

STATUS OF THE COMMUNITY REPORT

Prepared by

SOCIAL PLANNING COWICHAN

First Edition
Fall 2006



The Government of Canada has
Contributed funding to this
initiative





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Letter from the Chair



Social Planning Cowichan is pleased to provide the community with the Status of the Community report for the Cowichan Valley (2006).

Sustainable quality of life is dynamically linked to our economy, our physical environment and the health of our community. The indicators examined in this report provide the basis for an action plan to continue nurturing our areas of strengths and to find solutions to some of our most challenging issues – housing, transportation and the coordination of social services, including First Nations.

The work of “Visions 2020” established the foundation for this report. Social Planning Cowichan wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the many community members who participated in establishing the vision for quality of life in the Cowichan Valley.

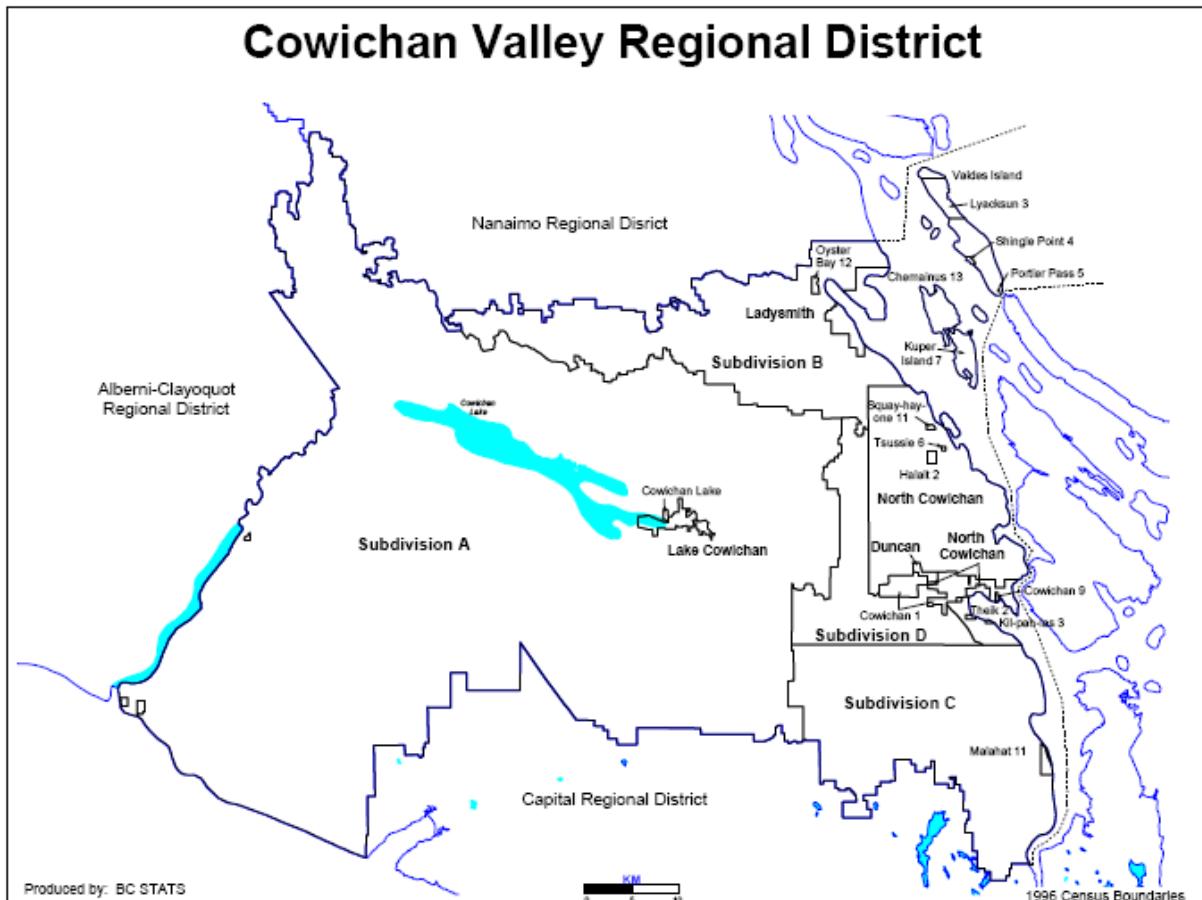
Thank you to the researchers and authors of this report for your wonderful ideas and hard work. Thank you also to all the members of the community who contributed.

It is our hope that community decision-makers will use the report to create meaningful strategies and plan for the future. Social Planning Cowichan is honored to be given the leadership role by the community to assist in moving forward on the priorities identified in this report.

Yours truly,

Candace Spilsbury, Chair
Social Planning Cowichan

The Geographic Area Examined In the Status of the Community Report



One of the challenges faced in the Cowichan region is multiple sets of boundaries. There are boundaries describing electoral regions, boundaries describing health regions and boundaries describing service areas for a number of diverse organizations. For the purpose of the Status of the Community Report, the area of inquiry includes the Town of Ladysmith in the North, the Malahat in the South, the Town of Lake Cowichan in the West and Thetis and Kuper Island in the East.

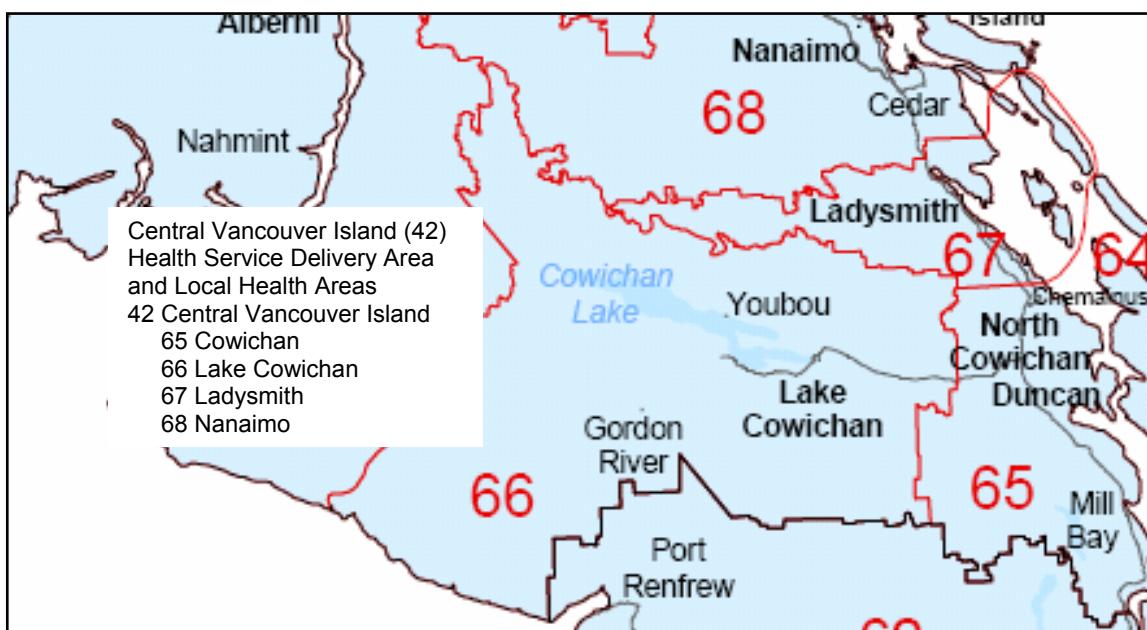
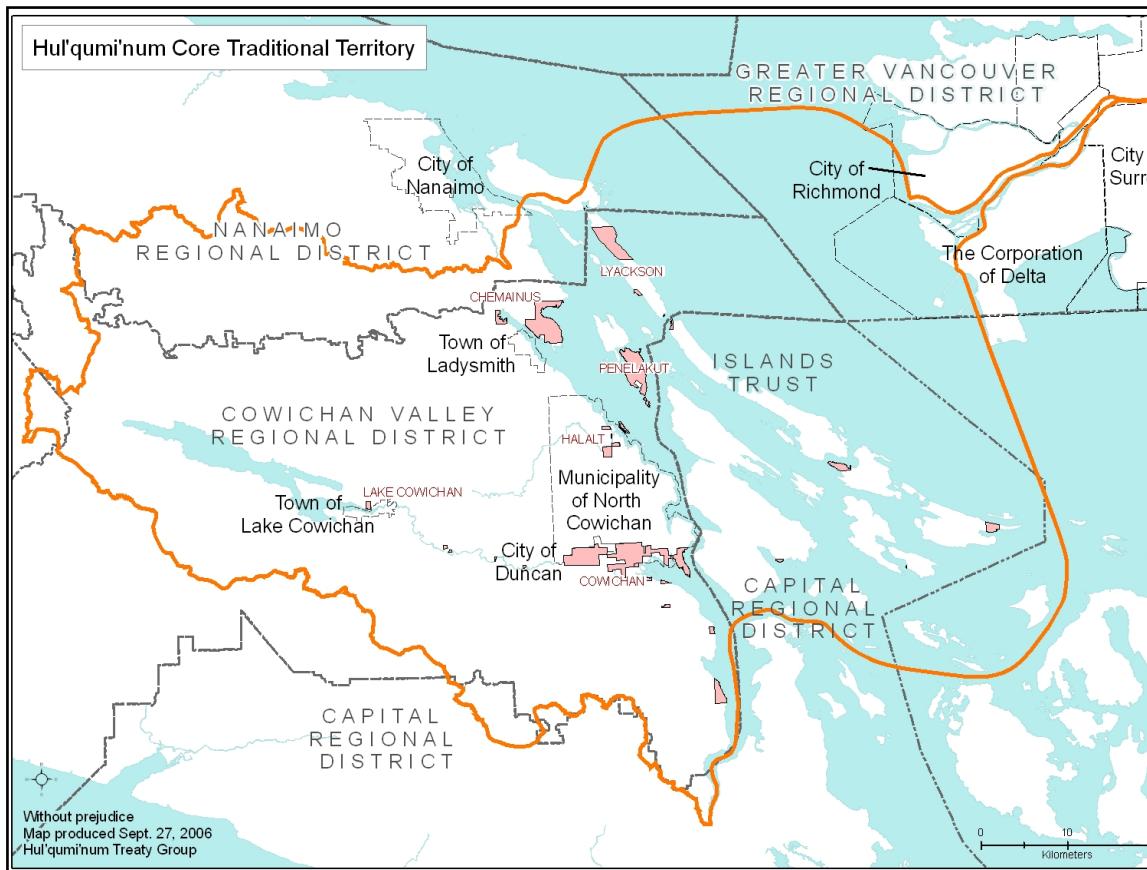




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Introduction

About the 2006 Report

Intent

Using the principles of the Earth Charter as a framework, the mandate for Social Planning Cowichan is to:

1. Serve as a catalyst for community well-being
2. Promote broader and deeper understanding on social issues that affect quality of community life
3. Advise on social impacts related to current trends and needs in the community.

The first step toward achieving this mandate is the production of the Social Planning Cowichan "Status of the Community Report." The report consists of 65 indicators grouped under ten broad categories. These categories include the six sectoral visions brought forward by the Visions 2020 group on behalf of citizens of the Cowichan Region, and four additional categories.

In 1992, a group of citizens from the Cowichan region met to discuss what they valued about life here and what they wanted to see preserved for the future. The product of this discussion was the Visions 2020 initiative organized under the direction of Community Futures Development Corporation and funded by Service Canada and Western Economic Diversification. The work of the Visions 2020 group includes a global vision statement and six sector-specific statements that were written and ratified by residents of the Cowichan region at a public forum in 2005.

The Status of the Community Report has incorporated and expanded upon the work of the Visions 2020 group to provide a comprehensive look at where the Cowichan region is now, and where it would like to be in the future.

What is the Earth Charter?

The Earth Charter is an authoritative synthesis of values, principles, and aspirations that are widely shared by growing numbers of people in all regions of the world. The principles of the Earth Charter reflect extensive international consultations conducted over a period of many years. These principles are also based upon contemporary science, international law, and the insights of philosophy and religion. Successive drafts of the Earth Charter were circulated around the world for comments and debate by nongovernmental organizations, community groups, professional societies, and international experts in many fields.

Earth Charter Principles:

RESPECT & CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE

1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.
2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.
3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.
4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.

ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.
6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.
7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.
8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.
10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.
11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.
12. Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.

DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE

13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision-making, and access to justice.
14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.
15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.
16. Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace.

THE WAY FORWARD

Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.

Earth Charter Cowichan members.shaw.ca/earthcharter earthcharter@shaw.ca

How do the principles of the Earth Charter relate to Social Planning Cowichan's 2006 Status of the Community Report?

Each of the ten reporting categories represents a chapter in the Status of the Community Report. Throughout this report, the Earth Charter principles relevant to various categories will be outlined so the reader can clearly see the connection.

About the Indicators:

A project steering committee applied rigorous criteria to select the indicators used in this report. The first priority for data collection was to use local sources where possible and to find the most recent data available. Every attempt was made to use data gathered at regular intervals to provide context for the information and to track trends over time.

Legend:



Trend is toward community well-being



No discernible trend



Trend is away from community well-being

Limitations

There are five regional governments, seven Aboriginal governments, three local health areas and two school districts within the Cowichan region. With so many operational boundaries in place, data collection for this report was a complex undertaking. Where possible, a geographic context has been given for indicators, as well as a time context.

The data from the recent Statistics Canada Census 2006 was not available at the time of writing this report. Data for the 2001 census was used in the absence of more recent local statistics. Also, Statistics Canada Census typically has low participation from Aboriginal peoples, which often results in persons identifying as Aboriginal being under-represented.

An invitation was extended to the Aboriginal communities within the Cowichan region to participate in the provision of information for the report. At the time of writing, we had conducted one interview with the Chief Negotiator of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group.

Recommendations

Upon completion of the Status of the Community Report, the people of the Cowichan region will have a comprehensive set of indicators with which to make decisions for the future. One potential option is to consider the Genuine Wealth model. Progress of a society is typically evaluated by its Gross National Product. This has been labeled a faulty calculator because it fails to take into account assets that contribute to genuine societal well-being. Economist Mark Anielski has proposed a new model, called Genuine Wealth, that considers our values as a society and focuses on conditions of well-being. The conditions of well-being include five forms of wealth: human capital (people); societal capital (relationships); natural capital (environmental assets); built capital (infrastructure); and financial capital. The Genuine Wealth model proposes a new kind of "balance sheet" that measures the state of all the assets, liabilities and equity of a community. Using this model, genuine progress indicators can be derived which align with the quality of life values of greatest importance to the community.

