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Sod Turned for New Residential and Assisted Living Units in Osoyoos

OSOYOOS – Seniors in Osoyoos will soon have more access to housing and health options after today's official groundbreaking ceremony of Mariposa Gardens, a new facility that will be equipped with 108 residential care beds and 36 assisted living units. The new beds will benefit seniors who need publicly funded housing and care.

"Mariposa Gardens will bring great benefits to local seniors with complex health care needs, as well as those who are still independent but require some assistance," said Penticton-Okanagan Valley MLA Bill Barisoff, speaking at today's event on behalf of Health Minister George Abbott. "Seniors across British Columbia are being provided with better care, more choices for care and improved access to services.

Last summer Baltic Properties Ltd. was awarded the contract to build Mariposa Gardens. Of the 108 residential care beds, 104 will be funded by Interior Health. Residential care is for seniors who can no longer live independently, and need around-the-clock nursing care in a home-like environment. The standards include full wheelchair accessibility, appropriate space for clients and caregivers, and the ability to include patient lifts and other support devices.

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, housekeeping, meals, and laundry services. The Province is providing \$57,000 in annual housing subsidies for 10 of the assisted living units through the Independent Living BC program.

The facility is being constructed at 8826 – 97th Avenue in Osoyoos.

"Building new, modern residential care and assisted living beds to meet the growing needs of our seniors is an important part of building and maintaining a community," said Interior Health Board Chair Alan Dolman, speaking to a crowd of local dignitaries and residents. "Osoyoos is a beautiful place to live, and seniors deserve to stay in their home community and have housing options that meet their care needs."

Will McKay, managing partner of Baltic Properties Ltd. and emcee of today's ceremony, said Mariposa Gardens will also provide an Adult Day Program and a Community Meals Program. He also noted that the residential care component of Mariposa Gardens will contain clusters of rooms creating mini-neighbourhoods that will allow Baltic Properties Ltd. to customize services, programming and staffing for each section.

“This allows for more flexibility in accommodating the unique and changing needs of the residents and ensures they receive the best care possible,” said McKay. “We’re very excited about this project, and we’re looking forward to providing housing options for seniors in this community.”

These additional residential care beds and assisted living units create capacity that will benefit the entire continuum of care. This can range from services that support seniors to live independently to inpatient care and resources such as 24/7 professional nursing care and specialized palliative services.

The 104 residential care beds and 10 assisted living units at Mariposa Gardens in Osoyoos are part of the province’s commitment to develop 5,000 new residential care beds and assisted living units throughout B.C. by the end of 2008. To date, 8,494 new and replacement beds and units have been built including 3,196 net-new beds and units.

Project completion is targeted for summer 2008.

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