

## **GREATER VANCOUVER REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS**

May 22, 2001.

On behalf of the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, I am pleased to forward to you a copy of the regional plan to alleviate and prevent homelessness in the region, titled "Regional Homelessness Plan for Greater Vancouver" (March, 2001). This regional plan was developed by the Regional Steering Committee through a year-long planning process which included collaboration among not only the considerable array of constituencies represented on the Regional Steering Committee itself, but also among a broader range of stakeholders who participated through workshops and outreach sessions.

On May 9, 2001, the federal Minister responsible for coordination of homelessness programs, Minister Claudette Bradshaw, approved this regional plan for Greater Vancouver. The Regional Steering Committee is now seeking endorsement of the regional plan from community organizations, municipalities and senior governments, and from homeless people themselves. The Steering Committee recognizes that the level of endorsement provided by each constituency will vary, but it requests of each "that the guiding principles (pp. 7-8) of the "Regional Homelessness Plan for Greater Vancouver" be approved and that the Regional Plan be endorsed as a working document".

The Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness coalesced in March 2000 for the purpose of developing a regional strategy to address the crisis in homelessness in this region, and since that time has also acted as the decision-making body on allocation of federal funding for "absolute homelessness" through the federal government's "Supporting Communities Partnerships Initiative" program, announced in December 1999. The Steering Committee includes representation from emergency shelter operators, service providers, health authorities, community advocacy groups, housing providers, urban aboriginal community groups, municipalities, and senior governments. (A current membership list is attached.) The Steering Committee's work is facilitated by the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

Work on the regional plan is not complete, as it is intended to be a "living document", and outreach with particular community sectors such as youth and urban Aboriginal organizations in the region is continuing. Furthermore, the Regional Steering Committee is currently considering options for future governance of the regional plan, which has a planning horizon of approximately ten years, to identify a governance entity that will oversee implementation of the plan and ensure that its policies continue to evolve according to changed circumstances.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) in 1998 pronounced homelessness in Canada a national disaster. For many years, individuals and community organizations in Greater Vancouver have been working hard to serve the needs of the growing population of homeless people here in our region, and have continued to report how needs increasingly outstrip available resources. Many of these people have now for the first time come together to develop a regional plan, and this plan represents their common agreement on a "continuum of housing and

supports” that is necessary to alleviate and prevent homelessness in Greater Vancouver. Your organization’s endorsement of this plan acts as an endorsement of this common agreement which has been achieved through a year-long community-based planning process.

Members of the Regional Steering Committee would be pleased to accept an invitation from your Board or organization to present the regional plan and to respond to queries. Such invitations can be forwarded through any member of the Steering Committee, or directly to me at (phone) 432-6384 or (e-mail) verna.semotuk@gvrd.bc.ca. Furthermore, the Steering Committee would be very pleased to receive from you a copy of your Board or organization’s resolution or motion to endorse this regional plan, as documentation of these resolutions will constitute an important indication of wide community support for the plan as community groups, governments, social agencies, health authorities, and homeless people work to implement its policies.

Thank you.

Verna Semotuk, Chair,  
Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness

Attachments

- “Regional Homelessness Plan for Greater Vancouver”, March 19, 2001
- Membership List, Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness
- Information Bulletin Number 3, May 2001

**GREATER VANCOUVER REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELESSNESS**

**May 22, 2001**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ALTERNATE</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
<b><i>SHELTER PROVIDERS</i></b>		
Karen O'Shannacery	Al Mitchell	Lookout Emergency Aid Society
Peter Fedos	Darrell Ferner	Options Services to Communities Society
Chris Morrissey		BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses
Gerald Minchuk	Sharla Mauger Councillor	City of Langley
Beverly Grieve	Joan Selby	City of Burnaby
Jane Pickering		City of Coquitlam
Jill Davidson	Cameron Gray	City of Vancouver
Cheryl Kathler		City of North Vancouver
Barb Beblo		City of Surrey
Thor Kuhlmann		City of New Westminster
Ross Blackwell		District of Maple Ridge
Margaret Picard	Rob Innes	City of Richmond
Verna Semotuk (Chair)		Greater Vancouver Regional District
<b><i>HEALTH</i></b>		
Linda Thomas	Arleen Pare	Vancouver/Richmond Health Board
Wendy Powley	Lance Nelson	Simon Fraser Health Board;
Laura Clarke		South Fraser Health Board
Scott Clark		United Native Nations
Blair Harvey		Vancouver Aboriginal Council
Michel Petit	Lynette Fiddler	Metis Family Services
David Stevenson	Paul Stevenson	Vancouver Metis Association
<b><i>HOUSING PROVIDERS</i></b>		
Alice Sundberg	Bonnie Rice	BC Non-Profit Housing Association
Diane Winkler		Co-operative Housing Federation of BC
Michelle Neilly	Ashley Chester	BC Housing
<b><i>COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS</i></b>		
Linda Western		United Way of the Lower Mainland
Aziz Khaki		Interfaith Council
<b><i>SERVICE PROVIDERS</i></b>		
Linda Syssoff		South Fraser Community Services
Marie Lemon	Jennifer Brubacher	Canadian Mental Health Association – Richmond
Linda Fletcher-Gordon	Rob York	Lower Mainland Purpose Society
Roxann MacDonald		SHARE

# GREATER VANCOUVER REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

May 22, 2001

NAME	ALTERNATE	AFFILIATION
Kathie Chiu	Gail Finnson	Child, Youth and Family Network (Maple Ridge)
Maureen Joyce		Stepping Stone Rehabilitative Society (Langley)
Rob Simms		Peace Arch Community Services
<b>ADVOCACY</b>		
John Argue		Working Group on Poverty
Tom Laviolette	Muggs Sigurgjerson	Carnegie Centre/Housing & Homeless Network
Kimiko Karpoff	Linda Mix/Vanessa Geary	Lower Mainland Network for Affordable Housing/New Westminster Community Housing Society
Timothy Welsh		Immigrant Services Society
Linda Mix	Kris Anderson	Tenants' Rights Action Coalition (TRAC)
<b>BUSINESS/LABOUR</b>		
Sophie King		Urban Development Institute
John Fitzpatrick		Vancouver & District Labour Council
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>		
Dianne Wenham		Ministry for Children/Families (Addictions Services)
Greg Steves	Jeanine Ratcliffe	Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (MSDES) Sr. Policy Analyst
Paul Clairmont	Barbara Montgomery	Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers (UCDU)
Carla McLean	Lindsay Stephens	Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers
Karen Hemmingson	Jennifer Vombrock	Min. of Community Development, Cooperatives & Volunteers
Susan Stevenson		Human Resources Development Canada
Jennifer Semenoff		Ministry of Social Development & Economic Security
Carl Gomez		CMHC
<b>EX OFFICIO</b>		
Chris Haynes		Ministry of Social Development & Economic Security
Deborah Nilsen		Ministry of Womens Equality
Janice Aull		Ministry for Children and Families
Jim Green		Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers
Garry Curtis		Intergovernmental Services