

February 29, 2024

Capital Regional District Update

RE: 161 Drake Road, Salt Spring Island

Dear Rob Fowles and CRD Staff,

We are writing to share an update on the supportive housing project at 161 Drake Road on Salt Spring Island.

Background

In early 2022, BC Housing, through the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation (PRHC), leased the land at 161 Drake Road from the Capital Regional District. Our original plan was to build 28 permanent supportive homes on this property for Salt Spring Island residents who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

We chose repurposed modular construction as the best option for this building. We had initially planned to remediate existing modular units, however in October 2023, BC Housing learned that the contractor, NRB, was unable to complete this remediation work. At this time, BC Housing reassessed the project, aiming to provide the most value and high quality to the community and its residents.

Design and Construction Updates

We have now chosen to construct a new, purpose-built modular building on this site. We have also selected a new contractor, Muchalat Construction, to complete the project. Using new construction also allows us to increase the number of units from 28 to 36, providing eight additional homes for vulnerable Salt Spring Island residents.

Of the 36 units, 32 will be supportive housing and four will be affordable rental housing for low-to-moderate income residents. These four affordable rental units will be ground-oriented with a separate entrance from the supportive housing.

Due to the new construction, an elevator can also now be added to the supportive housing building to increase accessibility for all residents. All units will be air-conditioned.

Project Schedule

Outlined below is the revised schedule for the project:

- *Spring 2024* – Module fabrication is expected to begin this spring, with site preparation and civil work happening concurrently.
- *Mid-2024 – Operator Selection*: We anticipate issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) soon to solicit a non-profit housing operator for the site.
- *Mid-2025 – Construction Complete*: The updated schedule is in progress, with the exact completion date still to be determined.
- *Late 2025 – Occupancy*: We are aiming to open the new homes to residents before the end of 2025.

Tenant and Community Engagement

BC Housing is continuing to engage with and support the current residents of the temporary housing at Kings Lane. We are also pleased to share that the last remaining resident of Seabreeze Inne has now moved to Kings Lane with support from BC Housing and the Umbrella Society.

All eligible Kings Lane residents will be offered a new home at Drake Road first. We will offer the remaining homes to eligible people via our Coordinated Access and Assessment Table.

BC Housing also continues to keep the local MLA and Ministry updated about this project.

We remain committed to providing the latest project information to the Salt Spring Island community and answering any questions people may have. Community members are welcome to visit letstalkhousingbc.ca/salt-spring-island-supportive-housing or email communityrelations@bchousing.org at any time.

We appreciate the CRD's ongoing collaboration on this project. Please reach out directly with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Smith", followed by a period.

Sarah Smith
Director, Regional Development, Vancouver Island
BC Housing