



PRESS KIT:

TBDSSAB Capital Projects Announcement

April 23, 2026
Thunder Bay, Ontario

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Media Release

TBDSSAB announces capital projects with community partners

April 23, 2026 – The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) is announcing capital investments in transitional housing and homelessness prevention.

Minister Rob Flack and MPP Kevin Holland made the announcement today in Thunder Bay, with representatives present from TBDSSAB and funded organizations.

These projects are funded through the province’s Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) and its one-time Encampment Response Initiative (ERI) funding to expand shelter capacity and create alternative emergency accommodation for people in encampments. The Province provides HPP funding annually to Ontario’s 47 municipal service managers for affordable housing and support services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Five organizations have received capital funding from TBDSSAB through HPP or ERI funding. The combined total for all projects is \$10.7 million and will add 66 transitional housing units and 120 shelter spaces to the local service system.

| Funded Organization | HPP | ERI |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Urban Abbey to retrofit 46 transitional housing units in a purchased property on Simpson Street. | \$3,786,000 | |
| PACE to retrofit 13 transitional housing units in a purchased property on George Street. | \$1,900,000 | |
| Teen Challenge to retrofit 7 transitional housing units in a purchased property on Johnson Ave. | \$1,202,124 | |
| City of Thunder Bay to create a temporary shelter village in Thunder Bay with 80 units. | | \$2,768,623 |
| Grace Place to expand emergency shelter capacity for a total of 40 spaces in their existing location. | \$50,000* | \$1,000,000 |
| TOTAL | \$6,938,124 | \$3,768,623 |

**Funded via HPP Operating*

For the 2025-26 fiscal year, TBDSSAB received \$16.5M in Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) funding through the province. Through HPP, TBDSSAB funds multiple homelessness prevention initiatives, including supportive housing, community outreach and support services, housing assistance and emergency shelter solutions.

Including today's announcement, TBDSSAB has made capital investments to support the creation of over 320 transitional-long-term and supportive housing spaces since 2019 through provincial and joint federal-provincial funding streams.

Quotes

- "We are working with our municipal partners to get more emergency and supportive housing built across the province, including in Northern communities like Thunder Bay, to help prevent and alleviate homelessness. A key part of our plan to protect Ontario is giving vulnerable people the support they need to secure safe, stable housing."

- Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

"The projects announced today aim to meet unhoused individuals where they are, at different points on their path toward stable housing. We are grateful to the Ontario government for trusting us with capital funding for projects like these, and to our community partners for stepping up to address the needs in our community."

- Jim Vezina, Board Chair, TBDSSAB

- "Urban Abbey is so thankful to receive the funding and support to create 46 transitional housing apartment units in the former historic Adanac Hotel. Without the critical support of the Ontario government and collaboration with the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, such projects would not be possible. We look forward to offering these units to those who are on housing wait lists, in the shelter system, and to those who are in encampments."

- Scotland Morrison, Urban Abbey

- "PACE Management and our Board of Directors are very grateful for the funding that we have received, which has enabled us to retrofit the building that we acquired at 409 George Street. Our units will give people in recovery a place to live that they can be proud of while they transition into permanent housing. We are very proud to say that we have already housed 10 people who were living at Shelter House, Salvation Army, and the encampments."

- Georgina McKinnon, Executive Director, PACE

- “Through this investment, we are able to take a significant step forward in expanding addiction recovery services in Northwestern Ontario. This project will increase access to safe, structured support for individuals seeking freedom from addiction while also strengthening the network of care available to families and the broader community. We are seeing firsthand the growing need for accessible, long-term recovery options, and this funding allows us to respond with both urgency and purpose. We are grateful to the Ontario government and the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board for recognizing the importance of this work and for partnering with us to bring real, lasting change. This is about restoring lives, rebuilding families, and creating healthier communities for generations to come.”
- **Daniel Emond, President and CEO Adult & Teen Challenge of Central Canada Inc.**
- “The Temporary Shelter Village is a modular bridge housing initiative designed to support people experiencing homelessness and reduce encampments in our community. This funding supports the City of Thunder Bay’s Enhanced Encampment Response Plan and will help create pathways out of homelessness, while enhancing community safety and well-being for all.”
- **Rilee Willianen, Supervisor – Encampment Response, City of Thunder Bay**
- “Grace Place is grateful to the Ontario government and the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board for providing the funds to enable this project. The expansion has enabled us to provide more shelter spaces and much needed supports to those who need it the most.”
- **Melody Macsemchuk, Grace Place**

Related News

- April 23, 2026: [Ontario Newsroom, Ontario Building More Supportive and Emergency Housing in Thunder Bay](#)
- November 17, 2025: [TBDSSAB’s HPP investment plan aims to keep people out of the cold](#)
- January 27, 2025: [Ontario Investing in Housing to Move Vulnerable People Out of Encampments](#)

Media Contact

Larissa Jones, Communications Assistant, Larissa.Jones@tbdssab.ca, 807-766-4704

Project Details

Urban Abbey Transitional Housing Project

Project Details

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| TBDSSAB Investment | \$3,786,000 |
| Via funding program | HPP |
| Investment Category | Transitional Housing |
| # Spaces | 46 |
| Location | 227 Simpson Street, Thunder Bay |
| Capital Project Type | Retrofit |

Urban Abbey intends on creating 46 Transitional Housing units on the second and third floor of the former historic Adanac Hotel, as well as providing Day Programming and Meal Services for our Transitional clients and those who use the Shelter system.

About Urban Abbey

Urban Abbey, local non-profit, specializing in Emergency Sheltering, Transitional Housing, and Food Security, aspiring to neighbourhood transformation of the Simpson Street area in Thunder Bay.

Website: www.urbanabbey.ca

Media Contact

Scotland Morrison, Urban Abbey, Head of Staff
807-633-3052, scotland_morrison@hotmail.com

PACE Transitional Housing Project

Project Details

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| TBDSSAB Investment | \$1,900,000 |
| Via funding program | HPP |
| Investment Category | Transitional Housing |
| # Spaces | 13 |
| Location | 409 George Street, Thunder Bay |
| Capital Project Type | Retrofit |

Through HPP, \$1.9 million is being invested to help create 13 transitional supportive housing units in Thunder Bay. The transitional supportive housing project will create homes for 13 individuals in a renovated apartment building. Priority will be given to those who have experienced chronic homelessness. The proponent, the charitable organization People Advocating for Change Through Empowerment (PACE), will provide 24/7 supports. The homes are nearby a transit hub, and health and social services including the newly developed HART Hub. Residents will have access to life skills and daily living supports as well as employment readiness support.

About PACE

Since 1989, P.A.C.E. (People Advocating for Change through Empowerment) has empowered individuals with lived experience of mental health challenges. P.A.C.E. provides peer support in 5 communities in the District of Thunder Bay, including within the TBRHSC Adult Mental Health unit and Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine (RAAM) clinics, supporting positive change and empowerment.

Website: www.pacenwo.ca

Media Contact

Georgina McKinnon, Executive Director, peoplechange@tbaytel.net

Teen Challenge Transitional Housing Project

Project Details

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| TBDSSAB Investment | \$1,202,124 |
| Via funding program | HPP |
| Investment Category | Transitional Housing |
| # Spaces | 7 |
| Location | 107 Johnson Ave, Thunder Bay |
| Capital Project Type | Retrofit |

Adult & Teen Challenge is launching a capital project in Thunder Bay to address the urgent need for safe, affordable transitional housing. Expanding our site at 107 Johnson Avenue, the project will create seven units—four 1-bedroom, two 2-bedroom, and one 3-bedroom—along with a group meeting space. This initiative strengthens addiction recovery services across Northwestern Ontario by increasing access to structured, supportive housing. In partnership with MMAH and TBDSSAB, we are responding to the growing demand for long-term recovery options, helping restore lives, rebuild families, and build healthier communities for the future.

About Teen Challenge

Adult & Teen Challenge is a world leader in providing freedom from addiction through a holistic model of recovery that addresses the body, mind, and spirit. Our programs are built on the belief that transformation is possible for anyone who seeks help.

We offer a full continuum of recovery, beginning with first-point-of-contact support, crisis referrals, and community-based outpatient services and support groups. For those requiring more intensive care, Adult & Teen Challenge operates in-residence programs where individuals participate in life skills development, vocational training, personal and group studies through an individualized plan of care to find freedom.

Website: www.teenchallenge.tc

Media Contact

Pastor Daniel Emond, President/CEO
204-949-9484 ext. 320, info@teenchallenge.tc

City of Thunder Bay Temporary Shelter Village Project

Project Details

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| TBDSSAB Investment | \$2,768,623 |
| Via funding program | ERI (Encampment Response Initiative) |
| # Spaces | 80 shelter spaces |
| Location | 879 Alloy Place, Thunder Bay |
| Capital Project Type | New Build |

The City of Thunder Bay’s Temporary Shelter Village is a modular bridge housing initiative designed to help people experiencing homelessness transition into stable housing. Featuring 80 private, climate-controlled units with beds and locking doors, the Village provides safety, dignity, and access to essential services including food, hygiene, laundry, and 24/7 staff support. As part of the City’s Enhanced Encampment Response Action Plan, the Village takes a human-rights-based approach to reduce harms, improve community safety and well-being for all, and create clear pathways out of homelessness and into housing.