Chapter One: Arts, Culture & Recreation

Introduction

Art and culture are fundamental to our society, as they tell the story of who we are today. They build positive self-image and improve self-esteem, thereby improving the quality of life in our communities.

"Tomorrow, the cultural portfolio may be the single most important agent in the pursuit of a healthy society."

Simon Brault Vice-Chair,
Canada Council for the Arts

Active recreation for all people is vital to the promotion and maintenance of general health and wellness in our community. The relationship between recreation, disease prevention and health promotion is substantiated by findings which recognize that light to moderate activity, typical of many recreational activities, can help prevent and manage many chronic diseases and positively affects mental health by reducing anxiety and stress and increasing self-esteem.

1.1 Arts



The Cowichan region has one of the highest per capita residences of artists and artisans in British Columbia. The Cowichan Region Economic Development Commission has applied for a grant from Arts Now (2010 Legacy) to do a cultural plan for the Cowichan Valley Regional District that includes a catalogue of the artists and artisans living here. This catalogue will include Performing

Arts, Visual Arts, Artisans, Literary Arts, Culinary Arts, Film and Video.

Artisans: Listings

	Listings
Carver	20
Woodworkers	20
Knitters/Weavers	20
Quilters	1
Fabric/Fiber Art	16
Jewellery/Maker/Designer	9
Handmade Crafts	14
Sculpture/Metal	21
Glass Art	6
Pottery/Ceramics	17
Other	2

Visual Arts Listings

	Listings
Photography	23
Painting/Drawing	55
Printmaking/Screen Printing	3
Graphic Arts	26
Other	91

Film & Video Listings

	Listings
Filmmakers	7
Pre/Post Production services	5
Other	2

Performing Arts Listings

	Listings
Dance	2
Vocal/Choir	5
Music	22
Acting	4
Disc Jockeys	4
Other	3

Literary Arts: Listing

	Listings
Writers	1
Publishing	17

Culinary Arts: Listings

	Listings
Culinary Professional	1
Specialty Foods	17
Wineries/Vineyards	14

*Source: Survey commissioned by the Cowichan Region Economic Development Commission, Regional Arts, Culture and Heritage Initiative (Researchers: Louise McMurray, Chrystal Stone) February, 2006

1.2 Culture



The cultural development plan proposed by the Cowichan Region Economic Development Commission aims to consolidate the effort to address the needs of the arts, culture and heritage sectors for the entire region. The plan will look at the needs and potential barriers to growth faced by artists in the region, and it will also identify a strategy to meet the needs of the growing demand for cultural tourism and the cultural requirements of an expanding population.

Heritage Survey	
HERITAGE	Listings
Natural Heritage	8
Historic Heritage Site	2
Libraries	4
Museums	9
Antiques and Collectables	18
Other	5
Community	
Arts Education	9
Association/Societies	19
Arts Organizations/clubs	38
Government/Organizations	14
Venues (Theatres, Galleries & Studios)	
Theatres, Galleries, Studios	42
Events and Festivals	
All types	25

* Source: Survey commissioned by the Cowichan Region Economic Development Commission, Regional Arts, Culture and Heritage Initiative (Researchers: Louise McMurray, Chrystal Stone) February, 2006

Connection to the Earth Charter:

#14: Integrate onto formal education and life-long skills needed for a sustainable way of life.

1.3 Recreation



"I think a park should be a protected area – not only for recreation, but for other purposes. Recreation is one value. There may be other values that need to be protected there. Places where there may be traditional medicines – to be able to collect and protect them...bathing places, plants and animals for harvest that need to be protected. That would be a Hul'qumi'num perspective – a value for parks that is more than just recreation."

Interview with Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

Parks and Public Spaces: For our Cowichan Valley communities, parks mean community enrichment. Our outdoor recreation sites offer solitude, physical challenge and spiritual renewal.

CVRD Parks is dedicated to the protection and development of our local natural environments for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of the public. CVRD Parks is committed to serving residents of the Cowichan Valley Regional District, British Columbians and their visitors.

There are two classes of park operated by the Cowichan Valley Regional District: Regional Parks and Community Parks. Currently, there are three Regional Parks in the Cowichan Valley that are funded by the entire regional district.

- Osborne Bay Park;
- Sandy Pool Regional Park;
- Trans Canada Trail Regional Park

There are over 100 Community Parks in the possession and/or control of the Regional District. These parks cover a wide range such as trail systems, tot lots, nature parks, boat launches, beach areas, athletic fields etc.. The taxpayers in each of the nine electoral areas fund these parks.

The need for a Parks and Open Space Master Plan comes at a time when Mill Bay/ Malahat is increasing in population growth. This is an opportunity to create an exciting parks, trails and open space plan that can be implemented as the community grows. The Trans Canada trail is a shared use recreation trail that will wind its way through every province and territory. It will be the longest trail of its kind in the world, spanning approximately 17,400 kilometers.

Vancouver Island's section of the Trail will accommodate three core activities: walking, cycling and horseback riding. Trans Canada Trail funding and development has been a co-operative project between the CVRD, Human Resources Development Canada, the Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks, Trails BC, the South Cowichan Rotary Club and many other agencies, local groups, businesses and individuals. If you're interested in getting involved, email parks@cvrd.bc.ca



There are ten Provincial Parks in the Cowichan Valley region:

- Carmanah Provincial Park
- West Coast Trail
- Cowichan River Provincial Park
- Gordon River Provincial Park
- West Shawnigan Lake Park
- Bamberton Provincial Park
- Eves Park
- Chemainus River Provincial Park
- Spectacle Lake Park
- Memory Island Park

There are also numerous municipal parks in Lake Cowichan, North Cowichan and the City of Duncan.

Recreational Usage: There are six public recreation facilities in the Cowichan Region.

- Frank Jameson Community Centre – Ladysmith
- Fuller Lake Arena – Chemainus
- Cowichan Centre – Duncan
- Kerry Park Recreation – Mill Bay
- Shawnigan Lake Community Centre – Shawnigan Lake
- Cowichan Lake Recreation – Lake Cowichan

A regional recreation participation rate was not available for this report as each center measures different indicators and has its own system for tracking usage.

Access to many recreational opportunities is dependent upon disposable income. The Recreation departments within the Cowichan Valley are committed to ensuring affordable recreational opportunities for all citizens

regardless of ability to pay. To break down potential barriers to recreation, **Leisure for Less** has been created to provide a wide range of accessible recreation activities that encourage active, healthy lifestyles.

Leisure for Less informs citizens of a wide range of free and low cost activities and opportunities for a toonie or less within the region. This publication showcases activities under \$2 offered within regional recreation facilities and extends to cover parks, trails, community events, teen centers, transit information, plus valuable community contact information.

The **Leisure for Less** publication is a partnership between the Cowichan Valley Regional District, the Town of Lake Cowichan, City of Duncan, the District of North Cowichan, and the Town of Ladysmith.

The Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association provides therapeutic riding lessons to children and adults with physical, intellectual and emotional disability. The Cowichan Valley Independent Living Resource Centre is a non-profit society that promotes informed choice and empowerment of persons living with disabilities. Information and referral services are for anyone needing information related to disability, services or benefits available to people with disabilities.

Recreation Integration Cowichan is a program offered by the Disability Resource Centre Society in Duncan. With an extremely generous donation from Ronald McDonald House Charities, as well as other sponsors, we have obtained two Trail Riders for hiking and three sailboats. We are planning to add programs such as curling, swimming, skiing, softball and basketball to our already existing programs: movie night, walk and talk, and craft sessions.

Connection to the Earth Charter:

#12: Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.



Chapter Two: Community Involvement

Introduction

Community involvement is an important component of a healthy and vibrant community. It can increase the well-being of participants directly, and the well-being of the community in general. Community involvement is also an important means of shaping the future of a community. The indicators of community involvement examined in this chapter are municipal voting, women in municipal government, charitable donations, volunteerism and non-profit organizations.

"One is not born into the world to do everything but to do something...."
Henry David Thoreau
Poet, writer, philosopher

2.1 Municipal Voting



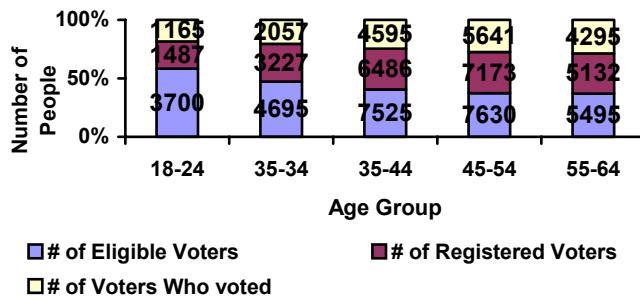
This indicator includes voter participation rates in the General Election for the Cowichan-Ladysmith electoral area.

Voting is a fundamental method for the citizens of a community to participate in decision-making. The following illustrates what we know about voters in the Cowichan region.

Source: Elections BC
<http://www.elections.bc.ca/elections/ge2005/Actual%20Voter%20Participation.htm>

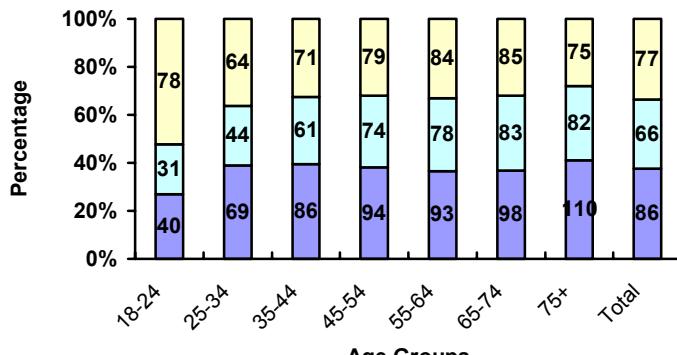
The percentage of eligible voters who vote in general elections in this region has been decreasing since 1983.

CWL- Cowichan - Ladysmith - May 16, 2001

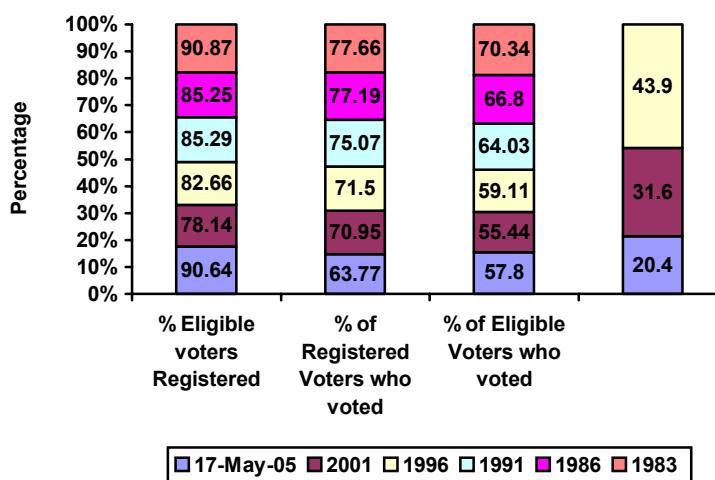


Source: Elections BC
<http://www.elections.bc.ca/elections/ge2005/Actual%20Voter%20Participation.htm>

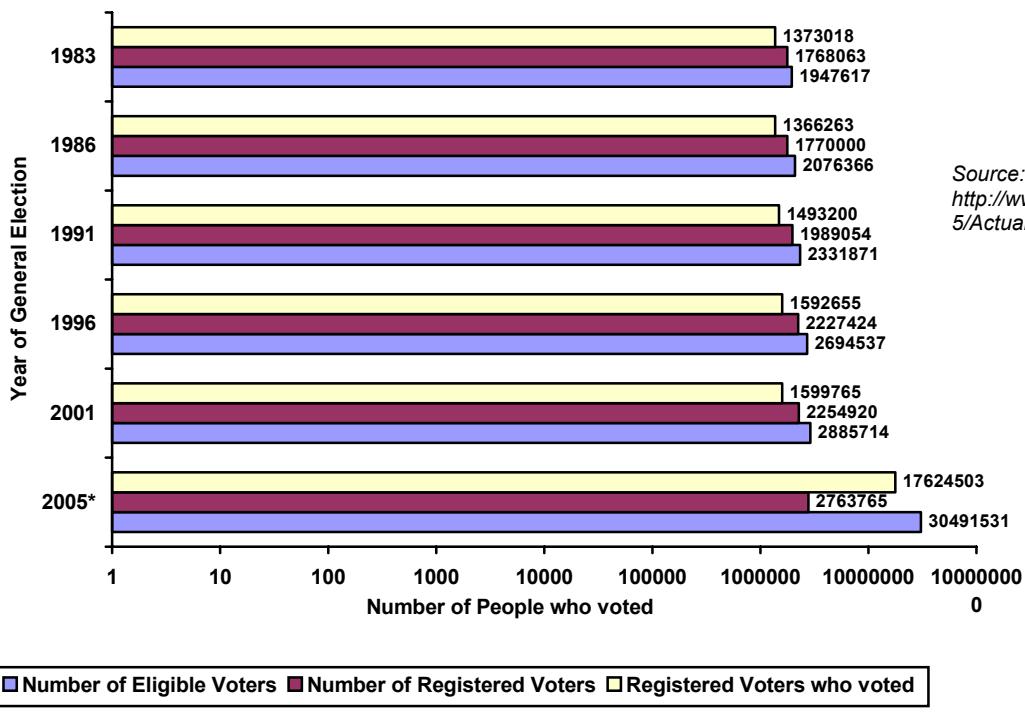
CWL- Cowichan - Ladysmith - May 16, 2001



General Elections May 17, 2005- 1983



General Elections *May 17, 2005-1983



Source: Elections BC and BC Statistics:
<http://www.elections.bc.ca/elections/ge2005/Actual%20Voter%20Participation.htm>

2.2 Women in Municipal Government



Women make up 52% of the Canadian population but only 21.4% of municipal councils. That puts Canada behind Sweden (45.3%), Finland (37.5%), Spain (36.0%) and New Zealand (32.2%). Even at 21.4 per cent, Canada's municipal councils have a higher percentage of women than the House of Commons (20.8%). In the 2006 federal election, 380 women ran as candidates, but only 64 were elected - two fewer than were elected in 2004. This is the real democratic deficit. Our communities cannot afford to lose the insights and expertise of half their citizens. (*Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2006*)

Region	# of women elected	# of seats available	% of total seats
Cowichan Valley	2	9	22%
Ladysmith	1	7	14%
Lake Cowichan	3	5	60%
Entire Cowichan	5	21	24%
Province of BC	382	1195	32%

Source: The Union of BC Municipalities

While women made a showing in each municipality within the Cowichan region, we fall behind the provincial average (32%) and are slightly above the national average (21%) for the number of women elected to municipal government.

2.3 Charitable Donations



According to a 2004 Statistics Canada Survey, average annual donations to charity in British Columbia were \$467 per person over the age of 15, which is above the \$400 national average. In the Cowichan Region, there is no centralized agency tracking charitable donations. However, the Cowichan United Way does track its annual charitable donations and provided the following figures:

Year	Donation
2001	\$269, 649
2002	\$280,180
2003	\$305,705
2004	\$314,000
2005	\$363,580

With less government money being spent on community-based social programs and resources, charitable organizations must turn to individual and corporate donors. There has been a steady increase in charitable donations to the Cowichan United Way over the past five years which demonstrates this trend in the Cowichan region.

**Source: Highlights from the 2004 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*

2.4 Volunteerism



According to the latest survey on volunteerism in Canada, British Columbians contributed an average of 199 hours of their time in 2004, which was the highest in the country. An estimated 1.6 million British Columbians volunteered through a group or an organization. British Columbians had the highest average annual hours volunteered in Canada, at 199 hours. Almost all volunteers surveyed (92%) agreed that making a contribution to their community was an important reason for volunteering.

According to the 2004 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, non-volunteers cited the following reasons for not participating: Did not have time, unable to make a long-term commitment, gave money instead of time, no-one asked, did not know how to become involved.

Unfortunately, there is no local source of data on volunteerism in the Cowichan region. Therefore, a trend could not be established for this report.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities in the Cowichan region, contact **Volunteer Cowichan**. Their website www.volunteercowichan.bc.ca is an excellent resource, or call (250) 748-2133.

Source: Highlights from the 2004 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating

2.5 Non-Profit Organizations



It is estimated that there are currently over 200 non-profit organizations in the Cowichan region. To date, a complete list of these organizations has not been compiled. In an effort to create a single resource for non-profit organization information, the Information Resource Bank has been created. All non-profit organizations are encouraged to register on this free website:

<http://visions2020.cowichan.net/database.php>



Gaps

In the Cowichan region, there is no centralized agency tracking charitable donations.

Connection to the Earth Charter:

#13: Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision-making, and access to justice.

Chapter Three: Economy & Employment

Introduction

A strong economy plays an essential role in a community's quality of life. The economic environment determines access to employment options, economic development and subsequent job creation. Sustainable sources of income, perceived job security and growing economic activity all contribute to the sustainability of the Cowichan region.

"The Cowichan economy will be diversified and thriving under a community driven regional growth management plan that facilitates sustainable development within existing and emerging sectors." "Visions 2020 project, 2004

"The statistical information has always confirmed that First Nations are in fact at the bottom of the social and economic indicators." Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

"Collectively, we own 5,000 hectares of land in the Cowichan and Chemainus Valleys, shared among the six tribes in this treaty. You'd think we should be fairly wealthy people. We collectively bring in millions of dollars...but yet here we are at the bottom of the economic ladder. So there are some major problems that need to be rectified...not just some tinkering, but a major overhaul of how we are able to conduct our business." Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

3.1 Employment By Sector



Employment by sector information for this region indicates a diverse and growing economy.

Forestry

Primary-Logging, Logging contractors, Heli-logging and log sorting;
Secondary -Transportation, Engineering, Silviculture, Logging supplies, heavy equipment sales, marine towing, land use management and Environmental services.

Value Added- Sawmills, Pulp & Paper mills, dimension lumber, custom milling, artisans, log homes, door & window manufacturing, cabinetry among others.

Forestry & Eco Tourism - Activities that use and generate revenues from forestry based Crown Land and parks. Includes trail riding, hiking, mountain biking, nature sight seeing, heli-sports, rafting, camping and other similar activities.

Marine Sector

The east coast of Vancouver Island and the Cowichan Lake area account for a high percentage of recreational activities in the marine sector, including 17% of the Cowichan region's businesses and 10% of local jobs. Nitinat Lake, on the West Coast of Vancouver Island is a world-renowned windsurfing locale and kayaking is also a highly developed activity on the coast and the regions' lakes. One of North America's well-known kayaking manufacturers has their plant in the Cowichan Region at Ladysmith. Commercial fishing and aquaculture is also an important component of the marine sector, with many fish boats having their

permanent moorage at area marinas. Aquaculture is a fast growing industry on the east coast of Vancouver Island and particularly in the coastal areas of the Cowichan Valley. Commercial fish hatcheries, up to ten shellfish operations as well as one fish processing plant are proof that the trend in this industry area is toward operations that produce higher valued seafood products

Tourism

This sector provides approximately 20% of the Cowichan region's employment. Tourism creates opportunities for partnerships with other sectors of the economy, by providing activities to visitors such as agri-tourism, marine, eco-tourism and adventure tourism.

Five Chambers of Commerce, the Cowichan Tourism Association plus a substantial arts, cultural and heritage community all contribute to the promotion and marketing of tourism activities and events and add significantly to the profile of the Cowichan Region.

Further initiatives and programs are underway including a study of the retail sector called 'Opportunity Cowichan', a joint initiative to substantially improve the Cowichan Bay Village and Marine District, a 'Cowichan By Sea' year long marine tourism promotional endeavor as well as several projects relating to sectoral improvement in the Cowichan Lake area related to economic development and diversification.

Technology

A huge Teleglobe Canada operation in the Cowichan Valley at Lake Cowichan on Highway 18, not only provides high tech jobs, but also clearly demonstrates the potential for additional high tech employment in the region and shows there is sufficient infrastructure in place to support those jobs.

Agriculture

Approximately one-quarter of Vancouver Island's productive farmland is located in the Cowichan region. The agriculture sector has tremendous opportunities for local growers and food producers. Presently, the majority of food products consumed locally are imported to the region; however, there is the capability of producing a larger percentage of the local food supply.

Agriculture has the potential to encourage small business, enhance community self-reliance and provide partnerships between farmers, retailers, restauranteurs and the tourism sector. Agri-tourism, local 'Farmers Markets' and a growing wine industry are important components of the regions' lifestyle.



Manufacturing

Major employers include Catalyst Pulp Mill at Crofton and Westcan Terminals at Cowichan Bay.

Agri-Tourism

Agri-tourism is perceived as a small sector in the region today, but with considerable opportunity for growth and prosperity. Sector businesses are organized, they have planning processes in place and are starting to receive a much higher profile within the market and government. There is a real appreciation that this sector partners well with our growing Tourism sector.

Marine Sector

The east coast of Vancouver Island and the Cowichan Lake area account for a high percentage of recreational activities in the marine sector, including 17% of the Cowichan region's businesses and 10% of local jobs. Nitinat Lake, on the West Coast of Vancouver Island is a world-renowned windsurfing locale and kayaking is also a highly developed activity on the coast and the regions' lakes. One of North America's well-known kayaking manufacturers has their plant in the Cowichan Region at Ladysmith. Commercial fishing and aquaculture is also an important component of the marine sector, as many fish boats have permanent moorage at area marinas. Aquaculture is a fast growing industry on the east coast of Vancouver Island and particularly in the coastal areas of the Cowichan Valley. Commercial fish hatcheries, up to ten shellfish operations as well as one fish processing plant are proof that the trend in this industry is toward operations that produce higher valued seafood products.

* Source: CVRD-Economic-Development-Commission Website:
http://www.crvd.bc.ca/edc/bus_information/bus_opps.htm

3.2 Income Levels



The average family income for the year 2000 was \$59,502, which is considerably below the BC average of \$64,821. The dual income family level for the Cowichan region was \$65,202 while the BC average was \$70,033. The female lone parent income figures are also significant. Single mothers living in the Cowichan Valley earned \$27,040 compared to the BC average of \$33,829.

Income Distribution Among Families: In the year 2000, 11.8% of Cowichan residents earned \$20,000, which is similar to the BC average at 12%. 63.8% of Cowichan region residents earned an income in the \$20,000 - \$79,999 range, which is slightly higher than the BC average at 60.4%. 24.4% of Cowichan residents earned \$80,000 or more and the BC average was 27.6%. 10.5 percent of Cowichan families are classified as low income with the BC average being 13.9 percent.

Connection to the Earth Charter:

#12: *Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.*

#10: *Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.*

3.3 Unemployment



The Cowichan region is higher than the provincial averages for unemployment and dependence on social assistance.

"Unemployment, I don't believe is as a result of people that don't want to work, I think they do want to work – it's just hard to find work and be accepted. And for employers to think, yeah, we could hire them."
Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

3.4 Income Security



In the year 2000, 68.7% of Cowichan region residents obtained their income from employment compared to the BC average of 75.8%. The number of Cowichan region residents who obtained their income from government transfers was 14.8%, which is higher than the BC average of 11.8%. 16.5% of Cowichan region residents obtained their income from "other" means, whereas the BC average for this category was 12.4%.

By sector, the majority of Cowichan region residents' income came from

the public sector at 27%, followed by forestry at 18%, agriculture 2%, tourism 4%, and mining 1%.

Labour Force Participation

In the year 2001, 66.5 % of Cowichan region residents participating in the labour force were male and 56.9% were female. 44.3% of workers were employed full time and 17.9% were self-employed. In the year 2000, the average employment income for residents living in the Cowichan region was \$28,701 which is lower than the BC average at \$31,544. The average employment income of a Full Year full time male worker in the Cowichan region was \$47,106 and \$33,181 for a female, compared to the BC averages of \$50,159 (male) and \$35, 636 (female).

Labour Supply

As of 2001, the number of Cowichan region residents with post secondary qualifications was 49.7% which is very similar to the BC average of 50.4%. The number of Cowichan region residents with post-secondary certificates or diplomas was 35.9%, while the BC average was 32.8%. 13.8% of Cowichan region residents had earned a university degree, compared to the BC average of 17.6%.

Income Assistance

In September 2005, in the Cowichan region, 5.9% of residents were receiving basic income assistance, which is considerably higher than the BC average of 3.7%. The number of single parent family Income Assistance Cases in the Cowichan region was 24.8%, which is again much higher than the provincial average of 17.3%. The population of Cowichan region residents aged 19-64 on income assistance who are deemed

Dependency on Safety Net						
Percentage of Population by Age Receiving Benefits September 2006						
Age Group	BC Basic* Income Assistance Recipients (%)		Employment Insurance Benefits (%)		Total of Basic BC Income Assistance & EI Beneficiaries (%)	
	Cowichan Valley	BC	Cowichan Valley	BC	Cowichan Valley	BC
Under 19	4.1	2.5				
19-24	2.3	1.4	2.2	2.1	4.5	3.5
25-54	1.9	1.3	3.5	2.9	5.4	4.2
55-64	0.8	0.5	1.5	1.3	2.3	1.9
19-64	1.7	1.2	2.9	2.5	4.6	3.7

*on temporary assistance only. Excluded are those on continuous assistance, aboriginals living on reserve, seniors/OAS & children living with relatives

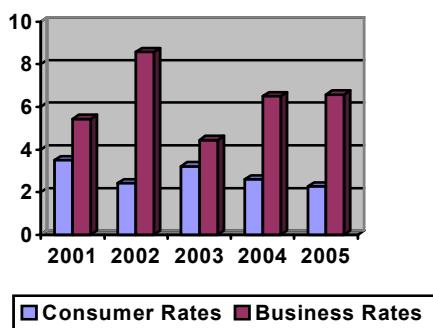
Basic Income Assistance Recipients as a Percent of the Population Aged 19-64, Vancouver Island/Coast Development Region, 2001-2005					
Region	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Capital	6.1	5.0	4.0	3.6	3.0
Cowichan Valley	9.1	7.7	5.7	4.8	4.6
Nanaimo	10.7	8.8	6.5	5.5	4.8
Alberni-Clayoquot	10.9	8.8	8.0	6.3	5.7
Comox-Stathcona	9.9	8.4	6.6	5.8	5.0
Powell River	9.7	8.9	7.1	5.8	4.7
Mount Waddington	8.3	8.2	7.6	4.2	8.1
Central Coast *	10.9	9.2	9.2	-	5.0
Development Region Total	8.1	6.8	5.3	4.4	4.0
BC	7.0	6.1	5.1	4.2	3.7

Source: BC Stats prepared using administrative files from the BC Ministry of Human Resources and Human Resources Development Canada

employable was 1.3%, compared to the BC average of .7%.

*Source: BC Statistics: Local Health Area 65, Indicators of Economic Hardship

3.5 Bankruptcy and Incorporation Rates



3.6 Initiatives

Cowichan Valley Agricultural Area plan

The Cowichan Valley currently imports approximately 90% of its foods. As this region is recognized as having a high level of capacity to become an agricultural producer for local, regional and external consumers, the *Agricultural Planning Group*¹ has embarked on a plan to establish an agricultural area plan for the Cowichan Valley that reflects its capacity and will provide economic and community development objectives.

Cowichan Region Strategic Opportunity Plan

With the support of 2020 Legacies Now, stakeholders from the Cowichan Region “Spirit of BC Communities” have created an opportunity plan to provide a framework for community strategies and activities related to leveraging opportunities associated with the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

Source: Cowichan Region Spirit of BC Committee Strategic Opportunity Plan

Recommendations

The Cowichan Visions 2020 process conducted in 2004 recommended “we will have a framework of a strong regional Growth Management Plan that encourages business which protect and maintains sustainable communities.”

Specific recommendations arising from the Visions 2020 Final Report 2006 included: coordination of sectors involved; using Social Planning Cowichan’s Status of the Community Report to help set benchmarks and realistic goals; encouraging use of the Resource Information Bank; community education about economic issues; and working more closely with politicians.

Connection to the Earth Charter:

#6: Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.

#7: Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.

#9: Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social and environmental imperative.

#10: Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.

#11: Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.

#12: Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.

