



PRESS RELEASE



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Halifax Residents Get New Affordable Rental Housing

HALIFAX, Nova Scotia, November 25, 2005 — People living in Halifax Regional Municipality will have access to more affordable rental housing thanks to a \$1.96 million, 23-unit development approved under the Canada–Nova Scotia Affordable Housing agreement.

The Honourable Geoff Regan, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing, and The Honourable David Morse, Minister of Community Services for the Province of Nova Scotia, made the announcement today.

"We remain committed to working with our provincial colleagues to create affordable homes for people living in Halifax and the surrounding areas," said Minister Regan. "Our on-going support creates new affordable rental housing in Nova Scotia that might not have been available otherwise."

"Affordable housing is essential to the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities," said Mr. Morse. "The creation of safe, affordable, and sustainable housing addresses a pervasive need in Halifax."

The development will be located on Main Avenue in Fairview. The four-storey building will create 23 units of affordable rental housing for single-person households, persons with disabilities, small families and seniors. All of the units are either barrier-free or visitable. This means they incorporate design features that reduce obstacles to people with physical disabilities or reduced mobility.

The project is scheduled to be completed by the fall of 2006. The Government of Canada is providing \$575,000 in up-front capital funding, while the province is committing \$182,000 in rent supplement funding. Rockingstone Development Inc. will provide about 20 per cent of the total development cost.

To date, almost \$29 million has been announced by the Government of Canada, and the Province of Nova Scotia and its partners for the construction or renovation of nearly 650 units in the province. A total of \$56.18 million will be available under the Canada-Nova Scotia Affordable Housing agreement. The federal assistance is part of the \$1 billion announcement under a 2001 federal-provincial framework, and the 2003 Federal Budget, to create affordable housing.

For more information, please contact:

Karen White
Community Services
(902) 424-4038
whitekl@gov.ns.ca

Marianne Murphy
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

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(902) 426-6581

mmmurphy@cmhc.ca

Information on the Canada-Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Agreement is available at local housing services offices or on the Department of Community Services website at www.gov.ns.ca/coms.

Backgrounder

Canada–Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Agreement

First Phase

The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia signed an Affordable Housing Program Agreement on September 13, 2002 — the first phase provided federal funding of \$18.63 million together with matching contributions of \$18.63 million from the Province of Nova Scotia.

The 2001 Speech from the Throne indicated the Government of Canada would help stimulate the creation of more affordable rental housing. The federal/provincial/territorial housing ministers met twice to finalize details of an affordable housing initiative that would address the needs and priorities of individual jurisdictions while meeting the goal of increasing the supply of affordable housing. The final framework was developed and agreed to on November 30, 2001 and includes the following:

- Provinces and territories have the primary responsibility for housing program design and delivery;
- Provinces and territories require flexible programs to address their housing needs;
- The initiative needs to create affordable housing for low- to moderate-income households;
- Units funded will remain affordable for a minimum of 10 years;
- Maximum subsidy is \$50,000 and;
- Provinces and territories will be required to match federal contributions overall.

Second Phase

The new agreement was signed March 3, 2005 and will see each level of government contribute \$9.46 million for the creation or renovation of affordable housing in Nova Scotia. The second phase reflects the framework determined in phase one of the Affordable Housing Program Agreement, with the exception that the maximum subsidy is greater.

Other Government of Canada Housing Support in Nova Scotia

The \$28.09 million federal contribution builds on current Government of Canada expenditures on housing in the province of Nova Scotia. The Government of Canada annually supports housing with approximately \$70.6 million in grants, contributions and subsidies which primarily serve some 23,400 lower-income families, seniors, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, and victims of domestic violence.

This includes funds for existing social housing and approximately \$7 million for the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP), Home Adaptations for Seniors' Independence (HASI), Emergency Repair Program (ERP) and the Shelter Enhancement Program (SEP).

Other Government of Nova Scotia Housing Support Programs

The provincial government offers a number of programs to help lower-income households maintain, acquire, or rent safe, adequate, and affordable housing. Through housing authorities, we own and operate over 12,000 rental housing units for families and seniors. Rent is based on household income. We also provide grants and loans for home repair and

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additions, as well as mortgage funds to purchase or build modest houses.