



Quality of Life
CHALLENGE

YEAR OF TRANSITION

Annual Report November 2007

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For all other Appendices, please contact the Quality of Life CHALLENGE at (250) 383-6166 or info@qolchallenge.ca.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of committed leaders and partners of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE took time to contribute their thoughtful reflections of the past year to this report. These ideas were brought together with documented evidence of change collected by Community Council staff.

The report was written, edited and produced by Mabel Jean Rawlins, Susan Stovel, Christina Peacock and Anna Russo.

The Quality of Life CHALLENGE acknowledges that this report and what it represents exists because of the investment of the collaborative partners, including the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, Coast Capital Savings Credit Unions, United Way of Greater Victoria, Shaw TV and individual and family donations.

Quality of Life CHALLENGE YEAR OF TRANSITION 2007

When a community of people travel together along new trails the journey is dynamic, unpredictable and rewarding. 2007 has been a year of transition for the Quality of Life CHALLENGE as it moved from Phase One into Phase Two. Very little went as anticipated. Like creating a new path through a coastal fog, we inched so slowly, sometimes sideways, sometimes straight ahead, looking for the best way through, not always knowing who was with us, or who cared.

We are Trailbuilders. As the year ends it is clear - much was accomplished. And those of us who journeyed together learned more about collaboration on comprehensive initiatives, about poverty reduction and about how to create vibrant communities where everyone can have quality of life.

The context for comprehensive collaborative work is very different today from when the CHALLENGE was emerging at the end of the last century. Overarching other societal changes are the growing awareness and concerns about climate change and its huge implications for our planet. Meanwhile, changing demographics are affecting labour shortages, immigration, services for seniors, and education planning. Through rapidly changing technologies average people are deluged with information, fuelling citizens to engage in shaping our new world. The established agents of power struggle to adapt. Roles of government, the private sector, the voluntary sector and individual citizens have merged, realigned and become less defined. In this confusion of change there is ready agreement that collaboration is the answer. And a plethora of agents are stepping forward to be seen as the collaborative leaders.

This report contains a description of the major accomplishments of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE during 2007, the progress indicators, and the key challenges. Much of this report contains our insights and learnings, which are presented as they apply to the Vibrant Communities research themes; to the process of comprehensive collaboration; and to the content work of poverty reduction. Following a review of the financial information, the report concludes with a brief summary and outline of the draft Strategic Community Plan for Phase Two.

SECTION ONE - MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The high point of the year was the release of the results of Phase One of the CHALLENGE (A Bold New Way – Report of Phase One 2003 to 2006 at www.qolchallenge.ca/achievements/index.php). Stories and numbers from previous years were gathered together, sifted and synthesized. In June the publication was released, bringing many people who had been engaged in various aspects of the CHALLENGE together to celebrate the outcomes of their commitment and hard work. Because the story was released this year, some might think that the achievements all happened this year. The truth is, we started this journey ever so slowly about seven years ago. Much has happened and now we are starting again.

One of the most intimate and memorable moments this year was a celebratory dinner for all those who had been members of the Steering Working Group since the very beginning of the CHALLENGE. As we sat comfortably together after good food and conversation, we each shared our memories about the CHALLENGE. This is some of what was said:

The Steering Working Group was an example of how consensus evolves. It emerged from a shared value base and was a unique partnership relationship.

I remember a 'fog of ideas', and all the visioning played itself out. Tonight is a milestone; use the Quality of Life CHALLENGE as a model.

.... the power of the poverty experience for everyone at the table. Not 'them and us' but people understanding. Once you've reached people that way it doesn't go away; it changes the reality.

About Coast Capital Savings - the depth of engagement and connection. Courageous leadership.

In August 2007 the new Leadership Roundtable took the helm. Moving onward into Phase Two has not been easy. The transition process started in 2005¹. We pressed onward intentionally and carefully. Today Phase Two priorities are established. The strong commitment of the dynamic new Leadership Roundtable represents all sectors and higher profiles than the Phase One leadership team. Funding is confirmed for this year and some multiyear commitments have been secured.

