

Request for EAD Meeting Item

SUBJECT:	Electoral Area Housing Needs Assessment
REQUEST BY:	Paul Demenok
DESCRIPTION/ CONTEXT:	<p>It is widely recognized that housing is a very important issue in BC. The Province has introduced several new housing support programs, and has announced it will mandate that local governments conduct local housing needs assessments every 5 years. A grant fund of \$5 million is being established to help fund these needs assessments.</p> <p>The municipalities in the CSRD have already initiated local housing projects and applications. There has been little effort in this direction in the electoral areas, and certainly no collaborative efforts.</p> <p>New granting programs from the province in support of housing will require that a needs assessment be conducted. The question for discussion is, <i>“Should the CSRD Electoral Areas collaborate to conduct with a regional housing needs assessment with funding from the province?”</i></p>
DISCUSSION:	<p>Housing is routinely cited as a key issue in discussion at economic development meetings. Lack of affordable seasonal housing has hurt local businesses. In fact, local businesses are being forced to reduce their hours and/or services as a result of the housing shortage.</p> <p>In communities like Blind Bay and Sorrento, there is a high proportion of seniors who are forced to move away from friends as they age and require assisted living types of services. There is no assisted living opportunity in Area C.</p> <p>We are beginning to see young families relocate to the South Shuswap from the lower mainland, and these people are looking for affordable housing, which is in short supply.</p> <p>Rental housing is in very short supply in our area, and no new rental properties are being constructed at this time. Can this situation be effectively addressed by the CSRD?</p>
OTHER COMMENTS:	A well-conducted needs assessment will assist the CSRD Board to determine the scope of this issue, and better quantify its economic, social and cultural impacts.