

**REPORT TO HOSPITALS AND HOUSING COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 04, 2023**

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**SUBJECT**     **Capital Region Housing Corporation Operational Update, Third Quarter, 2023**

**ISSUE SUMMARY**

To provide the Capital Region Housing Corporation (CRHC) Board with a quarterly update on operations, Tenant Engagement (TE), the Routine Capital Plan 2020 – 2024 and performance in the areas of turnover, vacancy, and move-ins up to and including September 10, 2023.

**BACKGROUND**

The CRHC is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Capital Regional District (CRD) with the mandate to develop and manage affordable housing to meet the needs of individuals and families residing within the capital region. In working to fulfill its mandate, the CRHC owns and operates more than 50 properties totalling over 1,900 units of housing providing homes to approximately 4,000 residents of the capital region with low to moderate incomes. In addition, CRHC manages a further three properties totalling 65 units on behalf of third parties to bring the CRHC's total units in operation to just under 2,000.

**DISCUSSION**

*Operations Update*

The properties that are managed by CRHC are supported by the work of approximately 52 full-time equivalencies (FTE). Staffing continues to require attention due to planned growth, unanticipated absences, and the movement of staff into various roles within CRHC operations. The CRHC, working collaboratively with Human Resources, has made considerable gains in filling operational vacancies that include roles across the Caretaker workgroup, Property Management staff, as well as both Property and Tenant Assists.

*Tenant Engagement (TE)*

TE staff have continued to streamline and develop best practices for prospective tenants applying for housing through the Regional Housing First Program (RHFP). This includes the development of an Independent Living Application which highlights community supports, self-identified supports and criteria for independent living.

Working with community partners has been a strong theme for TE staff in quarter three (Q3). Strengthening relationships with the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homeless has provided cultural perspectives to integrate into our work. Saanich Parks and Recreation have worked with TE staff to develop programming to be offered in our buildings, and ongoing Community Partners Meetings allow TE staff to continue to network within the housing industry.

The Fall newsletter for tenants will highlight ongoing TE initiatives including staff meet and greets at buildings and opportunities to engage more with TE staff. For example, staff are developing support for seniors in transitioning from Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefits to Old Age Security (OAS) benefits to help tenants maintain housing when their income status changes. The newsletter continues to provide tenants resources to allow for supported successful tenancies and connect staff with tenants in a meaningful way.

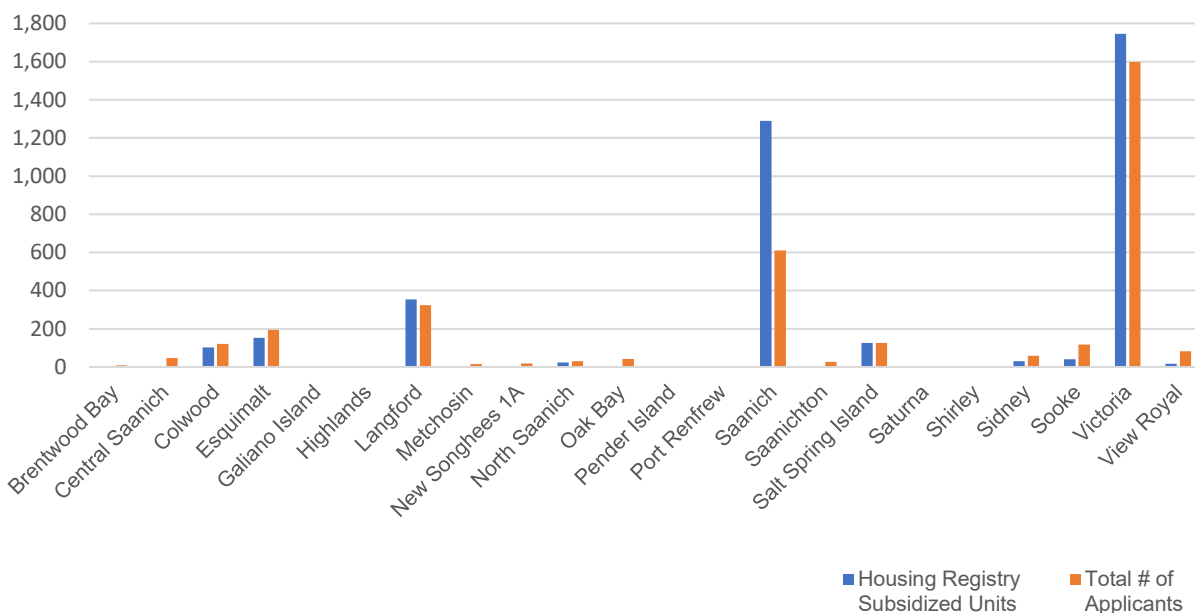
*Housing Registry Waitlist Statistics*

**Table 1: BC Housing Registry Waitlist Statistics**

Category	July 2023	August 2023	As at September 10, 2023
Total Registry Rent Geared to Income Units (Capital Region Area)	3,881	3,881	3,881
Applicants as noted below			
Family	872	884	882
Persons with Disabilities	666	689	681
Seniors	1,228	1,230	1,233
Wheelchair Modified	152	150	149
Singles	245	238	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,163</b>	<b>3,191</b>	<b>3,434<sup>1</sup></b>

