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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2019MAH0025-000193  
Feb. 8, 2019

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

### **New supportive homes now open in Smithers**

SMITHERS – Dozens of people experiencing homelessness are about to have access to safe and secure homes with the opening of Goodacre Place, a 24-unit supportive housing project that also includes space for emergency short-term beds.

“We have people in the community that have been living day-to-day without the security and the source of strength that a home provides,” said Doug Donaldson, MLA for Stikine. “Through our partnership with the Town of Smithers, I am thrilled that is about to change for people who have been experiencing homelessness — people who will now have the dignity of a roof, a door, a bed, a washroom, a kitchen and the support services they need.”

The new modular apartment building at 3896 Railway Ave. will be ready to welcome residents in March. It includes two accessible units on the ground floor for people with disabilities. The new homes will be available to people currently using space at a shelter on Broadway Avenue.

“Goodacre Place represents the realization of a long-held community vision, and I want to congratulate the partner organizations whose hard work made these 24 new homes possible,” said Taylor Bachrach, mayor, Town of Smithers. “Ensuring our most vulnerable residents have safe, stable, affordable housing is a step forward for our whole community.”

The housing will be operated by the Smithers Community Services Association, an experienced non-profit housing operator since 1973. It provides services for people with developmental disabilities, parenting programs, youth programs, public transit systems and family housing in the community.

“Smithers Community Services Association is pleased to be part of this landmark project, first envisioned by the Smithers Action Group over a decade ago,” said Cathryn Olmstead, executive director, Smithers Community Services Association. “We are overwhelmed by the outpouring of community support and encouragement, and are committed to ensuring this project will contribute to the quality of life of all members of the community.”

Like other supportive housing developments under the Building BC: Rapid Response to Homelessness program, the project offers residents around-the-clock services, including meal programs, life and employment skills training, health and wellness support services, and opportunities for volunteer work.

The new homes were built by manufacturer Nomadic Modular Structures and bring the number of completed modular supportive homes built throughout the province to more than 800. A further 1,200 are underway as part of the Building BC: Rapid Response to Homelessness program, which will deliver more than 2,000 modular supportive homes in 22 communities.

“Nomodic is committed to leaving things better and Goodacre Place has been the perfect opportunity to do just that,” said Kevin Read, CEO, Nomodic. “This was an immensely rewarding project for our entire team, and we know the new building will benefit its residents for years to come. We are extremely proud of the relationships we’ve built in the Smithers community throughout this process.”

Two of the units at Goodacre Place will be large enough to accommodate multiple short-term stay beds for families and individuals in need of emergency housing.

**Quick Facts:**

- The building is named in memory of former Town of Smithers councillor Bill Goodacre. Goodacre was born and raised in Smithers and contributed 12 years to the Smithers Community Services Association board at different times in the organizations’ development.
- The B.C. government provided capital funding of \$6.1 million and will provide an annual operating and support service subsidy for Goodacre Place.
- The Town of Smithers contributed \$250,000 for site remediation and \$149,800 in land equity.
- Residents will be charged a monthly rental rate of \$375, which is the social assistance shelter allowance provided by the Province to people experiencing homelessness.
- Through the Building BC: Rapid Response to Homelessness program, the Province is investing \$291 million to build 2,000 homes around the province and more than \$170 million over three years to provide 24/7 staffing and support services.

**Learn More:**

More information about the B.C. government’s modular housing program can be found here: [www.bchousing.org/partner-services/major-projects/modular-housing-initiative](http://www.bchousing.org/partner-services/major-projects/modular-housing-initiative)

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

A backgrounder follows.

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## BACKGROUND

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### **Services and supports provided for modular housing**

All new modular housing buildings in the province are being provided with around the-clock staffing to help youth, people with disabilities, seniors and others in critical housing need.

The Province is investing \$170 million over three years to help those with the highest housing needs build new beginnings. Experienced non-profit housing providers will provide support to tenants based on their assessed needs.

The services and supports that will be provided to youth, seniors, people with disabilities and others who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless include:

- meals;
- connecting residents to community supports, such as education and employment opportunities, and health and wellness services;
- individual or group support services, such as life skills, community information and social and recreational programs;
- case planning and needs assessment;
- other supports designed to assist residents in meeting their personal and housing goals, including culturally specific programs;
- help accessing income assistance, pension benefits, disability benefits, obtaining a B.C. identification card or establishing a bank account;
- support for residents to learn how to operate and maintain a home; and
- no-cost laundry services, either on- or off-site.

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