



TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN

Economic and Sustainable Committee

Tuesday, October 11th, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. – Council Chambers

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Page #

INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS (if applicable)

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

3. **BUSINESS ARISING AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

(a) Report on Sunfest Weekend – Bridget Horel, Island Coastal Economic Trust.

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(b) **Ongoing Items Still Being Addressed:**

(i) Parking Solutions.

(ii) Sustainable Waste – Use of Biovators, etc.

4. **DELEGATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

(a) Cheryl McLay, Regional Vancouver Island/Coast Manager, Regional Economic Operations, Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training Re: Overview presentation of Ministry's function.

(b) Amy Melmock, Manager, Economic Development, CVRD re: Overview of Progress on Rural Dividend Grant Project.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

6. **STAFF REPORTS**

None.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

(a) Article by Doug Griffiths on "Building a Team, Building a Successful Community".

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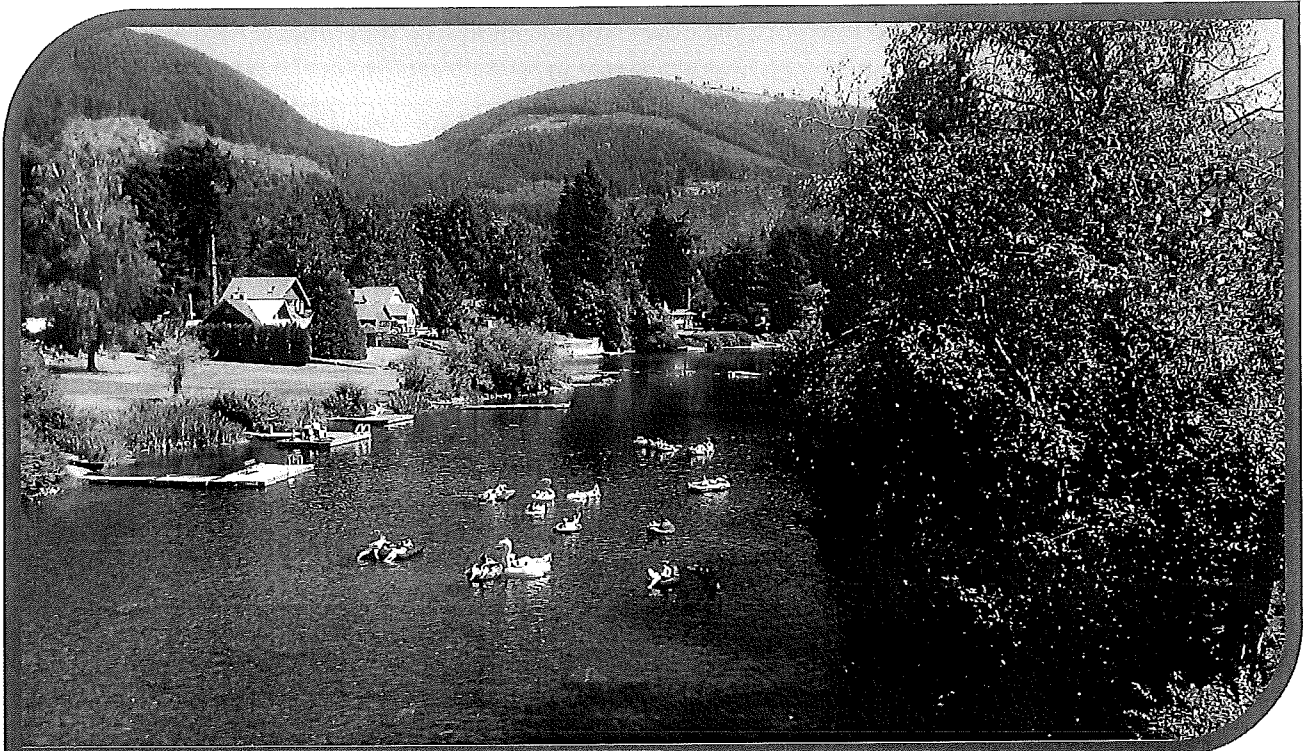
8. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

9. **PUBLIC RELATIONS ITEMS**

10. **MEDIA/PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

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SUNFEST STUDY 2016

*Report prepared for:
Town of Lake Cowichan and Community Stakeholders*





Lake Cowichan's Sunfest Welcome Initiative

BACKGROUND

Tourism is an industry with growing relevance in the region and this sector plays a significant role in Cowichan's economy¹. The Town of Lake Cowichan has identified that large festivals and events, held in the community, can play an important role in revitalizing the local economy.

In 2016, Sunfest, a private sector country music festival in operation for over 15 years, relocated from Duncan (Cowichan Exhibition Grounds) to a new site in Lake Cowichan (Laketown Ranch). Following this move, the Lake Economic & Activity Development (LEAD)² group was formed to assist the community in leveraging the tourism opportunities arising from large festivals and events such as Sunfest.

Over 100 volunteers worked together to prepare events in town to attract and benefit from the high number of visitors to the area during the Sunfest Country Music Festival. There were three different locations (Central Park, Saywell Park, and Ts'uubaa-asatx Square) offering visitors an opportunity to shop from vendors, listen to music, and explore a local farmers market in the downtown area.

