

BUILDING COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS PHASE II REPORT

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world, indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” – Margaret Mead

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary includes: a background on the project, the process used in Phase 2, the outcomes of Phase 2, and the next steps planned for Phase 3 of the Building Community Solutions project.

The “Outcomes” section details the themes that emerged related to the different Study Circles visions for the future of the community, the strengths and weaknesses that were identified, and the “action” themes that were brought forward. What is not detailed in this summary are the outcomes related to how the Study Circles participants were affected in the process – perhaps the most important outcomes - how the Circles affected what participants will do in the future; what they learned in the process; how the Circles affected the way they think about families and neighbourhoods, and what they found valuable about the process. The reader is encouraged to read the Participant Feedback in Section 3 of this report, to see that many people with the ability to provide leadership in the community have been encouraged to do so through this process. The Study Circle Reports contain a wealth of ideas, and it is hoped that community members, who read the ideas created for their neighbourhoods, will be inspired to become involved. At the very least, the approaches are a testament to the creativity and good will that emerges when people talk together in a respectful way.

Although the BCS Steering Committee is limited to supporting one of the “Action Themes”, it is hoped that community leaders and the community at large will internalize the other four themes, and that action to support these themes will emerge from a collective consciousness of what is important to people in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows. The will of the community to be involved in issues of community planning, youth, the use of community facilities and inclusion and accessibility deserves attention of community leaders.....

“What is at work here is a whole system invisibly creating the conditions that suddenly enable it to jump to a new place” – Margaret Wheatley

I want to acknowledge the work of the BCS Steering Committee – particularly the leaders in that group (you know who you are!), the people in School District #42 who helped to make the Study Circles happen, the excellent resources of the Study Circles Resource Centre, made possible through the Topsfield Foundation (including the ongoing support of Matt Leighninger), the Ridge Meadows Senior’s Activity Centre, United Way of the Lower Mainland, SPAC, the CYFN, Parks and Leisure Services, The Family Education and Support Centre, The Chamber of Commerce, the local businesses and news media who supported this project, as well as the facilitators who gave freely of their time, not only to facilitate the Study Circles, but also to attend training, write reports and respond to my many questions, and last but not least of course, the Study Circle participants.

Finally, my thanks for the opportunity of facilitating and documenting this great project!

Carol Munro, MA
Project Consultant

BACKGROUND

The Building Community Solutions Project (BCS) is an initiative of The District of Maple Ridge Social Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC), the Child Youth and Family Network (CYFN) and United Way of the Lower Mainland – Communities in Action.

The goal of BCS is to help community groups and agencies to work together to improve the quality of life, based on values of mutual respect, open communication and collaboration. The expected outcomes of BCS are:

- Improved services to the community and individuals
- More local community initiatives and partnerships (the process is as important as the project)
- Shifts to funding/additional funding
- Increased community involvement and accountability

The project is being conducted in three phases:

- Phase 1: Identifying key indicators and trends through the creation of a Community Impact Profile (CIP)
- Phase 2: Developing goals and targets through the establishment of Community Solutions tables
- Phase 3: Investing in strategies/achieving impact by mobilizing the community to action.

Phase 1 began in January 2001. A Steering Committee, with diverse representation was recruited from the community. With the help of a consultant, the Steering Committee identified key indicators in the areas of population demographics, economic factors, children and youth, education, housing, health, environmental factors, community participation, and public safety. The consultants researched the indicators and produced a report which is a “Snapshot in Time” of the quality of life in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

PHASE 2 – THE PROCESS

Phase 2 began with a Forum in June, 2002, where participants celebrated the completion of Phase 1 and identified three priority areas of concern:

- Youth
- Poverty
- Building a Healthy community

A consultant/coordinator was hired in August to assist the Steering Committee with implementation of Phase 2, and the Steering committee agreed to use Study Circles as a method of mobilizing the community to develop goals and targets.

Study Circles involve groups of 8-15 people who meet several times to discuss an issue. Through dialogue, the group builds stronger connections with other people, develops greater understanding of the issue and outlines steps for action. Study Circles are followed by an Action Forum, where an action plan is created, using the information and ideas gathered in the Study Circles.

