

SOME IMPLICATIONS  
OF  
COMMUNITY VALUES  
FOR  
COMMUNITY PLANNING

Submitted to:

Mr. Gerard LeBlanc  
District of Tofino Council  
Tofino Steering Committee for  
Sustainable Development for Clayoquot Sound

Prepared by:

L. J. MacLean  
Community Values Working Group

June 2, 1991

## INTRODUCTION

This submission is an attempt to briefly examine some of the findings from the Community Values Survey, public workshops, and the Community Values Working Group as they apply to community planning.

Initially in the public workshops, a series of statements was generated to summarize major points of discussion. These statements will be used to provide a framework for this submission and will be supplemented with data from the workshops, working group and the survey.

*The community places great value on a safe, healthy, sustainable and accessible environment, the integrity of which is strongly protected. The sense of "space" should be maintained.*

- Where land use conflicts are unresolvable, preservation of the natural environmental shall take precedence.
- No polluting industry shall be licensed to operate in Clayoquot Sound.
- The potential impact of rising sea levels needs to be considered.
- Ecologically sensitive sites require identification and protection.
- Heritage sites require identification and protection.
- Development must not exceed infrastructure carrying capacity.
- Sewage treatment is required, perhaps in combination with the technology for nutrient retrieval (eg. fertilizer). Space needs to be allocated for this purpose.
- Public waterfront access needs to be protected and enhanced. (Current access along the inlet shoreline is being blocked by commercial and residential development. Guidelines need to be established to govern changes to the foreshore.)
- Adequate green belt, parkland and "buffer zones" are required. Guidelines should be determined for "greenery" requirements for commercial and residential developments. Guidelines for removal of natural vegetation on private property should be established.
- Municipally owned waterfront should be retained for public use/access with commercial and residential development on the non-waterfront properties.
- Viewscape protection bylaws should be established to guide present and future development.

- Recommendations from Fish and Wildlife about inlet protection must be included in future planning.
- Beach protection bylaws may be required (ie. re beach fires, driftwood removal).
- Toxic waste disposal needs to be addressed. An environmental hazard reporting mechanism needs to be established.
- Community residents wish to retain the quiet, rural atmosphere of the area.
- Maintaining the sense of "space" will require considerable care re the inclusion of higher density commercial or residential development, but need not exclude such options (eg. a fourplex on one acre of land would provide accommodation equivalent to four residences on one quarter each but may not appear as "dense" if carefully planned.
- Consider additional access road to core area.
- Determine a maximum number of whale watching and sport fishing operations which can be licensed and implement regulations to control operations.
- Several safety issues have been discussed and the following recommendations are included for your consideration.
  - The First Street planter in front of the Post Office should be cut back so that pedestrians (especially children) can be seen before they enter the traffic lane.
  - The first parking space on First Street next to the planter should be converted to bicycle stands so cars are not backing into the crosswalk.
  - Review traffic patterns and parking. Restrict parking of large recreational vehicles to the municipal lot; restrict parking near intersections and crosswalks; ensure adequate set-back of buildings at intersections; install traffic warning signs at playground, school, preschool and "limited vision" signs near laundromat complex.
  - Require access for the disabled on all public buildings.
  - Curb at the Post Office should be level to the planter.
  - Provide light on sidewalk at rear entry to library and replace the door handle to allow the door to be opened from the outside.

- Level the sidewalk in front of the library where the grating is placed.
- Reduce speed limit on the highway curve south of the south entrance to Chestermans Beach.

*Assuming basic needs for food and shelter can be met, no economic development should compromise the quality of life in the area.*

Sustainable community planning strives to balance the interaction of ecologic, human and economic factors in the environment to ensure the basic characteristics of the community are not eroded.

- 68.4% of residents surveyed own their home; 21.9% rent accommodation; 5.7% share accommodation; 0.5% live in room and board situations; 3.5% have a variety of other accommodation.
- Of the 253 residents who own their own homes:
  - 10.3% have a disposable annual income under \$6,000.00
  - 17.4% have a disposable annual income between \$7 and \$13,000.00
  - 20.6% have a disposable annual income between \$14 and \$20,000.00
  - 19.4% have a disposable annual income between \$21 and \$27,000.00
  - 8.7% have a disposable annual income between \$28 and \$34,000.00
  - 6.7% have a disposable annual income between \$35 and \$41,000.00
  - 8.8% have a disposable annual income over \$42,000.00
- Careful consideration needs to be given to the impact of future community development on adjacent properties vis-a-vis the effect that development might have on property evaluations and taxes. Escalations could put a significant percentage of home owners in financial difficulty.
- Concerns re affordable land and housing continue. Innovative, long-term solutions must be sought. Some threats to resident home ownership or the availability of basic shelter have been identified as:
  - Limited land base
  - Rising land, house and property tax costs
  - Speculative land purchases
  - Non-resident/summer home ownership
  - Decreasing economic diversity
  - Seasonal wage scales
  - 56.8% of surveyed residents have a disposable annual income of less than \$20,000.
- A committee to investigate the feasibility of starting a community land trust in Tofino could address the issue of affordable housing at the same time as considering the potential for a continuing source of revenue for the District if some of

the municipally owned land were included in the trust. If municipally owned land could not be included in a land trust, consideration should be given to the feasibility of leasing rather than selling the land, and to establishing a residency requirement for lease or sale of municipally owned land.

