

Frequently Asked Questions

Withdrawal Management Centre

Why is the existing Vancouver Detox Centre being relocated?

- The existing facility is nearly 30 years old and its infrastructure is failing. It was not purpose-built for the existing use, and the design does not support best practices in care. The existing site is not large enough to accommodate the range of services to be included in the new centre on one level, which Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) requires for clinical services.

Why is this being proposed in a residential area? Why not locate at the new St Paul's Hospital?

- The withdrawal management centre is a community-based care service. Current detox facilities are all in community settings, in line with the best practices in treatment.
- The new hospital campus is dedicated to services that require close proximity to emergency and inpatient departments. Withdrawal management services do not fit this description.

Is the proposed facility safe for the community?

- Yes. For over 30 years the current Vancouver Detox Centre has been located near housing, businesses, and across the street from a school, with no reported issues.
- The withdrawal management centre will have 24/7 on-site nursing/healthcare staff, as well as an operations management plan in place.
- The project partners are committed to ensuring that the building is managed safely and responsibly. We will work with community members toward good stewardship of this site and the community as a whole.

What studies have been done evaluating the impact the withdrawal management centre will have on the community?

- The proposal is based on best practices in patient care, and decades of experience with services in residential neighbourhoods similar to the Clark Drive and 1st Avenue area.
- The best practice in care is to provide community-based services that support people to integrate into their communities.
- People with substance use problems are often stigmatized and are more often victimized than they are perpetrators of crime. Stigma is a major factor in excluding people from accessing the housing and services they need most.

Will this proposal attract drug use and intoxicated people to the neighbourhood?

- No. The proposal will not attract drug use. Clients typically arrive under another person's care. Clients receive support on site, including counselling, meals, and laundry, so there is not a need to leave the facility.
- Providing people with the supports they need will help to address many of the concerns the community may have about existing crime and substance use activity in the area.

Where will people go once they have completed treatment at the withdrawal management centre?

- A primary goal of withdrawal management is to ensure people have the supports in place to progress to further treatment.
- The proposal includes 20 new beds of transitional housing for people who have completed detox so they can continue receiving access to supports while waiting for placement in longer-term housing or treatment programs.
- The next stage of treatment varies for individual clients, and may include day programs, outpatient counselling, or specialized programs.

Why is the proposed facility larger than the existing Detox Centre?

- The size of the facility will help us incorporate program enhancements, such as outpatient service and transitional housing, which should reduce wait times for inpatient services.
- Integrating a range of services allows us to provide a continuum of care within the facility and helps people navigate the system more seamlessly by providing a central point of access.

Will ambulances/siren noise increase in the neighbourhood?

- No. There will not be sirens or noise upon arrival at the proposed withdrawal management centre. If a person needs emergency care, they will be taken to the hospital.

Are Supervised Injection/Consumption Services like Insite included in this proposal?

- No, services at the new site will focus on withdrawal management. This centre and the services provided are designed for people who want to reduce/eliminate their use of substances.

Affordable Housing and Existing Tenants

Are the affordable housing units intended for those accessing the withdrawal management centre?

- The affordable housing is a separate component from the withdrawal management centre and will be operated by a non-profit housing provider. Future affordable housing tenants will be selected from BC Housing's Housing Registry.

What is the target rent for the new building?

- The proposed development would provide housing for low-to-moderate income families, singles, people with disabilities, and seniors. Rates will be based on the Housing Income Limits according to CMHC affordability criteria. The specific rents are being determined and will be presented in detail when the project is presented to Council.

There is already social/affordable housing in this community. Is this proposal too much for one area?

- Grandview Woodland is a vibrant, diverse community with a robust existing mix of housing, including social, rental, co-op, and market housing.
- The Community Plan anticipates a mix of housing tenures, including new social and affordable housing. The affordable housing proposed includes a mix of income levels.
- City and regional policies encourage locating additional affordable housing near transit and amenities. The proposal is located in close proximity to transit, services, shopping, and employment spaces including Clark Drive, Commercial Drive, and Downtown Vancouver, making it suitable for higher density development.

What will happen to tenants currently living on site?

- The City is working closely with tenants based on individual needs and will assist them with securing appropriate housing. Existing tenants are entitled to a replacement unit within the new building if they meet eligibility criteria for the affordable housing.
- Existing tenants will be provided with an enhanced package that includes moving expenses and compensation based on the length of their tenancy, meeting the City of Vancouver Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy.
- A notice to end tenancy cannot be issued until all permits have been issued (rezoning, development, building, and demolition permits), in line with the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA).

Policy and Community Planning

How was the Clark Drive and East 1st Avenue site selected?

- No other site was a viable option given the size and location of what is needed. Clark Drive and East 1st Avenue was the best fit in terms of transit access, proximity to Downtown, site size, access to services, and the recently approved community plan for the neighbourhood.

How does the proposal respond to the Grandview Woodland Community Plan (GWCP)?

- The GWCP includes policies to support the delivery of non-market housing and addiction treatment facilities, which are identified as core community needs.
- The GWCP provides direction for buildings up to 6 storeys along East 1st Avenue. The existing zoning of the site on Clark Drive permits heights up to 100 ft (10 storeys).
- The GWCP includes policy to consider additional height and density for the delivery of non-market housing.
- The proposal has been refined in response to feedback from the community, City staff and the Urban Design Panel. This includes providing additional setbacks, and reallocating height on the Clark Drive portion of the building to enable a wider gap being building volumes.

What will be done to provide adequate parking for residents, staff, and visitors?

- A parking study was conducted and identified that the proposal will likely need more parking stalls than were included in the initial proposal. As a result, the parking count has been increased from 39 to 81 spaces.
- The project partners continue to work to address parking demand, and will encourage alternate means of transportation such as walking, transit, and cycling.

Who can the community contact if there is an issue with the building?

- If approved, the project partners would establish a protocol for ongoing engagement with the community.
- This would include providing a management contact with the withdrawal management centre, which will have 24/7 staffing on site.
- The housing operator will have on-site staffing as well, and a management contact will be shared with the community.