



PRESS RELEASE



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New Supported Housing to Benefit Trail Seniors

TRAIL, British Columbia, August 27, 2004 — Seniors with low incomes have more housing options with the opening today of 30 much-needed new seniors' apartments with support services in Trail. This multi-partnership initiative is made possible with contributions from the federal and provincial governments, under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement, as well as the City of Trail.

"Housing projects such as this one in Trail will help seniors continue to live as independently as possible in quality affordable housing," said the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing. "This close multi-partnership between the governments of Canada and British Columbia and our local partners will make it a reality."

The development, Silver City Gardens, is operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) for the Kootenays and offers apartments adaptable for seniors with wheelchairs and walkers. Tenants pay 30 per cent of their annual income for their units plus a monthly charge for hospitality services and eligible residents can access services provided by Interior Health.

"Seniors have told us they want to live in homes that balance their desire for independence and privacy with ready access to support and personal care services," said West Kootenay-Boundary MLA Sandy Santori. "Silver City Gardens will provide quality, affordable housing and support services to help seniors maintain their independence as they age. The end result is better health and a better quality of life for our seniors."

The provincial government, through BC Housing, is providing an annual operating subsidy of \$4.4 million over 35 years. The federal government, through the Canada-BC Affordable Housing Agreement, provided a \$900,000 capital grant. The City of Trail acquired and rezoned the land, for a total equity contribution of \$313,376. CMHA is leasing the site from the City of Trail for a 60-year term for \$10. Interior Health is providing personal care for eligible residents.

"Interior Health is pleased to be part of this project in Trail," said Carol Markowsky, chief operating officer of the Kootenay Boundary Health Service Area. "Projects like this help add much needed capacity to the system, and present more options for seniors to remain independent, longer."

"The City of Trail is proud to be a partner in this wonderful new facility," said Gord DeRosa, acting mayor, City of Trail. "Silver City Gardens is a fine housing development and Council is thrilled that the opportunity for supportive housing is now available to our residents. It is our senior population who built this city into the vibrant community it is today, and this project symbolizes our appreciation for their commitment to this community over the years."

"Canadian Mental Health Association for the Kootenays is extremely pleased with the Silver City Gardens facility and the supportive housing opportunities this beautiful, new resource makes available to tenants," said CMHA executive director Janice Bradshaw. "Residents of Silver City Gardens are seniors of low to moderate income who are able to direct their own care and whose health is better managed by support and care received in this community setting."

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Under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement, the Government of Canada, through CMHC, will contribute \$88.7 million over five years towards affordable housing in this province. The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide \$29.7 million annually to subsidize the costs of units built under this agreement, as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for vulnerable British Columbians.

This news release is available at www.bchousing.org online.

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Backgrounder

Silver City Gardens

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) for the Kootenays

The CMHA is a non-profit, voluntary organization concerned about educating people about mental health and wellness, and changing the way we view and treat mental health issues. CMHA for the Kootenays was established in 1994. It has a broad mandate and diverse funding base, resulting in service delivery that extends throughout the East and West Kootenays.

CMHA for the Kootenays manages six other housing developments and a rent supplement program for low-income individuals. Silver City Gardens is its first supportive seniors' housing development.

The agency has historically provided a range of services to varying populations considered to be at risk. Service is provided in eight major areas: housing, child care, youth, women, mental health promotion programs, employment, volunteer programs, and crisis intervention.

CMHA is a national organization that is more than 80 years old. There are provincial offices across Canada and over 200 branches throughout the country. In BC, there is a network of 20 branches that provide direct services and supports for people who have mental health issues.

Development Facts

Silver City Gardens

Location: 1939 Columbia Avenue, Trail

29 one-bedroom units

1 two-bedroom unit

30 units of supportive seniors housing

All units are wheelchair adaptable; one unit is fully accessible. There are common lounges on all four levels, all with spectacular views of the Columbia River. The development is in a central location and close to many amenities including grocery shopping and medical and dental offices.

Tenants pay 30 per cent of their income for their housing. Additional services offered include one meal a day, weekly linen services, light housekeeping, and a recreational program. Tenants pay \$470/month single occupancy or \$837/month double occupancy for these services.

The name, Silver City Gardens, was chosen for the development because of the historical significance of silver exploration to Trail. All CMHA for the Kootenays' housing developments include "Gardens" in their names.

Partnership Contributions

The capital cost of the development is \$3.9 million.

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- The provincial government, through BC Housing, is providing an annual operating subsidy of \$4.4 million over 35 years.
- The City of Trail acquired and rezoned the land for a total equity contribution of \$313,376. CMHA is leasing the site from the City of Trail for a 60-year term for \$10.
- Interior Health is providing home care for eligible tenants.