

**CHECK UP**

October 18, 2013

****

**Today’s Check up Includes:**

* Meeting Schedules
* Community meetings and Events
* Homelessness faces multi-prong attack by Social Planning Cowichan ( News Leader Pictorial)
* Paratransit community meetings
* Cairnsmore Neighbourhood group hosting Movie “in Transition 2.0” to build strong resilient neighbourhoods

C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE12\Lines\BD14996_.gif

**CCHN Network Member Meetings-**

* Next CCHN Meeting **November 14**, Dinner at 5:30 Meeting Starts at 6:00- CVRD Board Room
* Admin Committee Meeting **November 20,**  at 5:30 CVRD Committee Room 2

C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE12\Lines\BD14996_.gif

**Upcoming Events/ Workshops/ Community Meetings**

* **It is Time- Parent Conference** Saturday October 26th. Registration is FREE**-**
* **In Transition 2.0** A movie about creating healthy and resilient neighbourhoods -Tuesday, October 29 -7:00 to 9:00 pm -Growing Together Daycare 490 Cairnsmore Street Duncan
* **Para Transit Community Consultation Forums-** October 28, 6pm in Cowichan Lake October 29, 6pm in South Cowichan (See Article below for registration and more information)

**C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE12\Lines\BD14996_.gif**

**Homelessness faces multi-prong attack by Social Planning Cowichan**

By [**Peter Rusland - Cowichan News Leader Pictorial**](http://www.cowichannewsleader.com/staff_profiles/10868196.html)  
Published: **October 10, 2013 9:00 AM**  
Updated: **October 11, 2013 3:20 PM**

A multi-prong attack on the valley's growing affordable housing crisis is in Social Planning Cowichan's cross-hairs.

But affordable-housing answers are moving targets — from getting Cowichan's many homeless folks off our streets, to building lower-price housing within budgets of struggling families.

Needs will measured in SPC's homelessness count, while it partners with local government on a regional-needs analysis to help gauge action, explained Joy Emmanuel, SPC's affordable-housing co-ordinator.

"We need to provide direct services, and support those who are homeless in our community, while working to ensure those who are at risk of losing their housing do not become homeless," her release says. "Raising awareness is the first step to tackling these challenges."

Homelessness Action Week, Oct. 13 to 19 sees a Day of Direct Services to low-income and homeless folks Wednesday at Duncan United Church. Some 20 service providers will offer legal services, counselling, foot care and more. Donated clothing, blankets and personal-care items will also be distributed. (Call 250-746-1004, ext. 260, by Tuesday to donate.)

But that's just part of a large, long-term puzzle. SPC's fresh figures show about 20% of homeowners and 52% of renters, spend more than a third of their gross income on shelter costs.

And four of 10 Cowichan households don't make a living wage, pegged at $15.81 hourly for a family of four. Those issues eat into basics such as food, clothing, healthcare and schooling.

So Cowichan's catch-22 includes growing our economy to provide jobs that provide money for better housing.

"How do we help facilitate new opportunities to create affordable housing?" Emmanuel asked.

"A few developers have approached us, church groups, and local groups like Cowichan Green Community.

"The Cowichan Valley Regional District is working in Cobble Hill doing community consultations around age-friendly seniors housing.

But solutions don't happen overnight, she noted.

"It's housing for the future; all these initiatives need land. You have to know how to finance affordable-housing initiatives, zoning bylaws, partnerships, and all funders will ask for a needs analysis."

Social Planning, and its various committees, are pecking at various housing pieces.

A recent workshop was held with B.C. Housing and CMHC (financing) agents.

An affordable-housing trust fund is being brainstormed whereby local non-profit groups could apply for money. Valley municipalities and the CVRD are mulling affordable-housing policies, plus zoning bylaws to legalize secondary suites, she explained

"Even developers are getting into non-market housing, with funding from CMHC, as part of the housing they create.

"Eventually, Social Planning could be building housing," Emmanuel said.

She pointed to big support for a seniors housing co-op seen at last week's B.C. Co-operative Association open house in Duncan. And models exist elsewhere that could be cloned, or fine tuned, to answer Cowichan's affordable-housing crunch. For instance, Whistler developers must include employee housing in their projects to tackle the town's lack of worker accommodation.

SPC's also in talks with the CVRD about starting an affordable-housing trust fund to which developers would contribute. Jobs would also be a local spin-off.

Emmanuel said SPC is ready to work with developers and local leaders toward gaining more affordable abodes.

"Our figures are a huge statement about how many people are vulnerable in our community due to housing shortages.

"A major priority needs to be how we address it — people are housed, but precariously housed."

Sider: Homeless count part of housing solution puzzle

Social Planning Cowichan gained a $55,000 federal grant to host more Ready to Rent classes this winter, stage a day of direct services for homeless folks, and complete a homeless count in early 2014.

The count will give accurate numbers of homeless Cowichanians, and who they are, and why they're homeless, so solutions can be planned. SPC's Joy Emmanuel estimated there about 150 visibly homeless people here. They and others will be reached and counted by social workers and volunteers who know where many homeless folks live.

"It will be a regional count, but homeless tend to be in the Duncan-North Cowichan area," she said.

Emmanuel hinting at a possible SPC homeless strategy. "Part of the reasons for homelessness come from cuts in social programs, and cuts to affordable housing."

