

Lets Talk Housing

Exploration of housing in the
communities of the ACRD – Meeting
Notes

June 14th, 2018

1

June 14th Summary

Municipal leaders and staff gathered to discuss housing needs, challenges and opportunities in the ACRD. The following slides were used as a guide for the discussion around available data, individual community approaches and a collective discussion. Notes from the meeting have been inserted to record the conversation and resulting next steps while ensuring information from the meeting is distributed widely.

2

June 14th Attendance

- Scott Smith –Director of Development Services, Port Alberni
- Mike Ruttan – Mayor, Port Alberni
- Chris Alemany – Councillor, Port Alberni
- Keith Wyton – ACRD Director, Bamfield
- Penny Cote – ACRD Director, Sproat Lake
- Alex Dyer – Planner, ACRD
- Bruce Greig – Manager of Community Planning, Ucluelet
- Marilyn McEwen – Councillor, Ucluelet
- Aaron Rodgers - Manager of Community Sustainability, Tofino
- Josie Osborn – Mayor, Tofino
- Greg Blanchette – Councillor, Tofino
- Wilfred Cootes – Councillor Uchucklesaht Tribe, Director ACRD
- Lee Weber - Business Manager, Bamfield Marine Science Centre

3

Intent for the Day

Communities in the ACRD are facing challenges around housing affordability and availability. While our community's needs may be varied there is a wealth of knowledge to be gleaned and shared through an exploration of our current situations, priorities and ways forward.

We would like to invite leadership and staff from the communities of the ACRD for a half day discussion to:

- **Unpack the issues;**
- **Learn from local communities successes and best practices;**
- **Identify and prioritize shared areas of focus to strengthen regional advocacy and support.**

4

Agenda

- **Welcome and Introductions**
- **Regional and Community Data Review**
- **Discussion**
- **Breaking Down the Challenges**
- **Priority Setting**
- **Discussion Summary and Next Steps**
- **Closing**

5

What we know – Living Wage

Port Alberni 2018 - \$17.50

- **Annual Family Income of \$63,700**

**Clayoquot Sound
Biosphere Region 2017 -
\$20.11**

- **Annual Family Income of \$73,200**



6

What we know – 2015 Census

Census Stats – Average After Tax Income 2015, One Person

- ACRD –\$32,722
- Port Alberni – \$31,840
- Tofino – \$36,432
- Ucluelet - \$29,011

Census Stats – Average After Tax Income 2015, Two or More Income Households

- ACRD – \$70,328
- Port Alberni – \$66,465
- Tofino – \$83,098
- Ucluelet – \$76,500

7

What we know – 2015 Census

Community	Paying more than 30% on housing – owners	Paying more than 30% on housing - renters	Dwellings requiring major repairs	Average Value of Dwellings	Average monthly shelter costs
ACRD	15.3%	47.3%	1390 out of 13655	\$316,602	\$817
Port Alberni	13.6%	52.5%	705 out of 7410	\$233,739	\$789
Tofino	29.5%	28.6%	55 out of 755	\$648,561	\$1046
Ucluelet	29.8%	38.6%	75 out of 740	\$397,800	\$1005

8

Community Affordability

Affordability Factors

- Housing at or below 30% of income
- Food costs
- Transportation
- Community Amenities

Community Observations

- What factors are acting on your community?
- What additional data points are you paying attention to?

9

June 14th Discussion Notes – Data

- Require regional and sub regional collaborations on data to be more effective
- Needs assessments are crucial tools for municipalities
- Census data is challenging in rural communities – not reflecting actual population, more transient populations and seasonal influxes
- Useful to know data – who is commuting between communities, up to date rental and real estate numbers...

10

Tofino- Priorities

- **Supported housing** for vulnerable populations; numbers are not high, but need is critical. Some rental rates should be \$375/month or less.
- **Permanent, year-round rental housing** uninterrupted seasonally, most critically for low income residents, but also modest income residents especially those with children.
- Most rents should be \$625/month or less for singles and \$1,000/month for family units.
- **Entry-level homeownership units**, affordable to first time buyers and moderate income households. Most prices should be \$300,000-\$400,000, with some smaller units in the mid-upper \$200,000s.
- **Shared rental accommodation** for seasonal non-resident employees. Most rents should be \$450/person/month for shared accommodation.