Study Circle Guides are available through the Study Circle Resource Centre (www.studycircles.org). The coordinator researched available guides, and subsequently, in November, 3 Pilot Study Circles (two with steering committee members and one “mock circle” with youth) were held using a guide entitled “Building Strong Neighbourhoods for Families”. Following the Pilot Circles, the guide was adapted based on feedback from the facilitators, Pilot participants and the coordinator’s observations of the process.

In January, 2003, 49 facilitators were recruited and trained to use the guide, permission to use schools around the community as Study Circles sites was sought and granted, and recruitment of Study Circle participants began, using newspaper advertisements, brochures, posters and a website (www.rmkestudycircles.ca). Attempts were made to ensure that each group had diverse representation.

159 people registered for the Study Circles, and 15 school sites were designated. The Circles met for four consecutive weeks in February and March. Over the four weeks the Study Circles created visions for their neighbourhoods, identified neighbourhood strengths and weaknesses, approaches that might change things for the better, and action ideas.

The Action Forum was held in early April with at least 145 participants. The outcomes of the Study Circles were posted in large format around the Forum venue. A representative from each Circle made a presentation. Action ideas brought forward from the Study Circles were posted under 5 “themes”, and forum participants voted on the themes they believed should be a priority in Phase 3.

THE OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY CIRCLES

Then and Now – How things have changed

Participants in the Circles considered how things were different in their neighbourhoods, compared to when they were growing up. Themes emerged around people feeling less safe now, neighbours not knowing each other the way they used to, changing family structures, more emphasis on being “upwardly mobile”, and overprotected children.

Neighbourhood Visions

The 15 visions created by the Study Circles reflected the same wishes for the community. Participants expressed the desire for:

- Neighbourhoods where people work together to improve their neighbourhood
- Neighbourhoods where people felt safe
- Neighbourhoods where people care about and respect each other and the neighbourhood
- Neighbourhoods that are aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian friendly, and with green space and areas where people can meet.

Neighbourhood Weaknesses (what families are up against)

Weaknesses identified in the Study Circles fell into 7 themes:

1. **Safety** – Identified as a issue by 13 of 15 Circles
Concerns expressed were either about not feeling personally safe, or about places in the community being unsafe because of lack of sidewalks and lighting, or unsafe drop-off places for children at school
2. **Crime** - Identified as a issue by 13 of 15 Circles
Concerns were around theft, vandalism, “grow” operations, speeding motorists, drug use and drug “houses”, break-ins, violence, and gangs in Pitt Meadows.

3. **Transportation** - Identified as a issue by 14 of 15 Circles
Transportation concerns related to poor transit options, the length of time spent commuting, lack of places to ride a bike, overuse of cars and traffic congestion.
4. **Isolation** - Identified as a issue by 13 of 15 Circles
People were concerned about being “disconnected” from their neighbours, a somewhat transient population in some neighbourhoods, lack of community involvement, isolated seniors, neighbourhoods that are empty for long periods during the day while people commute to work, etc.
5. **Parenting and Youth issues** - Identified as a issue by 13 of 15 Circles
Parenting and youth concerns related to a perception of a lack of parenting skills or parents not taking responsibility, youth activities that were inaccessible to all because of transportation or economic difficulties, bored youth, latch key kids, not valuing our youth, lack of mental health services and other services for youth, and too many “chauffeured”, structured activities for children – leading to an inability to learn how to move safely around the community and learn independence. The youth issues identified are reflected in depth in *Filling the Gaps*, a 2001 assessment of youth needs in Ridge Meadows
6. **Poverty, Homelessness and Employment** - Identified as a issue by 13 of 15 Circles
Concern was expressed about a lack of good paying jobs in the community, the number of homeless adults and youth, parents not being able to afford programs for their children, illegal suites, lack of affordable housing, off-loading of responsibility by government leading to reduction of services for the poor, more seniors living in poverty, a decaying downtown core, and a high cost of living.
7. **Community planning** - Identified as a issue by 13 of 15 Circles
Planning issues were widely varied, and included concerns about sidewalks and lighting, infrastructure not keeping up with growth, a low percentage of parkland compared to other communities, the absence of social planning in Pitt Meadows and a myriad of development issues. (Community planners may be interested in doing more in-depth analysis of these issues).

Strengths in Our Neighbourhoods and Community

The strengths identified in every Circle fall loosely into three themes:

1. **People**
Appreciation was expressed for neighbours who look out for one another, friendly people, people who share their skills, environmentalists, local “characters”, local heroes and role models, athletes, youth, people who run and walk and cycle, social activists, volunteers, long time residents, people who take responsibility, artists, Katzie First Nation, people who organize neighbourhood celebrations, and people from diverse backgrounds.
2. **Green space/environment**
In every Circle, the natural environment was held up as a strength – parks, rivers, mountains, rural areas, dikes, green belts, lakes, trees and even blackberry patches! Appreciation was also expressed for parts of the “built” environment, such as golf courses, sports and recreation facilities, shopping facilities, schools that are within walking distance, horse friendly roads, no “big box” stores, and the downtown core project.

3. **Businesses, facilities and services**

Strengths in this area included churches, community social services, Parks and Leisure Services, the variety of restaurants, friendly businesses, the Youth Centre, the Senior's Centre, the hospital, the WestCoast Express, Re-cycling, BlockWatch, a progressive school district, Adopt a Block, the Volunteer Fire Department. Local festivals, fairs and community events were mentioned over and over. The list is too long to cite here, and the reader is encouraged to consult the Study Circle reports for more encouragement!

The Action Themes:

Not surprisingly, the action ideas are geared towards addressing weaknesses and building on strengths. *It is interesting to note that although crime and safety were issues of real concern, the Circles identified neighbours getting to know each other as being a solution, rather than more policing, harsher sentencing, etc.* What follows are the action themes and the number of votes each theme was given, during the Action Forum:

- **People in neighbourhoods getting to know each other and becoming more involved in community life - 72 votes**
- **Neighbourhood involvement in community planning and decision making and the OCP – 66 votes**
- **Value and support our youth – 46 votes**
- **More community use of public facilities – 35 votes**
- **More inclusion and accessibility – 7 votes**

The actions associated with these themes are recorded in Section 2, Outcomes of the April 3, 2003 Study Circles Forum.

NEXT STEPS

Following the Study Circles Forum, the Steering Committee met to consider Phase 3, and is committed to:

- Supporting the actions related to the theme that received the most votes: "People in neighbourhoods getting to know each other and becoming involved in community life", with an emphasis on developing leadership
- Securing funding from United Way and recruiting a coordinator for Phase 3
- Publicizing the outcomes of Phase 2, through printed copies of this report, the media, and the website
- Hosting a neighbourhood development workshop (led by a representative of the Study Circles Resource Centre)
- Recording and reporting out on the work of Study Circle groups that continue to meet
- Recruiting new Steering Committee members – one Steering Committee member will be assigned to each action idea being pursued and subcommittees will be formed as appropriate
- Recruit new planning committee members to oversee Phase 3
- Working towards sustainability of the BCS project.

PROJECT EVALUATION

This evaluation asks the questions “Did we do what we said we would do?” “How do we know that our work made a difference?” and “What would we do differently next time?”

1. Did we do what we said we would do?

The following chart indicates the outcomes planned by the Steering Committee for Phase 3, the strategies and activities undertaken to achieve these outcomes, and the results:

| Outcome | Strategies | Activities | Timeline | Results |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The community is mobilized to identify issues related to youth, poverty and a health community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring people together to learn about the issues, provide their perspective and ideas. ▪ Work with the community to develop an action plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribute FAQ sheet on the BCS project ▪ Distribute Fact Sheets on the issues ▪ Train facilitators to run Study Circles ▪ Hold pilot Study Circles with Steering committee members | November - December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FAQ distributed to steering committee, newspapers, Superintendent of Schools, Principals, Chamber of Commerce, Study Circle Resource Center, MRTA, DPAC, CUPE ▪ 49 facilitators recruited for Study Circles ▪ Dates set for facilitator training. Facilitator registration forms completed ▪ Trainers identified ▪ Pilot Circles completed. Analysis of results completed; Guide re-written ▪ Pilot sessions held with youth group ▪ Study Circle and Forum participants recruited – more than 400 people actively participated in the project. |
| Goals are in place to address these issues and an action plan is developed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring a diverse group of community members together to develop goals and a plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct Study Circles to clarify issues and priorities ▪ Hold a Forum to develop an action plan | January - April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 20 sites secured with School District. ▪ Principal or vice principal contacted at each school ▪ Participant registration forms completed/ posted on website ▪ Weeks for Study Circles and Forum identified ▪ 50 facilitators trained ▪ Marketing materials produced and disseminated – posters, brochures, ads ▪ Letters sent to community groups ▪ 159 participants recruited (134 attended) ▪ 15 Study Circles held ▪ Forum held (145 attendees) – Action plan prioritized by participants |
| The steering committee and any subcommittees formed are sustained and strengthened | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that the steering committee continues to meet regularly ▪ Keep committee members regularly updated on progress of project ▪ Recruit more people to the steering committee ▪ Provide support to steering committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schedule dates for meetings – encourage participation ▪ Regular emails, requests for ideas and feedback ▪ Contact potential members; encourage them to attend ▪ Assist with preparation of agendas, ensure that space for meetings has been booked, refreshments are available, minutes of meetings are circulated in a timely manner, etc. | Ongoing throughout project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Committee met regularly. Some committee members participated in Pilot, or Study Circles, some facilitated Circles, some attended Forum. Ongoing contact made with Steering Committee members who were not attending meetings regularly ▪ Committee was kept updated and asked for feedback at each step in the process ▪ 15 people added to Steering Committee list between September and February – 4 new members added following the Forum ▪ Subcommittee formed to approve PR materials ▪ Coordinator prepared agendas in consultation with planning committee. Steering committee members booked space, arranged refreshments; chaired meetings and recorded minutes. Coordinator distributed minutes |

| Outcome | Strategies | Activities | Timelines | Results |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Public awareness of human needs, changing trends, emerging issues and potential problems is raised | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publicize the process and the results ▪ Raise awareness of the outcomes of Phase 1 ▪ Publicize the progress/outcomes of Phase 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Circulate information to community groups and the community at large – flyers, email, letters ▪ Articles/ads in local media ▪ Information posted on municipal ▪ Study Circle website?? | Nov - April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Web site had information on Phases 1 and 2. ▪ More than 3,000 “hits” on site ▪ Letters sent to 194 community groups ▪ 5,000 brochures distributed ▪ 200 posters distributed ▪ Letter sent to all faith groups ▪ Both Save On’s, Dave’s Produce, IGA in Pitt Meadows, Chamber of Commerce participated ▪ 19 newspaper advertisements placed ▪ 8 newspaper articles ▪ Displays at Haney Place Mall, Valley Fair Mall, Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Recreation Centres ▪ 48 youth services providers contacted directly ▪ 32 municipal staff contacted directly ▪ 1 television interview (aired numerous times) ▪ More than 400 active participants in project ▪ Presentations made to: Both Municipal Councils, School Board, District Parent Advisory Committee, Silver Valley Association, Parks and Leisure Services Volunteer Group, Royal Canadian Legion, Mountain Festival Committee, District Girl Guides, Eric Langton PAC, Yennadon PAC, Citizens Advisory, Chamber of Commerce, Parks and Leisure Services Commission, Child Youth and Family Network, Ministerial Group, Kiwanis, MRSS PAC, Mount Crescent PAC, Fraserview Association, Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Youth Councils, Health Authority, participants in programs at The Family Education and Support Centre and West Coast Family Resources |
| Additional community resources are identified and/or mobilized to facilitate progress to Phase 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involve funders, local government, business and the community at large in the Study Circles ▪ Investigate possible sources of funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involve MCFD, Health, Chamber of Commerce, Parks and Leisure Services, school district, municipality, United Way in project | Ongoing throughout project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Power Point presentation prepared and circulated to Steering Committee ▪ Presentations made to business, community groups and local government (see above) ▪ Discussions held with MCFD ▪ 49 facilitators were trained ▪ MR Council incorporated Study Circle outcomes into strategic planning process ▪ Some Circles plan to implement their action strategies ▪ Database of all project participants ▪ Study Circles Report ▪ United Way has indicated that funding will be forthcoming for Phase III ▪ Study Circles participant’s commitment (See Participant Feedback in Section 3) |

2. How do we know that our work made a difference?

78% of Study Circle participants completed project evaluations. They provided many examples of changes in attitude and intended changes in behaviour which demonstrate that this was a successful community development exercise :

- 91% of participants believed that they had an increased understanding of the beliefs and attitudes of others
- 42% of participants believed that their ability to discuss issues openly and frankly had increased
- 49% of participants believes that they had an increased understanding of their own attitudes and beliefs
- 42% of participants believed that their ability to communicate more effectively had increased

When asked how the Study Circles affected what people would do, an overwhelming number of the 103 responses indicated that participants had experienced a change:

Many comments indicated a new commitment to become more involved in community life. Some examples:

- *"It has made me want to contribute more to my community"*
- *"Take personal responsibility for the small things I can do"*
- *"Feel more connected to larger community"*

Other comments indicated a change in attitudes towards the community, themselves, and others. Some examples:

- *"I am more concretely hopeful about the changes I want to see"*
- *"It makes me think about myself and how I'm going to raise my children in ten years"*
- *"Identified a gap between my feelings and my actions"*
- *"Made me understand other people's perspectives regarding solutions"*
- *"Have changed my general outlook"*

When asked what they had learned that surprised them, participants indicated an increased awareness of what they shared with their neighbours and how they appreciated the different perspectives Some examples:

- *"We all have similar concerns and beliefs about our neighbourhood"*
- *"A lot of people have the same concerns/ideas"*
- *"Respectfulness"*
- *"Different perspectives, ways of interpreting"*

When asked how the Study Circles affected the way they think about neighbourhoods and families, participants indicated a new awareness of how important it was for people in neighbourhoods to be connected with each other. Some examples:

- *"Everyone wants to live closer together, be connected & less lonely"*
- *"Think about neighbours differently and want to talk them and have deeper conversations regarding our community and neighbourhood issues"*
- *"Rekindled memories; now want to build a stoop/veranda to be more involved in life on my street"*
- *"Study Circles have affected the way I see the big picture - my inspiration, how I see how a little group can make a difference"*

When asked what they found most valuable about the Study Circles, participants indicated a new sense of hope that they could make a difference, and an appreciation of the views and ideas of others:

- *“Sense of community and hope”*
- *“Useful to witness degree of knowledge neighbours have re: community and what makes a good one”*
- *“Hope to make a difference; connections; to actively do something”*
- *“Learning about the difference between debate and dialogue; to think about our own reaction to other’s ideas”*

3. What would we do differently next time?

Coordinator/consultant’s perspective:

The Study Circle process should not be undertaken lightly! Making the connections with key players, and creating awareness and commitment to the process in the community is no small task. It is very important to plan carefully to make sure that no steps in the process are missed. From the coordinator’s perspective some things could be done differently in another round of Study Circles:

- **Make face to face contact with all the key people when creating the network needed to make the project a success:** Contact with school principals was made by email, following approval for use of the schools by the district superintendent. Some confusion arose when principals were unable to open attachments to emails. Had the coordinator taken the time to meet with the principals in person, get to know them and familiarize them fully with the process, she would likely have had even more cooperation and support. That being said, the majority of the principals extended themselves considerably to assist where they could. A face to face meeting with the District PAC earlier in the process might have gained more support through the school networks for recruiting participants
- **Work within structures that are likely to sustain the work of the Study Circles** In many ways, schools were a good choice for the Study Circles, and hopefully, the project may lead to more community use of schools. However in areas of the community where there is a neighbourhood association, it would likely have worked well to try to arrange for each association to host a Circle. This may have provided a better chance of the Circles in those neighbourhoods continuing to meet; i.e. a structure and meeting place already exists. It is interesting to note that in three areas where community associations exist, two Circles had to be cancelled because of lack of registration, and the third had low registration.
- **Set the dates for the Circles well in advance:** In an effort to accommodate as many participants as possible, the coordinator initially advertised the weeks of the Circles, but not the actual days. This was done with the idea that the Circle in a particular neighbourhood would be held on the day that suited most participants. In fact, other issues such as the availability of the facilitators and schools ended up being the deciding factor. Further, once the dates were set, the level of registration increased.
- **Hire a full time coordinator and recruit more active volunteers:** The amount of work involved in bringing all the necessary pieces together was more than anticipated. The initial expectation of the steering committee was that the coordination could be done in two days a week. Although the coordinator did not log all her hours, the project more or less became a full time job between December and March. Help came mostly from a few already overworked steering committee members and some facilitators who felt passionately about the project. The coordinator was unable to recruit enough volunteers to provide one liaison person for 20 Circles, and the goal of holding 20 Circles was reduced to 15.

