



# News Release

Thursday, May 10, 2001

## **Trellis support for new affordable housing development**

**Community and Neighbourhood Services** --- Construction is set to begin on one of Toronto's first affordable rental buildings under the city's Let's Build program. Through Let's Build, the City of Toronto is providing land and financing to Trellis Housing Initiatives, a community-based non-profit, to build 24 affordable rental units at Lawrence Av. W. at Allen Rd. Additional support comes from the Government of Canada's Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). A project launch ceremony was held at City Hall today.

Seventeen of the Trellis Gardens apartments will provide below-market housing for about 44 women and their children, and offer support services such as childcare and skills training. The site also accommodates a community garden and children's play area.

Rents for the 17 below-market units will range from \$500 per month for a one-bedroom unit to about \$550 for a two-bedroom. Seven more units will rent at affordable market rates. Tenants will be drawn from Toronto's waiting list for assisted housing, from the city's emergency shelter system and the Out of the Cold program.

"Trellis Gardens will be more than bricks and mortar," said Valerie Elliott Hyman, co-chair of Trellis Housing Initiatives. "It will be a community that offers a variety of skills to help people get back into the mainstream. We chose the name Trellis because it is a support for growth, development and beauty."

"I'm very excited about this project. Toronto has set the stage for partnerships among community groups and government to make housing happen," said Toronto Councillor Brad Duguid, chair of the city's Community Services Committee and project launch host.

Trellis Housing Initiatives is a coalition of Congregation Darchei Noam and the Out of the Cold program, a faith-based network that provides meals and overnight shelter to people without homes. These groups have a demonstrated ability to develop affordable housing and have experience in providing services to people in need.

Applying the city's Housing First Policy for Affordable Housing, Let's Build is leasing city-owned land at nominal cost and providing a grant of \$288,000 from Toronto's Capital Revolving Fund for Affordable Housing. An interest-free second mortgage of \$800,000 and waiver of development fees rounds out City of Toronto support to the project.

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“This development will help women and children to have better, more fulfilled lives without spending all of their energy worrying about the roof over their heads,” said Councillor Michael Feldman, chair of the Capital Revolving Fund’s advisory committee.

The federal SCPI is providing an additional grant of \$500,000 in capital funding and CMHC has contributed about \$87,000 in loans and grants for proposal development. Trellis Housing Initiatives is committed to raising at least \$360,000 towards capital costs.

"This project is an example of the Government of Canada's commitment to working with our partners to find innovative and successful ways of combating homelessness in Canada," said Joe Volpe, Member of Parliament for Eglinton-Lawrence. "This is the kind of support to those in need that is being provided through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative. I am delighted to see this facility moving forward in such a positive and meaningful way," he added.

Let’s Build is the City of Toronto’s affordable housing development program that helps community and commercial developers build affordable housing. Let’s Build makes available city-owned land along with capital grants, loans and development assistance. There are currently 384 units of affordable housing in various stages of development through Let’s Build.

The Government of Canada’s \$305-million Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative sponsors broad partnerships to support actions identified by communities to alleviate and prevent homelessness. Toronto will receive \$53 million over three years under the SCPI for service programs and capital projects.

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**Backgrounder available:**

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