RESEARCH

A survey of Sunfest festival participants was conducted during the 2016 festival in order to gather primary research about: who attends the festival; gaps in current infrastructure, amenities, and services; and distinguishing features or community assets that draw visitors to the area. Survey data was complemented by researcher observations, and conversations with community stakeholders.

REPORT

The following report outlines information gleaned from the two day survey of festival participants and from observations and conversations with community stakeholders. Key findings, conclusions, and recommendations are highlighted with the intent to assist the Town of Lake Cowichan and community stakeholders in preparation for future events and to support further development of the Tourism sector.

¹ The full Community Profile is available at:

<http://www.town.lakecowichan.bc.ca/Community%20Profile%20Lake%20Cowichan.pdf>

² More information about LEAD can be found at: <http://www.cowichanlake.ca/l-e-a-d/>



Connecting with Stakeholders

METHODS

A. Survey

A short questionnaire was developed to conduct a survey of festival participants encountered both on the festival site (on-site) and off the festival site (off-site) (refer to appendix 1). During data collection only one person in a group was invited to participate in a survey on behalf of the group. Participants were approached randomly on-site throughout the day on July 29th and 30th. Festival participants off-site, identified by their wristbands, were approached on July 30th.

Incentives

There was an incentive offered for both days that the survey was conducted. On the first day survey participants were entered into a draw to win a meet- and-greet with the band High Valley. On the second day the draw was for VIP viewing of Chase Bryant's performance.

B. Additional Observations and Stakeholder Conversations

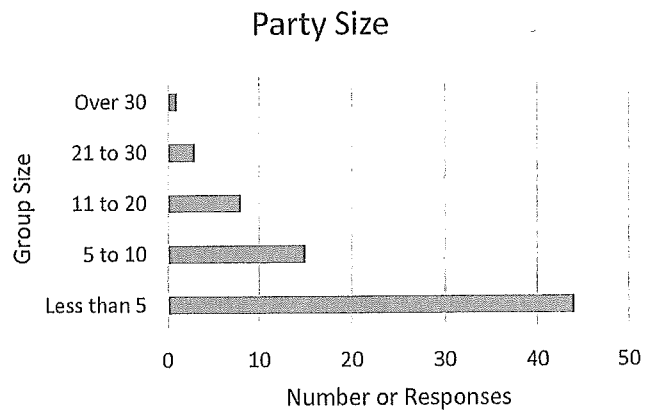
Stakeholder observations were recorded throughout the survey period and conversations were held and recorded with members from a variety of stakeholder groups including Lake Cowichan First Nation, event vendors, local business, volunteers, LEAD members, Chamber of Commerce Staff, and representatives from the Town of Lake Cowichan. The responses presented in this report are kept anonymous and confidential and are reported in aggregate form.

Locations

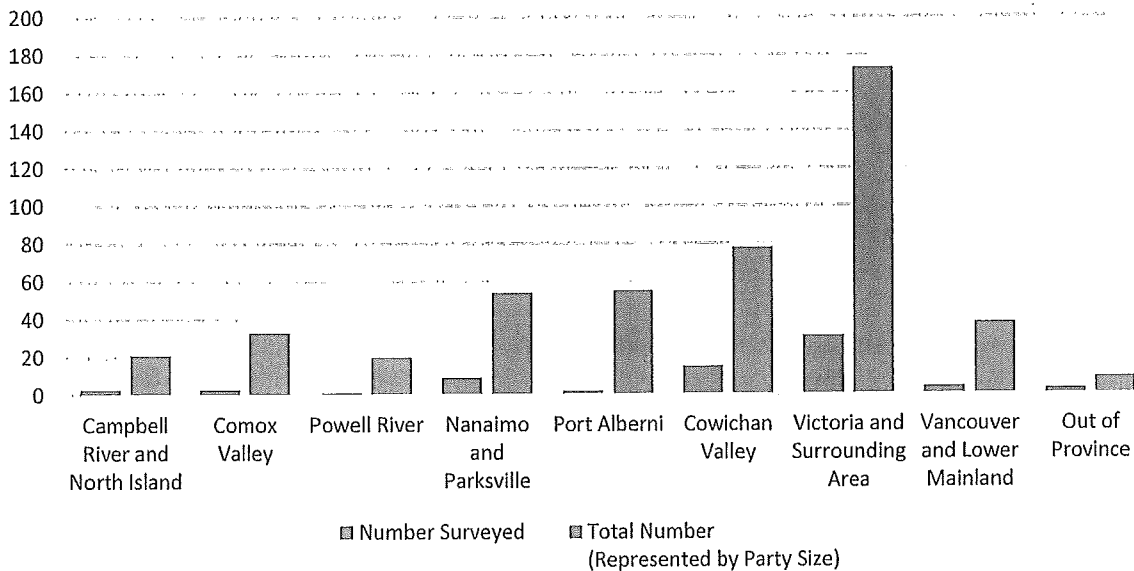
The survey, observations, and stakeholder conversations were conducted on-sight at various locations within the festival grounds and off-sight at the local downtown event sites (Central Park, Saywell Park, and Ts'uubaa-asatx Square) the Duckpond, the temporary information booths and shuttle locations, the shopping area by Country Grocer, the local BC Liquor Store, and Tim Hortons, as well as through encounters in the streets downtown.

TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN 2016 SUNFEST STUDY

Victoria, Nanaimo, and Duncan were the three most frequently identified areas of origin. Of those surveyed, 44% originated from Victoria and surrounding area, 21% from the Cowichan Valley, and 16% from Nanaimo and Parksville. Some areas had a low number of survey respondents yet those that responded had come to Sunfest with a large number of people (party size). This occurrence is depicted by Port Alberni in the graph below.



Geographic Distribution of Survey Respondents



ACCOMMODATIONS

The majority of participants (65%) surveyed were staying in one of the on-site camping areas during their time at the festival. This is reflective of the capacity of Laketown Ranch to accommodate campers (approximately 20 acres for campground and services)⁴. The second most common response, from 18% of those surveyed, was that they were staying out of town.

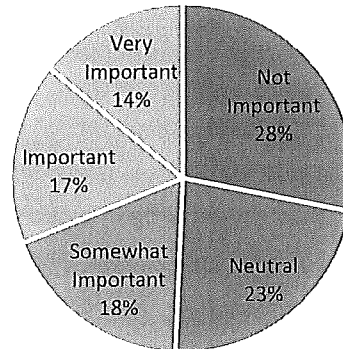
⁴ The full Official Community Plan Amendment and Rezoning Application Prepared for Submission to the Cowichan Valley Regional District (June 2015) is available at: sunfestconcerts.com/assets/LAKETOWN_RANCH_26June2015_digital.pdf

TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN 2016 SUNFEST STUDY

Perceived Importance of Off-site Activities

Participants were asked to use a one to five point scale to rate the importance of off-site events or activities. Almost half of respondents placed some value on off-site activities with 18% responding somewhat important, 17% responding important, and 14% responding very important. Over a quarter (28%) responded that off-site activities were not important to them and almost a quarter of the respondents (23%) felt neutral.

How important are off-site events/activities to you?

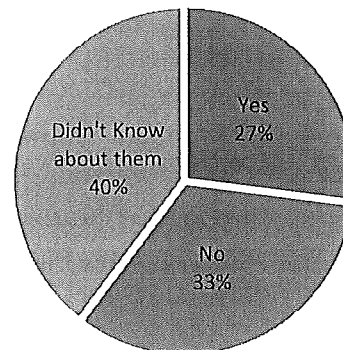


Activity Awareness and Participation

Those surveyed while on-site were asked “Do you plan on attending any of the events going on downtown this weekend?” and those surveyed while off-site were asked, “What brought you downtown today?”

While more than a third (40%) of those asked on-site did not know about the events, over a quarter (27%) planned to participate in the downtown events during the weekend.

Do you plan on attending any of the downtown events this weekend?

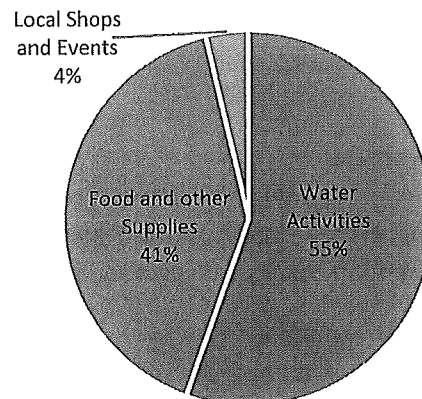


For those surveyed off-site, the two primary motives for travelling into town were participating in lake and riverside recreational activities (55%) and accessing food (restaurants and groceries) and other supplies (41%). These were followed by visiting local shops and events.

Tubing and swimming were common lake and riverside recreational activities in which respondents described participating.

Overall, few festival participants were observed at the local events organized downtown during data collection. Festival participants observed in town were tubing or they were clustered near the Liquor Store, Grocery Store, Tim Hortons and a Breakfast Diner (before crossing over the bridge into the downtown core).

What brought you downtown today?



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were offered. One respondent noted that they would have appreciated more planned events along the water during the day.

Shuttle, Parking, and Signage

A need for more advertising and promotion of the shuttles was noted by a few respondents. Some respondents did not know there was a shuttle downtown, others felt they were too expensive, and a number of those surveyed suggested that a shuttle to a location with beach access at the lake and/or ocean be offered.

One respondent noted that it was difficult to know where to park in town and another suggested that the parking in town should be free.

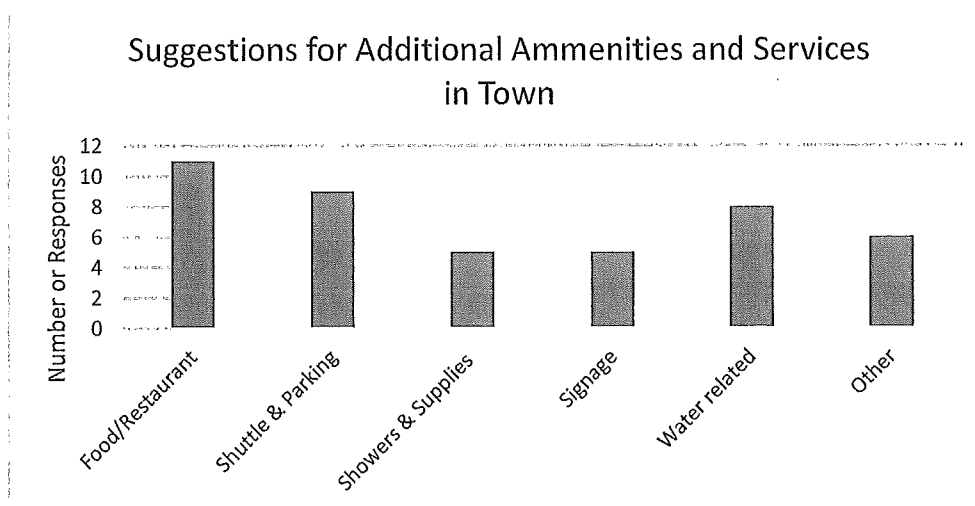
A few survey respondents indicated that improved signage would be beneficial. Some had experienced difficulties, finding stores, and getting around in general. One respondent suggested signage at the turn to Highway 18 and at the intersection where the roads turns left to Lake Cowichan. Another respondent, interviewed on the Duckpond side of the pedestrian bridge, was unaware that the bridge led people into the Town.

Showers, Supplies, and other Suggestions

Some respondents suggested that showers and shower access would be beneficial with one respondent explaining that their group of friends had travelled to Duncan for the morning to have breakfast and to enjoy the shower, pool, and sauna amenities located there. Other suggestions included a more centralized shopping area, a bank machine in town, and more accommodations and information about local accommodations.

PERCEPTIONS OF LAKE COWICHAN

Participants were asked three questions to glean information about their overall perceptions of Lake Cowichan and to understand what assets in the area help to draw return visitors.



A total of 36 people responded to this question and some provided more than one suggestion.

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MARKETING TO SUNFEST PARTICIPANTS

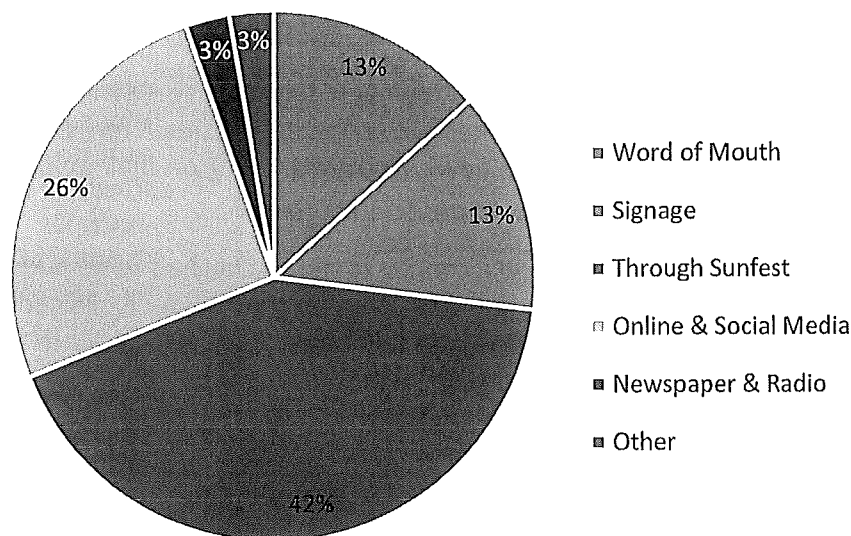
Participants were asked how they would find information about local events and respondents indicated the best way(s) to share information with them.

Almost half of respondents felt that the best way to share information about local events was through Sunfest. Responses from these participants included:

- posts on Sunfest Facebook
- updates emailed by the Sunfest team,
- information on the webpage,
- advertisements in the festival program,
- signs at the campsites
- leaflets on car windshields
- a one-pager of information include within their registration package

Roughly a quarter of the respondents (26%) indicated that online and social media were the best way to inform them of events, suggesting the Town's Facebook and google searches. Word of mouth and signage followed with 13% each. A smaller number of respondents indicated newspaper and radio as methods to communicate information.

How would you find information about local events?



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there was no signage to indicate that local events were taking place downtown or at the Central Park event location. Similarly, there was no signage to indicate downtown shuttle access points or the route into town from the drop-off location known by locals as the Duckpond.

Stakeholder Observations and Feedback

The most frequently discussed topic arising was the need for additional marketing – advertisement and promotion – of both the local events occurring downtown and the downtown core itself. Signage in town, promotion at the festival site, and early marketing to festival attendees were prioritized as areas for improvement.

Promotion through Signage

During several conversations, stakeholders indicated that signage, and in particular visual promotion of the events in Town, was limited. Most stakeholders felt that additional signage would assist in drawing festival participants into town. One described a vendor's attempt to assist passers-by with a hand-drawn sign prepared and posted to provide information about what was happening at Central Park. Another stakeholder described the importance of clear wayfinding, stating:

There was an assumption that people would find the town and we can see now that this assumption was wrong.

