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GOVERNMENTS CONTRIBUTE OVER \$2 MILLION TO HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PROJECTS

WINNIPEG—July 6, 2001—Residents in the Spence neighbourhood will benefit from housing revitalization and access to emergency shelter and transitional housing, and residents throughout the city will benefit from expanded food bank services with over \$2 million in funding from the Government of Canada, Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg, through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI).

Today's announcement was made by Ron J. Duhamel, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of State for Western Economic Diversification and Francophonie, on behalf of Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness, and Alfonso Gagliano, Minister of Public Works and Government Services, and Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC); Tim Sale, Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing; and Glen Murray, Mayor of Winnipeg.

"I am delighted that the Government of Canada through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative partnership, has been able to assist these organizations to move ahead with these important projects," said Minister Duhamel. "Renovating existing homes, providing emergency and transitional shelters, and helping food banks are key priorities of the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative. Today, the Government of Canada, through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative, is investing over \$1.4 million to address Winnipeg's housing and homelessness issues, bringing our total investment to date to almost \$2.5 million."

"This multifaceted approach meets several important goals, including boosting revitalization of inner city neighbourhoods," Minister Sale said. "Such projects build upon the foundation established jointly by the community and governments to improve communities and are clear examples of local groups taking the lead in revitalizing their neighbourhoods."

"Housing improvements in Winnipeg remain a priority for this Council," said Mayor Murray. "Together with our funding partners, older neighbourhoods in Winnipeg are beginning the process of renovation and renewal."

The WHHI funding allows community groups in the Spence area to develop housing renewal projects, enables New Life Ministries/Lazarus Housing to provide safe housing for the homeless and individuals or families at risk of being homeless, and helps Winnipeg Harvest complete major improvements to its new warehouse and food bank distribution services.

“Through assistance from the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative we will now be able to carry out important neighbourhood improvement projects that have been identified in the plan,” said John Unger, President of the Spence Neighbourhood Association. “This funding will provide quality housing for low and moderate income residents, and improve the overall condition of the neighbourhood.”

“These projects are much more than just about getting rid of boarded up buildings and providing homes for families,” said Reverend Harry Lehotsky of New Life Ministries/Lazarus Housing. “It’s also about making our neighbourhoods healthy and safe for the people living here.”

“The improvements to the warehouse are essential to maintain and enhance our services to an increasing number of food bank users,” said David Northcott, Winnipeg Harvest Executive Director. “Thanks to the funding from the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative, we can move ahead with this important project.”

For more information:

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

1) Housing Revitalization in the Spence Neighbourhood - Total WHHI funding is \$740,000

To enable non-profit housing organizations in the Spence neighbourhood to purchase and renovate homes in the area over the next year. This funding will be provided to non-profit housing groups working in partnership with the Spence Neighbourhood Association (SNA). Partners include the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation, Lazarus Housing, and the University of Winnipeg Educational Housing. The SNA will not be directly involved in the acquisition, renovation or ownership of the homes. The initiative is intended to include a mix of tenure types including homeownership, rent-to-own and non-profit rental.

Funding will be allocated based on priorities identified in a neighbourhood housing plan being developed by the Spence Neighbourhood Association (SNA). The SNA received \$60,000 in funding from the Province of Manitoba and City of Winnipeg last December to develop a neighbourhood housing plan, and to co-ordinate housing efforts in the neighbourhood

Contact: John Unger (204) 783-5000

2) New Life Ministries/Lazarus Housing - Total WHHI funding is \$942,000

To renovate three buildings in the Spence neighbourhood and convert the properties into emergency/transitional and permanent housing for individuals and families at risk of being homeless. New Life Ministries' community-based model integrates emergency and transitional housing tenants with long-term rental tenants while offering a safe, secure environment that will lead to a positive lifestyle. The concept is based on similar models used in the United States. Total project costs are estimated at just over \$1 million.

The **New Life Ministries/Lazarus Housing** project will involve several components:

- integrating transitional and emergency tenants among long-term occupancy tenants;
- providing staff resource supports to focus on the special needs of transitional and emergency tenants;
- locating transitional and emergency shelter units within the inner city;
- implementing strict house rules to ensure social health and safety;
- providing local supports to help with fellow tenants and the community;
- providing a range of unit types (two-bedroom units for parents with children, to single rooms); and
- providing a continuum of housing options delivered by local groups, allowing individuals to move from emergency to transitional to permanent housing.

Contact: Reverend Harry Lehotsky, (204) 775-4929

3) Winnipeg Harvest - Total WHHI funding is \$334,700

To undertake major renovations required connecting the new 16,000 square foot warehouse to the existing Winnipeg Harvest building at 1085 Winnipeg Avenue. The funding will also be used to purchase a new forklift, a used cube van to transport food, a freezer, warehouse racking and food grade containers, as well as upgrading Winnipeg Harvest's computer network and telephone referral systems. The improvements will result in more efficient receiving and handling of food by Winnipeg's major food bank.

Contact: David Northcott, Executive Director, (204) 982-3668

WHHI FUNDING BACKGROUNDER

The WHHI is a three-year, multimillion dollar tripartite partnership established by the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to address declining housing, homelessness and the revitalization of Winnipeg's older neighbourhoods.

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 foster improved cooperation and information sharing between the various levels of government and the community groups. Community groups wanting more information on the programs available can call the WHHI at (204) 940-3070.

Government of Canada

- \$10.8 million over three years under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) for Winnipeg homelessness-related projects. 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 are 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. All homelessness projects must meet the terms and conditions of the SCPI prior to receiving funding. Funding was provided for in the February 2000 Budget and is built into the existing financial framework.
- \$567,000 annually to homelessness-related youth projects under Canada's Youth Employment Strategy. \$3.3 million annually has been directed to homelessness-related Aboriginal projects under the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS).
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), under the 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 and provincial governments. The Manitoba government 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.

The Government of Canada is contributing approximately \$1 million under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), and close to \$338,000 under the federal-provincial cost shared Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP). The Government of Manitoba is providing \$250,000 under the provincial Neighbourhood Housing Assistance (NHA) program through the Neighbourhoods Alive! Initiative, as well as \$112,000 under RRAP. Additional funding of \$250,000 is being provided by the City of Winnipeg under its Housing Policy initiative.