

## Attributes and Functions of a Backbone Affordable Housing and Homelessness Organization

The table below outlines the attributes and functions that are necessary for the future backbone organization to have in order to effectively address the issue of affordable housing and homelessness here in the Comox Valley. The list was created by the Comox Valley Housing Task Force, and reviewed by local governments at the January 23, 2014 Facilitated Discussion.

Attribute	Description	Rationale
Permanent	There is no scheduled end date; priorities are flexible to meet the changing needs of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures on-going attention to the issue.</li> <li>• Provides continuity and long-term programming.</li> <li>• Platform for governments and local agencies to work together on long-term solutions.</li> </ul>
Accountable	Makes decisions that impact public interest, accountable to the community, funders, and other stakeholders to ensure a level of neutrality and professionalism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting helps to keep on track.</li> <li>• Builds trust with stakeholders and community.</li> <li>• Ensures sound use of resources.</li> </ul>
Transparent	Makes decisions openly in the public realm, all reports, minutes etc., are available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealing with public interest and funds.</li> <li>• Builds trust with stakeholders, community and funders.</li> <li>• Increases capacity for collaboration.</li> </ul>
Function	Description	Rationale
Provides legal protection for board/committee members	Through insurance and policies, board or committee members are protected from potential legal action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake initiatives on own</li> <li>• Not hampered by fear of potential legal action against individual members.</li> </ul>
Professional expertise	Staff and board/committee with expert advice and support in the area of affordable housing and homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds confidence in the community and with stakeholders.</li> <li>• Provides on-going support required for functions listed below.</li> </ul>
Capacity to Access On-Going Funding	An independent entity or under protection of an entity capable of applying for funding, holding funds, and distributing funding. This includes charitable tax status, the ability to receive government grant funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding is required to ensure the professional level of service to the community.</li> <li>• Helps to ensure the permanency.</li> <li>• Required to be able to carry out the functions listed below.</li> </ul>

Taken from Section 2.0 of Information Package: CVHTF Options for Governance 2014

Function	Description	Rationale
Advisory	Makes recommendations to government, stakeholders and shares information within the community and with other communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government agencies, such as BCHousing, CMHC prefer to support projects that have local support.</li> <li>• Based on the feedback and learning of the “Building Housing Solutions” Community Forum, this community would like to see a community wide housing plan.</li> </ul>
Award grants	As in the case of the \$75,000 from the CVRD for the Building Capacity Grants, be able to awards grants to local organizations for affordable housing and homelessness projects when the opportunity arises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local government may not have the expertise or resources to award and monitor funding opportunities and it is important that the community does not miss out on potential access to resources.</li> </ul>
Collaborate with partners and Networking	Partners may include; local governments, businesses, entities and individuals in Comox Valley, housing organizations, senior governments, and other Vancouver Island communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore opportunities for housing.</li> <li>• Identify barriers.</li> <li>• Strengthen local capacity.</li> <li>• Creates a more cohesive and responsive strategy for dealing with housing.</li> </ul>
Data Collection	Collect, sort and publish housing/homelessness data and statistics, including vacancy rates, affordability stats etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local agencies have access to data to help support their mandates and give direction to need gaps.</li> <li>• Local service providers do not have the resources to collect data and share with the community.</li> </ul>
Evaluation	Evaluate current programs and initiatives regarding housing in the community, including; service agencies, local government affordable housing policies etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all agencies have the resources to effectively evaluate programs.</li> <li>• Look at the issue from a community wide perspective and help to identify gaps in housing or services.</li> </ul>
Information hub	Centralized place where information related to housing and homelessness can be accessed by stakeholders, government and the public. Such as website, reference materials and contacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been and continues to be a lot of valuable work done in the Comox Valley, this information, data and experience should be accessible to anyone who is looking to develop solutions.</li> <li>• Help to coordinate efforts and connect agencies and individuals.</li> <li>• Decrease duplication of work.</li> </ul>

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<b>Function</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Leadership	Is respected and acknowledged as a source of expertise and support by the community, stakeholders, funders, and local/regional government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports the other functions by increasing value and legitimacy to the organization.</li> <li>• Increases the potential for achieving its goals.</li> </ul>
Planning	Assisting with and supporting long and short-term community plans regarding affordable housing and homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A coordinated, defined plan can increase the community's access to funds.</li> <li>• The community, stakeholders and funders have indicated that this is a priority at the "Building Housing Solutions" Community Forum.</li> </ul>
Support stakeholders	Provide information, contacts, professional expertise and other forms of support to stakeholders that are working on addressing affordable housing and homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many local agencies do not have the resources to carry out needs assessments, or evaluate data.</li> <li>• Increase likelihood of funding and projects in our community.</li> </ul>
Make Recommendations to Local Government	Help to strengthen affordable housing policies and programs by making recommendations to local government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide local government with advice that is professional and informed.</li> <li>• Develop relationship with local government and support local government with professional expertise.</li> </ul>

*Note: Stakeholders refers to all members of the community, neighbourhood, businesses etc.*