

**Speaking Notes – Groundbreaking Ceremony**

**Finnish Resthome – Wednesday October 14, 2015—3:00 PM**

**[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]**

Good afternoon everyone, it's a great pleasure to be here for this groundbreaking ceremony. We have a considerable number of dignitaries in attendance with us, so I would just like to thank them for joining us.

As previously noted, we are in the presence of a very special guest today. On behalf of the Office of Mayor and City Council I'd like to welcome Ambassador Murto to our community. Ambassador, it is an honour to have you here and we wish you a pleasant stay in our City.

To our Member of Parliament Bryan Hayes, thank you for taking some time away from the campaign trail to join us. Likewise, thank you to the Honourable Minister David Oraziatti for being here as well.

For almost 45 years, the Ontario Finnish Rest Home Association has been a fixture in Sault Ste. Marie. With multiple tiers of care and support available, from independent living units to around-the-clock assisted living, the Ontario Finnish Rest Home has been meeting the needs of our older citizens for decades.

It is no secret that Sault Ste. Marie—like most of Canada—has an aging population. Both our senior population and our very old senior populations are growing and will continue to grow. As our population ages, we need to adapt our services and our housing offerings in response.

Because we want our older citizens to be able to remain in our community. We want our older citizens to continue enjoying a high quality of life. We want our older citizens to live accommodations that are comfortable, dignified and suited to their needs.

Now, with the Uusi Koti campaign, the Ontario Finnish Rest Home is again demonstrating its responsiveness to the needs of our local seniors and the need for more senior housing options in our community.

What is great about this project is that it has the foresight to anticipate what the future will bring. For example, as we see more households being headed up by single persons, that is going to lead to additional demand for smaller one and two bedroom units, which this new building will help address.

I know I am at the end of the speaking order, so I'm going to keep my remarks brief so we can get the shovels out. But again, I'd like to thank everyone for being here and for all the people who have brought us to this milestone today: the board and staff of the Ontario Finnish Rest Home Association, the Ontario Finnish Rest Home Foundation, and of course all the contributing donors, funders and supporters of the Uusi Koti campaign.

Thank you.