

Municipality of North Cowichan

Official Community Plan Community Ambassador Teams

AGENDA

Thursday, May 13, 2021, 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 Community Ambassador Teams 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 OCP Community Ambassador Teams approve the agenda as circulated [or as amended].

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2 - 7

Note: these minutes were also included on the OCP Community Ambassador Teams May 12, 2021 agenda for their consideration.

Recommendation:

That the minutes of the OCP Community Ambassador Teams meetings held June 11, 2020, October 20, 2020 and October 22, 2020 be adopted.

4. BUSINESS

4.1. Welcome and Project Update

4.2. Presentation on Community Character Profiles Staff to Provide Brief Overview of Engagement Results and Procedure in Breakout Sessions

8 - 13

4.3. Community Ambassador Teams Review Profiles – Breakout Sessions

14 - 49

4.4. Report Back – Each Team to Present Results of Discussion

4.5. Wrap Up and Next Steps

5. NEW BUSINESS

6. ADJOURNMENT

Municipality of North Cowichan
Official Community Plan Community Ambassador Teams
MINUTES

June 11, 2020, 5:00 p.m.
Electronically

Members Present	Anne Murray, Sheila Kitson, Carreen Unguran, Ken Brown, Wendy MacPherson, Tom Andrews, Cindy Lise, Andrew Wilson, Dave Jackson, Sarah Nelles, Nancy Dower, Christina Godbolt, Carol Donnelly, Douglas Hume, Matthew Huotari, David Darwin
Members Absent	Laura Funk, Marita Judson
Consultants Present	Suzy Lunn, Rob Barrs, Vince Verlaan
Staff Present	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 5:02 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the OCP Community Ambassador Teams adopt the agenda.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Community Ambassador Team Meeting

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the minutes of the February 24, 2020 Community Ambassador Teams 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 team 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

Teams received presentation for information.

4.4 Engagement Tools and Techniques

Teams received presentation for information.

4.5 Gap Analysis

Teams received presentation for information.

4.6 Housekeeping, Wrap Up and Next Steps

Draft gap analysis will be sent to the teams for review.

5. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:01p.m.

Certified by Corporate Officer

Signed by Chair

Municipality of North Cowichan Official Community Plan Community Ambassador Teams MINUTES

**October 20, 2020, 5:00 p.m.
Electronically**

Members Present Gregg Perry, Chair
 Sandy McPherson
 Sheryl Sametz
 Christina Godbolt
 Tim Openshaw
 Dave Jackson
 Ender McDuff
 Margo Young
 Carreen Unguran
 Nancy Dower
 Brielle Varasteh
 Tom Andrews
 Ken Brown
 Mona Kaiser

Staff Present Megan Jordan, Manager of Communications
 Chris Hutton, Community Planning Coordinator
 Mairi Bosomworth, Community Planner
 Anthony Price, Planning Technician

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Official Community Plan Community Ambassador Teams approve the agenda as circulated.

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS

3.1 Part One - Conference session with all attendees

3.1.1 Welcome

Name and brief intro.

3.1.2 Introducing Community Character and Values Engagement

A presentation was provided to the teams followed by a discussion.

3.1.3 Presenting Community Character Framework

A presentation was provided to the teams followed by a discussion.

3.1.4 Present example survey/workbook exercise

The survey tool and workbook have not yet been finalized.

3.1.5 Discuss proposed role of Ambassadors

A presentation was provided regarding the role and expectation of the Ambassadors.

3.2 Part Two - Breakout with each community

The teams broke out into four groups, representing each Community Ambassador Team, led by a member from the Planning department. Each team was asked the same questions identified below.

3.2.1 Is this the right area for your community?

3.2.2 Is this the right name for your community?

3.2.3 Discussion of Engagement Framework and Engagement Exercise Questions

3.2.4 Can you tell us your top 3 (natural, built, cultural/heritage) landmarks in your community?

3.2.5 Are there any questions we should not be asking?

3.3 Part Three - Conference session with all attendees

3.3.1 Wrap Up and Next Steps

Summaries of each breakout occurred and the teams then had an opportunity to ask staff any questions they may have.

4. NEW BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 7:02 p.m.

Signed by Chair

Certified by Recording Secretary

Municipality of North Cowichan Official Community Plan Community Ambassador Teams MINUTES

**October 22, 2020, 5:00 p.m.
Electronically**

Members Present Lisa Hudson, Chair
 Wendy MacPherson
 Marita Judson
 Craig Meredith
 Sheila Kitson
 Cam Campbell
 Caitlin Kenny
 Andrew Wilson
 Laura Funk
 Rhiannon Snaith
 David Messier
 Cindy Lise

Staff Present Megan Jordan, Manager of Communications
 Chris Hutton, Community Planning Coordinator
 Mairi Bosomworth, Community Planner
 Anthony Price, Planning Technician

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Official Community Plan Community Ambassador Teams approved the agenda as circulated.

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS

3.1 Part One - Conference session with all attendees

3.1.1 Welcome

Name and brief intro.

3.1.2 Introducing Community Character and Values Engagement

A presentation was provided to the teams followed by a discussion.

3.1.3 Presenting Community Character Framework

A presentation was provided to the teams followed by a discussion.

3.1.4 Present example survey/workbook exercise

The survey tool and workbook have not yet been finalized.

3.1.5 Discuss proposed role of Ambassadors

A presentation was provided regarding the role and expectation of the Ambassadors.

3.2 Part Two - Breakout with each community

The teams broke out into four groups, representing each Community Ambassador Team, led by a member of the Planning department. Each team was asked the same questions, identified below.

3.2.1 Is this the right area for your community?

3.2.2 Is this the right name for your community?

3.2.3 Discussion of Engagement Framework and Engagement Exercise Questions

3.2.4 Can you tell us your top 3 (natural, built, cultural/heritage) landmarks in your community?

3.2.5 Are there any questions we should not be asking?

3.3 Part Three - Conference session with all attendees

3.3.1 Wrap Up and Next Steps

Summaries of each breakout occurred and the teams then had an opportunity to ask staff any questions they may have.

4. NEW BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 7:03 p.m.

Signed by Chair

Certified by Recording Secretary

1 INTRODUCTION

North Cowichan is comprised of several distinct communities. Each of these communities have their own natural and built elements, history, and values. These define the character of that community and guide the direction of how each will evolve over time.

One of the objectives set for the OCP update is ‘Respecting Individual Community Character’. Community character, within the planning context, refers to the built environment (buildings, street design, pathways etc.) and natural environment (landscapes, views, etc.) found in each community.

In order to respect individual character as we move through the OCP update we must understand it from the community’s perspective. The eight draft profiles in Attachment 2 articulate the unique character of each community from the community member’s perspective and provide insight into values related to change. These profiles are crucial as they will inform the OCP policy development process, providing local knowledge for future strategic plans (agriculture and heritage), local area planning, design guidelines and the zoning bylaw update. Communities most in need of local area planning are: Berkey’s Corner, Quamichan and Maple Bay.

2 SUMMARY

The general findings distilled from the profiles about preferences for land use, development and housing forms provide insight as we move into the growth management phase of the OCP update. They fall under the following categories:

- the **established centres** of the South End Centre, Chemainus and Crofton
- those **communities in transition** on the urban and rural edge such as Berkey’s Corner and Bell McKinnon
- those with an **appetite for change** such as Maple Bay
- those that have seen rapid **development perceived as being ‘out of character’** such as the Quamichan Lake Area, and
- the Rural Areas that need **continued protection** of the natural areas and farmland.

Established Centres

The community input suggests support for low rise multi-family housing over commercial space (mixed use buildings) in the established town centre of the South End Centre, village centres of Chemainus and Crofton. Higher density and growth in the South End Centre are reasonable given its proximity to the services and amenities in Duncan. Transitions from mixed-use commercial core includes ground-oriented forms of infill housing that would be suitable for families. Residents were interested in revitalizing centres to help create viable commercial opportunities, to support public realm improvements and to promote liveability for all residents. The local plans for these communities provide sound guidance for moving forward to meet local needs.

Communities in Transition

Communities in transition such as Berkey's Corner would benefit from a local area plan as there appears to be appetite for compact development surrounding a commercial core that supports public realm improvements.

The responses for Bell McKinnon were limited likely due to the fact the community provided input on the Local Area Plan in 2018 spurred on by the hospital development. While some feedback indicated a desire to protect the rural landscape, the majority of respondents were hopeful the vision for a model green growth centre of a vibrant, walkable urban village would be achieved.

Appetite for Change

Maple Bay is another community that could benefit from a local area plan formally recognized by the municipality. Though currently outside the urban containment boundary and outside the sewage system, there appears to be appetite for change that would strengthen the village centre with a viable commercial core while still maintaining its rural, coastal charm. Consideration for ground-oriented housing forms that are compatible with local character and site context paired with public realm improvements such water access, pedestrian networks and public gathering spaces would add to the charm and liveability of Maple Bay.

Development Perceived as 'Out of Character'

Quamichan community members value the natural ecosystem, the large rural properties and heritage-lake front buildings and homes. Recent slope slide housing development approved under comprehensive development zones have been perceived as out of character of the rural and lakeside charm of the Quamichan area. Though some residents indicated a desire for a commercial node for local residents the financial viability needs further consideration. The Quamichan Lake Area could benefit from a local area plan.

