



MERGED AGENDA GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, May 12, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre
80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC

SCHEDULED RECESS AT 3:00 P.M.

Pages

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

[Note: This meeting will be live streamed and video recorded for the public.]

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

a. Minutes

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Minutes of the Governance and Priorities Committee meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Monday, 2025-APR-14, at 1:00 p.m.

5. AGENDA PLANNING:

a. Upcoming Topics and Initiatives

7 - 8

To be introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

6. REPORTS:

a. Healthy Nanaimo:

1. Basic Needs Services Overview

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To be introduced by Dave LaBerge, Director, Public Safety.

Purpose: To provide the Governance and Priorities Committee with an overview of the basic needs services available for people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo.

Presentations:

1. Christy Wood, Manager, Social Planning, and Rosalie Sawrie, Social Planner
2. Marina White, Health Director, Snuneymuxw First Nation
3. Allison Dunnet, Executive Director and Strategic Advisor, Homelessness, Jennifer Fox, Director of Operations, and Jerry Michael, Coordinated Access and Assessment Manager, BC Housing
4. Lisa Murphy, Director of Mental Health and Substance Use Clinical Operations, and Mike Kirby, Manager of Mental Health and Substance Use, Island Health
5. Eileen Gillette, Director of Public Services and Planning, Vancouver Island Regional Library
6. John McCormick, Executive Director, Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization

[Note: PowerPoint presentation from BC Housing to be distributed on the Addendum.]

1. *Presentation 3: Add - PowerPoint presentation titled "BC Housing Update: Nanaimo Homelessness and Housing"*
2. *Presentation 3: Update Jennifer Fox's title to Regional Director, Vancouver Island Region*
3. *Presentation 4: Add - Amanda Lemon, Director, Addiction Medicine and Substance Use, and Brodie Tapp, Manager, Addiction Medicine and Substance Use, Island Health*

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7. QUESTION PERIOD:

8. ADJOURNMENT:



MINUTES

GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, April 14, 2025, 1:00 P.M.
Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre
80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC

Members: Councillor I. Thorpe, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor S. Armstrong
Councillor H. Eastmure
Councillor E. Hemmens
Councillor P. Manly*
Councillor J. Perrino

Absent: Councillor T. Brown
Councillor B. Geselbracht

Staff: D. Lindsay, Chief Administrative Officer
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
J. Holm, Director, Planning and Development
L. Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning
L. Rowett, Manager, Current Planning
N. Sponaule, Communications Advisor
K. Lundgren, Recording Secretary

1. **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:**

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272"

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Monday 2025-MAR-24 at 1:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

4. AGENDA PLANNING:

(a) Upcoming Topics and Initiatives

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, spoke regarding topics and initiatives scheduled for upcoming Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meetings. The schedule is subject to change, and Staff are looking to advance the topic related to prohibiting the sale and spread of invasive species to an earlier meeting date.

5. REPORTS:

(a) City Plan:

1. Form and Character Design Guidelines Project

Introduced by Jeremy Holm, Director, Planning and Development.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning, presented the draft Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8) Form and Character Design Guidelines (Guidelines) project, provided an overview of the project timeline and noted the following:

- The Guidelines project has been a joint project between the Current Planning, Community Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Sections
- The draft Guidelines consolidate a number of design guidelines into one document to improve clarity around the City's expectations

Lainya Rowett, Manager, Current Planning, continued the presentation and spoke regarding some of the key themes identified during the public engagement sessions as well as related amendments to the landscape regulations. Highlights included:

- The second phase of engagement allowed Staff to receive more specific feedback on the guidelines as written
- The draft Guidelines are more generalized to focus on intent rather than being too prescriptive
- This process provided opportunity to modernize the language for the High Performance Building Section of the draft Guidelines
- The Landscaping regulations have been updated in “Zoning Bylaw No. 4500” to reduce prescriptions in the Zoning Bylaw and have them be more comprehensively explained in the draft Guidelines
- Next steps include Council’s consideration of the proposed amendment bylaws in May of 2025, holding a Public Hearing for the proposed Zoning Amendment Bylaw in June of 2025, and the implementation of the new Guidelines in July to September of 2025

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The City’s Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Area was implemented through the City Plan; however, there are no design requirements related to fire safety in the more urbanized areas
- Finding the right balance within the draft Guidelines for when to use stronger wording requirements such as “must” and when to use suggestions such as “should” or “consider”
- Feedback from the development community through the engagement process encouraged Staff to improve clarity on how the Guidelines apply to industrial development
- The desire to improve development permit processing times, and the Guidelines’ role to simplify the process
- The Community seems to accept that energy efficiency and affordable buildings require a simpler design
- The High Performance Section of the Guidelines helps improve simple building designs

- The public engagement feedback saw cohesive agreement regarding the value of street interface and enhancement of public realm
- Ensuring there is a communication strategy for the Public Hearing to ensure the community is aware of their opportunity to engage further on these amendments
- There has been considerable investment into the neighborhood plans and concern that the consolidation of these plans could create a sense of loss
- An administrative support tool will allow applicants to provide rationale when they are unable to meet a consideration in the Guidelines
- While Staff received considerable feedback from the Old City Neighbourhood Association and Newcastle Community Association, there was also representation from a number of other neighbourhood associations in the engagement process

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to proceed with preparing a bylaw to amend Zoning Bylaw No. 4500 with the updated Development Permit Area 8 (DPA8) Form and Character Design Guidelines, and related amendments to the landscape regulations; and a bylaw to amend the “Development Procedures and Notification Bylaw 2024 No. 7375”, as outlined in the Staff Report dated 2025-APR-14. The motion carried unanimously.

6. QUESTION PERIOD:

The Committee received no questions from the public regarding agenda items.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 1:51 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CHAIR

CORPORATE OFFICER

Upcoming GPC Topics and Initiatives

June 23, 2025 – GPC Meeting		
1 pm	Controlling Sale of Invasive Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on options to prohibit the sale and spread of invasive species and options for the recovery of the cost abatement of such species (2025-MAR-3 Council motion)
	Urban Tree Canopy Management Strategy (IAP Priority Action #16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an update to Council on the strategy (2024-JUL-8 Council motion)
	Development Cost Charge and Amenity Cost Charge Bylaw Review (IAP Priority Action #203)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion took place at the 2024-NOV-25 GPC regarding DCC and ACC Programs. Staff noted that a draft bylaw with updated DCC rates would be brought forward in 2025 Note: staff are required to conduct public consultation and seek minister's approval of the bylaw
July 14, 2025 – GPC Meeting		
	Demolition and Deconstruction Bylaw (IAP Priority Action #33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on existing deconstruction bylaws, key elements of a draft bylaw and the challenges and opportunities for regulating deconstruction in Nanaimo. Report to include options for Council to consider for proceeding with drafting a bylaw Presentation by industry representatives Note: To be brought forward before the end of the second quarter of 2025 (2024-DEC-09 GPC motion)
	Parking Review and Bylaw Update (Several IAP Priority Actions Items)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated project between Current Planning and Transportation (presentation by consultant) (2024-DEC-16 Council motion)
	Review of Nanaimo Parking Rates and Penalties (Several IAP Priority Actions Items)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the current City fee rates for on-street and parkade parking, and penalties for parking violations Recommendation for potential changes to fee rates and penalties Companion report to the Parking Review and Bylaw Update report
	City Plan Review Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenting the status of the project. There may be decision points for Council to consider Providing draft policy to encourage the distribution of new supportive housing projects through the community Note: it is a Provincial requirement that the City review and amend its OCP by 2025-DEC-31 to address housing needed. Bylaw readings and a public hearing is required (2025-MAR-24 GPC motion and 2025-MAY-5 Council motion)

October 27, 2025 – GPC Meeting		
	Incentives that Support City Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2024-NOV-4 Council motion)
	Nanaimo Neighbourhood Zero Emission Vehicle (NZEV) Bylaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report providing a review of the NZEV policies and opportunities for discussion and consideration of Council recommendation (2020-JUL-20 Council motion)
	Tenant Relocation Protection Project (IAP Priority Action #73)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a policy to support tenants impacted by redevelopment and displacement
	Zoning Bylaw Review (IAP Priority Action #195)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review options and themes for updating the City's Zoning Bylaw

Legend	
	Council/GPC requested topics
	Staff initiatives
	Integrated Action Plan (IAP) program

2025 GPC Dates

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No GPC meetings scheduled for August/September

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DATE OF MEETING May 12, 2025

AUTHORED BY CHRISTY WOOD, MANAGER, SOCIAL PLANNING
ROSALIE SAWRIE, SOCIAL PLANNER

SUBJECT BASIC NEEDS SERVICES OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Governance and Priorities Committee with an overview of the basic needs services available for people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo.

BACKGROUND

At the Regular Council Meeting on 2024-NOV-04, Council directed Staff to prepare an update for a future Governance and Priorities Committee meeting regarding heating, cooling, and feeding centres, shelter spaces, and the role of community partners such as Snuneymuxw First Nation, BC Housing, Island Health, the Vancouver Island Regional Library, and the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization in delivering basic needs services to individuals experiencing homelessness.

Homelessness in Nanaimo continues to grow in both visibility and complexity, driven by factors such as a lack of affordable housing, income inequality, trauma, mental health challenges, and substance use. Existing services are often at or over capacity, with critical gaps in areas that support basic needs including meal programs, emergency shelters, supportive housing, hygiene facilities, daytime services, and health care.

The 2023 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count identified 515 individuals experiencing homelessness. Preliminary results from the 2024 PiT Count estimate this number has increased to 621, with nearly 70% identified as unsheltered, meaning they lack access to any form of daytime or overnight shelter. Sector professionals estimate that between 800 and 1,000 individuals experience homelessness in Nanaimo over the course of a year. In December 2023, the Province of British Columbia and BC Housing reported that 996 individuals experienced homelessness in the Nanaimo region in 2021.

Basic need services play a vital role in supporting individuals who are unsheltered. These services form part of the essential infrastructure that promotes public health and safety while providing a pathway to stability. They are often the first point of contact for individuals, helping to build trust and connect them with support workers, healthcare professionals, housing programs, and mental health or substance use supports. These services are foundational to long-term solutions. Consultations with people with lived

experience highlight the urgency of ensuring consistent access to food, hygiene, rest, warmth, safety, and health supports.

