



PRESS RELEASE



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Minister Collenette Announces Winners of Housing Awards Program

OTTAWA, Ontario, October 23, 2002 — Six housing initiatives received awards from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) this evening at the CMHC Housing Awards Dinner, which took place at the Courtyard Marriott in downtown Toronto.

"CMHC's Housing Awards recognize excellence, dedication, hard work and accomplishments. This recognition demonstrates to others innovative ways and means of pursuing development of affordable housing in Canada", said the Honourable David Collenette, Minister of Transport and Minister Responsible for CMHC. Accompanying the Minister were Steve Mahoney, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister responsible for CMHC and Jean-Claude Villiard, President of CMHC.

The two day Forum, on the theme of Affordable Housing Innovations, was an opportunity to recognize and share housing innovations that have helped reduce the cost of housing in Canada for households that would otherwise have difficulty finding housing to meet their needs. Fourteen finalists presented their innovations at the national event. Participants took advantage of this opportunity to learn about these housing initiatives and how they might be applied in their communities.

The Awards Program was open to both groups and individuals in the public and private sectors. Six winners and eight honourable mentions were chosen by an independent multi-disciplinary selection committee comprised of housing experts from across Canada.

Winners were:

- Colin Munro, architect/Groupe CDH, Montréal, Quebec--Concept and Design;
- La Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec--Process and Management;
- Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Tyendinage Mohawk Territory, Ontario--Finance and Tenure;
- Options for Homes Non-Profit Corporation, Toronto, Ontario--Finance and Tenure;
- Quint Development Corporation, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan--Process and Management; and
- The Working Centre, Kitchener, Ontario--Process and Management.

Honourable mentions were:

- City of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario--Planning and Regulation;
- Creighton/Gerrish Development Association, Halifax, Nova Scotia--Process and Management;
- David W. Edwards Architect Ltd., Regina, Saskatchewan--Concept and Design;
- Hilditch Architect, Toronto, Ontario--Concept and Design;
- Nepean Housing Corporation, Ottawa, Ontario--Planning and Regulation;
- Stella Burry Corporation, St. John's, Newfoundland--Process and Management;
- Whistler Housing Authority, Whistler, British Columbia--Technology and Production;

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- Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Corporation, Fort McMurray, Alberta--Finance and Tenure.

"I would like to congratulate all the winners and finalists for their accomplishments to date and encourage all participants to take the innovative ideas shared at this event back to their communities and across the country." said Minister Collenette.

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Housing Awards Winners

**Colin Munro, architect / Groupe CDH
Montreal, Quebec
Coopérative d'habitation LeZarts**

In March 2002, 33 painters, sculptors and media artists, some with spouses and children, moved into new, custom-designed lofts at LeZarts, a former two-storey, 22,000 square-foot clothing factory in Montréal's Centre-sud district. This housing cooperative offers affordable housing in downtown Montréal and gives residents the environment and synergetic support to develop their artistic talents. One unit is reserved for an artist-in-residence, funded by Le Conseil des Arts et Lettres du Québec. Developed by using Accèslogis and City of Montréal subsidy programs, LeZarts intelligently integrates work and living spaces, sparing artists from paying two rents. The building also includes a basement exhibition space, La Chaufferie, for the residents and the public.

**La Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal
Montréal, Quebec
Terrasse St-Michel**

La Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal (SHDM) is a para-municipal non-profit organization in Montréal, Quebec, whose mission is to increase the quality of life for low-income persons or those with special needs by refurbishing residential buildings and encouraging communities to manage their properties. With financial help from the City of Montréal and the provincial government, SHDM purchased and renovated Terrasse St-Michel, a 14-building development long neglected by its previous owners. Five years after the purchase, SHDM handed over property management duties to Habitations Terrasse St-Michel, a local non-profit organization. Rents at Terrasse St-Michel, although market based, remain below average, offering tenants well-managed, affordable accommodations-SHDM's ultimate objective.

**Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte
Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, Ontario
Revolving Loan Program**

The Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation, a community of 2,200 people, offers its young people, singles, elders, and those on social assistance the opportunity to obtain low-cost mortgages to build or purchase their own homes. With some federal funding, the community created a revolving loan program that offers low interest rates for entire mortgage terms. Hundreds of people have taken advantage of the attractive financing, producing a multi-million dollar mortgage portfolio owned and administered by the community. Today, 85% of households within the community own their homes.

Options for Homes Non-Profit Corporation

Toronto, Ontario

Affordable Home Ownership for Low- to Moderate-Income Residents

Low-income Canadians often consider home ownership beyond their means. Options for Homes, a private non-profit corporation located in Toronto, is changing this thinking. The company obtains access to residential land and pre-sells homes to low- and moderate-income households. By minimizing marketing expenses, avoiding costly amenities, and applying an innovative financing approach known as the Affordable Housing and Community Equity Reinvestment Technique (AHCERT), Options for Homes has built five affordable condominium complexes in Toronto and given hundreds of families the opportunity to own their homes.

Quint Development Corporation

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Affordable Housing Program

Located in the Core neighbourhoods of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Quint Development Corporation is a neighbourhood-led non-profit community economic development organization. Quint set up an innovative Co-operative program that puts home ownership within reach for 70 low-income families, with 20 more homes underway for this year. The program is set up to include families on social assistance. The Co-operatives, each comprising 10 families, own homes for five years, after which the households have the option to arrange financing to assume their own mortgages. Supporting Co-operative members through the transition from renter to homeowner and neighbourhood rejuvenation are major focuses of this program.

The Working Centre

Kitchener, Ontario

43 Queen Street South Downtown Revitalization

A volunteer-driven organization with a mandate to help people in lower incomes live full and productive lives, The Working Centre spearheaded the renovation of a long-neglected 9,000 square-foot building at 43 Queen Street in downtown Kitchener. Forging partnerships with regional and local governments, social agencies, voluntary associations and churches, The Working Centre turned the building into a vibrant multi-use complex that includes affordable housing; workspaces for crafts, bicycle repair, and computer refurbishing; a main-floor cooperatively run storefront for crafters; and a library and job-search resource area.

Honourable Mentions

City of Ottawa

Ottawa, Ontario

Affordable Housing Initiative

To create more affordable housing in Ottawa the City of Ottawa has used a full range of incentives at its disposal: offering surplus municipal land at virtually no cost, waiving municipal development fees and charges, reducing property taxes for new rental construction and providing capital grants for affordable housing development. Through its own resources and in combination with federal homelessness funding, the City has assisted with the production of over 300 new affordable housing units in the past three years.

Creighton/Gerrish Development Assoc.

Halifax, Nova Scotia

Creighton/Gerrish Development

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A partnership of four community-based non-profit groups, the Creighton/Gerrish Development Association (C/GDA) is developing a \$7.25 million mixed-use complex in central Halifax. C/GDA completed the first of 5 components, a 19-unit apartment building for low-income single persons, in January 2002. Subsequent elements will include a multi-purpose centre for the City's black community and 45 to 50 dwellings for sale and affordable to households in a neighbourhood where 44 per cent of households are renters of non-profit and public housing.

David W. Edwards Architect Ltd. Regina, Saskatchewan Relocation Project for Seniors Housing

The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation owns hundreds of semi-detached houses across the province, which local housing authorities rent to seniors. Seniors in small towns, however, often feel isolated in these homes and prefer to live in larger communities with more services. David W. Edwards Architect Ltd. proposed a creative solution: move several semi-detached units to a single location and connect them under one roof, adding hallways, lounges, and common areas. David W. Edwards Architect Ltd. has since reconfigured some 100 units in six Saskatchewan communities, and a zero vacancy rate attests to the program's success.

Hilditch Architect Toronto, Ontario 30 St. Lawrence Affordable Housing Project

To provide affordable accommodation for homeless persons in Toronto, Hilditch Architect designed a 10-townhouse complex on behalf of Dixon Neighbourhood Homes. Located on a property at 30 St. Lawrence Street, the townhouse complex was completed in February 2000, on time and on budget. Hilditch Architect designed the complex such that it would fit into any typical Toronto neighbourhood and provide residents with responsibility for their townhouses. The approach worked. Occupants maintain the properties in good shape and participate in various grounds-keeping activities, and the building's owner is meeting projected financial obligations.

