

Area D – Cowichan Bay OCP

Our Community. Our Future.

OCP Goals & Directions Survey Results
March 2011

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A goals and directions survey was conducted between December 15, 2010 and February 15, 2011 as part of the Area D – Cowichan Bay Official Community Plan process. The intent of the survey was to gauge the level of support for draft OCP goals and potential policy directions from Area D residents and stakeholders. The survey was accessible online through the CVRD website and on paper at True Grain Bread in Cowichan Bay, the CVRD office in Duncan. A total of 168 surveys were completed.

Section A. Goals & Directions

Twelve draft goals have been proposed for the Area D – Cowichan Bay Official Community Plan. Survey participants were asked to select all of the policy directions that they support to achieve each of the identified goals. The following responses were received (open ended comments are included in Appendix A). All responses were voluntary.

Goal 1 - Protect, enhance and restore the health of the estuary and foreshore

The Cowichan Bay Estuary is recognized as one of the most biologically important areas for fish and wildlife in the world. Yet land and water-based activities have negatively impacted the estuarine environment, resulting in a decline of the chinook salmon and other fish species, closure of shellfish harvesting, and loss of eelgrass and other plants which provide critical forage fish habitat. OCP policies should provide direction to achieve a healthy estuary and foreshore.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Regulate development activity on steep slopes and in the marine foreshore	126	76%
Provide educational opportunities and materials for residents	118	70%
Collaborate with other government agencies and non-profit organizations to work toward mutual goals	121	72%

Goal 2 - Carefully manage growth

Carefully managed growth is integral to preserving or enhancing resident quality of life. Gradual, low-impact growth is supported provided that it does not place a burden on infrastructure and services, taxes, public health and safety or environmental health. Infilling of existing residential areas - "growing up not out" - is preferred to extending services to undeveloped areas.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Ensure that new development does not adversely impact community character or environmental quality	128	76%
Promote sensitive infill of existing neighbourhoods rather than expanding services and infrastructure to undeveloped areas	109	65%
Ensure new development contributes community amenities (e.g. walking paths, community gardens, affordable housing, public art)	132	79%

Goal 3 - Support sustainable and active agriculture

The OCP strives to protect ALR farmland and promote agricultural activities to foster greater self-sufficiency, local food production and security, and greater economic diversity. While 70% of the Area D land base is designated as ALR (agricultural) land, the agricultural sector faces many challenges, particularly with more stringent regulations, increasing costs and conflicts with neighbouring land uses. The CVRD will strongly support and encourage the agricultural sector in Area D.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Encourage small-scale food production and market gardening	140	83%
Preserve high quality agricultural land for agricultural uses	146	87%
Reduce conflicts between residential and agricultural uses	116	69%
Encourage household food production and composting	129	77%
Encourage water conservation with all land uses	128	76%

Goal 4 - Support green infrastructure, natural ecosystems and species biodiversity

Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, significant environmental features, natural habitat, air quality and water quality are critical to our quality of life. Natural habitat areas and corridors support diverse plant and animal life and facilitate healthy ecosystem processes. These areas also offer significant recreational, social and cultural opportunities such as parks and trails. The CVRD will actively protect green infrastructure, natural ecosystems and species biodiversity.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Regulate development in and near sensitive areas such as the foreshore, riparian corridors, wildlife habitat, and steep slopes	123	73%
Restore environmentally sensitive areas and habitat that have been modified	109	65%
Reduce noise and light pollution that can impact migratory patterns, feeding habits, and life cycles of birds, fish and wildlife	117	70%
Pursue opportunities to reduce liquid sewage from entering groundwater or surface water	139	83%
Support recreational, social and cultural opportunities that are compatible with natural ecosystems and species biodiversity	121	72%

Goal 5 - Enhance mobility and transportation efficiency

Today in Area D there is a strong reliance on private automobiles for personal mobility. Almost 1,110 people - 90% of commuters - drive to work. This goal seeks to create a viable, safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system, which offers a variety of transportation alternatives including walking, cycling and transit.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Build "green" infrastructure (i.e. off-road walking trails, bike lanes, trail connections)	133	79%
Develop a transportation and parking strategy for Cowichan Bay Village	128	76%
Enhance public transit	120	71%

Goal 6 - Encourage local economic development

Economic health is a vital component of a complete community. Local employment lessens the need to commute long distances to work. Local businesses provide shops and services needed to supplement residents' daily needs and contribute to vibrant places. Today, more than 900 Area D residents leave the community for work on a daily basis. OCP policies will actively encourage the development of the agricultural and maritime economies in a manner that is in keeping with the character of Area D - Cowichan Bay and opportunities to provide "living wage" jobs within or close to Area D.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Encourage a diversified economic and employment base that provides living wage jobs	121	72%
Support home-based businesses that are compatible with neighbouring uses and the natural environment	129	77%
Foster connections between local producers (e.g. farmers), manufacturers and retailers to create local, value-added products	134	80%
Encourage tourist facilities and services that complement the human and natural heritage of Area D - Cowichan Bay	119	71%

Goal 7 - Enhance the community's connection to the water

The waterfront is a major asset to the Area D community. Residents feel strongly about their proximity to the ocean. OCP policies will encourage linkages between neighbourhoods and the waterfront (e.g. beach accesses and beach walks) and greater opportunities to experience Cowichan Bay Village from the waterside (e.g. public moorage and waterfront boardwalk).

