



PRESS RELEASE



Canadian Mortgage News - National Archive 2004

New Affordable Housing will Help Meet Seniors' Needs

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, November 26, 2004 — Lower income seniors in need of affordable housing and care are one step closer to having their housing needs met with the construction of a 56-unit assisted living development. The official groundbreaking ceremony for Clarendon Court took place today. The new development, which will provide affordable apartments and support services for seniors, is scheduled for completion by November 2005.

Clarendon Court is funded under Independent Living BC (ILBC), an innovative housing-for-health program that meets the needs of lower income seniors and people with disabilities, as a middle option between home support and residential care.

"Clarendon Court will enable seniors to remain in the neighbourhood in safe and affordable housing and maintain contact with their community," said the Honourable Ujjal Dosanjh, Minister of Health, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing. "This project is a good example of a strong partnership between the various levels of government and our local partners."

A benefit of the ILBC program includes increased choice for seniors in their own housing to maximize their independence.

"The provincial government launched the Independent Living BC program because it recognized that seniors need choice even as their health care needs change," said Ken Johnston, MLA for Vancouver-Fraserview. "Assisted living, built in their own neighbourhoods across the province, allows seniors to choose the housing and care they need and choice preserves their dignity."

Many seniors and people with disabilities are on a fixed income. "There is a need for more affordable housing and care options in Vancouver's Eastside," said Larry Campbell, mayor of Vancouver. "Clarendon Court will offer an affordable and secure home for seniors in greatest need in our city."

Assisted living adds to the current range of housing and care options currently available, and better suits a population of seniors who are living longer, healthier lives.

"Assisted living is just one of the housing options provided to seniors under VCH's comprehensive Community Care Network," said Lynn Buhler, acting chief operating officer for Vancouver Community, Vancouver Coastal Health. "It improves the health of seniors who need some assistance with medications and mobility, while providing access to social and recreational opportunities and respecting their desire to live as independently as possible for as long as possible."

The Baptist Housing Society of B.C., formed in 1964, recognized the need for affordable housing for seniors in B.C.

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"Our mission is to provide excellent quality and care to seniors and families," said Larry Nelson, CEO of the Baptist Housing Society of B.C. "Knowing that their loved ones are well cared for and still have their independence, gives family members peace of mind."

The ILBC program is managed by BC Housing in partnership with the government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the regional health authorities. The City of Vancouver also contributed to Clarendon Court, making it a collaborative venture between all three levels of government. The Baptist Housing Society of B.C. has provided significant equity towards the project and is involved in ongoing fundraising efforts.

The Province, through BC Housing and the ILBC program, is committed to providing 3,500 affordable apartments with support services across the province by 2006. To date, 2,458 ILBC units have been allocated or over 70 per cent of the program in communities across the province.

ILBC is funded in part through the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement. The government of Canada, through CMHC, will contribute \$88.7 million by 2006 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.

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(left to right) City of Vancouver Councillor Jim Green, Vancouver Coastal Health representative Lynn Buhler, Baptist Housing Society Board Chair Charlie Nishi, Minister of Health Honourable Ujjal Dosanjh, Minister of State for Women's and Seniors' Services Honourable Ida Chong, MLA Vancouver Fraserview Ken Johnston and Baptist Housing Society CEO Larry Nelson turn the sod at the groundbreaking of the new 54-unit assisted living development in Vancouver Fraserview

Backgrounder

Baptist Housing Society

The Baptist Housing Society strives to provide exemplary housing, care and services in each of their communities.

Dr. Jack Pickford founded the Baptist Housing Society in 1964 when he recognized the need for housing among the elderly within their communities. Shortly thereafter, their first retirement community, Clarendon Court, located in the Killarney area of Vancouver was built.

Now, almost 40 years later the Baptist Housing Society has grown to fourteen communities in several locations across the province. The society has several other developments funded by BC Housing and CMHC within B.C.

Development Facts

The building will be a four-storey complex with 56 one-bedroom subsidized assisted living apartments plus five market suites. All assisted living units in Clarendon Court are wheelchair accessible.

Construction is scheduled for completion by November 2005 with residents moving in during the same month.

Tenants receive two meals a day, weekly housekeeping and linen services, 24-hour emergency response, personal care services and social and recreational opportunities. Tenants pay 70 per cent of their after-tax income for their units.

Partnership Contributions

Capital cost of this project is \$13.026 million

Partners and Funding:

- The federal government, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, is providing a \$1.4 million capital grant.
- The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide housing subsidy of \$5,248,151 over 35 years.
- Vancouver Coastal Health is providing the personal care services through a support agency.
- The City of Vancouver is providing reductions on various development costs. The value of the contribution is approximately \$290,974.
- The Baptist Housing Society is providing the land at \$3,765,000 and \$1,775,000 in cash. This is a significant contribution from a non-profit society.