

women
of **options**

A logo for a 50th anniversary. It features a large, stylized number '50' in orange and yellow. The '0' is a circle with the word 'ANNIVERSARY' written inside it in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

An Affordable Housing Campaign
In Celebration of 50 Years of Community Impact

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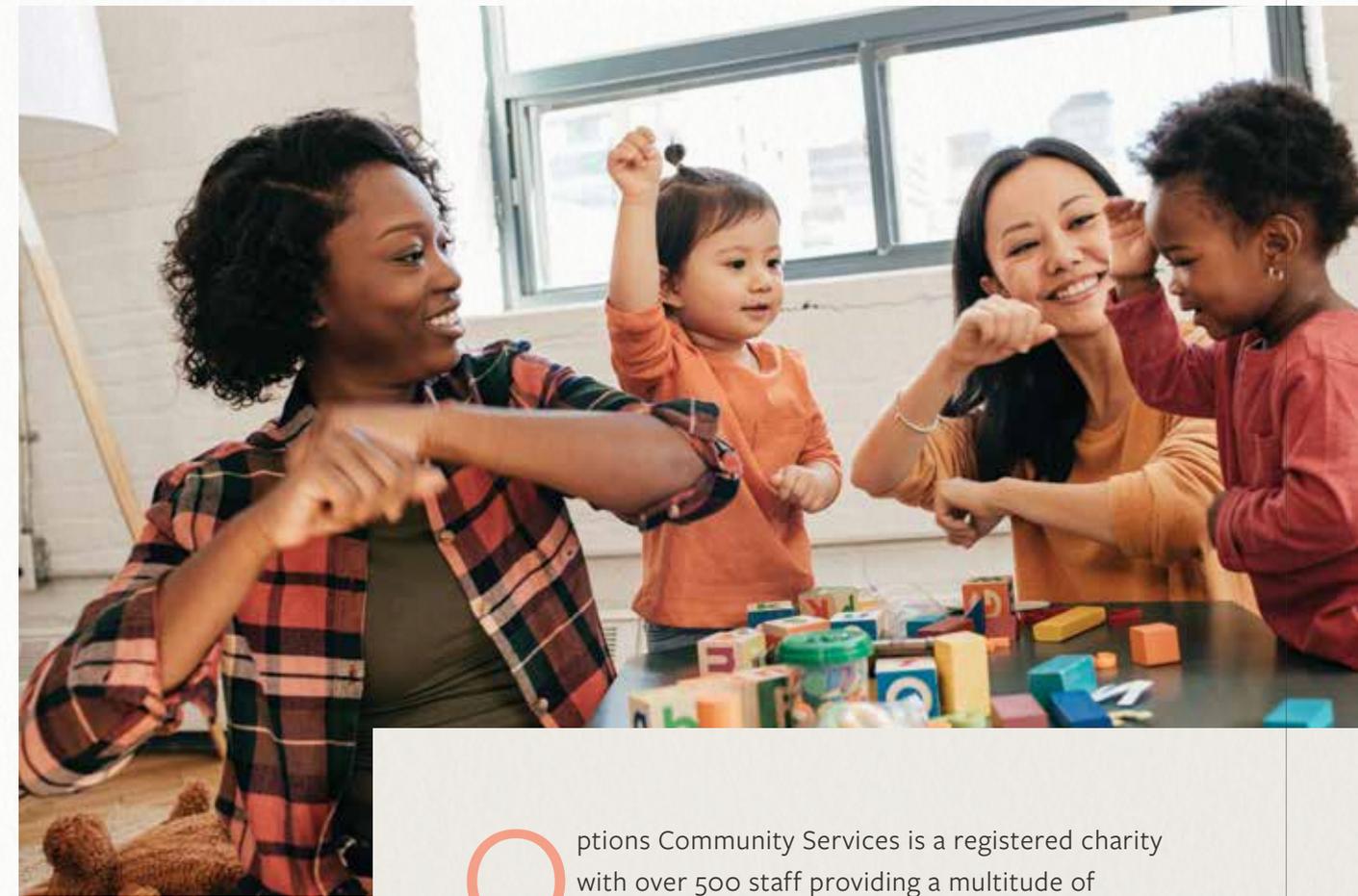
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OUR MISSION

We inspire hope and belonging for all.

OUR VISION

A healthy, caring community, where everyone thrives.



Options Community Services is a registered charity with over 500 staff providing a multitude of essential social services in Surrey, Delta, White Rock and Langley. This year marks our 50th Anniversary and the first time we have ever embarked on a capital campaign! Our organization collaborates with individuals, businesses, community organizations, groups and all levels of government to create effective, focused and responsive resources.

We provide services to Surrey and surrounding areas that run the gamut, including early childhood development, crisis support, employment opportunities and community integration for new immigrants and refugees, transition housing for women fleeing violence, support for the homeless, and affordable housing.

Options Community Services is governed by a volunteer board of directors and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

Help When You Need It Most

Removing barriers for a hopeful future

In recent years throughout Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, the need for more affordable housing has been at the forefront of media reports and has been cited as the biggest barrier to combating homelessness. South of the Fraser River this issue is close to home for Options as it affects many of our clients.

Amanda was a young teen mom in high school when she first met Tammy Dyer (Deputy Executive Director of Options Community Services). Tammy worked at the Options daycare that Amanda's mom recommended and helped her daughter get into.

"Tammy and Options were there to help me get through school," Amanda said. "Tammy would call me and make sure I got up for school every morning. She went above and beyond."

Initially, Amanda had housing through a First Nations youth program that her mother helped her find. But when she turned 16, she aged out of the program, was looking to escape an abusive relationship, and had just lost her

mother. Amanda needed a safe place to go.

"That's where Options and BC Housing stepped in. They helped me make my way to college and got housing for me and my daughter," said Amanda. "They figured out all the paperwork for me—I didn't even know what was going on, they took care of everything from the damage deposit, the furniture and all of that."

Amanda completed an associate degree and today she is a busy mom of three, working as a social media manager. Despite earning more than minimum wage, she says renting without affordable housing would be a struggle, and that's why it's so important.

People first come to Options because they have a specific need, but they quickly discover that the depth of help and services available through Options is so much more than they

could imagine or hope for. Because we have such a large portfolio, we're able to tailor our services to each person's unique needs in an ongoing capacity.

For many, Options becomes a lifeline, helping to remove multiple barriers and giving people a way out of crisis.

I was a teenage mom who needed to get her life together before she even knew how to. Finding affordable housing was really important—I could've ended up way worse without the support that I had. Life is just hard and it's nice to have that support there when you know that people care and it encourages you to do better for yourself.

AMANDA | OCS FORMER CLIENT

Building Community

As with other agencies, the pandemic has stretched and challenged the Options team, but our upcoming affordable housing project cannot wait. With a portfolio of more than 80 programs serving over 100,000 people each year, we are planning our first purpose-built, mixed income housing site in Surrey.

In addition to the growing waitlist of over 2,900 names for social housing,

more than 600 people across Surrey alone are experiencing homelessness at any given time.*

Our team at Options is grateful for the sense of community, collective good, and innovation that we've experienced during this pandemic, and is choosing resilience as we forge ahead with our plan to have shovels in the ground in 2021.

*<https://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/initiatives/2020-homeless-count>

From Our CEO

Recently, a colleague of mine shared her distress about hearing that people were being evicted from their homes right before Christmas because they could not afford to pay rent. What were these families going to do? If they could not pay their rent, they certainly couldn't find a new place and pay a damage deposit.

Sadly, homelessness is not a new issue, but the faces of those impacted have changed. According to the 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver (data taken in March pre-pandemic), Surrey had the second highest number of individuals affected by homelessness. And, for those experiencing homelessness for the first time, 43% were under the age of 25 and 45% were over the age of 55. They could be your friend, parent, sibling, grandparent or child – no one is immune to homelessness.

The absence of affordable housing is one of the biggest issues faced by the people we serve. With our deep roots in supporting our community, we've felt called to step up to help address this most critical need. Since 2018, we have been working with BC Housing and the City of Surrey to plan and develop a housing initiative at King George and 81st Avenue.

Our hope is that this capital campaign will bring many people together to bring life-changing benefits to both individuals and families, and to serve the greater good of the community at large.



I am delighted and encouraged by the participation of 50 amazing women who have volunteered to be a “voice” for our campaign, but it will take many others supporting them to see it through to success. Together we can erect the walls on this development and provide a safe haven for many people who are in need of stable affordable housing.

Please consider donating to this cause by supporting one of our 50 “Women of Options” as they each work to reach their fundraising goals.

Affordable housing gives people dignity and options they didn't have before. We are committed to building a happy, caring community where everyone thrives. We hope you are too.

Thriving together,

Christine A. Mohr

Christine Mohr, CEO & Campaign Co-Chair

50 Women of Options

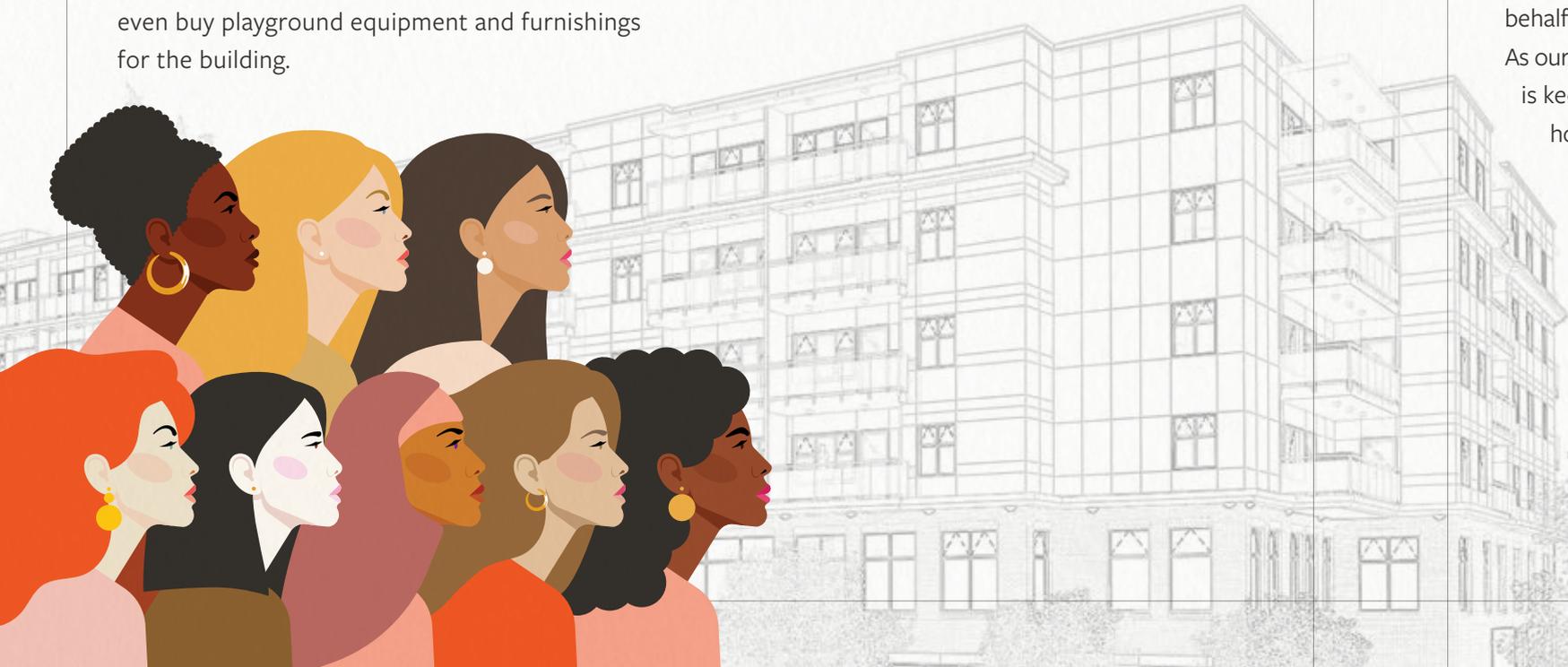
For 50 years Options has prided itself on being a humble grassroots organization. But with such a large-scale project on the horizon and no end of the pandemic in sight, we knew we had to reach out to the broader community to raise the \$1.5 million required to fund our first affordable housing project. So we designed a unique capital campaign in honour of our 50th anniversary and put out the call for help.

In a short span of time, 50 incredible women from the South Fraser community stepped up to offer their influence and connections in support of this project.

Options board members and staff have also contributed to the cause and the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society has contributed \$250,000. The donations raised by each of these 50 Women will make up the difference, and hopefully, even buy playground equipment and furnishings for the building.

Affordable housing is imperative for the success of the community. People need a safe, clean affordable place to live. How do you ever get a leg up in the world if you can't even have an affordable place to live to start? You'll always be behind.

TAMMY DYER | WOMAN OF OPTIONS



HOW IT WORKS

Each "Woman of Options" has committed to help raise \$25,000 for this project with donations through their connections, friends, families, and the South Fraser community. Your support and encouragement will help them reach their goal.



