

**QUESTION OF THE DAY** – AND AN *ESSAY* OF AN ANSWER  
MARCH 18, 2016

One of the most frequently asked question I hear as we move forward with our new venture is, **“Who’s The Developer”?** The short answer is *BC Conference is the developer*; but there’s also a long answer.

First, it’s worth repeating that Development, as a field, is not the same as Construction. A redevelopment project includes a construction phase, of course, but there is so much more to it than that. Large development firms typically have their own in-house construction department (in which case the developer and the builder are the “same”), but often very capable developers hire someone else to be the builder and manage the construction phase. All of this to say, that while BC Conference is taking on the role of the developer, we are **not** taking on the role of the builder/general contractor.

Property developers need essentially two things to make a redevelopment project happen: a property (i.e., a development site), and money. The United Church has lots of property, but not so much money. That’s why, for the last several years, Conference’s Property Resource Team has been looking for a development partner. We wanted someone with management expertise, but we also needed someone to invest financially in our redevelopment vision. We tried a few development partnerships along the way, and several are working, but none of them is a perfect fit. Finally, we turned to BC Housing to see if they would be interested in financing our redevelopment vision – and they were. BC Housing will lend Conference the money, at very low interest rates, so we can do it ourselves. In return we will build affordable housing that meets their requirements.

With both the property and money questions answered, it was just a question of getting the right Development Management Team in place.

As the developer, BC Conference needs a team that can create, imagine, control, and orchestrate the redevelopment process from beginning to end. Since that’s precisely the work that Conference’s Property Resource team had begun, it wasn’t a stretch for the PRT to step into the expanded role of development managers. Justen Harcourt, senior consultant with Colliers, and I from BC Conference, along with Project Manager Jane Koh, also from Colliers, will serve as the Development Management Team. Various other management and administrative resources (like legal counsel, policy advice, etc.) will be retained as needed.

Let’s be frank, when the media talks about developers, they’re not talking about leadership and management skills. They’re almost always referring to a very rich individual or organization that invests in real estate – someone who will take on the effort and risk of a hugely complicated venture in order to make a profit, which is achieved by changing the *use* of a property in a way that increases the property value.

That’s what we’re doing. BC Conference, as the developer, is taking on the risk and effort of redeveloping three congregational properties – but we’re not motivated by financial profit. Your congregational property – which is currently being *used* as the site for a church building and a large surface parking lot – will at the end of the day be *used* as the site for a mixed-use building featuring church space and *housing*. We’re taking on this role so each congregation will have a new facility and a new and steady source of income to contribute to the renewal of the congregational ministry. And because we’re doing it with financing from BC Housing, we’ll be building *affordable* housing (which, of course, limits the profit percentage). A new United Church ministry in the form of a not-for-profit housing society will be created to manage the housing using the proceeds from the venture, and reinvest any profits to further the purpose of the housing ministry.

This can be achieved because Conference is the developer.

**United Church/BC Housing - Pilot Redevelopment Venture w/ Brechin, Brighthouse and Como Lake**

The Development Management Team:

We are using a matrix management model, so that I (as an employee of BC Conference) am part of the Development Management Team, along with the Colliers’ professionals. Through this arrangement we can keep the interests of Colliers and the UC fully aligned.

This team approach gives the UC access to a depth of resources and services from the Colliers Corporation, along with Jane and Justen (and the entire Consulting branch) who bring their specialized expertise in urban planning, land use economics, financial analysis, public approval processes and project management to us. My expertise is strategic communications and process/change management, wherein I use my theological training to understand the impact change has on people and their organizations. I also have knowledge in United Church culture, policy and polity, and can draw on the skills of BC Conference staff as needed.

This information is to reassure you that we are well equipped to manage this process on behalf of each of your congregations and the wider church.

With the support and insight of all three Congregational Leadership Teams we, the Development Management Team, pledge to work to the best of our ability to bring this project to a successful completion on behalf of each congregation and the wider church.

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| <b>Project Sponsor: BC Conference - The United Church of Canada</b><br><i>(as per the BC Conference Property Development Council Of The United Church Of Canada)</i> |                        |  |   |
| <b>United Church Congregations</b>   |                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Brighthouse United</u> (Richmond)</li> <li>• <u>Brechin United</u> (Nanaimo)</li> <li>• <u>Como Lake United</u> (Coquitlam)</li> </ul> |   |
| <u><b>Development Management Team</b></u>  |                        |  | <b>BC Housing Interface</b><br>(Project Manager to be assigned) |
| <b>Corporate Authority</b>   | Gordon Easton/Colliers | Doug Goodwin/BCCUCC  |   |
| <b>Development Manager</b>   | Jane Koh               |  |   |
| <b>Process Manager</b>   |                        | Terry Harrison   |   |
| <b>Senior Development Manager</b>  | Justen Harcourt        |  |   |
| <b>Project Administration</b>  | Colliers in house      |  |   |
| <b>Project Lawyer</b>  |                        | Cameron White<br>(DWS LLP)   |   |

Blessings Be,



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