

News Release | Communiqué

Winnipeg Housing and
Homelessness Initiative



Programme Logement et
Sans-abri de Winnipeg

Canada

Manitoba



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON AFFORDABLE NEW INFILL HOUSING IN WINNIPEG

WINNIPEG – OCTOBER 23, 2001 – Families with low and moderate-incomes in the Lord Selkirk and Spence neighbourhoods will soon benefit from affordable, energy-efficient infill housing to be built in Winnipeg's inner city. The project is being made possible by the help of close to \$550,000 in funding assistance from the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI), and the Winnipeg Development Agreement (WDA).

Participating in today's sod turning ceremony were: Glen Murray, Mayor of the City of Winnipeg; Tim Sale, Manitoba Family Services and Housing Minister; and a federal official, on behalf of Ron J. Duhamel, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Francophonie), and Alfonso Gagliano, Minister of Public Works and Government Services, and minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

"I am extremely encouraged by the impact these projects are having on the revitalization of our neighbourhoods," said Mayor Murray. "In cooperation with the other two levels of government, City Council remains committed to the development of our inner-city neighbourhoods. So far, this unique housing and homelessness partnership has invested millions of dollars into the creation and rehabilitation of 385 housing units, 64 student accommodations and 11 transitional housing units in the inner city area."

"I am pleased the Manitoba government is supporting a success story, through funding from the WHHI, as it represents a creative blend of ideas generated by community groups and the use of new technology," said Minister Sale. "Families will immediately benefit from the creation of new and affordable housing, and with the installation of geothermal technology, the heating, cooling and hot water needs of these new units will be met for many years to come, at an extremely low cost."

"This project is about rebuilding the community by providing much-needed, quality homes at affordable prices for low and moderate income earners," said Minister Duhamel. "It's also about working together as partners to help improve the quality of life for the residents through the effective use of existing resources that ensure the new housing is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood."

WHHI is providing over \$288,000 to the North End Housing Project, Spence Neighbourhood Association and the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation to build nine infill-housing units in the two neighbourhoods. Some units will be available for purchase by low and moderate-income families, while others will be on a rent-to-own basis. Funding is being provided under the provincial Neighbourhood Housing Assistance (NHA) program and the City of Winnipeg Housing Policy initiative.

Additional funding of \$260,500 is being provided from housing revitalization initiatives through the Winnipeg Development Agreement (WDA) Community Revitalization Program, delivered by the City of Winnipeg. As well, CMHC provided a Proposal Development Funding loan of up to \$50,000 that enabled the groups to conduct a study on the feasibility of the initiative.

As part of a unique partnership of community organizations, the North End Housing Project (NEHP) and Spence Neighbourhood Association (SNA) collectively developed designs and issued a joint tender call for the construction of housing that will be cost effective, energy efficient, low maintenance, adaptable for people with disabilities and in tune with the character of the neighbourhood. Manitoba Hydro is working with the WHHI to ensure that the homes are built to energy efficient Power Smart R2000 standards. Under this infill housing initiative:

- Qualico Developments Inc. is building two, new side-by-side duplexes for the North End Housing Project. In addition, the NEHP is working with R.B. Russell School to build one Ready To Move home and one side-by-side duplex with structural insulated panels. These homes, located on Flora Avenue in the Lord Selkirk neighbourhood, will be provided to low and moderate income households under a rent-to-own model.

The heating and hot water for the side-by-side duplexes on Flora Avenue will be provided using geothermal heat pumps, which draw energy from the ground. This type of heating is expected to produce significant energy cost savings as well as reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, consistent with recommendations from Manitoba's Climate Change Task Force.

"The NEHP is pleased to work with the WHHI on this important project for the north end," said Gail Stapond. "Our goal is to develop and redevelop 100 or more units annually. We look forward to a continued partnership with the WHHI on future projects that will benefit our community."

