



**For Immediate Release
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AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT BEGINS CONSTRUCTION

ST. CATHARINES – The Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, and Niagara Region held a time capsule placement ceremony today to mark the start of construction on a project that will create 32 units of affordable housing in St. Catharines under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program.

Rick Dykstra, Member of Parliament for St. Catharines, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development; Jim Bradley, MPP for St. Catharines, on behalf of the Honourable John Gerretsen, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Niagara Regional Chairman Peter Partington attended the ceremony.

"The Government of Canada realizes the importance of a strong and positive relationship with the province of Ontario. We are therefore pleased to work with all three levels of government and the non-profit sector to provide affordable housing for the people of the Niagara Region," said Dykstra. "The new housing units celebrated today are a great example of working together to help create vibrant and healthy communities."

"One of the McGuinty government's fundamental goals is to help provide affordable housing for Ontarians who need it," said Minister Bradley. "This partnership with Goodwill will strengthen the entire community by creating much-needed affordable housing for seniors and providing facilities and services available to the Niagara community."

The \$3.2 million project, including over \$970,000 from the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, will provide 32 apartments at 36 and 38 Page Street in St. Catharines. Sponsored by Goodwill Industries Niagara, the units will be occupied by seniors with lower incomes.

"Niagara Region is pleased to have been able to contribute to the redevelopment of this significant landmark. The renewal of building is a positive step forward for this neighbourhood," said Peter Partington, Regional Chairman.

"This project is a great example of a federal, provincial, municipal and non-profit partnership and what can be accomplished when we all work together," said Mayor Tim Rigby, Mayor of St. Catharines. "I look forward to seeing the Goodwill residence completed and this important landmark serving as the hub of community activity."

"This Goodwill affordable housing project for seniors is an example of what social capital investment, under a partnership of all sectors, can do to rejuvenate Brownfield property, transform struggling neighbourhoods and revitalize communities," said Goodwill Industries Niagara CEO, Saulis Zemaitis.

Today's federal and provincial allocation will be complemented by approximately \$814,000 in municipal financial incentives.

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The new 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 in affordable housing over the life of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program. In total, the program will help 20,000 Ontario households by 2010.

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