

INPUT

LAND AND REAL ESTATE
ISSUES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Building Community with Partnerships



258

Union Street

RI
The
Real Estate
Institute of
British Columbia

INPUT

Input is the official publication of **The Real Estate Institute of BC (REIBC)**.

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Editor-in-Chief / Executive Officer

Brenda Southam, CAE

Managing Editor / Production

Uncover Editorial + Design uncovereditorial.ca

Advertising

Maggie Hill

Printing

Initial Print & Copy Center initialprint.com

Submissions and ideas, contact:

Brenda Southam

Tel: 604-685-3702 ext. 104 Toll-free: 1-800-667-2166

Fax: 604-685-1026 Email: info@reibc.org

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

REIBC

1750-355 Burrard Street

Vancouver, BC V6C 2G8

View online: reibc.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



DANIEL JOHN, RI
REIBC PRESIDENT

The REIBC community is one where its members are of giving character, always growing and striving for excellence both in their professions and in their communities.

The common theme of this year's 2019 BC Land Summit was the importance of people and community. Close to 800 professionals from across Canada attended our three-day conference, absolutely one of the best events of the year, with some of the most knowledgeable people in our industry sharing their knowledge and insights. Attendees were treated to the incredible keynote speakers Sheila Watt-Cloutier and Edward Glaeser.

REIBC has been productive this year. We have hosted more events than ever across the province, provided more educational opportunities through webinars, produced industry research that is being recognized internationally, and rolled out our new-look social media marketing. We were able to do this with the help of our members who have volunteered their knowledge, time, and insights.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Governors and staff, as well as all of the members throughout the years, that have volunteered their time and expertise to helping make REIBC an incredible community to be a part of. With all of your contributions we have been able to grow the organization and thrive as a real estate community.

It truly has been a privilege to serve as your president over the past year and I know we will be in good hands moving forward, with a Board of Governors dedicated to ensuring that the REIBC community keeps growing strong.

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FROM THE EO'S DESK



BRENDA SOUTHAM
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

REIBC is pleased to present this edition of *Input* as a follow-up to our well-attended and thought-provoking Presidents Luncheon in December. The conversation was about real estate value, risk, and return in building inclusive communities, offered from a “community builder’s” perspective, which included the issues of real estate development and affordability. The conversation shone a light on how community-building organizations contribute to building sustainable, vibrant cities.

For this edition of *Input*, we decided to expand on that conversation and so contacted a number of local community builders to share their perspectives. Each has their own story and I urge you to read each one with an open mind and an eye on community. Community is what we strive to build and these authors are certainly on the leading edge.

What jumps out at me is the partnerships that take place. Front and centre in every article, whether they be with governments, non-profits, or private enterprises, partnerships—particularly across silos—seem to be a requirement in the building of community. No matter how big or how small a project, partnerships are how they are begun and how they are finished.

I point to Stephanie Allen’s article, as at last December’s REIBC Presidents Luncheon she challenged the audience (and their organizations) to get more involved in community building. Allen has given all of us five ways to sink our teeth into equitable community development. Read on, and let us know how your organization takes action to build equitable communities. Write to us at info@reibc.org.

At 64 pages, this is our largest edition ever... Maybe that in itself tells us how important community building and partnerships are to all of us. Thank you, to all of you, for your insights.



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Please let us know your ideas for upcoming issues and how you like the magazine—and check out our Facebook and Twitter pages for up-to-the-minute information on REIBC activities.

**reibc.org
info@reibc.org**

CONTRIBUTORS

ARTICLES



Daniel Boffo is a co-principal at Boffo Properties. He has been involved in the real estate industry from a very young age, following in his father's footsteps, and since 2007 he has been proud to lead Boffo Properties with his sister. As a graduate of both UBC and BCIT, Daniel has a well-established development and construction background. Daniel has experience with a variety of projects, from residential townhouses to mid-rise woodframe, from social partnerships and mixed-use communities to commercial and industrial spaces. Daniel ensures each Boffo project is quality constructed and built to last, influenced by the past and designed for the future.

boffoproperties.com

daniel@boffoproperties.com



Robert Brown is the president of Catalyst Community Developments Society. He has 40 years of real estate experience, including work in commercial real estate, market housing development, innovative green building projects, non-profit development work, and hands-on work with community-based organizations. After working in many aspects of real estate in the UK, he came to Vancouver in 1988, and after eight years at a commercial real estate brokerage he created Chesterman Properties. Between 2001 and 2008, Robert was a partner in reSource Rethinking Building, a green building consulting firm. In 2013, he helped create Catalyst, which partners with non-profits to develop their assets to maximize community benefit.

catalystcommdev.org

robert@catalystcommdev.org



Graham Wood, RI, director of Real Estate at The Bloom Group, has broad industry experience from both the private and public sectors. He has a passion not only for property development and economic analysis, but also for the opportunity to bring innovative and collaborative approaches to create better outcomes for marginalized populations. Wood is a professional member of REIBC and the Urban Land Institute, and he holds a BA from Simon Fraser University, a diploma in Urban Land Economics (Real Estate Development) from University of British Columbia, and an MBA from the University of Victoria. He likes moonlit nights and long walks on the beach.

thebloomgroup.org

gwood@thebloomgroup.org



Jennifer Johnstone is the president and CEO of Central City Foundation, an organization that has been working to improve lives in Vancouver's inner-city since 1907. Johnstone's background is in non-profit management and community resource development. Over the past 30 years, she has held key leadership positions at Vancity Community Foundation, Battered Women's Support Services, Vancouver Status of Women, and Ballet British Columbia. Johnstone is a founding member of the Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative, sits on the national board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and serves as a volunteer board member for several local organizations.

centralcityfoundation.ca

info@centralcityfoundation.ca



Stephanie Allen is the associate vice president of Strategic Business Operations and Performance at BC Housing and a founding board member of Hogan's Alley Society. Allen started her development career working for market developers in BC, Arizona, and Alberta. In 2011 she joined BC Housing where she spent six years delivering provincially owned affordable housing projects. Allen is completing her master's degree in Urban Studies at SFU, focused on understanding urban planning and municipal policy through a social justice framework, especially as it relates to racialized and marginalized communities. She also serves on the City of Vancouver's Development Permit Advisory Panel and Poverty Action Advisory Committee.

hogansalleysociety.org

info@hogansalleysociety.org

CONTRIBUTORS, CONTINUED

ARTICLES



Jacqueline Gijssen is the project director at the Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative (SPRE). Gijssen brings a depth of experience and a passion for social purpose real estate to her role via a career in the non-profit sector, including planning, building, opening, and operating a variety of capital projects, plus a decade as Vancouver's Senior Planner for Cultural Spaces and Infrastructure. Working with non-profits and social entrepreneurs as well as members of the development, real estate, and planning communities, she builds partnerships and understanding for realizing successful projects that deliver social, environmental, and economic impact.
socialpurposerealestate.net



Joycelyn Guan is a student at Simon Fraser University, majoring in human geography with an extended minor in gender, sexuality, and women's studies. Inspired by their involvement in the Vancouver Planning Commission's 2018 "A City for All" summit, Guan is interested in pursuing a masters degree in urban planning after their undergraduate degree. Guan hopes to bring an intersectional lens to the field.



David Eddy is the CEO of Vancouver Native Housing Society, a non-profit, urban Indigenous housing provider in Vancouver. He has been employed in the affordable housing sector in Vancouver for the past 34 years. Eddy has served on boards or is a member of: Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, British Columbia Non-Profit Housing Association, Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council, Vancouver Mayor's Taskforce on Homelessness and Addictions, Housing Partnership Canada, and International Housing Partnership. Eddy is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing and has a master's degree in Leadership and Training from Royal Roads University in Victoria, BC.
vnhs.ca
deddy@vnhs.ca



Shayne Ramsay, CEO of BC Housing, is responsible for the delivery of a wide range of housing programs and services. No longer just a provider of housing for low-income British Columbians, BC Housing has expanded its mandate during Shayne's 18 years in the role to include other responsibilities, including licensing residential builders, delivering a wide range of homeless programs and support services, and conducting and sharing housing-related research and education. Shayne is a past chair of the International Housing Partnership, and he currently chairs Housing Partnership Canada (a member of International Housing Partnership), focusing on collaborative solutions and shared experiences in social housing.
bchousing.org/home



Gabriel Teo is a communications specialist for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). In his work, he collaborates with the Federal Ministry of Children, Families and Social Development to raise awareness around the National Housing Strategy and its programs, people, and developments. An accomplished storyteller and photographer, Gabriel puts his skills to work chronicling National Housing Strategy (NHS) success stories for the public and the media on behalf of CMHC. View more NHS success stories online at PlaceToCallHome.ca.
cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en

COLUMNS



Jill Atkey became BICNPHA's CEO in July 2018. She joined the organization in 2010 as the director of Research and Education, leading the team through research projects like the *2017 Affordable Housing Plan for BC* and the Canadian Rental Housing Index, as well as overseeing the growth of the Housing Central Conference into the must-attend education forum for the sector.

bicnpha.ca



John McLachlan, RI, LLB, is a lawyer at Lex Pacifica Law Corporation in Vancouver. His practice is focused on civil litigation with an emphasis on real property matters. John has appeared as counsel before the British Columbia Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court of British Columbia, the Provincial Court of British Columbia, the Federal Court, and various Administrative Tribunals.

lexpacific.com



Nicole K. Wong, JD, is an articling student at Lex Pacifica. She received her JD from the Peter A. Allard School of Law at the University of British Columbia in 2019. Prior to law school, Nicole received a bachelor of science in Biology from the University of British Columbia. While at law school, Nicole represented the school as a Law Student Ambassador and acted as VP Internal of the Asia Pacific Law Club. In addition, she volunteered as a clinician with the Law Students' Legal Advice Program and as an instructor with the Legal Education Outreach program, which seeks to engage high school students with legal issues.

lexpacific.com

ABOUT

Input was established in 1976. It ran at 12 pages and stayed that size for a long time. It was more like a newsletter then; when something new happened in the real estate industry, one of our RIs wrote about it, but the publication didn't cover much industry information otherwise.

Many years later, *Input* runs at an average of 48 pages, sometimes a bit bigger or smaller, and our authors hail from around the globe. Our focus is on keeping readers informed with all aspects of the industry, particularly hot topics.

REIBC delivers *Input* to 4,000 people or organizations within the real estate industry. Who receives *Input*?

- REIBC members
- REIBC subscribers
- PIBC members
- BC Notaries
- PAMA - Professional Association of Managing Agents
- SPA-BC - Strata Property Agents of BC
- Government ministries
- Real estate boards



Edgemont Walk, North Vancouver.



INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES WITH SOCIAL AND MARKET HOUSING

Daniel Boffo

Boffo Properties is a second-generation, family-run company based in Vancouver, BC. With longstanding roots in the community, and founded in 1963 by Tarcisio Boffo, Boffo Properties has continually strived to approach development from a neighbourhood-building perspective. An approach where in each new community where we are building, we look at the surrounding neighbourhood and its local amenities and aim to design and build something that will fit with and complement the surrounding community.

This has led us to a variety of different projects, each designed specifically for its neighbourhood. We have Mason's collection of brick townhouses in the Trout Lake area of Vancouver, Eastpark's city-homes and flats along Main Street, Haven's family-focused townhouses in Port Coquitlam, and Edgemont Walk's neighbourhood-building townhomes in Edgemont Village in North Vancouver. The success of these projects has led us to some creative partnerships that combine both market and social housing within the same neighbourhoods.

In East Vancouver, blocks from Oppenheimer Park, we designed and built a mix of market one-bedroom flats, market two-bedroom two-level city-homes, and social housing. And we're hopeful to continue to add to the mixed fabric of East Vancouver, working with The Kettle Society to design and build a mix of social and market housing with an expanded drop-in space for their clients. But the building of inclusive communities takes time, effort, and a lot of good hard work between partners at all levels in order to get to the finish line.

HOW WE GET THERE

With any development project, the process starts out along the same lines. Identification of an opportunity, due diligence into a piece of property, review of the

applicable policy and zoning requirements, and reports and analysis of the site. It's heavy research and a lot of time no matter if it's market residential, social housing, commercial, industrial, or any combination of the above. But combining social and market housing has its own set of challenges and opportunities.

Once a property has been reviewed to understand whether it would support a mix of both social and market housing, we then focus on finding the right non-profit partner for the project. A key component of our due diligence process is finding the right partnerships and aligning with our non-profit partner on shared values, goals, and objectives for any potential project.

IT'S ALL ABOUT PARTNERSHIPS

Designing an inclusive community with a mix of market and social housing requires strong partnerships at all levels. First and foremost, a non-profit partner who is involved from the beginning, who will have a say in how the non-profit component is designed and integrated into the project, and who will also include details that are important to their daily activities and operations is critical.

For Boffo Properties, we've been lucky enough to work with two outstanding non-profit development partners. As mentioned above, one is The Kettle Society, a society that has been supporting those living with mental illnesses for over 40 years, does incredible work in the community by managing supportive housing, operating a mental health drop-in clinic, and providing advocacy services, homeless outreach, health clinics, and supported employment. And we've also worked with MPA Society, which for over 45 years has focused on recovery and responsibility for those living with mental illness. For the past five years, MPA Society has operated and maintained the social housing that is part of our East Vancouver Cordovan project. Both groups are led by amazing individuals who care for and positively impact both their members and the communities in which they operate.

However, partnerships between non-profit partners and developers are just the beginning. Development partners like BC Housing are critical for integrated projects to be realized. BC Housing works with private and non-profit organizations, all levels of government, and various community groups to develop a range of housing options along the housing continuum. This ranges from addressing homelessness and providing housing with high levels of support to social housing and rental assistance.

BC Housing is an impressive organization with exceptional people who work to truly provide for communities.

Partnerships extend to various levels of government as well. Oftentimes, the municipal organization is a key partner in realizing shared goals for inclusive communities. Support from mayor and council and municipal staff provides the framework and context for these projects, which allows the development community to help deliver and execute the vision to move these projects through to completion. Zoning and policy must support this objective and ultimately can help make the economics and feasibility of some of these projects more achievable.

In past years, support from the federal or provincial governments varied, but recently we've seen a doubling down of support from both these levels. Moving forward, all levels of government are committed to providing more support services and housing options along the housing continuum and are focused on the opportunity to further leverage the shared will and creativity of the private sector and non-profit partnerships. And with this renewed effort, there are even more opportunities to look at the economics and feasibility of such partnerships.

MAKING THE NUMBERS WORK

Like any business, the underlying business model of building new homes or work spaces (whether market or non-market) must be profitable. For market homebuilders, the economics drive the opportunity. But through creative partnerships there are often ways to make inclusive communities work for all those involved and there are a variety of options to explore. Reduced municipal development fees coupled with added density can unlock greater potential for inclusive community sites. With in-kind amenities instead of cash community amenity contributions, the overall project and neighbourhood can benefit from a creative approach to incorporating amenities directly into a new development.

Any development proposal will have some level of risk; when forecasting revenues and costs for years to come, there is always a level of uncertainty. But when factoring in the added layer of an inclusive community, there can sometimes be—disappointingly—a stigma associated with such projects.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES FOR ALL

Addressing the stigma of mental health is a conversation we've had with our partners many times.



Eastpark, Main St building (top) and Quebec building (above), Vancouver.



Cordovan, in Vancouver.

Integrating social housing into market housing should lead to more inclusive communities for all. Unfortunately, there are still those in society who may not associate with the empathy, teaching, learning opportunities, and general benefits that inclusive communities can provide. It's a story we've told in our Cordovan community and one we're continuing to tell with our partnership with The Kettle Society.

When we marketed and sold our Cordovan flats and city-homes in East Vancouver, it was with direct reference to the social housing apartments that were also included as part of the development. They formed part of the Cordovan community, and this was always part of the Cordovan story. Our market homeowners who bought at Cordovan understood this. Many were first-time homebuyers themselves and understood that a mix of market and social housing made the community stronger.

One of The Kettle Society's main pillars of outreach is focused on ending stigma around mental health and homelessness. Kettle describes stigma as a mark of disgrace for certain circumstances, which can create a barrier to access for basic parts of society like health-care, employment, and housing. Kettle is focused on empowering its clients and offering mental health first-aid to those in the community, and ending stigma around mental health and homelessness is built into core services.

The broader neighbourhood and community benefit from and support these types of partnerships. At the municipal level, these projects are supported and the vision of an inclusive community—where there is no isolation, no ghettoization, and no stigma—is starting to flourish.

At Boffo Properties we feel strongly that the future of the development and homebuilding industry continues to lie in partnerships—between builders and developers with social and non-profit providers, and between all levels of government, community groups, residents, and neighbours. And we believe that through the development process there are numerous creative ways to make the numbers work, to approach things differently, and to design innovatively and build better so that every neighbourhood is one that best reflects the needs of its community. This makes for resilient, authentic, and complete communities.

In the end, what we hope to achieve as a market developer that has incorporated social housing into past and, hopefully, future projects, is an inclusive community for all—one that is based on empathy and education, awareness and grace. Our communities will be stronger because of it.

Photos by Boffo Properties.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

BC NON-PROFIT HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Jill Atkey



We all have a role to play in creating the vibrant communities we want to call home, and it begins with ensuring communities throughout BC are diverse, inclusive, welcoming places.

For nearly 30 years, BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA) has been supporting and advocating for the non-profit housing sector, working towards a future in which all BC residents have access to an affordable home. We are proud to say that future is closer than ever; new funding and enthusiasm from all levels of government are fueling an affordable housing boom in all regions of the province, and the sector is eager to seize these opportunities to revitalize and expand existing housing and develop new projects.

As the provincial umbrella organization for the non-profit housing sector, BCNPHA's mission is to raise the capacity of the sector so that societies are well prepared for new investments and other opportunities to expand affordable housing options throughout the province. We do this through education, professional development, research, and advocacy as well as through procurement programs and asset management services.

With more than 500 member societies spanning each corner of the province, we continue to expand our online education options for board members, senior executives, and frontline staff. We also provide valuable in-person professional development and networking opportunities, including four Regional Education, Networking and Tradeshow (RENT) events throughout the province each year and the annual Housing Central Conference—the largest affordable housing conference in Canada, drawing more than 1,500 delegates.

As the leading voice for affordable housing, BCNPHA advocates for the sector armed with groundbreaking research. In 2017, BCNPHA released the *Affordable*

Housing Plan for BC, a comprehensive strategy to tackle the rental housing and homelessness crisis over the coming decade, from which the provincial government adopted many recommendations, including the promise to build 114,000 units. In 2018, we released an update to the Canadian Rental Housing Index, which examines rental housing affordability and overcrowding in more than 800 municipalities across Canada. The index is housed in an interactive map (rentalhousingindex.ca), providing government, decision-makers, housing providers, and stakeholders with the critical data they need to help solve the housing crisis in their communities.

We believe partnerships and collaboration are the backbone in creating effective housing solutions, and we are proud to partner with the Homelessness Services Association of BC on Build Homes Not Barriers. This campaign activates local networks to engage with their neighbours to generate support for new affordable housing and shelter projects in their communities, which is essential to solving the backlog we are facing.

The housing crisis was years in the making and it will take years to get out of it. But we all have a stake in creating a future where everyone has access to a safe, secure, and affordable home.

RI

BELOW-MARKET RENTAL HOUSING BUILDS COMMUNITY

Robert Brown

The market real estate and construction industry in BC is incredibly active, representing a larger percentage of provincial GDP than the mining, fishing, and forestry industries combined. Over 350,000 homes have been built in our province since 2008. Yet, the housing affordability crisis continues and is becoming ever more acute, particularly for renters, as housing and other costs of living continue to decouple from local incomes.

There are nearly 7,000 individuals experiencing homelessness in BC, with an estimated demand backlog of 80,000 new rental units, while another 117,000 households need help affording the rent where they currently live.¹ It is clear that the demand for affordable housing is not being met by the traditional supply.

There is hope, however, for those whom the real estate market has left behind.

A NEW WAVE

Amid the current housing crisis and despite steadily increasing costs, the dedicated groups within the community housing sector have been working creatively together to build affordable community-owned housing and community gathering spaces through strategic partnerships.

Catalyst is part of a new wave within BC's housing development sector. Founded in 2013, Catalyst is a mission-driven non-profit real estate developer, owner, and landlord that works with other non-profits to unlock the value of their real estate assets. That value is reinvested in the form of community-owned affordable housing and community spaces, such as at Madrona at Dockside Green, Catalyst's below-market rental building in Victoria. By bringing our real estate development expertise together with land contributed by community partners





Madrona at Dockside Green, Victoria.

“Four years ago I was living in a tent in Beacon Hill Park. After a year of volunteering at Anawim transition house, I was offered a job selling flooring. A friend who lives nearby noticed the construction of Madrona and suggested I apply. I did and the rest is history. My journey back into community was complete. I still have the scars of being homeless, and still feel the intense anxiety of thinking no one cares. But it is organizations like Catalyst and Anawim House ... that truly believe in Community, and that make a difference by offering people in need a helping hand.”

—Jim, resident of Madrona

(non-profits, churches, municipalities, etc.) and funds from “impact” investors, we are building secure and affordable rental housing projects, like Madrona, to support people in our community who need it.

The homes Catalyst builds are focused on providing an affordable place to live for households with a total gross income between \$20,000 and \$80,000 per year. We help our non-profit partners achieve long-term financial sustainability by ensuring that they retain a substantial ownership interest in their property assets over the long-term. This also results in these important community-owned lands remaining in community hands, building capacity and resiliency in the non-profit sector overall.

To date, Catalyst has completed three projects with over 125 affordable rental homes, with another 650-plus homes under development, along with 58,000 square feet of community and commercial space. When completed, these projects will deliver over \$6.5 million of rent savings, compared to market, every year!

Another Catalyst project that will be completed later this year is the Hannelore, located on West 41st Avenue at



Cambie Street in Vancouver. This innovative and colourful building is being created by a partnership between Catalyst and Oakridge Lutheran Church, with the support of Vancity Credit Union and other impact investors. On completion, the project will include a new church and community space of over 10,000 square feet, 46 below-market rental homes, and retail space to generate revenue to support the affordability of the housing above. The \$30 million-plus project will be one-hundred-percent owned by community hands.

MORE THAN HOUSING

Beyond a roof over our heads, building community is essential for healthy and sustainable neighbourhoods. Strong social connections are a well-researched and significant determinant of health. One frequently cited 2015 study from Brigham Young University showed that social isolation and loneliness are as harmful as obesity, smoking, and lack of physical activity, increasing the risk of heart disease, depression, dementia, and other conditions.² Fostering a high degree of connectivity between residents is therefore another one of Catalyst’s core values, and we feel it is inseparable from our overall mission of real estate with social purpose.

1 Housing Central, 2017.

2 Brigham Young University, 2015.



Madrona in Victoria (left) and Hannelore in Vancouver (above).

To further this goal, Catalyst commissioned a research report in 2018, and the ten key findings created the foundation for a year-long Community Connections pilot project at Madrona. The goals of this project are to increase social connectedness among Madrona residents, develop positive connections between Madrona and other Dockside Green residents, and strengthen Madrona tenants' feelings of belonging, inclusion, and engagement within the Victoria West community.

Toward this end, Catalyst has organized and hosted numerous activities, including social events and workshops (on bike maintenance and earthquake preparedness, for example). We've also allocated a budget to support ideas that tenants bring forward, such as a new, extensive recycling program. Online surveys of tenants indicate that the pilot is leading to increased feelings of social connection, belonging, and community engagement, and efforts have already been paying off.

"I keep feeling like Catalyst added an element of magic to the equation when they created Madrona," says a current resident. "I think that magic is a combination of integrity and community. Not only do I live in a well-conceived and well-built home I can afford, not only am I close to town,

but suddenly I have a community, and owners [Catalyst] that come meet with us, chat over wine or burgers, and ask for our input. They want to do it right."

Catalyst believes that in creating, owning, and operating below-market rental housing, like Madrona at Dockside Green, that we are showing that the non-profit sector can deliver beautiful, affordable, inclusive, and sustainable homes for people that are a key part of our community. These projects serve as a leading example for other organizations that wish to use their assets to provide this much-needed housing and community space. Catalyst is sharing our model on an open-source basis to assist others in executing their projects and building their financial sustainability and the overall resilience of the non-profit sector.

Photos by Upper Left Photography (Madrona) and Catalyst (Hannelore).

RI

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019



This year the Annual General Meeting was held in conjunction with the Vancouver District Recognition Luncheon. A quorum for the AGM is 25 voting members, and we had more than 30 voting members present. President Daniel John called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m., with quorum, and proceeded through the agenda. President-Elect Susan Antoniali read the notice of the meeting and Secretary/Treasurer Keith MacLean-Talbot discussed the financial statements.

Our auditor, Todd Lilley of Rolfe Benson LLP, noted that the Institute's financials are in good shape and are being managed quite well. The overall surplus this year was just over \$28,000 and that is, in the auditor's opinion, a good place to be. The financials were approved unanimously, and Rolfe Benson LLP was once again named as our auditors, for 2019-2020.

The president then gave his report. President John noted that we had moved forward on a number of fronts and he was extremely pleased with the year. He was proud to have been our organization's president and knows that it will flourish under the upcoming leadership. He also noted that we are now being driven by a new mission statement, which is: "To promote our diverse RI designated members as distinguished professionals that are trusted, educated, and experienced."

President John highlighted that REIBC staff have organized a number of successful events in members' own communities and are doing almost-monthly webinars, that REIBC's research has been discussed internationally, and that our social media presence has been modernized and a long-term strategy implemented. He also noted that nearly 800 professionals from across Canada attended the 2019 BC Land Summit, which REIBC is a part of. President John thanked the Board of Governors for volunteering their time and expertise to REIBC, and thanked staff for their hard work. He ended his comments with, "It truly has been a privilege to serve as your president."

Secretary/Treasurer Keith MacLean-Talbot noted that there were five districts where governors were up for re-election this year, and that two of those districts held elections. He then introduced the new Board of Governors: Daniel John, Susan Antoniali, Umesh Chand, Mona Murray, Valeria Lifanova, Keith MacLean-Talbot, Sean McGinnis, Cindy Nesselbeck, Clayton Olson, Doug Page, Geoff Radtke, and Edwin Kwok Yu Yan. The meeting was adjourned.



REIBC's Annual General Meeting.

NEW GOVERNOR 2019-2020



EDWIN KWOK YU YAN, RI

Edwin Kwok Yu Yan, managing broker at LeHomes Realty Premier, looks forward to using all his experience to promote and further the goals and plans of REIBC.

Yan was licensed in 1986, right after graduating from UBC with a bachelor of Commerce in Urban Land Economics. His first job was in property management, leasing, and fee appraisal. He later worked in residential sales and often tutored and mentored new salespeople. Once he completed his three years of work experience, he became a member of REIBC, and soon after was recruited to be a managing broker under the recommendation of the salespeople he mentored. He was one of the youngest managing brokers at the time.

Along the way, Yan has managed to complete two certificates—in property management and social housing management—while working as a managing broker. He is involved with many committees and organizations, serving as the director of the Real Estate Institute of Canada – BC Chapter since 2017 and on the Arbitration Committee with the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver and the Realtor Care Committee with CREA.

As a member of REIBC since 1989, Yan first volunteered as director of the Vancouver Chapter from 2016 to 2018, then as a Standards and Practice Committee member. This natural progression led him to become an REIBC governor.

