

New homes for women, child care spaces under construction in Valemont ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Women and children leaving violence will soon have a safe place to recover and rebuild their lives as construction begins on a new women's housing project in Valemont.

"The province needs more affordable and safe places with supports for women to live, especially women and their children who are leaving an abusive situation," said David Eby, Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing. "We are working with community partners throughout the province to make sure women and children have a safe place to go when they need it most, including this new project in the Valemont area."

Located downtown, the 14-unit project will provide a number of housing options, including second-stage housing, which provides short-term housing with on-site supports, and affordable rental housing for women who need a permanent place to stay. The three-storey building will include studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom homes, a laundry room and a shared amenity space.

The homes are being funded through the Province's Building BC: Women's Transition Housing Fund, a \$734-million investment over 10 years, to build and operate 1,500 transition housing, second-stage housing and long-term housing spaces for women and children leaving violence.

There will also be a 72-space child care facility on the ground floor of the building that will be available for tenants and the broader community, thanks to approximately \$2.9 million through the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund.

"This project is an example of how our government is expanding vital services, including child care, for mothers who are building a life after violence," said Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care. "Integrating quality, affordable and inclusive child care into this new housing will help women return to work or school when they are ready, and will help them build a secure future for their families."

The new homes and child care facility in Valemont will be managed by Robson Valley Community Services Society, which has significant experience working with women and their children who are leaving violence.

"It is an honour to be selected as the operator for 14 affordable housing units and a new 72-space child care facility," said Lina Thompson, executive director, Robson Valley Community Services Society. "The impacts of the housing crisis are deeply felt in our rural northern B.C. community, especially for women and children affected by violence. In collaboration with the Village of Valemont, BC Housing, the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Columbia Basin Trust, we are able to assist women in rebuilding their lives through housing security, affordable child care and supportive programming."

Construction is anticipated to be completed in spring 2023.

Quotes:

Owen Torgerson, mayor, Village of Valemont –

"The Village of Valemont is grateful to see this project underway. Everyone has a right to feel safe in their home and community. Having safe and inclusive housing available for women escaping violence or who have experienced domestic abuse is absolutely integral. The Village of Valemont is also ecstatic to work with the Ministry of Children and Family Development through a long-term agreement by providing additional child care spaces for our community. Completion of this project will provide solutions for a multitude of critical needs."

Johnny Strilaeff, president and CEO, Columbia Basin Trust –

“The start of this project is great news for the Valemount community. These housing units and child care spaces will be a safe and secure place for women and their children in the area to live and grow. We look forward to celebrating the completion of this project with the community and want to congratulate the local and provincial partners involved who are making this concept a reality.”

Quick Facts:

- The Province is investing a total of approximately \$11.3 million for the development:
 - \$8.4 million from the Building BC: Women’s Transition Housing Fund for the 14 homes.
 - Approximately \$2.9 million from the Ministry of Children and Family Development toward construction of the child care facility and to create 72 new child care spaces through the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund.
- The Columbia Basin Trust is providing \$300,000 toward the child care facility.
- The Village of Valemount is providing the land for the project, valued at \$81,000.
- As with all projects for women and children leaving violence, the address of this project has not been disclosed due to safety reasons.
- The Province, through BC Housing, supports more than 110 transition houses, safe homes and second-stage housing for women – with or without children – who are at risk of or have experienced violence.

Region: British Columbia ^[3]

Tags: child care spaces ^[4]

accessibility ^[5]

gender equity ^[6]

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