



National Research Council  
Canada

Conseil national de recherches  
Canada

Director General

Directeur général

Institute for  
Research in Construction

Institut de  
recherche en construction

Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 0R6

**NRC-CMRC**

10 March 2008

Mr. John Kenward  
150 Laurier Ave. W., Suite 500  
Ottawa, ON  
K1P 5J4

Dear John:

At a meeting with Richard Lind in late January of this year, you provided me with a document calling for NRC-IRC to consider establishing a labelling program of sort for community development projects in Canada. Richard and you described the objectives and desirable features of such a program and explained why you considered that our institute was uniquely positioned to lead its establishment. As promised, I have consulted my senior colleagues on this opportunity and now wish to relate to you the results of these preliminary discussions.

We have carefully reviewed the set of Guidelines for the Development of Environmentally Responsible Communities that your association has recently developed and understand that these address issues, principles and values of key importance to the development of thriving communities in this era of enhanced environmental concerns. It is also evident that the home building industry views this topic and its issues as important to its future and that of our society.

As I noted in our January meeting, most of the topics identified in the Guidelines (e.g. urban and community planning, protection of natural systems, landscaping, site design and development) fall outside the scope of our historical research activities. With a couple of exceptions, we currently hold little to no technical knowledge that can be usefully brought to bear on discussions of these issues.

Admittedly, we have much experience setting up and operating national initiatives, including the development of model construction Codes, the provision of product evaluations and the elaboration of best practice guides. As you know, these programs are based on the best available technical knowledge and are directed or guided by volunteer experts coming from various regions of the country and a rich diversity of backgrounds. These programs also operate on consensus-based and transparent processes that allow for consultation and input from private and public stakeholders, so they are respected and valued as trusted tools by the entire construction industry.

Since this topic touches the responsibilities of a number of agencies and is of interest to a number of stakeholders, I am prepared to initiate consultations with these interested parties to understand if there is agreement that 1) such a program is needed 2) would be

2... **Canada**

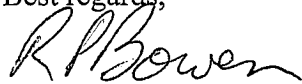
...2/ Mr. Kenward

willing to engage in its development and 3) what would be the best mechanism to achieve the desired outcomes.

I propose to carry out over the coming months, a preliminary consultation of key stakeholders with this expertise or interest in sustainable communities development, including other government departments and agencies such as CMHC and NRCan, associations such as CHBA, FCM and the Canadian Institute of Planners, and industry networks such as the Communities of Tomorrow and our own advisory board. This collective advice and counsel will be quite valuable in helping us decide whether or not and how an initiative such as this might be undertaken.

Your comments on this approach are most welcome.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. P. Bowen".

Robert P. (Bob) Bowen