

# Community Circles Primer

## Project Background

The Cowichan region is changing. Population growth, an evolving economy and a changing climate require regional coordination and local action. To support this coordinated effort the CVRD is updating its Official Community Plan (OCP) for the Electoral Areas, the main tool guiding how we use land and shape our communities.

The CVRD is in the process of “harmonizing” our existing electoral area OCPs into one OCP for the electoral areas and is now moving towards modernizing it to address regional trends.

The result of this process will be an OCP for the electoral areas that will set the foundation for the Cowichan Valley to be an attractive place to live, work and play for years to come.

Now is where you come in. We need a plan that reflects the lived experience of our community members. To do this, we need your voice.

The CVRD is looking for a new way to get community members involved in shaping its future.

## What is a Community Circle?

A community circle is a small group of people talking about the CVRD’s future guided by a discussion toolkit.

This is a way for you to gather with other CVRD community members on your own time to explore topics relating to the OCP, exchange ideas and record and submit them to the CVRD.

## How do I get involved?

### Step 1: Gather a group

This could be an existing group you are already meeting with, or you can bring together a group of family members, friends or colleagues.

You can come together because of a shared geography or because of your common interest in on an OCP policy area.

Don’t have a group? We will post information [here](#) about sessions being hosted by staff and instructions of how to sign up.

## Step 2: Pick a topic

The Modernized OCP will be organized around the following draft goals:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1) Manage infrastructure responsibly    | systems                                |
| 2) Make distinct, complete communities  | 6) Enhance regional prosperity         |
| 3) Expand mobility options              | 7) Mitigate & adapt to climate crisis  |
| 4) Protect & enhance natural assets     | 8) Improve governance & implementation |
| 5) Strengthen local food & agricultural |  |

Pick the topic or the topics you are most interested in diving into.

## OPTIONAL Step 3: Attend a facilitation training workshop

The project team will run a series of facilitation training workshops to support you to run your own session. Information about upcoming facilitation training workshops will be posted [here](#).

## Step 4: Assemble and review materials

Download a Community Circle Toolkit [here](#) which will include:

- A backgrounder on each MOCP goal
- Facilitator's instructions
- A workbook to record your group's discussion

Decide how you will record the results of your discussion. You can print your workbook and write directly in it, or type into an electronic version (PDF). If gathering virtually you will need a virtual meeting platform, a computer, a video camera, and a microphone. If you need

## Step 5: Get your group together and assign roles

Gather your group and use the facilitator's instructions to guide you. Within your group, assign the following roles:

**Community circle facilitator:** to ensure the group stays on track and is inclusive of all members

**Recorder:** to record the results of the discussion

**Timekeeper:** to keep you on time

## Step 6: Submit your group's workbook

By email:

By mail:

Drop off at:

**If you have any questions or need support hosting a session please contact:**

*Your group's input will help shape the policies in the OCP. A report summarizing what we heard during these community circles and other engagement events will be available on the project website.*