

The ‘Forum within the Summit’ on October 18

“The Public Infrastructure Dilemma: How will we sustain our water, our streets, and ourselves?”

What / Who:	2011 State of the Island Economic Summit /// Vancouver Island Economic Alliance
Where / When:	Vancouver Island Conference Centre, Nanaimo, BC /// 12:30pm until 3:30pm
VIEA Context:	“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, adopted in 2010.
Affordability Issue for Taxpayers:	<p>The initial capital cost of municipal infrastructure is about 20% of the life-cycle cost; the other 80% largely represents a future unfunded liability.</p> <p>Each year, the funding shortfall grows. Fiscal constraints provide a driver for a change in the way local governments plan, finance, implement and over time replace infrastructure.</p>
Forum Vision:	<p>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.</p> <p>Due to strong, local leadership at the working level, in 2009 the Province recognized the Comox Valley as a provincial demonstration of how to make real a <i>regional team approach</i>.</p>
Sustainable Service Delivery:	<p>Sustainable Service Delivery is the Province’s branding for a comprehensive approach to infrastructure asset management. This approach goes beyond an accountant’s life-cycle analysis.</p> <p>The paradigm-shift starts with land use planning and determining what services can be provided sustainably, both fiscally and ecologically. The legislative authority for integration of land use planning and asset management, including financial management, already exists within the Local Government Act and Community Charter.</p>
Key Message:	<i>All those involved in land development have a role to play in achieving Sustainable Service Delivery.</i> Local governments can develop a truly integrated Asset Management Strategy that views the watershed and the strategy through an environmental lens.
Comox Valley Regional Team:	<p>Four local governments (Courtenay, Comox, Cumberland, Comox Valley Regional District), the Comox Valley Land Trust, and TimberWest are striving to work across boundaries; align efforts at a watershed scale; and walk the talk in applying the ‘4Cs’ – that is, <i>communicate, cooperate, coordinate and collaborate</i>.</p> <p>By working together as a regional team and focussing on commonalities, the goal is to achieve An Integrated Watershed Approach to Settlement.</p>
Forum Structure:	The forum will be structured in two segments. First, we will present information to provide context and set the scene for the town-hall segment that will follow. Our objective in this segment is to inform and educate the audience so that there will be a common understanding. We will then conduct the town-hall segment as a ‘sharing and learning’ session. Our ‘convening for action’ experience is that this approach is effective in engaging an audience. It allows for a variety of ideas, questions and comments to flow freely.



**the partnership
for water sustainability in bc**

Convening for Action on Vancouver Island

At the 2011 State of the Island Economic Summit on October 18:

The Partnership, CAVI Leadership Team and VIEA Sustainability Committee are collaborating to co-host a 'Forum within the Summit'

"The Public Infrastructure Dilemma: How will we sustain our water, our streets, and ourselves?"

Convening for Action – Our Vision

All of us have attended workshops, seminars and conferences where everyone simply sits and listens all day. And then everyone goes back to their offices and carries on doing what they were doing. This is in contrast with CONVENING FOR ACTION. When we gather, it is for a purpose; there must be an outcome. We work in the local government context.

CONVENING FOR ACTION is a framework that brings together stakeholders with shared values, supported by the province, but led by local government. Collaboration and integration: it is a true bottom-up approach that identifies the issue and then seeks to address it through the alignment of all stakeholders, with emphasis on local government needs.

CONVENING FOR ACTION as a provincial initiative has evolved over the last six years. We started in the South Okanagan because there was a regional growth strategy and Smart Growth on the Ground in the town of Oliver. We experienced the power of the conversation and how people come together when they share a vision.

By 2006, we were ready to go a bigger scale. We said let's take on a whole region. That became CONVENING FOR ACTION ON VANCOUVER ISLAND, better known by the acronym CAVI. We applied the lessons that we learned in the South Okanagan. We asked the question: *what do we want this place to look like in 50 years?* If we change the land ethic for the better, we can improve the health of watersheds and the marine environment.

It has been one conversation at a time. It is not 'talking at' people. It is about facilitating the conversation. Somebody has to provide a reason to bring people together. Local government people started talking to each other and sharing. We started seeing ripple effects. The land ethic has started to change. It does not happen overnight.

Since 2009, we have concentrated our CONVENING FOR ACTION efforts in the Comox Valley. This is the provincial 'demonstration region' for showcasing what can be accomplished through a 'regional team approach'. The essence of the approach is that it establishes shared expectations and strives for consistency through collaboration and alignment.



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OBJECTIVE: The opportunity to host a half-day forum within the *2011 State of the Island Summit* provides a timely opportunity to “broaden the CONVENING FOR ACTION coalition” and provide a springboard for Island-wide action.

Context: The Summit is a signature event. It creates the opportunity to transfer the Comox Valley experience Island-wide; also, it is one month before local government elections such that it creates the opportunity to pick up where CAVI left off when the Real Estate Foundation and Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities co-hosted the **Green Infrastructure Leadership Forum** in December 2007. The goal of that event was to initiate a region-wide dialogue about *A Positive Settlement Strategy for Vancouver Island & Coastal Communities* (i.e. settlement in balance with ecology).



TARGET AUDIENCE: Refer to adjacent image. In the broadest sense, the target audience comprises anyone who makes decisions that ultimately impact on the use and conservation of land and water.

OUTCOME: Local governments in BC do have powerful regulatory tools if they choose to use them. They can integrate community design with desired outcomes at a regional scale and individual actions at a site scale. Embracing a ‘design with nature’ way-of-thinking and acting will help Vancouver Island communities achieve the vision for a healthy ecosystem.



FORUM FORMAT: The Forum is structured in two segments. First, we will present information that provides context and sets the scene for a town-hall segment that would follow. The objective in the first part is to inform and educate the audience so that there is a common understanding about: shared values; how shared values lead to sharing of a vision; and how a shared vision can be a powerful motivator for action.

The town-hall segment will then be conducted as a sharing and learning session. Our ‘convening for action’ experience is that this approach is effective in engaging an audience. Participants have commented that the format is excellent for ‘stirring the pot’ because it allows for a variety of ideas, questions and comments to flow easily and freely. Participants report that the non-formal setting makes everyone comfortable in sharing comments, whether positive or negative. We work towards an outcome. We aim to inspire and energize.