

EXCHANGE



EXCHANGE is a quarterly magazine published by the Local Government Management Association (LGMA) of British Columbia. It's about sharing information, exchanging ideas on best practices, enhancing professional development and building networks. Reach us at lgma.ca.

Winter 2023

P11 PROMISING APPROACHES

P19 TIPS & TACTICS

P20 SCHOLARSHIPS



Local Solutions for Housing Challenges

P4



Comprehensive legal services for municipalities and regional districts throughout British Columbia.

We help to lay the foundation for growth and success in large and small communities across the province by supplying local governments with the legal advice and strategic support required to help them carry out their mandates.

VANCOUVER OFFICE

1616-808 Nelson Street
Box 12147 - Nelson Square
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2H2
T: 604.689.7400
F: 604.689.3444
Toll Free: 1.800.665.3540

KELOWNA OFFICE

201-1456 St. Paul Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 2E6
T: 250.712.1130
F: 250.712.1180

www.younganderson.ca

Advice and Advocacy for Local Government

Providing legal services to
local government throughout
British Columbia since 1988



STEWART McDANNOLD STUART

Barristers & Solicitors

For regular updates about
the latest developments in
local government law,
visit our website.

www.sms.bc.ca

Telephone: 250-380-7744

2nd Floor
837 Burdett Avenue
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 1B3 Canada



LGMA

2022 Professional
Development
Partner



Update

In this Issue	1
President's Report	2
Executive Director's Report	3
Members Page	20

Professional Development

Tips & Tactics: Housing Resources for Local Government	19
LGMA 2023 Annual Conference Programs and Events	21
	22

4

Local Solutions for Housing Challenges

Professionals with expertise in planning and local government discuss some of the underlying causes of B.C.'s housing crisis as well as opportunities for viable solutions.



11

Case Studies: Promising Housing Approaches

Read about Rossland, Nanaimo, Port Moody and Tofino's success in leveraging civic assets, partnerships and other available tools to meet their communities' housing needs.



EXCHANGE

Exchange is the magazine for members of the Local Government Management Association of British Columbia.

Exchange is distributed quarterly to over 900 members of the LGMA, as well as Mayors and Regional District Chairs.

Exchange is printed on Sappi Flo, an FSC® Certified 10% recycled fibre paper at Island Business Print Group.



LGMA Office:
Suite 710A
880 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC V8W 2B7
Telephone: 250.383.7032
Email: office@lgma.ca
Web: lgma.ca

Contact the Editor:
Email: editor@lgma.ca

Cover Illustration:
Fanatic Studio/Getty Images



20

2022 Scholarship Recipients

Join us in congratulating the local government professionals who earned LGMA educational scholarships in 2022.



21

2023 Annual Conference

Get a sneak peak about what's in store at this year's LGMA Annual Conference, coming to beautiful Nanaimo this June.



In response to the increasing challenges and negative impacts of the housing crisis, local governments are taking the initiative to become part of the solution.

Housing. It's such a basic need, yet it has become an enormous challenge in our province. It's also evident that there are no simple solutions to address the housing crisis.

The factors affecting housing supply and cost are just part of the issue. There are even more variables when it comes to the mix of people who are trying to find homes to rent or own, are struggling with housing costs, or who are already experiencing homelessness, which can also be due to multiple different factors.

As a parent, I've watched my son and his friends struggle to find viable options for moving out while remaining in the Metro Vancouver region. At 25, he's only just now moving into his own place. Most of his friends from high school still live at home, even though they are all working in their chosen profession. When young, single, employed professionals making good salaries cannot afford to live in our community, even to rent a place, I cannot imagine how difficult it is for families, seniors and vulnerable populations.

No wonder we use words like "crisis" to describe the housing issue in our province. It's also not surprising that companies are finding it increasingly difficult to fill positions. We have long discussed the impact of Baby Boomers leaving the workforce, but the situation is further exacerbated by the fact that young people cannot afford to live in many communities, or cannot find housing period.

In response to the increasing challenges and negative impacts of the housing crisis, local governments are taking the initiative to become part of the solution. In some cases, the solutions are within the standard purview of local government, such as policy, zoning and land-use updates. But in other cases, local governments are applying creative local solutions through partnerships and innovative approaches.

In *Local Solutions for Housing Challenges*, professionals with expertise in local government and community planning share insights into some of the underlying causes of current housing issues, as well as advice on how local governments can use their knowledge and existing authority to make changes that result in viable solutions.

They highlight how local governments' expanding role – moving beyond processing permits and making land-use decisions – can help address the specific needs of the people in their community. The local solutions for local issues approach to housing is critical, as what works well in one community may have little to no benefit somewhere else. It's also evident that collaboration and partnerships are essential. Fortunately, federal and provincial governments are stepping up with actions and funding to help implement options like below-market and supportive housing, and there are local organizations with expertise in managing below-market and supportive housing.

In *Case Studies: Promising Local Approaches*, it's interesting to see how the local governments featured have developed customized solutions to address the gaps identified in their housing needs assessments. They are also moving into new areas, such as building housing on municipal-owned land to offer affordable housing options, approving creative rent-to-own developments to help new homeowners enter the housing market and leveraging partnerships to generate more below-market rental options.

It would be nice if there could be a cookie-cutter approach to solutions, so that communities across the province could simply apply the formula to their area for instant success. However, by sharing a mix of new approaches being applied effectively, the advice and case studies in this edition provide local government managers with ideas for how to mix and match possible solutions to fit their community's needs.

It's also important to recognize that many of these new initiatives take time. Time to plan, work with partners, source funding, engage the community, update policies and, in some cases, construct new buildings. It also means the time to get started is now, if not sooner. 😊

It's exciting to see that there is progress towards dealing with the many housing challenges across the province, and I hope the advice, insights and examples shared in these articles provide useful guidance for others.

Therese Mickelson, ABC
Editor



As I reflect on the LGMA's work in 2022, I recognize that the accomplishments are shared with – and greatly dependent upon – my fellow leaders in local government.

Greetings from the traditional territory of the Syilx and Nlaka'pamux nations, both of which are Interior Salish cultures. It is a pleasure to write this column as we welcome in the New Year. I hope you have had some time to rest and recharge after an extremely busy year.

In 2022, the LGMA supported local government election preparedness with training and resources, hosted its first in-person programming in nearly three years, introduced new programming in response to member needs (such as Indigenous awareness, climate adaptation and informational technology training), and was a key partner in the Working Group for Responsible Conduct's launch of the Responsible Conduct Every Day online course for elected officials.

As I reflect on the LGMA's work in 2022, I recognize that these accomplishments are shared with – and are greatly dependent upon – my fellow leaders in local government. I would like to thank each one of the many LGMA volunteers who made these and other achievements possible over the past year.

Looking ahead to 2023, local government leaders will continue to navigate this time of change, including becoming familiar with the new Premier and provincial cabinet appointments and establishing new working relationships. Strong relationships are essential as we work together on solutions to challenges that affect citizens across the province, such as the housing crisis in our communities.

This edition of *Exchange* highlights the challenges stemming from lack of available and affordable housing along with featuring what local government leaders do best: develop and apply creative and collaborative approaches with on-the-ground solutions. The shared stories and advice emphasize best practice examples to help local government leaders develop local solutions for this complex issue. The case studies include tips and experiences so that others can draw on the skills and knowledge of the local government sector in ways that are adaptive, resilient and also realistic.

Based on our experiences in local government and echoed in the UBCM's *Build BC: Housing Completions and Population Growth 2016-2021 Report*, we know that solving the housing shortage goes well beyond the capacity of local government; however, this does not mean we don't have a role to play. It's clear that historical and ongoing efforts of local governments to tackle housing challenges can have significant and positive impacts. I commend my peers around the province, as one element of a shared and multi-faceted issue, who have worked to find creative solutions where possible.

As we navigate these changing times together, the LGMA will continue to uphold examples of best practice approaches to shared challenges, and I know that you will join me in thanking our volunteers for taking the time to share their experience and expertise with their peers.

Corrie Griffiths
President



I often start my week by reviewing the news highlights shared by CivicInfo BC, and I am amazed to see the level of ingenuity embodied by local government leaders.

Hello! It is a pleasure to bring greetings to our friends in local government in the first edition of *Exchange* for 2023. I hope that you were able to take some well-deserved time away with family and friends over the holidays or, at the very least, I hope things were a little quieter in your office – and in your inbox!

Too often, we are so busy that we do not have the luxury to stop and admire our handiwork after a job well done. I hope you all found a small (or big!) way to celebrate all your incredible efforts in 2022. I know these accomplishments were robust and many. Local governments around the province navigated local elections, Council and Board orientations, adapted to changing legislation, led emergency management, and much more.

All of these achievements and more were managed amidst what *Maclean's* has called the greatest labour market crisis Canada has ever seen. What we know from our members, and from our own experience, is that we do not experience these challenges in silos. Labour market challenges are interwoven with – and further exacerbated by – the housing shortage and affordability challenges, inflation, the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and more.

