



Community Engagement Summary Report for

1616 & 1650 Queensway

Prince George

April 26, 2023

Contents

Purpose of the Report..... 3

Background 3

Engagement Goals 3

Engagement Overview 3

Neighbourhood Letter 3

Targeted Email 3

Let’s Talk Housing Webpage 3

BC Housing Community Relations Email..... 4

Summary of Comments Received 4

Conclusion..... 4

Appendix A: Neighbourhood Letter..... 5

Appendix BC: Virtual Open House Presentation..... 6

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this Community Engagement Summary Report is to provide an overview of the engagement that took place for 1616 and 1650 Queensway in Prince George. This report includes how the community members were communicated with and any key themes resulting from the engagement.

Background

BC Housing plans to buy and rezone 1616 Queensway, currently the Fraser Inn, and 1650 Queensway, the current site of Direct Art. If successful, the site will provide 28-30 permanent supportive homes in Prince George.

Engagement Goals

There were three goals as part of community engagement efforts for the proposed supportive housing at 1616 and 1650 Queensway as outlined below.

1. To share information about the proposed supportive housing, the process, and associated timelines
2. Build awareness of the importance and the need for supportive housing
3. To listen and respond to questions the community may have with regards to the proposed housing

Engagement Overview

BC Housing developed a virtual open house presentation that was housed on a public webpage, and open for over three weeks to review and comment upon. Notification about the virtual open house was made available through the following mediums:

- Neighbourhood Letter
- Targeted email to community partners

Neighbourhood Letter

A neighbourhood letter was created and distributed to properties within a 100m radius of the site on April 4, 2023, by BC Housing (**Appendix A**). This letter provided information about the proposed supportive housing, including location, operations and a link to the BC Housing Let's Talk Housing website.

Targeted Email

A targeted email, similar to the neighbourhood letter, was sent to 47 community partners with information about the proposed supportive housing development and a link to the Let's Talk page.

Let's Talk Housing Webpage

A dedicated webpage was created to share information about proposed supportive housing at 1616 and 1650 Queensway and host the virtual open house presentation (**Appendix B**).

The community was invited to visit the Let's Talk Housing webpage to find out more information about the proposed project and submit feedback. This digital platform launched April 3, 2023 and remained open for comments until April 24, 2023. The page will remain live and be updated as the project moves forward.

The page included the following:

- Project details
- Email address to ask questions
- Information about supportive housing
- Documents for download:
 - [The Virtual Open House Presentation](#)
 - [Fact Sheet about housing in Prince George](#)

The Let's Talk Housing page has had **87 views** since going live. The Virtual Open House was downloaded **20 times** and the Fact Sheet was downloaded **10 times**.

BC Housing Community Relations Email

Contact information for a monitored inbox was included on notification and presentation materials so that community members and key stakeholders could ask questions and offer input on the project and receive responses from BC Housing staff.

Summary of Comments Received

At the time this report was created on April 26, 2023, there have been two questions/comments submitted to BC Housing through the Community Relations email address. Both questions were inquisitive in tone and themes included questions about if the purchase had gone through yet, and what types/size of housing was being proposed for development. BC Housing answered both questions in a timely manner (same day) and those individuals had no further inquiries. The City of Prince George received no queries.

Conclusion

BC Housing allowed for a three-week period during which the community had access to the virtual open house, and an opportunity to ask questions. Highlights include:

- 40 neighbours reached by mail
- 47 community partners reached by email
- 87 views of the website
- 20 downloads of the presentation
- 10 downloads of the fact sheet
- 2 inquiries received

We are confident that the mechanisms to reach the public were sufficiently broad and given the minimal number of questions we are pleased that our communication has been fulsome and satisfactory.

Appendix A: Neighbourhood Letter



April 3, 2023

Dear neighbour,

We are excited to inform you that BC Housing is exploring an opportunity to build supportive housing at 1616 Queensway and 1650 Queensway. These buildings, currently the Fraser Inn and Direct Art, are for sale and BC Housing will be purchasing them, subject to zoning approval. Together, the two buildings are on four lots, providing ample outdoor space for tenant use and parking.

An operator for this future housing has not been selected yet, but we anticipate using a local provider with experience and connections.

What would happen?

The Fraser Inn would undergo light renovations with particular attention paid to fire and safety. The Direct Arts building would be renovated. An architect has yet to be confirmed but initial ideas include a commercial kitchen, two rooms on the main floor and the addition of 4-6 units on the second floor.