MISSION

To promote our diverse RI designated members as distinguished professionals that are trusted, educated, and experienced.

VISION

We will be the respected and trusted leader in the real estate sector through:

- elevating the value and recognition of the RI designation
- promoting excellence in real estate through professional development
- anticipating trends to be responsive to our members
- being a recognized contributor to the real estate body of knowledge
- developing and maintaining strategic partnerships

VALUES

Integrity: trustworthy professionals who are honest, reliable, respectful and always above reproach

Expertise: continuous improvement of the depth and breadth of the knowledge of our members

Diversity: professional, cultural and geographic

Transparency: proactive, open and honest communication

Community: collaborative mindset that fosters interaction, growth and increased professional expertise

MEMBER RECOGNITION 2019

5 YEARS

Darryl Anderson
Avtar Bains
Heidi Campbell
Levana Chan
Joyce Chong
Yvonne Deibert
Peggy Enemark
Kevin Giesbrecht
Keith Hampe
Richard Hellinga
Arnold Joe
Devin Kanhai
Jason Kempston
Guy Kirby
Michael Law
Kelly Lerigny
Boyang Li
Adam Lord
Garnett Macdowall
Catherine E. MacInnis
Linda MacSeafraidh
Stacy Matthes
Stephanie McNeil
Jared Melvin
H. John Neuls
Andrew Newman
Inderjit Nijjar
Clayton Olson
William (Bill) Phillips
Gordon Pladson
Nolan Rivers
Ramin Seifi
Brent Sieb
Cristiana Valero
Matthew Walsh
Andrew Webster
Graham Wood
Karmelle Yakimovitch
Tamara Zagumenna

10 YEARS

Douglas Berry
Tim Collins
Neil Currie
Johnny Grewal
Amir Kaboodani
Glen Kirk
Craig McLellan
Nathan Nottingham
Jonathan O'Grady

Brenda Orcutt
Diane Renz
Rajan Sandhu
Ken Sherk
John Shevchuk
Robert Vannucci
Kim Wagner
John Wainaina
Debbie Wilson
Tiah Workman
Fiona Zheng

15 YEARS

Troy MacBeth Abromaitis
Randip Bhandal
Kelvin Coley-Donohue
Michael Fitzsimmons
Tracey Love
Brad Marko
Lisa Martin
Alex Messina
Todd Pinske
William Rainbow
James Jefferson Robertson
Janet Scotland
Kerren Shalanski
Rose Sikora
Nathan Worbets

20 YEARS

Joe Barbosa
Wayne Beattie
Patricia Begg
Karen Benson
Jason Dooley
Tim Down
Edward Furlan
Douglas Gilchrist
Michael Goldberg
Tara Hamer-Hayley
Michael Heeney
Darin Johnson
Peter Jones
Melanie McComber
Douglas Page
Thomas William Pringle
John Yannacopoulos

25 YEARS

W.D. (Bill) Clifford
Claire Côté-Fulton
Raymond Eng
Larry Gillanders
Jason Grant
Robbin Greig
Gordon Jessop
Dieter Krueger
Yuen Ching
Katherine Kwok
Darren Lincoln
Dan McCarthy
Bruce Nimmo
Scott Russell
Gian Singh
Yvonne Smith
Andrew Tong

30 YEARS

Scott Baird
Edith Chan
Michael Chin
Ben Czelenski
Robert Guenther
John Henrey
Charles Johnstone
Thomas Knoepfel
Daren Liggett
Michael McCammon
Sohan Parmar
Peter David Walters
Philip Winkler
Edwin Kwok Yu Yan

35 YEARS

Murray Carpenter
Sandra Cawley
Ross Dalpre
David Godfrey
Brian Hawkins
Kenneth Hollett
Patrick Kelly
Ian McCurrach
Steven Reid
Greta Soo
Daniel Stewart
Gary Wiebe
Margaret Wai-Kay Wong
John Zaikow

40 YEARS

Ian Charles Glen
Fred Lindsay
Keath Gordon Williams
Steven Wong

45 YEARS

Danny Boyd
John Dean
William F. Fife
Glenn Lathrop
Wayne Frederick Williams

46 YEARS

Ronald Farrington
Ronald J. Schuss

47 YEARS

Graham Allen
John D'Eathe
Stanley W. Hamilton
Rudy Nielsen
Donald Taylor

48 YEARS

John W.E. Hayes
Ronald P. Reynolds

49 YEARS

Kenneth A. Johnson
Lloyd Gary Kenwood

50 YEARS

Michael Naish
Andrew Pearson

51 YEARS

Harold L. Waddell

53 YEARS

Vaughan Bruneau

56 YEARS

Ian Macnaughton

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BUILDING FOR COMMUNITY NEEDS

Graham Wood, RI

There is a “Skid Row” in many towns and cities, historically named after the skids that were placed on city streets to help drive lumber to mills. Disadvantaged people often lived near these skids in hopes of earning employment, and the name took on the connotation within cities that had similar poor populations, often without permanent housing, looking for work.

Unfortunately, Vancouver has its own contemporary community analogous to Skid Row—the Downtown Eastside—a community that has grown organically out of its conditions, near to the Canadian Pacific Railway lands that served as the Pacific Terminus, built to spur economic growth and prosperity for all by connecting Vancouver to the industrial hubs of Toronto and Montreal.

The Bloom Group Community Services Society (Bloom) is a nondenominational organization that grew out of St. James Community Services Society, which has served the Downtown Eastside (DTES) community for almost 60 years. Bloom operates a number of facilities in the DTES and throughout Vancouver, providing people with housing options. We also offer services that provide support for people with mental health issues, shelters for women and their families who are fleeing violence, and hospice services.

One of our facilities is Somerville Place, a 31-unit affordable housing facility that also contains our central administrative office. Somerville Place was named after Archbishop David Somerville who, in 1955, wrote about the needs in the DTES, now captured on a plaque:

When a grownup man struggles to keep back tears as he tells of his disappointment and humiliation—when the broken shoes and worn dirty clothes tell their story of sleeping in box cars, you can’t refuse to help him. You can only keep on giving until there is nothing left.

The words on this plaque are a plea for more help, and more support. They capture, poignantly, the urgency of the situation that was apparent in 1955—the loss of dignity and the suffering—not unlike the challenges we face today.

RESULTS, NOT CAUSES

John Steinbeck, in his seminal novel *The Grapes of Wrath*,¹ emphasizes that social frustration, loneliness, unemployment, and homelessness are not caused by areas like Skid Row





The View (250 Powell Street)

The View opened in the fall of 2015 after the building was transformed from a former remand centre into 96 units of affordable housing in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, of which:

- 42 units have been designed to meet the affordable housing needs of people with low to moderate incomes, with a priority given to those already working and/or living in the Downtown Eastside
- 38 units, including eight rented at the shelter rate, are designated for Indigenous youth participating in the BladeRunners trades training program
- 16 units, also priced at the shelter rate, are designated for women transitioning out of emergency or transitional housing facilities operated by The Bloom Group and YWCA Crabtree Corner



**Powell Place / Santiago Lodge –
Shared Courtyard
(329/333 Powell Street)**

Powell Place provides emergency shelter for women in crisis while supporting them to foster their independence, enhance their skills, and find and remain in permanent housing. The facility allows for integrated community services on site, offering accessible and individualized supports for women in crisis. In 2015 it doubled its occupancy from 26 beds to 52.

In addition to funding from all three levels of government, the 2015 Capital Campaign, led by Cindy Beedie, raised over \$1.2 million to assist with the renovation.

At Santiago Lodge, 25 residents live more independently with access to an on-site licensed practical nurse and a variety of community supports that promote health, recovery, social inclusion, and independence. The programming in Santiago includes:

- one-bedrooms or studios with kitchenettes and bathrooms
- common lounge areas and common laundry facilities
- full-time licensed practical nurse (LPN)
- organized group activities
- “worker program” that provides monthly allowance for residents that choose to assist with building upkeep or help lead group activities



- 1 John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, New York: The Viking Press, 1939.
- 2 Baxter, E. and Harper, K., *Private Lives/Public Spaces: Homeless Adults on the Streets of New York City*, New York: Community Service Society of New York, 1981.



or the DTES, but rather are a result of past policies, actions and inactions, and a great lack of awareness of impact. People, at their core, have a need to create, a need to work, a need to be active participants in their communities and to be able to utilize homes as a form of security, as a base to grow and to prosper. Steinbeck writes:

Results, not causes; results, not causes. The causes lie deep and simply—the causes are a hunger in a stomach, multiplied a million times; a hunger in a single soul, hunger for joy and some security, multiplied a million times; muscles and mind aching to grow, to work, to create, multiplied a million times. The last clear definite function of man—muscles aching to work, minds aching to create beyond the single need—this is man.

Every day I walk around the community where I work, by Oppenheimer Park, through our alleys, over needles and beside soup lines. Every day I see the people of this community, here as a result of fundamental flaws, complex and symptomatic, and I think, “Muscles aching to work, minds aching to create,” to a point where it has become a mantra. I can’t speak for everyone in this industry, but I imagine most come to work wanting to help facilitate that change.

BEYOND THE STATUS QUO

When it comes time to support this community through development efforts, the needs of the community, which are without doubt complex, need to be understood. Past efforts and current housing have, until very recently, been reactive and, as demonstrated in countless news items and bylines, not entirely effective.

In 1981, two anthropologists, Ellen Baxter and Kia Harper, captured the plight of the homeless population living in New York City in *Private Lives/Public Spaces: Homeless Adults on the Streets of New York City*,² calling then for comprehensive policy change:

The problem of homelessness has reached such extraordinary proportions in recent years that it can no longer be dealt with in piecemeal fashion. A comprehensive, well-integrated policy is desperately needed, one that will insist upon the joint responsibilities of city, state, and voluntary agencies and recognize that coordinated action by mental health and social service departments is essential. For mentally disabled individuals on the street, the distinction between clinical and survival needs has long lost any meaning.

What was true for New York City in 1981 is echoed in Vancouver in 2019. We still have homeless individuals living in the tents of Oppenheimer Park, looking for food in dumpsters in our alleys and sleeping over commercial exhaust outlets simply trying to stay warm. The loss of dignity that was sensed by Somerville in 1955 in Vancouver had already been identified by Steinbeck in 1939, in his fictional representation of migrant workers in the Great Depression—and it continues today. I can see why some people think that this issue will be too hard to solve, but these are the challenges that should unite people in our industry and in our communities. The status quo is not enough.

Fortunately, we are in a time when all levels of government—municipal, provincial, and federal—have come to the table to help. We have seen joint provincial and municipal projects like temporary modular housing for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The Province (through BC Housing) has committed to help build supportive housing, Indigenous housing (both on- and off-reserve) and increase the number of units for other targeted populations, such as women fleeing violence, while increasing the supply of affordable units in the market through partnerships with non-profits and private sector developers alike. At the federal level, CMHC



is aiming to create housing options for all by 2030—an ambitious goal.

While all of these plans are welcome, I worry about the lack of capacity within our industry to deliver on these promises. I worry that housing problems that have, for decades, been left more or less unattended—but for the grace of community organizations—can now be rapidly changed and solved overnight. Homeless communities like those at Skid Row in Los Angeles, or in and around Oppenheimer Park and the DTES, did not occur rapidly. Like any community, they grew out of the results of policy, the results of industrial growth, and, far more often than not, the results of personal and historical traumas, leading in many cases to self-medication, harm, addictions, educational and developmental challenges, and low employment. These are not easy problems. Bold ambitions will require equally bold and understandable policies.

I have looked at attempts to address these issues, and one of the plans that struck me and may have played a role in leading me into the community service industry was the Kettle-Boffo project in East Vancouver. At its core, this was a partnership between a non-profit community group, The Kettle Society, and Boffo Properties. While the concept wasn't successful and did not move beyond the planning stages for a number of reasons, the fact that the groups were able to work together, for so long, under a common goal to provide additional supported housing units within a privately built development, is amazing. Far too often the real value provided by non-profits and charities—such as Kettle, or groups like ours, among countless others in communities throughout BC—is never fully recognized.

DEVELOPMENT AS INTERVENTION

Community groups like The Bloom Group grew out of recognizing that there is an absolute gap in our system where people need support. Without this support, the costs are enormous for those suffering and for society at large. Vancouver has its ever-present first responders being called out for overdoses, police tasked with cleaning up parks, hospital beds utilized as ad-hoc housing, all at exorbitant rates because there are simply not enough spaces and supports.

Speaking of economics, Bloom is beginning to look at housing and services as an intervention and tying the costs saved by the creation of a development as line items in proformas. Some calculations have been done to evaluate the “social return on investment” (SROI), which is a general metric trying to show how investment in community has ratios of returns, but its methodology hasn't necessarily been transparent nor has it been

adopted by the decision-makers or funding bodies it was targeted to affect. When properly implemented and supported, social service organizations can and do reduce the burden on cities: We reduce call-outs to first responders, we reduce stays in hospital beds, and we even facilitate training and employment and see successes, however small at first, of individuals rising beyond their conditions. When properly supported, we reduce some of the financial burden that would otherwise be borne across the system. In effect, we are the community amenity contribution (CAC) and I will welcome any partner who wants to make that argument with us and effect positive change.

Real estate developers must understand that the housing we create will help enable people to meet their core needs—to facilitate their need to work, nurture the sense of creation, and support those efforts. This could and should include looking closely at the planning and policies from over a long period of time and learning from them. Cities are slowly moving toward recognizing the enabling nature of housing, but the process is long, arduous, and sometimes doesn't even involve consulting with the community groups that, through their years of knowledge and application, can best deliver those services.

