

**Staying Informed and Respecting our Environment.**

In order to reduce the carbon footprint of the OCP review, this will be the only newsletter mailed out to all properties in Electoral Area 'A'. Therefore, you will not receive another newsletter by mail to inform you of the progress of the OCP review. Newsletters will continue to be produced, but will be published on-line and made available in hard copy at the RDN Planning Department.

There are many ways to stay informed about the process including:

- Subscribing to the RDN's Email Alert System
- Going to the RDN website: [www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca)
- All notices of upcoming events will be published in the Take 5 and the Nanaimo News Bulletin.
- Contacting RDN planning staff

**HOW TO REACH US**

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**Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan Review Newsletter**

**Why Should I Participate in the OCP Review?**

**10 Best reasons for participating in the Official Community Plan review process**

1. The time for change is during the Official Community Plan review process, you can have your say.
2. All input is important and will be considered.
3. The Official Community Plan may affect your property including the recommended minimum parcel size, and its current and future use.
4. To have a say in your future.
5. To ensure that your interests are heard.
6. To make a difference in your community.
7. To be a part of decisions that will affect your community.
8. Its self paced - you decide on how you participate, you can attend public events, participate in surveys, read information on the Regional District of Nanaimo website, speak to Regional District of Nanaimo staff, submit written submissions, and/or arrange for onsite meetings with RDN staff.
9. It is an opportunity to become involved in a process which could potentially lead to significant changes in your community?
10. Community input forms the basis for the new Official Community Plan for Electoral Area 'A'.

**Subscribing to the RDN Email Alert System**

Throughout the Electoral Area 'A' OCP review process, the RDN will send email updates using its email alert system. Information will be sent from time to time on the progress on the OCP review, public events, workshops, and consultation opportunities. To start receiving this information you must subscribe to the email alert system as follows:

- i. Go to our website: [www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca)
- ii. Click on the Electoral Area 'A' OCP Review Page Link, located in the middle of the page. Look for this picture  →
- iii. On the top of the Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan page click on [submit your email](#).
- iv. Fill out the on-line form.
- v. Follow the instructions in the confirmation email that will be sent to you shortly after subscribing. You can unsubscribe at any time.

**If you have questions?**

Any questions on the OCP review process may be directed to:

Greg Keller, MCIP  
Senior Planner



**Not located in Electoral Area 'A' of the RDN?**

We apologize if you received this newsletter in error or know of people in Electoral Area 'A' who did not receive this newsletter. Unfortunately, we are unable to accurately correlate Canada Post mail routes to RDN Electoral Area boundaries. This results in some people receiving this newsletter who do not reside in Electoral Area 'A', some people not receiving the newsletter who should have, and may result in some people receiving two newsletters.



**Regional District of Nanaimo  
Electoral Area 'A'  
Official Community Plan  
Review Update**

Newsletter # 1

September 2008

**Points of Interest:**

- Open Houses scheduled for September 15, 16, and 17
- Applications for Official Community Plan Citizens Committee are now being accepted.
- Information on the Official Community Plan review is available at [www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca)

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**Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan Review Resumes**

The community forum held on May 10<sup>th</sup> paved the way for the Area 'A' Official Community Plan (OCP) review to resume in September 2008. The forum provided an opportunity for the community to present their views on sustainability, to discuss what should be included in the OCP review, and to inform the RDN how the community would like to participate and receive information on the review.

The feedback received at the forum was compiled and used by the RDN over the summer to draft a terms of reference for the review which was approved by the Regional Board at its August 26, 2008 meeting. A copy of the terms of reference is available on the RDN Website at [www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca) or by contacting the planning department at (250) 390-6510.



**Are you interested in helping to guide the future of Cedar, South Wellington, Cassidy, Yellow Point, and other Neighbourhoods in Electoral Area A?**

If so, you may be interested in attending one of three Open Houses on the Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan Review. The purpose of the open houses is to provide background information on Electoral Area 'A' and to discuss the process for the Official Community Plan Review. This is an opportunity to share information about Electoral Area 'A' and to become informed about the OCP review process including where to obtain information and how to participate in the process.

The three open houses are scheduled as follows:

September 15, 2008	3pm to 8pm	Western Maritime Institute Hall	3519 Hallberg Rd.
September 16, 2008	3pm to 8pm	Cranberry Community Hall	1555 Morden Rd..
September 17, 2008	3pm to 8pm	Cedar Community Hall	2388 Cedar Rd.

A presentation is scheduled for 7:00 pm for each of the open houses.

## Community Planning 101



### What is an Official Community Plan?

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is an important policy document that provides Local Governments and the community with general direction on land use matters such as environmental protection, growth management, parks and recreation, community servicing, land use, and minimum parcel sizes. The policies contained in an OCP are important because they help shape the community and have the potential to affect the way in which we live our daily lives. Once an OCP is adopted, a Local Government can not approve a bylaw or undertake any works that are not consistent with the OCP.

### How could the OCP affect my property?

Policies in an OCP sometimes recommend that changes be made to a zoning bylaw in order to help the community meet the goals and objectives contained in the Plan. The common types of changes that OCPs recommend include changes to the minimum parcel size and use of existing properties, all of which could potentially affect the future value and use of your property.

### What is Zoning?

Zoning is the legal mechanism by which Local Governments regulate current land use (i.e residential, industrial, commercial, etc) including parameters of development such as maximum height, minimum setback requirements, and parcel coverage. Zoning also controls the minimum parcel size. All proposed developments must be consistent with the Zoning Bylaw.

