

DATE: January 17, 2020**FILE:** 7710-01**TO:** Chair and Directors
Comox Valley Sports Centre Commission**FROM:** Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative OfficerSupported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer*R. Dyson***RE: Active Comox Valley Update****Purpose**

To provide the Comox Valley Sports Centre Commission with information regarding the future coordination of Active Comox Valley initiatives.

Recommendations from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the goals and mandate of Active Comox Valley will remain and continue to grow;

AND FURTHER THAT staff pursue numerous community partnerships to coordinate Active Comox Valley initiatives.

Executive Summary

Active Comox Valley is funded by the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD). The initiative is supported with resources from local municipalities, recreation departments, interested citizens and major community contributors who work collaboratively to promote healthy lifestyles and community spirit through physical activity. Active Comox Valley presence in the community has diminished over the past few years.

Active Comox Valley recognizes that there are real barriers to people getting more active, such as cost, accessibility and transportation issues. We support and promote activities which are affordable and accessible, like community runs/walks, free play boxes at beaches and family-oriented events. Together as a community, we can forge a healthier and more sustainable way of life in the Comox Valley.

This report is to provide information regarding the future coordination of ACV initiatives.

Highlights include:

- Active Comox Valley utilizes a cohesive, inter-governmental approach to health promotion in the Valley by working together in partnerships.
- Review historical Active Comox Valley coordination efforts.
- CVRD assisted with funds to sustain Active Comox Valley upwards of \$35,000 annually.
- A new approach to financially aid non-profit organizations to host signature Active Comox Valley events.

Prepared by:

Concurrence:

J. Zbinden***D. DeMarzo***

Jennifer Zbinden
Senior Manager of Recreation
Services

Doug DeMarzo
General Manager of
Community Services

Background/Current Situation

History:

Active Comox Valley is a community-based health promotion program that enables citizens of the Comox Valley to achieve healthier lifestyles through innovative and inclusive choices, coordinated activities and opportunities that will move them towards a proactive, lifelong approach to their health and well-being.

Supported by local municipal councils, the Active Comox Valley initiative launched in 2005 when recreation departments and stakeholder organizations met to discuss ways to promote active living in the Comox Valley. It was decided it would be beneficial to pursue the BC Government's Active Communities Initiative -- that same year local governments and community stakeholders participated in an Active Communities workshop, and utilizing the Active Communities Tool Kit to assess needs, applied for funding from UBCM's Community Health Promotion Fund pilot project. Active Comox Valley was granted \$35,000 in seed money to support the initiative and became one of over 150 registered Active Communities in the province; since that time the CVRD has administered funds to sustain the project through tax requisition and local partners.

Early on Active Comox Valley linked all local municipal recreation departments, interested citizens and major community contributors and stakeholders – the Active Comox Valley Steering Committee had representation from each of these groups, which include:

- Comox Valley Regional District
- Courtenay Recreation
- Comox Recreation
- Cumberland Recreation
- Black Creek Community Association
- Fanny Bay Community Association
- Denman and Hornby Islands
- Vancouver Island Health Authority
- School District #71
- 19 Wing Comox
- disease prevention and health and wellness organizations
- community events' representatives
- sporting organizations
- local health champions/advocates.

Originally an Active Comox Valley Coordinator reported to the Committee; this part-time contract position served as the communications channel between all of the municipalities and Active Comox Valley stakeholders, and ensured Active Comox Valley events and campaigns are promoted throughout the community through media and public relations, as well as hands-on participation, ensuring Active Comox Valley had a presence at local events to engage the public at the grass-roots level.

A few years ago the contract position was not renewed and CVRD programming staff led the Active Comox Valley initiatives. A couple examples of recent events organized were Terry Fox Run and Bike to Work Week. There is a general sense more outreach could be achieved under a new model.

Active Comox Valley coordination future:

CVRD staff have recently met with the regional recreation leadership table and have determined a change in coordination is needed to better promote the intent of the program.

Moving to the future staff plan to reach out to active organizations in the Valley and provide seed funding for signature events that offer free opportunities for citizens to enjoy unique opportunities. Examples of events may coincide with provincially/nationally significant days such as the Terry Fox Run, Move for Health Day or Earth day. Another approach is to tailor the event to the non-profit strength such as free learning lessons on bikes, Stand-up paddle boards or horses.

The goals/mandate of Active Comox Valley will remain the same and can continue to thrive through community group partnerships. Active Comox Valley uses strategies based on health promotion principles in an effort to create an all-inclusive healthy, active community through public dialogue, collaborative efforts and the development and delivery of a consistent, concise Active Comox Valley message. This can be delivered through free or affordable events or providing equipment for use such as playboxes at beaches.

Active Comox Valley utilizes a cohesive, inter-governmental approach to health promotion in the Valley by working together in partnership with municipal Recreation/Community Services departments, as well as outlying community associations, on Active Comox Valley initiatives and campaigns. This streamlined approach avoids overlap and duplication of programs and services offered in local recreation centres and allows for consistent collaboration for the advocacy, education and promotion of healthy living in the region.

Policy Analysis

It is vital to develop and expand partnerships like these for physical activity and health benefits in the community as this supports the boards strategic plan driver for community partnerships.

The following Sports Commission Strategic Plan Goals are supported.

- Strategic Goal 3 – Partnerships outcome - Partnership between jurisdictions and all external stakeholders. Building on relationships in or to develop partnerships that support and enhance the delivery of recreation services to all citizens in the Comox Valley.

- Strategic Goal 4 – Accessibility to Recreational Services outcome – Accessibility to Recreational Services. Services meet the public needs.

Options

- 1) Staff pursue numerous community partnerships to coordinate Active Comox Valley initiatives lead by CVRD programming staff with financial assistance to the community partners. This is the recommended option.
- 2) The Active Comox Valley Coordinator role returns to an external contractor's position and focuses on building relationships in the community to fund and deliver events
- 3) The Active Comox Valley program is cancelled and other healthy initiatives programs are reviewed and brought back in staff report for consideration.

Financial Factors

Active Comox Valley was granted \$35,000 in seed money to support the initiatives and became one of over 150 registered Active Communities in the province; since that time the CVRD has administered funds to sustain the project annually for \$32,000. If future partnerships are successful with non-profits the majority of the funding will be distributed to the non-profit groups to help off-set costs related to providing the free/affordable services.

Legal Factors

There are no legal concerns generated by this report as non-profits would be the lead on the event and have appropriate insurance.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

- i. Public health and safety: Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety and well-being:
 - Objective 7A-5: Support the promotion of healthy lifestyles and invigorating community spirit through physical activity.

Intergovernmental Factors

Active Comox Valley links all local municipal recreation departments.

Interdepartmental Involvement

Although the recreation department has taken the lead on this initiative, the finance department provides input and will continue to do so if implementation initiatives from the Active Comox Valley initiatives occur.

Citizen/Public Relations

We support and promote activities which are affordable and accessible, like community runs/walks and family-oriented events. Together as a community, we can forge a healthier and more sustainable way of life in the Comox Valley. The public will be notified of any changes to the Active Comox Valley process and/or initiatives through a communications plan that involves stakeholder input and notification to the general public.

Attachments: Appendix A – “Active Comox Valley Mandate”



Promoting healthy lifestyles and community spirit through physical activity.

ACV utilizes a cohesive, inter-governmental approach to health promotion in the Valley by working together in partnership with municipal Recreation/Community Services departments, as well as outlying community associations, on ACV initiatives and campaigns. This streamlined approach avoids overlap and duplication of programs and services and allows for consistent collaboration for the advocacy, education and promotion of healthy living in the region.

ACV'S MANDATE:

- Promote healthy behaviours
- Empower individuals to make healthy choices
- Address barriers to getting active
- Address motivational factors that would encourage activity
- Target special populations
- Measure and evaluate

OBJECTIVES:

