



Society of Saint Vincent de Paul London Particular Council Affordable Housing

Fundraising Committee

Over the next six months, the Fundraising Committee is concentrating its efforts on the short-term target of \$1.5 million, needed to complete the purchase of the land, and complete our investment in our first project. Subject to receiving all required municipal approvals, we will be in a shovel-ready status. It is hoped to be in that position by mid-summer 2024.

As of the end of February, the amount raised in both cash and pledges totals \$1,030,000. Envisioning future projects, the long-term five-year goal remains \$5,000,000.

A generous donation of \$100,000 was received from Dancor Construction, a Toronto developer which has begun to participate in the London commercial real estate market. Dancor's gift was presented on March 1, 2024 at St. Andrew the Apostle Church, the site of this affordable housing project. The event was well attended and, in particular, by City Councilors Shawn Lewis, Sam Trosow, Jerry Pribil, Peter Cuddy and David Ferreira, as well as Provincial Associate Minister of Housing Rob Flack. All who spoke were in favor of the project.



The Committee continues to pursue, with success, support from city and area church groups including Catholic Women's League, Knights of Columbus, Saint Vincent de Paul Conferences, in addition to charitable foundations. The Campaign is also reaching out to service clubs including the Kinsmen and Rotary Clubs, other religious communities, and corporations including the construction industry. The London Particular Council Society of Saint Vincent de Paul has agreed to have its original loan of \$50,000 become a grant. The Brian and Heather Semkowski Family Foundation has made a generous donation.

We are pleased to share that Kelly Swanson Flynn has joined the Fundraising Committee. Kelly's skills and experience from when she worked at Canada Life will be a great addition to the Committee.

Let's Partner.....Building Hope for Housing

The website for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and the Affordable Housing Campaign has been merged and improved. The site can be found at <https://ssvplondon.ca> with a separate tab to Affordable Housing at the top of the page. A social media strategy is being developed, and a Facebook page has been started that can be reached at [\(20+\) Facebook](#). The Marketing Department (TMD), a talented and reputable marketing agency, has been developing the project's promotional material on a pro bono basis, and a group of business students from Fanshawe College are assisting to raise awareness of the campaign.

Architect, Design and Building Developments

Our planners, Zelinka Priamo Ltd., and Cornerstone Architecture are preparing materials to submit a Consent to Sever Application to create the new parcel of land within the existing church property for the proposed 73-unit affordable housing complex. A subsequent Zoning By-law Amendment Application to establish appropriate, site-specific zoning and a Site Plan Application outlining technical details of the proposed development will also be submitted to the City of London's Planning Department. The Zoning By-law Amendment Application is expected to be submitted to the city by mid-April, with the Site Application to follow shortly after. All approvals are hoped to be in place during the summer 2024.

A Community Open House was held at St. Andrew's Church on February 28; this was a pre-application consultation required by the city. Invitations were sent to the nearby residents and other interested parties. About 15 people came from the neighborhood, along with City staff, Councilor Peter Cuddy, Cornerstone Architecture and Zelinka Priamo Ltd. who provided a PowerPoint presentation for the project, with Devonshire Consultants present, and a question-and-answer session followed.

Those attending were supportive of the project. Questions were asked about the parking, which meets the minimum 50% of units requirement, access which is off Huron Street, access to church parking which is not permitted, but there will be a sidewalk connection, occupancy plan which is 100% affordable, estimated occupancy date which is mid-2026, and how to apply which is that people can have their names put on a list now, with selection taking place in the months before building completion, and common areas amenities, which will include outdoor green space, and an indoor community room.

Federal and City Funding

Two important favorable developments have taken place. The project Request for Proposal (RFP) submitted to the City in January by Devonshire Consultants has been approved. This means that the project prequalifies to apply for the Federal Accelerator Fund for affordable housing. This allows for funding for projects which meet basic efficiency standards along with affordability and environmental criteria; this will allow for government contributions to grow to approximately \$120,000 per unit.

In addition, Devonshire Consultants advised that the federal seed money program for non-profit affordable housing projects, which had been cancelled last year, has been reinstated. This will allow for recovery of costs for professional services including architecture, planning, consulting, legal and accounting services, which may provide \$35,000 to \$50,000 in upfront savings, and up to an additional \$150,000 once construction begins.

We have been advised by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) that rents allowed for affordable housing projects they support have increased and construction costs have been decreasing. Both of these trends should benefit our project.

Check out our website at <https://ssvplondon.ca>

Check out our Facebook page at [\(20+\) Facebook](#)