Another significant accomplishment this year is the clear leadership of the Community Action Team (CAT) of individuals living on low or limited income. CAT is now an entrepreneurial partner within the CHALLENGE with representatives on the Leadership Roundtable. Its work has been profiled in the broader community and nationally through Vibrant Communities from Abbotsford to St John's, at the national Communities Collaborating Institute, with the Federal Family in Ottawa, and in the design of the telelearning conference on inclusion.

While the transition process was the top priority this year, resources were secured to provide continuity and to build upon the poverty reduction work of Phase One. The following activities were undertaken:

- Community Action Team expanded the vision for their work, clarified their status and structure, adjusted their leadership strategy, and developed a social enterprise.
- Employers were contacted and involved wherever possible in order to maintain momentum and relationships. Employers, particularly smaller businesses, are notoriously difficult to engage. To have their stories, involvement, testimonials, etc. is a significant achievement.
- Employer CHALLENGE newsletters continued with inspiring stories of how employers create a positive workplace, ensure their employees have a livable wage, and practice effective employee retention strategies.
- New Labour Market Dialogues research moved forward, engaging employers, community service agencies and people with barriers to employment in dialogues about hiring and retaining people with barriers to employment.
- The Recovery Project began, looking for ways to support employers and landlords to retain people with addictions.
- Living Wage research has expanded into a provincial network in BC. The outcomes of this new way of working together will help determine how that fits with Phase Two of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE.

¹ See Appendix A – Summary of the Transition of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE from Phase One to Phase Two
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SECTION 2 - INDICATORS OF PROGRESS TOWARD PARTNERS AND HOUSEHOLD TARGETS

Using Vibrant Communities criteria, the CHALLENGE has 12 new partners this year. Six of these are from the private sector, brought in through the Labour Market Dialogues. Three are people living on low or limited income who have joined the Community Action Team.

The CHALLENGE tracks the level of engagement of organizations and individuals – from interest to commitment. Although the total number of committed partners has not increased during this year of transition, six organizations have now committed to the core infrastructure of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE. For example Volunteer Victoria, Spectrum Job Search, the Disability Resource Centre and the University of Victoria were committed to the sustainable incomes work of Phase One; today they have deepened their commitment and become members of the Leadership Roundtable.

This year significant effort was placed upon building strategic leadership partnerships. All the efforts to deepen and develop new collaborative relationships were not successful. But solid foundations have been laid for a new level of collaboration as we begin to work together in Phase Two.

There is no change to report in number toward the households that are moving along the pathway out of poverty. We did not have any initiatives to bring immediate results in poverty reduction, nor any further evaluation of the long-term impact of previous work.

To see the Appendix *Report of Progress toward Partner and Household Targets*, contact the Quality of Life CHALLENGE at 383-6166 or info@golchallenge.ca.

SECTION 3 - KEY CHALLENGES

Since it was first scheduled for November 2006, the public launch of Phase Two has been postponed many times and a new date has not yet been set. We were very challenged by the frustration, difficulty and time it took to get to the beginning of Phase Two. We reflected upon and assessed the value of the work that had been accomplished and were determined to build on priorities that: show results; have broad-based support; have good research to back up the issues; are not being dealt with by other organizations/coalitions; and are important issues for the people involved in the CHALLENGE and the community as a whole.

The challenges to complete the transition were rooted in several realities: naming the horizontal silos; understanding diverse agendas; engaging high profile leaders; providing ways for the new leadership to own Phase Two; and, the continuing struggle to obtain operating funds for this long-term systemic work.

Within the past year in this region there were an increasing number of collaborative initiatives and initiators – horizontal silos. We were aware that there was concern and confusion amongst people in key agencies who were being asked to support several of these apparently overlapping and competing initiatives. Even though the CHALLENGE had a long and successful track record for effective multistakeholder collaboration, best practice suggested that we tread carefully before announcing yet another initiative with a focus on housing, homelessness, children, mental health or poverty. After much dialogue, patience, and concern about the passage of time and the possible loss of momentum and resources, the CHALLENGE finally made the decision to focus on the one priority from Phase One which was not being addressed by other coalitions in the region – sustainable incomes. In addition, we left open the possibility of working with other coalitions to which we could bring our particular expertise about including people experiencing the issues, community-based research, facilitating citizen dialogue and mobilizing people to action.

In a region with a relatively small population of 350,000, the key players hear about community issues and connect regularly, presenting unique opportunities and challenges for collaboration. A highly respected and skilled Transition Coordinator was contracted specifically to develop and confirm the partners for the Leadership Roundtable for Phase Two. Because of the complexities that became apparent, her contract was extended to ten months rather than the three we had anticipated. Here are some glimpses into that work:

- Last year the United Way announced significant changes in order to become a “community impact organization”, creating confusion about how it would relate to the CHALLENGE which appeared to have the same intentions. Eventually the United Way joined the Leadership Roundtable and contributed \$20,000 to this year’s operating budget plus \$45,000 for a project within the CHALLENGE.
- The CHALLENGE had ongoing dialogue with Success by Six and PLAY (Partnership in Learning and Advocacy for Young Children) to explore mutual benefits if we collaborated in a focus on children and families, but PLAY had other priorities.
- While Coast Capital Savings continued to provide leadership during the transition process, the organization was undergoing strategic changes, with timelines. Today there is a new long-term financial commitment to the CHALLENGE and to Vibrant Surrey. This dynamic Credit Union is an outstanding model of how to integrate corporate citizenship throughout its organization and out into the community.
- Shaw TV has been an exemplary collaborating partner. In Phase Two they would like to prepare television vignettes featuring local employers who are improving quality of life and reducing poverty through their employment practices.
- We have 13 municipalities in our region and it has been a huge challenge to engage local government in meaningful partnership. Focusing on the District of Saanich and the City of Victoria (the two largest jurisdictions), we had many discussions with councillors and staff, made a number of presentations to committees, completed application forms, and waited. Just recently the District of Saanich, through their Healthy Saanich Committee, agreed to support the CHALLENGE with a \$5000 grant that was no longer contingent upon confirmed funding from the City of Victoria. Meanwhile we await the decision from the City.
- The Vancouver Island Health Authority is hesitant to focus more attention on Victoria and the south island when its mandate includes struggling communities up island that show very poor health indicators. However, this year VIHA concluded its Health and Community Well-Being Strategy, appointed a Director for Community Engagement, and saw the advantages of being a partner in the CHALLENGE. The Director of Community Engagement now sits on the Leadership Roundtable. To date no further commitment has been forthcoming from VIHA.
- Service Canada was a strong leader and supporter during Phase One. The Victoria office has dealt with changes at the federal level; a new labour agreement defining new mandates with the province; where they should be relative to the United Way’s new role; and possible risks to their transparency. As a funder they were clear about and communicated their role. The enabler role was different. We needed to take time to work through the structure and nature of their partnership in Phase Two. As one of their staff said, *“This is new work for us. We’re learning.”*
- The University of Victoria is positioning itself anew within this community. We welcome their representative on the Leadership Roundtable and look forward to finding new ways to work together for the common good.
- The Victoria Real Estate Board has a quality of life initiative that aligns with the CHALLENGE, particularly around housing and neighbourhood issues. They are moving forward with some work focussed on women who are homeless or unstably housed – a topic which resonates with real estate brokers, many of whom are women.

- The principal in Chemistry Consulting is a recognized leader in the business community in Victoria, with the Chamber of Commerce and with private sector employment services. He was connected with Phase One of the CHALLENGE through the employer outreach.
- Meanwhile, agencies that took leadership and set examples during Phase One, and were active in the Sustainable Incomes Working Group, stepped forward willingly to be on the Leadership Roundtable. Volunteer Victoria, Spectrum Job Search, Disability Resource Group and the READ Society are bringing strong leadership to the new table, as well as integrating their programs and services and creating mutual benefit from their partnership in the CHALLENGE.

The most significant evidence of poverty reduction during Phase One came from changes in employment practices. We agreed that we could significantly expand on that work, but needed to engage key leaders in the business community. In order to engage leadership with high profile and resources, Coast Capital Savings contributed a unique in-kind gift to the CHALLENGE and to Vibrant Surrey. They contracted the services of top communications experts with connections to key leaders in the community. This work has also been slow, as the experts needed time to understand the comprehensiveness of the CHALLENGE, appreciate how much was already integral to the work and identify the unique piece that could help us leap forward. We were looking for the goal that all sectors could buy into, and the assurance that this was emerging from a neutral base. We believe we are nearly there. Appendix F is the October draft of the Strategic Community Plan for Phase Two.

Within the CHALLENGE we want continuity from Phase One, but also want to make a new and different mark in Phase two. We were faced with a chicken and egg scenario. How do you determine your priorities for the next phase when the new leaders are not on board yet and you want them to "own it". And how do you engage new leaders when you have not decided on your direction? We ended up building on one of the priorities from Phase One which was not being addressed by other coalitions in the region, where we had made major inroads, and where the work was innovative - the sustainable incomes/employer connections. The new Leadership Roundtable is being encouraged to use the existing working principles and move forward where they see opportunities. Some things are basic and won't be altered such as the importance of the Community Action Team and their voices being heard.

The ongoing challenge of securing the support, both on an energy and financial level for Phase Two, cannot be underestimated.

SECTION 4 - KEY LESSONS AND INSIGHTS

Vibrant Communities' Research Themes:

(1) Deep and durable

From the beginning of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE, there has always been a struggle between the "big vision" of improving quality of life for all, and making the efforts step-by-small step to get there. Some people hung on because of the big vision and our working principles, while others just wanted to see results. We managed to balance these two approaches, but it takes a lot of time, effort, commitment and patience.

By engaging so many people from a broad spectrum of the community and obtaining their support and input, we expanded the impact of the CHALLENGE throughout the region. In Phase Two the emphasis has shifted to focus on people of influence rather than large numbers. We intend to make greater in-roads with business to stir the economy and align government to support this work. It will be

interesting to track and analyse the differences in the depth and durability of outcomes between these two approaches.

When public attitude shifts about poverty and about the people who experience it, social change is deeper and more durable. We have learned that you can change attitudes around poverty through innovative strategies such as the Poverty Experience and the "Fishbowl sessions" with decision makers. The impact of these strategies is very powerful when people who are living on low incomes take leadership and share their experiences in a constructive way.

Well-communicated, up-to-date, local information on the issues is a basis for deep and durable change. For example, the living wage research, the well researched stories about local employers, and the "Making Room" housing publication have generated a lot of media coverage which supports broader understanding of the issues and then, changed attitudes. This has contributed to public policy changes and employers raising wages and/or benefits for their low income employees.

(2) Comprehensive strategies

"Quality of life" is a huge, comprehensive concept. During Phase One we were constantly trying to balance the tension between changing the world and changing one small aspect of it. "Community Connections" was a priority area that intentionally incorporated many groups, actions and issues into the Quality of Life CHALLENGE. In Phase Two the CHALLENGE will be more focused on specific aspects of poverty reduction with the intent of improving quality of life. The principles of working and thinking comprehensively remain integral to the work.

Unlike at the beginning of Phase One, other collaborating initiatives are now established and accomplishing social good in the community. The CHALLENGE has connected with them and found ways to focus where there is a gap - sustainable incomes. But the issues are all connected - housing, homelessness, community well-being, crime prevention, children and youth. There is a need for better communication and planning among these various initiatives to ensure that there is effective use of resources for the greatest community impact.

(3) Sustainability

We are planning for the next five to ten years - not just what we need today but how we imagine our community operating in the future. We have a dream of how we can work together, and a passion to improve the quality of life for all people who live here.

Bringing the dream to life and sustaining that work is ever daunting - not only the financial sustainability but also sustaining the individuals and organizations involved in the CHALLENGE. However we have a deeply committed leader who can inspire the team to follow this through and involve our community. Moving from Phase One to Phase Two has meant a major turnover in the group heading up the CHALLENGE and a long process to determine the priorities for the next three years. There will be some challenging times ahead when the new Leadership Roundtable (LRT) copes with balancing between the big picture goals and seeing concrete results.

Because of the significant time needed to see results and the ever-evolving process and strategies inherent in comprehensive community collaborations, it is difficult to find many major funders that are willing to "take the risk". It requires visionary, committed individuals within organizations to believe in this way of working and care passionately about the goals. Fortunately these are found in the three national leaders of Vibrant Communities; and, locally, in Coast Capital Savings and Service Canada among others.

Up until now, the CHALLENGE has only dabbled in notions of social enterprise to sustain the work. During Phase Two the CHALLENGE intends to explore entrepreneurial possibilities for generating revenue.