Development projects from social service organizations like Bloom aren't dissimilar from for-profit development and should rely on similar fundamentals. Where a for-profit market relies on absorption rates, construction costs, and returns on equity, non-profits are driven by service delivery, support, and impact. Our economic returns have not traditionally been measured at their source, and more often than not, the greatest social returns are not in what we produce, but what we prevent. Traditional social service metrics have been qualitative, and Bloom is reaching to better quantify these positive impacts. Impacts to communities and to individuals by offering stability, dignity, and meeting core needs. Impacts to the economy by reducing costs and facilitating employment and training. Again, we are the community amenity contribution.

Understanding the needs of the community creates a clear and necessary path to creating change. When embarking on projects that acknowledge community needs, changing and clarifying policies and quantifying the value of these projects is critical to ensure that the right change and right approaches are taken. While non-profits do not see development projects as products, a social development project should, fundamentally, define the positive effects it produces for communities.

Photos by The Bloom Group.

ON THE JOB



CINDY NESSELBECK, RI

**LAND CONSULTANT,
SELF-EMPLOYED**



WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL ROLE?

I specialize in providing real estate services for municipalities and regional districts. I am responsible for negotiating land and property transactions within the framework of regulations that are specific to local governments. This includes the Local Government Act, the Community Charter, and the Expropriation Act. In my current role, the projects are primarily acquisition focused, ranging from right-of-way interests to full property acquisitions.

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR DAY?

My typical day is spent in my office, generally following up on various aspects of current projects. Site visits do not occur as often as you might think. With the use of Google Earth and the resources available on the internet, coupled with the ability to communicate via cell phone, email, and video-conference, I am able to accomplish the majority of my tasks in a very efficient and effective manner from my office. In addition to regular communications with clients and property owners, I also routinely work with lawyers, surveyors, engineers, appraisers, and other government representatives to achieve the project goals.

WHAT PREPARED YOU FOR THIS ROLE?

When I graduated from the Urban Land Economics program in 1990, I was employed by the British Columbia Buildings Corporation, a Crown corporation responsible for providing real estate accommodations for the provincial government. BCBC was the largest landlord in the province, with a portfolio of owned and leased real estate assets ranging from rural facilities to downtown office

buildings. During my 17-year tenure with BCBC, I gained experience in many facets of the real estate profession.

After moving from Victoria to Nanaimo I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work for the City of Nanaimo, both as a property agent and subsequently as manager of their Real Estate Division.

WHAT DO YOU FIND CHALLENGING ABOUT IT?

The challenges are always project specific and relate to finding the common ground between the parties so that a deal can be made. Every deal is different. It is influenced not only by the specific property and its particular complexities but also by the people and personalities involved and their distinct interests and objectives.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT YOUR WORK?

I enjoy working with the variety of stakeholders that become involved in a project. I also enjoy the legal and technical aspects of negotiating land transactions.

Ultimately, I enjoy putting together agreements that address the interests of all of the parties. It is rewarding to participate in progressive initiatives of a local government in a way that leaves both the client and the impacted property owners satisfied with the outcome.

RI

IMPACT INVESTING IN SOCIAL PURPOSE REAL ESTATE

Jennifer Johnstone

When properties or facilities are owned and operated by mission-based and non-profit organizations or investors for the purpose of community benefit and to achieve blended value returns, this is called social purpose real estate. Investing in social purpose real estate can deliver financial and social returns that improve our communities and improve the lives of our neighbours in need.

Central City Foundation has been playing a role in inner city developments since 1907. More than a hundred years ago, a small group of neighbours decided to start a mission for poor and unemployed men in Vancouver's inner city. They sold 10-dollar "shares" in community and funded their first building on Abbott Street to be used as a community mission to feed and help neighbours in the inner city. Since then, the foundation has grown and diversified, but our mission remains to work together to transform community and build hope.

INVESTMENTS WITH IMPACT

Central City Foundation is a leader in Canada in social purpose real estate. Our unique model, of investing in real estate to house other community organizations who further our mission to improve lives, is working. The blended financial and social return on these investments is remarkable and our donors see impressive community impact.

Today we are a \$50-million foundation. We are not faith-based or formed from a family trust, but rather

have stayed true to our roots as a community foundation funded by individuals who want to help their neighbours. We help our neighbours in three ways: providing funding and support for programs, undertaking capital projects, and through social purpose real estate.

Our grants support dozens of innovative, community-led programs run by community partners. We are often the first funder of a program and one of the few willing to take on capital funding projects. But it's not just our grants that benefit our neighbours. Where others won't invest, Central City Foundation will, because we listen to our community partners and fund innovative solutions that fit their needs.

Capital from the foundation is invested in buildings and facilities that provide low-income housing and space and place for community organizations that are improving lives through unique early learning and education programs, daycares, health and family services, addiction treatment centres, and social enterprises.

We make good real estate investments and good investments in community. That's what social purpose real estate is—impact investments that benefit the community and provide a return, both financial and social, for investors. We have come to understand the critical importance of providing safe, secure, and affordable spaces for community organizations as the key to creating innovative and effective community programs that truly help people today as well as effect a lasting impact.



Ashnola at the Crossing in Keremeos.

ON THE GROUND

We currently own five social purpose real estate properties in BC, with other investments on our horizon soon. Our holdings include 75,000 square feet of urban properties and a 58-acre site in rural BC.

Each of our buildings serves a social purpose. In Vancouver, we own two buildings that provide housing, and whose commercial space is used by community groups to provide health services at highly subsidized rents. Another Vancouver building, the Phil Bouvier Family Centre, is used to provide childcare and family community activities led by Indigenous service organizations.

In New Westminster, we own the building used by Aunt Leah's Place. For more than 25 years, Aunt Leah's has strived to prevent children in foster care from becoming

homeless and to help young mothers in need from losing custody of their children. Aunt Leah's headquarters in our building is rented under a subsidized lease, providing office space for administrative and support staff, a youth space, a beautiful kitchen, and the security of tenure to be able to provide services to young people.

And finally, we also own the facility in Keremeos that houses Ashnola at the Crossing, a provincial, 22-bed treatment program for youth and young adults, age 17-24, from across BC who have serious, chronic substance use issues.

More than 10 years ago, because members of the community alerted us to the great need for addictions treatment for youth, we bought the Crossing facility in the Similkameen Valley and renovated it to be used as a long-term residential treatment facility. It operated from 2009 until 2015, providing much-needed care and support to



Aunt Leah's Place in New Westminster (above) and Abbott Mansion in Vancouver (right).

more than 400 youth. When funding for the program was stopped four years ago, we held the space and kept it ready while we worked diligently with government and private partners to reopen the program.

The new Ashnola at the Crossing program opened in 2017. BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services, part of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), oversees the program in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. The program is operated by Pacific Community Resources Society. Central City Foundation continues to own the facility, and we provide the Crossing buildings and rural site to PHSA rent-free. Keeping the site available shows how we, as investors, are committed to long-term supports for the people in our community who need them.

PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER

While we've benefitted from real estate values, rising prices have put horrible pressure on non-profits to sell land and buildings. The skyrocketing real estate market has put an extra premium on the ability to hold community space.

Working with the most vulnerable people in the city, community organizations are themselves feeling the impact of the rising cost of living and the lack of

affordable real estate. Our buildings offer a safe and stable space for our neighbours and community partners at highly subsidized rents so they can build a thriving community. For non-profit organizations, having us as their landlord offers a security of tenure that leaves them space to thrive and innovate, to take risks in programming that benefit their clients and our community.

We see ourselves as part of a bigger sector, the sector of community purpose real estate. We believe it's important to hold on to community properties in the face of gentrification and high-end luxury real estate. This is how we build community and how we address community issues.

We are a founding member of the Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative, which works to promote impact investing in real estate. Our investments are a model of how real estate investment can provide not just a financial return but also a tangible return in community good.

In 2015, we undertook a study to measure our social return on investment, to capture both the financial return on our real estate portfolio as well as measure our mission impact. Using a proxy-based model, we determined that, very conservatively, for every \$1 we invest in social purpose real estate, we create \$3.90 in social benefit. We see an 18% combined social and financial return on



our invested capital and we create a further \$11 million in indirect community benefit each year.

We're starting to think about our next project, and we'll face the same challenges as every investor—the cost of land, cost for development, building costs, financial challenges, and more. But we look for more than just a financial return. We know that investing in our community isn't just the right thing to do, it's the only thing to do in order to keep our cities thriving and supportive for all our residents.

Central City Foundation has more than 100 years of proof that providing safe, secure, and affordable spaces for community organizations is the key to creating innovative and effective programs that improve the lives of our neighbours in need. We stand as an example of how impact investing in social purpose real estate can bring a financial and social return on investments.

Photos by Central City Foundation.

RI

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OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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Community engagement event hosted by Hogan's Alley Society.



5 WAYS TO BUILD EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES NOW

Stephanie Allen

Last December at REIBC's Presidents Luncheon, joined by fellow panelist Jennifer Johnstone from Central City Foundation, I discussed the work we are doing to balance the risk and return of social purpose real estate—how we work from principles of equity and inclusion and how we combine traditional financial models, socially motivated investors, and community-led initiatives to build assets that create or preserve some of the most dynamic and thriving parts of our cities.

One of the key themes in the presentation was that equitable societies are safer, more resilient, and provide a more stable economic environment, which in turn increases wellbeing for all city-dwellers. At the end of the presentation I offered up a challenge to attendees: If we think about equitable city-building as a collective responsibility, how can you and your organization get involved?

Here are five ways for your organization to immediately contribute to equitable community development, wherever you may work.

1. HIRE AND DEVELOP DIVERSE TEAMS THROUGHOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION AND INCLUDE A DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVES IN DECISION-MAKING

By now the secret is out: Diverse teams that represent all walks of life perform better, innovate quicker, and are more resilient during challenging times. According to a 2017 article in *Forbes*,¹ decisions made and executed by diverse teams delivered 60% better results, and decision-making improves as team diversity increases. More effective decision-making is 95% correlated with positive financial performance.

In contrast, situations where an all-male team made a decision that was executed by a gender-diverse group there was a 15% drop in performance. By including women, people who are racialized, disabled, LGBTQ2S+, Indigenous, new immigrants, and different ages on your teams and in decision-making, not only will your organization better represent the communities in which you work, you'll improve your profitability.



2. USE YOUR PURCHASING POWER TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Similar to hiring equitably, you can purchase equitably. BC is a hotbed of social enterprises and non-profit organizations that provide outstanding-quality products and services. According to the Social Enterprise Council of Canada, social enterprises are community-based businesses that sell goods or services in the marketplace to achieve a social, cultural, or environmental purpose; they reinvest their profits to maximize their social mission.

For example, BladeRunners is an employment service program that provides job training for youth with barriers to employment. The organization has been providing skilled labourers to construction projects for 16 years in cities across BC. And Potluck Café & Catering employs residents from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside in its food catering enterprise and are a go-to for many organizations' meetings and events.

Social enterprises and non-profits can be found in most sectors and provide outstanding-quality goods and services. Even when it comes to smaller purchases, seeking out and investing in local, community-based organizations and social entrepreneurs has a multiplier effect on community wellbeing.

3. GET INVOLVED IN LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The skillsets and capacities of REIBC members are enormous and span a broad range of disciplines. Many of you are already giving back in your local communities, but if you want to get involved, consider some of the following ideas where your expertise could provide much-needed support to grassroots, community-based organizations:

- Join the board or volunteer with a non-profit organization or social enterprise that aligns with your passions and values.
- Offer your staff paid time off to volunteer a day or more per year (also doubles as a great team-building activity when done as a group!).
- Show up and add your support to community-led events and initiatives.

¹ Erik Larson, "New Research: Diversity + Inclusion = Better Decision Making at Work," *Forbes*, September 21, 2017.



City of Vancouver Northeast False Creek design charette (far left) and community organizing picnic for Hogan's Alley Society's African Canadian Cultural Centre (left).

4. MAKE TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENTS AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME

Cities and towns across the province are facing major pressures to improve existing infrastructures to support the wellbeing of all residents, from housing and transit to community amenities and public spaces. While often well received, there are times that new social purpose real estate projects are met with concern or resistance. As real estate professionals, you are uniquely qualified to understand the technical aspects of projects and offer your voice into the public process in ways that can dispel myths and promote greater inclusion.

BC Housing has developed a *Community Acceptance of Non-Market Housing Toolkit* that can be used by local community groups, non-profit organizations, and local governments to mobilize supporters and facilitate acceptance of community housing developments. For those who want to increase their professional capacity, the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) provides training and resources for professionals from all sectors about community engagement.

When people representing a broad range of backgrounds participate in the democratic process to support local development opportunities that benefit all community members, it is one of the most powerful drivers of positive change we have.

5. BUDGET TIME IN YOUR PROJECTS TO CONNECT WITH THE NEIGHBOURS

If you're like most real estate professionals, your work schedule is maxed out with little breathing room for extras. While it may seem impossible to find time to do more than the required amount of community engagement, by spending time getting to know what is special about a neighbourhood from the people who call it home, you may discover the kind of information that could greatly enrich your work. It may also allow you to participate in protecting valuable cultural assets while supporting the kind of development needed to meet the demands of our growing urban areas.

Sometimes people worry that equity-based initiatives are an erosion of power structures, but I'd suggest seeing it as a means to smooth out imbalances that have created systems that are neither economically efficient nor optimize our available resources. These inequities also fail to nurture the human potential in many of our fellow residents, which is a loss for our entire society.

As real estate professionals we work in one of the most vital aspects of human wellbeing: the places in which we live, play, and pursue our dreams. If we bring together our diverse interests with the goal of inclusive and equitable communities, it will lead to more prosperous, sustainable, and vibrant places to live that leave no one behind.

Photos by Stephanie Allen.



Kitsilano Neighbourhood House redevelopment opened in Vancouver in 2014 with community and program space as well as new seniors' housing. Owned by ANHBC Foundation and operated by Kitsilano Neighbourhood House. Photo by BC Housing.