- Qualico will also build two, new three-bedroom single-family homes for the Spence Neighbourhood Association and the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation. The homes will be located on Langside Street and Young Street in the Spence neighbourhood. These homes will be sold to low and moderate income households.

"This infill housing will be a real spark for neighbourhood growth in the whole area," said Travis Unger, Spence Neighbourhood resident. "It will get rid of open lots that are weed-filled and we can ensure there is a good balance of new housing and green spaces for the community."

The Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI) is a three-year, multi-million dollar tripartite partnership established by the governments of Canada, Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to address declining housing stock, homelessness and the revitalization of Winnipeg's older neighbourhoods. To date, the WHHI has committed over \$9.8 million to help community groups rehabilitate houses and provide assistance to homeless individuals and families, or those at risk of being homeless.

Located at 233 Portage Avenue in the Curry Building, the WHHI Single Window office serves as a one-stop shop approach for community organizations to access information on government-funded housing and homelessness programs. The single window concept also helps to foster improved cooperation and information sharing between the various levels of government and the community groups. For more information on the programs available, call the WHHI at (204) 940-3070.

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BACKGROUND

Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI) Funding

Government of Canada

Under the *National Homelessness Initiative (NHI)*, communities in Manitoba will receive approximately \$25 million over three years:

- \$12.7 million through the *Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI)*, which includes \$10.8 million for homelessness projects in Winnipeg, and \$1.9 million for projects outside the city;

The SCPI is based on a community plan developed by the various partners to design and implement local solutions to their particular homelessness issues. The SCPI funds up to 50 per cent of the costs of implementing the community plan. The other 50 per cent is comprised of direct or in-kind contributions from a variety of partners, including other levels of government, community organizations, and the private and voluntary sectors.

Additional federal funding assistance is provided through the following programs:

- \$1.9 million for youth projects under *Youth-at-Risk-Homelessness (Youth Employment Strategy)*; and
- \$9.9 million for Aboriginal-specific projects under *Urban Aboriginal Strategy-Homelessness*.
- *Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP)*, to help low-income households and landlords make necessary repairs to bring their properties up to acceptable health and safety standards. RRAP is cost-shared 75/25 per cent respectively by the federal government through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and by the provincial government through Manitoba Family Services and Housing. Manitoba is administering the program while the City of Winnipeg acts as the delivery agent.

Government of Manitoba

- \$8 million over four years for housing in Winnipeg neighbourhoods through the *Neighbourhood Housing Assistance (NHA)* program under the Neighbourhoods Alive! initiative. Neighbourhoods Alive! is a long-term development strategy aimed at providing community groups with the support they need for programs in the areas of housing and physical improvements, employment and training, education and recreation, and safety and crime prevention.
- The NHA will contribute to the revitalization of housing in declining neighbourhoods by supporting homeownership and renovation initiatives of community-based groups in designated neighbourhoods. Eligible community organizations and individuals may receive up to \$10,000 per residential dwelling unit for the purchase or renovation.

City of Winnipeg

\$7 million over five years under the *Winnipeg Housing Policy* to fund housing initiatives in targeted inner-city neighbourhoods. Funding is available through several programs:

- Winnipeg Municipal Cost Offsets Program provides financial assistance up to \$5,000 per housing unit through reimbursement of City fees and other eligible costs.
- Winnipeg Housing Revitalization Program provides financial assistance up to \$5,000 per housing unit for housing project pre-development costs.
- Winnipeg Neighbourhood Housing Plans and Advocacy Program provides financial assistance and other support to neighbourhood stakeholders to develop a Neighbourhood Housing Plan.
- Winnipeg Housing Demonstration Program provides financial assistance to proponents to encourage unique and innovative approaches to addressing inner city housing issues that result in quality, affordable housing.
- Winnipeg Minimum Home Repair Program provides financial assistance to owner-occupants to undertake minor necessary repairs required for continued healthy and safe occupancy of homes.