



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Transitional Home for Abused Women and Children Opens**

**BRANTFORD, Ontario, May 6, 2005** — Brantford area women and children who are victims of domestic violence have a better chance than most to have appropriate housing, as Maria House: A Home for Families in Transition was officially opened in a celebration held earlier today with \$184,000 in Shelter Enhancement Program (SEP) funding from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Funding of \$49,100 was also provided under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative, a component of the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiatives (NHI).

Lloyd St. Amand, Member of Parliament for Brant made the announcement today on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing.

"The renovation of the existing home to create Maria House is so vitally important to ensuring women and their children have access to the transitional housing and the services they require to help them succeed," said MP St. Amand. "This project is an excellent example of the Government of Canada's ongoing commitment to supporting those who are most in need in the community."

Neighbour to Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services, Maria House was renovated to provide safe and secure accommodations for up to eight women and children fleeing family violence.

"The renovations to Maria House will enable us to improve the quality of life for the women and children we serve from Brantford and Brant County," said Mr. Bob Kindon, President of the Board of Directors of Nova Vita. "By providing housing for women and their children in a setting that is supportive and accessible to the services at Nova Vita, we hope to help a woman increase her chance of a successful transition to community living."

The funding provided under the NHI covers costs associated with renovations, the purchase of new furniture and appliances, as well as contracting and project management.

Additional funding was provided by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which contributed \$12,100 for furniture and appliances, and by the Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services, which contributed \$30,000. The Government of Ontario's Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and the City of Brantford also provide rent subsidy funding through the MCSS Rent Supplement Program.

Nova Vita provides a variety of effective and efficient programs for abused and homeless women and children. Every year over 300 women and children find safe haven in the emergency shelter. Many then move on to live independent, violence-free lives in the community. But some of these families need "extra help" to make the transition to healthy, independent living. Maria House will help fill this major service gap in Brantford and Brant County by providing affordable supportive housing for abused women and children.

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Since its launch in 1999, NHI's Supporting Community Partnership Initiative has provided financial support to communities, and encouraged partnerships with provincial, territorial and municipal governments and the private and voluntary sectors to strengthen existing capacity and develop new responses to homelessness. By 2006, the NHI will have allocated more than one million dollars towards addressing homelessness and housing in Brantford.

CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program offers financial assistance for the repair, rehabilitation and improvement of existing shelters for women and their children, youth and men who are victims of family violence. Funding is also available for the acquisition or construction of new shelters and second stage housing.

CMHC is Canada's national housing agency with a mandate to help Canadians gain access to safe, quality and affordable housing. CMHC supports the Canadian housing industry and improves the living conditions of Canadians through mortgage loan insurance and securitization, assisted housing, research and information transfer and the promotion of Canadian housing exports.

### **For further information, please contact:**

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