Zoning Bylaws are the primary means of implementing the policies contained in an OCP.

### What is a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)?

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is an agreement between the RDN and its member municipalities on how growth and development will be managed and planned for on a region-wide basis.

### What is an Official Community Plan land use designation?

Land use designations are included within an OCP and are intended to specify the communities desire's with respect to future land use in a given area. A land use designation includes **policies** which assist the Regional District of Nanaimo and the community in working towards the desired future outcome. The policies contained in a land use designation may not accurately reflect the current zoning of a property. However, all changes in zoning must be consistent with the policies contained in the OCP land use designation. Otherwise an amendment to the OCP is required, which is subject to broad public consultation.

### What is a Development Permit Area?

The purpose of a Development Permit Area (DPA) is to make sure that the potential impacts of a development are addressed and ensure that development within a specified area is conducted in a responsible manner. This is especially important in areas that are environmentally sensitive and/or subject to hazardous conditions.

Development applications within DPAs are reviewed to ensure that the proposal is consistent with the DPA Guidelines. In some cases, a report from a professional biologist or engineer may be required to assist staff in evaluating an application. The OCP specifies the information required in order to submit a Development Permit application.

A common misconception about DPAs is that they are setbacks or "no-go" buffer zones. **This is incorrect.** Development may occur within a DPA provided the proposal satisfies the DPA Guidelines.

*"Local Governments can not approve a bylaw or undertake any works that are not consistent with the OCP."*



## Request for Applications to the Citizen's Committee

Residents of Cedar, Cassidy, South Wellington, Yellow Point, and other Electoral Area 'A' neighbourhoods as well as people with an interest in property within Electoral Area 'A' **of all age groups** are invited to submit applications for membership on the Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan Citizens Committee.

*"The role of the Committee is to represent the community's interests and help guide the OCP review process."*

The role of the Committee is to actively participate in the Official Community Plan review by representing the communities' interests in creating and guiding the Official Community Plan's goals, objectives, policies, and implementation strategies. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Citizens' Committee for the Electoral Area 'A' OCP review please visit [www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca) or contact Greg Keller, RDN Senior Planner at (250) 390-6510 .

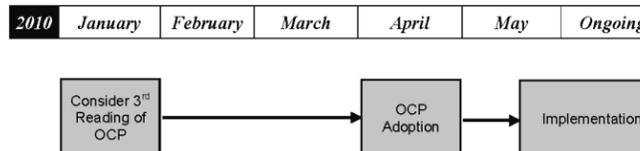
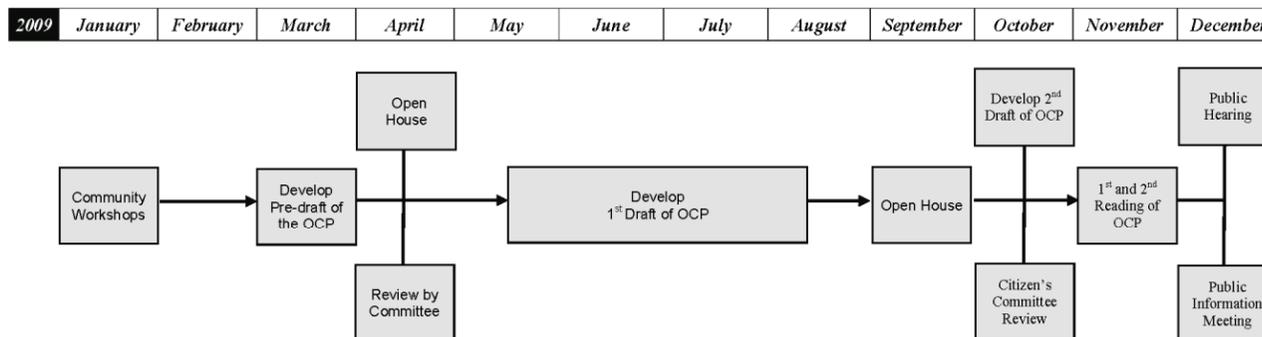
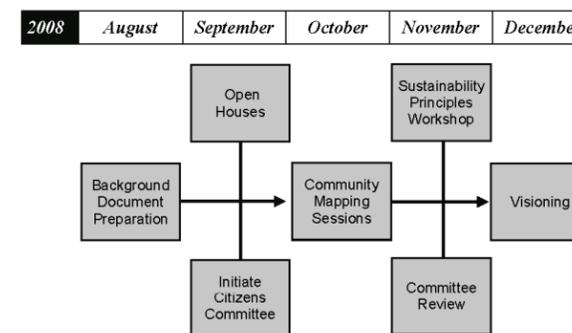


## Official Community Plan Review Process

It is anticipated that the OCP review process will conclude in the Spring of 2010. Public consultation for the OCP will be initiated on September 15, 16, and 17 with 3 Open Houses (see front cover for details).

The next step in the OCP review process is the formation of a Citizen's Committee (as above) followed by 3 community mapping sessions scheduled in October. Following the adoption of the OCP in the spring of 2010, the implementation process will be initiated.

The following provides a general overview of the Electoral Area 'A' OCP review process. Further detailed information is available in the OCP terms of reference, which is available on the RDN website.



Please note that the OCP review process may be amended in response to input from the Citizen's Committee and to address issues that arise during the review process.