

Minutes
Council's Response Committee on Housing and Emergency Shelter (CRCHES)
Committee Meeting
August 12, 2026 – 9:00 am
Finance Meeting Room, City Hall

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

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 June 10, 2026 CRCHES meeting minutes were provided and will be included on the next Regular Council agenda.

4. Invited Guests/Presentations

Erin Ferris, Community Safety Manager, joined the meeting. Discussions took place regarding:

The first phase of the three-year Fort St. John Housing Solutions Project was completed. Collaborative Housing First working groups were established, and all non-profit organizations will have access to the locally tailored Housing First model. The Fort St. John Association for Community Living supports a broad demographic that includes young adults with histories of substance use and cognitive disabilities, enhancing access to housing without preconditions. Phase Two will focus on unlocking additional housing assets, with discussions planned with Connective.

Strengthening abilities and journeys of empowerment (SAJE), a provincial government program, is available to young people with experience in care. There are some conditions to SAJE but they do not interfere with a housing first framework.

Positive outcomes associated with the Salvation Army's harm reduction intake approach were noted. Reports of temporary sheltering in the community have decreased substantially compared to previous years. Interest was expressed in inviting Salvation Army administration to a future meeting to discuss successes and opportunities including the reestablishment of a community table group.

Funding totaling \$14,000 was made available to the Fort St. John Women's Resource Centre and the Salvation Army in December. Through the Housing First grant, 725 hygiene kits and 168 winter warming kits were distributed, containing essential items such as socks, T-shirts, and toiletries.

The Situation Table continues to meet on a weekly and monthly basis. Consistent participation from children and youth organizations, the RCMP, and Northern Health has supported the initiative, though increased referrals would be welcomed. Some referrals were particularly complex and proved challenging due to gaps in available services.

5. Updates and Progress Reports:

- Councillor Klassen – Noted the Overdose Prevention Site is scheduled to open in October.

6. Ongoing Discussion Items

The BC Housing Occupancy Status Quarterly Report was reviewed.

7. New Business

A final report, including a recommendation regarding the future of the committee, is planned for the October 26 Regular Council meeting.

8. Budget and Resource Planning

Plans for a wrap-up event were discussed.

9. Action Items

- The proposed priority meeting requests were reviewed.
- Glennis:
 - Send out calendar invitation to Committee Members for wrap-up event and start a list of potential guests.
- Bonnie:
 - Invite Salvation Army Executive Director and the BC Housing representative to attend a future meeting

10. Adjournment

10:37 am