

Fact Sheet: Working with the Media

- ✓ **Talk from the viewpoint of the public's interest, not from the organization's.** Make sure you can explain in simple terms the negative impact that the HVCC will have on the community you're in. Given the current atmosphere related to the housing market, the media is likely to start from a skeptical or even negative position. Your goal is to make clear the value you bring to the average home buyer, and what that loss will mean to him.
- ✓ **Make your information easy to read and use.** When writing materials for the media, including e-mails, use a short, punchy headline or subject line to attract attention and give potential users a sense of what they'll gain by reading the materials. Do not use jargon, unfamiliar acronyms or technical terms. Personal pronouns, names and quotations make your copy easier to read and more interesting. Put your contact information, including name, address and phone numbers on the materials.
- ✓ **State the most important fact at the beginning.** The first-level response to a reporter's questions is a short summary of your position or newsworthy announcement. The second-level response includes a concrete example or evidence to back up your first statement. If the reporter persists, return to the first-level summary statement.
- ✓ **Do not argue with a reporter or lose your cool.** Trying to get your story across can be frustrating especially when the reporter doesn't understand the important role appraisers play in the home buying process. Keep your cool and stick to the facts. If this reporter is not interested, move along to the next one. If you make a reporter angry, you could jeopardize future stories, or it could result in a negative story.
- ✓ **If you don't know the answer, say so and get back to the reporter later.** Many times when a reporter is covering a subject, he or she will want numerical proof, such as statistics, to back up a claim. If you don't have the numbers, ask the reporter when his deadline is, and get back to him as soon as possible with an answer.