At the same time, local government managers have continued to lead with phenomenal innovation. I often start my week by reviewing the news highlights shared by CivicInfo BC (thanks CivicInfo!), and I am amazed to see the level of ingenuity embodied by local government leaders. From the story of Emergency Service Teams engaging the support of amateur radio operators to civic harvesting programs, local governments continue to thrive amidst times of change.

As the 2023 LGMA provincial renewal begins, I want to take a moment to thank our volunteers, sponsors, Board of Directors, partners, and the LGMA staff team for their incredible efforts. In 2022, we returned to in-person programming for the first time in nearly three years, launched the updated *BC Local Elections Manual* and *FIPPA Toolkit*, and delivered several iterations of in-demand technical courses to meet the needs of our members.

We launched the Corporate Officers Connect Lunch Series, a complimentary space for Corporate Officers to connect and draw on the informal mentorship of their peers. Members continued to utilize a number of member services, such as our Executive Coaching and Pension Consulting programs. Registrants in our HR/Leadership courses worked alongside their peers to build competencies to manage their teams effectively, and benefited from the support of volunteer HR coaches where needed.

We are also extremely proud to have worked collaboratively with sector partners to bring important training to local government leaders. We are honoured to have hosted Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. to bring the Indigenous Awareness and Indigenous Relations for Local Government training to our membership. In partnership with UBCM and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Working Group for Responsible Conduct launched the Responsible Conduct Every Day course for local elected officials.

Throughout the year, members reached out to us with common questions or concerns that led to the delivery of a number of complimentary town halls to ensure members received answers to top-of-mind questions or shared concerns. These town halls hosted representatives from partners such as the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Elections BC and more. We are grateful to our partners for taking the time to join our town halls, volunteer as guest faculty, provide inputs on programs and resources, and for helping us build the capacity of our membership overall.

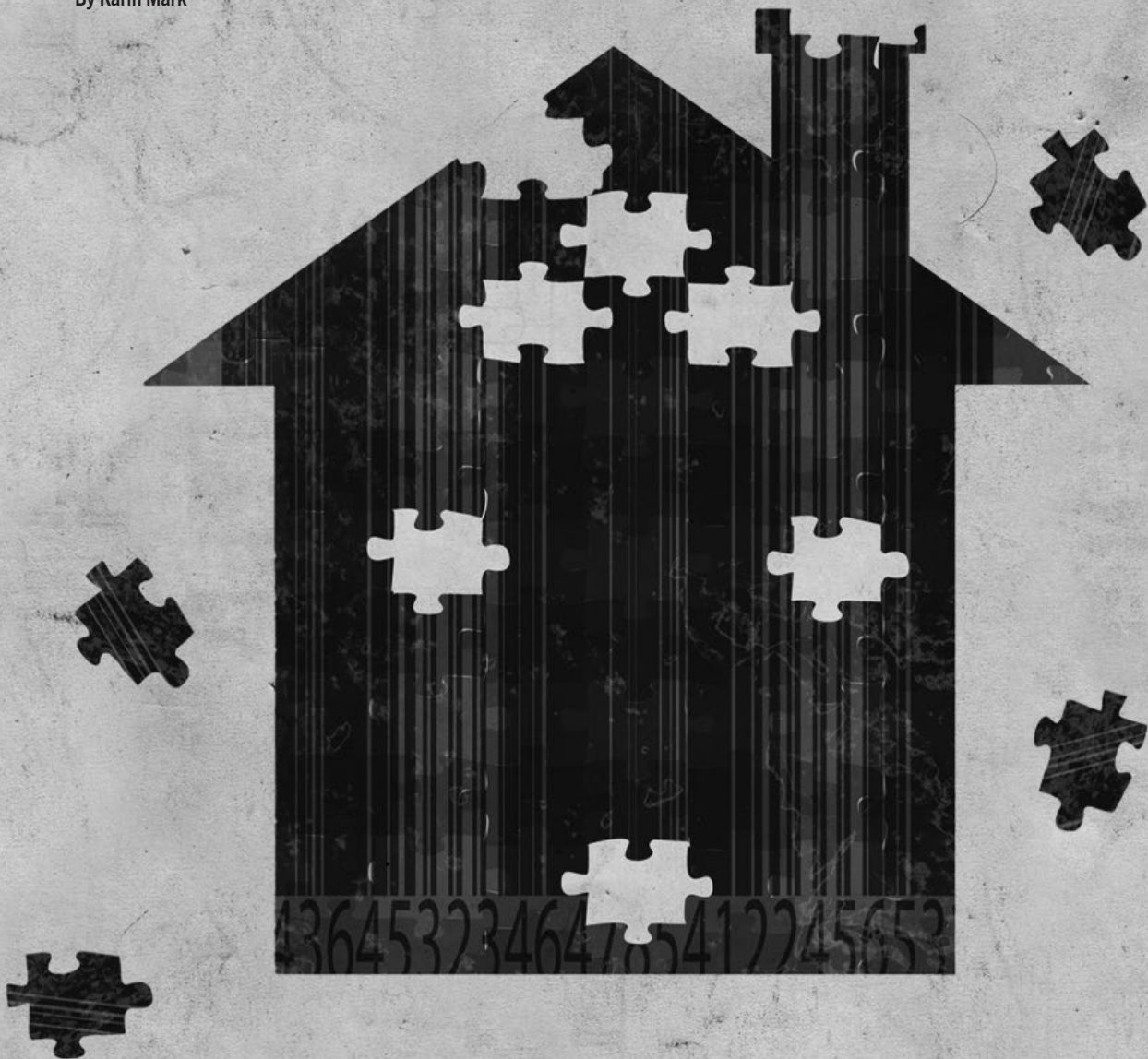
With this edition of *Exchange*, we're sharing more stories about how our local government leaders are leveraging partnerships to address the housing shortages being experienced across the province.

I hope our shared efforts in 2023 will be just as fruitful as some of the many accomplishments achieved in 2022.

Candace Witkowskyj
Executive Director

Local Solutions for **HOUSING** **CHALLENGES**

By Karin Mark



In Canada, housing is a human right.

This is not just a universal belief – it’s guaranteed in Canadian law through the *National Housing Strategy Act* adopted in 2019. In sharp contrast, however, is the housing crisis spanning British Columbia, from small hamlets to bustling cities. Shortages of attainable housing options, coupled with soaring rents and property values, have become the norm.

“Everybody recognizes the current situation is untenable,” says Josh van Loon, Senior Policy Analyst for the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM). “All levels of government are rethinking existing policy and trying new approaches. And frankly, the public wants this problem to be addressed, so there are greater expectations for everyone.”

Many factors are at play, including B.C.’s sought-after lifestyle and climate, a long-time lack of new rental building construction, erosion of the rental market as people leverage their property for short-term rentals, an abundance of single-family housing stock that many cannot afford, growing interest in small-town living during the pandemic, and speculative house buying and selling for profit by individuals, companies and international investors.

“When housing stopped being shelter and became a commodity, our problems began on the market side. When the price of that commodity outpaced our income levels, we started to push people out of the housing market,” says Ron Mattiussi, a professional planner and consultant whose career in community planning and local government spans four decades, including 12 years as City Manager for the City of Kelowna and 11 years as its Director of Planning and Development.

“Combine that with developers not building rental housing due to risks involved with tenants’ rights, and the lack of supportive housing for people with mental illness and dependency issues on the social side, and you have our current situation.”

Jamie McEwan, a professional planner, local government consultant and educator, draws parallels between housing and the approach governments used to take for infrastructure.

“It was set it and forget it,” says McEwan, Chair of Capilano University’s School of Public Administration and a consultant to local government with Urban Systems, and former Director of Planning and Development at the District of Lake Country. “We’re living with the consequences today of a long period of disinvestment in housing.”

“This is directly affecting local governments that can’t even hire senior staff because they can’t afford to live in the community.”



Jamie McEwan

The resulting housing crisis affects everyone from society’s most vulnerable to well-paid professionals, as well as employers who are struggling to fill positions because people cannot find or afford homes.

“This is directly affecting local governments that can’t even hire senior staff because they can’t afford to live in the community,” McEwan says. “It’s no longer something that part of our community faces – it’s something that all parts of the community are facing. The positive thing is that we’re actually talking about it.”

In March 2022, the UBCM addressed the housing affordability issue in its report *Building BC: Housing Completions & Population Growth 2016-2021*, building on its 2018 Housing Strategy, *A Home For Everyone*. A key finding of the new report was that despite a decade of increased housing supply in each year except one, housing had become even more unattainable. UBCM argued that the current policy framework was not working and that additional measures were needed to address both supply and demand.

Each party involved in housing development faces its own constraints, the report notes, including developer trade and supply chain issues, shortages of qualified professionals and developers, provincial approval processes and referrals, and federal policy.

A broad approach is required to tackle housing affordability effectively. The report flags that it’s not just about creating housing. It needs to be the right supply of housing – such as below-market rental housing and co-ops – and any proposed solution has to address the continuing influence of speculative buying and selling of homes for profit.

Continued on page 6

It's a difficult, thorny issue, van Loon notes. On one hand, housing costs are making it difficult for people to purchase a home, but at the same time, others are relying on selling their home at those high prices to help fund their retirement.

