

### Delegation Request

Lynn Burrows has requested an appearance before Council.

The requested date is January 21, 2019.

The requested meeting is:  
Council

Presenter's Information:

City: Nanaimo  
Province: BC  
Bringing a presentation: Yes

Details of Presentation:

I will be speaking to Councillor Armstrong's Motion, item 14 (a) that directs staff to explore the possibility of deeming the supportive housing units at 2020 Labieux Rd and 250 Terminal as "nuisance properties". My address to City Council will provide new information & research (another side of this issue) with the hope that Mayor Krog & Councillors will no longer consider continuing with the proposed Motion.

Lynn Burrows: Presentation to Nanaimo City Council Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019

Your Worship Mayor Krog and Councillors:

My speaking to you this evening concerns Councillor Armstrong's upcoming Motion (14a on the agenda) - possibly deeming our City's two newest supportive housing units as "nuisance properties".

I am concerned that until a few days ago Council may only have heard negative comments about these 2 housing projects (2020 Labieux and 250 Terminal) and so would like to bring some relevant information to council's attention prior to this Motion.

- 1) Both locations have not even been operating 2 months! 250 Terminal's kitchen facility and common area are still not open!
- 2) Some area residents near 250 Terminal have NOT noticed additional safety concerns since the facility opened. Some have stated, in either emails to you, or in Letters to the Editor of The Nanaimo Bulletin, that theft and break-ins have been on-going for at least a few years and, in their opinion, things have **not** gotten any worse. This is in sharp contrast to statements made at last week's council meeting. There is definitely another side of this issue that needs to be expressed and heard.
- 3) Supportive, "wet" housing, and "Housing First" have been shown to be beneficial to communities and especially to the housed residents.

A few years back, I spoke to City Council in favour of the proposed Supportive and "wet" housing for location on Bowen Rd near the Quarterway Bridge. At the time, I had been active with the City of Nanaimo's anti-poverty group for a few years and prior to that and much earlier in my life, had myself briefly experienced homelessness with 3 young children. Through my research for that presentation, I found that in almost 100% of the cases, although initially many neighbouring residents were strongly against having supportive or wet housing in their neighbourhoods, once these facilities were built and people had moved into them, it became obvious to these same people, that their initial concerns were not warranted. Often they even volunteered to help welcome and became involved as supportive neighbours. Some became active with the Community Advisory Committees associated with the supportive housing.

Here in Nanaimo, Vancouver Island University and Pacifica's year-long study of the Uplands Walk Project in the Dover Bay community showed that after a year of being open, the surrounding neighbourhood had mellowed with its fears and was basically quite accepting. Challenges identified initially by Dover Bay residents in 2015 did not materialize after the facility was fully operating. Dover Bay property values still increased: 13% increase versus a 14% increase for Vancouver Island. There was no perceptible increase in neighbourhood crime rates. Initial neighbourhood Crime & safety concerns & school proximity concerns went way down as well as the general level of community concern once the facility was functioning.

- 4) As we all know, 250 Terminal and 2020 Labieux are in response to Nanaimo's homelessness emergency. At 250 Terminal, there is 24/7 support staff (4 staff at all times), in addition to social workers, counsellors, janitorial, kitchen staff and gate security. Much attention is being given to help residents move forward with their lives. This provides a wonderful opportunity for them and already we are hearing some encouraging stories.

These two facilities now have Community Advisory Committees composed of nearby residents, police, Island Health, BC Housing, City Staffers and others. Let's give these emergency supportive housing facilities all possible support with continued reassurance that we, as a community, want them to succeed.

In closing, these are not easy times. Issues dealing with homelessness can be complex. However, there is no reason to declare these 2 properties as nuisance properties – to do so would put more of a burden and unnecessary stress on Island Crisis Care Society & Pacifica Housing and likely negatively impact residents of both facilities. It might be helpful if some of you were to sit down with reps from Island Crisis Care Society & Pacifica Housing to discuss potential ways the City of Nanaimo could assist with the smooth running of these 2 desperately-needed emergency supportive housing complexes.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

*Lynn Burrows, Nanaimo*

**References:** Uplands Walk Supported Housing Neighbourhood Impact Assessment

<https://pacificahousing.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Uplands-Walk-Report-Jan-17-2018.pdf>

HousingFirst: [https://www.canadian-nurse.com/articles/issues/2014/june-2014/putting-housing-first?fbclid=IwAR03LEjQacJcMGRxL5uhkRjhZF\\_UUGanKLryWIJ2edvZKGMZ9LWRli6K5CU](https://www.canadian-nurse.com/articles/issues/2014/june-2014/putting-housing-first?fbclid=IwAR03LEjQacJcMGRxL5uhkRjhZF_UUGanKLryWIJ2edvZKGMZ9LWRli6K5CU)