

# Town of Lake Cowichan Official Community Plan Open House Transcript of responses and comments

Prepared October 10, 2023

The posters included information, questions seeking responses using sticky dots (green for 'yes,' red for 'no' and yellow for 'not sure.' Additionally, sticky notes were provided for open ended questions.

Participants used sticky dots also for responding to sticky note comments written by other participants.



## Poster #1 Vision

Our vision is to create a vibrant, healthy, sustainable community that exists in harmony with the natural environment, enjoys a balanced economy, supports all generations, and provides the opportunities to satisfy diverse social needs.

This is our current vision.

Do we keep it as is?

- If yes, place a green sticky dot
  - 24 green dots

- 3 yellow dots
- If not, please write on a sticky note any suggested changes or additions.
  - Comment: healthy, sustainable, **and inclusive** community
    - 7 green dots added to this comment

## Poster #2 Population Forecast

Sticky note comments:

- Block 200 should not ever have any industrial development unless a by-pass route over river exists. No sewer or H2O capacity for it.
- Disagreement with the forecast:
  - 'Too low. Lake's population will grow massively. New school needed.'
  - 'This town is growing. This number is way too low. Other towns are maxed out, so people are looking up island to build and live.'
  - Lake Cowichan is a hub community. Considerations need to take in needs of surrounding communities and their populations. E.g., medical, recreation, commercial, social activity, and housing.

## Poster #3 What do you love?

Sticky note comments

Natural environment and parks related

- Trails (3 green dots)
- Access to water (one red dot)
- View of hills and trees (one green dot)
- The wild lands around it.
- The lake and river.
- The parks and gardens (one green dot)
- Love the trees and the gardens in the center South Shore median
- Access to safe walking trails
- Climate (stated twice)
- Wildlife
- Lake and river
- Green spaces
- Water access (lake/river)
- Own landscaping (one green dot)
- Nature trails
- Wildlife
- Gardens in town
- The natural areas that still exist and co-exist with wildlife (one green dot)
- I love seeing mountains from my window

## Social related

- Community garden
- History (one green dot)
- Amenities
- Community (one green dot)
- Small town vibe (4 green dots)
- Beautiful welcome to town
- Community care
- Close social networks (one red dot)
- The diversity of events etc. (one green dot)
- Small community support and inclusivity
- No traffic
- Peace
- Our community is amazing and coming together to help others (2 green dots, one yellow)
- Services (green dot)
- Walkability (2 green dots)
- No industrial pollution (one green dot)
- Co-existing with logging which is part of our town history (one green dot)
- We like our community
- Enjoy hiking/ walking/ swimming every day
- Friendly community (one green dot)
- I love everything about LC. I love my hometown. Lived here from birth until now. (one green dot)
- I love the lovely walking trails and especially the beaches
- I love Ed's coffee shop and the Cow Restaurant



## Poster #4 What do you hope for?

### Amenities

- Water fountains for parks
- Add a dock at Saywell
- Wildlife fencing on highway –we have lost too many elk!
- Improved parks
  - Water fountain
  - Dock Saywell
- Arts centre
- Central park needs usable path from the river
- Lake walking path

- Continued maintenance of trails (1 green dot)
- At one of these 20-25 years ago, I wrote to expand park / boardwalk along the riverfront from Saywell to Central Park (too bad town didn't acquire coop/current Fields) so I'd still like to see better access to boardwalk. Also, improved lake access. People come to Lake Cow to see the lake.

#### Housing related

- More housing for marginalized
- Family friendly housing options -affordable (received 6 green dots of agreement)
- Purpose built government subsidized rental housing. Rents tied to % of income (received 5 green dots)
- More government social and otherwise supported housing (received 8 green dots)
- Affordable housing for young families (one green dot)
- Affordable family housing (10 green dots of support)
- Affordable housing for seniors, young families
- Affordable housing for young families
- Good population and housing plans (1 green dot)
- ABG (Greenwell, sic) too valuable to be used for maintenance yard! A great place for housing (\_?\_\_ needed!!) (2 green dots)
- Utilize old AB Greenwell space for public housing. There are 16 acres enough for maintenance and housing (2 green dots)
- Utilize old AB Greenwell space for public housing (9 green dots)

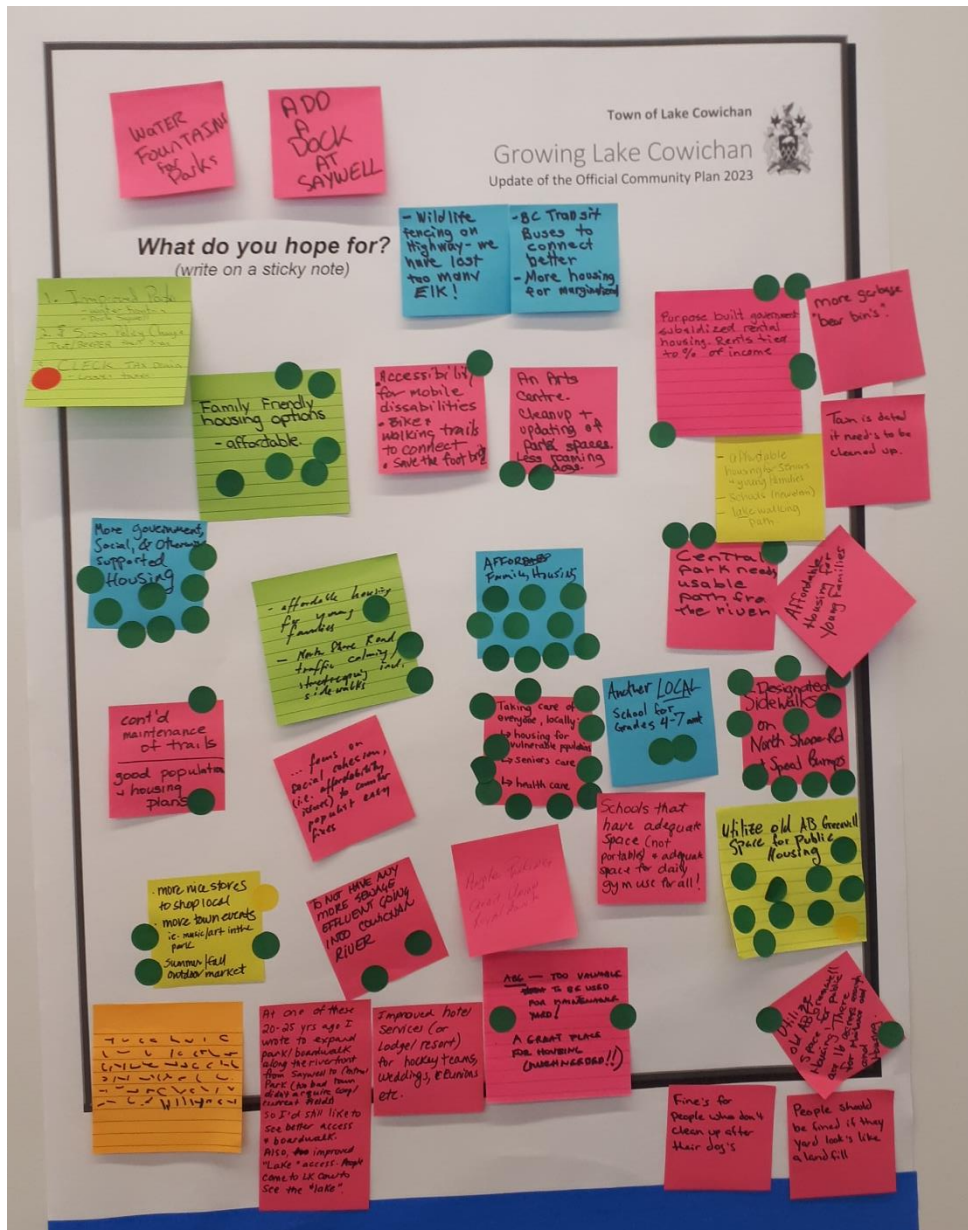
#### Transportation and mobility related