The grant from Service Canada's Homelessness Prevention Strategy also allows SPC to hire Aboriginal affordable-housing field worker William Jack for outreach with Cowichan's off-reserve people. He'll gather data about their current needs, services, and gaps around affordable housing for Aboriginals. Ready to Rent workshops help potential renters find and maintain their homes, while advising them of their rights.

SPC also works with landlords toward supporting people who've completed the program.

InfoBox: Cowichan's affordable-housing by the numbers (October 2013)

* Average household income: renter, $36,425
* Average annual real cost: $10,236
* Percentage of households that rent: 19%
* Average household income, homeowner: $75,091
* Median price of a single-family home: $379,615
* Annual income needed to buy a home: $75,900
* 20.1% of homeowners, and 52.3% of renters spend more than 30% of their gross household income on shelter costs
* Annual cost of living for family of four in Cowichan: $53,000
* Four out of 10 households don't make a living wage

Sources: Social Planning Cowichan, StatsCan National Household Survey, 2011.

2007, Social Planning Cowichan founded the Regional Affordable Housing Directorate (RAHD) to consult stakeholders

2010, RAHD completed the Regional Affordable Housing Strategy. Social Planning/RAHD now creating an Affordable Housing Society for Cowichan.

C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE12\Lines\BD14996_.gif

**The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) and BC Transit are looking for volunteers** to participate in the second round of Community Stakeholder meetings for a Paratransit/Rural transit study. The study objectives are to review the existing transit network in the South Cowichan and Cowichan Lake areas, and identify opportunities to improve transit service and cost-efficiency through the use of Paratransit services such as flexible routes or demand responsive services (dial-a-ride).

**At the first round of community stakeholder meetings (July 16):**

* Participants assisted in reviewing the existing conventional transit service by identifying strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in service coverage in relation to community needs.
* After learning about forms of Rural Transit (known as Paratransit in the transit industry), participants provided preliminary ideas about which forms they felt could best serve the needs in the community.

**At this upcoming second round of community stakeholder meetings (October 28 & 29)**

* Participants will help assess a range of Rural Transit (Paratransit) and alternative transit service concepts that have been developed by a consultant for the Lake Cowichan and South Cowichan areas.

**When**

· October 28, 6pm in Cowichan Lake

· October 29, 6pm in South Cowichan

**Sign up**: at [cvrdparatransit@bctransit.com](mailto:cvrdparatransit@bctransit.com) or call 250-995-5823.

**Share the word!** Please forward this message on to other organizations and individuals in the South Cowichan and Cowichan Lake areas who may be interested in participating.

**Watch our website for updates (coming soon!)**: <http://www.bctransit.com/transitfuture/cvrdpt_latestupdates.cfm>

**What is Paratransit/Rural Transit?**

Unlike cities where many transit customers live near transit routes, transit customers in rural areas are more spread out. This means that traditional city-style, fixed-route transit doesn’t work so well since very few people are within walking distance of a route.

Paratransit/Rural transit is an alternative form of transit which includes flexible scheduling and routing, demand responsive services such as dial-a-bus, and or van pools. These types of services are considered for areas with low population density and rider demand. Below is a diagram outlining types of Paratransit service options.

C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE12\Lines\BD14996_.gif

**You are invited to “In Transition 2.0”**

*A movie about creating healthy and resilient neighbourhoods*

Tuesday, October 29

7:00 to 9:00 pm

Growing Together Daycare

490 Cairnsmore Street

Duncan

For more information

Contact

Cairnsmore Neighbourhood Working Group Secretary

cairnsmoreneighborhood@hotmail.ca

**C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE12\Lines\BD14996_.gif**

**Public Health Association of BC Fall Conference - November 4-5**

The Public Health Association of BC (PHABC) and the Pan-American Health Organization present the 2013 Fall Conference along with a half-day session with the Ministry of Health.  
[Hilton Vancouver Metrotown](http://cts.vresp.com/c/?FirstCallBCChildandY/2e91512623/321050fb30/e93c987db7), 6083 McKay Avenue, Burnaby, BC, (604) 438-1200  
  
[Register now](http://cts.vresp.com/c/?FirstCallBCChildandY/2e91512623/321050fb30/4ca49c4c72/name=Conference)  
  
**Health in All Policies: Taking Intersectoral Action for Equitable & Sustainable Health**  
November 4th-5th, 2013, 8:00am-4:30pm  
This year’s conference theme will focus on Health in All Policies. The foundation for this work is the insight that most of the activities that contribute to the health of communities are generated outside of the health care system itself. Taking action on this insight requires developing an integrated, intersectoral approach to achieve equitable and sustainable health for all people.  
  
**Overcoming Challenges: Taking Vision to Action MOH Half-day Session**  
November 6th, 2013, 8:00-11:30am  
The intersectoral conference will be followed by an inaugural half-day session from the Ministry of Health, called Overcoming Challenges – Taking Vision to Action, to officially release Promote, Protect, Prevent: Our Health Begins Here - BC’s Guiding Framework for Public Health and to discuss ways of institutionalizing an intersectoral approach in BC.

**C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\OFFICE12\Lines\BD14996_.gif**

**Do you have a resource, event or information you would like to share?**

**Send it to** [cindylisecchn@shaw.ca](mailto:cindylisecchn@shaw.ca) **and it will be included in the weekly Check UP Newsletter**