



Comox News

August 2008

The Town of Comox Community Newsletter

Municipal election year

This year is an election year for local government in BC, and preparations in the Town of Comox are well under way. Residents and qualified property owners will be voting for one (1) mayor, six (6) councillors and one (1) school district trustee this year. General voting day is **Saturday November 15, 2008** at the Comox Recreation Centre, 1855 Noel Avenue, between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Before eligible electors can vote, they must be registered. Once again this year, we will be using the Provincial Voter's List from Elections BC as the Town's list of registered electors. If you are registered with Elections BC, you will automatically be placed on the Town Voter's List.

If you are a resident of the Town and are not registered with Elections BC, you may still register in



advance of the election by printing the form Resident Elector Registration Form, located at <http://comox.ca/town-hall/otherdocuments/admin-documents>, filling it out and bringing it in to Town Hall at 1809 Beaufort Avenue, Comox before September 23, 2008.

After September 23, 2008, you will only be able to register immediately before you vote.

New this year is mail ballot voting! Electors who have

a physical disability, illness or injury that affects their ability to vote at the voting places, or persons who expect to be out of town during all voting opportunities can request a mail ballot voting package.

For more information on the election process, please see the Elections section on our website, at <http://comox.ca/town-hall/departments/administration/>.

Comox Avenue sanitary sewer and storm drain

During June, the sanitary and storm sewers were replaced along Comox Avenue. The purpose of this project was to increase the capacity of our systems to deal with sanitary sewage from northwest Comox (the recent developments west of

Quality Foods) and storm drainage from Ivy Place and Comox Avenue properties.

JR Edgett, the contractor for the work, completed this \$500,000 plus project ahead of schedule and under budget.

Did you know...

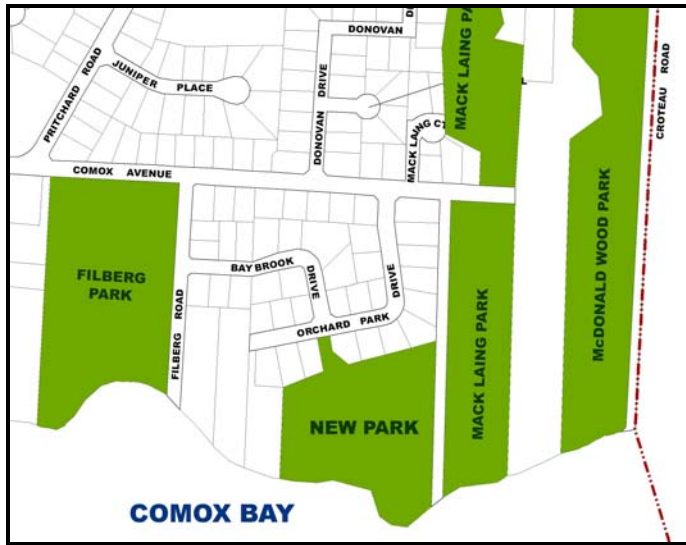
... that each litre of gasoline used in your vehicle produces 2.79 kg of CO₂ (www.fueleconomy.gov)?

... that a tree absorbs an average of 1,100 kilograms of CO₂ during its 80 year lifespan or about 14 kilograms per year during its peak growing years (years 20-55) [www.carbon-info.org]?

Inside:

- Town adds significant parkland
- Library official opening!
- Comox Recreation Centre
- Brooklyn Creek enhancement project
- New sponsored vehicle for Fire Department!
- Town's newest parkland
- Pesticide use
- "Tagging" continues to be a problem
- Recycling continues to climb
- Bicycling on sidewalks
- Lancaster Park Greenway
- No smoke, no fires!
- Water metering update
- Knight/Pritchard roundabout
- Water sprinkling

Town adds significant parkland



The Town has long recognized 6.3 acres (2.54 hectares) of waterfront property adjacent to Mack Laing Park, which was the original homesite and nut farm of Mack Laing, as having significant environmental and cultural value. With the lower portion of Brooklyn Creek running through it and emptying into Comox Bay, the land contains important riparian and marine habitat areas. Significant archeological evidence of First Nations occupation, including artifacts and human remains, have also been found on the property.

This property has been the Town's top priority for parkland acquisition. When it recently came up for sale, the Town entered into successful negotiations with the owner and the Nature Trust of BC on its purchase.

The Town is very pleased to be able to protect this significant land for both environmental and cultural purposes. A parks plan for this property will be initiated in the near future.

Library official opening!

The new "Portside" library is now open, with a very successful opening ceremony on Saturday June 21st. The library is more than double the size of the old library on Comox Avenue, with 6,000 more items on the shelves.

The library offers a new hold system, a new self-checkout machine and new extended hours.

Come on down and visit the new library! On-street parking is available on the north side of Beaufort in front of the library, with some additional parking around the back of the building. To access parking in the back, use the east-side driveway (at the right-hand side of the building).

Comox Recreation Centre

Last year, the Town received authorization from the electors of the Town of Comox to borrow \$450,000 to build a new gymnastics facility at the Comox Recreation Centre. In addition, the Town has received a grant of \$330,000 from the Provincial government to go towards this project.

Plans are to build an 8,000 square foot gymnasium that will be used primarily for gymnastics training. The new gymnasium will be an addition next to the existing gymnasium on the west side of the Centre, resulting in an L-shaped

overall building when complete. It is expected that construction on this project will begin this fall and be completed in the Spring of 2009.

The gymnasium addition is the first step in the Town's larger expansion plans for the Comox Recreation Centre. Look for more information on this leading up to the municipal election in November. Borrowing authority for the next phase of the addition will be sought through a referendum question on the municipal election ballot.

Brooklyn Creek enhancement project

The Town of Comox, the Brooklyn Creek Streamkeepers Society and the Pacific Salmon Foundation have joined forces this summer to work on much needed stream channel enhancements in the lower portion of Brooklyn Creek. The group, consisting of Town staff, volunteers and biologists, will be targeting areas that

have been adversely impacted by erosion and encroachment. The bioengineering techniques that will be used in Brooklyn Creek will help address fish habitat loss, channel and bank destabilization and damage to the pedestrian walkways that run along the creek.



Pesticide use



The Comox Pesticide Use Bylaw is now in full effect. Council adopted the Bylaw in 2006 in response to growing concern over the use of traditional (chemical based) pesticides for cosmetic or non-essential purposes. Increasing evidence in recent years shows that traditional pesticides accumulate and move through the environment in the air, land and water, and may have an impact on non-target organisms and plants.

Traditional pesticides can no longer be used on all public or private residential properties in the Town, and the Town's bylaw enforcement officer can issue a ticket to anyone

found violating the Bylaw. Included in the Bylaw is a list of products that can be used; anything not on the list is prohibited.

To help you identify products that are permitted, check the Active Ingredients or Guarantee of each product. The following is a **partial** list of local product brands that may be permitted by the Bylaw. Please check the ingredients to be sure*:

- Safer's
- Chemfree
- Scott's EcoSense
- Green Earth
- Later's

** This is not a complete list, and is not intended to endorse any specific product or its effectiveness in controlling particular pests.*

For more information on creating pesticide-free lawns and gardens, please see the Town's website at www.comox.ca/town-hall/articles/playing-it-safe/, or watch for the Regional District's series of ads in local papers.

"Tagging" continues to be a problem

"Tagging" or the marking of buildings and property with graffiti has become a very bothersome issue in the Town of Comox. The removal of this graffiti is extremely time consuming for staff and costly to the taxpayers of Comox.

We are requesting your assistance in helping to eliminate this problem. If you observe ANY act of vandalism, including tagging, please call the RCMP right away, at 250 338-1321. If

you are able to recognise any of the offenders in the act, or provide any information of someone who MAY have committed and act, please contact the RCMP or the Town of Comox Bylaw Enforcement Officer.

This information can also be supplied anonymously through the Crime Stoppers Program at 250 338-8477 or 1 800 222-8477. Your identity will not be revealed when you call Crime Stoppers.

Recycling continues to climb



In March of this year, the Town switched from a blue bag recycling service to a blue box service. This was in part due to requests from residents, and in part due to a request from our waste collector, International Paper Industries, Ltd (IPI). At the same time, IPI expanded the number of recyclable products that it collects to include plastic bags and plastic wrap.

These results seem to have had a very positive impact. Recycling in Comox has been steadily increasing since the inception of the program; however, in the four months since the switch in collection from a blue bag system to a blue box program, recycling has jumped by over 50%!

Residents living in apartment and condominium buildings can now have recycle pickup! IPI should have by now delivered large blue recycling totes to each apartment and recycling complex, located near your garbage bins. A smaller blue recycling box should have also been delivered to each residential unit.

For more information, contact your building/strata manager or IPI at 336-8066.

Did you know...

... that the recycling of paper products in Canada has increased from 19.8% to 49.1% between 1980 and 2006 (www.pppc.org/)?

... that waste paper is such an important part of the paper-making process now, that Canadian mills are importing it from the US (www.axys.net/).



Freshly painted washroom building tagged at Anderton Park

New sponsored vehicle for Fire Department!

Comox Fire Chief Gord Schreiner is pleased to announce that Comox Valley Dodge has offered the Comox Fire Department a brand new sponsored vehicle. For the past five years Comox Valley Dodge has been generous enough to provide the Department with a no charge PT Cruiser for use with its fire prevention programs. New owner of Comox Valley Dodge, Brad Trotman, is now replacing the older PT Cruiser with a brand new Dodge Nitro.

Chief Schreiner states: "We couldn't be more pleased. What an awesome deal for our community. Comox Valley Dodge is providing us with a free four-year lease on this great vehicle. Insurance Centres provides free insurance and Little City Signs provides free decaling. This all adds up to a great contribution to our community with little to no costs to us. It's great to see outstanding corporate citizens like these helping us help our citizens."

The Comox Fire Department prides itself on the important role it plays in preventing fires in the community, and this

new vehicle will greatly assist these efforts. The Fire Department also recognizes that it needs to be fiscally responsible in all that it does. To that end it has learned to be very innovative and creative. Assistant Chief Jim Lariviere states: "Having a high profile vehicle dedicated to fire prevention will only help to enhance the Fire Department's role in our community. This vehicle will be one of the most used vehicles in our fleet, and will help to focus attention on our prevention role. Through several different programs, we attempt to reach all sectors of our community. In fact we believe that the prevention of fires is one of the most important services we provide."

The uses of this vehicle by the Fire Department are numerous and will include attending dozens of public events each year, delivering many school based programs, assisting with the delivery of seniors programs and the day-to-day use by the fire inspector.

Town's newest parkland

A public event has been scheduled for Saturday September 20, 2008 to present the Town's acquisition of 6.3 acres (2.4 hectares) of parkland adjacent to Mack Laing Park.

Join Mayor Brass, the Nature Trust of BC and previous owner Greg Bay, who will present information about the property, conservation and the work of the Nature Trust.

While the public is encouraged to attend the event on September 20, the Town would like to remind residents that the land will only become public parkland over the next three years.

Until that time, please respect the privacy of the tenants who currently live on the property.

The date and time of the event will be noted in the local papers.



Bicycling on sidewalks



The Town's Bylaw Enforcement Officer has received a number of complaints regarding people riding bicycles on sidewalks in the downtown area.

As per section 183(2)(a) of the Motor Vehicle Act of British Columbia and section 8(a) of the Town of Comox Street and

Traffic Bylaw, 2001, riding bicycles on sidewalks is prohibited. Because bicycles travel at a much quicker pace than pedestrians, prohibiting them ensures the safety of all.

Please use the roadways when riding your bicycles, or walk bicycle on the sidewalk.

Lancaster Park Greenway

Construction has begun on the Lancaster Park Greenway. The greenway, comprised of a paved walking path, will tie into the existing path that runs along the side of Quality Foods. The new greenway will follow the south side of the Macdonald Bog and then cut through Lancaster Park, ending up at the

sidewalk across Lancaster Way at McDonald Road.

This section of greenway is 250 metres long and 2.5 metres wide, and will be lined with trees along the Lancaster Park section. Park benches, garbage cans and Doggie Bag Stations will be added along the route as well.



New detention pond and trail at McDonald Road/Noel Avenue

No Smoke, No Fires!

Comox Fire Chief Gord Schreiner would like to remind the residents of the Town of Comox that open burning is prohibited within the municipal boundary all year round. Open burning includes backyard fires, beach fires, campfires, fires used for the purpose of land clearing, and the use of outdoor wood-burning fireplace, fire-pits, chiminias and other similar wood-burning appliances. It does not include charcoal, propane or natural gas fires contained within barbecues, hibachis or stoves for the purpose of cooking food, nor does it include wood-burning appliances designed specifically for the purpose of smoking foods.

Over the past few years the Town of Comox has taken a very green approach when it comes to outdoor burning. In past years outdoor burning was allowed for a couple of weeks per year. Now it is prohibited all year round as the Town has added a weekly curb-side pickup of leaves and branches to its recycling program.

Chief Schreiner states: "We get numerous complaints each year from neighbours complaining of someone burning in their yards. Not only is the smoke annoying but it can affect the health of a person and their ability to enjoy the outdoors. That is the main reason why we have gone to a ZERO burning bylaw". Citizens of Comox found to be burning outdoors are subject to a \$100.00 fine for their first offense.