Continued Protection

Feedback from rural community members has reinforced that the rural areas need continued protection to safeguard the character of natural and agricultural lands, views to forested mountains, fields or oceans, travel on rural roads, working farms and forests. Some opportunity exists to create or enhance gathering places for neighbours and improve pedestrian mobility along rural roads. The rural areas could benefit from the proposed update to the Agriculture Strategic Plan.

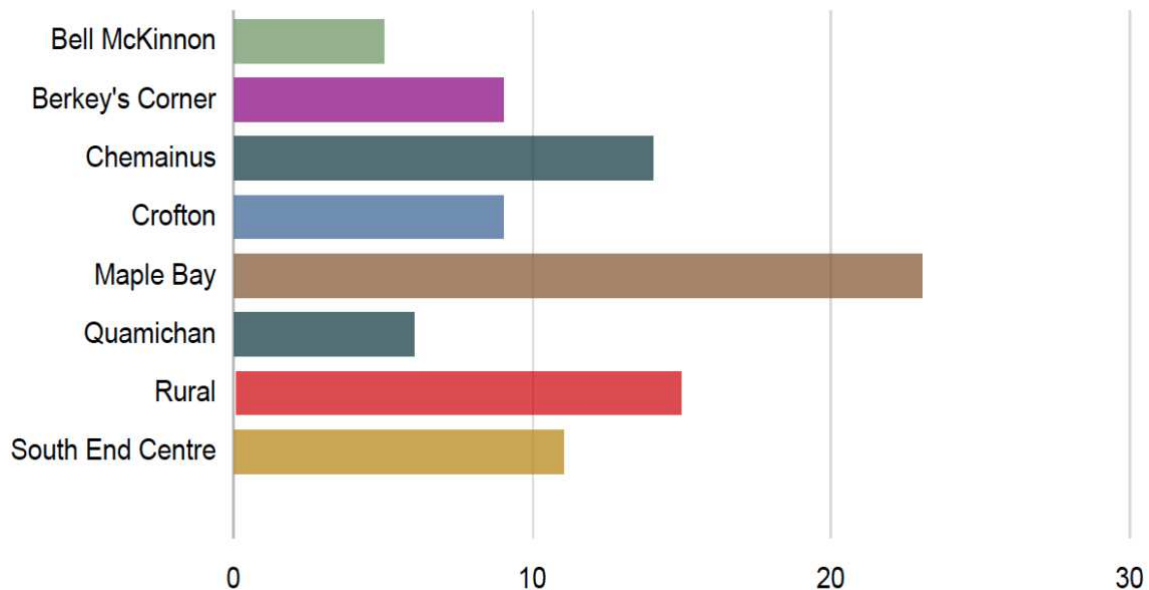
The Character Profiles

The eight draft profiles include a brief summary of the local planning context and a geographic representation of the community's heart or centre. They include the graphic illustrations from the Community Dialogue sessions. They include a description from the community's perspective of the local character of the buildings, streets and pathways, community spaces, natural places and views replete with photo documentation taken by survey respondents. The last section identifies any features or places that are considered 'out of character' and captures the community's ideas of how the character might evolve over time.

3 METHODOLOGY

Community Survey

A community character survey launched on November 23rd 2020 until February 1st 2021, garnering input from 92 community members across North Cowichan. Participants could submit their survey online through Survey123 or as a hardcopy. The Quamichan Lake Neighbourhood Association submitted a written submission. Participant breakdown by community is denoted below.



Residents answered questions about the built form and natural features that exist where they live, providing values-based feedback about the current and future state of their community. There was an opportunity to pin a location on a map denoting valued community landmarks and residents were encouraged to submit photos further identifying preferred built form styles, and important community landmarks and natural areas.

Community Dialogues

Two community dialogues were held on January 26th and January 27th 2021 through Zoom, facilitated by MODUS and North Cowichan staff. A total of 60 people attended the two sessions. The majority of attendees were from Maple Bay, Berkey's Corner, Quamichan and the rural areas. The attendees were split into break out rooms based on their community. A facilitator and notetaker used a Google Jamboard (see the graphic to the right) to guide the discussion on a series of questions related to the built and natural environment. The sessions were further documented by MODUS' graphic illustrators. The illustrations are included in Attachment 1.

The Jamboard is titled "thinkforward BELL MCKINNON" and includes a small map of the area. It is divided into a grid with the following sections:

- HEART**: Includes a heart icon and a wavy line.
- BUILDINGS, STREETS, PATHWAYS + TRAILS (Look and Feel)**: Includes a blue building icon.
- GATHERING SPACES, PARKS, PLAZAS + WHERE DO YOU FEEL MOST CONNECTED TO NATURE?**: Includes a green leaf icon.
- WHAT PHYSICAL OR NATURAL FORMS DETRACTS or TAKES AWAY from the character?**: Includes a yellow warning triangle icon.
- CHANGES + ADAPTATIONS for the future?**: Includes a circular arrow icon.
- TOP 3 Ideas**: A section for notes at the top right.

4 CONCLUSION

The character profiles document community members' dedication and love for their communities. Their thoughtful comments and insightful photos tell a tale of what makes each of their communities special. These profiles lay a foundation as we move forward with the OCP update, specifically how to address the important topic of growth management. The question of whether these communities will change is indisputable. The question of how is one we must get right.

ATTACHMENT 1: CHARACTER MAP OF THE COMMUNITIES

thinkforward

North Cowichan Community Plan



COMMUNITY CHARACTER



BERKEY'S CORNER

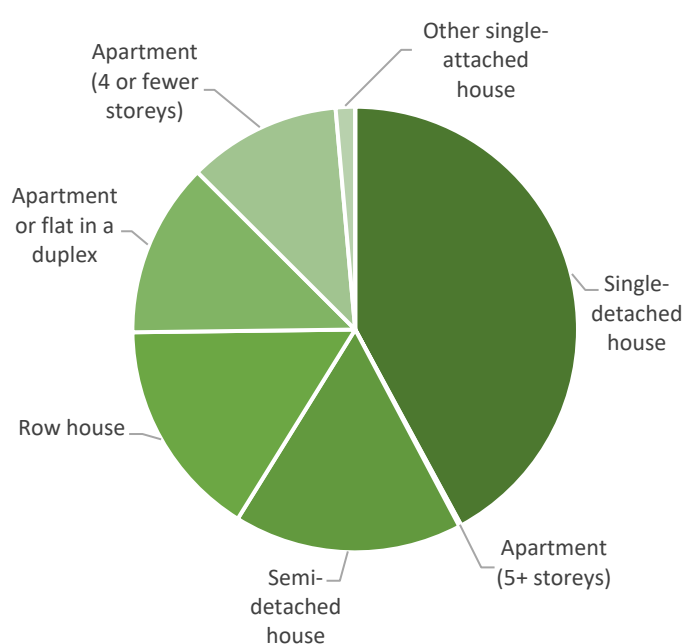
COMMUNITY CHARACTER PROFILE

Introduction

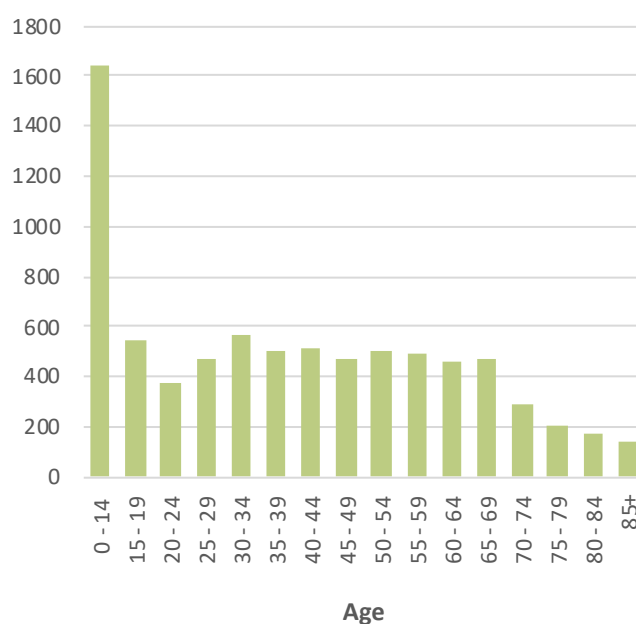
Named after the once popular Berkey Brothers Auto Service, Berkey's Corner is a community of commercial activity and outdoor access at the junction of Cowichan Lake Road, Somenos Road and Sherman Road.

The total population of Berkey's Corner is 7,875 people with the median age being 38.7 years. 42% of the dwelling type here are single-detached homes, while 17% are semi-detached houses. The remaining 41% consists of apartments (5+ storeys), row houses, apartments or flats in a duplex, apartments (4 or fewer storeys) and movable dwelling types.

Berkey's Corner Community
Demographics - **Dwelling Type**



Berkey's Corner Community
Demographics - **Age**



During the 2020/21 Official Community Plan update process, community members generously took time to take photos and talk about the character of the natural and built environment of their community and how this character might evolve over time. This profile compiles this rich and informative community perspective.

Local Planning Context

The community is 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 mixed density residential, recreational, religious and education facilities. A substantial neighbourhood commercial centre and residential subdivision are currently under construction.

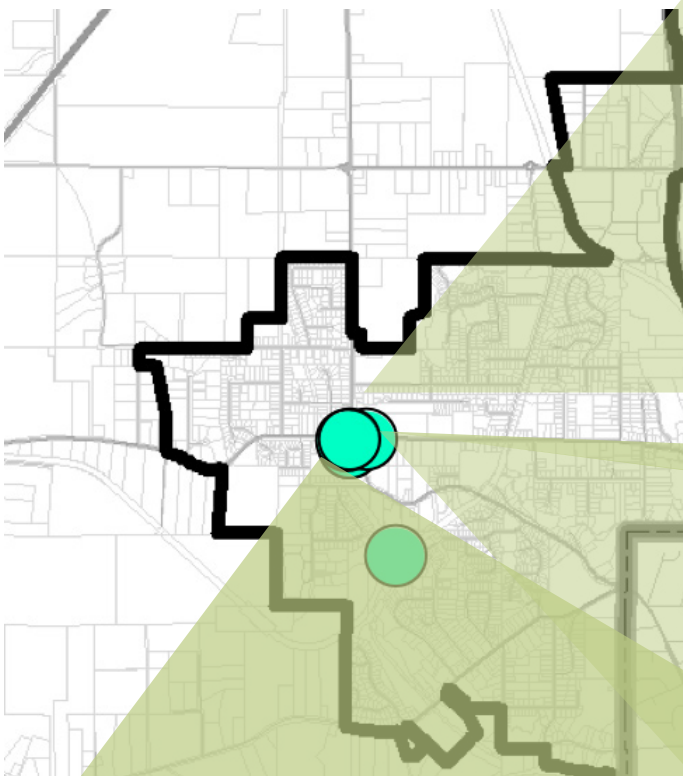
No area specific planning has taken place for Berkey's Corner. A local area plan and design guidelines would help guide the future of this community and ensure that the qualities of the built and natural environment that make Berkey's Corner unique are sustained as the community evolves.



The Heart of Berkey's Corner

Community members indicated on a map what they considered the heart or centre (their favourite places) of Berkey's Corner. The map below details the locations that community members chose. The locations identified include the commercial node at Somenos, Sherman and Cowichan Lake Road. Recreational areas like the fields and curling club are also at the core of this community.

Gathering Space



Trail-to-Trail Connector



Trail

Buildings

The built form character of Berkey's Corner is a blend of old and new, a testament to the history of the area and a taste of the changes to come. Single-storey rancher-style homes buttress the commercial hub, surrounded by ample green space. Berkey's Corner is a mix of more traditional pitched roof buildings complemented by low-rise, contemporary development. Newer buildings are inspired by the materials and colours of the surrounding agricultural lands, boasting clean silhouettes and the use of timber.

Multi-Family Housing



Single-Family Home

Drinkwater Elementary



The Guild Coffee and Lifestyle

Soccer Park



Roundabout

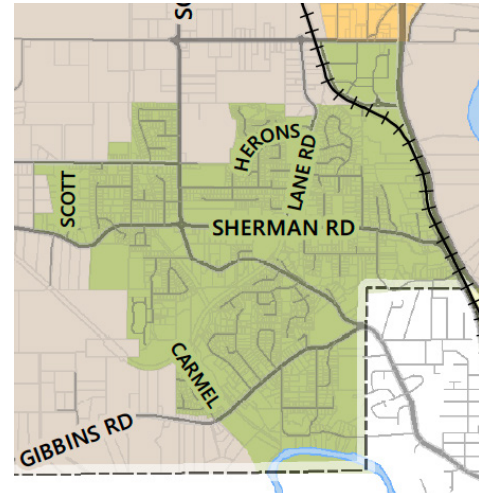


All the photos included in this Community profile have been provided by the community members.

Streets and Pathways

Characterized by the iconic roundabout, various active roadways converge at Berkey's Corner. The nature of streets and pathways in this community extends beyond the busy roadways and is better defined by the gravel, tree-lined trails that offer unfettered access to nature. Intimate residential roads promote slow vehicle speeds and supplementary infrastructure to maintain safe vehicle movement would be a welcome addition to the community.

Berkey's Corner is arranged in a fairly compact settlement pattern, characterized by a loop and cul-de-sac street network extending radially away from the central roundabout, enclosed by agricultural land on most sides. Major roads exhibit a mix of older, narrower sidewalks with rolled curbs, and wider, updated sidewalks with barrier curbs. Residential streets lack sidewalks, and some are bordered by ditches.



Road and Gravel Path Intersection with Accessible Curb Cuts



Roundabout



Road and Gravel Path Intersection

“ Nature at our doorstep
-
Everyone loves the Trans-Canada Trail ”

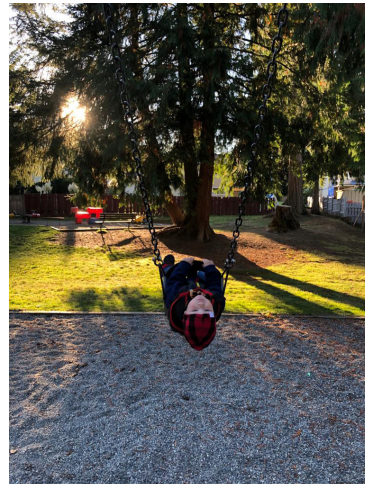
Community Spaces

Berkey's Corner is replete with active community spaces, from sports fields to playgrounds. Open spaces and trails dominate the area with age-friendly opportunities to gather through play, sport and recreation. Indoor community spaces are equally focused on sport and recreational activities. These community spaces are locally loved and support a larger, impermanent community through sports and recreation.

Parks



Playgrounds



Central Cafe

Trail-Cycling



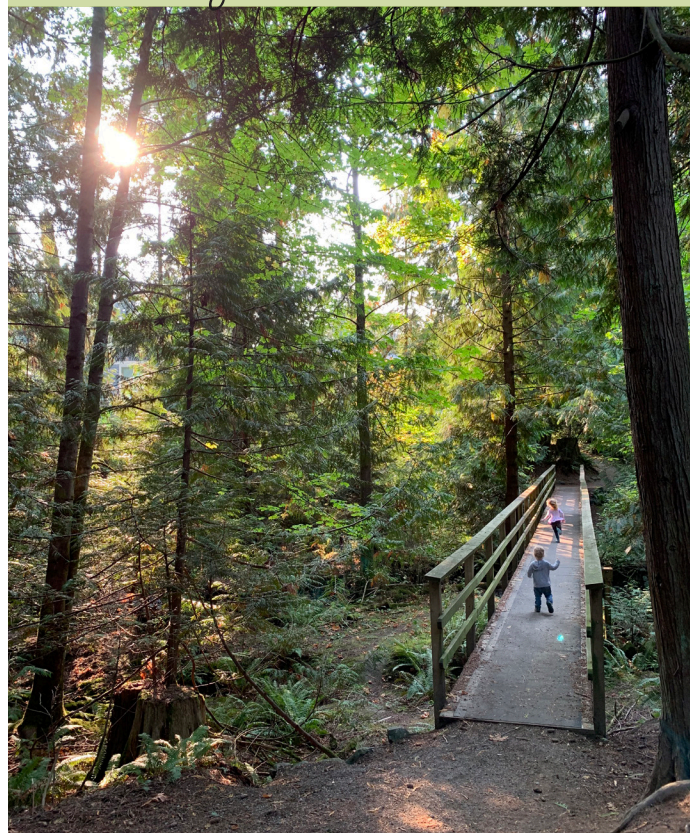
Natural Places

Ample green space surrounds Berkey's Corner and residential lots enjoy swathes of vegetation and large stands of trees. Nature is accessible and vibrant, inviting bird watching, trail walking and exploration of hidden forest bridges and winding creeks. The built environment and the natural environment overlap as trees, trails and agricultural landscapes intersect with roadways and buildings.

Trail Connector



Forest Bridge



Trail

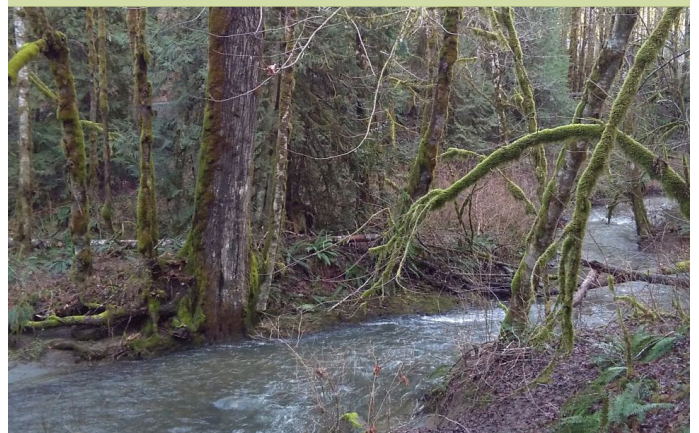


Walking Path

Landscape View



Trail Creek



Views

Plentiful view corridors are a defining feature of Berkey's Corner in all directions. Sprawling agricultural lands dotted with stands of trees and rural residences draw the eye towards the horizon. Mount Prevost looms from the west and Mount Tzouhalem is a distant icon to the east, both peaks towering above the low-rise buildings and tree cover.