"How do you deal with the fact that housing prices are so disconnected from people's incomes, but they're also an important part of people's savings?" he says.

AN EXPANDING ROLE

Local government's traditional role in housing was focused on processing permits and making land-use decisions. Among the challenges for local governments today is understanding their evolving role in housing.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS IN THIS EDITION:

- **Attainable housing:** Any type of rental or owned housing that consumes no more than 30 per cent of household income before taxes.
- **Market housing:** Home rental or ownership based on typical market prices.
- **Below-market rental housing/affordable rental housing:** Housing that is subsidized by non-profit agencies or government, with rents geared to income.
- **Supportive housing:** Housing serving people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, often including other social supports.
- **Non-market housing:** Any type of rental, supportive housing or home ownership that is below typical market prices. Typically subsidized.
- **Short-term rentals:** Vacation rentals of private homes, typically through online platforms.

Community planning now involves addressing the needs of people at all stages of the housing spectrum – from homeowners to those experiencing homelessness, and everything in between – and doing so in a way that seeks to understand barriers, is culturally appropriate and reduces stigma.

It's a long way from the perspective of a few decades ago, when everything other than market housing was considered the responsibility of provincial and federal governments. Mattiussi recalls the City of Kelowna's early forays into non-market housing in the 1990s, when a partnership with BC Housing was proposed.



Ron Mattiussi

"At that time, we were very adamant that it wasn't our job. We saw it as a download. Our job was to deal with the regulation of market housing," he says. "Over time, we recognized that if you had a need for other types of housing in your community, you weren't going to meet it without participating."

Local government involvement in non-market housing has steadily increased, at times forcing them into the role of managing community opposition. Mattiussi recalls how, about 20 years ago, the City went to bat for BC Housing's Cardington Apartments supportive housing project, proposed for a City-owned parking lot to help address increasing homelessness.

"It was the biggest battle I've ever had in my professional career," he says. "There's a lot of fear. Many communities fight it – they don't want a homeless shelter, they don't want supportive or affordable housing. That's where local governments have to step up."

BC Housing now promotes Cardington Apartments as one of its success stories for community acceptance. The Community Advisory Committees that are now common for all BC Housing properties have also reduced opposition with proactive neighbourhood engagement, as Nanaimo has experienced with its multiple projects (see case study on page 13).

"I believe local governments have a role in supporting supportive housing, including projects for the harder-to-house," Mattiussi says. "That takes political courage, but it is the socially responsible thing to do as a civil society."

That view is shared by McEwan, who sees a strong role for local governments in creating equitable, diverse and livable communities.

In terms of their traditional bailiwick – land-use planning – local governments can design communities that make it easy for residents to access work, school, food, health care and other amenities without requiring a car or a long commute. He gave the example of a single parent living in what would be considered to be an affordable basement suite but spending four hours a day driving due to its inaccessible location.

Continued on page 7



(604) 546 - 7674

www.hrwest.ca

info@hrwest.ca

GET HELP WITH YOUR NEXT
WORKPLACE INVESTIGATION.

“It’s important to consider all these factors when we look at housing affordability, so that individuals who may be at the greatest risk aren’t exposed to unsafe housing, or housing that isn’t serviced,” McEwan says.

They can also take the lead in breaking down age-old prejudices against people who need housing or financial supports or are experiencing homelessness.

“These aren’t just residents but your neighbours, the individuals you shop with, went to school with,” McEwan says. “We’ve got to get to the point where we’re using destigmatizing language and being trained to apply an equity lens to the work that we do.”

As local governments look to their zoning bylaws and Official Community Plans for opportunities for infill development and expanded housing options, McEwan encourages them to plan for multi-generations, multi-incomes, diversity and accessibility for all.



Josh van Loon

“This issue could overwhelm local government resources.”

“We are still grappling with coming out of an era of gated communities and developments that reflect modern-day segregation,” McEwan says. “In some cases it’s the long-term approach of working on engagement and understanding and building empathy with each other. And there’s also the component around courage and strong leadership in making decisions to build communities for everyone.”

The question for many local governments, especially in small communities, is how much they can take on within their limited capacity.

“It’s really specific to the community circumstances, capacity and staffing,” van Loon notes. “This issue could overwhelm local government resources.”

Continued on page 8

Fulton & Company LLP

Our objective is simple:
exceed your expectations.

Local Government Law, since 1885.



Fulton.

in 250.372.5542 | fultonco.com

COLLABORATING ON SOLUTIONS

B.C.'s housing issues are many and varied, and will require a multi-pronged response from all parties involved, Mattiussi says.

"I believe we must disentangle this mess and work on each strand," he says. "That will take a coordinated effort by all levels of government focusing on the areas they can do best."

From the UBCM perspective, it's been heartening to see increased action by both the provincial and federal governments, van Loon says. "We're hoping this urgency is coupled with engaging with communities, to minimize unintended consequences."

The common narrative is that more density is needed and that planning fees and regulations are regressive, but it's not that simple, he says. "Urban planning involves a complex series of trade-offs, and someone needs to pay for infrastructure."

When you build denser urban neighbourhoods, you must look beyond basic infrastructure to provide amenities to make them livable, such as trails, parks and public spaces.



bcmsa.ca

NEW! Safety Culture Survey & Safety Dashboard

BC MUNICIPAL SAFETY Association

Share the knowledge.

TRAINING | COR | FORUMS | RESOURCES
virtual | in-person | online

"It's about everyone coming to the table and playing a role – every level of government and community partners including the construction industry and non-profits."

"Densification done poorly can pose significant risks for health and climate change – loss of tree cover, more hard surfaces that increase heat and stormwater runoff," he notes. "When you pack more houses in an urban area, you need to do it right because those houses are going to be there for decades."

That's why it's critical for local governments to have the opportunity to apply their local knowledge and to seek a voice in changes to policy and regulations related to housing and community planning.

On the whole, McEwan has observed less finger-pointing and more willingness to find collaborative solutions.

"It's about everyone coming to the table and playing a role – every level of government and community partners including the construction industry and non-profits," says McEwan. "Everyone's still figuring out how best to play their role based on the strengths and capacities as partners."

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

While much of the housing equation is out of the hands of local governments, McEwan says there is great value in nurturing relationships with potential partners: BC Housing, Indigenous communities, health agencies, housing service providers, chambers of commerce, the development community and others.

"Spend time as a local government learning how to speak the language of your community partners. A lot of smaller and mid-size communities are getting stuck in process, and that's a result of not having the relationships and the trust and navigation skills to navigate community partners," McEwan says.

Examples include Nanaimo's ongoing dialogue with the Snuneymuxw First Nation, which has led to transitional housing and other supports for its members experiencing homelessness (see case study on page 13). As well, in Port Moody, partnerships have resulted in a growing number of rent-to-own opportunities and redevelopment of a church site to provide housing and community services (see case study on page 15).

"We need to be proactive in local government in building these relationships, and not just with funders," McEwan notes. "It needs to be a demonstrated pattern of genuine action and conversation, so you're not just showing up asking for funding when there's a transaction or grant opportunity."

Continued on page 9

It's important to recognize that trust may need to be earned with certain stakeholder groups, such as Indigenous communities, he adds. "Sometimes we're attempting to provide these services in an area where governments might not be trusted – for understandable reasons based on current events and lengthy histories. Start from the basis of relationships and working closely together, and build that relationship in a non-transactional way."

STREAMLINING PROCESSES

Many local governments are exploring options for speeding up approvals of development processes and taking advantage of grants available for that purpose. Some are looking to digital solutions that automate certain functions, while others are seeking ways to streamline their processes, including delegating approval authority for minor variances to staff for projects meeting certain criteria.

McEwan would like to see more local governments work with their elected officials to find opportunities for staff to take on approval responsibilities. He points out that most of the discretion in the process comes at the zoning and Official Community Plan (OCP) stage.

"Once development permit guidelines are set in the OCP, Council doesn't have a lot of discretion about whether a development permit can or can't be issued. It's a technical issue, so let staff offer that service," he says. "One of the best things local governments can do to get the housing they need is depoliticize the approval process."

Mattiussi recommends local governments also check that the requirements they have in place are truly needed and relevant today. He points to the highly restrictive development permit areas commonly introduced in the 1970s and 1980s to control form and character.

"There is an onus on local government and the planning profession to ensure the regulation we put in place has meaning – that it's actually making a better community, and we're not asking for it just because we can," Mattiussi says. "If we're going to have a bureaucracy it should be supporting a community goal."


For communities focusing on infill, pre-reviewed plans for secondary dwellings are one way to reduce red tape and encourage greater neighbourhood density. Last summer, Quesnel released five pre-reviewed designs for a laneway house or second building on pre-existing lots, allowing for expedited approvals and saving proponents time and money.

LEVERAGING POLICY AND ASSETS

Sometimes it's worth looking beyond provincial borders for promising solutions. Kelowna, for example, attracted international entries for its Infill Design Challenge, which sought innovative ideas for infill housing that enhances affordability, diversity, resiliency, inclusivity and livability. The winner for Kelowna's second challenge in 2021 was a four-unit design from Mexico.

Mattiussi says B.C. could take some lessons from innovative zoning in other parts of Canada or abroad. Edmonton has streamlined its regulations by cutting zoning types in half, for example, and Germany has flexible zoning that allows neighbourhood commercial uses within a residential area.

Continued on page 10



The graphic features a yellow and black wavy border at the top. On the left is the MATI LGMA logo (Municipal Administration Training Institute) and on the right is the Capilano University logo. The main title is "2023 MATI® Courses". Below this, it states: "Capilano University in partnership with the Local Government Management Association will offer five MATI® courses in 2023. Learn and network with local government staff from across BC and gain practical knowledge and skills you can immediately apply! Get the essential education you need to be more effective in your position and move into more senior roles." The five courses listed are:

- MATI® The Successful CAO (PADM 308)** February 9-14, 2023 – West Kelowna
- MATI® Advanced Communication Skills in Local Government Organizations (PADM 205)** April 16-21, 2023 – Richmond
- MATI® Managing People in Local Government Organizations (PADM 207)** May 7-12, 2023 – Salt Spring Island
- MATI® Leadership in Local Government Organizations (PADM 204)** October 15-20, 2023 – Parksville
- MATI® Community Planning in Local Government Organizations (PADM 208)** November 26-December 1, 2023 – Salt Spring Island

 At the bottom, it says "Contact us about other 2023 PADM courses we offer in Lower Mainland, Kelowna and Vancouver Island locations." There is a circular callout that says "Some courses fill quickly... register today!". The footer contains the text "COURSE DATES AND DETAILS www.capilanou.ca/local-govt REGISTER FOR 2023 COURSES Anna Delaney at adelaney@capilanou.ca".

“We must simply change our zoning and allow a range of uses in our zones. Europe has always done this. Secondary suites and carriage homes should be allowed in the single-family zone. So should duplexes and townhomes,” Mattiussi says. “It all starts with policy and local government. There’s some responsibility for local governments to make sure that all of the different types of housing are available. We have to be sure we’re getting absolutely every unit out of every lot that has services in the community. It makes the best use of the land we have.”

McEwan encourages local governments to look at their provincially-mandated housing needs assessments to sharpen their focus. “For example, if you have a shortage of rental units, do what you can to zone or put a policy in place to prioritize that type of housing.”

To facilitate the kinds of housing they want to see, local governments may proactively pre-zone specific areas – such as pre-zoning the downtown for multi-family buildings – or allow for supportive housing or group homes in every residential zone.

They may also mandate that new multi-family projects include a minimum percentage of family-friendly units with two or more bedrooms. Restrictions on short-term rentals and requirements for affordable housing reserve fund contributions are also becoming increasingly common.

Incentives to developers are another oft-used tool, such as allowing more density in exchange for a community benefit, or grants offsetting Development Cost Charges for purpose-built rental housing projects. That said, financial incentives need to be reviewed carefully to assess their long-term impacts.

There is a growing expectation for local governments to waive fees to support housing, van Loon notes, but the financial implications might not be widely understood. Fees are collected for a reason. “If you waive fees for infrastructure, it still needs to be built.”

McEwan recommends a cautious approach to incentives, including tying them to long-term outcomes.

“There’s no one-size-fits-all solution. The problem of providing housing in Terrace or Quesnel will be different than in Tofino or Revelstoke.”

“Development Cost Charges are not the driver of affordability in housing, and they pay for the amenities in a complete community,” he says. “Carrying costs are a major part of development pro forma. One of the greatest incentives communities can offer is streamlined processing.”

Local governments can also turn rising property values to their advantage by leveraging civic properties to meet housing needs. As public properties increase in value, they can be sold, developed or pre-zoned for community benefit. For example, both Rossland and Tofino have made use of their land holdings to develop housing for workers with low and medium incomes, addressing a gap identified by their housing needs assessments (see page 11 for case studies).

DATA-DRIVEN DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

The housing needs assessments present an opportunity for local governments to ensure their response is based on fact rather than conjecture.

Mattiussi recalls that in the 1990s, Kelowna’s Council of the day believed there was a need for seniors’ housing due to long waiting lists at all sites. Upon closer inspection, it was determined the lists were filled with all the same names, many of whom weren’t local residents. As it turned out, the real need was housing for people who are single and employed.

Local governments can use the findings from their assessments as a starting point for the conversations they should be having internally and with the public to create an understanding of all the types of housing the community needs, Mattiussi says.

“Start by discussing the issues around it and the implications of doing nothing,” he says. “It’s not about pushing the agenda, but about being proactive about defining and solving the problem.”

And while it’s important to consider best practices, solutions must be customized to each community’s needs, Mattiussi says.

“There’s no one-size-fits-all solution. The problem of providing housing in Terrace or Quesnel will be different than in Tofino or Revelstoke,” he says. “A solution may not work in other communities with different demographics and needs. You really have to examine the context of a potential solution and ask yourself how it will work here.”

See case studies of promising housing approaches starting on page 11, and housing resources in Tips & Tactics on page 19.



Planning, Development & Environmental Law

**Practical advice, creative options,
value for local government**

CL

CARVELLO LAW
Lui Carvello, RPP, MCIP
Lawyer & Registered Professional Planner
203-1005 Broad St. Victoria, BC V8W 2A1
250-686-9918 | lui@carvellolaw.ca
carvellolaw.ca

Recruiting Now for Experienced Lawyers
and Junior Planning Professionals

CASE STUDIES:

Promising Housing Approaches

By Karin Mark

Local governments across B.C. are seeking out creative solutions to the housing challenges in their community.

Here are examples of four – Rossland, Nanaimo, Port Moody and Tofino – that are leveraging civic assets, partnerships and other available tools to meet their identified needs. Additional resources related to these case studies can be found in *Tips & Tactics* on page 19.

FACILITATING WORKFORCE HOUSING IN ROSSLAND

In places where tourism is a significant employer and economic driver, ensuring hospitality workers can afford a place to live is an imperative. But it's also a significant challenge, especially for smaller communities like Rossland.

A winter tourism destination in the West Kootenays with a population of about 4,100, Rossland's housing affordability crisis hit home when its housing needs assessment revealed that one of its biggest gaps was affordable housing for workers with low to moderate incomes. As a result, local businesses are dealing with ongoing staffing shortages, which were further exacerbated by pandemic impacts.

"It's the same everywhere – prices have gone up and it's hard for people to afford housing," says Bryan Teasdale, Chief Administrative Officer at the City of Rossland, and the LGMA Board's West Kootenay Boundary Chapter Director. "Vacancy is pretty low. If a house goes on the market and even if a long-term or short-term rental listing goes up, it's filled pretty quickly."

Stacey Lightbourne, Manager of Planning and Development at the City of Rossland, notes: "Anecdotally you can see a lot of people moving out of Rossland to adjacent communities that are still a little bit less expensive. Because of the transportation challenges we have in our region, it makes it hard to find workers for the larger hotels for the ski hill, and we come back to the need for more affordable workforce housing."



Stacey Lightbourne

When the needs assessment data backed up what it was seeing in the community, the City knew it needed to explore options to increase its rental housing stock, with particular focus on affordable rentals for employees in the hospitality sector.

"It's the same everywhere – prices have gone up and it's hard for people to afford housing."



Bryan Teasdale

Part of the solution, as it turns out, was already in place: a former provincial highways works yard in a prime location in Rossland's Midtown that the City obtained in about 2005. The City had considered various uses for the lot over the years. Part of the space had already been dedicated for youth services and a skate park, but there was still a large undeveloped area.

The City wanted to squeeze more community benefit from the strategic site, and affordable housing was top of the list.

While considering how to address the gap in housing, the City was also struggling with a small, outdated City Hall with poor working conditions, unreliable internet access and limited public access. A creative solution to deal with both challenges came about thanks to a little push from Mother Nature. When the City Hall roof collapsed under the weight of snow in early 2018, it was clear that the City was facing an expensive repair that still wouldn't fix City Hall's numerous other problems.

In response, the concept for Rossland Yards was born. The City had already been working with the Lower Columbia Affordable Housing Society (LCAHS) to plan two storeys of affordable housing atop ground-floor office space, designated for a civic use that had not yet been finalized. The new plan involved moving City Hall into those offices instead.

The project got another boost with grant funding from the Columbia Basin Trust and BC Housing, which allowed for another storey to increase the housing from 24 to 37 affordable rental units, including 21 one-bedroom, 12 two-bedroom and four three-bedroom units.

The final concept for Rossland Yards was complete, featuring a new City Hall, 37 affordable rental units and community meeting space.

Yet there were still challenges to overcome.

Continued on page 12

“The tough thing about affordable housing is, when you look at it, is it a core service of the City? We’re on the fringe where it isn’t, but we need to support it.”



Drawing of Rossland Yards, opening in 2023.

CITY OF ROSSLAND GRAPHIC

When Rossland Yards opens its doors in spring 2023, the project will have weathered two election cycles, construction during a global pandemic, and contamination cleanup from former works yard activities – not to mention opposition from a small but vocal group of critics, primarily to the City Hall portion.

