Regional Household Affordability & Prosperity Project

Project Rationale

As the Greater Victoria area presently has a significant lack of affordable housing, many living in the regions' 13 interconnected municipalities have been unable to truly prosper and thrive. As a result of the housing crisis and the negative effects it has on the well-being and economic prosperity of communities, municipalities should incorporate a regional strategy while still operating independently to serve their citizens needs. By continually assessing the availability of affordable housing, and by fostering regional collaboration and information sharing between municipal governments, this project has the ability to help prioritize household prosperity and economic resilience within the region.

Progress Made – Phase 1

Many things were accomplished during Phase 1 of the RHAP project, which included but was not limited to: creating a Community of Practice within participating municipalities to foster collaboration and information-sharing about local housing affordability strategies; offering informational materials and free events for both the public sector and members of the public on housing affordability and poverty reduction; and generating literature-based publications on housing affordability tools, strategies, and the impacts of housing unaffordability within the communities of the Greater Victoria Area.

Main Goals – Phase 2

This project will build upon the progress made in Phase 1 by continuing to support the local governments of the Greater Victoria Area in their efforts to develop the most effective poverty reduction and housing affordability strategies. However, during Phase 2, the RHAP project aims to expand its reach and intensify its impact. This will be achieved by adding more municipal partners both within and outside the Greater Victoria Area in order to achieve deeper regional collaboration; involving City Councillors so that they may inform social policies in their respective municipalities; raising awareness and reducing stigma about issues related to housing unaffordability and poverty within our communities; and sharing innovative solutions for affordable housing that are applicable in a local context to bolster household prosperity and economic resilience in the region.

Partnerships

Funding:

Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) via the Province of BC (Poverty Reduction Grants)

Key Community Partner:

The Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria

Regional partnership:

Phase 1:

Lead and Host: City of Colwood

Municipal partners: Victoria, Saanich

Participants: Oak Bay, Esquimalt, Langford, Capital Regional District (CRD)

Project Activities

- Continually generating research on housing and homelessness in the region
- Sharing local & best practices among city staff, councillors, and the public
- Profiling local challenges surrounding housing poverty & vulnerability
- Compiling local policy practices & shared learnings
- Hosting events for networking and information sharing
- Fostering community engagement with municipal, business, community partners, and members
- Raising awareness on social issues impacting local communities
- Reducing stigma around housing poverty and housing insecurity

Municipal Involvement

Municipal partners within the RHAP project will have the ability to participate in a variety of the project's activities in accordance with each municipality's capacity and needs. These include, but are not limited to:

- Having research support and in-service workshops
- Engaging with the community on housing affordability challenges and solutions
- Taking part in a Community of Practice for staff members that prioritizes information sharing and collaboration surrounding affordable housing strategies
- Attending events, in-person or virtual, that enable staff and elected officials to learn more about affordable housing best practices

About the Community Social Planning Council

The Community Social Planning Council provides reliable information and engagement processes that inform decision making across all sectors in order to support broad based social well-being. This is done by bringing people together to address community issues, conducting community-based research, and supporting community and regional planning processes.