Mountain Views



Farmland View



View from Mount Prevost



My favourite view is from the top of Herons Wood path looking towards Mt Tzou

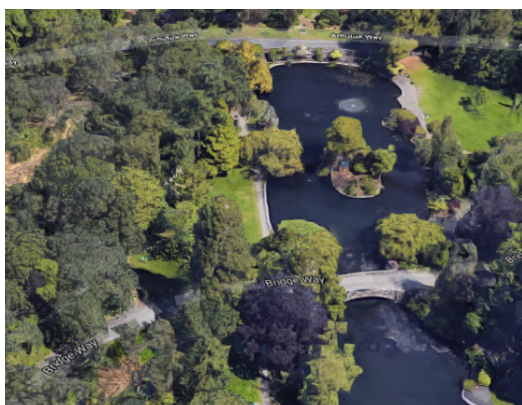


Thinking Forward - Resident's Perspectives

Community members indicate a desire to have local shops and restaurants are all within walking distance in Berkey's Corner, with access from the road and nearby trails. Enhanced walkability and bikeability would support the existing community character, as well as development that takes cues from existing structures, favouring vegetation between buildings for privacy and retention of nature. According to some community members, drive through restaurants, greenfield subdivisions and increased high-speed vehicle infrastructure would be in direct opposition of the unique character of Berkey's Corner.

As the area changes and grows, public realm improvements would support the walkable nature of this place, as would traffic calming measures on residential roads. Improvements and additions to outdoor and indoor gathering spaces would support this growing community.

Outdoor Concert Space



Green Space

Children's Splash Pad



“ We need more places to play in the summer and a gathering point. ”



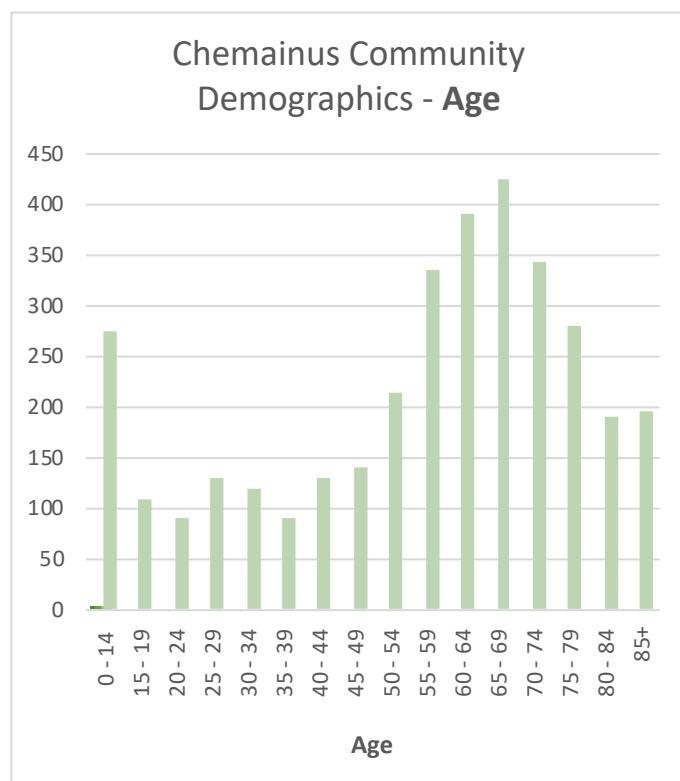
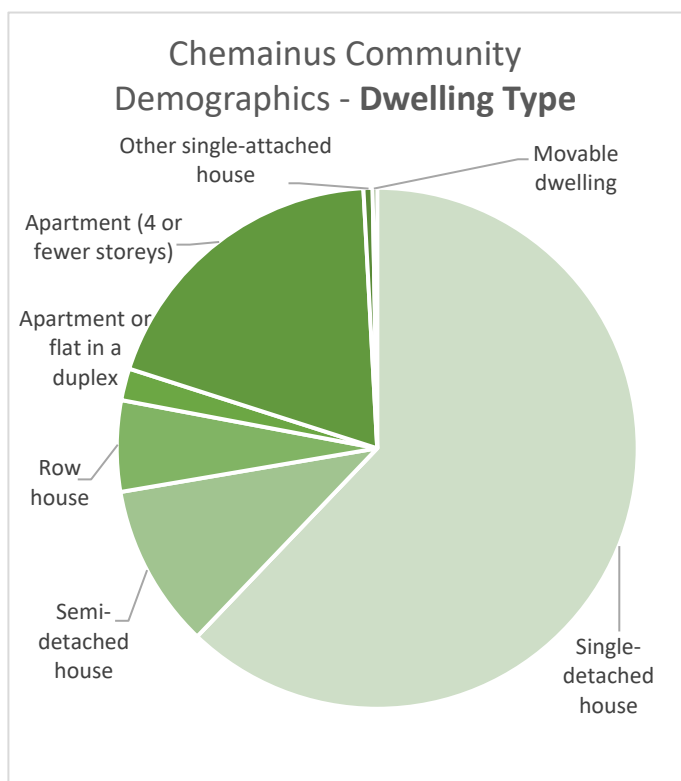
CHEMAINUS

COMMUNITY CHARACTER PROFILE

Introduction

Chemainus is a coastal, complete community 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 and theatre.

The total population of Chemainus is 3,440 people with the median age being 61.5 years. 62% of the dwelling type here are single-detached homes, while 10% are semi-detached houses. the remaining 28% consists of row houses, apartments or flats in a duplex, apartments (4 or fewer storeys) other single-detached and movable dwelling types.



During the 2020/21 Official Community Plan update process, community members generously took time to take photos and talk about the character of the natural and built environment of their community and how this character might evolve over time. This profile compiles this rich and informative community perspective.

Local Planning Context

Chemainus is within the Urban Containment Boundary identified in the 2011 Official Community Plan.

The [2011 Chemainus Town Centre Revitalization Plan](#) outlines a series of themes and opportunities, which support a common vision that is still relevant today. The plan presents ideas of vitality and energy for Chemainus as it continues to evolve and thrive as a community. The themes include:

- * All Day Every Day
- * White Picket Fences
- * Pedestrians First
- * Made in Chemainus
- * Alive with Green
- * Murals and Public Art
- * Theatres and Festivals
- * Industrial Heritage
- * Community Places

The [Chemainus Active Transportation Strategy](#) outlines opportunities, challenges, and barriers as well as strategic priorities and parking management solutions to improve conditions for walking, biking and barrier free movement in Chemainus. With parking management as an integrated solution for transportation demand the primary goal of this report is to promote active transportation as a way to improve health and provide opportunities for walking and cycling within Chemainus.



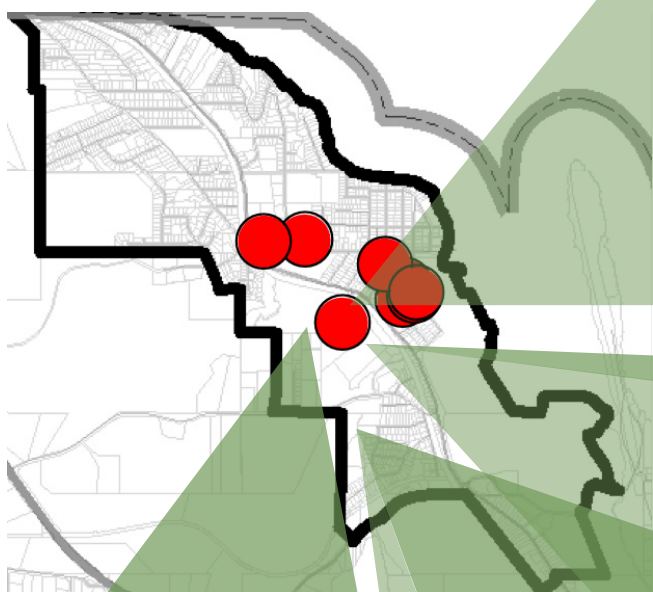
The Heart of Chemainus

We asked community members to indicate on a map what they considered the heart or centre of Chemainus. The map below details the locations that community members chose. Many felt the heart of the community was an area where residents and tourists alike could connect and interact through exploration of place and appreciation of history. Waterwheel Park and Kin Beach were spoken to, as was the recently constructed library. Generally, residents felt that that heart of Chemainus was wherever arts, culture and community could converge.

Chemainus Theatre



Willow Street



Old Town & Ferry Terminal



Waterwheel Park

Buildings

The built form in Chemainus is anything but “cookie cutter” in nature. The heritage Victorian architecture is a defining feature of Old Town Chemainus, with intricate fret work and ornate gables bedecking many of the commercial and residential buildings. Stacked turrets draw the eye upward and arched entryways beckon exploration of the area's unique history. Distinctive gingerbread-style details adorn many of the welcoming, single-storey commercial buildings, complementing the vast array of murals that Chemainus is renowned for. Charming, colourful homes and active store frontages add an additional layer to the artistic town vibrancy, an elaborate foil to the more contemporary forms of newer buildings like the library. Newer development draws on the texture and colours of the West Coast, making use of cedar and natural stone grey.

New Library



Mural

Civic Building



Chemainus Theatre

Heritage Store Front



Mural

“ Chemainus is vibrant, unique, artistic, welcoming. ”

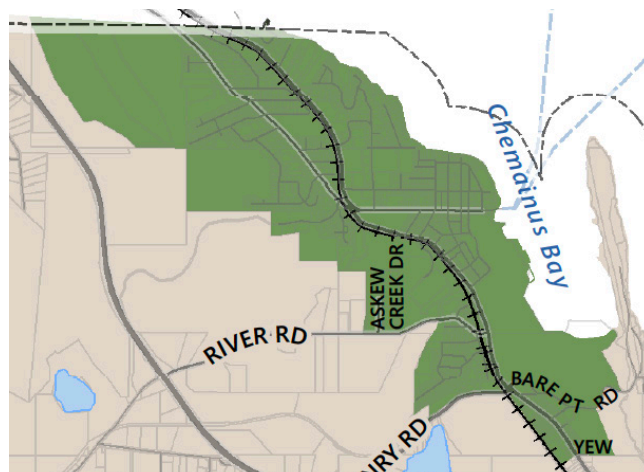
📷 All the photos included in this Community profile have been provided by the community members.

Streets and Pathways

Wide streets with well-maintained, continuous sidewalks foster safe cycling and walking for residents of all ages. Chemainus boasts excellent walkability as well as bikeability both in town and into nature, thanks to the Trans Canada Trail.

Brick paths and tree-lined roads are an ode to the history of Chemainus and the proximity to nature, while functional street furniture like benches add visual appeal. Roadways like Willow Street have the added benefit of delivering pedestrians right to the edge of Kinsmen Beach, yet another reminder of the oceanfront charm of Chemainus.

Chemainus is arranged in a linear settlement pattern along Chemainus Road, with arterial roads concentrated on the eastern, coastal side of the community. The linear loop street network design is highly walkable, owing to sidewalks on most sides of Old Town and New Town Chemainus streets, as well as trails. Many sidewalks, however, are narrow and are also discontinuous along Victoria Road and Chemainus Road. Residential streets lack sidewalks, and some feature gravel shoulders for parking and walking.



Alleyway



Chemainus Trail



Willow Street

Street Parking



Willow Street



Community Spaces

Waterwheel Park is a social mainstay in Chemainus, drawing residents and tourists alike through the wooden archway to enjoy nature and cultural programming, supported by amenities like washrooms and picnic tables. Neighbourhood parks, plazas and the Public Market support a vibrant arts and culture community year-round. Chemainus is bordered by a series of well-loved beaches, including Kinsmen Beach which provide good pedestrian access to the shoreline.

Additional parks provide urban opportunities to enjoy nature, ranging from the smaller Daniel Street Park to the more rugged Wul'aam (Echo) Park and Fuller Lake Area.

Chemainus Heritage Square



Askew Park

Waterwheel Park



Outdoor Theatre

Public Market



Labyrinth

“ The central waterwheel park is key
-
Best performing space on the West Coast
-
A beautiful example of placemaking in a community. ”

Natural Places

Conveniently located and publicly accessible, the shoreline parks of Chemainus are places of peace, beauty and connection to nature for many. Easily accessible trails lead down the ocean and away from the town centre to forested areas like Fuller Lake and Wul'aam (Echo) Park. Nature surrounds Chemainus, providing opportunities to leisurely admire the local flora just as easily as setting sail through the Stuart Channel.

Sailing in Stuart Channel



Local Flora



Lake



Trail Cycling



Beach Sunset

Chemainus Estuary



“ The nature surrounding Chemainus is serene, quiet, beautiful, accessible.

-

Great trail is accessible & great waters nearby ”

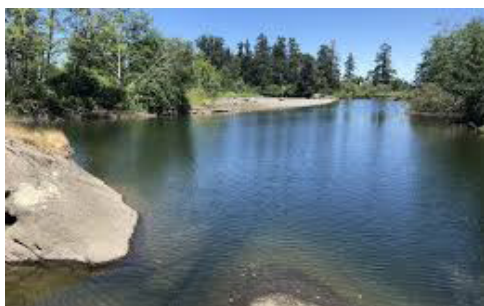
Views

Shoreline vistas, from land or from sea are quintessentially Chemainus. Whether it's sunset at Kinsmen Beach lighthouse, the Chemainus Estuary or the view by kayak on the Salish sea, the ocean draws the eye from every direction. Surrounding forest provide equally appealing views, such as those in Wul'aam (Echo) Park.

Kinsmen Beach and Lighthouse + Sunset



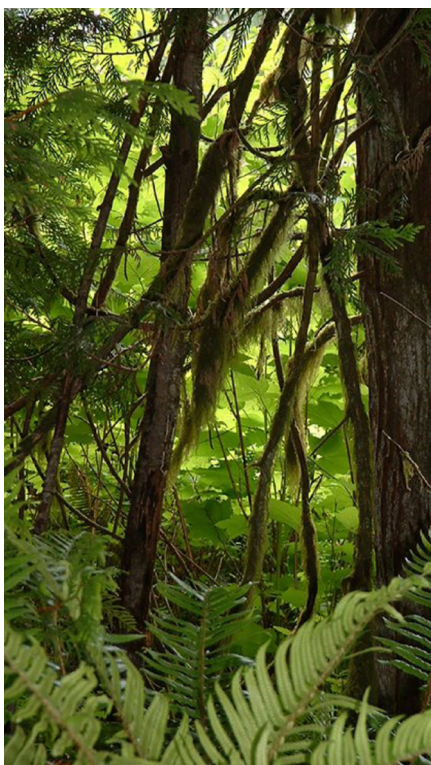
Building



Chemainus Estuary



Great Trail overlooking Ocean



Forest

“ Kayaking from
Kin Beach in
Chemainus.

Down at Kin
Park looking at
the beach and
sunset. ”

Thinking Forward

The character of Chemainus extends beyond the world-renowned murals, as the town is also home to artisanal retailers, safe streets, scenic beaches and ample green space. Bolstering the culturally vibrant, seaside town vibe is crucial as the area evolves. Safe and active transportation options should be upgraded and maintained, with an emphasis on pedestrian infrastructure along the waterfront. Shoreline accessibility such as a boardwalk should be enhanced to ensure unfettered public access to beaches.

Housing affordability should be retained through a diversity of housing options and thoughtful mixed-use development that supports local small businesses and retains heritage aesthetics.

Although Chemainus boasts historical points of interest and heritage architecture, additional work should be pursued to highlight and celebrate the rich history of local First Nation communities through arts and education.

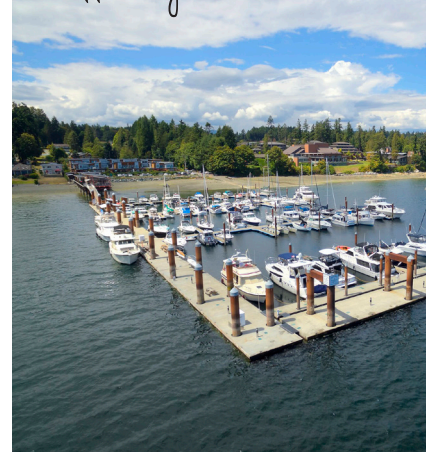
First Nations Recognition
and Celebration



Pedestrian Mall



Mill Bay Marina



Waterfront Walkway

“ Keep the old style charm. Add businesses that will attract visitors and help residents shop local

Convert part of Willow St to pedestrian mall

Need the ocean boardwalk for ocean views, access ”

“ Do not attempt to create a "bustling city" look. Our shtick is "Little Town That Could." ”



MAPLE BAY

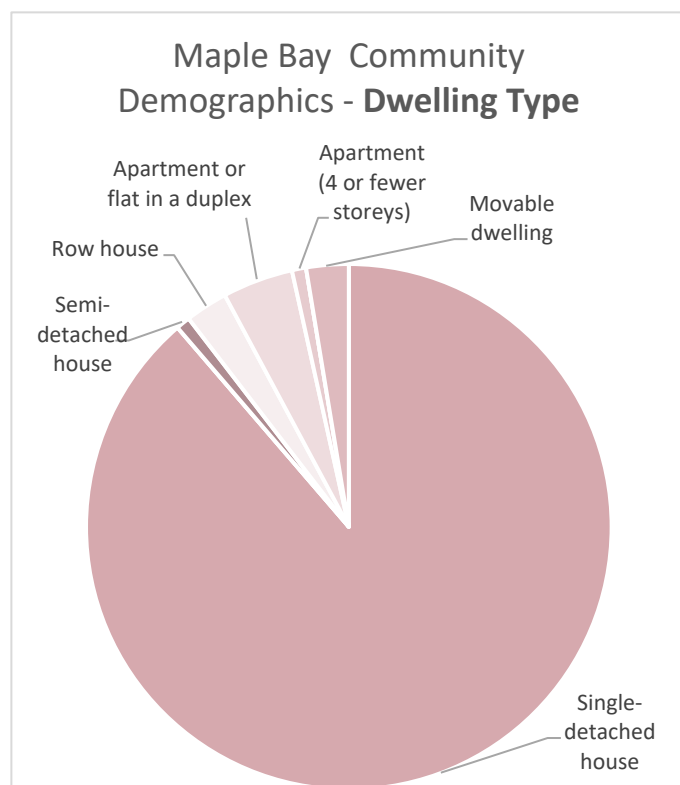
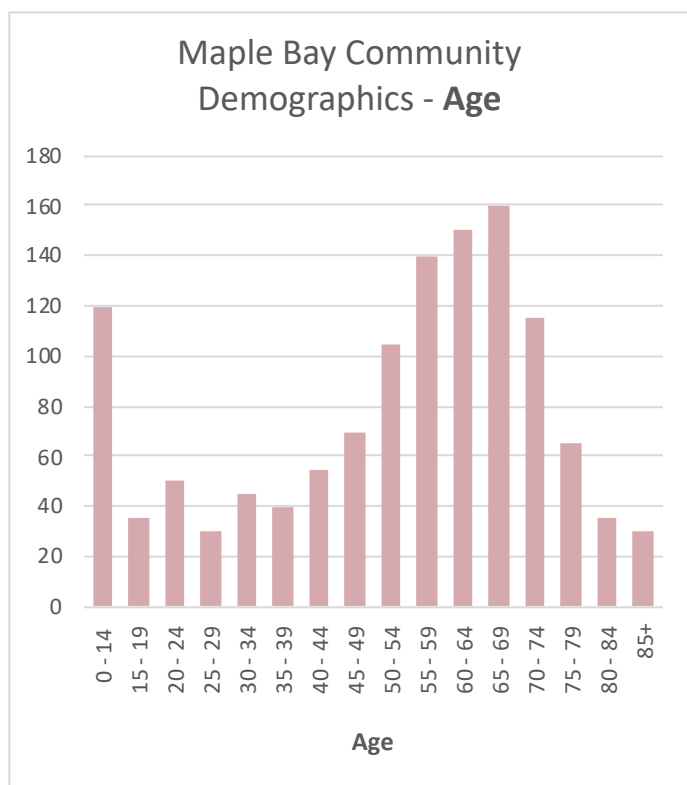
COMMUNITY CHARACTER PROFILE

Introduction

Located on the southern coast of the municipality of North Cowichan, Maple Bay is a small coastal hamlet with a floatplane dock, marina, pub and recreational access.

Access is via scenic roads, and the landscape provides great cross water views with forested mountain backdrops.

The total population of Maple Bay is 1,265 people with the median age being 57.6 years. 89% of the dwelling type here are single-detached homes, while the remaining 11% consists of semi-detached houses, row houses, apartments or flats in a duplex, and other single-attached houses.



During the 2020/21 Official Community Plan update process, community members generously took time to take photos and talk about the character of the natural and built environment of their community and how this character might evolve over time. This profile compiles this rich and informative community perspective.

Local Planning Context

The Maple Bay Community Association prepared the Maple Bay Area Plan¹ in 2015 and provides further insight into the character of Maple Bay.

The vision statement reads:

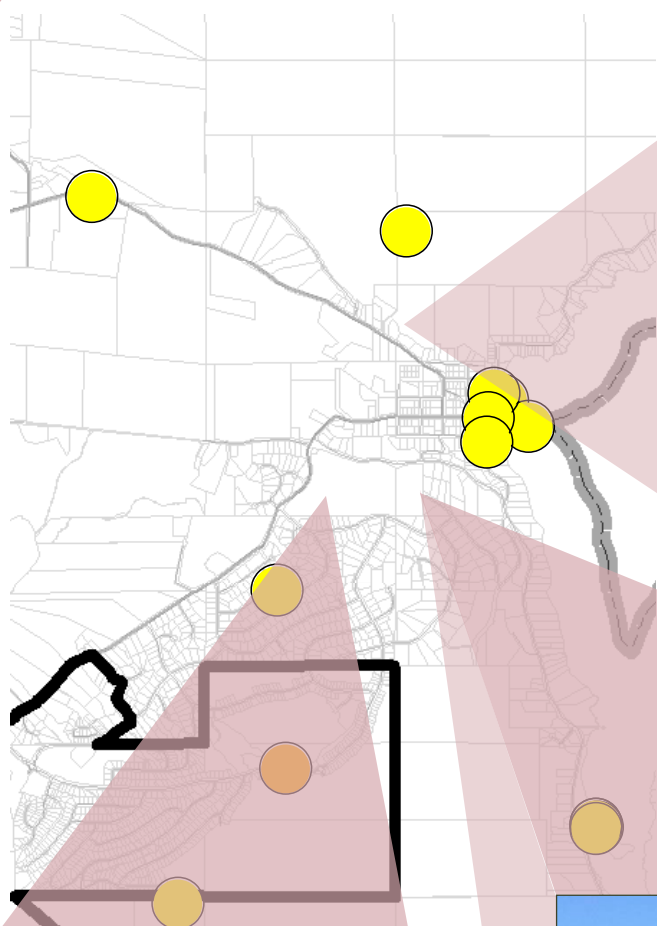
a rural, seaside community that values and protects its natural environment, facilitates outdoor activities, and promotes a strong community spirit for current and future generations

¹ This is not an officially recognized or endorsed plan by the Municipality



The Heart of Maple Bay

As part of the OCP update, we asked community members to indicate on a map what they considered the heart or centre (their favourite places) of Maple Bay. The map below details the locations that community members chose. The ocean was at the core of Maple Bay for many, with references to beaches, Maple Bay Wharf and oceanfront parks. Mount Maxwell and the Stoney Hill trail network were also considered the "heart" for some.



Maple Bay Marina



Buildings



Maple Bay Beach

Buildings

A blend of historically charming buildings and modest contemporary development create a visually appealing and architecturally rich built form in Maple Bay. Awnings and the rounded gambrel shape of the Shipyard Pub reflects the maritime history of the community and the strong connection to marine recreation and commerce. The muted colours of gambrel roof floating homes connect community to the water, giving new meaning to seaside living. The airy, minimal design of West Coast modern homes, both on land and in the Bay draw inspiration from muted ocean grays and blues, while employing the heavy use of cedar and other timber.

More colourful, stout buildings lend to the heritage nature and welcoming feeling of the community. The historical, pioneer-era character of Maple Bay is exemplified by the stately, farm-style Elkington House.

Residential lots take advantage of natural privacy screens of mature foliage, fitting in seamlessly with the heavily treed surroundings. Large residential lots rely on septic systems though many are connected to municipal water service.



Single Family Home



Shipyard Pub



Modern Coastal Home

“

I like the mix
of old & new
buildings. The
combination of
stately & modest
is unique.

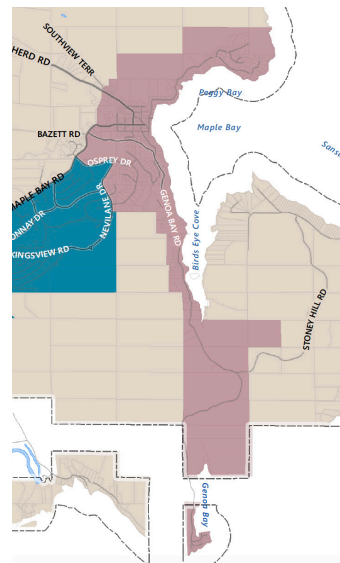
I like the look
of the Shipyard
Pub It was my
husband's uncles
boat yard many
years ago.

”

Streets and Pathways

Maple Bay Road blurs the line between urban settlement and nature, a winding, seaside road thickly enclosed by trees and vegetation. Genoa Bay Road, Beaumont Road and Arbutus Road are similarly characteristic of the area, bordered by trees and offering sprawling vistas of the ocean, the meandering nature reminiscent of a country lane. A dearth of streetlamps keeps the night sky free of light pollution, only full of wonder. Trails leading to Maple Mountain offer a scenic avenue on foot.

Maple Bay is arranged in a compact settlement pattern with residential areas extending north Arbutus Road and south along Genoa Bay Road. The road network pattern is mainly curvilinear, with a grid network emerging at the intersection of Herd Road and Maple Bay Road. Sidewalks are absent along most roads, including major roadways like Herd, Beaumont, and Maple Bay Roads, and adjacent to waterfront access points. A paved or gravel shoulder is typically present on major roadways and arterials.



Rural Road



Roads

Roads



Trail

Road overlooking Ocean



Trail



All the photos included in this Community profile have been provided by the community members.

Community Spaces

Gathering spaces in Maple Bay are anchored by the ocean, as beaches foster play, family recreation, swimming and community connection. The dog park offers opportunities for many, dog owner or not, to socialize and enjoy the open green space. Trails and forest are healthy and accessible, promoting outdoor recreation. Despite a lack of designated parks, the convenient access to nature encourages community members to enjoy the outdoors regularly. Lively indoor spaces like the local pubs blend the warm, welcoming pub atmosphere with the adjacent shoreline.