“No one wants to spend money on City Hall,” Teasdale says. “There was a vocal minority that wanted us to go to a referendum to borrow the money for the City Hall component.”

The City ultimately opted against a referendum after a facility needs assessment confirmed that relocating City Hall to the new building was the right move, bringing better customer service, lower operating costs and additional tax revenue from LCAHS, which received a permissive tax exemption that will gradually phase out over five years.

Additionally, the financing of the new, much-needed housing relied on the City’s participation. The City had secured significant grant funding for the project, with \$5.9 million in grants covering about half of the construction costs.

More funding arrived in 2022 from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ Sustainable Affordable Housing program: a \$1.6-million grant plus a \$1.6-million low-interest loan to bring the building to a net-zero energy ready standard, including energy-efficient windows, insulation, mechanical and other systems as well as solar-ready infrastructure. The additional funding was based on the City’s commitment to operate on 100 per cent renewable energy by 2050.

Even as the case to proceed with the project grew, the City was sensitive to community concerns and went beyond the typical public consultation requirements.

“We did special pop-up public hearings, we brought in our consultants, we had poster boards and open houses,” Teasdale recalls. “Everything was on our open agenda throughout the process, except for some initial financial details that were later released.”

With planning, financing and community engagement complete, construction began in 2021 and is on track for completion this spring.

Teasdale and Lightbourne attribute much of the project’s success to its partnerships with the various funders and service providers, the ongoing team effort of the City’s staff and Council, and the fact that it was meeting a demonstrated need for housing.

“Overall, we had detractors but we also had a significant amount of support from the community,” Teasdale says. “The tough thing with affordable housing is, when you look at it, is it a core service of the City? We’re on that fringe where it isn’t, but we need to support it because if we can’t get people to live here, then businesses aren’t here, which affects our downtown and makes the community less attractive.”

That being said, the City was clear about its role from the start: it would provide the land and help finance the construction of the building through grants and borrowing, but it would not operate the housing component. When the building is complete, the Lower Columbia Affordable Housing Society will lease the units from the City and act as the landlord for the building, including managing rental applications and setting rental rates.

Continued on page 13

 HR WEST CONSULTING elevating success	<p>☎ (604) 546 - 7674 🌐 www.hrwest.ca ✉ info@hrwest.ca</p>
<p>SUPPORT IN BUILDING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN YOUR WORKPLACE.</p>	

Rents for the units are set to be affordable to workers with maximum incomes of \$60,000 to \$85,000, depending on the number of bedrooms.

“We’re very cognizant about downloading. There’s a difference between support and delivery,” Teasdale says.

Lightbourne notes that the Rossland Yards project is an example of how local governments can leverage assets, such as land, to meet the community’s housing needs.

“The City can’t afford to do it alone and to manage it alone, but we can use what we have to support the development of affordable housing,” she says. “We can use our land, and by partnering, we can help support that development.”

HEALTH AND HOUSING FOR ALL IN NANAIMO


Nanaimo’s evolution from sleepy retirement town to bustling urban centre has breathed new life into the community and its economy over the past decade – while also bringing housing challenges to the Vancouver Island city of about 103,000.

Data from Statistics Canada shows Nanaimo’s population rose 10 per cent from 2016 to 2021, making it not only the fastest-growing metropolitan area on Vancouver Island, but one of the top five in Canada.

With that influx has come a heightened demand for housing of all types. The City’s multi-pronged approach supports people throughout the housing spectrum, including policy changes to address standard homeownership and rentals, and measures to support people who are either experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing their housing (estimated at about 8,000 people in 2020). This work has included partnerships with BC Housing, leveraging grants, and establishing the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization to implement a comprehensive Health and Housing Action Plan.

Hundreds of new affordable rental and supportive housing units have already begun to roll out through a landmark memorandum of understanding (MOU) Nanaimo signed with BC Housing in 2020.

Continued on page 14



WE VALUE OUR PARTNERS

By sharing information and working together, BC Assessment and Local and Indigenous Governments can ensure fair and equitable property assessments, optimize property tax revenue collected, and increase citizen awareness of assessment and taxation. Get involved by using our many services, and working with your local assessment office.

BC ASSESSMENT

Contact BC Assessment
Local Government & Indigenous
Relations Department:

Local Government
1-866-valueBC or 1-866-825-8322 x 23229
localgovernment@bcassessment.ca

Indigenous Communities
1-866-valueBC or 1-866-825-8322 x 04251
indigenouscommunities@bcassessment.ca

bcassessment.ca

Browse our services and products
for government



The MOU includes seven projects: three affordable rental buildings with a total of about 125 units charging below-market rents based on income, and four supportive housing developments with a total of about 190 units plus 24/7 supports to help people experiencing or at risk of homelessness shift to a stable and healthy life.

While the City had signed MOUs with BC Housing before for individual projects, this was the largest to date and promises to make a difference for people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo with a commitment to create more than 300 units over several years.

“It was nice to have that commitment from BC Housing,” says Lisa Brinkman, Manager of Community Planning at the City of Nanaimo.

Planning and building multiple projects at the same time requires careful oversight and a close working relationship. “Staff met weekly with BC Housing in 2022 to make sure things were moving ahead,” she notes.

The first supportive housing project opened in 2022, with 52 self-contained studio homes with supports for people experiencing homelessness, along with 14 “bridge to housing” beds for women that provide beds, showers, meals and 24/7 support services. Another supportive housing project scheduled to open in early 2023 will include about 50 new homes and 24/7 support.



Lisa Brinkman

The remaining five projects are in various stages of the application process and will be developed over the next few years.

While some local governments face significant neighbourhood opposition to supportive housing, that hasn't been the case in Nanaimo. By and large, residents have welcomed projects that provide a safe home for people struggling to live on the streets, Brinkman notes. “The need is undeniable.”

She also attributes the community acceptance to open and ongoing community consultation – in particular, the outreach conducted by the Community Advisory Committees set up for each BC Housing project. The committees, which include neighbourhood representation, are formed early in the planning stage and continue throughout the building's operation to address issues proactively.

It's a model that could translate well to other community services that tend to generate concerns or opposition, she notes.

“For the first supportive housing at 702 Nicol St., any problems are being solved as they come along,” Brinkman says. “They're developing relationships early. It's quite a success.”

Nanaimo has also been collaborating with Snuneymuxw First Nation to develop housing solutions for its members. For example, the City is using grant funding from the federal-provincial Strengthening Communities' Services Program to support unhoused Snuneymuxw members.

“For the first supportive housing at 702 Nicol St., any problems are being solved by the Community Advisory Committee as they come along. They're developing relationships early. It's quite a success.”

The project includes 12 temporary housing units on Snuneymuxw land along with culturally-appropriate health and wellness supports. Each unit has a studio-style bedroom, mini kitchen, shower and bathroom.

Snuneymuxw First Nation will also be the operator of one of the four approved BC Housing supportive housing projects and is a partner in one of the affordable rental housing projects.

To strengthen the relationship between the civic and First Nation governments, Nanaimo staff meet monthly with the Snuneymuxw Council to explore and discuss opportunities and issues.

“Some of the successes from our relationship with the Snuneymuxw First Nation are these housing partnerships,” Brinkman says.

Additional supports for people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo are also under way.

The provincial government has identified Nanaimo as one of two BC Housing Navigation Centres it is establishing in B.C. (the other will be in Vancouver). Nanaimo's centre will provide about 60 beds and individualized supports for people experiencing long-term homelessness. Based on successful examples outside B.C., the centres will provide integrated health services, 24/7 accommodation, case planning and a full range of personalized supports at a level not typically offered in temporary shelters. This project is in the planning stages, including searching for a suitable location.

The City has also budgeted \$480,000 to establish the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization, which will work towards implementing its Health and Housing Action Plan (HHAP), adopted in 2021 to address homelessness and other social issues.

Guided by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the HHAP commits to working closely with local Indigenous partners, providing culturally appropriate services, and changing negative perceptions of homelessness, substance abuse, mental health and poverty.

Eighty actions are spelled out in six priority areas: system coordination, diverse housing options, leadership and engagement, prevention, complex needs capability and poverty reduction.

Continued on page 15

The HHAP is included in Nanaimo's City Plan, a comprehensive strategic plan adopted in 2022 to guide City actions and decisions over the next 25 years – including addressing the full range of housing needs in the community.

This work is well underway, with steps including restrictions on short-term rentals, facilitating more ground-oriented housing and purpose-built rental buildings, and streamlining approvals for four-plexes and multi-family buildings of up to 100 units.

Upcoming focuses include family-friendly housing, pre-zoning in specific neighbourhoods, more safe affordable rental options through increased opportunities for coach houses and secondary suites, and infill to expand housing options in established neighbourhoods while maximizing existing infrastructure.

"It's an exciting time to be a planner in Nanaimo," Brinkman says. "It's going from a sleepy city to a hub of the island."

LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS IN PORT MOODY

Partnerships and innovative approaches are essential when dealing with complex housing challenges without big-city resources.

Port Moody has the high-rise development, rapid transit and other urban hallmarks of its Metro Vancouver neighbours, but with a population of about 34,000, it's also one of the region's smallest incorporated cities.

Wrapped around Burrard Inlet in the rapidly-growing north-east sector, Port Moody has applied partnerships and collaboration to address the region's complex housing challenges within the resources of a small community.

"Even being in the Metro region, we're still quite a small team," notes Kate Zanon, General Manager of Community Development at the City of Port Moody. "We don't have the resourcing that you're going to see in larger cities, where they have more resources focused on housing."

The City works closely with housing agencies, other local governments, the development community and other partners to find creative approaches to meet local housing needs.

Some of the recent innovative projects in Port Moody to date include rent-to-own (RTO) units that help first-time homeowners enter the market, and a church property redevelopment that is providing affordable rental housing alongside other community services.

In 2019, the City's first RTO program was proposed by developer Panatch Group at its 50 Electronic Ave. development, which includes 358 units in a pair of six-storey buildings. The company's lottery for the 30 RTO units made headlines. More than 500 first-time homebuyers who lived or worked in Port Moody lined up for the opportunity to rent the units for the first two years and have their rent applied to the purchase price.

"Rental costs, especially in new rental apartments, are more and more unattainable. So programs where people have a chance to get out of that cycle are going to be increasingly important."

While federal funding was introduced in 2022 for a RTO housing program through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the RTO concept was still something of a rarity when Panatch Group pitched it to Port Moody in 2019.



Kate Zanon

"It was brought forward relatively late in the project, just prior to the public hearing," recalls Kevin Jones, Senior Development Planner at Port Moody. "We thought it sounded like an interesting option. It certainly allows people looking to get into home ownership an opportunity to do so, by having two years' worth of rent to put towards their down payment."

The value of RTO has become increasingly apparent as rents continue to rise, Zanon notes. "Rental costs, especially in new rental apartments, are more and more unattainable. So programs where people have a chance to get out of that cycle are going to be increasingly important in the City to meet our housing needs."

Following City Council's positive response to that first RTO program, three other Port Moody housing proposals have come forward with a RTO component.

Continued on page 16

COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTING AND TRAINING

Help your new Council or Board speak on behalf of your local gov – when they agree, and when they don't!

- ✓ Jan's media & social media training
- ✓ Online or in-person
- ✓ One-on-one coaching



Jan enns
communications Inc.

CONSULTING • TRAINING



janenns.com

“We have many tools in place, and the City is going to be looking at them over the next year to 18 months to see if we’re using them to the maximum benefit of the community.”

Liam McLellan, a Social Planner II with the City, notes that RTO isn’t a solution for everyone, but does meet a need for a specific population group. “They have the incomes to afford mortgages for homes in the \$500,000 to \$700,000 range, but do not have the down payment available. An RTO program helps them to overcome this obstacle.”



Liam McLellan

Another unique housing project in Port Moody involving multiple partners is The Springs, a mixed-use development initiated by Inlet United Church of Port Moody. The church building was sitting on a large property, a large portion of which was used for parking, and its leadership was seeking to redevelop the property to provide a community benefit.

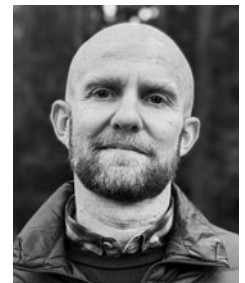
The church worked closely with non-profit developer Catalyst Community Developments Society (a non-profit B.C. developer) and Kinsight (which serves children and adults with developmental delays or disabilities) to develop a vision that involved knocking down the old church and redeveloping the entire site to accommodate a new church, affordable housing and a child development centre.

Opened in 2022, the site is now home to a new church and community space, 55 affordable rental units ranging from one to three bedrooms for people with low to moderate incomes, the Tri-Cities Children’s Centre operated by Kinsight and SHARE Family & Community Services Society, and office space for Kinsight and SHARE. The housing component is jointly owned and operated by Catalyst and the St. Andrews Housing Society, established by the church.

Port Moody supported the project with a grant from its Affordable Housing Reserve Fund covering \$528,000 in development fees.

BC Housing provided funding of \$9.5 million, covering about two-thirds of the construction costs, with the remainder coming from fundraising and financing secured by Kinsight. The BC Conference Property Development Council of the United Church of Canada provided the land, valued at \$4.3 million.

“A lot of pieces had to come together to make the economics work for this project,” Jones says. “I don’t think it’s one that is easy to replicate, but it seems to be a model that has also been successful in other municipalities – to work with churches that may have larger sites in key locations that can be leveraged.”



Kevin Jones

While these two successful projects are complete, the need for more attainable housing options continues to escalate. Port Moody’s Housing Needs Report, completed in 2021, identified many of the same housing gaps being experienced across the region. This includes a lack of market and affordable rental units, as well as a shortage of multi-bedroom units desired by families, seniors downsizing from large homes to apartment living, and remote workers looking for at-home office space.

The City’s actions to date to address these issues have included developing policies that specify percentages of affordable rental and multi-bedroom units in multi-family projects, that discourage the removal of rental housing, and that set out compensation for relocated tenants.

The City also adopted a Housing Action Plan (HAP) last summer with detailed housing targets, including considerations such as numbers of bedrooms in units and incomes that range from less than \$20,000 to more than \$110,000 annually.

“It sets out specific targets over the next 10 years to maintain housing opportunities for all residents, and maintain the same shape of housing typologies, in terms of having a lot of family-friendly units within the community,” McLellan says.

Upcoming work stemming from the HAP will include a formal RTO policy, incentives for market rental buildings, and minimum maintenance standards for rental buildings.

Zanon notes: “We have many tools in place, and the City is going to be looking at them over the next year to 18 months to see if we’re using them to the maximum benefit of the community and if not, how should we be amending them so that we’re getting the greatest benefit.”



The Shoop Group
● *inviting discovery*

- Strategic Planning
- Team Development
- Conflict Management
- Strategic Human Resources

www.theShoopGroup.ca

Continued on page 17

To tackle this complex issue, Port Moody relies on staff with housing and social planning backgrounds, brings in outside expertise as needed, and continually works to build external relationships and be part of regional discussions on solutions.

This collaborative approach might be valuable for other small communities seeking creative ways to address housing needs, Zanon says.

TOFINO HOUSING CORPORATION

Local governments in small communities often wear many hats, and in Tofino, that now includes stepping outside of a local government's usual services to take a hands-on role in providing housing.

The tourism-centred community of about 2,500 on Vancouver Island's west coast is experiencing a chronic lack of safe and stable rental housing, exacerbated by the so-called "Tofino Shuffle" – forced moves when long-term tenancies end in favour of summer vacation rentals. The problem is intensifying labour shortages and causing some long-time residents to leave the community.

"Whether it's the hospital, whether it's the school, whether it's childcare, people are struggling to find employees," notes Ian Scott, Executive Director for the Tofino Housing Corporation (THC).

The District established the THC to develop non-market housing on civic land. The non-profit organization is fully owned and controlled by the District of Tofino and is governed by a board of seven directors, four of whom are District representatives.

Interestingly, the THC was incorporated in 2005, but it was largely inactive until 2016 when it was revived by Council to address the pressing need and demand for affordable housing, which was identified in a housing needs assessment and seasonal workers' report. While housing has been a long-time problem, prices and lack of supply had reached the point where people at all income levels and stages of the housing spectrum were struggling to find places they could afford to rent or buy.

"As elected officials, we're charged with the wellbeing of all the residents," explains Tofino Mayor Dan Law. "Housing is a spectrum, everything from someone needing a couch to sleep on, to a co-rental unit to staff housing to rental housing and ownership as well. From a political perspective we have to ensure, to the best of our ability, a continuum of housing for the entire spectrum."

THC acts as a land steward and housing facilitator in the new model, which includes dedicated part-time staff (Scott), funding from BC Housing and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and a partnership with non-profit Catalyst Community Developments Society, which serves as developer, owner and operator of the housing.



Dan Law



Tofino Housing Corporation's Creekside rental building is the first of three projects that will deliver 86 units of new below-market rental housing.

Housing agreements for each property ensure they will perpetually be used for affordable rental housing. The model also relies on the District transferring land to the THC for housing, and THC receiving a percentage of the annual Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) collected on tourist accommodation, including short-term rentals booked through online accommodation platforms.

This approach is already demonstrating success, with three buildings already under way with a total of 86 new below-market rentals on District-owned land.

The first new rental building, Creekside, opened its doors in 2022 and is now home to 23 adults and 11 children. Ninety applications were received for 14 units ranging from one to three bedrooms, with rents estimated at 20 to 50 per cent below market.

Tenants were randomly drawn and those who weren't successful were placed on waiting lists for two more rental buildings under construction. Headwaters North, with 35 units, is expected to be ready for occupancy this fall. Headwaters South, with 37 units, will follow in early 2024.

The buildings feature indoor and outdoor common spaces, laundry facilities, storage space, and housing ranging from studios to three-bedroom units. Rents are set and subsidized through BC Housing's Community Housing Fund, based on number of bedrooms and household incomes, such as fixed incomes, low (e.g. \$60,000), or moderate (e.g. up to \$91,000).

