



The Corporation of the Village of Cumberland  
Committee of the Whole Meeting

Monday, May 30, 2022, 2:00 p.m.  
Council Chamber, 2675 Dunsmuir Avenue

We are honoured to gather on the unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation.

Pages

1. Approval of Agenda

1.1. Agenda for Committee of the Whole Meeting - May 30, 2022

**Recommendation:**

THAT the Committee approve the Agenda for the May 30, 2022  
Committee of the Whole Meeting.

2. Delegations

2.1. Maurice Primeau, Deputy Assessor, BC Assessment  
Overview of Assessment and 2022 Assessment Roll

**Recommendation:**

THAT the Committee of the Whole receive the delegation of Maurice  
Primeau from BC Assessment.

3. Reports

3.1. Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan: Interim Report  
Prepared by Kevin McPhedran, Interim Deputy Chief Administrative  
Officer

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**Recommendation:**

THAT the Committee receive the Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan:  
Interim Report.

**Recommendation:**

THAT the Committee receive a presentation from project planning  
consultants, Adam Fawkes and Gabi Haas of hcma and GDH Solutions,  
respectively.

3.2. Development Approval Process Modernization  
Prepared by: Courtney Simpson, Manager of Development Services

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**Recommendation:**

THAT the Committee receive the Development Approvals Process  
Modernization Summary Report for information.

**Recommendation:**

THAT the Committee receive a presentation from project consultant,  
Nancy Henderson of Urban Systems.

**4. Question Period**

A member of the public may only inquire about items included on the Agenda for that meeting during a question period.

- Please send questions by email to [info@cumberland.ca](mailto:info@cumberland.ca) using subject line "Question Period" ; Note: please limit to questions only - comments will not be read.

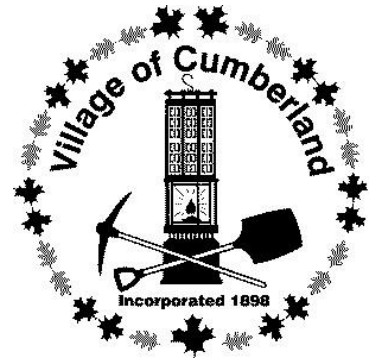
**5. Closed Portion**

**Recommendation:**

THAT Council close the meeting to the public pursuant to Section 90 of the *Community Charter* to consider:

- (f) law enforcement, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the conduct of an investigation under or enforcement of an enactment;
- (i) the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;

**6. Adjournment**



REPORT DATE: 5/20/2022  
 MEETING DATE: 5/30/2022

File No.

TO: Mayor and Councillors  
 FROM: Kevin McPhedran, Interim Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
 SUBJECT: Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan: Interim Report

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**RECOMMENDATION**

- i. THAT the Committee receive the *Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan: Interim Report*.
- ii. THAT the Committee receive a presentation from project planning consultants, Adam Fawkes and Gabi Haas of hcma and GDH Solutions, respectively.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to:

- present a general update on the Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan project;
- to present Council the Interim Report (attachment A); and
- to provide Council with an opportunity to comment and provide feedback on the next phase of the project, *Scope 3 – Analysis and Plan Development*.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION**

Date	Resolution
2021-09-27	THAT Council allocate \$70,000 in COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Government funds to fund the development of a Recreation, Arts and Culture Master Plan.

**BACKGROUND**

Since fall 2021, Village staff have been working on developing a Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan. In late 2021, a planning consulting services agreement was awarded to hcma, who have partnered with GDH Solutions to lead plan development. For the Village, the project is being lead by the (current) Interim Deputy CAO (previously Manager of Parks and Recreation), and supported by a planning team made up of the Economic Development Officer and Interim Manager of Recreation and Culture (previously Recreation and Culture Supervisor).

The attached *Interim Report* provides a comprehensive summary of the work done to date, including Scope 1 and 2, Data Collection and Review and Community Engagement, respectively. The report then provides an analysis of the key themes that emerged from Scope 1 and 2 processes, broken down in eleven separate themes in four categories: Foundational; Setting the Context, Services, and Infrastructure. At this time, the Committee is invited to provide their feedback on these themes which will then be used as building blocks in the next phase of the project, Scope 3 – Analysis and Plan Development.

#### K'ómoks First Nation Involvement

In parallel to the work described above, the project team has also developed and implemented a custom process to involve K'ómoks First Nation in the plan. Initiated by a Mayoral invite to K'ómoks Chief to participate in the project, and followed up on in a recent Council to Council discussion, staff from each organization are now formally engaged in the project. To date, this engagement model has proved very successful, first with meetings between the Village's Interim Deputy CAO and KFN staff leadership, followed by a comprehensive staff planning workshop involving the full Village team on May 18<sup>th</sup>. At this workshop, KFN was presented with eleven planning themes that emerged from Scope 1 and 2 works, following which discussions ensued on specific opportunities and priorities for KFN involvement. The outcomes of this workshop will now also be included in Scope 3 work and a draft Plan will then be shared with KFN for input.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

None.

#### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**

- Healthy Community
- Quality Infrastructure Planning and Development
- Comprehensive Community Planning
- Economic Development
- Reconciliation

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Funding for the project has been provided by the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Governments. Financial implications of various projects will be considered in the Analysis and Plan Development Phase.

#### **OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Development of the Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan is a key priority in staff work plans.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

Climate factors will be considered in the Plan Development Phase, including:

- Environmental resiliency objectives in landscape design
- Incorporation of climate factors in infrastructure planning, including both reducing energy consumption and emissions, as well as consideration of how recreation and culture facilities can better support community emergency response objectives.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Interim Report. Adam Fawkes, hcma. May 20, 2022.

## **CONCURRENCE**

None.

Respectfully submitted,

K. McPhedran

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Kevin McPhedran  
Interim Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

M. Mason

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Michelle Mason  
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

# Memo

**To** Kevin McPhedran  
Village of Cumberland  
2673 Dunsmuir Avenue

**CC** Gabi Haas, GDH

**From** Adam Fawkes

**Date** May 25, 2022

**Project** Village of Cumberland – Recreation, Arts and Culture Plan  
**Subject** Interim Report

## Details

### Introduction

In January 2022, **hcma** and GDH Solutions were engaged by the Village of Cumberland to develop a Plan to guide the delivery of its recreation, arts, and culture services to the community over the next ten years. The work is currently at beginning of Scope 3, with the completion of a comprehensive Community Engagement process and the start of the Analysis of 'what we heard'. This interim report is provided to staff and Council for information purposes and as a way of checking in to ensure the work is taking the right direction as it continues the final Scope 3 - Analysis and Plan Development.

*Scope 1 – Data Collection & Review*  
*Scope 2 – Community Engagement*  
*Scope 3 – Analysis & Plan Development*

### Scope 1 – Data Collection & Review

Scope 1 was completed in the winter months of 2022 and included a review of background information on existing facilities in the Village, programming, special events and previous related studies and reports. This review included information on relevant partnerships and relationships with other government agencies, education organizations, non-profit societies, and businesses.

This scope included an inventory of existing recreation and culture facilities and services in the Village, with a focus on the Cumberland Recreation Centre, the Cultural Centre and Cumberland Museum and Archives, Village Park, Village Square and No. 6 Mine Park. This included an in-person tour on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

To understand the context of recreation, arts and culture in the Comox Valley, an overview of regional facilities and organizations was conducted including the City of Courteney, the CVRD, and School District 71. Lastly, current and projected demographics for the study area were examined with a view to potential impact on Cumberland's facilities, programs, services, and events.

### Scope 2 – Community Engagement

#### What We Heard

GDH Solutions and **hcma** undertook an extensive consultation process during March and April 2022. Consultation methods included Survey Monkey which generated 247 responses, interviews and meetings with 35 key community stakeholders and Village staff, and an in-person public engagement event held on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

The consultation process resulted in a large number of suggestions as to how recreation, arts and culture might be improved and or enhanced in the future. The stakeholders provided exceptional insight into how the facilities, parks, programs, events, venues, organizational structures, policies, and funding could be improved.

The community stakeholders represent a broad spectrum of the community. Some were staff with organizations that had a role in the recreation, arts, and culture sector. This included not-for profit organizations, the public sector, the private sector, and many not-for-profit community organizations. Many of the stakeholders were volunteers supporting the numerous organizations in Cumberland.

In addition to the stakeholder meetings and interviews, the community survey using Survey Monkey provided additional insight into the needs and wants of the community. It also indicated the level of satisfaction with the current programs, services, and facilities in recreation, arts, culture, and events.

A large amount of information was gathered throughout the consultation period – from early March until the end of April. A number of “themes” emerged from these consultations. As this process proceeds, the themes will be enhanced as needed.

### Key Themes

1. **A growing and changing community** with potentially different expectations
2. **The role and impact of arts and culture** on the future of Cumberland, including economic development.
3. The many **Events** that are an **integral part of Cumberland’s culture and history**
4. The importance of **inclusion of the First Nations** community in recreation, arts, and culture
5. **Accessibility and Inclusion** – both facilities and activities
6. **Service Delivery** - recreation, arts and culture programs and activities by the Village and through partnerships.
7. **Partnerships and Collaboration**
8. **Ageing and insufficient physical infrastructure** to support recreation, arts, and culture
9. The role of the **Village outdoor spaces** in community gatherings, sports, and events; and the need to enhance/upgrade those spaces

The detailed consultation findings can be found in the Appendices.

The first page of Appendix A is a list of discussion points raised by the community stakeholders. The lists of comments are divided into Community Stakeholders and Staff. These Community Stakeholder comments are a compilation of comments from various individuals. In most cases similar comments were made by more than one person.

The “Summary Document for Recreation, Arts and Culture Engagement Interviews” also included in Appendix A, identifies themes that contributed to the development of the nine (9) “Key Themes”. The Stakeholders provided many comments and suggestions as to how the parks, recreation, arts and culture experience in the Village of Cumberland could be improved.

The “Summary Document – Recreation, Arts and Culture Engagement Event #1” is a summary of the comments in response to the question “What is your story?” and “What is your Vision”.

The list of comments and suggestions from both consultation methods will be helpful in the next phase of Plan development.

### Scope 3 – Analysis & Plan Development

The final scope of work begins with an analysis of the key themes that emerged from the community engagement process. The nine themes listed above, plus two additional themes (**Climate Change** and **Fiscal Responsibility**) have been reorganized to better guide the development of the Plan.

## Foundational

### 1. K'ómoks First Nation

One of the goals of this Plan is to involve and work in co-operation with K'ómoks First Nation to ensure their voices are heard and that the Plan addresses their needs and interests.

### 2. Accessibility and Inclusion

Accessibility and Inclusion are key issues that were requested multiple times in the community survey. These will need to be addressed as much as possible in the short term.

### 3. Climate Change

Community resilience. Adaptation and mitigation response to climate change.

### 4. Fiscal Responsibility

All planning to occur within context of the community size and budget realities.

## Setting the Context

### 5. A growing and changing community

The 2021 Census data indicate that the Village of Cumberland had the third fastest growth in British Columbia. The current population (2021) is 4,447, which is up from 3,753 in 2016. The community is expected to continue to grow. The census indicates a younger demographic, with an average age of 39 versus an average of 51 on the rest of the Comox Valley.

### 6. Arts and Culture

Cumberland is a community that values its arts and culture. There are a number of Societies and other non-profit organizations that stage events and offer workshops and programs. There are several buildings in the community that are used for cultural activities, for example an Art Gallery was created by a member of the Culture and Arts Society in Weird Church. The Museum was recently updated and is now able to offer a variety of experiences for all age groups.

### 7. Events

Cumberland has a long tradition of community events. They are organized by non-profit organizations and the private sector. The events have a significant economic impact on the community.

## Services

### 8. Service Delivery

The provision of programs and service is constrained due to the constraints of the current facilities, both the Recreation Centre and the Cultural centre. Many of the adult programs are physical activity based. A limited number of children's programs are offered, with the addition of day camps in summer and spring break. Aquatic programs are available for all ages at one of two indoor pools in Courtenay (operated by CVRD).

### 9. Partnerships and Collaboration

There is a longstanding tradition of collaboration between the Village of Cumberland and the many other service providers and events organizers that should be enhanced and formalized to ensure longevity of these relationships.

## Infrastructure

### 10. Ageing Infrastructure

The Recreation centre is not serving the needs of the growing, changing community. The large gymnasium is not suitable for the many activities that the community wants. These include a large variety of recreation, arts and culture activities for different age groups. The facility will likely need significant investment in the near future for refurbishment or replacement. In the meantime, there are small improvements that could be made to better serve the community.

The Cultural Centre is also outdated but could be enhanced (for the short term) to allow for a broader community use.

### 11. Village outdoor spaces

The Village outdoor spaces include Village Park, Village Square, and #6 Mine Park. All of these areas are very well used. The main issues with all of these parks is the infrastructure. Village Park needs new washrooms, changerooms, concession, storage etc. spaces to replace the existing buildings. New features should also be considered for these parks.

## Appendix A - Includes the following:

Community Stakeholder Interviews and Group Discussions	Page 1
Consultations With Staff	Page 2
Summary of Survey Monkey Responses	Page 3 to 8
Summary Document – Recreation, Arts and Culture Engagement Interviews	Page 9 to 11
Summary Document – Recreation, Arts and Culture Engagement Event #1	Page 10 to 18

## Appendix B - Full Survey Monkey document.

## Village of Cumberland - What We Heard APPENDIX A

### Community Stakeholder Interviews and Group Discussions

Key items that arose in the discussions with the community stakeholders.

1. Future Youth Centre – School will need the classroom being used as a Youth Centre in near future.
2. Cumberland Community School Society is running out of space for their range of programs and services (due to higher school enrolment).
3. Consider a “joint-use” agreement with SD 71 re gymnasium and field use.
4. Aquatic services are provided by the Comox Valley Regional District at two indoor pools.
5. An expanded relationship with the Village will help the Museum achieve their goals, to the benefit of Cumberland (Arts and Culture).
6. Business Association wants downtown public washrooms, designated (marked) parking areas. They support a “balance” of arts and culture events and updated recreation facilities.
7. Enhanced, redesigned Village Square to better accommodate events and the Farmers Market.
8. Events have a significant, positive, economic impact on the Village, however there is a lack of infrastructure, both physical and organizational for major events.
9. Arts and Culture Organizations need more funding support – operational and capital.
10. Cumberland would benefit from a Policy for Arts, Culture and Heritage.
11. Comox Valley Arts Council is developing a relationship with the Museum.
12. The Arts have big impact on community economics.
13. The Regional Arts Gallery has good participation from Cumberland artists, as well as a large number of volunteers from Cumberland.
14. Sid Williams Theatre would welcome more involvement from Cumberland re funding (all other municipalities support the theatre), and a Board member that resides in Cumberland.
15. Event organizers are seeking more support through the provision of outdoor event infrastructure (permanent stage, permanent washrooms) and easier access to Village equipment.
16. “Third spaces” need to be recognised and supported. Third spaces are generally buildings owned by non-profit organizations such as the Legion Hall, the Library, the Society Hall, Churches etc.
17. The Culture and Arts Society would like a theatre, outdoor covered stage, a sound studio and an arts space with good lighting.
18. Need a long range Plan for the Arts. A “Vision” is needed for both indoor and outdoor events. There is a need to encourage young people to be involved in planning for the Arts.
19. Any new facility should have flexible spaces with movable walls and retractable seating.
20. Village Park needs one or more new buildings that include washrooms and changerooms, storage, clubhouse space and mechanical systems.

21. Village Park sportsfields need improved drainage, new dugouts and backstops, improved lighting.
22. BMX is a good feeder for mountain biking. Lighting would be great. There is a need for security of use of the BMX track for the long term.
23. Membership in the Horseshoe Club is declining, despite their efforts to attract more participants.

## Consultations With Staff

### List of Key items that arose in the Staff Consultations

1. The Recreation Centre has poor outdoor lighting, unsightly exterior. Indoors not enough space for staff, no foyer, need a large multipurpose room and smaller program rooms, improved lighting, more and larger changerooms, new squash courts.
2. Need covered area in Village Park for programs and community group use.
3. Need one large building with one mechanical room for the whole park as well as washrooms and changerooms. Current buildings do not meet the needs of the users.
4. There is no service map – sometimes electrical works, sometimes not.
5. Mine #6 Park is not suitable for events – very poor drainage and grass gets wrecked.
6. Staffing – would benefit from more part-time staff to support administration and parks admin.
7. Staff (individuals) are alone in the building. Doing Health & Safety Review.
8. The level of staff support for events needs review – e.g., Cumberland Events Society runs events, but Village support role is unclear.
9. Clarity is desired regarding contracted versus part-time staff.
10. There is opportunity for more daytime programs for children, as there are many children that are home-schooled; could include “Phys-ed” style programs
11. There is need for a dedicated child-minding space.
12. There is interest in programs for 3 to 5 year olds.
13. Additional priorities for a new facility (by contract staff):
  - Dedicated fitness space, big weight room, room for classes
  - A large multi-purpose room that could be split in half
  - A large space (dividable) so you don’t need to put away all the equipment all the time – suitable for gymnastics, climbing, cross-fit, TRX
  - Keep indoor rock climbing – there are very few on the island that are accessible to all
  - Need space for Yoga, Barre classes
  - Covered outdoor space
  - Outdoor “functional movement” structure (example in Lethbridge)

## Summary of the Survey Monkey responses.

### Key Themes

- Need for more multi-purpose/activity rooms
- Need improvements to the Fitness Studio, the gymnasium and the washrooms
- In Village Park – need new washrooms and changerooms
- The Playground equipment, sports fields and spray park facilities were the next three amenities needing upgrades.
- The three top priorities for outdoors were multi-use covered areas, family gathering areas and event performance facilities. (*outdoor arts, culture and community facility improvements*)
- Sport and physical activity were the top activities for all age groups
- Need improved accessibility

### Survey Monkey Synopsis by Question

#### **Q1 *Where do you reside?***

The vast majority of respondents (85.77 %) lived in the Village of Cumberland. Thirteen (13.1%) lived in the Comox Valley.

#### **Q2 *What is your age?***

Seventy-two percent were between the ages of 19 to 59; twenty-seven percent were 60+, and only one person was 18 or younger.

#### **Q3 *How many people currently live in your household?***

Most of the respondents lived in households of 2 to 4 people, with about fifteen percent of households consisting of only one person.

#### **Q4 *Did you or any member of your household visit, participate in or attend any of the following in the last 3 years? Select all that apply.***

Organized events, outdoor recreation facilities (in parks) and the Recreation Centre were the most popular, with the Cultural Centre next in popularity and outdoor sports least popular.

#### **Q5. *Which of the following Recreation Centre facilities did you or members of your household use? Select all that apply.***

The gymnasium was most used at 70%, with the Fitness Studio at 51% and the climbing wall at 28%. Use of the recreation centre as a trailhead – for parking and washrooms & bike wash was at 47%.

#### **Q6 *How satisfied are you or other members of your household with your experiences at the Cumberland Recreation Centre and why?***

Only 25% of respondents were very satisfied, with 62% satisfied.

#### **Q7 *Have you had any issues registering for a program or booking a time/space at the Cumberland Recreation Centre?***

Eighty-five percent had no issues, with 15% indicating they had issues.

#### **Q8 *Have you had any issues with booking special events, facility rentals ,or park use permits?***

Very few respondents had issues , only 5 %, and 50% did not answer this question.

**Q9 Which of the following Cultural Centre facilities did you or members of your household use? Select all that apply.**

Seventy-two percent used Moncrief (upper hall) and 60 % used Buchanan, the lower hall.

**Q10. How satisfied are you or other members of your household with your experiences at the Cumberland Cultural Centre?**

About 23% were very satisfied, and 71% were satisfied with their experiences at the Cultural centre.

**Q11. What areas could be improved or added to make Village indoor fitness and sport facilities better suit the needs of you or members of your household?**

The number one choice for improvements was the Fitness Studio at 56%, followed by the gymnasium at 36% and the washrooms at 34 %. Improved accessibility for persons with disabilities was at 26%.

**Q12 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for Village indoor recreation facilities from the choices below.**

Gymnasium, Fitness Studio and Multi-purpose activity rooms were the top three choices.

**Q13 Which areas could be improved or added to make Village indoor cultural and community facilities better suit your needs or the needs of members of your household? (Select all that apply)**

The Buchanan Hall was the top choice for improvements along with a desire for more multi-purpose cultural and community rooms. Improved accessibility also ranked high.

**Q14 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for Village indoor cultural and community facilities from the choices below.**

All of the choices for the addition of cultural spaces ranked high, with the most popular being event and performance space, performing arts spaces and visual art programming.

**Q15 Which of the following Village outdoor facilities did you or members of your household use? Select all that apply.**

The majority of the Village facilities are well used. Most popular are the Village Park forested area, 74%, the Playground, 59% and the Village Square 58%. The spray park, the Mine 6 playground and the Village Park family picnic area are also popular. The ones with the lowest percentages of use are the Horseshoe Pits at 1%, the concession, 8% and the sports field lights, 9%.

**Q16 How satisfied are you or other members of your household with your experiences accessing Cumberland's outdoor recreation facilities?**

The majority of respondents were either satisfied (55%) or very satisfied(36%) with the outdoor facilities.

**Q17 What areas could be improved or added to make the Village outdoor recreation facilities better suit your needs or the needs of members of your household? (Select all that apply)**

The washrooms were by far the most selected amenity in need of improvement at 70%. Changerooms came in second at 30%. All of the other facilities scored fairly low in terms of needing improvement.

**Q18 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for Village outdoor recreation improvements and additions from the choices below.**

The washrooms were again the top amenity in need of improvement. The Playground equipment, sports fields and spray park facilities were the next three amenities needing upgrades.

**Q19 What areas could be improved or added to make the Village outdoor arts, culture and community facilities better suit your needs or the needs of members of your household? (Select all that apply)**

Multi-use covered areas scored the highest at 75%, with Family gathering/picnic areas coming in next at 64%. Event performing facilities also scored fairly high at 58%.

**Q20 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for Village outdoor arts, culture and community facility improvements and additions from the choices below.**

The three top priorities were Multi-use covered areas with a score of 3.08, family gathering areas 2.88 and event performance facilities 2.73.

**Q21 Which of the following organized events have you participated in or attended? Select all that apply.**

The most popular events were (in order): Farmer's Market, Cultural events, Arts & Craft Market, Music Event or Festival, Trail based event, Heritage event.

**Q22 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for improvements to organized events from the choices below.**

Permanent Outdoor stage was the top score, followed by more and better washrooms, then Variety in event types, and Improved venues for events.

**Q23 If there are specific improvements to organized events you would like to see, please describe them.**

This open ended question involved responses created by the survey participant. There was a long list of responses that are included in the next section.

**Q24 For which demographic would recreation, arts and culture programs be of interest to you or anyone in your household? Please select all that apply.**

The largest demographic was Adults (30-59) at 71%, followed by Older Adults 40%, Children (5-11) 35%, Youth 28%, and Preschoolers at 20%. Families were selected by 37% of the survey group.

