



PRESS RELEASE



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Integrated Addiction Recovery Centre Opens in Surrey

SURREY, British Columbia, April 20, 2007 — Federal, provincial and community partners gathered today to celebrate the official opening of the Phoenix Centre, a \$10.9 million integrated addiction services centre offering a continuum of supports for individuals recovering from addictions and mental illness.

“The Phoenix Centre is a fine example of what can be accomplished when all levels of government and the non-profit and private sectors commit to improving the lives of those dealing with homelessness, addictions or mental illness,” said Premier Gordon Campbell. “These are challenges that need to be met with a concerted effort by all of us as partners, and we’re doing that in British Columbia (BC) to ensure that those most in need of help find the support they need to build a better future.”

“Canada’s New Government is taking action to prevent and reduce homelessness,” said MP Nina Grewal. “That’s why we introduced the new Homelessness Partnering Strategy and why we have invested \$5.55 million in the Phoenix Centre to provide support for people facing challenging times and help them to get back on their feet.”

The Phoenix Centre is the first development of its kind in BC to combine clinical addiction services with transitional housing, employment and education services. The Centre will provide 28 early stabilization addiction services beds and 36 transitional housing units. The combination of care levels and services provided ensures residents will have support in a stable environment at all stages of their treatment and recovery.

“Surrey’s Crime Reduction Strategy places a great deal of emphasis on drug rehabilitation as a cornerstone of addressing the root causes of crime. The Phoenix Centre will make an enormous contribution towards providing a full range of addiction treatment services and housing in this community and will contribute towards the building of a safe and healthy community for our citizens,” said City of Surrey Mayor, Dianne Watts.

The non-profit Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education Society will operate the centre. The society uses the sustainable livelihoods framework to help people affected by substance misuse participate productively in the community and the economy. The society works in partnership with government, educational institutions, community service organizations, financial institutions and business to create a healthy, safe and vibrant community.

“The development of the Phoenix Centre represents the evolution of new levels of partnership, community leadership and dialogue in our community to broaden ownership of the issues of addiction and homelessness,” said Roy Dickey, President of the Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education Society. “The Phoenix Centre represents a significant transformation in how we think about the complex issues surrounding homelessness and addiction.”

In 2004, Vancity provided a \$1 million award to the Phoenix Centre. “The Vancity Award was created to support the social, environmental and economic well-being of the communities we serve,” said Elain Duvall, Chair of the Board for Vancity. “The innovative approach to providing housing integrated with employment and training opportunities will make a difference in the lives of many.”

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The Province has committed to creating 2,287 new housing units under the Provincial Homelessness Initiative. The Initiative aims to break the cycle of homelessness by integrating support services with housing so people may move beyond temporary shelter to more secure housing, gain greater self-reliance, and achieve appropriate employment.

Canada's New Government announced the new Homelessness Partnering Strategy in December 2006. The strategy began on April 1, 2007 and is providing \$270 million over two years to help communities across Canada combat homelessness more effectively. The Strategy focuses on a housing-first approach to homelessness, recognizing that housing stability is essential to self-sufficiency and full participation in Canadian society. With its clear goals of improved partnerships, enhanced sustainability and tangible results, the new strategy will provide concrete, meaningful and lasting results for Canadians in need.

For more information on the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, visit www.homelessness.gc.ca.

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Backgrounder

The Phoenix Centre

The Phoenix Centre follows an addiction services model that uses a collaborative community, social and economic development approach to homelessness and addiction in Surrey.

This approach helps people dealing with substance misuse and homelessness to have easy access to addiction services, safe housing and the supports they require to build the skills, resiliency and self-sufficiency necessary for a successful participation in the community and the economy.

The Phoenix Centre, a 46,000-sq. ft. building, houses: 28 early stabilization addiction services beds and 36 units of transitional housing; the Phoenix Kwantlen Learning Centre in partnership with Kwantlen University College; and the Employment and Social Enterprise Centre which provides a specialized access to employment program funded by Service Canada.

An on-site community centre provides aftercare support to residents completing Phoenix Centre programs. It includes a fitness centre, games room, workshop and classroom areas that help create a positive and supportive social network and healthy leisure and recreational activities.

Construction was completed in February 2007, and the first residents were welcomed to the Centre on March 6, 2007.

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Partners and Funding:

Capital cost of this project is \$10.7 million, including the following contributions:

- \$5.55 million from the federal government (\$3,725,825 through Human Resources and Social Development Canada, \$1.55 million through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and \$270,000 through Western Economic Diversification.)
- \$2.48 million from the Province of British Columbia (BC).
- \$1.05 million from Vancity (\$1 million through the Vancity Award initiative and \$50 000 from a strategic investment grant).
- The following groups have each contributed \$100,000 or more: Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia (\$122,500), and Vancouver Foundation (\$100,000).
- The following groups have each contributed \$10,000 or more: Woodward's Foundation (\$54,000), Peace Arch Hospital (\$50,000), the City of Surrey (\$20,000), Lark Construction (\$20,000), Guildford Rotary (\$10,000), Coast Capital Savings (\$10,000), and a private donation (\$10,000).
- The Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education Society is the registered owner of the land, purchased in June 2002 with the assistance of federal homelessness funding. The society has also contributed \$68,927 to the project, and will cover the existing mortgage of \$475,000.

Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education Society

The Society has worked to encourage and assist British Columbians in achieving personal, family and community health, free from substance misuse, since 1989.

The Society's vision of services is guided by a whole person/whole system perspective on health and well-being that integrates health, social and economic perspectives on the issues of addiction and homelessness. The Society follows a development model that sees individuals, communities, neighbourhoods and governments, business and other sectors devising strategies and goals to realize the vision of healthy communities.