

For Immediate Release
2012ENER0023-000219
March 2, 2012

Ministry of Energy and Mines
and Minister Responsible for Housing
Government of Canada

Partnership to renovate hotels in Downtown Eastside

VANCOUVER – The Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia today announced a public-private partnership to renovate and restore 13 provincially owned Single Room Occupancy hotels in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside to provide access to clean and safe social housing.

The Government of Canada will contribute up to \$29.1 million through the P3 Canada Fund toward eligible construction and implementation costs. The Province will contribute \$87.3 million toward construction and implementation costs and additional funding over a 15-year maintenance period.

“This project is an excellent example of how the private sector can leverage greater value for public dollars and deliver infrastructure that matters to Canadians,” said Wai Young, Member of Parliament for Vancouver South. “By retrofitting these 13 historic buildings we will give those most in need a place to call home, provide a lasting benefit to the community, and create jobs and growth for Canadians.”

A Request for Proposals has been issued to finalize the procurement process and select a successful proponent. Once selected, the successful proponent will be required to design, build, finance and maintain the project. The P3 contract transfers the risks associated with the construction, design, maintenance and financing of the project to the private sector, which is required to finance construction costs and provide long-term financing.

“The SRO renewal will improve living conditions for the residents and restore the heritage value of these century old buildings”, said Rich Coleman, Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister Responsible for Housing. “With about 900 residents, these buildings have an important role in our efforts to help those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness find stability and a safe, clean, affordable home. Restoring these buildings will make sure these properties will continue to fulfill that need.”



BC Housing



PPP Canada

“This is the first public-private partnership project through the P3 Canada Fund under the Brownfield redevelopment infrastructure category. A P3 Canada Fund investment in this project demonstrates the continued development of the market for P3 projects in Canada into new infrastructure classes,” said Greg Melchin, chair of the board of directors of PPP Canada.

“The challenge of tackling homelessness continues to be a top priority for Vancouver, and we are pleased to have the Province of B.C. and the Government of Canada coming together to improve living conditions for many of our most marginalized and vulnerable citizens,” said Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson. “The renewal and renovation of these 13 SROs is another important step toward our goal of ending street homelessness by 2015 and ensuring safe, stable housing for low-income residents, particularly in the Downtown Eastside.”

Karen O’Shannacery, executive director of Lookout Society added, “As a non-profit operator of SRO buildings in the Downtown Eastside, which have undergone extensive renovations, we know and appreciate the importance of this multi-level partnership and how it will ultimately benefit the individuals who call these buildings home.”

The 13 provincially owned SROs are over 100 years old with structural, plumbing and electrical infrastructure that requires renewal. In addition to the upgrades, the 13 aging hotels will be restored, preserving their heritage features and the historic character of Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside.

Media Contacts:

Mary Ann Dewey-Plante
Press Secretary
Office of the Minister of Finance
613 992-6754

Seumas Gordon
A/Senior Manager, Public Affairs
BC Housing
604 439-4789

Jack Aubry
Media Relations
Department of Finance
Government of Canada
613 996-8080

PPP Canada Media Inquiries
613 947-9480
1 877 947-9480
media@p3canada.ca

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect

BACKGROUND

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Single Room Occupancy initiative (SRI)

Project List: Development

Beacon Hotel, 7 West Hastings Street
Cordova Residence/Cordova Rooms, 56 Cordova Street East
Dominion Hotel, 210 Abbott Street
Gastown Hotel, 110 Water Street
Hazelwood Hotel, 344 East Hastings Street
Marble Arch Hotel, 518 Richards Street
Marr Hotel, 401 Powell Street
Orange Hall, 329-341 Gore Avenue
Roosevelt/Molson's Bank Building, 166 East Hastings Street
Sunrise Hotel, 101 East Hastings Street
Tamura House, 398 Powell Street
The Rice Block, 404 Hawks Street
Washington Hotel, 177-179 East Hastings Street

Scope & Maintenance:

Many of the 13 historic structures targeted in this project are over 100 years old with structural, plumbing and electrical infrastructure that require renewal. In addition to the upgrades, the 13 aging hotels will be restored, preserving their heritage features and the historic character of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

The Project will deliver:

- Long-term, supportive housing and an improved quality of life for tenants.
- Updated amenities, such as dependable heat and hot water availability.
- Restore the heritage value and appearance of these century old buildings.

These buildings have an important role in our efforts to help those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness find stability and a safe, clean, affordable home. Restoring these buildings will make sure these properties will continue to fulfill that need.

Activities under the new program will include work on:

- Structural elements.
- Exterior enclosures, partitions, doors and finishes.
- Mechanical and electrical systems.
- Heritage restoration and building envelope renewal.
- Hazardous materials abatement.

Once the project is completed, maintenance services will likely include:

- Maintenance planning; compliance and regulatory inspections.
- Major building system operations.
- Building security systems and 24-hour maintenance call centre.
- Life cycle maintenance (major capital renewals and repairs).

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