

Municipality of North Cowichan

Official Community Plan Advisory Group

AGENDA

Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 5:00 p.m.

Electronically

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

This meeting, though electronic, is open to the public and all representations to the Official Community Plan Advisory Group form part of the public record. At this time, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, public access to Council Chambers is not permitted, however, this meeting may be viewed on the District's live stream webcast at www.northcowichan.ca/meetings.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Recommendation:

That the Official Community Plan Advisory Group approve the agenda as circulated [or as amended].

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1. Official Community Plan Advisory Group Minutes

2 - 3

Recommendation:

That the minutes of the OCP Advisory Group meeting held June 5, 2020, be adopted.

4. BUSINESS

4.1. Welcome and Introductions

4.2. Project Schedule Update

4.3. Vision and Goals Survey and Update

4 - 22

4.4. Community Character Framework

23 - 38

4.5. Stakeholder Management Update

4.6. Housekeeping, Wrap Up and Next Steps

5. NEW BUSINESS

6. ADJOURNMENT

Municipality of North Cowichan

Official Community Plan Advisory Group

MINUTES

June 5, 2020, 1:30 p.m.
Electronically

Members Present	Caitlin Kenny, Cam Campbell, Mona Kaiser, Tim Openshaw, Bernie Jones, David Messier, Nick Neisingh, Rupert Koyote, Shannon Waters, Sandy McPherson
Members Absent	Chris Crowther, Hajo Meijer
Consultants Present	Suzy Lunn, Rob Barrs, Vince Verlaan
Staff Present	Rob Conway, Director of Planning Megan Jordan, Manager of Communications and Public Engagement Chris Hutton, Community Planning Coordinator Mairi Bosomworth, Community Planner

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, Chris Hutton called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:
That Committee adopt the agenda.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 OCP Advisory Committee

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:
That the minutes of the November 25, 2019 OCP Advisory Group meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

4. BUSINESS

4.1 Welcome

Introductions and round table.

4.2 Project Schedule Overview

The OCP Consultants from MODUS provided a presentation and facilitated the workshop with committee members and responded to questions and comments regarding the gap

analysis and engagement plan which was the focus of their presentation. Each of the following topics below were covered.

4.3 Engagement Plan Overview

Committee received presentation for information.

4.4 Engagement Tools and Techniques

Committee received presentation for information.

4.5 Gap Analysis

Committee received presentation for information.

4.6 Housekeeping, Wrap Up and Next Steps

Draft analysis will be sent to committee for review.

5. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The OCP Advisory Group received information on the digital engagement plan and was consulted on it.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.

Signed by Chair

Certified by Recording Secretary



VISION AND GOALS SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

Municipality of North Cowichan, OCP Review & Update

Prepared by: MODUS Planning, Design & Engagement Inc.
Version: 1.0
Date: 19 October 2020

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1 INTRODUCTION

North Cowichan Official Community Plan Update

The Municipality of North Cowichan is currently undertaking an update to its Official Community Plan (OCP) - to 'ThinkForward' and plan for the future of our community.

The project was initiated by Council in 2019 based on direction from Council's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan which states a priority as: To rewrite the Official Community Plan, forming the basis for local area plans throughout the community (Quamichan area, Berkeys Corner and Maple Bay).

The OCP will articulate a guiding vision for our community for the next 20 years. It will be used by Council and staff in budgeting, servicing, planning capital projects, and reviewing development applications. The OCP will also be used by residents and businesses as a reference for investment decisions, and by school districts and community organizations to guide facility planning and service delivery.

Overview of the OCP Process

The OCP project process is split into the following four key phases. We are currently in Phase 2 of this process.

Phase 1 - Background, Planning and Launch -Summer 2019 to January 2020

This phase kicked off the project internally, organizing the internal project team and OCP volunteers, collating background information, issuing the RFP and hiring MODUS Planning, Design, Engagement as the consultant.

Phase 2 - Community Vision and Local Character Mapping - February to December 2020

This phase consists of finalizing project initiation with the consultant, including developing an engagement plan, identified of opportunities and strengths and constraints via a Gap Analysis Report and confirmation of vision and community character values.

Phase 3 - Policy Options and Plan Development - October 2020 to March 2021

This phase focuses on creating the OCP document. Development of growth scenarios and policy direction will include options and selection of urban containment boundaries, land use designations, and growth targets and development of final policies and maps.

Phase 4 - Plan Adoption - April to July 2021

This phase will finalize the plan, with the adoption of the Plan by Council. This phase will be led by staff.

Purpose of Report

This report provides a summary of the input received from the Visions and Goals Survey as part of Phase 2 of the OCP update.

This feedback will help shape a 20-year vision and develop priorities so we can achieve that vision together. Coming to a common understanding about our collective community values will help us “ThinkForward” as we move through this community-driven process.

Communication and Outreach

The Vision and Goals Survey was open from August 14th, 2020 to September 17, 2020.

The survey was promoted through the following methods:

- Social media posts
- North Cowichan’s website and the [Official Community Plan webpage](#)
- Placespeak project page
- Email blasts
- Printed survey copies distributed at City Hall

SimpleSurvey was used to collect and organize the online survey responses.

Overview of Analysis

A total of **1201** completed surveys were collected. This includes 18 printed surveys and 1183 online submissions. The number of respondents represents approximately 5% of the North Cowichan population.

Responses to each question were analysed and categorised into key themes or topic areas. The number to the right of each theme or topic indicates the number of times it was generally referenced by respondents.

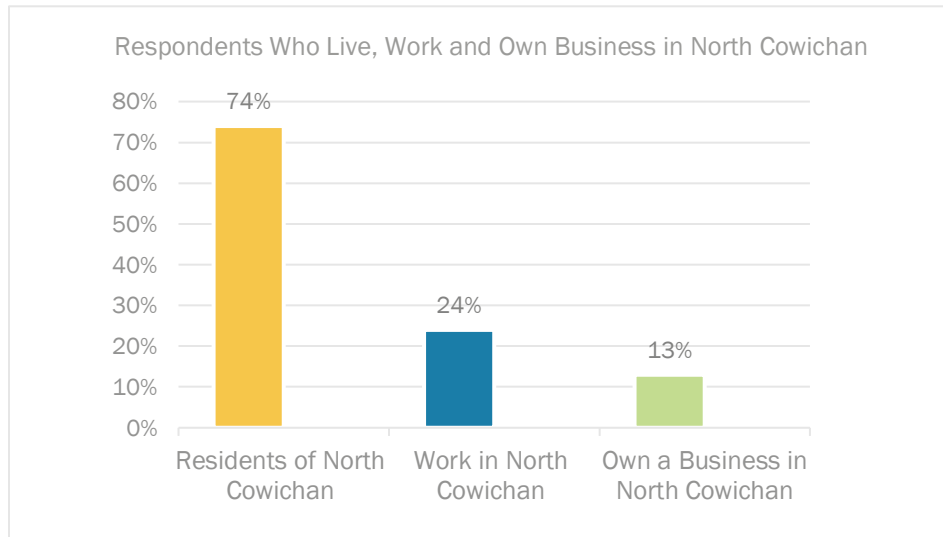
Example: Natural Areas & Green Space (**624**)

Who We Heard From

The following demographic information was collected from survey respondents who responded online and chose to answer questions regarding their relationship to North Cowichan and their age:

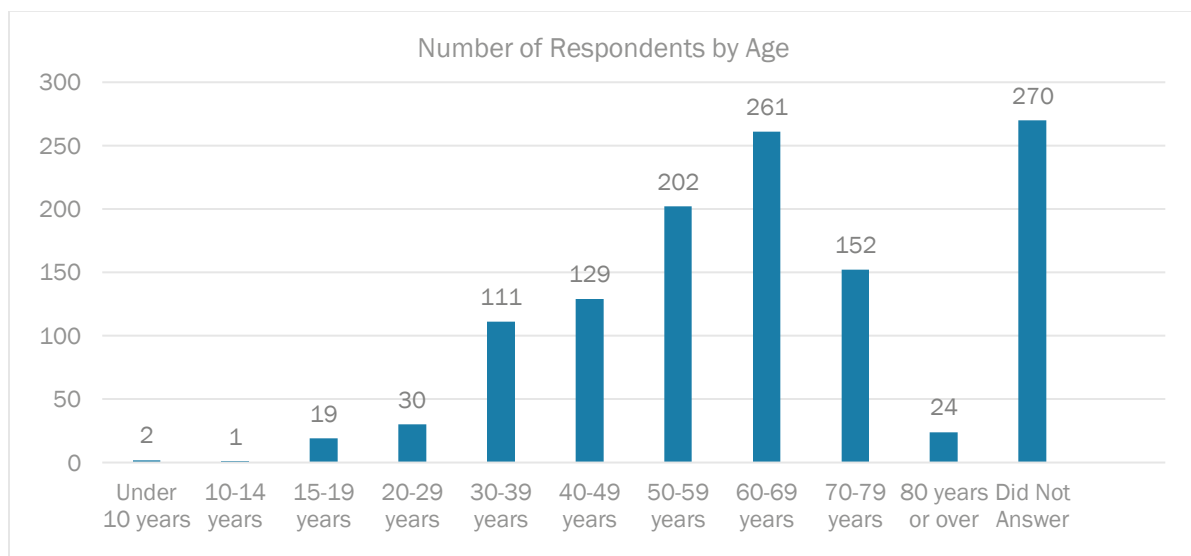
Respondent Relationship to North Cowichan

The chart below indicates that the majority of respondents (74%) are residents of North Cowichan. Twenty-four percent of respondents work in the Municipality while 13% own a local business.



Respondent Age Distribution

The chart below reflects the age range of who we heard feedback from. Although 268 respondents (22%) did not specify their age range, the majority (64%) were 40 years and older. Only 14.3% of respondents were younger than 40 years of age.



Total Responses: 1201

2 RESULTS

Overarching Themes

The results presented below summarize key themes from responses for each question that was asked on the survey. However, some themes appeared across all of the responses. The **preservation of natural areas and resources** was the most frequently mentioned topic. This relates to protecting wildlife habitats, limiting extraction of natural resources and implementing strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Respondents also indicated support for building a **greener economy** focused on investment in renewable resources and new opportunity for sustainable business development.

Another overarching theme was the **concern around drug use** in the community. Many respondents commented on the location of the safe injection site and the perception that prevalence of drug use in a particular area resulted in a higher rate of crime.

Growth management was commonly discussed as respondents expressed an interest in preserving the semi-rural character of North Cowichan and the natural and agricultural lands surrounding the community. There was an interest in keeping communities compact and concentrating development within a central core to prevent unregulated sprawl.

Q1. When you meet a new friend, how would you describe where you live (ex. Chemainus, Maple Bay ...)?

Respondents described the following locations:

- Duncan (254)
- Maple Bay (245)
- Chemainus (126)
- North Cowichan (79)
- Cowichan Valley (74)
- Crofton (62)
- Sahtlam (16)
- Cowichan (14)
- Quamichan Lake (14)
- Cowichan Bay (13)
- Cowichan Lake (10)
- Westholme (9)
- Somenos (7)
- Vimy (7)
- Cowichan Station (6)
- Near Hospital (6)
- Berkeys Corner (5)
- Cobble Hill (5)
- Thetis Island (4)
- Cowichan First Nations Land (3)
- Ladysmith (2)
- Mill Bay (2)
- Saltair (2)
- Yellow Point (2)

Q2. What do you love most about North Cowichan?

Responses to this question were categorized into the following key themes:

- *Natural Areas & Green Space (624)*
Natural green spaces and surroundings, specifically the mountains, rivers, forests and ocean
- *Outdoor Recreation (304)*
Access to outdoors for recreational activities such as hiking, biking, kayaking and swimming
- *Rural & Small-Town Feel (293)*
Small and quiet community with laid back and peaceful lifestyle.
- *Sense of Community (187)*
Friendliness of the people in North Cowichan and close-knit environment.
- *Farms & Access to Local Food (115)*
Access to locally grown and sourced food from nearby farms and an appreciation for the agricultural history of the area
- *Local Business & Community Amenities (96)*
Amount of local independent businesses and community amenities and activities such as the library, recreational centre, bookstore, farmer's market and bowling alley. This also includes access to wineries and arts and cultural community events.
- *Other Themes:*
 - Good Climate (73)
 - Regional Location (43)
 - City Management + Policy (13)
 - Indigenous Culture (12)
 - Affordability (relative cost of housing & taxes) (7)

Q3. What is one thing you would change about North Cowichan?

Responses to this question were categorized into the following key themes:

- *Environmental Protection & Preservation (197)*
Concern for the conservation of natural resources and preservation of forest and green spaces, specifically related to the negative impacts of logging and air pollution. Respondents also expressed a need for stronger plans and policies to address climate change.
- *Growth Management & Development (192)*
Reduce urban sprawl and a slower rate of development. This includes concern for uncontrolled development that will negatively impact natural areas/resources and may take away from the "semi-rural" character.

- *Drug Use (159)*
Prevalence of drug use, including the location of safe injection sites within neighbourhoods, and the perception of criminal activity.
- *Homelessness (126)*
Additional supports, services, and accommodation for people experiencing homelessness in the community.
- *Other Topic Areas:*
 - Recreation & Active Transportation (i.e. trails, sidewalks, bike lanes) (96)
 - Infrastructure & Roads (traffic) (94)
 - Taxes & Local Economy (78)
 - Political Representation & Leadership (68)
 - Planning & Strategic Direction (53)
 - Safety & Sense of Community (53)
 - Diversity of & Access to Housing (48)
 - More Support for New & Existing Businesses (30)
 - Transit System (22)
 - Impact of Industrial Sites (20)
 - Stronger Progressive & Social Values (20)
 - Bylaws & Enforcement (18)
 - More Support for ALR & Agriculture (14)
 - Access or Improvement to Hospital (7)
 - Access to Beach (6)
 - Downtown Revitalization (4)
 - Strengthened Relationships with First Nations (4)

PRINCIPLES

Q4. Sustainability

Existing Definition: Ensuring that decisions balance the right of future generations to a healthy, resource-rich environment with the needs of the current population.

Participants indicated the following level of support for the existing definition:

- 65% Support
- 9% Do Not Support
- 12% Unsure

When asked, “how would you change the definition to make it more meaningful to you?”, respondents commented on the following key themes:

Focus Areas & Considerations

- *Protection of Natural Environment (85)*
Preserving the surrounding forests, waters and undeveloped land should be a key part of this principle. Respondents also voiced the importance of protecting wildlife habitat, farmland and maintaining the area's local biodiversity.
- *Emphasis on Future Generations (57)*
Prioritising the needs of future generations over the current population. Decisions should reflect stewardship of land and resources to provide for future populations of not only humankind, but all living things.
- *Renewable Resources & Extraction (52)*
Preventing deforestation, habitat destruction and overconsumption of natural resources. This includes the use of more renewable energy alternatives and strategies for reducing resource extraction and urban sprawl.
- *Development & Population Growth (52)*
Recognizing the environmental impacts caused by development and population growth.
- *Other Focus Area Themes:*
 - Political Leadership & Accountability (39)
 - Financial Considerations & Economic Growth (38)
 - Emphasis on "Current Population" (25)
 - Walkable & Green Communities (14)
 - First Nations Right to Land (9)
 - Holistic View of Sustainability (8)
 - Equity Focus (7)
 - Age-Friendly Planning (5)

Edits to the Definition

- *Eliminating "Resource-Rich" (68)*
Without an explanation of the type and use of resources, it could imply mining, clear-cut logging, and further extraction. Respondents suggested changing the phrase to either be more specific (e.g., "healthy and protected waterways, forests and farmland") or eliminating the phrase from the principle's definition.
- *Defining "Needs" (42)*
Identifying and distinguishing essential needs of the population over our "wants". This includes redefining our needs so that they are not dependent on profit-driven and extractive practices.
- *Change or Describe "Balance" (19)*
Addressing ambiguity of the word and the need to include stronger language to communicate the urgency of this principle.

Q5. Economic Opportunity

Existing Definition: Ensuring that a positive environment is in place to promote growth and diversity. Jobs and businesses that are the foundation of the municipality remain important but new economic directions are also encouraged to respond to changes in the global economy and the challenges of demographic shifts.

Participants indicated the following level of support for the existing definition:

- 58% Support
- 12% Do Not Support
- 15% Unsure

When asked, “how would you change the definition to make it more meaningful to you?”, respondents commented on the following key themes:

Focus Areas & Considerations

- *Local Sustainable Growth (117)*
Prioritizing environmental sustainability over economic opportunity and the local economy over the global. This also includes specifying the type of growth that is best for the community to prevent uncontained development and sprawl (i.e. focus on infill, not greenfield or ALR development).
- *Maintaining Natural Resources & Environmental Protection (105)*
Economic growth and the promotion of new industries should not be at the expense of our natural areas, wildlife habitats and resources.
- *Supports for Local Business (89)*
Respondents expressed a need for greater supports for new and existing businesses, specifically by simplifying the permitting process and providing tax incentives for diverse and innovative industries.
- *Green Economy (61)*
Attracting sustainable and renewable energy projects to create more green jobs in the area. Suggestions include additional investment in ecotourism, agriculture and technology start-ups.
- *Other Focus Area Themes:*
 - Job Creation & Skill Development (35)
 - Role of Municipal Government (15)
 - Existing Barriers to Development (14)
 - Community Involvement (13)
 - Supporting Agriculture & Farming (12)
 - Childcare & Support for Families (2)

Edits to the Definition

- *Issues with “Promote Growth” (48)*
Concern with the idea of encouraging or promoting growth rather than managing or controlling it. Other respondents suggested to remove the term “growth” from the definition as it suggests conflict with the sustainability principle.
- *More Specific (42)*
General comments that the definition is too vague and leaves too much open for interpretation.

Q6. Smart Growth

Existing Definition: Encourage vibrant communities by planning for development including redevelopment, infill, mixed use and more compact communities. Smart Growth aims to enhance quality of life, preserve the natural environment and, over time, save money.

Participants indicated the following level of support for the existing definition:

- 61% Support
- 10% Do Not Support
- 13% Unsure

When asked, “how would you change the definition to make it more meaningful to you?”, respondents commented on the following key themes:

Focus Areas & Considerations

- *Development Restrictions & Protection of Natural Areas (102)*
Need for more constraints on development and a smaller urban containment boundary. This includes prioritising the preservation of agricultural and natural areas, especially those with sensitive habitats, and incorporating more green spaces and trail networks into new development projects.
- *Compactness & Less Sprawl (64)*
Focusing development in specific areas that will strengthen existing cores and promote more walkable communities. Respondents expressed interest in densifying these areas to reduce urban sprawl and preserve the more “rural” areas of North Cowichan that should remain low in density.
- *Development & Community Amenities (47)*
Development that prioritises quality of life and creates vibrant, safe and inclusive communities. As part of this, respondents suggested more transportation options including bike lanes, pedestrian infrastructure and reliable transit.
- *Other Focus Area Themes:*
 - Preservation of Rural Areas (36)
 - Need for Greater Housing Diversity (36)
 - Green Buildings & Climate Action (31)

- Additional Infrastructure & Services (26)
- Concern for Overdevelopment & Congestion (22)
- Planning for Implementation (21)
- Municipal Support & Involvement (19)
- Community Input & Engagement (18)
- Inclusive Community Development (15)
- Cost Concerns (13)
- Support for Mixed-Use Development (12)
- Preservation of Historic Character (7)
- Concern for Homelessness (4)

Edits to the Definition

- *More Information & Clarity (49)*
The definition does not provide enough detail or clarity for how this principle may be applied. Participants expressed confusion about specific terms such as “infill” and “complete communities”.

Q7. Healthy & Safe Communities

Existing Definition: A healthy and safe community is one where access to community services, housing, parks and open space, clean air and water, and other such benefits promote positive interaction and healthy outcomes among all residents.

Participants indicated the following level of support for the existing definition:

- 77% Support
- 3% Do Not Support
- 4% Unsure

When asked, “how would you change the definition to make it more meaningful to you?”, respondents commented on the following key themes:

Focus Areas & Considerations

- *Access to Housing & Homelessness (87)*
Concern for the prevalent issue of homelessness in the community. Participants expressed a need for greater access to housing services as well as affordable housing options.
- *Preserve Forested & Natural Areas (73)*
Respondents expressed a need to include the health of the local ecosystem in the definition of community health. This includes protection of environmental sensitive areas, forested and green spaces (e.g., Quamichan Lake) to protect our healthy air quality and access to clean water.

- Drug Use (70)
Concern that community safety is negatively impacted by the amount of drug use and the location of safe injection sites nearby schools. This also includes the perception that criminal activity is increasing in the area.
- Social & Community Resources (42)
- Access to health care, education, healthy food options and recreational opportunities to support community physical and mental health.
- *Other Focus Area Themes:*
 - Inclusive of All Community Members (39)
 - Safety & Police Presence (37)
 - Maintaining Parks & Green Space (29)
 - Transit & Active Transportation (25)
 - Outdoor & Community Recreation (21)
 - Implementation & Tracking Progress (14)
 - Affordability & Taxes (6)
 - Public Participation & Involvement (5)
 - Development & Infrastructure (4)
 - Municipal Role & Responsibility (4)
 - Greater Support for First Nations (4)

Edits to the Definition

- *More Clarity or Information (14)*
Concern that the definition is too vague and needs specific examples of the type of community services that should be prioritised.

Q8. Community Engagement

Existing Definition: Ensuring that Council, staff and citizens keep talking to each other in an open and transparent way to ensure that decision-making is in line with the policies, goals and principles of the plan.

Participants indicated the following level of support for the existing definition:

- 75% Support
- 3% Do Not Support
- 5% unsure

When asked, “how would you change the definition to make it more meaningful to you?”, respondents commented on the following key themes:

North Cowichan is currently conducting a survey to collect resident feedback on current engagement practices as part of a project to create a new Community Engagement Framework Policy

Considerations for Engagement

- *More Transparency (75)*
Participants expressed a need for greater transparent and open communication from staff and Council on decision-making processes. This includes a clear understanding of how public input will be incorporated into decisions and the availability of all relevant information.
- *Better Communication (49)*
Prioritising regular communication between Council and staff and the public. Some respondents suggested using social media to connect with more constituents, particularly a younger demographic.
- *Special Interests & Bias (39)*
Concern that not all community voices are heard equally and that some interests are prioritised over others.
- *Other Focus Area Themes:*
 - Focus on “Listening” (30)
 - Ensure Liability & Accountability (29)
 - Various Formats for Engagement (i.e., digital) (26)
 - Loss of Trust (24)
 - Addressing Barriers to Participation (17)
 - Acting on Feedback (16)
 - Reaching a Wider Audience (14)
 - Need for Flexibility in Plans (11)
 - Reliable Data & Information (9)
 - Staff & Council Unreliability & Inaccessibility (9)
 - First Nations Partnerships (7)
 - Regional Collaboration & Involvement (3)
 - Too Much Engagement (3)
 - More Holistic Planning (2)

Q9. Most Important Principles

Participants were asked “what are the most important principles to you” and responded with the following feedback:

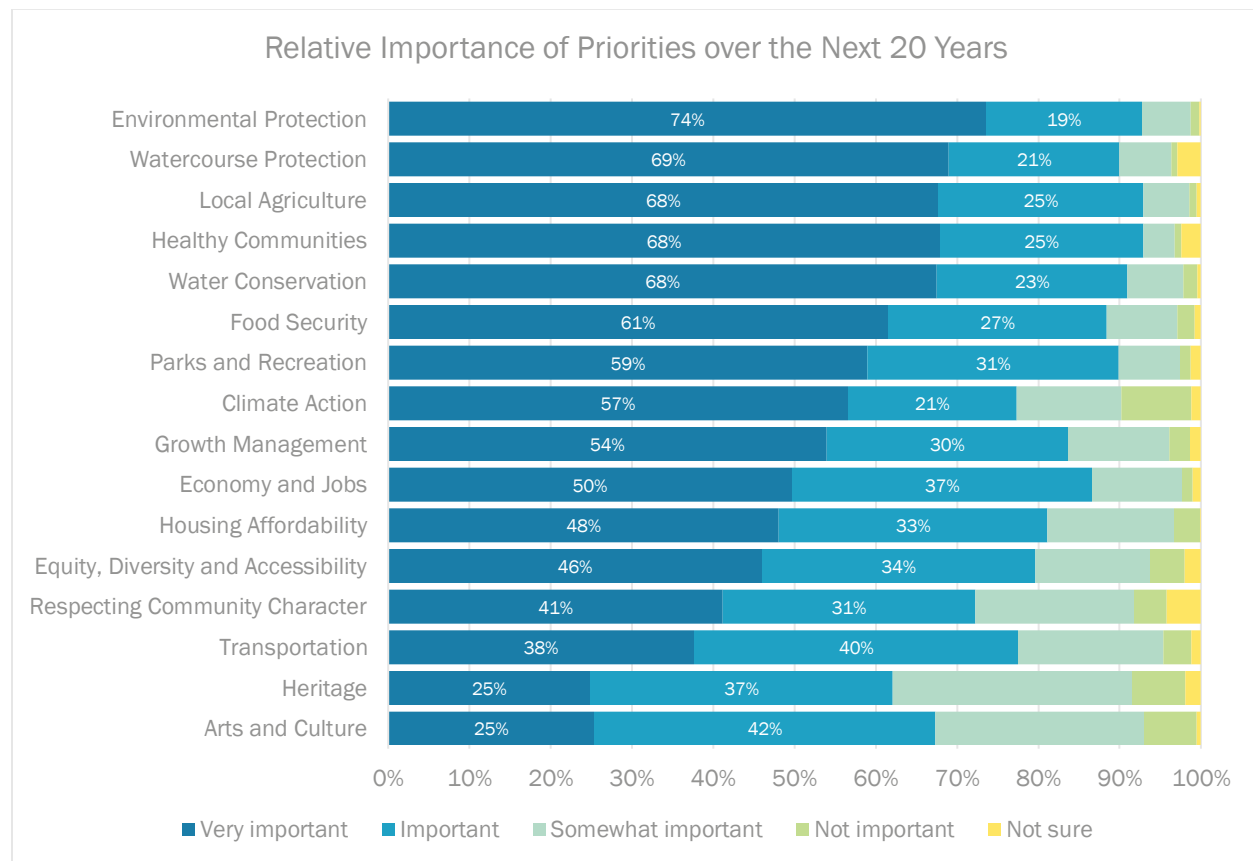
Key Themes

Generally, participants identified Sustainability, Smart Growth, Healthy and Safe Communities and Community Engagement as the most important principles.

- *Smart Growth & Sustainability (207)*
The need for “smart growth” by investing in the green economy and prioritising areas of density to reduce urban sprawl. This includes a greater focus on climate action and sustainable development.

- *Community Health & Safety (199)*
Prioritising healthcare, affordability and sense of safety to ensure a high quality of life for community members.
- *Preserving Natural Resources & Areas (170)*
The protection of forests, water and wildlife to respect a healthy ecosystem, maintain access to natural spaces, and ensure availability of resources and food supply.
- *Collaborative Planning & Engagement (146)*
Open and transparent communication and fair decision-making that prioritises unbiased, inclusive citizen involvement.
- *Other Important Topics:*
 - Economic & Business Development (66)
 - Implementation & Accountability (58)
 - Inclusivity for All Members of Community (44)
 - Recreation, Community & Pedestrian Amenities (41)
 - All 5 Principles Are Important & Interdependent (34)
 - Access to Housing (27)
 - Affordability & Taxes (22)
 - Food Security & Agriculture (21)
 - City Management & Public Services (20)
 - Reconciliation & First Nations Partnerships (20)
 - Maintaining Rural (Low Density) & Open Spaces (16)
 - Considering Needs of Future Generations (14)
 - Role of Local Government (8)
 - Historic Preservation (5)
 - Excellence in Planning (2)

Q10. Thinking about North Cowichan over the next 20 years, how important are the following priorities to you?



Approximately 18% of the 1201 total respondents did not answer this question. Of those who answered, environmental protection was perceived as the most important priority over the next 20 years, with 74% of participants selecting it as a very important priority.

Almost all of the environmentally related priorities (i.e., Environmental Protection, Watercourse Protection, Local Agriculture, Water Conservation, Food Security, Parks and Recreation) were rated “very important” or “important” by 88% - 93% of total respondents.

Arts and Culture and Heritage were the least prioritised by respondents with 62%-67% of respondents rating them “very important” or “important”.

Q11. What other emerging priorities should North Cowichan be planning for?

Responses were categorized into the following key themes:

Key Themes

- *Accessible Social Services (146)*
Participants expressed a need for more accessible healthcare, social and mental health services. This particularly relates to a main concern for drug use and homelessness in the community.
- *Natural Resources & Areas (118)*
Preservation of forested land, wildlife and waterways, specifically Quamichan Lake. Concern for continued logging and air pollution from resource-intensive industries.
- *Growth Management (62)*
Concern for negative impacts of development and rapid population growth. This includes increased density and the need for additional infrastructure in specific areas, particularly transit, to reduce urban sprawl.
- *Other Topic Areas:*
 - Affordable Housing (54)
 - Sustainability & Green Economy (54)
 - Safety & Policing (43)
 - Natural Disaster Preparedness (41)
 - Jobs & Businesses (36)
 - Public Infrastructure & Municipal Services (36)
 - Tourism & Recreation (33)
 - Improved Transit & Active Transportation (31)
 - Reconciliation & First Nations Partnership (31)
 - Inclusive Communities (29)
 - Support for Families & Children (24)
 - Age-Friendly Communities (23)
 - Education (23)
 - Food Security & Access (21)
 - Covid-19 Informed Planning (17)
 - Political Leadership & Accountability (7)
 - City Self Sufficiency (6)

Q12. Please complete the sentence: In 20 years, North Cowichan will be...

A successful OCP is framed around an inspiring, values-based and hopeful future vision of the community. It should be grounded in progressive planning practices yet realistic in implementation and consistent with other municipal goals. When asked to envision the next 20 years of North Cowichan, respondents suggested vision statements that were categorized into the following key themes:

Key Themes



- *Preservation of Resources, Green & Natural Spaces (175)*
North Cowichan will be...
“A leader in conservation of its natural beauty; it will be a livable and affordable community and a place where specialized agriculture thrives.”
- *Vibrant & Diverse Community (152)*
North Cowichan will be...
“A vibrant community which respectfully integrates the perspectives and needs of its peoples while protecting and celebrating its farms and natural areas.

“A diverse and welcoming community, working alongside First Nations, where people can work, live, and play in our amazing and clean natural environment, and where active and sustainable transportation, and sustainable local food systems are the norm”
- *Sustainable & Green Industries (139)*
North Cowichan will be...
“Known as a community that has supported positive growth while maintaining its rich history of agriculture and natural resource industry along with diversity and inclusiveness in population”

- *Safety & Support for Families (76)*
North Cowichan will be...
“A thriving community of families, neighbourhoods & businesses within a well-preserved natural environment that welcomes visitors from all over the world, a pristine holiday and recreational destination.”
- *Other Topic Areas:*
 - Business Mix & Thriving Economy (60)
 - More Populated & Compact (58)
 - Adequate Housing & Social Services (51)
 - Food Security & Protected ALR Land (51)
 - Parks & Outdoor Recreation (45)
 - Regional Destination & Example (44)
 - Additional Transportation & Pedestrian Options (27)
 - Age-Friendly Community (25)
 - Relationship with First Nations (22)
 - Transparent & Collaborative Leadership (17)
 - Amalgamate Municipalities in Region (12)
 - Job Opportunities (12)

3 NEXT STEPS

We will share this report with the OCP Advisory Committee for their feedback. At the completion of Phase 2 we will summarize all data including the results collected during the Gap Analysis stage, when we surveyed Council and staff and we received feedback from OCP Advisory Committee and Community Ambassadors . The results from the Community Character and Values Mapping stage will also be compiled. This information will be presented to Council for their feedback. Once this information is received by Council, we will create a vision statement for the updated OCP, revise the goals and principles section of the OCP based on the input received. These recommendations will be presented to the OCP volunteers, community and Council during Phase 3 when we update the OCP chapters.

Community Character Mapping & Values Framework

INTERNAL DISCUSSION ONLY – V3. DRAFT

Introduction

This framework provides an overview of the Community Character Mapping and Values stage of the OCP Update Project in which public feedback will help create community character profiles for eight communities within North Cowichan.

One of the thematic objectives set for the OCP update is 'Respecting Individual Community Character'. This objective provides the direction for this stage of the process (see Appendix 1 for the Backgrounder on Community Character). This stage will help us:

- understand the distinct character of each community and the accompanying values related to growth and development
- identify trends in land use and development perceived as being 'out of character'
- identify preferences for different land use, development and housing forms
- inform the next phase of the OCP update which includes growth scenarios options
- inform further policy and bylaw updates including:
 - development permit areas and guidelines,
 - local area plans, zoning bylaw, and
 - strategic plans (agriculture, heritage, etc.)

Community character, within the planning context, refers to the built environment (buildings, street design, and pathways etc.) and natural environment (landscapes, views etc.) found in each community.

It is important to understand the idea of community character from multiple perspectives. What does it mean for a child making their way from home to school? What does it mean for a person with mobility challenges trying to get to the library? What does it mean for a racialized person that has faced historic and systemic discrimination in their community? These perspectives are relevant and must be actively sought and will help create a more holistic understanding of the character of each community.

Methodology

The Community Ambassadors are key to this stage of the process as local experts with the most knowledge of their community. The Community Ambassadors will be engaged to review the framework to help determine if the engagement activities/questions proposed will resonate with their community. There are eight Community Ambassador teams representing each community.

They will also be key players in helping inform their communities and inspiring fellow residents to participate in planned engagement activities. Once this stage of engagement concludes, the Ambassadors will participate in a final workshop to review the engagement summary and help clarify their community's profile.

Community Engagement

A mix of digital and analogue engagement tools are proposed to capture community character assets in each unique community. Residents will be encouraged to get out into their community and explore what makes it unique before participating in any of the community character exercises.

To do this, we will offer an active survey where residents can place a pin on a map to denote a community landmark, submit a photo, or answer a few short questions. This exercise will be replicated in a hard-copy handout that the Ambassadors can help distribute into their communities.

Community dialogues offered via WebEx (or Zoom) will allow for discussion of the same questions from the digital and hard copy community landmark/asset identification exercise. This will ensure all feedback can be easily collated and assimilated into the engagement summary.

The objective will be to create a character profile of each community by collecting feedback reflecting what residents of each community like about the character where they live, and what they would like to see in the future.

Each profile will include:

- Description: including the generally accepted boundary;
- Resident perceptions of community boundaries;
- Elements of Community Character from the engagement exercises (natural and built environment)
- Community Values related to growth and development and the impact to character
- Acknowledgement of existing community planning resources for the community, if any.

Techniques:

1) **Ambassador Workshop #1**

The Ambassador groups will be engaged before community engagement begins. Staff will outline the plan for this round of engagement, present the framework, clearly lay out the Ambassador's role in this phase, and gain consensus on the engagement methods proposed in this framework. Staff will also consult the Ambassadors to ensure the questions asked in the survey exercise, workbook, and community dialogues will resonate with the public.

Engagement Questions:

- 1) Identify key landmarks in your community that set examples of:

- a. Natural beauty
 - b. Architectural value
 - c. Physical representations of local history
- 2) Are there any questions we *should not* be asking?
- 3) What support do you need?

2) Active Survey

A community character identification exercise will be available to residents through an online survey tool. This exercise will allow residents to identify representative character assets on a map or post photos and text responses to denote valued community landmarks. With this, there will be an opportunity to upload a photo, and to answer a few short questions that will elicit values-based feedback about the current and future state of their community.

Feedback on the character elements and values relating to change of each community will help shape each community profile by either affirming or highlighting opportunities for changes or conservation.

The Survey and workbook will include a current map, a current community description, and a few questions to accompany the exercise of highlighting a community landmark.

3) Hardcopy Alternative

A workbook will replicate the Active Survey exercise on paper, with the opportunity to either scan or email the workbook with photos attached to the email, or to return the entire package to a Community Ambassador or Municipal drop box (with photos printed and attached, or emailed).

4) Community Dialogues (optional)

Small digital dialogues can be held in each respective community to have a discussion about community character. North Cowichan staff will facilitate pre-registered sessions on WebEx. Members of each community will answer the same questions that were asked in the active survey and workbook exercises about their community together to build consensus and uncover common themes/values. These sessions will offer an interactive option for those who do not care to do a self-guided activity.

The Community Ambassadors will be invited and will be integral in encouraging their neighbours and friends to participate. Though this will be time and labour-intensive, it is recommended that a couple dates be offered to keep sessions small. Registration can be done via email or Eventbrite. A mail drop and/or post card for the Ambassadors to distribute could be considered.

5) Ambassador Workshop #2

Once community input into all activities has closed and MODUS has been able to collate feedback, a second Ambassador Group session will be held to help finalize their community profiles.

Roles/Responsibilities:

Action	Responsible
Facilitate Ambassador Session # 1	MNC
Facilitate Community Dialogues (bx7 or up to 14)	MNC
Create Work Book	TBD
Create and Manage Active Survey	MNC
Analyse Survey Data	MODUS
Update PlaceSpeak and Website	MNC
Create outline/Agenda/presentation for Ambassador meeting #1	MNC
Create outline/Agenda/presentation for Ambassador meeting #2	MNC
Campaigner E-blast	MNC
Social Media	MNC
Facilitate Ambassador Session #2	MODUS
Create Character Profiles	MODUS

Tentative Timeline *for revision*:

Action	Date
Community Ambassador Meeting #1	October 20, 21
Revise Framework and finalize engagement plan	October 28
Produce Active Survey and Workbooks	October 28-November14
Council Update	November 9 (TBC)
Launch Active Survey and Workbooks	November 15-January 17, 2021
Community Dialogues	January 11-21, 2021
Community Ambassador Meeting #2	January 28, 2021

Appendix A: Backgrounder of Respecting Individual Character



Community Character

North Cowichan brings together several distinct communities. Each of the communities have their own natural and built elements, history, and values. These define the character of that community and the ways that the community will change over time. Our OCP must recognize and address specific needs at the neighbourhood or community level to reflect that character. Some require a closer look, to see where revitalization or redevelopment needs would be best met. These communities include Crofton, Chemainus, Maple Bay, Quamichan, Bell McKinnon, Berkey's Corner, South End Centre.

CURRENT TRENDS

Local Planning. To acknowledge the unique character of various communities and refine those topics discussed in an OCP, North Cowichan has adopted numerous local area plans and revitalization plans.

Concentrating growth and development in village or urban centres. This enables us to provide the wide range of services and amenities necessary to create attractive, livable and walkable communities.

Zoning Bylaw helps facilitate community character. The Zoning Bylaw is used to implement policy within the OCP. It plays an important role in maintaining community character through form, massing and setbacks of buildings and guidelines for the form and character of commercial and multi-unit residential developments. The current Zoning Bylaw was developed in 1997 and has been amended, but not updated. It includes some specific zones related to local area plans, and some general zones.

WHAT DOES THE CURRENT OCP SAY?

- * Support community and neighbourhood planning

CHALLENGES

- * Community boundaries are not defined and individual character is not articulated for all communities
- * Balancing the need to preserve community character and providing new and diverse types of housing

OPPORTUNITIES

- * Involve each community in defining its boundaries and character
- * Utilize policy tools (plan policies, zones, development permit area guidelines etc.) in a way that acknowledges and enhances community character
- * Identify other communities/areas that require a local area plan and review existing local area plans to ensure they are consistent with new policies in the OCP
- * Integrate community character objectives into the OCP

Additional Resources

Bell McKinnon Local Area Plan Bylaw, Bylaw No. 3717, 2018 | Chemainus Town Centre Revitalization Plan, 2011 | Crofton Local Area Plan Bylaw, Bylaw No. 3580, 2015 | District of North Cowichan/City of Duncan | University Village Sustainable Local Area Plan, Bylaw No. 3582, 2015 | North Cowichan Community Character Project, 2009

Appendix B: Community Summaries

Introduction:

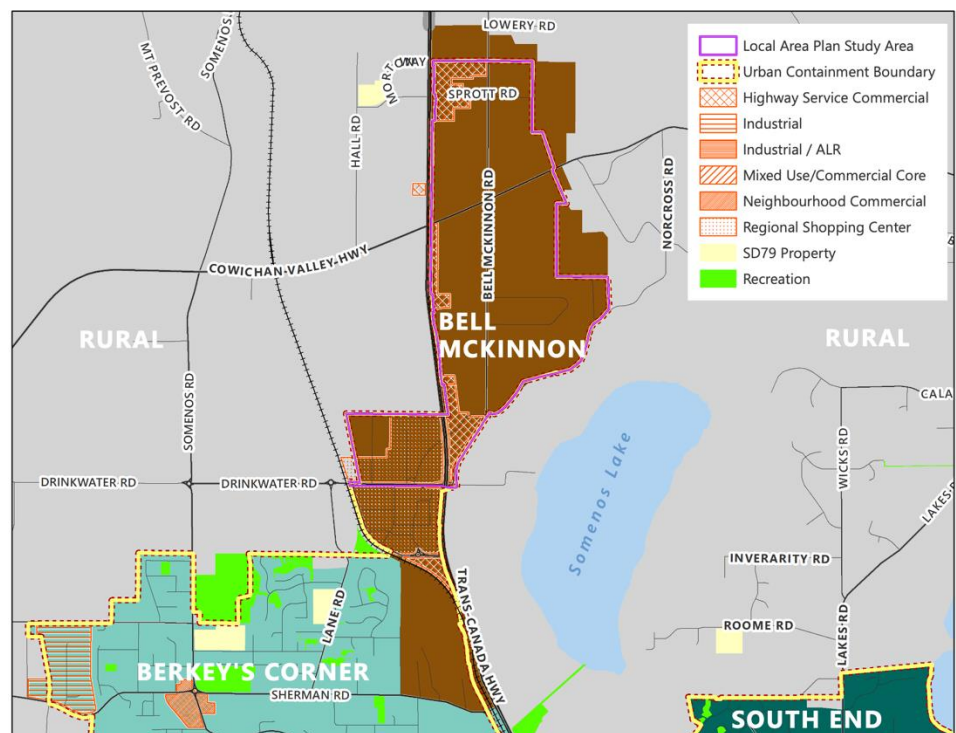
Talk to us about what makes your community unique!

We know the residents of ___ know it best and we want to tap into your expertise to clarify your community's character. Help us learn what about your community your community's built and natural environment and how/if these could or should change over time.

1. Bell McKinnon

The Bell McKinnon community consists of lands within the Urban Containment Boundary, along Bell McKinnon and Drinkwater Roads and includes a population of ~800. It is primarily rural residential and agricultural lands that are of moderate-low soil quality and some service commercial. There is recent and current substantial commercial and medium-density residential development. Construction of a new RCMP station in the coming year is expected.

Bell McKinnon is a community poised for transition. The [2018 The Bell McKinnon Local Area Plan](#) is in place to prepare for and respond to anticipated regional growth and the new regional hospital on Bell McKinnon Road. Bell McKinnon is envisioned as "A model Green Growth Centre in the Cowichan Valley that is a vibrant, walkable, urban village that facilitates healthy living in all stages of life." The local area plan provides detailed policies and recommendations to guide



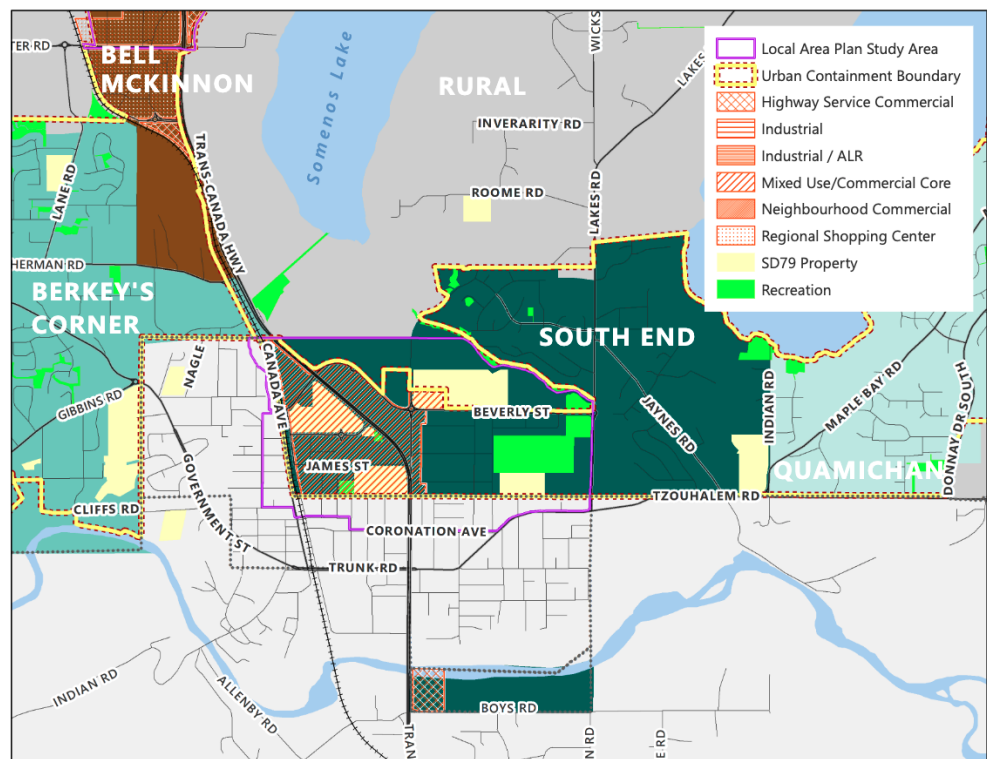
future private and public investments in the Bell McKinnon area over the next 20+ years.

2. South End Centre/ University Village

South End Centre incorporates the central areas of Beverly/Alexander and University Village, which are contiguous to the City of Duncan, and a number of residential neighbourhoods inside the present urban containment boundary and to the south west shore of Quamichan Lake. Approximately 3,800 North Cowichan residents live in this area.

The area has been identified as part of one of three growth centers within the District.

The [University Village Plan](#) provides a detailed policy framework and implementation strategy. The Plan is future-oriented and illustrates how the area is to be developed over a long period through a series of public and private sector initiatives. It is intended that the Plan will be developed over a 30-year timeframe, although regular monitoring was anticipated to take place during this period.

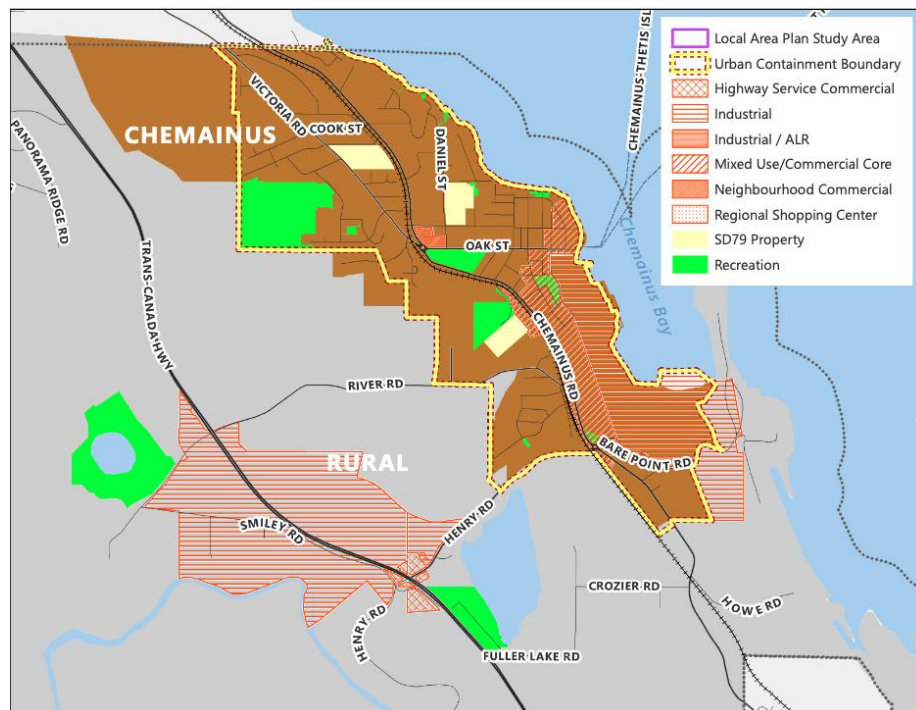


3. Chemainus

Chemainus is a coastal, complete community of approximately 3,400 at the northern extent of North Cowichan's boundary. It contains a compact mixed-use centre and an industrial park along the TransCanada Highway. It is recognized as an arts and cultural hub and tourist attraction and is famous for its murals.

Chemainus is identified as one of three growth centres within the District of North Cowichan's OCP.

