

# OTTER POINT OFFICAL COMMUNITY PLAN REVIEW REPORT

## THE REVIEW PROCESS

The Otter Point OCP review process is moving along. The consulting firm is HBLANARC which is working with an 11-member OCP advisory Citizen's Committee. The committee's membership, terms of reference, scheduled meeting dates, mapping and reports to date are available online at [http://www.crd.bc.ca/jdf/landuse/otterpoint\\_ocp.htm](http://www.crd.bc.ca/jdf/landuse/otterpoint_ocp.htm). Only four additional meetings are planned before the advisory Citizens' Committee completes its work.

1	Citizens' Committee Meeting:	Wed., March 30, 7-9 pm Otter Point Fire Hall
2	Community Workshop to identify OCP Policies:	Sat., April 9, 1-4 pm John Muir School
3	Citizens' Committee Meeting:	Wed., May 4, 7-9 pm Otter Point Fire Hall
4	Community Workshop to review the Committee's OCP recommendations:	Sat., June 4, 1- 4 pm John Muir School

OPSRRA encourages its membership: to visit the OCP review website listed above; to attend the advisory Citizens' Committee meetings; and especially to participate in the last two community workshops to develop policies for the OCP and to review the Committee's preliminary recommendations for a new OCP.

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THE FUTURE OF OTTER POINT

In 2008, *A Strategic Vision for Otter Point, Shirley and Jordan River* was developed in, as part of a broad community consultation with residents about their desired future development as a community (full report at <http://opsrra.ca/Vision.htm>). Five broad goals were widely agreed upon:

- ◆ Local, elected government that is affordable and accountable
- ◆ Strengthened community social ties
- ◆ Secure sustainable water and environment for humans and wildlife
- ◆ More successful rural businesses
- ◆ Efficient public transportation and trail systems
- ◆ Sustainable rural land use

As part of the Otter Point OCP review process, the public was again invited to share their ideas about the future of Otter Point. With direction from the advisory Citizens' Committee, the consultants developed a workbook to guide feedback and discussion of topic areas through the use of multiple choice and open-ended questions. Six priority topics were addressed:

- ◆ Vision and Sense of Place
- ◆ Parks, Trails and Transportation
- ◆ Natural Environment and Natural Habitat
- ◆ Drinking Water/Infrastructure
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Residential Types and Locations

Residents were encouraged to express their views by filling in the workbook either on their own and/or when participating in a community Public Ideas Forum on February 12. Eighty-eight workbook submissions were received – 33 of which were from persons participating in the Public Ideas Forum. About 73% of the respondents indicated that they were residents of Otter Point; 57% were in the 55-74 year-old age group. A brief summary of the workbook submissions

is outlined below, highlighting the top three responses in each priority area. A full summary of the responses and the feedback obtained in the full report from the Public Ideas Forum can be found by clicking on *NowHowWow Input Summary* at the website identified in the first paragraph.

## Summary of the *NowHowWow* Workbook Responses: Top 3 Responses To Each Priority Topic

**Note:** Respondents could make multiple choices for each topic and also add their written comments. The report used graphs showing the total number of responses for each item. There were **88** completed booklets. This summary shows both the number of responses and the related percentage.

### Vision For Otter Point: What best describes what you want Otter Point to be?

- |   |       |     |
|---|-------|-----|
| ● A rural community with active connections to parks, trails and regional transportation networks | 39/88 | 44% |
| ● A place to grow and sell food locally   | 32/88 | 36% |
| ● A place to promote arts, culture music and performance in the local area                        | 32/88 | 36% |

### Sense of Place: What would you like to see happen in Otter Point to enhance its sense of place?

- |  |       |     |
|--|-------|-----|
| ● Add a farmers market                 | 38/88 | 43% |
| ● Add a community hall/gathering place | 37/88 | 42% |
| ● Keep it like it is                   | 35/88 | 40% |

### Parks, Trails and Transportation: What would you like to see happen in Otter Point to enhance its parks, trails and/or transportation?

- |   |       |     |
|---|-------|-----|
| ● Partner with province, region and First Nations to co-plan and co-manage              | 54/88 | 61% |
| ● Priority to walk/cycle/run multi-use paved trails connecting to bus stops             | 45/88 | 51% |
| ● Priority to recreational hiking and nature trail linkages through future subdivisions | 45/88 | 51% |

### Natural Environment and Natural Habitat: These areas of Otter Point should be preserved/protected from future development.

- |  |       |     |
|--|-------|-----|
| ● Muir Creek watershed and the adjacent forested area      | 46/88 | 52% |
| ● Kemp Lake watershed (only part of the water supply area) | 45/88 | 51% |
| ● Farmland   | 45/88 | 51% |

### Drinking water/Infrastructure: What opportunities are available to address water supply?

- |   |       |     |
|---|-------|-----|
| ● Implement water storage through appropriate building design                     | 47/88 | 53% |
| ● Only approve development that provides proof of adequate long-term water supply | 46/88 | 52% |

- Enable limited new development to assist in paying capital costs to access water via CRD 6/88 7%

### Economic Development: What would you like to see happen in Otter Point to enhance economic development?

- Recreational tourism industry 39/88 44%
- Forestry 24/88 27%
- Agritourism 24/88 27%

### Residential Types and Locations: What would you like to see happen in Otter Point to enhance its residential character?

- Allow only large, lot single family (2.5 acres or larger) 28/88 32.00%
- Allow co-op housing 26/88 30.00%
- Allow cluster housing where individual lots may be ½ acre or less but large areas are set aside for public green space and trails 23/88 26.00%

At the March 16 meeting of the Citizens Committee, Nick Page, a Registered Biologist, presented information on aspects of mapping and the *Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI)* being used in the assessment of Otter Point. He noted that the SEI science and methodology are a provincial standard developed by the BC Ministry of the Environment and Environment Canada. An ecosystem is defined as a portion of landscape with relatively dominant vegetation; a sensitive ecosystem is one that is fragile and/or rare. There are seven different sensitive ecosystem types: *Wetland, Riparian* (but not restricted to fish habitat), *Older Forest, Woodland, Terrestrial Herbaceous, Coastal Bluff and Sparsely Vegetated*. Mr. Page noted that 35% of Otter Point falls within these seven sensitive ecosystem classes and that our local mapping sources remain limited. More information on this science and the standards being used can be obtained through a Google search for *sensitive ecosystems inventories*.

### OPSRRA SUBMISSION

OPSRRA made an initial submission to the OCP Review Committee on January 26, 2011. It outlined a number of interrelated and sometimes conflicting pressures for changes in the Otter Point OCP. It drew attention to the 2008 Strategic Vision for Otter Point, Shirley and Jordan River, which was developed with OPSRRA support and endorsement. It illustrated different OCP planning approaches used by the neighbouring rural communities of Metchosin and Highlands. It also recommended that the advisory Citizens' Committee give consideration to using planning tools applied in other areas in the development/revision of their OCPs, specifically *The Green Bylaws Toolkit* and the *Water Balance Model*. The full submission is on the OPSRRA website at <http://opsrra.ca/ocp.htm>.

However, as part of the OCP review process, OPSRRA, along with other community organizations and individuals, may still make a submission to the Citizens' Committee. The cut-off date set by the Committee for receiving submissions is April 9, 2011. The OPSRRA Board is seeking feedback and direction from its members as to whether to make a second submission and, if so, what that submission should include.

### QUESTIONS

1. Do you support:
  - A. the broad goals from the 2008 *Strategic Vision for Otter Point, Shirley and Jordan River*?
  - B. the community-identified priorities as reported above from the NowHowWow Report of February 2011?

2. Do you support OPSRRA advocating for the following provisions in a revised Official Community Plan?
- A. Keeping Otter Point a rural community with larger lots, “residential elbow room,” and a rural lifestyle;
  - B. Strengthening environmental protection for natural/sensitive ecosystems, riparian areas, steep slope areas, and foreshore areas;
  - C. A community-wide planning process to assess long-term community water supply options, opportunities and costs including: existing Kemp Lake water services, potential use of CRD water, potable well water and/or residential cistern storage systems;
  - D. A mandatory public assessment for all new rezoning and subdivision applications when significant impacts on the existing water supply/balance, parks and trails development, fire protection services, transportation services, sensitive ecosystems (**SEI standards**), local property taxes, and local economic development are reasonably anticipated;
  - E. A planning processes for the local economy built around a mixture of rural residential living, home-based business, forestry, agriculture and small-scale recreational tourism.
3. Do you want OPSRRA to organize a special meeting to focus on the Official Community Plan Review?

*Presented by the OPSRRA Board of Directors March 27, 2011*