**Q25 What types of programs are of interest to you for children ages 0 to 4? Please list.**

This open ended question also involved responses created by the survey participant. The list of responses was large and are included in the next section.

**Q26 What types of programs are of interest to you for children ages 5 to 18? Select all that apply.**

Physical Activity and sport led this list at 70%. Arts and crafts and Music and drama tied for the next most popular group at 48.34%. The last category, Social programs had 41%.

**Q27 What types of programs are of interest to you for adults (19 to 59)?**

The responses to this question were very similar to the previous question regarding children. Physical activity and sport was the highest at 78% followed by Arts & crafts – 49%, and Music and drama at 47%. Social programs were at 41%.

**Q28 What types of programs would be of interest to you for Older Adults(60+)**

This demographic still led with Sports and physical activity, but to a lesser extent – 56%. , Music and drama, Arts & crafts and social programs were all in the 39 to 40% range.

**Q29 What types of programs would be of interest to you for persons with special needs? Please list.**

This open ended question required responses created by the survey participant. The list of responses are included in the next section.

**Q30 *What are the barriers (if any) to you or anyone in your household to participate in recreation, arts and culture activities in Cumberland? Select all that apply.***

The barriers in order of number of responses were: Lack of information, Inadequate facilities, Facility hours of operation, and Cost.

### Open-Ended Questions

**Number 23. If there are specific improvements to organized events you would like to see, please describe them.**

Summary of comments related to events:

- Year round farmers market
- Larger outdoor covered area for music events.
- Local Artists regular performance evenings outdoors when the weather permits
- Dances
- More events
- A covered area by the BMX, and additional bathrooms in that area
- Closing Dunsmuir to vehicle traffic for markets and other events is always a good time!
- More live events, help local artists
- Kid's festivals and concerts
- Dog shows, Craft Fairs
- Diversity being welcomed and encouraged on all levels
- A small stage at Village Square for the summer music events
- A large stage at Village Park
- Renovated washrooms
- Get the town involved with more mountain bike events
- Bring back the May 1st Bean Dinner!
- Outdoor performance area and covered area for activities/competitions such as dance, fitness
- More senior's accessibility, and more attractions for their age
- More active participation by the Village for signage and improvement to off street parking adjacent to the event areas
- Just more events in the off-season, like Nov and Spring
- We need a better venue for musicians. Masonic hall acoustics aren't great.
- Absolutely need permanent (non porta potty) village washrooms
- The sound system in the CRI hall needs to be improved.
- Greater access to Cultural Centre
- Dirt jump and skating events at an improved space, better washroom access, sealed pump track.
- Definitely like to see Dunsmuir shut down for markets, etc.
- For larger events that attract non-locals, maybe some kind of ambassadors circulating to help people with appropriate parking, accessing toilet facilities and discouraging negative behaviours.
- Would love if events held on the field at village park did NOT ruin the field for sports, and/or the turf was improved to handle the traffic (e.g. better drainage, resod, etc.)
- Washroom facility with change room and showers. Multi use area to host gatherings

- Clearer communication and better stewardship from race organizers.

**Number 25: What types of programs are of interest to you or your children ages 0-4 Please list.**

Summary of program suggestions:

- Toddler and children outdoor dance party (daytime)
- Swimming
- Art, visual art
- Music (several comments re music)
- Stem based challenges
- More play groups or informative forest sessions
- Pre-school programs for babies and toddlers
- Play groups on weekends
- Art classes for pre-schoolers not during work week hours (9-5)
- Group activities
- Variations on toddler gym events
- Sensory development movement
- Gymnastics/ninjas
- Sports at the park
- Drop-in parent and tot gymnastics and climbing
- Free community activities for kids e.g., play and learn groups (low barrier so everyone can attend)
- Outdoor learning
- Parenting support
- Parent and baby, literacy, networking
- Painting, sculpture
- Dance
- Story time
- Mom groups to meet others, fitness with kids
- Early years style play/learning
- Physical activity stations outdoors for toddlers and kids
- Drop-in activities for toddlers, art/ride-on toys/story-time etc.

**Number 29: What types of programs would be of interest to you for persons with special needs?**

Summary of suggestions:

- Art therapy
- Arts and crafts
- Life skills, cooking etc.
- Outdoor dance/music
- Guided hiking, accessible trails, nature walks
- Adaptive trails
- Similar to regular programming but more inclusive facilities
- Arts and performances
- Social opportunities

- Yoga for people with PTSD
- Adaptive sports
- Gymnastics
- Accessible outdoor programming – being able to join in typical programming
- Smaller group activities for children with Autism
- Inclusivity into regular programs
- All events – awareness of barriers to access
- Fully accessible public washrooms
- Swimming
- Access to arts, music and outdoor physical activity
- Need more activities in general for persons with disabilities
- Full accessibility to mobility devices
- Programming for persons with diverse cognitive needs, including all age groups

# Summary Document - Recreation, Arts and Culture Engagement Interviews

This consultation phase was designed to gather information from Core Organizations, Regional Arts and Culture Organizations, Cumberland Arts & Culture Organizations, Village Park Sport Stakeholders, Internal Village Staff, and Village Program Staff (contractors).

Interviews, both individual and group, were conducted from mid-March until late April 2022. In total thirty-five stakeholders provided their input on Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture in the Village of Cumberland during this consultation phase.

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## Themes

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Several “key themes” were identified through the discussions with community leaders and staff active in parks, recreation, arts, and culture in Cumberland. These themes are:

- Changing demographics – many young families; older residents moving out of the area
- Significant growth in population
- The Cumberland Community School is an integral part of the Village. Their facilities need to be considered as they relate to future recreation programs and facilities
- Arts and Culture organizations want more collaboration with the Village both in terms of facilities, programming, and funding
- Event organizers are seeking more support primarily through the provision of outdoor event infrastructure such as a permanent outdoor stage
- Village Park sportsfields and buildings need considerable upgrading/rebuilding
- The BMX Park is very popular, but there is concern for long term use of the site
- Village Square would better serve the community through upgrades to accommodate gatherings and events (including permanent washrooms)
- The Recreation Centre and the Cultural Centre do not serve the needs of the community and require extensive renovations or replacement.
- A new facility needs a variety of distinct and dedicated program spaces - large, medium, and small
- The economic impact of the Arts is huge

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# What Is Your Vision?

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The participants in the consultation process provided an extensive list of suggestions as to what was great and what is needed to improve the parks, recreation, arts, and culture experience in Cumberland.

## Activities, Programs, Events, Services

- More arts and culture events would be good for the Village businesses – huge economic impact
- Continued events/activities such as the Woodstove Festival, the Night Market, the Farmers Market, Concerts, large outdoor events
- Work more closely with the regional arts and culture organizations – Comox Valley Arts Council; Comox Valley Art Galley; Sid Williams Theatre
- Village programs such as gymnastics, personal training, climbing and others are often full, but cannot be expanded due to lack of adequate facility space

## Infrastructure

- Permanent public washrooms in the Village downtown
- The Village Square made more usable for larger crowds (remove spruce tree, re-configure park amenities)
- Kiosk in Village for information and maps
- Modifications to outdoor and indoor spaces to better support arts and culture
- More indoor space to provide programs that are currently in the school (e.g., Youth Drop-In)
- Address the lack of infrastructure for arts and culture
- The Recreation Centre needs to be replaced, not renovated
- The Cultural Centre needs to be replaced, not renovated
- A new indoor facility should include a large multi-purpose room, large changerooms, several smaller multi-purpose rooms, a fitness room, squash courts, staff offices
- A large, dedicated fitness space with a weight room and a room for fitness classes
- Also need space for yoga and other “physical” classes
- A new facility should also include an indoor space that can be used for small theatrical/dance/music productions, rehearsals, and a sound studio
- The Cumberland Lake Park and Campground need a solution to the parking issues in the summer, and another outdoor covered space for programs and events
- Important to recognize the role of “third spaces” e.g., Weird Church, private businesses
- Village Park needs new support buildings or one combined building – washrooms, changerooms, and storage - as existing buildings are in very poor condition and not very

functional. They have electrical and water issues. They are not meeting the needs of the users.

- Village Park needs a covered outdoor space for programs
- Village Park needs an outdoor stage for events
- The sports fields need attention – dugouts, lighting and field conditions
- BMX park could use lights

### **Partnerships**

- The Museum would benefit from a closer relationship with the Village – to achieve common goals
- Currently there is no Joint-Use Agreement between the Village and the School; the Village makes no financial contribution to the School, although the school facilities indoors and out are extensively used by the community
- The BMX group wants “security” for use of the track in the long term

### **Village Support**

- The Cumberland Community Grant is not “focussed”. They need sector specific grants.
- Organizations need funding for their operations and projects
- Cumberland needs a Policy for Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Continued grant support from the Village for Events
- An Asset Management Plan
- More staff is needed to support administration, to run programs and to support community organizations. Parks has no administrative staff

# Summary Document - Recreation, Arts and Culture Engagement Event #1

During a Recreation Arts and Culture planning process for the Village of Cumberland, an open house was held on March 16, 2022. Visitors to the session were asked, “What is your story?” and “What is your vision”. This is a summary of comments from that session.

Subheadings have been created to enhance readability. Comments were taken from large-format, open brainstorm process and are listed in no specific order.

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## What is Your Story?

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Things I love – the new museum reno, science pubs, home and garden tour, Village Square events

I grew up in the Valley (Black Creek) and started coming to Cumberland at a young age to attend the Big Time Out. Loved Cumberland vibe, very laid back, outdoorsy and let ‘your freak flag fly’. When I joined the Women’s Rugby team out of high school, this was our playground and hub. I have since moved here and I am continuing to do the things that originally attracted me to Cumberland in addition to more! I have tried mountain biking here for the first time, exploring more mountainous views and lake spots and enjoying the live music at the Wave or other outside/inside venues have to offer. Everything is a bike ride away and I love that the way to town is always downhill.

Love the small town feel of Cumberland, active arts and music, energy of mountain bikers. The small venues are a treat. Village has a great spirit!

Love, love love the potential! We have lots of space to be ‘IN’ and to create, and ‘OUT’ to do the same. Some use of space in small businesses is exquisite – would love to see more!

Bike culture – my son started riding the BMX track at 3 years old and continues to BMX at 8. The BMX track has taught him the bike skills to gain confidence in riding the dirt jumps and mountain bike trails. We spend 7 nights a week at the dirt jumps, BMX track and skateboard park.

I love the excitement and the energy. Great community and want to be more involved

Love the arts culture and scene here – community events and markets, great food

Just made it to the Valley. Love it. Tulloch Academy is my company. I teach acting, dance, voice performance, camera, voice over. I write, direct and produce. Some of my work 'Bullying Games', 'Canada 150', 'Coquitlam Rises'. Here to help!

Love the strong sense of community and the strong commitment of its community members. It's very inspiring! I hope the community continues to welcome new people as warmly as we have been welcomed.

I love it here. I love you here. The music, the creators who need homes, the families who see, feel, engage with the arts, the stories, old and new, still unfolding. We are all in it. Counting houses, jobs, lovers, friends, disasters, change, gentrification. Let's create space for art and people.

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## What is Your Vision?

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### Activities/Programs

More inclusive recreation for various ability levels

Affordable yoga classes

Use of arts and cultural programs, facilities to share the stories of Cumberland's heritage, values, and shifting perspectives, place for dialogue

Music and dance recitals with workshops at Weird church. Youth workshops in basement

Have dance classes at Cultural Centre and recitals at Weird Church

More street fairs

Seniors' fitness class for older seniors

Chair yoga

Carpet bowling

Senior's chair fit class

Chair yoga for seniors

### Services

Draw in more tourists and keep them coming back with new community events, new signs (ie. Maps pointing people to significant historical/cultural sights)

More concerts in the park beside the bakery with kid-friendly start times and more adult-friendly ones with beer gardens

Bulletin board to announce events

Food Court or food truck areas

A community map to share with residents as well as tourists to direct them clearly to all the various rich parts of Cumberland. This could help spread out tourism 'traffic' to make it manageable

Access to stage rental and chair rental, etc.

Community Village map in the 'downtown' area for visitors and also to act as an affordable 'info booth' with QR code to update tourism info on website. Right now, tourists seek guidance from businesses

It would be awesome to display the financial and community benefit of the bike wash station. Example: the operating cost vs the money mountain bike tourism brings

## **Collaborations**

More collaboration with BC transit for Valley folks to attend Cumby events

More partnerships with the Sid Williams Theatre

Look at Weird Church as Cultural hub. This is a beauty venue. Village should help and support renovations

## **General Culture**

I hope that the community grows/improves within their means and remembers that although they have become quite the destination that they are still a community where people live and order of importance should lie with its residents rather than visitors.

Let the music culture bloom and progress just as it was before the pandemic. Outdoor music events and gathering back this summer

## **Venues/infrastructure**

Park at upper Kendall

Indoor market space

Studio space for artists where they can leave their art and access to public to show their art

Extra outdoor plugins in Village Square

Access to move portable staging from CRI to smaller rooms (i.e. Cultural Centre)

Blackout windows available for Cultural Centre

CRI gym sound treatment

Improve audio for non-sport events

Thick drapery to improved acoustics in CRI and Cultural Centre up and downstairs

New roof did not fix the leaks so ceiling can still drip in heavy rains

Lacrosse box that could be fun for other user groups too – like outdoor roller skating

More patio space

Outdoor Amphitheatre

Soundscape improvement for CRI gym

Blackout panels in Cultural Centre

Accessible & affordable community space for workshops and rehearsal

Covered stage area

Rename Cultural Centre – no one gets it

Make bottom floor of Cultural Centre soundproof in ceiling

Make bottom floor of Cultural Centre dividable with accordion wall

Change lighting to separate controls and dimmable

Collapsible bleachers for CRI

Swimming Pool

Covered Patios

Playground up amongst the new development (Kendall/Kentmore) to help with all the children on the street

Flat ground skater area with a few 'curbs' to grind - between dog park and existing skate park

Dirt Jumps

Outdoor table tennis

Multi-use flex spaces that can accommodate a number of varied uses

Combining recreation and culture with art-bike storage @ arts facilities

Gardens that are culturally purposeful (Indigenous plants, Chinese and Japanese)

Make Cultural Centre (Montcrief and Buchanan) and CRI could be improved for entertainment events with 1. Incandescent dimmable valence lighting with switches located in one place for ease of starting and ending a performance. Electrical breakout or 3 - 20-amp circuits located in one place for stage area to accommodate lights and sound.

Build an official trail through vacant treed lot across from Pharmasave, bottom of freaky Friday trail

Lots of outdoor events - update the small venues

More bike racks downtown

Parking lot at Cultural Centre have walk/ride. Markets too (*we're wondering if they're referring to a park and ride?*)

Add a washroom and covered space to Village Square

Blank site plans for all facilities and outdoor spaces. Used for liquor licenses, electrical needs, etc.

Support community recreation teams/clubs by providing support they may need to improve their organizations, i.e.: Cumberland Village Park washroom/changeroom/shower facility could 100% use an upgrade. Love how raw the park is (no fences, bleachers, etc.) but field maintenance could be improved (i.e. holes in the field for drainage).

## Summary of staff conversations/engagement

### Indoor Facilities:

- Noise transfer between upper and lower floor in the Culture Centre is a barrier to running cultural / “less active” programs in the Buchanan Hall
- Some relatively easy building improvements would make the Buchanan Hall much more amenable to arts and cultural programs: e.g. stage; black out curtains; room divider; improved lighting
- Similarly, some relatively easy building improvements to the Gymnasium in the Rec Centre could also make it much more amenable to arts and culture programs – e.g. sound / acoustic improvements

### Partnerships:

- Need to engage with key “3rd party” venues/spaces.... to seek out potential partnerships, ensure service gaps are filled but not overlapping. Important spaces for consideration include The Abbey, The Weird Church, the School, and the Masonic Hall.

### Outdoor Facilities:

- Replace the Village Park east ball diamond/dugout/scorekeeper hut with a multipurpose covered space to be used for programs, concerts/stages, awards ceremonies, etc. Face one side north (into the forested area), the other side south (lookout to the mountain). Include some storage space and washroom
- Improve west diamond amenities
- Village Park desired recreational amenities: more pickleball courts (add lines to the tennis court?); paved pump track; MTB skills zone; “street”/flat pad addition to skatepark
- Concession facilities aren’t required in VP, but services for food truck to “plug and play” would be needed instead

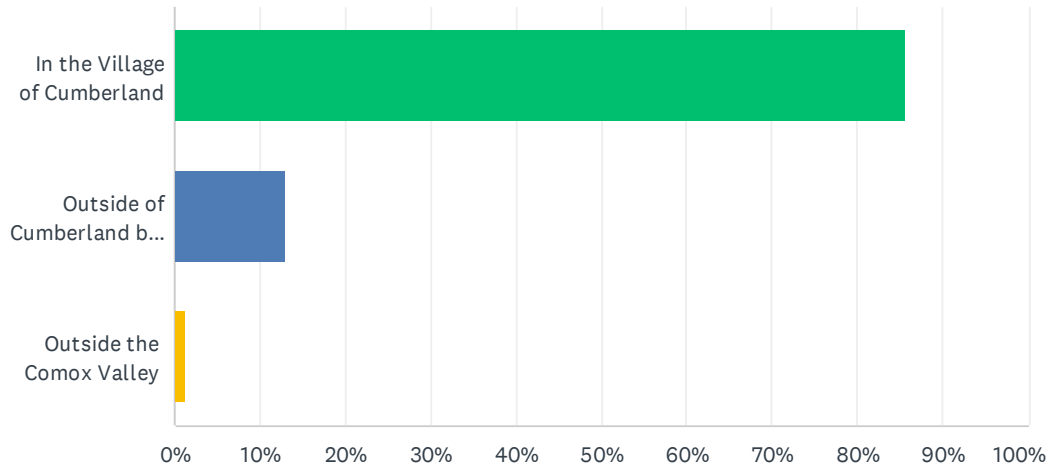
- Village Square: improved landscaping to facilitate special events.... covered area (potential partnership with private owner of customs building... at top of stairs?); permanent washroom in SE corner
- Build a playground in CVE
- No. 6 Mine Park
- 

#### Administration:

- Rename “Parks, Recreation and Culture Department”
- Facilitate easier access to Village furniture / event support items such as stage (in Rec Centre Gym), chair and table rental
- Create a “service map” of all venues... Gym, Buchanan Hall, Moncrief Hall, No. 6 Mine Park, Village Square, Village Park... similar to what Courtenay has for Native Sons Hall
-

## Q1 Where do you reside?

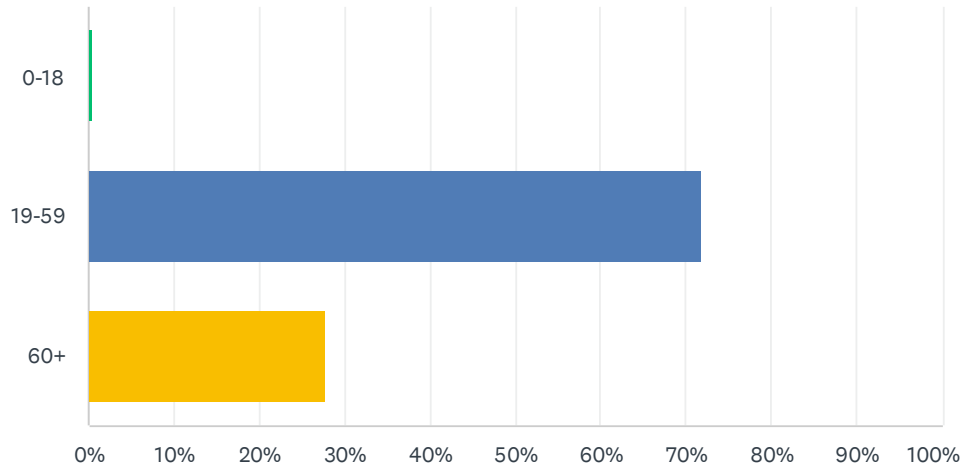
Answered: 246 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
In the Village of Cumberland	85.77%	211
Outside of Cumberland but in the Comox Valley	13.01%	32
Outside the Comox Valley	1.22%	3
TOTAL		246

## Q2 What is your age?

Answered: 246 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0-18	0.41% 1
19-59	71.95% 177
60+	27.64% 68
TOTAL	246

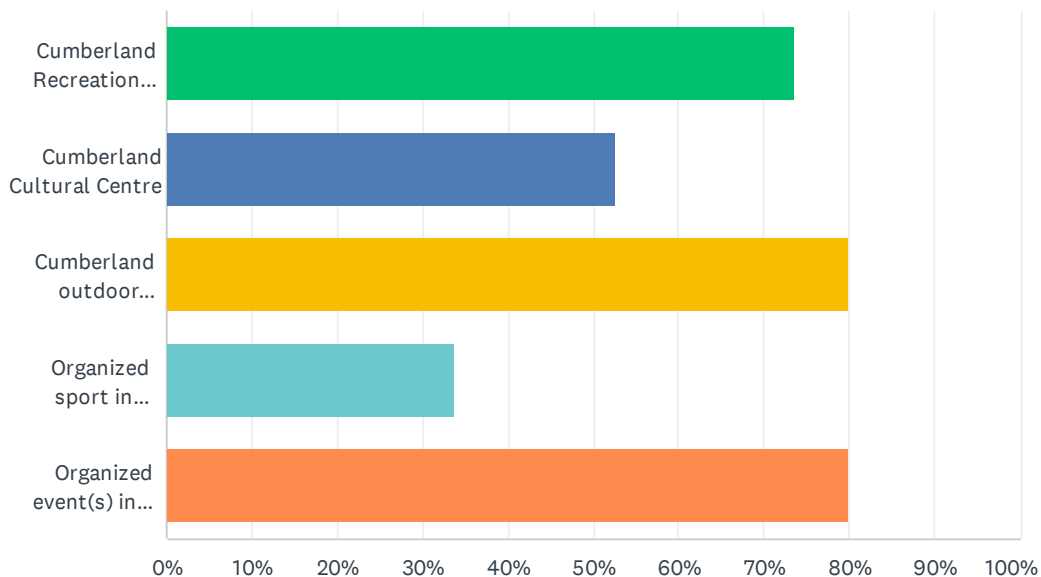
### Q3 How many people currently live in your household?

Answered: 247 Skipped: 0

Number in Household	Count
1	37
2	86
3	52
4	53
5	11
6	7
7	1
Total	247

Q4 Did you or any member of your household visit, participate in or attend any of the following in the last 3 years? Select all that apply.

