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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT WORK TOGETHER TO HELP FIGHT HOMELESSNESS IN WINNIPEG

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WINNIPEG – AUGUST 19, 2010 – With the support of three levels of government, renovations will be made to a transitional housing facility known as “Neighbours,” which will promote 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 for Manitoba, Mrs. Shelly Glover, Parliamentary Secretary for Official Languages and Member of Parliament for Saint Boniface, 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 support of \$831,000 to Holy Names House of Peace to contribute to the costs of renovating its transitional housing facility known as “Neighbours.”

“Having access to safe and affordable housing is a priority for everyone, and is sometimes particularly challenging for refugees and newcomers to our province,” said Minister Irvin-Ross. “Our government is pleased that this project supports families as they move into their new homes, while assisting them to achieve greater self-sufficiency and independence.”

“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 Mrs. Glover. “Through these renovations, Holy Names House of Peace will provide women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with eight more transitional housing units in their community to assist them in moving towards self-sufficiency.”

“Today’s announcement is another example of how governments and the community have worked collaboratively to create hope and opportunity for those who need a head start in order to make a life for themselves and their families,” said Mr. Pagtakhan.

“Thanks to the Homelessness Partnering Strategy and many foundations, organizations and individuals, Holy Names House of Peace can build a safe and supportive transitional home for newcomer, immigrant and refugee women,” said Sister Lesley Sacouman of Holy Names House of Peace. “This community project sparks hope for these courageous women who desire nothing less than to be creative and contributing citizens here in Winnipeg.”

The federal government is providing \$831,000 in Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding towards the renovation of this facility. As a result of these renovations, an additional eight units of transitional housing will be available for approximately 14 to 17 refugee and immigrant women annually who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. An additional \$150,000 in federal and provincial funding was provided through the Shelter Enhancement Program.

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 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 through which community organizations can access information on government-funded housing and homelessness programs. For more information, visit www.whhi.ca.

The WHHI’s housing programs are funded by the federal government through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, by Manitoba Housing and by the City of Winnipeg, and its homelessness programs are funded through the Government of Canada’s Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

These investments are part of the Government of Canada's \$1.9-billion commitment for housing and homelessness programs announced in 2008. This 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 Partnering 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

For further information, please contact:

Kimberlee Jones
Canada Mortgage and Housing
Corporation Communications
403-515-3048
kjones@cmhc.ca

Joe Czech
Manitoba Housing
Communication Services Manitoba
204-945-6778
joe.czech@gov.mb.ca

Media Relations
Human Resources and Skills
Development Canada
819-994-5559
media@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

Michelle Bailey
City of Winnipeg Communications
204-391-0903
mbailey@winnipeg.ca

HOMEWorks!

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Canada-wide Program Extensions

In September 2008, the Government of Canada announced a \$1.9-billion commitment for housing and homelessness programs, 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 – 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:

The Shelter Enhancement Program assists in repairing, rehabilitating and improving existing shelters for women and children, youth or men who are victims of family violence, and provides financial assistance for the acquisition or construction of new shelters and second-stage housing where needed. To find out more about how the Government of Canada is working to build stronger homes and communities for all Canadians, contact 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.