



Housing project a leap of faith

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Tim Dickau, pastor, Grandview Calvary Baptist Church, in front of the future Co:Here housing project, with Jennifer Crolow, Salsbury Community Society (operator) and Joyce Eng, Co:Here Foundation.



For Pastor Tim Dickau, the idea of his small congregation at Grandview Calvary Baptist Church taking on a \$10 million project to build housing for the homeless doesn't seem so astounding. After all, the church has a long history of taking in the homeless, refugees and those with addictions. In fact, the church has owned two homes adjacent to the church for decades which have seen many vulnerable people come and go.

Over the past 23 years, more than 100 individuals have lived in those homes, according to Pastor Tim. Some have stayed a few short weeks, while others have stayed for years.

The four-storey building, Co:Here (short for Community Here), to be located at the corner of East 1st and Victoria Drive, a stone's throw from the church, is just a bigger physical manifestation of the church's values of creating communities based on principles of simplicity, respect, empowerment and sustainability.

Twenty residents, who already live in the community, and are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, will co-exist with six

residents, who will support them with day-to-day living needs, in exchange for lower rent. The hope is that the residents and co-residents will create a community that is mutually enriching and transformative.

"My hope is that there will be no 'we' or 'them', because as fellow human beings we all walk beside each other," says Pastor Tim. "It's about people finding connections, becoming friends, and building a life together."

He also hopes the project will be a call to action for other faith-based groups that they can contribute in a meaningful way to addressing issues of homelessness, loneliness and isolation, and provide an option for those who want to live their lives in a more thoughtful and connected way.

The entire physical space has been created to promote a sense of community, while also honouring the need for residents to have solitude. Input was sought from homeless individuals in the community on what was important for them in a home. As a result, the building is a wonderful blend of honouring the

privacy of the individual, while tackling the need for social connection through the artful design of communal spaces.

Each floor will have individual apartments with a shared space containing a small common area, balcony and laundry. A larger communal area on the first floor has a kitchen and living room/dining room for all residents to share, and outdoor community space to grow a garden.

Streetohome Foundation has committed to raising \$520,000 for the project. "Our mandate is to support innovative projects, such as Co:Here Housing, which are transformative for individuals, as well as the neighbourhood, and inspirational for other community groups wanting to address the homeless issue," says Rob Turnbull, President and CEO, Streetohome Foundation.

The building requires no ongoing charitable contributions or government support for operations because rents from co-residents will reduce the annual operating and staffing costs of the project.

Read about the vision for Co:Here on page 2.

One-on-one with Joanne Gassman

Corporate Director, Streethome Board



The Board of Streethome Foundation represents a mix of community leaders who come from the public, private and non-profit sectors. Joanne Gassman is the newest Streethome Board Member,

having joined the Board in September of this year. For a complete list of Board Members, please visit: streethome.org/about-streethome/board

What attracted you to the STH Board?

When I first heard about STH in 2008, the concept really resonated with me. The model made so much sense – the strength of collaborating with community partners is so much stronger than working in silos. I feel privileged to be part of dynamic group of individuals from varying backgrounds working together on a complex social issue.

Where do you think STH will have the most impact this coming year?

People need a home and people need a job, the two are inextricably linked, so I am energized about the direction STH is exploring around employment. We have a wonderful opportunity to apply what we have learned from housing,

and how we have collaborated with community partners, to use the same model for jobs. Adding more and more housing is not sustainable.

What would people be surprised to learn about you?

Gosh... this is a hard one! I am pretty much an open book and allow myself to be vulnerable. Even though I was in banking for 39 years – I am not a numbers person! I would much rather spend time with people than with financial statements!

If you could go back and give your 20-year-old self one piece of advice what would it be?

Get a good coach and continually seek feedback. It is always great to receive kudos for what you do well, but the greatest growth comes from areas of opportunity for improvement.

What is the last book you read and what did you learn /take away from it?

The Blue Sweater by Jacqueline Novogratz, founder and CEO of Acumen Fund, a non-profit venture capital firm for the poor, that invests in sustainable enterprises. A fabulous book which demonstrates how providing individuals with a hand-up is so much more effective rather than hand-outs and the need to really think about how NGO's operate in order to be truly effective and sustainable; makes me think of STH!

What gets you up in the morning and what keeps you up at night?

I am a morning person, so by the evening I am thoroughly tired and sleep well! I love being up at daybreak, listening to the birds early in the morning. We recently added a small greenhouse and I love having my first cup of coffee there and thinking about the day ahead.

Co:Here Housing continued from cover

Artist's rendering of what the new building will look like at East 1st Avenue and Victoria.



If you'd like to learn more about Streethome funded projects, we invite you to contact Tracey Harvey, Administration and Donor Manager, at 604.629.2711 ext 101 or traceyh@streethome.org

- 4 storey complex to be built near popular Commercial Drive neighbourhood
- 26 self-contained units; 18 studios; 4 one-bedroom and 4 two-bedroom units
- Built on three city lots donated by the Grandview Calvary Baptist Church
- 2335 square feet of community space (kitchen, living room, dining room, and meditation and quiet room)
- Outdoor space for urban agriculture
- On-site community support worker
- Salsbury Community Society, which has extensive experience in operating community houses, will operate the building
- Co:Here Foundation, the fundraising partner, has raised \$8 million for the building. Streethome has committed to raising an additional \$520,000 for the project
- Partnership with JustWork, an agency specializing in finding meaningful, supportive work for people with employment barriers.

