



PRESS RELEASE



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Opening — 23 New Social and Community Housing Units in Saint-Damien-de-Buckland

SAINT-DAMIEN-DE-BUCKLAND, Québec, November 14, 2005 — Modest and low-income households in Saint-Damien-de-Buckland now have more affordable housing options thanks to the development of Habitations Rayon de Soleil, a building that was recycled into a residential project providing 23 new social and community housing units for families and individuals.

This announcement was made today by the Honourable Jean-C. Lapierre, Minister of Transport and Minister responsible for Quebec, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing, by Dominique Vien, MNA for Bellechasse, on behalf of Nathalie Normandeau, Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Regions, and by Hervé Blais, Mayor of Saint-Damien-de-Buckland. The ceremony took place in the presence of Marie-Claude Guillemette, Chair of the Board of Directors of Habitations Rayon de Soleil.

The conversion of this former school into a residential building, which required investments of nearly \$2 million, was completed thanks to the participation of public, private and community partners. The financial contributions for the development of this project, totalling \$1,273,900, were assumed by the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ), in an amount of \$733,900 under the AccèsLogis Québec program, by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which provided a sum of \$216,000 to support the recycling of a non-residential building into a housing project ("conversion" component) and, finally, by the community, which contributed \$324,000 to the project, including \$66,000 from the municipality of Saint-Damien-de-Buckland. The other costs are being assumed by Habitations Rayon de Soleil through a mortgage loan secured by the SHQ.

"This new housing project will allow 23 households in Saint-Damien-de-Buckland to live in a quality environment at an affordable cost and start a new page in their lives," said Minister Lapierre. "Housing is a priority for the Government of Canada, and we are pleased to work in cooperation with the Government of Quebec, the municipality and community sector representatives to enable more people to access housing and thereby contribute to the development of their region."

"The Government of Quebec's contribution to this community housing project reflects our commitment to develop sustainable resources to meet the needs of modest and low-income families and individuals. Such a commitment on the part of governments, the community and the private sector is a fine example of a successful partnership," said Dominique Vien.

Among the residents of Habitations Rayon de Soleil, 12 households can benefit from the Rent Supplement program, which provides financial assistance to low-income individuals who would otherwise have to spend more than 25 per cent of their income on housing.

The development of this project is part of the Government of Quebec's initiative to produce 18,600 social, community and private housing units for low, modest and moderate-income households. This initiative is notably supported by

federal funds made available under an Affordable Housing Agreement.

It should be recalled that an Affordable Housing Agreement was signed between CMHC and the SHQ in 2001. It provides for a total contribution of \$323.3 million to increase the supply of affordable housing in Quebec, with \$161.65 million from the federal government, \$104 million from the Quebec government and \$57 million from the municipalities participating in the program.

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