Kamaljit Lehal

Lawyer | Chair of Options Community Services Board of Directors

Kamaljit has lived in Surrey ever since her family immigrated from the UK in 1975. In her professional capacity she is a lawyer and runs her own practice with a focus on immigration law and advocacy on behalf of women fleeing violence. As our Campaign Co-Chair, Kamaljit is keenly aware of the need for home and shelter for everyone in the community.

"If you have a home then you have some sense of security and dignity, and everyone should have that."



Tammy Dyer

Deputy Executive Director | Options Community Services

Over her 34 years at Options, Tammy has seen first-hand the positive, impactful difference affordable housing can make in a person's life. At least twice a day Tammy drives past the land where the building is planned and looks forward to the day Options breaks ground.

"It has been a dream, and we've been working so hard on it for so long. When I actually see the machines in the ground working, and know it's going to happen, that will be an exciting day."



Anita Huberman

Chief Executive Officer | Surrey Board of Trade

As the Surrey Board of Trade's CEO for the past 15 years, Anita Huberman has worked with Options on diverse government advocacy issues. Issues that make a difference to city-building including: child care, workforce housing and healthcare. Anita was quick to step up to become a "Woman of Options" because she believes this project will make Surrey an opportunity city.

"We need housing options that are available to all income segments to live, learn, work and play in our own city."

JOIN US

The contributions of these 50 women, along with your partnership, will affect vital community change for years to come. Please find a complete list of our project champions and how you can support them at the end of this booklet.

Helping Families Flourish

Support for Parents and a Safe Environment for Children to Thrive



The absence of affordable housing is one of the biggest issues faced by the people we serve.

CHRISTINE MOHR
CEO, OPTIONS COMMUNITY SERVICES

Raj's Story

Raj and her son came to Canada with little more than the clothes they were wearing. Though she had a work permit, Raj's husband didn't allow her to get a job and she suffered emotional and physical abuse from her husband and in-laws.

After one particular assault, she was taken to the hospital by the RCMP and a social worker connected Raj and her son with an Options transition house, set up as a safe haven for women and children escaping abuse. At the transition home Raj received counselling, advocacy, and information of support services available to her. She was also connected with an immigration lawyer who helped her renew her visa and begin the permanent residency application process.

Raj faced a high level of risk for homelessness and an uncertain future with little to no options. It's difficult to say where Raj's journey would have led if she had been unable to find a safe transition home.



Tom's Story

When unexpected circumstances left Canadian newcomer Tom as a single parent without a place to live, he was connected with Options to help him rebuild his life. Navigating a crisis situation is difficult at the best of times, but those who are new to the country face additional barriers such as language and culture differences, and a lack of knowledge of available resources.

Tom worked with his outreach worker to find a home close to his children's school and obtain furniture and household items. Through Options, Tom and his family were able to find a home and access additional programs to help them continue to settle into their community.



Building Hope

Options Community Services believes that now is the time to take on an affordable housing project at 81st Avenue and King George Boulevard. The build will have 100 units with the majority being available well below market rental rates.

The building concept and funding model for this 100-unit complex at 8135, 8123 and 8109 King George Boulevard has been in the works since its purchase in 2015.

Over the last 5 years, we have seen a steady increase in the number of our clients whose primary barrier to succeeding is access to affordable, safe housing. We are seeing this in ALL of our programs, not just Housing related, but also Family Counselling, Employment Services, Daycare, Immigrant Services, our Fraser Health Crisis Line and more.

At Options, we've felt called to step up to help address this most critical need as we work with Habitat Housing Society, our sister charity, to plan for the project. Habitat develops and builds affordable housing complexes and will carry out the development of the site and operation of the housing units.

Of the 100 housing units spread across the top four floors of this build, 30 will be market rentals (still targeted to vulnerable populations, as not all vulnerability is financial), while the remaining 70

will be non-market rentals—designated as affordable housing, with rent starting as low as \$375 per month for a one-bedroom. **These units will be for tenants including: women fleeing violence, refugees, seniors, at-risk youth and others facing barriers in finding decent and affordable housing.**

The ground and second floors of this affordable housing build will host several community services provided by Options, such as: Early Years, special needs services for children, and mental health outreach, allowing Options to expand accessibility to



When you give a person a place to call home... the healing begins.

DILLON MCLELLAN
OCS OUTREACH PROGRAM MANAGER

our services to not only the tenants, but to the community as well.

The project received approval from Surrey City Council in July 2019, and on September 20, 2020, BC Housing announced that this affordable rental home project would be partially supported by a large capital grant from the Community Housing Fund. The project will also be partially supported by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

With occupancy slated for mid 2023, this is the agency's largest development project to date. Once it is complete, it will enhance Options' reputation as a housing developer

and allow for expansion of its community support services from that same location.

Furthermore, it is a step toward a new funding model for future agency developments. Monies raised above and beyond what is required for this build will go towards the next one, which is already in the planning stages.

BUILDING RENDERINGS:

PREVIOUS PAGE: THE SIDE ENTRANCE VIEW FROM KING GEORGE BLVD

BOTTOM LEFT: VIEW OF THE COURTYARD PATIO

RIGHT: A VIEW OF THE FRONT ENTRANCE FROM THE CORNER OF KING GEORGE BLVD AND 81ST AVENUE

BOTTOM RIGHT: A BACK ENTRANCE VIEW FROM THE LANEWAY



Strength in Numbers

We may have the best of intentions, plans, and expertise ready to go, but the truth is, without admirable and generous folks like you standing with us, it's just a dream. Will you help make this hope tangible for others like Amanda, Raj and Tom?

You too can inspire hope and belonging for all as you work with us to create a healthy, caring community, where everyone thrives.

To participate in this life-giving project, please visit womenofoptions.ca and give by clicking the donate button under one of our 50 Women of Options.

Or call our office at **604-584-5811 Ext. 11312** Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Cheques can be made out to **Options Community Services**, with **WOO** and the name of the **Woman of Options** you're supporting (if applicable) in the memo. Please mail your cheque to **Options Community Services, 9815 140th Street, Surrey B.C. V3T 4M4.**

Please give what you can. One-time donations and monthly pledges are welcome.

All gifts will be recognized unless made anonymously. Individual donors will receive a tax receipt upon donation.

Thank you for joining us in this crucial endeavour!



women of options



PRESENTED BY OUR CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS:

Kamaljit Lehal

LAWYER & FOUNDER, LEHAL LAW & CHAIR, OPTIONS COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Christine Mohr

CEO, OPTIONS COMMUNITY SERVICES



Linda Hepner

FORMER MAYOR OF SURREY



Elaine Cheung

CO-FOUNDER, HILARAPY



Kiran Dhaliwal

HR CONSULTANT, BC PUBLIC SERVICE



Gurjinder K. Bhurji

REALTOR, ROYAL LEPAGE WOLSTENCROFT REALTY & OWNER, STYLIN' CONFIDENCE SALON



Lori Quinn

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AND PHILANTHROPIST



Raj Arneja

AUTHOR, DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, NANAK FOODS



Anita Huberman

CEO, SURREY BOARD OF TRADE & HONORARY CAPTAIN OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY



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PRESIDENT, WHITE ROCK SURREY CHAPTER OF C.A.R.P. & CITY OF SURREY COUNCIL CANDIDATE



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Deborah Salh

CHAIR, SOUTH SURREY WHITE ROCK FEDERAL LIBERAL ASSOCIATION



Isabelle Hayer

MORTGAGE BROKER AND SURREY ROTARY PRESIDENT (1997-1998; 2019-2020)



Ritu Khanna

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SOUTH SURREY AND WHITE ROCK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



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OWNER, FRESH MAGAZINE & PROJECT HER



Sargy Chima

TEAM LEADER, EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CANADA



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RETIRED TEACHER & VP OPERATIONS, VISION 1 STEEL



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FORMER SURREY SCHOOL TRUSTEE, MLA, SURREY COUNCILLOR & FORMER SURREY MP



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If you have a home, then you have some sense of security and dignity, and every one should have that.

KAMALJIT LEHAL



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OWNER, LEADERS OF TOMORROW ACADEMY



Barbara McCaugherty
RBC MORTGAGE SPECIALIST



Rosemary Wallace
CITY COUNCILLOR, LANGLEY & LOCAL ARTIST



Luisa Hough
MORTGAGE PROFESSIONAL & PARTNER, XEVA MORTGAGE

How to Donate

To donate, please visit womenofoptions.ca and give by clicking the donate button under one of our 50 Women of Options.

Both one-time donations and monthly pledges are welcome.

Give Online

womenofoptions.ca

By Phone

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By Mail

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Surrey B.C. V3T 4M4.

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Together we are
Building community
Inspiring hope
One neighbour at a time



WOMENOFOPTIONS.CA

