

HEALTHY HOUSING FORUM

April 30, 2015
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
CFB Esquimalt Chief & Petty Officers' Mess

SNAPSHOT OF HOUSING & HEALTH IN ESQUIMALT

Marlene Lagoa (Township of Esquimalt)

Presentation: [PDF](#)

ACTIVITY: [Hopes & Fears](#)

Resources:

Victoria Foundation. [Vital Signs](#).

Victoria Real Estate Board. [Current Statistics](#).

Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. [Housing Market Information Portal](#).

Provincial Health Services Authority. [BC Community Health Profiles](#).

HEALTHY HOUSING: HOUSING AND THE LINKAGES TO HEALTH

Victoria Domonkos (Island Health)

Presentation: [PDF](#)

ACTIVITY: [Housing & Health Linkages](#)

Resource:

Provincial Health Services Authority. [Healthy Built Environment Linkages - A Toolkit for Design, Planning, Health](#) (Full Toolkit)

CRD HOUSING

Henry Kamphof (CRD)

Presentation: [PDF](#)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR BC'S CAPITAL REGION

Marika Albert (Community Social Planning Council)

Presentation: [PDF](#)

ACTIVITY: [Affordable Housing Policy Options](#)

Resource:

Community Social Planning Council. [Affordable Housing for BC's Capital Region – Tools for the Future](#).

HOUSING FOR ALL: THE GROWTH OF NON-MARKET HOUSING IN GREATER VICTORIA

Ben Isitt (University of Victoria)

Presentation: [PDF](#)

Resource:

Benjamin Isitt (2008). Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships.

[Housing for All: The Social Economy and Homelessness in BC's Capital Region](#).

CO-OP HOUSING

Patty Shaw (*The Co-operative Housing Federation of BC*)

Presentation: [PDF](#)

CLOSING REFLECTIONS

ACTIVITY: [Closing Reflections](#)



HOPES AND FEARS

- 1. On a post-it note, write down one HOPE you have about the future of housing in Esquimalt (or your community).**

Community (Built Environment)

- Housing becomes more interconnected with community
- More walkable neighbourhoods, fewer big box strip malls
- Better quality housing and built environment
- That Esquimalt keep improving walkway so all have access to amenities of Esquimalt
- Continue to maintain level of walkability as housing costs and population increases

Housing Stock (Diversity)

- Generation of new housing stock, variety and densification (where appropriate)
- Increase diversity of housing (i.e. affordability; accessibility; environmental impact)
- Esquimalt will be / (is) recognized for the opportunities for development – higher end and affordable
- That Esquimalt leads the way in developing new co-op housing
- Diverse housing options, new housing to meet the budget/income of young families, seniors and vulnerable population
- New development to provide variety of housing for all needs of residents and draw new residents to Esquimalt
- Housing for everyone – no one on the streets, no couch surfing

Housing Quality

- Houses will be built environmentally friendly with no chemical such as formaldehyde in carpets
- We can come with innovative strategies to provide healthy, liveable housing for the residents of Esquimalt
- That Esquimalt can provide quality housing in the future for all who would like to live here
- All residents will have a home that is safe, secure, healthy and appropriate for their needs.
- That all residents of Esquimalt have housing that is safe, appropriate and adequate to meet their needs REGARDLESS of income and life circumstances
- More housing available rent or own within the 30% of income range
- Safety

Families

CLOSING REFLECTIONS

- 1. On a post-it note, write down one thing you believe ESQUIMALT can take away from today's forum.**

Affordable Housing

- Esquimalt has adequate affordable housing
- Look at different avenues of affordable housing agreements
- Need for more family housing with a 0% vacancy rate for 3+ bedroom apartments
- Watch out for gentrification and plan to preserve your affordable housing stock

Co-op Housing

- Identify a parcel(s) of land to donate or lease for co-op housing development
- Value of Co-op Housing and exploring the addition of some

Community Image

- Esquimalt needs to show that we are a good, secure, safe place to live work and play by stepping up to build town centre
- Change the image of Esquimalt – how to keep the CFB employees living + shopping in Esquimalt

Homelessness

- The question of homelessness is vast → there need to be non-partisan discussion of all options
- Gather homeless people to protest against the government