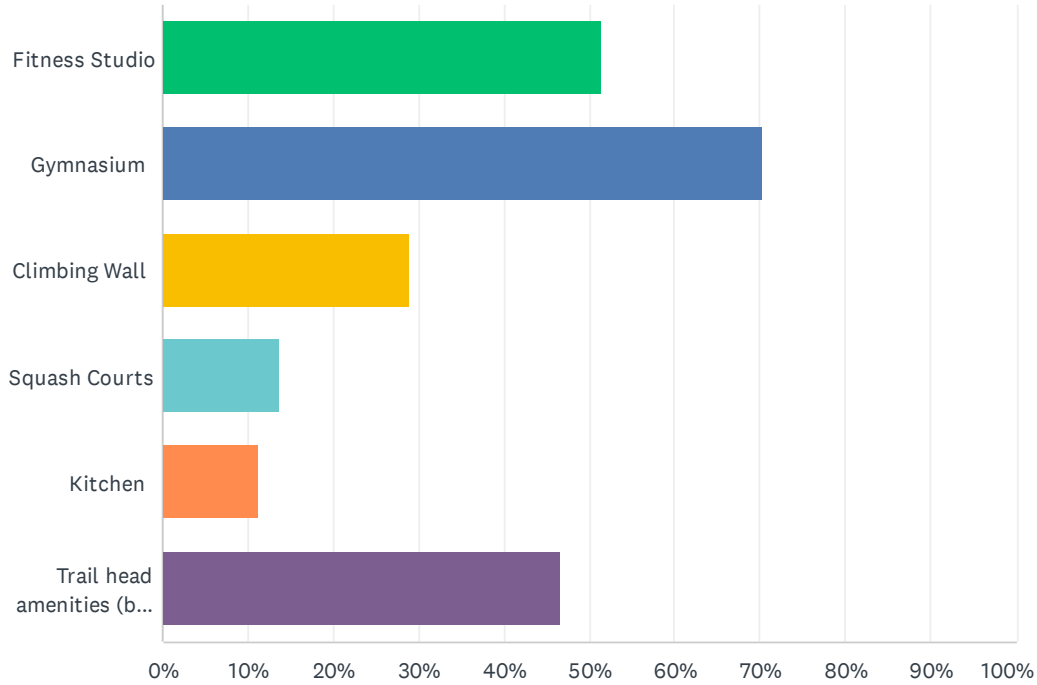
Answered: 235 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cumberland Recreation Centre	73.62%	173
Cumberland Cultural Centre	52.77%	124
Cumberland outdoor recreation facilities in Village Park, No. 6 Mine Park and/or Village Square	80.00%	188
Organized sport in Cumberland	33.62%	79
Organized event(s) in Cumberland	80.00%	188
Total Respondents: 235		

### Q5 Which of the following Recreation Centre facilities did you or members of your household use? Select all that apply.

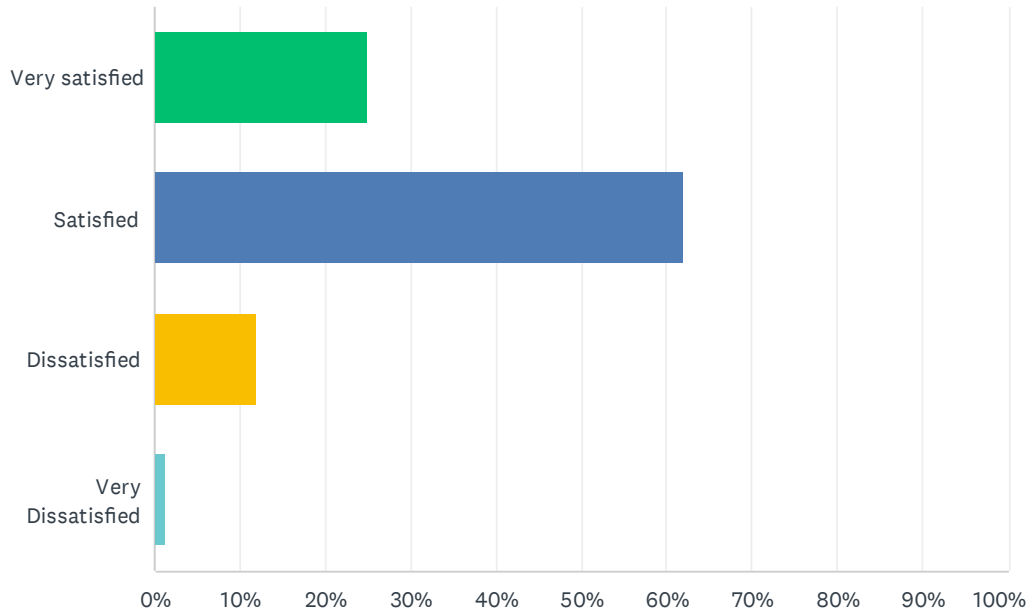
Answered: 169 Skipped: 78



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Fitness Studio	51.48%	87
Gymnasium	70.41%	119
Climbing Wall	28.99%	49
Squash Courts	13.61%	23
Kitchen	11.24%	19
Trail head amenities (bike wash and public washrooms)	46.75%	79
Total Respondents: 169		

## Q6 How satisfied are you or other members of your household with your experiences at the Cumberland Recreation Centre and why?

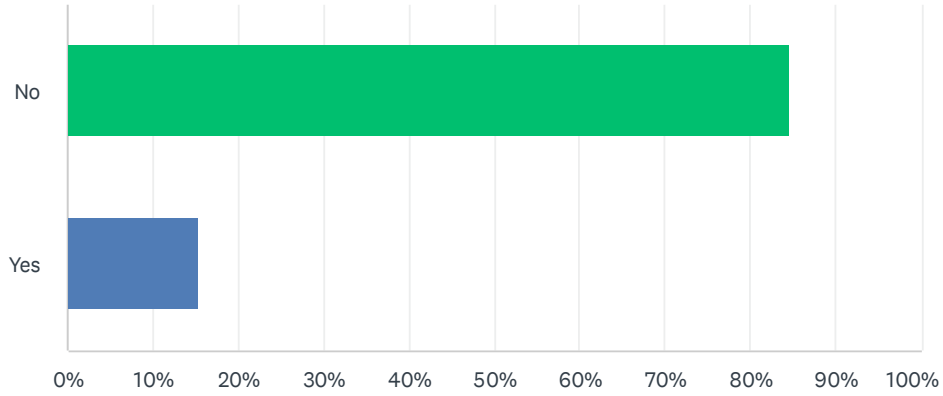
Answered: 169 Skipped: 78



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	24.85%	42
Satisfied	62.13%	105
Dissatisfied	11.83%	20
Very Dissatisfied	1.18%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>169</b>

## Q7 Have you had any issues registering for a program or booking a time/space at the Cumberland Recreation Centre?

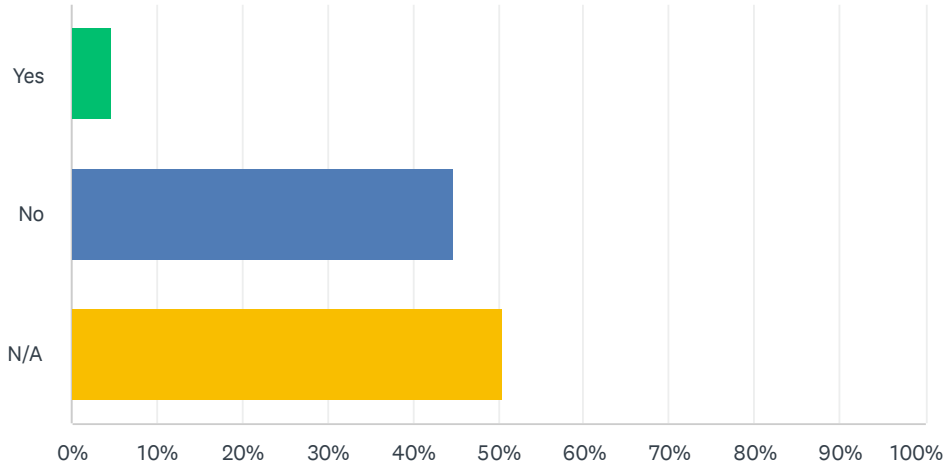
Answered: 169 Skipped: 78



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No	84.62%	143
Yes	15.38%	26
TOTAL		169

### Q8 Have you had any issues with booking special events, facility rentals, or park use permits?

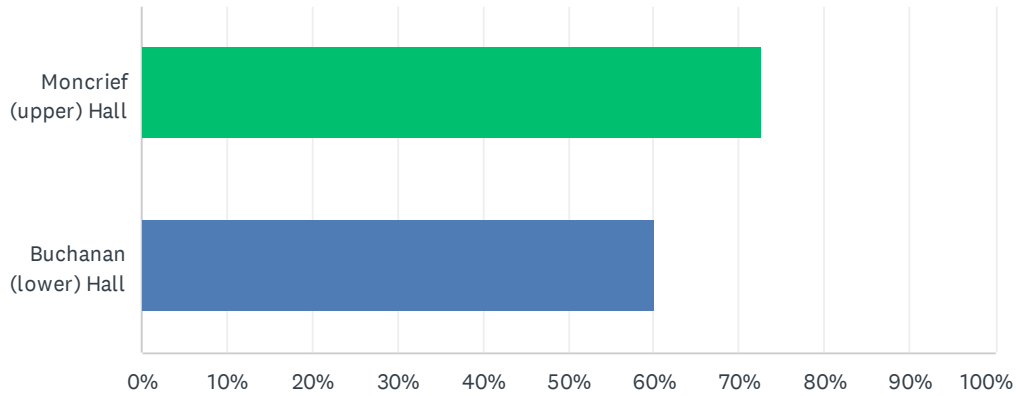
Answered: 172 Skipped: 75



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	4.65% 8
No	44.77% 77
N/A	50.58% 87
TOTAL	172

Q9 Which of the following Cultural Centre facilities did you or members of your household use? Select all that apply.

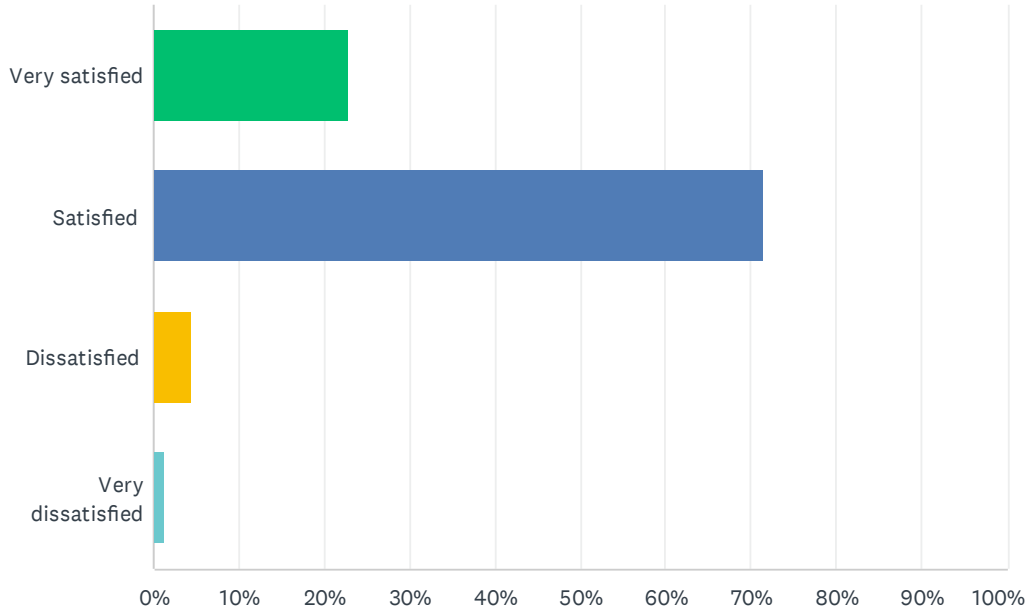
Answered: 143 Skipped: 104



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Moncrief (upper) Hall	72.73% 104
Buchanan (lower) Hall	60.14% 86
Total Respondents: 143	

## Q10 How satisfied are you or other members of your household with your experiences at the Cumberland Cultural Centre?

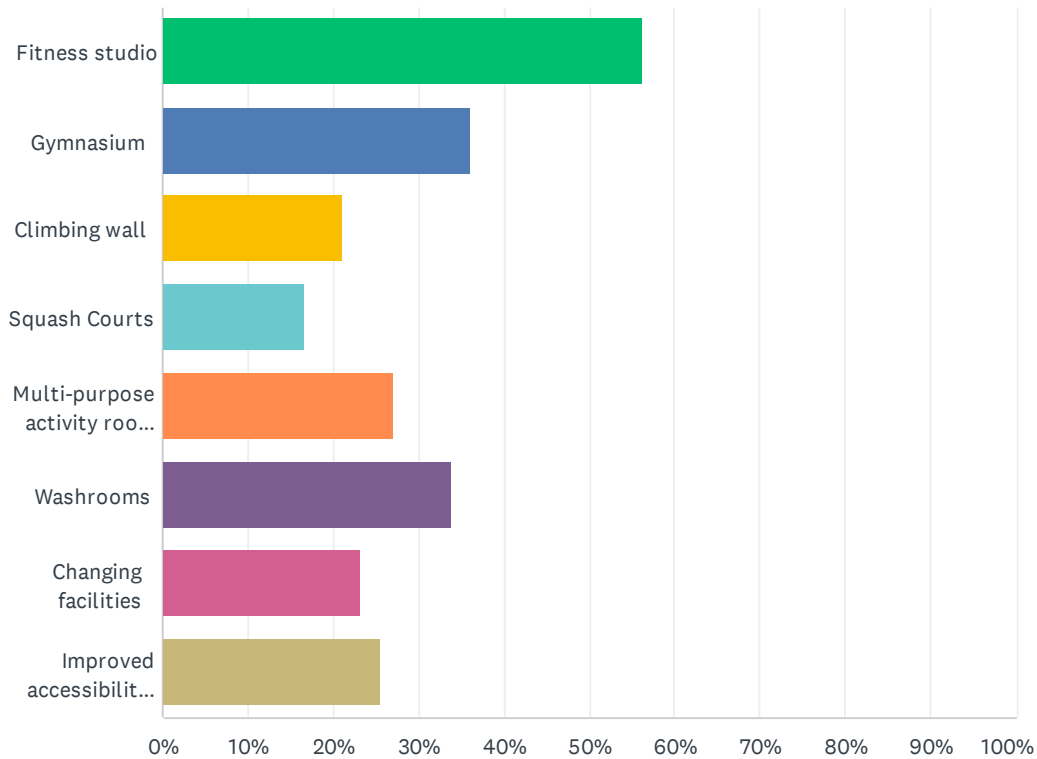
Answered: 158 Skipped: 89



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	22.78%	36
Satisfied	71.52%	113
Dissatisfied	4.43%	7
Very dissatisfied	1.27%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>158</b>

### Q11 What areas could be improved or added to make Village indoor fitness and sport facilities better suit the needs or you or members of your household? (Select all that apply)

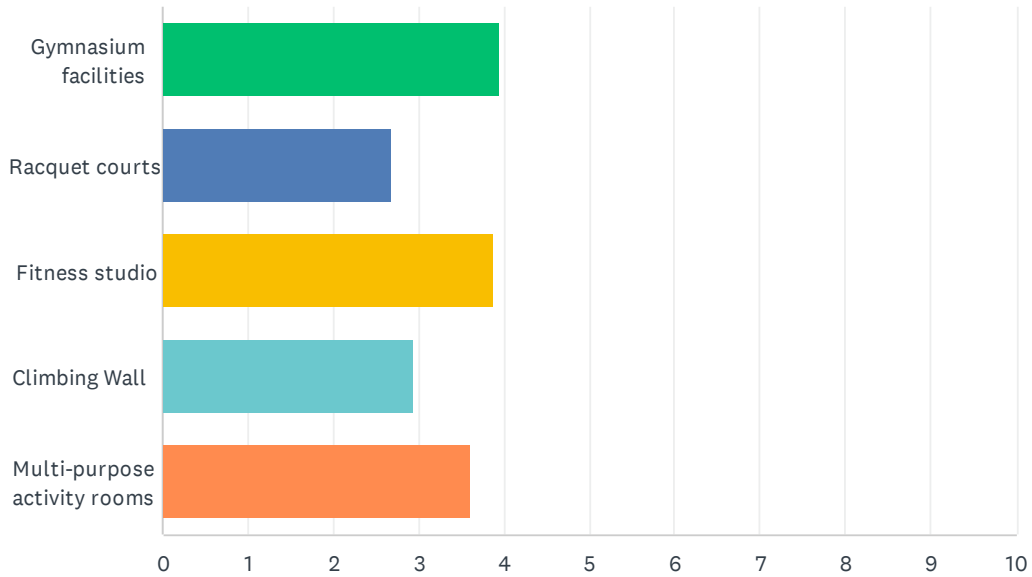
Answered: 133 Skipped: 114



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Fitness studio	56.39%	75
Gymnasium	36.09%	48
Climbing wall	21.05%	28
Squash Courts	16.54%	22
Multi-purpose activity rooms (e.g. Moncrief Hall)	27.07%	36
Washrooms	33.83%	45
Changing facilities	23.31%	31
Improved accessibility for people with disabilities	25.56%	34
Total Respondents: 133		

### Q12 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for Village indoor recreation facilities from the choices below.

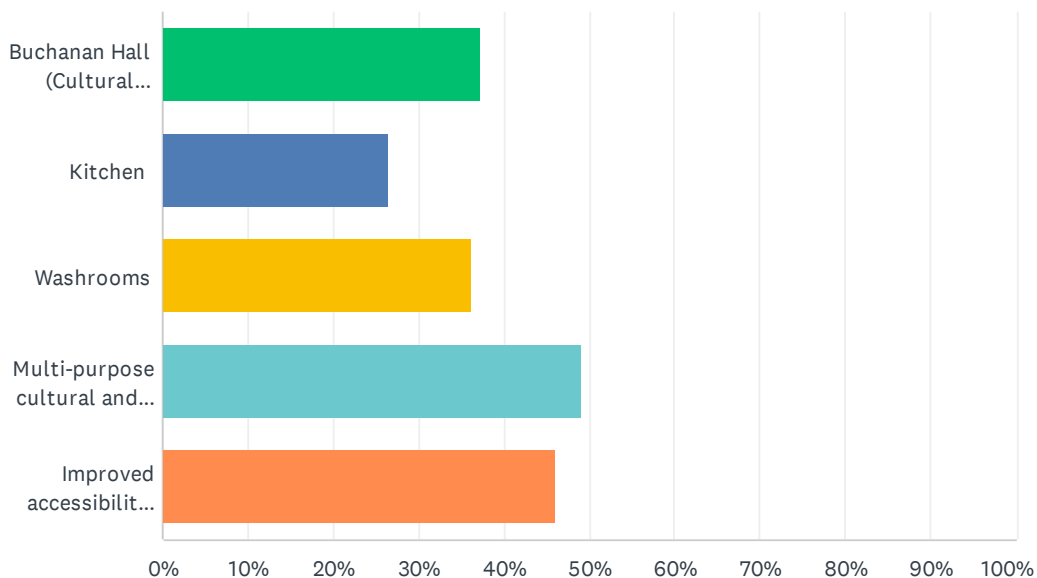
Answered: 174 Skipped: 73



	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Gymnasium facilities	28.08% 41	44.52% 65	21.92% 32	4.11% 6	1.37% 2	146	3.94
Racquet courts	14.77% 13	12.50% 11	25.00% 22	21.59% 19	26.14% 23	88	2.68
Fitness studio	41.96% 60	23.08% 33	22.38% 32	6.99% 10	5.59% 8	143	3.89
Climbing Wall	17.00% 17	17.00% 17	29.00% 29	18.00% 18	19.00% 19	100	2.95
Multi-purpose activity rooms	28.47% 39	27.01% 37	29.93% 41	6.57% 9	8.03% 11	137	3.61

### Q13 Which areas could be improved or added to make Village indoor cultural and community facilities better suit your needs or the needs of members of your household? (Select all that apply)

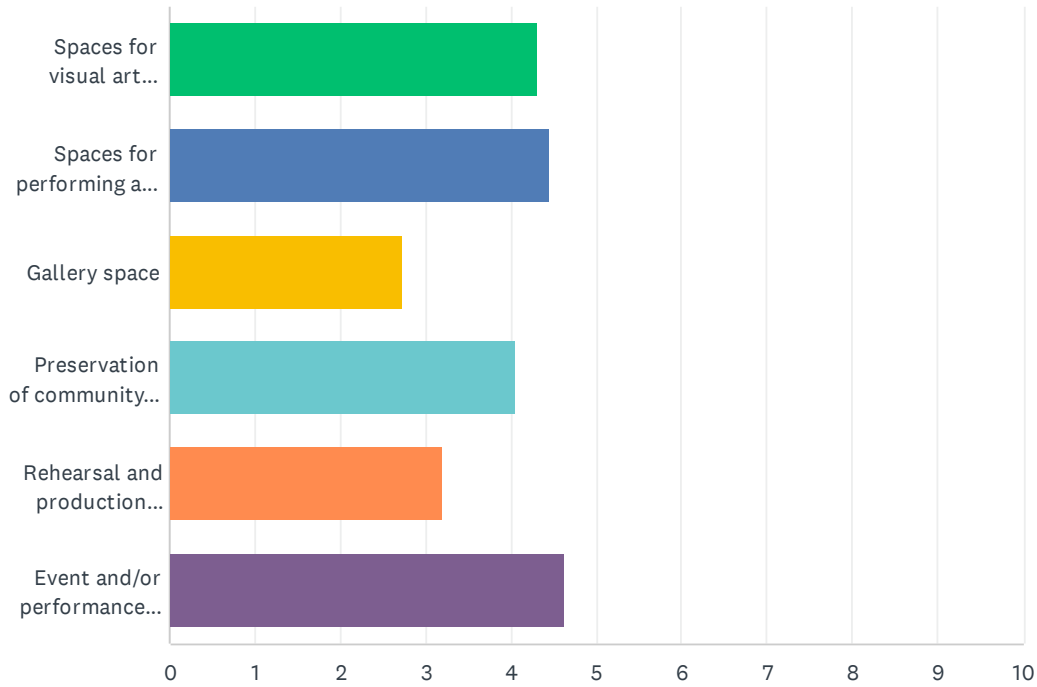
Answered: 102 Skipped: 145



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Buchanan Hall (Cultural Centre Lower Level)	37.25%	38
Kitchen	26.47%	27
Washrooms	36.27%	37
Multi-purpose cultural and community rooms (e.g. Buchanan Hall)	49.02%	50
Improved accessibility for people with disabilities	46.08%	47
Total Respondents: 102		

### Q14 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for Village indoor cultural and community facilities from the choices below.