- BC Transit buses to connect better
- Accessibility for mobile disabilities
- Bike and walking trails to connect
- Save the foot bridge (received one green dot)
- North Shore Road traffic calming / streetscaping including sidewalks (3 dots)
- Designated sidewalks on north shore road and speed bumps (10 green dots)
- Angle parking at credit union/ royal bank

#### Community related

- Siren policy change: text/ beeper then siren
- CLEC tax drain –lower taxes (received a red dot of disagreement)
- Cleanup and updating of park spaces
- Less roaming dogs (received 2 green dots)
- More garbage bear bins
- Schools (new elementary)
- Town is dated, it needs to be cleaned up
- Focus on social cohesion, (i.e., affordability issues) to counter populist easy fixes
- Taking care of everyone, locally—housing for vulnerable populations, seniors care, health care (received 11 green dots)
- Another local school for grades 4-7 (2 green dots)

- More nice stores to shop local
- More town events i.e., music / art in the park (2 green dots)
- Summer / fall outdoor market (1 green dot)
- To not have any more sewage effluent going into Cowichan River (2 green dots)
- Schools that have adequate space (not portables) and adequate space for daily gym use for all
- Improved hotel services (or lodge/ resort) for hockey teams, weddings, reunions, etc.
- Fines for people who don't clean up after their dogs
- People should be fined if they yard looks like a landfill



## Poster #5 What are you worried about?

### Sticky note comments

#### Housing related

- Housing (4 green dots)
- Losing our community to seasonal rentals and Air BnB –pushing families out (6 green dots)
- No low-income housing (2 green dots)
- The town becoming a bedroom community of monster homes (4 green dots)
- Too many homes used only part of the year –empty most of the time
- Not being able to house or care for our own, as we age as we face increasing financial challenge

#### Development related

- Worried about a 15-minute city, when a) accessibility of specialty items b) BC transit buses don't always meet (2 green dots)
- Growth containment boundaries = 15-minute communities
- The eyesore at the center of town roundabout –it has to be finished properly—not halfway done (one green dot)
- Over development surrounding the lake making access to lake and surrounding areas available to fewer and fewer people (one green dot)
- Collector road at end of Johel Road to Block 200 which will ruin the lives of all who live on it and around the lakes (Grants and Kwassin) (one green dot)
- Lake Cow adopting U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (sic)

#### Economic related

- Can the existing shops survive? (one green dot)
- Need town theme
- Supporting our local businesses (one green dot)
- Worry that business won't open as many locals do not support (2 green dots)
- Tourism replacing locals as in so many tourist destinations

#### Natural environment related

- Our watershed and waterways
- Wildlife habitat
- The river
- Monetizing and overuse of river (one green dot)

#### Community related

- Park spaces need cleaning up (one green dot)
- Too many loose dogs (one green dot)
- Racist comment around town (two green dots)
- Increased traffic and air pollution
- I've had no doctor for three years. We need to attract medical personnel. (2 green dots)

- Separations of our children’s education facilities and our community
- Division between rich and poor

## Poster #6 Housing Targets

Our greatest need is for affordable housing, rentals and for one-bedroom unit (9 green dots)

Sticky note comment:

- Not only affordability, availability (one green dot)

Your thoughts? (sticky notes)

- We need diverse housing
- Allow and encourage secondary suites everywhere including Point Ideal phase 1-7
- Affordable senior living (to buy or not) (one green dot)
- Affordable: 25-30% income (2 green dots)
- Totally agree, smaller affordable homes (3 green dots)
- How are we defining affordable? Is hits accessible to those living in poverty? (2 green dots)
- We need housing density: tiny homes, suites, RV pads on existing properties (one yellow dot)
- What about the sewage capacity and water system, can we accommodate the growth urban densification will stress our aged infrastructure? (one green dot)



## Poster #7 Housing policy to achieve targets

Priority for development approvals for the next 5 years—what do you think?

