

News Release | Communiqué

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT WORK TOGETHER TO FIGHT HOMELESSNESS IN WINNIPEG

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WINNIPEG – AUGUST 10, 2010 – With the support of three levels of government, the North End Women’s Centre will build a transitional housing facility to create stability and independence for women who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The Honourable Kerri Irvin-Ross, Minister of Housing and Community Development, Ms. Joy Smith, Member of Parliament for Kildonan–St. Paul, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and Mr. Mike Pagtakhan, City Councillor for Point Douglas, today announced \$917,640 to the North End Women’s Centre for its project, Transitional Housing Expansion, in Winnipeg.

“The North End Women’s Centre works toward the goal of equality for all women, and we are pleased that this assistance ensures access to housing and other key services,” said Minister Irvin-Ross. “Our government is committed to supporting locally driven approaches that strengthen families and to providing people in need with a safe and secure place to live.”

“Our government is giving a hand-up to Canadians with housing needs, and is helping those seeking to break free of the cycle of homelessness and poverty,” said Ms. Smith. “We are pleased to be working with the North End Women’s Centre, which will build safe, stable, transitional housing and provide support for women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.”

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“Projects like this one at the North End Women’s Centre help to create a fresh start for the women and children of our community looking for a safe place to call home,” said Mr. Pagtakhan. “The pride that comes with having your own living space and the ability to access support services results in hope and opportunity, and we are pleased to partner with the other levels of government to assist in making it happen.”

“One of the biggest needs in our community is for safe, affordable housing. Because of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding, we are able to provide a safe home and programming for six community women who are working to overcome their own addictions,” said Ms. Heather Block, Chair of the Board for the North End Women’s Centre. “Giving them a place where they don’t have to worry about their own basic needs will allow them to put their energy into making healthier lives for themselves.”

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy will provide \$917,640 to the North End Women’s Centre for the construction of a transitional housing facility. This new building will contain six transitional housing units, kitchen and laundry facilities, a children’s play area, office space and a supportive programming area for community women, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and are struggling with addictions, safety and chronic transience.

Through Manitoba’s Long-Term Housing Strategy, HOMEWorks!, the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada are contributing \$378 million over two years for housing initiatives in Winnipeg and across the province. More information about HOMEWorks! is available at www.gov.mb.ca/housing.

These investments are being delivered through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI), a partnership between the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg. The partners work together to deliver funding provided through each level of government for affordable housing, to address homelessness, and to assist in the revitalization of Winnipeg’s older neighbourhoods. Since 2000, the WHHI partnership has committed over \$138 million to repair, rehabilitate, or build over 5,000 housing units as well as assist those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The WHHI is a single-window office for community organizations to access information on government-funded housing and homelessness programs. For more information, visit www.whhi.ca.

The WHHI housing programs are funded by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Manitoba Housing, and the City of Winnipeg, and homelessness programs are funded through the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnership Strategy.

These investments are part of the Government of Canada's \$1.9-billion commitment for housing and homelessness announced in 2008. This ongoing funding will ensure that the Government can continue to assist low-income Canadians, seniors, persons with disabilities, recent immigrants and Aboriginal people, including those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Canada's Economic Action Plan has built on these investments by making an additional one time investment of more than \$2 billion over two years in new and existing social housing, and by making available up to \$2 billion in loans to Canadian municipalities over two years for housing related infrastructure improvements. The Government's investments are creating jobs, stimulating local economies and improving the quality of life for many Canadians. To learn more about Canada's Economic Action Plan, please visit www.actionplan.gc.ca.

The availability of safe and stable housing and related supports is an important element in addressing homelessness and helping individuals who are homeless achieve greater self sufficiency and a better quality of life. The Homelessness Partnership Strategy emphasizes longer term supportive and transitional housing by focusing on a housing-first approach to help people make the transition out of the cycle of homelessness.

For more information on the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, please visit www.hrsdc.gc.ca/homelessness.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ATTACHED

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Program Backgrounder

HOMEWorks!

In April 2007, the Province of Manitoba unveiled HOUSING First, a four pillar, \$188 million, low-income housing strategy including HOMEWorks!—a \$104.5 million initiative to help provide affordable homes for low-income Manitobans in five areas that were identified by stakeholders to provide a stronger foundations for healthy families and communities. The priorities include: inner-city revitalization; older Manitobans; urban Aboriginals; northern Manitobans; and homeless Manitobans. For more information, please visit www.gov.mb.ca/fs/ and select housing from the left hand side navigation.

Canada-wide Program Extensions

In September 2008 the Government of Canada announced a \$1.9-billion commitment for housing and homelessness, which extended the Affordable Housing Initiative and the renovation programs for low-income households for five years. In Manitoba, these initiatives are jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments through contributions totaling over \$34 million for the next two years.

Canada's Economic Action Plan Canada - Manitoba:

The Government of Canada has allocated \$79 million in Manitoba under Canada's Economic Action Plan as part of a two-year national investment of more than \$2 billion to build new and renovate existing social housing in Canada. The province will also contribute \$79 million for these initiatives over the next two years. For more information on Canada's Economic Action Plan, call 1 800 O Canada.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation:

To find out more about how the Government of Canada is working to build stronger homes and communities for all Canadians, call Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation at 1-800-668-2642 or visit www.cmhc.ca/housingactionplan.

Homelessness Partnering Strategy:

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is a unique community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to more than 60 communities across Canada. The HPS took effect April 1, 2007, with annual funding of \$134.8 million for two years. Funding for housing and homelessness programs has been extended for another five years, until March 31, 2014. For more information on the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, please visit: www.hrsdc.gc.ca/homelessness.