
news release

November 19, 2001
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New transitional housing on the horizon in Toronto

TORONTO, ONTARIO —Land in the Malvern Town Centre area is expected to be transferred to the City of Toronto for \$1 later this fall by the Governments of Canada and Ontario. This land transfer will help the City alleviate homelessness as part of their plan to create 92 new apartment units on the site.

As Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Honourable Alfonso Gagliano stated “We understand the City plans to use the property for a mix of transitional and affordable housing. This is a good example of creating local housing solutions through the collaboration of all three orders of government.”

Derek Lee, Member of Parliament for Scarborough-Rouge River, on behalf of the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness, commented “Homelessness is a challenge that no single government or organization can solve on its own. I am delighted that so many partners have come together to make this project possible.”

The 0.6 hectare (1.5 acre) parcel of vacant land at 20 Sewells Road, valued at \$675,000, is owned 75% / 25% respectively by the federal and provincial governments and will be transferred to the City of Toronto after the selection of community partners to build and operate a housing development. More information on this project is provided in the backgrounder attached.

This land transfer is being planned within the Government of Canada’s Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative, part of the National Homelessness Initiative announced in December 1999 by Ministers Bradshaw and Gagliano.

“The Government of Ontario is very pleased to be donating its share of this land to contribute to the development of more housing for individuals and families in need,” said Municipal Affairs Minister Chris Hodgson. “This is just one of the many Ontario government initiatives to reduce barriers and develop affordable housing in Ontario.”

“It’s great to see all levels of government working together to create affordable housing in Toronto,” said Toronto Councillor Brad Duguid, Chair of the City’s Community Services Committee.

This collaborative project is an example of how the Government of Canada’s National Homelessness Initiative is making a difference in communities across Canada through a community-based approach which enables local needs to be met with locally developed solutions.

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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BACKGROUND: TRANSFER OF 20 SEWELLS ROAD, TORONTO

On December 17, 1999, the Government of Canada announced the National Homelessness Initiative, an investment of \$753 million to help alleviate and prevent homelessness across Canada. The cornerstone of this initiative is the \$305-million Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), which helps communities put a range of supports in place. Another element is the \$10-million Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative (SFRPHI), which makes appropriate surplus federal real property available to groups addressing homelessness.

In 2000/2001 the Ontario Government made available a total of over \$129 million through various provincial homelessness strategy initiatives. One of those initiatives was a commitment to make provincial public lands available to create 500 units of affordable housing to address and prevent homelessness.

Under the federal initiative, surplus federal real property is available to municipal, provincial or territorial governments and to community-based organizations with valid non-profit charters. For parties interested in obtaining surplus federal real property to address homelessness, the local federal homelessness facilitator (Human Resources Development Canada) can act as a guide through the proposal and application process.

In this case, a vacant parcel of land at 20 Sewells Road will be given to the City of Toronto. The interest in this land is held jointly by the federal government (75%) and the Government of Ontario (25%). The total value of the land being transferred is \$675,000—the federal share being \$506,250 and the Province of Ontario's share being \$168,750. The land will be used to construct up to 92 transitional and affordable housing units. In keeping with the City of Toronto's *Community Plan for Homelessness in Toronto*, the transitional housing units will be targeted to households facing homelessness, while the affordable rental units will help households at risk of homelessness.

The Province is also contributing \$622,400 annually to the City of Toronto in the form of rent supplements for the 92 units of housing. The rent supplements will make the units affordable to those at risk of homelessness.

This project will also receive significant funding through both the SCPI and the City of Toronto's "Let's Build" affordable housing program.

Through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process, Let's Build will seek a proposal to develop and operate up to 92 transitional and affordable housing units. The transfer of the land will occur upon the completion of the RFP process and the approval of a viable proposal. The City will retain ownership of the land, providing it on a long-term lease basis to the housing provider.

Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), with the help of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), work as partners in implementing and managing the \$10-million Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative (SFRPHI). The Initiative provides federal custodian departments and agencies with fair market value for real properties that have been declared surplus to their program needs, and provides community organizations with access to those real properties to support their efforts. All surplus real properties made available through the SFRPHI are transferred for a nominal amount as non-cash contributions to recipients who are required to sign contribution agreements with the federal government.