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Create new beach accesses and waterfront trail connections	110	65%
Develop a waterfront boardwalk in Cowichan Bay Village	105	63%
Develop a low-tide beach walk	77	46%
Provide appropriate signage for trails and beach accesses	117	70%
The CVRD will pursue opportunities to acquire waterfront property for public parks, trails and facilities	107	64%

Goal 8 - Recognize and enhance the character and amenities of Area D and its unique neighbourhoods

Area D - Cowichan Bay residents wish to retain the rural character of their community and its unique amenities - agriculture, connection to the water, lifestyle and environmental quality. Area D includes a variety of different places and neighbourhoods - each with their own unique character. New development should complement the form and character of existing development and contribute amenities to enhance existing neighbourhoods.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Require new multi-family, commercial and industrial development to complement neighbourhood character through building and site design guidelines	108	64%
Provide amenities and services that are missing from existing neighbourhoods (e.g. community gardens, off-road walking paths, bike lanes, transit stops)	133	79%

Goal 9 - Build social infrastructure

Social infrastructure provides community services and facilities to support enhanced quality of life for all groups such as youth, families, seniors and singles. Social infrastructure may include a community hall, a farmers market, affordable housing, daycares or social programs. OCP policies will direct the development of social infrastructure and opportunities for social interaction.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Encourage indoor and outdoor community gathering spaces	113	67%
Encourage age-friendly and disabled-friendly public spaces and facilities (e.g. park benches, even walking surfaces)	125	74%
Support volunteerism in the community	115	68%
Provide a variety of housing types to meet the needs of a diverse community	90	54%

Goal 10 - Celebrate heritage, cultural values and identity

The cultural values and traditions of First Nations, our maritime heritage, agriculture, forestry and fishing are strongly tied to the past, and contribute to community sense of place and identity. These values should be supported through OCP policies.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Identify and protect significant heritage sites and buildings	125	74%
Consider heritage and cultural values in the design of new public parks and facilities	111	66%
Consider heritage and cultural values in the design of new private development	88	52%
Encourage special events and activities to celebrate community heritage and culture	117	70%

Goal 11 - Enhance public health and safety

As a coastal area, Area D is susceptible to flooding, storms, and other natural hazards. The safety of our roads, stability of steep slopes, and design of buildings and spaces to deter crime are also concerns. The OCP will address methods to improve the health and safety of our living and working environments.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Improve the safety of the Area D transportation network including roadways, parking areas, pathways, trails and pedestrian crossings	119	71%
Better regulate development near environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes and waterfront areas	114	68%
Design new developments using CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) criteria	84	50%
Encourage community involvement in safety and prevention programs	126	75%

Goal 12 - Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Climate change, linked to increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs) from human activities, is expected to result in increased sea level, increased precipitation, increased year-round temperatures and more extreme weather events (e.g. summer droughts, heavy rains, winter storms) on Vancouver Island. In the CVRD about 80% of GHGs come from on-road transportation, while the rest come from buildings and solid waste. OCP policies should facilitate reduced GHG emissions.

POLICY DIRECTION	Positive Responses	% of Respondents
Encourage alternative transportation (e.g. walking, cycling, transit)	123	73%
Encourage household and business recycling and composting	137	82%
Encourage smaller housing forms that consume less energy	88	52%
Require new development to be designed for energy-efficiency (e.g. building orientation for passive solar heating; roof overhangs and landscaping for shading)	101	60%

Section B. Demographics

Where do you currently reside?

Area D - Cowichan Bay	138	82%
CVRD (Duncan, Ladysmith, North Cowichan, Lake Cowichan, Area A, B, C, E, F, G, I)	19	11%
Vancouver Island / not CVRD	3	2%
Other, please specify	8	5%
Total	168	100%

Where in Area D - Cowichan Bay do you reside?

Cowichan Bay Village (Village area/stilt homes/floathomes/liveboards)	9	7%
Cowichan Bay Hillside (Pritchard/Wilmot/Pavenham)	36	26%
Falcon Crescent/George Road	7	5%
Glen Road	13	9%
Cowichan Bay Road/Hillbank Road/Bench Road	9	7%
Four Ways area	8	6%
Lambourn/Cherry Point	28	20%
Kingscote	13	9%
Jim's Crescent/Telegraph Road	1	1%
Chaster Road/Koksilah	2	1%
Wood/Sears/Nelson/Mindy	2	1%
Other Area D neighbourhood, please specify	10	7%
Total	138	100%

How long have you lived in Area D - Cowichan Bay?

Less than 1 year	8	6%
Between 1 and 5 years	24	17%
Between 5 and 10 years	35	25%
Between 10 and 20 years	36	26%
More than 20 years	35	25%
Total	138	100%

Do you rent or own your home?

Rent	7	5%
Own	131	95%
Total	138	100%

Please indicate your age:

Under 20 years	0	0%
20 to 24 years	2	1%
25 to 34 years	4	3%
35 to 44 years	25	16%
45 to 64 years	95	59%
65 to 84 years	33	20%
85 years or older	2	1%
Total	161	100%