Answered: 146 Skipped: 101

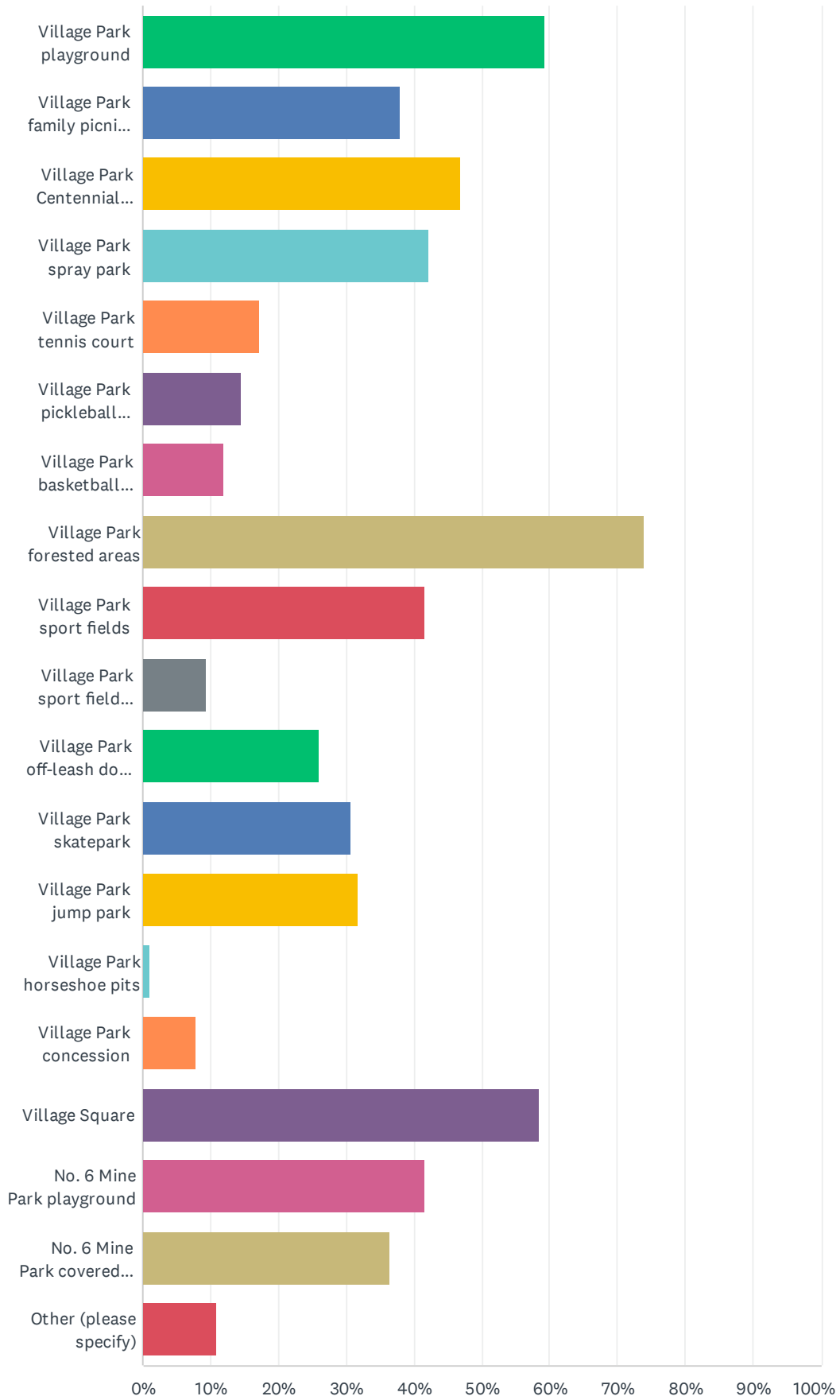


	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Spaces for visual art programming	26.53% 26	18.37% 18	27.55% 27	16.33% 16	9.18% 9	2.04% 2	98	4.31
Spaces for performing art programming	16.24% 19	40.17% 47	26.50% 31	10.26% 12	4.27% 5	2.56% 3	117	4.46
Gallery space	4.55% 4	10.23% 9	20.45% 18	13.64% 12	20.45% 18	30.68% 27	88	2.73
Preservation of community heritage	30.43% 35	15.65% 18	18.26% 21	12.17% 14	12.17% 14	11.30% 13	115	4.06
Rehearsal and production space for artists	7.00% 7	17.00% 17	21.00% 21	14.00% 14	25.00% 25	16.00% 16	100	3.19
Event and/or performance venues	40.46% 53	25.95% 34	12.98% 17	6.11% 8	4.58% 6	9.92% 13	131	4.62

Q15 Which of the following Village outdoor facilities did you or members of your household use? Select all that apply.

Answered: 192 Skipped: 55

# Recreation, Arts & Culture Planning Survey

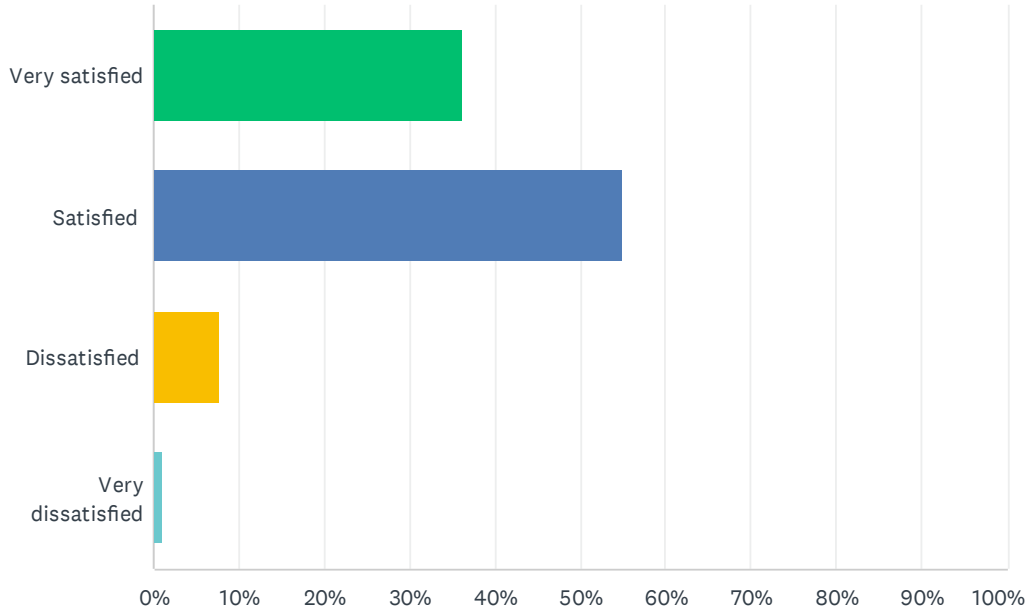


## Recreation, Arts & Culture Planning Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Village Park playground	59.38%	114
Village Park family picnic area	38.02%	73
Village Park Centennial building (washrooms/change rooms)	46.88%	90
Village Park spray park	42.19%	81
Village Park tennis court	17.19%	33
Village Park pickleball court	14.58%	28
Village Park basketball court	11.98%	23
Village Park forested areas	73.96%	142
Village Park sport fields	41.67%	80
Village Park sport field lights	9.38%	18
Village Park off-leash dog park	26.04%	50
Village Park skatepark	30.73%	59
Village Park jump park	31.77%	61
Village Park horseshoe pits	1.04%	2
Village Park concession	7.81%	15
Village Square	58.33%	112
No. 6 Mine Park playground	41.67%	80
No. 6 Mine Park covered area	36.46%	70
Other (please specify)	10.94%	21
<b>Total Respondents: 192</b>		

### Q16 How satisfied are you or other members of your household with your experiences accessing Cumberland's outdoor recreation facilities?

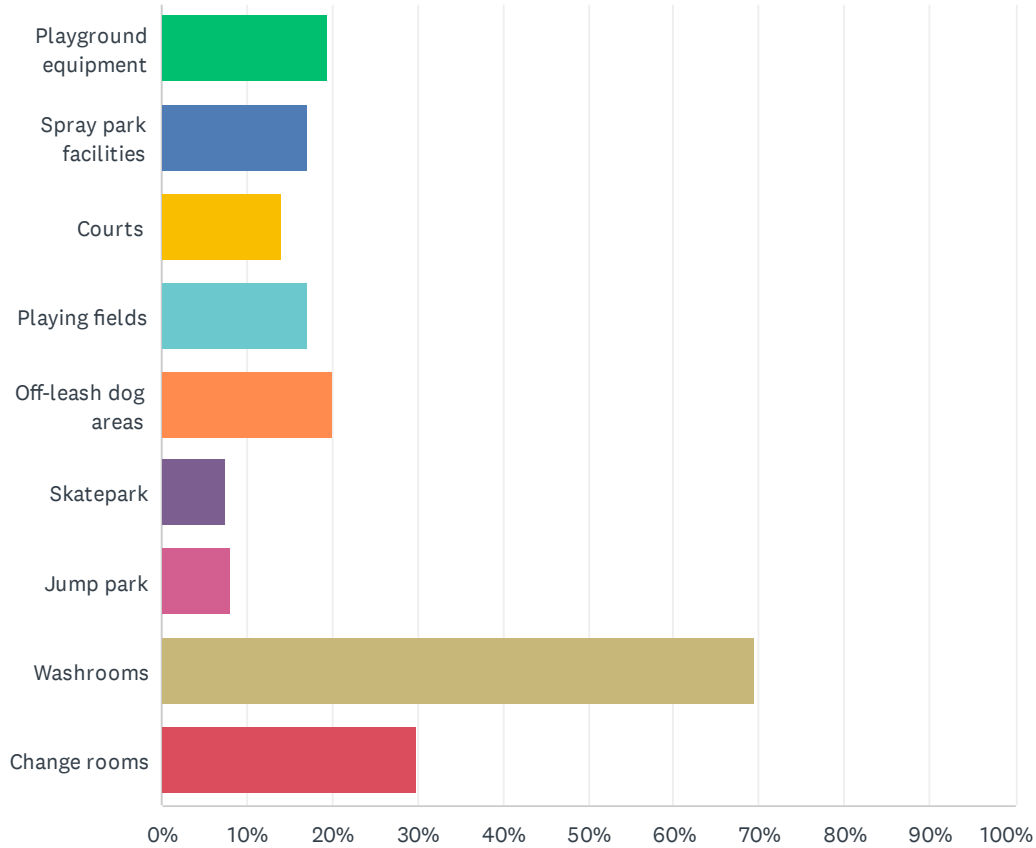
Answered: 196 Skipped: 51



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	36.22%	71
Satisfied	55.10%	108
Dissatisfied	7.65%	15
Very dissatisfied	1.02%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>196</b>

### Q17 What areas could be improved or added to make the Village outdoor recreation facilities better suit your needs or the needs of members of your household? (Select all that apply)

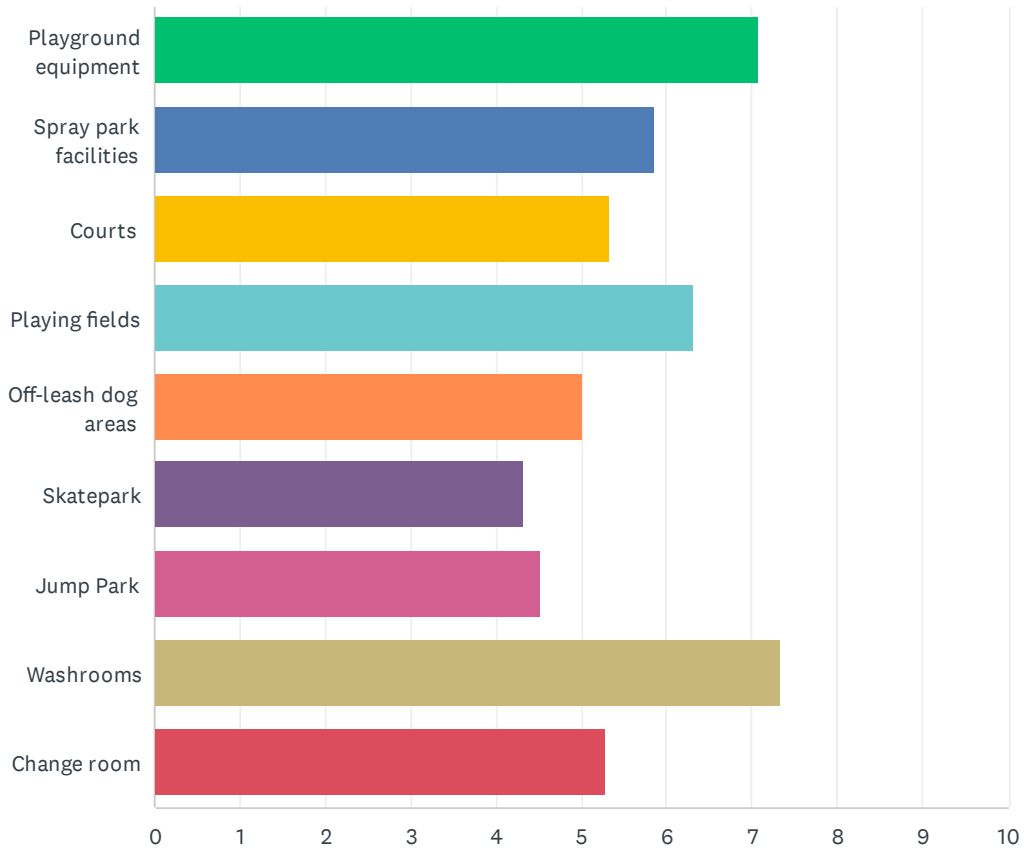
Answered: 134 Skipped: 113



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Playground equipment	19.40% 26
Spray park facilities	17.16% 23
Courts	14.18% 19
Playing fields	17.16% 23
Off-leash dog areas	20.15% 27
Skatepark	7.46% 10
Jump park	8.21% 11
Washrooms	69.40% 93
Change rooms	29.85% 40
Total Respondents: 134	

### Q18 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for Village outdoor recreation improvements and additions from the choices below.

Answered: 164 Skipped: 83

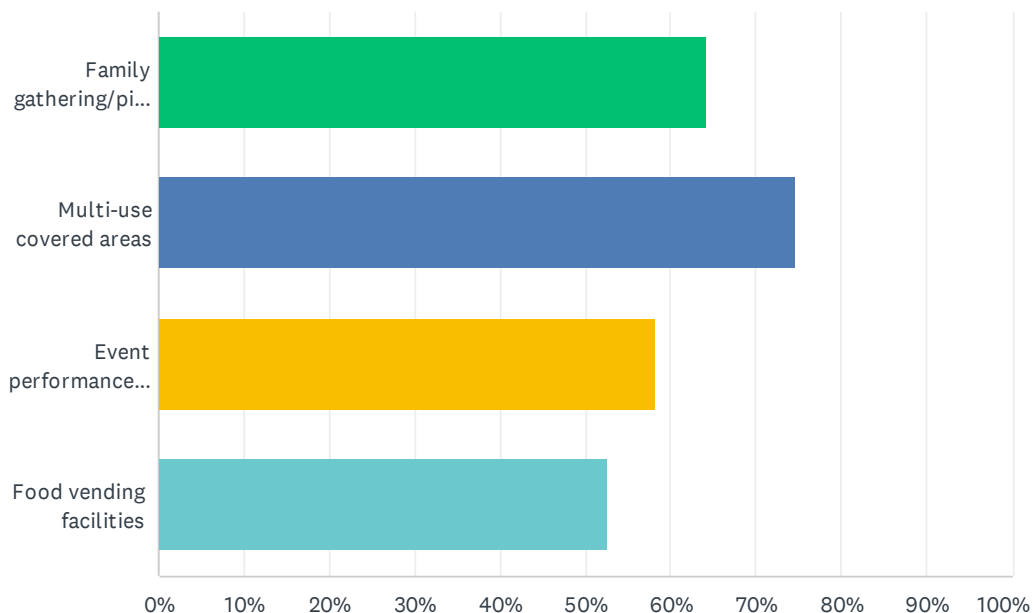


## Recreation, Arts & Culture Planning Survey

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL	SCORE
Playground equipment	29.41% 30	25.49% 26	13.73% 14	14.71% 15	5.88% 6	2.94% 3	1.96% 2	1.96% 2	3.92% 4	102	7.08
Spray park facilities	6.74% 6	17.98% 16	23.60% 21	11.24% 10	14.61% 13	10.11% 9	7.87% 7	4.49% 4	3.37% 3	89	5.87
Courts	14.29% 14	5.10% 5	21.43% 21	9.18% 9	12.24% 12	12.24% 12	6.12% 6	10.20% 10	9.18% 9	98	5.33
Playing fields	22.33% 23	12.62% 13	17.48% 18	17.48% 18	9.71% 10	5.83% 6	5.83% 6	3.88% 4	4.85% 5	103	6.31
Off-leash dog areas	12.04% 13	12.96% 14	9.26% 10	11.11% 12	8.33% 9	11.11% 12	15.74% 17	5.56% 6	13.89% 15	108	5.02
Skatepark	2.22% 2	11.11% 10	8.89% 8	3.33% 3	13.33% 12	21.11% 19	17.78% 16	14.44% 13	7.78% 7	90	4.32
Jump Park	10.87% 10	9.78% 9	13.04% 12	5.43% 5	4.35% 4	7.61% 7	15.22% 14	19.57% 18	14.13% 13	92	4.51
Washrooms	40.00% 58	23.45% 34	15.17% 22	4.83% 7	3.45% 5	3.45% 5	2.07% 3	6.90% 10	0.69% 1	145	7.34
Change room	7.00% 7	29.00% 29	14.00% 14	3.00% 3	8.00% 8	6.00% 6	6.00% 6	8.00% 8	19.00% 19	100	5.28

**Q19 What areas could be improved or added to make the Village outdoor arts, culture and community facilities better suit your needs or the needs of members of your household? (Select all that apply)**

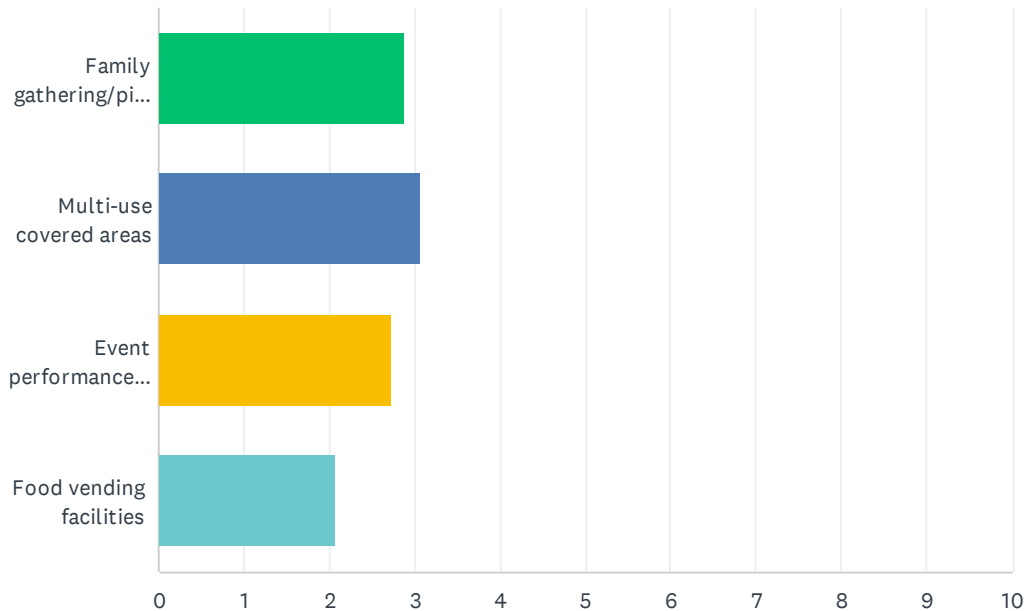
Answered: 165 Skipped: 82



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Family gathering/picnic areas	64.24%	106
Multi-use covered areas	74.55%	123
Event performance facilities (e.g. stage)	58.18%	96
Food vending facilities	52.73%	87
Total Respondents: 165		

Q20 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for Village outdoor arts, culture and community facility improvements and additions from the choices below.

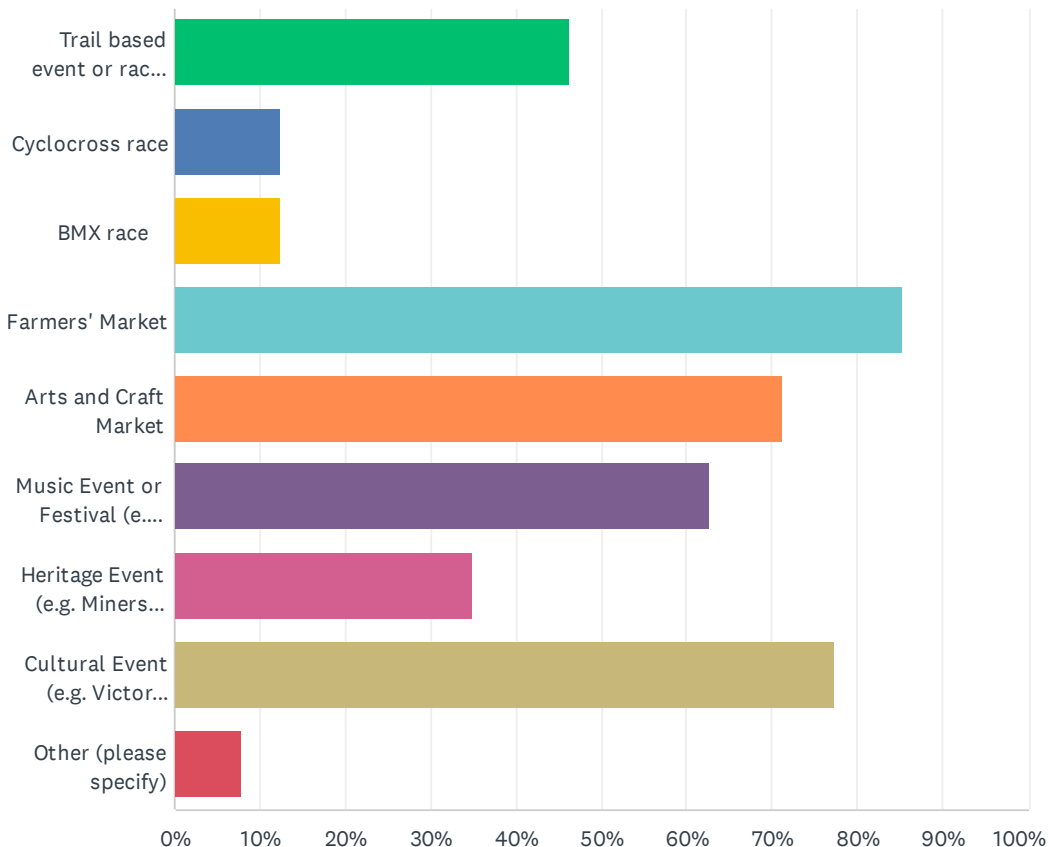
Answered: 167 Skipped: 80



	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE
Family gathering/picnic areas	35.62% 52	28.08% 41	25.34% 37	10.96% 16	146	2.88
Multi-use covered areas	35.85% 57	39.62% 63	20.75% 33	3.77% 6	159	3.08
Event performance facilities (e.g. stage)	30.94% 43	25.18% 35	29.50% 41	14.39% 20	139	2.73
Food vending facilities	12.17% 14	19.13% 22	32.17% 37	36.52% 42	115	2.07

