



NEWS RELEASE

Mustard Seed Affordable Housing appeal welcomes new chair

Calgary, Alberta (September 16, 2009) - One of Calgary's best-known business leaders will spearhead the drive to raise capital for a leading initiative to permanently address homelessness in Calgary.

Today Pat Nixon, chief executive officer of The Mustard Seed announces that Dan Gaynor has been appointed to chair the campaign to raise \$20 million in gifts from the private sector -- part of a \$72 million initiative that will create 224 units of affordable, supportive housing in Calgary's Beltline district.

"When you have a vision for major permanent change, you go after people with big hearts and big dreams," said Nixon. "Dan Gaynor is one of the people who give our city its reputation for vision and philanthropy. We simply couldn't have found anyone more qualified or committed to head up this important work."

Gaynor is best known for his years as publisher and president of the Calgary Herald, and also led newspapers from Kingston, ON to Edmonton. Gaynor also served as Chair of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, and has taken volunteer leadership positions with organizations including the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the United Way.

"Calgary has a desperate need for affordable housing," Gaynor said. "Compassion compels all caring Calgarians to act. The Mustard Seed has the experience and capacity to make this development work. This is the right model, in the hands of the right people, at the right time. I am in this project, start to finish, heart and soul."

Two years of planning led to a highly refined design, as well as broadly supported Good Neighbour Agreements all around the location at 10th Ave and Centre Street. In March 2009, the Calgary Planning Commission gave the go-ahead to begin construction of the 19-story apartment building.

The building will include street-level retail spaces, offices, meeting rooms available to the community, and 224 self-contained apartments. Integral to the design are facilities for The Mustard Seed to deliver sustained programs to help the 224 residents permanently change their lives. Use of alcohol will be prohibited. Rents will be set at 10 - 20 per cent below market rental rates for Calgary.

"We're all feeling a new surge of energy in the development now that Dan's on board," said Nixon. "Calgarians are going to be hearing a lot from us in the coming years, until we open our doors in 2012."

The announcement of Gaynor's involvement comes in the midst of Calgary's Homeless Awareness Week, drawing attention to long-term solutions that make a lasting difference to thousands of men, women and children living with no safe place to call 'home.'

The Mustard Seed development has already received substantial funding commitments from the provincial Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, and garnered public support from Police Chief Rick Hanson and area alderman John Mar.

-30-

For more information:

Courtney Fliss, Communications

The Mustard Seed

Cell: 403-615-1263

Email: courtneyfliss@theseed.ca