

# CAVI – Convening for Action on Vancouver Island *Leadership in Water Sustainability*

Shared Responsibility and the Regional Team Approach



**Convening for Action in the Comox Valley:  
*A Regional Response to Infrastructure Liability***

# Infrastructure

“The gift that keeps on taking”.

(Finance Director – Hamilton Wentworth)



# The New Business as Usual

- A need to meet growth in our Communities.
- A need to meet service levels.
- A need to respect established land uses such as agriculture.
- A need to respect nature.
- A need to respect a Communities recreational values.
- All this, within a financially sound framework.



# North East Comox

Development in Northeast Comox poses a significant concern to:

- Agricultural Lands;
- The environment (Wildlife Management Area);
- Recreational Values;
- Business as usual will only serve to add to our long term infrastructure liabilities.



# The 80/20 Split

- Constraints in finances and in nature are forcing us to rethink the manner in which we develop.
- Smart Growth.
- Denser communities that efficiently utilize infrastructure and services.
- Brown field developments that reduce our impact on nature.



# Comox's Infrastructure Liability

- Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB).
- In 1952 Comox reported 3.2km of water main and 11km of roads.
- In 2010 we have 88.5km of road and 93.4km of water.
- Today Water, Sanitary, Storm, Roads and Sidewalks are *conservatively* estimated to have a replacement value of \$163,814,169.
- That's approximately \$27,300 for every property in Comox.



# The Gap Grows

- Using typical life-spans and unit rates for construction, Comox should be allocating a combined total of \$3,500,000 per annum to capital replacement and/or reserves.
- Our current 5 year plans allocates \$2,100,000 per annum to reserves and capital projects.
- This equates to a \$1,400,000 per annum shortfall.



# So What's 1.4 million between Friends?

- \$1,400,000 equates to a 23% tax increase.
- Of the \$2,100,000 annual capital, only half goes to reconstruction of existing infrastructure.
- New growth (Knight Road Sanitary) and enhanced service levels (Anderton Storm) account for half of our capital expenditures.
- Re-investment really looks like \$1,000,000 per annum.





# Wait, There's More!

- Municipal Parks, Building's and Equipment at approximately \$650,000 per annum.
- All told, Comox is incurring liabilities at a rate in the order of \$3,000,000 per year.
- This equates to a 50% tax increase.
- To this we add Operating Cost!



# But it gets Worse!

- Climate Change.
- Enhanced Service Levels.
- Declining Funding.
- Increasing Regulations.



It's not enough to Work  
Harder, We must work  
Smarter

- How will we solve this problem?



# Technology

- Improved materials in construction.
- Non-destructive replacements such as Pipe-Lining and Pipe-Bursting.
- Improved mix design for items such as asphaltic and cement concretes.
- Extended life-span through improved maintenance regimes.



# Changing Development Patterns

- Technology alone cannot answer this problem, we must make fundamental changes.
- Pt. Holmes Sanitary Study.
- Sustainable Planning (Comox OCP).
- Comox Transportation Plan.



# Pt. Holmes Sanitary Study

- \$2,600,000 to provide 61 properties with municipal sewage (\$42,000 / property).
- Operating costs of approximately 42,000/year(\$680 /property / year).
- A geological study indicated that given continued land use in kind with the current pattern, a municipal sewage system is not warranted.



# 2010 Comox OCP

- Introduces the concept of 'Smart Growth'.
- Higher densities through ground orientated infill.
- Transit Orientated Development.
- A per capita reduction in GHG of 28%.
- Energy and Water Conservation DPA.



# 2010 Comox Transportation Plan

- Enhanced Cycle network.
- Improved pedestrian facilities.
- Increased transit coverage and service levels.
- Enhanced traffic control at major intersections.
- The result is a significant reduction in the need for vehicular facilities to meet predicted traffic loads until 2030.

