

## Support for rough sleepers another step closer

**Wednesday 12 January 2022**

The City of Melbourne's Make Room project is now more than halfway to its funding goal, thanks to a \$1.75 million philanthropic grant from The Ian Potter Foundation.

Council has now secured \$11.75 million for the \$20 million project, following other funding commitments from the Victorian Government and Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation.

The Make Room project will convert a Council-owned building at 602 Little Bourke Street into safe and supported housing for people experiencing homelessness.

Unison Housing will refurbish and manage the property, which will offer up to 50 studio apartments alongside communal living areas, housing and homelessness services, a social enterprise and wraparound support for residents.

The City of Melbourne will provide the building worth \$7.45 million and has allocated \$365,000 to begin the refit. The project will create more than 70 jobs in construction, and dozens of ongoing roles when the accommodation is open.

Early works are scheduled to begin in March, with accommodation and services open in 2023.

### **Attributable to Lord Mayor Sally Capp**

"The Ian Potter Foundation has improved the lives of many Melburnians, and I want to thank them for their generous contribution to our Make Room project – we've now received more than 60 per cent of the funding we need to make our vision a reality," the Lord Mayor said.

"Make Room will have a real impact on the lives of many Melburnians. Everybody deserves a home, and this project will directly assist those in need with the difficult transition to permanent housing."

"We are getting on with refurbishing 602 Little Bourke Street while we continue discussions with potential donors. I encourage corporates and charities to stand with us as we look to support some of our most vulnerable residents."

### **Attributable to Health, Wellbeing and Belonging portfolio lead Councillor Dr Olivia Ball**

"With some 300 people homeless in the inner city and 60 to 90 people sleeping rough on any given night, there's an urgent need for emergency accommodation as a step towards finding somewhere safe and secure to live long-term," Cr Dr Ball said.

"Council's 'housing first' approach recognises that people need somewhere to live before causes of homelessness can be addressed."

"Local government cannot solve homelessness alone, and we thank the Ian Potter Foundation for backing this project."

# MEDIA RELEASE



## **Attributable to Chairman of The Ian Potter Foundation, Charles Goode AC**

“The Ian Potter Foundation is very proud to support Make Room. The Foundation supports initiatives that address the factors that contribute to people becoming homeless, through to intervention strategies that provide people experiencing homelessness with much-needed support to assist them to transition into longer term housing.”

## **Attributable to Unison Housing CEO James King**

“Unison is honoured to receive such a significant grant from the Ian Potter Foundation towards the Make Room project which will reduce disadvantage and social exclusion, and deliver benefits to the entire community.”