Beginning with a multi-sectoral base and including the people experiencing the issues first-hand along with individuals and organizations that can affect change, has led to a multitude of strategies and great results. However, the process requires a credible convenor organization with multi-skilled staff, a large number of committed volunteers, faith in the process and plenty of patience!

(4) Building enabling environments

The Quality of Life CHALLENGE has helped to build an environment within BC's Capital Region that has a greater capacity to address social issues. Slowly but surely community capacity grows through gathering credible, local and up-to-date research on social issues; encouraging participation in Vibrant Communities learning opportunities; building on results; expanding the circle of engagement and changing attitudes among more and more people.

In Phase Two employers are central to the strategic priorities. Therefore, we intend to improve the way that we engage businesses. We are re-examining our language, decision-making style, profile and branding. We will provide evidence that the CHALLENGE adds value to business. The private sector can play a significant role in poverty reduction. Corporate social responsibility improves workplace environments and releases entrepreneurial possibilities. When advocating for policy change, the voice is much stronger if the private sector is aligned with the voluntary sector and other advocates.

In the belief that it will increase our chances for success in Phase Two, much effort was put into selecting and expanding the leadership team to include more "major players". In Phase One we started with visionaries and thinkers who asked probing questions as we began working in a new way and laying new foundations for change. Those processes frustrated more goal-oriented movers and shakers. Now the foundations of the CHALLENGE are firm and have been tested. It is time to bring on leaders with more influence to take us into action and the next level of change.

In order to create an environment for respectful collaboration and shared leadership, each of the partners at the new Leadership Roundtable are in the process of completing written agreements. The new template has three parts: it states our common vision and working principles, outlines what the agency will contribute to the CHALLENGE and, what it needs to receive from the CHALLENGE. This reciprocal agreement values the investment of expertise, programs, other in-kind resources, as well as dollars. We intend to weave all these resources together so as to effectively prevent and reduce poverty in our community.

This is challenging for some partners. For example, the mandate of some government departments may not necessarily match with the CHALLENGE or the Vibrant Communities mandate. In order to stay at the table they need to justify why they are there and what they bring to the table. Making the value of partnership in the CHALLENGE more explicit should also help to ensure commitment in the longer term.

Underlying much of the success of the CHALLENGE is the capacity of the convenor organization. The Community Council's role in the CHALLENGE has not always been clearly understood. This year the leadership team and the Community Council Board and staff worked hard to clarify and acknowledge that unique and important role, and the need to separate the lead staff position for the CHALLENGE from that of the Executive Director of the Community Council. There are similarities with Vibrant Communities and its convenor organization, Tamarack. As Vibrant Communities also moves into its

next phase it has hired its own director – separated in function from other Tamarack staff but still a staff position within Tamarack.

(5) Comparative Strengths and Weaknesses

During its next chapter, Vibrant Communities will be examining the comparative strengths and weaknesses of comprehensive, multisectoral initiatives for poverty reduction. Some analysis is contained in our recently released final report for Phase One which covers the period from 2001 to 2007 (see www.qolchallenge.ca/achievements/index.php).

Because of the nature of the work this year, the CHALLENGE was not at a place of analysing strengths and weaknesses of poverty reduction strategies. We were just maintaining a few activities to keep momentum going. Feedback loops for evaluation and learning will be built into the operating plans as they unfold from the Strategic Community Plan for Phase Two.

This year we were groping our way down the path with little analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the processes we used. However these processes are covered in this report. We are raising questions which could form the basis of the “strength and weaknesses” section in future reports, but we have not yet begun to answer these questions (see the following section on insights to The Processes for Comprehensive Collaboration).

The Processes for Comprehensive Collaboration

Questions arise as we leave Phase One behind. The answers are not clear. Later in Phase Two we can revisit these questions and see if they are still relevant, and if we have learned more about these conundrums of working together to build a community.

