
News Release

For Immediate Release
December 12, 2014

**MINISTER DREW CALDWELL, MP LARRY MAGUIRE CELEBRATE
GRAND OPENING OF NEW HOUSING FACILITY IN BRANDON**

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**Highlight Government Action
To Address Homelessness**

Larry Maguire, Member of Parliament for Brandon–Souris, on behalf of the Honourable Candice Bergen, Minister of State for Social Development, joined the Honourable Drew Caldwell, Minister of Municipal Government for Manitoba, appearing on behalf of the Honourable Kerri Irvin-Ross, Minister of Family Services and Housing for Manitoba, as well as Westman Youth for Christ and the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation to celebrate the grand opening of a new transitional housing facility.

With funding provided by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), the federal/provincial Investment in Affordable Housing and the City of Brandon, Westman Youth for Christ purchased land and built a facility that will provide transitional housing for up to 13 people per year.

Through the HPS, the Government of Canada works with other levels of government, communities and organizations to develop and invest in local solutions to combat homelessness. The Government recently announced the renewal of HPS with an investment of nearly \$600 million in funding over five years, until March 2019.

Quick Facts

- The Government of Canada provided \$1.3 million in HPS funding over three years (2011–2014) to the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, which in turn awarded \$552,167 to Westman Youth for Christ for their transitional housing project. Additional funding of \$249,927 was provided through the federal/provincial Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH).
- The funding is partly a result of the \$62 million IAH 2011–2014 agreement between the Governments of Canada and Manitoba. The Province of Manitoba is using the funds under this agreement to build more affordable housing and upgrade existing housing to ensure low-income Manitobans can provide safe, stable homes for their families.

- In addition, in July 2014, the Governments of Canada and Manitoba signed an extension to the original IAH agreement that will provide for a combined investment of \$104 million for the 2014–2019 period to help more individuals and families in need access affordable housing.
- Since the launch of the HPS in April 2007, nearly 34,000 Canadians who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless have benefitted from education and training opportunities; over 32,000 have received help to find work; and more than 5,770 new shelter beds have been created.
- Through Economic Action Plan 2014, the Government is building on its previous efforts and partnerships to implement the evidence-based Housing First approach across Canada, which has proven to be the most effective approach in reducing homelessness.

Quotes

“People who have experienced the trauma of homelessness need the supportive living environment found in transitional housing to stabilize their lives. Transitional housing offers a living environment where people can learn the skills and experience the sense of community they will need to live successfully on their own.”

– The Honourable Drew Caldwell, Minister of Municipal Government for Manitoba

“We are pleased to partner with the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation on this new Youth for Christ housing facility. This is a great example of the results we can achieve through strong partnerships. When people, especially youth, have a safe, secure roof over their head, it is much easier to obtain education, upgrade skills and become successful, productive members of society.”

– Larry Maguire, Member of Parliament for Brandon–Souris, on behalf of the Honourable Candice Bergen, Minister of State for Social Development

“Small but Powerful reflects the powerful difference a small apartment can make in the life of a homeless youth with the stability, comfort and security it provides. Small but Powerful also represents our commitment at YFC to helping youth make their move to independence. It’s the small things, like a staff member who will personally wake you up in the morning, a community partner who will offer you a job or a teacher who will give you one more chance. We believe every youth has the right to be responsible for their choices. This building and the shelter it provides give them a safe and secure home and allow them to focus on creating an independent life in our community.”

– Dwayne Dyck, Executive Director, Westman Youth for Christ

“The BNRC would like to congratulate Youth for Christ on its successful pocket suites project. The YFC suites not only provide apartments equipped with all the necessities, but also offer young people key supports to overcome personal challenges and the opportunity to more fully contribute to our community. This is the third time since 2000 that YFC has participated in a Homelessness Partnering Strategy funded project, and these pocket suites will undoubtedly build upon the demonstrated success of its other transitional housing facilities. Going forward, the BNRC looks forward to delivering HPS investment through more meaningful projects that will help ensure no one in our community has to experience homelessness.”

– Murray Hurl, Board Chair, Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation

Associated Links

- www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/index.shtm
- www.gov.mb.ca/housing/

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ATTACHED

Contacts

Media Relations Office
Employment and Social Development Canada
819-994-5559
media@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

Kimberlee Jones
Communications, CMHC
403-585-9324
kjones@cmhc.ca
Follow CMHC on Twitter [@CMHC_ca](https://twitter.com/CMHC_ca)

Rachel Morgan
Communications Service Manitoba
204-945-1494
rachel.morgan@leg.gov.mb.ca

Backgrounder

Homelessness Partnering Strategy

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is a unique, community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to 61 designated communities in all provinces and territories, as well as to Aboriginal, rural and remote communities across Canada, to help them address homelessness.

Economic Action Plan 2013 renewed the HPS with nearly \$600 million in total funding over five years, ending in March 2019, using a Housing First approach.

Until recently, the most common way to deal with homelessness has been a “crisis-based” model—not just in Canada, but in many developed countries. This model involves relying heavily on shelters and other emergency interventions. Typically, individuals must first participate in a series of treatments and demonstrate sobriety before they are offered housing. This approach has been costly and not effective in the long term.

Without stable housing, it is much more difficult to participate in treatment programs and manage mental and physical health issues. This leads to high costs for emergency housing, hospitalization, shelters, prisons and a host of other crisis services.

Housing First, on the other hand, involves ensuring individuals have immediate housing before providing the necessary supports to help them stabilize their lives. Experiences in other countries have demonstrated that this approach shows great promise.

Investment in Affordable Housing

Annually, the Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), will invest approximately \$2 billion in housing. These investments improve the quality of life for low-income Canadians and households living in existing social housing, including individuals who are at risk of homelessness, seniors, persons with disabilities and Aboriginal people. Economic Action Plan 2013 continues this commitment with a federal investment of more than \$1.25 billion over five years to renew the Investment in Affordable Housing to 2019. The Government of Canada will ensure that funds provided to provinces and territories support the use of apprentices, which will support training of skilled labour. To find out more about how the Government of Canada and CMHC help Canadians meet their housing needs, call CMHC at 1-800-668-2642.

The Manitoba government recently reached its five-year goal of providing funding commitments to create 1,500 new affordable housing units throughout the province. The province is now working toward its new commitment to create another 500 affordable housing and 500 social housing units in the next three years. Manitoba Housing and Community Development's overall strategy complements Budget 2014 with a plan to create good jobs, grow the economy and protect front-line services for families by focusing on what matters most to Manitoba's families. More information is available at www.gov.mb.ca/housing.