Despite increasing demand, access to basic needs services in Nanaimo has declined over the past decade. In the past five years, the city has lost two indoor daily meal programs, a shower program, the outshop and a drop-in centre. In response, the City has provided full or bridge funding to fill critical service gaps where able. Most recently, in order to address year-round needs, the City funded a drop-in hub which limited its ability to support additional general daytime warming centres as it has in previous years.

This report outlines currently available basic needs services in Nanaimo, including types, locations, and available performance data. While many community groups and volunteers provide food, clothing, and supplies, only services that are consistently offered at fixed locations are low-barrier and are dedicated to people experiencing homelessness are included. Outreach services, such as those provided by Community Safety Officers, Ministry Community Integration Specialists, and the Street Reach Team, are excluded due to variability in programming and location. However, their role remains vital for supporting individuals who cannot or do not access services directly. |

DISCUSSION

Meal Services

Six organizations currently provide a range of dedicated emergency meal services to individuals who are unsheltered or precariously housed in Nanaimo. The summary table below outlines key details of these meal programs, including the operator, location, schedule, and approximate number of meals served. A map of meal service locations is included as Attachment A.

There is a limited number of indoor, drop-in meal options available. Most meals are distributed outdoors or through outreach at various locations throughout the community. Funding for these programs is limited, with the majority sourced from private donations and community grants. The Federal Reaching Home Designated Funding program for Nanaimo contributes some financial support for meal provision under its client-based services category, contingent upon applicants meeting specific grant criteria.

Historically, the 7-10 Breakfast Club (7-10 Club) operated a regular breakfast program for vulnerable populations in Nanaimo. However, following the 2021 closure of their City-leased location (repurposed to accommodate permanent supportive housing) the organization has not secured a new facility. To address the resulting service gap, the City allocated \$36,122 from the Daytime Resource Centre budget to the Salvation Army to provide an indoor breakfast program from September to December 2021. An additional \$416,106, with \$252,132 supplemented with one time funding from the Strengthening Communities Fund, was used to provide additional funds to the breakfast program and food provisions to three warming centres between November 2022 and December 2023.

Despite these efforts, no ongoing, permanent funding source has been identified to sustain the breakfast program. Nevertheless, the 7-10 Club and the Salvation Army have continued to offer limited breakfast services through outreach, supported by private donations when available.

The table below provides an overview of the meal services currently available for people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo.

Table 1 (Meal Services)

Meal Program Operator	Schedule	Location(s)	Meal Provision Capacity Averages
Nanaimo 7-10 Breakfast Club	Daily bagged lunch, 7 days per week	Outreach (Caledonia Park, 55 Victoria, 520 Prideaux Street and 1 Port Drive)	200 bagged lunches daily
	Daily hot breakfast, 7 days per week (prepared by Salvation Army)	Outreach (Caledonia Park, 55 Victoria, 520 Prideaux Street and 1 Port Drive)	70 to 80 breakfasts daily
Harvest Church	Weekly dinner meal provided on Sundays (except July & August)	6553 Portsmouth Road	50 dinner meals served weekly
Nanaimo Foodshare	Weekly lunch meal provided on Mondays	St. Paul's Anglican Church, 100 Chapel Street	50 meals served weekly
Selby Mission	Weekly lunch meal provided on Thursdays	St. Andrew's Church, 315 Fitzwilliam Street	75 meals served weekly
Snuneymuxw Hulit Lelum – Health	Weekly lunch BBQ provided on Tuesdays (except winter months)	1 Port Drive	150 meals served weekly
Wisteria Community Association / Stone Soup	Daily bagged dinner served between 5:30 pm and 8:30 pm, 7 days per week	Outreach (411 Wallace Street, 736 Nicol Street, 90 Commercial Street, 205 Terminal Avenue North, and Bowen Park West)	300 bagged dinner meals daily

Hygiene Services

Access to showers and washrooms is essential for individuals living unsheltered. These facilities support public health, uphold personal dignity and mental well-being, and are critical for maintaining cleanliness. Cleanliness directly impacts how individuals are treated when accessing services such as healthcare, housing, employment, and public transit. Moreover, public washrooms and showers provide a safe and private space for personal care, and access to sanitation is recognized as a basic human right.

Due to the ongoing lack of shower and hygiene facilities in the community, the City has continued to fund the only dedicated shower program for unsheltered or precariously housed individuals, located at Caledonia Park. From 2018 to 2024, the City provided \$348,526, with \$76,000 supplemented with one time funding from the Strengthening Communities Fund to the First Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo and then in 2024 to Nanaimo Family Life Association (NFLA) to operate the shower program at a City-owned facility. In 2024, an average of 30 individuals accessed the showers daily and a total of 7541 showers were provided. The overall shower usage has increased by 392% from 2018 to 2024.

At present, there are no other free or drop-in shower services available in the City. The New Hope Centre, operated by the Salvation Army, historically provided drop-in showers but ceased these services during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have indicated they do not plan to resume shower access for the general public, limiting availability to shelter guests only. All other existing shower services in the City are restricted to individuals already staying in emergency shelters.

The Leisure Economic Access Pass (LEAP) program has been expanded to include organizations serving people experiencing homelessness which has helped to complement the Shower Program. Through this program, individuals can access recreational facilities, which also offer shower amenities. NFLA, for example, collaborates with City staff to adjudicate LEAP applications, enhancing access to recreational services and hygiene facilities for clients accessing emergency shelter and other support programs where appropriate.

The City also maintains a network of public washrooms and drinking water fountains throughout the community. These facilities are often the only sanitation resources available to individuals who are unsheltered. A full list of public washroom and water fountain locations, including hours of operation, is available on the City's website under the [Emergency Services and Supports](#) page. More recently, the Overdose Prevention and Supervised Consumption Site (OPS) has installed two portable washrooms. See Attachment B for a map of hygiene services in the city.

Daytime Services

In recent years, the City has partnered with community organizations to provide daytime warming services during the winter months, supplementing its role in coordinating emergency responses during extreme cold weather. These efforts have underscored the importance of having established daytime services, not only to enhance emergency response capacity but also to meet the ongoing basic needs of unsheltered individuals. Warming centres have acted as essential lifelines, offering food, clothing, and safe spaces, while reducing strain on other overstretched social services. After these centres closed, downtown service providers reported a sharp increase in demand for basic supports. The RCMP Bike Patrol and Community Safety Officers (CSO) also noted difficulties relocating unsheltered individuals from public areas due to the lack of appropriate daytime alternatives. In the absence of purpose-built drop-in or warming spaces, facilities such as recreation centre lobbies and public libraries have been used increasingly, despite not being designed to support individuals with acute or complex needs. These facilities have provided temporary relief during extreme weather but are not suitable for individuals who are heavily substance-affected, highlighting the urgent need for dedicated daytime services.

In collaboration with the federally funded Reaching Home program, the City has allocated \$584,257 to operate a year-round drop-in hub (the Hub) that also provides warming and cooling services. Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS) operates the daytime services. The Hub offers access to basic needs such as food, hygiene supplies, and clothing, as well as connections to emergency shelter, housing, healthcare, mental health, and other community-based services.

BC Housing is also using the Hub as an access point for the Province's Homelessness Encampment Action Response Team (HEART) and Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH) programs, linking unsheltered individuals to supports and temporary housing. A coordinated Encampment Response Plan (ERP) has been developed in collaboration with community partners to guide the transition of people sheltering outdoors into shelter and housing. At this time, the City does not have a large, centralized encampment, therefore, community partners are prioritizing outreach to individuals sheltering in the downtown area, particularly the area around the Hub. The Hub is the first point of contact for many people sheltering downtown, making it essential to the success of the ERP. Additionally, BC Housing is funding 20 temporary overnight shelter beds at the Hub, which is operated by NFLA with confirmed funding until May 31, 2025.

Since opening in January 2025, the Hub has recorded 6170 visits. It has welcomed 156 first-time daytime visitors and provided overnight shelter to 206 unique individuals. A full review of the Hub's operations will be presented to Mayor and Council in early summer 2025.

In addition to the Hub, Risebridge Society offers weekly daytime drop-in services on Tuesdays from 9 am to 12 pm. This program is provided by a group of dedicated volunteers who provide snacks, coffee and clothing.

As previously noted, due to the limited availability of purpose-built daytime spaces, the City's recreation centre lobbies and Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) branches in Nanaimo continue to serve as informal daytime spaces for individuals experiencing homelessness. These facilities are accessed for rest, washroom use, internet or technology access, and social interaction, including during extreme weather events when warming or cooling is needed. See Attachment C for the locations of these daytime locations.

Emergency Shelter Services

In Nanaimo, there are three organizations that receive year-round funding from BC Housing to provide emergency shelter services, although permanent shelter capacity remains limited. The Salvation Army New Hope Centre offers 24 emergency shelter beds specifically for men, Samaritan Place, operated by ICCS, provides 14 beds for women, and the Unitarian Shelter, operated by NFLA, offers 25 beds with a true drop-in model, meaning clients do not need a referral and can access shelter on a nightly basis when there is bed capacity. Additionally, the Friendship Lelum Aboriginal Youth Safe House provides 8 beds for at-risk youth aged 12 to 18, however this is funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Each shelter has unique parameters regarding length of stay, with individuals typically allowed to remain for periods ranging from 30 days to two years depending on their circumstances. Currently, the only shelter operating with temporary funding from BC Housing is the Hub, which is funded until May 31, 2025, and has 20 beds. Attachment D provides the locations of emergency shelter beds currently operating as of May 1, 2025.

In total, Nanaimo has 63 BC Housing funded permanent emergency shelter beds for adults, plus 8 beds designated for youth. Preliminary numbers for the 2024 PiT count enumerated 621 individuals as experiencing homelessness. In comparison, Kelowna reported 263 year-round emergency shelter beds and 297 individuals experiencing homelessness in their 2020 count, while Kamloops had 209 year-round emergency shelter beds, and 312 individuals identified in their 2023 count. Based on our most recent PiT Count data BC Housing currently funds about 10% of the need for permanent Emergency Shelter Beds in Nanaimo in comparison to approximately 89% in Kelowna and 67% in Kamloops.

To try and meet the need, service providers in Nanaimo have demonstrated creativity in stretching limited resources to meet community needs. For example, the Salvation Army internally funds an additional 10 transitional beds to help individuals stabilize and move from emergency shelter beds into longer-term supportive housing. Similarly, the NFLA internally funds two emergency shelter beds to assist individuals discharged from hospital or facing other crisis situations.

The following summary outlines the emergency shelter beds for adults experiencing homelessness that were available year-round and the average occupancy rate in 2024 as reported by service providers.

Table 2 (Emergency Shelter Services and Occupancy Rates)

Shelter Name	Total # beds	Occupancy Rate	Notes
Unitarian Shelter (co-ed) 595 Townsite Road (Nanaimo Family Life Association)	27	85%	2 beds are held for community agencies needing support for external clients i.e. high acuity
New Hope Centre (men only) 19 Nicol Street (Salvation Army)	34	88%	10 of the beds are internally funded and offered to long-term shelter guests that have stabilized. These beds can be empty if there are no suitable shelter guests.
Samaritan Place (women only) 702 Nicol Street (Island Crisis Care Society)	14	80%	Beds are held for guests for up to 30 days with occasional absences which can affect the occupancy rate.

In addition to year-round emergency shelter beds, additional temporary winter shelter beds were funded by BC Housing in 2024.

Table 3 (Winter Shelter Services and Occupancy Rates)

Shelter Name	Total # beds	Occupancy Rate	Notes
St. Peter's Winter Shelter 301 Machleary Street (Nanaimo Family Life Association)	40	90%	Open November to March annually
Risebridge Winter Shelter - 520 Prideaux Street (Risebridge Society)	24	NA	Open November to April. Reports of occupancy unavailable
Extreme Weather Response Shelter - 6553 Portsmouth (7-10 Club Society)	30	28%	Only open three days in 2024 during BC Housing's extreme weather thresholds

Shelter occupancy rates are affected by weather with highest occupancy reported during winter months and lowest occupancy rates in summer months. Occupancy rates are also lowest during social assistance cheque week when individuals have the finances to utilize other shelter options.

Supportive Housing Services

In 2019, the City of Nanaimo and BC Housing signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to build new housing on six sites, aimed at improving access to housing for Nanaimo's vulnerable populations. The MOU outlines the development of approximately 608 supportive and affordable housing units across the city, expanding options along the housing continuum. The City is providing support for these projects by providing land for lease at a nominal cost. Four of the six sites will provide permanent supportive housing specifically for people experiencing or are at risk of homelessness.

Table 4 (2019 MOU Supportive Housing Services)

2019 MOU - Property Address	Operator	Total # units
702 Nicol Street (open now)	Island Crisis Care Society	51
285 Prideaux Street (open now)	Connective	51
250 Terminal Avenue	TBD	50 approx.
355 Nicol Street	Snuneymuxw First Nation	35

In addition, the City has signed an MOU with the Ministry of Housing to participate in the provincial Homeless Encampment Action Response Team (HEART) and Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH) programs. HEARTH units provide long-term housing for people staying in emergency shelters, which frees up shelter beds for the HEART program to coordinate encampment response efforts. Four sites in Nanaimo have been selected to provide a total of 237 temporary HEARTH supportive housing units. The City is supporting the HEARTH program by providing land for lease at a nominal cost and up to \$750,000 for capital improvements at 1030 Old Victoria Road and is contributing approximately \$394,000 to support the lease for 1298 Nelson Street. The four sites identified, the operators and number of units are summarized below.

Table 5 (HEARTH MOU Supportive Housing Services)

HEARTH MOU - Property Address	Operator	Total # units
250 Terminal Avenue (open now)	Island Crisis Care Society	50

1300 Island Highway	Connective	50
1030 Old Victoria Road	Vancouver Island Mental Health Society	59
1298 Nelson Street	Pacifica Housing Advisory Society	78

Additionally, BC Housing is partnering with Island Health to develop approximately 20 units of Complex Care Housing at 1850 Boxwood Road. This project is proposed to support individuals experiencing homelessness who have complex health needs. The City received a rezoning application for this proposed project in February 2025.

Other supportive housing sites already operating in Nanaimo include:

- 1597 Boundary Crescent - 41 permanent supportive housing units – operated by Vancouver Island Mental Health Association,
- 2060 Labieux Road - 66 temporary supportive housing units – operated by Pacifica Housing Advisory Society,
- 6025 Uplands Drive - 34 permanent supportive housing units - operated by Pacifica Housing Advisory Society, and
- 437 Wesley Street - 36 permanent supportive housing units – operated by Canadian Mental Health Association – Mid Island Branch.

Currently, Nanaimo has approximately 329 permanent and temporary supportive housing units in operation for people experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness, with an additional 292 proposed units in various stages of development. Attachment E provides the location of current and proposed permanent and temporary supportive housing sites.

Health Services

In response to the growing challenges of homelessness, a range of health services have been implemented to serve the needs of individuals living unsheltered. These services include mental health support, substance use supports and treatment options, and integrated care models designed to address the complex needs of this population. The following summary lists low-barrier health services frequently accessed by people experiencing homelessness. These services provide general medical care, mental health support, substance use services, harm reduction, addiction support, and detox.

Table 6 (Health Services)

Service Name and Location	Operator	Service Type
Overdose Prevention & Supervised Consumption Site (250 Albert Street)	Canadian Mental Health Association – Mid Island	Harm Reduction
Medical Arts Centre Walk-in Clinic	Island Health	Medical Health

(650 Terminal Avenue South)		
Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (1200 Dufferin Crescent)	Island Health	Medical Health
Nanaimo Sobering & Assessment Centre (126 Haliburton Street)	Vancouver Island Mental Health Society	Detox
Central Island Access Services – Brooks Landing (2000 Island Highway North)	Island Health	Mental Health and Substance Use
Primary Care Outreach (110 Wall Street, 250 Albert Street, 1 Port Drive)	Island Health	Medical Health
AIDS Vancouver Island - Nanaimo (55 Victoria Road)	AIDS Vancouver Island	Harm Reduction
Nanaimo Addiction Clinic (55 Victoria Road)	Nanaimo Addiction Clinic	Addiction Services
Trew Beginnings (55 Victoria Road)	Trew Beginnings	Addiction Services
ARC Addiction and Recovery Clinic (55 Victoria Road)	ARC Clinic	Addiction Services
Outreach Pharmacy (55 Victoria Road)	Outreach Pharmacy Ltd	Addiction Services

Attachment F provides a map of these health service locations in the City of Nanaimo.

Social Service Management Mapping Project

The Social Services Management Mapping Project is a collaborative initiative between the City's Public Safety and IT & GIS Departments. Its goal is to develop a data-driven interactive tool that helps Staff analyze the relationship between social services and neighbourhood vitality, identify underserved areas or those at risk of social conflict and disorder, and support the strategic placement of new, essential services, including basic needs programs while balancing neighbourhood considerations.

Key data elements that will be included in the mapping project include:

- Social Service Locations:
 - Shelters (e.g., homeless shelters, emergency housing)
 - Basic need services (e.g. meal programs, shower programs, warming/cooling centres)
 - Supportive housing (e.g., transitional or permanent housing programs)

- Health services (e.g., clinics, mental health services, addiction centers)
- Positive Activity Generators:
 - Educational institutions (e.g., schools, universities, libraries)
 - Parks, recreation, culture and wellness spaces
 - Primary and secondary urban centres
 - Transit exchanges
 - Libraries
 - Walking distances to services and amenities
- Overlay and Contextual Data:
 - Population density
 - Vacant buildings
 - Fire orders
 - Public Safety - Calls for Service
 - Crime rates
 - Proximity to residential zones
 - Zoning regulations
 - Socio-economic indicators

Staff are currently compiling geospatial data and will use mapping tools to visualize service locations using symbols and, where applicable, heat maps to illustrate density or overlap. As a preliminary example, Attachment G displays the locations of all identified basic needs services in the downtown area and their proximity to one another. A future demonstration of this tool will be presented to Council at a later date in 2025. |

CONCLUSION

This overview of basic needs services is accompanied by a scheduled discussion at the 2024-MAY-12 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting with representatives from Snuneymuxw First Nation, BC Housing, Island Health, the Vancouver Island Regional Library, and the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization. Staff have invited these partners to share updates on their current and planned activities in Nanaimo related to homelessness and the provision of basic needs services. They have also been asked to present relevant program statistics and offer their perspectives on the following questions:

- What is working well in addressing homelessness and meeting the basic needs of unsheltered individuals in Nanaimo?
- What additional supports or services are needed to address homelessness and the critical needs of unsheltered individuals?
- How can access to basic needs services, housing, and health care be improved for unsheltered individuals?

SUMMARY POINTS

- In November 2024, Council directed Staff to prepare an update for a future Governance and Priorities Committee meeting regarding heating, cooling, and feeding centres, shelter spaces, and the role of community partners in delivering basic needs services to individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Basic need services play a vital role in supporting individuals who are unsheltered. Despite increasing demand, access to basic needs services in Nanaimo has declined over the past decade.
- City of Nanaimo partners from Snuneymuxw First Nation, BC Housing, Island Health, the Vancouver Island Regional Library and the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization have been invited to the 2024-MAY-12 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting to speak about the state of homelessness in Nanaimo and the basic needs being provided to people experiencing homelessness.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Meal Services

ATTACHMENT B: Hygiene Services

ATTACHMENT C: Daytime Services

ATTACHMENT D: Emergency Shelter Services

ATTACHMENT E: Supportive Housing Services

ATTACHMENT F: Health Services

ATTACHMENT G: Social Services Management Mapping Project – Sample Map

Submitted by:

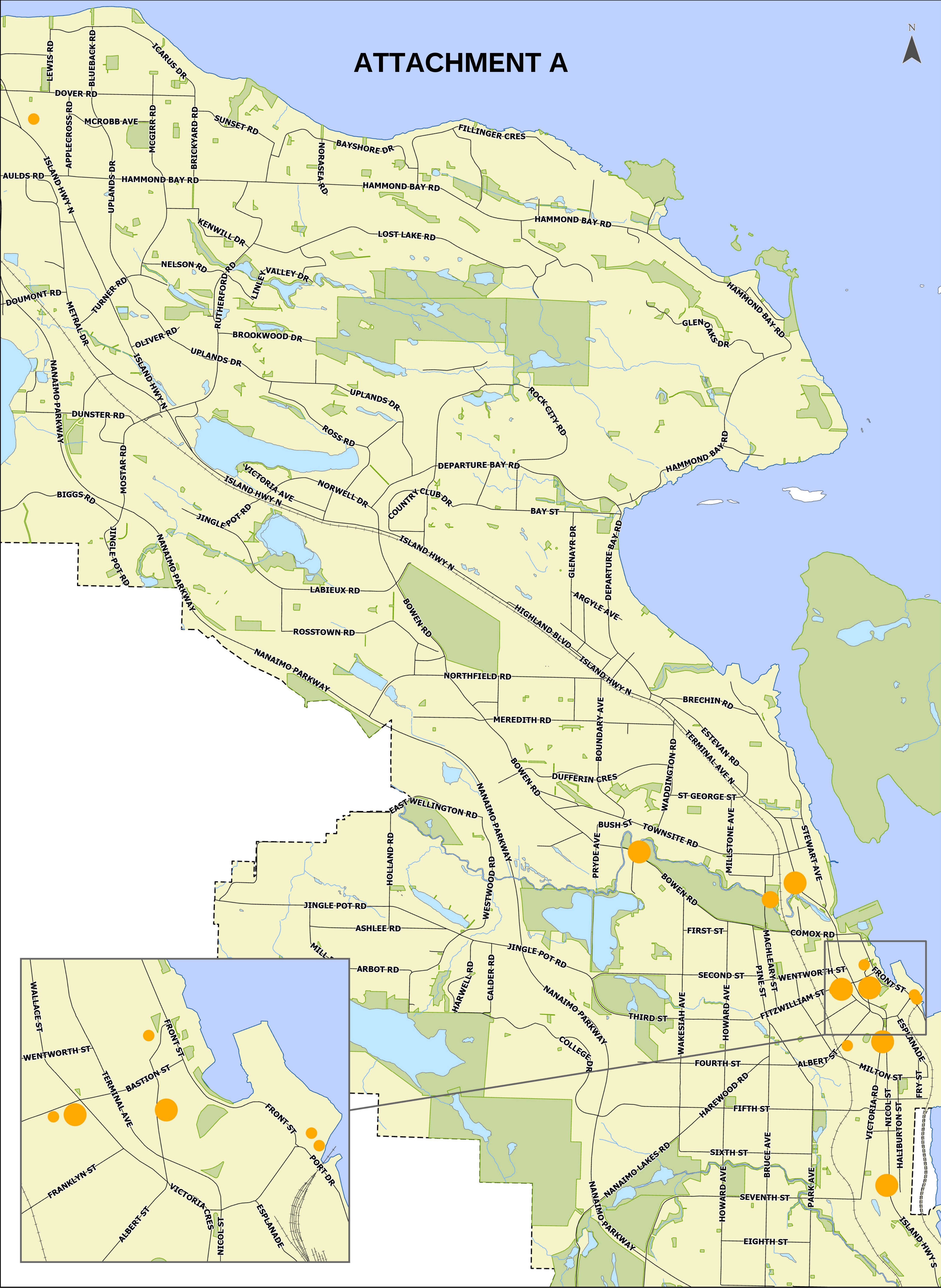
Christy Wood
Manager, Social Planning

Concurrence by:

Kerry Ing
Director, IT/CIO

Dave LaBerge
Director, Public Safety

Laura Mercer
General Manager, Corporate Services



City of Nanaimo

Basic Need Services

Legend

Meal Program, Meal Program - Daily (6)

Meal Program, Meal Program - Monday to Friday (1)

Meal Program, Meal Program - Once a Week (6)

Published: May 1, 2025

04509001,800

Meters

1:15,500

CITY OF NANAIMO

THE HARBOUR CITY

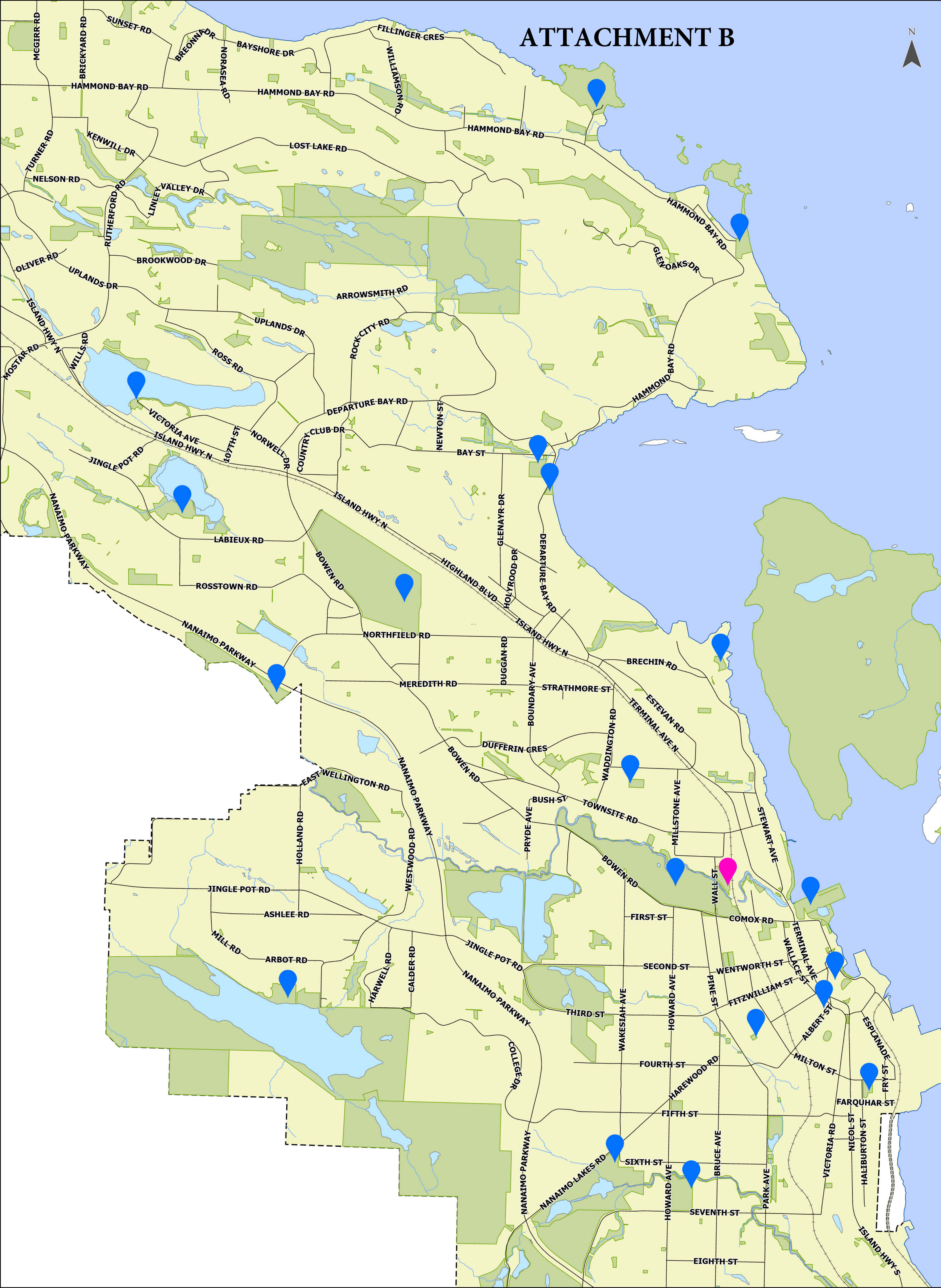
GIS

gis.support@nanaimo.ca

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Document Path: V:\Source Data\Departmental Data\EngPub\Wks\GIS\PROJECTS\SupportiveHousing\Maps\Social Services\PLN-20250415-Social Services.aprx



City of Nanaimo

Basic Need Services

Legend

Hygiene Service, Public Washrooms and Water (19)

Hygiene Service, Shower Program (1)

Published: May 1, 2025

0

425

850

1,700

Meters

1:14,000

CITY OF NANAIMO

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City of Nanaimo

Basic Need Services

Legend

Daytime Space, Drop-In Hub (1)

Daytime Space, Warmin/Cooling Daytime Space (8)

Daytime Space, Risebridge (1)

Published: May 1, 2025

04509001,800

Meters

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CITY OF NANAIMO

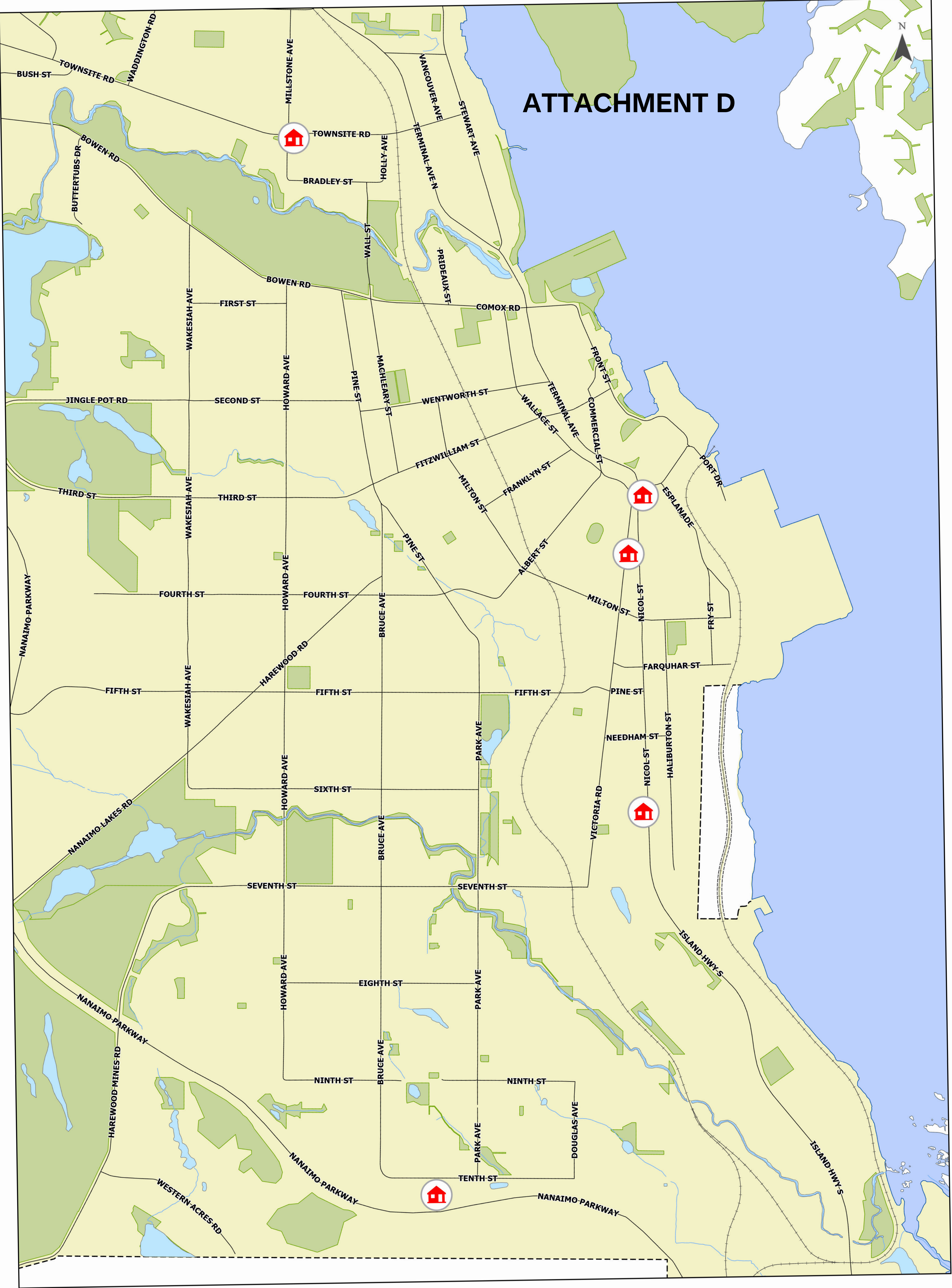
THE HARBOUR CITY

GIS

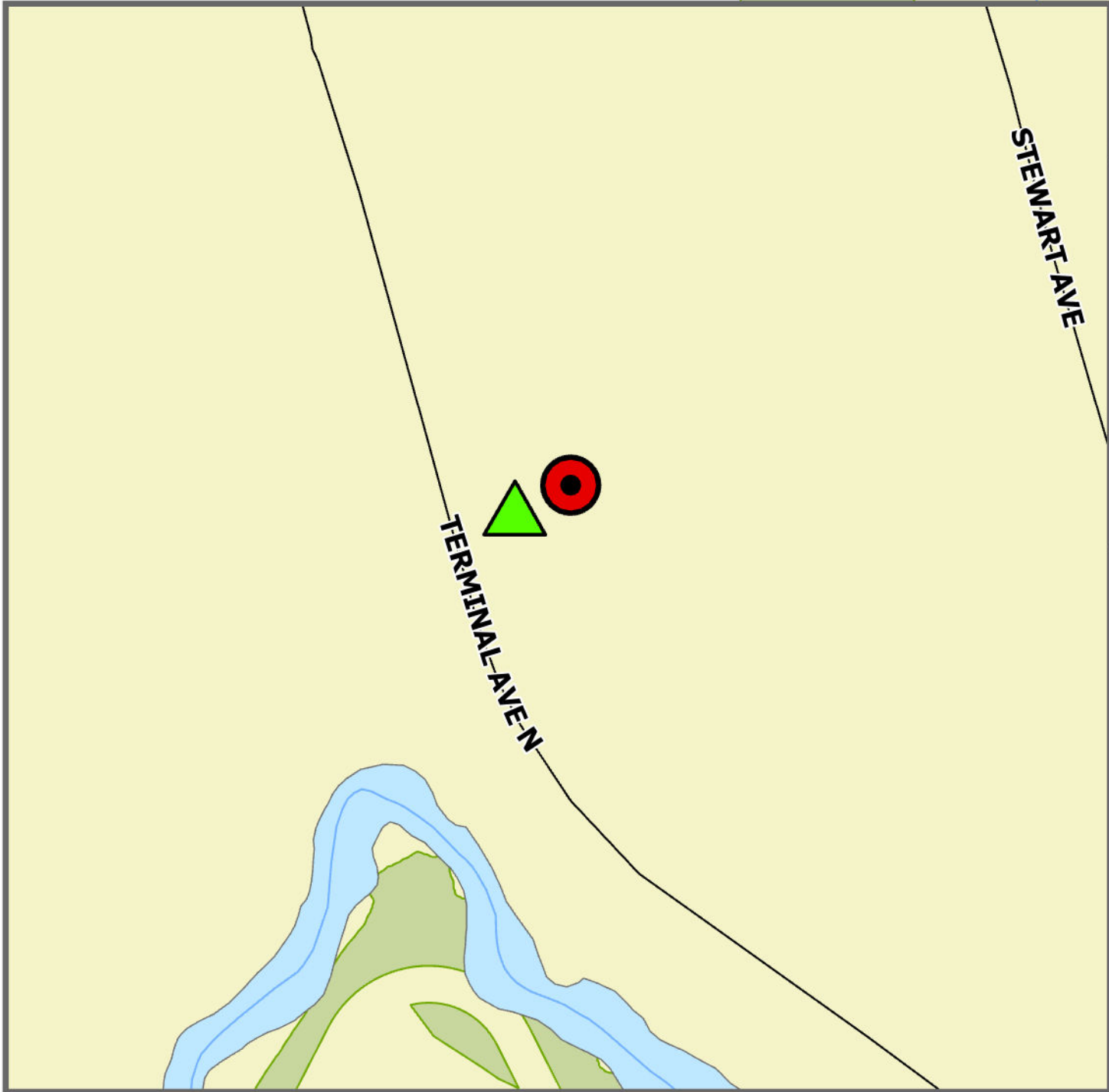
gis.support@nanaimo.ca

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City of Nanaimo

Basic Need Services

Legend

Health Service, Addiction Services (4)

Health Service, Detox Service (1)

Health Service, Harm Reduction (2)

Health Service, Medical Health Service (5)

Health Service, Mental Health & Substance Use Services (1)

03256501,300

Meters

Published: May 1, 2025

1:11,000

CITY OF NANAIMO

THE HARBOUR CITY

GIS

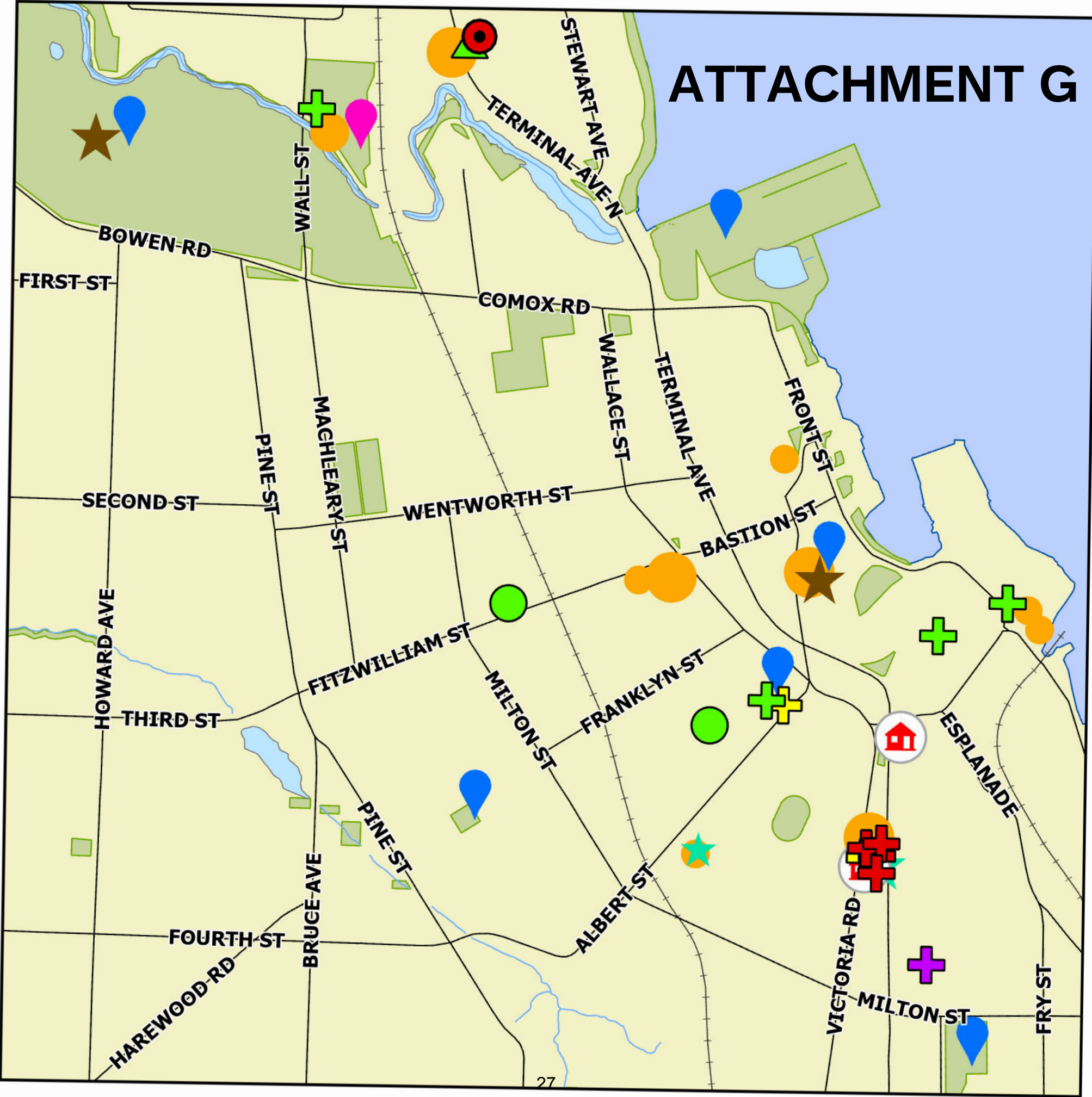
gis.support@nanaimo.ca

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ATTACHMENT G





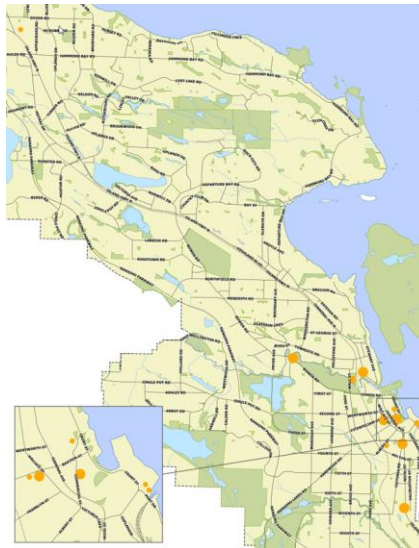
Basic Needs Services Overview

2025-MAY-12

1



Meal Services



2

Hygiene
Services



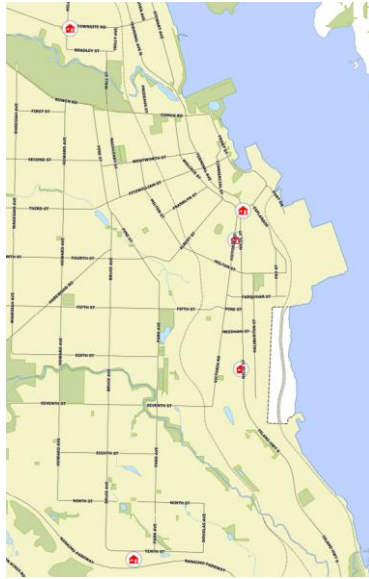
3

Daytime
Services



4

Emergency Shelter Services



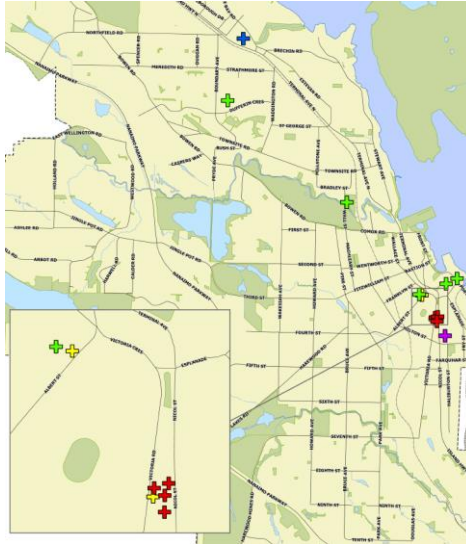
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Supportive Housing Services



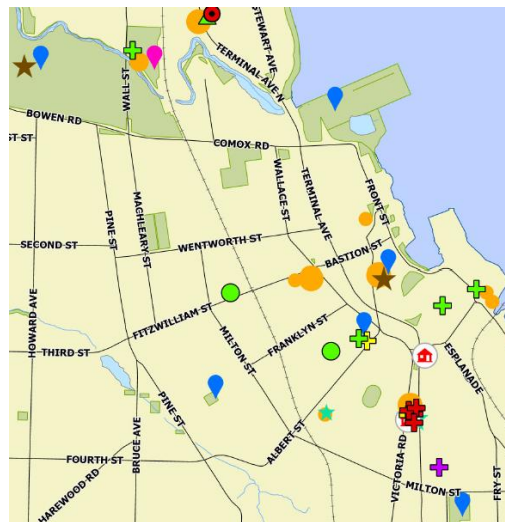
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Health Services



7

Social Services Management Mapping Project



8

Mental Health & Substance Use and Addiction Medicine & Substance Use

Nanaimo

1

Territorial Acknowledgement

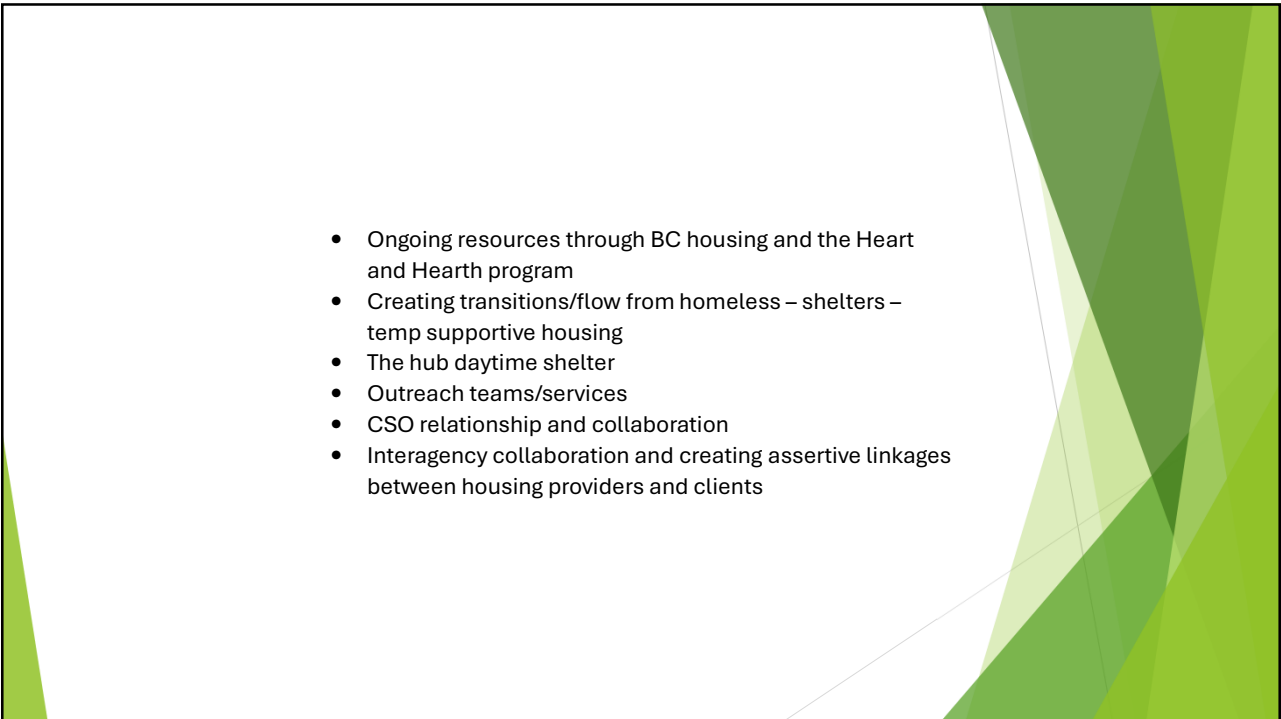
- We acknowledge that we are gathering on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation where we are privileged to serve our community.

2



What is working well in addressing homelessness and the basic needs of unsheltered individuals in Nanaimo?

3

- 
- Ongoing resources through BC housing and the Heart and Hearth program
 - Creating transitions/flow from homeless – shelters – temp supportive housing
 - The hub daytime shelter
 - Outreach teams/services
 - CSO relationship and collaboration
 - Interagency collaboration and creating assertive linkages between housing providers and clients

4

What more is needed to address homelessness and the critical needs facing unsheltered individuals?

5

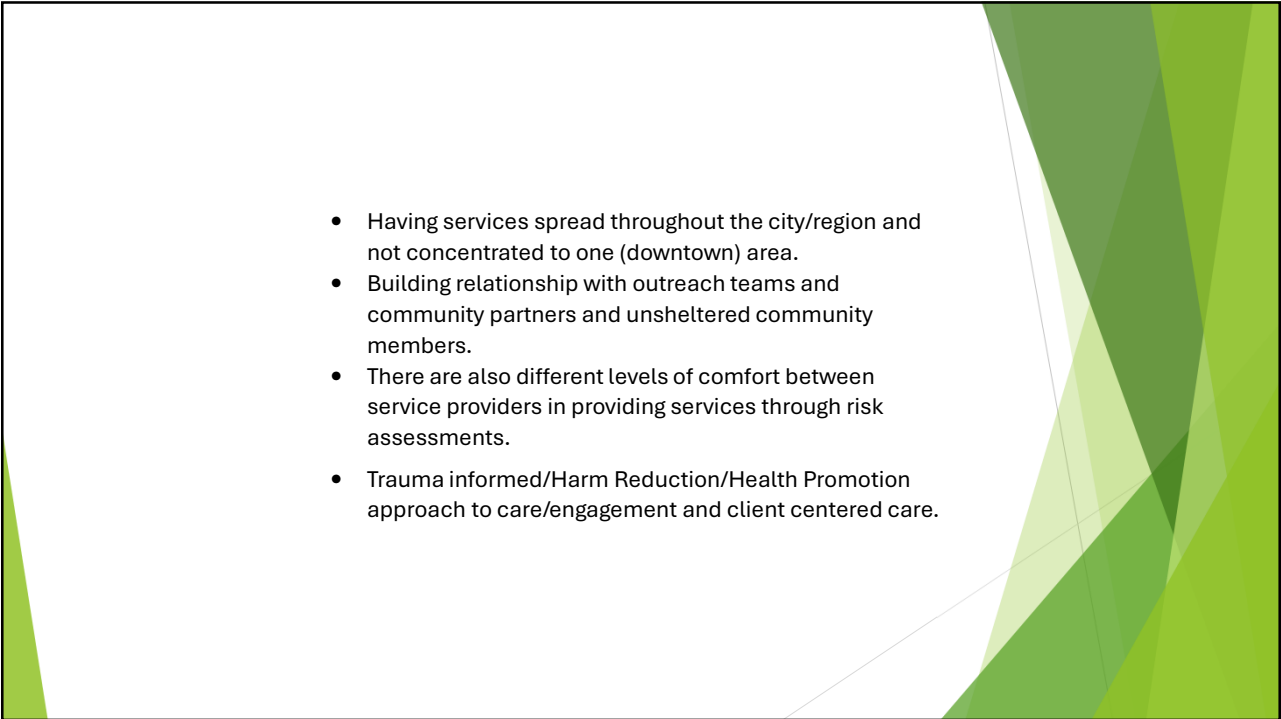
- ▶ Able to be proactive in providing supports instead of being reactive. When left to reactive response, clients health needs can become more complex as they are going longer without receiving support in a structured supportive environment.
- ▶ Some individuals do not want to attend shelter spaces, so above placement into shelters before going to Hearth housing options (Newcastle).
- ▶ Daytime shelters with onsite support for ADL's hygiene/laundry etc.
- ▶ Anything we can do collectively to help improve individuals' attachment to prosocial society, building trust and relationship with our outreach teams (and community partner organizations).
- ▶ Providing access to integrated MHSU services across the continuum of supports
- ▶ Providing access to housing resources
- ▶ Focusing some energy on early intervention to prevent a move to chronic homelessness.
- ▶ Develop ways for unsheltered community members to integrate into the volunteer or employed work force (vocational training, supporting community events etc.)

6

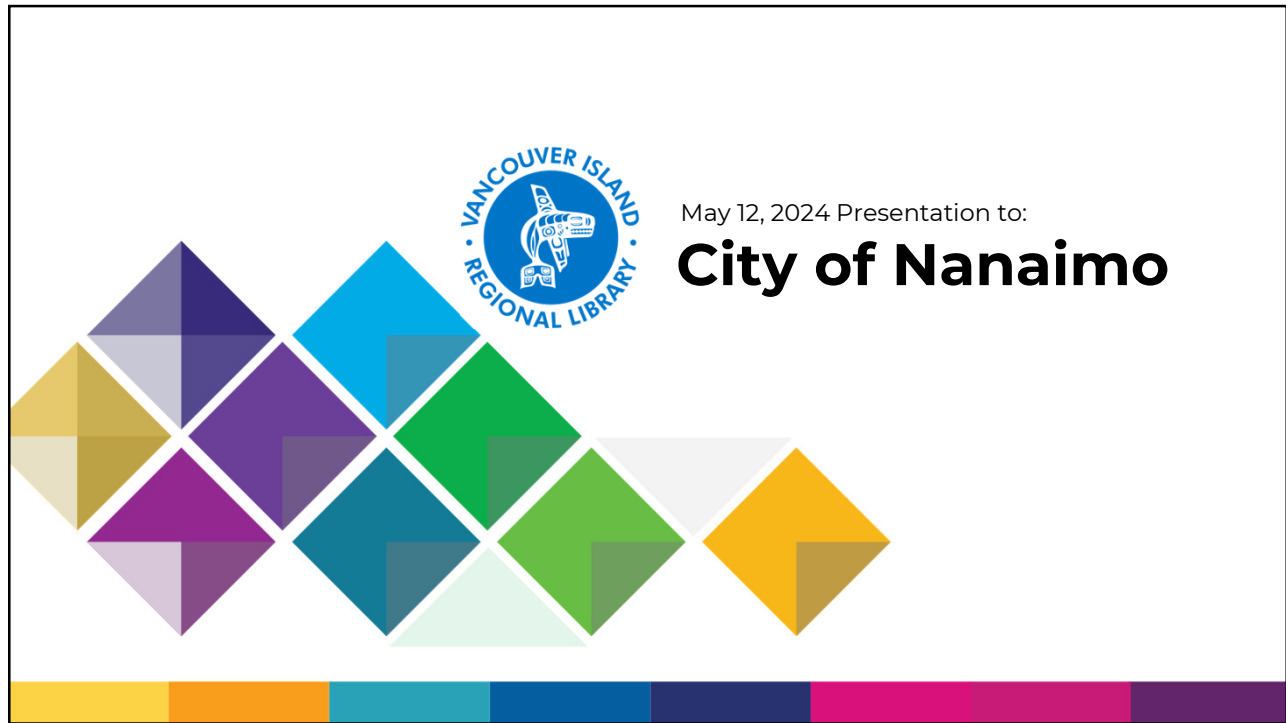


What more is needed to address homelessness and the critical needs facing unsheltered individuals?

7

- 
- Having services spread throughout the city/region and not concentrated to one (downtown) area.
 - Building relationship with outreach teams and community partners and unsheltered community members.
 - There are also different levels of comfort between service providers in providing services through risk assessments.
 - Trauma informed/Harm Reduction/Health Promotion approach to care/engagement and client centered care.

8



1

VISION

A thriving, connected, cohesive, and empowered region of Island and coastal communities.

MISSION

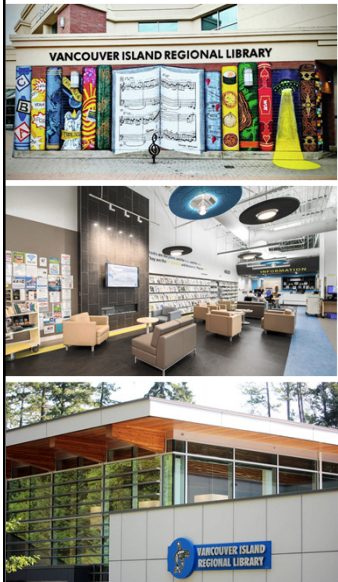
We lift our communities by providing barrier-free, region-wide, and equitable access to a unique and critical blend of Collective Services.


2

USAGE & IMPACT


3

1,200 daily visits







30K Resident Cardholders (1/3rd)



All demographics



395 programs attended by 10,994

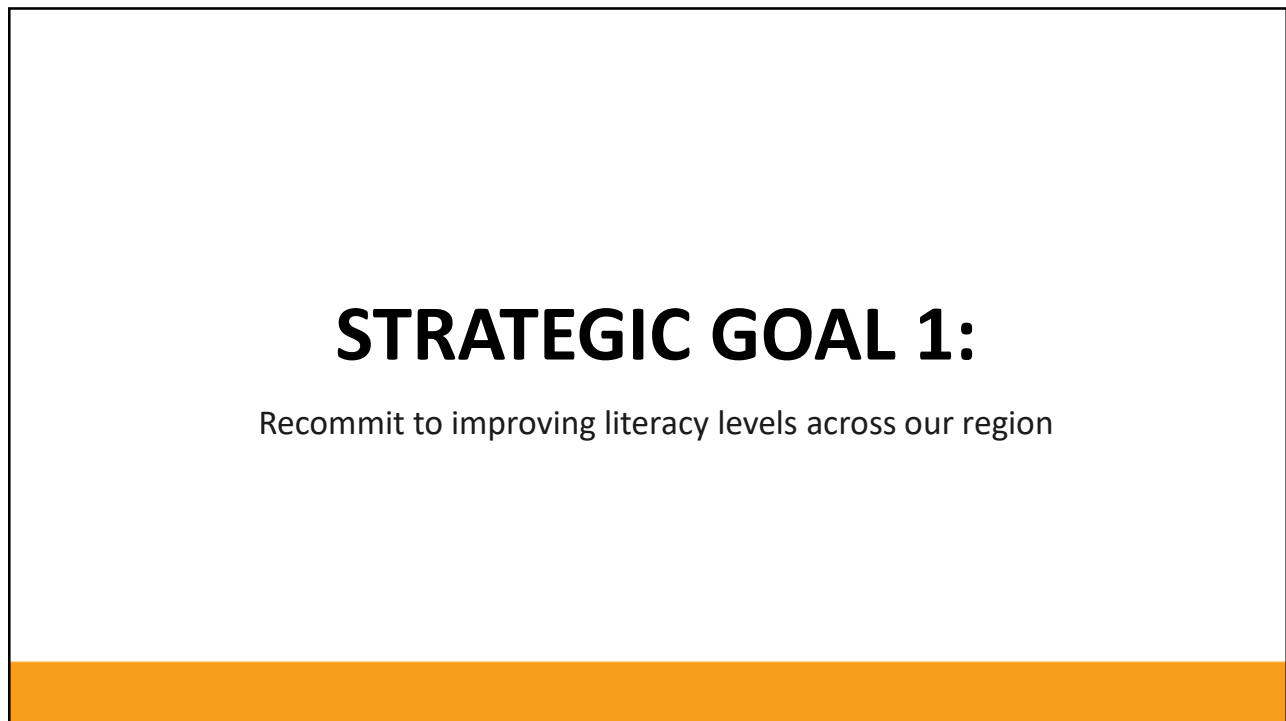


3rd largest collection in BC

4



5



6

STRATEGIC GOAL 2:

Review, innovate and design service models in service to equity

7

STRATEGIC GOAL 3:

Extend the impact and reach of our services through partnerships and reciprocity

8

STRATEGIC GOAL 4:

Foster safe, inclusive, and welcoming spaces, and Collective Services

9

STRATEGIC GOAL 5:

Grow organizational culture and effectiveness

10

Collective Services

11

Context

Overdue: The Case for Public Libraries

Why Investment in public libraries is essential to Canada's post-pandemic recovery, competitiveness, and resilience

<https://canurb.org/publications/overdue/>

October, 2023: Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) and Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC)

12

Context

Overdue: Three-year analysis

- Canada's public libraries play a crucial role in enabling governments to meet their obligations and strengthen the common good.
- Public libraries offer critical supports, including access to knowledge, culture, health, reconciliation education, belonging, and our democracy.

13

Context

Overdue: Three-year analysis

- Critical social infrastructure and community hubs
- Expanded roles and mandates to respond to social vulnerability across the country
- Canada (and BC) per capita investments lag behind the G8; post pandemic realities require investments
- Recommendations for Federal and Provincial governments to relieve operational pressures, treat libraries as critical infrastructure and formalize sustainable investment streams

14



15

Nanaimo Systems Planning
ORGANIZATION SOCIETY

Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting Presentation

John McCormick - Executive Director

May 2025

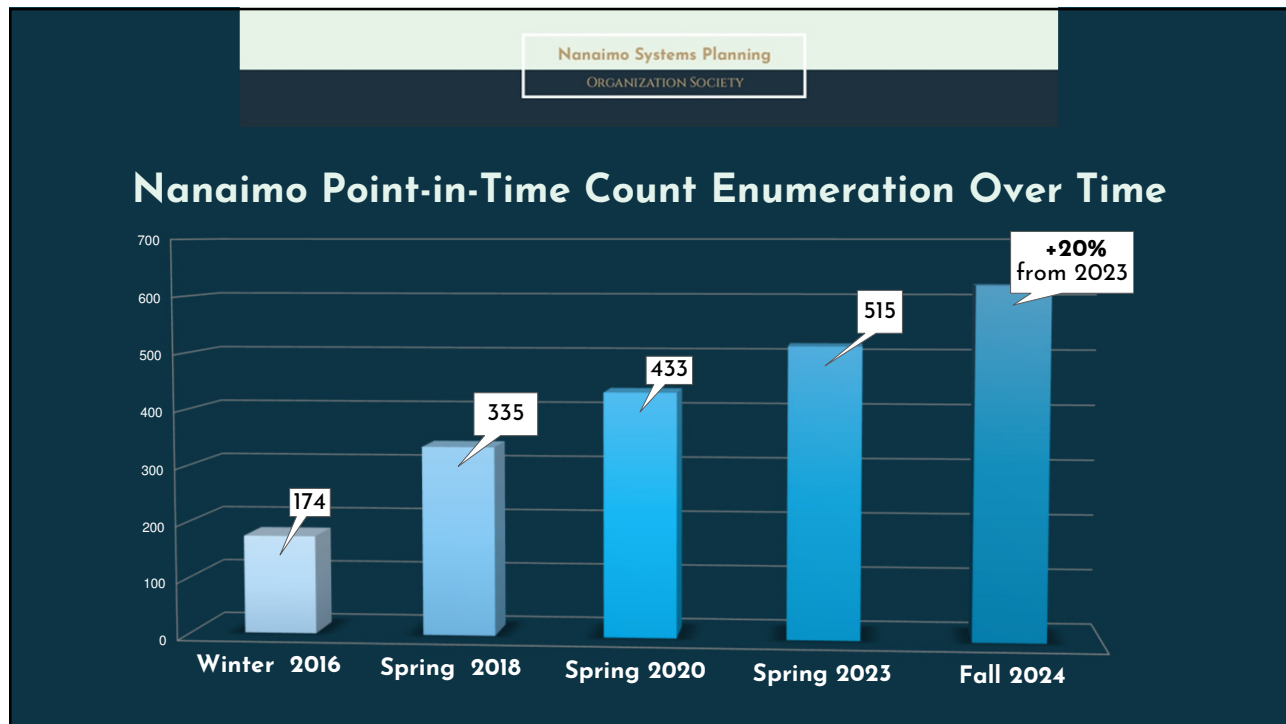
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Nanaimo Systems Planning
ORGANIZATION SOCIETY

Achieving 'functional zero' is the goal

= this means, Nanaimo's goal is to drive that number down toward zero, and is keeping it below the community's capacity to ensure positive exits from homelessness

2



3

Nanaimo Systems Planning
ORGANIZATION SOCIETY

Community Needs:

- Additional homelessness drop-in hubs
- Additional rental supports (subsidies, rent bank, etc.)***
- Reactivation of programming to provide survival supplies and system navigation
- Additional emergency shelter, transitional, and supportive housing resources.

4

Additional Emergency Shelter Resources

- 2024 Point-in-Time Count: 600+
- Current Emergency Shelter beds:
63 Permanent Year-Round (BC Housing Funded)
84 Temporary Winter (2024-25)
- About 60% of individuals who have been homeless for 6 months or more utilize emergency shelters
- We need 200+ additional permanent year-round shelter beds today

5

Provide Survival Supplies and Navigation

- Previously provided by CMHA - Mid-Island 'Out Shop' Program 2021 - 2024
- Provided tents, sleeping bags, and other survival supplies
- First point of contact with services for many individuals entering homelessness
- 1065 unique individuals accessed the program over 4 years

6

How to Better Support Unsheltered Individuals in Nanaimo

- Greater Access to and Coordination of Data Sharing
- Expand and invest in Nanaimo Community Wide Outreach Teams
- Deploy CHIA (GIS) for better street level service coordination
- Work with Governments to Adapt Building Code(s) for Emergency Shelter Spaces/Rapid Re-Housing
- Address challenges with staffing across the sector to ensure capacity: Keep and attract

7

Pre-emptive Actions:

- Prepare for federal government's ambitious plan for housing
- Expand proactive responses to housing precarity (rent bank)
- City tangible support to develop nonmarket housing
- More supervised use locations means less concentration of populations, less need for EMS, safer supply, less needles on streets/parks, etc.

8

Take the Initiative Locally:

- Act proactively locally and invite our provincial and federal counterparts to match our spending
- Cooperation between Vancouver Island communities
- Better utilization of appropriate/under-utilized buildings
- Commit to a 10-year plan to develop non-market housing that leverages local public and private, other levels of government

9

Address Inflows:

- Identify and slow the rate of entry into homelessness --
- Regional coordination on Vancouver Island

10



City of Nanaimo Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) Meeting

BC Housing Update: Nanaimo Homelessness and Housing

Jennifer Fox, Regional Director, Vancouver Island
Allison Dunnet, Executive Director, Homelessness
Jerry Michael, Coordinated Access and Assessment Manager

May 12, 2025

Presentation Topics

- Provincial Approach to Housing & Homelessness
- Supporting People & Communities:
 - Supportive Housing in Nanaimo
 - Shelters in Nanaimo

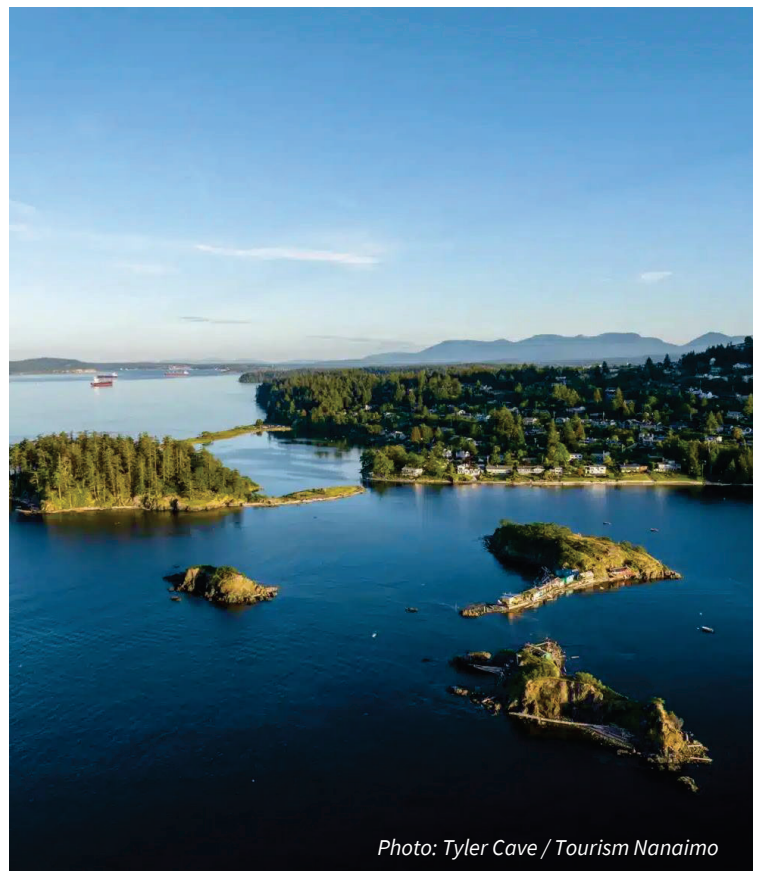


Photo: Tyler Cave / Tourism Nanaimo

Belonging in BC

The Province's collaborative plan to prevent and reduce homelessness

- Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs + BC Housing
- Partnership with Nanaimo (MOU)

Current Priorities

- HEART Strategic Working Group and Encampment Response Planning
- HEARTH Temporary Housing
- Coordinated Access Table & Tenancing Plans

Medium-Term

- Aligning Coordinated Access between BCH and Nanaimo's Community Entity
- Enabling access and broader use of Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)



Supportive Housing Overview

Typical Supports and Services

- Studio apartment or single sleeping unit
- Staff onsite 24/7
- Daily meals
- Storage, laundry, washroom and shower facilities
- Life skills training
- Access to culturally informed supports
- Referrals to health care and community supports

Residents

- Adults (19 +) of all genders including seniors and people with disabilities.
- Experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- In need of supports to maintain housing
- All residents pay rent



Current Supportive Housing in Nanaimo

Location Name	Address	Operator
Newcastle Place 50 Temporary (HEARTH)	250 Terminal Avenue	Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS)
Cornerstone 51 Permanent	285 Prideaux Street	Connective
Samaritan Place 51 Permanent	702 Nicol Street	Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS)
Nikao 66 Temporary (SHF)	2060 Labieux Road	Pacifica
Uplands Walk 34 Permanent	6025 Uplands Drive	Pacifica
Wesley St. Housing 36 Permanent	437 Wesley Street	CMHA Mid-Island

Total Temporary: **116**
Total Permanent: **172**
Grand Total: **288**

Supportive Housing Residents

294 people currently live in supportive homes in Nanaimo (permanent and temporary) as of March 31, 2025

112 people moved out of supportive housing in fiscal year 2024-25

**Note that for many people with various needs, supportive housing is a permanent home.*



Future Supportive Housing in Nanaimo

Location Name	Address	Operator
Sparrow 78 Temporary (HEARTH)	1298 Nelson Street	Pacifica
1300 Island Highway South 50 Temporary (HEARTH)	1300 Island Highway South	Connective
1030 Old Victoria Rd 59 Temporary (HEARTH)	1030 Old Victoria Road	VIMHS
McKenzie 50 Permanent (proposed)	McKenzie Avenue	TBD
Complex Care Housing 20 Permanent (proposed)	1850 Boxwood Road	BCH
355 Nicol St 35 Permanent (proposed)	355 Nicol Street	Snuneymuxw First Nations
250 Terminal Avenue 50 Permanent (proposed)	250 Terminal Avenue	TBD

Total Temporary: **187**
Total Permanent: **155**
Grand Total: **242**



CAA HEARTH Tenanting Strategy

Location Name	Operator	Tenanting Plan	Coordinated Access Update	Projected Opening Dates
Sparrow 78 Temporary (HEARTH)	Pacifica	Individuals who are on a path of wellness and stabilization with health and housing needs.	Referrals Paused – meetings expected to start again in early June	Occupancy expected in June 2025
1300 Island Highway South 50 Temporary (HEARTH)	Connective	Long term shelter guests or, where appropriate, currently unhoused individuals	22 Prospective residents have been identified Next CAA meeting May 20th	May 15, 2025
1030 Old Victoria Rd 59 Temporary (HEARTH)	VIMHS	Long term shelter guests or, where appropriate, currently unhoused individuals	12 Prospective residents have been identified Next CAA meeting May 15th	June 2, 2025



Nanaimo CAA Update

Active CAA Table Members



Current Activity

- Meeting monthly
 - 9 Additional meetings April to June to tenant HEARTH sites
- SPO and BCH CAA By Name List Review May 21st

Supportive Housing Registry

345 applicant households in Nanaimo as of March 31, 2025

Of these:

- 30% identify as Indigenous
- 28% are over the age 55
- 70% reported substance use issues
- 75% reported a mental health condition
- 32% reported having stayed at a shelter in the past

Shelters in Nanaimo

Location Name	Address	Operator
Salvation Army New Hope Centre 24 spaces + 10 transition	19 Nicol Street	Salvation Army
Samaritan Place 14 spaces	702 Nicol Street	Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS)
Unitarian Shelter 25 spaces + 2 emergency	595 Townsite Road	Nanaimo Family Life Association (NFLA)
The Hub Shelter 20 spaces (Temporary)	55 Victoria Street	Nanaimo Family Life Association (NFLA)

Total Spaces: 95

Shelter Guests

919 unique people accessed shelters in Nanaimo in fiscal year 2024-25
127 people have transitioned from shelters into housing in fiscal year 2024-25



Thank you