capacity to meet the increasing needs of the most vulnerable and under resourced people in our community.
- Help us bring detox and recovery services to the sunshine coast.

This is not a request to delay progress; it is a call to ensure success. The Sunshine Coast has a long history of community-driven solutions and strong collaboration. We can build the housing and support systems that this region urgently needs—but only through partnership, planning, and balance.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and other members of our community to discuss these concerns and to work together toward a plan that truly strengthens both housing outcomes and community health.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for your ongoing leadership on housing and health in British Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Catherine Leach', with a stylized, flowing script.

Catherine Leach

**Executive Director  
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society**