¹ The Agriculture Planning Group is an ad-hoc committee of people with expertise in agriculture planning and project management. Contributors include members of the Cowichan Agricultural Society, the Island Farmers Alliance, staff of Regional and Municipal Local Government, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Agriculture Canada and the Agricultural Land Commission, and individual volunteers – B. Smith, L. Bomford

Chapter Four: Education

Introduction

Education is a vital factor in the viability and sustainability of a community. Education levels are directly linked to employment rates, poverty levels and child developmental outcomes. Limited education levels frequently result in fewer opportunities for employment and financial security. Higher education levels are linked to enhanced physical health as well as economic well-being.

"All Cowichan residents value, participate and take responsibility for accessible education and training opportunities that continuously increase each other's capacities and collective contributions."

Visions 2020 project, 2004

"The graduation rates are getting better, literacy is getting better, post secondary is improving. I suspect there is a lot of work to be done on how First Nations are portrayed in the public school system...kids being able to go to school and be proud of who they are. I think that is something that could happen in the educational system."

Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

4.1 Student/Educator Ratios

Refer to Table 4.1



4.2 Education Levels Attained

Refer to Table 4.2



4.3 High School Graduation Rates

Refer to Table 4.3



4.4 Literacy

Refer to Table 4.4



Currently, there are no local statistics available on literacy rates. The 2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) is the Canadian component of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL). The main purpose of the survey was to find out how well adults used printed information to function in society. Survey data include background information (demographic, education, language, labour force, training, literacy uses, information and communication technology, income) and psychometric results of respondents' proficiency along four skill domains: prose and document literacy, numeracy and problem-solving.

While overall there has been little change in literacy proficiency since 1994, it is important to note that Canadians aged 16 to 65 have average prose and document literacy scores at Level 3 - the desired threshold for coping with the increasing skill demands of a knowledge economy and society. The average for numeracy is only slightly below this threshold level.

Provincially, the survey found no changes in the average literacy performance of adults 16 and over between 1994 and 2003, with two exceptions. In Quebec, there was an increase in

average prose literacy, and in the Atlantic region, there was an increase in document literacy. Malaspina University College, Cowichan Campus offers literacy level classes in their Career and Academic Preparation Program.

4.5 Public Library Usage

Refer to Table 4.5



Vancouver Island Regional Library Fast Facts - 2005

As of January 2006 192,199 customers were registered and actively borrowing materials. Register online for a library card. Customers borrowed over 4.6 million items - that's equal to every item in VIRL being borrowed at least 3.5 times each during the year

- 646 adult, kids and teen programs were held in VIRL locations with 20,355 participants
- VIRL has 178 Public Internet Access Stations located throughout its branches - 443,298 Internet sessions were logged in branches last year on its public computers.
- 1025 pre-school story times were held with 8,891 pre-schoolers in attendance and 4771 kids took part in the Summer Reading Club.
- In Fall, a new literacy outreach program called Every Child Ready to Read taught 184 parents easy-to-use skills to help them foster an early love of reading in pre-schoolers.

Table 4.1 Student/Educator Ratios

District - Average Class Size	Kindergarten		1 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12
	18.0	21.0	27.6	25.6	
Provincial - Average Class Size	Kindergarten		1 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12
	17.7	20.8	26.3	25.0	

Table 4.2 Education Levels Attained

Table 4.2 Education Levels Attained % population with Post Secondary Qualifications - 2001						
With Post Secondary Certificate or Diploma	75	76	78	79	79	77
With University Degree	85	87	86	88	86	86
Total	76	77	79	79	79	78
Source: Class size data collection (as of September 30) from standard BC public schools from October 18 to November 1, 2005						

Table 4.3 High school Graduation Rates

Table 4.3 High School Graduation Rates						
Province overview by School District (Public Schools only)		Complete Rate (%)				
		2000 /01	2001 /02	2002 /03	2003 /04	2004 /05
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	72	76	79	75	77
69	Qualicum	70	67	71	74	74
70	Alberni	58	57	66	67	63
71	Comox Valley	80	82	76	74	71
72	Campbell River	76	74	76	78	76
79	Cowichan Valley	66	68	70	70	69
All Public Schools		75	76	78	79	79
All Independent Schools		85	87	86	88	86
Province (Public & Independent)		76	77	79	79	78

*Source: BC Ministry of Education, November 2005

Table 4.4 - Literacy

Table 4.4 – Literacy					
	Average proficiency score	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4/5
Prose literacy				%	
British Columbia	281	17.3	22.7	37.2	22.9
Canada	272	19.9	27.8	35.4	17.0

*Source: <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/051109/d051109a.htm>

Table 4.5 - Public Library Usage

*Source: http://www.virl.bc.ca/images/stories/BoardDocs/Annualreports/2005_annual_report.pdf

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Population	415,477	400,361*	399,155*	408,577*
Registered Borrowers	185,790	183,809	208,201	192,199
New Registrations	31,777	29,213	27,944	24,875
Circulation	4,451,172	4,616,970	4,667,338	4,622,807
Reference Questions	260,573	230,743	266,493	243,337
Online Access				
Licensed Database Searches	62,465	156,672	117,367	130,258
Visits to the Website (virl.bc.ca)	241,145	291,626	414,122	465,296
Catalogue Use	495,356	756,389	894,038	1,003,506
Holds (Requests) Filled	453,887	482,926	539,719	645,434
Interlibrary Loans				
Borrowed from Other Libraries	8,367	9,736	6,718	7,753
Loaned to Other Libraries	1,328	1,332	1,495	1,663
Program Attendance	21,651	26,464	27,113	35,542

4.6 Post Secondary Tuition



The February 2005 Throne Speech stated that tuition fee increases would be limited to the rate of inflation, effective September 2005, to ensure post-secondary education is affordable to students and their families. In September 2005, British Columbia's tuition fees increased by two per cent, based on the 2004 British Columbia Consumer Price Index. Student financial assistance is available to students at the post-secondary level attending public and designated private institutions. The Ministry will monitor student applications and default rates, and take action if required, to ensure student financial assistance programs are targeted to where need is greatest.

*Source:
<http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2006/sp/ae/StrategicContext5.htm>

2005-2007 Malaspina University-College Tuition Fees:

Category I: Career/Technology programs

- \$116.52 per semester credit hour (\$349.56 per 3-credit course, \$466.08 per 4-credit course, per semester).

Category II: Continuing Education courses

- Fees for C.E. courses vary and are published in the Fall and Spring Continuing Education brochures. GST is charged for most C.E. courses, as listed in the brochure.

Category III: Distance Education courses

- \$116.52 per semester credit hour (\$349.56 per 3-credit course).

Category IV: English-as-a-Second-Language courses

- \$94 per course to a maximum of \$376 per semester.

Category V: University courses

- \$116.52 per semester credit hour (\$349.56 per 3-credit course, \$466.08 per 4-credit course, per semester).

Category VI: Career & Academic Preparation programs

- No tuition is charged for Literacy and Adult Basic Education courses; however, students enrolled in courses numbered 030 to 067 pay a \$50 per course support fee. Students are also required to pay Students' Union and Student Activity fees.
- Tuition for courses in Access Programs is assessed at \$.58 per hour.

Category VII: Trades & Applied Technology programs

- \$349.56 per month for full-time Trades & Applied Technology programs; part-time students pay \$209.74 per month. Fees are due in full prior to commencement of programs.

Category VIII: MBA programs For domestic students:

- \$14,000 per year for MBA and MBA (International) programs (includes books); \$2,100 for Management Foundation (Pre-MBA) program (books extra).
- For international students:(2006) \$22,000 (Cdn) for MBA and MBA (International) programs (includes books); \$4,850 (Cdn) for Management Foundation (Pre-MBA) program (books extra).

Co-operative Education Work Placements

- Tuition is \$506 per work placement term for Co-op Ed programs.

*Source:<http://www.mala.ca/calendar/GeneralInformation/tuition.asp>

4.7 Private Education Enrollment



The approximately 63,300 students enrolled in independent schools in 2004-2005 represent 9.5% of all elementary and secondary school enrollment in BC. In 1994-95 independent school enrollment accounted for 8.2% of all provincial school enrollment.

*Source: Federation of Independent Schools Association: <http://www.fisabc.ca/>

4.8 Home Schooling



According to School District 79, one student is registered as a home schooled student, forty-three students are registered in the Distance Education Program and sixteen students are registered in the Partners in Learning program.

The Distance Education Program home school component: follows the Ministry of Education curriculum and standards; allows students to work from home; focuses on the needs of the learner; ensures that parents and teacher work as an educational team; meets Ministry of Education guidelines for learning resources; includes regularly scheduled assessments and reports on student progress.

Students who attend the Partners in Learning Program at Chemainus Elementary School study part-time at school and part-time at home. Classroom attendance is three days per week and focuses on the basics of reading, writing and mathematics with parent involvement in planning and implementing the program. Parents spend time with the teacher learning how their child learns and how to teach their child. The Ministry of Education curriculum and assessment requirements are program foundations.

*Source: Jason Sandquist
School District 79, July 2006

Gaps

Currently, there are no local statistics available on literacy rates.

Community Priorities

The Cowichan Visions 2020 process conducted in 2004 recommended, "The Cowichan Valley community will offer dynamic and diverse education and training opportunities that are integral to the backbone of this robust and working community". Specific recommendations arising from the Visions 2020 Final Report 2006 included sending wish lists to community groups, utilizing schools outside the traditional 9:00-3:00 format and holding community events to include unions, teachers' association and principals.



Connection to the Earth Charter:

#11: *Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.*

#14: *Integrate onto formal education and life-long skills needed for a sustainable way of life.*

Chapter Five: Food Security

Introduction

The most widely accepted definition of food security at the individual level is that of the World Bank: "Secure access by all people at all times to enough food for a healthy, active life."

Local estimates suggest that 90% of the food consumed in the Cowichan region is imported. Therefore, if current modes of transportation for the food supply are interrupted or cut off, the Cowichan region would be in crisis. Food security is also linked to income levels. The Canadian Food Association's 2003 Hunger Count report indicates that inadequate minimum wage and social assistance rates, followed by high rents are two of the leading reasons for the growing demand for emergency food assistance in all communities. When people are unable to afford nutritious food, they are at greater risk for health problems and poor performance at school and in the work place. All of these scenarios lead to greater burdens on health care and other social systems.

Connection to the Earth Charter
#7: Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.



"Our people used to be able to support themselves primarily off seafood...By the late 1800's the Department of Fisheries and Oceans determined the Hul'qumi'num people didn't have the right to commercial fish on the Fraser River...then they cut off our right to commercial fish altogether without a license... It happened gradually... Now the amount of commercial and sports harvesting is leaving very little resources left."

Robert Morales,
 Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num
 Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

5.1 Food Bank Usage

There are six food banks in the Cowichan Valley: Ladysmith Food Bank, Lake Cowichan Kaatza Services, Chemainus Harvest House, CMS Self help Services, Cowichan Valley Basket Society and the Salvation Army. According to the Hunger Count 2006 report, the majority of recipients are either on Income Assistance or collecting Disability Benefits. In Duncan, the Cowichan Valley Basket Society gives out an average of 300 hampers per month. Individuals are permitted to utilize this service

once per month. The contents of a hamper is based on family size.

*Source: Canadian Association of Food Banks – HungerCount 2003, 2005, 2006

According to the Hungercount March 2006 survey, Chemainus Harvest House served 2500 people and the CMS Food Bank Society in Mill Bay served 3903 people from March 2005 to March 2006. Data from Lake Cowichan and Ladysmith was not available.

5.2 Community Meal Programs



Duncan Pentecostal Church

In 2005 the Duncan Pentecostal Church served 1103 meals.

*Source: Victoria Ayensu- Duncan Pentecostal Church

Duncan Christian Reformed Church

On average, approximately 160 people attend the monthly supper program at the Duncan Christian Reformed Church.

*Source: John Duifhusis- Duncan Christian Reformed Church.

Duncan United Church

In any given year, the average attendance rate for the Duncan United Church supper program is 100-140 people per month.

*Source Jill Furgas Duncan United Church.

Cowichan Valley Basket Society Stats 2001-Present						
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006-Present
Soups	37756	55654	72705	73868	66015	24526
Sandwiches	31569	35775	42020	47446	43982	16592
Hampers	2977	3474	4155	3855	3756	1495
Adults	4047	4848	6011	5689	5768	2330
Children	3181	4083	4679	4564	4146	1622
New Applicants	214	319	378	345	344	118

*Source: Betty Anne Devitt, Cowichan Valley Basket Society. June 06, 2006

5.3 School Lunch Programs

There are three school lunch programs offered in School District 79. The schools include Alexander Elementary, Koksilah Elementary and the three alternative school programs, which include, Cowichan Valley Open Learning Cooperative, Cowichan Valley Alternative School and the Middle Alternative Program. The schools are chosen to run the meals program based on the socio-economic status of the school population. The school lunch programs are funded through a grant provided by the Ministry of Education's Community Link program.

Number of students registered for school meals programs for the 2005-2006 school year:

Alexander Elementary - 80
 Koksilah Elementary - 139
 Cowichan Valley Open Learning Cooperative – up to 160
 Cowichan Valley Alternative School – average of 24
 Middle Alternative Program – average of 11

*Source: Jason Sandquist-School District 79.

Connection to the Earth Charter

#13: *Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision-making, and access to justice.*

5.4 Cost of Food for a Family of Four

The Community Nutritionists Council of BC and the Dietitians of

Canada in BC estimate that the monthly cost to feed a family of two parents with two children in 2004 was \$654.00 A couple with two children on social assistance receives a monthly income of approximately \$1,495.00 Considering only the cost of shelter (approx. \$934.00) and food, this household would have no money at the month's end to purchase other necessities such as clothing, transportation, telephone, personal hygiene items etc. Four per cent of BC's population is living on income assistance and this group is three times more likely to report food insecurity.

*Source: *The Cost of Eating in BC 2005*
www.dieticians.ca

Gaps

Food security issues could be discussed in partnership with the Agricultural Planning Group referred to in Chapter 3 – Economy and Employment.

Current Initiatives

Fruit-Save Program

Property-owners with fruit trees in the Cowichan region donate their fruit to the program. Volunteers go to the donor's property to harvest the fruit which is then given to food banks, shelters and other charities.

