



PRESS RELEASE



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87 Units to Help Homeless Being Built Downtown

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, May 18, 2007 — Construction has begun on an 87-unit, \$15.5 million supportive housing development that will help people at risk of homelessness and those recovering from alcohol and drug dependencies.

“Canada's New Government is working to ensure funding is available for projects like this one in Vancouver, that address the challenges of homelessness in communities across the country,” said Ed Fast, Member of Parliament for Abbotsford, on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. “This project will make an important difference in the lives of individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.”

The 10-storey building, being built on Richards Street in Vancouver's Downtown South, is one of the three new supportive housing projects on city-owned sites announced April 3 by Premier Gordon Campbell and the first of those projects to break ground. The project is part of the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, which 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.

“Kindred Place will provide professional support services and housing for people at risk,” said Claude Richmond, Minister of Employment and Income Assistance. “We know that combining long-term support with stable housing results in highly effective treatment for individuals who want to overcome their addictions.” Richmond went on to say that the province also funds many other services, including outreach and prevention programs.

“The Downtown South has lost significant numbers of single-room occupancy (SRO) units in the last decade. Providing replacement housing and alcohol- and drug-free housing for lower-income people leaving detox programs is crucial,” said Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan. “The City of Vancouver is proud to be a partner in helping fill this vital need in our city.”

Vancouver Coastal Health will provide support services for 30 alcohol and drug-free units. Staff will assist tenants to enhance and maintain independent-living skills, connect with community resources and maintain treatment services.

“Adding another 30 units to our expanding range of alcohol- and drug-free housing options will go a long way towards helping people recovering from addictions,” said Ida Goodreau, President and Chief Executive Officer, Vancouver Coastal Health. “Partnerships between housing and health providers are crucial for creating the kind of supportive environment that enables people to focus on their recovery and move on with their lives.”

More Than a Roof Mennonite Housing Society, a housing provider, advocate and resource group for people affected by low incomes, will manage kindred Place and housing needs. They seek to bring assistance, hope and meaning to these people's lives through the provision of secure affordable housing. The society has a successful track record of providing housing for those in severe need since 1984.

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“We believe safe, affordable housing is a key factor in bringing stability, security and a better quality of life to people living in vulnerable circumstances,” said Lorne Epp, Executive Director of More Than a Roof. “Building of relationships, developing a sense of belonging to a supportive community are new opportunities for homeless individuals. This development offers our future tenants hope for a personal comeback, and a sense of purpose for the future.”

The Provincial Homelessness Initiative is an integral part of the provincial housing strategy, Housing Matters BC. The strategy includes a commitment to build new supportive housing units as a continuation of the ongoing work of the Premier’s Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions. The Province has committed to creating 2,287 new housing units under the Provincial Homelessness Initiative. The Province’s budget for shelters and affordable housing is \$328 million — nearly triple what it was in 2001.

The Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, will contribute more than \$130 million by 2010 towards affordable housing in this province. The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide a minimum of \$34 million annually to subsidize the cost of units built under the Canada – BC Affordable Housing Agreement, as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for British Columbians in greatest need.

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[See related speech](#)

Backgrounder

Kindred Place Vancouver

Kindred Place, 1321 Richards Street in Vancouver, will provide 87 units of supportive housing for low-income singles. Thirty units are specifically for people recovering from addictions.

Tenants will have access to life-skills training, support groups and workshops on budgeting, conflict resolution and vocational options.

The ten-storey building will contain 320-square-foot studio suites and sufficient amenity space to provide the support services and programs necessary to assist the tenants in developing their independence and self-sufficiency.

Vancouver Coastal Health will provide housing support services for the 30 alcohol and drug-free units, including assisting tenants to enhance and maintain independent living skills, connect with community resources and maintain treatment services.

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Partner Contributions

Capital cost of this project is \$15,494,933

- The Government of Canada, through CMHC, is providing a one-time grant of \$1,287,500 through the Canada – BC Affordable Housing Program Agreement.
- The Province is providing \$4,787,500.
- The City of Vancouver is providing \$3,119,933, plus the land, valued at \$4,000,000.
- The Vancouver Agreement, an urban development initiative of the governments of Canada, British Columbia and Vancouver, is providing \$2,725,000.
- Vancouver Coastal Health is providing a \$2,100,000 in capital funding, and staffing for support of the 30 alcohol- and drug-free units.