



INFORMATION BULLETIN: JULY 2010 An Up-Date About the Work of BCS

Background

The Building Community has been formed by a group of volunteers who share a personal desire to contribute positively to the future of the Downtown Eastside (DTES). BCS focuses on supporting the communities that make up the DTES in their efforts to build on their many strengths and to address the current issues of poverty, homelessness, addictions and mental illnesses, and crime. (www.buildingcommunitysociety.org)

Priorities

Local Area Planning

BCS advocates for and supports local area planning activities that involve those who live and work in the DTES to ensure that future development is to their benefit and in particular to the benefit of those who live with low incomes, as well as to the benefit of the city as a whole.

Activities

- *Building Community Through Affordable Housing – A Blueprint for Sustainable Urban Development in the Downtown Eastside.* July 2008
- *The Case for a Local Area Plan for Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside – A Discussion Paper.* November 2008
- *Tools for Talking: An Interactive Spread Sheet that Demonstrates the costs and the capital and revenues required to generate non-market housing in a number of scenarios.* 2008.
- *Vancouver Downtown Eastside - Plans, Policies, Programs, Projects and Proposals – A Synthesis.* Available on request.

Model Demonstration Projects

- **Aboriginal Mother Centre:** BCS works with the AMC board of directors, Lu’ma Native Housing Society, Builders Without Borders and other parties to expand the current AMC facility and add 16 units of transitional housing for Aboriginal mothers and their children. The project is now under construction.
- **First United Church Redevelopment Project:** BCS works with the First United Leadership Team in the planning and development of a new facility on their current Gore and Hastings property incorporating three floors of community

services and spiritual activity and four different forms of non-market accommodation: a refuge, a shelter, supportive housing and general non-market housing. Design work is in its penultimate stage, capital and operating costing has been completed and planning and fund-raising are underway.

The BCS Services and Supports to Projects

- Fund-raising assistance (soft costs and capital costs)
- Assistance with obtaining legal advice
- Project planning
- Community consultations
- Communications planning
- Multi-party partnerships assistance
- Management and organization development

The Building Society Group

- Milton Wong, C.M. Honorary Chair
- Mike Harcourt, President of the Board
- Jacquie Forbes Roberts, Chair, Management Committee and Associates
- Larry Beasley, C.M. Planner
- Ian Chang, Planner
- Michael Clague, C.M. Community Worker
- David Eaves, Public policy commentator and consultant to non-profits, governments and business.
- Maggie Geiser, Advocate and Community Volunteer
- Terry Howard, Prison Outreach Worker
- Michael Mortensen, Planner
- Tim Pringle, Real Estate Foundation of BC
- Ray Spaxman, Planner
- Paul Sullivan, Communications Consultant
- Joe Wai, Architect
- Gerry Zipursky, Non-Profit Organizational Development Consultant and Manager

BCS acknowledges the support of the following organizations: Columbia Institute, Robert L. Conconi Foundation, Real Estate Foundation of BC, Rix Family Foundation, Phyllis and Irving Snider Foundation, the Schein Foundation plus individual philanthropists.

For further Information:

Maggie Geiser, Administrator
mgeiser@telus.net or 604 619 5050

July2010bulletin