

Electoral Area A Community Update

September 2020
Issue 3

BAYNES SOUND - DENMAN/HORNBY ISLANDS

Welcome. We are glad to share this third issue of the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Electoral Area A Community Update. While business has been operating in a different way than usual, there has still been a lot of work underway since our last update in February 2020.

Please contact us if you have any questions about the content, and share this update with others who may be interested.



Area A Director
Daniel Arbour

Weighing in on Rural Roadside Garbage and Recycling Collection

The CVRD is considering the introduction of roadside garbage and recycling collection in neighbourhoods of Electoral Areas A, B and C – but before further planning is considered, homeowners and residents in those areas are being asked if it's a service they would like.

An online survey is available at connectcvr.ca/ruralroadsidecollection until September 11 – asking for residents' input on how they currently manage their garbage and recycling, and how they would like to manage it in the future. Residents of Area A, B, and C can pick the survey that applies to their specific neighbourhood. A program would be pursued only in areas where there is community support and if technical and operational requirements can be met. Please note that Mount Washington, Royston, Denman and Hornby islands are not included in this review. Residents in Union Bay, Buckley Bay and Fanny Bay are invited to weigh in.

In 2013 a referendum on rural roadside waste collection services failed. However, residents continue to express interest for this type of service and options for recycling have changed. Given the changed circumstances, we feel it is a question worth asking again.

The survey results will inform staff on the interest in moving forward with a service in the different electoral area communities. They will be summarized and presented to the electoral area directors in October, for a future decision about whether to move forward with additional steps.



Trail improvements coming to Denman and Hornby islands

Two trail projects will be moving forward between August and October, offering new/improved safe access to trails on Denman and Hornby islands. On Denman, another portion of the Cross Island Trail will be constructed to connect the Denman West ferry terminal to the village centre. This will involve the construction of a new aluminum staircase at the end of Kirk Road.

On Hornby, the CVRD was recently awarded an Active Transportation Grant for the construction of a new 2.2-meter wide, multi-use trail to be built along the unopened portion of Gull Road. This trail will connect Fowler Road and Tralee Park to St. John's Point Road, the existing Hornby Roadside Trail system and Tribune Bay Provincial Park.



Caring for your septic system

Over 9,000 homes in the CVRD rely on on-site septic systems to treat their domestic wastewater. These systems offer an effective, long-term treatment option for homes not connected to a sewer system – but they must be maintained properly to ensure they remain effective, and don't harm the environment.

In May 2020, electoral area directors agreed to further assess options for mandatory maintenance programs by requesting data from Island Health. This information will help the CVRD understand areas of challenge with septic care and determine whether a maintenance program would help enforce standards, and if so, how.

Information about septic maintenance is available on the CVRD's website at comoxvalleyrd.ca/septic. Watch for more information this fall about an online information session, hosted by CVRD staff, in lieu of in-person sessions for 2020.





Planning together for COVID-19 renewal

In March 2020, the government of British Columbia declared a state of emergency for our province – and the Comox Valley, along with communities around the world, responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While immediate steps were required to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the CVRD has also been focused on how to adapt plans for 2020 and future budget years, to meet changing community expectations and priorities, fiscal conditions and prepare to support renewal.

In May, Directors agreed to key principles that will guide the CVRD's actions moving forward. The Board's Renewal Plan will seek to:

- Keep services affordable
- Streamline processes
- Protect quality of life and;
- Care for the community

In September, the board will ratify a renewal plan, which outlines adaptations for the CVRD's 97 services for 2020 and into future years. The review considers the relevance and priority of projects, requirement for public engagement, financial impacts and cost saving, and new ways of service delivery.

Rethink Comox Valley is a thoughtful review of services to support community recovery. For more information about the CVRD's COVID-19 Renewal Plan, visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/renewal.

Interim help from grants in aid

The CVRD worked quickly in March/April to adapt and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. One key action was the board's decision to approve \$93,179 in funding for the Comox Valley Community Foundation, Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness and the Community Health Network. These funds are to be directed to initiatives that support the homeless and provide food security.

Additional support of \$55,100 was also provided to local community organizations – in Electoral Area A, this included: Denman Community Land Trust, Denman Island Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program, Denman Island Preschool Society, Fanny Bay Community Association, Fanny Bay Seniors Society, Hornby Island Arts Council, Hornby Island Daycare Society, Hornby Island Educational Society, Royston Community Club, Ships Point Volunteer Firefighters and Union Bay Community Club.

Questions?

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Public consultation on Union Bay conversion this fall

The CVRD and Union Bay Improvement District (UBID) will engage with the public this fall to share the results of the conversion study completed over the past five months. The study will provide information to the community about what its services would look like if provided by the regional district.

Once the study and public engagement are complete, UBID trustees will determine next steps – including a referendum to ask the public on its preference to convert to the CVRD services or continue as the UBID.

Sewer extension to Royston/Union Bay assessed

The CVRD is continuing assessment and technical evaluation of the potential to connect Royston and Union Bay to the Comox Valley Sewer Service, which currently services Courtenay, Comox and K'ómoks First Nation. Earlier this year, the sewage commission agreed to receiving wastewater from Royston, Union Bay and other lands in Area A – opening the door to a potential option for ongoing wastewater management challenges in Electoral Area A. Results from the technical review are expected this fall – and a public engagement plan is being developed to ensure thorough consultation with the community is undertaken once more information is available. Visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/sewerextension for more information.

HELPING HANDS

The CVRD distributed 11 grants-in-aid in Electoral Area A quickly after the announcement of the pandemic to help local organizations deliver



services during the public emergency. One recipient, the HOPE Kitchen and Food Bank on Hornby Island, used their grant to enhance sanitation equipment and measures. With those steps in place, they also decided to keep their services open through the summer, and do take-out, to help those in need in the community.