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targeting special populations, including, but not limited to: First Nations, seniors, youth, economically and physically disadvantaged, rural areas - Identify the current level of community development in relation to active living and healthy eating, review the barriers, gaps and successes of current programming and marketing, and develop a community driven vision and Active Living Strategy for an Active Comox Valley - Map community assets which support a broad range of activities throughout the Valley - Enable and empower residents to integrate physical activity into their daily lives by implementing campaign to address barriers to participation (ie. time/money) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create free motivational tools and resources to promote active living - Enable collaboration for the advocacy, education and promotion of active/healthy living in the Comox Valley; choosing to make physical activity a part of daily life helps aid in disease prevention and other health issues - Provide a forum for networking and sharing of information and resources among partners - Develop active living messages promoting active living and healthy eating that will become familiar to residents - Evaluate, using a variety of tools and surveys, the success of ACV objectives |
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Program Reach

| | General Population | Targeted Populations |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Free Events | <p>Reach over 4,000 at each community event including: Canada Day Celebrations, Nautical Days, Spirit of BC Week</p> <p>Mini Tri-K (500 triathlon participants of all ages and their families)</p> <p>Legacies Now SportFit Event</p> <p>Fit For Heart (Heart & Stroke Foundation)</p> <p>Ovarian Cancer Walk for Hope 150 participants and their families</p> <p>KidsFest, average 3,000 attendees who are exposed to ACV's resources and brand</p> <p>Walk for MS, on average each year 105 participants and their families</p> <p>Move for Health Day, over 80 participants try a new activity for free</p> <p>Terry Fox Run – ACV coordinates this annual fun run to support cancer research and heighten awareness of the benefits of living an active, healthy lifestyle – over 170 Comox Valley residents of all ages and abilities took part in the 2011 event</p> | <p>Active Schools/Adopt a Classroom targeting 35 staff members, 300 students and their families</p> <p>Thrifty Foods Young Chefs targeting 96+ youth aged 10-12</p> <p>Thrifty Foods Nutrition For You Targeting 570 adults, seniors, youth</p> <p>Family Fun Day, targeting 400 families</p> <p>K'omoks First Nation, 19 band members engaged in pedometer challenge</p> <p>CUPE Local 439 – over 500 members used free pedometers</p> <p>Bike to Work Week – mobilizing the working population to use active transportation; supported by Bike to Work BC and local sponsors – first year ACV implemented the event in 2011 the number of participants more than doubled to 842 local cyclists</p> |
| Campaigns | <p>Spring Meltdown local rec centres register over 300 participants to log activity for the month of May, since the launch in 2007, participation has increased 22% on average each year</p> <p>TryAthlon Challenge, Comox Valley and Campbell River rec centres registers teams for free</p> <p>Get Up, Get Active Pedometer Challenge 1,100 pedometers distributed valley-wide, participants were encouraged to log their steps</p> <p>Don't Hibernate campaign campaign promoting 12 Great Places maps and encouraging winter activity</p> | <p>Healthy Workplaces, ACV provides free tools/resources</p> <p>Active Is For Life – “Guide to Free and Low Cost Activities in the Comox Valley”, received grant to target 35 – 54 year olds, reach of over 22,000 via local media coverage</p> |
| Partnerships | <p>Thrifty Foods Nutrition For You – offer free seminars/camps</p> <p>Comox Valley Cycling Task Force ACV presented at the CRA's AGM and Car-Free Comox Valley forum</p> <p>Rehabilitation in Motion – sponsor of new Outdoor Facilities map</p> | <p>St. Joe's Diabetes Education Centre, Comox Valley Accessibility Committee, Comox Valley Nursing Centre</p> |
| FREE ACV Resources/Tools | <p>“12 Great Places to Get Active For Free” maps – over 20,000 copies distributed Valley-wide, plus on ACV website</p> <p>Guide to Free and Low-Cost Activities in the Comox Valley – 7,500 copies distributed, plus showcased on ACV website</p> <p>ACV Lending Library (free equipment, tools – launched fall 2010)</p> <p>Get Up, Get Active Pedometer Program – received from a grant from ActNow BC, over 1,100 distributed</p> | <p>ACV Speakers Bureau (guest speakers donate their time and expertise to speak to local targeted organizations about wellness issues)- organizations that have participated include K'omoks First Nation and Canadian Diabetes Association, Vancouver Island chapter</p> |



“12 Great Places to Get Active for FREE” maps – ACV worked with the City of Courtenay’s Community Services and CVRD Parks and Planning on the design of the maps which promote trails Valley-wide; over 25,000 copies of these very popular resources have been distributed via rec centres, Visitor Centres, Welcome Wagon, Military Family Resource Centre, St. Joseph’s Diabetes Education Centre, local businesses and on the ACV website. Our third map was a partnership with the Cycling Task Force to link routes and heighten awareness of cycling-friendly and wheelchair accessible routes; our most recent map highlighting outdoor facilities was a partnership with a local physiotherapy practice, Rehabilitation in Motion, who share the same vision to encourage an active, healthy lifestyle.



