



Painting by Caitrin MacNeil, oil on canvas, 2023

# Rapid Housing Initiative:

## WINTER 2024 UPDATE

The Rapid Housing Initiative is a 25-unit, deeply affordable supportive housing development being built for individuals who are precariously housed in our community. It is being constructed in Sydney and will be owned by New Dawn Enterprises and operated by the Ally Centre of Cape Breton. This quarterly newsletter is to keep our Northend neighbours and the general public informed about the development's progress.



To access the project's website for monthly updates, resources and educational materials, please follow this QR code.

Interested in connecting with us? Feel free to contact the RHI Project Manager at: [cdonatelli@newdawn.ca](mailto:cdonatelli@newdawn.ca).



**New Dawn**  
Enterprises



**Ally Centre**  
OF CAPE BRETON



# PROJECT RECAP

Since our last update to the community in October 2023, please see below to learn about exciting advancements in the project.

## Design:

You may notice that our renders look slightly different than the last version we released. The team continues to make decisions on the aesthetics for the building. The newest renders reflect the refinement of these aesthetic choices.

You may also notice that the solar panels are no longer showing on the building's roof. Not to worry, the building will still be net zero. The solar for the building will likely come from a new off-site solar array that New Dawn is planning to build. We are currently conducting a feasibility study to determine how this array can provide affordable, renewable energy for the tenants of New Dawn's buildings and to low-income households in the community. If you are interested in learning more about energy poverty, visit this link: <https://newdawn.ca/2024/01/10/energy-poverty-and-an-equitable-transition/>.

## Build:

After receiving permit approval, construction began in November 2023. The on-site work has focused on groundwork and site preparation, with insulated concrete forms in place, plumbing laid, foundation poured, and considerable grading and gravel work completed. Off site, Eastcut is building the panelized walls and floors in their Trenton, NS factory. We thank you for your patience and understanding if there are any disruptions from the panel delivery, scheduled in March and April.

## Programming & Support:

Both the Ally Centre and New Dawn have finalized our operating agreements with the Department of Community Services (DCS). We thank DCS for their commitment to make sure the tenants of the RHI building will have access to the staffing, supports, and deeply affordable housing they need.

We also have been reviewing resources and having valuable conversations with other supportive housing providers on mainland Nova Scotia and across Canada to learn from their best practices to shape our own operating approach.

Snapshot of  
the site as of  
February 2024





*Painting by Loretta Gould, Seven Sacred Teachings of Indigenous Peoples, 2021*

## LOOKING FORWARD

See below for what we expect around the project over the next few months.

### Design:

With the finalization of tenders, we will look to conclude any further adjustments on the building's design. We anticipate making additional decisions on aesthetic choices as orders are placed.

Renown Mi'kmaw artist Loretta Gould will also be hard at work, offsite, creating the mural that will live on the York and Charlotte Street corner of the building. We cannot wait to share this beautiful piece of work with the public when the time comes. If you are unfamiliar with Loretta's work, the image above is one from a series of her paintings we are proud to display in the Eltuek Arts Centre.

### Build:

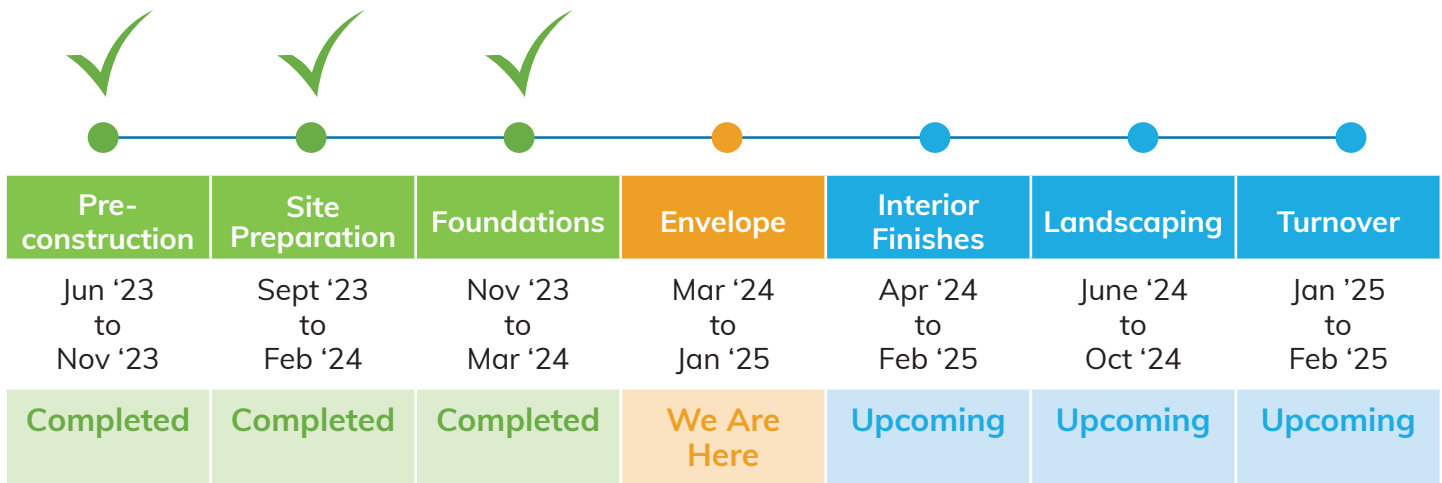
Once the panels are assembled on site, work on the building's interior and exterior can begin in earnest.

To tie in the building to existing CBRM sewer and water infrastructure, it will be necessary for the construction team to have the section of Charlotte Street between York and Nepean Streets closed for a couple of weeks in late spring. We thank you for your patience and understanding with this disruption, especially in light of all the work that has occurred on Charlotte Street recently. We are happy to report this is the only time in the project we anticipate needing to have any street closures.

### Programming & Support:

New Dawn and the Ally Centre are exploring the possibility of creating a supportive training and employment program for interested residents of the RHI building. We have learned from other service providers and government partners that once individuals are housed, and their day-to-day needs met, they may have a renewed interest in training and employment. Over the next few months, we hope to identify what is possible through an exploratory partnership between New Dawn, the Ally Centre, the YMCA/NS Works, DCS, and other community and government partners.





To access the project's website for monthly updates, resources and educational materials, please follow this QR code.

Want to sign up to receive the RHI Quarterly Newsletter online? Just follow this QR Code to get on our electronic newsletter mailing list.



### Interested in connecting with us?

Please feel free to contact the RHI Project Manager at: [cdonatelli@newdawn.ca](mailto:cdonatelli@newdawn.ca).

Thank you to the Province of Nova Scotia for their support in making this newsletter possible.

