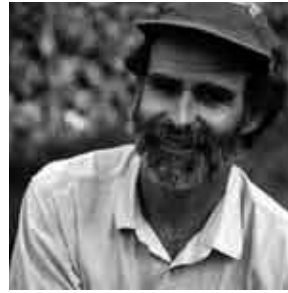


Strategy

B.C.'S MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS RECEIVE PRIORITY FOR ASSISTANCE



The most acute need for housing is among low-income people who have special housing and support needs. These individuals and families are often not well-served by or suited to the private housing market because their unique needs mean they require support services or, in some cases, a physically modified unit to live independently.

This strategy focuses eligibility for subsidized housing on these low-income individuals and families with special housing needs. It identifies the government's plan to renovate, redevelop or convert some of the existing provincially-owned subsidized housing to increase available units for this group. In partnership with the non-profit and private housing sectors, the government will also continue to build new units and these will be available to those who need them most.

Where possible, non-profit societies will be encouraged to serve clients having more challenging special housing needs. To do so, the Province will provide training, capacity-building and support to participating non-profit agencies.

Housing Fact

British Columbia is currently home to about 590,000 seniors. By the year 2031, the seniors' population will more than double to 1,300,000. Seniors currently make up 14 per cent of the population of British Columbia; by 2031 seniors will make up 23 per cent of the population.

No tenant in subsidized housing affected by these changes will be left without affordable housing. If a move is required as a result of redevelopment, the tenant may be offered a new subsidized housing unit, a rent supplement or housing allowance in private market housing or, for some tenants ready to assume the responsibilities of home ownership, assistance purchasing a unit.

With improved integration of support services, shelters and subsidized housing, more of B.C.'s most vulnerable citizens will gain access to subsidized housing thereby stabilizing their living conditions and enhancing their quality of life.

Only six per cent of seniors require residential care. Evidence shows that helping seniors remain in independent housing not only contributes to an enhanced quality of life, it also helps to reduce pressure on health and long-term care resources.

At present, there are not enough supported and assisted living residences available, especially for those with low incomes. That is why the government is continuing its commitment to build independent living spaces. These will consist of newly constructed non-profit units, conversions from existing non-profit housing or health facilities, and units provided through rent supplements in private assisted living developments.

INDEPENDENT LIVING BC

The Province is continuing its commitment to the Independent Living BC program. This program gives people the dignity of having their own home and the security of knowing that help is there when they need it. It also provides a cost-effective middle option between home care and residential care.



Steeves Manor provides 200 suites for seniors and young disabled people in Vancouver.



Beechwood, part of Beulah Gardens in Vancouver, consists of 48 bachelor units and 48 one-bedroom units – a total of 96 homes for seniors who can live independently.

Recognizing tenants' changing needs

Recognizing the changing needs of tenants, a partnership between BC Housing, the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and the Community Home Support Services Association undertook major renovations to Steeves Manor in Vancouver.

Built in the 1970s, this development provides 200 units for low-income seniors and people with disabilities. Each renovation had a specific function to meet the unique needs of Steeves Manor's tenants with disabilities.

These renovations included indoor scooter parking and storage; clinic and office areas for doctors, health service providers, and specialists; and a program office for an onsite community resource coordinator who provides access to community services.