Grant Opportunities

In addition to targeting the general sedentary population with our marketing campaigns and events, ACV has received grant opportunities to allow a focus on targeted areas that represent a

cross-section of the community:

Through the use of grant funds from the BC Recreation and Parks Association we launched an “Active Is For Life” campaign and produced a guide highlighting free and low-cost activities in the region and how residents can fit activity into their daily routine throughout the year (such as walking/biking to work, enjoying a family walk with the dog, enjoying low-cost activities like the supersaver swims, local mall-walking clubs, Cumberland climbing wall, etc.)

Through our multi-jurisdictional approach, ACV plans and implements annual campaigns to mobilize the population to get moving by logging their activity for the month of May during the annual Spring Meltdown, getting employees active and employers to support Healthy Workplaces, or trying a new activity on Move For Health Day. ACV has received grants for these initiatives to step up promotion for our messaging on the benefits of physical activity and how to get and stay motivated.

Partnerships

ACV proactively supports local initiatives (Walk for MS, Heart and Stroke activities, etc.) that share the same objectives as ACV –this helps avoid duplication and overlap of health promotion programs and we can achieve a greater uptake of participation and awareness by supporting established organizations

ACV has also been supportive of partner organization projects and due to our status as a registered Active Community have been able to endorse projects that contribute to increasing activity levels – for example, ACV endorsed Arden Elementary School’s successful application for a Trailway Grant to encourage running and walking; School District #71 was also successful in obtaining a planning grant for their Daily Physical Activity program.

ACV connects with other non-profit agencies (Heart and Stroke, Diabetes Education Centre, Boys and Girls, Success by Six, Morrison Stream keepers –to increase the skills and build

resources in our communities to promote healthy behaviours and empower individuals towards informed decision making. We thrive with involved, energetic, enthusiastic, community participants to share ideas,

expertise and energy to sustain our program and reach our objectives (interested community members, stakeholders, sports organizations, event





planners, businesses and corporate participants to help implement and sustain the project)

ACV offers tools and resources to partners in exchange for promotional opportunities to reach target populations; ACV offers links on our website and Facebook page.

Healthy Eating: Thrifty Foods Nutrition For You Partnership

When the ACV initiative began, it was envisioned we would utilize the expertise of project partners to incorporate healthy nutrition with physical activity for an overall healthy lifestyle. Thrifty Foods formed a partnership with all of the communities on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland where they have a store location.

- **Program Implementation date: April**
- **# of FREE Sessions delivered to date/populations reached:**
 - **12 Healthy Eating sessions**
300 adults/older adults
 - **6 Healthy Youth sessions**
150 youth 13 – 17 years
 - **6 Healthy Workplace sessions**
120 (working population)
 - **8 Young Chefs on the Run camps**
96 youth aged 10 – 12 years



Thrifty's offers the same sessions in all communities, and while some communities opted to charge a small administration fee, ACV municipal partners and stakeholders remained committed

to offering free activities in order to address barriers and give more populations the chance to participate. Thrifty Foods provides advertising, educational materials, food costs and staffing costs (local registered

dietitians and youth leaders facilitate the programs) while the local recreation/community centres donate the meeting space and handle the registrations.



These sessions have proved very popular. Now in our fifth year, the 'Young Chefs on the Run' camps always have a wait list. This partnership has proven very successful in terms of garnering corporate support to combine the nutrition component of ACV with our education on how to lead a healthy, active lifestyle.





Sustainability:

It is vital to develop and expand partnerships like these for physical activity and health benefits in the community; at the same time, as stated in the Comox Valley Sustainability Strategy, ACV plays an integral part in aiding to preserve community and social responsibility to improve the overall health of the citizens of the Comox Valley.