Marina Pavillion



Dog Park



Maple Bay Beach



Playground at Herd Road Park



Trail Head

Boats in the Bay



“ Maple Bay has a mix of land and sea gathering places. ”

“

Community spaces are our mountain trails and ocean

”

Natural Places

As a gateway to adventure on both land and sea, Maple Bay is graced with nature on all sides from the beaches to mountain peaks. Trails extending from town to Stoney Hill, Maple Mountain, Mount Prevost and Mount Tzouhalem offer access to outdoor recreation, enjoyment of wildlife and exploration of the exceptional forest. Many natural spaces are still untouched by development, allowing ecosystems to flourish. Views of the ocean are uncluttered by houses, and the few that do exist blend into the greenery. The healthy marine environment of the Bay is teeming with wildlife, easily appreciated on shore or on the water.

View of the Bay



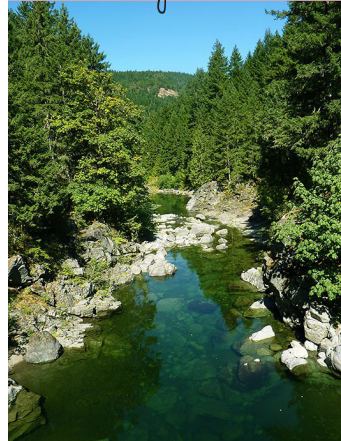
Maple Bay Beach

Trail

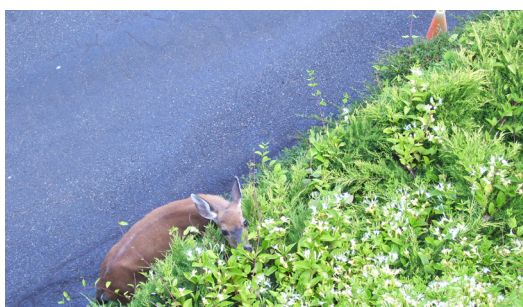


Maple Bay

Waterway



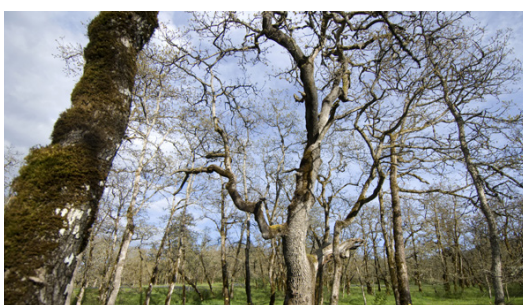
Stoney Hill Park



Urabn Wildlife



Beach



Garry Oaks

Ecological Reserve



“ The ocean and forest is relaxing and where I'm in touch with nature. ”

Views

The expansive views of Maple Bay, Saltspring Island and Sansum Narrows are among the defining vistas in the community, seen from the shore, the wharf and at high points on the road. Unobstructed views of Stoney Hill, Mount Prevost and Mount Tzouhalem are equally peaceful, providing visual appeal in all directions.

Stoney Hill Park



View of the Bay



Mountain View



Maple Mountain



View of Water from the Road

Thinking Forward

As Maple Bay grows and tourism increases, opportunities exist to reimagine the current village core and enhance the commercial viability. Improved public realm and diversified housing forms focused around a village centre will re-energize the community and lessen reliance of personal vehicles to meet their needs. Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure will support this direction, increasing safety and encouraging active transportation.

The health of the surrounding environment and climate change mitigation should be considered in equal measure, with the direction for growth founded on ecosystem protection and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. Gentle infill and density that retains the urban tree canopy and encourages friendly mixed-used buildings is an extension of current Maple Bay character, aiding to support local businesses and promote walkability. While floating homes are an eclectic component of the Maple Bay housing stock, the marine impacts of derelict vessels and non-marina liveaboards should be addressed.

Designated parks and additional gathering spaces will provide additional places for community members and tourists to congregate and connect. Additional parking will be needed to accommodate increasing vehicle traffic as the area grows and enhanced traffic calming will improve pedestrian safety as well as wildlife safety.



Ganges Harbour



Contemporary Floating Home



Urban Tree Canopy



Terraced Park



Pedestrian Mall



Mixed-Use



I'd like to see a walkable town with housing above shops.





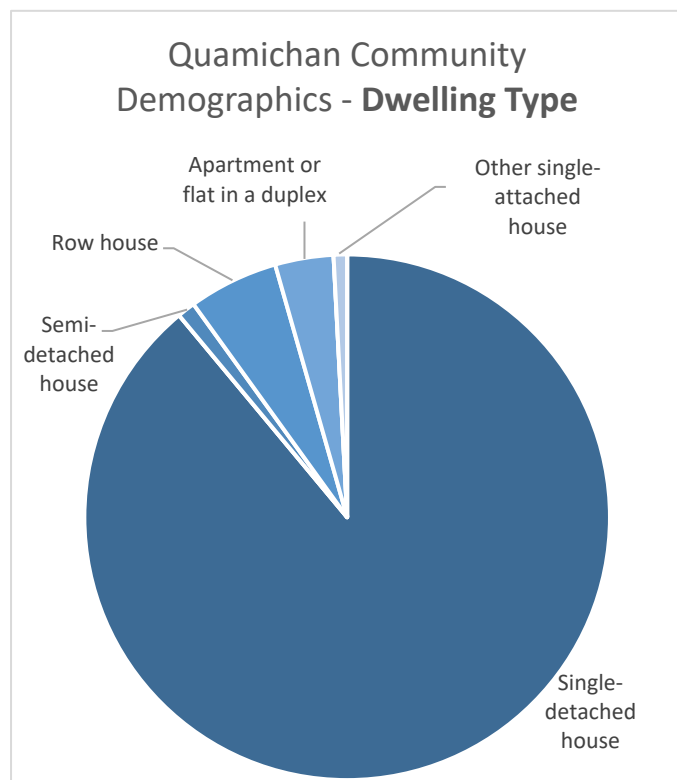
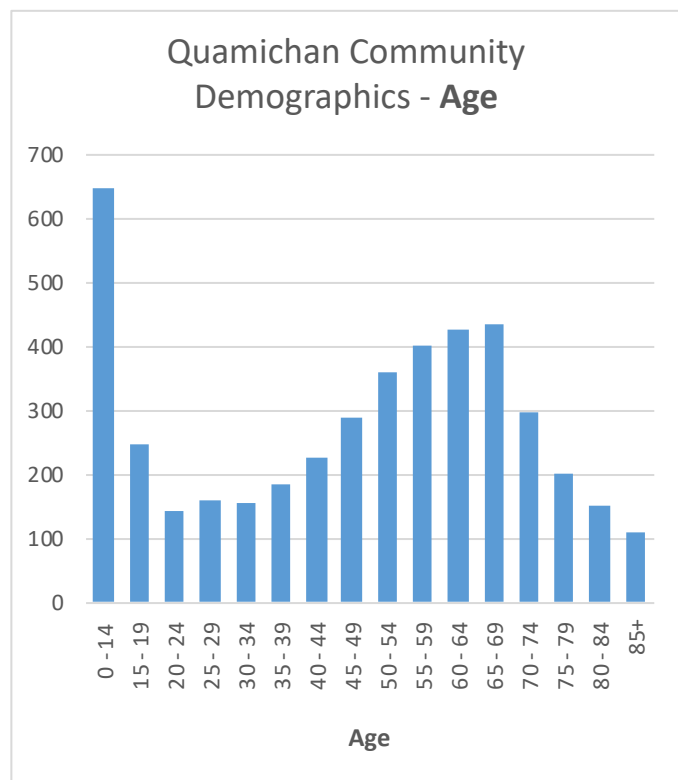
QUAMICHAN AREA

COMMUNITY CHARACTER PROFILE

Introduction

The Quamichan Lake Area is generally a collection of residential settlements located along the south/east shore of Quamichan Lake. The area includes a mix of residential, farming, heritage lake front properties and newer subdivisions.

The total population of Quamichan is 4,400 people with the median age being 53.0 years. 89% of the dwelling type here are single-detached homes, while the remaining 11% consists of semi-detached houses, row houses, apartments or flats in a duplex, and other single-attached houses.



During the 2020/21 Official Community Plan update process, community members generously took time to take photos and talk about the character of the natural and built environment of their community and how this character might evolve over time. This profile compiles this rich and informative community perspective.

Local Planning Context

The Quamichan Area is within the Urban Containment Boundary identified in the 2011 Official Community Plan. 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 and medium scale infill and development that are not captured under any policy guidance other than the Official Community Plan.



