

NEWS RELEASE

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Health and Housing Task Force Completes Mandate

Recommendations Going to Council for Consideration

Summary

Last week, the Nanaimo Council-led Health and Housing Task Force comprised of Snuneymuxw First Nation, Island Health, BC Housing, Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce along with a number of not-for-profits and organizations completed its mandate. A key deliverable was to create a Health and Housing Action Plan that outlines priorities for Nanaimo as well as identify targets/gaps/costs to address current and projected needs for our vulnerable population. The Task Force has recommended that Council endorse the Action Plan, which will be presented to Council at the February 22, 2021 Governance and Priorities Committee [meeting](#).

The Action Plan shows that fewer resources will be needed to keep pace with demand if funding and resources are used more effectively to meet health and housing needs. However, it is recognized that this would be contingent on the willingness and ability of the various organizations working in Nanaimo to shift resources, change the ways they work, and to overall better coordinate to achieve collective priorities.

The Action Plan recommends the creation of a Health and Housing Governance Board to oversee the implementation of the plan. Another recommendation found in the Action Plan is the establishment of a Funders' Table with the aim of securing the \$65.5M needed to meet Nanaimo's health and housing needs over the next five years. Key funding partners could include Island Health, BC Housing, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation as these organizations have the appropriate mandates to support this work, and the Action Plan will equip the Funders' Table to be more effective in demonstrating needs and advocating for additional investment in Nanaimo.

The Action Plan also calls for the creation of a Health and Housing Systems Planner Organization to help optimize current approaches and maximize return on investment. At their last meeting, the Health and Housing Task Force recommended that Council direct Staff to convene a transition group to establish the overall governance requirements as well as guide the implementation of the System Planner Organization and report back to Council. This recommendation will be considered by Council at the same meeting as the Health and Housing Action Plan.

Strategic Link: To be a livable, compassionate, and inclusive community for all.

Key Points

- On 2019-MAY-13, Council approved the creation of a Health and Housing Task Force to address the health and housing crisis in our community.
- The Task Force has spent the last year working with a consultant to create a Health and Housing Action Plan with specific recommendations on how to improve the coordination of resources for vulnerable members of our community and identify where more resources are needed from various stakeholders.
- The Health and Housing Action Plan will be presented to Nanaimo City Council for their consideration with recommendations on implementation of the plan.

Quotes

"On behalf of Nanaimo Council, I want to thank Dr. Alina Turner, the Health and Housing Task Force, our community partners and those who engaged with us on the creation of this ambitious plan. Council will review and discuss the findings of the Health and Housing Action Plan at an upcoming Governance and Priorities Committee meeting as well as a Council meeting. One thing is for certain, all of our hearts are in the right place and we want to see a solution that works for Nanaimo."

Don Bonner
Co-Chair, Health and Housing Task Force
City of Nanaimo

"The proposed Action Plan shows that through enhanced collaboration, integration and restructuring of existing health and housing services and supports, there could be a significant positive impact on the number of vulnerable community members who could be served adequately using both existing and future resource investments. A heartfelt thank you to all the members of the Health and Housing Task Force, Dr. Alina Turner, our community partners, and stakeholders who helped us map out where we are at and where we need to go."

Councillor Erin Hemmens
Co-Chair, Health and Housing Task Force
City of Nanaimo

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