Promotion at Festival Site

In addition to increased signage and marketing within the town, some stakeholders noted the importance of reaching festival goers with information at the festival site. A few stakeholders commented that Sunfest did not support Lake Cowichan by marketing on their behalf.

Early Marketing

Some business owners/vendors felt that people coming to the festival had come prepared, bringing supplies with them for their time in the area. Another stakeholder explained that reaching potential customers to showcase what Lake Cowichan has to offer, prior to their arrival in the area for the festival, will be important for future events.

SHUTTLE AND PARKING

There were two locations transformed into pay parking in the downtown area (near Central and Saywell Park) with parking fees, originally set at \$20 per day. The fees were reduced after the first day.

Miscommunication between the festival organizers and the community resulted in two different shuttle services to downtown – each with their own payment method. Both shuttles

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some of the activities, such as the beer garden, may be in competition with activities of other local businesses, noting the Riverside Inn and the Legion and describing that one local restaurant (Jake's on the Lake) had also set up a beer garden.

BENEFITS TO LOCAL BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES

An in depth analysis of the benefits to local business was outside of the scope of this project. Anecdotal conversations indicated that some businesses were feeling a benefit while others were not.

More than one stakeholder explained that local, storefront businesses seemed to do well but that mobile vendors did not do as well. Anecdotal information from businesses involved in food and beverage, tubing, or stores catering to the younger, female demographic, indicated approximately 30% more in sales than their best weekend.

One storefront business commented that commerce is generally good on the long weekend and that the festival may have deterred regular long-weekend traffic to the store. Another respondent felt that expectations for increased business were not met.

One respondent indicated that a broader scope planning process could assist the Town of Lake Cowichan in further leveraging the opportunities from organizations and events like the Sunfest Country Music Festival.

In general the feedback from stakeholders was constructive with the intention to improve future outcomes. This was expressed best by one respondent who stated:

Now that everyone has seen what occurs at Sunfest and what is offered on-site, there can be more planning around the amenities and events which should be held off site; as well as what everyone else visiting here would like to see.

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there is potential to collect additional valuable information by doing a full walk around targeted at getting feedback from a variety of businesses (i.e. restaurants, water sports/recreational rental businesses, retail shops, grocery store, gas station, liquor store).

- ❖ Follow up could involve a short set of standardized questions designed to gather baseline information that can be used to compare and measure the impact of future events.

Potential indicators could include:

- Number of festival participants making purchases,
- Revenue generated during the festival weekend,
- Percent increase in sales,
- Occupancy/vacancy rates at accommodations in the area (campsite, B&B, etc.).

Readiness to Accommodate Increased Pressure/Demands

A number of studies on festivals and tourism indicate that residents of host communities perceive two main problems resulting from these activities - traffic congestion and pressure on local services⁷. While some businesses in the food and beverage sector experienced a high level of pressure, in general the event did not seem to put pressure on local services and amenities and traffic congestion did not appear to be an issue. The Town of Lake Cowichan is well positioned to take advantage of growth in the tourism sector on Vancouver Island by expanding service and amenity infrastructure.⁸

Recommendations:

- ❖ Continue ongoing monitoring and evaluation of events
- ❖ Consider conducting an audit of existing events and resources to examine peaks and gaps related to seasonality and tourism⁹.
- ❖ Engage with residents, community stakeholders, and the broader community to share research highlights, communicate community impact, and to gauge satisfaction with events. This will help to foster continued community support and could come in the form of a:
 - Press release,
 - Factsheet to local businesses, and/or
 - Series of posts using social media channels.
- ❖ Build regional partnerships with neighboring and nearby communities to cross-promote events and activities.

⁷ Sourced from: 'Perceived Impacts of Festivals and Special Events by Organizers: an Extension and Validation' in *Tourism Management*, Volume 25, Issue 2, April 2004, Pages 171–181 by Gursoya, Kimb, and Uysalc.

⁸ Sourced from: Town of Lake Cowichan 2005 Downtown Revitalization Strategy

⁹ This audit process is discussed further in Festival Events and the Destination in the Book "Festival and Event Management: an International Arts and Culture Perspective".

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- ❖ Consider developing a Lake Cowichan Community App to provide visitors with mobile friendly content about restaurants, local events and activities, accommodations, shops. Collaboration with Tourism Cowichan, Lake Cowichan First Nation, Tourism Vancouver Island, the local Visitor Centre, and other stakeholders will be important to maintain existing partnerships and consistent branding. See appendix 5 for some examples from other communities on Vancouver Island.
- ❖ Work with the festival coordinators and provide them with promotional material to market the local area and events through Sunfest. Build on the existing channels used by respondents to market through Sunfest by:
 - Advertising in the festival program.
 - Including community information in the packages offered to festival participants.*
 - Placing information online with links shared on the Sunfest website/Facebook page.

* A sample one-pager with information about local events, businesses, and points of interest has been developed based on research results (see appendix 4).

Shuttle Service

A shuttle service is an excellent component to provide people with transportation from the site and into Town. Feedback about the cost, timing, signage, route/destination, and communication around the shuttle service reveal that there is a need to consider how best to operate the shuttle in future years. Appendix 5 includes ideas from other festival and events involving shuttle service.

Recommendations:

- ❖ Clarify roles and responsibilities surrounding shuttle service to mitigate the cost and efficiency issues in future years.
- ❖ Secure sponsorship/funds for the shuttle so that it can be offered to festival participants as a free or by donation service.
- ❖ Construct a high quality, colourful, portable, “bus stop” system to use during Sunfest and other events. A minimum of two structures that can be easily assembled for events and disassembled after events is recommended. With two structures, one bus stop can be located on the festival grounds, as an on-site booth/kiosk to provide festival attendees with a clearly identifiable location to travel into Town. The second structure can be located at the Duckpond site, or another identified drop-off location in Town.

OFF-SITE QUESTIONNAIRE

Gender of participant: _____

Approx.: Age of participant:

<25 25-39 40-59 60+

1. Where are you from? _____

2. Including yourself, how many people are in your party?

1 2 3 4 5 6 _____

3. Where are you staying while at the festival? (don't list)

Camping on-site Bed and Breakfast Hotel/Motel
 Camping off-site Air bnb Other

4. What brought you downtown today?

5. Typically, where would you go to find information about these local events? _____

6. How important are off-site events/activities to you on a scale from 1-5 - with one being not important and five being very important.

5. *Very Important* 4. *Important* 3. *Neutral* 2. *Somewhat important* 1. *Not important*

7. What activities do you plan on doing off-site this weekend? (don't list, check all mentioned)

Swimming Eating at local restaurants Kayaking/SUP/Canoeing
 Zip-line Visiting friends or family Other (please specify)
 Tubing Shopping – retail, gas, groceries _____

8. Now that you have been here for the festival, can you suggest any off-site community amenities or services that would add to your experience?

9. On a scale from 1-5 how do you feel about your visit to Lake Cowichan in general - with one being poor

5. *Very Good* 4. *Good* 3. *Average* 2. *Below Average* 1. *Poor*

and five being very good.

10. Would you come back to visit Lake Cowichan? Yes No Maybe

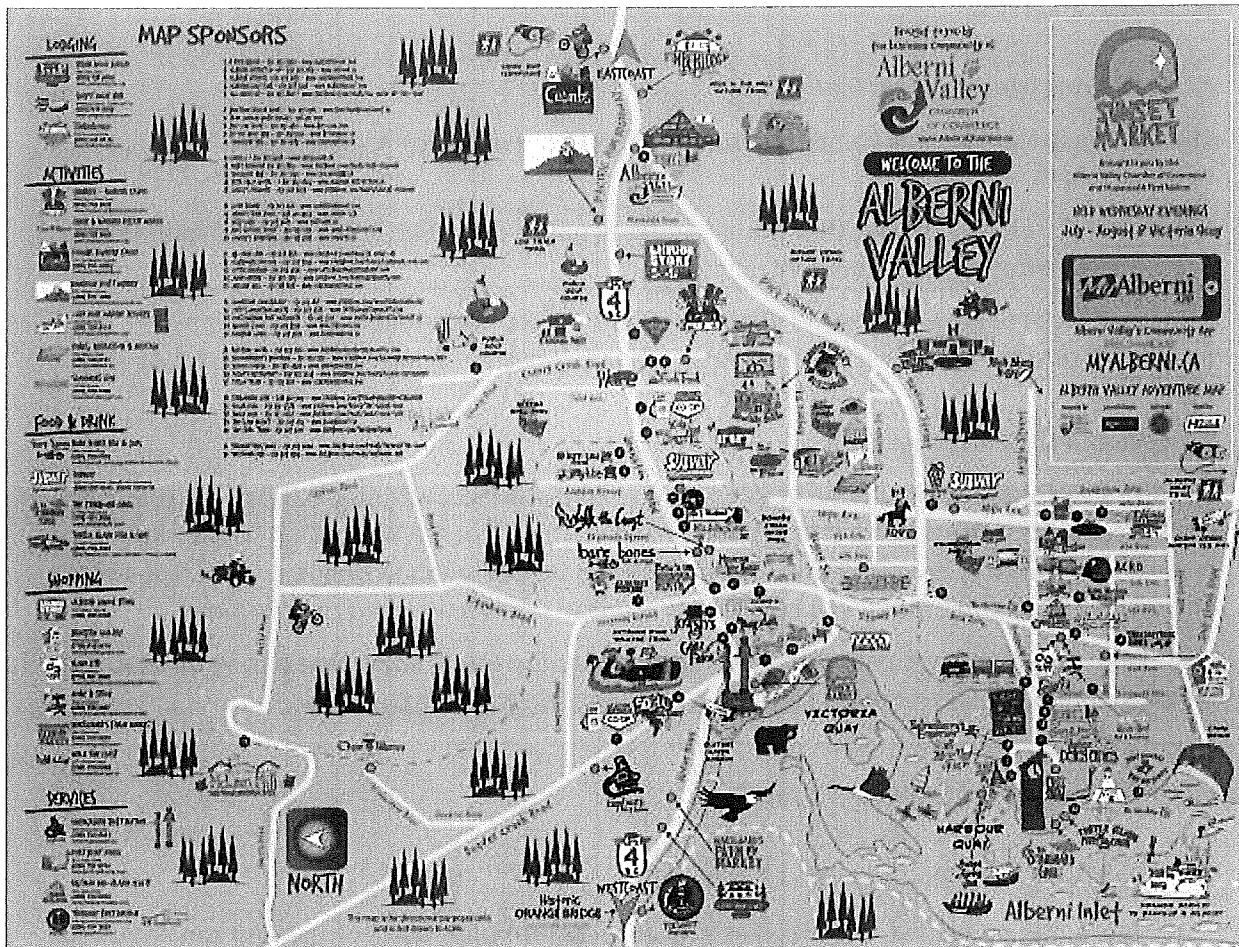
11. What would draw you back to Lake Cowichan?

Appendix 3: Implementation Plan Table

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY LEVEL	CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS	PARTY/PARTIES RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE (START AND COMPLETION DATES)
Work together to review, evaluate and prioritize report recommendations				
Formally/publicly acknowledge the involvement of volunteers and community members				
Conduct a formal follow up with businesses to gauge impact				
Consider conducting an audit to examine seasonal peaks and gaps				
Continue ongoing monitoring and evaluation of events				
Publicly share research highlights and community impacts				
Build regional partnerships with neighboring and nearby communities to cross-promote events and activities.				
Construct an high visibility, branded, signage system				
Develop an aesthetically pleasing map of Lake				
Consider developing a Lake Cowichan Community App				
Build on the existing channels used by respondents to market through Sunfest				
Clarify roles and responsibilities surrounding shuttle service				
Secure sponsorship/funds for the shuttle				
Construct a high quality, colourful, portable shuttle “bus stop” system				

(Back of One Pager)

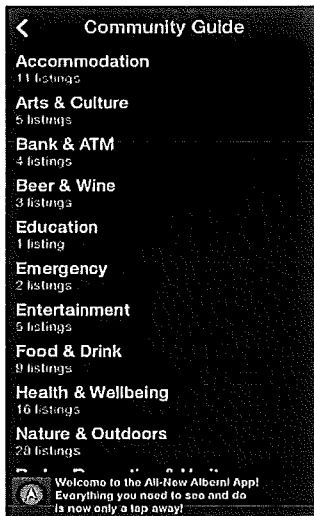
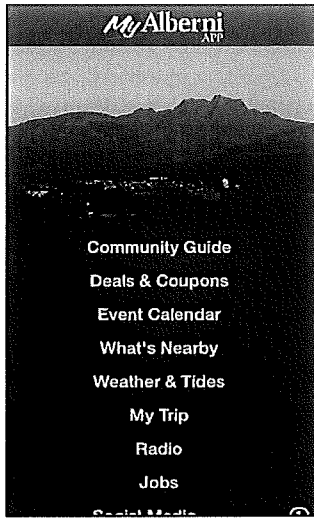
This page would include a full page, visually appealing and easy to follow map with information that is important for visitors to the area including: public beach access locations, places to eat, places to rent equipment for water sports/recreation, the pedestrian bridge, where to catch the shuttle, etc. An example community map, designed for Port Alberni, is below.



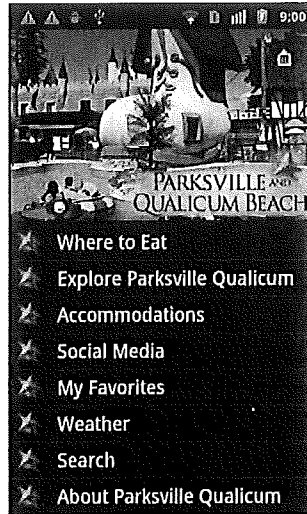
5. Tofino Community App - Tofino App

Tofino has a series of free community Apps. The Tofino Travel Guide helps users prepare and book their West Coast vacation. Information about local deals, accommodations, events, and activity rentals (surfboards, canoes, kayaks, zodiacs) can be accessed, as shown by the images below.

Port Alberni



Parksville & Qualicum Beach



Tofino



Report prepared by:
Bridget Horel, Economic Development Intern
Island Coastal Economic Trust



Building a Team, Building a Successful Community

With the focus this month largely on human resources, I thought long and hard about what I could write. Everyone in this issue is surely more expert than I on hiring the right type of people and managing them in a way that makes them happy and productive; so, what could I possibly write about? Then, it occurred to me that perhaps I was taking “human resources” too literally by applying it strictly to the management of people working in the municipal context. Those of you who know me know that I don’t actually write much about *municipalities*; rather, I prefer to write in the context of *communities*. You will also know I tend to challenge the traditional way of viewing our situations. This article will be no different.

Building a Community, Not Just a Municipality

I have long said the most important job we have in the municipal sector is to build strong communities; if we can ensure our communities are strong, then families will be able to take care of themselves. When our communities are weak, our families don’t have the foundation and resources they need in terms of health, education, economic opportunity, and quality of life to grow stronger. When our communities are strong, our families will have what they need to prosper. That means communities are the foundation of society. Our greatest challenge is to ensure communities of all sizes prosper, which will allow families to prosper, and in turn our society will be stronger.

