

October 21, 2005

PROVINCE ANNOUNCES LONG-TERM SUPPORT TO BOLSTER SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBOURHOODS ALIVE! INITIATIVE IN THOMPSON

THOMPSON—Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade Minister Scott Smith today marked the five-year anniversary of the Neighbourhoods Alive! (NA!) program and renewed core funding for the Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (TNRC) to support continued neighbourhood revitalization and community projects.

"I am proud of the work that we have accomplished in Thompson through the NA! program," said Smith. "When we invest in community groups and projects, we see neighbourhoods rejuvenated in physical appearance and spirit."

"The Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation is a catalyst in bringing together residents, community organizations, the municipality and businesses to renew our community," said Water Stewardship Minister Steve Ashton, speaking here today on behalf of Smith. "TNRC and its partners are helping develop made-in-Thompson solutions to the challenges of urban revitalization in a northern community."

Building on the success of the NA! model, Ashton noted that, to date, the province has committed almost \$2.8 million under Neighbourhoods Alive! to support neighbourhood revitalization in Thompson including:

- over \$841,000 for 34 community development projects,
- \$267,000 over three years for the Youth Builders training initiative,
- \$399,700 over five and a half years to support revitalization co-ordination and leadership by TNRC,
- almost \$1.3 million to rehabilitate or construct 153 housing units (to March 31, 2005),
- renewal of core funding support for the Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation for a further five years, and
- \$181,000 in NA! funding for six new or renewed projects. The project list is attached.

First launched in June 2000, the NA! strategy supports and encourages community-driven revitalization efforts in specific neighbourhoods in Thompson, Winnipeg and Brandon. NA! involves the multi-department co-ordination of six funding areas including a neighbourhood renewal fund, neighbourhood housing assistance, neighbourhood development assistance, Lighthouses, community initiatives and training initiatives. Residents, community groups, schools, businesses and various local organizations can access support from a range of programs aimed at community renewal.

Areas of support for NA! projects include:

- rehabilitating housing,
- building community leadership,
- enhancing neighbourhood parks and facilities,
- establishing safety and wellness initiatives,
- providing employment training, and
- sponsoring after-school recreation programs for children and youth.

More information on the NA! program is available on the website:
<http://www.neighbourhoodsalive.mb.ca>.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ATTACHED

THOMPSON NA! HIGHLIGHTS

- 34 community development projects totalling \$841,849 have been approved.
- \$1,274,990 has been committed to rehabilitate or construct 153 housing units.
- NA! has invested \$105,274 in park, playground and green-space enhancements to neighbourhoods in need.
- The Thompson Boys and Girl's Club's Youth Builders project has received \$266,840 over three years from the NA! Training Initiatives program to train up to 20 at-risk youth in construction annually.

Project Highlights

- Building addition: Teekinakan Day Care Centre is receiving \$31,680 in NA! funding for an addition to its building that will add needed storage and office space for the centre, licensed for 40 pre-school age children.
- Housing co-ordination: Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (TNRC) is receiving \$48,175 to continue its co-ordination of housing renewal activities in Thompson.
- Mural project: TNRC is receiving \$26,500 for a project to paint six new murals on businesses in Thompson. The project employs local artists, along with financial support from local businesses.
- FRONT and PAINT program: TNRC is receiving \$27,250 to provide incentives to homeowners and landlords to improve the exterior appearance of their properties, thereby contributing to the overall beautification of neighbourhoods.
- Wapanohk-Eastwood community school project: TNRC is receiving \$28,840 on behalf of community partners to support after-school educational and recreational activities at Wapanohk-Eastwood School, as well as community celebrations for local families and other residents.
- Norplex pool access program: TNRC is receiving \$18,523 to support a joint initiative with the City of Thompson and local community organizations, such as the Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre, to enhance water safety programming and increase the number of children and youth from distressed neighbourhoods accessing Norplex Pool.