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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Energy, Mines and Natural Gas  
and Minister Responsible for Housing

### **Province expands support to Streets to Homes**

VICTORIA – The B.C. Government is providing \$400,000 in annual funding to the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness to help people who are homeless find and maintain stable, affordable housing. The funding will be used to provide rent supplements for up to 103 individuals each year through the Streets to Homes (S2H) Program.

Using a ‘housing first’ approach, S2H works with people who have barriers such as poverty, mental health and/or substance use challenges, secure private market housing obtained through a comprehensive landlord support system. S2H provides the rent subsidy, as well as case planning and supports to help participants remain housed and become self-sufficient.

Now in its third year, S2H has already helped more than 130 people move directly from cyclical homelessness to stable housing since it began in June 2010.

The United Way of Greater Victoria provides funding for the Housing Support Workers’ that visit residents to connect them with community supports and ensure their housing situation is secure. The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness’ (Coalition) Leadership Council provides another 17 rent supplements.

The Province has funded 30 rent supplements under the program since it started and provided a one-time grant in 2012. The expanded support will be in place until April 1, 2013.

#### **Quotes:**

Rich Coleman, Minister of Energy, Mines and Natural Gas and Minister Responsible for Housing –“The Streets to Homes program has proven to be an effective way to move people from homelessness into secure housing and end the cycle of homelessness. We recognize how important it is to the community to continue this work.”

Ida Chong, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and MLA for Oak Bay-Gordon Head

“Housing is fundamental for people to feel safe and achieve stability in their lives. The Streets to Home program is a community effort that our government supports and strengthens Greater Victoria by helping to end homelessness.”

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Andrew Wynn-Williams, Executive Director of the Greater Victoria Coalition - "The Coalition's Housing Procurement Action Plan recommends 120 rent supplements for Streets to Homes. It has served more than 130 people and we want to ensure it can continue that great work to end homelessness."

Karyn French, Executive Director of Pacifica Housing - "Streets to Homes program is a true community partnership including the Coalition, the United Way of Greater Victoria, BC Housing and Rental Owners Management Society. We are so pleased the partnership continues to be behind the program and we can continue to find homes for the hardest to house."

### Quick Facts:

- In 2011/12 the B.C. government invested over \$41 million to support subsidized housing and rent supplements for more than 9,900 households in the Greater Victoria region. This includes providing support for more than 5,100 senior households and over 3,000 family households.
- Last year, more than 870 year-round emergency shelter spaces, subsidized housing units, and rent supplements were made available for those in Greater Victoria who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Managed by Pacifica Housing, Streets to Homes coordinates access to private market rentals, provides landlord support, coordinates community outreach, intake and follow-up supports
- From November 2009 to August 1, 2012, Streets to Homes has served 132 people experiencing homelessness; including:
  - 76 housed in private market housing
  - 11 housed in transitional or supportive housing

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