MAKING AN IMPACT WITH SOCIAL PURPOSE REAL ESTATE

Jacqueline Gijssen and Joycelyn Guan

As the lack of affordable housing garners headlines, space for community within Vancouver and BC's real estate markets is becoming increasingly inaccessible. Affordability affects more than just housing; non-profits and social enterprises, like small businesses, are under distress and being displaced. This distress results in impacts on families, businesses, and communities, when citizens cannot access the programs and services they seek or require.

To no one's surprise, the crisis of affordable space that began in the Vancouver area now encompasses Metro Vancouver, the Sea-to-Sky Corridor, Sunshine Coast, Victoria and areas of Vancouver Island up through Nanaimo, and parts of the Okanagan. This geographic spread is reflective of the crisis moving beyond BC's urban centres, but it is worth noting that social purpose real estate is not just an urban phenomenon. In neighbourhoods, smaller towns, and rural areas, these spaces also play a role on the flip side of the real estate equation, aiding with economic and community development and revitalization.

Despite Vancouver's notoriety as one of the least affordable markets in the world, affordability is in fact a global issue—one that casts a deep shadow across the non-profit and social enterprise sectors. The Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative (SPRE) was created in response to this crisis.

REAL ESTATE FOR GROWTH AND RESILIENCE

In order to build resilient communities, we need spaces to gather, exchange, work, and create. It is vital that these community spaces are located throughout our cities and neighbourhoods and that there is community control over these spaces, so that non-profits and

social enterprises can bring their substantive expertise, resourcefulness, and leveraging abilities to solve community challenges.

The non-profit and social enterprise sector (the social purpose sector) is an economic force made up of entrepreneurs and innovators.¹ This sector, whose spaces include childcares, youth and senior centres, arts and culture spaces, food security and environmental projects, community and health service centres, neighbourhood houses, social innovation spaces, non-market housing, and more, enables the growth of strong, healthy communities—resilient communities. In the face of growing social, environmental, and economic challenges, the social purpose sector is also a vital player in rallying, nurturing, and aiding communities in times of crisis.

The Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative helps non-profits and social enterprises with their real estate needs. SPRE looks at social purpose real estate as any space that non-profits or social enterprises use to deliver their programs and services and/or operate from. Formally, SPRE defines it as "... the property and facilities owned and operated by mission-based organizations and investors for the purpose of community benefit and to achieve blended value returns."² Such spaces can be for-profit, non-profit, or charitable, as long as they are "mission-based"—dedicated to delivering a social or environmental benefit for society. Foundations and governments own social purpose real estate, as do the private and non-profit sectors. Indeed, non-profit community-owned assets are a growing sphere of interest and concern—places of worship, legions, and community

1 Non-profits alone (not including social enterprises) account for 8.5% of Canada's GDP: "Non-profit institutions and volunteering: Economic contribution, 2007-2017," Statistics Canada, released March 5, 2019.

2 See socialpurposerealestate.net/about/what-is-spre.

halls are facing an onslaught of development interest as well as changing audiences and congregations. Most importantly, though, they have the potential to dramatically enhance their mission and their operating/capital pro-formas through redevelopment and enhancement of properties and services, including potential non-market housing.

A COLLABORATIVE OF FUNDERS AND INVESTORS

Now celebrating its tenth year, SPRE was launched by a group of funders and investors, including government, that work with non-profits and social enterprise clients struggling to find affordable, suitable, secure, and sustainable space. The SPRE Collaborative, now numbering 15 organizations and civic departments, works to strategically mitigate the impacts of the real estate market on these sectors. SPRE focuses on building awareness,³ building capacity and skills, delivering research projects, and aiding with long-term policy and partnership development.

The SPRE Collaborative is just that—a true collaborative. Vancity Community Foundation acts as the collaborative’s secretariat. SPRE members contribute approximately \$5,000 each per year to create a base operating budget, and one part-time staff member and occasional interns or research assistants enable the work. The real power comes from mobilizing the members of the Collaborative—leveraging individual and collective knowledge, expertise, and activities for common advancement.

SPRE partners with other organizations to deliver larger projects. The 2013 landmark study *RENT – LEASE – OWN: Understanding the Real Estate Challenges Affecting the Not-for-Profit, Social Purpose and Cultural Sectors in Metro Vancouver* was a project achieved in partnership with the Real Estate Institute of BC. This study documented for the first time the critical issue of non-profit and community space set within the context of the commercial real estate market. In 2019–2020, the study will see a deepening and updating thanks to support by SPRE members—the Real Estate Foundation of BC, BC Housing, and Vancity.

Advancing capacity in the sector and beyond comes through formal training workshops, conferences, bursaries, site visits, and by enabling collaborative partnerships. In 2010 and again in 2015,⁴ SPRE convened the first-ever international conferences on social purpose

SPRE COLLABORATIVE

BC Housing
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)
Canadian Heritage
Central City Foundation
City of New Westminster
City of Richmond
City of Vancouver (Affordable Housing, Social Policy, and Cultural Services)
Community Impact Real Estate Society
Metro Vancouver
Real Estate Foundation of BC
Renewal Partners
Vancity Community Foundation
Vancity Credit Union

real estate, drawing attention and support for non-profit community space. SPRE develops and provides access to resources through the website and, as noted, conducts research. Most recently, SPRE has been active in delivering a series of deep dive *Case Studies* and high-level *Space Profiles* to help build the crucial awareness and knowledge of social purpose real estate.

It should be noted that SPRE focuses on the broad spectrum of social purpose spaces. While non-market housing comes into play through mixed-use projects, it is well represented by other organizations, such as the BC Non-Profit Housing Association and the Cooperative Housing Federation of BC. Having BC Housing and CMHC at the SPRE table is a welcome addition to ensure the sectors do not silo, but rather engage in finding solutions that work across all types of spaces.

RETURNS ON INVESTMENT

Empowering the non-profit and social enterprise sector ensures its continued contribution to our overall economic success and the building of strong and healthy communities. The social, financial, environmental, and resiliency return on investment is not only worth it, it is vital.

Returns on investment in social purpose real estate are impressive. Studies into the economic and social benefits give hard numbers to that impact.⁵ Led by organizations like Central City Foundation, others are increasingly harnessing the potential of their core capital (not just their granting dollars) to invest in social purpose impact. It is a story being told and growing in importance everywhere as citizens see the results of their efforts to ensure their financial institutions, investment portfolios, and

3 To follow SPRE on social media, see @space4community.

4 In 2015, the Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative partnered with the Nonprofit Centers Network to convene Building Opportunities/Connecting Possibilities: The Social Purpose Real Estate Conference, Vancouver, BC.

5 *Putting a Dollar Value on Doing Good Things for Community*, Central City Foundation Community Report, Vancouver, BC, 2015.



HiVE co-working space (above) in Vancouver is at the forefront of shared work space with its particular focus on supporting non-profits, social enterprises, and small businesses through its social impact mission. The space is privately owned and leased to the HiVE. Photo by HiVE.

Centrepoin in Squamish (left) opened in 2017 with non-market housing, Sea-to-Sky Community Services program, administrative spaces, and program and worship space for Squamish United Church. Project by Squamish United Church and Sea to Sky Community Services, with BC Housing as a third strata partner. Photo by J. L. Gijssen.

SPRE visiting BC Artscape's Sun Wah Chinatown Project in Vancouver (below), featuring 50,000 square feet of artist and cultural space. Privately owned on long-term lease to BC Artscape. Photo by J.L. Gijssen.





Artspeak Gallery Artist Run Centre in Vancouver has been at the forefront of strategically investing in land assets to serve their programming needs with this building (above), which opened in 1997, and a second space in 2016. Both spaces are non-profit owned and operated. Photo by Nyampeta.

philanthropic gifts deliver—financially, environmentally, and socially.

As a collaborative that until recently had no staff, SPRE's ability to leverage its members' expertise and influence has been its strongest asset. SPRE members learn from one another and collectively are able to better influence and impact the crisis affecting non-profit community real estate. They continue to work on scaling up while ensuring the retention of current strengths, and they advocate strongly for the model that they have created—a "non-organization"—a collaborative of partners that share the common interest of making space for community. SPRE continues to add members seeking to gain from the Collaborative's collective value and recently was the inspiration for the City of Toronto working with the Toronto United Way to create a social purpose real estate committee for that city.

INFLUENCING CHANGE

SPRE's influence has been broad. From inspiring the creation of a non-profit development company to empowering non-profits to sign stronger lease contracts, creating long-term real estate strategies, and embarking on property redevelopment, SPRE and its members provide direct and indirect expertise, funding, connections, and support. SPRE itself is not a funder nor a property owner; rather, it works via its 15 members to provide access to a vast array of these types of services.



Victoria Social Innovation Centre, in Victoria, is a project of Family Services of Greater Victoria and Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society, who together purchased the property that opened in 2018 with new headquarters and service delivery space for both organizations, a childcare space, and lease space for other non-profits. Photo by J.L. Gijssen.

SPRE is regularly called on to advise on government policy—zoning and land use changes currently being some of the more critical areas of activity. SPRE itself, and through its members, also spends a good amount of time advising non-profits and social enterprises, in various stages of growth, on real estate options. All this work has meant that social and community service groups, arts and culture organizations, and those working in environment and other social purpose areas are accessing and securing decent-quality affordable space, and thus are able to focus precious resources on delivering the programs and services needed by communities.

Fundamental to both the success of SPRE and the creation of social purpose real estate is understanding that it takes many partners, including government, the private sector, and the non-profit sector, to solve the space crisis. It is important to focus beyond the short term and to avoid creating silos or divisions that waste time and resources. This is where SPRE has been so successful—in bringing together diverse member groups for effective and efficient action.

At the recent 2019 Land Summit, SPRE, as an Allied Partner, engaged with an audience of planners, architects, developers, real estate professionals, and others. The response was inspiring: Over 50% of the audience knew of or were working with social purpose real estate projects. To quote one delegate, "Social purpose...is putting hope back into real estate!"

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ASK A LAWYER

John McLachlan, RI, LLB, and Nicole Wong, JD

Q: *What is the state of social housing in Vancouver and the role of partnerships?*

A:

The housing affordability crisis in Vancouver is no secret, and it remains one of the most significant challenges that the City faces at present. High housing costs have only exacerbated existing housing problems. Particularly affected are the individuals who rely on rent supplements or social housing developments that are subsidized by the government.

A number of innovative solutions have been developed in response to these mounting problems. Increasingly, Vancouver has recognized the need to address housing issues through sustainable partnerships between itself and various government bodies, non-profit organizations, and private investors. An overview of the parties involved in these partnerships will be discussed, as well as the benefits and drawbacks that may stem from such collaborations.

The City of Vancouver sets out ambitious targets for social housing in its *Housing Vancouver Strategy*. This strategy indicates that there is a need for 12,000 additional units of social, supportive, and non-profit or cooperative housing over the course of ten years in Vancouver.¹ In order to meet these targets, the City has identified a number of key potential contributors with which it can form lasting partnerships. These contributors include the federal and provincial governments and a number of organizations that fall into the community housing sector—which includes non-profit and cooperative housing providers, community land trusts, municipalities, charities and faith-based groups, private sector organizations, and financial institutions interested in building or maintaining the supply of affordable housing.²

Collaboration among these parties appears to be crucial for the success of social housing development.

FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

The federal and provincial governments are crucial parties when approaching the development of social housing. Historically, these entities were the main funders of non-profit and cooperative housing. Particularly in Vancouver, federal and provincial government programs were responsible for much of the city's affordable housing units from the 1960s to the 1980s; however, these programs were cut in the early 1990s.³ No longer were governments providing the same level of direct assistance and funding. With a lack of new affordable housing to replace the old existing stock, the impact of these cuts have become increasingly apparent with the ensuing years. This impact demonstrates how government policy is a key determinate of housing trends.

Although the above program cuts frame the impact of government policy on housing trends in a negative light, government policy can also have positive effects on housing. For example, government can enact housing policy with tax incentives promoting business investments, federal insurance for mortgages, and direct assistance for affordable housing construction.

- 1 City of Vancouver, *Housing Vancouver Strategy*, Vancouver: Housing Vancouver, 2018, <https://council.vancouver.ca/20171128/documents/rr1appendixa.pdf>. Accessed 30 May 2019 at 24.
- 2 British Columbia, Rental Housing Coalition, *An Affordable Housing Plan for BC*, British Columbia: Housing Central, https://bcnpha.ca/wp_bcnpha/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/BC_Affordable_Housing_Plan.pdf at 5.
- 3 Supra note 1 at 13.



Partnerships with organizations like the Union Gospel Mission, which is breaking ground on new housing for women and children, are behind the success of the more than 20,000 new homes complete or underway in nearly 80 communities throughout the province. Photo and caption by Province of BC (flickr/CC).

Fortunately, it appears that the current federal government has taken steps away from the 1990s mentality and is attempting to enact policy to further drive social housing development. In 2018, the federal government prepared its first-ever *National Housing Strategy*, with one of the strategy's specific goals being its commitment to further affordable housing.⁴ One example of the federal government's commitment to affordable housing is demonstrated through the \$15.9 billion federally managed National Housing Co-Investment Fund.⁵ This fund is expected to create up to 60,000 units of affordable and community housing through monetary contributions and loans or through the transfer of up to \$200 million in federal land to affordable housing providers over the next ten years.⁶ However, the federal government cannot effectively utilize this fund alone, which will become more evident through the discussion below concerning the community housing sector.

Additionally, the unique relationship between federal and provincial governments should be highlighted when discussing the state of social housing development. In many cases, the federal government appears to rely on the provinces and territories as both another source of funding and a vehicle with which to channel those funds. Approximately 80% of all community housing is administered by the provinces and territories.⁷ This

interdependent relationship is apparent through the \$4.3 billion Canada Community Housing Initiative, through which the federal government will provide support to the provinces and territories in order to build a sustainable, community-based housing sector.⁸ This initiative still falls under the *National Housing Strategy*, but remains separate from the National Housing Co-Investment Fund. Although the federal government provides the money, the provinces must meet certain requirements in order to participate in this initiative. Provinces must agree to cost-match the funding they receive from the federal government and must also guarantee that the overall number of households supported by community housing is not decreased. By putting these requirements in place, the federal government can be somewhat assured that its funding is indeed being utilized for its intended purpose.

As the *National Housing Strategy* demonstrates, it is clear that the bulk of funding for social housing projects is still derived from the federal and provincial governments. However, complications can arise from this top-down approach in which the vast majority of decisions and resources for affordable housing stems from senior levels of government. A heavy reliance on government as the single source of funding can result in strict operating agreements and a lack of flexibility.⁹ This in turn makes it difficult for managers of social housing developments to adopt housing strategies that address the most current

4 Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, *Canada's National Housing Strategy: a place to call home*, Gatineau: Employment and Social Development Canada, 2018, <https://www.placetocallhome.ca/pdfs/Canada-National-Housing-Strategy.pdf>. Accessed 30 May 2019.

5 Ibid at 10.

6 Ibid at 12.

7 Ibid at 13.

8 Ibid.

9 Supra note 2 at 16.



M. Mitchell Place, a 52-unit supportive housing project in Vancouver. The building is dedicated to the memory of Margaret Mitchell, who served as the member of Parliament for Vancouver East for 14 years. Created as part of the Province's Building BC: Rapid Response to Homelessness program, the temporary modular homes will be operated by PHS Community Services. The new homes were constructed by BC manufacturer Horizon North. The BC government provided capital funding of \$8 million and will provide an annual operating and support service subsidy. Photo and caption by Province of BC (flickr/CC).

social issues and allow for the most efficient use of resources to aid those who rely upon social housing. Sole reliance on government funding also leaves social housing projects vulnerable to government cutbacks and the imposition of agreements that restrict building use and offer little to no further support once these agreements expire. With these clear limitations, it is suggested that a more appropriate model with better results for the individuals who rely on social housing might be one where additional funds are produced independent of government, allowing more self-sustaining housing. This leads into the expanded role of the community housing sector.

THE COMMUNITY HOUSING SECTOR

As previously mentioned, the community housing sector includes local partners with a stake in building or maintaining the supply of affordable housing. These organizations can be non-profit and cooperative organizations, municipalities, charities and faith-based groups, private sector organizations, and financial institutions.¹⁰ In many cases, a public-private partnership model is used to create new subsidized housing, in which developments may be designed and built by the private sector and then owned and managed either by private or non-profit housing providers. Another agency may act as a facilitator during certain stages as well.

Additionally, the community housing sector has a number of resources to contribute to funding, ensuring that these housing projects are not relying solely on government funding for their continued existence. For example, some faith-based groups own land and possess a willingness to use this land to build affordable housing for low-income individuals.¹¹ Financial institutions, such as Vancity, can provide grants or long-term capital with a reasonable return. Vancity partners with other organizations such as BC Housing, the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the BC Non-Profit Housing Association to develop and finance affordable housing in BC. Vancity contributes by providing professional advice and helping select mortgages tailored to each housing project's unique needs, and it has funded a number of affordable housing projects through loans and grants.

Municipalities are another important entity in the community housing sector and can utilize property tax exemptions and inclusionary zoning in order to facilitate the development of social housing.¹² The City of Vancouver has implemented an inclusionary zoning policy since 1988. This requires 20% of the units in developments of a certain size in certain neighbourhoods to be available for the development of affordable

¹⁰ Ibid at 5.
¹¹ Ibid at 18.

¹² Ibid.
¹³ City of Vancouver, Rezoning Policy for Sustainable Large Developments, Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2014, <https://bylaws.vancouver.ca/bulletin/R019.pdf>. Accessed 30 May 2019.

housing. This encourages more balanced communities of different income earners and a steady supply of affordable housing.¹³

However, it is important to note that senior governments remain necessary financial partners despite the increased role of the community housing sector. Rather than cutting senior governments out entirely, a more integrated approach should take precedence. Looking back on the National Housing Co-Investment Fund previously discussed, the federal government provides the fund; however, it relies heavily upon its partnerships. For the best coordinated effort and use of the fund, it is necessary for the provincial government and municipalities to provide supplemental contributions, be it through inclusionary zoning, accelerated approval processes, the waiving of certain development fees, or further government loans and tax rebates.¹⁴ Additionally, the federal government must rely on non-profit organizations and the private sector for the actual construction of homes.

Another example of a collaborative partnership between the federal and provincial government and the community housing sector is the implementation of the Federal Community Housing Initiative. Many of the former, restrictive operating agreements governing social housing are expiring; the initiative is capitalizing on this timing and aims to ensure that the new operating agreements made with the non-profit and cooperative providers that run federally administered community housing will still provide the necessary funding while also allowing for more flexibility.¹⁵ These new operating agreements will allow more flexibility for provinces to reinvest funds from properties back into the community housing sector. Additionally, housing providers will have easier access to more favorable loans, allowing for greater affordability and capital for maintenance and repairs.¹⁶

The wide range of organizations and institutions that fall under the umbrella of the community housing sector allows for increased connection with the community, but can also be a detriment at times. The vastness of the network can make it difficult to ensure that a single provider has the necessary resources to facilitate certain social housing projects. One solution may be to incentivize organizations with more assets and capacity to provide aid to other organizations that need guidance. In some cases, similar providers may be able to merge into a single entity for ease of collaboration and coordination.

Although it appears that a greater amount of responsibility given to organizations within the community housing sector is a step in the right direction, this is still very much a developing area when discussing social and affordable housing.

OTHER POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF PARTNERSHIP

There are some clear advantages that would stem from the City of Vancouver's continued partnerships with senior governments and the community housing sector. From an economic viewpoint, for every \$10 spent on housing and support for the homeless, \$21.72 is saved in health care costs, the justice system, shelters, and other social supports. Additionally, the construction of affordable rental housing will contribute thousands of jobs and billions in tax revenue for all levels of government. Income support programs would also then increase disposable income for lower-income households, therefore creating even more economic activity.¹⁷

The City also claims that new affordable housing will be able to serve those with the greatest need, including women fleeing from domestic violence, low-income single parents and seniors, and youth recently aged out of foster care.¹⁸ However, it is questionable whether the housing being billed as social or affordable housing is actually going to those most in need. Although the City stated that it met its annual goal for approval of social housing, Figure 1.16 of the 2019 *Housing Vancouver Annual Progress Report and Data Book* demonstrates these social and supportive housing approvals by income ranges are skewed towards the majority of approvals being for those with incomes in the \$50,000 to \$80,000 range, rather than those with much less.¹⁹ This suggests that although the report states that 2018 had the highest number of approvals on record, it is questionable as to whether these approvals are truly facilitating the goals of social housing development and servicing the lowest bracket of income earners. Considering this report was made only one year into a ten-year plan, it will be interesting to track this trend over the years and see the final breakdown of affordable housing by income bracket.

Overall, it appears that an increased awareness of the issues surrounding social housing in Vancouver is occurring within various levels of government as well as independent organizations. With a large number of organizations in the community housing sector working towards mitigating the Vancouver housing crisis and the emphasis on collaboration and partnership, it appears that social housing development is headed in the right direction.

Photos by Province of BC.

14 Supra note 4 at 10.

15 Ibid at 14.

16 Ibid.

17 Supra note 2 at 6.

18 Supra note 2 at 42.

19 City of Vancouver, *Housing Vancouver Strategy: Annual Progress Report and Data Book 2019*, Vancouver: Housing Vancouver, 2019, <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2019-housing-vancouver-annual-progress-report-and-data-book.pdf>. Accessed 30 May 2019 at 22.

HOUSING AND RECONCILIATION

David Eddy

Vancouver Native Housing Society (VNHS) is a duly incorporated non-profit society, with federal charitable status, headquartered in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. We have been in business since May 15, 1984, and currently own and operate 19 buildings in the City of Vancouver comprising 805 homes, and we have another 152 in development.

Our original and ongoing mandate has always been to provide safe, secure, affordable, and appropriate housing for families and individuals from the urban Indigenous community. Over the years we have adapted that mandate to address the needs of other marginalized Indigenous community members—including seniors, singles, youth, and women and children leaving abusive situations. We also now operate and manage properties that provide housing to other low-income members of the general population.

Recognizing the importance of tradition, culture, and spirituality to our Indigenous populations, we have incorporated those values into the housing that we create, so that what we do is not just about providing the bricks and mortar of housing, but integrating and weaving into those structures the symbols and images that have intrinsic meaning to many of our residents. Because of what we have experienced and learned, we have established a concept we call “Community Building Through the Transformative Power of Art.” This idea speaks to the importance and relevance of those values in the lives of people who have been marginalized and discriminated against because of who they are.

To tie the concepts of building housing for Indigenous populations to our view of the need to include spiritual

and cultural components in the effort, it is important for the reader to have some understanding of the historical treatment of our first peoples. In Canada, Indigenous societies have been discriminated against and marginalized mostly by official government policies and practices, initiated since Canada was constituted as a country in 1867. Legislation and practices such as the Indian Act and the residential school system, which involved forced removal of children from their families and communities to promote their assimilation into mainstream culture, have had devastating effects on the population resulting in multigenerational trauma and significant negative impacts that carry through to this day. These practices were initiated to wipe out the culture, languages, and spirit of Indigenous Peoples, which they very nearly did!

Fortunately, there has been recent recognition, and, to a certain extent, admission of wrongdoing, and some action has been taken. In 2008, the Government of Canada issued an official apology for its treatment of Indigenous peoples because of the residential school system. Prime Minister Stephen Harper stated, “The government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly.” Harper declared, “We are sorry.”

A Truth and Reconciliation Commission formed in 2008 submitted its final report in 2014, issuing 94 calls to action. Cities, such as Vancouver, declared June 21, 2013, to June 20, 2014, as a “Year of Reconciliation” and others followed and continue to do so to this day. There is now a theme of reconciliation rolling out across Canada and gaining momentum, based on people’s notions of justice, fairness, recognition of wrongdoing, and a desire to right wrongs, thus moving towards making things better for Indigenous peoples.



Frances Street redevelopment (top) and "Through the Eye of the Raven" mural (above) in Vancouver.

While not mandated by our funders and sometimes not supported by them as a requirement for the housing that we create at VNHS, our strategies to highlight, celebrate, and embrace traditional cultural, spiritual, and artistic practices began years before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report was issued. Nonetheless, we have found that they are in line with the principles laid out in the report and have become an everyday part of what we do and who we are as a housing society. While not initially planned that way, our practices flow into and support the theme of reconciliation and now guide us as we move forward. Some of those initiatives are described below.

STORYTELLING

In 2008, we created a video called "Looking Forward/Looking Back," in which 20 Indigenous artists told their stories of living and working in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) of Vancouver, an area many people refer to as Canada's poorest postal code. The funding for this project was made possible by a grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage.

PUBLIC ART

Our next foray into the world of artistic and cultural expression as a means of highlighting community pride in a front-and-centre community way was the creation of the Orwell mural. In 2010, we created the largest mural in Western Canada on the wall of a recently renovated single room occupancy (SRO) hotel that VNHS managed for BC Housing. The hotel is one of 24 purchased by the Province of BC and renovated to house some of the most marginalized folks in the DTES. The mural, called "Through the Eye of the Raven," is entirely Indigenous in its content. It had an immediate and salutary effect on members of the community and still provides an important focal point in the neighborhood.

SIGNIFICANT ICONIC STRUCTURES

Our seventeenth building, Skwachàys Lodge Residence and Gallery, was completed in June of 2012 and is, without question, our most iconic structure. The name Skwachàys (pronounced Squatch Eyes) was given to us by Squamish Chief Ian Campbell, whose ancestral name is Xálek'/Sekyú Siyám. Skwachàys is the name local Indigenous People gave to the area before European contact. The area consisted of salt marshes with underground springs feeding into them. The springs were regarded as portals to the spirit realm and Skwachàys was considered a place of transformation.

The pairing of a four-storey Victorian brick facade and a two-storey stainless-steel Indigenous longhouse, with a 40-foot story pole beginning on the fifth floor and reaching well above the structure's roofline, still turns heads seven years later. A significant cultural and

spiritual component of the Skwachàys Lodge Residence and Gallery is the "Dreamweaver" story pole carved by Coast Salish artist Francis Horne Sr. (ancestral name Khut Whee Mul Uch). It sits atop the restored 1910 original brick facade and ties the knot of the iconic marriage between the Victorian front and the Indigenous longhouse. The interior finishes are also rich with art and cultural and spiritual enhancements, including authentic ceremonial spaces that hold significant spiritual import to members of the community and hotel guests alike.

While VNHS manages and operates 19 buildings in the City of Vancouver, Skwachàys is the only one that has no governmental financial support to subsidize the low-income Indigenous artists who live on the first three floors. We create our own subsidy for housing these 24 residents from the profits generated by the top three floors of an Indigenous art-themed hotel and an Indigenous fair-trade art gallery located at street level. These social enterprises inject more than \$200,000 per year back into the residence while providing employment for 12 people with an annual payroll approaching \$400,000.

CARVING PAVILION

The Skwachàys Lodge Dreamweaver pole was carved at the entrance to Britannia Senior Secondary School, the Vancouver high school with the largest Indigenous student population in the city. We assembled two 24-foot portable canvas carports over the 40-foot western redcedar log and brought in a generator and lighting to create a temporary carving pavilion.

The idea of carving the pole at Britannia School was to involve the students, thereby connecting them with their culture. The success of this effort was the seed that ultimately grew into the creation of the permanent carving pavilion adjacent to the school. VNHS was an important partner in this process, broaching the idea of a permanent structure with architect Joe Y. Wai and then promoting it to other community entities to get them involved. We raised the first \$100,000 to kickstart the design and construction, which encouraged other community partners to contribute the funds to complete the project.