Development

- Consider a range of options that will benefit the community now + into the future
- Esquimalt is engaging in community consultation to help guide the future
- enough diverse housing to suit the needs of people
- Esquimalt needs more Density
- Use every available tool to transform Esquimalt Road
- Be a catalyst for creation of new units of low- cost housing
- There is a large need for diversity of housing which best supports healthy housing
- I am hopeful that housing can be on the radar for the Township so we can have

Partnerships

- To work together with the municipality, the CRD, Provincial and Federal government to make affordable housing available to all
- That partnerships are the key to success across the housing continuum

Political Will

- That Esquimalt needs to change its political mosaic
- To have the political will to create affordable housing through some kind of incentive program
- Could Esquimalt build a housing trust fund – could be looked into further
- For Esquimalt to seriously consider the expertise around housing that was raised today and that the municipality takes risks around innovative housing solutions
- At least one financially viable idea that directly connects with its Economic Development Strategy and Official Community Plan could be realized by Esquimalt
- Continue to be an accessible livable community

Worker Housing

- Worker housing for DND & Shipyards needs to be addressed
- A better connection to the CFB Seaspan workforce is required to better focus affordable, healthy housing in Esquimalt

Miscellaneous

- Diverse perspectives on how to overcome barriers to different housing policy options
- The work done by Island Health

2. **On another post-it note, write down one thing that you are taking away from today's forum.**

Approaches

- That practically all presentations blame government; not one said what they would do better
- Learned about barriers to different housing strategies
- It can't be solved alone: partnerships, partnerships, partnerships
- Many varied approaches are required to address healthy and affordable housing issues
- A lot of interesting and diverse opinions and ideas
- Different approaches to affordable housing
- That we all have 'talked' about this issue and it is now time for concrete action
- Be a catalyst for creation of new units of low-cost housing
- I learned equality can be unjust
- A better understanding of the issue in our community
- The group that attended today can help improve the future of Esquimalt
- I believe that people are way too hard on their communities. Not all is bad and there need to be positive.
- That there are others with the same interest in building a community for all peoples

Affordable Housing

- Affordable family housing in Esquimalt is at a crisis level and action is needed now – not in years – now
- To further innovate developer opportunities to deliver housing affordability
- There's an engagement by the City to support growth of affordable housing in the community

Co-op Housing

- Learning more about co-op housing
- Didn't know about co-op housing before today
- The role co-op housing can play in providing affordable housing
- Co-op housing is a viable affordable housing option
- Changing landscape / funding of co-ops and upcoming crisis

Development

- New development is key to changing perception of Esquimalt in Region
- Esquimalt needs more high end development not significantly more affordable housing
- Planners are interested in growth and multiple options. Community at large may be more resistant.

Homelessness / Non-Profit Housing

- Hope for ending homelessness in the region
- The answer to homelessness already exists.
- I really enjoyed learning the history of non-profit housing in the region.

HEALTHY HOUSING: HOUSING AND THE LINKAGES TO HEALTH

1. What housing forms and tenure types would you like to see more of in Esquimalt / your municipality?

- Those that work here are able to live here. Shortage of suitable housing for CFB workers (i.e. townhouses on the lower end, single family dwellings at higher end).
- Support mixed-use along corridors
- Shortage of supportive housing / services for seniors so they can age / stay in place in the community / home.
- High-end luxury housing – one benefit is to reduce taxes
- Co-op Housing - affordable family housing
- Increased density housing
- Significant rezoning is required prior to any development taking place

2. What are the main ‘shortfalls’ towards quality housing in the current housing stock in Esquimalt / your municipality?

- Need to transform Esquimalt Road to change perception of community
- Too many old buildings in stock, not enough new buildings as developers feel projects are not financially viable
- As buildings age there is an increase in cost associated with maintenance. May outstep revenue therefore maintenance is deferred resulting in a decrease in “quality”
- Lack of investment on single family dwellings as no return on investment – but sites with deferred maintenance – changing
- Political will – different levels of government all working on the same thing and not talking to each other
- Polarizing views on land development
- Parking requirements could be relaxed for developments to make “viability”
- Zoning can be a barrier → i.e. parking requirements
- Transit servicing backwards → won’t bring service until you have the density
- Rigid design parameters
- Form-based code → no creativity!
- Lack of education about social equity and about what affordability actually means/looks like
- Housing policies buried in OCP, but not used

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR BC'S CAPITAL REGION

Given the policy options presented, which policy do you think has the most traction?

