



CVRD COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMISSION

History and Overview

In 1996, the CVRD established a Women's Safety Advisory Committee (WSAC). The WSAC was a standing committee of the Board, replacing a regional Task Force which oversaw a Women's Safety Audit Pilot Project. Its mandate was to "advise on women's safety issues with the Regional District including review of land use application referrals, conducting of safety audits, representation on Official Community Plan reviews and other similar items referred by the Board."

Activities of the committee included:

- Conducting safety audits to assess safety issues and define solutions.
- Developing tools and resources such as the Cowichan Valley Safety Audit Guide, Planning for Safer Communities Guide.
- Providing education and training through workshops and seminars for citizens, professional groups such as planners, developers, architects, and community organizations, in the Cowichan Valley, in other communities around the province, and for regional and provincial organizations.
- Engaging in policy and guidelines development.
- Conducting specialized initiatives for community safety.
- Sharing information about this work with many other communities around the province, some who have requested information, education and assistance to develop similar programs.

Community Safety Audit Work

Between 1996 - 1999, the WSAC committee oversaw a series of community safety audit projects undertaken in the Cowichan Valley that examined issues around women's safety in their community environments and ways in which these issues could be addressed at the community level. These projects were carried out in partnership with the Cowichan Valley Safer Futures Program. They were funded by the CVRD, as well as the National Crime Prevention Centre and Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services.

Five broad community safety audits and several smaller site studies were done which involved extensive research and community consultation. The audits revealed a range of safety issues and barriers faced by women in their communities, and identified solutions ranging from improving physical environments, to changing long term planning policies and processes, to community programming and education to change attitudes and behaviours that allow violence to occur.



These audits resulted in over 500 recommendations. A process for implementing audit recommendations, and to make personal safety a regular consideration in all local government processes was developed. Hundreds of recommendations were implemented including:

- Development and incorporation of community safety principles and policies into long term planning and development processes, to ensure ongoing attention and sustainability.
- Improvements to physical environments to reduce obstacles and opportunities for violence and enhance accessibility for women and other marginalized groups.
- Development of new and enhancement of existing community services and programming to address community and social development.

Community Safety Advisory Committee

Between 2000 - 2012, the Community Safety Advisory Committee continued to work as a Standing Committee of the Board. To better meet the needs of the communities, the work was expanded in the direction of a more comprehensive approach to community health and safety, and to involve more community sectors that are needed to address the range of safety issues and solutions that are often identified through our community research. Appendix A provides a snapshot of areas of contributions to planning and policy in the region.

Regional (cross jurisdictional) involvement is important because it recognizes the numerous inter-relationships among the causes and symptoms of crime and violence, as well as between communities. This approach helps motivate and support collaboration because it emphasizes every partner's contributions and incorporates the priorities of all involved.

The committee continued to be supported by Safer Futures, and in 2008, a Regional Function was established to provide funding support. Each year, the committee developed a work plan, followed by actions, resulting in recommendations being presented to the CVRD Board for approval. These recommendations were then responded to by way of community based actions. These targeted safety needs were addressed in a collaborative manner, involving local government, the business sector, community agencies and local residents working together to find solutions.

Examples of initiatives conducted with the CVRD CSAC from 2005 - 2012 have included:

Regional Health and Safety Strategy 2006
Making the Links Community Health and Safety Initiative 2006-2009
Regional Safety Lens 2008
Barefoot in the Park - Safe Needle Disposal Strategy 2008
Safer Communities Forums

Community Safety Advisory Commission

In December 2012, the CVRD adopted By-law 3622 to create the Community Safety Advisory Commission to complement the board's identified strategic action of continuing to support the Community Safety Advisory Committee. As Committees of the Board are appointed on an annual



basis, the establishment of the Commission with a three year term for members provides for continuity, and a longer term focus on community safety issues.



APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTION AREAS

Policy Development

CVRD Public Safety Policy

Official Community Plans

Cobble Hill Village

Town of Lake Cowichan

Areas F / I

Area A Mill Bay – Malahat

Area C / Cobble Hill OCP Amendment

Cowichan Bay (draft) amendment

Shawnigan Lake (draft) amendment

Recommendations to Other Organizations/Levels of Government

CVRD UBCM resolution

Ministry of Transportation and Highways

Zoning by-laws

Area E

Other

District of North Cowichan Urban Design Guidelines adopted; OCP community survey included community health and safety component

CVRD Transit Safety Plan

Emergency Planning

CVRD APC Handbook includes safety guidelines

City of Duncan adoption of development guidelines

Assessment of Development Plans

Valleyview Centre

Village Green Mall

City of Duncan public washrooms

Tom Bannister Park

Seniors Complex

Area D Parks and Recreation Commission – Lambourne Road Park

