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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2004

WHHI FUNDS HOMELESS EMERGENCY SHELTER AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA—Homeless people and youth at risk of the negative effects of street life will benefit from additional and improved shelter space as well as continued programming, through over \$1.1 million in funding assistance from the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI).

Funding of \$548,588 is being provided to Neeginan Development Corporation under the Urban Aboriginal component of the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative (NHI). Operation Go Home, Macdonald Youth Services, West Broadway Development Corporation, JobWORKS and Tamarack Rehab Inc. will receive \$581,259 under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI).

Today's funding announcement was made during the official opening of the recently upgraded Neeginan Emergency Shelter located at 652 Main Street. Anita Neville, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South Centre, on behalf of the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Minister responsible for Homelessness; Doug Martindale, MLA – Burrows, on behalf of the Honourable Christine Melnick, Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing; and Deputy Mayor Dan Vandal, on behalf of Glen Murray, Mayor of Winnipeg, participated in today's ceremonies.

“These organizations have demonstrated they are meeting the needs of disadvantaged citizens, and this funding will continue providing the necessary services and programs for those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless,” said Ms. Neville. “The Government of Canada, through the National Homelessness Initiative, is pleased to support these seven projects which have been identified as priorities by the community to address homelessness in Winnipeg.”

“This support is key to ensuring these community-driven projects continue to directly benefit adults who are homeless and to reach out to youth at risk due to the harmful affects of street life,” said Martindale. “It is gratifying to work as a partner with these groups to effectively support youth and adults in need, while providing opportunities for self-sufficiency.”

“The City is pleased to be a partner with the federal and provincial governments in providing shelter assistance to our citizens in need,” said Mayor Murray. “A caring community is a safer community and the City recognizes and appreciates the exceptional work carried out the six organizations that are receiving funding today.”

The National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) funding, through the WHHI, is helping organizations to build new facilities or renovate existing buildings, provide more transitional housing, as well as expand programs and services for those at risk of being homeless. (See attached backgrounder for project descriptions.)

The Government of Canada launched the NHI in December 1999 to support communities’ efforts to prevent or alleviate homelessness. Over \$1 billion is being spent toward the federal government’s commitment to addressing homelessness in Canada. Since the NHI was launched, the Government of Canada has invested over \$22 million through 83 projects to address homelessness in Manitoba.

“This funding furthers the Government of Canada’s commitment to continue working with community groups in Winnipeg, the private sector and all levels of government to find local solutions to address homelessness,” stated Minister Bradshaw.

The funding is being coordinated through the WHHI, a partnership established by the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to address homelessness, declining housing stock and the revitalization of Winnipeg's older neighbourhoods. Located at 361 Hargrave Street, the WHHI serves as a single-window office for community organizations to access information on government-funded housing and homelessness programs. Community groups wanting more information on programs can call the WHHI at (204) 940-3070.

For more information:

Brian Williamson
Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI)
(204) 984-0592

Denis D'Amour
Minister Bradshaw’s Office
(506) 851-3419

BACKGROUNDER

- **Neeginan Development Corporation—\$548,588.** The funding supported the purchase and upgrading of a building at 652 Main Street and includes funds for the operations of the Neeginan Emergency Shelter. The shelter provides an additional 40 beds per night for Aboriginal people who are homeless. The main floor is used as an emergency shelter for homeless people who require observation due to behaviour problems or intoxication. The second floor is reserved for men and the third floor is set aside for women. Each floor has a support worker.

Contact: Larry Wurcherer (204) 989-7131

- **Operation Go Home (OGH) – Winnipeg Chapter—\$223,698 + \$69,097.** The funding will support additional programming and the hiring of 10 staff to provide prevention and intervention services for youth at risk of the negative effects of street life. Total project costs are estimated at \$669,692.

Contact: Cheryl Rutherford (204) 783-5617

- **Macdonald Youth Services (MYS)—\$131,709.** The funding supports MYS in the operation of its multi-service Youth Resource Centre 24/7. The Centre provides youth at risk of the negative effects of street life with access to showers, laundry facilities, food, clothing, first aid, safe, clean beds and counselling. Total project costs are estimated at \$231,000.

Contact: Paul Johnston (204) 949-3799

- **West Broadway Development Corporation (WBDC) – Youth Builders—\$73,483.** The funding will support the Youth Builders program, started with Gordon Bell High School in 2000. The program works with youth at risk of homelessness from the West Broadway area. The activities offer 20 youth the chance to rebuild their community and their lives through construction work experience, leadership training, life skills development, counselling, as well as the potential to earn high school credits. Total project costs are estimated at \$221,000.

Contact: Robert Loiselle (204) 227-3880

- **JobWORKS Youth Builders—\$71,712.** The funding covers the costs of an 18-week Youth Builders program in the Spence neighbourhood designed to provide 20 homeless or at-risk youth with valuable work experience and skills in a high-demand field, reducing their chances of becoming homeless in the future. Total project costs are estimated at \$445,000.

Contact: Al Hyrtsak (204) 453-8351

- **Tamarack Rehab Inc.—\$11,560.** The funding will help the group to renovate and modernize a 12-unit transitional house for people experiencing the effects of dependency. Total project costs are estimated at \$25,000.

Contact: Douglas Cooper (204) 772-9836