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Jane-Finch to become new community model Greenwin Property Management leads revitalization project



Deanne Cameron/The Toronto Star

(Left to right) Stephanie Payne, Coordinator of the San Romanoway Revitalization Association; Former Toronto Mayor Barbara Hall; Kevin Green (Chair of Revitalization Board); Don Hull (VP Marketing, Greenwin); Jean Augustine, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women) and MP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore and Maria Augimeri, Toronto City Councillor, York Centre - Ward 9. Together they announced the \$1.3 million funding of a three-year plan to reduce crime and revitalize the troubled Jane and Finch community.

Recently, local children and their parents sat together with community and business leaders gathered on the newly resurfaced tennis courts of The Palisades, an apartment complex in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood, to hear details of an announcement 18 months in the making.

Among those gathered to hear the announcement, were representatives of Greenwin Property Management Inc., who manage three of the four facilities at San Romanoway at the northeast corner of Jane-Finch in North York.

They came to hear the Hon. Jean Augustine, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women) and MP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, reveal details of a \$300,000 federal grant, which combined with \$1 million in private money, will fund a three-year plan to reduce crime and revitalize the troubled community.

The Federal grant is being awarded to the San Romanoway Revitalization Association. The not-for-profit association was created and initially funded by the buildings' manager, Greenwin Property Management Inc, the properties' owners including Residential Equities Real Estate Investment Trust (RESREIT) and others, more than two years ago, for residents of the Jane-Finch complex.

Once dubbed "Canada's worst community" by Prime Minister Jean Chretien, the neighbourhood has a high youth unemployment rate and has seen a recent rise in youth related crime.

Under the leadership of its full-time Coordinator, Stephanie Payne, Association volunteers from the area provide social and cultural enrichment programs to children and families living in the three buildings on San Romanoway, with the support of government, local police, private partners, residents, building ownership and management.

"With the support of the Federal Government, community residents and our partners we are working together to revitalize our community," said Payne. "This project demonstrates that effective partnerships are key to creating safe, sustainable communities. The vision of Greenwin, RESREIT and others and the support of all levels of government is helping us meet

our goals." As a founding member of the Association, the project's guiding principles mirror the commitment of Canada's largest property manager to its communities.

"At Greenwin, we believe that property management means community management," says Larry Popofsky, CEO Greenwin Property Management Inc. "Right from the start we had a vision for what this community could be, and working with committed ownership and the buildings' residents, we have begun the revitalization process."

This process includes improvements to the lighting, landscaping, and interiors of the site's buildings (which include a community centre managed by Greenwin). It also includes improved security measures across the complex and a decision to help fund youth programs to improve the overall quality of life for its 4,400 people, particularly for San Romanoway's 2,000 children and youth.

The Federal grant monies will go towards the planned social programs for the neighbourhood, while the site's physical improvements are the responsibility of the association's private sector partners, like Greenwin and RESREIT.

"We believe that building owners, association boards and property managers have a responsibility to their residents," says Popofsky. "Today, we have a duty to find committed partners, be they residents, government or local business, who together with ownership and management will work towards creating healthy, vibrant communities."

"We believe that the San Romanoway Revitalization will become a model for owners, property managers and residents that can be applied to communities right across the country."