

Shipping container homes tackle Canada's lack of housing supply

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Shipping containers that once sat in junkyards have been given new life as they're used as the building blocks for homes across Canada.

In Canada's competitive housing market, shipping containers are being used to help offset the lack of supply in some markets and improve [affordability](#) by using inexpensive materials.

In Vancouver, non-profit Atira Women's Resource Society, BC Hydro and other partners teamed up to create the country's first social housing development created out of decommissioned shipping containers. The three-storey housing development in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside offers 12 units that are 280 to 290 square feet and some with great views since it's located across the Port of Vancouver.

One resident's studio unit comes with floor-to-ceiling windows, hardwood floors, an in-suite washer and dryer, kitchen and a private bathroom.

The cost of building the project is much more inexpensive at \$82,500 per unit compared to \$220,000 per unit for a concrete housing project, [Atira Women's Resource Society chief executive told the Vancouver Sun](#).

"Once you put the containers on site and secure them, the construction is really similar to other forms of housing," Atira Women's Resource Society chief executive told the *Vancouver Sun*.

"We spray-foam insulated everything and put up drywall, and as you can see, it's not significantly different than any other apartment you might see anywhere else in Vancouver."

But one of the biggest issues the project faced was dealing with the misperceptions of living in a shipping container building. Some people expected that living in a shipping container will be cold and similar to a dungeon and while it might look modern on the outside since they're made out of high-grade steel, the home's interior is similar to any other apartment.

The shipping residence is in such high demand that the non-profit proposed a larger seven-storey project which will be built in Vancouver's Strathcona neighbourhood and have 26 units. The monthly rent for the unit is expected to be \$570 per month for women and children, [Atira's chief executive told Global News](#). The building is expected to be made up of 90 shipping containers with the non-profit hoping construction will begin sometime this year. Shipping container properties may

also be built near Tofino, B.C., and in Alberta.

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