



May/June 2008 Newsletter

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Strategic Plan Goals 2008/2009

- Affordable Housing
- Child Care Strategy
- Implications of Regional Growth
- Cross Cultural Relationships

Social Planning Cowichan's Annual General Board Meeting

Social Planning Cowichan would like to invite the public to attend its next annual general Board meeting on September 8th, 2008 from 4:45pm to 6:15pm. The meeting will be held at 135 Third St. in the Community Futures Cowichan Board Room.

Message from the Chair

New opportunities for Social Planning Cowichan to move forward on the Board's goals were created this Spring. Two Vancouver Island University, Human Services diploma program practicum students worked on our initiatives in May and June: Dorthy Joe and Michelle Nowzek. With new funding, we were able to hire them in new positions.

Michelle, as our executive assistant, will continue to be our lead staff member. Dorthy is working as a summer student on strengthening cross cultural relationships.

In addition, Services Canada funding allowed us to hire 2 researchers: Kim Farris to support the Regional Affordable Housing Directorate and Katrina Halkett to begin our work on the Implications of Regional Growth.

It has, indeed, been busy and productive months! On behalf of the Board, I extend sincere thanks to our 4 staff members and the community for their support of our strategic plan goals 2008/2009.

**Candace Spilsbury, Chair
Social Planning Cowichan**

Katimavik Volunteers Looking For Local Rental Housing

Katimavik is Canada's leading national youth services program, designed for young Canadians aged 17-21. Each year participants volunteer for more that 700 community partner organizations in nearly 100 communities across the country.

This year Katimavik is coming to our community and they need help finding rental housing. The team requires a three + bedroom house that is close to Duncan centre or to public transportation. If you or someone you know has an opportunity for housing that would fit this description, please call Michelle @ 250-746-1004 ext.250 for more details.

Regional Affordable Housing Directorate Update

The Regional Affordable Housing Directorate held two productive meetings this Spring. The group is scheduled to meet next on Thursday, September 18th.

In June, the Directorate heard from guest speaker Gail Franklin of the Fraser Valley Housing Network (FVHN). Gail gave a history of the formation of the FVHN and stressed the importance that communication and community involvement played in getting their project up and running.

The Directorate is quickly moving forward with research and development of several surveys with the aid of a recent University of Victoria graduate, Kim Farris. Kim has an undergraduate background in urban geography which has been very useful in this work. The research and statistics Kim is gathering are aimed at getting a clearer picture of our specific and unique Region's needs for affordable, safe, and accessible housing for all.

The first of three surveys has been sent out to service providers and the data being collected is expected to be available by the end of summer for analysis. Two other surveys are near completion for focus group and individual impact across the CVRD.

Regional Child Care Task Force Update

Over the past two months Social Planning Cowichan's Regional Child Care Task Force has held two meetings. The first meeting brought an increased membership to the group creating a broader representation of the community.

The group welcomed guest Nancy McInnes, Chair, ECE Vancouver Island University's Nanaimo Campus. Nancy spoke to the Task Force about increased access to Early Childhood Education through new program options being looked at by the university.

Through collaboration with local governments and educational institutions the group continues to look at the issues of staff training and recruitment, as well as raising awareness about the need for quality, affordable, childcare spaces in our Region.

It is expected that the group will complete their Terms of Reference in the fall. Members of the Regional Childcare Task Force have expressed that they want to be sure the Terms of Reference reflect their wish to be action oriented on childcare issues.

This newsletter is produced by-monthly by Social Planning Cowichan. For more information contact Michelle Nowzek at info@socialplanningcowichan.org or 250-746-1004 ext.250

Implications of Regional Growth

Simon Fraser University health sciences undergraduate student Katrina Halkett is working as a research assistant studying the 'Implications of Regional Growth.' Social Planning Cowichan's work in this area involves investigating how growth and development in the region affects the community, especially how the changing community environment affects older adults. This research will also explore ideas pertaining to how the community can best meet the needs of the aging population.

Through her work, Katrina will help contribute to the updating of the Status of the Community Report. She will collaborate with community organizations that serve seniors to work on developing partnerships to aid Social Planning Cowichan in its work of recommending short and long term strategies to improve the quality of life in the Cowichan Region.

Cross Cultural Relationships

Social Planning Cowichan has set working on Cross Cultural Relationships as a goal for our work plan in 2008/2009 and Dorthy Joe has been hired to start this work. Dorthy is a graduate of the Social Services Diploma Program of Vancouver Island University. She is a Cowichan Tribes Band Member and has been raised traditionally in the Cowichan Region.

It is Social Planning Cowichan's intention with this initiative to work with the many organizations that are involved in building and strengthening cross-cultural relationships in our community and to carry on the social legacy of the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG).