



## REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2012  
CVRD BOARDROOM, 12:00 PM  
175 INGRAM STREET, DUNCAN, BC

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### AGENDA

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The next regular Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 29, 2012 at 12:00 pm in the Boardroom, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan BC.	

**Note:** A copy of the full agenda package is available at the CVRD website [www.cvrld.bc.ca](http://www.cvrld.bc.ca)

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Director Marcotte, Chair  
Director Hartmann, Vice Chair  
Director Duncan  
Director Giles

Director Hutchins  
Bob Crawford  
Mick Smith  
Joanne McLeod

Ian Christison  
Pat Durose  
Wayne Haddow  
Rodger Hunter

Dave Thomson  
Fred Oud  
George Robbins  
Judy Stafford

**DISTRIBUTION:**

**Full Agenda Package:**

WARREN JONES, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
TOM ANDERSON, GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
GEOFF MILLAR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER  
KATHY LACHMAN, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

**Agenda:**

DIRECTOR KENT	DIRECTOR FRASER
DIRECTOR LEFEBURE	DIRECTOR IANNIDINARDO
DIRECTOR LINES	DIRECTOR MORRISON
DIRECTOR MCGONIGLE	DIRECTOR DOREY
DIRECTOR WALKER	DIRECTOR WEAVER

MARK KUEBER, GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES  
ROB KLINE, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & LANDS

Minutes of the Regular Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission held on Tuesday, March 27, 2012 at 12:00 pm in the CVRD Boardroom, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC.

**PRESENT**

Director M. Marcotte, Chair  
Directors L. Duncan and G. Giles  
Bob Crawford, Mick Smith, Joanne McLeod, Ian Christison, Pat Durose and Dave Thomson

**ALSO PRESENT**

George Robbins and Pete Keber  
Tom Anderson, General Manager, Planning & Development  
Geoff Millar, Manager, Economic Development  
Kathy Lachman, EDC Business Development Officer  
Judy Mills, Recording Secretary

**ABSENT**

Directors R. Hartmann and R. Hutchins, Wayne Haddow, Rodger Hunter and Fred Oud

**WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair called the inaugural meeting to order and the members introduced themselves.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Two items of information were added.

**It was moved and seconded the amended agenda be accepted.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Regular Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting held November 22, 2011 be adopted.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**BA1 – Section 946 of the Local Government Act**

Director Duncan expressed concern regarding applications for subdivision in ALR. He reviewed the history from 2005 and there have been very few applications. Applications are tracked however decisions are not communicated. He is interested to know how many applications have been approved.

Discussion ensued.

**It was moved and seconded the report on applications for subdivision in ALR be included in the next Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission meeting for information.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Tom Anderson will include a cover letter with definition of Section 946 of the Local Government Act.

**DISCUSSION**

**D1 – Meeting Schedule & Location**

Member consensus to hold the Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month at noon in the CVRD Boardroom. Due to the statutory holiday the May meeting will be held on the fifth Tuesday. The meeting schedule will be circulated.

**D2 – Review Bylaw  
No. 3515**

The CVRD Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission establishment bylaw was reviewed. Economic Development and Environment Commission appointments will be made at the April 11, 2012 Board meeting. Full commission is 16 members; quorum is 9 members one of whom must be a Director of the Board.

It was noted District of North Cowichan (DNC) is included in the CVRD Agriculture Plan. Director Hartmann sits on the DNC advisory committee as well as the RAAC. Chair Marcotte has agreed to meet with DNC at any time.

It was noted that there is general liability coverage for CVRD volunteers. Tom Anderson will provide more detailed information regarding this coverage at the next meeting.

**REPORTS**

**R1 – Islands  
Agriculture Show**

Kathy Lachman gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the success of the first ever Islands Agriculture Show held on Feb 3-4, 2012 at the Cowichan Exhibition. An Agriculture Show is one of the 78 action items in the CVRD Agriculture Plan.

A steering committee was formed to organize this event. The event was very well attended with 148 delegates and over 800 paid tradeshow attendees. Young Farmer's Day attracted over 400 school kids. There were 63 booths sold to 55 exhibitors which included a poultry in motion exhibit as well as outdoor displays. The evaluation included an exhibitor survey of which all 31 responses said they would return next year. The event exceeded revenue projections which included a one-time grant from the Islands Agriculture Foundation (IAF).

At the event Geoff Millar was recognized by the Islands Agriculture Foundation for his dedication to the Islands Agri-Food Initiative and service as Chair.

Bob Crawford reported the Cowichan Agriculture Society signed up 10 new members.

The steering committee has met and set the date for next year's show on Feb 1-2, 2013 at the Cowichan Exhibition. They will be developing a report for the IAF grant and updating the website and are considering setting up a non-profit society.

A 7 minute video of the show was shown and has been uploaded to YouTube and the iashow.ca website. On the website you can vote for the type of speakers that interest you for the 2013 show.

**It was moved and seconded a letter be sent to the Islands Agriculture Show Steering Committee thanking and congratulating them on their success.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

George Robbins noted that Country Life had a full advertisement on the Islands Agriculture Show. Their writer is now looking to relocate to the island.

Tom Anderson left the meeting at 1:12 pm.

**R2 – Update on  
Agricultural  
Advisory Committee**

Kathy Lachman gave a PowerPoint update on the Agricultural Advisory Committee sub-committee activities to date.

Discussion ensued.

Director Duncan expressed interest to use the rooster logo for the Agriculture Branding Program. Geoff Millar has begun discussions with Catherine Pastula of Island Farm Fresh (IFF) so that when we are ready we can move forward with this initiative.

Director Giles left the meeting at 1:26 pm.

Further discussion ensued.

**Member consensus that the RAAC will continue with sub-committees. Members will be contacted before the next meeting to advise who is on which sub-committee.**

**INFORMATION**

**IN1 – EDC Stats on  
Farming**

Director Giles absent. Item was tabled.

**IN2 – BC Strategy for  
Growth**

Geoff Millar reported B.C. Agri-foods has launched a Strategy for Growth to ensure food production in B.C. will continue to grow and support valuable jobs and healthy communities. They are looking for feedback from your community. The information will be circulated.

It was noted that District A Farmers Institutes AGM is being held Saturday, March 31, 2012, Gabriola, BC.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 1:33 pm.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Recording Secretary



R 7

## STAFF REPORT

### REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMISSION APRIL 24, 2012

DATE: April 16, 2012 FILE NO: N/A  
FROM: Maddy Koch, Planning Technician BYLAW NO: N/A  
SUBJECT: Subdivisions in the ALR under Section 946 of *the Local Government Act*

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**Recommendation/Action:**

Report is for information purposes.

**Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:** N/A

**Financial Impact:** (Reviewed by Finance Division: N/A)

**Background:**

At the Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission meeting of March 27, 2012, it was requested that staff provide background on subdivisions for relatives (Section 946 subdivisions) in the ALR, and a report on the outcomes of these applications since 2005.

The Provincial *Local Government Act* provides a legal framework which Local Governments must work within. Section 946 of this act allows "subdivision to provide residence for a relative", subject to certain conditions. This section permits subdivision of lots within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) to sizes below the minimum lot sizes established by Local Governments (see attached Appendix A).

Section 946 allows Local Governments to adopt bylaws to set minimum lot sizes for parcels subdivided under this Section, however, it does *not* allow the minimum lot sizes to apply to lands located within the ALR. When a 946 subdivision is proposed within the ALR, a lot as small as 2500 square metres may potentially be approved.

Approval of a 946 subdivision within the ALR is subject to criteria within the Act being met and a rather lengthy process. The following is a list of the conditions that must be in place for an ALR property to be eligible for subdivision under Section 946:

- The applicant must have owned the property for at least 5 years prior to making the application;
- The application must be "for the purpose of providing a separate residence for the owner or for the owner's mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter, son, daughter-in-law, son-in-law or grandchild";
- If the property is classified as farm land for assessment and taxation purposes, the remainder lot must be larger than 2 hectares;

- The property must not have been subdivided under Section 946 within 5 years previous to the application and;
- Neither of the proposed lots may be less than 1 hectare in size, unless the medical health officer approves a smaller area; in which case a lot may be no smaller than 2500 square metres.

If an ALR property owner is able to meet the above conditions, they may apply to subdivide under Section 946.

### ALR Application

Any application to subdivide within the ALR must also be reviewed and approved by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). ALR subdivision applications are first received and reviewed by the CVRD. The CVRD either forwards the ALC a recommendation to approve the application, or –to be neutral- “no recommendation”. Before 2009, the CVRD would send the ALC recommendations to deny applications; but now, if the Board decides an application should be denied, it is not forwarded to the ALC.

Upon receiving and reviewing the application, the ALC decides whether or not to approve an ALR subdivision application.

### Subdivision Application

If the ALC supports a 946 subdivision, the applicant may apply to subdivide the land through the Ministry of Transportations and Infrastructure, as they are the approving officers for subdivisions in the Electoral Areas. Subdivision applications are reviewed by the CVRD to ensure compliance with CVRD bylaws.

### 946 subdivisions within the CVRD

In December 2011, staff researched CVRD Board Resolutions and ALC resolutions pertaining to all 946 subdivision applications in the CVRD since 2005. The findings are detailed in the attached table (Appendix B) and summarized below.

The CVRD Board has made resolutions on 22 different 946 subdivision ALR Applications since 2005. Of these 22 files, only 16 contained ALC resolutions. Files that did not contain ALC resolutions either had been denied at the CVRD level and not forwarded to the ALC, or had not been reviewed by the ALC yet.

File analysis revealed that the CVRD has tended to make neutral recommendations to the ALC- 9 out of the 22 applications (41%) were forwarded to the ALC with no recommendation. Five applications (23%) were recommended for approval and 8 (36%) were recommended for denial. The ALC approved 8 applications (50%) and denied 8 applications (50%).

ALC resolutions were not extraordinarily different from the CVRD’s recommendations. There was only one application where the CVRD recommended denial and the ALC approved the application. The ALC concurred with the CVRD’s recommendations for 6 applications. The CVRD had made neutral recommendations for the remaining 9 applications.

Of the 8 applicants that received approval from the ALC, 6 have completed the subdivision process, one has an active subdivision application and one did not pursue subdivision.

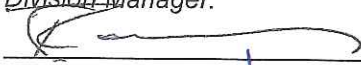
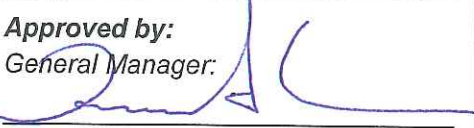
In summary, Section 946 of the *Local Government Act* facilitates subdivision of agricultural land to lot sizes much smaller than anticipated by CVRD zoning bylaws. However, in the CVRD these applications have only amounted to an approximate average of one successful subdivision of this type per year since 2005.

Submitted by,



Maddy Koch  
Planning Technician  
Planning and Development Department

MK/ca  
attachments

<p><b>Reviewed by:</b> <i>Division Manager:</i></p> 
<p><b>Approved by:</b> <i>General Manager:</i></p> 



**Subdivision to provide residence for a relative**

**946.** (1) If the requirements of this section are met, an approving officer may approve the subdivision of a parcel of land that would otherwise be prevented from subdivision by a provision in

- (a) a bylaw under this Act other than a bylaw under subsection (4), or
- (b) a regulation under the *Local Services Act* that establishes a minimum parcel size.

(2) An application for subdivision of a parcel under this section may only be made if all the following requirements are met:

- (a) the person making the application has owned the parcel for at least 5 years before making the application;
- (b) the application is made for the purpose of providing a separate residence for the owner or for the owner's mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter, son, daughter-in-law, son-in-law or grandchild;
- (c) the subdivision would not be a subdivision that an approving officer is prevented from approving by subsection (3).

(3) Despite subsection (1), an approving officer must not approve a subdivision under this section in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) if
  - (i) the parcel proposed to be subdivided is classified as farm land for assessment and taxation purposes, and
  - (ii) after creation of the parcel subdivided for the purpose of providing a residence as stated in subsection (2) (b), the remainder of the parcel proposed to be subdivided would be less than 2 hectares;

(Am) Nov 01/02

- (b) if the parcel proposed to be subdivided
  - (i) is not within an agricultural land reserve established under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, and
  - (ii) was created by subdivision under this section, including subdivision under section 996 of the *Municipal Act*, R.S.B.C. 1979, c. 290, as it read before it was repealed and replaced by section 13 of the *Municipal Amendment Act (No. 2), 1989*;

(Am) Nov 01/02

- (c) if the parcel proposed to be subdivided
  - (i) is within an agricultural land reserve established under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, and
  - (ii) was within the previous 5 years created by subdivision under this section, including subdivision under section 996 of the *Municipal Act*, R.S.B.C. 1979, c. 290, as it read before it was repealed and replaced by section 13 of the *Municipal Amendment Act (No. 2), 1989*.

(4) Subject to subsections (5) and (6), a local government may, by bylaw, establish the minimum size for a parcel that may be subdivided under this section, and different sizes may be specified for different areas specified in the bylaw.

(Am) Mar 31/04

(5) A bylaw under subsection (4) does not apply to land within an agricultural land reserve established under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, with the exception of land to which section 23 (1) or (2) of that Act applies.

(6) Any parcel created by subdivision under this section must be at least 1 hectare unless a smaller area, in no case less than 2 500 m<sup>2</sup>, is approved by the medical health officer.

(7) For 5 years after subdivision under this section,

- (a) the use of the parcel subdivided for the purpose of providing a residence as stated in subsection (2) (b) must be residential use only, and
- (b) the use of the remainder of the original parcel must not be changed from the use of the original parcel, unless the use is changed by bylaw.

(Am) Mar 31/04

(8) For a parcel of land that is not within an agricultural land reserve established under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, or that is within such a reserve but is land to which section 23 (1) or (2) of that Act applies, approval of subdivision under this section may only be given on the condition that

- (a) the owner of the original parcel covenants with the local government, in respect of each of the parcels being created by the subdivision, that the parcel
    - (i) will be used as required by subsection (7), and
    - (ii) will not be subdivided under this section, and
  - (b) the covenants referred to in paragraph (a) be registered under section 219 of the *Land Title Act* at the same time that application is made to deposit the subdivision plan.
- (9) If a subdivision referred to in subsection (8) is approved, the approving officer must state on the note of approval required by section 88 of the *Land Title Act* that the approval is subject to conditions established by subsection (8).

RS1979-290-996; 1989-33-13; 1999-14-40 (B.C. Reg. 70/2000); 2000-7-177; 2002-36-87 (B.C. Reg. 171/2002); 2004-12-29.

**946 subdivisions in the ALR: 2005- 2011**Resolution Legend:

Denial
Approval
Neutral

<u>Electoral Area</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>File No.</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>CVRD Board Resolution</u>	<u>ALC Resolution</u>
C	2005	1-C-05ALR	To subdivide 0.4 hectares from the 1.2 hectare lot	That [the application] be recommended for <b>denial</b> as it is contrary to the Agricultural Objectives and Policies of the Cobble Hill Official Community Plan and it would set an unwanted precedent for further subdivision of other lands that are immediately adjacent to the subject property.	That the application be <b>refused</b> as proposed
B	2006	2-B-06 ALR	To Subdivide a 0.81 hectare parcel from the 40 hectare property and to subdivide 15.1 ha from the property	That [the proposal to subdivide a 0.81 ha lot] be <b>supported</b> and that [the proposal to subdivide a 15.1 ha lot] be forwarded to the ALC with <b>no recommendation</b>	That the application be <b>approved</b> subject to the 24.2 ha remainder being consolidated with the adjacent 40 hectare property
C	2006	3-C-06 ALR	To subdivide the subject property into a 0.25 ha lot and a 2.1 ha lot.	That [the application] be forwarded to the Agricultural Land Commission with <b>no objection</b>	Not Found
D	2006	3-D-06 ALR	To subdivide 0.27 ha from the 1.1 ha subject property	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC <b>for their consideration</b>	That the application be <b>refused</b>
D	2006	4-D-06 ALR	To subdivide the subject property into a 1.11 ha lot and a 1.12 ha lot	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC <b>without comment</b>	That the application be <b>approved</b>
H	2006	5-H-06-ALR	To subdivide 1.8 ha from the 12.72 ha property	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC <b>for their consideration</b>	That the application be <b>approved</b>
B	2007	2-B-07 ALR	To subdivide the property into a 0.8 ha lot and a 0.9 ha lot	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC for their consideration <b>without comment</b>	That the application be <b>refused</b> as proposed
C	2007	1-C-07 ALR	To subdivide one 1.6 ha-2.02 ha parcel from the 6.07 ha subject property	That [the application] be forwarded to the Agricultural Land Commission for their consideration with a <b>recommendation to deny the application</b>	That the application be <b>approved</b> subject to: compliance with site plan, a fence and 15 metre vegetative buffer, covenant to require maintenance of the fence/ buffer, access via McAlpine Road, subdivision being completed within 3 years.



C	2007	2-C-07 ALR	To subdivide the subject property into two lots: one 1.4-1.6 ha parcel and one 4.2-4.4 ha parcel	That [the application] be forwarded to the Agricultural Land Commission for their consideration.	That the application be approved subject to: compliance with site plan, subdivision being completed within 3 years.
E	2007	2-E-07 ALR	To subdivide the property into a 2 ha lot and a 4 ha lot	That [the application] be forwarded to the Agricultural Land Commission with a recommendation to deny the application	That the application be refused
E	2007	3-E-07 ALR	To subdivide 10.1 ha from the 36.89 ha property	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC with a recommendation that the application be revised in order to locate the proposed lot line along the existing A-1/ F-1 zone and ALR boundary	That the application be approved as proposed subject to inclusion of 5 ha of the subject property into the ALR
H	2007	1-H-07 ALR	To subdivide a 1.25 ha from the 14.4 ha lot	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC for their consideration without comment, and request that the ALC conduct a site visit of the subject property prior to a decision being made	None found, but a note to file indicates that the application was refused
C	2008	2-C-08 ALR	To subdivide along a road.	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC with a recommendation to approve the application	That the application be allowed subject to: compliance with the site plan, registration of a covenant to ensure only one dwelling is put on each lot
E	2008	4-E-08ALR	To subdivide 2.27 hectares from the 6.76 ha property	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC with a recommendation to deny	That the request be refused as proposed
C	2009	3-C-09ALR	To subdivide 1 hectare from an 8.3 hectare lot	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC with a recommendation to approve the application, on the condition of a no further 946 subdivision covenant being registered on both parcels and that ALC resolution #459/2005 be rescinded	That the application be approved as presented subject to rescinding resolution 459/2005 (the resolution was for the purpose of excluding the lot from the ALR)
D	2009	1-D-09ALR	To subdivide the property into a 0.8 ha lot and a 5 ha lot	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC with a recommendation to deny, noting the following comments: -the existing property is already smaller than permitted by the current zoning and subdivision would worsen the problem of parcel sizes that were unsustainable for farming -The principle of protecting farm land is a core value for many residents and -ALR rules permit sale of property to finance farm improvements but the approval process is onerous	That the application be refused as presented
H	2009	1-H-09ALR	(As revised) To subdivide 1 ha from the 3.9 ha property	That [the application] be denied and not forwarded to the ALC and that the appropriate refund be given as per the Development Application Procedures and Fees Bylaw.	Not forwarded to the ALC

E	2010	5-E-10ALR	To subdivide 1 hectare from a 5.8 hectare lot	That [the application] <b>be denied.</b>	The application was not forwarded to the ALC
F	2010	1-F-10ALR	To subdivide a 0.8 ha lot into two lots of 0.4 ha each	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC with <b>no recommendation</b>	That the application <b>be refused</b>
B	2011	1-B-11ALR	To subdivide 0.4 ha from a 1.7 ha parcel	That [the application] <b>be denied</b> and not forwarded to the Agricultural Land Commission, pursuant to CVRD Board Resolution No. 09-353(10)	The application was not forwarded to the ALC
C	2011	1-C-11ALR	To subdivide 0.8 ha from the 16 ha parcel	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC with a recommendation to <b>approve</b> , due to the Farm Production Plan and Mr. Robbins long-standing contribution to the agricultural community.	Not yet received
C	2011	2-C-11ALR	To subdivide 2 hectares from the 33 hectare subject property	That [the application] be forwarded to the ALC with a recommendation to <b>approve</b> given the homesite severance aspect of the application	Not yet received.



R2

## STAFF REPORT

### REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING OF APRIL 24, 2012

**DATE:** April 12, 2012  
**FROM:** Tom R. Anderson, General Manager  
**SUBJECT:** CVRD Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan

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**Recommendation/Action:**

That the Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission review the Draft Terms of Reference for the CVRD Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan and provide comments and support.

**Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:**

The Corporate Strategic Plan lists that we will "develop and implement an Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan as one of its top Strategic Actions.

**CVRD Environmental Lens Initiative:**

The Environmental Lens Initiative was developed in 2010 to provide guidance on how the CVRD, as an organization, could weave sustainability principles into all decision making processes. The Purpose of the Lens is to influence all aspects of decisions made by the CVRD in the delivery of all its services to the residents and businesses of the Region. The Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan was identified as a Phase 1 Project.

**Financial Impact:** *(Reviewed by Finance Division: [Signature])*

The Gas Tax Agreement (GTA) Regionally Significant Projects Fund will pay 100 percent of the estimated \$300,000 cost of this study.

**Direction:**

The CVRD Regional Board passed the following resolution at their April 11, 2012 regular meeting:

**It was moved and seconded that it be recommended to the Board that the CVRD Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan Terms of Reference be forwarded to the Environment, Economic Development and Regional Agricultural Advisory Commissions, District of North Cowichan, City of Duncan, Town of Ladysmith, Town of Lake Cowichan, First Nations and Electoral Areas' Area Planning Commissions for comment and support.**

**Background:**

Under the Gas Tax Agreement, all local governments receiving Gas Tax funding must undertake Integrated Community Sustainability (ICS) Planning as part of a regional strategy. In the context of Gas Tax funding, ICS Planning is defined as "long term planning, in consultation with community members, that provides direction for the community to realize sustainability objectives it has for the environment, cultural, social and economic dimensions of its identity." The CVRD Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan is proposed to achieve those objectives.



Attached to this report is a Draft Terms of Reference which provides a general outline of the Objectives, Desired Outcomes, Approach and Deliverables. In addition, two Appendices are attached. One provides further detail on the Guiding Principles, Stakeholder Engagement and Project Phases. The second, attempts to provide further insight into the discussion on Sustainability and Approaches to Assessing Sustainability.

In giving considerable thought to the development of the sustainability plan there would appear to be a number of challenges and wise practices that should be considered when developing an approach for integrated sustainability planning within the CVRD.

