



PRESS RELEASE



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New Centre Brings Hope to Nanaimo's Homeless

NANAIMO, British Columbia, April 11, 2006 — A new \$4.2 million housing development aimed at helping Nanaimo's homeless and families in crisis is officially underway following a celebration-of-construction ceremony held today with federal, provincial and local representatives.

The Salvation Army New Hope Centre in Nanaimo is one of 12 transitional housing developments being built across the province as a result of the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions. Other major partners in the project include the Government of Canada through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Vancouver Island Health Authority, the Nanaimo Working Group on Homelessness and The Salvation Army.

"Our government is committed to working with our partners to create facilities like the Salvation Army New Hope Centre to give people the support they need to make the transition towards long-term permanent housing," said the Honourable Diane Finley, federal Minister of Human Resources and Social Development.

B.C.'s Housing Minister Rich Coleman said that as part of the project the Province would fund counselling services and employment programs for those staying at the centre. "This facility will provide those in need with tools, skills and support to improve their lives and regain their independence," said Coleman.

The new centre, operated by the Salvation Army Nanaimo Ministry, will house a total of 45 beds, 29 of which can be used as emergency crisis or shelter beds along with 16 self-contained studio units for longer-term transition and supportive housing.

"By combining housing with support services, The Salvation Army New Hope Centre demonstrates how various levels of government and the non-profit and private sectors can join together to build safe, healthy communities," said Nanaimo Mayor Gary Korpan.

"The Vancouver Island Health Authority funding for residential care and assisted living workers will provide 24 hour, 7 day a week coverage so clients will have the necessary supervision and support at all times," said Marg Fraser, Manager, Mental Health and Addictions Services — Nanaimo, adding that a supportive drop-in centre will provide a central location with coordinated services to this underserved population.

"It will offer a continuum of housing arrangements for those in transition from homelessness to a more stable living situation," said Lieutenant-Colonel Donald J. Copple, Divisional Commander, The Salvation Army British Columbia.

"This funding is going a long way to help reduce homelessness in Nanaimo," said John Horn, Chair of Nanaimo's Working Group on Homelessness Issues. "It has allowed the stakeholders and partners in this process to make significant progress on our community plan, and provides us with the kind of social infrastructure that will have an impact for years to come."

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The Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, will contribute \$130 million towards affordable housing in this province. Since 1999, the National Homelessness Initiative has also committed more than \$89 million to projects targeting issues of homelessness in BC. The provincial government, through the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, will provide \$34 million annually to subsidize the cost of units built under this agreement, as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for British Columbians.

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Backgrounder

The Salvation Army New Hope Centre

The New Hope Centre, located in downtown Nanaimo, will house 45 beds including six crisis beds on the ground floor and eight self-contained studio units for transition and supportive housing on each of the third and fourth floors.

The second floor will contain 23 specialized beds of which 16 are men's shelter beds in four dormitory rooms, five are designated as women's shelter beds in one dormitory room with three-piece washroom, and two beds which can be used as either crisis or shelter beds. The wood-framed four-storey building is equipped with an elevator, and is adjacent to a recently renovated Community and Family Services Centre.

The capital cost of the development is \$4.2 million, with \$1.7 million committed to the development under the Canada/British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement:

- \$800,000 grant from the federal government, through CMHC, and
- \$900,000 grant from the Province, through BC Housing.
- BC Housing, through the Province of BC, is also providing a \$200,000 grant.
- The Salvation Army is providing \$375,811 in cash equity, and the land, valued at \$1,089,700.00.
- The value of the land includes \$460,000 in equity from upgrades funded by the federal government through the National Homelessness Initiative.
- The Government of Canada, through the National Homelessness Initiative, is also providing \$300,000 towards construction of the facility.
- The City of Nanaimo is providing \$300,000 in land equity and development cost charge (DCC) forgiveness and reduction of levies totalling \$120,518.
- The Real Estate Foundation is providing a \$50,000 grant.

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The Vancouver Island Health Authority is providing the following:

- \$135,270 ongoing annual operating funding for the HOME program;
- \$354,730 ongoing annual operating funding for the Housing Support Program

The Salvation Army is the largest non-governmental social service agency in the province. The B.C. division's operating budget is \$75 million.

Visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca for online information and services.