

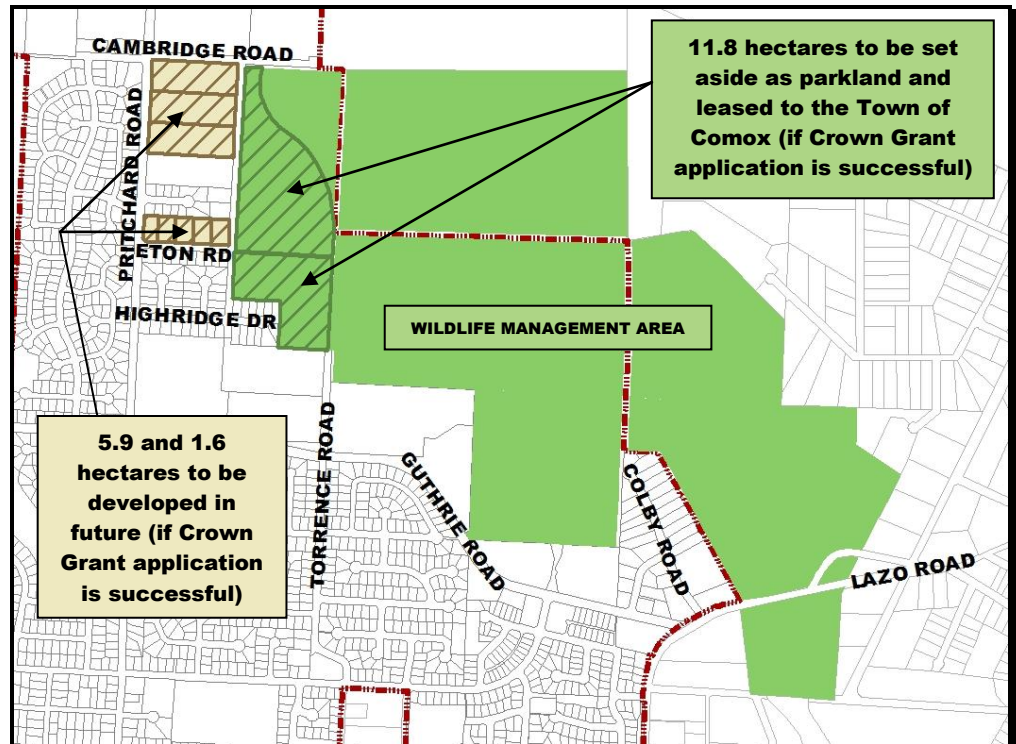


Comox News

August 2012

The Town of Comox Community Newsletter

K'omoks First Nation Memorandum of Understanding



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In June 2012, the Town of Comox signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the K'omoks First Nation (KFN) regarding several pieces of provincial Crown land in Comox. The MOU specifies that the Town and the KFN agree to jointly submit a provincial Sponsored Crown Grant application for transfer of the Crown lands to the KFN. The MOU also specifies that, if the Crown Grant application is successful:

- 11.8 hectares of Crown land adjacent to the Northeast Comox – Lazo Marsh Wildlife

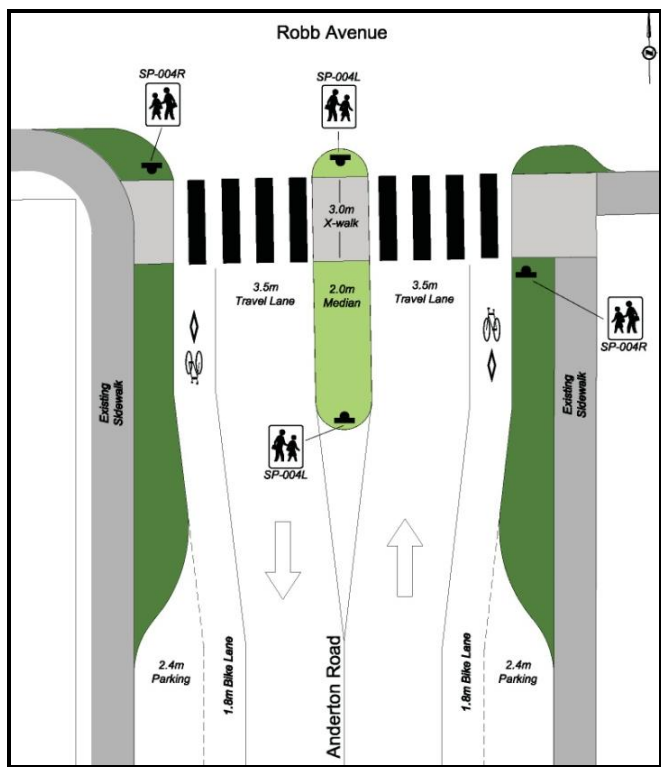
Management Area will be set aside as parkland and leased back to the Town for 99 years;

- 5.9 hectares at Cambridge and Pritchard Roads will be held, with any development subject to agreement with the Town and in accordance with the Town's Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaws; and
- 1.6 hectares along the north side of Eton Road will be developed in accordance with the Town's Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaws.

During the update of the Official Community Plan, the community expressed strongly that the parcels of land adjacent to the Northeast Comox – Lazo Marsh Wildlife Management Area be preserved as public park land. The Town is thankful for the interest of the KFN in working jointly on this project, and is pleased about the long-term agreement that will be of value to all Comox Valley residents.

It is expected that an application will be forwarded to the Provincial government this fall.

Robb-Anderton intersection



Over the past few years, the Town has received some complaints over the safety of the crosswalk across Anderton Road at Robb Avenue. This crosswalk is heavily used by school children heading to and from École Robb Road. It also crosses a very busy Anderton Road, creating conflicts for both children and drivers. In 2011, the Town asked its traffic consultant (Boulevard Transportation Group) to examine the safety of the crosswalk and provide any recommendations for improvements.

Boulevard recommended a number of changes, including a centre median, to act as a pedestrian refuge, and better signage. The design would also accommodate bike lanes along Anderton Road. These recommended changes will be completed this summer, in time for the start of the next school year in September.

Guthrie Road overlay

Work along Guthrie Road is continuing, with a 2nd overlay being installed between Aspen and Shamrock. Also included are bike lane improvements. Work has

already begun, with paving expected to begin after the August long weekend. It is expected that work will be complete by the end of August.

Secondary suites

In Comox, a secondary suite is a self-contained living unit located within a single family home. Secondary suites must have their own entrance, kitchen, bathroom and living area. More and more communities in BC are permitting secondary suites, with the Town of Comox included among them. Reasons for this trend include the following:

- In areas where housing costs are high, secondary suites provide additional income that can be used as mortgage helpers;
- Secondary suites allow families to stay together by providing a home for an adult child or an aging parent;
- Secondary suites provide low impact densification while allowing neighbourhoods to maintain their character; and
- Secondary suites offer affordable rental housing for tenants.

In 2007, the Town began allowing secondary suites in new neighbourhoods, provided certain conditions were met and building regulations complied with. This initiative resulted from Council's strategic priority of becoming a more sustainable and livable community and, in particular, its goal of becoming a more inclusive community by providing affordable housing units.

The first neighbourhoods to take advantage of the secondary suite allowance

(subject to building regulations being complied with) included the newer areas surrounding Quality foods, as well as the newer areas surrounding Forester Avenue and Gardener Way in eastern Comox. Up until recently, the Town had also approved a number of individual zoning changes to permit the creation of secondary suites in existing single family areas. Since 2007, there have been a total of 69 legal secondary suites created in Comox. Of these suites, the majority have been one bedroom units with an average size of 600 square feet. The remaining 2 bedroom units have an average size of 700 square feet.

Building on the success of this initiative, Council has now permitted secondary suites in most single family residential zones in the Town, without owners needing to go through individual zoning changes for their properties. While this change will permit secondary suites, it is important to point out that it will not legalize existing secondary suites in these areas. Homeowners with existing suites, and those wishing to build a new suite, will still need to apply for the necessary permits and approvals from the building department. Homeowners are also advised that either the suite or the main home must be owner-occupied.

For more information, see <http://comox.ca/online/documents/planning-documents/secondary-suites/>

Brooklyn Creek salmon habitat

Habitat restoration continues in Brooklyn Creek this summer, with work being conducted in the lower reaches. A narrow channel will be significantly widened, which will allow for the deposit of woody debris and spawning gravel. A viewing area and gravel walking path will also be installed in the future, eventually leading to the foreshore.

The Town was fortunate to have received a \$25,000 grant from the Pacific Salmon Foundation for this project. Other partners include the Brooklyn Creek Watershed Society, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and many other volunteers and contractors offering in-kind assistance.

Lancaster Park

A new playground for children aged 5-12 is currently under construction in Lancaster Park, off of McDonald Road. The equipment is funded jointly by the Town of Comox, the Comox Lions Club and the developer of the

surrounding area. In addition to the play structures, two circular picnic tables will be installed, one of which will be wheelchair accessible. The playground is expected to be open by late August.



Local road paving

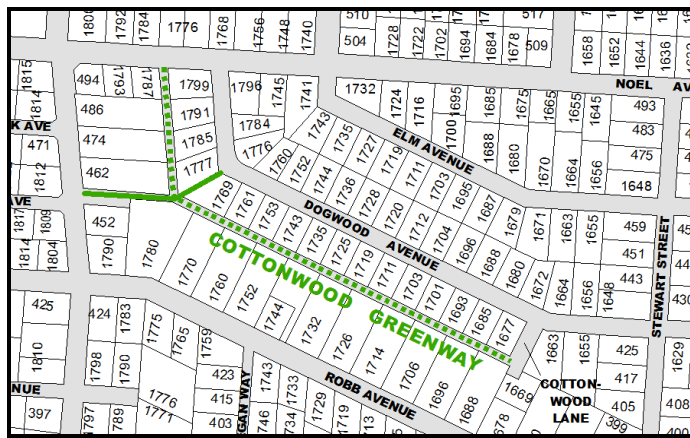
Repaving has now been completed on a total of 2.3 kilometers of road in Town. The following roads received new surfaces, either in part or in whole:

- Aitken Road
- Dogwood Avenue

- Comox Avenue
- Crestview Drive
- Savary Place
- Strathcona Crescent
- Rocky Heights Road

Thank you for your patience and cooperation while work was underway.

Cottonwood Greenway



At the end of Cottonwood Lane (off Dogwood Avenue) is undeveloped road right-of-way that extends approximately 430 metres parallel to Dogwood Avenue all the way to Noel Avenue. The Town is currently cleaning up this right-of-way in preparation of installing a pathway. Staff have been in discussion with neighbouring residents and the Comox Town Residents' Association

regarding design elements, which has resulted in a 'greener' greenway. Increased recreational opportunities has been a strategic goal of Council for the past few years. In its Strategic Plan this year, Council identified "Increasing connectivity within and between neighbourhoods" as one of its goals. The Cottonwood Greenway will help to achieve this goal.

Ellis Street crosswalk

In 2011, Boulevard Transportation Group examined the safety of several intersections as part of its Transportation Study. One that they examined with respect to pedestrian safety was that at Comox Avenue and Ellis Street.

Their conclusion was that a signed and marked crosswalk should be installed across Comox Avenue at this intersection. They determined that, with a bus stop located at the intersection and the number of residents living on the opposite side of Comox

Avenue, a crosswalk was warranted. Their recommended design was for one at the east side of Ellis Street, and to incorporate curb extensions on either side.

Boulevard also recommended that a sidewalk be installed along the west side of Ellis Street enabling pedestrians from Comox Avenue to access the west leg of Beaufort Avenue without having to cross at Beaufort Avenue and Ellis Street.

The project will be complete by the end of August.

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Councillor

We're on the Web!

See us at:
comox.ca

Smoke alarms save lives

Comox Fire Chief Gord Schreiner would like to remind you that working smoke alarms really do save lives. A working smoke alarm could very well be the best investment you ever make to protect your family and property. Every second counts if a fire were to start in your home, and while many homes have smoke alarms, in many cases these alarms do not work because the batteries are dead or have been removed.

Chief Schreiner states, "It is always surprising to us how many homes do not have working smoke alarms. They cost very little and really can make a very big difference."

Remember,

**"SMOKE ALARMS REALLY DO
SAVE LIVES"**

Anderton Park revitalization

The Town recently received \$400,000 in grant funding from the Community Recreation Program in order to revitalize Anderton Park on Balmoral Avenue. Revitalization plans include installing an outdoor seniors' fitness circuit as well as rebuilding four of the six tennis courts.

In early August, work will begin on the fitness circuit, with HealthBeat outdoor fitness equipment being installed in a very unique design. Although targeted for seniors, the equipment can be used by those aged 13 and over.

The fitness circuit will be complete by early September, with the tennis courts rebuilt in 2013.

Notices

Stage 1 water restrictions

The Comox Valley local water system, which includes the Town of Comox, is currently in Stage 1 water restrictions. Stage 1 allows:

- even numbered homes to use sprinklers to water lawns on even numbered calendar days between 4 to 9 a.m. and 7 to 10 p.m.;
- odd numbered homes to use sprinklers to water lawns on odd numbered calendar days between 4 to 9 a.m. and 7 to 10 p.m.;
- all homes to water trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables on any day with a sprinkler between 4 to 9 a.m. and 7 to 10 p.m.;
- all homes to water trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables on any day at any time if watering is done by hand held container or a hand held hose equipped with an automatic shut-off nozzle.

For more information, see
www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/water.

Business Licence fees

There are still a few businesses in Town with outstanding licence fees, and which have now received an overdue fees letter. If your business is still in operation, please ensure that you pay your outstanding fees to avoid fines and a possible "cease operations" notice. If your business is no longer in operation, please advise the Town in writing as soon as possible. Thank you for your prompt attention if you received a recent letter.

Bicycles on sidewalks

The Town's Bylaw Enforcement Officer is once again reminding residents to please not ride bicycles on sidewalks. While we are more lenient with smaller children riding at a slower pace, adults and older children should be on the shoulder of the road or a designated route or path.

Recreation Programs



Program registration will begin August 15 for fall activities. Please check out Comox programs in the Comox Valley Recreation Reporter or on our website at

<http://comox.ca/recreation>.

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.