I have worked with some pretty successful municipalities. They are well-run municipal organizations that do

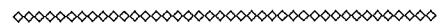
everything they are supposed to do very well. They budget well, their policies are good, they have happy staff who are very productive thanks to great human resource policies, and they set long-term plans for their municipality. That in itself isn’t a problem. The concern arises when those very successful municipal organizations are set in the heart of communities that are not as successful. I have witnessed these organizations operate, and there is no fault to what they do. In fact, they do what they are supposed to do impeccably; yet, there is a disconnect on some critical level between what happens with the municipality and what happens with the community.

Then, I realized what might be the problem. Good human resource management is done in a way that ensures the organization is productive and strong, and the employees are happy and productive. It doesn’t matter if the organization is a municipality, a chamber of commerce, a school division, a 4-H club, a volunteer organization, a business, a corporation, or a social club. Positive human resource management practices almost exclusively focus on the people and their connection to, and role within, the organization. (I know there are some businesses that have begun the process of engaging and supporting their employees in volunteering and corporate social responsibility initiatives, but those corporations are still rare; and, for the most part, those initiatives remain the domain of corporations and businesses.) Organizations are, by default of good human resource practices, focused strictly on their issues, thereby siloing themselves from other organizations – which is completely counter to the process of building strong communities.

Working Together

Effective municipalities focus on their exclusive domain of responsibility, and so they should; but, this often results in a disconnection to many of the other organizations that make a community great. The municipality should not venture into the jurisdiction of the school board; but, without some connection, the two organizations are missing a chance to find common ground that can help them build a stronger community. It works likewise with the chamber of commerce. The municipality’s operations have no relation whatsoever to what happens with the chamber; yet, without a discrete (but meaningful) connection, the policies, actions, or attitudes of the municipality could undermine the success of the local business community.

Many groups are looking for strategies to retain and attract youth to the community. Attracting and retaining youth, however, is a matter much broader than simply “working with youth.” To be desirable to youth, you need a community that has jobs or professional/business opportunities; but, it must also have access to good health-care, schools, post-secondary education, and a high quality of life – complete



DOUG GRIFFITHS is the Principal at 13 Ways, Inc. <www.13ways.ca>, a firm that specializes in assisting communities and businesses overcome their challenges and identify a path to success. As co-author of the best-selling book, *13 Ways to Kill Your Community* (Frontenac House), Doug regularly speaks and works across the country. He can be reached at <doug@13ways.ca>.

with recreation, social amenities, and aesthetics. A plan to retain and attract youth *must* include the groups that are working on economic development, community beauty, education, health-care, and many others.

When I was a teacher, we worked collectively to attract the parents of new babies to consider our school as the best choice for their kids. Over the long term, however, the population of the communities in the region continued to decline – and it eventually caught up to our school, as well as to every other school in the region. A committee of volunteers worked hard to attract new doctors to our town, but the biggest challenge to keeping them was that the spouse didn't want to stay in a community with too few businesses and services, and where they had even fewer friends or community connections. No one got the spouse engaged or entwined in the community, or even showed them around after the first week. We tried to attract new families to our community since there was growth in the local

economy that created jobs; but, after a few families moved in, there were no more homes for sale, and indeed there were no lots to buy on which to build homes. There was no place for families to live, even when they wanted to move into the community.

The school had a great team focused on its success. The volunteer organization that worked to attract doctors was incredibly focused and singularly dedicated to attracting doctors to town. The economic development committee worked tirelessly to attract young families to the new job opportunities. Each group, however, worked in isolation and on their singular task to make their organization successful. As each group achieved short-term success, their long-term success was halted because of the lack of understanding and cooperation between organizations. Every organization was successful in isolation, at least in the short term; but, eventually, as the community failed, so did each of them.

Keeping the Big Picture in Our Sights

I know our human resources practices focus us on the vision, goals, and objectives of our own organization, and they measure the success of those practices by the success of the organization. Without something to tie it all together – from the municipality to the chamber, the chamber to youth, youth to economic development, economic development to beautification, and so on – we fail to see the real task, the real objective, and the real success of each organization is to build a strong community. And, if we don't build a strong community, and instead get one that falls apart and dies, what need will we have for any of the organizations? The most important job of human resources in the future, I suspect, will be to create teams across organizations that focus on the bigger picture of building communities, because without communities ... we fail. Success means building a team that understands the success of their organization means working with others to build a strong community. MW

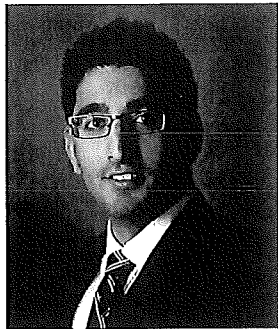


MUNICIPAL, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT LAW

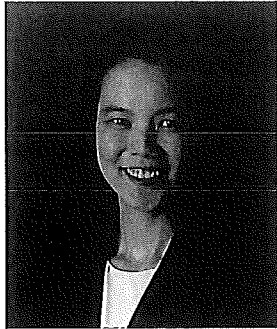
Wood Bull LLP

is pleased to welcome to the firm

Raj Kehar
Associate Lawyer



Angela Fang
Land Use Planner



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