



FAQ's
Proposed Supportive Housing Project
City of Grand Forks

- 1) **Who will live in this project?** Homeless individuals, those at risk of being homeless, those that are hard to house and low income adults. The occupants will pay rent (it's not "free" housing) and some will receive support services to ensure they are good tenants. Some will need supports with mental health and/or substance abuse. The tenants must sign an agreement that they will abide by the building rules and receive the supports as needed.
- 2) **Have other locations been looked at (P&T, Hotel 99, Moto)?** Yes, many sites were looked at and were not feasible because of a lack of infrastructure, site unavailability, inadequate size, location or zoning.

This Council and the previous Council has worked with BC Housing and community groups toward relocating this project to a suitable site and to date the 70th Avenue and 2nd Street sites are being reviewed.

- 3) **Who is paying for the development?** Cost sharing and servicing issues are currently being negotiated. Until these negotiations have been finalized, the matter will remain "In-Camera".
- 4) **Will there be community consultation?** There will be a public hearing about the proposed zoning bylaw change on the afternoon of Wednesday, June 5th (from 3:00pm to 6:00pm) so that Council can hear the views of all residents. Letters and emails submitted to the City with respect to the bylaw will also be documented and reviewed by Council.
- 5) **Who proposed the possible move from 2nd Street to 70th Avenue?** Council as a whole proposed the potential relocation of the project due to community concerns about the 2nd Street location. On May 21, 2019, Council gave 1st and 2nd reading to the rezoning bylaw which, if passed after the public hearing, would permit the project (along with other community uses).
- 6) **Why did the City buy the land?** The City bought the lots on 70th Street to facilitate servicing and development of the west sector of the City, to potentially provide access to the 19th Street housing project, and to use the land for uses that are of benefit of the City. It made sense to purchase these lots because they are immediately beside a large City recreational area and other City-owned lands.
- 7) **What did the vote on May 21st mean?** Council gave the zoning bylaw amendment 1st and 2nd reading which means the rezoning proposal is advertised and progresses to a public hearing so all members of the community can express their views to Council.
- 8) **What can council do to stop this project completely?** BC Housing is a Provincial crown corporation. Senior levels of government can overrule municipal decisions. As such, Council has little say in what BC Housing does. To date council has tried to make the best of it by having the project changed from 52 studio units to 34 one bedroom units, negotiating the possible relocation of the project and putting forth a resolution that BC Housing has to consult with the community before purchasing land for housing projects.

- 9) **Is it possible to declare a moratorium?** As mentioned above, BC Housing represents a senior government and can override municipal zoning, etc. (this is rare, and they prefer to work with communities). Also, it would be difficult for the City to deny a housing project if it meets the zoning, servicing and cost requirements.
- 10) **Who asked BC Housing to come to Grand Forks?** For at least the last five years, private citizens, community groups and different Councils have asked the Province for “help with the homeless situation”. As a result, the supported housing project is proposed to help with this situation.
- 11) **What is the proposed new zoning for the 70th Avenue site?** Council asked staff to prepare special site-specific zoning for this property to enable more control and to limit the project to this specific site.
- 12) **Why is this rezoning being rushed?** BC Housing has strict timelines for development and funding. It may be that if Council doesn’t move forward, the project may be developed on the 2nd Street because BC Housing already owns the land.
- 13) **Is the 2nd Street lot suitable?** The lot is appropriate for BC Housing’s needs in terms of size and location, and BC Housing owns the lot.
- 14) **What happens if Council votes “yes” and passes the rezoning bylaw?** Council can’t (by legislation) consider the next step until after a public hearing and receiving written submissions from the public. After the public hearing, Council has the option of either giving the rezoning bylaw 3rd reading or not. If the rezoning bylaw is passed then the project can proceed on the lots on 70th Avenue, subject to servicing agreements and building permits.
- 15) **What happens if Council votes “no” and doesn’t pass the rezoning bylaw?** The lands will remain under single family residential zoning and the project won’t proceed. However, the project may still proceed on 2nd Street.
- 16) **Is Council only working with BC Housing? What about the people?** Council has worked tirelessly to make this the best project for the community. Council spent hours reviewing the petition and other feedback received about the 2nd Street location. As a result, Council is exploring 70th Avenue as an alternative option.
- 17) **I haven't seen anything about the purchase of the 70th Avenue site in the press, why?** The purchase of the land and approval for allowing access through Lots C and D were made public at the Council meeting on March 25th, which is the day that the sale was finalized. The media was in attendance.
- 18) **What’s going on with a supportive housing project in Maple Ridge?** In March, the Council of Maple Ridge voted down a 51-unit supportive housing project and the Province (BC Housing) decided to go ahead with it anyway. As a senior government, the Province’s priority in this case overruled the municipality’s.

- 19) **Isn't the proposed 70th Avenue site too close to family and other community facilities?** There are sports fields and other recreation facilities immediately to the north of this site. BC Housing advises that there will be 24/7 security on site as well as cameras and 24 hour workers. There will also be an operating contract with the local non-profit operator, with strict operating procedures.
- 20) **What will this project look like?** The designs are not finalized but it will be a 4-storey building with offices on the main floor. The building would likely take up 2 of the 4 lots and the remaining lots could be used for recreation/community amenities.