

December 17, 2024

To: The Honourable Brenda Bailey, M.L.A. Vancouver - South Granville, Minister of Finance

Subject: **Letter of Support for Seniors Housing Information & Navigation Ease Program**

This letter follows up on the August 30, 2024 meeting with you and the Westside Seniors Hub (WSH) on behalf of WSH's Community-Based Seniors' Services (CBSS) Partner Organizations. The meeting focused on senior tenants who are being negatively impacted by developments in the Vancouver housing market.

At that meeting you encouraged WSH to propose a housing navigation project to support the increasing numbers of long-term senior tenants who are first-time homeless or at risk of eviction. Many of these tenants are affected by the implementation of the Broadway Plan. As you will recall, we acknowledged the impact of housing precarity on seniors' health and its implications for the healthcare system.

Housing has been a key priority for WSH throughout 2024. Meetings of WSH Partners (listed on the top of page 2) and consultations with key stakeholders (tenants, BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health) identified challenges and potential solutions. WSH Council has explored other civic, provincial and federal programs that help urban seniors in precarious housing situations. Several WSH Partners are directly involved in supporting seniors housing navigation needs.

The [Seniors Housing Information & Navigation Ease \(SHINE\) Program](#) developed and managed by the Seniors Services Society of BC (SSSBC) is an example of a very effective housing navigation program. SHINE is a BC-wide program with documented success preventing homelessness and supporting over 6,000 seniors to be housed in the first half of this fiscal year alone. It has been recognized locally in the City of Vancouver's [Seniors Housing Strategy](#) (July 2024), provincially by the United Way's [Aging in Uncertainty: The Growing Housing Crisis for BC Seniors](#) (2023), and nationally by CMHC's [Future Cities Canada Spotlight: Housing Innovations](#) (2021). More than simply training staff and volunteers in housing navigation, the program also includes a monthly Community of Practice for updates and continuous learning, access to the SHINE Manager for consultation about complex cases, standard procedures for documenting and evaluating case management, and support for clients through to temporary and/or stable housing.



ASK Friendship Centre  
Brock House Society  
Dunbar Community Centre  
Dunbar Residents Association  
Family Caregivers of BC  
Home Support Program VCH  
Jewish Family Services  
Kerrisdale Seniors Centre  
Kitsilano Community Centre & Assn.

Kitsilano Neighbourhood House  
Pacific Spirit United Church  
South Granville Seniors Centre  
St. Faith's Anglican Church  
St. Stephen's United Church  
Vancouver Public Library Westside Branches  
West Point Grey Community Centre & Assn.  
West Point Grey United Church

In its capacity as a grass-roots coalition of CBSS public and non-profit organizations on Vancouver's Westside, WSH Council and the Partners directly involved in housing strongly support the breadth of the SHINE program. This letter, then, is a **full endorsement of the SHINE program with the strong recommendation that the BC government expand its financial support for the SHINE program in the 2025 budget to include ten (10) additional communities and multi-year funding**, as proposed by SSSBC in May 2024.

If further grassroots community information would support a BC Government decision to expand its support for the SHINE program, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Mary Jane MacLennan, Cole Dudley and Lynn Shepherd  
On behalf of WSH Council



Special thanks to Kitsilano Neighbourhood House for its role as Lead Partner of the Hub