There are many factors to overcome to ensure a healthier population in the region: affordability, due to increased housing prices and taxes; higher than average rate of older adults, high demand on local health care practitioners as well as a significant decrease in activity by youth and adults. While a new system of greenways, bikeways and trail ways is being addressed, there are still accessibility/transportation issues to get to recreation centres, etc.

Excerpt from the Comox Valley Sustainability Strategy, prepared for the Comox Valley Regional District, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland, and City of Courtenay by HB Lanarc Consultants © 2010

Goal 7.2 Promote health and wellness for all residents.

Objective 7.2.1: Community awareness and the build environment support healthy, active living.

Target: % of increase in the number of residents classified as active or moderately active:

| | Aged 12 – 19 years old (from 2001 level of 59%)* | Aged 20 – 64 years old (from 2001 level of 41%) | Aged 65+ years old (from 2001 level of 34%) |
|------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 2020 | 5% | 10% | 5% |
| 2030 | 10% | 20% | 10% |
| 2040 | 15% | 30% | 15% |
| 2050 | 20% | 40% | 20% |

**2001 Canadian Community Health Survey*

An Active Comox Valley initiative began in September 2005, aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles and invigorating community spirit through physical activity. This target builds on the success of this program and encourages further increases in active living, recognizing the positive impacts that active lifestyles can make on health and increasing social capital.

Measurement and Evaluation

Evaluation is ongoing and a critical process to accurately evaluate output success of ACV’s program and initiatives.

ACV received a subsidy through BCRPA to commission a phone survey of 2,800 Valley residents; benchmark levels were obtained during a telephone survey in 2006 and a subsequent evaluation in 2008



allowed ACV to measure improvements in physical activity levels as well as awareness of our mandate and objectives.

Results showed that residents face many barriers to getting active including lack of time/too busy and also lack awareness how to incorporate physical activity into their daily routine – workplace support is a prominent factor too.

- Awareness of ACV jumped from 19% of respondents to 25% in 2019
- Residents who are somewhat active (engaging in activity 3 x/week) increased 9%, jumping from 11% to 20%

The foundation of ACV's consistent and concise messaging (social marketing) has been built and has become familiar to Comox Valley residents. With a rapidly growing population in the Valley; we need to invest in all age groups: children, teens, adults and older adults. We need to continue building on the success of the ACV initiative by continuing to work in partnership and secure grants to continue to coordinate, plan and implement community-wide health and wellness activities.



Building healthy public policy, creating supportive environments for health , wellness and recreation, development of personal skills through awareness and education, while at the same time strengthening community action, all help continue the collective objectives of mobilizing all segments of the population for a healthier, and more active, Comox Valley.



ACV Coordinator

The Active Comox Valley Coordinator reports to the ACV Steering Committee and serves as the communications channel between all of the municipalities and ACV stakeholders. The position works with different governmental departments from each municipality: Recreation and Community Services on implementation of ACV initiatives, Finance on granting opportunities, Parks and Planning on mapping projects, and Communications with cross-promotion of initiatives. A detailed scope of service is outlined below:

Contractor Terms/Scope of Service

Terms and Conditions

Contractor agrees to coordinate and administer the Active Comox Valley project as an independent contractor of the CVRD/Active Comox Valley Project

The work to be performed by the contractor will include but is not limited to Internal Communications, Partnerships, Public Awareness and other relevant duties as outlined in the job description. These duties are broken down in Primary, Secondary and Other duties and can include:

- Establish key messages for target populations in the Comox Valley, including the continued promotion of the ACV slogan and branding efforts
- Develop and administer a frequency schedule using a variety of media avenues to deliver a consistent and concise message. This will include writing educational and promotional materials or designating members of the ACV Steering Committee to write appropriate articles when time permits
- Develop creative ways to target the inactive population, moving them from pre-contemplation to contemplative action
- Assist the ACV Steering Committee in establishing the ACV Project as a priority for key community stakeholders (Municipal Bodies, Regional Boards, Vancouver Island Health Authority, local businesses, etc.) This may include presenting to local community groups.
- Work cooperatively with designated member of Steering Committee to ensure sub-committee's community awareness/marketing needs are met
- Assist with event planning and consult with Steering Committee on methods for community awareness