

IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 20, 2010

## 6-STOP AFFORDABLE HOUSING TOUR

The Ottawa Branch of the *Housing Network of Ontario* and six local housing providers throughout the city are offering an opportunity for all Ottawa area MPPs to participate in a **6-Stop Affordable Housing Tour** in May and June.

The 6-Stop Affordable Housing Tour will showcase Ottawa's existing affordable housing for families, youth, and single adults in different parts of the city. The media are invited to come out to each stop on the tour to hear and see first hand what is working well in Ottawa.

**“Our community needs every MPP in the Ottawa region to be active champions of affordable housing,”** says Eugene Williams, Co chair of the Ottawa branch of *The Housing Network of Ontario*. “The tour is a chance to see first hand how successes can be replicated; we plan a ‘show and tell’ tour to demonstrate ‘here is what it takes; this is what it gets you’.”

Ottawa's affordable housing advocates stress that creating new affordable housing stimulates the economy and promotes economic prosperity, as does investing in social capital. Mr. Williams points out that, “Supporting the community's capacity to develop affordable housing helps drive economic growth and reforming housing legislation will build healthy and sustainable communities.”

### **1<sup>ST</sup> TOUR STOP – MAY 21<sup>ST</sup>, 10 AM-11AM**

**Location: Gloucester Housing Corporation (GNC)** 1932 Ken Steele Court in Ottawa-Orleans. Ken Steele Court is located just off Innes Rd; from Innes, turn left onto Viseneau Drive and it is the first left.

**Ed Campbell, GHC President** will lead the tour for *Phil McNeely, MPP*. “We are very proud of our five rent-geared-to-income housing communities and our new affordable housing community; we are committed to providing more quality affordable housing in the future. **We know that affordable housing must be truly affordable for tenants and that as housing providers we need adequate funding to maintain our communities as they mature**”, explains Mr. Campbell. “Tenants would continue to pay rents based on income and we would have ongoing funding to repair, retrofit, and develop new affordable housing. We believe that housing is a basic core need for all people and that social housing is truly a social investment.”

### **UP NEXT ON THE 6-STOP TOUR –**

**Stop 2 will be at the Woodland and Cayhill Communities** (Ottawa Community Housing) in Ottawa South, **Premier Dalton McGuinty riding**, to be followed by stops in the ridings of West-Nepean, Ottawa-Centre, Ottawa-Vanier and Nepean-Carleton. All stops are on Fridays 10-11 am in May and June; media releases for each stop will be sent.

Mr. Williams explained the timing of the 6 Stop Tour, “The Housing Network of Ontario wants to see a strong foundation for Ontario's future in a *Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy*. We will be urging MPPs to adopt and act on it right away once it is tabled in June. We'll assess the strategy using HNO's **5 Tests for Success**, which are

based on what we heard people say in our community as well as in others across Ontario during the province's consultation last year."

**Highlights from the 5 Tests for Success** (More details in the attached 2 page flyer) –

1. **Bold targets and sustained funding** – with annual funding to build 10,000 affordable homes a year and for ongoing maintenance;
2. **A solid measuring stick** – Systematically reducing the number of households on the wait list for affordable housing in all regions of Ontario;
3. **Accountability** – Annual public reporting on progress under a full-time Minister of Housing
4. **Make housing truly affordable and accessible** – A new Housing Benefit to close the gap between high rents and low-income; a plan that works for marginalized communities that also has Legislative changes to better protect tenants and to promote affordable housing;
5. **Reform housing legislation to build stronger communities** with a fair appeals process for housing providers and tenants; adds vacant units to those now covered by rent regulation guidelines; allows municipalities to introduce inclusionary housing policies; and has the power to expropriate abandoned properties for affordable housing conversion."

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**Watch for media releases about each four stop.**

**For comments:**

- **Ottawa Branch Co-Chairs of The Housing Network of Ontario: Eugene Williams and Jenn Wilks**  
*Arrange through Eugene Williams Cell – 613-791-5174*
- **Gloucester Housing Corporation (GHC) President: Ed Campbell**  
*Arrange through Catherine McCurdy, GHC General Manager      Phone - 748-6606 ext. 304*

IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 27, 2010

# **STOP 2 – THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TOUR IN OTTAWA SOUTH**

## **CEO OF OTTAWA COMMUNITY HOUSING SAYS LONG TERM INVESTMENTS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDED**

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, Stop 2 of the Affordable Housing Tour visits Ottawa Community Housing's *Woodland and Cahill Communities*. The *Woodland and Cahill Communities* are in Premier McGuinty's Ottawa South riding. The Ottawa Branch of the Housing Network of Ontario is organizing this tour with six local housing providers throughout the city to provide an opportunity for Premier McGuinty and area MPPs to visit some of Ottawa's existing affordable housing for families, youth, and single adults in different parts of the city.

**“During our first tour at Ken Steele Court, a Gloucester Housing Corporation community, we were thrilled that Ottawa Orleans MPP Phil McNeely expressed his support for the HNO Ontario 5 Tests for Success report,”** says Eugene Williams, Co-Chair of the Ottawa Branch of the Housing Network of Ontario. **“Our community needs every MPP in the Ottawa region to be an active champion of affordable housing and MPP Phil McNeely is clearly one of those champions”**, says Williams. At the tour, Mr. McNeely expressed his support for the hard work that Gloucester Housing Corporation does for the Ottawa-Orleans area and the important support it gives to families in need.

Ottawa's affordable housing advocates stress that creating new affordable housing stimulates the economy and promotes economic prosperity, as does investing in social capital. Mr. Williams points out that, “Supporting the community's capacity to develop affordable housing helps drive economic growth and reforming housing legislation will build healthy and sustainable communities.”

### **TOUR STOP 2 – MAY 28<sup>TH</sup> , 10 AM-11AM - In Premier McGuinty's Ottawa South Riding**

**Location: Woodland and Cahill Communities (Ottawa Community Housing) in Ottawa South  
Corner of Cahill Drive and Patola Private - Parking is available on side streets  
Light refreshments will be available**

**Jo-Anne Poirier, Ottawa Community Housing's CEO** will lead the tour.

“A number of our communities have benefited from the recent financial investment senior governments have made in social housing. One-time investments are definitely welcome but long-term sustainable funding is essential to effectively build new affordable homes and properly maintain social housing stock.” says Jo-Anne Poirier, **CEO** of Ottawa Community Housing Corporation.

## **UP NEXT ON THE 6-STOP TOUR–**

**We are organizing 4 more tours that will take place in the ridings of Ottawa-Vanier, West–Nepean, Ottawa-Centre, and Nepean-Carleton.** All stops are on Fridays 10-11 am in May and June; media releases for each stop will be sent.

Mr. Williams explained the timing of the 6 Stop Tour, “The Housing Network of Ontario wants to see a strong foundation for Ontario’s future in a *Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy*. We will be urging MPPs to adopt and act on it right away once it is tabled in June. We’ll assess the strategy using HNO’s **5 Tests for Success**, which are based on what we heard people say in our community as well as in others across Ontario during the province’s consultation last year.”

### **Highlights from the 5 Tests for Success** (More details in the attached 2 page flyer) –

6. **Bold targets and sustained funding** – with annual funding to build 10,000 affordable homes a year and for ongoing maintenance;
7. **A solid measuring stick** – Systematically reducing the number of households on the wait list for affordable housing in all regions of Ontario;
8. **Accountability** – Annual public reporting on progress under a full-time Minister of Housing
9. **Make housing truly affordable and accessible** – A new Housing Benefit to close the gap between high rents and low-income; a plan that works for marginalized communities that also has Legislative changes to better protect tenants and to promote affordable housing;
10. **Reform housing legislation to build stronger communities** with a fair appeals process for housing providers and tenants; adds vacant units to those now covered by rent regulation guidelines; allows municipalities to introduce inclusionary housing policies; and has the power to expropriate abandoned properties for affordable housing conversion.”

- 30 -

**Watch for media releases about each tour stop.**

**For comments:**

- **Ottawa Branch Co-Chairs of The Housing Network of Ontario: Eugene Williams and Jenn Wilks**

Arrange through Eugene Williams

Cell – 613-791-5174

- **Ottawa Community Housing Corporation: Manager, Corporate Communications**

Arrange through Susan Therien

Cell – 613-296-2651

**Photo’s of Gloucester Housing Corporation Tour Included as Attachment**

IMMEDIATE RELEASE June 10, 2010

## **STOP 3— THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TOUR IN OTTAWA WEST-NEPEAN**

### **PREMIER MCGUINTY'S REPRESENTATIVE SAYS PROVINCE IS BACK IN THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUSINESS**

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Stop 3 of the Affordable Housing Tour visits Youth Services Bureau Long-Term Housing in MPP Bob Chiarelli's Ottawa West-Nepean riding. This is the third of a 6-Stop Tour organized by Ottawa Branch of the Housing Network of Ontario with local housing providers throughout the city to provide an opportunity for Premier McGuinty and area MPPs to visit some of Ottawa's existing affordable housing for families, youth, and single adults in different parts of the city.

#### **TOUR STOP 3 – JUNE 11<sup>TH</sup>, 10 AM-11AM**

**In MPP Bob Chiarelli's Ottawa West-Nepean riding**

**Location: Youth Services Bureau Ottawa Long-Term Housing** in Ottawa West-Nepean  
**96 McEwan Avenue**  
**Light refreshments will be available**

**Dan Sabourin, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa Director of Community Services** will lead the tour.

The Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa works with thousands of young adults who are trying to get back on their feet and be successful contributing members of our society. "When basic needs of safe and affordable housing are out of their reach and they cannot reach their potential, it affects us all", says Dan Sabourin, Director of Community Services for Youth Services Bureau Ottawa. He stresses that, "Our community needs access to housing for a segment of the population who face discrimination such as that experienced by many youth; we also need short-term support for those that need it, and a commitment to building affordable housing. Young adults should not have to choose between housing or feeding themselves and their family."

#### **At Stop 2 with Ottawa Community Housing**

**"We were encouraged to hear John Fraser, Premier McGuinty's Executive Assistant, state that the Provincial Government was back in the affordable housing business,"** says Jenn Wilks, Co-Chair of the Ottawa Branch of the Housing Network of Ontario. **"With 10,200 people on the social housing waiting lists in Ottawa, it is critical that the Province takes immediate steps to invest in maintaining and building affordable housing"**, says Wilks. At the second tour, Jo-Anne Poirier, Ottawa Community Housing's CEO emphasized **the importance of the Province providing long-term sustainable funding to build new affordable homes and maintain existing housing stock.**

Ottawa's affordable housing advocates stress that creating new affordable housing stimulates the economy and promotes economic prosperity, as does investing in social capital. Jenn Wilks, Co-Chair of the Ottawa Branch of the Housing Network of Ontario, points out that, **"Supporting the community's capacity to develop affordable housing helps drive economic growth and reforming housing legislation will build healthy and sustainable communities."**

#### **UP NEXT ON THE 6-STOP TOUR**

**We are organizing three more tours that will take place in the ridings of Ottawa-Vanier, Ottawa-Centre, and Nepean-Carleton.** All stops are on Fridays 10-11 am in May and June; media releases for each stop will be sent.

Ms. Wilks explained the timing of the 6-Stop Tour, “The Housing Network of Ontario wants to see a strong foundation for Ontario’s future in a Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy. We will be urging MPPs to adopt and act on it right away once it is tabled in June. We’ll assess the strategy using **HNO’s 5 Tests for Success**, which are based on what we heard people say in our community as well as in others across Ontario during the province’s consultation last year.”

**Highlights from the 5 Tests for Success** (More details in the attached 2 page flyer) –

11. **Bold targets and sustained funding** – with annual funding to build 10,000 affordable homes a year and for ongoing maintenance;
12. **A solid measuring stick** – Systematically reducing the number of households on the wait list for affordable housing in all regions of Ontario;
13. **Accountability** – Annual public reporting on progress under a full-time Minister of Housing
14. **Make housing truly affordable and accessible** – A new Housing Benefit to close the gap between high rents and low-income; a plan that works for marginalized communities that also has Legislative changes to better protect tenants and to promote affordable housing;
15. **Reform housing legislation to build stronger communities** with a fair appeals process for housing providers and tenants; adds vacant units to those now covered by rent regulation guidelines; allows municipalities to introduce inclusionary housing policies; and has the power to expropriate abandoned properties for affordable housing conversion.”

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**Watch for media releases about each tour stop.**

**For comments:**

- **Ottawa Branch Co-Chairs of The Housing Network of Ontario: Eugene Williams and Jenn Wilks**

Arrange through Jenn Wilks

*Cell – 613-552-5579*

- **Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa: Director of Community Services**

Arrange through Dan Sabourin

*Cell – 613-290-2531*

IMMEDIATE RELEASE June 17, 2010

## **STOP 4— THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TOUR IN OTTAWA CENTRE**

### **PROVINCE DELAYS AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN OTTAWA MPPs CONTINUE TO ATTEND TOURS TO SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

On June 18<sup>th</sup>, Stop 4 of the Affordable Housing Tour visits an apartment building, townhouses and several small properties in the block on and near Booth Street which are owned by Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation in MPP Yasir Naqvi's Ottawa Centre riding. This is the fourth of a 6-Stop Tour organized by Ottawa Branch of the Housing Network of Ontario with local housing providers throughout the city to provide an opportunity for Premier McGuinty and area MPPs to visit some of Ottawa's existing affordable housing for families, youth, and single adults in different parts of the city.

“We are disappointed that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has decided to delay the release of the long term affordable housing strategy until the fall”, says Jenn Wilks, Co-Chair of the Ottawa Branch of the Housing Network of Ontario. “All Ottawa MPPs who have met with us and participated in our tours have said they understand the need for affordable housing. This delay will cause continued hardship for the 10,200 people on the social housing waiting list who need affordable housing”, says Wilks. HNO Ottawa Branch members held meetings with Ottawa Liberal MPPs in January 2010 and they agreed that the Province needed a Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy.

#### **TOUR STOP 4 – JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup>, 10 AM-11AM**

**In MPP Yasir Naqvi's Ottawa Centre riding**

**Location: Properties owned by Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation (CCOC)  
The tour begins at 170 Booth Street;  
Visits townhouses at 25 Rochester Street and;  
Tours several small properties in the block of Rochester, Primrose and Booth Streets**

**Ray Sullivan, Executive Director; Centretown Citizen Ottawa Corporation** will lead the tour

Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation (CCOC) is a community-based, tenant and member directed non-profit housing organization whose mission is to create, maintain and promote housing for low and moderate income people.

“Strong communities are diverse” says Calinda Brown, CCOC's president. “With a variety of unit sizes, income mixing and tenure, the Lebreton Flats area is a model for how affordable housing should be integrated into neighbourhoods. With a district heating plant, community garden and residents engaged in projects ranging from shared childcare playgroups to food security, this neighbourhood brings together elements that help to make its residents resilient to challenges such as solo parenting, unemployment and aging in place.” “We need the Province to fund new developments through the Ontario Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy so that organizations like CCOC can build more of this kind of affordable housing.” says Brown.

## UP NEXT ON THE 6-STOP TOUR

**We are organizing two more tours that will take place in the ridings of Ottawa-Vanier, and Nepean-Carleton.**

All stops are on Fridays in May and June; media releases for each stop will be sent.

Ms. Wilks explained the timing of the 6-Stop Tour, “The Housing Network of Ontario wants to see a strong foundation for Ontario’s future in a *Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy*. We are urging MPPs to adopt and act on it right away. We’ll assess the strategy using **HNO’s 5 Tests for Success**, which are based on what we heard people say in our community as well as in others across Ontario during the province’s consultation last year.”

There are 141,635 Ontario households on the waiting list for affordable housing with a wait list stretching from 1-21 years. Census data indicates that 1 in every 5 tenant household in Ontario pays over 50% of their income on rent and 626,255 households in Ontario are unable to find acceptable housing that costs 30% or less of their income.

**Highlights from the 5 Tests for Success** (More details in the attached 2 page flyer) –

16. **Bold targets and sustained funding** – with annual funding to build 10,000 affordable homes a year and for ongoing maintenance;
17. **A solid measuring stick** – Systematically reducing the number of households on the wait list for affordable housing in all regions of Ontario;
18. **Accountability** – Annual public reporting on progress under a full-time Minister of Housing
19. **Make housing truly affordable and accessible** – A new Housing Benefit to close the gap between high rents and low-income; a plan that works for marginalized communities that also has Legislative changes to better protect tenants and to promote affordable housing;
20. **Reform housing legislation to build stronger communities** with a fair appeals process for housing providers and tenants; adds vacant units to those now covered by rent regulation guidelines; allows municipalities to introduce inclusionary housing policies; and has the power to expropriate abandoned properties for affordable housing conversion.”

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**Watch for media releases about each tour stop.**

**For comments:**

- **Ottawa Branch Co-Chairs of The Housing Network of Ontario: Jenn Wilks**

Arrange through Jenn Wilks

*Cell – 613-552-5579*

- **Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation: Executive Coordinator**

Arrange through Ray Sullivan

*Cell – 613-294-9840*

## It is not enough to provide bricks and mortar! STOP 5 THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TOUR IN OTTAWA VANIER

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, Stop 5 of the *Affordable Housing Tour* will visit supportive affordable housing at Options Bytown with Ottawa Vanier MPP Madeleine Meilleur to showcase just why more is needed than bricks and mortar.

“It is important that Minister Meilleur in particular sees first hand why Ontario needs to provide funding for at least 2,000 new supportive housing units annually and she’ll have a chance to see how important that is in Ottawa at Options Bytown,” says Eugene Williams, Co-Chair of the Ottawa Branch of HNO. “Our community needs culturally appropriate services to support people with disabilities, mental health issues and addictions to maintain their housing and those are provided through the Ministry of Community and Social Services.”

“Thousands of Ottawa residents living on modest incomes need Ontario to get moving quickly on creating more affordable housing but we also have to remember the many hundreds of people who need supports to be housed successfully. Unfortunately all of these community members will continue to face housing hardships this summer because the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing suddenly delayed the release of the long term affordable housing strategy until the fall,” says Mr. Williams. “The Ottawa MPPs who held consultations, met with us and participated in these tours have made it clear that they understand the need for affordable housing; now it’s time for action and spending to reduce housing-related poverty.”

Lorraine Bentley, Executive Director at Options Bytown explained their situation, “We’re a front line agency that addresses the growing homelessness crisis in Ottawa on a day-to-day basis. We welcome the province's new focus on affordable housing but it is not enough to provide bricks and mortar.”

“A provincial affordable housing strategy needs to include people who are poor as well as those who require supports to cope with medical, psychiatric and other challenges,” says Ms. Bentley. “It’s the only way we can ensure that people in need can live independently, have access to safe, affordable, supportive housing and ultimately enjoy the benefits of living in stable communities.” Options Bytown has been urging the provincial government to include safeguards - and support services – due to special needs when they are needed for those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or living in unsafe and inappropriate housing.

### TOUR STOP 5 – JUNE 25<sup>TH</sup>

**Time:** June 25<sup>th</sup>, 10 am-11am

**Location:** Options Bytown Non-Profit Housing Corp., 380 Cumberland St., Ottawa K1N 9P3  
in Minister Meilleur’s Ottawa Vanier riding

**Tour Leaders:** Natasha Poushinsky, President and Lorraine Bentley, Executive Director of Options Bytown

This tour stop is one of several organized by the Ottawa Branch of the Housing Network of Ontario (HNO) with local housing providers in different parts of the city to provide an opportunity for area MPPs to visit some of Ottawa’s existing affordable housing for families, youth, and single adults. When the *Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy* is released the Housing Network of Ontario plans to assess the using **HNO’s 5 Tests for Success**, which are based on what was heard from hundreds of people in Ottawa and others communities across Ontario during the province’s consultation last year.

There were 7,445 individuals who needed to use Ottawa emergency shelters in 2009. There were 10,235 households

on Ottawa social housing waiting list in 2009 and a total of 141,635 households on the waiting list across Ontario with wait list times stretching from 1-21 years. Census data indicates that 1 in every 5 tenant household in Ontario pays over 50% of their income on rent and 626,255 households in Ontario are unable to find acceptable housing that costs 30% or less of their income.

**Highlights from the 5 Tests for Success** (More details in the attached 2 page flyer) –

21. **Bold targets and sustained funding** – with annual funding to build 10,000 affordable homes a year and for ongoing maintenance;
22. **A solid measuring stick** – Systematically reducing the number of households on the wait list for affordable housing in all regions of Ontario;
23. **Accountability** – Annual public reporting on progress under a full-time Minister of Housing
24. **Make housing truly affordable and accessible** – A new Housing Benefit to close the gap between high rents and low-income; a plan that works for marginalized communities that also has Legislative changes to better protect tenants and to promote affordable housing;
25. **Reform housing legislation to build stronger communities** with a fair appeals process for housing providers and tenants; adds vacant units to those now covered by rent regulation guidelines; allows municipalities to introduce inclusionary housing policies; and has the power to expropriate abandoned properties for affordable housing conversion.”

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**For more information or comments:**

- **Ottawa Branch Co-Chairs of The Housing Network of Ontario Gene Williams and Jenn Wilks**

Arrange through Gene Williams

*Cell – 613-791-5174*

- **Options Bytown:**

Arrange through Lorraine Bentley

*Office – 613-241-6363 x 223*