



Making a difference...together

PROVINCIAL POLICIES MUNICIPAL PLANNERS MEETING – DISCUSSION NOTES

June 25, 2019 1:00 – 3:00 pm, CRD Commons Room, Victoria, BC

PRESENT: Central Saanich – Andrea Pickard; Colwood – Iain Bourhill; Esquimalt – Bill Brown; Highlands – Laura Beckett; Juan de Fuca – Iain Lawrence; Langford – Julia Buckingham, Leah Stohmann; Metchosin – Sherry Hurst; North Saanich – Ann Berry; Oak Bay – Deborah Jensen; Saanich – Sharon Hvozdzanski, Shari Holmes-Saltzmann; Sidney – Corey Newcomb; Sooke – Teunesha Evertse, Ivy Campbell; Victoria – Lindsay Milburn; View Royal – Lindsay Chase; CRD – Kevin Lorette, Christine Culham, Stephen Henderson, John Reilly (facilitator), Jay Douillard, John Hicks, Colleen Cybulski, Maia Kerr (recorder)

1. Welcome and Introductions

John Reilly provided a welcome and everyone introduced themselves.

2. Housing Needs Assessment Workshop

Jay Douillard summarized the Housing Needs Reporting Requirements and identified some of the difficulties and incompatibilities of comparing different types of data. For example, he noted that while BC Assessment Data picks up non-permitted suites, CMHC does not (and also doesn't pick up short term rentals). In some cases data within the CRD is tracked using the postal address, which results in data that does not accurately represent development activity and overall dwelling supply in the various municipalities or electoral areas. Regional Planning has taken this up with the Province and is awaiting their response. Jay distributed copies of the new BC Housing dwelling estimates and asked the municipalities and electoral areas to notify him if they see any issues. Finally, he also noted that it will be important to plan the timing of the report to take advantage of census data etc.

John Reilly – A CRD coordinated Housing Needs Report Program which includes multiple municipalities working in partnership is eligible for up to \$150,000 in funding. However, it is very important to align the CRD Housing Needs Report Program with the work of those municipalities that are reporting independently.

Status of municipalities who are applying for funding to report independently:

- Sidney – Corey Newcomb
 - Applied in May - Application was driven by timeline for Sidney's OCP
 - Collaborated with Sooke on scope
 - Feedback from UBCM: requested breakout of budget so that each task had an identifiable source of funding; funds must be used for specific tasks; policy planning work is outside the scope of the report funding
 - RFP closed June 7th and received eight proposals (\$20-\$57K)
 - Urban Systems was chosen to complete the work (28K)
 - RFP includes a public component (interviews), policy work and improvement, and staff capacity building and tools
- Sooke – Teunesha Evertse
 - Applied in May – Currently working on OCP and policies need to be updated

- UBCM feedback: very data-oriented; work planned must match the table and any spinoff/economic development is not eligible for funding
- RFP closed in April, received six proposals (\$35K to \$52K); Chose to work with Urbanics
- If Sooke receives UBCM funding, they will use the municipal funds that they have reserved for the project to complete a separate economic assessment
- Planning to use a web-based online survey, developer 1:1s and interviews with operators
- Oak Bay – Deborah Jensen
 - Applied in May – Council Strategic Plan requested decisions be data-driven so research was already underway in order to update existing housing data
 - Focusing on their Housing Framework
 - Consultations will take place
 - Municipality is located near university, college, hospital
 - Willing to share resulting report and data with CRD
 - RFP closes this week; RFP budget is 35K
- View Royal – Lindsay Chase
 - Also using Sooke's template as base for scope
 - Applied in May - Driving force was that the OCP review is starting next year
 - Interested in collaborating with region next time
 - Waiting to hear back regarding their grant application before issuing a RFP
 - If the grant application is unsuccessful, then they will just gather data; if the application is successful, they will use their municipal funds for policy development
 - Have identified a gap in knowledge regarding the housing continuum
 - View Royal has big housing issues – 17% of homeowners are paying more than 40% of their income on housing
 - Looking to inform public opinion and understanding on housing issues

John Reilly noted that CRD has extra funding that was budgeted for the Data Book Update which can be put towards the Housing Needs Assessment.

Municipal Planners separated into groups and discussed the following questions:

(3) Identify Focus Areas for Regional Project

What areas of planning in your region are currently being worked on and how can this HNA project help your municipality/EA in achieving your objectives? What areas of focus proposed by other municipal projects should be included in the regional project? Are there other areas of housing need that could be added to the regional project?

- Affordable housing is a priority in all municipalities/EAs
- As housing data becomes outdated quickly, many municipalities/EAs are seeking more up-to-date data to support their updating housing strategies, capacity assessments, affordable housing programs, and local area plans/OCPs, etc.
- Excited about opportunity for collaboration across the region and to have data that can be compared between municipalities/EAs (regional context)
- Based on incomes, it appears that much new housing development is not affordable to current residents
- Interested to find out if municipal/EA policy is driving certain types of development (e.g. municipal control/restrictions on use of multi bedrooms, age-restrictions and/or short-term vacation rentals)
- Community engagement and education is vital to humanize and understand affordability
- Engagement with First Nations should be considered

- Relationships with media and developers are also important
- Looking at family-oriented workforce housing, supportive housing, secondary suites and accessory dwellings, etc.
- Interested in integrating with GIS
- Strong desire from some to keep the data requirements to those set out by the province
- Some municipalities/EA not content with the RGS population and dwelling projections and may want to see different projections as part of this project
- Some municipalities/EA also looking at childcare gap analysis and economic development
- We need to ask questions: Why are there differences between municipalities? Are we serving the needs of the city? Is the current practice of putting affordable housing where there is available land the best approach? What is the effect of CVRD taking up slack for housing needed in CRD?

(4) Regional Alignment Among Projects

Where is there alignment between the local initiatives and the desired output for the regional HNA? Where might there be work needed in helping ensure alignment?

- Important to take regional context into account when looking at the municipality
- To encourage alignment, planners need to continue to meet through workshops, share drafts, and compare notes before going to committees and council
- Interest in aligning everything from methodology to infographics
- The supply of zoned and designated land needs to be part of the equation
- Local action is necessary in order to do something regionally, but it is also important to avoid letting this initiative push municipalities/EA into regional competition

(5) Opportunities to Leverage UBCM Funding

What forms of data presentation, beyond a formal written report would best serve regional, municipal and electoral area information needs?

- Web Component
 - Interactive website with housing data (e.g. Langford currently using 'Town Folio')
 - Web-based reporting (dashboard, maps) that is easy to update for future reports
 - Tailor website for affordable housing developers
 - Public mapping – CRD atlas
 - GIS/mapping
- Community Education
 - Community presentations to give public regional perspectives and change perspective that it's only happening in 'my' area and remind residents that developments in one community affect many communities
 - Educate public on housing and why it is important using plain language
- Municipal Council
 - CRD could present to councils to increase understanding

What resources would be needed to develop these different forms of data presentation?

- CRD funding
- Municipal/EA buy-in
- Tech support for online resource and to develop base map
- Admin support

- Communications support to develop universal infographics and customizable infographic template
- End product should be accessible (plain language), interactive, web-based, easy to update and in the form of an adaptable template

Municipal Planners came back into one group to discuss the following:

(6) Create a Governance Structure to Support Project

Discuss DPAC role and confirm among participants.

- CRD needs municipal/EA council support in time for the November Draw
 - All council letters of support due to CRD in September
 - 'Pilot' municipalities/EA could prepare a letter which states that even though they are starting on our own, they are still interested in collaborating and sharing results
 - **CRD to draft letters for municipalities/EA and template wording for councils**
- **CRD to draft governance**
- Sooke scope of work = starting point
- DPAC's role aligns with this group – governing TOR?
- Debrief once Housing Needs assessments are in
 - 'Pilot' municipalities/EA to act as advisors

Request Volunteers to sit on working group.

- Sub Committee: Lindsay, Leah, Deborah, Cam, Teunesha
- Will formulate draft TOR and run past entire group for review

3. New initiatives

a. Housing Agreement Program to support Municipalities/EA

John Reilly introduced the proposed CRD Housing Agreement Program currently under development. ***CRD to share details with group once developed.**

b. Housing and Transportation Cost Study

John Hicks introduced the Housing and Transportation Cost Study. CRD is in the final stages of working on custom transportation data sets for each municipality (larger municipalities have more than one data set) and validating data through Malatest and is working with UVIC. ***CRD to share details with group once developed**

4. Next Steps

- JR to send out 'municipal best practices' completed by the Community Social Planning Council during the update of the Regional Housing Affordability Strategy (RHAS) and will ask for feedback and any further updates from each municipality/electoral area

5. Next Meeting

September – October – date will be circulated. Colwood has offered to host the next meeting

6. Adjournment