



GREATER VICTORIA
HOUSING SOCIETY

Since 1956

VISIONS

Volume 1, Issue 2

Winter 2011

Pembroke Partnership Our Newest Project

Inside this issue:

Affordable
Housing
Community
Wheels Program 2

The Success
of Affordable
Housing 2

TC Island
Savings Open 2

Where the
Dollar Goes 3

Gifts of Real
Estate 3

In Memory 3

Our Staff
Our Board of
Directors 4



Hon. Ida Chong congratulating GVHS and our partners at the start of construction ceremony held on January 14th.

An old industrial building is being transformed into a main floor commercial space and 25 affordable rental apartments. The property will be strata titled with two lots:

- 1) The commercial main floor to be owned and managed by Knappett Projects Inc.,
- 2) Greater Victoria Housing Society will own and manage the 25 apartments on the second and third floors. The apartments will rent below market rates and will be targeted to individuals with incomes under \$35,000. In particular, the building is designed to meet the needs of new entrants to the workforce and low wage earners.

The project uses the same footprint as the existing building, will reuse or recycle as much of the existing building material as possible and is considered a conversion as we are using existing structural elements of the building. The building has been designed to carry forward the current historic look and complements its position on the edge of "old town" Victoria.

While the project has multiple levels of government capital funding, there will be no on-going government support for this building. This is a partnership between a charitable non-profit society and a local investor who is willing to make concessions to meet the goal of providing more affordable rental housing for low wage earners in the Victoria area. Our funders and partners are Knappett Projects Inc., Capital Regional District, City of Victoria, United Way of Greater Victoria, Coast Capital Savings, Home Depot Canada Foundation, CMHC and BC Housing.



Community Thank You



The Greater Victoria Housing Society would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to all those who supported us during the tragic Christmas Eve fire at our building "Constance Court".

A special thanks to:

Esquimalt Fire Department, City of Victoria Police Department, Esquimalt Emergency Social Services, Downs Construction, On Site Restorations, our residents and our neighbours.

Your outpouring of support is truly appreciated!

Affordable Housing / Community Wheels Program

Affordable Housing/Community Wheels Program is the result of an innovative partnership between the Victoria Car Share Co-op and the Greater Victoria Housing Society. This project is made possible by community project funding from Vancity.

This program allocates 15 free car share memberships to Greater Victoria Housing Society for use by eligible tenants. The value of a Victoria Car Share membership is \$400.

What are the benefits of car sharing?

Affordability, Convenience & Simplicity, Mobility, Reduced Environmental Impact



For complete instructions on eligibility requirements and how to enroll please visit:

www.victoriacarshare.ca/gvhs.html

“Affordable housing helps make a community strong, vibrant and healthy.”

The Success of Affordable Housing

The affordable housing crisis in Greater Victoria has been building for years. Homelessness is its most visible sign. However, the impact of the crisis is often hidden as low-income householders find themselves making difficult decisions to pay the monthly rent. In fact, tenants can pay as much as 65 percent of their income toward housing. This leaves little for necessities, such as food, utilities, clothing, transportation, and personal health care. Many low-income families, seniors, and adults with disabilities cannot find affordable housing, thus putting their health, well being and ability to prosper at risk. **Here is the story of one of our tenants:**

Twenty years ago Sally fled an alcoholic husband in Nova Scotia to start life afresh on the west coast. Sally started her first job at 16 and has valued her independence ever since. An illness in her 50s, however, left her fighting for benefits and the medication she needed to keep going. She had to rely on welfare, but yearly rent increases forced her give up her private sector apartment and look elsewhere. “Where was I going to go? I couldn’t make ends meet. I was eating a lot of canned food.” Sally eventually discovered social housing, and in 2000 she moved into a Greater Victoria Housing Society owned building close to downtown where she now comfortably lives, paying a reasonable 30 percent of her income toward rent. She appreciates the solid construction and excellent safety features of the building she shares with the other 100 plus residents. “I feel safe here. If it wasn’t for affordable housing, I’d be out on the streets.”

