



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Arts Community Welcomes Housing for Seniors & Disabled**

**VANCOUVER, British Columbia, July 09, 2007** — A \$20.7 million, 111-unit mixed-income housing project for seniors and disabled persons in the professional performing arts officially opened today in Vancouver's Coal Harbour.

"The Vancouver Performing Arts Lodge is a great example of how partnerships can create quality, affordable housing for seniors and individuals with disabilities," said Premier Gordon Campbell. "This development incorporates the spirit of the artist, with performance space and a strong support network of volunteers, neighbours and friends."

"Canada's New Government is committed to providing affordable housing solutions for seniors and persons with disabilities, so that they can continue to live in their communities, close to family and friends," said James Moore, Member of Parliament for Port Moody – Westwood – Port Coquitlam, on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. "The Vancouver Performing Arts Lodge will ensure that seniors and persons with disabilities, who have contributed to the cultural life of this city, will have the safe and supportive housing they need."

The first residents moved into the Vancouver Performing Arts Lodge (PAL), at 581 Cardero Street, in 2006. The 99 one-bedroom units and 12 two-bedroom life-lease suites are now fully occupied. The Lodge features a rooftop garden and a multi-purpose performance space. "PAL's Angels," volunteers from the performing arts community, provide personal support services such as assistance with shopping, light housekeeping duties and companionship.

"The City of Vancouver has been recognized as one of the most livable cities in the world, and the most livable city in North America," said Mayor Sam Sullivan, City of Vancouver. "We're proud to play a role in PAL's housing development for seniors and individuals with disabilities in the performing arts, and to recognize the role of the arts in making Vancouver such a great place to live."

"From our first public meeting on April 23, 2001 to the moment when our residents began moving in on May 29, 2006, this has been the story of a community's response to the urgent situation of Vancouver's pioneer performing arts professionals and how it was met with tremendous generosity of spirit and imagination," said Jane Heyman, President of PAL Vancouver. "It's a dream come true. Our residents now enjoy secure, affordable housing, with the rooftop studio theatre providing a venue for their passion and creativity, allowing us to add to the vibrancy of the neighbourhood. We're very grateful to all our partners who helped make this possible."

The provincial government has committed to creating more than 12,950 subsidized housing units since June 2001. The Province's budget this year for shelters and affordable housing is \$328 million — nearly triple what it was in 2001.

The Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, will contribute more than \$130 million by 2010 towards affordable housing in B.C. The provincial government provides a minimum of \$34 million annually to subsidize the cost of units built under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement, as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for British Columbians in greatest need.

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**Backgrounder**

**Vancouver Performing Arts Lodge**

The Vancouver Performing Arts Lodge (PAL) at 581 Cardero Street in Coal Harbour, is a new mixed-income development for seniors and people with disabilities in the professional performing arts and allied industries.

The eight-storey building at Cardero and Hastings, contains 111 units: 12 two-bedroom life-lease suites and 99 affordable one-bedroom suites. The development's amenities include a multi-purpose performance space and a rooftop garden.

Seniors in the performing arts earn an average of \$10,000 annually — half the average income of all other Vancouverites over the age of 65. Eighty per cent of the suites are rent-geared-to-income and 20 per cent are at low-end-of-market. Rents are set as low as \$450 (8 suites), with 70 per cent of the suites renting at \$700 or less.

PAL Vancouver's fundraising efforts have helped reduce capital development costs and made rents more affordable. PAL is continuing fundraising with its annual giving campaign to ensure long-term affordability of the suites.

A group of volunteers known as PAL's Angelsoffer friendship, assistance and arrange support services for residents.

The capital cost of this development is \$20.7 million.

**Partnership contributions**

- The federal government through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation provided \$250,000 under the Canada-BC Affordable Housing Program Agreement.
- The Province provided \$385,000 in grants, and assistance with arranging the mortgage financing.
- The City of Vancouver provided "air space parcel" zoning, valued at approximately \$5 million for a nominal amount as well as \$1 million in matching grants.
- PAL raised \$5.2 million from the sale of life-lease units and contributions from various institutions and societies, including \$310,000 from the Union of BC Performers, \$300,000 from the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 891, \$60,000 from ACTRA Fraternal Benefit Society, \$25,000 from the Directors' Guild of Canada, \$25,000 from B.C. Council of Film Unions, and many foundations and individuals.

**Performing Arts Lodge of Vancouver**

PAL Vancouver is a B.C. non-profit organization, created to provide and sustain quality affordable housing with support and creative options primarily for seniors and the disabled in the professional performing arts and allied industries.

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PAL Vancouver was co-founded by Joy Coghill and Jane Heyman in 2001 as a chapter of Performing Arts Lodges of Canada.

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