11

Tofino - Challenges

- Household income
- Land\$/availability
- Construction cost (remote/topo)
- Seasonality

12

Tofino– Addressing the issues

- THC/TBF
- Council direction (housing first)
- Amenity Policy
- OCP 2019

13

Tofino – Wish List

- Affordable rental housing
- Seasonal employee housing
- Maintain STR enforcement
- More water
- THC (long term)
- Whistler
- No goals yet, digging out of the hole
- Resources (Province)

14

June 14th Discussion Notes - Tofino

- Challenge to attain accurate housing and population data with such seasonal and mobile populations
- Staff housing is a huge challenge – measuring need and defining lead (who's responsibility)
- Short Term rentals – balancing need with community affordability
- Require business involvement and developers that 'get it'
- Covenant policy(ies) which work for community interests
- Need for regional/sub regional collaborations on data collection and housing authority for sustainability and data validity

15

Ucluelet - Priorities

- stop & reverse the bleed of rental housing (esp. secondary suites) lost to short term vacation rentals
- add supply of the same 4 housing types noted by Tofino

16

Ucluelet - Challenges

- loss of year-round housing to short-term vacation rentals
- need for seasonal worker housing – even a temporary pressure relief valve
- construction costs & contractor capacity
- existing zoning (pre- online bookings) being gamed to allow STR's



17

Ucluelet – Addressing the issues

- adopt updated OCP with new chapter & policies on Housing and Growth Management
- undertake a Housing Needs Assessment
- look for opportunities to update inclusionary zoning to ensure a mix of affordable housing types are delivered with each phase of new development in the community
- explore the use of new rental zoning powers proposed in Bill 23
- explore the use of DCC's for affordable housing (resort muni's)
- add zoning opportunities for infill of compact, more affordable units in existing neighbourhoods (very small lots, rental cottages, etc.)

18

Ucluelet – Wish List

- a regional Housing Authority ready to take on the role of keeping the wait list, qualifying applicants, monitoring and enforcing housing agreements & covenants
- funding & land from senior levels of govt.
- a diverse mix of housing types and sizes in all future developments
- champions in the business community as well
- education and awareness among both landlords and tenants

19

June 14th Discussion Notes - Ucluelet

- Similar situation to Tofino
- Covenants which work for community and developers who 'get it' a high priority
- Data on who is commuting between Ucluelet and Tofino another interesting piece in addition to seasonal work force housing need
- Contractor availability has been barrier to development

20

Port Alberni - Priorities

- Affordable Housing.
- Supportive Housing.
- Seniors Housing.
- Consider Carriage/Laneway Housing options.

21

Port Alberni - Challenges

- Substandard rental housing operated by bad landlords.
- Low household incomes.
- High number of population that needs support services.

22

Port Alberni – Addressing the issues

- DCC reduction bylaw adopted by Council for Supportive Living and Affordable Housing.
- Multi-stakeholder working group to enforce on bad landlords and support tenants.
- Working with local non-profit groups on potential housing projects.
- Continue support of infill housing projects.

23

Port Alberni – Wish List

- New Affordable and Supportive Housing.
- Seniors Housing.
- Improve existing substandard housing.
- Continued coordination of non-profit housing providers.

24

June 14th Discussion Notes – Port Alberni

- Require a Needs Assessment
- Investigating zoning and bylaws to create more alternatives such as laneway housing and density increases
- Pursuing partnerships with churches, neighboring first nations and other groups
- Investigating use of city assets
- Require an increase to family housing

25

Bamfield - Priorities

- Housing for the employed who do not own housing
- BMSC students and employees couch surfing among seasonal inventory.
- Housing for young families.

26

Bamfield - Challenges

- High level of absentee/seasonal occupancy
- Rental income does not cover the cost of developing new inventory
- Landlords perceive STR as more attractive than long term rental
- Seasonal employment in tourism sector and university programs creates bottlenecks and discontinuities
- Balance the benefits of increasing visitor levels with the needs of residents.

27

Bamfield – Addressing the issues

- Sense of optimism about potential for future growth
- Huu-ay-aht First Nation (HFN) investment in village properties seen as positive
- Recent collaboration- Community support for land use permission for HFN employee housing
- Bamfield Marine Science Centre (BMSC) as a premiere learning and research institution centre brings valuable resources and potential for community benefits.
- Relatively small geographic community footprint requires careful planning- development must not degrade distinctive and unique assets
- The Official Community Plan states the desires and issues relevant to future direction- ongoing engagement is required to reflect community needs as change happens and opportunities arise.
- Proactive is better than reactive

28

Bamfield – Wish List

- Explore different governance models that would support more local initiative and control over major community sectors such as housing.
- Continue to collaborate with HFN and BMSC
- Expand a diverse housing stock that meets the needs of residents and visitors.
- Goals-
 1. Attract young families and keep the school open
 2. Balance the visitor accommodation market with the housing needs of residents
 3. Reduce housing barriers for the diverse collection of people who love Bamfield as an attractive community with dynamic social and economic opportunities in a unique and unspoiled natural setting.

29

ACRD - Priorities

- One of the objectives of our OCPs is to facilitate the provision of safe, affordable housing for residents.
- Promote alternative forms of housing to increase the rental housing market.
- Maintain housing affordability in the rural areas while protecting agricultural lands.

30

ACRD - Challenges

- Housing prices increasing in rural areas.
- Limited ability for the ACRD to build affordable housing – no local service area.
- Limited developer interest in building alternative forms of housing.

