

Exploring Social Planning in the Comox Valley: Where to From Here?

Nov 7, 2019



This workshop hosted by the Comox Valley Social Planning Society brought together local government elected officials and staff with representatives of the CV Social Planning Society (Society) and the CV Community Health Network (Network). The workshop was facilitated by Scott Graham from the Social Planning and Research Council of BC and purpose of the workshop was to:

- Dialogue about community social planning and the role of different community stakeholders
- Co-explore possible future directions for collaboration, shared goals, and planning activities
- Build consensus on collaborative roles we can play in social planning work in the Comox Valley moving forward.

The workshop began with an overview of the role of local government in social planning including how it fits with the Local Government Act and Community Charter and information from the Network, the Society and local government about current initiatives. Then participants worked in small groups to explore opportunities and challenges for possible collaborations and engaged in a “dotmocracy” process to determine five priorities for future collaboration and next steps. We ended with sharing a meal together.

Summary of results of dialogue and deliberation

Through a process of dialogue and deliberation, local government leaders, Comox Valley Social Planning Society and the Comox Health Network, identified the following five priorities for future collaboration:

1. Work with CHN & CVSPS together to support regular feedback from and information with CVRD with a view to continually finding opportunities for more fulsome discussion and engagement
2. Invite all elected officials & School District to some CVRD Sessions (3x a year), considering special “COWS”, K’omoks First Nation as well as local government staff involvement
3. Work together to advance the Agricultural Plan with a focus on affordability and aging farmer renewal
4. Enhance public governance and engagement at local neighbourhood level, with a focus on emergency planning
5. Collaborate to address housing issues, including a focus on: assessments, Regional Strategy and implementation, exploring the development of a Housing Authority, Land – Publicly Owned, and other strategies such as Co – ops, rental, youth housing strategy, and zoning enforcement



Transcript from small group notes: Opportunities and Challenges

GROUP NO. 1

- Through schools get more people involved in community participation exercises
- (SD71 has a community school policy)
- Sports organizations – contacts for public consultation exercises
- School district ability to reach out to parents with their communication tools
- Emergency planning exercises
- Community hall in rural areas – focus for connections
- Immigration welcome centre – developing community cohesion
- International Students
- Creating cultural awareness of the “others” in our community
- Seniors Centres – Seniors Organizations
- Zoning regulations for sharing spaces – how to integrate in existing neighborhoods
- Seniors with no grand kids or grand kids with no local grandparents
- Employment + income – not in LG. purview – now here but CVEDS review may be an opportunity for social development lens
- L.G. – Land use Opportunities shape these opportunities

GROUP NO. 2

#1 – CHN & CVSPS tougher to regulate to give feedback/information to CVRD (Look for mechanisms for more fulsome discussion/engagement)

#2 – Clarify the Role of the CVRD rep in reporting back

#3 Invite all elected officials & SD to some CVRD Sessions (3x a year) (Special “cows” + KFN with local gov’t staff involvement.

4 Visual representation on where people are collaborating along with opportunities for engagement & support

#5 Send info “the other way” local government ____> CHN/CVSPS

#6 Resources to review (Eg. DCC) to support social

#7 Sharing across municipalities (like Ministry of Transportation for policies)

#8 Meet and Mingle for local government, social groups, etc. sponsored by the Community Foundation

GROUP NO. 3

1. Housing

- Assessment
- Regional Strategy
- Implementation
- Housing Authority
- Land – Publicly Owned
- Multiple Strategies (Co – ops, rental, youth, strategy)
- Info about Moratorium on zoning Enforcement re: trailer, motor homes

2. Property Management S.D. & Municipalities

- Parks, SD and municipalities
- School zone v. Park zone
- Shared maintenance
- Housing opportunities
- Native Plant/Edible/Restorative landscaping

3. Child Care

- Municipalities/SD/NIC/ Community Rec Assns
- Common waitlist
- Wage security

4. Impact of Aging Population

- Volunteer Staff Shortages

5. Agricultural Plan

- Affordability
- Aging Farmer Renewal
- Where?

6. Transportation

- Multimodal committee standing

- Integrate School transportation with CVRD Public
- Walkability

7. Climate Action/Regional Plan

- Greenhouse gas reduction
- In OCP process + Emergency Planning

8. Strengthen Public Governance around Settlement Hubs Neighborhood

Attendees

Doug Hillian (Courtenay Councillor and CVRD Director)

Wendy Morin (Courtenay Councillor and CVRD Director)

David Frisch (Courtenay Councillor and CVRD Director)

Nancy Gothard (Courtenay Planner)

Nicole Minions (Comox Councillor)

Maureen Swift (Comox Councillor and CVRD Director)

Vickey Brown (Cumberland Councillor)

Leslie Baird (Cumberland Mayor)

Edwin Grieve (CVRD Director, Area C)

Arzeena Hamir (CVRD Director, Area B)

Alana Mullaly (CVRD Planner)

Sarah Jane Howe (SD #7! Trustee)

Sheila McDonnell (SD #7! Trustee)

Ian Hargreaves (SD #7! Trustee)

Bunny Shannon (CVSPS President)

Betty Tate (CVSPS Vice- President; CHN Co-Chair)

Pam Munroe (CVSPS Treasurer)

Joanne Schroeder (CVSPS Board Member)

Lindsay McGinn (CHN Facilitator)

Maurita Prato (CHN Coordinating Circle Member)



Appendix A: Agenda

Sequence of Activities

Time	Activities	Notes
	Opening remarks, introductions, review of agenda	Opening remarks and a welcome will be provided, as well as recognition of the First Nations' territory on which we meet. Scott Graham (Facilitator) will be introduced, will facilitate a round of introductions and will review the purposes for the workshop, the proposed process for discussion and deliberation and the sequence of activities.
1:15 – 1:45	What is Social Planning and what does it mean for local governments?	Scott will begin with the role of government in Social Planning and how that fits with the Local Government Act and Community Charter.
1:45-2:15	What types of social planning are happening in the Comox Valley now? Community Health Network and Social Planning Society presentation	Lindsay McGinn will review the priorities that arose from the conversations that resulted in the formation of the Comox Valley Community Health Network. Betty Tate will review priority actions for Social Planning Society. Limited Q&A. Intention is not to add or subtract priorities.
2:15-3:00	In addition to the work of the Health Network and Social Planning Society, what local government initiatives are currently underway that address social issues and build healthy communities?	Local government representatives report on what is happening in their jurisdictions (e.g. update Regional Growth Strategy, Courtenay OCP, strategic planning Comox, Food Policy council, Urban Forest policy)
3:00-4:00	What are the opportunities and challenges of pursuing collaboration around social planning initiatives in Comox Valley	Small group discussions and report back to whole group.
4:00-4:15	Break	Take a walk outside, talk with fellow attendees
4:15-5:30	What next steps are possible Small group discussion and report back and practical to help us work better together?	Small group discussions and report back to whole group.
5:30-6:15	Dinner served	
6:15-7:00	Summary and next steps.	Reflections on moving this dialogue to action. Scott will summarize the next steps in the process

We acknowledge that we are living, working, and playing in the unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation