

# CRD Housing Affordability Strategy

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## Outline for Consultation Framework

The consultation process is key to the development of an effective strategy. The following describes the elements of that process.

### **Purpose**

- Education, awareness raising, generating overall commitment and building partnerships
- *Objective: Stakeholder involvement to create community understanding of issues, gain community support, and develop lasting partnerships within the community.*

### **Principles**

- Inclusive, incremental and collaborative process
- Community based
- Credible
- Practical policies
- Pragmatic solutions for change
- Best Practices transferable throughout the Region
- *Objective: Sharing of reliable facts in a collaborative environment to create housing solutions*

### **Stakeholders**

Assembly of stakeholder database, including the following major groups.

*Industry groups:* these are the stakeholders involved in the production/delivery/management of housing, including builders, developers, financial institutions, landlords (ROMA), housing providers, architects, planners, realtors, corporate community, business organizations (e.g. Chambers, etc.), health/social service workers, academics, student housing (UVic, Camosun, Royal Roads), etc.

*Client groups:* low and moderate income, special needs clients are the target groups. They are represented through a number of organizations and stakeholder entities such as those identified in the Victoria Homelessness Assets and Gaps Study (2001), Together Against Poverty (TAP), the Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative (SCPI) (*Note there is overlap between this group and Community groups listings*)

*Community groups:* community associations, CEDCO, Community Social Planning Council (CSPC) advocacy groups (disabled, mental health, seniors, youth, ex-offenders, aboriginal/First Nations, churches (including Downtown Churches – including Salvation Army), Habitat for Humanity, SCPI,

tenants/homeowners associations (in this category within the CRD there is only TAP which performs a broader advocacy role), etc.

*Government representatives:* federal (CMHC, HRDC, DND, Health Canada, Canada Lands, provincial (MCAWS, BCHMC, Health, BCAL, BCBC, etc), and local (Vancouver Island Health Authority + Hospitals, IMPAC, School Districts, etc.)

*Elected officials:* local (Mayors and Councillors) + Electoral Area Director, provincial (MLAs and EAs) and federal (MPs and EAs), School District Chairs & Trustees

*Key sources available include:*

- HAP membership;
- Stakeholder list prepared for Homelessness Assets and Gaps work (2001)
- CRD list of stakeholders (contact Donna Zimmerman, Human Resources, CRD),
- Housing Providers Web site
- Regional Transportation Strategy Advisory Committee members
- Stakeholder associations (Note: It is not expected that stakeholder associations will provide membership lists, rather we will be asking stakeholder associations for their cooperation and assistance in distributing information on the Housing Affordability Strategy to their members.)

- *Objective: The Stakeholder Database should be 'all inclusive'.*

To achieve this it is expected that groups will be added incrementally, as gaps are identified. As part of the stakeholder base, there is also the need for integration with the Transportation Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy.

## **Consultation Program**

Consultation will be directed at achieving an inclusive process across the regional community that:

- is educational;
- is participatory;
- encourages dialogue between stakeholders; and,
- allows participation in the identification of issues and solutions by both project participants and the wider community.

The process comprises opportunities for interviews, focus groups and workshops outlined in more detail below. There will also be Fact sheets and information available on the CRD Web site.

The objective of the workshop events at the end of Phases One and Two, and one part way through Phase Three is to create awareness of the affordability issues,

harness local creativity and commitment and create synergy through partnerships around determining housing solutions.

In addition, an Advisory Committee is also a critical part of the consultation process but the Terms of Reference have been dealt with separately. The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to provide advice to the consultant, Project Manager and Project Management Committee on matters of process and substance in identifying issues, concerns and information to be addressed in the Strategy. The Advisory Committee is intended to be a discussion forum and will not be responsible for directing the consultant.

It is also anticipated that the Housing Affordability Partnership (HAP) will have an integral role in the consultation process. Again, this is being defined separately in consultation with the HAP Steering Committee.

## **Phases and Components**

### *Phase 1: Assembling the Database – “The Working Capacity”*

*Objective:* to identify current and future issues, and identify and analyse present, and forecast future, problems.

*Interviews:* Preparation of the database will involve some personal interviews with stakeholders, particularly those in the Industry Group. There may also be the opportunity for stakeholders to self-select for interviews in database areas to be identified. Once areas for interview self-selection have been determined, invitations would be sent out to the relevant stakeholder groups.

*Focus Groups:* As appropriate, the assembly of the database will be accomplished through a maximum of 5 focus groups (up to 2 hours) with stakeholders. A structured discussion guide will be prepared, and results compiled in matrix format. Focus groups provide:

- an efficient method for assembling and verifying data;
- an opportunity for sharing information and perspectives and in turn educating stakeholders on the issues;
- a synergetic experience that can ‘snowball’ and generate ideas.

Key groups are those identified under Stakeholders, plus there will be a General Interest Focus Group. The stakeholder groups will be invited to send a representative to a focus group, and group participants will represent a cross-section of the stakeholders to promote a sharing of experiences and understanding of issues. The General Interest Focus Group will be advertised and interested applicants required to submit a letter of application responding to questions to ensure a cross-section of interests, needs and experience. The Advisory Committee will be responsible for convening a committee to select participants for this focus group.

The agenda will include: an overview of the project; discussion of the data/needs issues; knowledge of policy, legislative and regulatory framework issues; and stakeholder experiences with partnership, financing and tenure arrangements.

*Fact Sheets:* these will be compiled to share the information assembled with the stakeholders and the interested public.

*Workshop #1:* The structure will be designed to focus on the results of the data analysis and identification of issues. A preliminary design is attached as Appendix A, with a more detailed Workshop Design prepared in May, 2002. The Workshop will include a component of general interest participation by inviting applications from interested members of the general public and approved on the basis of selection criteria and limited in number to 25 participants.

#### *Scheduling Recommendations*

Workshop Location: Victoria City Hall Council Chambers.

Workshop Date: Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., June 18 & 19.

#### *Phase 2: Innovations – “Testing and Building Capacity”*

*Objective:* to address issues and housing affordability needs.

Components similar to those in Phase 1 (anticipate the number of focus groups will be scaled back)

#### *Phase 3: Strategic Recommendations – “Growing Capacity”*

*Objective:* Identify and recommend practical policies and gain commitments to action to address needs and problems in short, medium and long term.

Components similar to those in Phase 1 (anticipate the focus groups may not be required)

Open Houses – assess the pros/cons as proceed to determine usefulness in Phases 2 & 3, and decide at later date.

## **Communication Strategy - Outline**

### **Purpose**

To raise awareness of stakeholders/residents about the implications the strategy has for them and the region, and to get them involved and gain commitment.

### **Communication Tools:**

There is a need to identify a CRD Spokesperson – who will act as a ‘Champion’ for the strategy:

#### *Meetings:*

- interviews
- focus groups

- workshops
- speaking opportunities

*Electronic:*

- CRD Web Site updates/bulletins – add RGS Implementation Page and use:
  - as Bulletin Board;
  - for notification of meetings;
  - for posting Fact Sheets, etc
  - Links to Municipal Web Sites
  - Links to other key Web sites – Health Region, HAP, etc
- Email to stakeholders

*Print:*

- Articles in CRD Newsletters/bulletins
- Fact sheets
- Direct mail/fax outs to stakeholders

*Media:*

- News releases (+ backgrounder kits)
- Articles – a series of news articles prepared at key points in the preparation of the housing affordability strategy, alternatively human interest stories about personal experiences in housing\* (e.g. Quality of Life, low-end of market housing - Burnside Gorge Community Association work, Cool Aid, M'akola Housing, students, etc.)
- Interviews – phone-in / talk shows/panel discussions
- Local radio/TV stations (may be appropriate at the three major workshops)

## **Prepare Communication Action Plan and Schedule**

Designate media contact and have media briefing kit available.

Contact Jody Patterson, Jack Knox, and other reporters as appropriate regarding human interest stories (\*see above).

Identify key milestones/events for promotion and communication (e.g.), and prepare communication plans (tools and resources, etc.) as part of event planning.

*Suggested events:*

- Project initiation (News Release distributed mid-April/02)
- Major workshops concluding each phase

## **Appendix A**

### ***Preliminary Design for Workshop #1: Assembling the Database – “The Working Capacity”.***

The workshop will comprise two 3 hour evening sessions run consecutively. Participants will be invited stakeholders (up to 100) and 25 selected members of the general public responding to an advertisement.

Session #1 will present an overview of the project and focus discussion on the market analysis (Baseline Data, 1980-2011; local needs, issues, assets, resources and capacities, housing affordability forecasting, housing market analysis). The agenda will involve:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Project Overview
- Presentation on Market Analysis
- Breakout groups discussion with facilitators and a facilitator’s guide designed to probe issues and obtain feedback
- Plenary reporting from groups

Session #2 will focus discussion on the assessment of the policy, legislative and regulatory framework and on partnership, financing and tenure arrangements. Agenda format will involve plenary presentations and breakout groups with plenary reporting, similar to Session #1, plus Next Steps as the closing item on the agenda.

The same participants will be encouraged to attend both sessions, but this format does give people the option of attending only the evening of particular interest.