

CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, May 15, 2002

SUBJECT:

Regional Housing Affordability Strategy – Consultation Framework and Housing Affordability Partnership Involvement

BACKGROUND:

March 13, 2002 Board authorize the execution of the contract for the Regional Housing Affordability Strategy.

DISCUSSION

Consultation Framework

The report on today's agenda on the status of RGS implementation strategies outlines the progress made to date on the Regional Housing Affordability Strategy (RHAS). This report includes a description of the Consultation Process (Attachment A) prepared by the consultants and reviewed by the Project Management Committee (PMC).

The consultation framework proposes to educate, raise awareness, generate overall commitment and build partnerships. The objective is to encourage stakeholder involvement to create community understanding of issues, gain community support, and develop lasting partnerships within the community. Its principles are outlined in the attached report.

The project is proceeding in three Phases:

- Phase 1 Assembling the Database – “The Working Capacity”
 - Objective: to identify current and future issues, and identify and analyse present and forecast future problems;
- Phase 2 – Innovations – “Testing and Building Capacity”
 - Objective: to address issues and housing affordability needs; and
- Phase 3 – Strategic Recommendations – “Growing Capacity”
 - Objective: to identify and recommend practical policies and gain commitments to action to address needs and problems in short, medium and long term.

Consultation will take place in all three Phases through a combination of interviews, focus groups and workshops with the stakeholders to be identified during Phase 1. Several Fact Sheets will be prepared throughout the project. These and project findings will be widely distributed, as described in the Communication Strategy Outline. Two Open Houses are being considered for Phases 2 and 3 for the general public.

Workshop #1 will present an overview of the project and discussion of the material being gathered by the consultants: market analysis; policy, legislative and regulatory framework; and partnership, financing and tenure arrangements. Small group discussion will probe issues and obtain feedback. The workshop will involve approx. 100 participants (including 25 selected by the Advisory Committee from applications received from the general public in response to an advertisement), and is scheduled for June 18-19, from 7:00 to 9:30 PM, in the Council Chambers at Victoria City Hall.

Role of the Housing Affordability Partnership (HAP)

The consultants have prepared Notes on the role that could be assumed by the Housing Affordability Partnership during and after the preparation of the RHAS (Attachment B). These notes are to be discussed by the HAP Steering Committee on May 21, and so should be considered preliminary only.

In summary, it is proposed that HAP should be integrally involved with the preparation of the Strategy; that its own capacity as a cross-sectoral entity should be assisted; and that its involvement should be staged to coincide with that organization's ability to take on the work, so that eventually HAP could be an advisor and facilitator during the implementation phases. It should be noted that most of the RHAS Project Management Committee are members of the HAP Steering Committee, ensuring close integration between the two.

This approach fits with the trend to building capacity within the community, and leveraging resources collectively for housing.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Regional Planning Committee receive the attached report as information.

Chris Goldburn, Manager Information Services
Regional Planning Services

Mark Hornell, Director
Regional Planning Services

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

W.M. Jordan, Executive Director

Attachments