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B.C., federal government ink \$180-million housing plan

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The B.C. and federal governments have announced a \$180-million affordable housing plan for low-income individuals, families and seniors as part of a national agreement between provinces and territories.

Over the next three years, B.C. and Ottawa will each chip in \$90 million that can go toward new construction, renovation, home ownership assistance, rent supplements, shelter allowances and accommodation for victims of family violence.

Under the affordable housing framework, provinces and territories are responsible for the design and delivery of affordable housing programs that address specific needs in their jurisdictions.

"Our government is committed to working with the province of British Columbia to develop and implement solutions to housing," said MP James Moore. "This agreement recognizes the need for local solutions to housing challenges and the importance of reporting on progress on achievement of outcomes."

B.C. Housing Minister Rich Coleman said the new agreement will help to create safe, quality housing for B.C. residents in need.

"Over the last decade, the province has invested \$2.8 billion and created more than 20,000 new units of affordable housing," said Coleman. "These accomplishments have been driven by a sound provincial housing strategy, strategic investments and partnerships with all levels of government and community agencies. This new agreement will help us continue to create safe, quality, affordable housing for B.C. residents in need."

The announcement was made at Sorella, a new 108-unit supportive housing development for women at risk of homelessness in the Downtown Eastside. Sorella received more than \$20 million from both levels of government through an earlier funding agreement, along with funding from the City of Vancouver.

"This new federal-provincial agreement will increase the potential for a range of housing options for people who need it most," said Karen Stone, executive director of the B.C. Non-Profit Housing Association.

"Non-profit housing providers are a key partner in managing more than 60,000 affordable housing units in B.C., and our providers and tenants look forward to greater housing affordability options."

Both levels of government will issue annual public reports on the progress of the housing initiatives.



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