- Is there a quicker way to transition into the next phase? Progress comes slowly when moving forward while respecting relationships and the fibre of the community. We were heartened when we saw the parallels with the slow unfolding of Chapter Two of Vibrant Communities.
- What is the best way to undergo a transition into the next phase of a comprehensive collaborative initiative? Should we have held back, waiting for the dust to settle with emerging parallel processes? Could we have just moved boldly forward earlier?
- What is the role of governments? Apart from Service Canada, we have had very little support or collaboration from the province or local government, despite a lot of effort.
- What is the role of individual citizens in collaborative initiatives. In Phase One most of the Steering Working Group were committed visionary individuals. In Phase Two everyone at the table, except the past Chair, represents an organization – even the Community Action Team.
- Will there be a difference in outcomes and impact when the leadership table is mainly composed of leaders from established organizations, rather than individuals with their personal visions and passions?
- Is collaboration always the best way to bring about deep and durable change? When is it best not to collaborate?

The Theory of Change, which was based on our working principles, has served us well. The outcomes from Phase One demonstrated the effectiveness of that bold new way of working. The new Leadership Roundtable has given verbal assent to continue with these principles in Phase Two. However, this new collaboration will put its own stamp upon their Theory of Change.

The Content Work of Poverty Reduction and Enhancing Quality of Life

Some will claim there is a change in what employers are paying because of the living wage research. In fact, it may have more to do with our extremely competitive labour market where our unemployment rate has been at about 3% for months. Some may say that business is more engaged in solutions because of the increase in corporate social responsibility. In fact, it may have more to do with the threat that poverty and homelessness are having on their bottom line. Whatever the motivation, there is an appalling level of human suffering and poverty in this region – a part of Canada that boasts a world class quality of life.

Therefore, Phase Two must be marked by new bold strategies that build upon the successes and learnings of the past. In creating the new Strategic Community Plan we gathered together a table of various strategies or actions that fit within the Sustainable Incomes Priority to prevent and reduce poverty². The table includes activities that were used in Phase One that have ended, activities which are currently underway, and a list of some activities that could be used during Phase Two.

Much of the work that has been underway over the past year is background research that is laying the foundation for Phase Two. The strategies include supports for employers and people living in poverty, and research into employment practices. The activities include:

- *Support for the Community Action Team* and their development and presentation of the Poverty Experience. There is strong commitment to continue this support throughout Phase Two.
- The *Employer CHALLENGE newsletter* continues to support employers by featuring local businesses whose practices are improving the quality of life and/or reducing poverty for the waged poor. In addition, the newsletter is expanding its content about employment practices.
- The *Labour Market Dialogues*, a significant community-based research initiative to gather information about how to support employers to hire and retain people who have specific barriers to employment. In October the Leadership Roundtable supported recommendations which emerged from a recent stakeholders session to determine the next iteration of the Labour Market Dialogues and how that will interface with the CHALLENGE³. Reports were produced (www.communitycouncil.ca/activities.php#lmd) on this research into the barriers to employment, in particular around childcare and the workplace, immigration and employment, mentorship, transition to work, hiring and ads, literacy and the workplace, working with addictions.
- *Living Wage* research, in partnership with a provincial network of interested organizations, including the Health Employees Union and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. The new numbers will be released early in 2008.
- The *Recovery Project* which began in September to gather information and develop a handbook for employers to assist them in retaining employees with addictions. The handbook should be ready for release in the spring of 2008.

² Contact the Quality of Life CHALLENGE for Appendix C - Coordinated Actions for Change (383-6166 or info@qolchallenge.ca)

³ Contact the Quality of Life CHALLENGE for Appendix D - Leadership Roundtable Briefing Note October 2007: Relevance of Labour Market Dialogues to the Quality of Life CHALLENGE (383-6166 or info@qolchallenge.ca)

SECTION 5 - FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The budget year for the Quality of Life CHALLENGE is from April 1 to March 31. Confirmed revenue for the current 2007-2008 fiscal year is \$221,260 plus \$141,908 from the Community Council for the Labour Market Dialogues research funded by Service Canada. \$38,635 was carried forward from the previous year, enabling total expenses of \$259,577 to cover \$168,285 for personnel, \$47,148 for program and \$44,144 for administration and overhead. See appendix ⁴

The revenue that has been confirmed to date for the 2008-2009 fiscal year covers the 2:1 match required for Vibrant Communities. In addition to the significant in-kind professional support, Coast Capital Savings has committed a further three years of funding to the CHALLENGE: \$75,000 for year one of Phase Two plus two years at \$50,000. As a collaborating partner, the Community Council will continue to bring all the resources of the Labour Market Dialogues, which will have a budget of \$100,000 next year. In kind contributions are assured from Shaw TV. Negotiations continue with other community partners including local governments to confirm long term funding.

