
News Release

Agreement provides funding for 160 new social housing units in 25 Nunavut communities

January 20, 2005 (Iqaluit, Nunavut) – A joint \$40 million contribution agreement signed by the Governments of Canada and Nunavut today will mean improvements to the living conditions of hundreds of people in Nunavut communities.

The Honourable John Godfrey, Minister of State (Infrastructure and Communities), the Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Minister of Community and Government Services and Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC), and Member of Parliament Nancy Karetak-Lindell, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing, today announced a contribution agreement to provide funds in support of the construction of 160 new social housing units for Nunavut's 25 communities.

"Social housing is an important aspect in the overall health of a community. Adequate housing is critical to improving the quality of life in the far North," said Minister Godfrey. "This investment in housing will generate long-term benefits to each community – socially, economically, environmentally and culturally. It is an example of our New Deal at work in Nunavut."

The Governments of Canada and Nunavut are each contributing \$20 million for the social housing units. The NHC and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) will work together to implement the project.

"Safe and adequate housing means the world to those who are in need. We cannot over-emphasize how important an investment like this one is to the people of this territory," said Minister Kilabuk. "Social housing has long been an infrastructure priority in Nunavut and with the continued help of the federal government hundreds of people will have access to new, affordable and efficient homes."

Each community will receive a minimum of three social housing units. At least 95% of the clients will be Inuit. The housing will be targeted to low-income seniors, single people and families. To date, the materials to construct 85 units have already been shipped to almost all communities. It is expected that 53 units will be completed by the end of March 2005.

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“The Government of Canada is committed to addressing the long term housing needs and challenges facing Nunavut,” said M.P. Karetak-Lindell. “This project will help to reduce over-crowding while improving housing quality.”

The housing will exceed the current Model National Energy Code for Houses by at least 25% and at least 10% of all units will be barrier free for persons with disabilities. To improve the performance and energy efficiency of the housing and ultimately reduce the environmental impact and ongoing operating costs, innovative technology, design and approaches will be utilized whenever possible.

The construction of these homes will provide employment and training opportunities for local residents, resulting in transferable skills and job experience.

Federal funds will come from the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund (CSIF). The CSIF supports large-scale strategic infrastructure projects that improve quality of life and further sustainable growth. Beginning in 1994, the Government of Canada has committed \$12 billion toward over 20,000 infrastructure projects in Canada’s communities. This should leverage over \$30 billion from all partners.

Since the creation of Nunavut in 1999, the Government of Nunavut has funded the construction of 325 new social housing units. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, through the Affordable Housing Program, has provided \$5 million towards the construction of 200 of these units.

Through the New Deal for Cities and Communities, the Government of Canada is taking constructive steps to engage and consult with stakeholders, to continue to promote new partnerships between federal, provincial, and municipal governments and to deliver stable, predictable, long-term funding for cities and communities in urban and rural areas.

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