Bowser Village Centre Plan

Over the past year-and-a-half I have had the pleasure of working with a dedicated group of community representatives to produce the Bowser Village Centre Plan. This Advisory Group is very diverse, and came to the process with many different and opposing agendas. They truly took ownership of this plan, the process and the results, and I believe we have created an outstanding piece of work built on majority advisory group consensus.

The Bowser Rural Village Centre Plan is a first in the Regional District of Nanaimo, and is extremely important for our community and for the other rural village centres throughout the RDN. Once it is approved by the RDN Board of Directors, this plan will give the RDN Board, staff and developers direction on how we want our sustainable Bowser Village Centre to develop in the future.

Based on sustainability principles, the Bowser Village Centre Plan outlines proposed policies, future land uses and design guidelines for land within the Bowser Village Centre. It also provides direction on community priorities such as aquifer protection, pedestrian-friendly development, affordable housing, seniors housing, access to alternative transportation and recreation. Other key topics include fiscal accountability, transparency in governance and inclusive planning processes.

The plan can be viewed online at www.rdn.bc.ca (Area H Village Planning). Hard copies are also available at the Beacon Office in Bowser. Once adopted by the RDN Board of Directors, the Plan will become an addendum to the Electoral Area H Official Community Plan.

Toilet Rebate Incentive Program

Property owners in the Electoral Areas of the Regional District of Nanaimo are now eligible for a new toilet rebate incentive program offered through the RDN Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program. The idea behind the incentive is to help property owners protect community water supplies for the future and reduce stress on septic systems and wastewater treatment systems.

Low flow toilets use just six litres of water per flush, and ultra low flow models use either six or three litres. Older toilets can use 13 litres or more per flush, so by taking advantage of the toilet rebate program a property owner could save up to 80,000 litres per year.

To qualify for the rebate, property owners must be within the Regional District of Nanaimo Electoral Areas A, B, C, E, F, G, or H. Eligible property owners can apply for up to two rebates per property. Low flow toilet upgrades are eligible for a $50 rebate, and dual flush upgrades are eligible for a $75 rebate. The low flow toilet sales receipt must be dated after October 28, 2009, and applicants must be replacing a toilet with a flushing capacity of 13 litres or more with a CSA Approved low flow or dual flush model. The toilet flush volume is usually printed on the inside.
of the tank, on the tank label, on the back of the bowl, or on the flush valve. Application forms are available at the Regional District of Nanaimo office at 6300 Hammond Bay Road, or at www.rdnrebate.ca. Applications must include a sales receipt for new low flow toilets and a recycling receipt for the old toilet (From either the Nanaimo Recycling Exchange or the Church Road Transfer Station).

For more information about the application process, contact RDN Water Services at 250-390-6560 or 250-954-3792 or email watersmart@rdn.bc.ca.

**Lighting the Way**

Electoral Area H welcomed the Olympic Flame on November 2 with a release of doves, a free pancake breakfast at the Bowser Legion, an art unveiling and performances by local musicians. Welcoming the Olympic Flame was a true privilege and we were extremely proud to be selected as a Route Community for the Olympic Torch Relay.

The 106-day, 45,000 kilometre 2010 Olympic Torch Relay began on Oct. 30, and will be the longest domestic Torch Relay in Olympic history. By the time the Olympic Games begin in Vancouver, the Olympic Flame will have been welcomed in over 1,000 communities and will have passed within a one-hour drive of more than 90 per cent of the entire Canadian population.

**Recreation Highlights in Lighthouse Country**

Watch for some exciting programs in the New Year to motivate you and your family to stay active!

Bowser Buddies, an active preschool program which also provides the opportunity for parents to socialize, returns to the Lighthouse Community Centre on Wednesday mornings, from 9:30 to 11 am. Join Lori Chesley for games, singing and playing. This program is open to children 0-5 years, and is a parent participation program.

Children’s theatre for ages four to 14+ is also on the winter calendar, with Dawn Osborne’s program, Chicken Kisses’ Theatre. The dates and time are currently being changed to fit Dawn’s “farm life” schedule. This fun and encouraging program will develop voice, movement, improv, script and stage work.

Jennifer Edwardson from Scrapbookin’ Adventures is offering her children’s scrapbooking class, “I Love My Family Scrapbooking” at Bowser School on February 24. Children ages five to 12 are welcome.

Coach Heather Beatty will continue her running programs, Lace Up and Run Some More in Lighthouse Country and Lace Up and Run Stronger in Lighthouse Country on Monday mornings, starting from the Bowser Legion in January. Heather’s programs are open to anyone over 16 years of age.

If there is enough community interest Ballroom and Line Dancing classes will begin in the New Year.

The very successful Lighthouse Recreation badminton and youth and adult floor hockey is still filling the Bowser School gym on week nights.

Kim Longmuir, RDN Recreation Programmer can be reached at klongmuir@rdn.bc.ca (250) 757-8118 or (250) 240-4911. Finding instructors for children’s programs, fitness and yoga has been a challenge in Area H, so if you know anyone who is interested in instructing, please drop by Kim’s office, located in Eyes on BC (Beacon) office.

**Sewer Service Option**

The RDN is currently determining the cost of initiating a review study on the likelihood of introducing sewer servicing for Bowser Village. We are still at the discussion stage but will continue to look at the possibility of offering sewer servicing for the area.

**Team WaterSmart**

Team WaterSmart expanded region-wide in 2009 as part of Drinking Water and Watershed Protection, a new service in the RDN’s seven electoral areas.

We are fortunate to have this program available in all areas of the RDN.

Approved by referendum on November 15, 2008, Drinking Water and Watershed Protection is aimed at sustaining the regional water supply and protecting surface and groundwater sources. The RDN’s Drinking Water/Watershed Protection Coordinator is currently developing a working plan for 2010 with the RDN Water Services Department and the Drinking Water/Watershed Protection Advisory Committee.