

Minutes  
Council's Response Committee on Housing and Emergency Shelter (CRCHES)  
Committee Meeting  
December 10, 2025 – 9 am  
Council Committee Meeting Room, City Hall

Attendees: Councillor Trevor Bolin, Councillor Sarah MacDougall, Councillor Gord Klassen, Bonnie McCue, and Glennis Wunderlich (recording secretary)

Guests: Erin Powers, Healthy Communities Lead – Northern Health

1. Call To Order:

9:00 am

2. Approval of the Agenda:

The agenda was approved by consensus.

3. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes:

The November 12, 2025, CRCHES meeting minutes were provided and will be included on the next Regular Council agenda.

4. Invited Guests/Presentations

Erin Powers attended as an invited guest.

Discussions took place regarding:

The role of the Healthy Communities Lead which is community outreach liaison for Northern Health and gathers information on the needs of communities by connecting with individuals and groups like Save Our Northern Seniors and Fort St. John's Community Action Team (CAT). Needs of the community are relayed to Health Authority senior administration. The role can act as a conduit or intermediary between CRCHES and Health Authority contacts and administrators.

Challenges and success of other communities in the Health Communities Lead's network.

A shift in the community on the stigma that was attributed, in part, to the committee's efforts to raise awareness through communication. Efforts included connecting with individuals experiencing homelessness and local businesses, engaging with the public, encouraging operational changes among frontline agencies, and enhancing connections in the service provider network.

A recent CAT meeting included discussion of the challenge to secure housing if last address was a shelter, and the predominance of “survival crime” as opposed to crime for profit. Aspirations include securing a space to provide warming, laundry facilities, showers, and storage. The Society for Narcotic and Opioid Wellness (SNOW) has received micro-grants to offer some local supports.

The necessity of addressing root causes and factors that contribute to someone eventually experiencing homelessness. Early intervention, supporting parents, and educating young people are key. The school district was mentioned as a potential partner to fulfill the education component of awareness and early prevention.

5. Updates and Progress Reports:

Councillor MacDougall shared details on a recent CAT meeting. CAT has been meeting quarterly and includes community organizations as well as Peers (persons with lived experience), such as SNOW. Peers may be willing to meet as they have valuable contributions to make to CRCHES discussions.

6. Ongoing Discussion Items

Information Sharing Agreement with BC Housing outstanding. Would like to have active by end of year.

7. New Business

The Building Stronger Communities through Housing Co-operatives Webinar Briefing was reviewed. Key takeaway was the need for a non-profit to lead a co-op housing initiative.

8. Budget and Resource Planning

The committee’s budget cannot be carried over to 2026. Planning for the best use of budget to take place early in the new year.

9. Action Items

- Bonnie: Follow-up with BC Housing on status Information Sharing Agreement for quarterly reporting
- Councillor MacDougall: Invite Peers from CAT to attend a future meeting
- Glennis: Invite Helen Gilbert to attend January 14 meeting

10. Adjournment

10:29 am