## Q21 Which of the following organized events have you participated in or attended? Select all that apply.

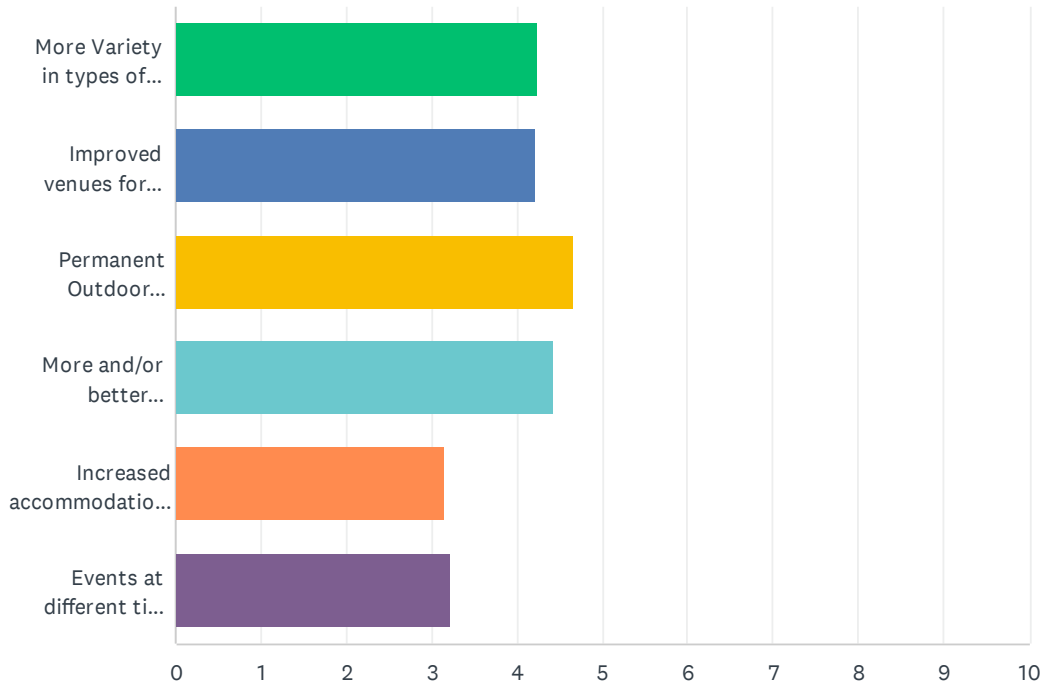
Answered: 177 Skipped: 70



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Trail based event or race (e.g. mountain bike, trail run or adventure race)	46.33%	82
Cyclocross race	12.43%	22
BMX race	12.43%	22
Farmers' Market	85.31%	151
Arts and Craft Market	71.19%	126
Music Event or Festival (e.g. Cumberland Wild, Woodstove Festival, Perseverance Folk Fest)	62.71%	111
Heritage Event (e.g. Miners Memorial)	35.03%	62
Cultural Event (e.g. Victoria Day Celebrations, Lantern Festival, Foggy Mountain Fall Fair)	77.40%	137
Other (please specify)	7.91%	14
Total Respondents: 177		

## Q22 Please indicate your top 3 priorities for improvements to organized events from the choices below.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 79



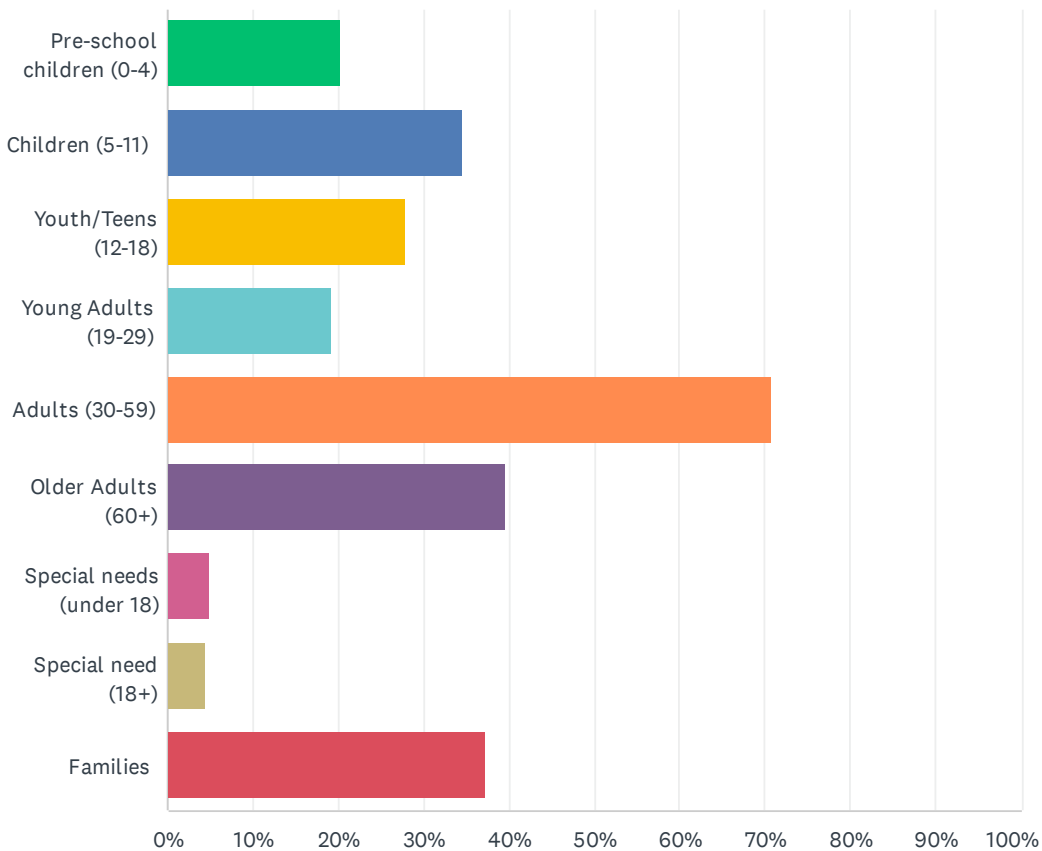
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
More Variety in types of events	25.40% 32	21.43% 27	24.60% 31	15.87% 20	6.35% 8	6.35% 8	126	4.25
Improved venues for event	15.74% 17	29.63% 32	28.70% 31	15.74% 17	7.41% 8	2.78% 3	108	4.22
Permanent Outdoor Stage/covered area	39.52% 49	25.81% 32	14.52% 18	8.06% 10	7.26% 9	4.84% 6	124	4.68
More and/or better washrooms	32.35% 44	23.53% 32	19.85% 27	10.29% 14	7.35% 10	6.62% 9	136	4.43
Increased accommodations for people with disabilities	15.45% 17	12.73% 14	14.55% 16	10.00% 11	24.55% 27	22.73% 25	110	3.16
Events at different times of the year	7.76% 9	20.69% 24	23.28% 27	6.90% 8	16.38% 19	25.00% 29	116	3.22

**Q23 If there are specific improvements to organized events you would like to see, please describe them.**

Answered: 37 Skipped: 210

**Q24 For which demographic would recreation, arts and culture programs be of interest to you or anyone in your household? Please select all that apply.**

Answered: 182 Skipped: 65



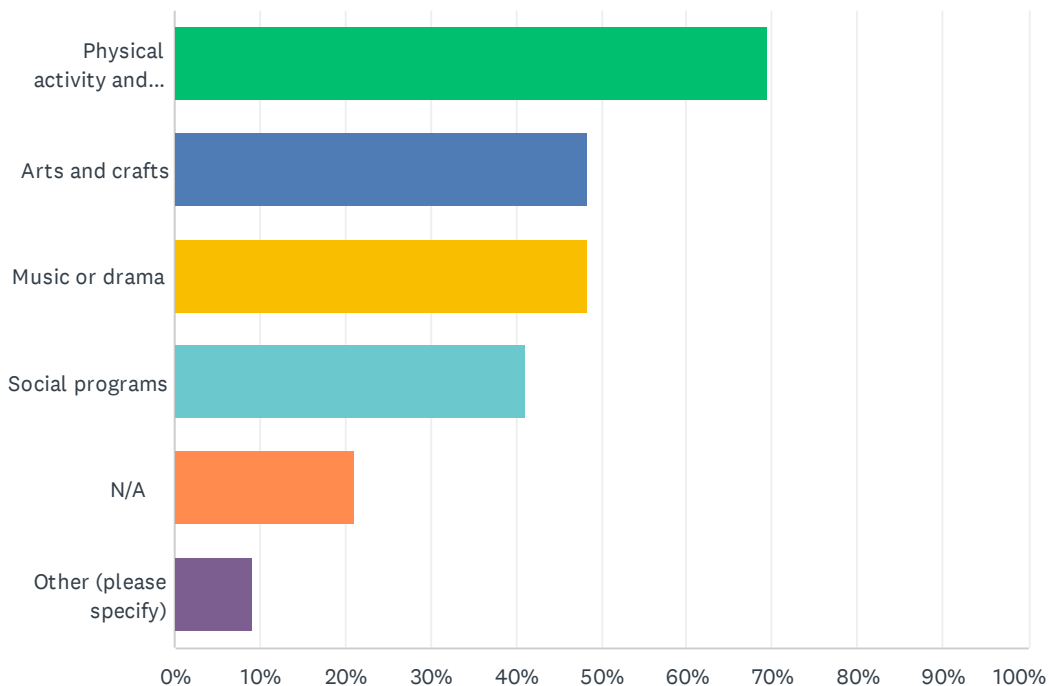
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Pre-school children (0-4)	20.33% 37
Children (5-11)	34.62% 63
Youth/Teens (12-18)	28.02% 51
Young Adults (19-29)	19.23% 35
Adults (30-59)	70.88% 129
Older Adults (60+)	39.56% 72
Special needs (under 18)	4.95% 9
Special need (18+)	4.40% 8
Families	37.36% 68
Total Respondents: 182	

**Q25 What types of programs are of interest to you for children ages 0 to 4? Please list**

Answered: 61 Skipped: 186

## Q26 What types of programs are of interest to you for children ages 5 to 18? Select all that apply.

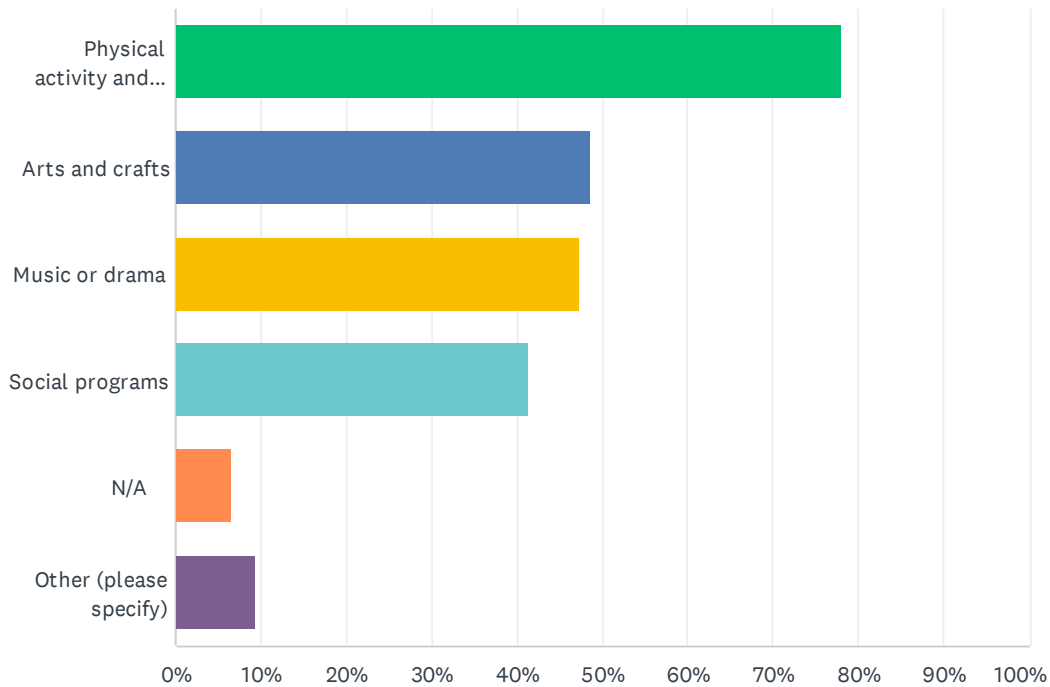
Answered: 151 Skipped: 96



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Physical activity and sport	69.54%	105
Arts and crafts	48.34%	73
Music or drama	48.34%	73
Social programs	41.06%	62
N/A	21.19%	32
Other (please specify)	9.27%	14
Total Respondents: 151		

## Q27 What types of programs are of interest to you for adults (19 to 59)

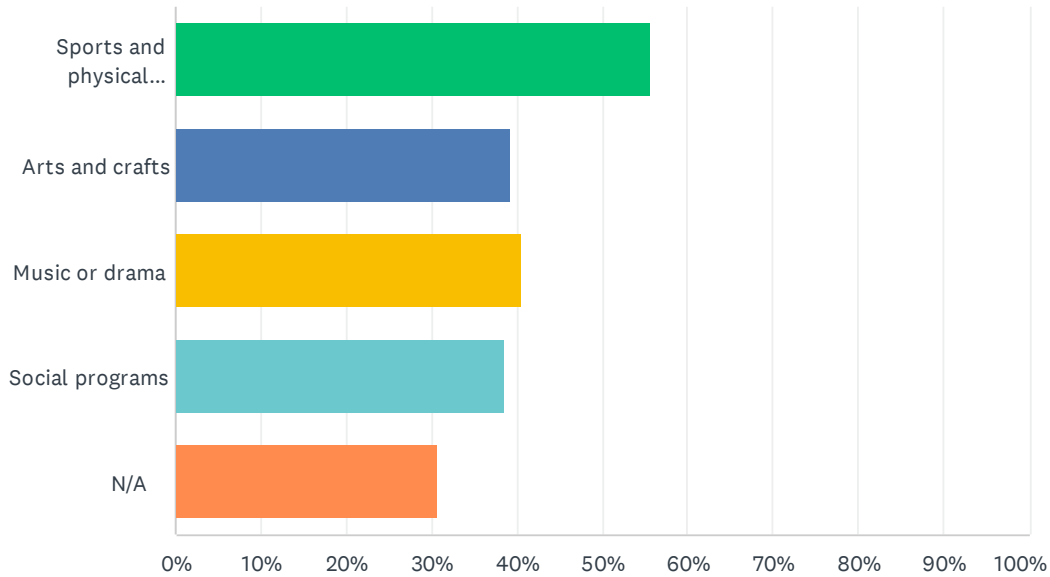
Answered: 169 Skipped: 78



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Physical activity and sport	78.11%	132
Arts and crafts	48.52%	82
Music or drama	47.34%	80
Social programs	41.42%	70
N/A	6.51%	11
Other (please specify)	9.47%	16
Total Respondents: 169		

## Q28 What types of programs would be of interest to you for Older Adults (60+)

Answered: 153 Skipped: 94



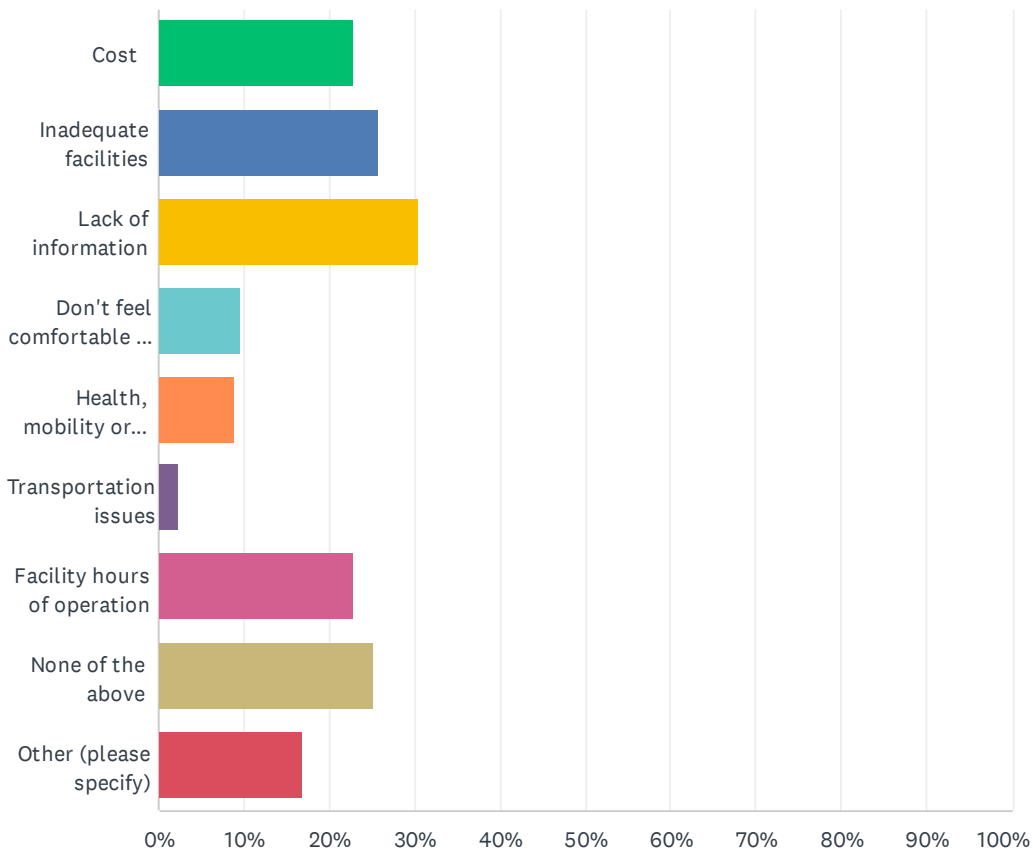
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sports and physical activity	55.56%	85
Arts and crafts	39.22%	60
Music or drama	40.52%	62
Social programs	38.56%	59
N/A	30.72%	47
Total Respondents: 153		

Q29 What types of programs would be of interest to you for persons with special needs? Please list:

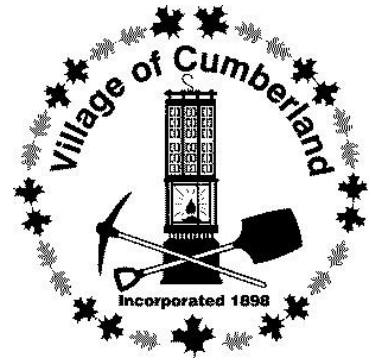
Answered: 39 Skipped: 208

### Q30 What are the barriers (if any) to you or anyone in your household to participate in recreation, arts and culture activities in Cumberland? Select all that apply.

Answered: 167 Skipped: 80



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Cost	22.75% 38
Inadequate facilities	25.75% 43
Lack of information	30.54% 51
Don't feel comfortable or welcome	9.58% 16
Health, mobility or accessibility issues	8.98% 15
Transportation issues	2.40% 4
Facility hours of operation	22.75% 38
None of the above	25.15% 42
Other (please specify)	16.77% 28
Total Respondents: 167	



REPORT DATE: 5/20/2022  
 MEETING DATE: 5/30/2022

File No. 3010

TO: Mayor and Councillors  
 FROM: Courtney Simpson, Manager of Development Services  
 SUBJECT: Development Approvals Process Modernization

**RECOMMENDATION**

- i. THAT the Committee receive the Development Approvals Process Modernization Summary Report for information.
- ii. THAT the Committee receive a presentation from project consultant, Nancy Henderson of Urban Systems.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide background information and a high-level summary about the attached report and process.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION**

Date	Resolution
November 8, 2021	THAT Council receive the Amendments to Local Government Legislation Proposed in Bill 26 report for information.
May 22, 2021	THAT Council direct staff to submit an application to the Union of BC Municipalities Local Government Development Approvals Program, for funding to review and update the Village of Cumberland’s development approvals processes including information technology to support it, and that the Village of Cumberland provide overall grant management.

**BACKGROUND**

Province of BC Development Approvals Process Review

In 2019, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAH) completed the third stage of the Development Approvals Process Review (DAPR). The DAPR was initiated to better understand the challenges facing development approvals across British Columbia as part of a broader effort to identify barriers to affordable housing in the province. Consultation with rural, suburban, and urban local governments, and various non-government stakeholders provided a cross-section of the diverse challenges facing the development approvals process. This engagement allowed MAH to assess the common challenges in the province’s development application process, outline the

qualities of effective and efficient processes, and identify opportunities to develop these attributes across the province.

### Bill 26

Bill 26: Municipal Statutes Amendment Act (No. 2) 2021, was given Royal Assent on November 25th, 2021. Of relevance to Cumberland’s Development Application Review, the Bill proposes amendments to various sections in the Local Government Act and Community Charter including:

- Removal of the default requirement to hold public hearings for zoning bylaw amendments that are consistent with the official community plan;
- Allowing for delegation of decisions on “minor” development variance permits;
- Enabling local governments to determine specific notice methods for public notice requirements.

Changes regarding public hearings, delegation of development variance permits, and public notice as applicable to development applications are considered as part of this review. Adoption of a public notice bylaw will be optional under the proposed legislation and includes notice relating to a variety of financial and procedural bylaws.

### Project Background

The review assesses the Village’s current development application review process, including identifying additional opportunities for streamlining, clarity in communication, and reducing the need for amendments and variances. An improved process will help to accommodate projected development pressures and ultimately eliminate barriers to create affordable housing as guided through policies in the Village’s Official Community Plan Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw regulations.

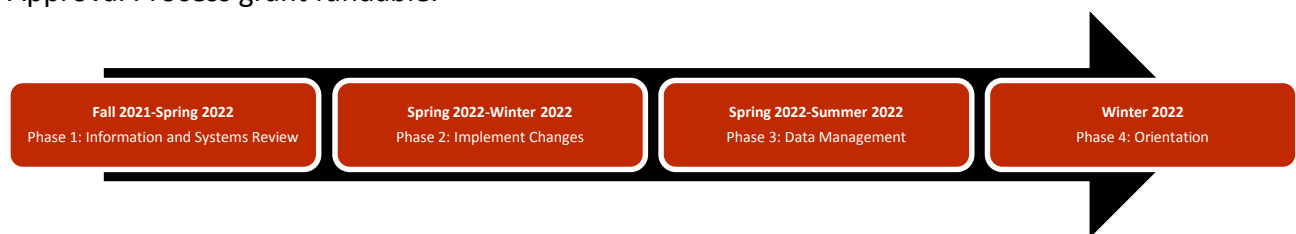
The attached report is a summary of phase 1 of the project. It includes a review of existing processes, consultation with stakeholders, and recommendations for process improvements, streamlining opportunities, establishing benchmarks, milestones and targets based on desired level of service, provide options and recommendations to consider implementing a fast-track application stream. The review also identifies opportunities to improve processes and records management using software and information technology.

### Stakeholder Engagement

To better understand the current development approvals process, a series of solution-oriented interviews were conducted with community stakeholders to gain a better understanding of where the process can be streamlined from their perspective. These stakeholders included members of the Village Council, staff, and individuals from the development community. In addition to the interviews, an online survey was created and sent out to local developers as an alternative means to provide input.

### Next Steps

To prioritize and implement the recommendations in the report that are UBCM Development Approval Process grant fundable.



**ALTERNATIVES**

- 1. Alternate recommendation/action in the form of a Council resolution. Include explanation or details of that alternative.
- 2. Not proceed with any action at this time.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**

- Healthy Community
- Quality Infrastructure Planning and Development
- Comprehensive Community Planning
- Economic Development
- Reconciliation

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

This project is fully funded by the Provincial government through a grant program administered by UBCM.

**OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

The goal of the project is to identify opportunities to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Village’s development approvals processes. The Summary Report [Attachment 1] identifies the recommended actions that are within the scope of the grant and will be completed with consultant support. The project budget also includes funds for temporary staff to assist support this work so that there is minimal impact on regular operations of the Development Services Department.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- 1. Development Approvals Process Modernization Summary Report

**CONCURRENCE**

Rachel Parker, Corporate Officer *RP*

Respectfully submitted,

C. Simpson

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Courtney Simpson  
 Manager of Development Services

M. Mason

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Michelle Mason  
 Interim Chief Administrative Officer

# VILLAGE OF CUMBERLAND

## DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS PROCESS MODERNIZATION

### SUMMARY REPORT

May 25, 2022





## PREPARED FOR:

The Village of Cumberland  
2673 Dunsmuir Ave  
Cumberland, BC V0R 1S0

**URBAN**  
S Y S T E M S

304 - 1353 Ellis Street, Kelowna, BC V1Y 1Z9 | T: 250.762.2517

File: 3332.0013.01

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# Project Overview







The Village of Cumberland is at an exciting stage of growth and is quickly becoming one of the most attractive places to live on Vancouver Island. The Village has experienced an impressive influx of new residents, with a third of the population being new to the area.<sup>1</sup> The rapid growth of the area has resulted in a significant development boom that is expected to continue into the coming years.

As such, the Village has received funding from the Union of BC Municipalities Local Government Development Approvals Program to conduct the Development Approvals Process Modernization project.

The Development Approvals Process Modernization project is intended to streamline the development approval process and lead to positive outcomes related to the provision of affordable housing and other community priorities as outlined within the Official Community Plan (OCP) and other bylaws.

When a development approval process has clarity of purpose, runs efficiently, and focuses on client and community needs, it costs less to administer and helps assure compliance with local government regulations and policy. Conversely, an inefficient system with jurisdictional overlaps, ad hoc requirements, and unclear mandates can create confusion, generate delays, and can add to the cost in planning, design, and construction, which and may discourage development.

The guiding principles behind the UBCM funding program and this project are:

 <p><b>Achieves Outcomes in the Public Interest</b></p>	<p>The approvals process is set up to support development that is strategically aligned with adopted community plans, supports community values, is strategically aligned with the public interest and results in high-quality built environments.</p>
 <p><b>Certainty</b></p>	<p>The requirements, timeframes and costs of development approvals are clearly outlined and communicated in advance or as early as possible in the application process.</p>
 <p><b>Transparent</b></p>	<p>Decisions during the approval process are documented and communicated in a clear and timely manner.</p>
 <p><b>Collaborative</b></p>	<p>Local governments and applicants work collaboratively to achieve desired outcomes. Where public involvement is appropriate, the process seeks public input early in the process and in an informed manner.</p>
 <p><b>Flexible</b></p>	<p>The process achieves consistency while providing some flexibility to respond to unique opportunities and encourages innovation.</p>
 <p><b>Timeliness</b></p>	<p>The development approval process occurs on timeframes that are appropriate to the level of complexity of the application and that all parties acknowledge their responsibility to provide required information in a timely manner.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Village of Cumberland Economic Profile

## **GOAL AND PURPOSE**

The goal of the project is to identify opportunities to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Village’s development approvals processes while meeting the objectives set out in the Official Community Plan and other strategic planning documents.

The review assesses the current development application review process, including identifying additional opportunities for streamlining, clarity in communication, and reducing the need for amendments and variances. An improved process will help to accommodate future projected development pressures and ultimately eliminate barriers to create affordable housing.

The process aims to identify and create efficiencies in the processes and determine specifically how the departments coordinate and communicate at various stages in the processes. The goal of the initiative is to establish benchmarks for pivotal milestones within each application process.

### **WHO IS THIS WORK FOR?**

Ultimately the work being undertaken aims to increase housing availability to support a community that will grow in alignment with the OCP and therefore serves the needs of the entire community. The work is being undertaken to improve the development process and identify opportunities to reduce the administrative burden on the Village by identifying opportunities to create efficiency in the process.

### **HOW WILL THIS WORK BE USED?**

This work will be used to inform the next phases in the project which will implement several regulatory and process refinements that will improve the development approvals process and therefore facilitate a streamlined process for the types of development that are most in line with the community’s goals.

## **Our Approach**

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This process review is Phase 1 of a multiple phased project that has been provided funding from the Union of BC Municipalities.

### **PHASE 1**

#### Information and Systems Review

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Review existing processes, consult with stakeholders, and prepare summary document with recommendations for process improvements streamlining opportunities, establishing benchmarks, milestones and targets based on desired level of service, provide options and recommendations to consider implementing a fast-track application stream.

## PHASE 2

### Implement Changes

---

Amend Procedures Bylaw, Zoning Bylaw, and Subdivision Servicing Bylaw to reduce common variances and implement process efficiency recommendations in the Phase 1 Report. Update communication material to assist applicants in understanding the development approvals process, regulations, and requirements with the intent to reduce inquiries and ensure a clear process.

## PHASE 3

### Data Management

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Based on needs identified in previous phases, select and implement software and data management practices that support the changes to the approvals process. Identified solutions will integrate into daily operations to streamline the process and improve workflow.

## PHASE 4

### Orientation

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Conduct orientation and training for staff and new councillors of new systems and all changes made through the process. Orientation will take place following the municipal election in October 2022.



## **Review and Research**

The consulting team reviewed the Village's current development processes, forms, brochures, and bylaws. The team reviewed some development application files and Village correspondence with applicants and referral agencies to better understand the needs. Information regarding the number of applications and processing times for the past several years was also examined.

The consulting team also conducted comparative research with other similar sized local and regional municipalities to understand industry best practices.

## **Interviews and Online Survey**

The consultants conducted various interviews with Village staff to get a sense of application intake, processing, and staff capacity. This included the economic development officer, finance staff, engineering and operations, bylaw enforcement, parks, the corporate officer and the planning and development services team. In addition, the project team contacted 38 development stakeholders to request interviews and/or the completion of a detailed online survey. A total of 12 completed surveys were collected and 2 interviews were conducted.

## **Provincial Context**

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### **Homes for BC: A Government's 30 Point Plan for Housing Affordability**

In this report, the Province noted that local governments are a strategic partner in delivering affordable housing and that municipalities are on the front lines of the housing crisis. The Province of BC is committed to empowering and supporting local governments' efforts to accelerate the construction of the housing that communities need. While the development approval process plays an important role in ensuring that the vision of the community is realized, and that local interests are met including an adequate supply of safe, well-serviced and aesthetically-pleasing development, approval processes can also result in timelines that significantly impact the provision of housing.

### **Development Approvals Process Review**

In 2019, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAH) completed the third stage of the Development Approvals Process Review (DAPR). The DAPR was initiated to better understand the challenges facing development approvals across British Columbia as part of a broader effort to identify barriers to affordable housing in the province. Consultation with rural, suburban, and urban local governments, and various non-government stakeholders provided a cross-section of the diverse challenges facing the development approvals process. This engagement allowed MAH to assess the common challenges in the province's development application process, outline the qualities of effective and efficient processes, and identify opportunities to develop these attributes across the province.

The DAPR identified a number of internal issues that local governments face in their application processes including:

- Incomplete or poor-quality submissions by proponents;
- Increased complexity of requirements;
- Inconsistent development permit guidelines; and,
- Contradictory advice from different departments.

Other application process challenges identified by the development industry include:

- Lack of transparency on the status of development applications; and,
- Lack of consistency of requirements between adjacent local governments.

This Development Approvals Framework review will assess these issues in Cumberland and will seek to develop solutions to facilitate development process improvements.

### **Bill 26 – Municipal Statutes Amendment Act (No.2) 2021**

Bill 26: Municipal Statutes Amendment Act (No. 2) 2021, was given Royal Assent on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Of relevance to Cumberland’s Development Application Review, the Bill proposes amendments to various sections in the Local Government Act and Community Charter including:

- Removal of the default requirement to hold public hearings for zoning bylaw amendments that are consistent with the official community plan;
- Allowing for delegation of decisions on “minor” development variance permits; and,
- Enabling local governments to determine specific notice methods for public notice requirements.

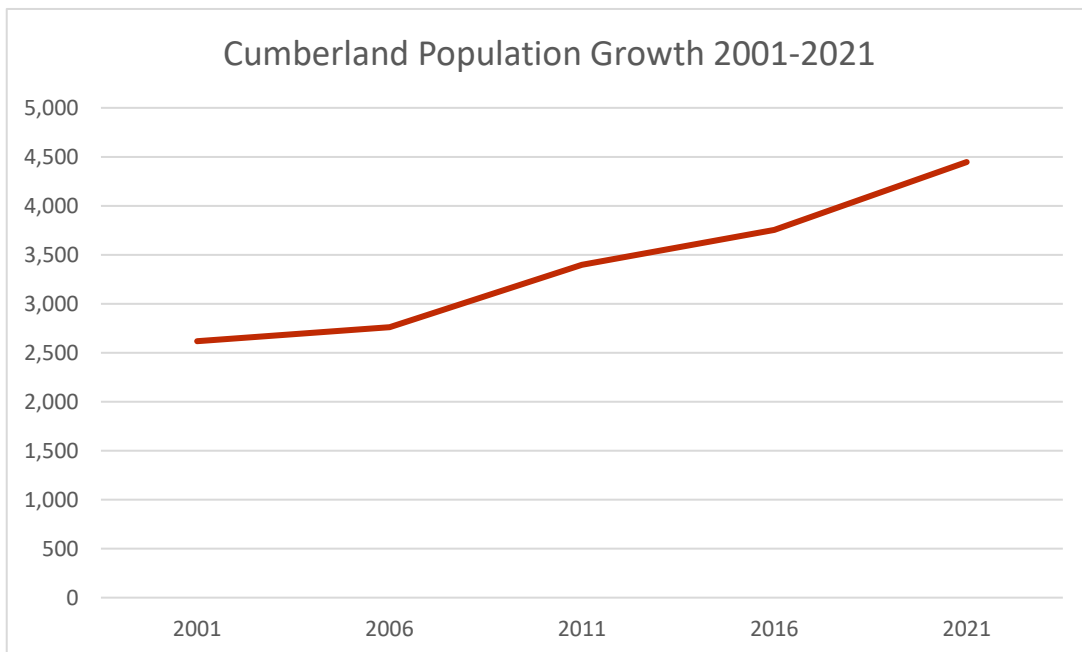
Changes regarding public hearings, delegation of development variance permits, and public notice as applicable to development applications are considered as part of this review. Adoption of a public notice bylaw will be optional under the proposed legislation and includes notice relating to a variety of financial and procedural bylaws.

## Local Context



Cumberland is quickly becoming one of the most desirable places to live on Vancouver Island, and therefore experiencing growth that is rapidly outpacing the rest of the region. Between the 2016 and 2021 Census, the Village of Cumberland grew 18%, making it one of the biggest changes in population in the province of British Columbia. Most of the new residents are between the ages of 25 and 40, contributing to a much younger median age (39.2) than the Comox Valley Regional District (58.0).

*Figure 1: Cumberland Population Growth 2001 to 2021*



Issues regarding the development application review process must be considered in context of the rapid growth and the resulting development boom. The following factors have shaped the development environment in Cumberland today. These include:

- Increasing complexity of development applications with changing regulation (i.e. Official Community Plan update and Zoning Bylaw update)
- Increase in development activity
- Increased housing costs and lack of affordable housing
- First-time or inexperienced applicants
- Rapidly rising costs of infrastructure requirements
- Demand for additional services, community amenities and institutional development

This rapid influx of new residents has resulted in significant amount of new development in the past 5 years. Currently, the majority of the development is being done by individual property owners looking to build single-family homes. Application volume peaked in 2017 with a 72% increase from the previous year and has remained consistently around 50% higher than 2016 volumes. In numbers, there were 78 development applications in 2016, 152 applications in 2017, and 128 applications in 2020.

Changes to Village policies, procedures, and bylaws during the last 5 years, including a new Official Community Plan in 2014 and Zoning Bylaw in 2017 also significantly increased growth and density opportunities. This has added to the development boom but also added complexity and time to the process through designation of new development permit areas, for example. At the same time, several advisory committees were established, creating a new referral step in the process for approving many development applications. The Village GIS and Building Inspection services are provided through contract with the Comox Valley Regional District. Information technology support is provided through a third-party contractor

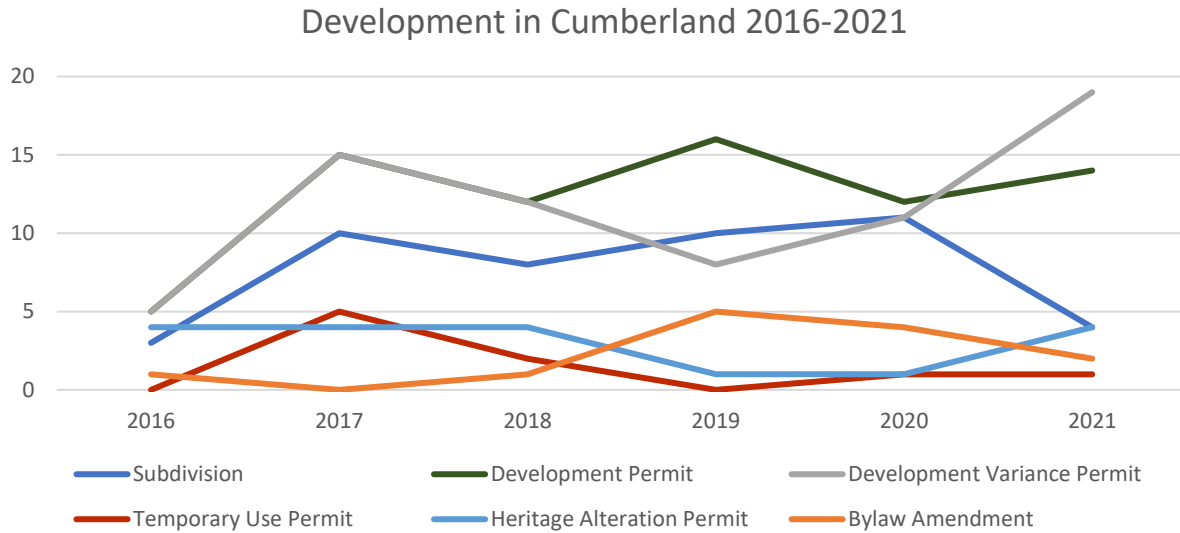
The increased interest and development demand, combined with development challenges and community priorities indicates a strong local economy and desirable community. However, these forces may also stretch the capacity of the Planning & Development Services department, which, in turn, results in added pressure to other departments. Subsequently, pressure comes from the development community which seeks certainty with respect to timelines and outcomes.

Table 1: Significant Development Applications in Progress (2022)

Address	Details	Application Type
Bevan Road Industrial Area	Six new industrial lots and new Tree Island Yogurt facility.	Subdivision Development Permit
Comox Lake Road/ Horbury Road		OCP and Zoning amendment for 25 historic cabins
Maple Street	24 new residential lots located on the extension of Maple Street, behind the new Fire Hall.	Subdivision
Penrith Avenue extension	Coal Valley Estates Phase 11 for 64 residential lots, 1 commercial and 5 multi-family lots.	Subdivision Development Permit
Royston Road, 3025	Construction of a 56 unit manufactured home park.	Manufactured Home Park Permit, Development Permit, Development Variance Permit
Second Street 3339, 3341, 3345	Non-Market Rental Housing Project for 23 units	Official Community Plan and Zoning amendment

The following graph and corresponding table outline trends in development application completion and permit issuance between the years of 2016 to 2021.

*Figure 2: Development in Cumberland 2016 to 2021*



Year	Bylaw Amendments	Development Permits	Development Variance Permits	Subdivision Applications	Heritage Alteration Permit	Temporary Use Permit
2016	1	5	5	3	4	0
2017	0	15	15	10	4	5
2018	1	12	12	8	4	2
2019	5	16	8	10	1	0
2020	4	12	11	11	1	1
2021	3	14	19	4	4	1

**PLANNING AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

To understand the policy and regulatory context of the review, the team reviewed key Village of Cumberland documents that influence the development applications process. Documents reviewed included relevant strategic documents, bylaws, policies, internal procedures, and communication materials.

## Village of Cumberland's Strategic Priorities 2020-2023

The Village of Cumberland Strategic Priorities guide corporate management and decision-making. The purpose of the priorities is to focus and coordinate resources.

Strategic priorities relevant to the Development Approvals Process Modernization are as follows. :

1. Attainable Housing
2. Quality Administration through Accountability and Transparency
3. Maintaining Village Character and Retaining Heritage

## Official Community Plan (2014)

The Village of Cumberland completed an update of their Official Community Plan (OCP) in 2014. The plan provides a framework of goals, objectives, and policies to guide decisions on future planning and land management.

The OCP vision statement has been condensed below to highlight sections specific to the Development Approvals Process Modernization project:

*"...The Village of the future is well-managed in a sustainable and orderly fashion with full public participation, and a thriving, resilient and diversified economy based on tourism and other industries and businesses that are compatible with community values. Citizens recognize that residential growth must be balanced by revenues from successful businesses with the objective of making jobs available for Cumberland residents."*

The vision for the Village was built upon the following principles:

- Improvement and expansion of infrastructure to accommodate measured growth
- Attainable housing
- Village Centre rejuvenation
- Promotion of the Village for local and regional businesses
- Recreation and tourism
- A healthy, active, and engaged citizenry of all ages and walks of life
- Accountability and transparency
- Protection and enhancement of natural features and functions

The OCP envisions Cumberland in 2030 as a community that has successfully developed and nurtured key assets and features of the area to retain residents and attract visitors alike. It envisions a strengthened community with enough land for businesses, agriculture, parks, environmental areas, community amenities and housing. The OCP demonstrates a strong commitment to the natural environment and a collective commitment to preserving the natural surroundings of forests and wetlands.

Land use policy encourages new development in close proximity to or within the Village Centre and support for residential infill development. The OCP demonstrates support for development that provides a benefit to the community as a whole and guides evaluation of the development applications on this basis. With this in mind, many have indicated that what is the Village is looking for in terms of

development is not completely clear. With an OCP update on the horizon, the Village may consider strengthening policy surrounding development that provides a community benefit to provide clear expectations for the development community and guide decision making.

### **Other Planning or Regulatory Documents**

In addition to the documents listed above, a number of relevant bylaws and planning documents were reviewed. They are as follows:

- 1) Zoning Bylaw No. 1027, 2016
- 2) Subdivision and Development Bylaw No. 948, 2012
- 3) Development Procedures and Fees Bylaw 1073, 2018
- 4) Development Approval Information Bylaw No. 809, 2005
- 5) Advisory Planning Commission Bylaw No. 999, 2014
- 6) Development Guides and Communication Material
- 7) Housing Needs Report (2020)
- 8) Economic Development Strategy 2018-2023

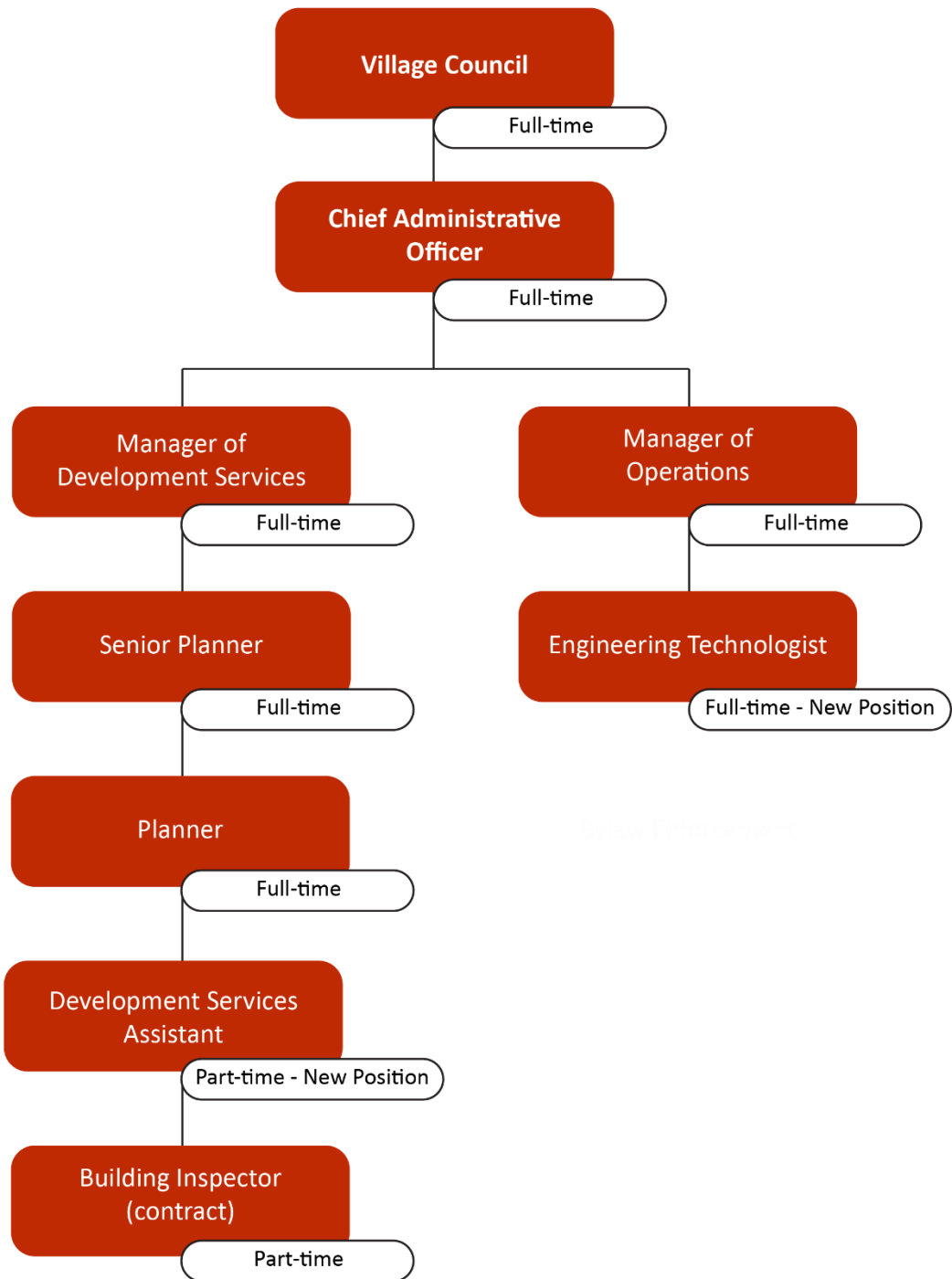
### **STAFFING**

The Village of Cumberland has experienced staff turnover and the creation of new positions within the organization in the past 5 years. With the increasing population growth, staff have been stretched to capacity to handle the increase in demand. New positions have included a new Part-time Development Services Assistant and an Engineering Technologist among others.

