

REPORT TO HOSPITALS AND HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 07, 2020

SUBJECT 2019-2022 Affordable Housing Service Planning

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide the Hospitals and Housing Committee with an overview of relevant initiatives undertaken by the Regional Housing Division in 2020 and planned for 2021 to deliver on approved Board Priorities and the Corporate Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board completed its strategic planning early in 2019 and approved the CRD Board Strategic Priorities 2019-2022.

The four priorities are:

1. Community Well-being – Transportation & Housing;
2. Climate Action & Environmental Stewardship;
3. First Nations Reconciliation; and
4. Advocacy, Governance & Accountability.

The priorities were confirmed at the annual check-in on May 13, 2020.

The 2019-2022 CRD Corporate Plan is aligned to the Board direction. It highlights the initiatives the CRD needs to deliver over the Board's four-year term to address the region's most important needs. The Corporate Plan identified nine initiatives under Affordable Housing, which fall under the Hospitals and Housing Committee's mandate.

Appendix A *Community Need Summary - Affordable Housing 2021* is a summary of the planned activities for 2021. It contains details about core service levels, new initiatives proposed and performance metrics.

Nine delivery initiatives were approved last year, for delivery in 2020. Appendix B *Affordable Housing – Initiative Progress Report* provides insights into what has been delivered through those initiatives.

The Service Planning process gathered information necessary to assemble a provisional budget for Committee and Board review. The purpose of this report is to explain how the Regional Housing divisional program of work connects to the Board Priorities, Corporate Plan and provisional budget.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Hospitals and Housing Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That Appendix A Community Need Summary - Affordable Housing be approved as presented and advanced to the October 28, 2020 provisional budget review process.

Alternative 2

The Hospitals and Housing Committee provide CRD staff with alternative direction with respect to advancing Appendix A Community Need Summary – Affordable Housing.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Initiatives identified in the Corporate Plan (including Board Priorities) cannot be undertaken without resourcing. The Board determines resourcing through its annual review and approval of financial plans. To support the Board's decision-making, staff, through the service planning process, provide recommendations on funding, timing and service levels.

During this year's service planning process, staff have been mindful of the fiscal challenges facing the region. To that end, any budget increase or other impacts have been mitigated, as much as possible.

Service Delivery Implications

The Community Need Summary provides an overview of all work that needs to be undertaken in order to meet regulatory requirements, satisfy Board direction and meet the needs of the communities served by the CRD.

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

Staff have identified three initiatives that will have budget implications for 2021 (Table 1).

Table 1: Community Need Summary - Affordable Housing, Delivery Initiatives

#	Initiative	Description	Year(s)	FTE Impacts in 2021	Budget Impacts in 2021
1a-2	Housing Investment through the CRD/CRHC	Invest in/build Provincial Income Assistance rate, market rate and affordable housing units through the RHFP and operate housing projects through the CRHC	2020 – 2022	6.5 Ongoing 2 Term	Included in Provisional Budget
1a-10	Reaching Home *	Reaching Home Program	2019 – 2022	0.8 Term	Included in Provisional Budget
1a-11	Southern Gulf Islands Housing Strategy	Develop a Strategy that aligns with the CRD's Regional Housing Affordability Strategy and is tailored to the context of the Southern Gulf Islands	2021	-	Included in Provisional Budget

Blue highlighted areas are initiatives that directly address a Board Priority.

Delivery Initiatives

1a-2 Housing Investment through the CRD/CRHC

The RHFP is a \$120 million equity partnership between the regional, provincial and federal governments initiated to meet the housing needs of chronically homeless individuals. As of December 2019, eight projects (907 units with 211 shelter units) have been approved. Four of the projects (534 units) are or will be owned by the CRD and operated by the Capital Region Housing Corporation (CRHC) through a 60 year lease.

One project was commissioned in 2019 (Millstream). Two projects will be commissioned in 2020 (130 units in Spencer and 152 units in West Park Lane) and one project will be commissioned in 2021 (Hockley).

BC Housing introduced the Community Housing Fund (CHF) in 2018 and CRHC has been successful in securing funding for two projects through the fund (154 units in Caledonia redevelopment and 97 units in Michigan Square). The CRHC is now applying for funding for one project through the CHF call for proposals.

Significant resources are required for the development, onboarding and operations of the new housing units. Approval of new projects will also require appropriate human resources to provide oversight and ensure that the owners (CRD/CRHC) interests are represented. This initiative seeks to increase the staffing complement by creating six new ongoing positions and two term positions in the Regional Housing Division for the project management, marketing, leasing and operating of the new units. It also seeks to add one part-time ongoing position in the Information Technology & GIS Division for the ongoing support of systems used by the division. The request for staff is aligned with current staff ratio. The cost of increasing the staff complement in 2021 will be recovered from the capital projects and the tenant rental revenue.

1a-10 Reaching Home

The CRD has a formal agreement in place with the Government of Canada to act as the Community Entity for the Reaching Home Program. This program of work advances the Community Well-being Board Priority by improving the assignment of housing and support to vulnerable people.

As a Community Entity, the CRD is expected to play a significant role in the development, implementation and monitoring of a Coordinated Access and Assessment (CAA) system that supports the allocation of housing and health and other social support services. The system must be supported by the government's Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). Each Community Entity must have a clearly articulated system in place by March 31, 2022.

Over the past year, the Regional Housing Division has been working with BC Housing and Island Health to develop and implement the required system. A Request for Proposal process did not yield a suitable contractor with the necessary understanding of the local context. A recommendation has therefore been made by the overseeing committee for the CRD to take on the work. This initiative seeks to recruit a three year term position, starting in 2021, to oversee the work, including any enabling policies and agreements preceding the deployment of new systems. All costs related to the position will be recovered through Reaching Home.

1a-11 – Southern Gulf Islands (SGI) Housing Strategy

A Housing Needs Assessment was completed on SGI and the findings indicated a serious shortage of secure, appropriate and affordable housing for low to moderate income earners. This initiative acts on the CRD Board approval of a recommendation by the Southern Gulf Islands Economic Sustainability Commission to develop a Housing Strategy for the SGI Electoral Area. It will advance the Community Well-being Board Priority by supporting both the social and economic well-being of the residents and businesses in the island communities.

The objective of the SGI Housing Strategy is to develop housing solutions that are tailored to the context of the SGI Electoral Area. A phased approach to implementation will be taken, with potential short-term solutions delivered as early as Q4 2021. The initiative will cover the contracting cost for a Housing Feasibility study and a Garden Suite Design study. The additional workload will be absorbed within the existing Regional Housing and SGI Administration staffing capacity, with support from colleagues across the organization.

CONCLUSION

Staff have been progressing initiatives and actions identified in the Corporate Plan, including Board Priorities. The Board determines resourcing through its annual review and approval of financial plans. As per previous years, to support the Board's decision-making, staff are providing recommendations on funding, timing and service levels through the service and financial planning processes.

RECOMMENDATION

The Hospitals and Housing Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That Appendix A Community Need Summary - Affordable Housing be approved as presented and advanced to the October 28, 2020 provisional budget review process.

Submitted by:	Christine Culham, Senior Manager, Regional Housing
Concurrence:	Kevin Lorette, P. Eng., MBA, General Manager, Planning & Protective Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A: Community Need Summary - Affordable Housing
Appendix B: Affordable Housing - Initiative Progress Report