

For Immediate Release
March 14, 2019

Supportive Housing plays a critical role in the city's fight to end homelessness

On March 11, 2019, the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Honourable Greg Rickford, Minister of Indigenous Affairs announced a \$4.5 million provincial investment for a 30-unit Supportive Housing development in Kenora, ON. Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) will develop the infrastructure, and the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) will provide support through a lease agreement. Both OAHS and KDSB will be responsible for co-developing the services and supports that will be offered.

Supportive housing provides a combination of permanent housing and access to comprehensive support services and programming. An inclusive community includes a diverse mixture of housing options. An ideal District includes market housing, single, family and senior units and additionally; opportunities for those that require assistance.

In Kenora alone, 88% of the homeless population self-identified as Indigenous during the KDSB's Homelessness Enumeration in 2018. Though this specific Supportive Housing development has been identified for Indigenous individuals, OAHS and KDSB are committed to providing an inclusive opportunity for access to anyone who is vulnerable in the City of Kenora.

"Every individual needs safe and stable housing. For the most vulnerable people in the City of Kenora, many deal with negative socio-economic conditions that make it difficult to maintain stable housing. By providing housing with culturally appropriate wraparound services that support tenants every step of the way, individuals are better able to succeed and thrive," says Henry Wall, Chief Administrative Officer of the KDSB.

Some components of Supportive Housing include:

- Supporting individuals and families that are at risk of homelessness;
- Affordability, safety and security;
- A home-like atmosphere, and;
- Access to support services that are case managed around individual needs.

Supportive Housing does not:

- House those who are involved in the judicial system;
- Increase crime and criminal activity within the vicinity of the location;
- Decrease property values, and;
- Discriminate against any individual to be eligible for tenancy; however, criteria will be in place to ensure the appropriate individuals will be selected for tenancy.

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The investment in communities through Supportive Housing makes economic sense for everyone; it costs Municipalities more money through emergency services to have an individual or family that is homeless than it does to provide Supportive Housing that equips individuals with the means to better their lives and get back on their feet. Supportive housing also benefits communities by improving the safety of neighbourhoods and beautifying areas with new or rehabilitated properties.

The KDSB and OAHS will be hosting an open house on Thursday, March 21st at the Ukrainian Literary Society Hall, 509 4th Street North in Kenora to discuss this exciting project, the importance of providing a broad range of responses and appropriate housing such as Supportive Housing in a community and address attendee questions. The open house will be held from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm.

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Media Contacts:

Roberta Lappage
Communications Officer
Kenora District Services Board
(807) 223-2100 x 2474
rlappage@kdsb.on.ca

Steven McCoy
Communications Specialist
Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services
(705) 256-1876 x 235
smccoy@oahssc.ca