



# BC Housing

## **\$11M INVESTMENT TO CREATE 70 JOBS IN ABBOTSFORD**

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April 3rd, 2009

ABBOTSFORD – The Province is investing approximately \$11 million in a 40-unit supportive housing development in Abbotsford that will help create 70 jobs, announced Rich Coleman, Minister of Housing and Social Development and local MLAs Mike de Jong and John van Dongen.

“This new development will provide stable and supportive housing for people most in need while creating new job opportunities in Abbotsford,” said Coleman. “Projects like this one are essential to support families and communities during these challenging economic times.”

“By partnering with the City of Abbotsford, we are able to bring more stability to people’s lives,” said de Jong, MLA for Abbotsford-Mount Lehman. “In addition to new supportive housing, this joint venture will also create new jobs in our community.”

Construction is expected to start this summer. The proposed site at 3106 Clearbrook Rd. is part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the Province and the City of Abbotsford in September 2008.

“People with low incomes or who are at risk of homelessness in our community will now have access to more affordable rental housing,” said van Dongen, MLA for Abbotsford-Clayburn. “It’s a rewarding project that will help meet the needs of those who are in greatest need.”

Rezoning is required for the site and the city approval process will be consistent with established policies and practices for development permit applications, including public consultation on the projects, as well as formal public hearings on the applications. The city continues to explore options for a second site. The 40 units of supportive housing proposed for the development will help people move beyond temporary emergency shelters so they can re-establish their independence, effectively breaking the cycle of homelessness.

“This is an important step in developing much-needed supportive housing for our community,” said Abbotsford Mayor George W. Peary. “Safe and affordable housing is a fundamental requirement and these integrated support services will provide additional assistance for many of our most vulnerable citizens.”

The Women’s Resource Society of the Fraser Valley (WRSFV) has been selected to develop and manage this supportive housing development. The society, selected as the result of a proposal call issued by the Province last fall, will be involved in the design and development of the supportive housing and will provide on-site support services, including staffing the housing 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

For over 25 years, WRSFV has been providing and promoting the development of services to assist in reducing the incidence of domestic violence and offering a variety of

support services and programs, including women's counselling, outreach and multi-cultural outreach, caregiver support, and children and youth support. The society also operates two transition houses and two second stage housing projects.

"We work to improve the quality of life for vulnerable women in the Fraser Valley. We are pleased to partner with the Province and the City to help make this housing development a reality," said Pam Willis, executive director, WRSFV. "By being a part of this development process, we are continuing our work to make the Fraser Valley a better place for women and their children."

This project is part of an overall \$14-billion capital infrastructure program supported by the Province that will create up to 88,000 jobs and help build vital public infrastructure in every region of B.C.

Increasing affordable housing, reducing homelessness and helping our most vulnerable citizens is a key agenda for the Province of British Columbia. In 2009/10, the Province's budget for affordable housing and shelters is \$469 million, more than four times as much as in 2001.

'Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness' is a website providing a comprehensive and detailed look at provincial programs and services to address homelessness. Visit [www.bchousing.org/breakingthecycle](http://www.bchousing.org/breakingthecycle) for more information.

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