## **CHALLENGES**

### **1. Building a common understanding of sustainability**

It is generally accepted that sustainability is the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. There is a tendency for the public and even planners to think that sustainability will 'happen' if we pollute less and use fewer resources while continuing to grow the economy. However, fundamental to sustainability is the principle of carrying capacity. Regions have a limited capacity to provide resources and services and when that capacity is exceeded ecological and social systems begin to breakdown. Unlimited growth is not an option. Sustainability rests on living within the limits of:

- Ecosystems' capacity to continue providing food, clean air and water and other essential goods and services, and
- The capacity of social and economic systems' to provide adequate and equitable healthcare, education, employment, cultural opportunities and other services.

Fully understanding, adopting and working with this concept requires a collective shift in thinking.

### **2. Complexity of integration**

Aside from the challenge of understanding sustainability, it is challenging to integrate the various system components and address carrying capacity. A water sustainability plan, for example, is complicated enough without considering the implications for habitat, biodiversity, public health, tourism and culture. However, without integration the result will be an amalgamation of various lists of "to dos" without a sense of the key linkages and limiting factors to sustainability within the watershed.

### **3. Meaningful community engagement**

Community input is critical if a plan is to be accepted, supported and implemented. However, it is challenging to include all the segments of the community. Innovative methods, resources and time are required to capture valid, representative input. Younger people, who are considered to have the largest stake in sustainability planning, are often the most challenging to involve because of busy lives and competing interests. Maintaining sufficient interest and involvement is also difficult given the plethora of planning processes and the general perception that planning interferes with getting things done.

### **4. Implementation**

Plan implementation is typically challenging because it depends on:

- successfully overcoming the above challenges,
- ensuring adequate dedicated resources to follow through,
- ensuring clear accountabilities and processes/data to track progress, and
- ongoing commitment and support for the plan from partners and other levels of government.

## WISE PRACTICES

1. **Committed Champions** – Strong visible commitment by elected officials and other opinion leaders is important for building staff and community buy-in and communicating key messages.
2. **Coordination** – Dedicated resources to coordinate and manage the development of the plan and its implementation helps ensure timely, consistent progress and institutionalization of the plan.
3. **Cross Sector Teams** – Bringing people from diverse backgrounds to work together on project teams help to build bridges across departments, jurisdictions, and sectors/disciplines, and challenges “siloed” thinking.
4. **Partnerships** – Local governments cannot achieve sustainability on their own. Community partnerships are essential. Identifying shared benefits and focusing on openness, inclusiveness and respectful interactions from the beginning of the planning process should help build those partnerships in a timely way.
5. **Community Input/Buy-in** – An inclusive, engaging and transparent planning process promotes legitimacy and community support.
6. **Research and Analysis** – Best available data and appropriate analysis must underpin the strategies, indicators and targets in order for the plan to be credible.
7. **Clear Goals** – Well-crafted, measureable goals that resonate with the public are key to establishing and inspiring vision and a workable framework for the plan.
8. **Follow Through** - Implementation plans with clear responsibilities and targets and ongoing monitoring and reporting of progress help to institutionalize the plan. Ongoing reporting also helps to maintain community engagement.

## PROJECT GROUPS

Given recent discussions regarding the Environment Commission requesting to have a member(s) of their Commission on the Plan Steering Committee, it was felt that a brief outline should be provided which gives a general overview of key stakeholders expected to participate in the Plan process. Obviously, a broad group of stakeholders are affected by and /or influence regional sustainability planning. They include elected officials from the CVRD, North Cowichan, Duncan, Lake Cowichan, Ladysmith, First Nations, local government staff, federal and provincial governments, members of CVRD commissions and advisory bodies, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and various sectors of the general public. It should be cautioned that the eventual structure of such Plan Committees may also be influenced by any recommendations provided by the successful Consulting Team and ultimately the CVRD Chair and Regional Board. In the absence of that at this point, the following structure and roles will ensure broad and effective participation of CVRD stakeholders:

1. **Cowichan Valley Regional District Board and Local Government Partners** – Decision making.  
The CVRD is leading the integrated regional sustainability planning process in cooperation and consultation with municipal councils and First Nations. The CVRD Board will make final decisions regarding the plan and other local governments may also wish to be active decision making partners. All will receive regular progress reports.
2. **Sustainability Steering Committee** - Project oversight, guidance and decision making.
  - Appointed CVRD Board members and municipal leaders as well as chairs of key CVRD advisory bodies, First Nations representation and possibly other opinion leaders are recommended.



3. **Sustainability Advisory Group** –Advisors to the Steering Committee

The intention is to bring together staff and community members with special expertise and interests in sustainability planning. During the process the Advisory Group will break into working groups when it is necessary to focus on the technical aspects of specific topics. This will be an important opportunity to bring others with relevant backgrounds into the process to aid buy-in, capacity building and collaboration. The core Advisory Group will be composed of:

- Planning Department staff reps: CVRD, Duncan, Ladysmith, Lake Cowichan and North Cowichan, possibly CAOs; CVRD managers of Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture, Engineering; Environment, First Nation reps. etc.

4. **Regional Focus Group** – A local working group comprised of opinion leaders from across the Regional District to meet regularly and provide informal advice and serve as a sounding board.

5. **Public** –Input and ideas at key points in the planning process.

6. **Project Team** – Coordinate and implement project

In keeping with the notion of knowledge retention and capacity building within the community, the project team will be composed primarily of local people and will feature an internship opportunity for youth leaders interested in developing community consultation skills. The youth interns will be trained as facilitators and organizers and will help develop the public consultation strategy to ensure effective targeting of youth.

- CVRD Project Manager
- Consultant Team Leader
- Community process facilitators
- Graphic design and communications
- Research and Analysis
- Specialized Sustainability Expertise
- Other key staff/collaborators

## MOVING FORWARD

Once input has been received from the various agencies as directed, a further report with a revised Terms of Reference will be forwarded to an up-coming CVRD Regional Services Committee meeting for further direction.

Submitted by,



Tom R. Anderson,  
General Manager  
Planning and Development Department

TRA/ca



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# CVRD Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan

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Terms of Reference

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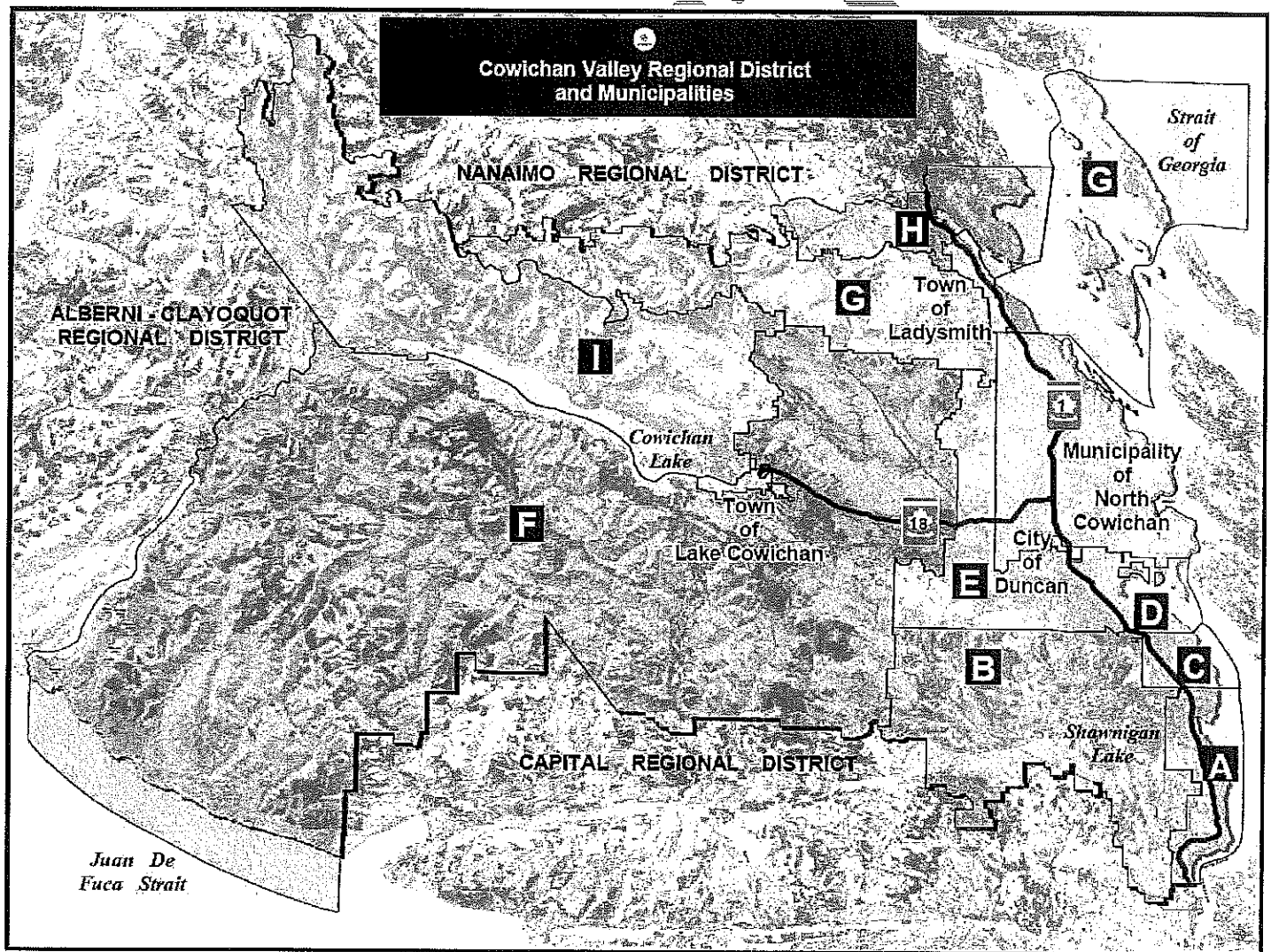
March 2012

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## Introduction

The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is located on Southern Vancouver Island, generally between the cities of Nanaimo and Victoria. The CVRD, incorporated in 1967, is home to more than 80,000 people, living in the region's four municipalities, nine electoral areas (A through I) or First Nations reserves, as shown on the map below. The region as a whole is notably heterogeneous – each community and electoral area within the region has its own unique socio-cultural, economic and environmental context. All of the electoral areas and municipalities have official community plans and land use regulations in place.



The CVRD intends to develop an Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan (IRSP) that will provide a compelling long-term (30 year) vision and strategy to achieve a sustainable future for the region's population. This will be a multi-faced plan addressing land use, servicing, environmental, cultural, social and economic issues that are unique to the region. The IRSP will build on previous region-wide and sub-regional studies and plans which include, but are not exclusive of the:

- State of the Environment Report
- Sustainable Economic Development Strategy
- Area Agricultural Plans
- Solid Waste Management Plan
- Liquid Waste Management Plans
- Cowichan Region Affordable Housing Strategy
- Regional Environmental Strategic Plan
- Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan
- Regional Parks & Trails Master Plan
- Regional Energy Plan
- CVRD Community Surveys
- South Cowichan Official Community Plan

The IRSP will also address current regional planning deficiencies with respect to population forecasting, transportation, recreation, and arts, culture and heritage, in addition to other deficiencies that may be identified through the IRSP process. Furthermore, the IRSP will acknowledge sub-regional differences while acknowledging that an all-encompassing and holistic policy framework is needed to help achieve integrated regional sustainability.

## Objectives

Key objectives of the IRSP project are as follows:

- To seek to **engage all stakeholders**, including all local governments, First Nations, and community members, within the region in dialogue to build awareness and develop a common understanding of sustainability;
- To **assess the CVRD's capacity** to achieve sustainability, examining key challenges and opportunities based on dialogue with stakeholders, analysis of existing plans, studies, strategies, land use plans, servicing, environmental, economic, social, and demographic data, and identification of gaps, inconsistencies and shortcomings of existing plans and strategies;
- To **identify strategic actions** respecting land use, servicing, environmental, cultural, economic and social elements to approach regional sustainability; and
- To **develop a system for measuring progress** towards achieving sustainability, including a set of indicators and associated targets that are appropriate for the Cowichan Region.

## Desired Outcomes

The Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan is intended to guide the CVRD toward a sustainable future. This involves beginning a conversation among stakeholders and working toward a common vision and definition of sustainability for the region. The process of developing the IRSP should help to build the capacity of the CVRD to achieve sustainability. It should also build capacity among community members who will collectively, through individual and shared actions, determine to what extent the region is sustainable in the future. The IRSP will provide a framework for decision-making with respect to planning, land use management, infrastructure development and servicing within the region that will be

useful for not only the CVRD but for other local decision makers. Furthermore, its success will be measurable through the establishment and monitoring of appropriate sustainability indicators and targets.

A successful sustainability plan will:

- Demonstrate a commitment to a broad, long term and integrated approach to community resilience and sustainability;
- Provide a forum for collaboration on regional issues among local governments, First Nations and other agencies;
- Ensure the integration of existing regional and sub-regional studies and plans;
- Encourage local governments and community members to commit to sustainability and implement the required actions;
- Increase public confidence in local government;
- Create greater certainty for community members and investors; and
- Enhance the quality of life of community members.

The success of the Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan will also depend on how well-tailored the plan is to the Cowichan Valley, the degree to which local citizens, local government staff and elected officials, and other stakeholders “buy-in” and are committed to the Plan’s implementation, and how completely the Plan is implemented over time.

## Approach

The Consultant Team selected to guide the IRSP process will be responsible for outlining a suitable approach, having regard for the ideas enshrined within the proposed approach (Appendix A) and sustainability discussion (Appendix B), that will include:

- An inclusive and transparent stakeholder engagement process with a variety of opportunities for community members to provide input and become engaged in the process;
- Opportunities for community learning and capacity building among stakeholders including local government representatives, elected officials, and community members;
- A commitment to completing the IRSP within a two-year time frame; and
- A sound planning process designed to achieve the stated objectives (above).

## Deliverables

The IRSP project will involve completion of the following, at a minimum:

- A literature review of the current best sustainable planning practices, methodologies and tools;
- An assessment of the CVRD’s key challenges and opportunities as we move towards integrated regional sustainability planning;
- A definition of sustainability as it applies in the context of the CVRD, developed through extensive and careful stakeholder consultation;

## CVRD Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan

- Strategic directions to achieve integrated sustainability across the CVRD (i.e. specific directions for servicing, Official Community Plans, corporate plans and policies, and regulatory bylaws); and
- Establishment of sustainability criteria, indicators and targets for the purpose of monitoring the implementation of the IRSP through time.

### **Budget**

The budget for the development of the Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan is \$275,000 exclusive of HST.

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## **Appendix A – Proposed Approach to Developing an IRSP for the Cowichan Valley Regional District**

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The approach to developing the IRSP should be guided through a set of underlying principles, including at a minimum, the following:

- Inclusivity – the approach will seek to involve a broad cross section of community members, representing the diverse demography of the region using a variety of engagement methods;
- Collaboration – the approach must be collaborative, seeking consensus among all stakeholders particularly in the development of a definition and vision of sustainability; and
- Shared Responsibility – acknowledging that all stakeholders have a role to play in creating a sustainable future and that both individual and collective actions will determine whether or not sustainability is achieved.

