



CVRD COMMUNITY SAFETY
ADVISORY COMMISSION

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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Message from the Chair

I would like to thank all of our CSAC members, our partners and our sponsors for their ongoing commitment to a safer and healthy Cowichan Valley. CSAC could not succeed without the dedication of these people and agencies.

2016 saw CSAC expand its focus to a broader multi-stakeholder response to complex and integrated issues in order to address the increases in needle collection and disposal, substance abuse, homelessness, and neighbourhood crime. In many cases all of these emphasis areas are linked and require collaborative investigations to identify practical and lasting solutions.

In 2016, to meet this growing community safety pressure, CSAC re-tooled its approach in how it concurrently manages its complex programs, making the best use of its available staff and resources.

I am very optimistic that the work and process modifications CSAC undertook in 2016 will continue to be of benefit through 2017 and beyond; and thereby help find solutions to our community's safe challenges.

Respectfully,

Michael E. Trickey
CSAC Chair

Executive Summary

Community Safety achieves a positive state of well-being for people by looking at the social and physical environments within a community. It reduces and prevents injury and crime, builds strong, cohesive, vibrant, participatory communities, and saves valuable resources that could be spent on positive community development.

The CVRD Community Safety Advisory was formed in 2003, but has been working since its inception as the Women's Safety Advisory in 1996, to foster safe communities.

In December 2012, the CVRD created the Community Safety Advisory Commission (CSAC) to complement the Board's identified strategic action of continuing to support the Community Safety Advisory Committee. CVRD By-law 3622 established the CSAC to "provide advice on safety issues of regional, sub-regional, and interagency importance".

Over the years, CSAC has worked on a range of issues and initiatives including but not limited to Women's Safety Audits, Planning and Design Guidelines, a Community Action Plan, the development of a Regional Safety Lens, a Safe Needle Strategy, Regional Youth Safety Strategy and Youth Safety Lens.

In 2011, the CSAC adopted Youth Safety as their priority and has worked over the past three years to gather information and hear the voices of Youth to better understand what youth need in order to flourish, and how local governments can both respond and plan to create communities that foster resiliency and protective factors.

As a result the Youth Projects stream hosted by Safer Futures completed an action project to identify and design safe spaces in local parks for our young people.

During 2016, the Commission has been focusing on a broader and collaborative multi-stakeholder response to a complex set of issues in the core of the region involving a critical increase in discarded needles, substance use, homelessness, and neighbourhood crime. These issues, and corresponding actions, are detailed in a series of Problem Statements. Our report provides a synopsis of this work and progress to date.

"The prevention of violence facilitates community cohesion and participation, fosters neighborhood improvements, expands employment and educational opportunities, and improves overall health and well-being."

(Cohen et al; Addressing the Intersection. Oakland: Prevention Institute; p.1)

I. Introduction and Background

Purpose of this Report

This report provides a brief background and introduction to the CVRD Community Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC), a description of activities conducted, and a summary of achievements realized during 2012.

CVRD Community Safety Advisory Commission

Until December 2012, the CSAC was a standing committee of the Board, appointed by the Board on an annual basis. In December 2012, the CVRD created the Community Safety Advisory Commission (CSAC) to complement the Board's identified strategic action of continuing to support the Community Safety Advisory Committee. CVRD By-law 3622 established the CSAC to "provide advice on safety issues of regional, sub-regional, and interagency importance" with the following responsibilities:

- To advise the Board on community safety issues of regional, sub-regional and interagency importance.
- To serve as a forum for multi-sectoral discussion where local government and community groups can work together. The Commission has a leading role in providing advice and support to safer communities' initiatives across the region.
- To be a conduit for recommendations arising from its members and from community initiatives, and for issues referred by the Board, elected officials, and staff requests.
- To be a resource for planning staff at various local governments and to Advisory Planning Commissions.