A move in date estimate is not yet available as the size and scope of renovations has yet to be confirmed.

Collaborative effort

To facilitate the proposed supportive housing project, BC Housing has submitted a land use application with the City of Prince George. This is another step forward in supporting the housing needs in the City of Prince George.

Virtual Open House

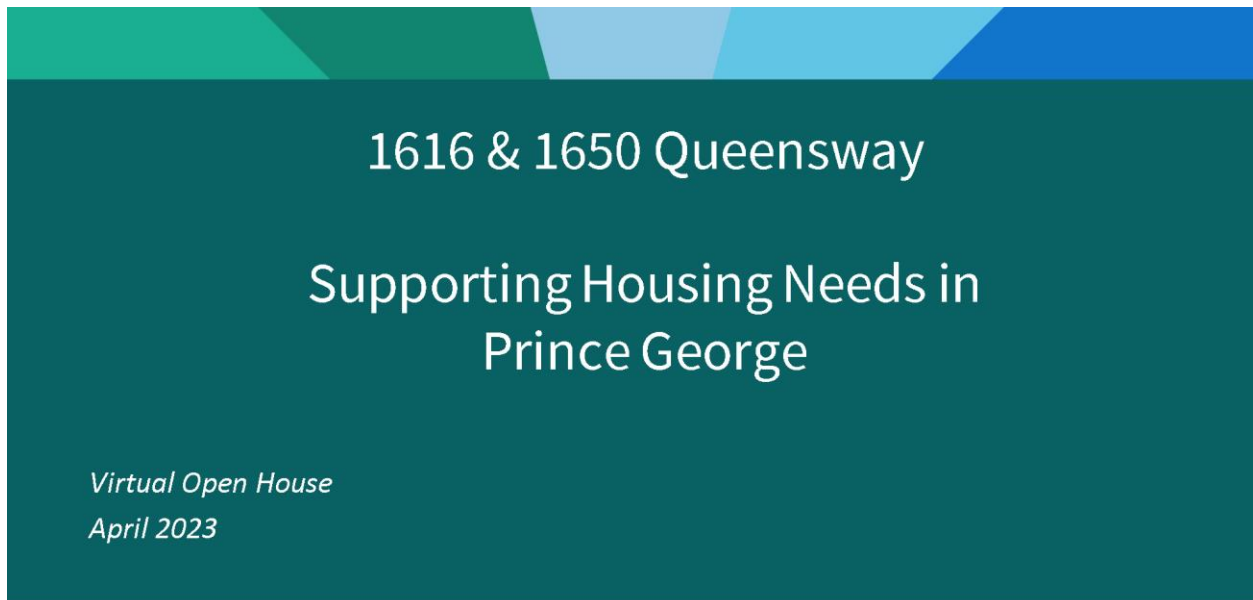
Please visit the Let's Talk Housing webpage at <http://letstalkhousingbc.ca/prince-george-queensway> to review a presentation with more details about the project.

For questions about supportive housing programs or this project, please contact BC Housing at communityrelations@bchousing.org.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