Website: www.thunderbay.ca/en/city-services/temporary-shelter-village.aspx

Media Contact

Michelle Williams, Manager – Communications & Public Relations, 807-627-2446

Grace Place Emergency Shelter Expansion Project

Project Details

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| TBDSSAB Investment | \$ 1,000,000 | \$50,000 |
| Via funding program | ERI (Encampment Response Initiative) | HPP |
| Investment Category | Emergency Shelter | |
| # Spaces | 40 shelter spaces | |
| Location | 235 Simpson Street, Thunder Bay | |
| Capital Project Type | Retrofit | |

Meeting the increasing need in the community for shelter spaces and support for the marginalized and the unhoused, Grace Place has expanded its space. Grace Place will increase its overnight emergency shelter beds and supports through the Out of the Cold program which operates from October 1 to April 30. The extra space will also increase room for their Community Meal and Drop-In. Grace Place served over 60, 000 meals last year and anticipate with increased space to host more community initiatives geared to the unhoused population and address the many complexities of addiction issues within its clientele.

Background

Grace Place began in 2008 in the downtown south core of Thunder Bay with the vision of providing a safe haven to those facing homelessness in the community. Today that vision remains strong, as Grace Place continues to serve as a community hub providing stability and support for many needing an extra helping hand. It is often difficult for people on a fixed income to meet their basic needs; Grace Place seeks to ease the burden of finding shelter, food and services. Since 2008, thousands have come through the door to find a warm place to gather, a safe place to sleep and a hot meal.

Website: www.graceplacethunderbay.com

Media Contact

Gary Macsemchuk, 807-620-1833, macsemch@confederationc.on.ca

Downloads: Digital Assets Folder

[Click here to download Digital Assets folder \(.zip\)](#). Or scan:

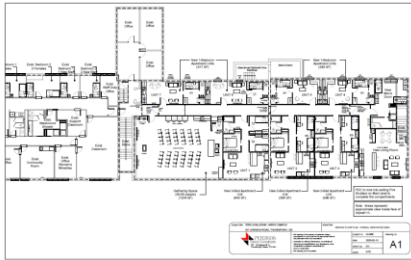


<https://bit.ly/2026-04-23-TBDSSAB-Capital>

Project Images (in Digital Assets folder)



Urban Abbey 227 Simpson Street project floor plans



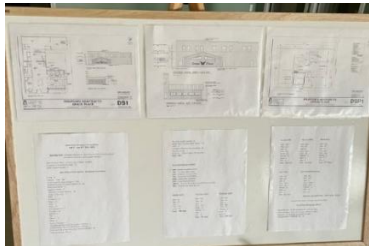
Teen Challenge transitional housing floor plans



PACE Thunder Bay, 409 George Street



City of Thunder Bay shelter village design renderings



Grace Place expansion project renderings



Media Event Photo. In this photo (left to right):

Ken Ranta, CEO, TBDSSAB
Ken Boshcoff, Mayor of Thunder Bay
Jim Vezina, Board Chair, TBDSSAB
Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs
and Housing
MPP Kevin Holland
Scotland Morrison, Urban Abbey
Pastor Daniel Emond, Teen Challenge
Melody Macsemchuk, Grace Place
Rilee Willianen, City of Thunder Bay
Gary Macsemchuk, Grace Place
Georgina McKinnon, PACE

Background

About TBDSSAB

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) supports people to improve their lives and become self-sufficient. We do this as the service system manager for vital, quality social services needed by individuals and families living in the District of Thunder Bay—including child care and early years, community housing, homelessness prevention programs—and through the delivery of Ontario Works.

Visit the TBDSSAB website for more information at www.tbdssab.ca.

About HPP

The Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) is a provincially funded program that supports Ontario's 47 municipal service managers to provide affordable housing and support services for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The objective of the program is to support service managers in preventing, addressing and reducing homelessness, including chronic homelessness.

Service managers receive funding from the province through the Homelessness Prevention Program to develop and deliver programs and supports to address homelessness that best meet local needs.

Eligible Uses of HPP Funds

Under HPP, service managers can create their own local programs under four broad service categories: Emergency Shelter Solutions, Supportive Housing, Community Outreach and Support Services, and Housing Assistance.¹

Service Managers may also use HPP funding towards capital expenditures to support the creation and renewal of supportive housing and emergency shelters. Service managers are required to complete an annual investment plan outlining how they plan to use their HPP allocations each year for ministry approval.

¹ Government of Ontario: Addressing homelessness, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/addressing-homelessness>