Commission Role and Activities

Within these general terms of reference, the CSAC has had the ability to assume a broad role to advise and to address a range of factors that contribute to community health and safety in the Cowichan Region. Historically, the Committee has taken a Social Development Approach to community safety and crime prevention which recognizes that just as there is no one cause of crime, victimization and fear, there is also no one solution. This approach focuses on addressing the underlying causes of crime and victimization, and undertakes research, needs assessments, action planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Over time, CSAC activities have included:

- ❑ Identification and assessment of issues and priorities for research and action.
- ❑ Undertaking, and/or providing guidance and direction to research and action projects.
- ❑ Promoting education and awareness of community safety-related issues and prevention strategies.
- ❑ Developing and submitting recommendations to the CVRD Board and other levels of government to undertake specific action as to address, promote and encourage

policy development, community development, and provision of services relating to community safety.

- ❑ Developing and submitting recommendations to relevant departments, committees and structures of the CVRD and member municipalities for Official Community Plans and other by-laws, parks, emergency planning, human resources, and so on, relating to personal and public safety.
- ❑ Developing tools and resources.
- ❑ Providing education and training through workshops and seminars for citizens, professional groups such as planners, developers, architects, and community organizations.
- ❑ Sharing information about this work with other communities around the province and across Canada.

An additional key role that CSAC has been working on through 2016 is the collaboration between stakeholders to successfully address community safety issues. Most issues that come to CSAC are complex and span multiple stakeholders, each with their own objectives. These individual objectives need to be molded into common stakeholder-wide objectives to ensure each community safety issue is dealt with most effectively.

Structural Support to CSAC

The CSAC is supported in its efforts by the CVRD, including administrative and departmental functions. Over the years, various departmental staff have provided input to the committee and have reported on their activities. As of April 2016, the CSAC is now supported by the Public Safety Division, Community Services Department of the CVRD. We welcome staff support from Conrad Cowan, Public Safety Manager and Gail Erickson, Administrative Support.

CSAC is supported by the Safer Futures Program under an Annual Financial Contribution. Safer Futures is a community research and development program that conducts research on issues related to the safety of women, children and other vulnerable groups in their communities and works collaboratively to develop and implement solutions.

Supportive and Guiding Documents

The Annual CSAC Work plan

This work plan is informed by the two documents that provide a Framework for action and the basis for the main activities of CSAC.

The Community Safety Action Plan

In 2006, CSAC developed a draft Community, Health and Safety framework entitled “Community Safety Action Plan”. This document provides an overall Strategic Plan to address safety within the Cowichan Valley region. Four building blocks provide the structure of the Plan: 1) Policy and Guidance, 2) Safe and Accessible Design, 3) Building Strong Neighbourhoods and 4) Coordinated Action. The Plan provides the framework for the CSAC Work Plan each year (available at: <http://www.cvrld.bc.ca/DocumentView.aspx?DID=1609>)

The Cowichan Region Safety Lens

The Community Safety Lens is a planning and development tool. As a framework document it considers safety, ensures adequate consultation and informs a range of procedures. Specifically, the lens provides planners, elected officials and developers with a tool to assess safety for proposed developments and planning in the Cowichan region (available at: <http://www.cvrld.bc.ca/Document View.aspx?DID=7392>).

CSAC Framework

CSAC has four primary objectives that form the basis for its work:

Policy and Guidance

- Bringing a community safety perspective into planning and policy development of local governments.

Planning and Response

- Gathering information and data related to community safety, crime prevention and social development issues, and providing input into relevant community planning processes.

Community Linkages and Collaboration

- Developing connections and collaborative relationships with local governments, community organizations and citizens to foster effective communications and community safety efforts.

Priority Issues

- Youth Safety has been a priority issue for the Commission since 2011.

2016 Community Safety Advisory Commission Members

M. Trickey, Chairperson, Member of the Public
M. Dorey, Director, Electoral Area G, CVRD
S. Furstenau, Director, Electoral Area B, CVRD
K. Marsh, Councillor, Municipality of North Cowichan; Director, CVRD
C. Fradin, Councillor, Town of Ladysmith
J. Horgan, Councillor, City of Duncan
M. Staples, Social Planning Cowichan
A. Canute, Councillor, Cowichan Tribes
E. Croft, Trustee, School District 79
R. Carfantan, Inspector, RCMP
C. Rolls, Cowichan Community Policing Advisory Society
J. Sterk, Member of the Public
L. Vaccher, Member of the Public
J. Capps, Youth Member of the Public

II. Our Work in 2016

This year, the work of CSAC revolved around two broad themes:

- Moving forward with Youth related safety initiatives stemming from the 2014 Youth Dialogues, and
- Planning and action around a series of broader and complex inter-related community safety concerns such as the critical increase in discarded needles, substance use, homelessness, and neighbourhood crime.

Youth Projects

Safe Youth Cowichan Project - Creating Places to Belong for Youth in the Cowichan Valley

From 2012-2014, Safer Futures and Safe Youth Cowichan (SYC), conducted Youth Safety Dialogues in response to community concerns around increasing issues of youth safety in the Cowichan Region. The dialogues involved over 500 youth from all areas of the region. Findings from the dialogues highlighted the importance of fostering communities that value and include youth in decision-making processes, especially when designing and developing youth friendly spaces, programs, facilities, activities and transportation.

The aim of the Youth Spaces Project was to build a sense of belonging for youth by designing and developing innovative spaces within community parks where youth feel safe and welcomed to express their diversity without fear, shame or violence.

The project was funded by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General through a Civil Forfeiture Crime Prevention and Crime Remediation Grant and was carried out by SYC with the Safer Futures program of Cowichan Women Against Violence Society and in collaboration with the CVRD Community Safety Advisory Commission, Cowichan Green Community Youth Outreach Team, Municipality of North Cowichan and the City of Duncan.

SYC began with creating awareness about the importance of belonging for youth and how they needed to be consulted in decisions that affect them and especially in designing and developing in the local community.

Over the summer of 2016, SYC worked with youth in the Cowichan region to identify community parks where spaces for youth could be created. Two spaces within the central area of Cowichan were identified as key areas as youth were already using these spaces and these were parks where there was evidence of conflicting uses between youth and other community members.

SYC consulted with many youth to determine what youth would like to see in a space that was created for them. The project also consulted with community members living around and using the parks to address any concerns and garner input into the design process. With these results SYC created an innovative design for a space that can be used by all community members but

especially welcomes youth. Safer Futures is currently writing grant proposals to raise funds for the construction phase.

Community Safety Issues

The past year saw a great deal of community concern and activity related to issues of safety, mental health, substance use and homelessness in the Cowichan Valley. Early on in the year, the Commission received reports and requests relating to these different aspects, and our analysis brought us to a place of understanding that the issues are interconnected and need to be addressed using a comprehensive safety lens.

The following table presents a summary and analysis of the issues, as well as planned and completed actions.

Topic	Details and Actions
1. Overview of Issues	<p>Community dialogue during the first six months of 2016 highlighted a number inter-related concerns in the Duncan Core area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased discarded sharps in public places and lack of capacity for needle collection facilities • Concurrent concerns related to substance use, homelessness and child welfare • Public safety and disorder perceived to be linked to a local alcohol outlet • Increasing issues regarding thefts in the Downtown Core
1.1. Safe Needle Disposal	<p>A May 2016 meeting convened by Island Health and attended by several local stakeholders (Island Health, Local Government, NARSF, Island Saving Centre, Safer Futures, CVRD) highlighted a significant increase over the last two years in the amount of discarded sharps in the community, particularly around Somenos Marsh, Lewis/Beverly/York Streets, East Marchmont and the old VIU site near the Cowichan River.</p> <p>Concurrently, local government and community agencies observed increased use of the Somenos Marsh area for camping by both adults and youth/children, increases in the number of young people (under 18) using intravenous drugs, accessing shelter and needle services, and living homeless. Exploitation of youth and children who are among the homeless using the Marsh has also been observed. Further concerns were voiced regarding discarded needles and refuse around businesses in the Beverly Alexander area, activities around Island Savings Centre, and alcohol use and public disruption around the liquor store at Alexander Street and the Trans Canada Highway.</p>
1.2. Community Safety Beverly – Alexander area	<p>Between May – July 2016, the CSAC received requests from North Cowichan (May 20th 2016) and City of Duncan (July 12th 2016) “that the liquor store related issues/concerns in the Alexander/Whistler Street area</p>

<p>/ CPTED Request for Liquor Store Concerns</p>	<p>be referred to the CVRD’s CSAC and RCMP to consider expanding the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) study of the Beverly Street Area.”</p> <p>Other concerns listed in the letter from the City of Duncan include: increased incidents of vandalism; loitering; drinking in public; camps being set up by the dike; sleeping in front of businesses doorways; increased drug use and discarded needles.</p> <p>Discussion by CSAC members highlighted the need for further background information and consultation to provide adequate analysis. The concerns presented indicate a more complex problem than would be indicated for a CPTED review of the area. A more comprehensive community audit was recommended.</p>
<p>1.3. Downtown Duncan Business Area</p>	<p>In May 2016, representatives of the Downtown Business Improvement Association (DBIA) attended a CSAC meeting to present on concerns in the downtown area related to increasing break-ins and theft.</p> <p>The DBIA presented a record of thirty-one incidences over a six month period between October 2014 and April 2015. In addition it was observed that there has been an increase in drug use, sleeping out/homelessness in the downtown core. Further, thefts have also been escalating at Kinsmen Park. Plants have been stolen and there is more sleeping in the park.</p> <p>In the past, there had been a Task Force to deal with issues in the downtown core. As well, Safer Futures conducted safety audits and produced a Safe City Report for the City of Duncan in 2005.</p> <p>As the presentation was done in May of 2016 and the statistics provided were from 2014/15, updated information is needed to determine the current situation around thefts in the downtown area. As well, information and analysis is needed to determine the root issues; for example, linkages with increased homelessness and substance use were noted.</p>
<p>2. Issues Analysis</p>	<p>Broader community issues linked to substance use, mental health, poverty, homelessness and needle disposal are being approached through several avenues including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Cowichan Health Network members • Mental Health and Substance Use Committee • Social Planning Cowichan • Island Health • Local Governments • Cowichan Housing Association • Downtown Business Association <p>Given the complexity and reach of the issues presented, it is suggested</p>

	<p>that the three main umbrellas of Social Planning Cowichan, Our Cowichan (including Island Health) and CSAC collaborate to coordinate strategic research and planning, and efforts arising related to broader community health issues.</p> <p>For issues that present at the level of neighbourhoods, specific working groups involving local residents and businesses, supported by community agencies, RCMP and local governments, can be an effective way to approach solutions at this level.</p>
<p>3. Issue Urgency</p>	<p>These issues have been emerging/escalating since 2014. As noted above, they are the culmination of a range of factors, and as such, will be conducive to some short-term actions, but will require a longer term, comprehensive strategy.</p> <p>These issues have been discussed at several tables including the CSAC (community safety), a Harm Reduction Roundtable hosted by Warmland in May 2016, two meetings focused on youth homelessness convened by Cowichan Housing Association in June and July 2016, and Our Cowichan Health Network meeting, September, 2016.</p> <p>The issues of substance misuse, addictions, mental health, homelessness, poverty pose significant personal, social, health and economic costs to individuals and the entire community. In addition to the significant social costs of a life disrupted and pain experienced by individuals affected by these issues, the social and economic costs to communities for example, of having neighbourhoods that feel unsafe, policing, physical repair and maintenance, and hospitalization are enormous. We know however, that the benefits of implementing preventative planning and interventions not only result in improvements to the lives of individuals, families and communities, but they also result in significant cost savings over the longer term.</p> <p>This general area has been the topic of a great amount of research and community consultation sparked by similar community concerns by Safer Futures since 1998, beginning with a community audit and progressing to a community safety strategy in 2003, followed by a Neighbourhood Plan developed by the District of North Cowichan in 2006.</p>
<p>4. Vision Statement And Actions</p>	<p>Community Safety achieves a positive state of well-being for people by looking at the social and physical environments within a community. It reduces and prevents injury and crime, builds strong, cohesive, vibrant, participatory communities, and saves valuable resources that could be spent on positive community development.</p> <p>The issues presented are complex and multi-faceted and include homelessness, substance misuse/addictions, mental health, needle disposal, child welfare, exploitation, poverty and crime. The vision for</p>

