

**For Immediate Release
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PLAQUE DEDICATION CEREMONY MARKS WELLAND MILLS PROJECT

THOROLD – The Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, Niagara Region and the City of Thorold held a plaque dedication ceremony today at the Welland Mills affordable housing project that will create 18 units of affordable housing in the City of Thorold under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program.

The Honourable Robert Nicholson, Member of Parliament for Niagara Falls and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Democratic Reform, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development; the Honourable Jim Bradley, MPP for St. Catharines and Minister of Tourism, on behalf of the Honourable John Gerretsen, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Niagara Regional Chairman Peter Partington and Mayor of the City of Thorold Robin Brock, attended the ceremony.

"Canada's new government is proud to help support this important and unique affordable housing project for the City of Thorold," said Minister Nicholson. "The Welland Mills affordable housing project is an excellent example of what can be accomplished when all levels of government and the private sector work together to meet the needs of local residents."

"The McGuinty government is on the side of Ontario's most vulnerable," said Minister Bradley. "That's why our government is proud to partner with Keefer Developments who has successfully preserved the historical Welland Mills while providing affordable housing for those who need it most."

The \$2.2 million project, including over \$527,000 from the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, will provide 18 apartments at 20 Pine Street North. Sponsored by Keefer Development Ltd., the units will be occupied by seniors.

"Niagara Region is pleased to be supporting this project by waiving development charges worth \$47,880. This project benefits not only the City of Thorold, but our entire Niagara Community. It is yet another example of what can be done when the various levels of government work together for the common interest of the citizens we serve," said Niagara Regional Chairman Peter Partington.

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"We are absolutely delighted to have partnered with Keefer Developments to bring this rather distinct affordable housing initiative to Thorold. This project will not only provide affordable housing but residents will dwell in the beautiful old historically designated Welland Mills which has been meticulously restored and is located in our downtown core," said Thorold City Mayor Robin Brock.

"The redevelopment of this wonderful heritage building further advances the regeneration of the Thorold core area. As the only remaining flour mill of the three original mills that came together to form Maple Leaf Mills, there is a wonderful legacy here to be preserved. Our residential units have preserved elements of the heritage to provide unique and comfortable living spaces. We are thrilled to partner with senior government levels to help make this great example of smarter growth, a reality," said Phil Ritchie, President, Keefer Developments Ltd.

Today's federal and provincial allocation will be complemented by more than \$412,000 in municipal financial incentives.

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.

For further information please contact:

Kathie Howes
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
647-225-3730

Patti Munce
Minister Gerretsen's Office
(416) 585-6333

Niagara Regional Housing
Denise Papaiz
905-682-9201 ext. 337