

VISION

ACTION PLAN

CHBA STRATEGIC PLAN 2006



Canadian
Home Builders'
Association



PREFACE

For more than sixty years, the Canadian Home Builders' Association has represented the housing industry in Canada with pride, commitment and tremendous effort.

Each year brings new challenges that demand clear vision and strong leadership. The housing industry, the economy and the role of government continue to be in a state of change. At the same time, global concerns about the quality of life everywhere place a growing responsibility on Canadians to protect the environment and use resources to the greatest social and economic advantage for future generations.

Strategic planning provides the framework for effective leadership. It sets out the Association's mission and principles—why the CHBA exists and what it stands for. It identifies the Association's goals and objectives—what the CHBA is in business to accomplish. And it establishes strategic directions for how the Association will pursue these goals and objectives.

In 1991, the CHBA developed the *CHBA Strategic Plan for the '90s*. This plan was based on extensive grassroots consultation that involved all three levels of the Association—local, provincial and national.

The adoption of this strategic plan marked the beginning of a new era for the CHBA. It confirmed the CHBA's leadership role and the common commitment to the Association's fundamental principles. It recognized the strength and importance of the CHBA in providing quality services to its members. And it set a challenging agenda for the years ahead.

Since then, the plan has been reviewed annually to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. At each Annual Meeting of Members held during the National Conference, the CHBA Vision Action Committee (formerly the CHBA Strategic Plan Review Committee) presents a summary of the Association's activities and achievements as they relate to the Strategic Plan. This gives everyone—staff, elected officials and members—an opportunity to gauge how well the Association is doing in reaching its goals and meeting its mandate.

The CHBA Strategic Plan for the '90s proved to have remarkable vision and longevity. Not until 1999 was it deemed necessary to make changes to it. At the Annual Meeting of Members in Regina in February 1999, three new objectives were adopted, along with minor alterations to a few existing objectives. In addition, a number of other minor revisions were made to update the supporting text where needed.

At the 2002 National Conference in Victoria, the CHBA embarked on a process of renewal. A Vision Task Force called for dynamic changes to how the Association operates internally as well as externally in order to meet the challenges facing the industry. The core of the vision was a business environment where new home builders, renovators and developers are respected and trusted by consumers and government policy-makers alike.

In 2005, the Strategic Plan was amended to include a core purpose statement as a preamble to the CHBA mission statement. The purpose statement reinforces the CHBA's commitment to housing consumers and assists the Association in communicating this message to the public at large.

Further changes to the plan were made in 2006 to reflect important work done under the auspices of the Vision Plan to create a stronger and uniform professional identity for CHBA members across the country. This included a new unified CHBA Code of Ethics and the addition of a CHBA Member Builder's Statement of Business Values and Commitments setting out the industry's position on Corporate Social Responsibility. As well, other CHBA statements and position documents were referenced.

Lastly, the name of the plan was changed to the Vision Action Plan to reflect better the new dynamic direction of the Association.

The Vision Action Plan is a "living document", and the process of change is ongoing. The CHBA will continue to review the plan on an annual basis and revise it when needed, as the Association continues to grow with the challenges and adapt to changes in the industry and the marketplace.



GREG CHRISTENSON
Chair, Vision Action Committee
February 2007

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

There are two fundamental principles guiding the CHBA's approach to housing policy in Canada:

- The right of all Canadians to decent, safe and appropriate housing; and
- The right of all Canadians to a reasonable opportunity to own their own homes.

The realization of these fundamental principles requires a partnership between government and the housing industry. While the industry actually builds housing, the Association endorses the principle of industry/government partnership. This partnership is required to achieve the above principles while improving quality, affordability and choice.

In the mid-'80s, the Canadian government embarked on a review of housing policy in Canada in consultation with the CHBA. This review identified the following four fundamental components of sound housing policy:

- The government has a legitimate role in housing the needy and disadvantaged through targeted and cost-effective policies and programs;
- The government has a responsibility to provide a stable environment in which the housing industry can operate effectively;
- Market housing should not be stimulated or otherwise unduly interfered with through the actions of government; and
- There will be prior consultation between the government and industry before significant changes are made to housing policies or programs.

The CHBA believes that these fundamentals provide a solid foundation for sound national housing policy. They identify the legitimate roles of government and industry and form the basis for the CHBA's approach to industry/government consultations.

The Association remains firmly committed to these fundamentals, which define the industry's relationship with government and its approach to housing issues.



CORE PURPOSE STATEMENT

THE CORE PURPOSE OF THE CHBA IS TO ASSIST ITS MEMBERS IN SERVING THE NEEDS AND MEETING THE ASPIRATIONS OF CANADIANS FOR HOUSING.

MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF THE CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION IS: TO BE THE VOICE OF THE RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN CANADA; TO ACHIEVE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH OUR MEMBERSHIP CAN OPERATE PROFITABLY; AND TO PROMOTE AFFORDABILITY AND CHOICE IN HOUSING FOR ALL CANADIANS.



CHBA MEMBER BUILDER'S* STATEMENT OF BUSINESS VALUES AND COMMITMENTS

OUR VALUES

INTEGRITY

We act with consistency, transparency and respect to do what is honest, ethical and trustworthy in all aspects of our company's operations.

PROFESSIONALISM

We strive continually to improve our company's skills and increase our knowledge and capabilities in order to operate our businesses to the highest level of professional performance.

RESPONSIBILITY

We accept accountability to our customers, employees, colleagues and communities for the results of our decisions and actions.

COMMUNITY

We recognize that sustaining the social, economic and environmental health of the communities we work in is vital to our business success.

LEADERSHIP

We take a leadership role in improving the social, economic and environmental health of our communities through the way we operate our businesses and through the products and services we provide.

OUR COMMITMENTS

We make the following commitments in order to put our values into action:

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CUSTOMERS

- We provide to our customers, in a timely and transparent fashion, information that will assist them in making informed and knowledgeable decisions.
- We accept responsibility to our customers for the products and services they receive from us.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND INVESTMENT

- We recognize our business has a wide range of impacts on the well-being of our community. Through our commitment to socially and environmentally responsible business practices, we strive to ensure that these impacts are positive.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENT

- We acknowledge that the development of new communities, and the construction and renovation of homes, has a range of impacts on the environment, both today and in the future. We work with governments and others to develop environmentally responsible housing solutions.

- We are committed to developing communities, and to building and renovating homes, in an environmentally responsible manner through utilizing appropriate technologies, materials, building practices and techniques.
- We pursue continuous improvement and innovation in our processes, practices and products, in order to meet our environmental responsibilities.

BUSINESS PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE

- We operate our business in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and, guided by our values, strive to perform beyond what the law and convention may require.
- We recognize that the building and renovation of homes and the development of communities has a range of impacts on others. By actively engaging in thoughtful and productive relationships within our community, we strive to understand the issues and concerns of others and respond in an open and constructive manner.
- We actively contribute to, and invest in, the well-being of the communities in which we operate our businesses.
- We strive to ensure that all employees, business partners, manufacturers, suppliers, lenders, trade contractors and professionals with which we do business understand our values and commitments.
- We have criteria for selecting suppliers of goods and services which reflect our commitment to social, environmental and human rights principles and values.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- We provide employees with the leadership, resources and opportunities to do their best work and achieve their full potential.
- We invest in education and training in order to sustain both our companies and our industry. We choose to do business with trades and suppliers who share in this commitment.
- We support our employees in meeting their responsibilities to family, friends and community.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

- We fulfill our responsibility for a safe working environment for all workers on our projects, whether these workers are directly employed by us, or by other firms working for us.
- We maintain a clear and effective health and safety program and ensure that all those employed on our worksites are properly trained and supervised in relation to this program.
- We act to achieve worker safety through, and beyond, compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

* Refers to New Home Builder, Renovator and Developer members.

CODE OF ETHICS

MEMBERS shall comply with applicable building codes of Canada as a minimum standard for construction and shall work toward its improvement in the interests of structural sufficiency, safety, and health.

MEMBERS shall plan their sites and homes to conform to the principles of good community planning and support for the environment.

MEMBERS shall deal justly with their employees, subcontractors, and suppliers of all goods and services.

MEMBERS shall deal honestly and fairly with their customers and stand behind the quality of their work and service commitments.

MEMBERS shall exchange information and experience, and encourage research on materials, technical advancements and building techniques in order to provide the best value for their customers.

MEMBERS shall avoid all conduct or practice detrimental to the house building industry, to the Association, to the good name or reputation of any of its members, or its customers.

MEMBERS shall commit to continuing learning through human resource policies and practices, including employment practices which treat employees as assets.

MEMBERS shall actively promote health and safety principles.

MEMBERS shall treat their competitors, including their property and ideas, with respect.

**THESE RESPONSIBILITIES ARE FREELY AND SOLEMNLY ASSUMED
AS THEY FORM PART OF AN OBLIGATION AS MEMBERS OF THE
CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION**



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SECTION ONE: ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

THIS SECTION PRESENTS THE ISSUES AND PRIORITIES THAT FORM THE CONTEXT FOR THE CHBA'S VISION ACTION PLAN. IT REFLECTS THE ASSOCIATION'S ONGOING EXAMINATION OF THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE OUR INDUSTRY, OUR CUSTOMERS AND OUR MEMBERS' ABILITY TO PROVIDE NEW HOMES AND COMMUNITIES, AND HOME RENOVATION SERVICES.

The Canadian Home Builders' Association is one organization that provides services to its members on three levels. In order for the CHBA to remain vital, effective and relevant to its membership, the activities and efforts of the Association must reflect the interests and concerns of its members.

Forum '90 was a turning point in the CHBA's history. The two-day plenary session held in Ottawa in May 1990 was the focus of a grassroots planning process that saw Association members on all levels involved in the development of the CHBA strategic plan.

This process began with a thorough examination of the context in which the Association and its members operated, and expected to be operating in the future. Understanding the issues that are likely to dominate the industry at any point is key to establishing priorities to guide the efforts and activities of the Association.

The purpose of the Forum was to encourage a careful scrutiny of Association policies in a number of critical areas, and to elicit vital grassroots participation in formulating the vision for the future.

Those attending the Forum (presidents of provincial and local associations, Executive Officers and members of the National Executive Board) represented all levels of the Association. Prior to the session, a series of briefing notes identifying a number of issues were distributed to stimulate debate and foster discussion in provincial and local associations across the country.

The Forum strongly re-affirmed the CHBA's commitment as the voice of new home builders, renovators and developers. (Throughout this document, the term "residential construction industry" encompasses new home builders, renovators and developers, unless otherwise specified).

The Forum resulted in clear priorities for a number of issues and provided direction for the formulation of the CHBA mission statement and objectives, which formed the basis for the *CHBA Strategic Plan for the '90s*. In the years since then, the Strategic Plan, now named the Vision Action Plan, has played an important role in the decision-making of the Association.

Every year, the CHBA Vision Action Committee (formerly the CHBA Strategic Plan Review Committee) undertakes an extensive review of the Plan. There are three aspects to this:

1. The Committee reviews the actions taken in the preceding 12 months on the previous year's recommendations for action on specific strategic issues and provides members with a summary "report card" on the Association's work in each issue area. The Committee may also report on other activities that are relevant to the Association's ability to carry out the Vision Action Plan.
2. The Committee identifies specific issues of strategic importance for the coming year and makes recommendations for action. When these recommendations are in the context of the objectives of the Plan, no formal amendment to the Plan is needed.
3. When the Plan itself requires significant modification or updating, recommendations are put before members as resolutions for voting at the Annual Meeting of Members.

As part of the annual review, the issues and priorities of every CHBA national Committee and Council are identified and will be expressed in the recommendations as appropriate.

Every year, the Committee's report is distributed to all provincial and local associations for review and comments, and a summary is presented at the Annual Meeting of Members.

This process ensures that the CHBA Vision Action Plan continues to reflect the issues and priorities that influence our industry and our members today and will continue to do so in the years to come.

TAXATION

ISSUES

For a number of years, the housing industry has been the focus of escalating taxation from all levels of government.

Increased taxation adds to the cost of housing in Canada. This affects the affordability of home ownership, and thus reduces accessibility, particularly for first-time buyers who may find themselves locked out of the housing market.

The combination of levies, fees, charges, taxes and transaction costs typically adds significantly to the cost of buying a new house in most housing markets in Canada, often representing a substantial percentage of the price of a typical modest new home.

- Municipal infrastructure charges (e.g., lot levies, development cost charges, connection fees, permits) make up a significant part of government-imposed costs.
- When creating a new subdivision, developers are responsible for most infrastructure costs, paying both subdivision agreement costs for on-site infrastructure and development cost charges for off-site infrastructure.
- Under the Harmonized Sales Tax regime, the provincial sales tax is applied to the full sales price of the house, not only the building materials.

PRIORITIES

The CHBA is committed to monitoring, assessing and speaking out on taxation issues that affect the industry and home buyers adversely.

- The CHBA should continue to work actively to ensure choice and affordability for home buyers. The Association at all levels needs to take an active role by pressing for a review of taxation related to growth, and making positive recommendations for change at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government.
- The CHBA should continue to give priority to assisting provincial and local associations in their efforts to oppose new discriminatory forms of taxation.
- The CHBA should continue to emphasize the harmful effects of rent control on the production and maintenance of private rental housing. At the same time, it should continue to stress the importance of a reasonable tax regime to encourage private investment in rental housing.
- Ultimately the home buyer is the victim of a burdensome tax system. The CHBA should continue to insist that all three levels of government cooperate and coordinate their decisions regarding taxation. Uncoordinated, ad hoc decisions among the three jurisdictions create unnecessary and unjustifiable hardship for new home builders and home buyers alike.
- The CHBA should continue to emphasize the responsibility of all three levels of government with respect to financing municipal infrastructure. In particular, provincial and federal governments must understand their responsibilities, given the substantial revenues they receive from the residential construction industry and the importance of infrastructure investment for Canada's competitiveness.

REGULATION

ISSUES

Land and housing policies, by-laws and approval processes are primarily established and enforced at the local level. The regulatory environment governing the home building industry delays the production of new housing; adds unnecessarily to costs; restricts and discourages innovation; and, ultimately, discriminates against new home buyers and industry development.

Lengthy and cumbersome approval processes, plus a shortfall in investment in the infrastructure required for new housing development, can cause land prices to skyrocket. Higher costs—direct costs such as fees and indirect costs such as interest charges due to delays—impact on the housing industry and on consumers, particularly the first-time home buyer.

The planning process has become politicized. Anti-growth sentiment makes the regulatory system more onerous and reduces the decision-making process to one of negotiation dominated by the most vociferous interest groups.

The industry recognizes the legitimate need for planning policies, servicing standards and financial obligations pertaining to land development. However, it is imperative to streamline approval processes, eliminate unnecessary duplication of regulations, rationalize servicing standards, remove artificial barriers and adopt voluntary, market-driven approaches to public policy objectives.

The CHBA has been instrumental in the implementation of the Affordability and Choice Today program (ACT), designed to increase housing quality, affordability and choice through regulatory reform, and is committed to its ongoing success. ACT is a tripartite initiative carried out with participation from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, and the support of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

PRIORITIES

Ultimately, regulations become a matter of time and money, and thus they affect housing affordability. The CHBA is committed to playing a key role in the area of regulations, serving not only as the voice of the residential construction industry, but also as the voice of home buyers, particularly first-time purchasers, who do not have a strong knowledge base or voice in local decision-making that affects the availability of housing.

- The CHBA should continue to promote the significance of the housing industry in the community, and to demonstrate how the regulatory environment can reduce housing affordability and choice.
- The CHBA should continue to encourage the establishment of municipal liaison committees in order to support consultation between the officials of local associations and elected municipal officials and their senior staff. In particular, good liaison with municipal planning and economic development departments should be fostered to encourage consultation with local associations before regulations are developed. The CHBA should continue to provide local associations with supportive materials for the development of municipal liaison committees.

- The CHBA should continue to facilitate information sharing on regulatory issues among provincial and local associations.
- The CHBA should continue to support the ACT Program as a venue for pursuing innovative ideas and initiatives pertaining to regulations.
- The CHBA should continue to promote Smart Regulation, including the principles that government action must be based on real need and good research; that there must be coordination amongst governments and meaningful consultation with the people and industries directly affected by government action; and further, that governments must monitor and be accountable for the performance of their regulatory actions. The CHBA should continue to work with the federal government in these areas.
- Further, the CHBA should continue to support the federal government's commitment to reducing the paperwork burden for small businesses in Canada, and to encourage actions to remove barriers to innovation and economic efficiency as they affect the housing industry.

FINANCING

ISSUES

Financing is of key importance to the housing industry. The capital requirements are significant, as most housing is built and purchased with borrowed funds.

HOME BUILDER FINANCING

Most builders start out on a small scale with limited capital resources. Financial requirements brought about by the decisions of a variety of parties can be a serious impediment to entering the industry.

In addition, the risks associated with home building have shifted away from lenders, municipalities and others to fall disproportionately on new home builders. Inadequate or costly builders' risk insurance can further threaten builders' financial stability.

HOME BUYER FINANCING

Most home buyers require financing in order to purchase new or existing property. The instruments for home ownership financing have improved considerably over the past decades, and opportunities for additional innovation to benefit prospective purchasers will continue to emerge.

PRIORITIES

Changes in the financing environment can have far-reaching and potentially devastating consequences for the building industry. The CHBA is committed to playing a critical role in consulting with financial institutions and insurance providers, coordinating and disseminating information to members, and providing consumer education.

- The CHBA should continue to work closely with lending institutions to create an effective communications network. The CHBA should consult with representative organizations of the banking industry, while local associations should communicate with local lenders' associations.
- The CHBA should continue to advocate for a stable builders' risk insurance environment.
- The CHBA should continue to provide up-to-date information to Canadians about the full impact of the economy on the housing industry on a regular basis. This includes such activities as collecting data and issuing news releases.
- The CHBA should continue to encourage young people to set money aside for a secure future and develop an equity base for retirement through home ownership.

HOUSING

TECHNOLOGY

ISSUES

Canada is recognized as a world leader in technical research, technological advancement and general housing research. Innovative construction techniques and systems, the increased use of manufactured components, and the introduction of new materials and products have contributed greatly to greater productivity and to the ongoing improvement in the quality of Canadian construction.

There are a number of key issues pertaining to the continued development of housing technology and its adoption by new home builders, renovators and developers.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Housing quality and technical research are extremely important to the housing industry.

There is a need for governments to continue to demonstrate their commitment to support national objectives in housing quality and technology development. This is particularly true in the area of brownfield development and the environment.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER (DIFFUSION)

Education and training is the primary vehicle for transferring new technology to the building site.

A number of agencies, both private- and public-sector, are involved in developing industry training courses. The CHBA has an important role in ensuring that the efforts of all the key players are coordinated to streamline delivery and maximize resources.

PRIORITIES

While the structure of the residential construction industry does not lend itself to financing research and development, the CHBA is committed to playing a strong leadership role in the area of housing technology.

The CHBA should be proactive and act as a conduit for information among governments, manufacturers, new home builders, renovators and developers.

The CHBA should continue to nurture its network so that accurate information on real problems and opportunities are identified and brought to the attention of those with the resources to fund studies and initiatives.

Further, the efforts of the CHBA should continue to be directed towards supporting voluntary changes in the marketplace.

- The CHBA should continue to be involved in the development of new commercially viable technologies, including setting priorities for research activities and helping to coordinate resources. This will ensure that efforts are directed towards projects that are of primary importance to the housing industry and its customers.
- The CHBA should continue to encourage governments to offer appropriate support for companies involved in research and development, and demonstration programs.

- The dissemination of information about new and emerging technology is an important function for the Association, and a valuable membership service. The CHBA should continue to:

- improve communication within the Association on housing technology issues
- urge members to use the resources of the Association
- monitor and encourage technological changes
- support and improve the National Building Code, and ensure the continued focus on health, safety and structural sufficiency
- optimize R-2000 technology benefits
- foster close relationships with manufacturers.

- The industry should continue to promote innovative design options and building components. At the same time, it should promote the use of new technology to improve community development, as well as individual houses and products.
- The CHBA should persist in its efforts to seek reform of legislation dealing with liability in such key areas as time limitations and the appropriateness of joint and several liability, to encourage technical and technological innovation.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

ISSUES

The housing industry is becoming more complex in the face of changing market conditions, a shortage of skilled workers and a broad range of technological changes.

New home builders, renovators and developers need to develop and maintain a wide variety of skills to operate effectively in the marketplace. Business management skills, technical know-how, and sales and marketing abilities are prerequisites for success in the building industry.

The issue of builder certification and designation is being addressed in a number of regions. Education and training come under the mandate of provincial associations, and certification and designation are provincial issues.

In the longer term, the residential construction industry must secure a steady supply of trained and qualified people to meet future demand. The lack of skilled people, the aging of the existing work force and the difficulty of attracting sufficient numbers of newcomers have given rise to concerns for the future health of the industry.

PRIORITIES

BUILDER AND RENOVATOR TRAINING

Education and training are essential to the housing industry. The CHBA is committed to playing an active role in a number of key areas.

- Business skills are vital in the building industry. The CHBA should continue to encourage a wide range of training activities for new home builders and renovators, including facilitating the use of new business technology.
- Consolidation and exchange of information among provincial associations are required. The CHBA should continue to act as a clearing-house for information by developing a comprehensive library of training programs from across the country. This includes industry recognition or designation programs for new home builders and renovators supported by provincial associations.

SKILLED LABOUR FORCE

The CHBA is committed to working within Canada's training and education system to ensure a steady and predictable work force that is well equipped to meet present and future challenges in the industry.

- The CHBA should continue to promote a national human resources development action plan that meets the requirements of the residential construction industry and encourages collaboration and greater consistency in the delivery of education and training programs across the country.
- The CHBA should continue to encourage young people to enter the residential construction industry by actively promoting it as a viable career option.

- Immigration contributes meaningfully to Canada's economic, social and cultural fabric while providing a pool of skilled labour and potential home buyers. The CHBA should continue its efforts to encourage a policy of increased immigration quotas and greater attention to the skilled labour needs of the industry.

EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP

The relationship between employers and employees is governed by a range of federal and provincial regulations. A strong and mutually beneficial relationship goes beyond compliance with minimum requirements. Rather, it must be based on careful consideration for the long-term welfare of both parties and implementation of positive and effective measures.

- The CHBA Member Builder's Statement of Business Values and Commitments identifies accountability to employees as a core value.
- The Canadian Home Builders' Association Position on Workplace Health and Safety sets out objectives and goals for employers in providing a healthy and safe work environment.
- The Canadian Home Builders' Association Statement of Principles and Guidelines for Employer-Employee Relationships deals with human resource management based on the premise that "good ethics are good for business."

The CHBA should continue to encourage the efforts of member employers to develop effective practices for hiring, supporting and retaining employees.

MARKETING

ISSUES

New home builders and renovators operate in a constantly changing marketplace that is dominated by a variety of factors, such as the business cycle, demographics and changing lifestyle trends.

Marketing is one of the keys to success in the residential construction industry. New home builders and renovators need to:

- understand the marketing process
- understand customer expectations
- find creative responses to changing marketplace demands
- enhance their market research skills.

The industry is responding to the challenges of the marketplace. Increasingly, new home builders and renovators are taking a highly informed approach to business, staying up to date on market conditions and trends, identifying target markets, adapting their products to incorporate new techniques and designs, and fine-tuning their sales and marketing skills.

PRIORITIES

The CHBA is committed to assisting its members to succeed and prosper in a complex marketplace.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

New home builders and renovators need to acquire and maintain a wide range of knowledge and skills in both technical and business areas. The CHBA should continue to:

- develop information and reports on consumer needs, wants and values
- promote professionalism through education and training
- promote coordination of education and training activities
- provide information on new products.

MARKETING TO CONSUMERS

The CHBA has a substantial contribution to make on the demand side.

The CHBA should continue to provide members with knowledge about the marketplace and the tools for dealing successfully with the demands of housing consumers.

THE ENVIRONMENT

ISSUES

Growing concerns about the natural environment are fostering new priorities in both public policies and the marketplace.

For the housing industry, the environmental imperative is to provide Canadians with homes and communities that have the least adverse effect on the natural environment.

The challenges are complex, and no organization or agency can single-handedly effect comprehensive changes. Long-term, viable solutions must come about as a cooperative effort among those with common interests and shared concerns.

The housing industry can make a significant contribution to further public awareness and knowledge of environmental issues in housing. New home builders, renovators and developers have an opportunity to provide consumers with valuable information and housing options in the marketplace.

The R-2000 Initiative is a great asset for the industry and a critical foundation for other housing labeling programs. Further, the building science and technology developed as a result of the R-2000 Initiative have application in upgrading the environmental performance of existing housing.

PRIORITIES

The housing industry has an important role to play in environmental initiatives, and the CHBA is committed to continue its leadership role in this area.

POLICIES AND POSITIONS

The CHBA has been a pro-active and outspoken participant in environmental issues for a number of decades, and it will continue to support endeavours that will further environmentally responsible housing solutions and oppose those that do not. *The Canadian Home Builders' Association's Position on the Environment* consolidates the CHBA's stance on environmental issues.

- The CHBA should continue to advocate market-oriented, voluntary approaches rather than regulation to environmentally responsible housing.
- The CHBA should continue to encourage governments to support research and development of environmentally responsible housing techniques and products, as well as technology transfer and diffusion of successful and cost-effective new techniques.

- The CHBA should continue to support the R-2000 Initiative, and encourage ongoing government investment in the enterprise.
- The CHBA should continue to support the development of other environmentally responsible housing initiatives.

NEW HOME BUILDER, RENOVATOR AND DEVELOPER ACTIVITIES

The CHBA Member Builder's Statement of Business Values and Commitments commits members, on a voluntary basis, to develop communities and build and renovate homes in an environmentally responsible manner. *Guidelines for New Home Builder, Renovator and Developer Members of the Canadian Home Builders' Association to Contribute to the Development of Environmentally Responsible Housing* offers guidance on specific actions that members can take with respect to environmental issues in housing.

