



the partnership for water sustainability in bc

Convening for Action on Vancouver Island

Comox Valley Local Governments Showcase “A Regional Response to Infrastructure Liability”

2011 Seminar Series is Springboard to Vancouver Island Economic Summit

Convening for Action in the Comox Valley: Visualize What We Want Our Region to Look Like in 50 years

Create a Legacy: Settlement Change in Balance with Ecology

1. *Influence choices by individuals and organizations*
2. *Use the term “sustainability” as a lens for considering approaches that influence choices*

2011 Comox Valley Learning Lunch Seminar Series
A Regional Response to 'Infrastructure Liability'

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2011 State of the Island Economic Summit

At the 2011 State of the Island Economic Summit, *Convening for Action on Vancouver Island – CAVI* and the Vancouver Island Economic Alliance (VIEA) are holding a pre-Summit session that is being described as a "Forum within the Summit".

The Forum program will be built around the "infrastructure liability" theme, and will showcase the Comox Valley experience in striving for Sustainable Service Delivery. The Comox Valley regional team approach is relevant to all local governments, and is replicable.

Genesis for CAVI-VIEA Collaboration

In June 2010, the VIEA and Leadership and the Leadership Society of Vancouver Island co-organized the *Dialogue in Nanaimo: Fresh Water Sustainability Is in Our Hands*. The goal was to provide a springboard for action.

"What outcome do we want? We hope that the individuals in the room today will learn some more about this incredibly critical component of our lives. We want you to see, meet and greet folks in this room and find out what other people are doing. We want you to network with like-minded people; and we want you to collectively answer initially WHAT NEXT. We want this day to be a springboard to action," stated Patrick Ross, Chair of the Leadership Society of Vancouver Island, in his opening remarks.



The most significant outcome of the Dialogue in Nanaimo was three-way alignment with CAVI. This led directly to a CAVI breakout session at the 2010 State of the Island Economic Summit in October. The session was titled *Water for Life and Livelihoods: What Drives Large-Scale Real Estate Development in the Mid-Island Region?*

"CAVI participation at the VIEA Summit was both timely and rewarding in that a promising partnership was formed with VIEA. This partnership provides an opportunity to develop an integrated approach to sustainability on Vancouver Island based upon a balanced understanding of the relationship between the economy and the environment," reports Eric Bonham, a founding member of the CAVI Leadership Team.



"This message was strongly reinforced by the Premier during lunch when he observed the power of partnerships aligned with a collaborative long-term vision...there is an opportunity for us to come together to do something exceptional for Vancouver Island' said the Premier, noting the need for 'the vision to imagine and the tenacity to pursue it'."

"We must look outside our boundaries and work with our neighbouring communities for the betterment of all. Vancouver Island could be a test case...to show the world literally...how we can collaborate and pull things together," concludes Eric Bonham.

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VIEA 3-Year Plan

In November 2010, the VIEA Board adopted a 3-Year Plan which identified collaboration with CAVI as a high priority for 2011. This collaboration is now manifesting itself through the work of VIEA's Sustainability Committee which includes CAVI representatives.

"Collaboration with CAVI creates an opportunity for early success in moving forward with the Link Project. CAVI has been building credibility and a partnership network in a local government setting. CAVI is a successful 'demonstration project' that can both inform the VIEA implementation plan and provide a springboard for expanded action," states the VIEA 3-Year Plan.



Linking Island Leaders Project

In 2009, VIEA initiated the Linking Island Leaders Project. Completed over a 52-week, the findings were unveiled at the 2010 Summit.

"The Link Project examined regional collaboration and economic development on Vancouver Island through a multi-disciplinary approach that included data review, community visits, networking and strategy development," explained VIEA Past-President Cori Lynn Germiquet. "The Link Team met with community leaders:



local government, First Nations, educators, media, business, industry associations, and individuals who are community champions."

Vision for Regional Collaboration

"The Link Team has been talking to Vancouver Island leaders about collaboration. What's working and what's not. We have identified opportunities and created linkages." stated Wendy Mauer, Project Manager, when she reported out at the 2010 Summit.



"Attitude, trust, respect, agility and a desire for sustainable communities is the platform for building a healthy economic future for Vancouver Island. This is what we heard from leaders around Vancouver Island."

The VIEA 3-Year Plan provides this perspective: "The recommendations, strategies and actions presented in the Link Project Report align beautifully with what CAVI has been doing to date and the vision that we clearly share for 'broadening the coalition'."

"CAVI has defined the 'water sustainability issue' in terms of (and as a consequence of) our ethic for use and conservation of land. Another way to express this is that Water Sustainability is a metaphor for managing the Built Environment sustainably."



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Regional Team Approach in the Comox Valley

Through a professional development program, the four Comox Valley local governments are aligning efforts, building leadership capacity, and striving for a consistent regional approach to Sustainable Service Delivery. The program is built around an annual seminar series.

"CAVI success is founded in large part on being able to create 'convening for action' forums where practitioners can have the conversations that they otherwise would not have," states Kim Stephens,



Executive Director,
Partnership for Water
Sustainability in British
Columbia.

"But our success goes beyond simply organizing successful forums. It is really about how we have

tapped into the power of the 'regional team approach' where the participants are motivated by the shared vision. We do not 'talk at'. We listen. We facilitate. We mentor. We help others be successful."

Sustainable Service Delivery

The Comox Valley program is the foundation for a 'regional team approach'. The seminars provide a neutral forum for sharing, exploring and learning in a way that no other forum currently provides. The series is open to developers, consultants, and non-government organizations located in the Comox Valley; and to local governments and others from outside the Comox Valley. The open forum facilitates cross-fertilization of experience and ideas.

"In 2011, our focus is on the unfunded 'infrastructure liability' confronting all local governments. One of the foundation pieces underpinning the series is expressed this way: *All those involved in land development have a role to play in achieving Sustainable Service Delivery. The players include land use and infrastructure professionals,*" states Glenn Westendorp, Public Works Superintendent with the Town of Comox. He is Chair of the 2011 Seminar Series.



"We have moved beyond continuing education solely for the purpose of professional development. The 2011 Series is aligned with the recently adopted Regional Growth Strategy and Regional Sustainability Strategy. We are exploring what implementation of regional policy means on the ground. We are working towards a Joint Report on A Regional Response to Infrastructure Liability."

2011 Summit Will Showcase Comox Valley Approach

"The 2011 Comox Valley Seminar Series is a springboard to the 'Forum within the Summit' in October," concludes Kim Stephens. "By showcasing the Comox Valley outcomes at the Summit, we hope to inform and educate elected folks and others on Vancouver Island about the 'infrastructure liability' and the choices that need to be made."

"These choices encompass life-cycle cost and level-of-service. The two are interconnected. The Comox Valley is leading the way in demonstrating what can be accomplished through a regional team approach. Four local governments and the Comox Valley Land Trust are striving to work across boundaries; and walk the talk in applying the '4Cs' – that is, communicate, cooperate, coordinate and collaborate."

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