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

A broad group of stakeholders are affected by and/or influence regional sustainability planning. They include elected officials from the CVRD, North Cowichan, Duncan, Lake Cowichan, Ladysmith, First Nations, local government staff, federal and provincial government agencies, members of local government commissions and advisory bodies, businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and the general public.

The approach to developing the IRSP must seek to engage all stakeholders and involve a variety of engagement and communications methods to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to contribute. Additionally, all stakeholders should be allowed to contribute in a manner in which they feel comfortable and in a manner in which their input will be valued. The final form or content of the IRSP must not be premeditated or preconceived given that stakeholder input will be responsible for shaping the Plan.

### **PROJECT PHASES**

#### **Phase 1 – Organization & Commitment (3 months)**

Before launching into the project it is critical to secure commitment to carry out the planning process from the CVRD Board, other local governments and First Nations. The project and proposed approach will be discussed and confirmed with key committees, commissions, local government staff, Councils and the Board.

A Consultant Team will be retained to guide the project and will confirm the approach, including a detailed community engagement process, in collaboration with the CVRD Project Manager/Project Team. The Consultant Team will work with the CVRD Project Manager/Project Team, key CVRD staff, elected officials and community opinion leaders/members to ensure a shared understanding of the integrated sustainability planning project.

The Consultant Team will undertake and complete the following:

- Confirm the approach, including a detailed community engagement process and work plan, to developing the IRSP, in consultation with the CVRD Project Manager/Project Team (the work plan shall identify participants, responsibilities, timelines for each phase of the project, and project milestones and timing for deliverables); and
- Prepare project overview communications materials including participants and involvement structure with terms of reference for the steering and advisory committees for formal approval by CVRD Board & Elected Officials.

### **Phase 2 – Project Scoping/Background Research (6 months)**

This phase will involve significant background research and analysis and community consultation to assess the capacity of the CVRD to undertake sustainability planning, to build an understanding of sustainability concepts among stakeholders, and to assess the opportunities and challenges to sustainable development in the region and the implication of current policies, regulations, practices, behaviors, and development trends on future sustainability.

The Consultant Team will undertake and complete the following:

- Literature review of sustainability best practices and identification of measures which may be appropriate for the CVRD;
- Synthesis and assessment of regional reports, plans, strategies and assessment of gaps, shortcomings;
- Background information studies including trend analysis of demographics, transportation, housing stock, etc.;
- Initial stakeholder engagement to begin dialogue about sustainability in the context of the region and local communities;
- Continuous communications using a variety of methods (i.e. newspapers, newsletters, social media); and
- Regular reports to project teams/steering committee/CVRD Board & Elected Officials.

### **Phase 3 – Establishing a Regional Vision & Measures to Achieve Sustainability (6 months)**

This phase involves working with key stakeholders to reach a common understanding of sustainability for the Cowichan. It is anticipated that a series of workshops will be held to engage stakeholders in a discussion about sustainability, to identify sustainability opportunities and challenges, to develop a common vision for a sustainable region and to identify the measures needed to achieve sustainability.

The Consultant Team will undertake and complete the following:

- Broad-based stakeholder engagement throughout the region;
- Development of a regional sustainability vision statement;
- Identification of sustainability opportunities and challenges;
- Identification of potential sustainability indicators and targets;
- Continuous communications using a variety of methods (i.e. newspapers, newsletters, social media); and
- Regular reports to project teams/steering committee/CVRD Board & Elected Officials.



#### **Phase 4 -- Developing the Draft Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan (6 months)**

This phase will involve synthesizing the background information collected during Phase 2 and community and stakeholder input during Phase 3 to create a defined action plan to achieve sustainability. Specific actions will be identified to address land use, servicing, environmental, cultural, social and economic challenges and opportunities. The draft Plan will also include a framework for measuring sustainability using a set of sustainability indicators and targets that are tailored and appropriate for the region.

The Consultant Team will undertake and complete the following:

- Stakeholder engagement to confirm the proposed action plan;
- A detailed sustainability action/implementation plan;
- A sustainability measurement framework with appropriate indicators and targets;
- Continuous communications using a variety of methods (i.e. newspapers, newsletters, social media); and
- Regular reports to project teams/steering committee/CVRD Board & Elected Officials.

#### **Phase 5 – Confirming the Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan (3 months)**

During this final phase of the project the draft Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan should be made available for stakeholder review and comment. At the completion of the review/comment period, the Consultant Team shall make the appropriate final revisions to the draft IRSP for endorsement/adoption by CVRD Board members and representatives of partner jurisdictions and agencies.

## Appendix B – Sustainability and Approaches to Assessing Sustainability

In the 1980's growing concern about the rapidly deteriorating state of the environment and the consequences for economic and social development led to the United Nation's World Commission on Environment and Development – the Brundtland Commission. The Brundtland Report, released in 1987, provides the most widely accepted definition of sustainability: ***Sustainable development seeks to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future.*** (<http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-01.htm>). There are several principles underpinning this definition:

- **Carrying Capacity** – Nature provides life sustaining goods (e.g., food, timber, water) and services such as maintaining hydrologic cycles and supporting ecosystems) [http://ohioline.osu.edu/paradigm/table\\_1.html](http://ohioline.osu.edu/paradigm/table_1.html). The Brundtland Report notes that *nature is bountiful, fragile and finely balanced. There are thresholds that cannot be crossed without endangering the basic integrity of the system.* The concept of carrying capacity refers to those thresholds - the amount of change or stress an ecosystem can support before its capacity to provide goods and services is compromised. Natural resources are limited.
- **Interconnectedness** – Ecological, economic and social systems are linked through society's dependence and impact on nature's goods and services. The Brundtland Report calls for a new approach to policy and decision making *that integrates production with resource conservation and enhancement, and that links both to the provision for all of an adequate livelihood base and equitable access to resources.* In other words, we need to integrate the natural environment into our economic and social decision making framework.
- **An Ongoing Process** – Sustainability is a journey whereby humans must continually adjust to meet their social, economic and cultural needs while protecting the environment's ability to support them. The Brundtland Report refers to it as *sustainable human progress* or *sustainable development*. The term *development* as used in the Brundtland Report should not be confused with *growth* which traditionally means economic development. Unlimited growth is not sustainable.

In 1989 Karl Henrik Robert, founder of The Natural Step, described four sustainability conditions as the minimum criteria for sustainability (<http://thenaturalstep.org/the-system-conditions>), including:

- Nature is **not** subject to the progressive build up of substances from the earth's crust (e.g., fossil fuels and metals).
- Nature is **not** subject to the progressive build up of substances produced by society (e.g., waste, dioxins, PCBs, etc).
- Nature and natural processes are **not** subject to progressive physical degradation and destruction (e.g., overharvesting fisheries, eroding the soil etc).
- People are **not** subject to conditions that systematically undermine their capacities to meet their needs (e.g., resources are used fairly and efficiently to meet basic human needs globally).

Robert's sustainability conditions are based on fundamental scientific principles and are accepted as valid by the scientific community. The sustainability conditions are stated in the negative because it is impossible to identify precisely how a sustainable society would look in the future.

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More recently the concept of **resilience** has come to the fore. Resilient systems have an inherent capacity to withstand, recover from, or adapt to stress and changing conditions. Managing for resilient ecological and social systems is therefore viewed as being an essential condition of sustainability. [http://www.sou.gov.se/mvb/pdf/206497\\_Resilienc.pdf](http://www.sou.gov.se/mvb/pdf/206497_Resilienc.pdf)  
[http://www.mpiweb.org/CMS/uploadedFiles/About\\_MPI/Restless%20Communities%20to%20Sustainable%20Places.pdf](http://www.mpiweb.org/CMS/uploadedFiles/About_MPI/Restless%20Communities%20to%20Sustainable%20Places.pdf).

The concept of sustainability and the need for communities to set a more sustainable course has taken root. However, planning for sustainability, which is inherently a complex concept, remains challenging. A number of approaches to developing a sustainability plan have been devised including:

- The Natural Step ABCD process <http://thenaturalstep.org/en/abcd-process>,
- The ICLEI sustainability planning toolkit <http://www.icleiusa.org/sustainability/sustainabilitytoolkit>; and
- BC Smart Planning for Communities Initiative [http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/intergov\\_relations/smart\\_planning.htm](http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/intergov_relations/smart_planning.htm)).

The most common approach to assessing sustainability at a local level relies on identifying unsustainable environmental, social and economic trends and issues and then basing actions on influencing those trends and issues. There are several sets of sustainability-related principles or themes that are often used to guide assessments. Some communities, including Whistler BC, have used The Natural Step's four sustainability conditions. Others, including Sooke and Dawson Creek) have adopted variations of the 8 Pillars Framework (HB Lanarc). The United States Government Partnership for Sustainable Communities initiative advocates six livability principles, which are similar to the Smart Growth BC 10 smart growth principles.

The Ecological Footprint is another well recognized sustainability assessment framework. It is a method for assessing how fast natural resources are consumed and waste generated by a population and compares the land area required to support this level of activity to the land area the population actually occupies. The Ecological Footprint is considered a useful indicator of sustainability and ecological footprints of a number of Canadian municipalities have been calculated <http://www.anielski.com/Documents/EFA%20Report%20FINAL%20Feb%202.pdf>. Unfortunately, the usefulness of this approach for local planning is limited because it requires large data sets, complex calculations and, at a local scale, the data required is often not available.

Recent experiences with regional sustainability planning in Australia have resulted in the development of a regional sustainability assessment framework that holds promise as a relatively simple way of assessing regional carrying capacity and as such will allow communities to develop 'real' sustainability plans. The method focuses on assessing the pressure placed on a region's ecosystems caused by human activities against known or assumed thresholds for those pressures to determine if they have exceeded the human carrying capacity threshold (Graymore, Sipe and Rickson 2010<sup>1</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup> Graymore, M.L.M., N.G.Sipe, and R.E Rickson. 2010. Sustaining human carrying capacity: A tool for regional sustainability assessment. *Ecological Economics*. 69: 459-468.



R3

## STAFF REPORT

### REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING OF APRIL 24, 2012

DATE: April 12, 2012

FILE NO:

FROM: Tom R. Anderson, General Manager

BYLAW NO:

SUBJECT: CVRD Climate Action Plan

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#### **Recommendation/Action:**

That the Regional Agricultural Advisory Commission review the Draft Terms of Reference for the CVRD Climate Action Plan and provide comments and support.

#### **Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:**

The Corporate Strategic Plan lists that we will "Develop a community climate change action plan to meet or beat provincial green house gas emission targets."

#### **CVRD Environmental Lens Initiative:**

The Environmental Lens Initiative was developed in 2010 to provide guidance on how the CVRD, as an organization, could weave sustainability principles into all decision making processes. The Purpose of the Lens is to influence all aspects of decisions made by the CVRD in the delivery of all its services to the residents and businesses of the Region. The Lens states that we are to "Develop a plan to ensure the CVRD complies with the BC Climate Action Charter by 2012," and that this be prioritized as a Phase 1 Project.

#### **Financial Impact:** *(Reviewed by Finance Division)*

The Gas Tax Agreement (GTA) Regionally Significant Projects Fund will pay 100 percent of the estimated \$75,000 cost of the study.

#### **Direction:**

The CVRD Regional Board passed the following resolution at their April 11, 2012 regular meeting:

**It was moved and seconded that it be recommended to the Board that the CVRD Climate Action Plan Terms of Reference be forwarded to the Environment, Economic Development and Regional Agricultural Advisory Commissions for comment and support and further, that the Climate Action Plan be undertaken as a part of the more comprehensive Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan.**

#### **Background:**

Attached to this report is a Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Climate Action Plan (CAP) which provides a general outline of the Project Description, Objectives, Project Details and Process, and Budget.

Beyond the detail provided in the ToR, most significant is that this study be undertaken concurrently with the CVRD Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan (IRSP). The Background Research, Action Strategies, key indicators and Targets which will evolve from this Plan will become key component parts of the IRSP. For that reason, it is proposed that the two Plans be tendered as a package for consultants to submit on and that the same consultant be awarded both projects.

In the same manner as the IRSP, it is proposed that comments received from the Commissions will be forwarded to an up-coming Regional Services Committee along with a revised Terms of Reference for further direction.

Submitted by,



Tom R. Anderson  
General Manager  
Planning and Development Department

TRA/ca



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# CVRD Climate Action Plan

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Terms of Reference

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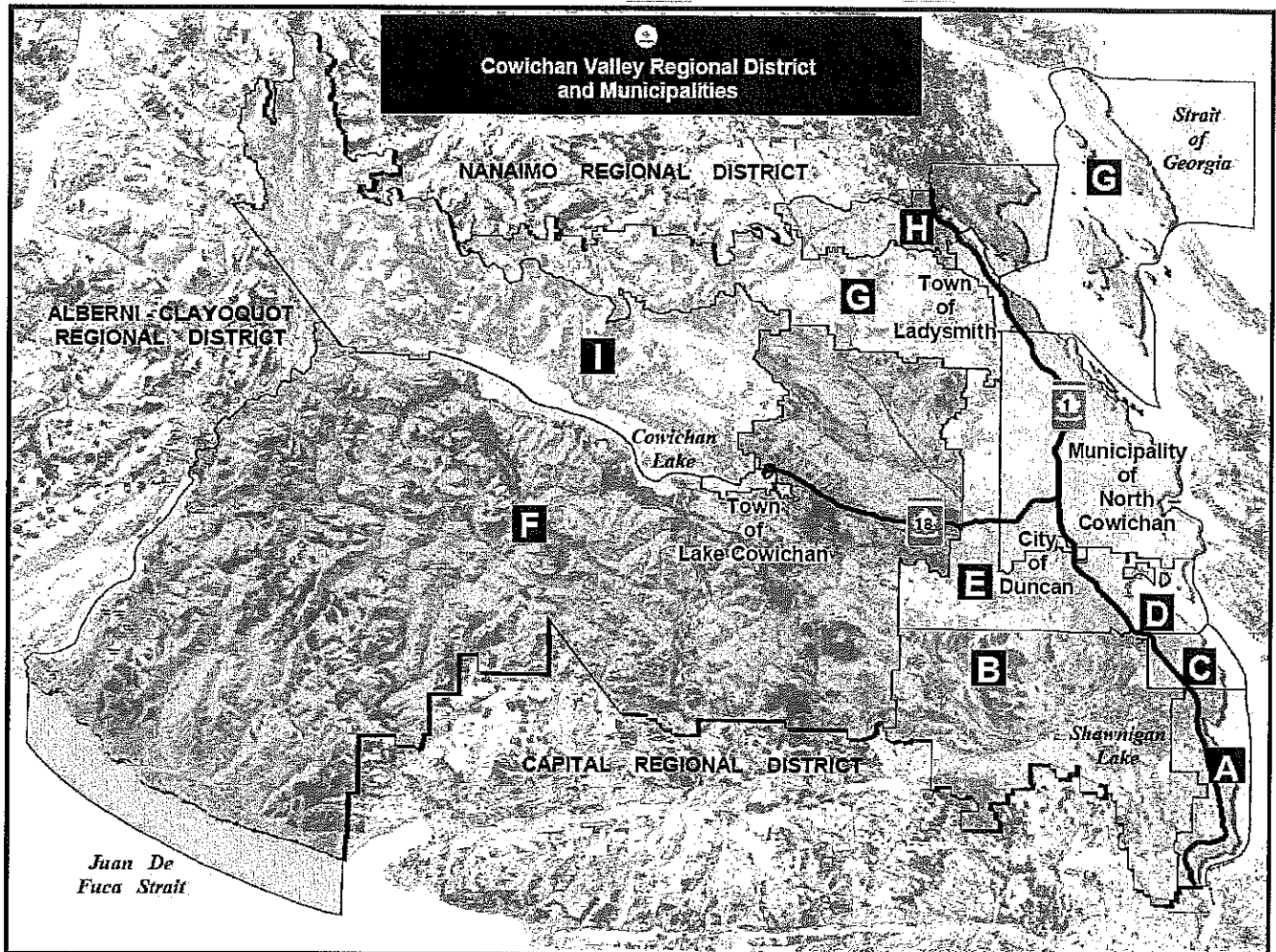
March 2012

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## Introduction

The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is located on Southern Vancouver Island, generally between the cities of Nanaimo and Victoria. The CVRD, incorporated in 1967, is home to more than 80,000 people, living in the region's four municipalities, nine electoral areas (A through I) or First Nations reserves, as shown on the map below. The region as a whole is notably heterogeneous – each community and electoral area within the region has its own unique socio-cultural, economic and environmental context. All of the electoral areas and municipalities have official community plans and land use regulations in place and some of the municipalities have Climate Action Plans started or adopted. The Cowichan Tribes is just initiating a Climate Action Planning process.





## Context

The Cowichan Valley Regional District intends to develop a Regional Climate Action Plan in parallel with the Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan. The inherent relationship between climate change and sustainability provides an opportunity to achieve administrative and financial efficiencies by integrating the development of these plans.

## Project Description/Abstract

A Regional Climate Action Plan (CAP) is needed to address the complex nature of climate change in the context of the Cowichan Region. The CAP will identify regionally significant knowledge, tools, networks and policies to effectively prepare the region for the impacts of climate change. The focus will be on mitigation strategies to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases, and adaptation strategies to moderate potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, or to cope with the consequences of climate change. These may include, but are not limited to, strategies addressing land use planning, infrastructure and servicing, transportation planning, energy planning, and government and community capacity building. The CAP will also consider the climate action plans being developed by the region's member municipalities and incorporate major findings and directions into a comprehensive regional plan. It is critical that the CAP address the regional context, opportunities for synergies among multiple jurisdictions, and strategies for mitigation and adaptation across the region. The CAP should also endeavor to engage all stakeholders within the region in order to develop understanding and support for a Regional Climate Action Plan. As such a comprehensive communications and consultation strategy will be an integral part of the CAP process.

## Objectives

- To develop a regionally-responsive and comprehensive climate action plan with clear mitigation and adaptation strategies, designed to achieve the targets established by Bill 27.
- To provide a clear implementation schedule which identifies priorities, required resources, responsibilities, and timing for implementation of strategic actions;
- To provide a plan for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of specific climate change indicators in order to measure the progress of the CAP;
- To engage all stakeholders including members of the public, government agencies, and others in the process of developing the CAP in order to build understanding and support for climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives; and
- To ensure clear and continuous communications among stakeholders throughout the CAP process.

## Project Details & Process

The CAP process will involve gathering, analyzing and synthesizing information into a comprehensive plan, which will provide a framework for long term, strategic planning, capital program development, program development and or refinement, focused investments, and public communication concerning climate change. Development of the CAP should involve the following elements.

### A. Project Scoping & Background Research

Prior to developing the plan, it is important to have a clear understanding of both present (baseline) and future (anticipated) conditions (data, policies, and activities) which will influence the development of the CAP. This component of the work should include:

- Reviewing and summarizing climate change projections and potential impacts for the Cowichan Region, based on up to date information;
- Reviewing, summarizing, and (if necessary) recommending updates for proposed CVRD GHG reduction targets;
- Reviewing and summarizing the present regional energy profile (including corporate and community energy emissions and consumption data (from CEEI and TaNDM));
- Determining the anticipated future regional energy profile (based on population growth projections);
- Analyzing existing climate change policies and regulatory frameworks (within existing Corporate Strategic Plans, Official Community Plans, zoning and subdivision bylaws, and other regional plans and strategies) and directions of the Cowichan Valley Energy Mapping and Modelling Project, and identifying opportunities to improve policy and regulatory frameworks;
- Reviewing and summarizing existing activities underway;
- Conducting a regional climate change vulnerability assessment for communities, infrastructure, and CVRD capital assets within the region including an assessment of policies, regulations, strategies, activities, and existing activities; and
- Community consultation and focused technical discussion with key stakeholder.

### B. Development of Climate Action (Mitigation & Adaptation) Strategies

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines mitigation as: “*An anthropogenic intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases*” and adaptation as “*adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.*” The CAP must include climate action strategies for both mitigation and adaptation.

The mitigation analysis, planning process and target setting will consider strategies and policies to reduce community emissions with a focus on:

- Initiation of a Regional Action Plan Steering Committee and technical committee;
- Reducing community based GHG emissions based on targets outlined in the OCP’s and municipal plans;

- Identifying carbon sequestration opportunities; and
- Educating and engaging the public.

The adaptation analysis and pathways to increased community resilience to forecasted changes will involve:

- Research of areas known knowledge gaps and lack of adaptive strategies (gap analysis);
- Identification of regional climate change impacts;
- Assessment of reliability, function and durability of built infrastructure;
- Analysis of risk based on identified impacts - Including but not limited to impacts to: human and community health, areas of importance including drought, flooding, increased risk coastal impacts, slope instability, impacts of external economic issues;
- Public and stakeholder consultation processes;
- Development of communication strategies; and
- Development of adaptation measures and recommendations for community and public bodies.

### **C. Development of an Implementation Strategy**

The CAP will include a detailed implementation strategy which will enable the region to work toward the targets established by Bill 27. The implementation strategy should include:

- Strategic actions to address climate change;
- Priorities and timeline for implementation (i.e. short-term, medium-term, and long-term);
- Resources required for implementation (i.e. subsequent research, staff resources, costs, etc.);
- Anticipated benefit and payback period; and
- Roles and responsibilities for implementation (i.e. staff, stakeholders, community members).

### **D. Development of a Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy**

The CAP will include a monitoring and evaluation strategy, including key indicators and targets, in order to measure the progress of CAP implementation.

## **Budget**

The budget for the development of the Regional Climate Action Plan is \$75,000 exclusive of HST.

RAAC Sub Committee Participation  
 April 24, 2012

**Sub-Committee #1**

Goal #2: To create a local government policy framework that supports and welcomes increased agricultural production, encourages land improvements and helps provide access to resources.

Goal #4: To improve water management for agricultural purposes

Committee members:

- Rodger Hunter
- Mick Smith
- George Robbins
- Joanne McLeod
- Wayne Haddow
- Ruth Hartmann

**Sub Committee #2**

Goal #3: To improve capacity and profitability in the local agricultural industry

Goal #6: To preserve the character and environment of the community

Committee members:

- Pat Durose
- Wayne Haddow
- Gerry Giles
- Judy Stafford
- Rob Hutchins
- Fred Oud

**Sub Committee #3**

Goal #1: To create a strong communications network between agriculture and the community

Goal #5: To improve and extend the access to market for local foods

Committee members:

- Dave Thomson
- Loren Duncan
- Bob Crawford
- Ian Christison
- Lori Iannidinardo
- Pete Keber