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# news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Local groups to administer Government of Canada funds for homelessness**

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**BARRIE, ONTARIO** — Final approval for the Barrie area Community Plan on Homelessness was announced today by Aileen Carroll, MP for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford, on behalf of the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness.

The \$493,734 in funding for this initiative was previously announced and is funded through the Government of Canada's Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), under the National Homelessness Initiative.

Through this funding, the Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness/United Way of Greater Simcoe County is designated as the Community Entity to co-ordinate the funding and activities for the projects that will address the needs of homeless people in the community. The Community Entity will ensure that these projects respect the priorities outlined in the Community Plan.

“Today’s announcement will help ensure that homeless people who need our help will get it promptly,” said Carroll. “This a gratifying example of the community, the not-for profit and private sectors, and the Federal Government coming together to find effective ways to help homeless Canadians.”

“We would like to thank MP Aileen Carroll for stepping in, taking the initiative and making this happen,” said David Jeffery, Executive Director, United Way of Greater Simcoe County. “This is good news for Simcoe County and we appreciate the federal government’s investment in our community. This 18 months of funding for supports and services will assist us in shoring up a crisis situation, and we look forward to continuing our work with partners to develop a housing plan and policies for longer term solutions.

“There are many people who are homeless and many more that are on the verge of losing their homes. The Government of Canada’s Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative is a definite, positive step towards reducing the numbers of homeless in Simcoe County,” said Mandy Hillyard, Co-ordinator, Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness. “ It will allow those organizations who have been actively working on this issue to better serve those who are homeless and to ultimately help Simcoe County residents secure affordable housing.”

The SCPI funds will be used to enhance homeless programs and services in Simcoe County as well as to undertake community planning about homelessness. All levels of government, local agencies and other interested organizations in the county have been working together at the community level to identify issues and to develop a strategic approach to homelessness. This community plan will provide the basis for medium and long-term action plans around both Federal and Provincial funding and other community initiatives that direct existing resources.

A Community Plan is the community’s vision of how best to help the homeless. The 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 both prevent and reduce homelessness. 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.

The SCPI enables communities to bring together various partners to develop local solutions for their particular homelessness needs and issues. The Government of Canada’s \$753 M 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 for homelessness related activities. The National Homelessness Initiative is making a difference in addressing homelessness by using a community-based approach to help develop solutions that work.

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