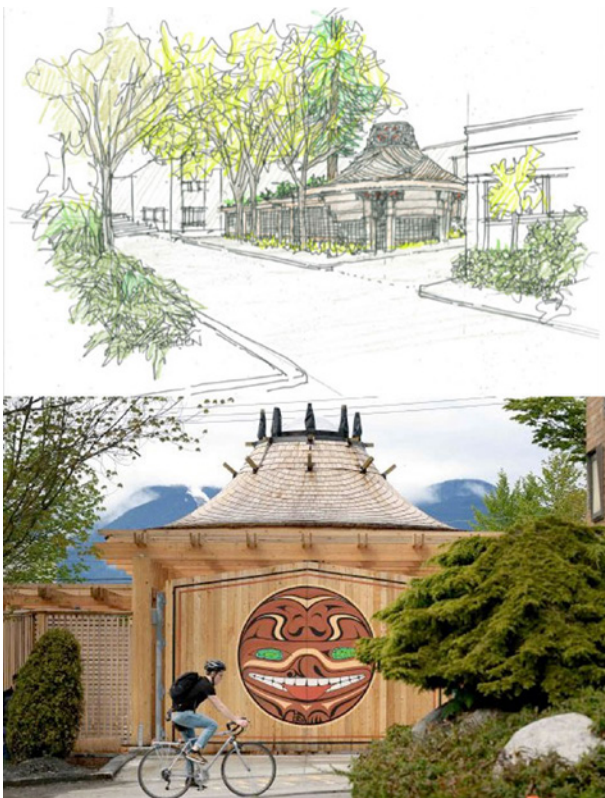
IMPORTANT INDIGENOUS AND MAINSTREAM PARTNERSHIPS

Our eighteenth building, Kwayastut (pronounced Kwayasote), opened in 2014 and was also named by Chief Ian Campbell. It means "finding one's power," a reference to the fact that 30 of the 99 tenants are youth, many of whom were street entrenched and homeless before being housed with us. At the rear of the nine-floor structure is a two-storey, 20,000-square-foot state-of-the-art youth centre operated by our building and community partner Pacific Community Resource Society (PCRS)



Dreamweaver story pole in temporary carving pavilion at Britannia Senior Secondary School (above) in Vancouver; rendering and permanent pavilion (below).

Skwachàys Lodge Residence and Gallery in Vancouver (right).



through their Broadway Youth Resource Centre (BYRC). BYRC is an award-winning one-stop youth centre that provides a wide range of social, health, education, employment, and life skills services to youth. It is a multi-service and multi-agency hub with a range of facilities for youth all under one roof.

KANATA FESTIVAL ON TURTLE ISLAND

The Kanata Festival was a 22-day Indigenous cultural event created to amplify Indigenous voices during Canada's Sesquicentennial (150th) celebration in 2017. The festival featured traditional knowledge holders, storytellers, musicians, dancers, carvers, poets, fashion designers, and other Indigenous artists from over 50 Nations. The celebration of Indigenous heritage, music, food, art, and culture was jam-packed with family entertainment and activities that provided a platform for true history and authentic traditions to shine. The Kanata Festival drew over 40,000 visitors.

The Kanata Festival was first and foremost an instrument for reconciliation. Kanata is the Iroquoian word for village and the origin of the name of Canada. The event was designed to promote increased understanding of and reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous Peoples: to rename, reclaim, and reconcile.

A downtown parking lot was transformed into Turtle Island by painting a stylized depiction of North America on the tarmac. The presentation and performance spaces were held in traditional housing structures—tipi, long-house, wikiup, and wigwam. A highlight of the festival was Ktunaxa elder Wayne Louie, who built a Sturgeon Nose (white pine) canoe using traditional methods. This was a historic event because Wayne, unfortunately, passed away earlier this year (2019), and his knowledge is lost forever as he was the last Ktunaxa canoe builder. The festival was funded by Canadian Heritage with support from the City of Vancouver, Central City Foundation, and Vancity.

ON THE DRAWING BOARD

Because of a fire that we had at our property at 1766 Frances Street in December 2017, we have decided, given the building's age and small unit count, we will redevelop the site, which will include purchasing the existing property to the east. Doing so will allow us to more than double the original density and use the neighbouring purchased property to create a much needed childcare centre for our tenants. As has been our practice, we will enhance the structures with significant cultural and artistic designs relevant to and in acknowledgement of the Coast Salish Peoples of the area. Some of our partners in this effort include: M'akola Development Services, GBL Architects, BC Housing, City of Vancouver, and the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA). We hope to see completion of this project by the end of 2022.

THE LITTLE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE THAT COULD

Time Magazine recently came out with their first annual list of the World's Greatest Places in 2018. *Time* solicited nominations across a variety of categories—such as museums, parks, restaurants, and hotels—from their editors and correspondents around the world as well as dozens of industry experts.

Time evaluated each one based on key factors, including quality, originality, innovation, sustainability, and influence. The result is a list as diverse as the world it reflects, with 100 entries spanning six continents and 48 countries. The list highlights everything from a Texas water park that empowers kids with disabilities to a Maldives resort that's building an undersea abode, to a library in Tianjin, China, that's almost as wondrous as reading itself.

We at Skwachàys Lodge Residence and Gallery are thrilled beyond belief to announce that we have been chosen in this inaugural year to join this august group of places. We are also proud to represent Canada as the only entity in the country to have received this honour.

CONCLUSION

The more that VNHS connects and interacts with our residents, the more it becomes apparent how the value of culture, heritage, spirituality, and Indigenous art figure positively in their lives. Coupling these attributes with our concepts of good-quality social housing—a universally recognized key determinant of health—we believe we have the makings of a successful strategy that will serve to counter many of the negative effects that Indigenous Peoples have suffered here since European contact.

Recognizing that this is by no means a panacea for all the wrongs committed against Indigenous Peoples over the last 400-plus years, we nevertheless believe it is a positive step. We are aware that we are not alone in trying to right past wrongs; there are others working toward the same goals in communities all across the country. We believe we have momentum on our side to continue to move the social and affordable housing agenda forward. At the same time, our intention is to do this utilizing the theme of reconciliation and adhering to and following the principles and calls to action as articulated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report.

This is an update to an article originally published in DDC Magazine in the spring of 2017.

Photos by Vancouver Native Housing Society.

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PARTNERSHIPS ARE KEY TO BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Shayne Ramsay

Thirty years ago, when I was in the early stages of my career in the social housing sector, I probably wouldn't have been able to predict how complex the delivery of affordable housing would become. Renters and homeowners alike are struggling to secure safe and affordable housing, and while the housing market in some areas of the province is experiencing typical economic cycles, many urban and rural areas are working diligently to address increasingly high housing costs for their residents.

Our mission at BC Housing is to make a positive difference in people's lives and communities through safe, affordable, and high-quality housing. We have and continue to rely on community-based groups and professionals in the sector to deliver on our mission. One of the things I know for sure is that transformative, community-enriching work happens when we work together to address housing needs in our province. I think this is especially true when we work together to support the most vulnerable people in our communities.

RAPID RESPONSE

Our Rapid Response to Homelessness (RRH) program is an important example of this kind of teamwork. The Province of BC initiated the RRH program in 2017 to provide an immediate response to the growing issue of homelessness in communities across BC, committing to invest \$291 million in 2,000 supportive modular homes for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and an additional \$170 million over three years to ensure that the people living in these homes have access to 24/7 support. The design and construction of these housing developments have utilized modular technologies to accelerate the timeline from design to occupancy. Almost all of these 2,000 modular homes will be complete by the end of 2019.





Nora Hendrix Place, Vancouver.



Residents of Nora Hendrix Place, in the project's communal outdoor spaces.



Partnerships are the foundation of everything we do at BC Housing and we work with a spectrum of local governments and community groups in the RRH program to allocate homes across the province based on local needs and demands. Local governments are instrumental in identifying suitable housing sites by considering the proximity to vital community services and accessibility to transit, among other community-building factors.

Modular housing developments are purchased from manufacturers and installed on underutilized or vacant land, often provided by local governments but sometimes offered by private market developers.

Experienced non-profit housing societies are the cornerstone of what we do and to the RRH they bring their wealth of know-how in operating the housing and supporting residents. Because community housing providers are embedded in their communities, they are in the best position to understand and respond to the needs of residents who are transitioning from an unhoused to a stable home environment.

Supportive housing is also assisted by the provincial health authorities, which provide residents with the health care they need to begin to move forward with their lives. Services provided to residents may include

connection to mental health services, chronic illness and addictions supports, medication management, food security, and connection to cultural supports, social inclusion, life-skills education, and other supports that create a sense of community. These supports are a necessary component to help individuals stabilize their lives and maintain successful tenancies.

BC Housing and our non-profit partners also engage with law enforcement and community advisory councils to respond to community concerns and ensure neighbourhoods remain safe.

NORA HENDRIX PLACE

One outstanding example of community partnerships is the group that came together for Nora Hendrix Place, a brand-new modular housing development under the RRH program that opened up on Union Street in Vancouver's Strathcona neighbourhood. Located in what was once known as Hogan's Alley and home to Vancouver's Black community, these 52 supportive homes brought together BC Housing, the City of Vancouver, PHS Community Services Society, and Hogan's Alley Society to prioritize Black and Indigenous residents, who are overrepresented in Vancouver's homeless population.



Hogan's Alley Society is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to reviving the social, political, cultural, and economic histories of Vancouver's Black community. It is deeply involved in the City of Vancouver's plans to redevelop Northeast False Creek and is committed to ensuring that the redevelopment of the Hogan's Alley Block, which will occur when the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaducts come down as a part of the Northeast False Creek redevelopment, addresses the needs of Vancouver's contemporary Black community, displaced from the area decades ago.

Hogan's Alley Society saw Nora Hendrix Place as a way to redress the historic harm of racism and discrimination in housing while also helping to meet the current need for supportive housing solutions in the community and gaining valuable experience in developing and operating housing. Some of the support services will be culturally specific and targeted to the needs of both Black and Indigenous communities.

The society is working in partnership with PHS Community Services Society, an experienced supportive housing provider with other projects in BC, which will be responsible for operations.

"Historically, the fragmentation and isolation of the Black community led to the loss of its political strength

and social cohesion," explains Dr. June Francis, chair of Hogan's Alley Society. She refers to the African concept of *ubuntu*—sometimes defined as a humanist philosophy meaning "a person is a person through other people"—and notes the importance of reconnection and integration within an individual's larger community as a path towards health and stability. "It's about how to create belonging; how to influence positive outcomes in terms of health and culture and identity," Dr. Francis continues. "Answers to these issues for the Black community will also inform solutions for other groups facing similar challenges."

As you can see, this initiative could not be possible without strong partnerships. People experiencing homelessness are already living in communities, and these communities need to explore ways to connect with and support them. It is through the efforts of organizations like Hogan's Alley Society and PHS Community Services Society that we are able to assist people in getting off the street and out of tent cities into stable housing where they can access supports and take steps to address the issues that led them there.

The Province has been opening supportive housing developments in communities across BC for over ten years, and we've seen how effective this type of housing

can be in helping people address their issues, which for some can include mental health and substance use issues. Supportive housing is based on the Housing First model, a proven model helping many people find and maintain stable homes, improving their quality of life and reducing their use of health and social services in the long term. This improvement on the old treatment-only approach is supported by research and real-world results, including the *At Home/Chez Soi* study,¹ an extensive four-year cross-Canada study.

SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

While there is considerable anecdotal evidence to support the Housing First model, it is difficult to quantify the impacts to a community in terms that can be objectively understood. To that end, BC Housing commissioned a series of three studies to examine the social return on investment (SROI) created by different forms of affordable and supportive housing developments. One of these, *The Social and Economic Value of Dedicated-Site Supportive Housing in BC*,² looked specifically at dedicated-site supportive housing, the type offered by Nora Hendrix Place.

SROI analysis combines quantitative, qualitative, and participatory research techniques to demonstrate the value of outcomes from different stakeholder perspectives. The result is an SROI ratio that compares investment to the financial value of social outcomes achieved, showing—in monetary terms—the benefit of social investments.

Despite the significant and ongoing success of many of these supportive housing projects, some people still object to supportive housing being located in their communities, fearing that it will decrease property values or increase criminal activity. In fact, our experience supports that there is a wide range of benefit to a variety of different stakeholder groups in the community, in both the short and long terms.

The most significant and tangible benefits are those experienced by the people who will be living in the housing: housing stability, increases in personal wellbeing, healthier living conditions, ability to participate in employment, reduced substance use, and increased safety and social connections. In addition, there are social and economic benefits to the community, such as increased revenue from permits and taxes, increased local spending and employment, decreased use of emergency and social services, and reduced homelessness.

Findings from all three studies showed that a range of significant social and economic value is created through investment in affordable and supportive housing projects. For dedicated-site projects, the research conservatively concluded that for every \$1 invested in dedicated-site supportive housing, an estimated \$4 to \$5 in social and economic value is created.

CALL TO ACTION

Clearly, the inclusion of affordable and supportive housing options is a key component of building strong and healthy communities where people feel connected, and the Province is committed to supporting the development of a wide range of new housing with its recent commitment of more than \$7 billion over 10 years—the largest investment in affordable housing in BC’s history.

The Province cannot build its way out of the housing crisis on its own, however. Last year it created HousingHub, a centre for community partners and private industry to collaborate on developing new construction or redeveloping existing sites for affordable housing purposes, including both affordable rental and homeownership options for middle-income households.

HousingHub is currently partnering with non-profit and private developers, faith groups, property owners, federal and local governments, and Indigenous partners to locate and use or repurpose land to increase the supply of affordable housing.

These housing partnerships will benefit people, communities, and partners alike. Developers will receive low-cost financing in exchange for building affordable housing, while benefiting from the work HousingHub is doing with municipalities to minimize regulatory barriers and expedite the development process. Local governments also benefit through the creation of affordable, high-quality housing that fits the needs of people in their communities.