The CHBA should continue to:

- encourage the construction of environmentally responsible housing and communities
- encourage provincial and local associations to establish environmental committees
- facilitate information sharing among all levels of the Association
- develop information materials on new environmentally responsible products and practices
- promote participation in the R-2000 Initiative and other environmental housing initiatives
- work with building products manufacturers on environmental issues.

CONSUMER ACTIVITIES

The CHBA should continue to:

- inform consumers about environmentally responsible housing, including building materials that are healthy and safe.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The CHBA should continue to:

- liaise with municipalities on existing and upcoming initiatives designed to address environmental issues and concerns pertaining to housing
- support efforts to reduce construction waste by encouraging ongoing development of waste recycling techniques and participating in municipal waste management programs
- promote the revitalization of Canada's urban cores
- encourage the development of brownfield sites, including standards, environmental approvals, financing and liability issues.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

ISSUES

Consumer protection is an intrinsic part of any product or service offered for sale in Canada's marketplace. The scope of consumer protection in housing ranges from sales and marketing to codes and standards.

Provincial and regional new home warranty programs are at the centre of consumer protection in housing, offering consumers a wide range of warranties and guarantees against defects, damage and loss of deposits. These programs were originally established by the CHBA as self-funding corporations with voluntary membership, to promote the professionalism of its members and its commitment to consumers. Recent years have also seen the emergence of for-profit warranty programs in some regions.

The emphasis of the programs has shifted since they were first created. Warranty programs are more restrictive in their entry requirements and impose tighter controls on members. Many programs offer extended consumer protection coverage, and some have taken on new responsibilities for builder education as well as consumer information.

The CHBA Member Builder's Statement of Business Values and Commitments commits members, on a voluntary basis, to act with integrity and accept responsibility to their customers for the products and services they provide.

PRIORITIES

The CHBA is committed to being proactive in the area of consumer protection.

WARRANTY

The CHBA Membership Criteria require that all eligible new homes built by new home builder, renovator or developer members must be enrolled in a new home warranty program.

- With the support of the Canadian Home Warranty Council, the industry should continue to work towards ensuring a consistent minimum level of protection for home buyers across the country through warranty programs. In the process, it should monitor the development of a broader scope of consumer protection in some regions, driven by consumer demand and other market forces.
- Both consumers and new home builders need to understand their respective contractual obligations and responsibilities under new home warranty. The CHBA should continue to encourage provincial and local associations to educate the public about warranty programs through a range of Association consumer activities.
- The CHBA should continue to support efforts by warranty programs, as well as commercial market research companies, that measure the satisfaction of home buyers and home owners, in order to provide both the public and builders with insight into and benchmarks on builder performance.

PRACTICES, CODES AND STANDARDS

- As a high priority, the CHBA should continue to promote the advantages of dealing with industry professionals to both the buying public and real estate people.
- The primary reasons for customer dissatisfaction are lack of understanding of the industry and unrealistic expectations of the products and services they are buying as well as the home buying and renovation process. The CHBA should continue to provide builders with information and tools such as the *Guidelines for New Home Builders and Renovators to Assist Them in Meeting Realistic Customer Expectations* to help them deal efficiently and professionally with their customers.
- Under-the-table contractors jeopardize consumers and legitimate contractors alike. The CHBA should continue to fight the underground economy on many fronts, including the *Get it in Writing* educational campaign, to encourage consumers to work with professional contractors.
- The National Building Code (NBC) of Canada sets out objectives and requirements to ensure the health and safety of homes for Canadians. The CHBA should continue to take an active role in the ongoing evolution of the NBC, advocating practical, cost-sensitive approaches and solutions.
- Counterfeit and non-conforming building products have the potential to undermine consumer confidence and increase liability and cost for new home builders and renovators. The CHBA should continue to alert and inform its members as well as consumers about the issue.

AFFORDABILITY

ISSUES

The affordability of homes is a concern for both home buyers and new home builders. Purchasers must be able to carry the mortgage payments on a home; a serious deterioration in affordability will undermine the opportunity for people to own their own homes.

The main issue is affordability for first-time home buyers. The high cost of land, lot levies, development taxes and regulatory requirements add to the base cost of new homes. As production costs increase, home ownership is pushed beyond the reach of a growing number of potential first-time buyers.

Affordability trends vary across Canada, as house prices vary with changing levels of demand, the regulatory and taxation environment, and factors such as the availability of suitable infrastructure for new housing construction.

PRIORITIES

Affordability is central to the housing industry and a high priority for the Association. The CHBA is committed to safeguarding and improving the affordability of housing.

LIAISON WITH GOVERNMENTS

Housing affordability is affected by developments in a wide range of areas, most notably:

- taxation
- regulations
- interest rates
- land supply.

The CHBA has a valuable role to play in ensuring that housing is accessible to and attainable by Canadians across the country.

- In most parts of Canada, land supply is one of the key elements of the affordability problem. The CHBA should continue to push for an adequate and timely supply of serviced land.
- Local associations should continue to take a pro-active role in their communities by getting involved with local councils on issues such as land planning, zoning, and streamlining the approvals process.

- The CHBA should continue to work with government on regulatory issues.
- The CHBA should continue to support innovative use of government land, while ensuring its disposal at market value.
- The CHBA should continue to work with the federal government, the Canadian Bankers Association and other national lenders' organizations, and mortgage insurers to advance financing improvements.
- The CHBA should continue to explain to the public the cost of development and the restraints affecting the provision of housing.

LEADERSHIP

ISSUES

Success in carrying out the CHBA's Vision Action Plan demands a great deal from the leadership of the Association.

The strength, relevance and value of the CHBA to members are direct results of the commitment by the leadership. Strong industry leadership must come from within the membership, and strong management must come from Association staff at each level.

- Elected industry leaders represent the Association to governments, public agencies, the media and the public at large. They present the industry's policies and priorities and give expression to the strong commitment to private-sector values that form the foundation of the CHBA. One of the great strengths of the CHBA is that many of its elected leaders are drawn from the ranks of new home builders, renovators and developers.
- Professional staff leaders manage the day-to-day affairs of the Association, ensuring that short- and long-term plans are carried out, and providing counsel and support to elected leaders. Executive Officers at all levels are responsible for maintaining the vitality of the Association and ensuring that members benefit fully from belonging to the CHBA.

The *Statement of Commitment*, signed by members of the National Executive Board and Provincial Association Presidents, outlines the responsibility of the CHBA's leadership to ensure a consistent and constructive flow of information among all three levels of the Association.

PRIORITIES

Effective leadership does not come about accidentally. Rather, it is the result of deliberate policies and actions.

INTERNALLY

There is a growing appreciation of the importance of professionalism in senior staff. The CHBA is committed to continuously developing and nurturing strong professional leadership for the years to come.

- Through the Executive Officers' Council (EOC), the CHBA should continue to address the need for increased professionalism in the management of the Association's affairs, by providing opportunities for professional development, facilitating the exchange of information among Executive Officers and fostering an effective communications network between and among the national, provincial and local levels of the Association.

- The Provincial Presidents' Forum provides an opportunity for provincial Presidents and their Executive Officers to exchange knowledge, experiences and expertise on provincial legislative issues that affect the industry. The purpose is to ensure that issues of common concern across Canada receive strong, active and informed leadership through provincial and local associations.

EXTERNALLY

Beyond the invaluable contributions of a professional staff and elected leaders, the credibility of the CHBA is closely linked with the performance and actions by its members. This in turn affects the CHBA's ability to play a leadership role within the industry, with governments and with consumers.

The CHBA is committed to ensuring that the requirements for membership reflect the values and principles of the Association, and to promoting the recognition of the importance of these values and principles.

- The CHBA's Code of Ethics, along with the Disciplinary Procedures, sets the foundation for the professionalism of Association members. All CHBA members are required to sign off on the Code.
- The CHBA Membership Criteria set out consistent and meaningful application requirements for those wishing to belong to the Association. This enhances the value of membership for everyone and recognizes the professionalism of CHBA members.
- A key goal of the Association's outreach activities is to encourage consumers to buy a new house or renovate an existing home through a member of the CHBA, because of the added value received. The CHBA should continue to promote the advantages of dealing with professional CHBA-member new home builders and renovators.
- The CHBA Member Builder's Statement of Business Values and Commitments commits members, on a voluntary basis, to strive to ensure that impacts of their businesses practices on their community are positive.
- The CHBA should continue to provide advice on ways that member new home builders, renovators and developers can actively contribute to and invest in the well-being of the communities in which they operate their businesses, such as *Guidelines for New Home Builders, Renovators and Developers on Contributing to the Community*.
- Further, the CHBA should continue to pursue ways to increase awareness of the building industry as a major contributor to the Canadian economy, to enhance public understanding of the profession and to promote the industry's commitment to corporate social responsibility.

SECTION TWO: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

THIS SECTION HIGHLIGHTS THE APPROACHES AND DIRECTIONS THAT WILL ENABLE THE CHBA TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES IN THE YEAR 2007 AND BEYOND.

The national Committees and Councils of the CHBA play a vital role in the Association. The significant, and voluntary, contributions of a great many individuals to the various national Committees and Councils over the years have enabled the Association to grow and mature—as a major influence in the Canadian housing industry; as a consumer advocate to ensure quality, choice and affordability for all Canadians; and as a driving force in increasing the professionalism of the members of the residential construction industry.

- One of the fundamental functions of each of the Committees and Councils is to serve as a conduit for information between members of the Association and society at large, whether this involves governments, consumers and/or other industries.
- As a second fundamental function, the Committees and Councils of the CHBA carry out independent research, cooperate with other agencies on a variety of projects and initiatives, and make recommendations on policies and priorities.
- A third fundamental function is that of internal information sharing. National Committees and Councils play a critical role in the Association by facilitating the sharing of local, provincial and national information. This helps to prevent duplication and support coordinated efforts throughout the entire Association, thereby maximizing the use of resources.

Given that these functions are ongoing and consistent, they will not be highlighted further, except where they serve to emphasize areas of particular importance. Rather, the following pages will provide an overview of additional activities that are planned and proposed to advance the success of achieving the objectives set out for the future.

OBJECTIVES

INTERNAL

1. To promote member awareness that the CHBA is one Association with three levels—local, provincial and national—working together in pursuit of a common agenda.
2. The CHBA is committed to operating in accordance with democratic principles and procedures, and to serving its members in an open, transparent manner that provides the opportunity for equal access and benefits to all.
3. To increase professionalism within the residential construction industry through: education and training; technical research and technological advancement; as well as, the active compliance with the Association's Code of Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility principles.
4. To strengthen the national, provincial and local levels of the Association to enable them to represent the industry's interests effectively in their jurisdictions.
5. To support and develop the Association's leadership capabilities through activities designed to recruit and encourage new elected leaders and the appointment of professional staff at all levels of the Association.

EXTERNAL

6. To strengthen and build upon the Association's position as the voice of the Canadian residential construction industry, through government liaison, and policy positions.
7. To monitor and oppose inappropriate regulation and taxation that adversely affects housing affordability, quality and choice for Canadians.
8. To recommend and promote stable financial options and instruments tailored to the particular and changing needs of home buyers, home owners, renters and home builders.
9. To provide proactive and responsible leadership in addressing Canada's environmental agenda as it relates to the residential construction industry.
10. To focus the Association's work in economic research and market analysis; technical research, technology development, transfer and demonstrations; sales and marketing; education and training; and, urban issues, so as to give priority to the Association's mission and objectives.



OBJECTIVE ONE

TO PROMOTE MEMBER AWARENESS THAT THE CHBA IS ONE ASSOCIATION WITH THREE LEVELS—LOCAL, PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL—WORKING TOGETHER IN PURSUIT OF A COMMON AGENDA.

The structure of the CHBA—one organization operating at three levels—is the foundation for working effectively with all levels of government and organizing activities that are national in scope but local in character.

At all levels within the Association, elected leaders, Executive Officers and volunteers are dealing with complex issues that affect the business environment.

To reach the goals of the Association, all three levels must work together with a common purpose—to secure a business environment within which members can operate profitably.

A NATIONAL CONTEXT

The residential construction industry is influenced by three levels of government, and increasingly, by intergovernmental arrangements and processes. The structure of the Association is ideally suited to this government reality as it easily allows the national level to work with its provincial and local associations to provide comprehensive, representative input to the intergovernmental process.

The CHBA's agenda is large and complex. All levels of the Association are faced with a growing number of issues and a growing workload. At the national level, the CHBA is committed to four key activity areas:

- Direct federal responsibility—as the voice of the Canadian residential construction industry, the CHBA will continue to address a wide array of issues and maintain ongoing relationships with federal government departments and agencies.
- Intergovernmental tasks—the CHBA will continue to work with provincial associations on issues that involve both federal and provincial governments, such as building codes and infrastructure investment.
- Coordination and research support—the CHBA will continue to provide advice and support to provincial and local associations on a large range of policy issues.
- Information sharing—the CHBA will continue to ensure the effective sharing of experience among provincial and local associations on issues that may occur locally but are of common concern across the country.

COMMUNICATION

While the CHBA's structure allows it to pursue the Association's agenda effectively, it also poses significant challenges.

Foremost is the need to maintain effective communications so all members are aware of what each level of their Association is doing on their behalf.

Further, it is important that members are fully aware of, and have access to, the full range of services provided by all three levels.

The CHBA is committed to ensuring effective communications and reinforcing member awareness of the full scope of the Association's activities. The CHBA will continue to:

- maintain a members-only website as a primary information source
- provide ongoing coverage of national-level activities in the CHBA's membership publications and online
- distribute printed information on selected topics to members on a timely basis
- promote the use of the CHBA logo
- coordinate national presidential visits to provincial and local associations
- enable participation by national staff and elected leaders in provincial and local strategic planning meetings.

OBJECTIVE TWO

THE CHBA IS COMMITTED TO OPERATING IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES, AND TO SERVING ITS MEMBERS IN AN OPEN, TRANSPARENT MANNER THAT PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EQUAL ACCESS AND BENEFITS TO ALL.

The strength of the CHBA depends on the involvement of member volunteers at every level and in every aspect of the Association’s affairs.

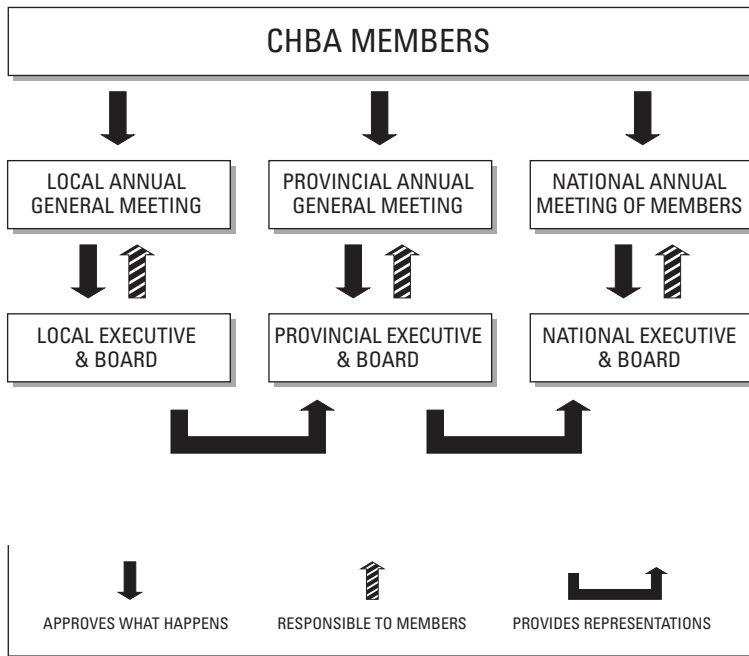
The CHBA’s national governing structure is open and democratic. The structure permits and encourages information transfer among the local, provincial and national levels. This ensures that all three levels of the CHBA have the opportunity to participate and that the Association’s agenda can be pursued effectively and efficiently. (See Figure One.)

The CHBA is committed to upholding the principles of transparency and equal access in every aspect of the Association’s business.

The national Board of Directors is comprised of representatives of provincial and local associations. Directors’ meetings as well as Committee and Council meetings are open to all members. At the Annual Meeting of Members, every member has a vote that can be cast in person.

The CHBA is committed to ensuring that the Association’s by-laws and procedures at all levels accurately reflect the democratic principles and accountability that are the foundation for how the Association governs itself and its affairs.

FIGURE ONE: CHBA GOVERNING STRUCTURE



OBJECTIVE THREE

TO INCREASE PROFESSIONALISM WITHIN THE RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY THROUGH: EDUCATION AND TRAINING; TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT; AS WELL AS, THE ACTIVE COMPLIANCE WITH THE ASSOCIATION'S CODE OF ETHICS AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PRINCIPLES.

The CHBA is placing high priority on the professionalism of its members. Initiatives aimed at increasing professionalism within the building industry will continue to dominate the Association's efforts.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The National Education and Training Advisory Committee is committed to ensuring the ongoing availability of relevant education and training programs to meet the needs of new home builders, renovators and developers.

- The National Education and Training Advisory Committee is committed to supporting members in their voluntary efforts to build their knowledge and skills as professionals, including a national designation for new home builders and renovators.
- The Committee will continue to initiate and participate in efforts to ensure a stable labour force that is well equipped to respond to the challenges of the present and the future.
- The Committee will actively seek opportunities to participate in government programs related to human resource development and management issues, national training courses and skills portability.

TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT

The Technical Research Committee is committed to promoting technical and technological advancement while giving priority to affordability, choice and quality.

