



news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan help those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Saskatoon

SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN, July 29, 2010—Local female youth in need will benefit from a new transitional housing facility, thanks to support from the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan. Mr. Maurice Vellacott, Member of Parliament for Saskatoon–Wanuskewin, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, made the announcement today, along with the Honourable June Draude, Minister of Social Services for Saskatchewan.

“Our government is giving a hand-up to Canadians with housing needs, and is helping those seeking to break free from the cycle of homelessness and poverty,” said Mr. Vellacott. “We are pleased to be working with the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre, which will provide female youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with transitional housing to help them on their way to achieving independence.”

Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding of \$347,280, and \$300,000 in capital funding from the Government of Saskatchewan, will be used by the Centre for the construction of two buildings, which will create 10 new transitional beds in Saskatoon. This facility will assist female youth between the ages of 12 and 15, primarily of Aboriginal ancestry, who are homeless or vulnerable to homelessness.

“The Government of Saskatchewan is pleased to continue its partnership with the Government of Canada and the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre in providing care and security for some of Saskatoon’s most vulnerable citizens,” said Minister Draude. “In addition to \$300,000 in capital funding from the Government of Saskatchewan for this project, the Province also provides annual operating funding of \$2.4 million to the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre for 11 existing homes for vulnerable youth. This new project will create 10 additional spaces for children and youth in care at two new homes in Saskatoon, and will boost the annual operating funding provided to the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre by the Government of Saskatchewan to \$3.1 million.”

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Through the Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative, a component of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, the Government of Canada also provided land valued at \$365,000 to the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre.

“We would like to thank the Government of Canada for its financial contribution and the contribution of land on Wilson Crescent, which will be used in conjunction with the commitment of our other partners—the Government of Saskatchewan, the City of Saskatoon and our community partners—to allow us to strengthen our continuum of services for young children ages 12 to 15,” said Mr. Don Meikle, Director of Housing and Outreach Services for the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre. “We will continue to provide these vulnerable young children with safe and supportive housing so their journey in life can be less difficult.”

In September 2008, the Government of Canada announced an investment of \$1.9 billion over five years, until 2014, for housing and homelessness programs for low-income Canadians.

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 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.

The Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative, a funding stream of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, makes surplus federal real properties available to community organizations, the not-for-profit sector and other levels of government for projects that help prevent and reduce homelessness. Partners in the Initiative are Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada, and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

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

This news release is available in alternative formats upon request.

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backgrounder

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is a unique community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to 61 communities across Canada. The HPS took effect April 1, 2007, with annual funding of \$134.8 million for two years, and was extended in 2008 for a further two years until March 31, 2011.

The HPS provides structures and supports that help people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless achieve self-sufficiency and full participation in society. This model seeks to address homelessness by working in partnership with the provinces and territories, other federal departments, as well as with communities and the private and not-for-profit sectors.

By working with all our partners, we will maximize results to make a lasting difference in the lives of vulnerable Canadians. The Homelessness Partnering Strategy provides the support that our community partners are seeking.

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy uses a housing-first approach, recognizing that the first step is to provide individuals with transitional and supportive housing.

The HPS has seven funding streams:

Regionally Delivered:

- Designated Communities
- Outreach Communities
- Aboriginal Communities

Nationally Delivered:

- Federal Horizontal Pilot Projects
- Homelessness Knowledge Development
- Homeless Individuals and Families Information System
- Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative

For more information on the Homelessness Partnering Strategy and the seven funding streams, please visit the following Web site: www.hrsdc.gc.ca/homelessness.