Welcome | Please sit at any table
Acknowledgement of territory
New members
Your Mandate

The Citizens’ Assembly is tasked by the City of Duncan and the Municipality of North Cowichan (the Municipalities) to learn about the needs and interests of local residents, examine the implications of creating a new, amalgamated municipal structure, and advise local councillors and their administrations on the conditions under which the Municipalities should proceed.

Specifically, the Citizens’ Assembly on Municipal Amalgamation will develop:

- A set of values which describe their aspirations for good local governance;
- A list of issues which they believe need to be satisfactorily resolved for municipal amalgamation to merit consideration;
- A detailed recommendation concerning municipal amalgamation, including any conditions which would need to be satisfied if a merger was to proceed.
To assist the members of the Assembly with their mandate, we will examine:

1. To examine the Municipalities’ respective infrastructure, services, operations, and governance structures;

2. To inform and review the Amalgamation Study being undertaken concurrently with the Citizens’ Assembly

3. To learn from relevant case studies concerning prior, similar municipal amalgamations in British Columbia

4. To consult with and learn from independent experts as well as local residents
Our timeline

Jan 21  Feb 4  Feb 25  Initial Findings  Apr 1  Apr 6  Apr 8  Apr 22  Final Report

Tonight
Only the second step in a long process

2015 Plebiscite → No
2017 Citizens’ Assembly → Yes → Both Councils vote → No
2018 Referendum → Yes
Provincial approval

There will be many opportunities to help shape this decision
New materials

- Project website
- Google Earth mapping files
- Duncan and joint-council minutes and report (~300 pages)

- To come: Historical clippings
Highlights from last week
Overview

Cowichan Valley Regional District
3,500 km²
Total Population 80,330 (2011)

North Cowichan
195 km²
Population 28,805 (2011)

Duncan
2 km²
Population 4,935 (2011)
Population in 2011

North Cowichan: 28,805
Duncan: 4,935
Population Projections

Today

- Duncan: Est. 30,000
- North Cowichan: Est. 5,000

2046

- Duncan: Est. 40,800
- North Cowichan: Est. 5,900

Growth:
- 1% Growth
- 0.5% Growth
1. Overview of Responsibilities

**Municipalities**
- Water, Sewer, Storm
- Garbage and Recycling
- Roads and Sidewalks
- Recreation and Parks
- Policing (if municipality is over 5,000 population)
- Local Economic Development
- Building Inspections and Fire Protection
- And Community Planning and Zoning which includes:
  - Restricting types of development to certain properties or areas
  - Signage regulations
  - Enforcing land use issues (like noise, unsightly properties, unauthorized uses)
  - and Helping people “get along”...like dogs at large, parking

**Regional District & Shared Services**

Regional districts created in the 70s with the intent to provide a mechanism for sharing services between municipalities and unincorporated areas

- Economic development, Tourism, Emergency preparedness, 911, transit, and solid waste management facilities such as Bings Creek.

Including sub-regional services such as:
- Recreation for the Cowichan Lake area, recreation for the South End, some recreation in the Core area such as the Island Savings Centre, and some sub regional parks as well.

Some individual services to some but not all unincorporated areas such as:
- Water or sewer, garbage and or recycling, and fire services

Some regional services only provided to the unincorporated areas, such as:
- Bylaw Enforcement, Planning and Land Use, Building Inspection, and some small community parks in some unincorporated areas.
Staffing

**Duncan (1912)**
- 8 exempt staff
- 24 unionized staff (FTE, PTE)
- 5 students
- 38 paid-on-call firefighters within one fire hall

**North Cowichan (1873)**
- 25 exempt staff
- 238 unionized staff (FTE, PTE and casuals)
- 35 students
- 145 paid-on-call firefighters within four fire halls
So today…

Debrief public roundtable
Perspectives on municipal amalgamation

• Gary Paget
• Marijke Edmundson
• Patricia Ross
• Debra Oakman (by phone)
• Brian Walliser

Lunch

Refine values
Identify issues … as potential criteria for assessing the pros and cons of amalgamation
Roundtable debrief

Who did you meet?
Why were they motivated to attend?
What did you hear that surprised you?
What should we keep in mind as we do our work?
Municipal Amalgamation in British Columbia: A Brief History

Gary Paget, Senior Advisor
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
Local Government Restructure Types

- Restructure
- Incorporation
- Amalgamation
- Boundary extension
- Corporate status change
- Dissolution
- De-amalgamation
History of Duncan-Cowichan

- Cowichan First Nations
- 1873: District Municipality of North Cowichan incorporated (first DM in BC)
- 1912: City of Duncan incorporated (smallest city in area in Canada)
- 1967: Cowichan Valley Regional District incorporated
Key Governance Principles

