

News Release

July 10, 2020

22 new deeply affordable housing units open at 25 Leonard Ave.

Today, Mayor John Tory, along with Deputy Mayor Ana Bailão, (Ward 9 Davenport), Planning and Housing Committee Chair, Councillor Mike Layton (Ward 11 University-Rosedale) and Chairman Emeritus of Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), Phil Rubinoff, joined staff from St. Clare's Multifaith Housing Society to celebrate the opening of 22 new affordable housing units at 25 Leonard Ave.

The new rental units are owned and operated by St. Clare's and are purpose built to support people experiencing homelessness. They are studio apartments with a washroom, kitchen and combined sleeping/living space. Tenants will also have access to shared facilities including laundry and other programming space. The City of Toronto is providing rent supplements that will allow the units to rent at approximately 50 per cent of average market rent (about \$524 per month).

The addition of the new 22 units cost \$5.4 million to construct and was funded as follows:

- St. Clare's: \$3.8 million equity and mortgage financing.
- RESCON: \$1 million via a fundraising effort that resulted in 21 donors from the construction and infrastructure sectors.
- The City of Toronto: \$500,000 capital grant plus fee waivers and property tax exemptions through the Open Door Program and a \$150,000 development grant.

The apartments are part of an intensification project, built on a small strip of land that was formerly a parking lot next to an existing 77-unit affordable housing building owned and managed by St. Clare's in the Kensington Market neighbourhood. The new three-storey building features durable and attractive construction materials. A key highlight of the building is the laser-cut, steel railing panels that were created based on art from local artists Margaux Smith and Leo Krukowski. The art installation reflects the community and also signifies the strong connection the community has with the tenants of the existing building and their desire to welcome their new neighbours.

High resolution images and b-roll of the new housing can be found in the City's online Media Room: <https://www.toronto.ca/home/media-room/video-b-roll-images/25-leonard-ave-b-roll-images/>.

Quotes:

"The success of this project demonstrates what can be achieved when we come together to address housing in our city. Housing is vitally important, but we can't do it alone, which is why the HousingTO Action Plan commits to implementation through partnerships and

collaboration – exactly as what we see here with St. Clare’s, RESCON and the City of Toronto. I want to thank all of our partners for bringing this project to life and for helping us provide stable, affordable housing for vulnerable residents in our city.”

- Mayor John Tory

“We’re moving forward on our commitment to ensure that Toronto is a place where families and individuals can live in safe, well-maintained and affordable housing. This project will change the lives of 22 people, giving them safe and permanent homes. This is one of many examples across the City where we are welcoming new neighbours as we collectively realize the right to housing for all residents.”

- Deputy Mayor Ana Bailão, (Ward 9 Davenport), Planning and Housing Committee Chair

“Providing, stable supportive housing to those experiencing chronic homelessness is just the right thing to do. It’s been a pleasure to work alongside St. Clare’s and to see the development of these 22 new units. You can count on me to continue to work alongside neighbours in Kensington Market to build more affordable housing, and to protect the affordable units that exist.”

- Councillor Mike Layton (Ward 11 University-Rosedale)

“As the former councillor for this area, the 25 Leonard Avenue project has been important to me from the very beginning. I am so happy to have been able to support the creation of these new affordable housing units and to know that there will soon be 22 new tenants living in a safe, supportive and affordable home. The COVID-19 crisis has shown just how critical access to affordable housing is to our health – you can’t follow public health advice to stay home if you don’t have one. As Chair of the Board of Health, I know that projects like 25 Leonard will help improve the health of individuals experiencing homeless and the community as a whole.”

- Councillor Joe Cressy (Ward 10 Spadina-Fort York), Chair of the Board of Health

“The project highlights the capacity of the non-profit sector to contribute to housing supply and affordability, but would not have been possible without the support of the City, RESCON and private sector donors, and our wonderful Kensington Market neighbours. We hope this sets the stage for future collaborations. Homelessness is a solvable problem, and we can do this together. We are relieved that our construction team was able to get the structure finished in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a time when it is particularly clear just how important housing is.”

- Andrea Adams, Executive Director, St. Clare’s Multifaith Housing Society

“I am delighted to see this project come to fruition and I am especially proud that residential builders and developers, construction associations and labour unions were able to come together with St. Clare’s to help tackle homelessness in Toronto. The St. Clare’s venture is now also inspiring developers and landlords in other communities.”

- Richard Lyall, President, RESCON

St. Clare's Multifaith Housing Society

St. Clare's is a charitable organization that provides affordable mixed-income housing in downtown Toronto. Tenants represent a cross-section of Toronto's diversity. St. Clare's was formed in 1998 by people who knew that the only way to end homelessness was to build affordable housing. Their buildings are located within a geographical area that enables the organization to closely supervise and implement the best property management and tenant support practises. St. Clare's innovative approach and vision in securing the property, financing, and resources has worked to build 177 units of 'geared to income' housing and facilitate collaborations with developers to build another 190 new units, committing to the creation of a mixed income community that offers affordable and adequate space for families and those in the shelter system.

RESCON and project donors

RESCON is Ontario's leading association of residential builders committed to providing leadership and fostering innovation in the industry. Donors to the project included: Aspen Ridge; Brown Group; Carpenters Local 27; Carpenters Local 675; Empire; Great Gulf; Greenpark Homes; Heavy Construction Association of Toronto; Hullmark; Laurier Homes; Liberty Development; Lifetime; Lindvest; LiUNA Local 183; LiUNA Ontario Provincial District Council; Mattamy Homes; Menkes; Ontario Formwork Association; RESCON; Silvercore Properties; Sorbara Group; Tridel; and Yorkwood.

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