

Sod turned for Native women's shelter

By LARIE STOLEY
Calgary Sun

With prayers and the burning of sweetgrass, construction of a Native women's shelter was launched yesterday.

About 20 people gathered in a vacant city lot and said a prayer for success as sod was turned on the new south-east shelter in Windsor Park.

Gerri Many Fingers, executive director of the Native Women's Shelter, said the \$800,000 25-bed facility is a result of years of negotiations with the city, province and community representatives.

"We've had our problems — we've done a lot of lobbying, talked to a lot of people to get to this day," she said.

The shelter received \$200,000 in funding from Albi's Miracle Home lottery and will mortgage the rest of the cost. The mortgage will be guaranteed by the Alberta Municipal Affairs Department.

Construction will begin April 15.

Ald. Barb Scott said

there's a great need for projects of this kind.

"The need for this type of shelter is tremendous — this is a day of celebration for us because we've worked for so long to get here," Scott said.



Taking part in the sod-turning ceremony yesterday were (from left): Elder Rachel Hoof Sr., program

— MICHAEL DREW, Calgary Sun manager Josie Oltrup, Ald. Barb Scott, Monique Maher, Gerri Many Fingers and Marilyn Fraser-King.