- What do you think are some of the barriers to implementing the policy?
- How would you overcome the barriers?

POLICY OPTION: DENSITY BONUSING (x2)

Barriers:

- Perception of Density (Esquimalt is a small town) most people think it's negative, depends on type of density/fit to area
- Community support
- NIMBY
- Esquimalt's Image issue
- Bureaucratic process
- Parking requirements
- Regulatory barriers (min. size)
- Lengthy development/ (rez.) process
- Municipalities – amenities
- Financial viability
- Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Anchor tenant
- Developers to bring commercial development with residents above (eyes on the street)

Overcome Barriers:

- Education
- Transit – pass / car share co-op
- Community service / commercial component
- Need to promote businesses
- Need to increase tax base
- Road quietening – more of a community setting
- Allowing for regulatory flexibility
- Working with the municipality
- Encouraging mixed-use (commercial component - e.g. coffee shop)
- Require a % of units below market (in perpetuity)

POLICY OPTION: **INCENTIVES / TAX EXEMPTIONS / TAX HOLIDAYS**

Barriers:

- None reported

Overcome Barriers:

- Municipality working in partnership with development community to make the construction of new buildings viable
- Provide 100% property tax holiday for a specified period of time
 - Applicable to both developer and carried over to owners
- Explore a significant reduction to parking requirements

POLICY OPTION: **TAX EXEMPTIONS tied to HOUSING AGREEMENTS**

- To ensure the exemption provides affordability in the community
- Impact Investments: providing investors an opportunity to contribute to their community
- Target 1000 – 4000 of Base & Shipyard workers (reduce crawl) incentive
- CRD Housing Data Book – regional profile, by community
 - What does data show?
 - Where are the gaps?
 - How can they be addressed?
- Dockside Green 3D Model of sections of Esquimalt Road to get financial and developer backing

POLICY OPTION: **EXPAND HOUSING AGREEMENTS**

Barriers:

- Political will – changing priorities with elections
- Lack of understanding of actual community residents needs
- Land costs and availability

Overcome Barriers:

- Options to encourage co-operative housing agreements

POLICY OPTION: MORE MARKET HOUSING REQUIRED

Barriers:

- Municipal process
- Length of process
- Esquimalt has reputation as a low-end housing market

Overcome Barriers:

- Shorten process
- Streamline process
- Incentives / Entice developers to come here
- Esquimalt needs land assembly
- Make Esquimalt more desirable
- More commercial

3. After cost and availability, what are other barriers when it comes to finding adequate housing for the following groups...

a. Homeless:

- Willingness to be helped
- Location
- Adequate, suitable housing conditions, landlords – informed, truly supportive advocacy
- Bylaws enforced
- Mental health + substance abuse services (wrap around services)
- Stigma (NIMBY)
- Daily upkeep tasks
- Employment (steady)

b. Elderly:

- Supportive – companionship
- Consistency of home support – house cleaning, yard work, grocery shopping
- Safe community
- Making homes accessible
- Daily upkeep tasks
- Transportation
- Isolation
- Vulnerability to crime
- Desire to move; anxiety around change
- Services available to support those who are healthy to live at home (preventative)

c. Low Income:

- Transportation access
- Walkability of area/town
- Access to well-paid employment within reasonable distance
- Access to childcare and affordable childcare
- Cost of living beyond housing (food, utilities, etc.)
- Finding an appropriate roommate

d. People with Disabilities:

- HandyDart availability
- Self-care; require extra services and support
- Access to childcare and affordable childcare
- Vulnerability to crime
- Employment
- Daily upkeep tasks

Overall:

- Transportation
- Chronic stress (mental health)
- Up-keep costs of property
- Isolation social support
- Info about housing availability, services and programs

4. What are some of the environmental hazards faced by residents in Esquimalt / your municipality?

Esquimalt:

- Noise pollution – planes/trucks/boats
- Noise related to industrial uses and DND – impacts health and stress levels
- Military/ship building
- Exposure to industrial contaminants (air pollution, air particles)
- Light pollution – graveyard when repairing cruise ships (24 hr. lights)
- Traffic congestion morning + afternoon
- Traffic exhaust – backed-up traffic
- Increased housing increases traffic – quality of air
- Increase in number of cars on the road
- Bylaw for pesticides?
- Tsunami – Sea Level Rise – Climate Change impact
- Older housing: maintenance, mould, rodents, quality of air, oil tanks buried
- Sewage - location of sewage facilities; Graving Dock causing dust from repairing cruise ships
- Infrastructure capacity
- Water – tanker traffic
- Oil Spills – affecting residents and wildlife
- Soil – Presence of contamination
- Asbestos in schools

