
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Natural Gas Development
and Responsible for Housing
City of Abbotsford

Province and City of Abbotsford partner to provide winter shelter

ABBOTSFORD – People in need of a safe, warm place to stay during the winter months in Abbotsford will soon have access to a new winter shelter.

The B.C. government will provide \$450,000 and the City of Abbotsford will contribute up to \$750,000 to construct a 40-bed shelter that will be open from mid-December until the end of April 2016. The city will also provide the land for the portable, purpose-built shelter which will be located at 1640 Riverside Rd.

The Lookout Emergency Aid Society will operate the shelter and provide a range of health and housing support services, including serving three meals a day. Outreach workers will also connect clients with rental assistance, so they can access more stable, long-term housing.

Last year, more than 270 homeless people in Abbotsford were housed through housing rent supplements and shelter services.

Quotes:

Darryl Plecas, MLA for Abbotsford South –

“The most critical issue affecting people who are homeless is getting a roof over their heads, especially during the cold and wet winter months. The Province, the City of Abbotsford, the Lookout Society and a number of community partners are all committed to working together to improve the living conditions of Abbotsford’s most vulnerable population – starting with a warm, safe place to sleep.”

Simon Gibson, MLA for Abbotsford-Mission –

“This shelter is one step of many that we are taking to solve the problem of homelessness in our community. This shelter will provide those in need with far more than a warm, dry place to stay. They will also have the opportunity to connect with health and support services and be directed toward more permanent housing, so that next winter they do not have to call a shelter home.”

Michael de Jong, MLA for Abbotsford West –

“Providing a warm, safe place to stay is one step to address homelessness. With additional services provided by the Lookout Emergency Aid Society for this winter shelter, we can help those in need connect to community services and transition into permanent housing.”

Mayor Henry Braun, City of Abbotsford –

“The City of Abbotsford is extremely grateful for the funding provided by the Province for this project. The Temporary Response Shelter will provide a warm, safe place to stay through the winter months for up to 40 people currently living outside in our community. The city has adopted a Housing-First approach in providing support for homeless people living in Abbotsford and this Temporary Response Shelter is an important step in helping people move toward more permanent housing.”

Shayne Williams, executive director, Lookout Emergency Aid Society –

“Winter shelters provide warm, safe beds for the most vulnerable and it also allows us to serve homeless individuals we wouldn’t otherwise come in contact with. Through these interactions the Lookout Society can help connect them with community services and find them appropriate housing. We can’t wait to open the doors at this new temporary shelter and provide homeless individuals a break from their life on the streets.”

Quick Facts:

- Since 2001, the B.C. government has invested \$4.4 billion to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals, seniors and families.
- This year, more than 102,500 B.C. households will benefit from provincial social housing programs and services.
- Last year, the Province invested over \$6.5 million to provide subsidized housing and rent supplements for almost 2,000 households in Abbotsford. This includes providing support for more than 990 senior households and almost 480 family households.
- Provincially, the B.C. government provided \$71 million in funding last year for close to 1,740 permanent, year-round shelter beds in 34 communities.

Learn More:

For more information on affordable housing programs and the province’s efforts to end homelessness in B.C., please visit: www.housingmattersbc.ca/factsheets.html and www.bchousing.org

To see a map of permanent and temporary shelters in B.C., please visit: http://www.bchousing.org/Options/Emergency_Housing/Map

Lookout Emergency Aid Society: <http://lookoutsociety.ca/>

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