	<p>addressing these issues should encompass the complexity and range of factors for a safer, healthier community, and strive to make improvements such as reductions in thefts, vandalism and discarded needles; decrease homelessness and increase affordable housing; decrease poverty and increase social and emotional well-being of residents.</p>
<p>5. Summary of Actions to June 2016</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional needle disposal boxes have been installed near Somenos marsh on York Road and one in Kin Park right next to the High School. Needle boxes have been installed in most of the bathrooms at the Island Savings Centre. 2. Island Health has enhanced efforts to dispose of needles dropped off at MMHU. 3. The Safe Needle Disposal Toolkit is being updated. 4. Community agencies have continued and/or expanded efforts: NARSF continues to provide needle exchange; Warmland provides outreach, shelter and needle exchange; Public Health (MMHU) is providing needle exchange and is working on a map of disposal sites; Island Saving Centre provides a needle disposal site. 5. Our Cowichan has held a networking meeting to discuss issues of drug use, needle disposal, poverty, mental health, and homelessness (Including the MHSU Collaborative) 6. Warmland is conducting outreach to youth. 7. Cowichan Housing Association has held two forums on the topic of youth homelessness. 8. Social Planning Cowichan is undertaking a Poverty Reduction Initiative.
<p>6. Planned Actions and Progress June – December 2016</p>	
	<p>1. Safe Needle Disposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating of the Safe Needle Disposal Toolkit (<i>Safer Futures – in progress</i>) • Continuing to work with the Safe Needle Disposal Committee to assist implementation of additional disposal sites and methods as described above (<i>CSAC Lead</i>) • Working with the Safe Needle Disposal Committee to monitor use and preferred locations of disposal sites (<i>CSAC Lead</i>)
	<p>2. Downtown Duncan Business Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain update on current situation and Task Force activities; determine next steps from this information. (<i>CSAC Lead</i>) • Invite DBIA representation to CSAC meetings on a regular basis to inform and update on status of downtown crime and safety issues (<i>CSAC Lead</i>) • Facilitate dialogue between DBIA and RCMP to monitor break in

	<p>and crime prone locations, typical merchandise stole, resale of stolen merchandise e.g. assess if linkage between break ins and drug use (<i>CSAC Lead</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess options for conducting CPTED reviews for at-risk businesses • Link concerns related to homelessness, addictions, etc. into broader efforts
	<p>3. Community Safety Beverly Alexander / CPTED Review Request for Liquor Store Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial CPTED assessment was conducted by CSAC members during a CPTED certification course. Overarching recommendations were identified and are to be used in support of neighbourhood community consultations and community safety audits set to happen early in 2017 • Conduct neighbourhood community consultation/engagement to obtain input from the local neighbourhood regarding their safety concerns and recommendations (<i>Social Planning Cowichan, Safer Futures</i>) • Gather data on RCMP calls for service, local demographics and relevant demographic statistics to inform definition of issues (SPC, Safer Futures) • Conduct safety audits of the local area with the participation of residents, businesses, local agencies and local governments (<i>Safer Futures, Social Planning Cowichan</i>) • Present recommendations back to the local neighbourhood, local governments, CSAC and Our Cowichan to develop a plan for addressing concerns (<i>Social Planning Cowichan, Safer Futures</i>). • Prepare a comprehensive implementation and monitoring plan. (<i>Lead: to be determined</i>).
	<p>4. Homelessness and Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the issues presented regarding substance use, crime and disorder are linked to homelessness, the strategy should also contain this element. • Prepare a gap analysis for homelessness and housing needs (Cowichan Housing has this as a priority in their current year plan) • Identify priority projects for addressing homelessness and affordable housing, particularly for youth and proceed (CHA as above, with community partners) • A Point in Time Count will be conducted by United Way in February 2017, and a Community Plan focusing on Aboriginal Homelessness in the Duncan area will be underway in March 2017.