- Yes (16 green dots)
- No (no dots)
- Not sure (7 yellow dots)



Designate on the land use map the entire town as appropriate for multi-unit developments, reserving the highest density for Urban neighbourhood compact, uptown, and downtown (subject to rezoning public hearings)

- Yes (5 green dots)
- No (5 green dots)
- Yellow (8 yellow dots)

Priority to development approvals shall be given to rental housing

- Yes (9 green dots)
- No (12 red dots)
- Not sure (5 yellow dots)

Sticky note comments:

- Are these rental housing affordable (4 green dots)
- Who as the \$\$ to build rental housing? Who will manage it? Who will get richer? (2 green dots)

## Poster #8 Greenhouse gas emissions: climate actions for adaptation

- Town is focused on addressing wildfire hazards through its development permit area and FireSmart covenants for new subdivisions. (2 green dots)
- The Town also is addressing potential flooding via its rainwater management regulations and minimum flood construction levels for all new construction. (one green dot)
- ***If you believe the Town should do more to adapt to climate change, what actions do you think should be considered?*** (use sticky notes) (2 green dots, 2 red dots)
  - *Sticky notes:*
    - Monitor Pine Street area flooding, it comes from sewers
    - BC transit bus to connect at least once a day to the commuter bus to Victoria without a 2 hour wait (2 green dots)
    - No drive throughs (one green dot)
    - No idling !! especially at drive throughs and especially diesel trucks.
    - We need another bridge –too much traffic coming from this side of the river (one green dot)
    - Scrap the idea of a collector road at tend of Johel Road to preserve green space, Trees good! Cars bad! (2 green dots)
    - Better fast transit. Trains, subways, water taxi
    - Invest in green energy (one green dot)
    - We need to address water with increased population (5 green dots)

- More e/c plug ins (3 green dots)
- Bike lanes (2 green dots)
- Watershed –river and lake levels (one green dots)
- Lake Cowichan a place to live forever
- Block town off to make it a giant pedestrian only walking area –no gas emissions
- More shady spaces or outdoor open structures (3 green dots)
- More seats on sidewalks
- Preserve green areas around lakes (4 green dots)
- Avoid allowing backfilling of swamp area (one green dot)
- Promote wildlife preservation area (one green dot)

## Poster #9 Corporate greenhouse gas emissions

*Do you think the Town should take action to reduce its corporate emissions?*

Yes (green dot)	21
No (red dot)	2
Not sure (yellow dot)	2

*If yes, what actions do you propose? (use a sticky note)*

- Why is electric vehicle not used?
- Anti-idling policy? For crew (3 green dots)
- 32% increase? How? Why?

Other comments

- Focus on river and lake, our town's emissions won't impact global climate change.

## Poster #10 Community greenhouse gas emissions

Sticky note comments

- People need gas, oil, and wood heating, taking that away will do more harm than good (2 green dots, one red dot)
- Do better, get tougher (one green dot)
- CO2 is plant food (4 green dots)
- It appears this does not include GHG from increased traffic
- CO2 is .04% of the atmosphere. How will L.C. have any effect?

## Poster #11 Community GHG climate actions for mitigation

- 1) Adopting the Provincial targets which are highly unlikely to achieve based on performance over the past 25 years. For example, the target of 40% reduction by 2030 is impossible. (3 red dots)
- 2) Adopting a modified set of targets that mirror the Provincial trajectory, but in a more realistic time frame.

### ***Provincial targets vs. Town targets for community GHG reduction***

	Province	Town
<b>2030</b>	40%	30%
<b>2040</b>	60%	n/a
<b>2050</b>	80%	80%

- 3) Be completely realistic and anticipate that we may never achieve the lauded 80% reduction in emissions within the next century. Focus instead on GHG emission reduction targets that will be beneficial for Town operations and also those that may be beneficial for citizens.

### ***What do you think?***

1. Adopt Provincial targets

Yes (green dot)	18
No (red dot)	6

Sticky note:

- The harm of action will hurt and impoverish people (2 green dots, one red dot)

**OR**

2. Maintain our own less ambitious targets (30 and 80%)

Yes (green dot)	8
No (red dot)	6

3. Completely realistic (25% in 2030, 50% in 2040)
4. Yes (3 green dots)

5. No (2 red dots)

Sticky notes:

- What is the definition of realistic. Who defines based on what?
- BC Transit needs to connect better (2 green dots)
- Public transit
- Only 25% of people owning vehicles? (one green dot)

## Poster #12 Any other thoughts?

Write on a sticky note

- These comments should be documented and made public as part of the process for accountability!!
- When repairing duck pond bridge, consider design indigenous elements, local history, but also Ohtaki connection: i.e., red Japanese style elements?
- More public access to lake (4 green dots)
- Less 'monster' homes, especially on lake (7 green dots and responses of 'I agree, and yes!')
- More coordination with CVRD to protect public access to greater (majority) of lake front around all of lake (4 green dots)
- Once CVRD gives developers lakefront properties it is lost forever to everyone else. Do not allow the lakefront to be privatized (one green dot)
- Front access to this building is hidden and unwelcoming (one green dot)
- Add signs at 'front' where is parking side?
- Restrict air bnb, petition for CVRD to do the same in all Cowichan Lake area (4 green dots)
  - Comment in response to above: Why take away passive income in this recession? These won't be allowed to be rentals anyways
- Observing who came out to this open house, and they are using multiple stickers to benefit what they want, isn't a true representation of what of information



## Land Use Map

Sticky note comments:

- Need branding session for downtown theme!! (one green dot, one yellow)
- Old AB Greenwell space used for community living, affordable housing (one green dot)
- Arrow pointing to north of existing Slopes, 'no new housing developments, becoming too congested. JH Boyd School site –park or owner to make a nice center
- Put in affordable housing –JH Boyd site

## Map 1: Land Use Map Inset

Sticky note comments:

- Arrow pointing to land reserved for park in the Edgewood neighbourhood 'When will new park be installed?'
- Sticker near '100 houses' neighbourhood: New school eventually needed for areas growth ((all lake) (1-3) (4-12) (4 green dots)
- Sticker near CLEC: 'is anything going on at the CLEC? Perhaps let a business rent it and let them pay rent if it is used it will stay current'
- Sticker on the lake: 'Public walking path along water/ lake'
- Sticker pointing to duck pond trestle: 'repair walkway over trestle'
- Sticker pointing to former JH Boyd site: tons of wildlife here everyday-- make it a park
- Sticker on former JH Boyd site: 'no future housing development on former school property off Grossleg, too congested with school current
- Arrow pointing to existing parks and the vicinity around the community centre star on which a corner grocery store is located on Cowichan Ave: 'build park? Improve grassed area and children's play area

## Map 2: Mobility and Transportation

Sticky note comments:

- Do not lose CLEC as valuable asset for town
- CLEC: why is it always a drain? Taxpayer subsidized and no benefit to taxpayers. Answer: poor management and council apathy
- Pave Macdonald!
- Love the trails, add more
- Comments regarding point no. 9 'Johel Road: future dedication or expropriation
  - No collector road at end of Johel Road, goes against all the OCP's green initiatives except this map. The carbon cost to build will be huge, trees destroyed, swamps dug up and backfilled, populations of wildlife effected.
  - No collector road at end of Johel Road, only future walking/ biking trail . will destroy creek between lakes and will need a bridge. Cost to build will be astronomical environmental and hydrological studies, carbon costs, land costs
- Comment along Highway 18
  - Wildlife fences or bridges please! We have lost too many elk

- Comment regarding point 2, unimproved Forest Road to town campground
  - Amenity for approval

## Map 7 Parks, Open Space, and Public Facilities

Sticky notes:

- Shade trees needed at Lakeview Park public beach
- Isn't there supposed to be a park at Trail's Edge?
- Arrow pointing to tubing access point at Centennial Park: this tube access is not usable
  - Note near the old train bridge (Greendale): the tube access is unsafe and not a real public access point, don't like it

Additional note by consultant:

- Several missing park numbers and missing newly dedicated and/or improved parks

