



“My husband and I moved to Duncan to retire...far more affordable than the lower mainland. That was our primary reason...but what we have found here is far more valuable...a tight community of caring people and a better quality of life.”

“How can we make our community a better place?”

ANNUAL REPORT

2015



Social Planning Cowichan researches, forms partnerships, creates strategies and informs the Cowichan public about social planning issues.

Welcome to our 2015 Annual Report!

With the transition of our affordable housing programs to the newly formed Cowichan Housing Association, we have been able to focus our energies on some new areas, including creating a social policy framework and examining the impacts of voluntary organizations in the community. At the same time, our work on existing priorities such as the Living Wage and cultural connections has continued to grow and develop.

Over the summer, we have asked numerous people around the Region to share their concerns and values about our community, we have been able to highlight some of these comments in this report. We look forward to the upcoming year ahead and continuing to support the Cowichan community.

Jenn George
Board Chair

Kathleen Sheppard
Executive Director



“How can we as a community embrace change and invest in our children and grandchildren’s future?”

SOCIAL POLICY framework

Most of us have a vision for the future for our children, our families and our community. Creating a social vision is about bringing together the pieces that affect our lives, from income and prosperity to health and well-being and creating a common vision of our community.

This spring, Social Planning, in partnership with Board Voice Society of BC and Safer Futures Cowichan began the process of exploring a Social Policy Framework for the Cowichan Region.

Since May, we have reached out to hundreds of people, getting perspectives about our community. By combining this information with research data, we hope to create a picture of the priorities of our community.

A follow up community forum is scheduled for October.

WE ASKED:

What do you value most about your community?

27%

sense of community

23%

people & family

18%

natural environment

9%

cultural diversity

What concerns you most about your community?

30%

natural environment

17%

health & safety

10%

affordable housing

9%

economy & poverty

LIVING wage

Each year, we analyze the cost of living in our community to determine the Living Wage for a model family. A Living Wage is the minimum hourly wage needed to cover a family's costs. In 2015, the Living Wage for the Cowichan was \$17.55, an increase from \$17.04 in 2014.

Our model living wage family includes two parents and two children and makes the following assumptions:

- both parents are upgrading their education
- both parents work 35 hours per week
- the 7 year old child is in after school care and attends a summer camp
- the 4 year old child is in day care
- the family rents a 3 bedroom apartment
- the family has 2 vehicles

The family's living wage is based on an after tax wage and includes all monthly living expenses but doesn't allow for savings or debt payment.

Monthly Expenses:	
Food:	\$907.39
Clothing & Footwear:	\$195.20
Housing:	\$1224.65
Transportation:	\$850.34
Childcare:	\$1047.42
MSP Premiums:	\$144.00
Other Health Care:	\$166.80
Parent Education:	\$84.92
Other Expenses:	\$831.35
Contingency	\$234.85
Total Expenses:	\$5,686.92
Hourly Living Wage (per person):	
	\$17.55

CULTURAL

connections

Since 2008, Social Planning Cowichan has been working to support cultural connections between individuals, organizations and governments in our community.



Understanding the Village

In 2015, we hosted several Understanding the Village workshops, both for the public and in local schools. These experiential workshops take participants through the experience of colonization, creating an understanding of how that history impacts our communities today. Due to the success of these workshops, our team has also received requests to deliver workshops in Seattle, Nanaimo and Victoria.

Cowichan 101

In partnership with Duncan United Church, Social Planning has hosted Cowichan 101 throughout 2015. This series of monthly workshops has given participants the opportunity to learn about and experience aspects of the Cowichan culture.

Walk of the Nations

In 2015, Social Planning, in partnership with Cowichan Intercultural Society and Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship) hosted the 7th annual Walk of the Nations. Each year, this walk through downtown Duncan culminates in a musical celebration of our cultural diversity.

IMPACTS OF THE

voluntary sector

In August, we released a new research report, *Benefiting Community: The Economic and Social Impacts of the Voluntary Sector in the Cowichan Region*. This report provides analysis and insights into the contributions and benefits made by more than 344 non-profit and charitable organizations in the Cowichan Region.

With an economic impact of more than \$119 million per year, the voluntary sector provides nearly 1800 jobs and benefits the overall wellbeing of the community.

TOTAL REVENUE:

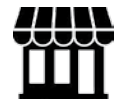
\$119,530,741



14.3%
Donations



26.4%
Government



59.3%
Earned Revenue
& Transfers

“Our impact is economic. We employ and contract with over 80 individuals. We purchase all our goods and services from the community. We are educating people, and businesses on a daily basis that our service is needed and they benefit from our patronage.”

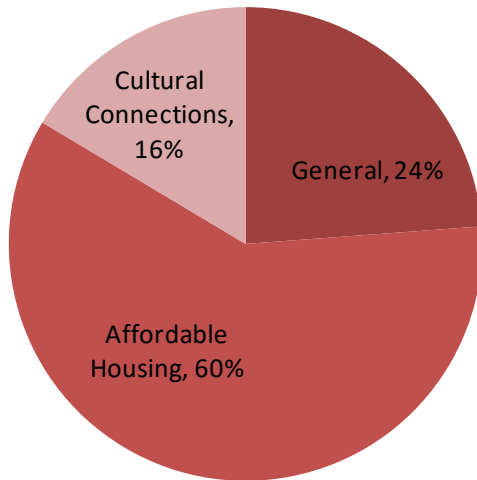
AFFORDABLE

housing

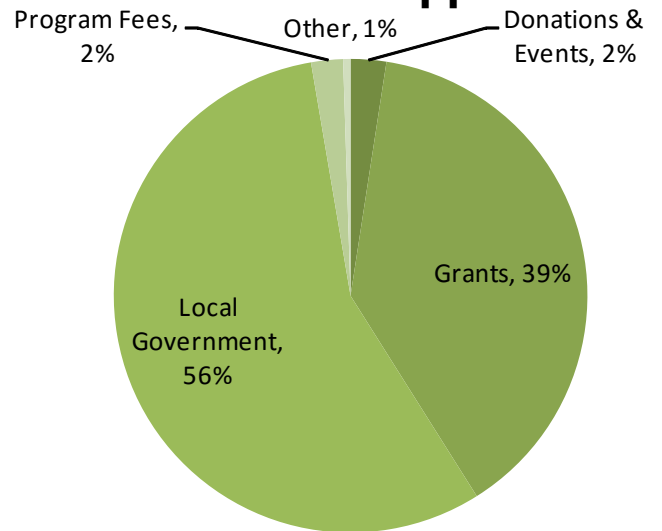
In January, we facilitated the establishment of the Cowichan Housing Association, a new organization that will focus on homelessness prevention and affordable housing in the Cowichan region. As part of this transition, Social Planning has transferred responsibility for its affordable housing programs to the new organization.

FINANCIAL *information*

Cost of Our Work



Sources of Support



General expenses include all projects and partnerships that do not have dedicated funding. Financial information is for the fiscal period ending March 31, 2014. Financial statements are available upon request.

WHO *we are*

Staff:

Kathleen Sheppard
Executive Director

Michelle Staples
Special Projects Consultant

Harry Berbrayer & Alicja Khun Khun
Project Officers

Board of Directors:

Jenn George, Chair
Chris Hall, Vice Chair
Valerie Nicol, Past Chair
Gina Warburton, Secretary-Treasurer
John Scull
Terri Dame
Cindy Lise

Local Government Liaisons:

Michelle Bell - City of Duncan
Kate Marsh - North Cowichan
Carol Henderson - Ladysmith
Carolyne Austin - Lake Cowichan

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THANK YOU *to our supporters and partners, especially:*

