
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Energy and Mines
and Ministry Responsible for Housing

New supportive housing and youth centre underway

VANCOUVER – Construction has begun for a new supportive housing project at 1134 Burrard St. to provide 141 apartments for adults and youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and a new youth centre that will provide supports for youth living onsite and in the community.

This is the 10th project to break ground under an agreement between the Province and the City of Vancouver to build 14 new social housing developments on city-owned sites to reduce homelessness in Vancouver. The new units will provide supportive housing to accommodate the homeless and those at risk of homelessness, including people living on the streets or in shelters, and those living in Single Room Occupancy hotels.

The Province will provide approximately \$28 million in construction financing, annual operational funding for support services and \$2.5 million for the construction of the youth centre. The City of Vancouver provided the land valued at approximately \$6.3 million and will waive municipal fees and development cost charges. In addition, Streetohome Foundation provided \$2.8 million towards this project.

The Kettle Friendship Society will manage and operate the 16-storey building and provide support services for adult tenants housed at the development. Family Services of Greater Vancouver will operate the youth centre located on the ground and second floors and will provide support services for the at-risk youth tenants.

Quotes:

Rich Coleman, Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister Responsible for Housing –

"Supportive housing developments are important investments in our communities. They provide homeless people and at-risk youth with a place where they can discover safe, affordable housing and programs that can help them to become more productive members of our society. Burrard Street brings us another step closer to reducing homelessness and helping people create new opportunities to change their lives."

Mary McNeil, Minister of Children and Family Development and MLA for False Creek –

"An important goal for this project is to provide housing options for at-risk youth who are struggling to break free of poverty and homelessness. Once complete, Family Services of Greater Vancouver will use this new youth centre to provide an array of programs and services that will benefit the youth living at the development and the Vancouver community."

Gregor Robertson, mayor, City of Vancouver –

"Ending street homelessness by 2015 remains a crucial goal for the City of Vancouver, and we've made good progress in recent years with an 82 per cent reduction in street homelessness since 2008. This project at 1134 Burrard is a great example of how our partnerships with the Province and groups like the Kettle Friendship Society are creating vital new supportive housing for many of Vancouver's most vulnerable citizens."

Dick Vollet, president and CEO, Streethome Foundation –

"Supporting our city's youth is one of the keys to solving the issues of homelessness in Vancouver. Most of the youth living on the street were either former foster children or forced out of their homes due to abuse or poverty. Many of these youth, perhaps for the first time in their lives, will be able to access resources that we often take for granted – the security of a safe and welcoming home and consistent support with practical life skills training."

Nancy Keough, executive director, The Kettle Friendship Society –

"Through this project, The Kettle Friendship Society will change the lives of people from this community. They are the people we see every day as we go about our business; individuals who have found themselves overwhelmed by circumstance and feel forgotten by society. They need a helping hand to access resources, to eventually building trust and most importantly hope. We cannot wait until the construction is complete and we can open the doors for our new tenants."

Caroline Bonesky, CEO, Family Services of Greater Vancouver –

"We are looking forward to moving into the new building and continuing to support and inspire homeless and at-risk youth in Vancouver to take the next steps with their lives—be it to return home; to find safe, affordable housing; to improve literacy or meet educational goals; or to access health, mental health, or addictions services. I would like to acknowledge all of our partners--especially the Province of British Columbia--for providing the financial resources for this crucial development."

Quick Facts:

- Over the last decade, the Province has invested \$2.8 billion to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals, seniors and families. This year, more than 95,000 B.C. households will benefit from provincial social housing programs and services.
- In 2011/12 the Province will invest over \$105 million to provide subsidized housing and rent supplements for more than 27,200 Vancouver households.
- The Kettle Friendship Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with mental health issues by provide housing, employment, advocacy and support services; raising awareness of mental health issues and promote inclusion of people living with mental illness in all aspects of society.
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver is a community-based not-for-profit organization providing crucial social services to children, youth, adults, and families across Vancouver, Richmond, Burnaby, New Westminister, and Surrey.

Learn More:

- Visit www.bchousing.org/Initiatives/Creating/PHI to learn more about provincial programs and services to address homelessness.
- To learn more about programs and services offered by The Kettle Friendship Society please visit www.thekettle.ca.
- To learn more about programs and services offered by Family Services of Greater Vancouver please visit www.fsgv.ca.
- To find out more on how you can make a contribution to the Streethome Foundation please visit www.streethome.org/you-can-help.

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