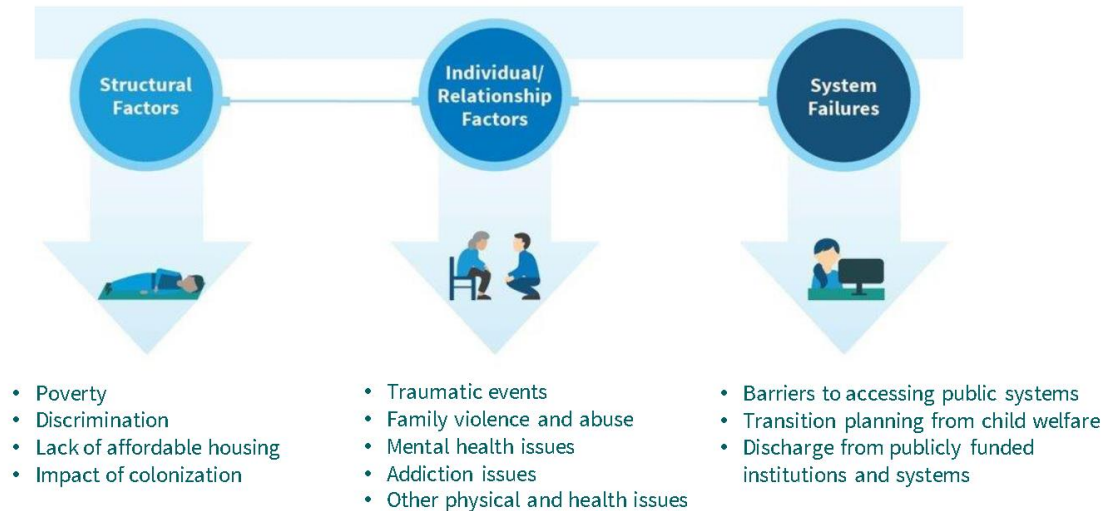
BC Housing



The Presentation

- This Virtual Open House provides the community with an opportunity to learn more about the proposed supportive housing at 1616 & 1650 Queensway in Prince George.
- We encourage you to read through this presentation and submit your feedback, questions and comments to communityrelations@bchousing.org or by using the Questions and Answers section of this Let's Talk page.
- Questions and comments will be included as part of a report to the City of Prince George. Names will not be included out of respect for privacy.

Understanding Pathways to Homelessness



Addressing Homelessness in Prince George

- In 2020/21 Report on Homeless Count, Prince George recorded 186 individuals who were homeless.
- Shelters and outreach is an important and immediate support for people experiencing homelessness, but the goal is for everyone to have a home
- Social service providers report more people at risk and increased wait lists



What is supportive housing?

- Subsidized housing with on-site supports
- Homes are for single adults, seniors and people with disabilities at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- Often culturally informed services.



On-site Supports

- Daily meal services
- Individual case planning
- Individual & group services (*life skills, community kitchen*)
- Connection to community supports including employment skills training and health and wellness supports



Why is this site being developed for supportive rental housing?

- There is an ongoing, urgent need for safe housing in Prince George.
- In 2020/21 Report on Homeless Count, Prince George recorded 186 individuals who were homeless.
- During winter months Prince George shelters are typically at or close to capacity.



1616 & 1650 Queensway Proposed Supportive Housing

Supportive Housing

- April 2023 - Announcement of intent to purchase and rezone
- May 2023 – Final reading at City Council
- 28-30 supportive homes

Operator

To be named



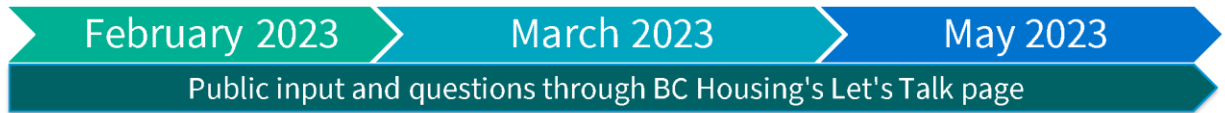
Resident Selection Process – Thoughtful & Thorough

Housing for individuals:

- Over the age of 19
- Experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- In need of additional support to maintain housing
- Priority given to Prince George residents
- All residents pay rent and sign a program agreement around expectations and behaviours



Moving Forward



Announcement Intent to Purchase

Announcement and reach out to stakeholders, neighbours and the community on housing plans for this site



Community Engagement

Engagement including a Virtual Open House for the community to learn about this proposed project and answer questions



Council Consideration

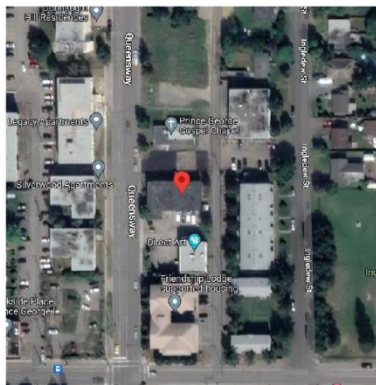
Rezoning the building for use as supportive housing

Resources and Information about Affordable Housing

- [Affordable Rental Housing Program](#)
- [Social and Economic Value of Supportive and Affordable Housing in BC](#)
- [Affordable Housing Actions](#)

1616 & 1650 Queensway

If approved and there are no serious construction delays, we anticipate residents will move into the buildings in Winter 2024.



Questions or Comments?

- Submit inquiries through communityrelations@bchousing.org or the questions section on the Let's Talk Housing page
- For more information on how to apply for subsidized housing, visit <https://www.bchousing.org/housing-assistance/rental-housing/subsidized-housing>
- Questions for the City of Prince George? Contact:
Kali Holahan, Supervisor Land Use Planning
kali.holahan@princegeorge.ca



Thank You