



PRESS RELEASE



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Canada-B.C. Affordable Housing Agreement — Phase II

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, December 3, 2004 — The Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia are allocating \$84 million towards transitional housing and a range of supports to help communities tackle the challenges of homelessness, mental illness and drug addiction.

Premier Gordon Campbell and the Honourable David Emerson, Minister of Industry, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Housing and Labour, announced the second phase of the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Program Agreement. They also announced the first four developments under the new agreement will be in Vancouver, Surrey and Nanaimo.

The new agreement will see each level of government contribute about \$42 million for developments that will provide a continuum of affordable housing with support services to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, people with mental illnesses and physical disabilities, those with drug and alcohol addictions, Aboriginal peoples, youth, and women with children fleeing abusive relationships. Support services include counselling, drug and alcohol treatment, and job training that will help people break out of the cycle of poverty and despair.

"We feel extremely passionate about the hard work we are doing with our partner, and these new funds will help to address the specific housing needs of some of the most disadvantaged residents of B.C.," said Minister Emerson. "B.C. is the second province to access this additional federal funding and is to be commended for already identifying projects that can benefit from our support."

"All of us, in every community and at every level of government, want to ensure that those in need have the housing and support they require to help them move toward a life of self-reliance, independence and opportunity," said Campbell. "Safe and affordable housing is a critical step in helping people at risk of homelessness find some stability so they can access employment assistance, health care and mental health and addictions services."

The first four developments in Vancouver, Surrey and Nanaimo are:

- The Phoenix Alcohol and Drug Recovery and Education Society in Surrey, a 62-unit multi-service development for adults recovering from drug and alcohol addictions.
- The New Hope Centre in Nanaimo will see the addition of 21 units of transitional housing to a planned shelter to create a multi-service development.
- 55 East Hastings Street in Vancouver will see the development of 98-units of transitional and supportive housing for singles facing multiple challenges.
- Woodward's in Vancouver will see an additional 100 units of housing for people at risk of homelessness, with a focus on aboriginals, bringing the total commitment to 200 units.

Today's announcement followed a meeting of the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness that is working to establish the framework for an integrated program to tackle the challenges of mental illness, homelessness and addictions in B.C.

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communities. Additional projects will be identified in partnership with communities and the task force. Proposals that are developed by the task force may be eligible for funds through the Canada - B.C. Affordable Housing Program Agreement.

The announcement brings the total investment by the Government of Canada to \$130.4 million in funding for B.C. residents under the Canada - British Columbia Affordable Housing Program Agreement. This investment will be matched by contributions from British Columbia.

The provincial funding for the program is in addition to the \$154 million a year that the provincial government provides for social housing - the highest amount ever provided in B.C. The Province has also provided an additional \$5 million in provincial funding for increased emergency shelter support across the province. This includes 153 additional year-round emergency shelter beds, and 198 additional cold/wet weather shelter beds. There is also a one-month extension of all cold/wet weather beds province-wide to April 30, 2005.

The agreement is another step in the Province's commitment to help communities become safer and more supportive. The Province last month returned 100 per cent of traffic fine revenue back to communities to support them to make their streets, parks and neighbourhoods safer.

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Backgrounder

Canada - B.C. Affordable Housing Agreement

First Phase

The Governments of Canada and British Columbia signed an Affordable Housing Program Agreement on Dec. 13, 2001 — the first phase provided for \$88.7 million in federal funding. The province will provide \$29.7 million annually to subsidize the costs of units built under the first phase of the agreement.

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This funding is creating about 3,900 units under the Provincial Housing Program (PHP), the Independent Living British Columbia (ILBC) program, and the Community Partnership Initiatives (CPI) funding stream.

Second Phase

As part of the second phase, the following initiatives were announced today:

Phoenix Alcohol and Drug Recovery and Education Society — Surrey Funding breakdown:

- Federal capital funding — \$1,500,000
- Provincial grant — \$2,900,000

This is a 62-unit, multi-service development for adults recovering from drug and alcohol addictions. It will bring addiction services, transitional housing and education and employment services under one roof. The community has expressed an urgent need to address addiction issues.

Estimated completion date: December, 2005.

New Hope Centre — Nanaimo Funding breakdown:

- Federal capital funding — \$500,000
- Provincial grant — \$900,000

The addition of 21 units of transitional housing to this planned shelter, to create a multi-service development. Service providers in Nanaimo agree the new shelter is the most critical piece in providing services to the city's homeless. The transitional housing will provide much-needed additional supports.

Estimated completion date: January, 2006.

55 East Hasting St. — Vancouver Funding breakdown:

- Federal capital funding — \$6,400,000
- Provincial capital funding — \$6,400,000

This is a 98-unit development with transitional and supportive housing for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. There are opportunities to link this development with existing services assisting the homeless population. The City of Vancouver will provide the land, valued at \$1.18 million, for a nominal rent to a non-profit housing provider.

Estimated completion date: June, 2007

Woodward's — Vancouver Funding breakdown:

- Federal capital funding — \$13,500,000
- Provincial subsidy for \$13,500,000 in capital

This is an additional 100 units, following the previous commitment of 100 units, for the former Woodward's department store's redevelopment proposal, for a total of 200 units. These additional units will be targeted for those at risk of homelessness.

Estimated completion date: April, 2007.



Left to right - The Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier of British Columbia, and the Honourable David Emerson, Minister of Industry, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing.