



THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF OAK BAY
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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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February 2, 2026

Hon. Josie Osborne, Minister of Health
Hon. Bowinn Ma, Minister of Infrastructure
Chair Hollins and Board of Directors, Island Health
Chair Murdoch and Board of Directors, Capital Regional Hospital District (CRHD)
Hon. Diana Gibson, MLA for Oak Bay-Gordon Head

Dear Ministers, Board Members and MLA Gibson:

RE: Requesting a Collaborative Campus of Care for the former Oak Bay Lodge Site

On behalf of Oak Bay Council, I am writing to express our urgent and continued support for the redevelopment of the former Oak Bay Lodge site. This four-acre publicly-owned and fully-serviced parcel just blocks from a major medical center has sat vacant for seven years. Amid a provincial long-term care crisis and with willing partners standing by and ready to act, this opportunity demands immediate action.

The BC Seniors' Advocate's 2025 report, *From Shortfall to Crisis*, highlights a staggering 200% increase in long-term care waitlists since 2016, with average wait times now reaching 290 days. In Oak Bay, where over a third of our residents are seniors, and for the entire Greater Victoria region, these figures are not abstract, they represent the measurable realities of families in distress.

Council has taken decisive action to remove historical barriers. Last year we adopted a new Official Community Plan, which specifically designates this site for up to six storeys for seniors care services. Through these changes, we have signaled to the Province and the Capital Regional Hospital District (CRHD) that we are ready for a high-impact facility that serves not just Oak Bay, but the entire region.

Our community is demanding action. Grassroots organizations have provided educational talks, panels, marches, and proliferating lawn signs – all demanding action on Oak Bay Lodge. I have heard from many residents and organizations that they are not just asking for this project but are also willing to fundraise to support it. As you know there is active interest from non-profit partners able to provide a wide range of needed services, and they too may be able to bring capital to the project – but only if there is commitment to advance the redevelopment.

Council acknowledges we have no direct input into the project planning; however, we would still like to strongly express our support for the priorities our community has clearly voiced. As noted in the extensive survey undertaken by the CRHD in 2021, there is strong public support across the region for a "Campus of Care" at this site. These services can include and integrate complex care, long-term care, dementia and respite care, end-of-life (hospice) care, primary/longitudinal care with multi-disciplinary practices, intergeneration space, and supportive and independent living. This model aligns closely with Provincial goals and supports those aging in place (and the loved ones who are supporting them).

We recognize that the "math" of the project - specifically the incremental operating costs - remains the primary hurdle between the feasibility studies and commitment to the project. We also recognize that there is an opportunity here that should not be missed, particularly when looking at the advantages of partners willing to help and potential cost savings.

If the Province designates the site as a health facility, the CRHD brings a unique ability to fund 30% of the capital costs, finance through reduced Municipal Finance Authority rates, and directly construct the project to remove most of the risk. The Hospital District Act also allows the CRHD to build a facility that meets current needs but can also expand to meet future or changing demands. The partnership with well-known and high-quality non-profit service providers with existing Island Health operating agreements ensures there are quality operators who also have the potential to subsidize capital costs. Add in Council's support and the community's willingness to contribute, and we feel the opportunity is here to bridge any operating gap together. Importantly, the commitment will not result in any increased operational costs to the Province or Island Health until the building is occupied, which is several years away.

We strongly encourage you to find solutions for this site, advance the project, and take advantage of the opportunity in front of you. As the project progresses, we also invite and encourage you to communicate the details to both Council and the public. Council, our residents, and the region look forward excitedly to seeing a renewed vision and advancement for the new Oak Bay Lodge Campus of Care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Murdoch".

Kevin Murdoch, Mayor
District of Oak Bay

C. Oak Bay Council

Addendum: Fact Sheet & Research Summary (January 2026)

I. Provincial LTC Crisis Data (Seniors' Advocate 2025)

- Waitlist Growth: From 2,381 (2016) to over 7,200 (2025)—a 200% increase.
- Wait Times: Average wait for a bed is now 290 days (nearly 10 months).
- Economic Burden: "Bed blocking" in acute care hospitals costs the province approx. \$2,000/day per senior, compared to \$300/day for a long-term care bed.

II. Site & Regulatory Status

- Vacancy Timeline: The original 235-bed facility was closed in 2019 and demolished in 2022. It has been vacant for 7 years.
- OCP Bylaw 4942 (Dec 2025): Officially increased height allowance to six storeys specifically for 2251 Cadboro Bay Rd to support seniors and health solutions
- Financial Placeholder: The CRHD 2025–2026 Capital Plan includes the site as a priority project with estimated capital costs exceeding \$300 million.

III. Key Stakeholder Quotes

- NDP MLA Candidate Diana Gibson (October 10, 2024): "We will redevelop Oak Bay Lodge, with a priority on health services for seniors, including primary care."
- Minister Josie Osborne (December 1, 2025): Has been a consistent supporter of seniors care and campus of care models since her time as Mayor of Tofino & Acting Chair Alberni-Clayoquot Regional Hospital District. "Seniors advocate reports have consistently shown that improved staffing, stability and the delivery of relational care are paramount to helping residents age successfully and with dignity."
- "Action Oak Bay" Citizens' Group (Dec 2025): "It's been empty for seven years and the tsunami of old people—that's us—is coming... we want to help [fundraise] and are willing to help."

IV. Campus of Care Definition

Under current BC health policy, a "Campus of Care" is a multi-level site that allows residents to transition from Independent Living to Assisted Living and Complex Care without leaving the site. Modern versions (like the one proposed for Oak Bay) often include a Seniors' Wellness Centre and Primary Care Clinics to serve the broader neighbourhood.