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Press Release



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TURNER DRAKE EXPANDS IMPACT WITH RKI FUNDED PROJECT

Halifax, NS - 6th of January, 2024 - A proposal developed by a team of experts at Turner Drake & Partners Ltd. specialising in Planning and Economic Intelligence has been selected as one of 18 projects across Canada to receive funding support under Phase 2 of the federal Research and Knowledge Initiative (RKI). The applied research project, titled **“Process and Methodology Improvements for New Best-Practices and a Provincially-Standardised Approach to Housing Needs Assessments,”** aims to address current shortcomings in Housing Needs Assessments (HNAs), capitalise on new data and analytical tools, and ultimately contribute to better understanding and policy-making at all levels of government.

This project, funded in part by the Government of Canada and further supported by the Province of Prince Edward Island (PEI), represents a significant opportunity to improve and standardize Housing Needs Assessments. In collaboration with ASBB Consulting, the team will pilot this enhanced approach across PEI before concluding with a set of tools and resources to assist other regions of Canada in adopting the new methodology.

A Challenge in Housing Needs Assessments

Housing Needs Assessments are a critical starting point for communities to understand their housing challenges, and increasingly, they are a prerequisite for accessing funding and programs aimed at addressing these issues. However, current HNAs often suffer from inconsistencies. Available templates and guidelines vary significantly, and many fail to incorporate the latest data or reflect new methodologies. Long-standing gaps in data resources, particularly for smaller communities with populations under 30,000, contribute to a lack of comprehensive insights. Additionally, HNAs are frequently carried out by local governments without coordination between jurisdictions, resulting in fragmented information that hinders senior levels of government from maintaining an accurate, coordinated overview.

This project seeks to overcome these challenges by developing a standardized, hybrid provincial/municipal approach to Housing Needs Assessments. The goal is to create a more consistent, coordinated framework while still accommodating the unique needs and characteristics of individual communities. Key objectives include:

- **Exploratory Analyses:** Conduct targeted research to address gaps in essential housing data, particularly for small and rural communities.
- **Enhanced Data Resources:** Develop a comprehensive dataset that incorporates underutilized data sources, providing a complete and more consolidated picture of housing needs.
- **Streamlined & Standardized HNA Framework:** Collaborate with stakeholders to identify the critical information required for HNAs, streamline the process, and remove unnecessary elements that contribute to high costs and extended timelines. The project will establish a hybrid methodology that balances provincial/municipal consistency with local customization.
- **Pilot Evaluation:** In alignment with Phase 2 of the RKI, the improved methodology will be tested and evaluated across PEI, providing a proof of concept and an opportunity for further refinement.
- **Knowledge Dissemination:** The project will produce a suite of resources, including guidebooks, toolkits, and data tools, to support the implementation of the finalized methodology and share best practices across Canada.

This initiative is an exciting opportunity to reshape how Housing Needs Assessments are conducted across the country, ensuring they are more effective, efficient, and responsive to the diverse needs of communities of all sizes.

About Turner Drake & Partners Ltd.:

Turner Drake & Partners Ltd., a “*home-grown*” leader in real estate consulting, specialises in Valuation, Property Tax, Counseling, Planning, Economic Intelligence, and Space Measurement Services. From our offices in Halifax, St. John’s, Charlottetown, Saint John, and Toronto, we service clients in the real estate industry across Canada.