

ATTACHMENT A



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His Worship Leonard Krog
Mayor of Nanaimo
455 Wallace St
Nanaimo BC V9R 5J6

Dear Mayor Krog and Councillors:

I am writing to thank you for inviting me to participate in Nanaimo's Health and Housing Task Force tour on August 22, 2019, and for meeting with me at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) convention on September 24, 2019.

I sincerely appreciate you taking the time to share with me about the challenges you're experiencing. I can assure you that staff within our ministry, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction are aware of the challenges your community and others are facing, and are working together to find solutions to the current obstacles regarding shelter and supportive housing services and supports.

In our UBCM meeting, we continued our ongoing dialogue surrounding the challenges your community is coming up against, including the high number of homeless people in the city, a lack of treatment beds, and concerns about existing shelters and supportive housing units. You also noted concerns regarding public disruption, fears of increasing vigilantism, and a sense that people are beginning to stigmatize the homeless community as criminals. I also heard your frustration with the lack of psychiatric care for children and youth and capacity issues with the Brain Injury Society.

I hope you were able to take advantage of the recent Community Wellness and Harm Reduction Grant funding application and Foundry expansion expression of interest opportunity. As part of our government's commitment to youth mental health and wellness we are expanding the network of Foundry centres. The application can be found here: <https://foundrybc.ca/growing-foundry-network/>.

I also appreciate your feedback from the Health and Housing Task Force tour and am working with staff to address the three priorities you identified in your letter, including increasing funding to support temporary housing sites at 2020 Labieux Road and 250 Terminal Avenue; providing funding to the John Howard Society to operate 10 additional supportive recovery beds in Nanaimo; and consideration of using the city as a pilot project for programs supporting mental health and addictions treatments.

Our government continues to be committed to making the mental health and addictions system work for all British Columbians by providing people with care when, where, and how they need it.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Judy Darcy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Judy Darcy
Minister

pc: Ms. Sheila Malcolmson, MLA, Nanaimo