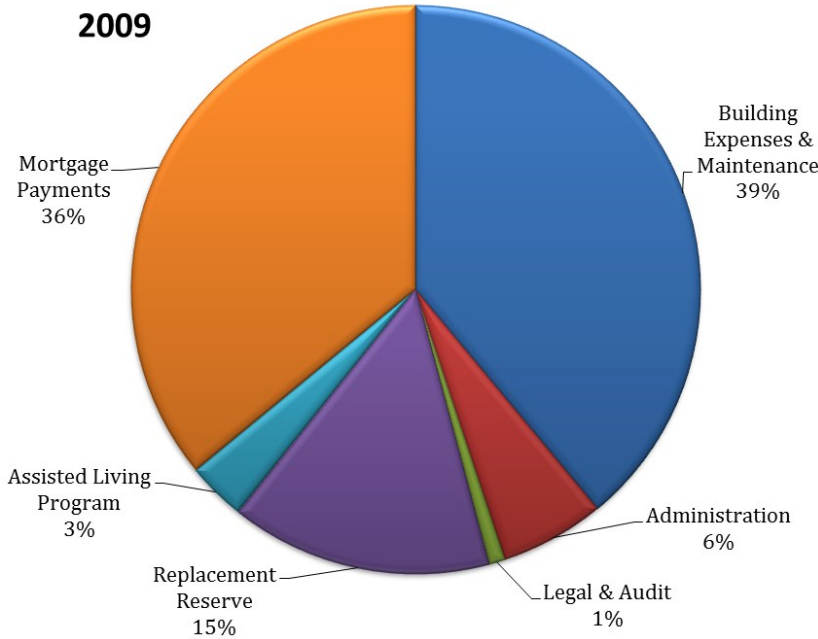


PRESENTED BY
VIEW ROYAL
CASINO

Funds raised through the 2011 Times Colonist Island Savings Open supports affordable housing provided by the Greater Victoria Housing Society.

June 2 - 5, 2011 Support us by supporting the Open

Where the Dollar Goes



“Affordable housing creates a foundation for a thriving economy and social ease.”

Gifts of Real Estate

Many people donate regularly to charities. Giving provides a great sense of personal satisfaction and can generate significant tax benefits through non-refundable charitable tax credits or for businesses tax deductions.

Suppose you’ve been considering giving a charitable gift but haven’t found it practical to do so. What about considering a gift of real estate? Why do this? A present or future gift offers you the opportunity for valuable income tax and estate tax savings. You can also free yourself of immediate and future management and selling issues.

With real estate values skyrocketing over the past few years, many investors are discovering that a large portion of their net worth is tied up in land and property holdings that are not easily convertible into cash. One strategy for philanthropically inclined individuals who seek to reduce tax efficiently is to donate highly appreciated property to charity.

Gifts of real estate can include a gift of a principle residence, rental commercial property, rental residential property, recreational property, vacant land for development and agricultural property.

In Memory

It is with deepest sympathy to family and friends that we acknowledge those recently departed:

- November: Bonnie Soulsby, Constance Court
- December: Brian Fillman, Constance Court; Beryl LeFeuvre, Townley Lodge
- January: Dennis Perry, Esquimalt Lions Lodge



Staff

Kaye Melliship, Executive Director
 Raymond Moss, Mgr. Property Operations
 Craig Vanni, Mgr. Revenue Development
 Roberta Meijer, Mgr. Finance
 Brenda Lesiuk, Finance Assistant
 Bev Bailey, Housing Assistant
 Gillian Hurn, Housing Assistant
 Glen Galvin, Property Operations Assistant
 Nancy Wilkinson, Reception

Maintenance: Murray Bierd
 Peter Biggley
 Steve Webster

Caretakers: Peggy Aeichele
 Doug Allen
 Justin Carter
 Michael Dunn
 Jessica Frances
 Michael Johnston
 Al Olson

Board of Directors

Eric Dahli, Chair
 Kim Thorau, Vice Chair
 Sam Macey, Secretary/Treasurer
 Ian Batey, Fundraising Chair
 Tony Beckett, Director
 Hank Mathias, Director
 Glenys Parry Blackadder, Director
 Karen Ramsay Cline, Director
 Paul Wickens, Director
 Peggy Lewis, Recording Secretary



1 - 772 Bay St.
 Victoria, BC V8T 5E4
 250.384.3434 phone
 250.386-3434 fax
 email: info@greatervichousing.org

If you would like to receive an electronic version of this newsletter please let us know and we would be pleased to add you to our email distribution list.



“Dedicated to Providing Affordable Rental Housing in Greater Victoria.”