- Legislation should provide a rich array of governance and service delivery approaches for communities.
- Voters should generally get to choose how they are to be governed.
- Direct Provincial intervention to restructure local governments is rare.
Provincial Direct Intervention

- **Impetus:** 1972 provincial election
- **Activist restructure policy focussed on:**
  - Kamloops
  - Kelowna
  - Nanaimo
  - Prince George
- **Note:** not pure amalgamations (rural area)
Consequences of Direct Actions

Local Consequences:

- Nanaimo and Kamloops have serious divisions
- Kelowna has a serious urban-rural divide in governance, finance and service delivery

Overall Consequences:

- no Provincial government has since chosen to force amalgamation
- *Community Charter* provision “no forced amalgamation” enacted in 2003
Voluntary Amalgamations

- 1974: Towns of Castlegar & Kinnaird amalgamate into City of Castlegar
- 1984: City of Chiliwack & District of Chilliwhack amalgamate to create City of Chiliwack (*after having separated in 1908*)
- 1996: Districts of Abbotsford & Matsqui amalgamate to create City of Abbotsford
Why was Abbotsford a Success?

- Municipalities already well integrated: water, sewer, parks & rec, fire services
- Desire for stronger planning when faced with Vancouver growth juggernaut
- Concern with economic development
- Strong political leadership (formal and informal)
Unsuccessful Amalgamations (1)

- 1975: defeat of major provincially led initiative to amalgamate all unincorporated Western Communities

- Ultimately led to a plethora of municipal incorporations: Metchosin (‘84), Colwood (‘85), View Royal (‘88), Langford (‘92), Highlands (‘93) and Sooke (‘99)
Unsuccessful Amalgamations (2)

- Two part ballot:
  - 1987: separate View Royal municipality vs joining Esquimalt
  - 1996: separate Highlands municipality vs joining Langford
  - 2007: separate West Kelowna municipality vs joining Kelowna

- In all cases local independence prevailed over amalgamation
Summary

- Power of place and community control are a strong force in BC
- Provincial wariness about overriding local choice continues
- RD’s and more flexible municipal service / corporate powers provide options for achieving local objectives
- Since larger boundaries will never be large enough, supra-municipal arrangements will still be needed
- Idiosyncratic factors (history, geography) can hinder success
Bibliography


Bob Bish, *Governing Greater Victoria: the role of elected officials and shared services*, Fraser Institute, 2016
Thank you for your time and participation
Local Government Restructure
Program Overview

Marijke Edmundson, Program Director
Governance & Structure Branch, Local Government Division
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
Only the second step in a long process

2015 Plebiscite

2017 Citizens’ Assembly

Both Councils vote

2018 Referendum

Provincial approval

There will be many opportunities to help shape this decision
# Key Program Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Intent</th>
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</table>
| Local leadership                               | • Locally focused studies  
• Local committee leadership                                                                                                                                         |
| Inter-jurisdictional collaboration             | • RDs conferred with on change that affects governance, finance  
• Municipalities advised of electoral area changes                                                                                                               |
| Consider all community sectors/service providers | • Engage with business, resident groups, stakeholders and servicing entities                                                                                           |
| Decisions based on research, analysis and community consent | • Study the current governance, servicing models and values, interests, concerns and identity of community  
• Approval of the electors                                                                                                                                          |
| Building relationships                         | • To enhance local and regional governance                                                                                                                                           |
| Minister and Cabinet approvals                 | • The buck stops at the Cabinet table and CSCD Minister sends it there                                                                                                                    |
What is Local Government Structure?

Physical representation of governance ‘zones’

In BC, we have:
- Regional Districts
- Municipalities
- Improvement Districts
- Specialized entities

Facilitating local:
- Taxation and service delivery
- Representation
- Decision-making authority
- Community and land-use planning
Roles in Restructures

**Province - CSCD**
- Technical expertise, input, and advice
  - Assist in the framing of a local study process
  - Provides advice and perspective on what the objectives might look like
- Support public & stakeholder consultation
  - Provides the opportunity for the public to have their voice heard in support or rejection of a structure change
- First Nations consultation
- Issue and monitor grant funds (if applicable)
  - Provides resources (funding) to support the study process

**First Nations Obligations**
- Legal responsibility for consultation rests with the Province
  - Must be able to demonstrate duty has been met
  - Obligation exists on a spectrum and varies with circumstance
Roles in Restructures

**Local Governments**

Lead study design and delivery
- Define scope of work
- Hire and direct consultants
- Select and manage study committee
- Lead Public/stakeholder consultation
- First Nations engagement
- Manage and allocate grant funds (if applicable)

**Public/Stakeholder Input**

- Can be a considerable impact to public/stakeholder interests
- Affected property owners must have the opportunity to be heard
  - Extent depends on the circumstances of the proposal
- Municipal electoral approval required
- Members of the public may be involved in the local committee
The Abbotsford Amalgamation Experience

Patricia Ross
Abbotsford City Councillor
The Comox Valley Experience

Debra Oakman, Chief Administrative Officer
Comox Valley Regional District
Comox Valley Experience

2008 Provincial restructure
• Comox Strathcona Regional District to Comox Valley Regional District and Strathcona Regional District

2011 Royston Improvement District
• water, garbage and fire protection - merger to Comox Valley Regional District

2016 Sandwick Water Works District
• Water - merger to Comox Valley Regional District
Comox Valley Experience

Leadership administration approach

• Identify early critical success factors – assign appropriate resources, monitor progress, maintain ongoing communications
• Develop, recommend and implement strategies to address issues and to meet provincial/community priorities
• Identify organization human resource skill set requirements and recruit for the future
• Develop team approach
• Develop, recommend and implement policies to guide the board/organization
• Celebrate success and acknowledge challenges, change, fears
• Develop strategy to tackle difficult issues head on
Comox Valley Experience

• Legal and financial checklists developed
• Additional resources recruited to manage specific aspects of the restructure eg: interim Strathcona Regional District CAO
• Impact on human resources, retirements, loss of corporate knowledge, recruitment challenges

Recommendation: Engage a transition (change) management team
Comox Valley Experience

Project team approach
- Adopt a project management framework to assist with identifying critical activities, deadlines and assign roles/responsibilities
  - Restructure period
  - Transition period
- Important to develop two project timelines and action plans as these two periods represent:
  - Planning and preparing for the restructure
  - Implementing the restructure

Analyze services
- Consider a comprehensive analysis of services, stats, costs, etc before restructure then plan for analysis three to five years post restructure
Comox Valley Experience

• **Communications**
  • Embrace communications as critical success factor

• **Outcomes**
  • Identify objectives of restructure
  • Develop measures to be accountable

• **Resources**
  • Outsource for project management role
  • Determine external funding opportunities
Comox Valley Experience

Consider:

External appointments and any impacts

• Weighted votes at the Regional District
• Vancouver Island Regional Library Board
Comox Valley Experience

Conclusion

- Overall positive – smaller geographic focus on services to meet regional priorities
- Lots of work – prepare and develop project plan
- Patience – allow for three to five year transition period
The BC Approach to Local Service Integration:
How the RD System has Reduced Pressure to Amalgamate

Brian Wallisser
Presentation Outline

1. Consolidation vs service integration
2. Canada – pressure to consolidate
3. British Columbia – service integration & the role of regional districts
4. Why service integration reduces consolidation pressure
5. Lessons – key talking points for CAMA
Alternative Pathways to Reform: Consolidation vs Integration

- Amalgamation & service integration are alternative pathways to reform

- Consolidation via amalgamation:
  - Focus on a broad range of services
  - Seeks to rearrange services into new, larger, fixed boundaries – all at once

- Service integration:
  - Focus on individual functions, or parts of functions
  - Acknowledges that no single boundary is best for all services
  - Generally unfolds over time – evolutionary in nature
Consolidation in Canada

- Most provinces:
  - Strong consolidation pressures
  - Common threads: (1) weak integration regimes, (2) provincial governments willing to intervene

- 1990’s and 2000’s:
  - ON, QC, NS – top-down reform, controversy
  - Examples... Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Montréal, Québec, Halifax... many others

- 2000’s and 2010’s:
  - SK, MB, NB, NL – seeking “voluntary” reform
  - AB – struggles with its “Capital Region”
BC’s Advantage: Service Integration

- Same period... amalgamation pressure rarely crops up in BC
- RD system: the most flexible, adaptable system for service integration in Canada
- Enables rational, evolutionary reform:
  - Collective delivery of almost ANY service, to ANY area, using ANY mode of provision
  - Actuated almost entirely voluntarily, with little provincial government interference
**BC’s Advantage:**

**RD Service Flexibility**

1. **Choose service component** (all or part of a function)

2. Choose service area

3. **Choose service mode**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Component</th>
<th>Direct production</th>
<th>Public-public contracting</th>
<th>Public-private contracting</th>
<th>Autonomous entity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local / rural</td>
<td>Rural fire – CSRD</td>
<td>Suburban fire – CSRD</td>
<td>Recycling – KBRD</td>
<td>Financial aid – CapRD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interlocal</td>
<td>Water delivery – CapRD</td>
<td>Suburban transit – CORD</td>
<td>Waste collection – NRD</td>
<td>BV-EDA – BNRD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
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<td>CRHC– CapRD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-regional</td>
<td>Regional parks – Low. Mainland</td>
<td>9-1-1 services – North Island</td>
<td>Regional parks – Lower Mainland</td>
<td>9-1-1 oversight – North Island</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why Integration Reduces Consolidation Pressure

- Solving service issues one-by-one is easier
- First things first – a focus on true service priorities
- Cooperation tends to reduce interlocal friction
- Cooperation is self-reinforcing – success breeds success
- Cooperation keeps Province from meddling incessantly
- Instead, the Province has been constructive – by building vital “helper institutions” (e.g., MFA, MIABC)
- And two more things:
  - Integration is possible (but harder) OUTSIDE the RD vehicle
  - Consolidation can only ever be partial at best (even Megacity Toronto remains too small for some purposes)
Considerations for DNC-CAMA

- The 80/20 rule applies...
  - spend 80% of your time on understanding / defining problems
  - recognize that problems in service provision are distinct from problems of general governance – so treat them differently

- What do we want? Evidence-based reform...
  - Avoid the temptation to prescribe solutions too soon
  - Don’t base recommendations on assumptions that can’t be validated

- The tortoise often wins...
  - resolving one thing at a time can work best
  - the trade-off is that pace of reform is reduced

- It’s easier to break something than fix it...
  - take care not to demolish stuff that works, or upset established relationships, or undo proven community engagement practices
  - “one cannot forget the powerful grip that the past has on the present and that institutional changes in most instances come slowly” (J. Everett Brown)
Lunch
1. **What values do you want your local government to exemplify?**

**Group 1**: (Gus, Fred, Barb, Kathryn, Anthony, Andrew)
- Necessary because you need regulators and administrators
- Accessibility to Mayor and Council (e.g. online access to minutes, etc.)
- Valuable services (parks, garbage, by-laws, infrastructure, maintenance, parks and recreation)
- Seamless garbage pick-up! Keep our cities clean, keep H2O clean (Cheamainus is often under a boil water advisory)
- Public forums and well-advertised
- Retaining and providing green space
- Good service at municipal level
- More attention to youth, seniors
- Efficiency
- Accountability
- Quality

**Group 2**: (Regan; Don, Susan, Dee, Rick, Lance, Sarah)
- Respect for taxpayers/public
- Unobtrusive, low-conflict
- Approachable
- Public consultation

**Group 3**: (Jim, Tanya, Alec, Tyler, Martin, Vicky)
- Value the infrastructure / management services
- Proximity and accessibility to local government
- Fiscal responsibility
- Local government has a good awareness of issues, concerns are raised by Assembly members

**Group 4**: (Fay; Hendrik, Jackie, Jacqueline, Marilyn, Annie, David)
- More of a citizen democracy. Currently too much based on personal (preferences of representatives?)
- Need input from citizens to reflect what citizens want from every community.
- Implementation of OCP requires clarity
- The regulations that have been put in place getting to be too much
- Accessibility
- Accountability
- Room for both commercial and rural/small community
- One opinion – don’t want too high a representation relative to population; other opinion – should have more representation

**Group 5**: (Rachel; Justin, Andy, Fiona, Jaye,)
- Local interests protected and promoted, even if local government doesn’t always do this well
- Cost-efficiency – e.g. streamline services, management
- Gives us voice – we can voice our opinions; our representatives, staff are accessible and responsive
- Vision – ability to set a clear direction and make a plan
- Commitment to communicate and involve citizenry
- Quality services, again we don’t necessarily always get but it is important to us
- We should share rather than compete
- Environmentally sensitive

**Group 6**: (Beverly, Nora, Mona, Ross, Shiyana)
- Small – approachable councillors and mayor
- Duncan and North Cowichan are intimate; many locals know each other; small town mentality
- No political parties, acceptance
- Less inefficiencies
- Officials are responsive and take action to enforce the law
- Relationship with local First Nations needs to be collaborative
- Collaboration, working together for the interests of all the communities
1. What values do you want your local government to exemplify?

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- Approachable
- Accessibility
- Small – approachable councillors and mayor
- Proximity and accessibility to local government
- Accountability
- Value the infrastructure / management services
- Efficiency
- Respect for taxpaying public
- Fiscal responsibility
- Less inefficiencies
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- Officials are responsive and take action to enforce the law
- The regulations that have been put in place getting to be too much
- Relationship with local First Nations needs to be collaborative
- Value the infrastructure / management services
What issues or concerns do you think matter most when considering whether Duncan and North Cowichan should be amalgamated?

Create a long list, then select and prioritize 8-10 top issues or concerns
Adjourn