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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FUNDING ALLOWS TEEN STOP JEUNESSE AND PARTNERS TO OFFER MORE SERVICES IN ST. VITAL

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA— Services for youth and adult learners, child care and other supports that reach people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless will be improved with the expansion of Teen Stop Jeunesse and the co-location of five community agencies in one building. The project is being made possible with \$953,000 in funding support from the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI).

The new building, to be known as Centre 24/7, will be the home of Teen Stop Jeunesse, Morrow Avenue Child Care, Victor Mager Job Re-Entry/Adult Literacy Programs, the St. Vital Adult Education Centre and Youville Centre.

The Honourable Raymond Simard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing; the Honourable Nancy Allan, Manitoba Minister of Labour and Immigration, on behalf of the Honourable Minister Christine Melnick, Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing; and Gord Steeves, Councillor for St. Vital Ward on behalf of Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz, participated in the official sod-turning ceremony at 533 St. Anne's Road.

“Having these organizations at one location will lead to a more coordinated effort in addressing the needs of those at-risk,” said Simard. “This unique partnership will result in sharing and maximizing resources to serve an even greater number of people in need. Shelter is the foundation upon which healthy communities are built, and today's announcement is an important step in that direction.”

“This support, through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative, will ensure Manitobans in need will be better able to access supportive and preventative services including families, youth and children,” said Minister Allan. “This locally-planned initiative creates an improved home for all of the community partners, especially Morrow Avenue Child Care, which is helping meet the needs of families for quality, early childhood development services.”

“Teen Stop has been providing an invaluable service to the St. Vital community for over 20 years,” said Councillor Steeves. “This expansion will allow five organizations to partner together to maximize and share their resources, while working to provide a safer environment for at-risk youth. I applaud our community and government partners for their innovative efforts in addressing homelessness in Winnipeg.”

The WHHI funding of \$953,000 will enable Teen Stop Jeunesse to purchase a lot next to their existing site, build a new addition, as well as renovate the main floor and basement of the existing building. Centre 24/7 will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and will offer improved space for the day care, a clothing depot, and shower and laundry facilities. Together, the five community agencies will have a multi-purpose centre in St. Vital, providing core programming from one facility. Morrow Avenue Child Care, Victor Mager Job Re-Entry/Adult Literacy Programs and Teen Stop Jeunesse are all providing in-kind contributions to the project. Total costs are estimated at \$1,059,000.

“We are deeply grateful to the WHHI for providing this much-needed funding that will see our dream of expanding our home away from home a reality,” said Bob Sadler, President of Teen Stop Jeunesse. “With a larger facility and Teen Stop Jeunesse and its Partners at one location, we will be able to provide our youth and the community in need with more opportunities for growth and development.”

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. The NHI was launched in December 1999 to support communities’ efforts to prevent or alleviate homelessness. Over \$1 billion is being spent toward the federal government’s commitment and since the launch, over \$28 million through 108 projects has been committed in Manitoba alone.

Funding is coordinated through the WHHI, a partnership established by the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to address homelessness, the 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.

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