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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Housing and Social Development  
Capital Regional Hospital District

### **\$8.4 MILLION OLYMPIC LEGACY HOUSING UNDERWAY IN SAANICH**

SAANICH– Murray Coell, Minister of Labour and MLA for Saanich North and the Islands, announced today construction is underway on the Olympic Vista Apartments, an Olympic legacy housing project that will provide 36 affordable rental apartments with support services for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Saanich.

“Reconfiguring modular housing units from the 2010 Olympic Winter Games into supportive housing for area residents is a sustainable and innovative way to create a lasting legacy in Saanich,” said Coell. “This development will allow us to provide a more diverse range of housing options for those most in need.”

The Province’s contribution of \$7.2 million will be used to reconfigure the modular homes into the Olympic Vista Apartments, which will provide 36 bachelor suites. The Province will also provide annual operational funding for support services. The Capital Regional Hospital District (CRHD) provided the land, valued at \$1.15 million.

“This is the first major development on the former Mount View School site and the Capital Regional Hospital District is proud to be a partner in this significant milestone for the Region,” said Graham Hill, chair, Capital Regional Hospital District. “The undertaking of this project demonstrates our commitment to community and sustainability and we are happy to have been selected as part of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games legacy”.

The building is a result of an agreement between the Province and the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC), to reconfigure 320 temporary modular housing units from the Olympic and Paralympic Village at Whistler, and relocate and convert them into 156 permanent, affordable apartments in six communities across the province. Other communities include Chilliwack, Enderby, Sechelt, Surrey, and Chetwynd.

“The addition of the Olympic Vista Apartments will increase our district’s ability to help residents who are facing the risk of becoming homeless,” said District of Saanich Mayor Frank Leonard. “I would like to thank all partners involved in bringing this wonderful project to fruition.”

Victoria Cool Aid Society (Cool Aid) will manage and operate the Olympic Vista Apartments. Established in 1968, Cool Aid provides the Capital Region with a range of critical programs, including supported housing, integrated health care, emergency shelter and employment services to adults who have been marginalized.

“We are committed to developing community-based solutions that will end homelessness in the capital region,” said Kathy Stinson, executive director, Victoria Cool Aid Society. “Thanks to our strong partnerships with the Province and community organizations, we are able to provide the region’s most vulnerable residents with the housing and respectful assistance they need to move forward in their lives.”

Increasing affordable housing, reducing homelessness and helping those who cannot help themselves is a key agenda for the Province of British Columbia. Through Housing Matters BC, the Province is addressing a range of housing needs, from homelessness to affordable rental housing and homeownership.

In 2010-11, the Province will invest over \$562 million – more than four times as much as in 2001 – to provide affordable housing and supports to reduce homelessness. To find out more about affordable housing in B.C., visit [www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org).

# BACKGROUND

## OLYMPIC VISTA APARTMENTS

Victoria Cool Aid Society's Olympic Vista Apartments is located at 3814 Carey Rd., in Saanich. When completed, the three-storey plus basement building will provide 36 bachelor apartments, with support services for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The apartments are reconfigured modular homes from the Olympic and Paralympic Village at Whistler. Each self-contained home will be approximately 37.7 square metres (406 square feet). All suites will be accessed by the main floor lobby, with an elevator servicing the second and third floors. The basement does not have any dwelling units, just electrical, storage & crawlspace.

### **Partners and Funding:**

The total capital cost of this project is approximately \$8.4 million:

- The Province, in partnership with VANOC, will provide \$7.2 million through a Provincial Infrastructure grant.
- The Capital Regional Hospital District provided the land, valued at \$1.15 million and will lease the property to the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation (PRHC) for 60 years at a nominal rate.

### **Operational Funding:**

- The Province will provide \$662,141 in annual operational and support service funding for residents of the 36 apartments.

### **CAPITAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT**

Olympic Vista Apartments is part of a larger proposal for the former Mount View School site. In addition to the 36 supportive housing units for homeless individuals, the plan also calls for a 244-bed residential care home, 165 independent living suites for seniors, 14 affordable family townhouses, a mixed-use market development and public open space. CRHD completed the purchase of the Carey Road site from School District 61 in 2007. The CRHD is currently working with Baptist Housing Ministries to advance the complex-care component of the plan and the Capital Region Housing Corporation has recently commenced work on the Affordable Family Townhouses. For information on the Mount View Heights development, please visit [www.crd.bc.ca/hfp/mountview](http://www.crd.bc.ca/hfp/mountview).

### **VICTORIA COOL AID SOCIETY**

Cool Aid has been building hope, lives and community in the Capital Region since 1968, through a wide range of programs, including supported housing, community health and dental care, emergency shelter, mental health services, and a casual labour pool for adults who are homeless or in need of help.

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