



Royal Canadian Gendarmerie Royale
Mounted Police du Canada

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RE: UBCM Communities' Strengthening Grant for 2021

The unique nature of a resort town brings its own challenges to policing, from the transient nature of tourists and seasonal workers, to expensive housing, and lack of alternative solutions for those who require immediate access to shelter at odd hours, or during crisis situations.

We are not immune to domestic violence or situations that require people to seek access to a safe space. With the large number of visitors to our town we sometimes find people in unsafe situations where they have no support within the community, and the person from whom they are seeking protection has sole access to or control over the finances or transportation that would enable them to leave. It is not uncommon for police to learn of situations where victims of domestic violence have had no alternative options and have had to sleep in cars or stairwells, or wander through the village at night because it was unsafe for them to stay in the situation they were in, and no other options were available.

There is currently no permanent Safe House in Whistler, and it is difficult to acquire immediate access to emergency accommodations in the middle of the night for those in a crisis or unsafe situation. On top of that, Whistler is also faced with affordability and housing shortage issues, which can further lead to people being forced to remain in unsafe situations due to a lack of alternative options. Without a Safe House within the community it becomes difficult for victims to leave, resulting in people staying in unsafe environments, rather than remove their children from school, or disrupt their employment, to seek shelter in another community, further away from their support systems.

The availability of accessible, emergency housing within the community would be invaluable and provide police with another tool to help keep people safe when in volatile situations, and prevent further violence from occurring. The RCMP support the RMOW in the administration of the UBCM Communities' Strengthening Grant for 2021 and the proposed activities outlined in the application.

Cpl MILLER
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