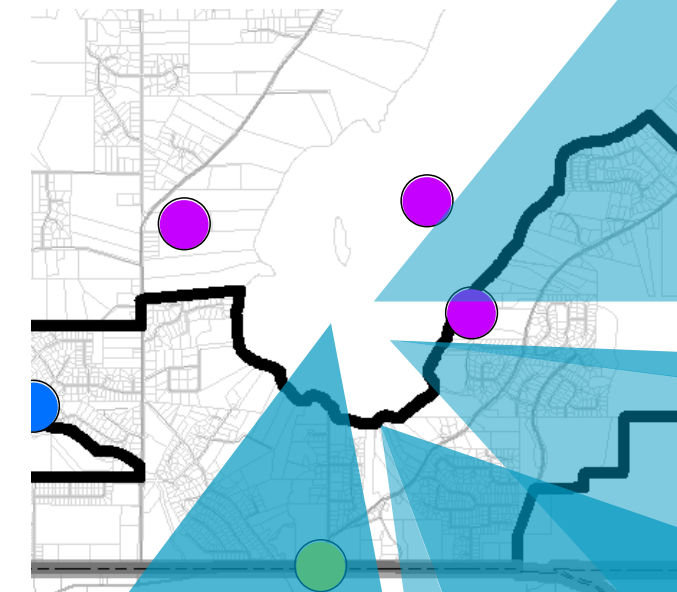
The Heart of Quamichan

As part of the OCP update process, we asked community members to indicate on a map what they considered the heart or centre (their favourite places) of Quamichan. The map below details the locations that community members chose. Many indicated that Quamichan Lake was the centre of this place, a place of peace and recreation. Areas of convergence between heritage and nature, like the Elkington House were indicated by some. Others felt that the heart of Quamichan is undefined and that the anticipated commercial area or other yet to be developed gathering places could be the future core of the community.

Pastoral Maple Bay Road



Garry Oak Trees



Rural and Lake Views



Mountain and Lake Views

Buildings

The culture and history of Quamichan is reflected broadly through community buildings and homes. The deep eaves and dormer windows frame heritage buildings and farm style homes set far back on large lots. Native vegetation, gardens and grassy areas add to the bucolic nature, while active woodshops, cideries and farms add vibrancy to the rural landscape. Buildings are complementary to the natural beauty of this area, as stands of trees and pastoral sightlines are preserved.

Single-Family Home



Quamichan Lake Barn



Quamichan Lake Barn

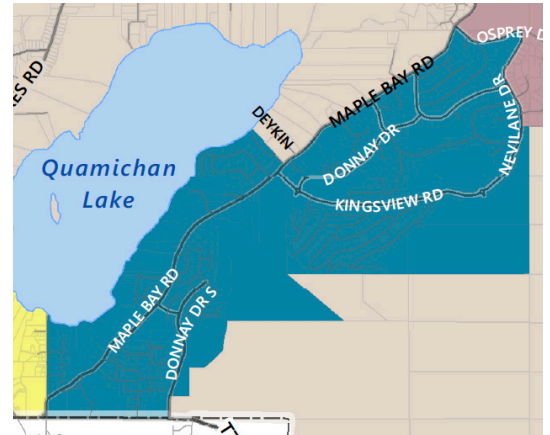
“ Quamichan is heritage homes and farms that are rural, historic and scenic. ”

📷 All the photos included in this Community profile have been provided by the community members.

Streets and Pathways

Rural, twisting roads bordered by rough gravel shoulders beckon exploration of the surrounding environment and direct sightlines to Quamichan Lake are a constant reminder of the community's namesake. Trails and paths create connections to the lake and forest, while providing opportunities for walking and cycling.

Quamichan exhibits a looping street pattern adjacent to Kingview Road up Mount Tzouhalem and features more cul-de-sacs further south towards Donnay Drive South. Major roads may have narrow sidewalks on one or both sides featuring barrier curbs, while others have a paved or gravel shoulders instead. Some residential streets lack sidewalks, and some feature gravel shoulders for parking and walking. The Kingsview Development along Kingsview Road is currently under construction and will feature wide sidewalks, road verges and safe pedestrian crossings.



Rural Road

Pathways
that
connect
to nature
surround
us



Rural Road



Sightline to Quamichan Lake

Community Spaces

The beloved Quamichan Lake is a mecca for outdoor activity and connection to nature. Whether paddling across the water, exploring the shoreline or mountain biking, this area is well-used by the community. The saltier waters of the adjacent Maple Bay also foster gatherings and play, as does the Quamichan playground and Maple Bay Elementary School.

Lake Vegetation



Quamichan Lake

Quamichan Lake Access



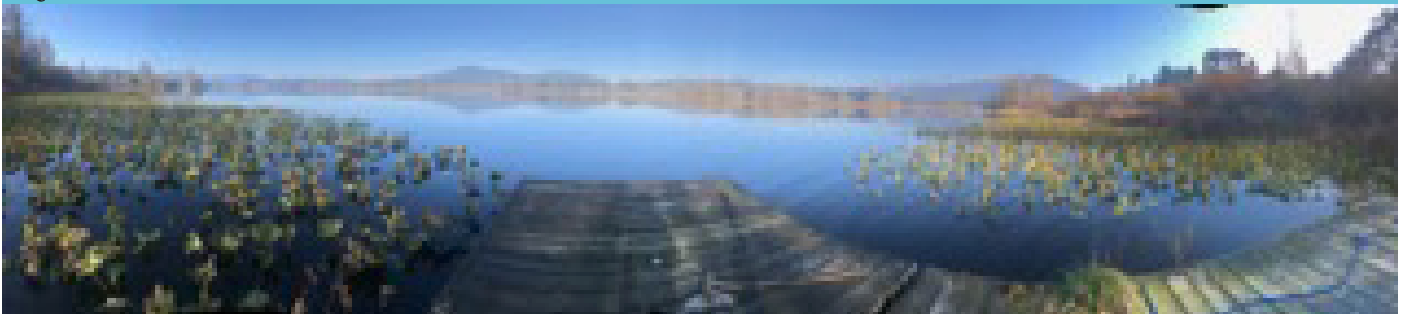
“ I Enjoy the lake views, wildlife
and outdoor activities.

”

Natural Places

Quamichan Lake serves as an idyllic natural haven for those seeking to hike trails, explore the forest and enjoy the water. Nearby mountains allow access to elevated arbutus forest and views of the surrounding valley, as well as the Garry Oak Reserve that is unique to this region. Winding dirt trails and wooden boardwalks blend in with nature providing opportunities to enjoy and connect with the natural environment.

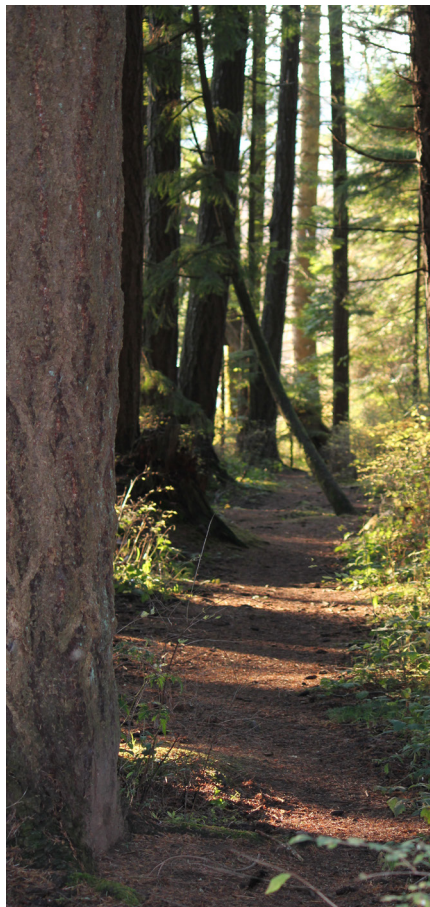
Quamichan Lake



Garry Oak Reserve

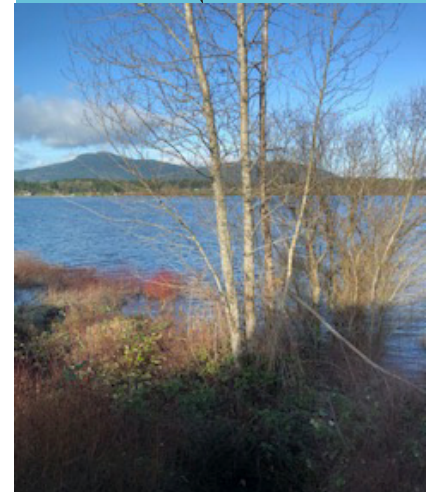


Quamichan Lake



Trail

Lake Shoreline



“ The Gary Oak Reserve is in my backyard ”

Views

Views from atop Mount Prevost and Mount Tzouhalem stretch out across the forest and farmland, out past Maple Bay and Cowichan Bay. From below, these peaks are equally impressive and can be seen throughout Quamichan.

Quamichan Lake



Valley Sunset



“

My favourite view is from Mt. Prevost looking over to Cow Bay

”

Thinking Forward

Current gathering spaces are predominantly used for recreation, like hiking and biking trails and draw a mix of tourists and locals. A commercial center and accessible public space would be beneficial to support community building as Quamichan grows. Preservation of heritage buildings and local businesses are crucial to the retention of Quamichan's character and improved pedestrian infrastructure would support active transportation and friendly, village feel of this community.

Although Quamichan Lake is well-loved, addressing declining aquatic health would improve this place and benefit the natural ecosystems. Recreational trails would benefit from expansion and improved connectivity around and to the lake. Preservation of forested land, in particular the rare Garry Oak ecosystem is essential to retain the natural heritage of the land and support outdoor recreation.

Any further development should be, thoughtful, low-impact development should complement existing structures without overpowering the heritage and agricultural character of the community with an emphasis on tree retention.



Terraced Park



Green Space



Urban Tree Canopy

“

Subdivisions like Donnay /Kingsview, built on steep slopes that put watershed at risk detract from our community character.

”