Connection to the Earth Charter

#9: *Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.*

#10: *Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.*

What's Left for Food After Shelter and Living Costs?				
Monthly Costs	Family of 4 (on Welfare)	Single Parent 2 Children (On Welfare)	Family of 4 (low earned income)	Family of 4 (average Income)
Disposable income	\$1495	\$1385	\$2218	\$4307
Cost of Shelter	\$934	\$934	\$934	\$1212
Other daily living costs	\$563	\$387	\$606	\$671
Money needed to buy food (2005)	\$654	\$477	\$654	\$654
Money Left	-\$656	-\$413	\$24	\$1770

*Source: *The Cost of Eating in BC 2005* www.dieticians.ca

Community Gardens

The Jubilee Community Garden project began in early 2004 to provide local downtown community members with a place to grow their own produce. The Jubilee Community Garden is located at the north end of Centennial Park and has allotment gardens available for urban gardeners, as well as a community garden bed that grows produce for local food banks such as the Cowichan Valley Food Basket and Community Kitchens. For more information contact Cowichan Community Lands Trust: ccslt@telus.net



Providence Farm has created an allotment garden to encourage the public use of, and interest in the community gardens. By providing organic garden space to the community, we hope to motivate and activate people in the public to interact with each other and with our various program participants. To date, several community groups and individuals have utilized the garden, so far developing 89 plots. If you are interested in renting a garden plot, we encourage you to contact Providence Farm at provfarm@island.net.

Community Food Action Initiative
The CFAI is, "part of the Healthy Eating component of ActNow BC¹. The purpose ... is to increase food security in BC by supporting the implementation of community, regional and provincial initiatives that improve access to healthy foods for all members of the community while specifically striving to improve access for people with low income".



¹ ActNow BC is a health promotion program designed to support individuals and communities to protect and improve their health by 2010 focusing on healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco use, overweight and obesity, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Community Food Action Initiative, 'Improving Local Food Security' Nov/05

Chapter Six: Health, Community & Social Services

Introduction

This chapter explores the broad issues of Health, Community and Social Services in the Cowichan region. Health is no longer viewed as a stand-alone issue because it is affected by so many other societal factors.

"Even in the most affluent countries, people who are less well off have substantially shorter life expectancies and more illnesses than the rich. Not only are these differences in health and important social injustice, they have also drawn scientific attention to some of the most powerful determinants of health standards in modern societies. They have led in particular to a growing understanding of the remarkable sensitivity of health to the social environment and to what have become known as the Social Determinants of Health"

World Health Organization, 2003

"The Cowichan region is a caring and safe community that proactively works together towards excellence in innovative, integrated and holistic health and social development for all."

Visions 2020 project, 2004

"Health indicators are improving, but we're still at the bottom in terms of positive health indicators. Recent reports convey the message that we've got more suicides, more crime and infant mortality is greater than the outside world. When I look at our health center in Duncan, it's pretty nice. It's pretty progressive...but there's some very big problems in our community and I don't know how we're going to address that."

Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

Connection to the Earth Charter
#7: Adopt patterns of production consumption and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.

6.9 Addiction Services for Adults and Youth



At the present time, addiction services for adults and youth in the Cowichan Region are only available on an outpatient basis at "The House" and at the Cowichan District Hospital.

Adults who require detox services are sent to Nanaimo, and youth are sent to Victoria. There is currently no transition housing or residential housing for recovering addicts, so frequently they are being returned to high risk environments upon leaving detox treatment centers.

*Source: Dr. David Todman, VIHA Mental Health and Addictions Therapist

6.1 Teen-Aged Pregnancy Rates

Includes live births, stillbirths, induced abortions and miscarriages resulting in hospitalization.
 Refer to Table 6.1

6.2 Low Birth Weights

BC Vital Statistics, 1999-2003
 Refer to Table 6.2

6.3 Infant Mortality Rate

BC Statistics, 2000-2004 (per 1,000 live births). Refer to Table 6.3

6.4 Potential Years of Life Lost Due to Suicide/Homicide

Average 2000-2004
 Refer to Table 6.4

6.5 Life Expectancy Rate at Birth

Average 2001-2005
 Refer to Table 6.5

6.6 Potential Years of Life Lost

Average, 2000-2004
 Refer to Table 6.6

6.7 Crisis Line Usage

Refer to Table 6.7

6.8 Mental Health Programs

Refer to Table 6.8

Connection to the Earth Charter

#10: Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.

#11: Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.

#12: Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.

#13: Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision-making, and access to justice.

Table 6.1 – Live Births to
Teenaged Mothers



Pregnancy Rates (ages 10-14 years) - (BC Vital Statistics) 1994-2003	
Rate/1000	
BC	.7
Local Health Area 65-Cowichan	1.3
Local Health Area 66 - Lake Cowichan	2.5
Local Health Area 67 - Ladysmith	1.1

Pregnancy Rates (ages 15-19 years) BC Statistics – 2000-2004 - Rate/1000	
BC	17.8
Local Health Area 65 - Cowichan	23.2
Local Health Area 66 - Lake Cowichan	32.8
Local Health Area 67 - Ladysmith	27.8

*Source: BC Statistics - Indicators of Health Problems

Table 6.2 – Low Birth Weights



Low Birth Weights – BC Vital Statistics, 1999-2003 Rate/1000	
BC	50.87
Local Health Area 65-Cowichan	52.65
Local Health Area 66 - Lake Cowichan	30.43
Local Health Area 67 - Ladysmith	60.26

Table 6.3 – Infant Mortality
Rates



Infant Mortality Rate – BC Statistics, 2000-2004 (per 1,000 live births) Rate/1000	
BC	4.1
Local Health Area 65- Cowichan:	4.6
Local Health Area 66- Lake Cowichan:	9.2
Local Health Area 67 -Ladysmith:	8.7

*Source: BC Statistics - Indicators of Health Problems

Table 6.4 – Potential Years of Life
Lost Due to Suicide/Homicide



Potential Years of Life Lost Due to Suicide/Homicide – Average 2000- 2004 Rate/1000	
B.C.	4.4
Local Health Area 65 - Cowichan	6.3
Local Health Area 66 - Lake Cowichan	2.5
Local Health Area 67 - Ladysmith	7.6

*Source: BC Statistics- Indicators of Health Problems

Table 6.5 – Life Expectancy Rate at Birth



Life Expectancy Rate at Birth – Average 2001-2005	
Health Area	Years
BC	80.0
Local Health A 65- Cowichan	80.0
Local Health Area 66 - Lake Cowichan	82.0
Local Health Area 67 - Ladysmith	78.8

*Source: BC Statistics Indicators of Health Problems 2005

Table 6.6 – Potential Years of Life Lost



Potential Years of Life Lost – Average, 2000-2004 – per 100		
	Natural Causes	Accidental Causes
BC	33.0	8.7
Local Health Area 65- Cowichan	36.4	10.1
Local Health Area 66 - Lake Cowichan	46.2	8.6
Local Health Area 67 - Ladysmith	39.2	9.1

*Source: BC Statistics Indicators of Health Problems 2005

Table 6.7 – Crisis Line Usage



Cowichan Crisis/Crisis Response				
	Information Calls	Intervention Calls	Team calls	Total
April 2, 2004- March 31, 2005	1642	34	303	1979
April 1, 2005 March 31, 2006	1756	32	413	2201

*Source: Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society

Therapists, Chiropractors, Optometrists, Pharmacists, Audiologists and Denturists.

Doctors/Specialists: 62

Psychiatrists: 5

Dentists: 43

Hospitals: 3

Medical Clinics: 6

Veterinarians: 13

*Source: BC College of Physicians and Surgeons

6.11 Number of Doctors Accepting New Patients



As of July 2006, there are two doctors accepting new patients in Duncan.

*Source: Cowichan News Leader

6.12 Dentists Accepting Patients on Social Assistance



As of July, 2005 there are five dentists in the Cowichan Region who will accept patients on Social Assistance. They are located in Ladysmith (1), Chemainus (1), Duncan (2), Mill Bay (1).

The Chemainus dentist provides dental work at no charge to patients on social assistance. The other four dentists in the region provide patients on social assistance with coverage for 80% of the cost and the patient is responsible for paying the remaining 20%.

*Source: <http://www.bcdental.org/index.htm>

6.13 Walk-In Clinics



There is one walk-in clinic in the Cowichan region. The Silverfern Walk-in clinic is located at 160 Jubilee Street in Duncan.

Silverfern Walk-in Clinic Usage Rates:

- February 2005..... 1758
- March 2005 1538
- February 2006 2357
- March 2006 2570

Mental Health Centre in-take Statistics

Duncan Mental Health Centre Intake Statistics	
Year	Monthly Average
	50
	73.6
	91.6
	88.75
	92.25 (to April 30)

*Source: Duncan Mental Health Centre

6.10 Number of Health Professionals



Hospitals in the Cowichan region are located in Duncan, Chemainus, and Ladysmith. The Cowichan region offers access to a variety of services through the provincial health care system, including mental health, nutrition, speech therapy and community/ elder care. Other health care practitioners include Psychologists, Physiotherapists, Massage



Gaps

Adult and Youth Addictions

Currently, there is no capacity for follow-up to outpatient services which could increase engagement and retention. There are currently no facilities or services for people in the transition stage. Many people return to the high-risk environments they came from.

- Shortage of physicians taking new patients.
- Consistently higher than average teen-aged pregnancy rates.
- Significant increase in Mental Health intakes over past four years



Community Priorities

The Cowichan Visions 2020 process conducted in 2004 recommended, "Cowichan is a caring, safe, community, promoting health connections and life-long wellness of body, mind and spirit for all". Specific recommendations from the Visions 2020 Final Report in 2006 include open community forums to encourage partnering of organizations, involving the media and networking meetings.

Some local Child and Youth care workers have prepared a proposal for a community-funded, staffed Transitional Home for 4-6 pregnant parents (under age 25) and/or their children under 5 yrs., who need housing and life skills support. The proposal includes an attached Child Care Facility.



Chapter Seven: Housing and the Built Environment

Introduction

"We reaffirm our commitment to the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing as provided for in international instruments. To that end, we shall seek the active participation of our public, private and non-governmental partners at all levels to ensure legal security of tenure, protection from discrimination and equal access to affordable, adequate housing for all persons and their families."

Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements, 1996.
<http://www.unhabitat.org/declarations/s/ist-dec.htm>

"To make progress on adequately housing all people requires knowledge of the macro context in which housing is located as well as the ability to make specific contributions at the community, group and individual household levels."

Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto
<http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/>

Housing needs and demand in the Cowichan Valley can be viewed as a continuum - private homeownership, submarket homeownership, private rental, non-profit rentals, non-profit supportive housing, and homelessness.

Owner occupied housing predominates in the CVRD and the proportion is higher than for the

province as a whole - 77% as compared to 66%. Duncan has the lowest proportion. The predominant housing type in the CVRD is single-detached (76% of all dwelling units), followed by apartments (12%). This compared to 55% and 33% respectively for BC as a whole. In 2005, the Duncan Census Area stood out in the province as a centre with significant increases in the number of new home starts. Over the last two years, the number of multiple housing starts has increased significantly.

**Source: Housing Need and Demand Study for the Village at Providence Farm, July 2006*

"The Cowichan region encompasses distinct and vibrant planned neighbourhood communities that work collaboratively to ensure socially environmentally friendly development, including appropriate infrastructure, affordable housing and green recreation spaces."

Visions 2020 project, 2004

"We don't have the ability to govern our own land, even though we live on reserves. I will give you a personal example: In Cowichan, I have a certificate of possession, which is kind of like title on this reserve land, family land. I wanted to get a second mortgage to make improvements on the house. I have a law degree and have been working for my whole life earning a decent income, good credit history...In theory, I have a lot of equity. I have a lot of borrowing power. It took over a year to get that in place. My daughter, who just graduated from university, who just got married, doesn't

have anything really, went to a bank to see if she and her husband qualified for a mortgage off reserve, and they were approved that afternoon for more money than I got."

Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

7.1 Housing Tenure

Also refer to Table 7.1



Owner occupied housing predominates in the Cowichan Valley. In 2001, the CVRD had a much higher proportion of owned dwelling units than for the province as a whole – 77% as compared to 66%. Within the region, none of the municipal jurisdictions were as high, with Duncan being the lowest at 56%.

7.2 Housing Costs

Refer to Table 7.2



7.3 Housing Starts

Refer to Table 7.3



In 2005, the Duncan Census Area stood out in the province (along with Kamloops, Campbell River, Penticton, and Fort St. John) as a centre with significant increases in the number of new home starts. Over the last two years, while the number of single detached starts has been higher than for multiple unit starts, the number of multiples has increased significantly.

7.4 Vacancy Rates and Rents

Also refer to Table 7.4

In 2001, over 6% of households in the CVRD had incomes less than

\$10,000, 14% had incomes between \$10-\$19,999, and 12.9% had incomes between \$20-29,999 (in total 35% of households) The ability to afford rent is a significant issue for many in the region.

7.5 Non-Market Housing

Also refer to Table 7.5



It is well known in the Cowichan Region that there is a shortage of non-market housing (subsidized, affordable, co-op etc.). Unfortunately, there is no source of data to indicate the actual availability and perceived demand for this type of housing.

In late 2001, the Federal and BC Governments signed an Affordable Housing Agreement to jointly fund affordable housing projects in the province over a 5-year period. Subsequently, the province redirected its programs away from affordable independent family and seniors housing, establishing the Independent Living BC program. Within this program the Vancouver Island Health Authority has been allocated funding for 384 supportive and assisted living units for frail seniors and persons with disabilities.

In 2001, the National Homelessness Initiative was launched with an emphasis on providing emergency shelter, transitional and second stage housing, and support services for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness. The result is that moderate and lower income households are facing a housing situation that is very different from even five years ago. Relying heavily on senior governments – the traditional approach for dealing with

housing affordability issues – is not adequate. New relationships are needed.

**Source: Housing Need and Demand Study – The Village at Providence Farm, Urban Aspects Consulting Group, July 2006*

7.6 Homelessness and Emergency Shelter Usage



The actual number of homeless people in the Cowichan region is difficult to capture and is often referred to as a “moving target”. We know the Temporary Cold Weather Shelter that operated out of the Margaret Moss Health Clinic for 36 nights between February 10 and March 18, 2006 served 37 people. We know that a 2006 homeless count in the city of Duncan identified 76 individuals as homeless. We also know that in early 2006, the Ministry of Human Resources identified approximately 200 Employment Assistance recipients in this region are not receiving the shelter portion of the benefit due to the lack of a permanent address.