The BC Housing Registry (the Registry) helps housing providers manage applicant lists and eliminate duplication among providers. The statistics provided above are for the CRD only with the highest representation of need in Victoria (47%), Saanich (18%), Langford (9%), Esquimalt (6%), Colwood (4%), Sooke (3%) and View Royal (2%). Chart 1 shows the total number of Housing Registry Subsidized Units across the capital region as well as the total number of current applicants.

**Chart 1: Applicant Waiting List Details – Capital Region**



The Registry requires applicants to renew their applications every six months to remain active. This process can account for slight fluctuations in the numbers with the number of applicants in Q3 showing an increase of 7.6%.

<sup>1</sup> The total also includes Rent Supplements (2), Transfers (234) and Pending Applications (20).

*Vacancy*

**Table 2: Vacancy Rate – Units Operating More than 12 Months**

Year	Period	# Units Vacant	# Days Vacant	Average Days Vacant
2023	Jan - March 10	68	3,382	49
2023	April – June 30	97	4,548	47
2023	July 1 – Sept 30	102	5,938	58

As of September 30, there are 102 units reported vacant across CRHC’s units which have all been in operation for more than 12 months. These vacancies total 5,938 days for an average of 58 days vacant. Staff continue to focus on turnover of units to a target of 30 days or less. However, as most units require capital work to occur in them, the turnover time continues to be impacted by contractor and material availability. Currently, wait times for scheduling works means a unit is vacant for a minimum of 45 days.

*Turnover*

**Table 3: Q3 Turnover Rate – All Units**

Year	Period	# Turnovers Operating More Than 12 Months	# Turnovers Operating Less Than 12 Months	Total
2023	January 1-March 10	24	1	25
2023	April – June 30	61	0	61
2023	July 1 – Sept 30	44	3	47

Turnover of units decreased in Q3. The reason for higher turnovers is partly due to improved weather, which allows individuals to make life choices about jobs and movement. Portfolio representation of the 47 units that turned over is: RHFP – 65%, Umbrella Operating Agreement (UOA) – 17%, No Operating Agreement (NOA) & Investment in Housing Innovation (IHI) - 11%.

*Rent-Up*

Staff have been turning their attention to the new 51-unit building, *Prosser Place* which was handed over in April 2023. Staff are actively working to follow up with those households who had previously expressed an interest in applying to CRHC-operated housing to determine their suitability and continued intent in pursuing a tenancy. As of September 18, a total of 43 of the 51 units are rented. The remaining eight vacant units include five that await additional renovations to ensure accessibility standards are met. The three units remaining are being actively marketed and shown.

*Routine Capital Plan*

The updated Five-Year Routine Capital Plan has a budget of \$4.7 million (M) in 2023. Typically, capital spending is its highest in Q3, with Q1 having the lowest spending due to inclement weather management, lower number of move outs and the focus to begin annual inspections. Q3 spending has progressed as anticipated with many projects underway.

Capital spending as of September 7, 2023, was \$1.5M across the five funding portfolios. The first phase of the reroofing project at Pinehurst is complete with the second phase underway as well as fence replacement and exterior painting work at various properties totalling \$1.4M of budgeted work in progress. Examples of work in progress to award include reroofing at Kings Place, perimeter fencing at Beechwood, Electric Vehicle installation at Spencer Closer and decking at Olympic View. In total, at the end of Q3, an estimated total of \$2.9M in routine capital works will be underway.

Staff have worked hard to initiate and execute capital work projects and will continue to do so throughout the balance of 2023 to get ahead of the market for 2024 scheduled work. New large capital projects going to market will include perimeter fencing, reroofing, exterior/interior painting, and common area flooring.

Staff continue to prioritize unit turnovers and have completed annual inspections. These inspections are used as staff reference for 2024 capital planning which is scheduled to occur through September.

**CONCLUSION**

Through Q3 2023, CRHC has been actively recruiting, interviewing, and onboarding staff as offers are accepted. The work in communities continues with considerable positive progress on renting up the recently opened Prosser Place. Management for various contracted services are all being addressed through appropriate procurement processes to ensure the contracts are updated regularly and that CRHC staff can continue to test the marketplace seeking the most qualified contractors identified through a fair and competitive process. In total, as of this report, \$1.5M of works has been undertaken through the Routine Capital Plan, with an additional \$1.4M in process.

Staff continue to successfully re-rent units and are continuing to focus on efforts to decrease the average number of days vacant.

**RECOMMENDATION**

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

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