The CHALLENGE operates within the human resource policies and procedures of the Community Council, which is the legal sponsor. The Community Council is committed to internal equity and works toward comparability of wages and salaries. Therefore the earnings of CHALLENGE personnel cannot go above those of similar positions within the sponsoring organization. As the CHALLENGE seeks a director, it is apparent that the starting salary is lower than similar positions within other Vibrant Communities.

SECTION 6 - FUTURE PLANS FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

As this report is being written, advertisements are going out to hire a full-time Director for Phase Two for the CHALLENGE. The Leadership Roundtable is working on the details of the draft Strategic Community Plan for Phase Two⁵.

Great progress has been made through Phase One, particularly in the final year. Momentum is growing and it seems like we have reached the "tipping point", not only through the 2200+ individuals connected to the CHALLENGE but also through the growing participation of local businesses and key organizations in employment/housing/low income issues in the region. Attitudes are changing ("helped" by the reality of employee shortages and the desperate housing situation) among the business community and the community as a whole.

The Quality of Life CHALLENGE's extensive research, the publications highlighting the realities of living on a low income, and innovative strategies like the Poverty Experience have all received a lot of media attention and have contributed to changing attitudes. As well, the conscious effort to celebrate individuals and organizations that are contributing to the quality of life in the region has been a positive force and many people feel honoured by the recognition.

We look forward to the excitement and possibilities of Phase Two of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE. There will be successes, detours and failures because that is the nature of comprehensive community initiatives but the learnings and the process itself will engage new leaders and strengthen our community.

⁴ Contact the Quality of Life CHALLENGE for Appendix E – Quality of Life CHALLENGE First Quarter Income and Expense Statement, April 1 to June 30 2007 (383-6166 or info@qolchallenge.ca)

⁵ Contact the Quality of Life CHALLENGE for Appendix F - Quality of Life CHALLENGE Phase Two Community Plan, October 2007 (383-6166 or info@qolchallenge.ca)

APPENDIX A
Milestones in the Transition of the Quality of Life CHALLENGE from Phase One to Phase Two

Summer 2005	<i>2007 and Beyond Task Force</i> established
November 2005	Annual Report to Vibrant Communities states, <i>There is now a strong commitment to sustain this work. In 2006, plans will be completed to implement phase two of the CHALLENGE from 2007 to 2010.</i>
December 2005	Facilitated session to confirm core principles and values for 2007 and beyond
March 2006	<i>Convening Collaborations in the Capital Region</i> , a community workshop for a handful of local leaders engaged in collaborative work to deepen understanding of collaborations in the Capital Region, foster relationships among collaborators and build collective capacity for change and results
May 2006	<i>Quality of Life CHALLENGE 2007 & Beyond: The Vision, Possible Indicator, Measures, Strategy and Action</i> , Discussion Paper for Steering Working Group
May 2006	<i>Community Council and the CHALLENGE, Possible Options</i> , Discussion Paper
June 2006	Draft graphic to illustrate new collaboration among key partners
October 2006	<i>The Value Added of the CHALLENGE</i> , Paper on the benefits of being a partner in the CHALLENGE
November 2006	Transition Facilitator contract begins
November 2006	<i>Collaborating for Community Change</i> Conference co hosted by United Way and Community Council with Paul Born
Throughout 2007	Series of strategic meetings with potential partners including: PLAY, United Way (with Mark Cabaj), Victoria Foundation, City of Victoria, District of Saanich, Vancouver Island Health Authority.
May 2007	Last meeting of Phase One Steering Working Group. Decision: Maureen Young chair, Sue Stovel Past Chair of the Phase Two Leadership Roundtable.
June 2007	Communications experts contracted to engage high level partners
June 2007	Public Celebration of Phase One; release publication of the story of Phase One
July 2007	First meeting of Phase Two Leadership Roundtable. Chair confirmed.
August 2007	Orientation and Planning Day with Phase Two Leadership Roundtable
To be determined	Phase Two public launch (to be linked with release of new information such as revised living wage data)