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MANITOBA'S NEIGHBOURHOODS ALIVE! COMMITS ALMOST \$1 MILLION FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL IN BRANDON

BRANDON—Manitoba's Neighbourhoods Alive! program is committing \$235,780 in funding for nine revitalization projects and is preparing to sign a new five-year agreement with the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC) to provide the corporation with core operating funding of \$150,000 per year. Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade Minister Scott Smith made the announcement at the YWCA's Meredith Place project which is receiving funding from the Neighbourhoods Alive! program.

"The Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation is playing a vital role in co-ordinating efforts to revitalize Brandon's oldest neighbourhoods, supported by core operating funding from the provincial Neighbourhoods Alive! initiative," said Smith. "The province recognizes the successful renewal of older high-needs neighbourhoods is a long-term process and so we are pleased to be signing a new five-year agreement with the BNRC."

Neighbourhoods Alive! is planning to provide \$235,780 in funding for nine revitalization projects including the Brandon YWCA - Meredith Place Residence project. The Brandon YWCA is receiving \$15,000 to support the purchase of equipment and furnishings required for new emergency units and counselling space at the transitional housing facility. Details of eight other projects funded are attached.

The BNRC has been working with community partners since 2000 to implement a five-year neighbourhood renewal plan. Much of that plan has been completed including the rehabilitation and development of 673 housing units, improvements to many core area parks and community facilities, and the establishment of resources such as the home-repair program that helps develop the skills of Brandon core area residents.

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The new core operating funding of \$150,000 per year represents an annual increase of \$75,000 over the previous five-year agreement. The enhanced long-term funding will enable the BNRC to continue to co-ordinate the successful neighbourhood revitalization efforts in Brandon's core area and ensure these improvements are sustained.

Neighbourhoods Alive! supports and encourages community-driven revitalization efforts in specific neighbourhoods in Brandon, Thompson and Winnipeg.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ATTACHED

The Neighbourhoods Alive! neighbourhood renewal fund is also supporting:

- Neighbourhood Renewal Planning – The BNRC will be receiving funding of \$8,000 to undertake a broad community consultation and develop a new Neighbourhood Renewal Plan to guide the revitalization of Brandon's older neighbourhoods over the next five years.
- Community Development Co-ordination – Renewed funding of \$27,400 has been provided to allow the BNRC to continue its successful efforts to assist local community organizations in developing projects that improve the quality of life in the core area of Brandon.
- Home Repair Program 2006 – Renewed funding of \$24,780 will allow the BNRC to continue the delivery of home repair and maintenance workshops to residents of Brandon's core area.
- Downtown Brandon Storefront Improvement Project 2006 – Renewed funding of \$35,000 has been provided to the BNRC to continue this project which was piloted last year. Businesses, co-ops and not-for-profit organizations in the BNRC district are eligible for up to \$3,000 in grants for improvements to the exteriors of their buildings. Applicants are also expected to match the provincial contribution.
- Front and Paint 2006 – Established in 2003, this project is receiving renewed funding of \$45,000 to allow the BNRC to continue to provide grant assistance to homeowners and landlords to undertake exterior renovations to their properties. Maximum grants are \$1,000 per unit and applicants are expected to contribute some of their own resources.
- Small Grants Fund Program 2006 – The BNRC has been administering this program since 2002, with funding provided by Neighbourhoods Alive!. This year's contribution is \$50,000. Community groups in the BNRC district are eligible for grants of up to \$5,000 for projects that support community connecting. Last year, the BNRC funded 17 projects including Brandon Friendship Centre's cultural camp and Westman Settlement Services' newcomer cooking classes.
- Samaritan House, Computer Training for Literacy project – Samaritan House is receiving NA! funding of \$10,600 for the purchase of eight computers for Samaritan House's adult literacy program targeted to residents of the BNRC district.
- Brandon School Division, King George School Community Playground Redevelopment project – The division is receiving \$20,000 to improve the recreational space for the over 200 students attending King George School and for neighbourhood children and families. The NA! funding will support the purchase and installation of a new play structure.