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AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING UNITS OPENED IN WEST BROADWAY

WINNIPEG, February 16, 2006 – Six renovated affordable housing units for lower income residents were officially opened today in West Broadway, at 287 Furby Street. The units were reconstructed from two vacant rooming houses, purchased with the help of \$420,000 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).

Participating in today's ceremony were the Honourable Christine Melnick, Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing, Councillor Jenny Gerbasi, Fort Rouge - East Fort Garry Ward, on behalf of Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz, and Dennis Cleve, Corporate Representative on behalf of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

“We are pleased to support a success story, the work of Westminster Housing Society which is boosting the efforts by community groups to build stronger, healthier communities, which in turn, benefits Manitobans and their families,” said Minister Melnick. “These six fully reconstructed units will provide low income citizens with access to adequate housing as they work to build their independence and play a positive role in the overall quality of life of the neighbourhood.”

“This housing project in West Broadway will be a real boost to the neighbourhood,” said Councillor Gerbasi. “It is important for our city to revitalize older neighbourhoods and maintain quality housing options for people in central areas close to the downtown. We are also pleased that these units become affordable housing choices for lower income individuals and families.”

The project involved purchasing two boarded-up inner-city triplexes located next to each other at 283 and 287 Furby Street and converting each into three self-contained, affordable rental units for lower income residents.

Total project costs are estimated at \$452,540, with Westminster Housing Society contributing the balance. WHHI funding of \$420,000 includes \$300,000 cost-shared by the governments of Canada and Manitoba under the Canada-Manitoba Affordable Housing Initiative's New Rental Supply Program, \$60,000 from the provincial Neighbourhood Housing Assistance (NHA) program and \$60,000 through the City of Winnipeg's Housing Initiative.

"We are delighted to play a part in rebuilding a neighbourhood on Furby Street," said Tom Ford, Chairman of the Westminster Housing Society. "That process takes the combined efforts and financial assistance of governments, of community organizations, of individual donors and private foundations. Real progress has been made in recent years and Westminster Housing Society is committed to a continuation of its work in this community."

The funding is coordinated by the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative, 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.

Since 2000, the WHHI partnership has committed over \$73 million that has or will contribute to the repair, rehabilitation or construction of 3050 units and 144 rooms or beds, as well as assist the homeless or those at risk of being homeless. 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. For information, organizations or citizens can call 940-3070.

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