

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 13, 2025**

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### **Leeds and Grenville Selected for National Homelessness Reduction Innovation Fund**

BROCKVILLE, ON - The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville has been named one of the first communities in Canada to receive funding through the Homelessness Reduction Innovation Fund (HRIF), a national initiative supported by the Government of Canada and the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness.


The announcement was made by federal Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Gregor Robertson during the National Conference on Ending Homelessness in Montreal on October 30, 2025. Leeds and Grenville's project is among a select group chosen to pilot innovative approaches aimed at reducing homelessness across the country.

On Thursday, November 13, an official opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the John Howard Society's Pathways Cabin Program expansion, which includes the addition of 24 new supportive housing units located in the adjacent building. The expansion has been made possible through an \$830,000 grant from HRIF, which supports targeted, data-informed projects that help communities reduce homelessness and promote sustainable housing solutions.

In February 2025, 25 supportive cabins opened at 1805 County Road 2 East in Brockville, ON, providing transitional housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. Adjacent to these cabins, a former dormitory-style building has now been transformed into an additional 24 supportive housing units, extending the range of care. The program will provide ongoing stabilization supports for individuals progressing from the supportive cabins toward greater independence and long-term housing stability.

The focus of this project is to increase successful move-ins and support a step-by-step progression for individuals experiencing homelessness toward independent housing stability. With the existing partnership with the John Howard Society's cabin program, this initiative creates a natural progression for residents who have demonstrated readiness to transition from the supportive cabins to less intensive supportive units.

Residents will receive supports focused on building essential life skills, including cooking and grocery shopping, obtaining personal identification, employment readiness and job search assistance, financial literacy and money management, anger management and conflict resolution, and addiction recovery and wellness supports. These skill-building opportunities will foster confidence, independence, and readiness for long-term housing success.

A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of a curved, overlapping shape in shades of maroon and teal.

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The HRIF investment aligns with the Counties' 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, "United in Housing Solutions for All," which aims to create 150 supportive housing units over the next decade. With this project, the Counties will achieve 49 units in the first year—33 percent of the overall goal. Officials also acknowledged the City of Brockville for providing the building and waiving lease costs for two years, making the expansion possible.

Local leaders believe the project will not only transform lives in Leeds and Grenville but also serve as a model for communities across Canada.

### Quotes

"Through partnering with organizations like the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, the federal government is taking bold action to reduce homelessness in communities across the country – including in Leeds and Grenville. I'm looking forward to seeing the positive impact this project has as one of the first communities in Canada to receive funding through the Homelessness Reduction Innovation Fund." - **The Honourable Gregor Robertson, Minister of Housing and Infrastructure**

"This community has shown an unwillingness to sit idly by while people in our community struggle. I want to thank everyone who has made an effort to advocate for those who need strong advocates," said **Michael Barrett, MP for Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands-Rideau Lakes**. "I have taken many opportunities to ask Parliamentary Secretaries and Federal Ministers responsible for this funding for our community because I know it will be delivered with great excellence."

"Today's announcement continues to build on the pillars of our local homelessness plan. This includes the Cabins to provide a safe place to escape life on the street, the HART Hub for treatment and recovery, and now, transitional housing with wrap-around supports to set individuals up for long-term success," said **Steve Clark, MPP for Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes**. "I'm pleased that the federal government is on board as a partner with Ontario and our local municipalities as we continue collaborating to support the most vulnerable in our community."

"Today, we celebrate the addition of 24 new supportive housing units in this building, a former dormitory that has been transformed into a space of hope and opportunity. This expansion is about more than adding housing units, it's about creating a path to independence. It builds on the success of the supportive cabins and offers residents the next step toward stability." - **Corinna Smith-Gatcke, Warden of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville**

"As we all know, homelessness exists in every community, but what really matters is how we respond to that. Here in Brockville, we're responding with care, creativity, and community as a whole. This project is about so much more than a building; it's about dignity and hope, and the belief that

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everyone deserves a safe place to call home and a fair chance to rebuild their lives." - **Katherine Hobbs, Councilor for the City of Brockville**

"Here in Leeds and Grenville, your real-time, by-name data tells a powerful story-tracking who becomes homeless, how long they experience it, who moves into permanent housing, and who returns to homelessness. Your coordinated efforts are helping more people find and keep a home efficiently and effectively.," said **Amanda DiFalco, Senior Director of Strategy and People, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness**. "We're so proud to partner with the United Counties to repurpose and create 24 new supportive housing units-24 new homes for people experiencing chronic homelessness, paired with the supports they need to rebuild their lives."

"Today marks not just the expansion of a program, but the deepening of our commitment to dignity, hope, and the belief that everyone deserves a safe place to call home," said **Robyn Holmes, Assistant Executive Director, John Howard Society of Kingston and District**. "As we open this next phase, we reaffirm our commitment to addressing homelessness in Leeds and Grenville, not with temporary fixes, but with sustainable, supportive pathways forward."

### **About HRIF**

The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) and the Government of Canada are partnering with communities like ours to meaningfully reduce homelessness through the Homelessness Reduction Innovation Fund (HRIF). HRIF projects are rooted in local realities and take a groundbreaking, data-driven approach to continuously improve results.

Through HRIF, communities identify opportunities to reduce homelessness using local, real-time data and get the chance to test those ideas. That includes improving systems for groups of people who most often fall through the cracks. Our community will work with CAEH throughout the project to monitor progress, adjust where needed, and share what we learn with other communities.

Local projects will lay the foundation for national progress toward ending homelessness. As HRIF communities share real-time data and lessons, CAEH will share successful approaches nationally.

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