
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

Province opens the door to housing investment on reserves

PRINCE GEORGE – British Columbia will become the first province in Canada to invest provincial housing funds into on-reserve housing.

“Everyone in British Columbia deserves a good home, including people who live on-reserve,” said Premier John Horgan. “That’s why we’re opening the door to all Indigenous communities to join us as we make housing better and more affordable for people in every part of the province.”

Through the new Building BC: Indigenous Housing Fund, the British Columbia government will invest \$550 million over the next 10 years to build and operate 1,750 new units of social housing for projects, both on- and off-reserve.

BC Housing will send out a request for proposals to identify prospective partners, including Indigenous non-profit housing providers, First Nations, Métis Nation British Columbia, and non-profit and for-profit developers, wanting to partner with Indigenous housing providers and First Nations.

In addition to funding under the new Indigenous Housing Fund, Indigenous organizations and First Nations will be able to access provincial support, under the new housing funds announced as part of Budget 2018 and the 30-point housing plan.

The new housing will be developed in partnership with the Aboriginal Housing Management Association, Indigenous housing societies and First Nations.

With National Indigenous Peoples Day coming up on June 21, 2018, this investment to support affordable housing for Indigenous peoples is one of many areas where the Province is advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

The Province’s focus on building a true and lasting vision of reconciliation is anchored by a cross-government commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action, and case law.

The provincial government is making significant new investments in Indigenous priorities and reconciliation, with more than \$250 million allocated over the next three years, in the areas of affordable housing, language revitalization, child care, mental health and addictions, reducing poverty, improving access to justice, skills training, emergency management and revitalizing the environmental assessment process.

Quotes:

Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing –

“We know that Indigenous peoples often face extraordinary housing challenges. With these new provincial housing funds now available to more people, we are taking a major step forward in making sure Indigenous peoples everywhere in British Columbia have access to the safe and secure housing they need.”

Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation –

“Our government recognizes the rights of Indigenous peoples to be actively involved in developing and determining housing policies and programs affecting them. We’ll be working closely with the Indigenous housing sector every step of the way, to make sure Indigenous peoples are partners in building this new housing. This is one of the ways we are moving forward on reconciliation with First Nations and Indigenous peoples in B.C.”

Adam Olsen, MLA for Saanich North and the Islands –

“This is an important investment that will increase the quality of life for Indigenous peoples in B.C. Levels of Indigenous homelessness are unacceptable, and there is a direct link to a lack of housing on reserves. This is a smart investment, and recognizes that healthy, safe communities start with healthy, safe homes.”

Terry Teegee, Regional Chief, British Columbia Assembly of First Nations –

“We have never seen such a commitment from a provincial government for on-reserve housing investments. I applaud the leadership of Premier Horgan and his ministers. Housing is a fundamental human right, and impacts a wide range of societal needs, including security, health for families and employment. First Nations in B.C. seek to improve a major gap in housing needs. This is an important step for building stronger First Nations’ communities.”

Chief Bob Chamberlin, vice-president, Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs –

“Today, we are encouraged by this first step of the provincial government to respond to the need for affordable housing for Indigenous peoples. For true reconciliation, steps like these are crucial, but Indigenous peoples must be involved every step of the way. With a growing need for social housing, there is much work left to be done.”

Cheryl Casimer, political executive, First Nations Summit –

“We welcome today’s announcement of the creation of the Indigenous Housing Fund by the Province of B.C. This fund will provide a significant investment that will have immediate positive impacts in addressing the acute shortage of affordable housing units, especially for those Indigenous peoples in B.C. living below the poverty line. This fund will also assist Indigenous peoples with greater opportunities to access housing within their own communities, rather than being forced to move to urban centres.”

Clara Morin Dal Col, president, Métis Nation British Columbia –

“Métis Nation B.C. is excited about the housing opportunities for Métis people in British Columbia through this new program. These funds have the potential of helping to provide Métis people long-awaited access to housing, and as a result, provide substantial benefits to

the health and well-being of our communities. We are very pleased with the Province's investment and commitment to this provincial housing plan. This is a significant step toward government's efforts of nation-to-nation relationships and reconciliation."

Margaret Pfoh, CEO, Aboriginal Housing Management Association –

"Today's announcement is a positive step in the right direction to alleviating the housing challenges of our Indigenous peoples. We are over represented in every housing need category. The Aboriginal Housing Management Association, and our members, look forward to partnering with First Nations and Indigenous housing organizations to create the housing that we so desperately need."

Quick Facts:

- Budget 2018 launched the biggest investment in housing affordability in B.C. history — more than \$7 billion over 10 years.
- All programs announced in Budget 2018 will be open to Indigenous organizations and First Nations, for housing both on- and off-reserve, including:
 - **Building BC: Community Housing Fund** – close to \$1.9 billion over 10 years to build and operate 14,350 affordable new rental homes, through partnerships with municipalities, non-profit housing providers, housing co-ops and Indigenous organizations.
 - **Building BC: Women's Transition Housing Fund** – \$734 million over 10 years to build and operate 1,500 new units of housing including transition houses, safe homes, second-stage and long-term housing.
 - **Building BC: Supportive Housing Fund** – \$1.2 billion over 10 years to build and operate 2,500 units of supportive housing for those that are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.
- Currently, more than 4,600 subsidized housing units are specifically designated for Indigenous peoples in B.C. More than 700 Indigenous housing units are in development or under construction throughout the province.

Learn More:

Read Homes for B.C., government's 30-point plan to address housing affordability for British Columbians: bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/homesbc/2018_Homes_For_BC.pdf

To find out what the Province is doing to improve housing affordability, visit: news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/bc-government-addressing-housing-affordability-challenges

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