The Technical Research Committee will continue its efforts to ensure that public-sector research and development is relevant to the industry and to consumers. In particular, it will:

- focus attention on the developing technology needs of the new home building and renovation sector
- support the CHBA's R-2000 commitments with respect to the technical standard and the quality assurance process by overseeing the delivery of R-2000, and recommending changes as appropriate
- give priority to major technical issues.

Advances and innovations in building technology are taking place on an ongoing basis, and new home builders, renovators and developers must keep up to date. Environmental concerns are also fueling the growing need for information. The CHBA will support technical publications in its efforts to inform members of technical and technological concerns and interests.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

The CHBA is committed to promoting the professionalism of its members.

- All members must sign off on the Association's uniform Code of Ethics and promise to operate their company in accordance with the spirit of the Code. The CHBA will continue to encourage provincial and local associations to incorporate the CHBA's Disciplinary Procedures into their own by-laws and regulations.
- New home builder members must agree to enroll all eligible new homes in a new home warranty program. The CHBA will continue to emphasize the importance of warranty coverage for new home buyers.
- Where Association-required industry designation programs are in place, new home builder, renovator and developer members agree to achieve and maintain the required designation. The CHBA will continue to emphasize the importance of ongoing education and training for new home builders, renovators and developers.
- The CHBA's Member Builder's Statement of Business Values and Commitments set out a series of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) principles. The CHBA will continue to develop information tools, such as guidelines and workshops, to assist members in incorporating CSR in their business practices, as well as other materials to assist members in their efforts to gain trust and recognition in the marketplace.

OBJECTIVE FOUR

TO STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL LEVELS OF THE ASSOCIATION TO ENABLE THEM TO REPRESENT THE INDUSTRY'S INTERESTS EFFECTIVELY IN THEIR JURISDICTIONS.

The industry is affected by three levels of government and, in recent years, by a growing number of intergovernmental arrangements, involving several levels of government. This trend, which affects areas such as human resource development, immigration, the environment, taxation, and the provision and maintenance of infrastructure, will undoubtedly continue.

The CHBA is committed to ensuring the most effective industry approach to governments at any level, including intergovernmental arrangements.

In order to represent the industry's interest to governments effectively, the provincial and local associations must be well informed, well organized and well prepared. The CHBA is committed to strengthening provincial and local associations across the country.

- The national Committees and Councils of the CHBA will continue to act as resources of information and advice for provincial and local associations.
- The CHBA will continue to encourage the active participation of provincial associations and builder representation on national Committees and Councils.
- The CHBA will continue to engage local associations in the national agenda through representation on the national Board of Directors.
- Where provincial and local committees and councils do not exist currently, the CHBA will continue to encourage the creation of such committees and councils.
- The CHBA will continue to encourage the establishment of municipal liaison committees to facilitate consultation between officials of local home builders' associations and elected officials of municipal governments.
- The CHBA will continue to provide information and advice to help local associations make effective use of the resources available to them from the other levels of the Association.
- The CHBA will continue to encourage provincial and local associations to engage in sound financial planning and to allocate the required resources to conduct their housing policy liaison and other activities effectively.
- The CHBA will continue to encourage provincial associations to develop their own housing policy papers and strategic plans.
- The CHBA will continue to develop mechanisms for improved communication and interaction among provincial and local Executive Officers to help to strengthen the CHBA's provincial and local associations through greater information sharing.
- The development and refinement of materials for use at the provincial and local levels will continue to be a priority for the CHBA.
- The CHBA's website provides an excellent tool for making information available to staff, elected officials and members quickly and effectively. The CHBA will continue its ongoing effort in this area.

OBJECTIVE FIVE

TO SUPPORT AND DEVELOP THE ASSOCIATION'S LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES THROUGH ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO RECRUIT AND ENCOURAGE NEW ELECTED LEADERS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF AT ALL LEVELS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The CHBA's strength, influence and effectiveness as the voice of the residential construction industry is inextricably linked with the capabilities of its leadership, both elected officials and professional staff.

Working in a complex and challenging environment, the housing industry demands a great deal from Association leadership. The CHBA is committed to supporting and developing leadership on all levels.

ELECTED LEADERSHIP

Traditionally, the elected leaders of the CHBA begin gaining political experience at the local association level, and have the opportunity to rise to provincial and national leadership through appointments to key positions on various Association Boards, Committees and Councils.

- The Annual Meeting held during the CHBA conference will continue to afford all members the opportunity to participate in the policy-making and priority-setting processes of the Association.
- The CHBA will continue to encourage the participation of the membership in national, provincial and local committees in an effort to secure a steady pool of potential industry leaders.
- The CHBA will continue to encourage the appointment of appropriate individuals to leadership positions within its Committees and Councils.
- The CHBA will continue to give priority to enhancing the mandate and role of national, provincial and local nomination committees in support of effective succession planning.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

The professional staff manage the day-to-day operations of the Association on all levels. They ensure continuity in the way the Association's affairs are conducted and are an invaluable source of information and support for elected officials.

The CHBA will continue to undertake a wide range of activities in order to improve the professionalism and effectiveness of Executive Officers across Canada.

- The CHBA will continue its efforts to encourage an effective structure in the Executive Officers' Council and at provincial and local association levels to implement the strategic priorities of the Association. Activities include:
 - promotion of the basic operational requirements for provincial and local associations to function effectively, and the maintenance of position descriptions outlining the responsibilities of staff in relation to their boards of directors and membership.
 - promotion of criteria for measuring sound Association management practices and principles (e.g., strategic plan, budget, financial reports, financial projections, operating plans and case studies).
 - distribution of manuals to assist Executive Officers with organizational requirements such as model by-laws, terms of reference for committees and councils and media relations.
 - promotion of the importance of full-time Executive Officers for all home builders' associations.
 - provision of opportunities for professional development such as seminars, resource materials and information packages.
 - enhancement of the existing communications framework to ensure that all Executive Officers have access to timely information, including round tables, seminars, conference calls, newsletters, electronic messages and an annual Professional Development Forum.

CHBA RECOGNITION OF LEADERSHIP

The CHBA will continue to promote and encourage excellence in leadership.

- The CHBA National Awards recognize outstanding contributions to the home building industry made by individual members of the Association.
- The national Rooftop Club recognizes outstanding contributions in the field of membership recruitment and retention.
- The national Executive Officers' Awards recognize outstanding contributions by Executive Officers.

OBJECTIVE SIX

TO STRENGTHEN AND BUILD UPON THE ASSOCIATION'S POSITION AS THE VOICE OF THE CANADIAN RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, THROUGH GOVERNMENT LIAISON AND POLICY POSITIONS.

Membership in the CHBA exceeds 7,000 companies. When the Association addresses government, it does so as the only organization that represents Canada's residential construction industry across Canada. Over the years, the CHBA has successfully pursued a high profile with governments on all levels.

The CHBA is committed to taking a pro-active approach to industry representation. The President and the national Board of Directors of the CHBA will continue to provide leadership in developing policies and setting directions for the Association. The national Committees and Councils will continue to participate in representative or consultative activities on behalf of the membership as may be appropriate. For instance:

- The Technical Research Committee will continue to emphasize liaison with such agencies as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Natural Resources Canada and the National Research Council on issues of technology, building science, research and information transfer. The Committee will also continue to represent the CHBA on codes and standards bodies.
- The Canadian Renovators' Council will continue to focus its efforts on liaising with government agencies to promote interests that are specific to the renovation sector.
- The National Education and Training Advisory Committee will continue to give priority to consultation with federal and provincial governments on skilled labour shortages, the implementation of a human resources development action plan for the industry, and changes to Canada's immigration policies to ease the entry of immigrants with the skills required by the industry.

As well, the Committee will continue to support the development of a national designation for new home builders and renovators.

- The Economic Research Committee will continue to serve as a forum for information exchange and dissemination on a wide range of matters such as economic conditions and projections, housing activities and forecasts and availability of financing.
 - The Urban Council will continue to be a resource for local associations on urban issues that are common across Canada, such as federal investment in municipal infrastructure, regulatory and tax reform, and strategic public investment to support emerging market opportunities—e.g., reurbanization, innovative community development and brownfield redevelopment.
 - The National Marketing Committee will continue to collaborate with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on initiatives to provide information and advice to consumers and to present intelligence on consumer trends and market opportunities to new home builders and renovators.
 - The President and the Executive Board of the CHBA will sustain their critical roles in monitoring federal housing policies and programs, and in securing the CHBA's leadership and proactive role in promoting the interests of the residential construction industry and consumers.
- In this regard, they will continue to encourage better targeting of government housing programs. This includes the adoption of portable housing allowances for lower-income households, and limiting social housing programs to those with special needs, including the homeless.
- The CHBA will continue to place a high priority on a strong relationship with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

OBJECTIVE SEVEN

TO MONITOR AND OPPOSE INAPPROPRIATE REGULATION AND TAXATION THAT ADVERSELY AFFECTS HOUSING AFFORDABILITY, QUALITY AND CHOICE FOR CANADIANS.