31

ACRD – Addressing the issues

- Accessory Dwelling Units
 - Second dwellings permitted in most zones on properties with a minimum 1 acre lot size.
- In-fill residential development
 - The OCPs in the Alberni Valley support a 0.6 acre minimum for subdivision in Residential areas.
- OCP Policies to support affordable housing.
 - Density bonusing, manufactured homes, multi-family, dwellings above commercial uses.

32

ACRD – Wish List

- Many Regional Districts in the province have adopted Regional Housing Affordability Strategies.
 - Coordinated regional response to housing demand, homelessness.
 - Protect non-market and market rental stock.
 - Establish a regional financial contribution service to build affordable housing.

33

June 14th Discussion Notes – ACRD (including Bamfield)

- Require needs assessment
- Challenges of rural and urban adjacent property – limited access to amenities, incentives for developers/building, balancing development with agricultural lands
- Require regional collaborations

34

Breaking Down the Challenges

The following questions were used to guide conversation

- What shared challenges are our communities facing?
- Where can local governments have an impact?
- What opportunities are there to move forward?

In advance of the meeting ACHN coordinator pulled out the following shared challenges from the community presentations:

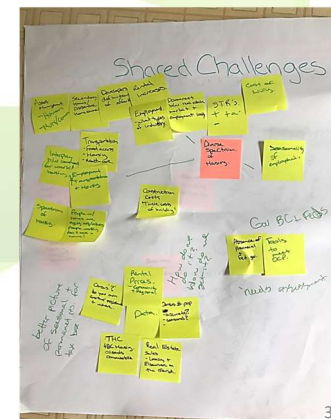
- Require a diverse mix of housing options to address challenges
- Average household income vs costs
- Construction and land costs/availability
- Seasonality
- Short term rentals
- Absentee and/or bad landlords

35

June 14th Discussion Notes - Challenges

After reviewing challenges noted through out the community presentations participants engaged in a facilitated discussion

Several trends emerged most notably around: data collection, funding and tools to move towards implementation, development of diverse spectrums of housing



36

Challenges Discussion Continued

The development of a diverse spectrum of housing was a focal point for the communities participating. Discussion around shared challenges and considerations focused around the following topics

- Asset management – both human and municipal/community
- Addressing secondary homes and absentee homeowners
- Disconnect between real estate market and employment locally
- Employment – types of industry and wage
- Seasonality of employment
- Developers definition of affordability
- Rental increases
- Cost of living
- Transportation, food access, housing, health care
- Interplay between communities for work and housing
- Construction costs “true costs of building”
- People with homes are aging out and retiring. People working cannot afford homes.

37

Challenges Discussion Continued

Data Collection

- Require a better picture of seasonal and permanent residents for decisions and funding
- How do we do data collection? How do we get the numbers?
- Census population stats – accuracy and how do we reflect seasonal influxes?
- Real Estate Sales – locally and compared to elsewhere
- Rental Prices – locally by community and regionally
- Census question for secondary home owners – do you own another residence and where?

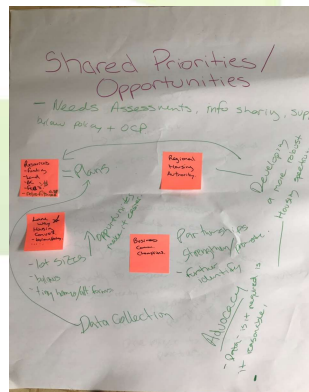
Funding and Tools for Implementation

- Absence of provincial and federal government supports for so many years
- Require tools and resources to meet requirements (assessments), implement OCP's and new standards for project funding
- Community Needs Assessments to support housing projects, if not already done is there opportunities for communities to have financial support?

38

June 14th Discussion Notes – Shared Priorities and Opportunities

Participants discussed shared commonalities and opportunities to collaborate. Opportunities arose around information sharing, joint advocacy and data collection and the development of plans (needs assessments, OCP's) which support the development of a robust housing spectrum.



39

Shared Priorities and Opportunities - Continued

Planning and Information Sharing

- Needs Assessments - Information sharing (contractors, funding sources, considerations, etc)
- Supportive bylaw, policy and OCP
- Resources – funding, land, provincial and federal dollars, retro fits
- Lot size, laneway housing and other alternative density solutions – bylaw and policy
- Increasing opportunities to make it easier

Regional Housing Authority

- Developing a more robust housing spectrum

Partnerships

- Strengthen and promote
- Identify further opportunities
- Business community champions

Advocacy

- Data collection – is it required, reasonable, reflective of communities?
- Resources for planning and projects

40

Next Steps

The discussion from the afternoon highlighted consistent trends and priorities for local communities to consider as well as a few next steps.

Increase community and regional capacity

- Investigate local and regional needs
- Shelf ready projects
- Needs assessments if not already complete
- Mechanism to carry conversation forward

Investigate and advocate for funding

- Regional coordination
- Needs assessments
- Capacity for regional coordination
- Programs and resources which work for local communities

Immediate Next Steps

- Resolution to UBCM around capacity for communities to plan
- One pager(s) for business, partners and other stakeholders around housing priorities
- Reconvene conversation in early October