



NEWS RELEASE

Vancouver Agreement renewed for second five-year term

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VANCOUVER - The governments of Canada, British Columbia and Vancouver today announced that the Vancouver Agreement, an innovative urban development initiative, will be renewed for a second five-year term lasting until March 2010.

The Vancouver Agreement represents a new way for governments to work together and with business and community groups in order to promote and support economic and social investments in the community. The Agreement's first focus is revitalization of the city's Downtown Eastside, particularly encouraging local business retention and attraction, secure and safe housing, and support for residents with addiction and mental health issues.

"In its first five years, the Vancouver Agreement has made a significant contribution to social and economic initiatives that are helping to revitalize the city's Downtown Eastside and improve the lives of residents," said the Honourable Stephen Owen, federal Minister of Western Economic Diversification and Minister of State (Sport). "The Government of Canada is proud of this partnership with the provincial and city governments and is committed to continuing to support locally driven solutions that make Vancouver a thriving, safe and healthy city."

A key commitment and legacy of the Vancouver Agreement is the unprecedented Inner City Inclusiveness Commitment that was part of Vancouver's successful bid for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games to promote social and economic sustainability by fully integrating the Downtown Eastside into this major international event.

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“The provincial government made a commitment to create a legacy for the Downtown Eastside as part of our 2010 Olympic bid,” said the Honourable Murray Coell, provincial Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women’s Services. “Not only have we realized this commitment but in January we were all thrilled to witness Bell Canada become the first major Olympic sponsor to contribute to this legacy with a donation of \$2 million towards Downtown Eastside economic revitalization. This generous contribution is an example of the Vancouver Agreement in action and demonstrates the business, community and government partnership and commitment to the Downtown Eastside and the city of Vancouver.”

The Vancouver Agreement is also contributing to major initiatives like the redevelopment of Woodward’s, a seawall-to-seawall pedestrian and cyclist link from False Creek through Chinatown and Gastown with the Carrall Street Greenway, the operation of North America’s first supervised injection site, and improved social housing.

“The Vancouver Agreement is a national model for urban development,” said His Worship Mayor Larry Campbell. “Working closely with community and non-profit groups and the business community, the federal, provincial and city governments are showing that with will and commitment we can respond to community challenges by changing how governments work together and with business and the community. Renewal of the Vancouver Agreement not only strengthens the Downtown Eastside and the city as a whole, but is a positive and exciting development for the province and the country.”

In September 2004, the Institute for Public Administration of Canada awarded its highest annual prize for innovative public service management to the Vancouver Agreement for innovation and creativity in governance, particularly for moving to a horizontal model from traditional ‘silo-based’ governance.

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