

CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT
Regional Planning Services Department

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, July 16⁹, 2003

SUBJECT:

Final Report on the Regional Housing Affordability Strategy

BACKGROUND:

The Regional Housing Affordability Strategy is one of the three implementation initiatives authorized by the CRD Board in early 2002. A presentation on the findings documented in the two working papers on which the Draft Proposed Strategy is based was made to the Regional Planning Committee on March 19, 2003.

~~attempt to bring to light potential goals, and direction for mode choices, supporting infrastructure, operating and capital costs and administration of the strategy. Key parts of these working papers will then form the foundation for the overall TravelChoices Strategy. This consolidated strategy will need to balance competing elements. Based on the recommended TravelChoices Strategy, the final report will contain recommend implementation priorities.~~

~~This report provides an update on the work to date on the TravelChoices Strategy. A presentation will be made at the committee meeting by the project consultant who will request input on the draft working papers.~~

DISCUSSION:

The first two documents submitted for review identified the scale and scope of the housing affordability issue in the Capital Region, and a list of possible actions that in various combinations could be used to deal with them. These were circulated to all municipal council members in the region.

The draft Final Report is now complete (see Attachment A). It has been created to be a stand-alone document, and includes

- a description of the issues,
- a justification for local and regional level action by the regional community,
- the vision, goals and strategic directions for the region in terms of housing affordability,
- prioritized recommendations for action, and
- recommendations for implementation and monitoring.

The intent of the report is to identify a strategic vision and goals, and to give strategic direction to ensure that any action taken by the Capital Regional District Board, its member municipalities and the Strategy's funding partners¹ is done in a coordinated, cooperative way, and is focused on jointly-held objectives.

¹ Capital Region Hospital Board, Vancouver Is. Health Authority, BC Housing, CMHC, Capital Region Housing Corp.

The vision, goals, objectives, strategic principles, strategic directions and targets are shown on Attachment B.

Recommendations for action are identified for each of the strategic directions, and these are prioritized. Concerted action on many fronts will be required. The highest priority is assigned to four options that would act as catalysts for further action:

- the Regional Housing Fund (note: a 'business case' for a Fund, including recommendations for structure, operations, source and allocation of funds, is being prepared and will be circulated to municipal councils with the Final Report)
- the Regional Housing Resource Centre and Facilitator,
- the Harmonization of Municipal Development Regulations, and
- Incentives for the Preservation of the Existing Rental Stock.

The report does not include an implementation plan. This and the final Strategy will be developed later, based on the comments received from the member municipalities and others, as per the communications plan. It is hoped that municipalities and other stakeholders will endeavor to develop their own suite of actions, suited to their capacities and resources, from the range of options shown in this report and in Working Paper 2.

~~Working papers 2 and 3 were originally planned to be on the RPC agenda for February. Other agenda items resulted in delaying a presentation to this committee until its March meeting.~~

~~Status of the Work Plan~~

~~The status of the deliverables related to the Travel Choices work plan is as follows:~~

~~LARRY. MIKE ASKED THAT THE PEDESTRIAN PIECE BE PLACED INTO THE CONTEXT OF LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION~~

~~The next two four draft working papers on transit, road networks, land use-transportation and increasing travel choices “Transit and Road Network” strategies are planned to be submitted to the April 2003 RPC meeting.~~

~~e project management team is working with the Inter-Municipal Planning Advisory Committee (IMPAC), the community based stakeholder committee and a municipal working group comprised of planners and engineers in the preparation of these working papers. The Regional Cycling Committee has also contributed to the review of the draft cycling strategy. Once each report has cleared the committee review process and is released for review by RPC it is also circulated to all municipal councils as information.~~

~~Each committee has contributed valuable information to these reports. To date there has have been no formal responses from the municipal councils on these reports.~~

~~The Regional Cycling Committee has raised a number of concerns with the draft cycling strategy that have been forward to the project management team. These issues will be addressed in the completion of the Transportation Strategy. The primary issues relate to the standards for regional cycling routes, priorities for improvement and the potential market which may be attracted to cycling.~~

~~Subsequent to the presentation of the roads, transit, and land use working papers, a working paper with respect to the necessary funding and administration efforts necessary to achieve the goals of the strategy will be prepared for discussion.~~

~~The primary components of all working papers and the direction resulting from CRD and municipal consideration of these documents will be summarized in an overall Travel Choices Strategy document.~~

~~LARRY. I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE DETAILS OF THE COMMENTS ARE TOO SPECIFIC FOR A REPORT TO RPC. IN ALL CASES, WE ARE GOING TO BE ADDRESSING ISSUES FROM A RANGE OF GROUPS ON THE ENTIRE STRATEGY. THIS APPROACH KIND OF ISOLATES ONE GROUP AS HAVING MORE INPUT. YOUR~~

~~CALL. cover many topics. The key issues relate to the:~~

- ~~• preferred standard for upgrading major cycling routes;~~
- ~~• potential market and promotion of cycling;~~
- ~~• analysis and recommendation of the priority routes;~~
- ~~• relationship to other strategies; and~~
- ~~• recommendations submitted by the sub-committee in March 2002 and not included in the draft strategy.~~

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Regional Planning Committee receive this report for information and provide comments to the RHAS Project Manager.

That the Regional Planning Committee make suggestions for any items requiring further work, and for any points that could be prepared as part of a list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' for use by councils and the wider community.

That the Regional Planning Committee recommend to the CRD Board that the Final Report of the Regional Housing Affordability Strategy be circulated to the councils of member municipalities for initial review and comment.

FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE RECOMMENDATION: N/A.

Chris Goldburn, Project Manager RHAS
Regional Planning Services

Mark Hornell, Director
Regional Planning Services

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

W.M. Jordan, Executive Director
Attachments
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The Vision

Improved housing affordability for residents of the Capital Region.

The Goal

To improve housing affordability and ensure the availability of a reasonable choice of housing by type, tenure, price, and location, especially for low and moderate-income households, the elderly, youth, those with special health and other needs, and the homeless, over both the short and long term.

The Objectives

- To create a policy and regulatory environment that will increase the supply of more-affordable housing.
- To increase the availability funds for more-affordable housing.
- To promote and facilitate community-based support and partnerships that will improve housing affordability.
- To focus on meeting the needs of those in Core Need, the homeless and the “hard to house”.

The Strategic Principles

- Community-based
 - Sustainability
 - Flexibility
 - Inclusive
- Range of Options
 - Educational
 - Creativity

The Seven Strategic Directions

1. Raising and leveraging additional funds for more-affordable housing.
2. Reducing policy and regulatory obstacles to facilitate the provision of more-affordable housing.
3. Encouraging intensification to improve housing affordability.
4. Utilizing public lands to support housing affordability.
5. Encouraging self-help initiatives by community organizations and individuals to increase the supply of more-affordable housing.
6. Maximizing the use of existing senior government housing programs and advocating for increased funding for more-affordable housing.
7. Improving awareness, changing attitudes and building support for more-affordable housing.

The Targets

- Households in core need: by the next Census in 2006, the number of households in core need on a percentage basis in each municipality will be less than was the case in 2001.
- The regulatory framework: by 2004, a harmonized set of development regulatory forms, including standardization of information requirements, definitions, and fees is adopted by local governments throughout the region.
- Secondary suites: by 2006, the number of secondary suites has increased by 10% and secondary suites have been legalized in all municipalities.
- Denser housing forms: by 2006, the proportion of denser housing forms in each municipality will be higher than it was in 2001.