



Request for EAD Meeting Item

SUBJECT:	Housing
REQUEST BY:	Paul Demenok
DESCRIPTION/ CONTEXT:	<p>Housing has been identified as an important issue in this regional district. The Province is bringing forward legislation that will require Regional Districts to conduct housing needs assessments every 5 years. The Province has also brought forward a number of funding programs designed to help develop new housing opportunities for certain populations. At present, the CSRD has no regional housing strategy or plan. Housing has not been a recent topic of discussion for the EA directors. There are several housing initiatives going on in CSRD municipalities, and recently several large grants were awarded.</p> <p>The EA Directors need to discuss this issue in order to identify the path forward in the CSRD electoral areas. Specific questions that need to be discussed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What information is available on the new legislation from the Province regarding housing needs assessments, and the \$5 million fund to support these studies? -What are the directors views regarding this issue in general? -Should the CSRD become involved in the housing market? Why/why not? -What are the specific needs by electoral area? -How should the needs assessments be organized? -Should we consider the development of a sub-regional service to address housing? -Should we think about developing a sub-regional housing plan?
DISCUSSION:	<p>Various studies have identified housing needs in the CSRD including the Sicamous and Shuswap Labour Market studies, and Shuswap Economic Development Plan. In these documents, needs for low cost seasonal housing for people working in tourism were outlined. It has been noted that the lack of seasonal housing has adversely affected the tourism business in this region.</p> <p>Rental housing of all types is in very short supply throughout this region. In Area C there is a shortage of supportive, independent-living and assisted living housing for seniors. Judgementally, there is also a lack of lower cost housing for families and couples.</p> <p>For the most part, the data suggesting various housing needs in this region are based on subjective conclusions and have not been specifically studied. A housing needs assessment will provide useful information and may help set direction for any future initiatives. A housing needs assessment should identify and if possible, quantify all types of needs.</p>
OTHER COMMENTS:	<p>New funding programs are now available through BC Housing. Criteria for these funding programs usually identify a requirement for collaborations involving such groups as local government, non-profit housing societies/associations, faith-based groups, service organizations, First Nations and developers. If the CSRD is to proceed, what groups should it collaborate with?</p> <p>It is anticipated that the new \$5 million funding program to support local government housing needs studies will become available early in the new year. What preparations should the CSRD undertake at this time?</p>