**Source: VIHA Briefing Note, April 6, 2006*

Social Planning Cowichan's Inadequate Shelter Report is expected to be released in the fall of 2006. The following summary highlights some of the findings to date:

Homelessness is a complex issue. There is no single cause and therefore no single solution. The actual number of homeless people in the Cowichan Region is impossible to count with any degree of accuracy or reliability. MLA Doug Routley's office reports that during last year's

cold wet weather, there were approximately 75 people who were homeless. This number is reported to be low; however, as the First Nations people were not fully counted.

Homelessness is the result of lack of income, affordable housing and social supports. It is related to multiple factors including: poverty, unemployment, low wages or underemployment, reductions in government support for social housing and other kinds of social assistance.

A government policy of 'de-institutionalization' for people with mental health disorders has also resulted in homelessness. Adverse events such as sudden job loss, marital breakdown, domestic violence or abuse (particularly in the case of women and youth), incarceration or hospitalization can trigger homelessness. In the Cowichan Region homelessness and relative homelessness have also been attributed to loss of jobs in the resource based industries - logging, fishing, mining etc.

**Source: Social Planning Cowichan, Inadequate Shelter Report Draft Summary, August, 2006*

Table 7.1 – Housing Tenures

TABLE 18: DWELLING UNITS (NUMBER AND TENURE) 2001					
	Total*	Owned	%	Rented	%
CVRD	28,850	22,095	76.6	6,480	22.5
North Cowichan	10,495	7,820	74.5	2,675	25.5
Duncan	2,235	1,245	55.7	990	44.3
Ladysmith	2,685	2,020	75.2	660	24.6
Lake Cowichan	1,155	865	74.9	285	24.7
BC	1,534,335	1,017,485	66.3	512,360	33.4

*Includes Band Housing
Source: Canada Census 2001



Table 7.2 – Housing Costs

TABLE 24: CVRD COMPARATIVE ACTIVITY BY PROPERTY TYPE (REPORTED UNCONDITIONAL SALES)			
	12 Months to Date		
	2005	2006	% Change
Lots			
# Reported Sold	129	158	49%
Average Sell Price/Unit	\$70,892	\$114,286	61%
Median Sell Price		\$104,400	
Single Family*			
# Reported Sold	820	936	14%
Average Sell Price/Unit	\$255,102	\$277,366	23%
Median Sell Price		\$263,000	
Condominium Apartment			
# Reported Sold	97	186	91%
Average Sell Price/Unit	\$90,657	\$112,800	24%
Median Sell Price		\$119,000	



Table 7.3 - Housing Starts

TABLE 20: HOUSING STARTS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2005 - DUNCAN CENSUS AREA								
Single Detached			Multiples			Total		
2004	2005	% Change	2004	2005	% Change	2004	2005	% Change
187	209	12	28	179	##	215	388	80

Sample size too small to report.
Source: *Housing Now, 2005 Fourth Quarter Highlights*, CMHC, Released First Quarter 2006

Connection to the Earth Charter

#7: Adopt patterns of production consumption and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.

Table 7.4 – Vacancy Rates and Rent

TABLE 33: RENTS AND INCOME - CVRD		
Apartments	Annual Average Rent Cost	Annual Income Required*
Bachelor	\$5,040	\$16,800
1 bedroom	\$5,808	\$19,360
2 Bedrooms	\$7,092	\$23,640
3+ Bedrooms	\$8,340	\$27,800
Townhouses	Annual Average Rent Cost	Annual Income Required*
1 bedroom	\$6,072	\$20,240
2 Bedrooms	\$7,056	\$23,520
3+ Bedrooms	\$9,120	\$30,400

*Assumes rent is 30% of annual income.
Source: Based on *Rental Market Report, British Columbia Highlights*, CMHC, October 2005

*Source: *Housing Need and Demand Study – The Village at Providence Farm, Urban Aspects Consulting Group, July 2006*

TABLE 29: PRIVATE APARTMENT VACANCY RATES (%) BY BEDROOM TYPE										
	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom+		Total	
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
Duncan-NC* CA	5.9	4.3	4.9	1.9	2.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	3.6	1.6
Victoria CMA	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.5
Nanaimo CA	4.2	0.5	0.8	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.7	5.0	1.4	1.4
BC	1.9	1.5	2.0	1.5	3.0	2.5	5.3	3.6	2.4	1.9

* NC=North Cowichan/ CA= Census Area
Source: *Rental Market Report, British Columbia Highlights*, CMHC, October 2005

There were only 23 private apartment units actually available in October 2005

TABLE 31: PRIVATE ROW (TOWNHOUSE) VACANCY RATES (%) BY BEDROOM TYPE										
	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom+		Total	
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
Duncan-NC CA*	No units	No units	5.2	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	1.5	1.5
Victoria CMA	**	**	2.7	1.7	0.0	0.0	4.5	0.9	2.8	0.7
Nanaimo CA	11.1	25.0	4.0	0.0	1.9	1.4	4.1	4.1	3.0	2.8
BC	4.9	**	5.2	3.4	3.8	2.6	6.8	4.7	5.5	3.8

* NC=North Cowichan/ CA= Census Area
Source: *Rental Market Report, British Columbia Highlights*, CMHC, October 2005

There were only three private townhouse units actually available in October 2005.

Gaps

There is no source of data to indicate the actual availability and perceived demand for affordable housing.

Community Priorities

The Cowichan Visions 2020 process conducted in 2004 recommended, “Distinctive and vibrant planned communities that support and sustain our healthy rural Cowichan character”. Specific recommendations from the Visions 2020 Final Report in 2006 included regular community meetings hosted by politicians to discuss land development and other housing issues, and updating CVRD building codes.

Connection to the Earth Charter

#12: *Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.*

#16: *Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace.*

Chapter Eight: Natural Environment

Introduction

"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."

Albert Einstein

"We all live downstream."

David Suzuki

"Only when the last tree is cut, only when the last river is polluted, only when the last fish is caught, will they realize that you can't eat money."

Native American proverb

"The Cowichan region preserves, conserves, protects and enhances its natural ecosystems and manages growth within this framework."

Visions 2020 project, 2004

8.1 Water Quality

Because of overpopulation in many regions of the world, mass consumption and water pollution, the availability of drinking water per capita is inadequate and shrinking as of the year 2006. For this reason, water is a strategic resource in the globe, and an important element in many political conflicts. Some have predicted that clean water will become the "next oil",



making Canada, with this resource in abundance, possibly the richest country in the world.

The quality of water in our watersheds and streams is closely linked to land use and reflects the overall health of our environment. The general water quality of the Cowichan River is typical of rivers on Vancouver Island. High precipitation in the watershed causes very soft water that is low in colour and nutrients.

The Koksilah River is similar to the Cowichan River in general water quality; however, turbidity levels may be higher due to the absence of a large headwater lake to act as a sediment trap.

Coliform bacteria are frequently detected at the outlet of Cowichan Lake and in the Koksilah River at the highway. The source of the fecal coliform contamination has not been determined. The discharge from the Duncan/North Cowichan sewage treatment facility has a detectable impact on the water quality of the Cowichan River. Fecal coliform concentrations remain low downstream from the discharge because of the adequate chlorination and dilution.

Metals data have been collected on the Cowichan and Koksilah Rivers for several years. Total copper, lead and, to a lesser extent, mercury and zinc are frequently detected in the Cowichan River near Riverbottom Road and the highway bridge, and in the

Koksilah River at the highway. The concentrations of the above metals are generally low, with higher concentrations occurring during the winter months when stream flows are higher.

The impact of permitted discharges on the water quality of the Cowichan River is variable. The impact of the discharge from the Ministry of Environment fish hatchery is minimal throughout the year because of the low concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus in the effluent. The impact of the effluent from the Village of Lake Cowichan is considered minor because of the high degree of dilution during the critical summer low flow period.

*Source: Ministry of Environment:
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/objectives/cowichan/cowichan.html#quality>

Did you know that the average household contains around 10 to 46 litres of hazardous, corrosive, or poisonous materials? Water is considered to be a renewable resource. However, with an increasing population there continues to be a growing demand for fresh water. Unless we take conscious efforts to protect this resource, pollution could severely limit the amount of water available to us. Each time we wash our car or do a load of laundry, this contaminated water enters our sewers or onsite septic tanks and fields. Therefore, protection of groundwater within the CVRD is of utmost importance. Since many of us rely on wells for drinking water and septic systems for sewage disposal, the

impact of pollution can really 'Hit Home'. Whatever you put down the drain or flush down the toilet ends up in your septic field. The water from your septic field filters through the soil and ends up in your well. For this reason, limiting the amount of chemicals and toxins you put down your drains makes sense. In addition, fish and other aquatic organisms rely on this resource for survival. Contamination of this resource could kill these species and make your tap water unsafe to drink.

*Source: www.cvrdrrecycles.bc.ca

8.2 Air Quality



The **Air Quality Index (AQI)** is a standardized indicator of the air quality in a given location. It measures mainly ground-level ozone and particulates (except the pollen count), but may also include sulphur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. Various agencies around the world measure such indices, though definitions may change between places.

The Meteorological Service of Canada (MSC) uses the following health classifications:

(AQI 100 corresponds to 0.08 ppm ozone; other levels for other pollutants)

- 0-25*: Good (green)
- 26*-50: Moderate (yellow)
- 51-100: Poor (orange/red)
- 101+: Very poor (purple)

The only current and on-going air quality monitoring in the Cowichan Valley is a station on Deykin Avenue at Quamichan Lake. It is

one of three stations in the monitoring network of the Catalyst Paper pulp mill. It measures inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀) and Total Reduced Sulphur (TRS) gases with continuous analyzers. TRS is specific to the kraft pulp mill operations.

PM₁₀ monitoring results show generally good air quality at this site, the annual average is about 10.5 µg/m³, about 1% of the time in a year the level is above 25 µg/m³, the level that would be considered FAIR on the Air Quality Index scale. In the last four years the highest value recorded was about 48 µg/m³, just below the BC PM₁₀ Objective of 50 µg/m³, or the point where the Air Quality Index would be POOR. Higher levels are usually measured in the fall open burning season.

*Source: Warren McCormick, Air Quality Meteorologist - Ministry of Environment, Vancouver Island Region

Did you know that particulate pollution kills 82 people every year in British Columbia? Over 5,000 premature deaths in Canada per year can be attributed to air pollution. In the Cowichan Valley, open burning occurs frequently as people burn piles of lawn/garden materials, crop cuttings, forestry scraps, construction wastes, cardboard and paper.

Burning organics may be easy to do, but it doesn't come without serious consequences.

*Source: www.cvrdrrecycles.bc.ca

8.3 Recycling



In February 2006, The Town of Ladysmith implemented an organic waste collection program. Organic waste collection is an affordable, environmentally conscious alternative aimed at reducing the amount garbage that we send to the landfill. The organic matter is processed through several stages before International Composting Corporation in Duke Point packages up the final product – organic soil enhancer.

Recycling is mandatory in the Municipality of North Cowichan. There is no limit to how much recycling you may put out at the curbside. Yellow bags and yellow recycling labels are available free-of-charge at the Municipal Office.

Municipality of North Cowichan Recycling Statistics: Refer to Table 8.3 below:

Table 8.3

Year	# of houses	Recyclables (tonnes)	Garbage (tonnes)	Total Solid Waste (tonnes)	% Recycling	Recyclables per house (kg)	Garbage per house (kg)
1999*	7295	363.0	1705.0	2068.0	17.52	8.3	39.0
2000	7335	777.7	3211.1	3988.8	19.52	8.8	36.5
2001	7811	903.6	3028.3	3931.9	23.00	9.6	32.3
2002	7871	960.9	3142.5	4103.4	23.42	10.2	33.4
2003	7965	1011.9	3219.5	4631.4	23.92	10.6	35.5
2004	8058	1123.2	3180.5	4303.7	26.13	11.6	32.9
2005	8183	1264.9	3127.1	4392.0	28.82	11.7	31.8

8.4 Invasive Species

Invasive Plant Species

- Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum Mantegazzianum*), also known as Giant Cow-parsnip forms a dense canopy out-competing native riparian species, resulting in an increase in soil erosion along the stream banks where it occurs. Proliferating populations of this plant in urban and suburban areas represents an increasing public health hazard. The plant exudes a watery sap that sensitizes human skin to ultraviolet radiation. This can result in severe burns to the affected areas as well as blistering and painful dermatitis. The blisters can develop into purple or blackened scars. Giant Hogweed is found most commonly along roadsides, vacant lots, streams and rivers. Because it often grows in wet areas, it is considered an invasive freshwater weed.
- Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) is an unarmed deciduous shrub of the pea family. It produces seeds that can remain viable for up to 40 years in the soil, making this weed very difficult to control once it spreads to a new area.
- Himalayan Blackberry (*Rubus discolor*) is a perennial import from Eurasia and is an aggressive exotic that rapidly overtops understory vegetation. While it is a noxious weed, much of our wildlife has adapted to feeding on it as a food source. The blackberry reduces biodiversity due to competition and the result is a less varied and less nutritious diet for the native wildlife.

Invasive Animal Species

- Northern Winter Moth (*Operophtera fagata*) is epidemic on South Vancouver Island. It is a severe defoliator of broad-leaved plants, notably Garry Oak, fruit trees, ornamental trees and shrubs.
- Eastern Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) is larger and more aggressive than its cousin, the Red Squirrel. While Red Squirrels prefer to feed on conifer forests and stay in trees to prevent predation, the Gray Squirrel is a generalist feeder and thereby adapts more quickly to new environments.
- American Bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*) are multiplying in the Cowichan region. They are serious predators that threaten the region's biodiversity. Once they become established, the populations grow quickly. Adult bullfrogs can weigh up to 700 grams. American bullfrogs invading the local ecosystem have fewer parasites and no known predators compared to bullfrogs found in their native habitat.

**Source: Malaspina Communications and Public Relations, News Release: Dec. 3/04*

For more information about what you can do re: Invasive species see www.island.net/~cclt/invasive.htm

8.5 Endangered Species

The BC Conservation Status defines species on their “**red list**” as extirpated, endangered, or threatened, while those on their “**blue list**” are species of special concern. A search on the BC Species and Ecosystem

Explorer reveals the following local species are on the RED list in the South Island Forest District, which includes the Cowichan Region:

Vertebrates: Sharp-tailed snake, Enos Lake Limnetic Stickleback, Enos Lake Benthic Stickleback, Cowichan Lake Lamprey, Vancouver Island Marmot, Northern Leopard Frog, Vesper Sparrow (*affinis* subspecies), Brandt’s Cormorant, Leatherback, Sea Otter, Keen’s Long-Eared Myotis, Killer Whale, Common Water Shrew (*Booksii* subspecies), Northern Goshawk (*Iaungi* subspecies), Peregrine Falcon (*anatum* subspecies), Northern Sea Lion, Marbled Murrelet, Common Murre

Non-Marine Molluscs:
Oregon Forest Snail,
Evening Field Slug,
Dromedary Jumping Slug,
Threaded Vertigo, Pewter Physa, Ashy Physa, Blue-Gray Taildropper, Pacific Vertigo

Butterflies: Johnson’s Hairstreak, Common Ringlet, Edith’s Checkerspot, Greenish Blue (*insulanis* subspecies)

Vascular Plants: Pink sand Verbena, Olympic onion, Carolina Meadow Foxtail, White Top Aster, Rough-Leaved Aster, Deltoid Balsamroot, River Bulrush, Winged water Saltwort, Contorted-pod Evening Primrose, Small-flowered Bittercress, Green-sheathed Sedge, Foothill Sedge, Paintbrush Owl-clover, Golden Paintbrush, Muhlenberg’s Centaury,

Phantom Orchid, Small-flowered Godetia, Washington Springbeauty, Erect Pygmyweed, Dense Spike Primrose, Brook Spike Primrose, Oregon Ash, Hutchinsia, Scalepod, Kellogg's Rush, Smooth Goldfields, Grey Beach Peavine, Creeping Wildrye, Macoun's Meadow-foam, Fern-leaved Desert Parsley, Gray's Desert Parsley, Seaside Bird's foot Trefoil, Bog Bird's foot Trefoil, Dense-flowered Lupine, Prairie Lupine, Stream-back Lupine, Small-headed Tanweed, Manroot, White Mecanella, Coast Microseris, Lindley's Microseris, Tooth-leaved Monkey Flower, Dwarf Sandwort, Branching Montia, Needle-leaved Navarretia, Pine Broom-rape, Rosy Owl Clover, Mountain Owl Clover, Redwood Sorrel, White Lip Rein-Orchid, Fragrant Popcorn Flower, Slender Popcorn Flower, Fringed Pinesap, Tall Wooly-heads, Slender Wooly-heads, Water Plantain Buttercup, California Buttercup, Snow Bramble, Lemmon's Willow, Snakeroot Sanicle, Purple Sanicle, Oliney's Bulrush, Oregon Selaginella, Scouler's Catchfly, Nevada Marsh Fern, Small-flowered Tonella, Cup clover, Graceful Arrowgrass, Dwarf Trillium, Bearded Owl Clover, Howell's Triteleia, Ochroleucus Bladderwort, Blue Vervain, Yellow Montain Violet, Columbian Water-meal, California Hedge Parsley

*Source: Ministry of Environment: BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer. <http://srmaps.gov.bc.ca/apps/eswp/results.do>

8.6 Energy Consumption/Conservation



In 2004, the David Suzuki Foundation published *Sustainability within a Generation*, a report proposing goals and approaches that would make Canada a world leader in sustainability. To evaluate Canada's progress toward sustainability the Sustainable Planning Research Group at Simon Fraser University completed a major academic study using the most recent data verified and published by the OECD. *The Maple Leaf in the OECD* finds Canada's environmental performance falls far short of these expectations, ranking 28th out of the 30 countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The study examined 29 environmental indicators to compare Canada's environmental performance to those of other OECD countries within the framework of the goals identified in *Sustainability within a Generation*.

Canada is particularly inefficient in its use of energy and water. Per capita energy consumption in Canada is almost double the OECD average. Canada's total energy consumption increased 17.8% from 1992 to 2002. Per capita consumption increased 6.5%. Similarly, Canada has a worse record on energy intensity – the amount of energy consumed per unit of GDP – than all OECD countries but Iceland. Canada consumes 50% more energy per unit of GDP than the OECD average, and more than twice as much as the

most efficient nations, Ireland and Italy. Canada consumed 1,420 m³ of water per capita, more than double the OECD average.

*Source: *The Maple Leaf in the OECD*, Sustainable Planning Research Group, Simon Fraser University, 2005

British Columbia is the fastest growing province in energy consumption. Fuel consumption increased at a faster rate than the national average (+1.4%) in five provinces in 2004. Alberta (+2.4%), Manitoba (+3.2%), Nova Scotia (+3.3%), New Brunswick (+3.4) and BC (+3.6%) topped the nation with growth of consumption. Energy exports were the main contributor to the overall increase, soaring 22.3% in August, mainly due to a substantial increase in electricity exports.

*Source:
<http://www.bccstats.gov.bc.ca/releases/info2005/in0541.pdf>

8.7 Land Use



Official Community Plans by Electoral Area: The Cowichan Valley Regional District outlines its land use policies in the Official Community Plans set forth for each electoral area. This information can be obtained at <http://www.cvrdr.bc.ca/html/NewDSPage/ocp.html>

Developing an OCP is a community-based, grass-roots effort. Planning staff work with local volunteers, appointed by the CVRD Board, in creating or updating the OCP. Because it is important to reach out widely into the community, the CVRD employs other measures to tap into community opinion; these measures

include questionnaires, open houses, community meetings and workshops. Once the CVRD Board adopts an OCP, regulatory bylaws such as zoning are updated. Aside from providing policies regarding land use and development, OCPs also can designate "development permit areas" for the following reasons:

- To protect the natural environment
- To protect development from hazardous conditions
- To protect farming
- To protect heritage areas
- To revitalize a commercial area
- To establish guidelines for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential development.

All local governments are required to ensure that zoning bylaws and new development conform to the OCP. Without an OCP, there would be no clearly defined foundation for regulating land use.

*Source:
<http://www.cvrd.bc.ca/html/NewDSPage/ocpmore.html>

For further information about the various Official Community Plans in the Cowichan Region see:

The Town of Ladysmith:
<http://www.town.ladysmith.bc.ca/>

The Town of Lake Cowichan
<http://www.town.lakecowichan.bc.ca>

The Municipality of North Cowichan
<http://www.northcowichan.bc.ca/>

The City of Duncan
<http://www.city.duncan.bc.ca/>

The Cowichan Valley Regional District <http://www.cvrd.bc.ca/>

Current Initiatives

Zero Waste Initiative

The Zero Waste initiative emphasizes the importance of the first two R's in the 3R hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle). Simply reducing the amount of waste you generate can have a far greater impact on your overall waste production. By not producing it in the first place, there's no worry on what should be done with it; you've bypassed reuse, and recycle.

The 500 home community of Arbutus Ridge in Cobble Hill reached 86% waste reduction through a deluxe curbside collection system introduced several years ago. As well, there are now two commercial composting facilities in the area that can compost almost anything organic - including clean wood waste, diseased plants, waxed paper or cardboard, cooked foods, bones, plate scrapings, and all the usual compostable items from yard and garden materials to kitchen peelings. Items that cannot currently be recycled conveniently, such as cell phones, computers and other electronic waste, or 'e-waste' will eventually be under a regulation that will allow consumers to recycle their items at no charge.

*Source: www.cvrdrecycles.bc.ca

Community Priorities

The Cowichan Visions 2020 process conducted in 2004 recommended, "a region which is managed under a 'Growth Management Strategy' carefully balances the environment, economy and community in a holistic and sustainable way."

One of the specific recommendations that emerged from the work of Visions 2020 Final Report 2006, was to conduct an environmental audit or inventory specifically for the Cowichan Region. Environment Canada has published ***Guidelines for the Development of Sustainability Indicators*** as part of its ***Sustainable Community Indicators Program***.

SCIP is an Internet-based reference guide to help communities and organizations develop indicators of sustainability and establish a sustainability indicators program.

Besides providing indicator development guidelines, the SCIP Web site provides tips, tutorials and examples of how you can produce indicator reports. The Web site also provides templates that you can fill out to document your indicator program (metadata), as well as an example template you can use for an indicator report.

*Source: <http://www.ec.gc.ca/soerre/English/Scip/guidelines.cfm>

Connection to the Earth Charter

#5: Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.

#8: Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.

#12: Uphold the right of all, with out discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.

#15: Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.



Chapter Nine: Public Safety

Introduction

Communities belong to all of the people who live in them. Personal Safety is an important part of community living. Yet, many people have fears for their safety, especially at night, and even in the day, at home, at work and in public places.

There are many ways communities can work together to improve personal safety, through:

- Talking and listening to the issues
- Improving places people identify as feeling unsafe
- Planning and designing places to be safer and more accessible
- Supportive services and programs
- Education and awareness

*Source: Safer Futures,
http://www.saferfutures.org/safety_crime_prevention.php

9.1 Police Call Volume



Three-year trends:

	2003	2004	2005
Lake Cowichan	2644	2913	3006
Shawnigan Lake	4339	4452	4360
Duncan/North Cowichan	18507	20247	20168

*Source: Cowichan Region RCMP detachments

9.2 Crime Prevention Programs



The Duncan/North Cowichan R.C.M.P. Community Policing Office runs numerous programs throughout the year based on public demand and the types of criminal

activity occurring in the community. The office has approximately 85 to 100 volunteers and each volunteer participates in a different program. There are also approximately a dozen victim services volunteers and five auxiliary constables. The following programs and services are offered:

Citizens On Patrol, Speed Watch, Child Identification, Home Security Checks, Business fanout, Meth Watch, Block Watch Programs, Personal Safety Programs, Referral Service, non-emergency complaints and lost and found items

*Source: Telephone interview with Community policing coordinator Carol Ann Rolls.

The Ladysmith R.C.M.P. Community Policing Office runs numerous programs serving Ladysmith, Saltair, Cedar and Chemainus. They have approximately 10 volunteers who must work a minimum of 4 hours per week for the program they volunteer for. The community policing office is located in Ladysmith and operates from 9 to 5pm. The following programs are offered:

School patrol, Bike Checks, Fingerprinting children for identification purposes, Home inspections, Motorbike Safety, Block Watch

*Source: Telephone interview with Ann Lamont --volunteer at the Ladysmith

Community Policing Office. The coordinator of the Community Policing Office is Audrey Ballegeer. **The Shawnigan Lake Community Policing Office** serves the areas of Shawnigan Lake, Mill Bay, Cobble Hill and the Malahat. The following programs are offered:

DARE program, School Liaison program, Block Watch, Speed Watch and the Auxiliary Constable program.

The Lake Cowichan RCMP Community Policing Office serves the areas of Lake Cowichan and Youbou. They offer programs such as Neighborhood Watch, Victim Services and the Auxiliary Constable program.

*Source: Cpl. Brian Brown Lake Cowichan RCMP

9.3 Annual Crime Statistics



Three-year trends in the number of offences refer to Table 9.3

9.4 Youth Crime



Youth Crime Rate Average 2002-2004

The Youth Crime Rates for the Cowichan region, which includes Shawnigan Lake, Duncan and North Cowichan, refer to Table 9.4.

Table 9.3 – Annual Crime Statistics

2005 ANNUAL CRIME STATISTICS <i>Three-year trends in the number of offences</i>									
	North Cowichan			City of Duncan			Regional District		
Year	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Assaults:	749	845	783	373	492	353	134	187	200
Vandalisms:	949	1049	1054	480	450	392	133	303	320
Thefts From Motor Vehicles:	754	881	940	336	299	284	193	210	302
Theft of Motor of Vehicle:	256	236	215	149	98	129	62	58	89
Break and Enters (Residenc e):	292	321	323	95	94	93	56	57	59
Break and Enters (Business) :	128	182	209	119	192	195	87	85	147
Other Theft:	828	922	1050	905	842	599	203	231	748
<i>Source: Duncan/ North Cowichan RCMP 2003, 2004, 2005 Annual Mayors Reports</i>									

Table 9.4 – Youth Crime

Youth Crime Statistics				
	<u>Cowichan Region</u>	<u>Lake Cowichan Region</u>	<u>Ladysmith Region</u>	<u>BC Avg</u>
Violent:	1.7	1.1	1.5	2.6
Property:	5.1	4.6	2.9	2.9
Total Serious:	6.8	5.7	4.4	5.6
<i>*Source: BC Statistics: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca</i>				

9.5 Restorative Justice

The Nanaimo John Howard Society runs a Restorative Justice Program called the Community Justice Forum for the entire Cowichan region. R.C.M.P. refer appropriate cases to be considered as an alternative to the court system for first time offenders who are willing to accept responsibility for the offence. A Community Justice Forum, which includes offenders, victims, their support people and R.C.M.P., is facilitated by a trained volunteer. After discussion, the group reaches consensus about what may constitute the most valuable learning experience for the offender (eg. apologies, restitution, community work) as well as promotes a healing process for all parties involved. All attendees of the group conference sign a contract. Offered in the Nanaimo and Cowichan Valley regions.

**Source: Nanaimo John Howard Society
<http://www.johnhoward.bc.ca/programs/nanaimo.htm>*

Community Youth Justice Services

The Ministry of Children and Family Development operates all youth justice services for the Cowichan region. The mission is to provide a range of community based services that respond to the criminogenic needs of youth, thereby promoting lawful behavior and contributing to public safety. The purpose is to protect society by providing appropriate support and supervision, and to facilitate rehabilitation by providing youth

the best possible opportunities for healthy growth and pro-social development through a youth focused integrated case management process.

Youth Justice Services include:

- Extrajudicial sanctions (formal diversion from court proceedings);
- Supervision and case management of youth on bail, peace bonds, probation, intensive support and supervision program orders, supervision in the community, conditional supervision, and reintegration leave from a youth custody centre;
- Preparation of reports for court and Crown Counsel; and,
- Community-based non-residential and residential programs.

Approximately 130 youth probation officers work in multi-disciplinary teams in various communities across BC to provide Youth Justice Services. Youth probation officers are officers of the court who supervise youth subject to court orders and agreements. There are two youth probation officers working in Duncan and they serve the Cowichan Valley region

Additional services provided include these day programs.

- Intensive support and supervision programs
- Specialized residential programs
- Community service work
- Drug and alcohol programs
- Full and part-time wilderness challenge programs
- Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services

Youth residing in the Cowichan Valley may have to travel outside the region to participate in some of these services.

** Source:*

http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/youth_justice/community.htm

9.6 Sexual Assault

Refer to Table 9.6



9.7 Spousal Assault



Domestic Violence is a crime that is different from other crimes in two ways: The likelihood of repeat violence is common and at most times predictable and the victim is known in advance.

**Source: Hadley Inquest Jury Recommendations, 2002*

http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/police_services/publications/releases/police_release_February2005.pdf

From April 2004 to March 2005 there were 372 new cases at the Cowichan branch of Women Against Violence Against Women. 232 were relationship assaults and 20 were criminal harassment assaults.

From April 2005 to March 2006 there were 409 new cases at WAVAW, an increase of 37 cases from the previous year. Three hundred and fourteen were relationship assaults and 11 were criminal harassment assaults.

**Source: Cowichan Women Against Violence*

Table 9.6 Sexual Assaults

Sexual Assault Three-year trends in the number of offences					
	City of Dun can	Lake Cowic han	Town of Ladys mith	Municipality of North Cowichan	Shawnigan Lake
2002	33	12	6	32	6
2003	22	9	1	30	4
2004	28	19	8	29	7

*Source: Duncan/ North Cowichan RCMP

9.8 Drug Trends



Cowichan Valley R.C.M.P. Detachments are dealing with ongoing problems of narcotics use. R.C.M.P. members report that 80 to 90% of all criminal offences have links to substance use. The main substances being used in the Cowichan Valley are alcohol; Marijuana is also very prevalent in the area. Crystal Meth is becoming a serious concern; police officers report that youth have easy access to crystal meth. Other drugs of concern in the valley are cocaine and ecstasy.

* Source: Garth Cunningham- Duncan R.C.M.P.

9.9 Organized Crime Syndicates



The R.C.M.P. acknowledges that organized crime exists in the Cowichan Region. However, they were not able to provide further information because it would compromise ongoing investigations. They say that when organized crime moves into a community, drug problems and an increase of criminal behavior does occur.

*Source: Garth Cunningham- Duncan R.C.M.P.

Current Initiatives

Safer Futures is a **community development and research program** of Cowichan Women Against Violence Society. <http://www.cwav.org/index.php>.

We have been working since 1996, to research issues of personal security for women, children and other marginalized groups in their communities, and to work at the community level to develop and implement solutions.

Safer Futures works locally in communities of the Cowichan Region; we also work at the provincial level and beyond. Community Safety Advisory Committee

Connection to the Earth Charter

#12: *Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.*

#13: *Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision-making, and access to justice.*

#15: *Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.*

#16: *Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace.*

Chapter Ten: Transportation

Introduction

Transportation is a key factor in achieving full participation in community life as it provides people with mobility and access to employment, community resources, medical care, and recreational opportunities.

"Transportation infrastructure within the Cowichan region meets the needs of all residents by providing a variety of affordable, reliable and environmentally acceptable modes of transportation that minimizes traffic congestion, supports the economic development and is inclusive of cyclist and pedestrian needs."

Visions 2020 project, 2004

Major Transportation Issues in the Cowichan Region:

"Transportation is an issue that gets caught up in what I call federal and provincial wrangling over whose responsibility it is. We struggled as a board on how we were going to deal with it – we said ok, we will buy vans...but there was too much demand for 2 or 3 vans trying to pick everyone up... Eventually we wanted to see if we could get public transportation to go on reserve. That was tough."

Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, June 27, 2006

Trans Canada Highway Corridor:

In 2005, Urban Systems conducted a TCH Corridor Management Plan Open House. The issues identified were:

- TCH is serving local, regional and provincial functions;
- Historical population growth of 1.3% per year
- Land use characteristics along corridor inconsistent with highway function
- Limited major north/south roadway system
- limited support network for access and circulation to local properties.

Medium Term Recommendations:

- Integrated land use and transportation plans
- Managing existing corridor through access management
- Integration with existing programs such as road rehabilitation
- Partnerships and funding with local agencies and property owners through redevelopment may advance some projects
- consider long-term directions to preserve rights of way through redevelopment.

Long Term Recommendations or Alternative Routes/Highway Bypass:

- Region-wide direction on transportation improvement plans and priorities
- Community consultation on long-term direction for highway improvements;
- Consider right-of-way dedication for long term highway improvements
- Establish alternative routes as a municipal corridor

The Malahat Corridor serves a strategic, multi-purpose function: for commuters, mainly between the CVRD and CRD; a strategic link for Vancouver Island tourism; and an important component of the Island's freight distribution network. Recent studies have concluded that the major transportation issue for the Malahat Corridor is reliability, because closures often result in significant delays for many vehicles. While safety is a concern, and should be improved, the crash rate is lower than the provincial average. Capacity may become an issue as traffic volumes increase in the future.

Malahat Corridor Study

Phase I - June, 2006 Objectives:

- Analyze the issues
- Develop options
- Conduct a preliminary evaluation of options;
- Seek public feedback.

Phase II, Fall 2006:

- Technical Analysis and Evaluation of Options
- Further define the preferred options
- Additional evaluation of the preferred options
- Recommend solution(s)
- Consultation: Discussions with municipal and stakeholder groups
- Updates on the project website
- Second round of public meetings to review results.

Source: BC Ministry of Transportation, Malahat Corridor Study, June 2006

10.1 Public Transit Usage



Transit provides some key benefits to the communities it serves: Reduced infrastructure and congestion costs; Reduced environmental costs; Supports community development and Improved mobility for all residents.

The Cowichan Visions 2020 process surveyed public attitudes related to growth and development in the Cowichan Valley. When people were asked to comment on the current transportation system in the Cowichan Valley, the lack of transit service was the most frequent response. When participants were asked if they had identified any transportation concerns, more than one third of respondents mentioned the need for more transit service.

Of those who responded to the survey, only about 2% were current transit users. When asked what was preventing them from using alternative transportation, the largest group (27%) said there was no transit service in their neighborhood. The next largest group (22%) said that they did not use alternative transportation due to the convenience and time saved associated with driving.

These responses show the need for improved service coverage and for more frequent and direct service, in order to improve convenience and attract choice transit riders.

The most significant change over the last five years has been the increase in the student share of ridership, from 25% to the current 39%. Over the same period, the seniors/BC Bus pass share of ridership has decreased from 32% to 20%. The adult share of ridership has remained almost constant.

These changes reflect how the system is beginning to evolve from a shopper-oriented service to a more commuter-oriented service, with a strong focus on school commuters.

*Source: *Cowichan Valley Transit Business Plan*
<http://www.crvd.bc.ca/html/pdf/CowichanValleyTransitUpdateSept05.pdf>

10.2 Accessible Services



The Cowichan Valley has less paratransit service than most other comparable communities. For example, it has about one third the level of paratransit service found in the Comox Valley. Currently, paratransit only operates in the City of Duncan and the District of North Cowichan. This service consists primarily of door-to-door service for people with disabilities, although there are scheduled trips that are available to the general public.

handyDART is a special door-to-door transit service for people with disabilities who are unable to use the regular fixed-route transit system without assistance - handyDART also offers a fixed route transit system. It is available to Crofton and Chemainus currently twice a week.

To book a trip telephone 748-1230
 Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm,
 Saturdays 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.
 Sundays and Holidays no service

*Source:
<http://www.busonline.ca/regions/cow/accessible/handydart.cfm>

10.3 Mobility Impaired Permit Holders



There are a total of 265 mobility impairment permits issued to people with disabilities in the Cowichan Region. 112 permits are issued in Duncan/North Cowichan, 26 permits in Lake Cowichan, 126 permits in Ladysmith and 1 permit in Mill Bay/ Shawnigan Lake

*Source- *Manager for Accessibility programs at Social Planning And Research Council BC*. <http://www.sparc.bc.ca>

10.4 Airport/Floatplane Usage

Airport/ Float Plane Usage From Maple Bay



Total Number of Harbour Air Passengers:

2004 - 1985
2005 - 1998
2006 - 947 (July, 2006)

Morning is the busiest time for floatplane flights. Most flights are for business use to downtown Vancouver. Harbour Air runs flights year-round. Salt Spring Air also serves Maple Bay. They run flights Monday to Friday, 7am to 5pm and 8am to 5pm on weekends. (No other data available)

Gaps

Transportation is frequently identified as an issue of great concern in the Cowichan region.

The Cowichan Valley has less paratransit service than most other comparable communities.

When people were asked to comment on the current transportation system in the Cowichan Valley, the lack of transit service was the most frequent response.

Community Priorities

The Cowichan Visions 2020 process conducted in 2004 recommended, "Cowichan Region residents have a variety of accessible, reliable and environmentally acceptable modes of transportation".

For an economical, environmentally friendly alternative to commuting alone to work everyday, try carpooling with the help of a ride-matching Web application called CarpoolTool. There are currently 18 carpool vans in the Cowichan Valley that run from various regions in the Cowichan Valley to Victoria. There are 69 riders/drivers from Duncan to Victoria/ Esquimalt, Sixteen drivers/riders from Cowichan Bay to Vic Victoria and six drivers/riders from Lake Cowichan to Victoria. Twenty drivers/riders go from Shawnigan Lake to Victoria.

Connection to the Earth Charter

#7: Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.

#10: Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.

#12: Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous people and minorities.



Recommendations

Chapter 1: Arts & Culture

Support the efforts of the Cowichan Region Economic Development Commission to develop a cultural development plan by:

- Involving as many people as possible; mobilizing the arts community and other stakeholders; including the aboriginal community; developing the role of local government in terms of public art, funding, facilities and collaboration.
- Connect with the aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities and develop programs to build diverse bridges between all cultures and ages.

Recreation:

- Settle disputes and create a plan for everyone that includes indoor recreation, outdoor recreation, seniors' centers etc.

Chapter 2: Community Involvement

Explore ways to increase public participation in local government.

Issues we have identified regarding poor voter turnout include:

- The young voter turnout numbers which are significantly lower compared to the general population.
- Wide spread voter disengagement across all levels.
- Municipal politics are considered to be irrelevant.
- Citizens don't participate in committee work or attend meetings unless they are in opposition to initiatives – we don't have the tools to

engage residents in dialogue and discussions.

- We don't think that residents feel municipal governments are transparent (lack of trust).

Chapter 3: Economy & Employment

- Consider economic development and its impact on quality of life. This includes: golf courses verses nature; eco tourism and the forestry industry (ie. allocation of forest land for urban use, the Forest Land Reserve is gone; forest companies are selling land to private owners, by laws are needed to encourage sustainable forestry).

- Develop employment policies that are family, volunteer and youth friendly. For example, consider models in Sweden and Norway that provide for 10 family days per year; employer supported volunteerism (Catalyst pays and, or, trains youth to work under skilled mentors).
- Link economic development to quality of life issues such as: land use, sustainable forestry and agriculture, land protection, commuting issues, housing poverty and literacy.
- Link quality and affordable child care to the work place.
- Establish volunteer friendly employment policies and opportunities, for example paying young people to work with mentors.

Investment in families:

- Quality affordable child care is needed.
- Consider models in Sweden and Norway where family well-being is key.
- Provide support to parents to be with their children if they make that choice.
- Develop a measure of children's connectedness to their families, as well as family's connectedness to their communities.
- Establish wage equity.
- Unions need to get involved in mentoring youth in trades.
- Establish family friendly, employment practices and policies.

Chapter 4: Education

- Increase the number of aboriginal children finding success in school.
- Identify areas that foster success and provide equal opportunity.
- Examine school readiness: quality, accessible pre-school, daycare and mother's allowance.
- Ensure adequate basic needs (housing and food).
- Ask students what they need (both in and out of school).
- Provide mentoring, peer counseling and peer supports.
- Ask front-line workers and agencies what they need.

Chapter 5: Food Security

- Establish a coordinated food security network in the Cowichan Valley. Develop a plan.
- Involve producers, users, service providers and retailers in the plan.
- Garner support from local and provincial levels of government, and that includes preservation of agricultural land.
- Build on the work that is already being done. Enhance awareness through a variety means.
- Look at other locations for the food bank.
- Plan for a mom's food bank.
- Create more public awareness of community kitchens. Expand the program. Provide transportation and assistance.
- Involve the arts community (they have had a big impact on aids). Educate audiences and involve them in the plan.
- With climate changes there is a need to grow food locally.
- Keep our water public.
- Leave agricultural land alone.
- Reactivate the food security network (ie. green community, community kitchens, VIHA).
- Bring groups together ie. church groups, literacy.
- Promote food production and awareness through the schools.
- Establish Good Food Box vouchers.
- Offer programs to teach cooking.

Chapter 6: Health, Community & Social Services

- Foster connections to apply a comprehensive, inclusive and holistic lens to complex issues. Involve all community sectors.

- Assist with identifying community funding opportunities.
- Support short term intervention together with long term planning for prevention and awareness.
- Develop a list of community support organizations.

- Identify a framework and container for analysis and action (e.g. multi-sectoral committee).

Chapter 10: Transportation

- Support development of programming such as volunteer drivers, improved Handi-dart, express service to Victoria, improved transit scheduling, etc.

Chapter 7: Housing & the Built Environment

- Raise the profile of the issues and acknowledge that we have a housing problem.
- Involve and empower those who are in need of adequate housing.
- Help create community partnerships – government, service organizations, young people, business, etc.
- Support advocacy and awareness.

Chapter 8: The Natural Environment

- Support pro-active planning at the local government level (eg., by-laws and zoning).
- Encourage greater community participation, cooperation and communication between groups of common interest.
- Engage other levels of government.

Chapter 9: Public Safety

- Develop an accurate and full picture of community safety in the region, going beyond police statistics to look at a range of indicators that recognize the links between quality of life and safety.
- Develop a communications strategy to inform and educate the community about the picture of community safety, and obtain feedback from a range of sectors to develop plans and actions.

References

Maps

Cowichan Valley Regional District
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group
B.C. Statistics

Chapter 1 – Arts, Culture and Recreation

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Cowichan Region Economic Development Commission, Regional Arts, Culture and Heritage Initiative. Inventory of Arts and Culture, compiled by Louise McMurray of Film Cowichan and Chrystal Stone.

Ron Austen, General Manager, Cowichan Community Centre

Cowichan Valley Regional District, Leisure for Less: Affordable Recreation Opportunities

CVRD Parks webpage:
<http://www.cvrd.bc.ca/parks/index.html>

North Cowichan Parks Book:
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