



**PRESS RELEASE**



*Canadian Mortgage News - National Archive 2003*

## **New Subsidized Housing for At-Risk Homeless**

**NEW WESTMINSTER, British Columbia, October 15, 2003** — A heritage building in the heart of New Westminister has been given new life as a housing development for individuals at risk of homelessness. The Cliff Block building at Sixth St. and Clarkson has been restored to provide 23 units of subsidized housing and support services for some of the city's most marginalized and vulnerable citizens.

Cliff Block combines contributions from the federal and provincial governments, under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement and the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative, with financial support from Fraser Health, the City of New Westminister and Lookout Emergency Aid Society.

"This project is a prime example of the Government of Canada working in partnership with the province, the City of New Westminister and a community-based group to bring quality transitional housing to the people of British Columbia," said Stephen Owen, Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Indian Affairs and Northern Development), on behalf of the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Federal Coordinator on Homelessness. "Successes like the Cliff Block building are key in developing strong communities, not just here in British Columbia, but throughout the country."

"We are committed to supporting strong and healthy communities," said Joyce Murray, MLA for New Westminister, on behalf of George Abbott, Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. "For some people, the affordable apartments and support services provided by Cliff Block mean the difference between being homeless, and having stable housing to help them maintain their independence and improve their quality of life."

Operated by Lookout Emergency Aid Society, the 23-unit development at 606 Clarkson St. includes 16 sleeping rooms (transitional) and 7 studio units (permanent). On-site staff provide residents with services to support their transition to a more stable and healthy lifestyle. The Cliff Block building also includes office space for Lookout's community outreach program, which helps ensure those in need have access to shelter, food and health treatment.

"The Cliff Block building gives local men and women with a history of homelessness a welcoming home, a place to regain their health where they have support to work towards their goals," said Karen O'Shannacery, Executive Director, Lookout Emergency Aid Society. "We are thankful to our funding and service partners, and are pleased to be able to offer this housing and support to residents who otherwise may have been forced to leave their home community."

"Cliff Block really makes a difference in the lives of those requiring housing and mental health supports," said Barry Forbes, Chair, Fraser Health Authority Board. "We look forward to building future partnerships as we continue to work towards meeting these growing needs in the communities we serve."

"A broad range of housing options is vital to creating a healthy community," said Wayne Wright, mayor of New Westminister. "We are pleased to support Lookout Emergency Aid Society in its excellent work in providing additional affordable housing and a supportive environment to help people change their lives for the better."

## Canadian Mortgage News - New Subsidized Housing for At-Risk Homeless

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 year, the provincial government will contribute \$153.3 million in funding to subsidized housing. Since June 2001, the government has committed funding for construction of about 3,400 housing units across B.C. To date, about 2,850 of these units have been completed, and about 550 units are currently under development.

Through the National Homelessness Initiative, the Government of Canada has also contributed more than \$51 million since 2000 as well as committed another \$44 million over the next three years to assist communities to implement their plans to reduce and prevent homelessness. Funding for this Initiative is provided for in the February 2003 federal Budget.

This news release is available at [www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org) online.

### **Contact:**

Rhonda Chaput  
Communications Specialist  
BC Housing  
604 439-4734

Lorraine Verokosky  
CMHC  
604 737-4164

Karen O'Shannacery  
Executive Director  
Lookout Emergency Aid Society  
604 255-0340

Jane Hopkins  
HRDC  
Homelessness Initiative  
604 666-3141

### **Look Out Emergency Aid Society**

Lookout Emergency Aid Society was established in 1971 to deliver 24-hour, seven-day-a-week service for adults who are destitute or require assistance. This includes affordable accommodation, outreach programs, crisis counselling and community referral services. The Society operates three emergency shelters, four supportive and transitional housing developments, and two permanent housing residences.

### **Housing Development Facts**

Cliff Block Building  
606 Clarkson Street, New Westminster

Number of Units: 23

## Canadian Mortgage News - New Subsidized Housing for At-Risk Homeless

People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness have access to transitional housing and support services.

### **Partnership Contributions**

The federal government, through the National Homelessness Initiative, provided \$1,244,000 to the development. As well, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation contributed \$390,000 toward capital costs under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement and provided a loan of \$318,000 under the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program.

The provincial government, through BC Housing, is providing close to \$4 million in operating subsidies to the society over the next 35 years. In addition, BC Housing contributed two grants totalling \$239,000 to the society.

Fraser Health is providing \$257,000 annually in operating funds.

The City of New Westminster contributed \$105,750 toward capital costs.

### **Media Contact:**

Rhonda Chaput  
Communications Specialist  
BC Housing  
604 439-4734

Lorraine Verokosky  
CMHC  
604 737-4164

Karen O'Shannacery  
Executive Director  
Lookout Emergency Aid Society  
604 255-0340

Jane Hopkins  
HRDC  
Homelessness Initiative  
604 666-3141