

**DATE:** August 28, 2019**FILE:** 1700-02/2019/512**TO:** Chair and Directors  
Committee of the Whole**FROM:** Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative OfficerSupported by Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer*R. Dyson***RE: 2019 - 2023 Financial Plan – Regional Growth Strategy – Function 512  
Budget Amendment – Housing Needs Grant**

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**Purpose**

To amend the 2019 - 2023 financial plan for the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) service, function 512, to reflect the successful grant application for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment project.

**Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:**

THAT the 2019 - 2023 financial plan for the Regional Growth Strategy service, function 512, be amended to increase professional fee expenditures by \$52,500 in both 2019 and 2020 to be funded by an increase in conditional provincial grant revenues of \$52,500 in each of those years as a result of the successful award of \$105,000 through the Union of BC Municipalities to support a Regional Housing Needs Assessment project.

**Executive Summary**

- Preparation of a regional housing needs assessment report is a strategic priority.
- The RGS Technical Advisory Committee, comprising planning representatives of each member municipality and the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), prepared a project scope of work (Appendix A) and made application to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to fund the Regional Housing Needs Assessment project.
- UBCM has provided a grant of \$105,000 to undertake the housing needs assessment. In-kind contribution will be made by CVRD staff to coordinate the project on behalf of the CVRD and member municipalities.
- A request for proposals has been issued and closes September 12, 2019. The project will be completed by March 31, 2020.
- The project will result in an assessment of current and future housing needs for each jurisdiction, related gap analysis, and a public engagement strategy.
- The project will, in the short term, inform updates to municipal and rural Official Community Plans, the RGS five year review and, in the longer-term, could inform preparation of a regional affordable housing strategy.

Prepared by:

Concurrence:

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**Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)**

Village of Cumberland	✓
Town of Comox	✓
City of Courtenay	✓

Attachments: Appendix A – “Regional Housing Needs Assessment: Scope of Work”

### Housing Needs Assessment Project Scope

1. **Project Description:** The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) and its member municipalities (project partners) are commencing a housing needs report process, and are seeking submissions from qualified consultants for data collection and analysis. Also addressed through this process will be the development and implementation of an engagement strategy for consultation with relevant stakeholder organizations and the community. Support for the development of in-house capacity to undertake future housing needs reports is integral to the project. The scope of work is detailed below.
  
2. **Deliverables:** Proposals must provide and execute a work plan that will achieve the following:
  - i. Prepare a housing needs report that will meet all data collection and reporting requirements of applicable sections of Part 14, Division 22 of the *Local Government Act* (RSBC, 2015, c. 1) and the related housing needs report regulation.
  - ii. In consultation with CVRD staff, develop a community engagement strategy that focuses on information sharing and the collection of quantifiable data for review by the project partners that:
    - a. Includes the use of local citizens with lived experience of housing challenges (full continuum of housing needs) and local housing, homelessness and supports providers (i.e. key informant interviews, surveys);
    - b. Includes formal (i.e. open house) and informal (i.e. pop-up/piggy back events) opportunities for public consultation.
  - iii. Provide, through text and visual representations, a summary of findings that is “web-ready”.
  - iv. Provide raw data in a format that is importable to project partners’ GIS databases (ESRI geodatabase format/shapefile, ArcGis).
  
3. **Housing Needs Report Content:**

In addition to meeting all of the information and analysis requirements prescribed by the province, the consultants will deliver a housing needs report that:

  - i. Is organized in a manner to provide an overall regional housing needs profile and separate housing needs profiles for each planning area (i.e. each municipality and electoral area);
  - ii. Is organized such that all data can be separated and analyzed by individual planning area (versus aggregated) and refined, where possible, to neighbourhood level/census dissemination area detail (intent is smallest meaningful spatial area);
  - iii. Provides a clear picture of current housing needs, newly arising needs and current and projected supply analysis;
  - iv. Provides an overall “gap analysis” for the CVRD;
  - v. Identifies current affordable housing services and programs within the CVRD;
  - vi. Engages key stakeholders and the community in the development of an “appropriate housing” definition and develop a list of replicable “appropriate housing” indicators for future use in policy and decision-making;

- vii. Using qualitative data, supplements quantitative findings regarding housing condition/suitability, household composition, local barriers to accessing housing, mobility, link between housing and transportation, etc;
  - viii. Analyzes impact of external demand pressures on housing demand and supply (e.g. housing speculation, short-term vacation rentals);
  - ix. Includes a baseline analysis of existing and planned supply relative to the “appropriate housing” indicators for each planning area; and
  - x. Proposes a methodology for housing needs report replication for future housing needs reports (e.g. submission of raw data importable to project partners’ systems, qualitative and quantitative data assumptions).
4. **Background Information:** The consulting team should review the following:
- Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy
  - Official Community Plans for each planning area
  - Zoning Bylaws for each planning area
  - Community Foundation’s Vital Signs reports (2016, 2018)
  - Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness Five Year Action Plan (2019)
  - Data from local service providers (e.g. Point in Time homelessness count, housing and supports waitlists)
  - Building permit data from each planning area
  - Land use approval data from each planning area
  - Localized Vancouver Island Real Estate Board data
  - Short-term vacation rental platform localized data
  - Project partners’ Affordable Housing Strategies, past housing needs reports (i.e. Village of Cumberland 2016)
5. **Timing/Phasing Plan:**
- i. Orientation and Context Phase (September-October 2019):
    - a. Meeting with project partners to understand data and analysis needs.
    - b. Meeting with key stakeholders (identified by CVRD) to understand data gaps and available data.
    - c. Approval of engagement strategy by project team (including survey and interview questions).
    - d. Initiation of engagement strategy.
  - ii. Data Collection Phase (September – December 2019)
    - a. Survey design and distribution.
    - b. Key informant interviews.
    - c. Preliminary findings meeting with project team.
    - d. Submission of raw data to project partners by December 1, 2019.
  - iii. Findings and Analysis Phase (December 2019 – February 2020)
    - a. Submission of draft findings and analysis report to project team (include data sources).

- iv. Summary and Conclusion Phase (March 2020)
  - a. Delivery of final housing needs report (pdf and web-ready).
  - b. Report presentation to elected officials (electoral area directors and councils).
  - c. Report presentation to key stakeholders and public.
  - d. Facilitated discussion on next steps.