

August 7, 2001

**MOSAIC MARKERS TRACE STEPS
OF OLD VANCOUVER TOWNSITE
IN DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE**

VANCOUVER B.C. – Today marks the official unveiling of the Old Vancouver Townsite Walking Tour, a series of 17 distinct mosaic tiles strategically placed in the Downtown Eastside (DTES), each portraying a different facet of Vancouver’s rich and diverse history. The Walking Tour was planned, designed and constructed in six weeks by 170 residents of the DTES. The project is a partnership between Carnegie Community Centre, residents and the federal government, under the Vancouver Agreement.

Carnegie Community Centre administered the program, which taught the participants day-to-day life skills and trained them for early employment strategies. The local residents collaborated with historians and businesses to research historical incidents that make Vancouver’s past so unique.

“Above all, this project helped foster relationships within the community,” said the Honourable Hedy Fry, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), on behalf of the Honourable Ron J. Duhamel, Minister of Veterans Affairs, Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Francophonie). “There is also the symbolic nature of the mosaics themselves. They represent the multifaceted history of Vancouver. They were made by people from different backgrounds, in a country that is itself a mosaic of cultures.”

“Bringing the community together to beautify the Downtown Eastside makes the Walking Tour a fitting example of the work the three levels of government are undertaking in partnership with the community under the Vancouver Agreement,” said Minister George Abbott, Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women’s Services. “The province supports the Vancouver Agreement; it creates programs that promote economic and social development in the communities that form the Downtown Eastside.”

“The physical improvement of the environment is an exemplary way to revitalize the area,” said Mayor Philip Owen. “Using local talent to give recognition to events and people who helped shape what Vancouver is today will go a long way in developing community pride.”



“A Canadian Mosaic” located at Union and Princess. A mosaic about families and settlement. A stylized mother and child with circles depicting the different races set against the timelessness and scale of nature; sun, earth, sea.

Margaret Prevost, President of Carnegie Community Centre, is pleased with the impact this project has had on the community. "This project was an opportunity for people, who otherwise would not have the chance to meet, to work together towards a common goal," said Margaret Prevost, President of Carnegie Community Centre. The local participants have learned social skills and have come away with a sense of pride in their community. Furthermore, this project was designed to be expandable so that more mosaic markers can be added to the Walking Tour at a later date.

The Old Vancouver Townsite Walking Tour was funded by the Government of Canada with a \$200,000 contribution by Western Economic Diversification Canada under the Vancouver Agreement. The Vancouver Agreement is a five-year collaboration involving the federal, provincial and municipal governments. Signed in March 2000, the Agreement focuses on three main areas: community health and safety; economic and social development; and community capacity building.

The mandate of Carnegie Community Centre is to provide social, educational, cultural and recreational activities for the benefit of the people of the DTES through the leadership and participation of the volunteers.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: A backgrounder on the Old Vancouver Townsite Walking Tour is available at our Website: <http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/mediacentre/2001/aug07-01b.html>
For this news release: <http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/mediacentre/2001/aug07-01a.html>