



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Official Opening of Peel Youth Village Gives Youth a Place to Call Home**

**MISSISSAUGA, Ontario, October 14, 2005** — The Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario and the Region of Peel celebrated the official opening of Peel Youth Village today. Peel Youth Village provides transitional housing and supports for homeless youth, as well as programs and recreational activities for the surrounding Acorn Place community.

Attending today's ceremony were the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing; the Honourable Navdeep Singh Bains, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and MP for Mississauga–Brampton South; the Honourable Harinder Takhar, Ontario Minister of Transportation and MPP for Mississauga Centre, on behalf of the Honourable John Gerretsen, Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; and Frank Dale, Regional Councillor of the Region of Peel.

Through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), a component of the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI), the Government of Canada previously announced Phase I SCPI funding of \$2,474,818 for this project. By the end of March 2006, under SCPI Phase II, it will have provided a further contribution of \$1,197,559. In addition, the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario have contributed \$658,000 under the Canada–Ontario Affordable Housing Program.

The Region of Peel provided \$426,024 through grants in lieu of property taxes and land donations.

"No Canadian, especially our vulnerable youth, should ever be subjected to homelessness," said Minister Fontana. "Shelter is one of the foundations upon which healthy communities and individual dignity are built, and the Government of Canada is committed to providing all Canadians with the support they need to thrive and prosper in the workplace and our community."

"The McGuinty government knows that safe and affordable shelter is crucial to youths in this province who are trying to gain independence," said Minister Takhar. "Peel Youth Village is a tangible proof of this government's commitment to providing affordable housing to those who need it most. By investing together in affordable housing, we are investing in the people of Ontario and strengthening our families and our communities."

Peel Youth Village is a four-storey residential project designed to house and assist 48 youths aged 16 to 30. It is a comprehensive transitional housing and community development facility. Peel Youth Village will provide young people with the appropriate supports they need to move from the street to stability.

"In partnership with the federal and provincial governments, the Region of Peel built this exciting new facility for the benefit of our youth and the Acorn community alike," said Mr. Emil Kolb, Regional Chair of the Region of Peel. "Operated by the YMCA of Greater Toronto, Peel Youth Village will provide its residents and members of the community with a place to participate in recreational and educational programming, as well as other community activities."

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"Peel Youth Village is a unique approach to housing local youths in transition who are motivated to help themselves," said David Szwarc, Commissioner of Social Services, Region of Peel. "This facility will not only provide a safe living environment for its residents, but the programs offered within these walls will also empower them to regain independence and ultimately work toward becoming happy, healthy and contributing members of the community."

The Government of Canada launched the NHI in December 1999 to support communities' efforts to help Canadians out of homelessness. By working in partnership with community organizations, the private and voluntary sectors, and other levels of government, the NHI is bringing all stakeholders together to develop local solutions that work to address the particular needs and challenges that homeless people face. Since the launch, the Government of Canada has contributed over \$8.9 million to alleviate homelessness in the regions of Peel and Halton and in Dufferin County.

In Peel Region, the Government of Canada, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, has contributed \$6.2 million through the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program Agreement to date. 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 have invested \$734 million through the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program. In total, the program will help 20,000 Ontario households by 2010.

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