

For Immediate Release
June 13, 2006

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT BEGINS CONSTRUCTION

TORONTO – The Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario and the City of Toronto held a sod turning ceremony today to mark the start of construction on a project that will create 68 units of affordable housing in Toronto under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program.

Donna Cansfield, MPP for Etobicoke Centre, on behalf of the Honourable John Gerretsen, Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti, on behalf of Mayor David Miller, and federal officials attended the ceremony.

“Canada’s new Government is very proud to be a partner in the construction of the YWCA Bergamot. This project will help ensure that vulnerable women will have access to the housing and services they need to build a stronger future for themselves and their children,” said the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development.

“Starting over again can be a real challenge to women and their families who have left their homes due to domestic violence,” said MPP Cansfield. “The McGuinty government is on the side of Ontario’s most vulnerable. That’s why we are providing affordable housing that will help these families rebuild their lives and create a brighter future for their children.”

The \$10.6 million project, including over \$1.97 million from the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, will provide 68 units at 60 Bergamot Drive in Etobicoke. The project is sponsored by YWCA Toronto and the units will be occupied by families and single persons with lower incomes.

The City of Toronto provided \$2.5 million from the Capital Revolving Fund, \$400,000 in deferred property taxes and \$1.43 million from the Child Care Reserve Fund for the construction and start up of the child-care centre.

“This initiative will provide something that’s absolutely critical for abused women and their children – a safe place to call home,” said Councillor Mammoliti, Chair of Toronto’s Affordable Housing Committee. “As well, the addition of on-site, regulated child care is good for kids and good for moms who are going back to school or back to work.”

“YWCA Toronto is pleased to announce that construction of YWCA Bergamot has begun,” said Deepa Jacob, President, YWCA Toronto. “YWCA Bergamot is 68-unit affordable apartment building with a 62-space early childhood development centre. It will be for women-led families, with priority given to women who have experienced violence. For women and their children, Bergamot will provide the long-term stability they can afford and the security necessary to plan their future and rebuild their lives.”

In Toronto, the Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), has contributed \$46 million through the Canada Affordable Housing Program Agreement.

The new federal provincial agreement, signed on April 29, 2005, comprises a commitment of \$301 million from each of the two levels of government. With this commitment, the federal, provincial and municipal governments will invest at least \$734 million over the life of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program. In total, the program will help 20,000 Ontario households by 2010.

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