

Towards A Housing Solution for Refugee Claimants in BC Project - Sep 2018 - Mar 2019

Project Overview

Title	Towards a Housing Solution for Refugee Claimants
Goal	To increase settlement and integration outcomes for refugee claimants seeking asylum in BC by supporting their housing needs.
Partners	• Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology (Province of BC - (MJTT)) • Multi Agency Partnership of BC (MAP)
Timeline	September 2018 - March 2019 (7 months)

Background

Canada is a signatory to the UN Convention (1951) and Protocol (1967) Relating to the Status of Refugees and is responsible for the protection of people seeking asylum in our country (known as “refugee claimants”). In 2017, a record 50,000+ refugee claimants arrived in Canada, 2325 of these in BC (about 5% of the national number). The housing market in BC’s Lower Mainland (high rental + low vacancy rates) creates a significant housing challenge for refugee claimants and their support network who are struggling to meet this basic human need.

Refugee claimant housing providers, with others, launched a day-long forum on 10 May 2018, bringing together 60+ participants representing 40+ agencies/businesses to focus on solutions. The resulting [Refugee Claimant Housing Forum Report and Action Plan](http://www.mapbc.org/housing-for-refugee-claimants) can be found at www.mapbc.org/housing-for-refugee-claimants.

In July 2018, The Province of BC (Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology) responded with resources (\$70,000) to implement key elements of the Action Plan and the following is proposed:

Project

Activity	Outcome	Resource Distribution
Build capacity within Multi Agency Partnership (MAP)	MAP is resourced to initiate coordinated action and respond to opportunities	\$19,000
Build capacity within housing providers	Refugee claimants gain increased access along the housing continuum	\$17,000
Increase public awareness and understanding	British Columbians accurately understand refugee claimants’ immigration status, housing and support needs, and assets	\$7000
Undertake Community Asset Mapping and strategic planning	Refugee claimants in BC’s Lower Mainland benefit from a region-wide, comprehensive housing and support plan	\$20,000

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Kinbrace Community Society signed the agreement on behalf of MAP with the Province of BC. Schedule "A" (below), copied from the agreement, outlines the heart of the project in a bit more detail....

SCHEDULE "A"

TOWARDS A HOUSING SOLUTION FOR REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

ARTICLE 1 - TERM

1.01 Term

Notwithstanding the actual date of execution and delivery of this Agreement, the term of this Agreement (the "**Term**") commences on September 1st, 2018 (the "**Effective Date**") and ends on March 31st, 2019, unless extended in accordance with section 1.02 below or earlier terminated in accordance with its terms.

1.02 Extension

The Term of this Agreement may upon the written agreement of both Parties, including by way of an exchange of letters, be extended for a period of up to 3 months, on terms and conditions acceptable to both Parties, and the Province will make any amendments or updates to this Schedule "A" and Schedule "B" as may be required or appropriate in the circumstances.

ARTICLE 2 - PROGRAM AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.01 Background and Objectives

The Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology (JTT) intends to enhance the capacity of the province and communities to support the housing needs of refugee claimants. It is expected that this project will lead to better settlement and integration outcomes for refugees seeking asylum in B.C.

2.02 Standards of Performance

The Recipient must:

- (a) deliver the Project and perform the Services in furtherance of the Program objectives;
- (b) ensure that all persons employed or retained to perform the Services are qualified and competent to perform them and are properly trained, instructed and supervised;
- (c) perform the Services to a standard of care, skill and diligence maintained by persons providing, on a commercial basis, services similar to the Services; and
- (d) use all reasonable efforts to meet the following performance standards in its provision of the Services:
 - activities are carried out in accordance with the description and timeline in 2.03;
 - deliver this project in close consultation with the Ministry and in coordination with the BC Asylum Seekers Contingency Plan being developed by the Ministry; and
 - consult with Ministry-funded agencies who deliver BC Settlement and Integration Services for refugee claimants.

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2.03 Project Services, Deliverables and Milestones

The Contractor will:

- Build capacity within Multi-Agency Partnership (MAP): Support the MAP and the MAP Housing Working Group, including support to meetings, being a resource accessible to internal and external agencies, and coordinating reporting of initiatives supported by this funding;
- Build capacity within refugee claimant housing providers: Identify new and innovative types of housing to support the needs of refugee claimants and build capacity within refugee claimant housing providers to establish housing options such as utilizing Airbnb and vacant units, and engaging landlords, 'empty nesters', 'snowbirds' etc.;
- Public education: Promote public awareness and understanding of refugee claimant issues as well as their contributions through a re-design of the MAP website, public forum, social media campaign, engaging with local and national media, and collaboration with the ISSofBC's Refugee Hub website;
- Create a strategic plan for refugee claimant housing and support: Conduct a systems / housing mapping exercise in BC Lower Mainland and a community assessment that includes the voices of refugee claimants, housing stakeholders, and the diverse community invested in welcoming refugee claimants. The needs of refugee claimants, community assets, gaps to be filled will be included in a strategic plan that is community-owned with majority buy-in by all stakeholders.

