

## Affordable Family Housing FAQs

~ Prepared by the Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre in partnership with #BuildHomesNotBarriers - a partnership of Homelessness Services Association of BC and BC Non-Profit Housing Association~

Medium Density Residential housing for Families has been developed in rural and urban communities across BC. Below are some common questions and concerns that can surface when communities begin this process as well as some information specific to the LB Warner site.

### **Q - Will this proposal negatively impact property values?**

A – There is no evidence to support negative impact to property values, and some evidence to support a positive effect. Two large studies have asked this question. One involved group homes in BC in 1995, which found no negative effect<sup>1</sup>. The other was a review of 31 separate studies across North America, which found 7 examples of neighbourhoods that saw positive effects on property value, and 19 that found neutral effects<sup>2</sup>.

One of the studies included in the review found that for every 100 feet closer to affordable housing, a neighbourhood lot would increase in value by \$86 compared to if the affordable housing was not there<sup>3</sup>. This neutral or positive effect is seen in urban and rural communities across BC<sup>6</sup>.

### **Q – Will this proposal increase crime in the neighbourhood?**

A – There is no evidence to support an increase in crime associated with affordable housing. The largest study of this in Canada was in Toronto between 1997 and 2006, found that during this time period, crime rates dropped at a rate that was equal to the rest of the City, suggesting no impact of affordable housing<sup>4</sup>. In 25 years of supported housing in Vancouver, there has not been an increase in crime in these neighbourhoods<sup>5</sup>.

### **Q – Will this proposal change the character of the neighbourhood?**

A – Like any development, Affordable housing developments are subject to clear guidelines around form and character within neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods where developments have occurred often benefit long-term from the developments with vacant lots transformed into vibrant neighbourhoods with green spaces, play areas for children, community multi-use amenity facilities, all of which can be included in proposals for this site.

### **Q – Will this proposal impact the safety of children, particularly at the adjacent Gymnastics Club?**

A – There is no evidence to support a safety risk to neighbours associated with affordable housing<sup>7</sup>. Additionally, providing safe and affordable housing is an important part of preventing and ending homelessness, which is shown to have a positive effect on community safety<sup>7</sup>.

### **Q – What about impact to existing infrastructure, traffic, and parking in the area?**

A – Like any new development, this proposal will have to comply with bylaws around municipal issues like parking stalls. In general, affordable housing residents drive fewer cars than others<sup>8</sup>. Medium density allows for economies of scale, keeping infrastructure costs lower than lower density developments<sup>9</sup>. By creating affordable housing, neighbourhoods will gain neighbours who on average will stay longer than in market housing, meaning they will contribute to community from a social perspective, as well as support local businesses<sup>10</sup>.

## References

- 1 - [http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/pub/htmldocs/pub\\_neighbour/p\\_value1.htm](http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/pub/htmldocs/pub_neighbour/p_value1.htm)
  - 2 - Centre for Housing Policy. "Don't Put it Here!": Does Affordable Housing Cause Nearby Property Values to Decline. [www.nhc.org](http://www.nhc.org)
  - 3 - Goetz, Edward G., Hin Kim Lam, and Anne Heitlinger. 1996. There goes the neighborhood? The impact of subsidized multi-family housing on urban neighborhoods. Minneapolis-St. Paul: University of Minnesota, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs
  - 4 - de Wolff, A. 2008. We Are Neighbours: The Impact of Supportive Housing on Community, Economic and Attitude Changes. Wellesley Institute.
  - 5 - "Supportive Housing Strategy for Vancouver Coastal Health," June 2007 [www.vancouver.ca](http://www.vancouver.ca)
  - 6 - Toward More Inclusive Neighborhoods. BC Housing, 2014
  - 7 - Horner, H. 2009. Affordable Housing Research and Recommendations. Minneapolis, MN: McKnight Foundation.
  - 8 - Wynne-Edwards, J. 2003. Overcoming Community Opposition to Homelessness Sheltering Projects under the National Homelessness Initiative. Government of Canada.
  - 9 - <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/hpd/mythsfacts.pdf>
  - 10 - 13 Federation of Canadian Municipalities. 2009. Housing in My Backyard: A Municipal Guide For Responding to NIMBY
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