
FACTSHEET

February 1, 2010

Ministry of Housing and Social Development
Government of British Columbia

Provincial Housing Strategy and the DTES

Coping with a legacy of poverty, crime and drug use, Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) is striving toward revitalization. Vancouver's oldest neighbourhood, the DTES has a strong tradition of community activism. About 16,000 people live in the DTES, in an area centred east of Cambie Street, south of the waterfront, with Hastings Street as the main thoroughfare.

Stable, affordable housing builds a foundation for better, healthier lives and communities – and it's a critical need for many DTES residents. The Province is implementing a comprehensive strategy and making significant investments in housing for British Columbians in need, including people in the DTES. In 2009/10, the Province's budget for social housing is approximately \$450 million, more than three times as much as in 2001.

Provincial Housing Investments in the DTES

- Housing Matters BC, the Province's housing strategy, strives to reduce homelessness and ensure access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing today and into the future.
- The provincial housing strategy has helped bolster social housing in the DTES.
- As of September 30, 2009, there are approximately 26,500 units of subsidized housing in the City of Vancouver funded by the provincial government through a variety of programs.
- The Province currently provides more than \$30 million annually to subsidize over 7,000 units of social and supportive housing, managed by non-profit societies, housing co-ops or BC Housing in the DTES.
- A further 317 units of supportive housing in the DTES will be opening during the next few years – 117 units at the Doorways of Hope and 200 units at the Woodward's site.
- Additionally, the Province is investing in approximately 1,400 long-term, supportive housing units on 14 sites owned by the City of Vancouver – several are located in the DTES.
- To date, the Province has purchased 24 Vancouver single room occupancy hotels, protecting approximately 1,480 units of affordable housing (including 1,280 in the DTES) for people in greatest need.

CONTACTS

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BC Housing is a provincial Crown agency that develops, manages and administers a wide range of subsidized housing options across the province. Fergus McCann can provide information on provincial housing programs and link reporters to key contacts, including social housing service providers and clients.

VISUAL RESOURCES

- Contact Fergus McCann above

WEB RESOURCES

Housing-related websites:

- Housing Matters BC – explains the provincial housing strategy, which includes the Homelessness Intervention Project: www.housingmattersbc.ca/
- Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness – explains what B.C. is doing to break the cycle of homelessness: www.bchousing.org/breakingthecycle
- Vancouver Housing Update – provides an update on homelessness from community partners: www.vancouverhousingupdate.ca/

MEDIA COVERAGE

- *Tenant loves renovated SRO in Downtown Eastside*, CKNW, Dec. 12, 2008 (transcript available/attached)
- *Housing minister puts homelessness issue under 1 roof*, CBC News, March 3, 2009 (www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/03/03/bc-homeless-one-ministry.html)
- *B.C. acquires 15 new properties to house homeless*, CBC News, January 30, 2009 (www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/01/30/bc-homeless-units.html)

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For assistance or more information:

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