

SENIORS' RENTAL HOUSING

Introduction

The Seniors' Rental Housing initiative is part of a new federal-provincial housing agreement announced in April 2009. This agreement provides for \$123.58 million to create up to 1,000 housing units over the next two years for seniors and persons with disabilities. The federal and provincial governments will each provide matching contributions of \$61.79 million. This new initiative will create approximately 800 jobs in BC.

This initiative will focus on promoting partnerships with local governments, non-profit housing providers and the private sector, and will in most cases use modular, manufactured housing construction that promotes wood product use.

Program Overview

The Seniors Rental Housing initiative will:

- Increase the supply of new affordable rental housing for low-income seniors and persons with disabilities, primarily in small communities.
- Provide affordable rental housing through a delivery model that, where possible, requires no ongoing operating funding, subsidies or support services.
- Stimulate local economies through the development of new rental housing and the use of local materials.

The Seniors' Rental Housing initiative helps implement the provincial housing strategy, *Housing Matters BC*. The initiative is an important addition to the range of housing options for seniors, including SAFER, Seniors' Supportive Housing, and Independent Living BC.

How the Initiative Works

The Province will provide capital funding for the construction of the homes. As housing sites for this initiative are to be provincially or municipally-owned, local governments are being asked to consider offering municipally-owned sites for development. BC Housing is also identifying potential properties held by its land holding company, the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation, for the purposes of this initiative.

The coordination of the construction of all developments funded through this initiative will be lead by BC Housing in consultation with partners. The developments will be managed by a local non-profit housing provider. Non-profit operators will be responsible for the day-to-day operations, maintenance and management of the housing. Operating subsidies, if required, will be provided by BC Housing.

Target Population

This initiative will target low-income households who are:

- Seniors, defined as single persons age 55 and older or couples where at least one person is aged 55 or older.
- Persons with disabilities in receipt of a recognized disability pension, or considered disabled for income tax purposes. For couples, one person must meet these criteria.

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Income limits for eligible individuals or households will be based on Core Need Income Thresholds established by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation which vary by community. Generally speaking, eligibility requirements for subsidized housing in British Columbia will apply.

Use of Modular Housing

In order to respond quickly and take advantage of funding opportunities, single storey modular housing construction will be promoted, dependent on specific community needs, conditions, partnerships and resources. In certain situations multi-storey wood frame housing forms may be used where land value requires a higher density to achieve an economically viable project and community planning objectives.

All new buildings will be required to meet or exceed energy efficiency requirements, such as the energy performance standard of EnerGuide 80, the use of Energy Star rated products, and an overall reduction in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions as per the requirements of Bill 44, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act.

A sample modular unit design has been prepared for illustrative purposes, which provides independent living for seniors and for persons with disabilities and that will fit well in the communities. Unit sizes are modest, with one-bedroom units typically in the 600 sq. ft. range. See sample unit design and renderings attached.

Selection of Sites and Housing Providers

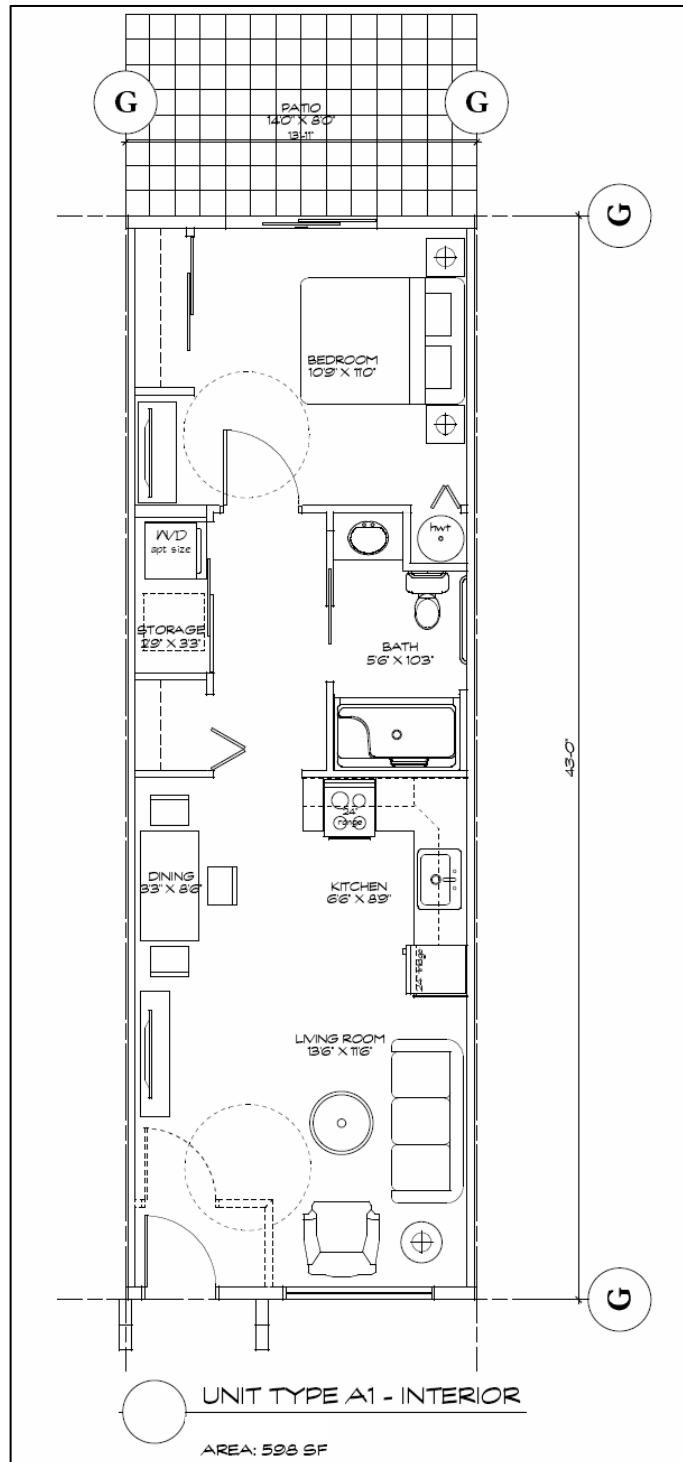
BC Housing will work with local governments to review and identify an appropriate site for the development that is either municipally- or provincially-owned. The selection of housing sites for this initiative will take into account a number of factors including proximity to public transit and health services, and accessibility to shopping, amenities and community supports. Co-location with existing housing projects or other community amenity spaces is encouraged.

A Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) will be issued by BC Housing for housing sites where non-profit housing providers have yet to be identified.

More information on the Seniors' Rental Housing initiative is available at www.bchousing.org.

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Seniors' Rental Housing initiative – Sample Modular Unit Design



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Seniors' Rental Housing initiative – Sample Modular Unit Design Artist's Rendering

