B.C. budget cuts freeze funding for Harrison housing proposal

Adam Louis

Agassiz-Harrison Community Service (AHCS) confirmed that the senior housing project proposed for Harrison Hot Springs was one of hundreds affected by provincial budget cuts.

The AHCS submitted an application for funding from B.C. Housing last July to potentially build a senior housing development in the village. On Feb. 17, AHCS received word that the all housing projects submitted to the Community Housing Fund (CHF) request for proposals (RFP) would not proceed.

"While this is disappointing news, AHCS continues to be committed to affordable housing for the region in response to the Housing Needs studies undertaken for the Village of Harrison and the District of Kent," reads a communique released from the AHCS.

"We will continue to work with the Village of Harrison to determine the next steps as the project is only in the proposal stage. We will seek other sources of funding and submit applications to future B.C. Housing funding calls as appropriate.



A proposed housing development for seniors in Harrison Hot Springs – proposed to be built on this property – has hit a speed bump after B.C. budget cuts halted significant funding efforts. (Adam Louis)

"We thank the Village of Harrison and all residents for their input and will keep the community posted on any new developments."

Last summer, ACHS, Terra Purpose Real Estate and The Nerdy Architect appeared before Harrison's council to discuss the proposed housing project. The project would be located where the village's public works yard currently sits, incorporating at least part of the overflow parking lot near the village office.

The public works yard would have to move, which was an objective more intensely pursued several years ago. Harrison council approved applying for an investigative license to renew efforts to move the public works yard.

In July 2025, Harrison's village council voted 4-1 to write a joint letter of intent with AHCS and provide a letter of support for a provincial grant application (Coun. Mark Schweinbenz was opposed to both motions).

The grant would provide for a 60-unit, four-storey affordable housing project for seniors.

The housing project received letters of support from Harrison's Age Friendly Committee, the Sts'ailes First Nation, Agassiz-Harrison Senior Citizens Housing Society, AHCS Seniors Services Department, Agassiz-Harrison Healthier Communities Committee and Fraser Health.

Locals have expressed a number of concerns surrounding the proposed housing development.

These included aggravating an already-high-pressure parking situation in the village and a lack of medical and food amenities accessible to those who need senior homes.

Harrison officials reiterated that, despite social media discourse to the contrary, the proposed housing development was not social or transitional housing or any type of extended care – only independent living options for seniors.

AHCS published a letter from B.C. Housing confirming the "the pace of planned housing investments will need to slow to remain aligned with available funding."

"As a result, the 2025 CHF RFP will not proceed, and applications submitted under this call will not be advanced," reads the letter signed by Mike Pistrin, BC Housing vice-president of development and asset strategies. "We understand this is disappointing, and that applicants have been patiently waiting for information about next steps.

"We want to reassure you that the Province remains committed to meeting the overall targets for the CHF programs but over a longer time horizon.

"While we are adjusting the pace of our housing investments, we remain firm in our resolve to deliver the housing we've committed to."

Pistrin encouraged all those overseeing proposed housing projects to seek other funding sources where possible; B.C. Housing is expected to update applications when intake and further funding is available.

The CHF initiative was a planned $3.3-billion investment aimed at building more than 20,000 affordable rental homes in the province.

The Observer has reached out to Harrison Hot Springs officials for comment.

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