



Victoria Community Health Co-operative, the VHC

Chair: Vanessa Hammond vichealthcoop@gmail.com 250.415.9272
www.victoriahealthcooperative.ca Serving our Member-Owners and Community

October 23, 2020

Mayor Lisa Helps
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps:

In recognition of the housing crisis Victoria and its communities are facing, the Victoria Community Health Co-operative is delighted to see the recent work presented at the October 20th Renters' Advisory Committee (RAC) meeting. We align ourselves with the World Health Organization's vision of wellbeing, which includes housing as one of the top Social Determinants of Health.

Given Victoria's limited rental housing stock and the number of residents in need of affordable rental housing, we present the following suggestions:

- We hope you will accelerate the work schedule and implementation of RAC's recommendations to address the lack of available and affordable rental housing. We need immediate action in order to serve all in need of housing, and to support essential service workers who are often inadequately paid and struggle to afford to live in Victoria.
- We urge you to look positively at creative solutions such as co-housing and co-operative housing to encourage more efficient use of housing space. This could be especially beneficial for low to moderate income seniors who are facing a significant crisis of affordability, housing security, and rent stability, along with social isolation and loneliness.
- Relatedly, we encourage you to work with the Province to stop ICBC's obstruction of informal car sharing, which drives insurance costs higher if vehicle users live at different addresses. Car sharing is one way to help mitigate parking space needs and in turn, reduce the need for tenants to pay additional rent to procure a parking space.

We thank you for your work on affordable and secure housing. I would be happy to discuss these suggestions further. Please feel free to contact me by email at vichealthcoop@gmail.com or by phone at (250) 415-9272.

Cooperatively,

Courtney Wiens
Director, Victoria Health Co-operative

Cc: Victoria City Council
Cc: Renters' Advisory Committee