Nepean Housing Corporation Ottawa, Ontario Farnworth Manor Homes

With 4,000 people on a waiting list for its 265 subsidized rental units in Ottawa's west end, the Nepean Housing Corporation (NHC), a private non-profit housing provider, recognized the community's drastic need for additional affordable housing. A municipal land donation, government grants and considerable creative thinking enabled NHC to secure financing and launch a project to build 76 units in manor home form. Rents on sixty-five per cent of the Farnworth Manor Homes units are subsidized; rents on the balance are charged at market rates.

Stella Burry Corporation St. John's, Newfoundland Carew Lodge

A community-based non-profit organization, the Stella Burry Corporation purchased a run down building in St. John's, Newfoundland and turned it into one of the best examples of supportive housing in the province. Refurbished and reopened in August 2001, Carew Lodge provides safe, affordable accommodation to 14 tenants, many of whom have difficulty finding places to live. The project represents the success that federal and provincial governments and grass-root community organizations can achieve when they work together to help people on low-incomes find decent affordable housing.

Whistler Housing Authority Whistler, B.C.

Beaver Flats Employee Housing

The Whistler Housing Authority (WHA) oversees the development and administration of employee-restricted housing in Whistler. In December 2001, the organization finished developing Beaver Flats Employee Housing, a 57-unit apartment restricted to those who work full-time in Whistler. Rent controls protect tenants from escalating Whistler real estate prices and an energy-efficient building design keeps tenant utility costs down. The building is fully occupied and WHA receives vacancy inquiries every day, a testament to the project's success.

Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Corporation Fort McMurray, Alberta Edgewater Court

In 2001, the province of Alberta donated eight acres of land in Fort McMurray, Alberta, to the Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Corporation (WBHDC) to develop affordable housing. WBHDC has completed the first two phases of Edgewater Court, introducing 120 new social housing rental units to the Fort McMurray community. A third phase will add 55 more units. Edgewater Court rents are cost based, not market based, which keeps rents affordable and restricts rent increases to cost-of-living adjustments. With Edgewater Court, WBHDC has met its objective: to increase the supply of affordable rental accommodation in a market where vacancy rates hover around zero per cent.

Backgrounder : CMHC Housing Awards Program Affordable Housing Innovations

The 2002 CMHC Housing Awards, the seventh since the inception of the program, focuses on the theme: **Affordable Housing Innovations**.

The Housing Awards Program, held every two years, was created in 1988 by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Canada's national housing agency. A theme is selected for each Housing Awards cycle. Past Awards themes have included housing for seniors, young families, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, young people, and housing challenges of the new millennium. The 2002 Program recognizes individuals and organizations that have helped reduce the cost of housing in Canada for households that would otherwise have difficulty finding housing to meet their needs.

Applicants submit housing innovations under five Awards categories, designed to encompass a wide spectrum of housing activities: Finance and Tenure; Technology and Production; Planning and Regulation; Concept and Design; and Process and Management.

With the exception of CMHC employees, any group or individual in Canada, private or public, is eligible to apply - builders, architects, designers, developers, manufacturers and planners as well as municipal, provincial or territorial housing and social service agencies, volunteer associations, community groups, non-profit housing groups and housing co-operatives, financial and educational institutions and individuals. Applicants must have created or implemented housing solutions in Canada within the past ten years.

After applications are received by CMHC, an independent multi-disciplinary committee evaluates the submissions and selects the winners and honourable mentions.

The national Forum, where finalists are recognized, provides an opportunity for stakeholders to meet, interact, and learn how finalists' housing innovations can be applied in their own communities. All finalists receive a certificate; winners are announced and presented with a trophies. Finalists receive exposure and national recognition by peers and other industry, community and government representatives. The award winning housing innovations are promoted across the country by the media and presentations by finalists at selected housing related events.