



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Minister Collenette Announces CMHC's Housing Affordability Grant Recipients**

**OTTAWA, Ontario, March 11, 2003** — The Honourable David Collenette, Minister of Transport and Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), announced today 10 grants, totalling \$110,000 and worth up to \$20,000 each, have been awarded under CMHC's Affordability and Choice Today (ACT) Program.

"ACT program grants enable municipalities and the private and non-profit housing sectors to act in partnership to improve housing affordability and choice", said Minister Collenette. "By working together they help change planning and building regulations to make them more responsive to the housing needs of all Canadians."

Operating since 1990, the ACT program is a partnership between CMHC, the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA), the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). FCM carries out program administration on behalf of the partners. In 1998, the United Nations recognized ACT as a best practice for improving the living environment.

Jim Thomson, CHBA President, said, "ACT grants help the home building industry and municipalities to streamline approvals and build partnerships. These regulatory reform solutions are shared across the country so that others can benefit from them."

CHRA President Dr. John Metson added, "Many ACT grant recipients are from non-profit housing groups developing innovative ideas that address housing needs in their communities. These ideas lead to housing affordability and choice."

FCM President John Schmal said, "ACT teams have developed a wealth of solutions addressing housing issues that are typical in municipalities across Canada. Among the issues are two-generational housing, intensification, computerised approvals, secondary suites and downtown revitalisation."

To date 189 projects have been awarded a total of approximately \$2.2 million in grants. Projects are selected by a national committee of housing experts, from across the country.

ACT's Web site has information about the program and 80 case studies documenting completed ACT initiatives. The ACT Web site is at: [www.actprogram.com](http://www.actprogram.com)

#### **Case studies may also be obtained from CMHC at:**

CMHC Order Desk  
Suite 1000  
700 Montreal Road  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0P7  
1 800 668-2642 or fax at: 1 800 245-9274

**For further information please contact:**

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**ACT Grant Recipients, 2003**

**OUR Ecovillage: OUR Community Association, Shawnigan Lake, British Columbia**

\$20,000 to introduce a new zoning designation, the first of its type in Canada, permitting four distinct land uses. The project will demonstrate a model for Ecovillages and other similar sustainable communities with more features than previously introduced elsewhere in Canada. Project contact: Brandy MacPherson, 250-743-3002

**Revitalization of St. Catherine Street East: Collectif en aménagement urbain Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, Montréal, Québec**

\$20,000 to modify bylaws for the renovation of existing buildings for an innovative artisan live/work cooperative. The project will demonstrate revitalization of a depressed neighbourhood. Project contact: Jean Rouleau, 514-523-4443

**Affordable Housing in Small Communities in Mountain Terrain: District of Hope, British Columbia**

\$15,000 to seek broad consultation on a municipal housing strategy through public and housing industry workshops. The goal is to revise the zoning bylaw and residential development guidelines to provide guidance on developing housing in mountainous terrain, sustainable development, innovative servicing and environmental sensitivity. Project contact: Graham Murchie, 604-869-5671

**IHA Rental Housing Project, Interfaith Housing Association: Hamilton, Ontario**

\$10,000 to work with the municipality in identifying and addressing regulatory barriers faced by non-profit groups that want to acquire and redevelop surplus municipal property for affordable housing. Project contact: Wayne Irwin, 905-522-6843, ext. 24

**Implementing Smart Bylaws in British Columbia, West Coast Environmental Law Federation, Central Saanich, British Columbia**

\$10,000 to work with two to five municipalities to adopt smart growth bylaws and policies for development approvals, mixed-use zoning and infrastructure. The bylaws and policies will be based on WCELF's Smart Bylaws Guide, which is being developed to assist small municipalities in adopting smart development practices. Project contact: Chris Rolfe, 604-684-7378

**Harmonization of Application Forms-Capital Region Municipalities: District of Saanich, British Columbia**

\$10,000 to reduce the multiplicity of unique local government application forms in the 13 municipalities within British Columbia's Capital Region and to harmonize development review procedures. A best practices manual will provide proposed forms and procedures to be used. Project contact: Russ Fuoco, 250-475-1775

**Regulatory Changes Feasibility Study for Whistler, Whistler Housing Authority, Whistler, British Columbia**

\$10,000 to study various regulatory changes that will lead to innovative housing strategies for a resort town to use in

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mitigating the loss of affordable housing for its resident workforce. Project contact: Marla Zucht, 604-905-4688

**Development Process Information Seminars: City of Timmins, Ontario**

\$5,000 to hold information sessions for the local construction industry to provide a better understanding of the planning and building approvals process and communicate recent changes in legislation. The impact will be to reduce the time for obtaining approvals and generate a more positive working relationship between the construction industry and municipal staff. Project contact: Mark Jensen, 705-360-1350

**Secondary Suites Promotion Project: Landlord's Self-Help Centre, Toronto, Ontario**

\$5,000 to increase awareness of secondary suites as an affordable housing option, reduce community resistance and enhance the understanding of homeowners and the community regarding the regulatory environment governing secondary suites. This initiative supports the municipality's efforts to encourage secondary suites as a means of increasing the supply of affordable housing. Project contact: Susan Wankiewicz, 416-504-3459

**Integrated Housing for Seniors and the Disabled: First Baptist Church, Prince George, British Columbia**

\$5,000 to bring together all stakeholders and build consensus through a brainstorming session on innovative forms of seniors' housing that is appropriate for the community. This will lead to a comprehensive zoning bylaw that will streamline the approvals process for seniors' housing. Project contact: Dr. Wayne Hagerman, 250-564-4522