

What We Heard

Engagement Summary Report

Phase 4: Summer 2026

PHASE 4: Engagement Activities

MAY 2026

- Community postcard mailout to all households in the Plan area.
- Three newspaper notices in the Comox Valley Record.
- Social media posts and reminders to Engage Comox Valley subscribers

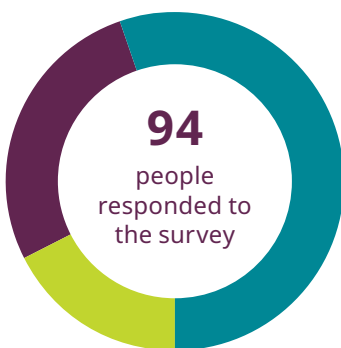


JUNE 1, 2026

- Draft LAP released on Engage Comox Valley.
- Public Open House held at the Oyster River Fire Hall with LAP summary tours provided every 20 minutes and CVRD subject matter experts available.

JUNE 1-15, 2026

- Community Survey open on Engage Comox Valley.



51%

live in the Saratoga
Beach LAP Area

25%

own property
within the Saratoga
Beach LAP Area

16%

are nearby
residents in
Electoral Area C

78

people
attended the
open house



JUNE 2, 2026

- Virtual LAP walk-through video available on Engage Comox Valley.

JUNE 18, 2026

- Draft LAP presented to the Area C - Advisory Planning Commission and follow up engagement activities conducted.

Phase 4 Survey Result Highlights

Learn how the community prioritized policies on key topics, including parks, recreation, local economy, transportation, and land use, and how this feedback was incorporated into the LAP to help guide decision-making. These questions were based on community feedback gathered from previous engagement sessions.



Please rank the following park-related actions in order of priority to you with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least:



WHAT WE HEARD

53.52%

of respondents selected “Plan and develop connected accessible trails and greenways” as the top priority.

25%

of respondents selected “Coordinate with the Province in exploring a trail connection to Miracle Beach Provincial Park”.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

also supported **dispersing beach user pressure** more evenly across the area.

“IDENTIFY MORE VISITOR PARKING”

had mixed responses (15 ranked it as first choice, but 10 ranked it last).



WHAT WE DID

- ✓ Re-ordered Parks, Trails & Beaches policies to reflect community prioritization.
- ✓ Identified both “plan and develop connected and accessible trails and greenways” and “explore a trail connection to Miracle Beach Provincial Park” as high priority actions.
- ✓ Added rationale to Miracle Beach Provincial Park trail connection policy “to help spread peak season beach visitation more evenly across the area.”



To help guide an advocacy strategy to the Ministry of Transportation and Transit, please rank the following policies in priority to you with 1 being the most important and 7 being the least:



WHAT WE HEARD

59%

of respondents selected “Address community priorities relating to traffic, parking and road conditions” as the top priority for advocacy to the Ministry of Transportation and Transit.



WHAT WE DID

- ✓ Re-ordered Ministry of Transportation and Transit Advocacy policies.
- ✓ Reworded “Address community priorities relating to traffic, parking and road condition” to allow for stronger direct advocacy to MOTT.
- ✓ Identified this policy as a high priority action.



Community feedback identified key areas of missing connectivity. Rank the following areas in order of priority (1 being your top priority, 5 being your lowest) for where you'd most like to see improved community connectivity to through multi-use paths or trails:



WHAT WE HEARD

THE MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS (51%) identified **Oyster River's commercial hub** as the top priority for improved community connectivity through multi-use paths or trails.

RESPONDENTS ALSO RANKED CONNECTIVITY with **Miracle Beach Provincial Park** (average rank: 2.29), **Saratoga Beach** access points (average rank: 2.45) and **Miracle Beach Elementary School** (average rank: 2.64) as important.

CONNECTIVITY TO THE HAMM ROAD HUB was the **lowest priority** for respondents (average rank: 3.82). It was the first choice of only 3% of respondents and had the highest number of respondents select it as their last choice (20%).



