

Partners break ground on 51 units

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By AMANDA PRATT
EXPOSITOR STAFF / BRANTFORD

A ground-breaking ceremony was held at 24 Harris Ave. on Wednesday to mark the start of construction on a project that will create 51 affordable housing units for families, seniors and singles with lower incomes.

"It's going to be a really nice building," said Dan Temprile, commissioner of social services. "There will be adequate parking, play areas for the kids and the rents will be affordable."

Temprile said that the \$4.1-million initiative, which will receive \$1.4 million from the Canada/Ontario Affordable Housing Program, resulted from studies showing a shortage of affordable housing in Brantford and that many low- and fixed-income residents couldn't afford their rent.

"This project is an example of a partnership between the federal government, provincial government, municipal government and the private sector in addressing the need of affordable housing," said Temprile. "Affordable housing projects are going to be places where people are proud to live. They're gonna be well constructed, safe and affordable."

The three levels of government also announced \$383,000 in funding for a second project that will create an additional 27 units of affordable housing at 40 Queen St. to be occupied by single people with lower incomes. This project is sponsored by the Brantford YM-

YWCA Non-Profit Homes Association.

The Harris Avenue building is sponsored by Multani Custom Homes Ltd., and president Dalip Multani said it couldn't be built in a more perfect spot.

"This is a beautiful site sitting inside the city," said Multani, noting it's adjacent to another affordable housing location. "The infrastructure, transportation — everything is here."

Multani said the project should be completed by next spring.

The federal and provincial money will be supplemented by \$1.8 million from the city, plus other municipal financial incentives.

"Housing is probably the most important thing we have, short of food, so when you create housing in the community, you're doing a wonderful thing," Mayor Mike Hancock told the crowd gathered at Wednesday's ceremony.

"When you look at the pictures (of the Harris Avenue building), there's gonna be people there — it's not just bricks and mortar," said Dave Levac, Brant MPP. "It's a great day when we express who we are by what we do and not by what we say."

In a third announcement, the federal and provincial governments announced \$614,000 for Brant County to fund 24 affordable housing units in Paris at 120 - 140 West River St. Brant will contribute about \$518,000, plus other municipal financial incentives for the project.

This initiative is sponsored by Meadows Court Properties Inc. Families, seniors and singles with low to moderate incomes, as well as disabled persons, will occupy the units.



Brantford Mayor Mike Hancock was among dignitaries to speak Wednesday morning at the site of a new affordable-housing apartment complex being constructed on Harris Avenue by Dalip Multani (left).

Affordable housing project a go in Brant

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By JOHN PAUL ZRONIK
EXPOSITOR STAFF / PARIS

Brant County will put \$518,000 toward constructing 24 new affordable housing units in Paris.

Councillors approved a proposal put forward by G.K. York Property Management to convert one of four buildings on the Penman's property on West River Road into apartments at a meeting Tuesday night.

The building will house designated

affordable one and two-bedroom units, with rental rates ranging between \$575 and \$675 per month. It will also include four apartments to be rented at market-rate.

The project will also be able to tap into affordable housing funding from the federal and provincial governments, to a tune of \$566,000 and \$48,000 respectively.

G.K. York representative Colleen Armstrong said the plan will not only provide much-needed affordable housing in Brant County, but also preserve an important historic site in the community.

"We're very excited about taking this site on," Armstrong said. "It's very important that it be preserved with a useful purpose."

"They are wonderful buildings and a large part of Paris and the County of Brant history."

The Penman's property was once home to Penman's Mill, historically one of the largest employers in Paris.

The proposal is part of a larger plan put forward by G.K. York to redevelop the four buildings on the Penman's property for residential and some commercial purposes. The project is expected to take three to four years to

complete, with the affordable housing initiative to be completed in the next two years.

Mayor Ron Eddy said the county acted to create more affordable housing for a good reason.

"There is a real need," Eddy said. "It's been building up because affordable housing has not been built on a continuing basis. I suspect the day (the apartments) are finished, they'll be filled."

Eddy also said the development will help the downtown Paris economy by bringing more people to the area.

While G.K. York believes there's enough existing sewer and water ca-

capacity to accommodate 28 new apartment units at the Penman's site, the county needs to increase capacity before further phases of the proposed development can be completed, Armstrong said.

"We have to wait for the county to improve some of the infrastructure required for this development," she said. "Our reports indicate this phase can go ahead earlier than other parts of the project."

G.K. York has yet to finalize its acquisition of the Penman's property, but Armstrong said it will be complete by the spring.