



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Lilly Building Project Will Provide Housing and Opportunities for Youth**

**ST. JOHN'S, Newfoundland & Labrador, January 20, 2009** — With the support of the federal and provincial governments, Choices for Youth's Lilly Building Project will fill a significant housing gap within the city by combining 14 safe affordable housing units with on-site support, a basic literacy and math skill program, and an employment preparation program.

The project has received a total of \$2.29 million in funding from various federal – provincial initiatives to offset construction costs: under the Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador Affordable Housing Program, cost-shared 50/50 with the federal and provincial governments, (\$900,000), the federal Housing Trust Funds (\$680,000), the National Homelessness Initiative (\$550,000), and the federal – provincial Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (\$164,000). In addition, the project also received Seed Funding directly from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to assist during the initial planning stages.

In addition, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has invested a further \$533,000. The Department of Environment and Conservation is providing \$400,000 through the Newfoundland and Labrador Green Fund to address energy efficiency measures being undertaken during project renovation. Also, the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment is contributing programming funds of \$103,000, and the Department of Health and Community Services is contributing \$30,000 for employment program costs.

The Honourable Charlene Johnson, Minister of Environment and Conservation, and also on behalf of the Honourable Trevor Taylor, Minister Responsible for Newfoundland Labrador Housing (Housing), and Member of Parliament, Randy Hoback on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), made the announcement today.

“As a province, we recognize that one of our most valuable assets is our youth who are vital to the prosperity and growth of our future,” said Minister Johnson. “This project sends a clear message to young people in our community — they are important and we are working to provide them the support that will help them reach their full potential.”

The aim of the project is to take a multi-faceted, holistic approach to recurring homelessness by removing lifestyle, housing, educational and employment barriers. Youth will be supported in learning the skills to live independently and securing opportunities to make healthier lifestyles more sustainable. The future vision for the project is to incorporate a social enterprise which would provide youth with much-needed hands-on employment experiences and financial sustainability.

“The Government of Canada is committed to making affordable housing available in Newfoundland and Labrador and across Canada for those who need it most,” said Mr. Hoback. “The creation of these units here in St. John's will provide youth access to safe affordable and quality housing, helping them to build a stronger future.”

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Since the renovation and construction of the Lilly Building began, in September 2008, ten youth have been learning valuable construction skills as they work alongside contractors and trades people. These youth were referred to Choices through various programs across the city, received safety and basic construction training at the Carpenters Millwrights College.

“Through all the programs at Choices, we recognize that youth need safe, affordable housing and opportunities to support themselves through employment,” said Sheldon Pollett, Executive Director of Choices for Youth. “This new affordable housing facility will enable an extremely vulnerable population of youth to make sustainable long-term changes in their lives.”

Once completed, the facility will provide 14, one and two-bedroom apartments, along with programming and office space. One of the apartments will be completely wheelchair accessible.

### **For more information on these programs:**

Homelessness Partnering Strategy:

[www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/homelessness/index.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/homelessness/index.shtml)

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation:

[www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/inpr/afhoce/fias/index.cfm](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/inpr/afhoce/fias/index.cfm)

Newfoundland Labrador Housing:

[www.nlhc.nf.ca](http://www.nlhc.nf.ca)

Department of Environment and Conservation:

[www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/](http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/env/)

Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment:

[www.hrle.gov.nl.ca/hrle](http://www.hrle.gov.nl.ca/hrle)

Department of Health and Community Services:

[www.health.gov.nl.ca/health](http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health)

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