WHAT WE DID

- ✓ Reordered Off-Road Active Transportation policies, identified Oyster River connection as a high priority action.
- ✓ Removed Hamm Road commercial/ industrial hub as it was ranked significantly lower than the rest.



Please rank your preferences for better transit connections from Saratoga Beach:



WHAT WE HEARD

OVER HALF OF RESPONDENTS (52%) identified better transit connection **between Saratoga Beach and the City of Courtenay** as their first priority (49 responses).



WHAT WE DID

- ✓ Added new policy to: “review existing transit routing to achieve improved transit connections to City of Courtenay [high priority action]”



Which of the following commercial opportunities are priorities to permit in non-commercial (e.g. residential) areas through temporary use permits? Please check all that apply:



WHAT WE HEARD

THE TOP THREE COMMERCIAL-RELATED USES selected by respondents for support through temporary use permits were:

- 1. Agri-tourism**
(selected by 44 respondents)
- 2. Markets**
(selected by 44 respondents)
- 3. Food Trucks**
(selected by 42 respondents)



WHAT WE DID

- ✓ Added new policy and identified it as a high priority action: “Consider supporting temporary use permits for agri-tourism, markets, and food truck uses on properties where not already permitted”.



If a property owner can address sewer and water requirements, as well as maintain ecological values, what type of housing would you support higher density for?



WHAT WE HEARD

43%

of respondents chose "Housing which applies universal accessibility principles (e.g. single story, small-scale, ground-oriented housing forms)".

43%

of respondents chose "Housing that achieves net positive environmental outcomes (e.g., zero emissions, conservation covenants, park land dedication, regeneration of impacted lands)".



WHAT WE DID

- ✓ Re-ordered types of housing in policy and removed the types which did not show strong community support in survey 2.



Did you participate in any of the 2025 community engagement opportunities (public open house, survey, focus group or Engage Comox Valley):



WHAT WE HEARD

67%

of respondents participated in the previous community engagement opportunities.



Overall, how have you found the engagement process for the Saratoga Beach Local Area Plan?



WHAT WE HEARD

67%

of respondents who commented on the LAP engagement process had a **positive impression**. 33% had a negative impression.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK WILL BE USED TO GUIDE FUTURE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES, INCLUDING:

- Ideas to improve accessibility and reduce barriers to participation.
- Suggestions on marketing public events and alternative ways of engaging with community members unable to attend in person, or unable to rely on cellphones/ internet.



What's In and What's Out?

Throughout the engagement process, we heard a range of feedback on topics of particular community concern related to conflicts between the land uses highlighted below.



Auto-Racing Uses

Community concerns over noise, traffic, air pollution, and visual impact.

What the LAP does not do:

Land use requirements which set out what is and is not permitted on a particular property are governed by the Zoning Bylaw. The Local Area Plan does not amend or update the Zoning Bylaw, and cannot curtail or alter uses which are permitted under zoning or have lawful nonconforming status.

What the LAP does:

Contains policies which seek to minimize and reduce existing and future land use interface conflicts.



Beach Uses

Community concerns over behaviours of some beach users including noise, waste, pollution, and other bylaw infractions.

What the LAP does not do:

Saratoga Beach itself is Crown land, managed by the Province. The CVRD's nuisance bylaws therefore are not enforced on the beach, as the CVRD does not hold any foreshore leases for parks or CVRD-managed assets on the beach itself.

What the LAP does:

Contains policies to explore improved management of Saratoga Beach itself through CVRD involvement and advocacy to the Province.



Road and Road Shoulder Uses

Community concerns over road maintenance, pedestrian and cyclist safety, parking, traffic safety, and drainage.

What the LAP does not do:

All roads, shoulders, road rights-of-way and other associated infrastructure in the CVRD are owned by MOTT (Provincial jurisdiction), meaning the CVRD has no jurisdiction over them.

What the LAP does:

Contains policies to guide an advocacy strategy to MOTT to achieve the community's transportation priorities.

