



PRESS RELEASE



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New Assisted Living Homes to Benefit Mission Seniors

MISSION, British Columbia, April 8, 2005 — Low-income seniors will soon have more housing options, with the construction of a 57-unit assisted living facility in Mission, a first for the community.

Today was the official groundbreaking ceremony for the Cedars, which is located adjacent to Mission Memorial Hospital. The facility will provide 40 affordable, independent apartments with support services and 17 units of rental housing.

The Mission Association for Seniors Housing (MASH) spearheaded the project, which is a partnership between the society and the federal and provincial governments through the Independent Living BC (ILBC) program, as well as the District of Mission, Fraser Health, and private donors.

"The Government of Canada is committed to teaming up with our partners in Mission to help seniors and their need for affordable housing," said the Honourable David L. Emerson, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing. "Units such as these make it possible for seniors to remain close to their family and friends, and allows them to remain active in their communities."

While some seniors need ongoing professional nursing care, the vast majority of seniors do not want or need 24-hour care in a hospital setting. Assisted living adds to the range of housing and care options currently available, and better suits a growing population of seniors who are living longer, healthier lives.

"We've made great progress in our commitment to improve housing and health options for all British Columbians, and we couldn't have done it without strong partnerships with all levels of government as well as with non-profit housing providers and health sectors," said Maple Ridge-Mission MLA, Randy Hawes. "Working together, we are giving seniors more choices for independent, affordable housing with ready access to support services when needed."

Assisted living homes are self-contained apartments where residents receive hospitality and personal care services, such as meals, housekeeping and laundry services, recreational opportunities, assistance with medications, mobility and other care needs, as well as a 24-hour response system. Fraser Health will provide funding for these personal care services.

"As a middle option between home care and residential care, assisted living offers a more tailored approach to addressing seniors' housing and personal care needs," said Fraser Health Authority Interim CEO, Keith Anderson, "Adding 1,100 new assisted living units across Fraser Health is important to help us to better meet the health care needs of Mission and our other growing and aging communities."

"Mission has a rich historical past and owes a great deal to its senior citizens," said District of Mission Mayor, Abe Neufeld, "It's important that our community works to make it possible for our seniors to continue living here even when their levels of care change."

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"Once completed next year, this development will provide Mission with 57 new homes for its older citizens," said MASH President, Don Lobb. "Our community has really rallied around the project and has been a vital partner in making this day a reality."

The province, through BC Housing and the ILBC program, is committed to providing 3,500 affordable apartments with support services across the province by 2006/07. To date more than 2,900 ILBC units have been allocated, 84 per cent of the program, in communities across the province.

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 cost 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.



Groundbreaking photo:
(Left to right) Irv and Dave Froese of Bervin Construction Ltd;
Betty Ann Busse , Fraser Health; Randy Hawes, MLA Maple Ridge - Mission;
Don Lobb, President, Mission Association for Seniors Housing ;
Dick Klemets, Mission Association for Seniors Housing;
Nelson Merizzi, CMHC;
George Potter, Mission Health Care Auxiliary;
Judith Ray, Mission Association for Seniors Housing; Mayor Abe Neufeld;
and Jenny Stevens, Mission City Council.

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

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Backgrounder

The Cedars

Mission Affordable Housing Society

The Mission Association for Seniors Housing (MASH) was formed in January 2000 to provide and operate affordable and accessible seniors' housing in Mission. The non-profit society is an amalgamation of seven local community groups, representing about 750 members. These partnership organizations currently manage 137 units of seniors' independent housing and 76 residential care beds. The Cedars is the first development for MASH.

Development Facts

- 40 units of assisted living housing funded under Independent Living BC
- 17 units of low-cost rental housing

Location: 7366 Hurd Street; adjacent to Mission Memorial Hospital.

Construction is expected to be complete by May 2006.

The development's name pays tribute to the local forestry industry and history of Mission.

Two of units are fully wheelchair accessible; all units are fully accessible and accommodate mobility aids.

Tenants pay 70 per cent of their after-tax income for their units. They receive two meals a day, weekly housekeeping and linen services, and recreational opportunities.

Partners and Funding

The capital cost of this project is \$11.2 million.

- The federal government, through CMHC, is providing a \$1.4 million grant under the Canada — British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement.
- The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide \$8.7 million in operating subsidies over 35 years for the 40 ILBC units.
- Fraser Health will fund the personal care services to tenants in the ILBC units.
- MASH has provided \$905,000 in land equity and cash from private donors.
- The District of Mission has provided reductions on various costs totalling \$241,475.

Independent Living BC

In 2002, the province, through BC Housing, implemented the Independent Living BC program in partnership with the federal government, regional health authorities, and private and non-profit housing providers.

The program will create 3,500 affordable independent living units with support services across the province by 2006. Of these, 2,500 units are being developed with non-profit societies through the construction of new developments or the conversion of existing health facilities. The remaining 1,000 units are being provided through rent supplements in private assisted living developments.

Seniors are referred to ILBC units by their local health authorities. Case managers work with individual seniors to determine whether independent living is the best option to meet their needs.