The 2011 Chemainus Town Centre Revitalization Plan outlines a series of themes and opportunities, which support a common vision. The plan presents ideas of vitality and energy for Chemainus as it continues to evolve and thrive as a community. The Plan



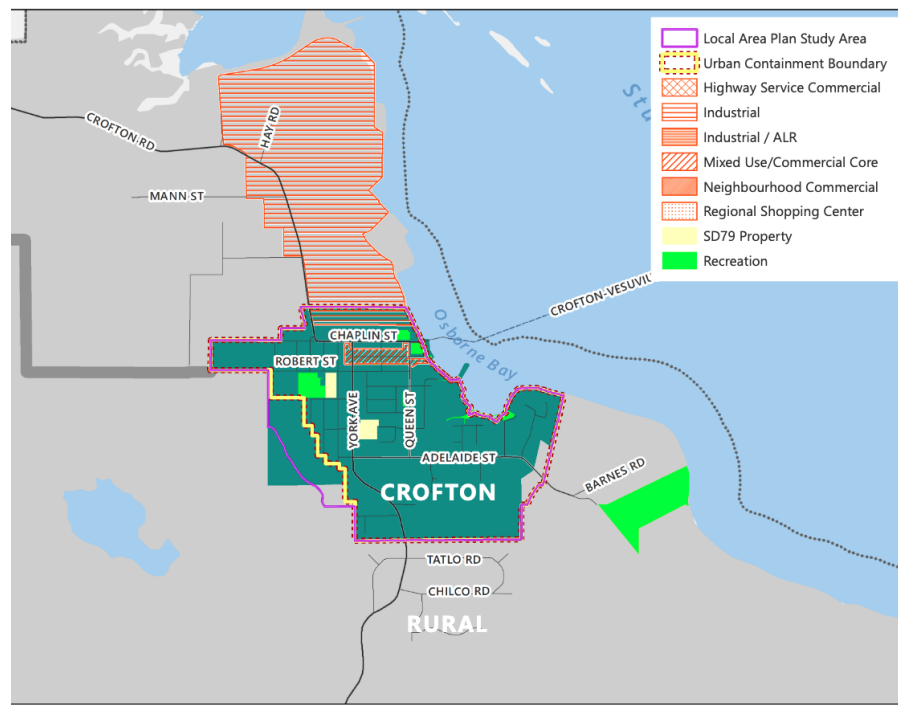
identified broad themes, key projects and an implementation plan.

4. Crofton

Crofton is a community of 1,800 people, nestled into the shoreline of Osborne Bay and overlooking Saltspring Island. Its sloping topography offers dramatic views and panoramic vistas. Crofton is identified as one of three growth centres within the District of North Cowichan's OCP.

The purpose of the [2015 Crofton Local Area Plan](#) is to provide a detailed policy framework and implementation strategy. The document is a conceptual document intended to work as a guide for citizens, developers and municipal staff when contemplating development proposals and community initiatives. The Plan is also

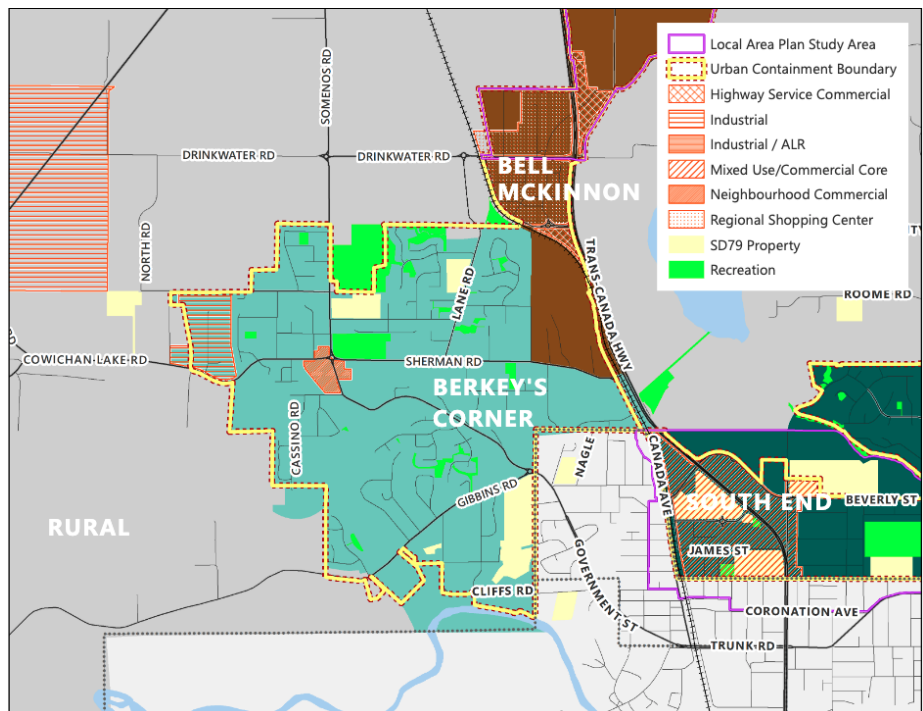
intended to inform policy and to give certainty to the community of Crofton on the future direction of the community as it grows and changes over the years.



5. Berkey's Corner

Berkey's corner is a term used to define the area west of the TransCanada highway and North of the City of Duncan and bounded by agricultural and industrial lands to the north and west. The area contains recreational and education facilities and a substantial neighbourhood commercial centre Is currently under construction.

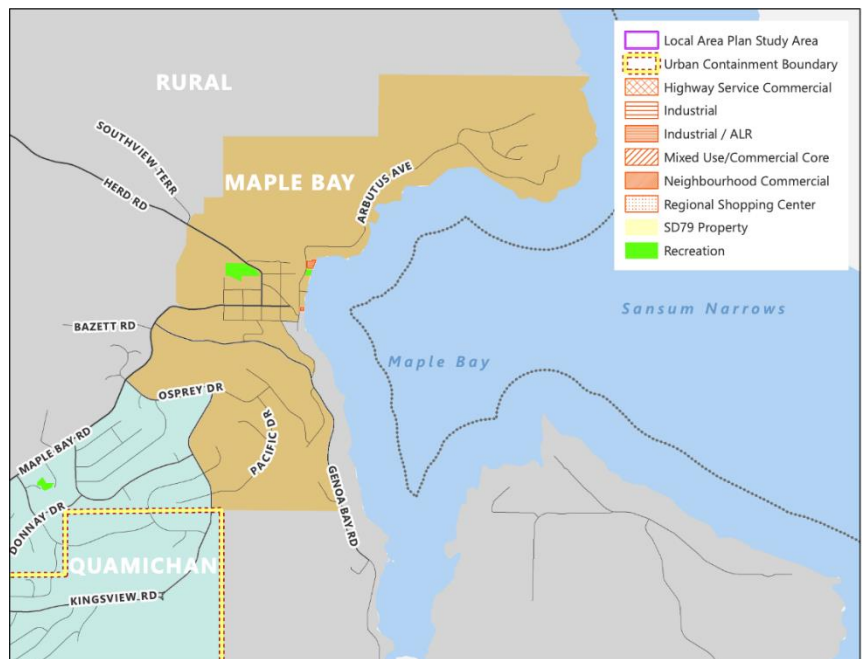
Despite substantial infill and green field development, no area-specific planning has been undertaken for this area.



6. Maple Bay

Located on the southern coast of the municipality, Maple Bay is a small coastal hamlet of 1,890 with a floatplane dock, marina, substantial recreational and amenity access. Access is via scenic roads, and the landscape provides great cross water views with forested mountain backdrops. There are some commercial activities, public facilities and amenities within reasonable walking distance, which help to form relatively complete communities.

