



April 2016 Newsletter

Peninsula Homeless to Housing Task Force

Our Mission is to assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness on the South Surrey White Rock Peninsula to live in safe and appropriate housing

NEXT MEETING: Friday, April 8th at 9:45am White Rock Baptist Church, 1657-140th St. Surrey.

Please circulate to contacts.

In our November Newsletter we outlined three specific housing commitments made by the Liberal Party during the federal election.

1. *Direct the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the new Canada Infrastructure Bank to provide financing to support the construction of new, affordable rental housing for middle- and low-income Canadians."*
2. *Conduct an inventory of all available federal lands and buildings that could be repurposed, and make some of these lands available at low cost for affordable housing in communities where there is a pressing need."*
3. *Wave the GST on new rental housing construction with a total of "\$125 million per year in tax incentives" available.*

The March 22nd federal budget's housing investments provides new information on the direction/priorities of the new federal government. There is a two phase commitment:

1. Phase 1 is a two year investment strategy through the Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) program
2. Phase 2 includes developing a National Housing Strategy to deliver on the remaining eight years of the Government's long-term infrastructure plan

Over the next two years the 2016 budget offers \$1.5 billion for affordable housing for provinces and municipalities (additional dollars are specific to First Nations). This could mean \$195 million for BC, based on a proportion equivalent to our population (13%). The IAH has four different programs streams within it. Some programs require matching provincial dollars (Affordable Housing Initiative, Energy and Water Efficiency retro-fits) and some do not (Senior and Homeless Partnering Strategy).

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) will have an additional \$111.8 million over two years to "to help prevent and reduce homelessness, including Housing First activities, better emergency response services, and supports for youth, women fleeing violence, and veterans."

The following table summarizes the next two years of housing investments (sorry for the small type size).

Table 2.1
AFFORDABLE HOUSING INVESTMENTS
millions of dollars

	2016-2017	2017-2018	Total
Doubling the Investment in Affordable Housing Initiative	261.6	242.8	504.4
Increasing Affordable Housing for Seniors	100.3	100.4	200.7
Supporting Energy and Water Efficiency Retrofits and Renovations to Existing Social Housing	500.0	73.9	573.9
Supporting Shelters for Victims of Violence	60.0	29.9	89.9
Tackling Homelessness	57.9	53.9	111.8
Subtotal	979.8	500.9	1,480.7
<i>Additional Investments in Housing for First Nations, Inuit and Northern Communities¹</i>	<i>356.2</i>	<i>382.8</i>	<i>739.0</i>
Total Investments Funded Through Social Infrastructure Commitment	1,336	883.7	2,219.7
<i>Additional Investments to Support the Construction of Affordable Rental Housing²</i>	<i>13.1</i>	<i>72.6</i>	<i>85.7</i>
Grand Total	1,349.1	956.3	2,305.4

¹ Includes funding for renovation and construction of new shelters on reserve. An additional \$3.4 million would be provided for shelters on reserve in 2018-19, bringing total investments for housing in First Nations, Inuit and northern communities to \$742.4 million over three years, starting in 2016-17. See Chapter 3—A Better Future for Indigenous Peoples.

² Funding for the construction of affordable rental housing will continue beyond 2017-18. Additional funding of \$122.6 million over three years, starting in 2017-18, would be provided, bringing total investments to \$208.3 million over five years. Funding for this measure is over and above investments in affordable housing under the Government's social infrastructure commitment.

The AHI will be doubled with an anticipated 4000 units built. The \$500 million over 5 years are for low-cost loans set up by the CMHC – these loans will lower the equity requirement for developers. The cheaper borrowing available to government (Crown borrowing framework) can pass savings on to housing developers (as was done with the cooperative housing from 1973 – 1978). The Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association wrote a piece that this may be aimed more to the for-profit sector rather than the non-profit sector. See article here:

http://www.onpha.on.ca/ONPHA/Content/PolicyAndResearch/Other_documents/ONPHA%202016%20federal%20budget%20response.aspx

Not specific to housing construction, but definitely related to rental affordability the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for low-income single seniors will have a top-up benefit (up to \$947 annual increase) as of July. This is about a 10% increase in the benefit amount. The increase will affect about 900,000 seniors across Canada. In addition, lower-income senior couples who are forced to live apart (because of health issues or requirements for long-term care) will see a small increase in benefits.

Challenge for PH2H – A local congregation has extended a challenge to the community to make a donation to PH2H for its modest operating budget of \$5,000. Donations will be matched up to \$2,500 for up to 4 years. Cheques would be made out to Sources (fund manager) for PH2H.

Please circulate our newsletter to your congregations and members. Send feedback/ news items to:
ph2htaskforce@gmail.com