



News Release Communiqué

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OVER \$1.5 MILLION FOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO HELP YOUTH AT RISK IN WINNIPEG

WINNIPEG, JUNE 14, 2002 – Four local community groups are receiving over \$1.5 million through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI), to provide youth at risk of homelessness access to improved shelter, programs and services.

The WHHI funding is being provided to Villa Rosa, Macdonald Youth Services, West Broadway Development Corporation and JobWORKS, through the Government of Canada's Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) and the Youth component of the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI).

Today's announcement also celebrated the official opening of Macdonald Youth Services' new 24 hour Youth Resource Centre. Participating in the ceremony were: the Honourable Rey D. Pagtakhan, Minister of Veterans Affairs, Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development) and senior federal minister for Manitoba, on behalf of the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour, and Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness; the Honourable Tim Sale, Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing; and Councillor Gord Steeves, Acting Deputy Mayor of Winnipeg.

"Together, we are building momentum to provide both immediate and lasting solutions for the problems faced by young Canadians who are without homes, or in danger of becoming homeless," said Minister Pagtakhan. "This is the premise of the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative, designed to help Canada's homeless people by supporting the development of local solutions for local communities."

"The Manitoba government, through the WHHI, is pleased to support these community groups in their work to assist at-risk youth to achieve their fullest potential," said Minister Sale. "By partnering with the WHHI, these organizations allow us to not only help people in need, but assist them to achieve greater self-sufficiency and independence. Our involvement in this initiative represents our government's overall commitment to supporting youth and building strong communities."

"Grassroots agencies and programs that provide assistance to at-risk youth are the best resources for helping people get their lives back on track," said Councillor Steeves. "The City of Winnipeg is proud to support each of these groups through our continued partnership with the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative."

The funding through the WHHI will help improve services and enhance employability skills for youth at risk including:

- \$548,029 for Villa Rosa and \$349,622 for Macdonald Youth Services through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative; and
- \$364,234 for West Broadway Development Corporation and \$308,791 for JobWORKS in Youth funding. (See attached backgrounder for project descriptions.)

"The Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative has allowed Villa Rosa to renovate our building to become universally accessible and to provide a safe and healthy environment for our moms and babies," said Kathy Strachan, Villa Rosa Executive Director.

"Macdonald Youth Services is thrilled to be able to extend the services of the Youth Resource Centre to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The after school and weekend hours are frequently challenging for young people and now we will be able to help during those times," said Dr. Erma Chapman, MYS Executive Director. "We are also excited to welcome the WHHI as a funding partner, joining the United Way of Winnipeg and Manitoba Family Services and Housing in helping to meet the needs of young people in the Winnipeg community."

"The Youth Builders program is an example of the kind of creative partnerships that can develop among community organizations and government," said Paul Chorney, West Broadway Development Corporation Executive Director. "The results can be seen in our neighbourhood as young people learn about renovation and about themselves and play a positive role in West Broadway's revitalization."

"We are grateful to the WHHI for this assistance which will enable us to provide employment and educational opportunities for many youth who are looking to contribute positively to the community," said Al Hrytsak, JobWORKS Executive Director. "Through the JobWORKS Youth Builders program, the participants will develop their self-esteem, start career planning, acquire more responsibility and help re-build their community."

The Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative is a three-year, multi-million dollar tripartite partnership established by the Government of Canada, Province of Manitoba and City of Winnipeg to address homelessness, declining housing stock and the revitalization of Winnipeg's older neighbourhoods. With this announcement, the WHHI has committed over \$18 million to support the repair, rehabilitation and construction of about 670 units of housing and 100 rooms or beds, as well as provide assistance to homeless individuals and families, or those at risk of becoming homeless.

Located at 233 Portage Avenue in the Curry Building, the WHHI serves as a Single Window office for community organizations to access information on government funded housing and homelessness programs. This also helps improve co-operation and information sharing between the three levels of government and community groups. Community groups wanting more information on programs can call the WHHI at (204) 940-3070.

Funding for the National Homelessness Initiative was provided for in the December 2001 Budget and is built into the existing financial framework.

For more information on the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative, visit the Web site at: www.hrdc.gc.ca/homelessness

For more information on Manitoba Family Services and Housing, visit: www.gov.mb.ca/fs

For more information on the City of Winnipeg, visit: www.city.winnipeg.mb.ca

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Project Backgrounder

The National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) funding, through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI), will help improve services and enhance employability skills for those at risk of homelessness.

Funding for the following projects was provided under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative:

- **Villa Rosa will receive \$548,029** to complete renovations to its Residential building (784 Wolseley Avenue) and its Independent Living Program building (788 Wolseley Avenue). These renovations will enable Villa Rosa to continue providing assistance to both pre and postnatal women and their children who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in a safe, clean and healthy environment.
- **Macdonald Youth Services will receive \$349, 622** to operate a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week Youth Resource Centre at 161 Mayfair Avenue. The expanded hours will allow the organization to increase its efforts to help meet the needs of young people between the ages of 12 and 21 facing multiple barriers.

Funding for the following projects was provided under the Youth component of the NHI:

- **West Broadway Development Corporation will receive \$364,234** to provide 24 youth at risk, aged 16 to 29, with educational and work experience. The Corporation, along with Gordon Bell High School, is building on the successful Youth Builders Program initiatives piloted in February 2000 and renewed in February 2001, to help youth improve the community and help create a safer neighbourhood in which these youth live.
- **JobWORKS will receive \$308,791** to provide 30 youth-at-risk, aged 16 to 29, from the West Broadway and Spence neighbourhoods with a chance to re-build their communities and their lives through construction work experience, leadership training, and counselling, while earning high school credits. The youth participants will also renovate a training facility at 666 Ellice Avenue, as well as three sub-standard homes in the West Broadway and Spence neighbourhoods. Once completed, the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation (WHRC) homes will be sold to low income buyers.

Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI) Funding

Government of Canada

Under the *National Homelessness Initiative (NHI)*, communities in Manitoba will receive approximately \$24 million:

- \$12.8 million through the *Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI)*, which includes \$10.9 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:

- \$1.7 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.

For more information on the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative, visit the NHI Web site at: www.hrdc.gc.ca/homelessness

Government of Manitoba

Neighbourhoods Alive! is a long-term development strategy aimed at providing community groups in designated areas of Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson 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 Manitoba government has committed \$3.7 million to Neighbourhoods Alive! in the 2002 budget to develop local capacity, innovative training and provide a fund through which local neighbourhoods can implement their revitalization plans.

WHHI BACKGROUNDER

In addition, under Neighbourhoods Alive! and through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI), the Government of Manitoba has committed:

- \$8 million over four years for housing in Winnipeg neighbourhoods through the *Neighbourhood Housing Assistance (NHA)* program, plus an additional \$1 million each year for housing in Brandon and Thompson.

The NHA will contribute to the revitalization of housing in designated neighbourhoods by providing assistance of up to \$10,000 per dwelling unit to neighbourhood based development/renewal corporations and non-profit and co-operative housing corporations for locally planned and developed housing initiatives. Funding can also be provided directly to homeowners or owners of rental housing projects where there is demonstrated community support.

- The Manitoba government has also committed close to \$2 million annually to its share of federal renovation programs, including the *Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP)* and the *Shelter Enhancement Program (SEP)*.

City of Winnipeg

The City of Winnipeg has allocated \$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.