Project Activities/Timeline/Deliverables:

Activity	Key Deliverable	Target Date
Building capacity within Multi-Agency Partnership (MAP)		
1. The coordinator will support the Housing Working Group (HWG) co-chairs in all their projects.	HWG vision and plan is well-supported administratively.	As needed
2. Organize and support HWG meetings (e.g. with local municipalities, Housing groups, Airbnb etc.)	Build a stronger network with other entities concerned with Refugee Claimant (RC) housing in the Lower Mainland Region (LMR) and beyond.	As needed
3. Represent MAP HWG	MAP HWG is well represented at all meetings concerning RC housing in the LMR	As needed
4. Create, edit, supply documentation as needed for MAP HWG.	Presentations, reports including data collected are available to MAP HWG co-chairs	As needed
5. Coordinate bi-monthly and final reports to Provincial govt.	MAP initiatives reported out to funder Province of BC	OCT 2018, JAN & MAR 2019

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Building capacity within housing providers 1. Coordinate ongoing conversations between RC housing providers starting with 11 Sept HWG meeting, through ongoing HWG meetings, and other ad hoc meetings 2. Coordinate strategic actions led by RC housing providers and include other stakeholders with interest 3. Leave no stone unturned: explore and leverage potential partners, housing groups, demolition vacancies, empty-nesters, other 4. Galvanize all housing for RC efforts to eliminate duplication 5. Document all activities in publicly accessible space for future reference 6. Create housing / shelter supply	RC housing providers are focused with the same message and plan RC housing providers take action collaboratively to maximize meeting RC housing needs No “what ifs” or “what abouts” remain untended to All resources focused on RC housing are maximized for effectiveness MAP website hosts key activities and outcomes for ongoing and future reference This medium – long term goal will likely not happen in this project period, but we should be working toward this end	SEPT and ONGOING till end MARCH
Public education 1. Set up and coordinate new MAP Information Working Group, set objectives, review roles and timeline. 2. Hire web designer and meet to discuss new MAP website. In collaboration with the MAP IWG collect text and images to develop site 3. Refugee Hub of ISSofBC attends monthly MAP meetings to provide statistical updates and gather information for HUB publication from MAP members 4. Public education social media	Collaborative and creative vision for all public education goals A new and up-to-date site is envisioned that is of value for MAP members, RC service providers and the public alike. RC serving sector is well-informed re: current situation and duplication of information released is avoided. Stereotypes and misrepresentations of	SEPT 2018 SEPT 2018 – FEB 2019 Monthly OCT – DEC

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campaign launched in collaboration with ISSofBC Refugee Hub	RC's are challenged by an engaging and current campaign on social media	2018
5. New website launched at MAP - HWG forum where results from Community Assessment and Recommendations are released. MAP Coordinator responsible for organizing forum.	Stakeholders, including govt. and non-govt. partners in providing services to RC's are well informed and ready to move ahead with actions to alleviate housing crisis for RC's.	MAR 2019
Community Assessment / Mapping / Strategic Planning		
1. Inform MAP-HWG members of Community Assessment action at 11 and 27 Sept meetings	MAP-HWG members are in the know and mobilizing for community assessment	SEPT 2018
2. Fully articulate Community Assessment goal and outcomes	Communication is clear for stakeholders	
3. Recruit and contract a qualified, experienced consultant to successfully complete Community Assessment	Skilled consultant hired with written contract and agreed timeline	
4. Design budget lines and amounts	Financial risk is mitigated	OCT 2018
5. Design starter tools, research tools, and methodology	"How" is established	
6. State geographic parameters	"Where" is established	
7. Articulate diverse and representative stakeholders for research list	"Who" is established	
8. Detail timeline for project	Schedule of interviews and meetings is confirmed with stakeholders	
9. Report #1 to MJTT	Funders are informed of progress to date	
10. Engage listening and data collection (interviews, focus groups, research)	Information is collected	NOV - JAN 2018
11. Report #2 to MJTT	Funders are informed of progress to date	JAN 2019

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12. Write report and recommendations	Listening and data collection is presented in report	FEB 2019
13. Present findings and recommendations at public forum with/for stakeholders	The community hears what was Learned, and what are the recommended ways forward	MAR 2019
14. Report #3 (Final) to MJTT	Funders receive wrap up report	MAR 2019

2.04 Reporting

The Recipient will provide regular updates and Reports to the Province advising of the status of the Project and the activities undertaken and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, will provide in writing and deliver electronically to the Province the following materials for approval, and on or before the deadlines set out, below:

- a) October 31, 2018 – 1st progress report on the above key deliverables
- b) January 31, 2019 – 2nd progress report
- c) March 31, 2019 – final report with a summary of all deliverables and a strategic plan agreed by MAP stakeholders