The Development Services department has experienced a complete staff turnover including the Manager of Development Services over the last three years. While the additional staff has contributed to increased capacity, new staff require training and onboarding. It was noted that previous Development Services staff had individual approaches to processing applications developed through years in the position but processes were not formalized into a systematic approach or consistent among staff. This informal approach together with increased application volumes has led to the need and desire to create a consistent, systematic approach to application process that is clear and predictable across the department and easily transitioned to new staff.

In addition to the three Development Services staff, building inspection is contracted from the Comox Valley Regional District and is available two days a week. This can be challenging for timing and processing of applications. As the Village continues to grow and demand increases, it may be worth considering increasing the scope of the RDCO contract and/or creating a permanent position for a building inspector.

Figure 3: Development Services Organizational Chart

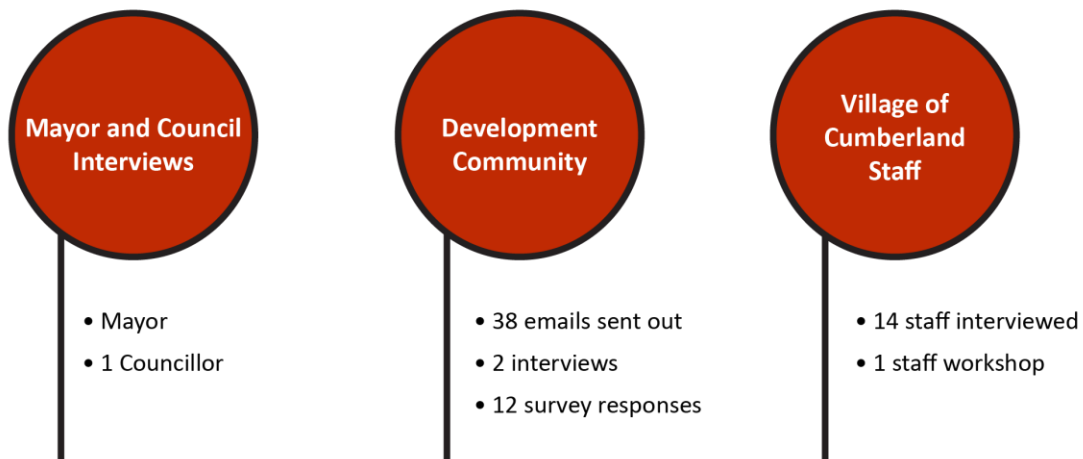


## What We Heard

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To better understand the current development approvals process, a series of solution-oriented interviews were conducted with community stakeholders to gain a better understanding of where the process can be streamlined from their perspective. These stakeholders included members of the Village Council, staff, and individuals from the development community. In addition to the interviews, an online survey was created and sent out to local developers as an alternative means to provide input.

Input from stakeholders who interact with the development approvals process on a regular basis included:



The engagement process provided valuable insight into experiences regarding the development application process. Discussions covered the development review and approval process from application submissions through to public hearings, approvals, permitting, and ongoing financial tracking.

Key takeaways from the engagement include:

### Process

- The desire for additional consistency and clarity of approval timelines. Application timeframes and associated benchmarks are also desired.
- The desire for guidance on required documents to be submitted early on in the process
- Pre-application meetings with staff to review the application process, requirements, timeline, and fees are helpful at guiding them through the requirements and processes. Additional guidance and “heads up” comments from staff would be appreciated by the applicants.
- Concerns about the development permit application forms as they are not straightforward and intuitive. Some applicants felt that the format of the application can lead to confusion and result in unintentionally incomplete applications. Adjustments and/or reformatting of the application forms may result in a more straightforward start to the development process and avoid scheduling delays/lost time.
- Desire for online tracking showing current applications in queue and status.

## Communications

- Desire for additional and clearer guides, brochures and website information about the application process, fees and application requirements.
- Desire for more clearly communicated anticipated processing times and application expectations.
- Desire to keep the small-town, personalized approach to customer service versus a highly automated IT approach; however, some IT efficiencies should be explored.
- The importance of trust and strong relationships between developers, their agents, and Village staff to implement an efficient process.
- Survey respondents had either a very clear or somewhat clear understanding of the required documents to be submitted early in the development application process.
- Staff was friendly and polite and applicants felt they received great customer service.

## Policy and Regulations

- Concerns for clarity of development vision in the OCP, not sure what staff and Council is looking for.
- Public information meetings for Zoning Amendments that align with the OCP are not considered a necessary step by some members of Council and the development industry.
- Explore the opportunities provided by Bill 26 to delegate minor development variance permit applications to staff and waive public hearings for Zoning Amendment applications that align with the OCP land use designations.
- Concerns for clarity and ease of understanding of Village bylaws and regulations.
- Concerns for the Development Permit requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units being cost and time prohibitive.
- Concerns for parking and bicycle parking regulations being too onerous.

## Internal Procedures

- High demands for staff resources coupled with a small number of staff results in insufficient capacity to meet the desired level of service with respect to application processing timeframes and response to inquiries. Staff seem “overworked” and “overwhelmed” by current volumes.
- Delegate minor applications to staff to allow Council’s to focus on governance, rezoning, and land use applications that don’t conform to the OCP.
- When Council requests “special project” reports from the planning department, it must be recognized that it impacts resources otherwise utilized for development application processing.
- Find procedural efficiencies and create systems to track information such as security, application conditions, legal agreements, and records to reduce staff time finding information.
- Part time building official staff was identified process inefficiency making timelines run longer due to staff capacity and availability.

**Software**

- Paper and folder-based records management is time consuming and prevents staff from easily getting a high level overview.
- Find ways to better leverage under utilized software such as GIS and Sharepoint in order to make more efficient use of existing systems.
- Consider the creation of a file management policy to guide staff in consistently and efficiently handling development application information.
- Enable “self serve” online applications, guides, and reporting for higher capacity stakeholders to free up staff time for applicants in need of a more hands on approach.

<b>What We Heard – Key Themes (at a glance)</b>	
▪ Application Volumes	▪ Opportunities to Delegate
▪ Benchmarks, Monitoring, Tracking and Reporting	▪ Communications Materials and Responsiveness
▪ Training and Onboarding	▪ Accessory Dwelling Units – Resource Implication
▪ Development Permit Guidelines	▪ File Management
▪ Bylaws and Document Updates	▪ Incomplete Applications
▪ Public Information Meetings and Public Hearings	▪ Pre-application Meetings

## Discussion and Analysis

***STRENGTHS***

During the review of Cumberland’s development application processes, numerous aspects of the process were highlighted as being strengths by the development community. For example, the Village’s personable approach to customer service plays a positive role in applicant experience despite processing delays and staffing limitations. While there are many elements of the development application process that can be streamlined and improved, there are multiple effective attributes that should be mentioned. The following section outlines some of the positive elements of Cumberland’s development application process expressed by survey respondents, and members of the development community.

**Policy and Regulatory Framework**

The Village has a good foundation of both policy and regulations to guide the development process comparative to many municipalities of similar size. This framework, coupled with a strong understanding of infrastructure capacity and upgrades to accommodate growth, puts the Village in a strong position to implement development application process improvements.

### **Single File Manager**

Many in the development community were used to larger centres where an application may not have a dedicated planner processing their application and noted that they appreciated the consistency of this approach; however, this approach has been challenging over the last couple years due to several staff changes which force applications to be transitioned to a different staff member. Since the department has been fully staffed the implementation of a single file manager approach improves consistency and efficiency and has been identified as a recent improvement

The Village's current practice reflects best practice which is when an applicant would like to escalate a concern to senior management, the file manager be included in the conversations to maintain a sense of ownership, understanding and responsibility. Involving technical staff in resolving issues tends to increase departmental capacity and overtime usually reduces the amount of time senior management gets pulled into technical issues. It is recommended that the Village continues with this approach.

### **Inter-departmental Collaboration (Development Review Team)**

Cumberland staff have a high level of inter-departmental communication which provides frequent opportunity to collaborate on ongoing development applications. Office culture plays a strong role in the Cumberland Village Hall and contributes to an atmosphere that encourages discussion of varied opinions and group problem solving. Municipalities can often work in "silo" environments which can be detrimental to inter-departmental communication, which is not the case in Cumberland. The Operations Department plays a significant role in the review of development applications with respect to infrastructure servicing. The new Engineering Technologist position appears to be assisting timely reviews and referral responses. The Village has also recently implemented a more formal approach to their Development Review Team (DRT) meetings with agendas and the completion of meeting notes. These meeting could be further strengthened by expanding invitations to additional departments for review of more complex applications.

In addition to agendas and meeting notes, recommended best practices would be for attendees to have their referral responses prepared and be ready for discussion. DRT meetings are shown to resolve issues and conflicting direction from different departments as well as identify non-negotiable issues versus concerns that may have a variety of solutions or are less important. For complex applications with identified staff concerns, it is also be recommended that the applicant be invited to the meeting to answer questions and discuss the applications as this often leads to solution identification and open lines of communication. It is also recommended that staff send a comprehensive review letter to the applicant within one or two weeks of the DRT meeting.

### **Comprehensive Preliminary Lot Review (PLR) Letters**

A revised template for Comprehensive PLR letters has recently been implemented by the Manager of Development Services. The PLR letter details the requirement of subdivision, and any future requirements that could be relevant to the applicant at later stages in the approval process. This allows the applicant to have the full picture of what to expect in as the application proceeds.

### **Staff Dedicated to Continuous Improvement**

Staff were also keen to identify how the development process could be modernized to reflect best practices and were engaged in the review process and genuinely excited about the opportunity the subject grant funding provided to improve processes and improve level of service.

### **Friendly Customer Service**

Engagement with the development community identified that development services staff were recognized to be professional and polite in guiding applicants through the development process. Most applicants feel that staff are welcoming and responsive when they contact the Village for assistance. An emphasis on strong customer service and responsiveness to inquiries acts as a fundamental element for encouraging investment in Cumberland; however, prioritizing responsiveness to inquiries and guiding inexperienced applicants can often be a time-consuming task for staff and can divert many hours per week away from application processing workloads. Cumberland should strive for a balance between the two goals and look for digital solutions to provide answers to frequently asked questions such as guides, brochures, and website content.

### **Council Reports**

Comprehensive and well-prepared Council reports are the foundation of decision making for elected officials. Staff recognize the importance of Council Reports and spend the time required to assemble and analyze technical information in order to provide a recommendation and the supporting information for Council to provide required direction and make decisions. Based on current workloads, a large portion of staff time each month is spent preparing Council Reports and presentations.

### **Supportive Council**

Building on the previous section that references the ability to attract and retain good staff, Cumberland's Council plays an instrumental role in providing a supportive environment. Staff support is often expressed publicly during public hearings and Council meetings, and Council does not tolerate criticism of staff. Celebration of staff successes for a job well done can send a message to residents and applicants.

When speaking with other municipalities regarding development application processing, one of the consistent messages was that processing development applications is easier for staff in jurisdictions when the staff review process and subsequent recommendations are routinely approved and supported by Council. In many municipalities, if applicants know they do not have the support of staff, they will opt not to proceed to Council (and thereby allowing staff to focus on applications that align with the municipalities vision and policy). In other communities, applicants want to proceed to a Council meeting anyway, knowing that Council may be willing to deviate from the municipality's policy framework, and may approve the development regardless of the staff recommendation. It is therefore useful to remember that if a Council does not publicly support staff—not only staff recommendations that come to Council, but also the role of staff members, their expertise, and ability to process applications—this can have impacts on the propensity for applicants to listen to staff advice during the process.

## **CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Staffing Levels**

All applicants that were interviewed and members of Council recognized that the recent spike in development inquiries, and applications have overwhelmed staff, and that these volumes were further exacerbated by active files that have been open for two or more years and had to transition to new staff. The Village of Cumberland has a small complement of staff in general which creates challenges such as little to no redundancy and a high loss of organizational knowledge as a result of any staff turnover. The planning division is in the process of rebuilding a strong team of qualified and capable staff.

The addition of a designated part-time position at 0.60 full-time equivalent (FTE) for administrative support has been a recent, much needed, addition to the Development Services Department. The addition has greatly assisted in the functioning of the department, especially with respect to checking for application completeness, collecting fees, and ensuring adequate records management. Administrative support will lead to both application processing efficiencies and provide much needed resources to improve systems and procedures. The recommendations in this review identify several additional duties that could be assigned to the Development Services Administrative Assistant which could lead to requiring this position at a 0.8 or 1.0 FTE.

The Village contracts CVRD for plan checking and building inspection services. In many ways the CVRD contract provides Cumberland with redundancy and vacation coverage that many small towns of similar size do not have with only 1 building inspector on staff. The CVRD inspections staff is scheduled to be in Cumberland 2 days a week, some applicants did not feel that this was enough and feel the current level of service has resulted in project delays.

The Village is already aware of the challenges in finding and retaining good planning and building staff in today's market. Although the Village has the benefit of being a vibrant destination community, and is a desirable place to live, the recent surge in the cost of housing in the Comox Valley coupled with high demand for qualified local government staff and availability of jobs, makes it even more challenging to find and retain staff. Many local governments are working hard to create a positive culture and great work environment as incentives to supplement collective agreement compensation and holiday time. While not reviewed as part of this process, it is worth noting that other local governments, in recognizing the challenge to recruit and retain good staff, have initiated strategies to:

- Review pay and benefits to ensure competitive advantage (compare pay scale, holidays, training opportunities, etc.);
- Ensure staff have the tools to do their job well (equipment, software, training, etc.);
- Create a positive work environment through a supportive culture, opportunities for advancement, and the celebration of staff successes; and,
- Maintain and build a supportive relationship between staff and Council so that staff feel supported by Council and motivated to achieve Council priorities.

High demand for planners and building inspectors has made it difficult to engage qualified, mid-career staff with strong experience. Best practices suggest the organization can foster long-term leadership and

retention of staff by aligning their values to “grow their own”. By continuing to invest in staff training, the Village can empower existing staff to improve their knowledge and grow their skills.

Current planning staff levels are in line with those of comparable municipalities with similar populations and development pressures; however, the current systems at the Village are more labour intensive and as a result put a high demand on existing resources. The recommendation of this report will aim to create efficiencies that will in turn result in the ability to improve levels of service with the current staff compliment. Other similar sized municipalities with significant growth pressures all had in house inspection staff that were at times shared with another municipality or there were service agreements to contract staff during vacations and other absences. Attracting and retaining staff, maintaining the level of service expectations, and meeting the legislative requirements for complex buildings was a challenge in all of the communities reviewed.

### **External Review Option**

The Village may want to consider providing applicants with an option in certain situations for an external application review to “fast track” applications by retaining consultants to assist with application processing that are retained by the Village and in turn billed to the applicant at actual cost. The Village could provide applicants with the ability to utilize this option if they are targeting a quick turnaround and willing to pay additional costs or if an application is overly complex and would require an abundance of staff time. Other jurisdictions that utilize this approach have noted faster processing times as a result. Applicants have noted that “time is money” and that they would be willing to pay additional fees that result in faster processing timelines.

Contracts with external engineering and planning firms are used to conduct the review, this often involves working in conjunction with staff to coordinate communication, inter-departmental meetings, and council reports. The option for external review would require an amendment to the Development Procedures & Fees Bylaw and ensuring that there is clear policy and procedures to guide how and when a fast tracked external review is an option to applicants is recommended.

### **Pre-application Meetings**

Only 45 percent of applicants engaged in this review indicated that they had a pre-application meeting with staff. It is recommended that pre-application meetings are required and that the process could be further improved by providing the applicant with a pre-application checklist or summary letter that clearly outlines the application requirements applicable to the scope of the subject application as well as some advisory comments for consideration. While providing advisory comments at this early stage of the process can be challenging as a complete application has yet to be submitted, providing strategic direction and policy insights at this stage in the process can save significant time for both staff and applicants later in the review process.

It is recommended that there is a clear distinction in the expected level of information provided between a request for a pre-application meeting and a response to a development inquiry. Many municipalities charge a fee for pre-application meetings, while others provide one complimentary pre-application meeting and charge applicants for subsequent meetings. The Village may want to explore pre-application fees further as part of future development application fee reviews.

### **Guides, Brochures, and Checklists**

Only 18 percent of survey respondents agreed that the Village provides useful guides, brochures, or website information and 64 percent of respondents thought that improved communication materials would be beneficial. Nonetheless, these materials help to give broad context and decrease the amount of staff time dedicated to process-related inquiries. There are adjustments that can be made to improve these materials and revisions will be required to reflect recommended process amendments. During engagement the consensus was that the guides, brochures, and checklists which cover a variety of planning and development topics are helpful to give context to development processes. Guides outlining the process and requirements for accessory dwelling units are a priority as staff spend a great deal of time assisting applicants with these applications.

### **Incomplete Applications and Application Intake**

The submission of incomplete applications has become a more pressing issue for the planning department with the influx of development applications over the past 2 years. In discussion with the development community, it was expressed that applications could be submitted, and upon staff review, be returned to the applicant to resubmit with additional information. The timing between submission and staff review has increased due to the increased number of applications, resulting in the perception of lost time by the development community while waiting for news on their application submission.

To reduce the number of incomplete applications, a pre-application meeting is recommended prior to the submission of a development application. To avoid applicants dropping into the Village Office expecting an “on the spot” pre-application meeting, an appointment should be scheduled unless the application is minor. It is recommended the planning application forms and website clearly outlines a requirement for a pre-application meeting to prevent the submission of incomplete applications.

To further reduce incomplete submissions, it is recommended that a pre-application letter and/or checklist be provided to the applicant subsequent to a pre-application meeting and that the Village apply additional rigor to the application intake process. The application should be reviewed against the pre-application requirements checklist prior to accepting the application at the front counter.

The newly created Development Services Assistant position could be responsible for the application intake process for most straightforward application submissions. In the case of complex applications, the pre-application letter should also require that an appointment be made with the planner assigned to the file to review the application at the time of submission. This recommended best practice will save a great deal of staff resources that are spent chasing outstanding development and building permit information.

If the application is incomplete, it is recommended that the application not be received by the Village until it is complete. This practice becomes critical should the Village implement level of service benchmarks and timelines. While the applicant with the incomplete submission may not be in favour of this practice, more experienced developers in Cumberland and throughout the province acknowledge this as a best practice and recognize the inefficiencies associated with incomplete applications.

### **Application Statistics and Status Tracking**

To support application status tracking, monitoring application targets, and the volume of applications, it is recommended that the Village improve tracking procedures by refining the application statistics process in a way which automates and easily updates application statistics and reporting. This information could be used to better define and monitor service targets, enabling a more fulsome understanding of timelines

and capacity. In addition to highlighting problems and enabling the establishment of a big picture, it is recommended that the Village also use this information as a communication tool. It is also recommended that the current quarterly updates to Council would include additional application statistics and benchmark monitoring. A simplified and curated version of this information should be made as this was identified as desired by the development community. These and other reporting needs can be met through shifting the application process into existing software tools and following information management best practices.

### Systems and Tools

To address the challenges identified in this report, it is recommended that the Village adapt and update its information systems to enable alignment updating processes. The current development landscape at the Village is largely a manual and labour-intensive process. An opportunity exists to leverage existing tools to enable efficiencies with some improvement and standardization. As the development application process is modernized, it is recommended that the tools used by the Village are adapted as well. It is recommended that Cumberland consider a software use and integration model similar to the figure below.

Figure 5: Tools and use cases

#### Website

Used for:

- Communication materials
- Application guides
- Application submissions
- Self serve status updates
- Public reporting

#### Sharepoint/Office 365

Used for:

- Internal process tracking
- Communication
- File storage
- Collaboration
- Automations
- Reporting

#### GIS

Used for:

- Internal and public servicing and zoning reference
- Lot information
- Spatial reporting
- Dashboards

### **Single Point of Contact Requirement for Applicants**

To simplify communication between the Village and the applicant or their agent, a recommended best practice is to require a single point of contact representing the property owner(s) for each application. It is recommended that the Village put the onus on one owner or their agent to communicate or forward information to a variety of stakeholders and consultants. Communications can get very complex if there are numerous players representing an application, and as a result, place a demand on staff resources that could be better used elsewhere in the process. It is recommended that the application and agency forms be amended to outline and strengthen the expectations of this approach and include acknowledgement by the owner and their agent.

### **Comprehensive Letters**

Comprehensive letters are provided to applicants following application with the intent of relaying the impact of Cumberland bylaws and policies on the specific elements of a proposal. The letter details outstanding requirements, anticipated conditions and issues that may arise at future stages of the development approval process. This allows the applicant to have the full picture of what to expect in the development process to avoid unexpected changes in project budgets or proformas. Cumberland has recently developed a comprehensive Preliminary Layout Review letter template as part of the subdivision approval process; however, much of the correspondence related to development permits and variances is via email and provided in a way that lends itself to a significant amount of back and forth correspondence with applicants. Staff have identified the need for additional templates, such as acknowledging receipt of a complete application and providing file manager information, and are in the process of implementing additional forms of standardized communication improvements.

It is recommended the Village provides applicants with a comprehensive letter subsequent to the staff and agency review and referral process that provides the applicants with a list of concerns or additional requirements as well as “heads up” comments for additional requirements that may be required as the development progresses to future stages in the development permit process such as development or building permit.

### **Development Permit (DP) Process**

#### *Accessory Dwelling Unit*

The Village has very comprehensive development permit guidelines and DP areas that cover much of the Village. DPA 6 - Residential Infill area's justification is intended to promote a high standard of design in ground oriented medium density housing projects. Single detached dwellings with suites and duplexes are exempt; however, the construction of a coach house requires a DP. With the rapidly increasing cost of housing, many homeowners are looking to build accessory dwelling units (ADU) to subsidize housing costs and/or providing housing for family members. Application inquiries, obtaining complete applications presenting DP applications to the APC and Council require a significant amount of staff time.

Development Permits for ADUs were commonplace early on in the evolution of zoning bylaws to include ADUs as a permitted use. Over the last several years, many municipalities have streamlined the process by no longer requiring DPs and incorporating regulations in the zoning bylaw, resulting in ADUs requiring to meet zoning criteria and obtain a building permit in zones that allow ADUs as a permitted use. If the Village remains concerned about the form of ADUs, there are zoning bylaw regulations that can be a requirement to protect the interest of the Village including, landscaping and screening requirements, locations of decks and patios to mitigate privacy concerns and height restrictions that reflect lot grading.

Should an applicant not meet the zoning regulations, they could apply to Council for a Development Variance Permit.

It is recommended that the Village exempt ADUs from DPA 6 and amend the zoning bylaw to incorporate additional regulations that would provide the Village with the assurance that ADU will be constructed as desired.

