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For Immediate Release

The Regional Municipality of York wins housing award

Armitage Gardens recognized by CMHC; turned affordability ideas into action

NEWMARKET – The Regional Municipality of York received the 2006 Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) housing award for Best Practices in Affordable Housing at a ceremony in Ottawa last night.



York Region won the award for leveraging innovative ideas and financial assistance from all four levels of government to transform a vacant wing of York Region's Newmarket Health Centre into Armitage Gardens, a 58-unit building of affordable and accessible homes for seniors and adults with disabilities.

"Armitage Gardens is a unique and affordable rental housing initiative that aims to increase the supply of rental housing for people with lower incomes and special needs," said York Regional Chair and CEO Bill Fisch. "We are very proud to receive this award and be recognized for this innovative project."

Armitage Gardens allows seniors and adults with disabilities to live independently in a safe and supportive environment. The two-story building features easy access to the Newmarket Health Centre enabling residents to stay close to family members who require long-term care. Outside, beautifully landscaped grounds with mature trees, perennial gardens and a gazebo offer an inviting outdoor space where residents can socialize.

"Armitage Gardens is an example of how all levels of government can work together to create affordable housing and turn innovative ideas into action," said Town of Newmarket Mayor Tom Taylor, Chair of the Region's Community Services and Housing Committee. "The benefit to the community will be long lasting."

The building is barrier-free and wheelchair accessible; 26 of the 58 units offer enhanced accessibility for people using mobility devices. The enhancements include roll-in showers, lowered kitchen counters, side-by-side door refrigerators, front control stoves and an in-suite storage area.

This project helps to meet the needs of seniors with limited financial resources. Rents on all of the units are at or below market rates. In addition, assisted living support services may be made available to residents at no cost. These services include help with meal preparation, medication reminders, personal care and housework. This allows tenants to live independently while still receiving the assistance they need.

CMHC established its housing awards program in 1988 to recognize significant contributions to the advancement of Canadian housing. Presented every second year, the housing awards identify and celebrate the very best practices in housing, and share them with communities across the country.

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Media Contact: Tim Paleczny, Corporate Communications, York Region
Phone: (905) 830-4444 Ext. 1238, (416) 297-9696 or Toll free 1-877-464-9675
Cell Phone: (905) 251-6413 Email: tim.paleczny@york.ca
Corporate Communications After-hours Pager: (905) 830-3302