



For Immediate Release
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A Step Forward for the Niagara Health System Project

Request for Qualifications Issued

Toronto, ON - The new Niagara Health System (NHS) health-care complex will reach a significant milestone when the request for qualifications (RFQ) to design, build, finance and maintain the new facility is issued tomorrow. This is the first step in selecting the project team to design, build, finance and maintain a new, state-of-the-art health care facility that will replace two aging, existing community hospitals in St. Catharines and bring new regional programs and services to the Niagara region.

Once completed, the new state-of-the-art health-care facility will consolidate acute, and ambulatory services on a new site for the residents of St. Catharines, Thorold and the immediate area. The bigger, more modern facility will provide new programs and services such as cardiac catheterization, radiation therapy for cancer treatment and longer-term mental health services for residents across Niagara. This will enable close-to-home access to these specialized services.

"This marks an important milestone for the Niagara region," said Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal David Caplan. "The project is part of the government's five-year \$30 billion plus infrastructure investment plan that represents the biggest investment in health care infrastructure in more than a generation."

"This is a clear sign of the government's commitment to upgrade and modernize health care," said George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. "An investment that will improve the health services provided to Ontarians."

"This health-care facility is going to provide a tremendous opportunity to improve health care in the Niagara region," said Jim Bradley, Government House Leader, Minister of Tourism and MPP for St. Catharines. "Our government is pleased to bring this reality one step closer."

"This is another major milestone on our way to improving access to life-saving care and ensuring that our facility is equipped to meet the future health care needs of the patients and families we serve," said Debbie Sevenpifer, President and CEO of the NHS.

RFQ submissions will be reviewed to pre-qualify project teams with the design, construction and facilities management experience, the qualified personnel and the financial strength to deliver a project of this size and complexity. Pre-qualified teams will then be invited to respond to a Request for Proposals (RFP) to design, build, finance and maintain the new hospital, which is expected to be released in the late spring 2007.

The NHS will manage this project with Infrastructure Ontario, a Crown Corporation dedicated to the renewal of Ontario's hospitals, courthouses and other essential public assets. Ensuring appropriate public control and ownership, Infrastructure Ontario uses alternative financing and procurement to strategically rebuild vital infrastructure, on time and on budget.

All infrastructure projects will be guided by the principles in the government's Building a Better Tomorrow framework, ensuring public ownership of public assets such as hospitals, schools and water and wastewater infrastructure.

Visit www.infrastructureontario.ca for more information.

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