



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **25 Assisted Living Homes to be Built in Lake Country**

**LAKE COUNTRY, British Columbia, August 19, 2005** — Seniors in Lake Country will soon have 25 units of assisted living to call home when construction is completed on the new Lake Country Senior Housing Society assisted living development. A groundbreaking ceremony was held today at the Blue Heron Villa site on Main Street.

"The development of this project will allow seniors in the Lake Country area to live in a quality environment at an affordable cost," said the Honourable Ujjal Dosanjh, Minister of Health. "Shelter is one of the foundations upon which healthy communities and individual dignity are built. We are pleased to work with our partners in British Columbia to provide more seniors with better housing in their community."

The Lake Country Senior Housing Society; the Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC); the Province, through BC Housing; Interior Health; and the District of Lake Country, are creating the 25-unit assisted living development to meet a need for seniors in the Lake Country area.

"This assisted living development is a great example of three levels of government working together to create affordable housing options for B.C.'s communities," said Al Horning, MLA for Kelowna-Lake Country. "Lake Country seniors should be able to live independently as long as possible in housing they can afford and enjoy. This development will help seniors do just that."

"Many Okanagan seniors have spent a large part of their lives in this area," said Alan Dolman, Interior Health Board Chair. "Independent housing, combined with assistance with medications, mobility, and social and recreational opportunities, enhances their overall health."

"Lake Country has a proven need for seniors' housing," said District of Lake Country Mayor, Rolly Hein. "Our population in Lake Country is increasing, and as this happens our citizens are beginning to demand higher levels of service. This assisted living development integrates housing and health services and addresses a key need for our community."

Assisted living units 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. The apartments provide a middle option between independent living and residential care.

BC Housing provides funding to ensure the housing remains affordable to tenants. Interior Health will fund the personal care services.

"We're advocates for seniors' housing and care needs in Lake Country," said Lake Country Senior Housing Society President, Dr. Gayle Konkle. "The community supports this project and our goals for the community - everyone is excited to see us getting there."

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The Province of British Columbia, through BC Housing and Independent Living BC, is committed to providing 3,500 affordable assisted living apartments across the province. To date over 3,200 units, or 90 per cent, have been allocated in communities across the province.

The Government of Canada will contribute \$130 million by 2008 towards affordable housing in this province. The provincial government will provide a minimum of \$34 million annually to subsidize the cost of units built under this agreement, as part of its strategy to provide a range of housing options for British Columbians in greatest need.

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

Cathy Renkas  
Communications Officer  
Interior Health  
(250) 862-8394  
(250) 862-7228 (cellular)

Christina Wensley  
Events Coordinator  
CMHC  
(604) 737-4032  
(604) 837-4613 (cellular)

Dr. Gayle Konkle  
President, Lake Country Senior Housing Society  
(250) 766-2962

### **Lake Country Senior Housing Society**

#### **History of the Society**

The Lake Country Senior Housing Society is a non-profit society formed in December 1998 to develop and manage seniors' housing and services in Lake Country, and to raise the profile of seniors in the community. The Lake Country Senior Housing Society was originally a committee of Old Age Pensioner Organization members who saw the need for a wide variety of housing options for seniors in Lake Country.

#### **Blue Heron Villa — Assisted Living**

In order to best serve the seniors in the assisted living development, the Society and the Interior Health Authority have partnered with inSITE Housing, Hospitality and Health Services Inc., as a mentor to operate the assisted living program. The Society will manage the building then, following a period of transition, the Society will subsequently take over full management of Blue Heron Villa.

#### **Development Details**

The development will have 25 one-bedroom units of assisted living seniors housing. The building will be a 3-storey wood-framed structure with two elevators, surface parking and a partial basement. There are three fully wheelchair accessible suites and 22 regular suites.

Funding partners include the following:

- The federal government, through Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, will provide \$625,000 in capital funding.
- The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide housing subsidies totalling \$4.2 million over 35 years.
- Interior Health will provide funding for hospitality and personal care services and the housing operations related to the assisted living component of the project.
- District of Lake Country will provide development cost charge waivers and property tax exemptions up to \$510,000.