

PRINCE GEORGE | Report to the Community

Welcome to the inaugural edition of our **Prince George: Report to the Community!** This quarterly newsletter will feature stories, updates, partner spotlights, and more.

With two new programs and another on the way, it has been a busy year for Connective in PG!

Since first expanding to the region in 2019, we have been honoured to respond to an increasing number of requests for service. Through our range of housing, employment, and community-based services, we have helped respond to some of the community's toughest challenges. Over the years, our presence has grown to include six programs, 124 units of housing (with another 160 on the way!), and more than 100 local staff.

We believe everyone deserves to feel safe and included in their chosen community, and for over 90 years have worked closely with individuals at every stage, in any circumstance – including those experiencing poverty, homelessness, mental health or substance use challenges, developmental disabilities, or other complex barriers.

Together with our valued community partners, we have been pleased to use this expertise in service to those who call Prince George home. We can't wait to see what our future here holds!

MEET OUR LOCAL LEADERSHIP TEAM



CHRIS KINCH

Vice President of Service Delivery

Chris joined Connective in 2022, as we prepared to open our first supportive housing program in the north. Previously, he held a Portfolio Manager role with BC Housing. Prince George has been Chris' home for the last 20+ years, where he enjoys making the most of winter weather by strapping on his skis.



CAMILA SANCHEZ

Director

Camila joined Connective earlier this year, coming to us from a Director role with Sources Community Resource Society. She has lived in Prince George for 15 years, where she also teaches at the College of New Caledonia. When not working, Camila can likely be found spending time with Pepper, her black lab.



MARIANNE SORENSEN

Senior Manager

Marianne joined Connective at the start of 2023. Prior to, she spent 30 years in the social services sector, working on behalf of the community's most vulnerable. Marianne grew up in Prince George, and has since raised her own children here, passing along her love of the outdoors and of northern friendliness.



TIM THOMPSON

Senior Manager

Tim joined Connective in 2023, following a diverse 40-year career with Correctional Services Canada and other parts of the criminal justice system. He and his family moved to Prince George in 2017, and have found solace in spending time out outdoors together, particularly near the water.

MEET OUR LOCAL PROGRAMS

Supportive Housing

Our supportive housing programs provide safe, secure housing and 24/7 wraparound supports to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Connective staff provide meal programs, life and employment skills training, health and wellness assistance, as well as culturally appropriate supports for Indigenous residents, to help them reach their self-identified needs and goals.

These programs are funded by BC Housing, who also manages program referrals and helps ensure that resident needs can be appropriately met by the available supports.

Both Ontario and Victoria Street Supportive Housing are two-phased projects, each with a second building (purpose-built and renovated, respectively) coming online in the future.

Stay tuned for updates as this work progresses!

Transitional Housing

The transitional housing program at 3rd and London is part of the BC Government's HEARTH (Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing Programs) initiative.

Once open, it will provide temporary housing and 24/7 wraparound supports to individuals experiencing homelessness. In particular, those who are living outdoors or in encampments.

The project makes use of modular construction, similar to what is used in logging camps. Each unit is a private room, and residents will also have access to shared washrooms, laundry facilities, and an amenity trailer with dining area.

Unlike with supportive housing, which is longer term (and in some cases, permanent), transitional housing is intended as a stepping stone toward other, more independent housing.

160 Ontario Street



OPENED
June 2022

UNITS
50 Active
(+51 in Phase 2)

1550 Victoria Street



OPENED
May 2024

UNITS
60 Active
(+36 in Phase 2)

397 3rd Avenue



OPENING
Fall 2024

UNITS
43

To facilitate this, Connective staff will provide residents with two meals per day, as well as access to a range of supports. These include wellness checks, healthcare and community service referrals, outreach, life-skills training, and assistance with search for, and transition to, longer term housing arrangements that best meet their needs and desires.

Long-Term Care

1777 Yew Street



OPENED
August 2024

UNITS
14

Juniper House is a licensed, long-term care program offering a safe and compassionate home, with 24/7 wraparound supports, for adults and seniors living with dementia or acquired brain injuries. The facility features individual units with shared bathrooms, common spaces, and an outdoor garden.

Connective partnered with Northern Health to develop this program. It allows residents, who are referred by Northern Health, to continue having their care needs met but while living more independently in the community. This, in turn, helps to alleviate pressure on hospitals and other clinical institutions.

Substance Use Recovery

34000 Blackwater Road



OPENING
Early 2025

UNITS
30

Although Connective's approach has long been grounded in low-barrier and harm reduction-based philosophies, we have also understood the importance of alternative services catered to those ready for clean and sober living.

It's why we were honoured and excited when BC Housing invited us to fill an urgent service gap and assume operation of a men's substance use recovery centre. Located on a sprawling 150+ acre property 30KM SW of Prince George, this program offers participants an idyllic setting to build community while recovering from substance use.

Job Readiness Training

Northern BC



STARTED
2019

SERVED TO DATE
800+ People

ACES (Acquiring Community Based Employment Skills) provides certificate-based training, employment readiness workshops, and job search assistance to individuals facing multiple barriers to employment.

Staff work with participants to identify their career goals and connect them with the supports needed to achieve them. In addition to providing service locally, staff have also been honoured to provide service delivery and training to remote First Nations communities – including Lake Babine, Stellat'en, Kwadacha First Nations, and more.

In addition to these programs, our Prince George Outreach Workers are also pleased to administer a variety of rental supplements, as well as supports to those enrolled or residing in Connective programs and local criminal justice institutions.

TERRA'S STORY

Finding Safety and Support



|| **“Now, with this stability, I can start to see a way forward.”**

At 42, Terra has found a sense of safety and stability that she long lacked. Living in a one-bedroom apartment at Connective's **Ontario Street Supportive Housing**, she feels a deep sense of gratitude. “I'm very, very lucky to be in here.”

Though the last two decades have proven extremely challenging, it wasn't always this way. As a young adult, Terra played rep soccer and studied criminology and calculus at college.

It was only after her father committed suicide that Terra slipped into depression, and then into substance use. As life continued to intensify and addiction took hold, her living situation unraveled.

Terra bounced from a friend's place to a travel

trailer, and then a tent next to the courthouse.

The pandemic offered a brief reprieve through temporary accommodations, but lasting stability has only come with her current home.

Ontario Street has become a lifeline for Terra. It's not just about shelter, it's about community. “Living around people who get it means nobody judges you,” she says. “Sympathy can feel like pity, but empathy feels like health and if you haven't been through it, it's hard to empathize.”

With support from Connective staff, Terra dreams of rebuilding her life and possibly going back to school. “It's a lifelong fight,” she admits. “But now, with this stability, I can start to see a way forward.”

WHO TO CALL, WHEN TO CALL

Supporting Community Wellbeing in Prince George



Call **911** if you see a crime or safety risk in progress or about to be committed

Call non-emergency at **250-561-3300** if the event has already happened



Call **911** if you see someone who's having a medical emergency

Wait for an ambulance and do not move the person



Call **911** if you see a fire in progress

Call non-emergency at **250-561-7664** if you have fire safety concerns



Contact **bylaw** about property or public space concerns, graffiti, excessive noise, street obstructions, or litter

☎ **250-561-7662**

✉ **bylawstaff@princegeorge.ca**



Contact **Connective** with any program concerns (relating to residents or property issues)

✉ **info@connective.ca**