Citizens living in the Comox Fire Protection area (most of area "B") wishing to have an open fire require a permit issued from the fire department. Permits are only issue between the months of October to April each year. Other areas in the Valley have similar restrictive rules and regulations. Citizens should check with their local fire department before starting any open fires.

Water metering update

This fall, the Regional District will be seeking public consent to adopt a bylaw giving the RD board authorization to borrow funds necessary to install water meters in all area within the Comox Valley Water Service Area (including the Town).

As the Regional District has exceeded its water licence supply a few times, installing

water meters is a necessary step in ensuring that there is an adequate supply for all of the users of the Comox Valley water system (this includes the Town of Comox, the City of Courtenay, the Regional District, BC Hydro and others).

Public open houses this fall will be held prior to the introduction of the bylaw.

Town of Comox

1809 Beaufort Avenue
Comox, BC V9M 1R9

PHONE:
(250) 339-2202

FAX:
(250) 339-7110

E-MAIL:
town@comox.ca

Staff Contacts

Richard Kanigan
Administrator

Al Fraser
Parks Superintendent

Don Jacquest
Treasurer

Marvin Kamenz
Planner

Shelly Russwurm
Deputy Corporate Administrator

Gord Schreiner
Fire Chief

Glenn Westendorp
Public Works Superintendent

Council

Dr. Jim Brass
Mayor

Ray Crossley
Councillor

Patti Fletcher
Councillor

Ken Grant
Councillor

Paul Ives
Councillor

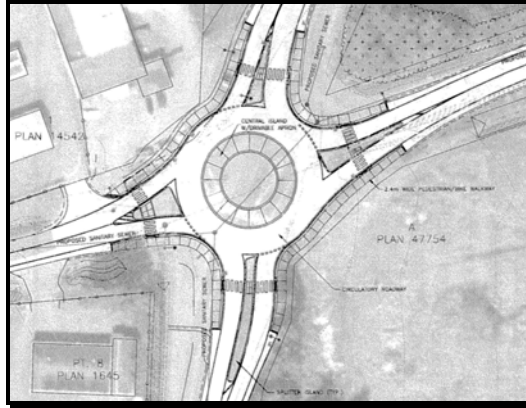
John Marinus
Councillor

Marcia Turner
Councillor

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.comox.ca

Knight/Pritchard Road roundabout



Construction has now begun on the new roundabout intersection at Knight and Pritchard Roads. The current configuration of the intersection (with roads not intersecting at 90 degrees) has resulted in frequent vehicle collisions. This will be greatly reduced by the roundabout design.

This project has been funded through the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund, whereby the Provincial and Federal governments each fund one-third of the cost. The remaining one-third of the cost will come out of the Town's Development Cost Charge reserves.

The intersection is a key gateway into Comox and the entire Comox Valley from the Comox Valley Airport and will include landscaping and signage to welcome visitors to the area.

The design of the traffic circle will minimize disruption to the watercourses along the roads, including measures taken to improve fish habitat in the Queen's Ditch system. It is anticipated that construction will be completed within two months.

Water sprinkling

Water sprinkling and other uses in the Town is regulated by the Comox Valley Water Conservation Bylaw. Currently, Stage 1 is in effect with respect to water use, meaning residents at even-numbered addresses can water from midnight to 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. to midnight on even-numbered days. Residents at odd numbered addresses can water from midnight to 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. to midnight on odd-numbered days.

Up to the minute information on the current Stage that the Town is in and water uses permitted during that Stage is posted on our website main page at www.comox.ca (you may need to scroll down the page to see the notice).



Notices

Dogs at large

Our Bylaw Enforcement Officer has received many calls regarding dogs running off leashes in parks and especially on beaches. The Comox Dog Licence and Pound Bylaw requires that all dogs, while in any public place within the Town, be on a leash of not longer than 2.5 metres (Section 5.2). Please ensure that your dogs are leashed.

Fire Regulation Bylaw

The Comox Fire Prevention and Regulation Bylaw, 2007 has been amended to allow residents to use outdoor gas-burning fireplaces, as well as outdoor wood-burning appliances for the purpose of smoking food. Residents are advised that all other outdoor burning, such as backyard fires, campfires and beachfires are prohibited.

Advertising on Town property

There have been a fair number of signs advertising local events showing up in Comox, particularly on powerpoles and streetlights. Please be advised that advertising in this way is not permitted in Comox, and you will be asked to remove the signs as soon as they go up.

This newsletter is a result of Council's initiative to increase communication with residents. If you have any comments or suggestions, or would like to see anything in particular in upcoming editions, please contact us. If you would like to receive this newsletter via electronic mail, please send an email to town@comox.ca.