



PRESS RELEASE



Canadian Mortgage News - National Archive 2007

30 Supportive Housing Units to Help Homeless in Kelowna

KELOWNA, British Columbia, May 24, 2007 — Construction will begin on Cardington Apartments, a new 30-unit, \$5.5 million supportive housing development for homeless adults with mental health and addictions issues, following an official groundbreaking ceremony today.

“Canada’s New Government understands the special needs of individuals who are struggling with mental health and addiction issues and the challenges of homelessness in communities across the country,” said Ron Cannan, Member of Parliament for Kelowna – Lake Country on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. “That’s why we’re working to ensure funding is available for projects like this one, here in Kelowna, so that safe, quality and supportive housing is available for those who need it most.”

The project is part of the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, which aims to break the cycle of homelessness by integrating support services with housing to help people move beyond temporary shelter to more secure housing, greater self-reliance, and appropriate employment. The four-storey building on St. Paul Street is expected to be occupied by May 2008.

“Cardington Apartments will make a real difference, both for the people who call it home and for the community as a whole, by providing stable housing and support to people battling addictions and mental illness,” said Al Horning, MLA for Kelowna – Lake Country. “Facilities like this are possible because of innovative partnerships between the Province, the federal government, non-profit organizations and local governments.”

“With more than 400 people in Kelowna living on the street or in a shelter, providing supportive housing is vital,” said Kelowna Mayor Sharon Shepherd. “The City of Kelowna is proud to support this initiative to help break the cycle of homelessness in our city.”

Interior Health will provide support services for the 30 units. Staff will assist tenants in developing independent-living skills, connecting with community resources and maintaining treatment services.

“Partnerships between housing and health providers are crucial for creating a supportive environment,” said Alan Dolman, Board Chair for Interior Health. “Interior Health will provide the health care component of this important partnership so that people with mental health and addictions issues are able to focus on their recovery and move forward with their lives.”

Cardington Apartments will be managed by the John Howard Society of Central and South Okanagan. The mission of the John Howard Society is to understand and respond to social and health-related problems, with a focus on criminal justice.

“We believe affordable, supportive housing is vital to providing stability, security and a better quality of life to people living in vulnerable circumstances,” said Shelley Cook, Executive Director of the John Howard Society. “Building

Canadian Mortgage News - 30 Supportive Housing Units to Help Homeless in Kelowna

relationships and developing a sense of belonging to a supportive community are new opportunities for homeless individuals. This development offers 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. This strategy includes a commitment from the Premier’s Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions to build new supportive housing units. To date, 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.

Contact:

Candace McGuire
BC Housing
Telephone: 604-439-4670
Cellular: 604-805-9623

Shelley Cook
Executive Director
John Howard Society
250-763-1331

Megan Shaw
CMHC
604-737-4032

Interior Health
Cathy Renkas
Telephone: 862-8394
Cellular: 862-7228

Backgrounder

Cardington Apartments

The John Howard Society Cardington Apartments, 1436 St. Paul Street in Kelowna, will provide 30 units of supportive housing for adults who are homeless and addressing addictions and mental health issues.

The four-storey building will contain approximately 300-square-foot studio suites and additional space to provide support services and programs to assist tenants in achieving independence and self-sufficiency.

Interior Health will provide housing support services for tenants, including assisting individuals to develop independent living skills, connect with community resources, and successfully complete treatment programs. Tenants will also have access to treatment services and on-site staff.

Partner Contributions

The preliminary capital budget is approximately \$5.5 million.

- The Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, will provide a one-time grant of \$2.25 million under the Canada – BC Affordable Housing Agreement.
- The Province will provide an operating subsidy of approximately \$225,000 annually for 35 years. The subsidy will offset the difference between what the tenant pays and what it costs to administer and maintain the building, including the principal and interest on the mortgage.
- The City of Kelowna will provide the land (valued at \$465,000 in 2005) for a nominal fee on a 60-year lease.

Canadian Mortgage News - 30 Supportive Housing Units to Help Homeless in Kelowna

- Interior Health will provide funding for support services up to approximately \$500,000 annually.
- John Howard Society will provide cash equity of \$165,000.