



MAP HOUSING WORKING GROUP MEETING MINUTES

- **PRESENT:** Doug Peat (Journey Home Community), Brad Kinnie (Journey Home Community) Barry Growe (Journey Home Community), Luke Greidanus (Kinbrace), Derek Chu (Kinbrace), Mohammad Zaout (Kinbrace), Ann Ball (New Hope), Marzieh Nezakat (MOSAIC), Liam McQuillan (MOSAIC), Julia Wu (bc211), Nicole Stinson (BC Housing), Jenny Lam (Options Community Services), Mohsen Eslami (SOS-ISSofBC), Kelly Rader (Inasmuch)
-

Co-Chairs: Marzieh Nezakat (MOSAIC) and Doug Peat (JHC)

Welcome, and land acknowledgement from the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations.

The **Agenda** was **APPROVED**

The **Minutes of the May 26 Housing Working Group Meeting** were **APPROVED**

Discussion around strategic relationships for next year's MAP HWG

Nicole Stinson (BC Housing): No updates on \$4.8 m funding transferred from the Min of Municipal Affairs to Min Attorney General (where BC Housing sits); the funding was transferred, still waiting for direction that it can be administered by BC housing.

In terms of engagement with others and the government through MAP, Nicole suggested engaging with senior staff at a policy level and has sent names/contact information to MAP (Confirmed).

Nicole also suggested we work specifically with Marika Albert at BCNPHA since she is linked with policy.

Questions:

- **Doug Peat (JHC)** - interested in the level of understanding at the policy level at BC government on the needs of refugee claimants around housing?

Response: there is certainly room for improvement – more communication will help and provision of more data. The issue will not arise unless we bring it up.

Action point Doug Peat: We will deliberately seek out the policy at the provincial government to inform and inspire them into further responses on behalf of the sector in the Area of Housing and affordability.

- **Doug Peat:** With the **BCNPHA** we should continue with the provincial Housing strategy, seek further opportunities to be involved in BC Housing Central Conference, usually in November, and ask for a representative from HWG. We can invite them to do a presentation on what is needed from their perspective.

- **Marzieh Nezakat:** **BC CHARMS** is planning a workshop/roundtable with **BCNPHA and Landlord BC** to raise awareness about Housing affordability for refugee claimants. This a BC CHARMS deliverable.

Doug Peat: Possibly better to deliver the message/hear the needs as two separate groups (non-profit and private landlords). Reps can be invited to speak at the HWG meetings too.

- **Brad Kinnie (JHC):** The list from the agenda is comprehensive, and there is value in being targeted, given our capacity issue.
- **Nicole Stinson:** Organizations have newsletters; contributing to their newsletters is a good way to reach their membership and raise awareness.
Marzieh – Landlord BC published an article by BC CHARMS in ‘The Key’ about refugee claimants and it provoked many inquiries from landlords all over BC wishing to rent to refugee claimants. This is a great idea.
- **Doug Peat:** We also need to gain endorsements from shelter providers and explain the impact on the shelter system with the new arrivals
- **Kelly Rader (Inasmuch):** Need someone that could help with writing proposals to expand staff. They are looking for information and partnerships for Housing Opportunities that come their way as they have a limited budget.
Doug – happy to share information on how JHC have developed Meanwhile Spaces.
Derek (Kinbrace): Suggested hiring a good fundraiser as a long-term investment.
Mohsen (SOS): In the case of potential accommodation as Kelly mentioned who can take over the management for shared houses? (Mohsen referred to a business owner he met who procures housing for sub-letting to groups of people and manages the housing.)
Marzieh: If the living conditions are good and the tenancy agreement is clear this sort of arrangement would be useful. We can help manage a housing coordinator.
Julia (BC211): From past experiences, if you are willing to get a group to work together, it can be a better deal. The challenge is how to get a group to share a house together. It is essential that people recognize the difference between landlord and roommate (sub-let) situations.

Discussion around the circulated draft letter to Minister David Eby (The letter was shared onscreen)

- **Derek** - The \$4.8 million cannot address all three areas suggested in the letter. He suggested adding the section under the Rationale about further Government funding.
- **Marzieh** - If we are targeting \$4.8 million, we need a letter with concrete suggestions showing where the money is best spent. Use examples from successful housing developments.
- **Derek** – originally the funds were for ‘temporary, short-term housing’ – are we missing this? And should we point out why the original RFP didn’t work for us?
- **Marzieh** - Are there any limitations on where the money can go?
- **Doug** - Trying to prevent unrealistic limitations as to where the money could go, and show the true needs of the sector, and where the money could go
- **Brad** - Rename the letter if the purpose of the letter is to change the criteria of where the money could go.
- **Mohsen** - Suggested that we limit the funds to solutions around temporary and shorter-term transitional housing.
- **Brad** - if the money is put into short-term (emergency) solutions, the money will be gone and won't have a longer-term solution
 - Suggested both long-term and short-term housing recommendations.
 - Suggested a fulsome discussion with BC Housing about the needs

Derek – agreed (mostly) with Brad - Never seen the government provide \$4.8 million to support Refugee Claimant housing. He suggested that the funding be used for capital, capital matching, and something longer lasting and not short time needs like rent subsidies, per diems etc.

There was a dynamic conversation about short and long terms needs that all the agencies reflect in varying degrees. Suggested that if we reflect all of the needs of the agencies and list them to provide BC Housing with the opportunity to chose one short term and one long term need.

- Derek stated he was adamantly opposed to including short term needs.

Vote on whether the funding should be limited to long-term solutions and leave out short-term solutions

Mohsen (SOS)- Funding for both Short-Term and Long-term solutions (No)

Kelly (Inasmuch): (Long-term)

Julia (BC211): (Long-Term)

Derek (Kinbrace): (Long-Term)

Jenny Lam (Options): (Long-term)

Liam (MOSAIC): (Long Term)

Result: Long term BUT considering the sector's needs, should we suggest this is just the beginning and we require more additional funding beyond the \$4.8 million?

Kelly suggested someone from the government to attend a HWG meeting to learn additional information on the housing needs of Refugee Claimants.

Doug suggested we invite Angela Cook (Deputy Minister)

Doug: amended letter to reflect the discussion, including

‘Provide Capital or capital matching grants.’ (collapsed #2 and #3)

Derek: Suggested if organizations are taking money from the pot, they will need to bring some funding to buy properties and/or units.

- 3 and 4 should be taken out because they are both short-term solutions.
- Suggested to reword the third bullet point, as Kinbrace accepts Single Male.

➔ The letter will be sent to all attendees for additional comments or changes asap, and then sent to Hon David Eby and cc'd to Shayne Ramsay (BC Housing CEO)

Vote: Disagree with having number 2 (Provide Capital Grants) listed apart from number 3 (Provide Capital Matching Grants: