



PRESS RELEASE



Canadian Mortgage News - National Archive 2005

New Homes Benefit People with Disabilities

NANAIMO, British Columbia, March 29, 2005 — People with permanent disabilities will benefit from a new housing development that opened today in Nanaimo's downtown core.

The development is the result of a partnership between all levels of government and the Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society. Vancouver Island Health Authority is providing annual funding for a mental health support worker seven days a week to support individuals living in the building. The 24-unit development includes a classroom for workshops and training programs.

"Those who need it the most in Nanaimo will be able to live in a quality environment and continue to contribute to their communities," said the Honourable Senator Jack Austin, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing. "This funding partnership enables persons with permanent disabilities to be near their families and friends."

"The province is committed to delivering a range of housing options for British Columbians with the greatest needs," said Nanaimo MLA Mike Hunter. "This development will help individuals with disabilities lead healthier and more stable lives."

"Too often people with disabilities do not have the tools to help them integrate into the community," said Marilyn Wharton, Mental Health and Addictions Services, Vancouver Island Health Authority. "Through partnerships and improved support services, we are able to help individuals deal with the challenges they face on a daily basis."

"People with disabilities need to know that there are homes where they are made to feel welcome," said Mayor Gary Korpan. "This development is an important step forward in helping people with disabilities to live better lives."

"It is fulfilling to see this development open and fully occupied," said Jim Spinelli, Executive Director of Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society. "We have been working on the project for five years and it would not have been possible without widespread support in the community."

The Government of Canada, through CMHC, will contribute \$130 million by 2008 towards affordable housing in this province. The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide a minimum of \$34 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 British Columbians in greatest need.



Ribbon cutting: Marg Fraser; Mike Hunter; Jim Spinelli; and Lee King

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

For further information, please contact:

Larisa Saunders
Corporate Communications
BC Housing
(604) 439-4757
(604) 790-2344 (cellular)

Jim Spinelli
Executive Director
Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society
(250) 755-1158

Christina Wensley
CMHC
(604) 737-4032

Visit the province's website at www.gov.bc.ca for online information and services.

Backgrounder

Development Information

Location: 153 Wallace Street, Nanaimo

- 24 one-bedroom apartments for people with permanent disabilities
- Three wheelchair-accessible units
- Includes a common room with full kitchen and patio

Residents receive support from professional staff to assist them to live more independently. Staff is available to assist

Canadian Mortgage News - New Homes Benefit People with Disabilities

with day-to-day living skills, emotional support and also to help tenants develop a sense of community.

The fully occupied development includes a training room that will be used for personal development workshops, community projects and computer training. Some programs are offered to other individuals with disabilities throughout the community.

Society Information

The Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society was formed in 1990 in response to community need; it develops and operates housing and services for people with special needs.

The society also operates Albion Place, a 17-unit family housing project, and 350 Prideaux Street, a complex with 20 apartments that also serve individuals with permanent disabilities.

Partners and Funding

The capital cost of the development is \$2,747,614.

- The federal government, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, provided a \$720,000 capital grant.
- The provincial government, through BC Housing, is providing an operating subsidy of \$4,183,000 over 35 years.
- The City of Nanaimo provided reductions on various development costs valued at \$167,598 and is leasing the property to the society for 75 per cent of its market value over a 60-year term. The value of the lease mark-down is \$36,000.
- Vancouver Island Health Authority is providing annual funding for professional support services.