



CANADIAN BUSINESS
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Coast Capital Savings CEO leads local business leaders on Seeing is Believing tour: Goal is to explore innovative business solutions to homelessness in the region

Victoria, B.C. – Coast Capital Savings President & CEO Lloyd Craig says business has a key role to play in finding solutions to make housing affordable and accessible in the Greater Victoria Region.

Craig is leading local business leaders on Vancouver Island's first ever Seeing is Believing tour, hosted by Canadian Business for Social Responsibility (CBSR), in partnership with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and the Quality of Life CHALLENGE.

Tour stops will be at Pacifica Housing Advisory Association, Victoria Cool Aid Society and Burnside Gorge Community Centre. Through the unique Seeing is Believing program senior representatives of local businesses will spend the morning visiting these three organizations that are focused on providing a continuum of housing solutions – from emergency shelter for homeless families, to supportive housing and private market outreach, to workforce housing.

The business leaders, including Ted Hughes, Co-chair, Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and Sue Stovel, Past-chair The Quality of Life CHALLENGE will talk to community members who use the services of these agencies with the goal of deepening their understanding of the complex roots of poverty and homelessness. At the end of the tour, the business leaders will explore ways to leverage day-to-day business operations and resources to align with economic development, homelessness and housing strategies currently moving forward in the region.

“Homelessness is on the increase in Victoria and the vision for this tour is to inspire and challenge business leaders to become part of the solution,” said Craig. “I believe that business has a lot to offer in finding innovative and feasible ways to contribute to that solution but the first step involves understanding the issues and the tour will promote this increased knowledge.”

More than 1,242 of the Capital Region's population are homeless or nearly homeless. And there are currently 953 families, 406 seniors, 59 single people and 17 people needing wheelchair access on the waitlist for social housing in the Capital Region.

Wendy Campbell, Director, Member Mobilization, CBSR, says Seeing is Believing is based on a simple principle: you can't solve a problem without seeing it. The program provides business executives with an opportunity to engage the community first-hand, better understand social issues and look at new and expanded solutions.

“Business has the skill and resources to make a real contribution to alleviate homelessness,” says Campbell. “The direct interaction between business leaders and community members fostered by the Seeing is Believing program has inspired organizations to leverage their resources towards creative solutions.”

- 30 -

About Canadian Business for Social Responsibility (CBSR): Seeing is Believing is a program of CBSR. Founded in 1995, CBSR is a business-led, non-profit CSR consultancy and peer-to-peer learning organization that provides its members with candid counsel and customized advisory services as they formulate powerful business decisions that improve performance and contribute to a better world.

About Coast Capital Savings: Coast Capital Savings is the second largest Canadian credit union with 380,000 members and offers a full suite of innovative personal and business financial products across its 51 branch network.

About the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (GVCEH): GVCEH is a new non-profit, independent organization that will lead and engage community organizations, governments and non-governmental agencies to work in partnership with each other and the broader community to drive the commitment to end homelessness in the Greater Victoria region.

About the Quality of Life CHALLENGE: The Quality of Life CHALLENGE is made up of partners across all sectors working collaboratively to generate long-lasting solutions that prevent and reduce poverty in BC’s Capital Region. Phase Two of the CHALLENGE will focus on three strategic areas: increasing sustainable incomes, reducing costs of living, and creating learning opportunities.

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