The THC is also exploring ways to support home ownership that is price-restricted and only available to residents of the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District. This would involve building townhomes, duplexes or other homes and then offering them for sale – by lottery if demand is sufficient – at below-market prices with provincial or federal funding support.

Continued on page 18

“The approach up until now has been to zone space for certain kinds of housing and the market will look after it. I think we’ve passed that simplistic approach.”

However, while affordable home ownership is part of the housing gap THC is striving to fill, Scott says, it’s more complicated than developing rental buildings given market conditions, interest rates, mortgage requirements and the potential for less financial support from other levels of government.

“At this point we’re at a place where even somebody making the median or moderate income cannot get into the regular market except in unusual circumstances,” Scott says. “Filling that gap is part of what our mission is.”

In general, a more nuanced approach is required to address the complex housing challenges of today, notes Scott, who is a professional planner. In Tofino’s case, that has meant a larger role for the local government in housing, as well as big-picture conversations about how to provide the housing and services people want without changing what makes Tofino a desirable place to live and visit.

“The approach up until now has been to zone space for certain kinds of housing and the market will look after it. I think we’ve passed that simplistic approach,” says Scott. “We’re at a place – and Tofino may be one of the canaries in a coal mine – where housing is part of the infrastructure question. It can’t be done in isolation of some of those other important questions around what is driving the demand for housing – such as number of hotel beds and size of the business sector – and how you influence or manage that.”

Law uses short-term rentals (STR) as an example of the complexity. Although Council and staff are reviewing the District’s STR regulations, Law notes that STRs are the only way some people can afford their home because prices are now out of reach, even for those with reasonable incomes. “It’s not as clear-cut as it seems.”



Ian Scott

B.C. has a few other examples of local government-owned housing corporations, including Whistler Housing Authority – the inspiration for THC – and the Capital Region Housing Corporation.

In Tofino’s case, keys to success have included Council leadership, having suitable available civic land, the partnership with Catalyst for its expertise in non-profit housing development, BC Housing and CMHC’s financial support, transparency and communication with the public, and dedicated resources and staff. It’s not a job that can be done properly off the side of someone’s desk, Scott notes.

Law agrees. “The linchpin in everything is we have an extremely competent and professional Executive Director. If an opportunity comes up, Ian can run with it. Because he knows the ins and outs and the players, things can happen very quickly. Processes are often so drawn out in government that each piece must be put into place as efficiently as possible to succeed in a timely manner.”

While shrinking waitlists will be an indicator of the THC’s success over time, Scott points out that it’s important to focus on the individuals behind the numbers. Having safe, stable housing will be life-changing for hundreds of Tofino residents who find a home in the first three THC buildings.

“The people in those first 14 units who have been living in the Tofino Shuffle – those people and their families are the individual successes,” Scott says. “We also can’t lose sight of the fact that amongst those successes, there are failures when people have to leave town.”

Law knew many of the families lucky enough to be chosen for Creekside, including one that had moved 12 times in 10 years. He was thrilled to hear they were selected. “To be honest, I actually cried,” he says.

The current projects are just the beginning of the THC’s work. About 10 to 15 properties are required to start to achieve economies of scale, and there’s little doubt that enough pent-up demand exists in Tofino to fill them.


“We do have to keep going,” Law says. “It has to be part of the way our municipality works from now on, into the foreseeable future.”

Find links associated with these case studies and other housing resources in Tips & Tactics on page 19.



**FIND OUT HOW WE CAN
HELP WITH ALL YOUR
LABOUR RELATIONS NEEDS.**

 **HR WEST
CONSULTING**
elevating success

 (604) 546 - 7674

 www.hrwest.ca

 info@hrwest.ca

tips & tactics

Housing Resources for Local Governments

Resources and Activities Referenced in Articles

Within British Columbia:

- Kelowna – Infill Challenge Design Competition: kelowna.ca/homes-building/property-development/infill-housing/infill-challenge-20
- Nanaimo –
 - Memorandum of Understanding with BC Housing: letstalkhousingbc.ca/Nanaimo
 - Nanaimo Health and Housing Plan: nanaimo.ca/docs/default-document-library/healthandhousingactionplan-document_for-website.pdf
 - Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization: nanaimo.ca/your-government/social-issues-and-community-safety/nanaimo-systems-planning-organization
 - Affordable Housing webpage: nanaimo.ca/your-government/social-issues-and-community-safety/community-and-social-service-programs/affordable-housing
- Port Moody –
 - Housing Action Plan: portmoody.ca/common/Services/eDocs.ashx?docnumber=586951
 - Housing webpage: portmoody.ca/en/business-and-development/housing.aspx
 - 50 Electronic Avenue rent-to-own lottery: 50electronicave.com/port-moodys-rent-to-own-lottery-draw/
 - The Springs multi-use project: springscommunity.ca
- Rossland Yards – Workforce housing project: rossland.ca/buzz_items/midtown-mixed-use-development
- Tofino Housing Corporation – tofinohousingcorp.ca
- Union of B.C. Municipalities –
 - Housing webpage: ubcm.ca/policy-areas/housing-0
 - Report: *Building BC: Housing Completions & Population Growth 2016-2021* (2022): ubcm.ca/sites/default/files/2022-03/Final-UBCM%20Housing%20Position%20Paper.pdf
 - Report: *A Home for Everyone: A Housing Strategy for British Columbians* (2018): ubcm.ca/sites/default/files/2021-08/UBCM%20Housing%20Strategy.pdf
- Quesnel – Pre-reviewed accessory dwelling designs: quesnel.ca/building-development/accessory-dwelling-units/pre-reviewed-accessory-dwellings

Outside British Columbia:

- Edmonton – Zoning review to consolidate residential and other zones: Edmonton.ca/zoningbylawrenewal
- Germany – Article on Germany's less restrictive approach to zoning: vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/bitstream/handle/10919/48185/hirt_to_zone_or_not_to_zone.pdf?sequence=4
- Centre for Cities – Article on how zoning works in other countries: centreforcities.org/blog/planning-reform-how-does-zoning-work-in-other-countries

Learning Opportunities

- Capilano University-LGMA Municipal Administration Training Institute® (MATI) – Community Planning for Local Government Professions: lgma.ca/mati-programs
- LGMA – Watch the Programs and Training page in 2023 for upcoming town halls related to housing and other topics: lgma.ca/programs-training
- Simon Fraser – City Program: sfu.ca/continuing-studies/about/city-program

Additional Resources

- Aboriginal Housing Management Association – *British Columbia Urban, rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy*: abma-bc.org/research-reports
- Canadian Urban Institute – City Talk Canada Resources: canurb.org/initiatives/citytalk-canada/
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities –
 - Stronger Together: A Toolkit for First Nations-Municipal Community Economic Development Partnerships: fcm.ca/en/resources/cedii/stronger-together-toolkit
 - Green Municipal Fund Resources: greenmunicipalfund.ca/resources?utm_source=blocks&utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=launch
- Jay Pitter – Book: *Subdivided: City-Building in an Age of Hyper-Diversity* (free excerpt at jaypitter.com)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Congratulations to the 2022 LGMA Scholarship Winners

LGMA is pleased to announce that the following individuals have been selected as the 2022 educational scholarship recipients.

GRANT ANDERSON COMMEMORATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

- **Sam Gerrard** (Vancouver Island University)
- **Matthew Smith** (Vancouver Island University)

LGMA DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS LEGACY FUND SCHOLARSHIP

- **Jennifer Arbo** (University of Victoria)
- **Mikhaila Carr** (University of Northern British Columbia)
- **Wesley Chenne** (Simon Fraser University)
- **Karen Hira** (University of Victoria)
- **Taryn Hubbard** (Capilano University)
- **Zariya Khan** (Langara College)
- **Scott Monroe** (University of Northern British Columbia)
- **Anneliese Neweduk** (Simon Fraser University)
- **Julia Power-Dodd** (The University of the Fraser Valley)
- **Rebecca Roder** (Capilano University)
- **Nathan Zemp** (Simon Fraser University)

FIRST NATIONS PUBLIC SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP

- **Daisy Elliott** (Vancouver Island University)

KEN DOBELL PUBLIC SERVICE EDUCATION FUND SCHOLARSHIP

- **Eva Yip** (University of Victoria)
- **Holly Yee** (Vancouver Island University)
- **Mary Kelly** (Simon Fraser University)
- **Eugene Yeung** (University of British Columbia)
- **Christy Juteau** (University of Victoria)
- **Reyhan Cumming** (University of British Columbia)
- **Kindry Luyendyk** (University of Victoria)
- **Kirn Dhillon** (Capilano University)

Scholarship Opportunities

LGMA offers a wide range of scholarships for people working in local government and studying in the areas of government and public policy. Applications for the 2023 scholarships will open in July.

Details on the criteria for the various scholarships can be found at lgma.ca/scholarships.

Board of Examiners

Certification Programs

Two local government employees have been recognized for their education and work experience while working in the local government field in B.C. and are being awarded a Certificate by the Board of Examiners.

Certificate in Local Government Service Delivery

- **Lia Pesklevits**, Executive Coordinator, Town of Comox
- **Jamie Leggatt**, Director of Communications, City of Chilliwack

Scholarship Opportunities

Two Board of Examiners scholarship programs are available to eligible local government employees who wish to work towards certification or upgrade their professional skills. Funding assistance is available for tuition and travel costs, and applications are accepted year-round. For details, go to: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/local-governments/governance-powers/councils-boards/officers-employees/learning.

Make Plans to Join Us in Nanaimo June 13 to 15

Shifts, shocks, and the overall increased pace of change – all of these have driven the warp-speed adaptation of leaders and teams. Where are we now, what have we learned, and what can we take with us to help shape the future?

The 2023 LGMA Conference, themed *Taking Stock, (re) Shaping Together*, will take place at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre in Nanaimo from June 13-15. The Annual Conference will once again bring together local government practitioners, experts and partners from across British Columbia to explore a wide range of current topics and trends and expand their professional networks.

The LGMA Trade Show is also returning on June 13 and 14.

For more information about learning opportunities, accommodations, registration and more, visit lgma.ca/annualconference.



**Taking Stock,
Re(Shaping) Together**
2023 LGMA CONFERENCE
JUNE 13-15 | NANAIMO

Thank you to our 2022 VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the heart of the LGMA! The LGMA would like to personally thank the 150-plus volunteers who lent their expertise in 2022 to make our programs and resources for local government professionals a success. We acknowledge your skills, expertise and efforts. For a list of our 2022 volunteers, visit our Volunteer Appreciation page at lgma.ca/volunteer-appreciation.

Interested in giving back to your profession?

Check out the LGMA's Volunteer Opportunities page at lgma.ca/become-a-volunteer or contact us at office@lgma.ca.

The right questions lead to clear insights.

The W Group has designed and deployed thousands of surveys & forms capturing the data needed to make informed decisions.



Municipal Survey Research Experts | thewgroup.ca



MEMBER MOVEMENT

Sheila Allen, Director of Corporate Services, District of Saanich (formerly Executive Director, Strategic Human Resources, Ministry of Children and Family Development)

Patti Bridal, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Vernon (formerly Director of Corporate Services, City of Vernon)

Jennifer Bruns, Manager of Legislative Services, City of Vernon (formerly Corporate Officer, District of Sicamous)

Robyn Carlé, Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Hazelton (formerly Chief Financial Officer, District of New Hazelton)

Juli Haliwell, General Manager of Corporate Services, City of Burnaby (formerly Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Anmore)

Kevin Henderson, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Dawson Creek (formerly General Manager of Development Services, City of Dawson Creek)

Dan Horan, Chief Administrative Officer, Township of Esquimalt (formerly Director of Engineering and Public Works, District of Oak Bay)

Danielle Leurebourg, Director of Corporate Services, City of Port Alberni (formerly Deputy City Clerk, City of Parksville)

Joanne Molnar, Chief Financial Officer, District of Stewart (formerly Chief Financial Officer, Village of Chase)

Kevin Poole, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer & Director of Community Safety, Lands and Administration, City of Vernon (formerly Director of Community Safety, Lands and Administration, City of Vernon)

Paula Richardson, Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Belcarra (formerly Municipal Coordinator, Village of Belcarra)

Ted Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer, Capital Regional District (formerly General Manager, Integrated Water Services, Capital Regional District)

RETIREMENTS

Laura Ciarniello, Director of Corporate Services, District of Saanich

Lorna Dysart, Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Belcarra

Greg Fletcher, Chief Administrative Officer, Regional District of Mount Waddington

Lyn Hawley, Deputy Corporate Officer, Village of Alert Bay

Dianne Hunter, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Fort St. John

Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer, Township of Esquimalt

Robert (Bob) Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer, Capital Regional District

Blair Lekstrom, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Dawson Creek

Carol Newsom, Chief Administrative Officer, District of Chetwynd

Will Pearce, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Vernon

Dana Schmidt, Deputy City Clerk, City of Delta

Twyla Slonski, Director of Corporate Services, City of Port Alberni

Donna Smith, Corporate Officer, Town of Ladysmith

2023 LGMA PROGRAMS & EVENTS

February 9-14
MATI Successful CAO
The Cove, West Kelowna

February 14-16
CAO Forum
Delta Grand Okanagan, Kelowna

April 4, 11, 25
Bylaw Drafting Online Course

April 16-21
MATI Advanced Communications
Radisson Hotel Vancouver Airport,
Richmond

May 7-12
MATI Managing People
Harbour House, Salt Spring Island

May 12, November 17
CAO Connect Lunch Series
Online

May 19, June 2, September 15
Indigenous Awareness Training
Online Course

May 24, September 20
Corporate Officer Connect
Lunch Series
Online

June 8, 9
Approving Officers Workshop
Online

June 13
Communications Forum
Vancouver Island Convention Centre,
Nanaimo

June 13-14
LGMA Trade Show
Vancouver Island Convention Centre,
Nanaimo

June 13-15
LGMA Annual Conference
Vancouver Island Convention Centre,
Nanaimo

September-December
Foundations in Local Government
Learning Series
Online Course

September 21
CAO Breakfast
TBC, Vancouver

September 22
Indigenous Relations Training
Online Course

October 4-6
Corporate Officer Forum
Vancouver Island Convention Centre,
Nanaimo

October 6, 13, 20, 27,
November 3, 10
Project Management Fundamentals
Online Course

October 15-20
MATI Leadership in Local Government
The Bayside Resort, Parksville

October 23, 24, 31, November 7
Effective Report Writing Online
Course

October 25-27
Admin Professionals Conference
Westin Wall Centre, Richmond

November 14, 21, 28
Minute Taking Online Course

November 16, 23, 30
Change Management Online Course

November 26 - December 1
MATI Community Planning
Harbour House, Salt Spring Island

2023 PARTNER PROGRAMS & EVENTS

February 8-10
Local Government Leadership
Academy Radisson Hotel Vancouver
Airport, Richmond

May 14 - May 17
International Institute of Municipal
Clerks Annual Conference
Minneapolis, Minnesota

May 25-28
Federation of Canadian
Municipalities Annual Conference
Toronto

May 28-31
Canadian Association of Municipal
Administrators Annual Conference
Deerhurst Resort, Ontario

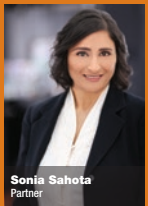
May 31-June 2
Government Finance Officers
Association of BC Annual
Conference
Whistler

June 12-15
Association of Municipal Managers,
Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario
(AMCTO) Annual Conference
Niagara Hilton Fallsview Resort &
Casino, Niagara Falls, Ontario

September 30-October 4
International City/County
Management Association (ICMA)
Austin/Travis County, Texas



Local Government Law • Planning and Land Development
Procurement • Construction • Infrastructure • Municipal
Corporations • Litigation and Dispute Resolution



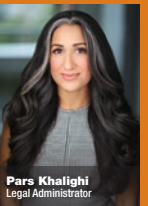
Sonia Sahota
Partner



Pam Jefcoat
Partner



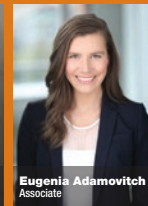
Michael Moll
Partner



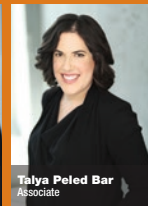
Pars Khalighi
Legal Administrator



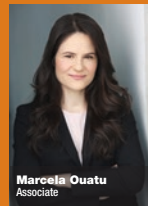
Sara Gray
Associate



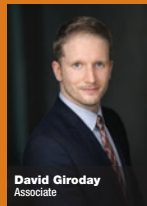
Eugenia Adamovitch
Associate



Talya Peled Bar
Associate



Marcela Ouatu
Associate



David Giroday
Associate



Kai Hsieh
Associate

*Small Firm.
Big Thinking.*

www.civiclegal.ca

Main 604 639 3639 | Email info@civiclegal.ca
710 - 900 West Hastings St. Vancouver, BC, V6C 1E5



Follow us @CivicLegal

MEET OUR EMPLOYMENT LAWYERS

LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT, TERMINATION, WRONGFUL & CONSTRUCTIVE DISMISSAL,
COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS, GRIEVANCES, DISPUTE RESOLUTION, HUMAN RIGHTS,
INVESTIGATIONS, BULLYING & HARASSMENT, PRIVACY



MARISA CRUICKSHANK
cruickshank@lidstone.ca



DEBRA RUSNAK
rusnak@lidstone.ca



ANDREW CARRICATO
carricato@lidstone.ca



PAUL HILDEBRAND
hildebrand@lidstone.ca

GOVERNANCE
FINANCE
TAXATION
LAND USE

PROPERTY
FOIPOP
**LABOUR &
EMPLOYMENT**

BYLAWS
ELECTIONS
LITIGATION
INSURANCE

INDIGENOUS
ENVIRONMENTAL
CONFLICTS
CONSTRUCTION

LIDSTONE & COMPANY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAWYERS

www.lidstone.ca