REGULATION

The issue of housing affordability is expected to continue to be a dominant factor in the housing market in the coming years. The CHBA is committed to playing an active role in advocating changes to the regulatory environment where these will help to achieve affordability, choice and quality in housing.

- The CHBA will continue to foster discussion and recommend research to address the adverse effects of regulation on the housing industry and housing consumers.
- Current liability laws restrict project financing, constrain innovation and place an unbalanced and unfair risk on the industry. The CHBA will continue to push for substantial reform to liability legislation, including proportional liability and time limits for liabilities on defects.
- The CHBA will continue to promote the concepts of “smart government” and “smart regulation” to encourage a focused and coordinated approach to housing. The goals are to minimize the regulatory burden and to ensure that regulations are introduced as a last resort only to achieving public policy objectives, in order to secure a competitive and productive housing sector able to maximize housing affordability, choice and quality.
- The CHBA will continue to pursue ways to encourage the adoption of innovative approaches, systems and products in the marketplace through regulatory reform.
- The CHBA will continue to represent the housing industry to national codes and standards bodies, including the Canadian Commission on Buildings and Fire Codes, the Canadian Standards Association, the Canadian General Standards Board and the Canadian Construction Materials Centre. This will ensure that decisions and actions by these bodies are informed by the knowledge, experience and expertise of housing practitioners.
- The CHBA will continue to encourage and promote ways to streamline and/or remove unnecessary regulations, such as participation in the ACT program.

TAXATION

Increased taxation is a major concern for the new home building and renovation industry. The CHBA is committed to identifying and addressing problem areas that have financial implications for the industry.

- The CHBA will continue to pursue fair tax treatment of new home purchases and renovation work under the federal Goods and Services Tax and the Harmonized Sales Tax regimes.
- The CHBA will continue to monitor fiscal policies and monetary matters on an ongoing basis and will submit formal presentations as part of the federal government’s pre-budget consultation process, as well as through other venues.
- The CHBA will continue to hold regular meetings with the Minister of Finance and the Governor of the Bank of Canada in order to ensure that they are well informed about the housing industry and how decisions by the federal government in such areas as fiscal and monetary policy affect the industry.
- The CHBA will continue to pursue options for financing municipal infrastructure in order to reduce the financial pressures on local government and increase the supply of serviced land for residential development.
- The CHBA will continue to monitor the impact of levies, fees, charges, taxes and transaction costs on new housing, and to work with provincial and local associations on their presentations to provincial and municipal governments.

OBJECTIVE EIGHT

TO RECOMMEND AND PROMOTE STABLE FINANCIAL OPTIONS AND INSTRUMENTS TAILORED TO THE PARTICULAR AND CHANGING NEEDS OF HOME BUYERS, HOME OWNERS, RENTERS AND HOME BUILDERS.

The existence of a stable financing environment is important to both members of the housing industry and to consumers.

The Economic Research Committee of the CHBA will continue to serve as a national forum for information exchange about the economic affairs of the housing industry. This role covers not only the activities of new home builders, renovators and developers, but also the interests of financial institutions, manufacturers, suppliers and government agencies.

- Other CHBA committees will continue to provide input to the CHBA's initiatives in this area, with the objective of improving available financial instruments and options as the marketplace changes.
- The CHBA will continue to monitor and disseminate the results of economic research from national agencies and organizations, and financial institutions.
- The CHBA will continue to promote the importance of such measures as the GST New Housing Rebate, mortgage-insured low down payments, the use of RRSP savings for home purchases and the capital gains tax exemption for principal residences.
- Canada has one of the best mortgage insurance systems in the world. The CHBA will continue to oppose any suggested measures to weaken the system or undermine consumer confidence and will continue to support a competitive mortgage insurance environment.

OBJECTIVE NINE

TO PROVIDE PROACTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP IN ADDRESSING CANADA'S ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA AS IT RELATES TO THE RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

The environment is high on the CHBA's priority list. Environmental concerns are widespread, and the CHBA is committed to playing a leadership role by pursuing a course of action that incorporates a managed balance between environmental and economic requirements.

POSITION AND POLICY

The CHBA is committed to working with governments through cooperative undertakings that recognize and respect the interests of the industry and the public.

- The CHBA will continue to work with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Natural Resources Canada and others as appropriate on environmental research and demonstration projects. Initiatives designed to reduce the environmental effects of housing in Canada include:
 - house-as-a-system approach for incorporating environmental features in houses
 - waste reduction, recycling and reuse on construction sites
 - infill housing
 - higher density
 - conversion and reuse of existing structures
 - development of brownfield sites
 - preservation of sensitive lands
 - commercialization of geothermal, wind and solar energy.
- The CHBA will continue to support and promote R-2000 and other initiatives that demonstrate industry leadership in pursuit of Canada's environmental agenda.
- The CHBA will continue to update its *Builders' Manual* by working with manufacturers, suppliers and researchers to provide builders with information about state-of-the-art housing technologies, systems and processes, including environmentally responsible technologies.
- The CHBA will continue to support the construction of environmentally responsible housing by recognizing builders' achievements through the Association's awards programs.
- The CHBA will continue to espouse the importance of the CHBA Member Builder's Statement of Business Values and Commitments as it relates to the environment, and to support members' endeavours to meet their environmental responsibilities in all aspects of their business practices through:
 - development of industry how-to information and case studies
 - regular information updates on new environmental products, technologies, designs and practices
 - consumer information.

COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS

The work of CHBA's national Committees and Councils will continue to place primary importance on the Association's commitment to the environment.

- The Technical Research Committee and the Canadian Renovators' Council will continue to focus efforts on environmental issues, with the objective of improving the environmental awareness of consumers and industry members. This will help to create a climate for appropriate action on environmental issues and encourage:
 - voluntary, market-driven approaches
 - business alliances with product manufacturers and service providers
 - product research
 - consumer research
 - demonstration projects.
- The Manufacturers' Council will continue to encourage research and development leading to innovative products and technologies for environmentally responsible buildings. It will also continue its efforts to foster partnerships within the industry, in order to assist new home builders, renovators and developers in meeting their environmental responsibilities.
- The National Marketing Committee will continue to pursue ways to promote environmentally responsible housing to consumers.
- The Canadian Renovators' Council will continue to support a wide range of measures to upgrade the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock.
- The Urban Council will continue to focus on community design and strategic infrastructure investments that are beneficial to the environment.

OBJECTIVE TEN

TO FOCUS THE ASSOCIATION'S WORK IN ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND MARKET ANALYSIS; TECHNICAL RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT, TRANSFER AND DEMONSTRATIONS; SALES AND MARKETING; EDUCATION AND TRAINING; AND, URBAN ISSUES, SO AS TO GIVE PRIORITY TO THE ASSOCIATION'S MISSION AND OBJECTIVES.

Over the years, the CHBA has developed a number of mechanisms for the purpose of focusing its efforts, improving its performance and continuing to grow and mature as the industry changes and becomes more complex and challenging.

The CHBA is committed to fostering an agenda for Committees and Councils that is constructive and supportive of the needs of its professional new home builder, renovator and developer members.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND MARKET ANALYSIS

- Surveys will continue to provide technology and market intelligence through polls of new home builder, renovator and developer members on current industry issues.
- The CHBA will continue to collaborate with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Statistics Canada and others to produce up-to-date data on housing trends and activities.
- The CHBA will continue to promote further research and understanding of various market segments, e.g., housing for older Canadians.
- Through its membership in the International Housing Association and participation in international new home warranty and housing conferences, the CHBA will continue to obtain knowledge and insight on industry issues and trends outside Canada for the benefit of members.
- The CHBA will continue to promote its economist as an important resource for provincial and local associations.
- The CHBA will continue to issue a number of publications in print and online to provide up-to-date information to its members on a wide range of issues. Publications include the "National" newspaper, "Home Builder" magazine, "Solplan Review", "Ottawa Update", "Economic Update" and "Tax Alert".

TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The CHBA is committed to improving continuously the quality and performance of housing.

- The CHBA will continue to seek technical innovation through voluntary, industry-directed activities, such as the R-2000 Initiative and other industry initiatives.

MARKETING

The CHBA is committed to nurturing public awareness of the Association and its members, and to provide valuable consumer information on home buying and renovation, through marketing efforts at all three levels of the Association.

To a large extent, consumer confidence in the industry depends on the individual's personal experience in the marketplace. The CHBA is committed to providing new home builder, renovator and developer members with information and tools to assist them in improving the home buying experience for the benefit of their customers as well as their own business.