A Message from Rob Turnbull

A home for everyone



Streetohome staff: Tracey Harvey, Rob Turnbull and Papinder Rehncy

The end of the year is a good time to take stock of successes and challenges, and look forward to what the New Year has in store.

Indeed, 2014 has been an exceptionally busy year, with the completion of a number of projects including: 1134 Burrard (141 homes); 675 East Broadway (99 homes); and 111 Princess (139 homes); 101 East Cordova (8 homes) and 951 Boundary Road (56 homes). That's an increase of 443 new housing units for those who are homeless.

As tenants begin to move in now and into the early part of 2015, the hallways, apartments and common living spaces will be transformed into homes; warm, safe places where individuals can sleep, have a meal, and access supports to help them remain housed.

We also celebrated the two-year anniversary of the Vancouver Rent Bank which has helped 413 people including 91 children remain housed since its inception.

Recently, we began fundraising for FireHall #5 (76 homes for women and children fleeing abuse or at risk of homelessness in the Killarney/Champlain Heights area) and Co:Here (20 homes for homeless individuals; see cover story). If you'd like to learn more about these projects, I'd welcome your call.

Planning appropriately for the future requires solid data and, in the upcoming year, we will be working with our partners to collect information on the housing stock in the city and aligning it with the needs of the homeless population. Furthermore, our Research Committee will continue its important work to scour the research for best practice and identify how we can better serve the needs of the homeless population.

In early 2015, we anticipate two more Streetohome projects being shovel ready: YWCA Cause We Care House (21 homes at 730 East Hastings) and Atira Housing (198 homes at 41 East Hastings).

While we still have much work ahead of us, we've had some pretty big successes and we couldn't have attained those without our partners, including the Vancouver Foundation, Province of British Columbia, the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, our donors and our service providers. It truly is a privilege to be able to work in a community that is 100 percent committed to helping vulnerable individuals transition from the street and shelters into their own homes and help them access support services to improve their health and quality of life.

I would like to extend my personal appreciation to our Board and the many volunteers who sit on Streetohome committees. Their passion and desire to truly make a change is an inspiration to the community, our partners and our donors.

Finally, from all us of here at Streetohome, I'd like to wish you and your family, the very best for the upcoming season and New Year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Turnbull'.

Rob Turnbull, Ph.D., CHE
President & CEO
Streetohome Foundation

Welcome Papinder

Join us in welcoming Papinder Rehncy, our new Communications and Project Manager. Prior to joining Streetohome in August 2014, Papinder was part of the communications team at the BC Cancer Agency, where she provided communications support for the opening of a new cancer centre in Abbotsford, a world-renowned research facility in Vancouver, and the first public PET/CT program in the province. At Streetohome, she will be working with donors, tenants and partners to tell their stories, as well as providing support for grant writing and project management. You can contact Papinder at papinderr@streetohome.org or 629-2711 ext. 103.



Donor spotlight: David Gadhia on why he chooses to give to Streetohome



For Homelessness Action Week this October, we spoke to six donors on their reasons for giving to Streetohome. In this issue, we bring you an excerpt from one of those stories. You can read the full story on our website. Photo: David Gadhia with wife Charu.

If anyone knows the importance of a hand-up, it's David (Divyesh) Gadhia, whose family fled from Uganda's brutal regime in 1972 when he was 10. He remembers the anxiety his parents felt as immigrants trying to build a new life in a part of the world where they knew no one. He also remembers the community supports available to the family to make their landing just a little bit softer.

"We're very grateful for the opportunity Canada gave us. We had great access to education, employment and an opportunity to better our lives."

As a young man, he went on to university and great success as a developer in the hotel and gaming industry in BC and Alberta. However, he's never forgotten the importance of lending a helping hand to those in need.

That's what compelled him to give to Streetohome three years ago. "It aligned with our family's philosophy of supporting those programs that help people become more self-sufficient, and lead more productive lives."

"Streetohome's model is to prevent homelessness in the first place and help individuals living on the streets and in shelters move into supportive housing. We are impressed with how Streetohome supports vulnerable individuals in our society," says Dave. "It isn't a hand-out, but a hand-up."

It's the kind of innovative and sustainable solution that David believes is needed to solve homelessness in the city. "I have great confidence that Canadian society – which is all encompassing and inclusive – will find a solution for homelessness. I can't even begin to think it's not possible."

Dave's strong sense of helping the community was instilled by his parents and his faith. "As long as I can remember, they inspired in us an obligation of sharing and giving back to the community."

He's tried to impart those same values in his two sons – both at university – by taking them to volunteer at soup kitchens when they were youngsters. "While we've been very fortunate, it was important for my wife and me to expose our children to all aspects of society, and instill an appreciation of what they have been given and the importance of sharing their good fortune to make the world a better place."

We would like to thank all our donors who have given so generously this year and in the past. If you'd like to read more inspiring donor stories, please visit www.streetohome.org

Congratulations, Frank



Congratulations from all of us at Streetohome to Board member Frank Giustra on receiving the Dalai Lama Humanitarian Award. In October, His Holiness presented the award to Frank for his vision and leadership, which exemplifies a compassionate spirit that has changed lives.

about streetohome

Streetohome Foundation is a community organization dedicated to ensuring that residents of our city have access to safe, decent, affordable housing and the support they need to make a difference in their lives.

We bring together business, government and community leaders to build resources and develop lasting solutions to homelessness.

Be **part** of the solution.

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find us

