
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests and Range and Minister responsible for Housing
City of Vancouver

NON-PROFITS SELECTED FOR 12 CITY-OWNED HOUSING SITES

VANCOUVER – Non-profit societies have been selected to manage approximately 1,200 new units being developed to provide housing for those facing homelessness in Vancouver, Minister responsible for Housing Rich Coleman announced today.

“These non-profit societies were chosen for their experience and expertise in managing supportive housing,” said Coleman. “Now we can move forward with community meetings and get on with approvals to begin construction.”

The groups were selected in response to a proposal call issued to non-profit societies to develop and operate supportive housing on 12 city-owned sites. The selection follows the December 2007 approval of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Province and the City of Vancouver to fast-track up to 1,200 new units of social and supportive housing on the sites. The new housing will accommodate homeless British Columbians and those at risk of homelessness who are living on the streets or in shelters, and those living in inadequate single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels.

Under the agreement, the Province is paying for predevelopment costs such as architects, consultants, lawyers, surveyors and engineers, as well as permit fees. The City is leasing the sites to the non-profit operators for 60 years, and they will be charged a nominal fee for rent. They will be exempt from property taxes as long as each development provides subsidized social and supportive housing.

“The non-profit organizations that have been selected are key partners in creating appropriate housing developments that will help to alleviate homelessness in our city,” said Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan. “Now the groups can work with local neighbourhoods to make sure the developments provide safe, secure affordable housing for those who need it most.”

The non-profit groups will present design and management plans at open houses that will begin over the next few months, giving the public an opportunity to provide input prior to the groups’ applications to the City’s Development Permit Board or to City Council for rezoning. It is anticipated the first developments will be considered in June, at which time the public will also be invited to comment.

The provincial contribution to pay for predevelopment costs is part of a \$41-million commitment to help break the cycle of homelessness that was announced on Oct. 12, 2007. It builds on the provincial housing strategy, Housing Matters BC, announced in October 2006. The Province has allocated \$360 million this year towards shelters and affordable housing.

The MOU supports the City's Supportive Housing Strategy, approved in June 2007, and is an important step toward accomplishing the goals and objectives identified in Project Civil City.

More information about these housing developments is available at:
www.bchousing.org/programs/homelessness/Vancouver.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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