I believe we all have a responsibility to act where we can. Together we can address many of the issues we are facing with respect to housing affordability. More information, including full details of the affordable rental supply and homeownership programs, is available on the HousingHub website or by calling 604-439-4757.

Photos by BC Housing.

- 1 Lauren B. Currie, Akm Moniruzzaman, Michelle L. Patterson, and Julian M. Somers, *At Home/Chez Soi Project: Vancouver Site Final Report*, Calgary, AB: Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2014.
- 2 A. Miller, A. Rosales, H. Mang-Wolley, C. Bolton, and C. Peck, *The Social and Economic Value of Dedicated-Site Supportive Housing in B.C.: A Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis*, Calgary, AB: Constellation Consulting Group, 2018.

MEMBER PROFILE

GUY AKESTER, RI

**DIRECTOR AND
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
COMMERCIAL, BC,
TRIOVEST**



V
V

Early in his career, Guy Akester worked as a multi-market transaction manager for global corporate occupiers, like FedEx and Shell, undertaking transactions from Burnaby to St. John's and from Krakow to Singapore. "Real estate is fundamentally the same everywhere in the world," says Guy. "What changes is the people and the business culture. Individually, each market believes it is unique... It isn't."

Guy believes real estate, and business in general, is a team sport. At Triovest, where he recently joined as senior vice president, he works with his 550 teammates across the country and 56 team mates in BC to invest, develop, and manage industrial, retail, office, and mixed-use real estate on behalf of clients.

In addition to the team environment, Guy enjoys engaging with clients. "Each building or complex is both a business and a community," he says. "I enjoy engaging with our communities and helping them be healthy, happy and financially

successful." Triovest has recently launched a new, sustainable, mass timber office building in Vancouver, and it manages the Marine Gateway and Crossroads mixed-use projects.

Prior to Triovest, Guy was a part of the TransLink real estate team. During his time there, his team sold the Oakridge Transit Centre for a record-breaking \$440 million (in 2016), which provided the critical local seed funding for the major public transit expansion that is starting in the Vancouver region. He was also part of a specialized transit-oriented development (TOD) team that has, over the past six years, reviewed, approved, and supported new homes and places for work in hyper proximity to transit for over 100,000 people.

Guy sits on the District of North Vancouver's Board of Variance, where he contributes his experience in both real estate and local government. "This is where I feel I can add the most value to my local community—outside of being a taxpayer!" he says.

Having lived in nine cities in six countries and explored 50 countries, Guy's experiences, which include travelling through military checkpoints, soldiers pointing guns at him, and classmates "disappearing" for saying the wrong thing, inform his global and local outlooks. "These and other experiences left me with a profound appreciation for how lucky we are as Canadians, for our democratic institutions and the rule of law," he says. "Locally, we need to reimagine local government in Metro Vancouver, as the current 23 have been working at cross-purposes for decades. Vancouver needs to evolve."

RI

HELPING CANADIANS ACCESS HOUSING: STORIES FROM THE NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

Gabriel Teo

Anounced in November of 2017, the National Housing Strategy (NHS) re-establishes the federal government's leadership role in housing through a long-term vision of clear goals and ambitious targets, significant new investments, and a focus on partnerships to achieve more. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is proud to lead the NHS and will work with key partners to maximize results for Canadians.

To help more Canadians access housing that meets their needs and that they can afford, the NHS sets out to achieve bold outcomes over the next 10 years, including:

- reducing chronic homelessness by 50%
- reducing or eliminating housing need for 530,000 households
- creating 125,000 new housing units
- repairing and renewing more than 300,000 housing units
- protecting 385,000 community housing units and expanding by another 55,000 units

Thanks to new investments proposed in Budget 2019, Canada's NHS is now a 10-year, \$55-billion plan that will give more Canadians a place to call home.

In June of 2018, a 10-year bilateral agreement was signed with British Columbia, through which investments of more than \$990 million will be made over the next decade to protect, renew, and expand social and community housing. This funding is in addition to the \$705 million of previously planned federal housing investments

in BC through the Social Housing Agreement (SHA) over the next 10 years.

Below are three stories showing the impact the NHS is already making on the lives of Canadians.

DIVERSE RESIDENTS BUILD INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY

Co:Here aspires to be much more than an affordable housing project. It's an intentional community carefully nurtured by residents who come from all walks of life and who choose to make it their home.

Operated by Salsbury Community Society, Co:Here stems from a Grandview Church housing initiative. It's built on the church's former parking lot in Vancouver, and the 26-unit building uses the community development approach to supportive housing.

Salsbury Community Society's intent is to break through social walls that divide classes. It does this by having people from different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds live together as neighbours. Residents share the day-to-day patterns of life together, including cooking, celebrations, and house-policy decision-making.

Linda is one of 34 residents who moved to Co:Here last February. She works part-time at Just Catering, a social enterprise that provides work for people with barriers to employment.

Her true passion is art. She loves to create abstract and colourful patterns on canvas. For the past 10 years, Linda has worked as a teaching assistant in a program at Vancouver Coastal Health Art Studios. The program

Co:Here, in Vancouver (right and below right), received funding from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and BC Housing through the 2014-2019 Canada-British Columbia Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing.



uses art therapy to help people dealing with addictions or mental health challenges.

Another resident, Mike, is a long-time member of the Burning Man community, and he has proudly served at the festival as a Black Rock Ranger since 2005. Rangers safeguard the community and preserve its unique culture. His career experiences have been wide, from construction safety to business consulting. A passion for live-event production led Mike to hold roles such as rigger, audio-visual technician, and lighting technician.

In 2015, Mike experienced a life-altering stroke. It left him with severe speech challenges and the need to use a wheelchair. Since then, Mike's journey to recovery has been difficult, moving from one residential care facility to another. But at Co:Here, Mike found more than care and treatment—he found a community again, a sense of belonging, and a tribe of people committed to mutual support and a shared stewardship of their building. Mike has been at Co:Here since it opened, and today he gets regular visits from old friends. Mike also uses Co:Here's shared amenity space to host a weekly stroke recovery group.

Once a week, tenants come together to cook a meal in the shared kitchen. Everyone has a role to play in making sure dinner is delicious and on time. This week's meal is led by Co:Here resident Adam, a professional chef. Adam works at the Pacifica Treatment Centre for people with drug and alcohol addictions. Even with 30 people expected at tonight's dinner, he isn't fazed.

"I believe people living in communities like this is generally a good thing for society," Adam says. "Everyone's food and shelter essentials are met with this kind of



housing model, and I love connecting with all the different characters and personalities here.”

WEST COAST TOWNHOMES CELEBRATE CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Indigenous communities on the West Coast were traditionally visited and first viewed from the water. This concept inspired the overall form and character of Nuutsumuut Lelum, Nanaimo’s first affordable housing for families in 20 years. Nuutsumuut Lelum is Hul’q’umi’num, the language of the Salish people. In English it means “All in One House.”

Built on a slowly rising hill, the buildings are clad in rich red cedar. Métis public art adorns each end of the development, and a beautifully carved 37-foot Coast Salish totem pole welcomes visitors to the property.

Charles “Charlie” George is originally from Bella Bella, in British Columbia’s Central Coast region. He’s a Heiltsuk First Nation wood carver and has been honing his craft for more than 50 years. Charlie lives at Nuutsumuut Lelum with his wife and three sons. They are among the building’s first tenants, a community that also includes youth transitioning to independent living, young families, and elders.

“It’s about time they build more community housing like this. For all kinds of people. Not just more condos everywhere,” Charlie says. “I’ve been living in Nanaimo for over 20 years and it’s been getting harder and harder to find housing, especially a big enough place for my family.”

Nuutsumuut Lelum creates a sense of community by bringing together individuals and families of various ages and backgrounds. This was a key priority for Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre Executive Director Chris Beaton. “We wanted to create sustainable and affordable rental homes for people in this community, but it was also important for us to build something with deep cultural connections in an urban setting,” says Chris. “Elders play a central role here—they anchor this community and help watch over everyone.”

Located in central Nanaimo, the 25-unit development is close to local schools, family-oriented amenities, and a



large park. On-site amenities include a common courtyard for cultural gatherings, a fire pit, shared kitchen area, children’s play space, and community garden.

The building is Passive House Certified. It incorporates initiatives and technology that result in lower energy use and operating costs when compared with a conventional building. “We paid careful attention during construction to completely insulate the entire building envelope, almost like a sealed unit,” recalls Chris. “When you combine that with our heat-recovery ventilation units and highly energy-efficient windows and doors, you can literally use your own body heat to warm up a room—that’s how incredibly efficient the homes are.”

An additional benefit is the sound dampening in the units. “I can really hear the difference when you close the windows and doors,” says Charlie. “Before, my boys used to wake up in the middle of the night because of the sirens and road noise. Now, it’s so peaceful and quiet here that they sleep well into the morning.”

A SUPPORTIVE SANCTUARY FOR WOMEN

Emily remembers waking up in hospital after having a panic attack in Vancouver’s Waterfront Station. She had travelled from the suburbs to downtown Vancouver. The person she had travelled with told her that he needed to pick up some personal items, but once they reached the station he completely disappeared. She had no money or



Union Gospel Mission's Women & Families Centre in Vancouver (above) received funding from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund, an initiative of the National Housing Strategy.

Nuutsumuut Lelum in Nanaimo (left) received funding from the Government of Canada through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and from the Government of British Columbia through BC Housing under the Social Infrastructure Fund.

possessions and no plans for where to go next. She had recently separated from her husband, and she was now homeless, again.

Emily's next decision would change her life. The hospital staff recommended that she enter a stabilization program for women at Union Gospel Mission called The Sanctuary. Emily agreed, and she headed straight there after she was discharged.

Located in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, The Sanctuary opened in 2014. It provides supportive housing for 12 single women, along with six mothers and their babies. Union Gospel Mission has a mix of integrated services and programs, including 24/7 support for women in drug and alcohol recovery and on-site childcare.

Emily was struck by the kindness of people at The Sanctuary. With open arms and without judgement, they helped her confront her deeper issues. A survivor of childhood abuse and trauma, she was forced to fend for herself from the age of 12. She turned to drugs to escape and eventually to escort work to survive.

After a month of sobriety at The Sanctuary, Emily moved out and reconnected with her husband. When she discovered she was going to have a baby, she returned to The Sanctuary for several months for continued care and support.

Four years later, Emily's relationship with her husband has had highs and lows. Persistent issues have pushed Emily to raise their child on her own. She continues to live a sober lifestyle and credits her successful recovery to the deep connection she had with the centre's support staff.

Emily volunteers at Union Gospel Mission, where her extraordinary story of recovery and resilience has made her an inspiration for other women in recovery. "I just really want to make that connection with people. That's a big part of how I made it through my own journey to recovery," she says.

In February 2018, work began on a Women & Families Centre. The new Union Gospel Mission facility will provide 27 transitional sleeping units and 36 new social housing units for women in the Downtown Eastside. It will be open to women struggling with addiction and to their children.

Emily is excited about the new facility and for the opportunity to help more women who find themselves in similar situations. In fact, she hopes to become a women's advocate and public speaker. She says, "Showing empathy and being there for someone when they need help the most, that's when change truly happens in people—and I want to be part of that transformation."

Photos by Gabriel Teo.

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Resource Operations &
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BC Assessment



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BC Assessment



Harpinder
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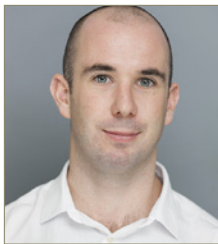
John
Tam, RI

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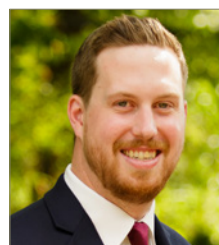
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HIABC is a not-for-profit association of Home Inspectors with over 325 members in BC, recognized since 1992 as the leader in the advancement of professional home inspectors. Ensure your home inspector is a member of HIABC.
hiabc.ca
executivedirector@hiabc.ca
1-800-610-5665



NLD Consulting - Reserve Fund Advisors

Are you preparing for your strata's Depreciation Report? Contact BC's largest team of Certified Reserve Planners (CRPs) for a no-cost, no-obligation proposal today!
reserveadvisors.ca
info@reserveadvisors.ca
1-604-638-1041



Pacific Dawn Asset and Property Management Services Inc.

Your property management specialist: Commercial, Strata, Property Management and Leasing. Also ask about our Interior Design & Construction.
pacific-dawn.com
info@pacific-dawn.com
1-604-683-8843



Power Strata Systems Inc.

PowerStrata is a comprehensive, easy-to-use, secure and cost-effective strata management software, specifically designed for managing BC strata corporations of any size and complexity efficiently.
powerstrata.com
info@powerstrata.com
1-604-971-5435



PAMA - Professional Association of Managing Agents

PAMA is focused on the creation and delivery of advanced education for professional residential property managers. It promotes the values of professionalism and business ethics. In addition to the provision of the mandatory re-licensing education, PAMA delivers numerous seminars and workshops throughout the year.
pama.ca
admin@pama.ca, 1-604-267-0476



Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver

The REBGV is a not-for-profit professional association that represents more than 14,000 REALTORS®. It provides a range of services, including the MLS®, education and training, business practices and arbitrations, advocacy, research and statistics and technology solutions.
realtylevel.org
rebgv.org, 1-604-730-3000



REIC-BC Chapter

REIC-BC links local members to counterparts around the world. Our mission is to educate members, certify their proficiency and professionalism, advocate on issues that affect the industry and enhance members' competence.
reic.com
bc@reic.com, 1-604-638-3457



Schoenne & Associates

Fully accredited to provide: residential, commercial, and industrial real estate appraisals; consulting assignments; and strata depreciation reports (reserve fund studies).
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schoenneassociates@shaw.ca
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