



news release

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For release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Peel Region's Homeless to benefit from Government of Canada Funding

Orangeville, Ontario — Approval for the Peel Region community plan on homelessness was announced today by Gurbax Malhi, Member of Parliament Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour, on behalf of the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness. Funding in the amount of \$2.8 million will be provided to Peel Region through the Government of Canada's Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), under the National Homelessness Initiative.

“This plan to address homelessness in the cities of Brampton and Mississauga and the Town of Caledon reflects Peel Region's strong resolution to provide both immediate help and lasting solutions to people who are without homes, or in danger of becoming homeless”, said Malhi. “The Government of Canada recognizes that fostering partnerships among governments, communities, voluntary groups, the private sector and homeless people is the most effective way to alleviate homelessness locally.”

A local steering committee comprised of government and community representatives was established to develop the Community Action Plan which identifies existing conditions, gaps in service for those in need and recommendations to address homelessness. The priority areas in the Peel plan include:

- a 20-unit housing project for families who have lost their homes and require support services to help them get back on their feet;
- a Youth Village, with housing, support services and job training for homeless youth; and
- expansion of Peel's Outreach Program, in which Program workers offer people living on the streets and those who may be at risk of losing their homes counselling, referrals service and primary health care.

“Peel is thrilled to have the support of the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative to help us to truly make a difference in the lives of many Peel families, individuals and youth who lost their jobs, their families and their entire support systems and find themselves in desperate need of help from the community,” said Regional Chair Emil Kolb. “ This significant contribution will help make our plans become a reality. I am delighted that the Government of Canada shares our commitment and vision to alleviating homelessness in Peel, and look forward to what we can do together as partners to achieve this goal.”

As part of its Continuum of Supports Strategy to address homelessness, Peel has built two homeless shelters. The federal funds announced today will make it possible for Peel to move forward with its Community Plan projects. The two housing projects will be built on Region-owned land. Peel also plans to begin building more affordable permanent housing in 2002.

The community plan is a product of a consultative process involving all stakeholders interested in addressing homelessness in a particular community. The community identifies assets, gaps and priorities that meet local requirements to provide assistance to the homeless. The community plan provides a foundation for community action that can build on the community's assets and begin to address some of the identified gaps.

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The SCPI enables communities to bring together various partners to develop local solutions to their particular homelessness needs and issues. The National Homelessness Initiative is making a difference in addressing this issue by using a community-based approach to help develop solutions that work. The \$305 million SCPI is key component of the Government of Canada's \$753 million National Homelessness Initiative.

The Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative also includes expansion of existing programs for youth and Aboriginal peoples, enhancement of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's renovations and shelter programs, and making surplus federal properties available.

Funding for the National Homelessness Initiative was provided for in the February 2000 Federal budget and is therefore built into the existing financial framework.

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For more information on the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative, visit our web site at www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/nsh-snsa

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