#### *Public Process for DPs*

Cumberland's DP process outlined in Development and Procedures Bylaw No. 1073, 2018 is not in alignment with Provincial legislation as it may require a neighbourhood public meeting and notification as part of the DP approval process. Best practice is not to require public notice or public meetings as part of the development permit approval process as this approach gives the public a false sense that they can influence DP approvals. In the case of the DP approval processes, both the municipality and the applicant are bound by the DP guidelines that are adopted by bylaw. While the public do not have a role in the DP approval process, community engagement is an important component in the establishment of DP guidelines during the drafting of Cumberland's OCP.

Case law (e.g. *Yearsley v. White Rock (City)*[2009]) has illustrated that local government that bring in public opinion into consideration that is outside of the applicable DP guidelines exceeds municipal jurisdiction. By considering irrelevant and/or extraneous criteria outside of the bylaws and DP guidelines in refusing to issue the development permit. Reliance on public opinion was not a relevant consideration if it was not linked to legitimate factors within the zoning bylaw or the OCP. City Council acted to refuse the application because of unspecified, vague concerns that were not referenced in the OCP, including implied concerns about height, regardless that the proposed building was within the height requirements of zoning and OCP guidelines.

It is recommended that the Village amend Development and Procedures Bylaw No. 1073 to remove the requirement for neighbourhood public meetings and notice provisions for DP applications.

#### *Exemptions*

As part of the next phase of the Development Modernization Process it is recommended that staff and the consultant review the existing DP exemptions listing in the OCP and consider additional exemptions, for example, waiving some DP application requirements at building permit for applications that satisfied the current DP conditions at time of subdivision.

#### *Clarify DP Guidelines*

Cumberland's DP guidelines are quite wordy and include unnecessary repetition of Provincial legislation. It is recommended that the next OCP review include a comprehensive review of the DP guidelines to strengthen certain guidelines, reduce redundancy, provide additional clarity and focus. It is also recommended that guides be created to assist applicants with navigating the DP process as part of the next phase of the modernization process.

#### **Delegated Authority**

##### *Delegation of DPs*

Delegating development application approval authority to staff typically reduces the timing of the application approval process by one month or more depending on application volumes and the number of items on Council agendas. It is recommended that the Village consider amending Bylaw No. 1073 to outline the scope of DPs that Council would consider delegating to staff. Delegated DPs often include form

and character DPs based on limitations deemed reasonable by Council. When considering increasing the scope of development permits delegated to staff it is recommended that the Village also consider strengthening any DP guidelines that the Village deems to be too vague.

Currently, the Development Procedures and Fees Bylaw No. 1073, 2018 does not have any provisions to delegate duties and powers of Council with respect to development applications. Best practices for streamlining DP applications are to delegate technical development permits (DPs) related to Environmental Protection, Groundwater Protection, Farmland Protection, and Wildfire Urban Interface. Council could also consider a measured approach and delegate minor technical DPs to staff and set parameters that would trigger more significant or major technical DPs to go to Council for consideration of approval.

Municipalities have varying of levels of delegation with respect to form and character and infill housing DPs. It is recommended that Council provide direction on the level of delegation that they would be comfortable delegating to staff. Delegating powers to staff can also be phased in over time to ensure that both Council and staff have a policy and regulatory framework in place to guide decision making.

#### *Delegation of Minor Development Variance Permit Applications*

With the Local Government Act (LGA) now giving authority for Council to delegate minor variances related to:

- siting, size, and dimensions of buildings, structures and other permitted uses
- off street parking and loading spaces
- signs
- landscaping to screen or for natural environmental benefits

It is recommended that the Village consider establishing criteria for determining when variances are minor in nature and delegating minor variances to staff as part of the implementation of this review. Development Procedures and Fees Bylaw No. 1073, 2018 as well as Village documentation such as application forms, guides and checklists should reflect this recommended change.

#### **Council Committees**

The Village has more advisory committees than comparable communities. Many communities have found that advisory committees consume a large portion of staff resources to prepare reports, agendas, and meeting minutes. In particular, many municipalities are eliminating Advisory Planning Commission (APC) or establishing a terms of reference that focuses on long range planning versus the review development applications that are in alignment with the OCP. The desire to streamline the application process and the recognition that the establishment of a strong regulatory and policy framework is sufficient to protect the community's interest. This is also a trend toward the establishment of task forces for specific initiatives to gather community and stakeholder input during policy and plan development that are later disbanded after the completion of a plan or strategy.

During the interviews, there seemed to be a desire to maintain advisory committees in Cumberland as they maintain the small-town, community-driven approach to planning that attracts people to Cumberland. However, there was an interest in revising the mandate of the APC to focus on long range planning and major applications. It is recommended that the Advisory Planning Commission Bylaw No. 999, 2014 be amended to include only OCP and Zoning bylaw amendments not aligned with the

community vision as set out in the OCP and long-range planning documents. This would limit the APC's involvement in small applications such as development permits, temporary use permits, and development variance permits which would streamline the development application processing time and save staff time.

There is general support for the Heritage Committee amongst staff and Council. The clear mandate and terms of reference work well to promote the community-driven approach to heritage conservation. It is recommended that the Heritage Committee's Terms of Reference be reviewed to determine if the committee's scope is appropriate and if there are any opportunities to reduce staff time dedicated to the functioning of the committee.

Other Council committees were not identified through this process as they typically have a smaller scope specific to one project. Other Council committees include:

- Accessibility Committee
- Economic Development Steering Committee
- Homelessness and Affordable Housing Committee

#### **Zoning Amendments - Public Information Meetings and Public Hearings**

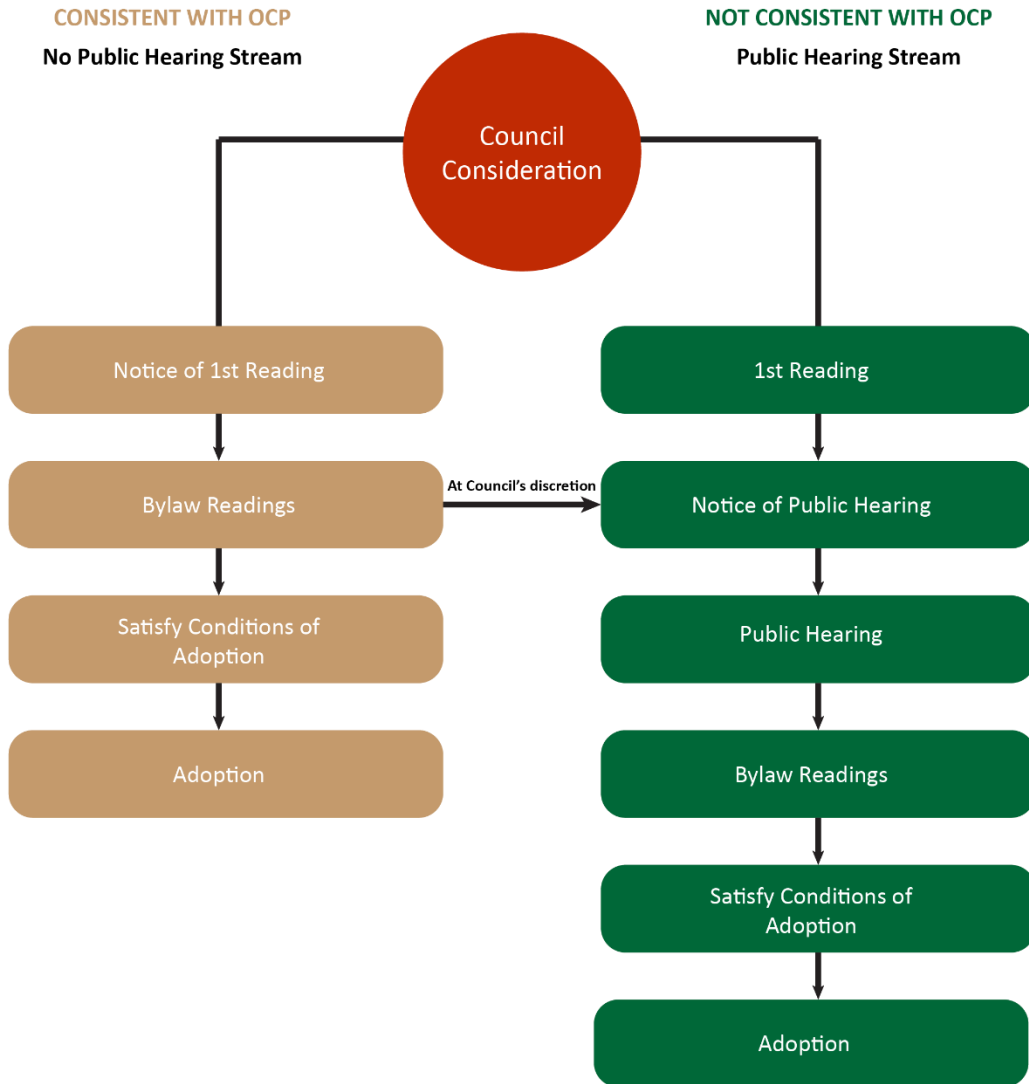
Cumberland Zoning Amendment approval processes provides considerable opportunity—greater than what is required by statute—for public review of and comment on development proposals. The Village includes a requirement for a Public Information Meeting for Zoning Amendment applications prior to the application being considered by Council. A review of applications identifies that significant weight is placed on the importance of resolving issues raised by the community during this early consultation. While such meetings can serve to raise community concerns early in the process and provide an opportunity to resolve community concerns prior to a public hearing, many applicants see the public information meeting as an unnecessary step in the Zoning Amendment process.

Bill 26 – Municipal Statutes Amendment Act (No.2) 2021 was recently enacted by the Province of BC which removes the default requirement to hold public hearings for Zoning Bylaw Amendments that are consistent with the OCP. The proposed change was intended to provide the authority for local governments to streamline their processes and help develop housing that aligns with the community's vision. To ensure transparency, the proposed amendment for public hearings requires local governments to provide public notice of the rezoning bylaw before the bylaw is considered at first reading by Council.

Cumberland may consider utilizing this newly available approach to reduce the timelines and workload associated with public hearings. Staff time is required to coordinate and organize the public hearing with the applicant and Council, prepare a public hearing Council report, attend the public hearing, and summarize comments from the public and elected officials. These steps add up to a significant amount of staff time that may not provide value to a Zoning Bylaw Amendment application process if the application is already in alignment with the OCP.

It is recommended that Council consider amending the Development Procedures and Fees Bylaw No. 1073, 2018 to reflect this legislative amendment and remove the default requirement for public hearings for zoning amendments that are aligned with the OCP and instead provide for Council the ability to require a Public Hearing if deemed necessary at 1<sup>st</sup> reading. Council may wish to retain the Public Information Meeting requirement. Additional direction will be requested from Council regarding implementation options respecting this new legislation.

Figure 6: Streams for Rezoning



### Zoning Bylaw Amendments

There are opportunities for the Village to consider amending several bylaws to streamline the development review process and reduce the demand on staff resources for commonly requested variances that have a high rate of Council approval. Examples of commonly requested variances include amending the maximum 90 metre<sup>2</sup> size of secondary suites that has recently been removed the BC Building Code.

Council may wish to consider pre-zoning some properties to align with the desired future land use in the OCP to incent development or redevelopment in accordance with the OCP vision and Council priorities. Pre-zoning lands with the desired land use would reduce risk associated with land use applications for the developer and would reduce approval timelines, costs, and simplify the development process. The Village would want to carefully consider which lands (or permitted uses to add) to pre-zone based on desired

land use and existing infrastructure. It should also be noted that pre-zoning would eliminate the ability for the Village to negotiate zoning conditions such as community amenities (which also add to timelines and developer uncertainty). Should Council want to maintain opportunities for new development to contribute to community amenities, density bonusing provisions could be incorporated into the zones.

An example that the Village may want to consider is the desired redevelopment of downtown including additional affordable housing opportunities such as purpose-built rental housing or small-unit, entry level apartments that would provide entry level housing ownership opportunities. Council may also wish to pre-zone for increased density in specific multifamily zones to incent higher densities in “smart growth” areas. It would be up to the Village to define and determine the type of uses that they would like to incorporate into the Downtown as part of the pre-zoning process. The Village should aim to understand the barriers to redevelopment and determine if those barriers could be reduced by way of revisions to the Zoning Bylaw.

### **Approval Timeline Targets**

Establishing clear benchmarks or targeted processing timelines and level of service expectations for applicants is considered a best practice for streamlining the development application process.

There are many factors that contribute to approval timelines and many of these factors are not within the control of the Village. Application timelines are also greatly impacted by applicant responsiveness for additional information, or the time required to satisfy conditions of approval and secure project financing.

When establishing targets for key development application milestones, is important to identify benchmarks in the process that are within the Village’s control and recognize that outside of these key benchmarks, processing timeframes are largely dependant on actions undertaken by applicants. Examples of timeline targets that could be considered could include the following benchmarks for a Zoning Amendment Application:

- 1) provide applicant a summary of application requirements after a pre-application meeting;
- 2) timeline to send out agency referral comments from date of complete application submission;
- 3) schedule date for application review team meeting form end of referral period;
- 4) timeline to provide application comprehensive review letter; and,
- 5) target to get application before Council for consideration.

It is recommended that the Village establish timeline targets for key milestones in the development review process and monitor the success of reaching these targets. As monitoring targets requires staff resources, it is recommended that target monitoring gives consideration to limited staff resources and an alternative means of automating the tracking and monitoring of targets is considered a priority in the selection process of any technology solution.

It should be recognized that Cumberland has reviewed a few large scale, complex applications that have unique circumstances and conditions. These cases represented multi-faceted applications, with multiple approvals, involvement of more than one department, and where key infrastructure decisions are required. While it is still important to track and learn from these applications and experiences, and review them to determine what could be improved, it is useful to recognize that there will always be some applications that represent unique challenges that are difficult to anticipate as part of the process. These applications often represent outliers and are not necessarily indicative of larger process issues; further, the capacity required over a long period of time to process multi-phased developments must be

recognized. It is acknowledged that these multi-phased, complex applications would fall outside of the typical benchmarks and approval timelines.

### **Industry Relationships**

While staff maintains good relationships with the development community on an application basis, it is recommended that the Village continue to utilize the engagement process for bylaw and policy amendments to engage the growing development community and seek their feedback on the development application process improvements when time and resources allow. Engaging the development community is a component of this grant funded project will be an avenue to strengthen development industry relationships with the assistance of consultants when seeking feedback from the industry and/or communicating regulatory or policy changes.

### **Subdivision Requirement – Street Trees**

During our interview and engagement session the current system requiring and of collecting bonding for the installation of street trees for low density residential subdivisions was identified as a very labour-intensive process. It is recommended that options for revising the current system be investigated and that the current process is amended to create efficiencies. Streamlining these processes will free up staff time to work on development applications, improving systems and procedures, and further strategic initiatives.

### **Building Permit – Construction Cost Valuation**

Cumberland's building fees are based on project valuation, the fees in the bylaw are significantly below current construction costs and should be revised to reflect current conditions. The Village may wish to consider more frequent construction cost amendments to reflect market conditions or implementing an alternate approach to determining project valuation that reflects current market conditions, such as using Marshall Swift construction cost data.







### **Advocacy for Expanding Applicable DCC Projects**

Over the years there have been several UBCM resolutions requesting the province to review DCC and Community Amenity Contribution legislation to increase the scope of DCC eligible projects or obtaining addition options for financing community amenities required to service growth. The Provincial DAPR report also identified the need to complete a "Provincial comprehensive policy review of both development cost charges and community amenity contributions for infrastructure and community amenities to be funded, in part, by development." It is recommended that the Village advocate for the expansion of DCC funding eligible projects to include civic facilities such as fire department equipment, civic facilities, and recreation amenities required to accommodate a growing community. The resulting changes to Provincial legislation would also facilitate local governments to pre-zone land that would typically negotiate amenities through the zoning amendment process which would in turn streamline development approval processes and increase the housing supply.








## Summary of Recommendations for Improvement

Based on the review above, a variety of recommended action items have been identified as priorities for the Village of Cumberland. Many of the actions are fundable through the UBCM grant funding awarded to the Village. The grant funded projects are considered “short-term” should take priority as the deadline to complete these projects is August 2023. The improvements are grouped into the following sections:

- Process
- Communications
- Policy and Regulations
- Internal Procedures
- IT Solutions and Record Management

Section	Action	Grant Funding Eligible	Timeframe
<b>Process</b>			
Based on conversations with staff, Council and the development community, best practices in streamlining the application intake and review process have been identified as most relevant to Cumberland’s context. Process improvements could be made in steps involving the pre-application meeting, the intake of applications, public engagement, and application referrals.			
P.1	Establish, track and monitor application processing benchmark targets.		Short-Term
P.2	Clarify opportunities to fast-track applications that align with strategic priorities or the provision of affordable housing utilizing the “external review” option or a prioritized processing queue.		Short-Term
P.3	Remove the public information meeting requirement for Zoning Amendment applications that align with the OCP land use designations.		Short-Term
P.4	Remove the requirement for neighbourhood public meetings and notice provisions for DP applications.		Medium-Term
P.5	Require mandatory pre-application meetings and provide applicants with an application requirement checklist that they must comply with in order to qualify as a complete application submission at time of application intake.		Short-Term
P.6	Establish clear distinctions in the expected level of information provided between a request for a pre-application meeting and a response to a development inquiry.		Short-Term

Section	Action	Grant Funding Eligible	Timeframe
P.7	Focus on improving application intake procedures to reduce incomplete applications and the identification of missing information later in the process.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
P.8	Review the existing DP exemptions listing in the OCP and consider additional expansions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiving some requirements at building permit for applications that satisfied the current DP conditions at time of subdivision</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
P.9	Review Heritage Committee’s Terms of Reference to determine if there are any opportunities to reduce staff time dedicated to the functioning of the committee.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p>Effective communication is key to a streamlined development approvals process. Communication includes materials such as guides and application forms, internal and external communication, and mid-stream application updates. Improvements to communication will help to clarify application requirements, improve the quality of applications submitted to the Village and save staff resources.</p>			
C.1	Update the application guides and brochures to clearly outline entire application process and components of the process that often lead to staff inquiries for clarification. This includes outlining a requirement for a pre-application meeting.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
C.2	Advocate for a Comprehensive Review of Provincial legislation respecting development cost charges and community amenity contributions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Short-term
C.3	Provided simplified checklists	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
C.4	Provide information about expected processing timelines at the pre-application stage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing
C.5	Create a centralized online location where applicants can track their application status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-term
C.6	Clearly state on all application forms and guides that only complete applications will be accepted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
C.7	Place development application material in an easily accessible and searchable online location	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
C.8	Continue to engage with the development community about policy, regulation, processes, and procedures to foster positive industry relationships outside of specific development applications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing

Section	Action	Grant Funding Eligible	Timeframe
C.9	Create a pre-application checklist and memo template to communicate requirements to applicants.		Short-Term
C.10	Provide applicants with an application requirement letter or checklist subsequent to the pre-application meeting that is submitted at the time of application submission to apply additional rigor to the application intake process.		Short-Term
C.11	Provide applicants with a pre-application meeting summary letter that clearly outlines the application requirements applicable to the scope of the subject application as well as advisory comments.		Short-Term
C.12	Update application and agency forms to require a single point of contact and place onus on owner or agent to communicate or forward application information to a variety of stakeholders and/or consultants to make better use of staff resources.		Short-term
<p><b>Policy and Regulation</b></p> <p>Bylaw amendments to streamline the process will create clarity for applicants. Additional transparency on external review procedures may also help to encourage use of the process and alleviate pressure on current internal processes.</p>			
R.1	<p>Official Community Plan Development Permit Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exempt ADUs from DPA 6</li> </ul>		Short Term
R.2	<p>Zoning Bylaw No. 1027, 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate any additional regulations that would provide the Village with the assurance that ADU will be constructed as desired.</li> </ul>		Short term
R.3	<p>Development Procedures and Fees Bylaw 1073, 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand delegated authority for DPs and minor variances</li> <li>Revise the public hearing requirements to reflect recent changes to the <i>Local Government Act</i></li> <li>Establishing criteria for determining when variances are minor in nature and delegate minor variances to staff.</li> <li>Expand the scope of DPs delegated to staff to include form and character DPs based on limitations deemed reasonable by Council.</li> <li>Remove the default requirement for public hearings and instead provide for Council the</li> </ul>		Short term

Section	Action	Grant Funding Eligible	Timeframe
	ability to require a Public Hearing if deemed necessary at 1 <sup>st</sup> reading.		
R.4	Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 948, 2012 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend to reduce the need for commonly requested variances or time consuming and cumbersome processes such as the system for collecting and releasing street tree bonding.</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
R.5	Advisory Planning Commission Bylaw No. 999, 2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend to include only OCP and Zoning bylaw amendments and long-range planning projects.</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
R.6	Consider revising building permit construction valuation fees to reflect current market conditions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-Term
R.7	Consider in the next OCP review include a comprehensive review of the DP guidelines to strengthen certain guidelines, reduce redundancy, provide additional clarity and focus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium Term
<p><b>Internal Procedures</b></p> <p>During engagement, staff capacity and turnover was identified as a potential streamlining issue. Consistent internal organizational practices will help to reduce information lost to staff turnover, create clear onboarding procedures and ultimately streamline the processing time. Succession and redundancy planning is needed for all roles to ensure that there are no major gaps when a staff member is absent.</p>			
I.1	Create internal policy, procedures, templates, and application checklists to ensure consistency of approach and improve effectiveness of onboarding new staff and third-party consultants.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-term
I.2	Improve procedural flowcharts and formalized onboarding practices and materials for staff that are entering a new role.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-term
I.3	Invest in staff training to improve internal knowledge and keep up to date with best practices in development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing
I.4	Improve financial tracking process, documentation procedure, and establish clear roles and responsibilities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-term
I.5	Establish file close-out procedures that clearly outline conditions of approval and tracks and requirements and consideration for subsequent approvals.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Short-term

Section	Action	Grant Funding Eligible	Timeframe
I.6	Improve tracking procedures by enhancing the application process through automation and include additional application statistics and benchmark monitoring in quarterly updates to Council.		Short-term
I.7	Establish approval timeline targets for key aspects in the development review process and monitor the success of reaching these targets.		Short-term
I.8	Investigate options to improve and streamline the street tree requirement and bonding process.		Short-term
<b>IT Solutions and Record Management</b>			
Software solutions and record management policy will help to provide a technical solution to adapt and update information systems to enable alignment updating processes.			
IT.1	Set up a web portal for development application submissions.		Short-term
IT.2	Create simple application guides for hosting on the Village's website.		Short-term
IT.3	Deploy self serve application status and reporting for applicants.		Short-term
IT.4	Establish and implement a file management policy that includes retention, storage, naming, and access.		Short-term
IT.5	Expand the use of SharePoint/O365 to include internal process tracking, communication logging, centralized file storage, document integration and automation.		Short-term
IT.6	Improve the use and integration of GIS in the review process.		Short-term
IT.7	Utilize dashboards and summary reporting to communicate with Council, Directors, and the public.		Short-term