- The CHBA will continue to review and implement New Homes Month and Renovation Month on an annual basis, working with private-sector partners, and provincial and local associations to ensure optimum profile for the residential construction industry in Canada, especially at the local level.
- Public concern about the environment will continue to be strong. The CHBA will continue to seek opportunities to promote its efforts and position with respect to the environment in various initiatives, including the EnviroHome initiative that highlights R-2000 homes that are "better for you, better for your community and better for the environment".
- The CHBA will continue to provide information to help consumers to understand quality in building products, recognize the benefits of brand-name products and avoid counterfeit and non-conforming products.
- The CHBA will continue to promote consumer seminars on various aspects of renovations and new home purchases.
- The National SAM Awards recognize excellence and outstanding achievement in new home construction and renovation, and in the sales and marketing field. The CHBA will continue to promote greater visibility for the competition and for finalists. Provincial and local associations will continue to be encouraged to establish their own awards programs, as well as participate in the National SAM Awards.

- The CHBA will continue to pursue the development of Customer Choice Awards programs across Canada.
- The CHBA will continue to pursue activities to provide new home builders, renovators and developers with insight into customer perceptions and expectations, and to assist in their efforts to address the needs of their customers professionally and effectively.
- The CHBA will continue to promote the exchange of information among new home builder, renovator and developer members on good business practices for the home buying and home renovation experiences.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- The CHBA will continue to promote builders' forums and seminars as a primary vehicle for educational opportunities.
- The CHBA will give priority to information and education in the area of occupational health and safety, and to its relations with Workers Compensation committees across the country.

- The CHBA Annual Conference will continue to provide a forum for networking among peers and highlighting innovative approaches and products available to the industry.

URBAN ISSUES

A range of issues in the industry that are closely linked with urban development, such as infrastructure investment and development charges, directly affect the profitability and viability of many CHBA members. They also have a profound impact on consumers and their ability to afford the purchase of a home.

- The CHBA will continue to advocate a proactive and coordinated approach to urban development.
- The CHBA will continue to develop background papers, toolkits and guidelines for use by provincial and local associations in their discussions about urban issues with their respective governments.

ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS

The Vision Action Plan provides the framework for the efforts and initiatives of the Canadian Home Builders' Association for year 2007 and beyond.

In order to assess the progress of efforts, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies in support of the Association's objectives, the CHBA will continue to review the Plan on an annual basis.

Each year, the Vision Action Plan will be submitted to the national Committees and Councils of the Association for review and recommendations.

The Vision Action Committee will make recommendations to the Executive Board, who in turn will forward the Plan, with revisions, if any, to the national Board of Directors for review and acceptance. The final revised Vision Action Plan will be circulated to provincial and local associations and presented to the Annual Meeting of Members for approval.



FIGURE TWO: CHBA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

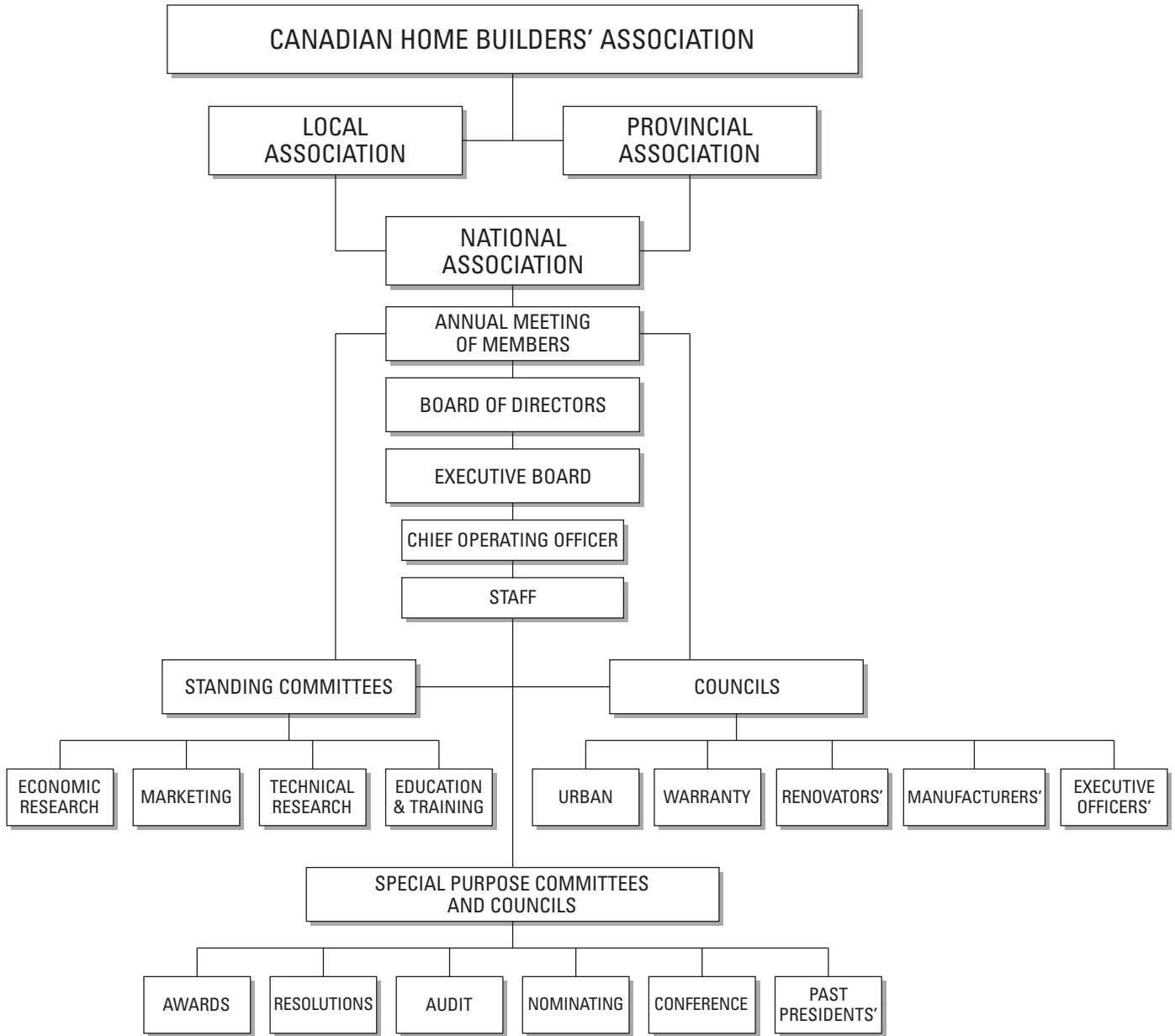
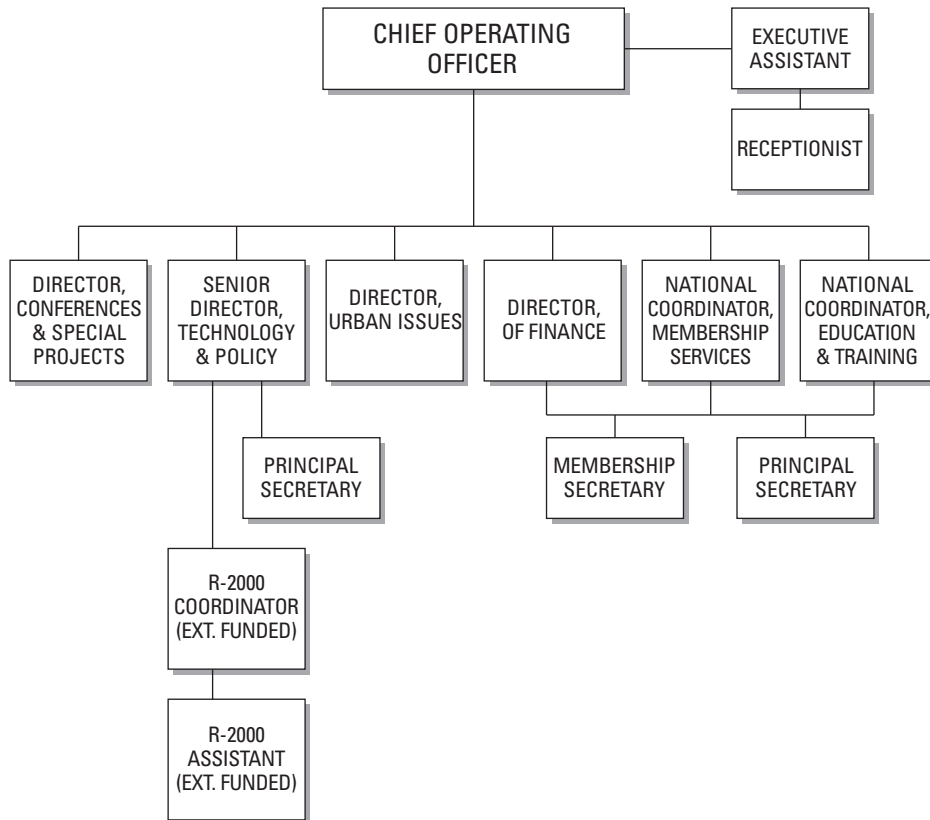


FIGURE THREE: CHBA NATIONAL STAFF



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