- Exposure in work environments
- Lack of green space & loss of green space – need more trees and green spaces
- Need to improve walkability – need to improve the pedestrian realm to increase the number of people walking. Esquimalt has higher walkability than Core however still need to increase the number of people walking
- Underutilized facilities – opportunity needed for [?] communication to address environmental concerns/hazards and quality of life
- The need for alternative transportation means (boat/water taxi)
- Community isolation – need for access to health services, libraries, daycare, and seniors day care.

Other Communities:

- Old septic fields – failing
- Composts – rats carry disease
- Flooding
- Land Slides
- Snow – Ice – freezing water
- Invasive species – allergies (e.g. broom)
- Hot water and drought affects water supply
- Feed lot – Saanich

- Affordable housing for young families
- Make housing for families more attainable and appropriately designed
- To increase availability of low income housing for families
- Affordability and inclusiveness for more families
- Increase average family income

Policies

- Esquimalt takes a more liberal approach to housing in terms of secondary suites
- Inclusive-zoning: affordable units within market level developments
- Adoption of lane way / garden suites policies
- I hope the municipality can be successful in imposing very high design guidelines (not just architectural, but healthy living) on all new developments.

Political Will

- Better synergy between private and public sectors to achieve quality affordable housing for all
- Esquimalt will support change and development in the future
- Realistic view of market economics and centralization of services

Seniors

- Age in Place Housing
- Increase housing for seniors to match growth

2. On another post-it note, write down one FEAR you have about the future of housing in Esquimalt (or your community).

Affordability (General)

- That housing will continue to become more unaffordable, and that families will have less money to spend on daily necessities
- Increasing costs of housing
- That housing / shelter cost will continue to rise jeopardizing residents' access to housing they can afford negatively impacting local economy
- New housing at prices out-of-reach to average population.
- The pace of development will limit affordability
- Unaffordability or financial accessibility of quality housing
- People will not be able to afford healthy housing
- Healthy housing will not be affordable and accessible housing
- Segregation housing: haves vs. have nots
- Widening gap between "haves" and "have nots"

Affordability (Residents)

- Gentrification – adds to cost of housing and destroys community
- New development will drive price of housing beyond the ability of existing residents to remain in community.
- Losing residents that have established their families in the community to housing elsewhere due to affordability and availability

Community

- That the community of Esquimalt can maintain its character as a welcome, engaged community as it grows
- Gentrification – adds to cost of housing and destroys community
- That level of walkability will decrease as population grows and development increases
- Ongoing deterioration of built environment

Density/High Rises

- Unsustainable growth – too high density – in poorly situated areas (e.g. no grocery store, recreation centre, etc.)
- Increase in housing becomes higher density which can create social problems
- That Esquimalt housing becomes a community of high rise apartments up against the water and no one can see the great space on the edges of Esquimalt
- That high rise condo/apartments may not materialize development in downtown Esquimalt

Housing Stock

- Older homes remain past the time of safety and residents become ill due to mould or other environmental issues related to their home
- Degradation of housing stock due to age
- Deterioration of existing rental housing stock

Political Will

- Council and stakeholders do not have the courage to support change
- Selling all municipal property to developers instead of using the property to build healthy affordable housing for the future. Plan with future not just for today.
- Planning and political processes encumber creativity and availability of housing in the region.
- That creation of affordable housing is not sustainable and/or dependent on political party support
- Opportunity to attract base, shipyard employees to live in Esquimalt may be lost if planning on development of a new healthy housing stock is slow moving
- No differences is made to existing methods

- That changes will not appropriately consider HEALTH and WELLBEING of residents

Vulnerable Populations

- Not enough housing for seniors to match growth
- Not everyone will be taken care of
- Existing housing increasing costs to reach new housing making healthy housing [?] difficult to find for vulnerable and average households

Miscellaneous

- Abandon
- That too many people overextend themselves and interest rates go up causing an economic collapse
- That 30% of housing correction that people have been talking about for years
- I fear that Esquimalt Road – as it looks currently – will continue to define Esquimalt in the public's mind