Though not officially recognized by the District, the Maple Bay Community Association prepared the [Maple Bay Area Plan in 2015](#). The vision statement reads: *a rural, seaside community that values and protects its natural environment, facilitates outdoor activities, and promotes a strong community spirit for current and future generations.*

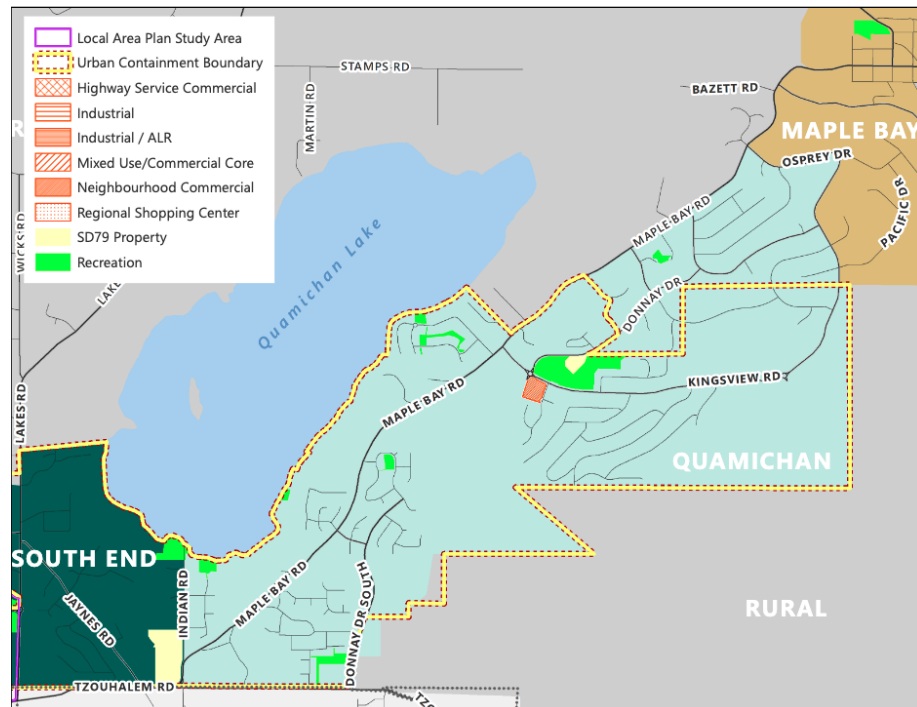


7. Quamichan Lake Area

Description:

The Quamichan Area is generally the present eastern extent of the South End boundary and a collection of residential settlements located along the south/west shores of Quamichan Lake. A mix of pastoral, lake, and forest views are part of its character. Approximately 4,400 people live in this area.

The Quamichan Area does not currently have any local area plan. A number of comprehensive development plans have been adopted and appended to the OCP. These guide a large majority of the housing units being developed in the area. However, there are many other areas seeing small/medium scale infill and development that are not captured under any policy guidance more detailed than the policies provided in the OCP.



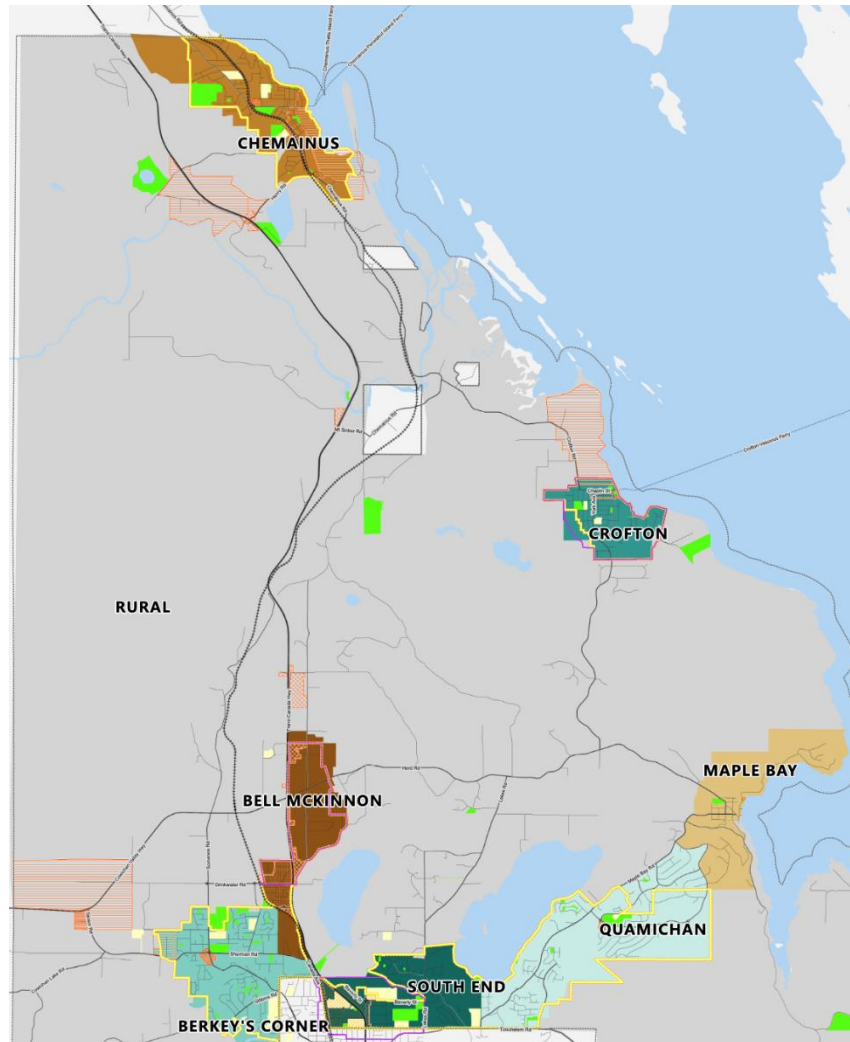
8. Rural Areas

Description:

The rural areas of North Cowichan comprise the balance of North Cowichan's substantial land base of food, forestry and recreation. Approximately 25% of the land in all of North Cowichan is located in the agricultural land reserve and ~25% is located in the Municipal Forest reserve (there is some overlap). Other forestry, farming, park and low-density suburban uses, as well as industrial land makes up the balance. This includes small communities such as Westholme, Stony Hill, Genoa Bay, and Vimy.

A number of plans provide guidance on development, as well as extensive policy statements about rural, agricultural, and forestry lands in the current OCP. These include the 2001 Strategic Agricultural Plan (an update is anticipated to begin in 2022), and a Forest Management Plans.

For the purpose of measuring population, the rural community is divided into West (~1,900); East (~3,600); and North (~1,590).



Appendix C: Draft Active Survey Questions

What places makes your community special? These can be landmarks, buildings, public spaces, streetscapes, parks, natural spaces or any other places where experiences special to your community occur.

We want to know so we can ensure these qualities and places are sustained into the future.”
Landmarks: [to be provided by Ambassadors]

From there, you may want to visit the most important assets, landmarks, or features that define your community from your perspective! Use the map tools to zoom to a particular location, then click on the map to add a tag. You can add a description and upload a photo for each entry. Contribute as many different locations as you like.

1. What community do you want to discuss? [Drop down list of eight communities]
2. Imagine you have visitors from out of town. What place do you show them that is special to your community? Place a pin on the map to indicate its location. [Pin on map, 100 characters]
3. Is there a landmark (ex. building, trail, artwork) in your community that tells a story of its past or present? What is it? What is the story?

For the following questions, please consider a place that best matches the description and submit a photo of that place.

Built Environment

4. What is a **building** in your community that best represents the “look and feel” of your community? Please submit a photo with your response. [Photo submission]
 - a. What about its “look and feel” do you like the most? Consider the various features and elements that make up the building. [Open-ended; max 50 characters]
5. What is a **street/pathway** in your community that best represents the “look and feel” of your community? [Photo submission]
 - a. What about its “look and feel” do you like the most? Consider the various features and elements that make up that street. [Open-ended; max 50 characters]
6. Should our built environment change/adapt new styles and needs over time? [Yes / No]

Natural Environment

7. What is a **public gathering space, park or plaza** in your community that best represents the “look and feel” of your community? [Photo submission]
 - a. Where is this place? [Open-ended; max 50 characters]
 - b. What about its “look and feel” do you like the most? Consider the various features and elements that make up the public space. [Open-ended; max 50 characters]
8. Where is the best view in your community? [Photo Submission]
 - a. Where are you? What are you looking at? [Open ended; max 50 characters]
9. Where in your community do you feel most connected to nature and why? [Open ended; max 50 characters]
 - a. What about its this place do you like the most? Consider the various features and elements that make up the public space. [Open-ended; max 50 characters]
10. You’ve told us a lot about what your community *has*. What should be included overtime (ex. A town square, park, heritage conservation)? Feel free to show us a picture from another city/ country/ continent of what you think is needed and where it’s needed? [photo submission] [photo submission]