



PRESS RELEASE



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Partnership Opens New Multicultural Family Housing in Surrey

SURREY, British Columbia, July 23, 2003 - Low- to moderate-income families now have greater access to secure affordable housing with the opening of Salamat Housing, a new development serving multicultural families in Surrey.

This project combines contributions from the federal and provincial governments, under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement.

"The Government of Canada is working in partnership with the provincial government and other groups to bring quality affordable housing to the people of British Columbia", said Hedy Fry, MP for Vancouver Centre. "Successes like Surrey's Salamat Housing are key to developing strong communities, not just here in B.C., but throughout Canada."

"A multicultural setting such as this encourages respect for and appreciation of cultural diversity", said Gulzar Cheema, Minister of State for Mental Health speaking on behalf of Housing Minister George Abbott. "Salamat Housing shows what can be achieved through partnerships that bring together multiple levels of government, the private sector and the non-profit community."

Families from diverse cultural backgrounds live in this new 34-unit townhouse development at 12689 - 72nd Avenue. Salamat Housing includes two, three and four-bedroom units in several buildings, and is located in a residential neighbourhood, close to transit, schools and shopping and across the street from Kwantlen College.

"The Persian word 'Salam' means 'peaceful greetings' and 'Salamat' means safe", said John Halani, Chair of the Salamat Housing Society. "We chose this name because we want to promote peace and ensure people feel safe living in this building and this community. We are very grateful for the federal and provincial governments' assistance in building the development."

Under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement, the Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, will contribute \$88.7 million over the next five years towards affordable housing in this province.

The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide \$29.7 million annually to subsidize the costs of units built under this agreement as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for vulnerable British Columbians.

This news release is available at www.bchousing.org.

Contact:

Gillian Day
Communications Specialist

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BC Housing
604 439-4755

John Halani
Chair
Salamat Operations Society
604 687-6631

Lorraine Verokosky
CMHC
604 737-4164

Backgrounder

Salamat Housing Society was established in 1991 to create a new housing development for families. The society now manages Salamat Housing and meets regularly with tenants to discuss concerns and consult on policy development.

Development Facts

Location: 12689 - 72nd Avenue, Surrey

Number of units: 34

Families from diverse cultural backgrounds live in this 34-unit townhouse development. Salamat Housing includes two, three and four-bedroom units in several buildings, and is located in a residential neighbourhood, close to transit, schools and shopping, across the street from Kwantlen College.

Society volunteers help tenants and new immigrants access language courses and other education, obtain employment, and drive people to see health professionals and to religious services.

Partnership contributions

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) contributed \$510,000 toward capital costs.

The provincial government, through BC Housing, is providing \$4.2 million in operating subsidies to the society over the next 35 years.