



BELLA COOLA VALLEY

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

The CCRD is excited to be undertaking an update to our Bella Coola Valley Official Community Plan (OCP). The current OCP was adopted in 1999 and the update of this Plan was identified in the CCRD’s 2022 Strategic Priorities report. Over the next few months we will be working with the Board of Directors, community and stakeholders to chart a path for the future of the Bella Coola Valley. The consulting firm Urban Systems has been hired to help guide the CCRD through the OCP update.

We will need your input throughout this process. To prepare you for this, we want to provide you with some important background information to get you started.

What is an Official Community Plan?

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the highest order document for a local government. An OCP aims to provide a framework for the future vision and direction of the community. It establishes policies and actions for the local government, and the community at-large, to implement and pursue. Creating a new OCP is an opportunity for the community to come together and collectively offer input on how they want to see their community grow and develop in the future. More specifically, an Official Community Plan is:

1. A land use plan that provides direction on where certain land uses should be located. Mapping will be prepared identifying areas where residential, commercial, industrial, parks and institutional development should be located. It will also identify areas of environmental significance and potentially hazardous lands where future development should be limited or regulated.
2. A policy document that can include direction for a variety of issues including economic development, environmental sustainability, heritage preservation, transportation and infrastructure, and community services.

The graphic to the left provides an illustration of some of the initiatives that inform the development of an OCP, as well as illustrates the various bylaws utilized by a local government to implement the OCP. While not outlined on the figure below, it is also important to note that an OCP can be an important document in accessing funding from senior governments for infrastructure and other investments.



Why update the Bella Coola Valley OCP?

As noted above, the existing OCP was adopted in 1999. A typical update frequency for an OCP is every 5-10 years, and while this can often be extended for smaller, more rural jurisdictions such as the CCRD, the current Bella Coola Valley OCP is now 23 years old. Factors and considerations that make the updating of the OCP timely include:

- Updated legislative requirements (current OCP was developed under the Municipal Act and OCPs are now governed under the Local Government Act);
- The need to incorporate updated mapping and base data;
- The need to incorporate recent plans, studies and other relevant initiatives undertaken by the CCRD, including land use planning, housing needs, emergency management and infrastructure servicing and asset management updates;
- An increased focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- Emergence and/or increased prominence of various trends influencing local government planning and development, including active transportation, short-term rentals, and the legalization of cannabis;
- Changing demographics within the CCRD;
- Changes in the regional economy and employment base;
- Changes in community services and resources;
- An increased focus on social issues that may have typically been more prevalent in larger communities, including affordable housing, food security and health and wellness (including mental health and addictions); and
- An increased focus on reconciliation with First Nations communities and the enshrinement of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) into law by the Province of BC.

Project Process and Timeline

The diagram below highlights the various phases and proposed timeline for the project. We are hopeful that the project will be wrapped up by the fall 2023.



For more information please contact the Central Coast Regional District at:

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