



Submission Regarding Affordable Student Housing and the Changes to the Vancouver Campus Plan

November 20, 2020

Dear Board of Governors,

This submission is written on behalf of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) of UBC Vancouver in support of the changes being made to the Vancouver Campus Plan, with a focus on alternative methods of affordable student housing.

We support the Vancouver Campus Plan amendments to align the plan with the university's sustainability and childcare priorities, as well as the change of use for the site. The Westbrook Mall and Agronomy Road site is a valuable opportunity to incorporate further outdoor academic learning spaces, which aligns with the goals outlined in the Vancouver Campus Plan, and a strong opportunity for the Faculty of Medicine's academic space.

With regards to concerns about the loss of student housing spaces in the Mixed Use Hub, we sincerely hope the Board of Governors requests that the administration mobilize on the conclusion of Stadium Road Neighbourhood and leverage Campus Vision 2050, to create more opportunities for affordable housing for faculty, staff, and students.

As per the 2020 AMS Academic Experience Survey ("AES"), 8% of students report experiencing housing insecurity while studying at UBC and 37% of students report that the cost of housing has caused them to reconsider whether they should attend a university with more affordable or available housing options instead of UBC¹. 47% of students reported that the cost of housing had caused them to live farther away from campus than they would like.

During COVID-19, students reported experiencing increased levels of housing insecurity (12.5%), in tandem with the affordability crisis created by the pandemic.² With rising costs of tuition, textbooks, food prices, ancillary fees, that have been compounded by economic recession, we urge the University to act on the student affordability crisis by creating affordable on-campus housing.

AMS would like to reiterate our strong support for the Stadium Road Neighbourhood and its current proposed density of 1.55 million square feet of residential development, as detailed in the Stadium Road Neighbourhood Analysis brought to the September Board cycle. The upcoming

¹ [AMS Academic Experience Survey Report 2020](#)

² [AMS/GSS COVID-19 Survey](#)



Land Use Plan review is a valuable opportunity to act on student affordability, UBC's sustainability priorities, and accessibility to UBC campus through the creation of affordable on-campus housing options and effective transit advocacy.

Sincerely,

Cole Evans
President
AMS of UBC Vancouver

Georgia Yee
VP Academic and University Affairs
AMS of UBC Vancouver