



MEDIA RELEASE

February 05, 2021

Letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs - RE: Supportive Housing

The Board of Directors of the Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce fully supports Penticton City Council's call for a complete and independent audit of the existing Compass House, Burdock House, and Fairhaven supportive housing projects to determine if sufficient actions have been taken to support those in need of housing and what the impact of the housing projects have been on the community.

As an organization we are keenly aware that housing has always been a serious issue in Penticton, and never more so than in the past year with the pandemic and its consequences. Response to this epidemic has forced many of Penticton's businesses to scale back or close their doors completely, with many jobs lost. We completely support the fact that there should be safe, secure housing available for all our citizens. But with an uncertain future, many of our member businesses have reached out to let us know that they believe some of the housing decisions made by BC Housing in the past few years may have had undue consequences to the viability of their business and the security of their employees. The Chamber understands fully that we need to ensure that the city's most vulnerable are supported, while at the same time we insist that it is vital that the community have meaningful input on these major housing decisions.

According to 100 Homes Penticton, since 2016 over 350 people have secured housing and support through providers in the city, yet there are still over 100 people unhoused and over 140 on the supportive housing registry. The Chamber believes an audit would shed light on this phenomenon, and create more transparency concerning the supports and services that are available locally in order to remain a safe and vibrant community.

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For more information:

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The Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce is a dynamic, trusted and respected business authority that drives economic and social growth and improvement on behalf of, and in support of our members and the community.