



**PRESS RELEASE**



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## **\$4.4 Million Seniors' Housing Complex Opens in Chemainus**

**CHEMAINUS, British Columbia, June 02, 2007** — Government and community partners are celebrating the official opening of The Steeples, a new housing complex that will provide 16 assisted living units for seniors in Chemainus.

"Canada's New Government supports the creation of affordable housing in British Columbia," said James Lunney, Member of Parliament for Nanaimo – Alberni. "This project will give seniors in Chemainus the opportunity to stay in their community close to family and friends and receive the care and support they need."

Assisted living units are self-contained apartments with a 24 hour response system. Residents receive personal care services, such as recreational opportunities and assistance with medications, and hospitality services such as housekeeping, meals, and laundry.

"Seniors are asking for the opportunity to remain in their communities as their housing and care needs change," said Ron Cantelon, MLA Nanaimo – Parksville. "Assisted living provides choice, independence and dignity for seniors as well as peace of mind for families, knowing their loved ones are receiving the right level of care in their home communities."

The province is providing funding to ensure that the housing remains affordable to residents. The Vancouver Island Health Authority is funding the personal care and hospitality services.

"VIHA is committed to improving access to care throughout our service area, and this new facility increases the options for seniors in the Chemainus area to support their long-term needs," said Jac Kreut, board chair, Vancouver Island Health Authority. "As well, projects like this one will also help reduce pressures on emergency departments and busy hospitals such as the Cowichan District Hospital."

"The Chemainus Health Care Foundation is the first non-profit group to provide assisted living apartments in the area," said Rondeau Fenton, Director, Chemainus Health Care Housing Society. "These apartments allow our seniors to remain in their community as their care needs evolve."

"These assisted living units will provide a much needed asset to our community," said North Cowichan Mayor Jon Lefebure. "The Municipality of North Cowichan is committed to partnering to create more affordable housing options in our community. This is a wonderful step forward."

These new units are part of the British Columbia Government's commitment to provide 5,000 net-new residential care beds, assisted living units, and supportive housing with home support units by the end of 2008. To date, 8,494 new and replacement beds and units have been built, including 3,196 net-new.

The Province of British Columbia is committed to providing more than 4,000 affordable assisted living apartments for B.C. seniors and persons with disabilities. To date, more than 3,900 have been allocated in communities across the

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province. The Province's budget 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 this province. The provincial government will provide a minimum of \$34 million annually to subsidize the cost of units built under the Canada – BC 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

#### The Steeples

The Steeples, at 9910 Esplanade Street in Chemainus, provides 16 assisted living apartments for seniors. The development opened in April 2007 and is funded under Independent Living BC, a housing-for-health program that provides more options for seniors in British Columbia.

The assisted living units are all one-bedroom units, and 14 units are wheelchair-friendly. Eligible residents pay 70 per cent of their after-tax income for their units and services, which include meals, weekly housekeeping and linen services, 24-hour response, personal care services, and social and recreational opportunities.

The Chemainus Health Care Housing Society is operating The Steeples.

#### Partners and Funding Information

The total capital cost of this development is approximately \$4.4 million.

- The federal government, through the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, provided a \$1.21 million grant.
- The Province provided capital grants amounting to \$800,000, and will provide approximately \$1.6 million in housing subsidies over 35 years.
- The Vancouver Island Health Authority is providing approximately \$200,000 in annual hospitality funding.
- The Chemainus Health Care Foundation provided \$304,000 in land equity and \$132,261 in cash.
- The Municipality of North Cowichan provided \$33,908 in municipal reductions.

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### **Chemainus Health Care Housing Society**

Chemainus Health Care Housing Society was formed by the Chemainus Health Care Foundation (CHCF) in 2005, to provide safe, comfortable, and affordable housing for seniors and people with disabilities who require some assistance to remain independent. CHCF is a non-profit group formed in 1988 to raise and manage funds with the purpose of fostering and encouraging development and expansion of health care facilities and services in the Chemainus Valley.