



**For Immediate Release
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AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT BEGINS CONSTRUCTION

NIAGARA FALLS – The Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, Niagara Region, the City of Niagara Falls and Niagara Regional Housing celebrated the start of construction of a project that will create 40 new units of affordable housing in Niagara Falls. The project is sponsored by Bethlehem Projects of Niagara and receives \$2.8 million in funding under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program.

The Honourable Rob Nicholson, P.C., Q.C., Member of Parliament for Niagara Falls, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; Kim Craitor, MPP for Niagara Falls, on behalf of the Honourable Jim Watson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Niagara Regional Chairman Peter Partington; Niagara Falls Mayor Ted Salci; and Michael Gruyich, Honourary Campaign Chair attended the ceremony.

“The Government of Canada is committed to making affordable housing available in Ontario and across Canada for those who need it most,” said Minister Nicholson. “The creation of these units here in Niagara Falls will provide individuals, families and persons with disabilities access to safe, affordable and quality housing, helping them to build a stronger future.”

“The McGuinty government is committed to working with our partners to build more affordable housing for people in need,” said Kim Craitor, MPP for Niagara Falls. “Bethlehem Projects of Niagara has been an enthusiastic partner in the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program. We look forward to seeing the completion of this project, which will greatly benefit the entire Niagara Falls community.”

Niagara Region Chair Peter Partington expressed Regional Council’s support for the future development, “Bethlehem Projects has become a valuable community partner across Niagara. In assisting our vulnerable population with affordable housing and support services, they contribute a great deal to the community through the lives that they improve. I am proud to support this development in Niagara Falls, as it offers a great opportunity to be another extraordinary example of new affordable housing from Bethlehem Projects.”

Niagara Falls Mayor Salci noted his city’s interest in the success of the initiative, “This support for lower and moderate income families in Niagara Falls is vital. Now that the building has begun, people in our community who need an affordable place to live will have more opportunities to help ease the burden of supporting their families during challenging times through access to sustainable housing.”

This supportive, affordable apartment building will provide permanent safe housing for singles and families of low to moderate income. Universal design will be used throughout the building to enable aging in place and four units will be modified for people with physical disabilities.

“With over 1500 households waiting for affordable housing in Niagara Falls the need for this housing is critical,” said Michael Gruyich. “Having a decent, affordable place to live is a basic human right and I am pleased to announce that 66% of the \$500,000 community investment required to ensure the success of this project has been raised. We invite others to help us meet our goal.”

It is expected that the building will be ready for occupancy in Spring 2010.

The \$5.1 million project, including \$2.8 million from the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, will be complemented by more than \$57,000 in municipal financial incentives.

The federal-provincial agreement, signed on April 29, 2005, comprises a commitment of \$301 million from each of the two levels of government. With this commitment, the federal, provincial and municipal governments will invest at least \$734 million over the life of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program. In total, the program will help close to 20,000 Ontario households by 2010.

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