One solution to alleviate the housing shortage was to allow secondary houses on half acre lots currently zoned for single family residences. In one Alberni neighbourhood this approach was tried but resulted in escalating land evaluations and taxes as the properties were considered to be revenue producing. Properties in the same neighbourhood which remained single residence only were apparently also taxed at the higher rate as they had the potential to become revenue producing. Given this were to result, it would be likely that rents on these secondary houses would also rise, possibly beyond the reach of local residents requiring housing. In that event, secondary houses would most likely be rented out to tourists which would defeat the original intent of the proposal. Furthermore, an increase in property evaluations and taxes for owners not choosing to erect a second residence may force some current home owners to sell. In all likelihood, such half acre properties would be purchased primarily by non-residents, thus compounding the housing problem for local residents. It is of interest to note that a second neighbourhood approached by the Alberni District to consider the same rezoning rejected the proposal, apparently because of the problems created in the area where such rezoning had been implemented.

- Once zoning is determined, consistent enforcement of that zoning is required; violations, if they exist, would have to be phased out.
- Size restrictions on residential and commercial developments are desired. A two-storey limit has been suggested with square footage to be compatible with neighbouring structures. Concern has been expressed regarding the "monster house syndrome" which has destroyed communities in Vancouver because of the impact on property evaluations and taxes.
- A majority of residents surveyed have indicated a preference for small (low density), low impact, environment-oriented and locally initiated tourism developments. Beach concession stands are rejected. Additional large resort complexes, hotels, restaurants, pubs and marinas, etc. are incompatible with values expressed in the community survey.
- A location for a future community centre needs to be identified.
- Specific areas within the District of Tofino boundaries which were identified as having "special importance" to residents are: Tonquin Park, Chestermans Beach, Tofino Inlet, Frank Island, Mackenzie Beach and Cox Bay. Mackenzie Beach and Cox Bay

already have some tourism development in place as does some of Tofino Inlet. Sixty-five point four percent of all residents surveyed indicated there should be specific areas in Clayoquot Sound not advertised for tourist use. The Tofino community plan could protect the non-commercially developed areas above by zoning them primarily as local resident use areas.

- Marketing of the area needs to be addressed to attract tourists with values and expectations complementary to those of area residents.
- Bed and breakfast operations require regulation. (Should there be a differential rate for water and sewer? A business license?)
- Future commercial developments should be required to provide parking and when appropriate on-site staff accommodation.
- "Resident Parking Only" signs are required in congested areas (eg. in front of main street residents.)
- Tofino has to determine the limits it must set for commercial and residential development without destroying the existing character of the community. The community cannot possibly absorb every tourist or potential investor. Some hard decisions need to be made about the extent to which the community can meet the demands being made on it. (Good communication with Port Alberni and Ucluelet regarding available tourist accommodation may help alleviate some pressure on the area. Hotel/motel advertising should include "reservations required" or "recommended".

*The cultural and economic diversity in the community is highly valued. Diversity of occupation should be encouraged as should individuality and self-sufficiency. The respect accorded people, whatever their heritage, income or occupation must be retained or enhanced. The community should continue to encompass a wide range of age groups.*

- Care must be taken that the emphasis on tourism does not result in decreased economic diversity.
- Land use plans, building permits and business licenses should be monitored to ensure continued diversification. (Refer to Question 20 in survey for current occupational breakdown.)
- Consider land use needs to enhance self-sufficiency of community, especially re food production. (eg. community garden, greenhouse, compost (possibly community garden/greenhouse complex could operate in conjunction) with the CO-OP to supply produce?)
- Determine interest from Nuu-chah-Nulth re land requirements for a native cultural centre (possibly in combination with a community centre?)

- Consider needs of differing age groups when planning land use. (eg. pre-school, teen areas, long-term care, hospital outreach programs, etc.)
- Community centre could be a multi-use building, possibly combined with other functions to help cover costs. (eg. nature centre, medical clinics, mental health, substance abuse centre, women's resource centre, clinics (physio, dentistry, veterinary), swap shop, theatre, meeting rooms, volunteer bureau, preschool, day care, seniors groups, etc.)
- Consider need for future North Island College space (possibly in community centre) (Has NIC considered offering courses in native language/culture? Would their space be adequate?)
- Consider land use needs if more "value added" industries related to fishing, wood lots, etc. were developed.
- All planning should contribute to the stability of the existing community.
- Native land issues need to be addressed.

*Methods of exercising responsibility for a sustainable community must be determined.*

"Sustainable community development consists of human activity which guarantees the future of the community." (Bailey: *Planning Sustainable Communities*. November 1988)

The community plan will be a major factor contributing to the quality of life in Tofino, and should be carefully reviewed by residents. Every effort should be made to reach a consensus on the plan; at the least, the plan should be approved by a majority of residents prior to its adoption by Council.

Further review of the Community Values Survey may provide additional indicators for land use planning.

Of particular relevance to community planning is the high level of commitment residents have for Tofino. Sixty-four point four percent of residents indicated they would prefer to stay and work at an unrelated job rather than move elsewhere in the event they lost their source of employment. Maintaining and/or enhancing the quality of life residents experience will be a major challenge as the community develops. Concern has been expressed about the possible loss of the "small town ambience".

This submission is an attempt to provide a brief overview of data relevant to community planning which has been gathered from the survey and from community meetings. The opportunity for input to the process of community planning is greatly appreciated.