- **Complete the pilot project from start to finish:** The last session of the pilot project was not completed in its entirety, and the study guide material for the last session turned out to be too much for one evening.

Participant's perspective:

Participants in the Study Circles were asked what they would change in another round of Study Circles.

- The timetable was rushed – particularly the last session (15 responses)
- Have better demographic representation in our Circle - more youth, disabled people, ethnic diversity (9 responses)
- Too much repetition in last session (5 responses)
- Narrowing down to just three priorities out of lots of priorities – some ideas may be lost (3 responses)
- No coffee (3 responses).

Other responses appear to be related to experiences in particular groups, and can be viewed in the appendices.

Steering Committee's perspective:

What Worked

Facilitator maintained structure in Study Circle Process

Good advertising

Well paced process

Effective Study Circle format

Good outline for Facilitators

Amount of recruiting in the neighbourhoods
Quality marketing and promotional materials
- nice to see such consistency

Fabulous experience - showed how solution focused the people are

Level of commitment by the community is commendable
Seeing the community come out to do something

Choice to hire such a strong Coordinator

Interest from the community very impressive

Community is stronger from the process – growth and changes not measurable

A new way of doing things that can make things happen in the long term

What Didn't Work

Forum before Study Circles at the beginning of Phase II was confusing

Process seemed a little complex

Consensus at the end of the forum didn't work well for me

Last session had too much material to cover

Erratic attendance made discussion difficult

Consultative process identified 1 of 3 themes established at the beginning of Phase II
Phase II seemed to slide back but by the end achieved outcomes
Missing piece from Katzie

Outline could use some retraining

Over emphasis on youth issues because adults did not attend

Suggestions

Change time structure
2 – 4 hour sessions on Saturdays

Steering Committee to look at time commitment for Coordinator and Facilitators

Forum longer with more expressive theme
- pre-selected theme changed to group consensus of themes

Immigrant and handicapped groups to be included

More word of mouth recruitment

Simplify or reduce the number of questions in Study Circle process

Groups to have more than 5 people for good discussion

Comments from Linda & Michelle (United Way):

Well done. Impressed with how your group fosters relationships and brings people to the table. You are inclusive and understand the building community process.

This group has vision which will drive actions.

Outcomes of April 3, 2003 Study Circles Forum

One hundred and forty five people attended the Study Circles Forum. Forum participants included 60 Study Circle participants, 23 Study Circle facilitators, 15 Steering Committee members, a number of community leaders and interested community members.

Forum Activities:

1. Food was served at the beginning of the evening, and while they were eating, Forum participants reviewed the outcomes of the Study Circles, which were posted in large format around the walls of the room.
2. At the same time, Study Circle participants who attended the Forum posted their action ideas under the main themes that had emerged from their Circles:
 - People in neighbourhoods getting to know each other and becoming more involved in community life
 - Neighbourhood involvement in community planning and decision making and the OCP
 - Valuing and supporting our youth
 - More community use of public facilities
 - More inclusion and accessibility
3. A representative from each Study Circle made a presentation on the highlights of his or her Circle. Presenters represented the diversity of the community, including a number of youth presenters.
4. Forum participants were invited to vote on which theme they believed should take priority in Phase 3 of the Study Circles project, and to sign up for action items they were interested in.

Forum Outcomes:

Theme #1:

People in neighbourhoods getting to know each other and becoming more involved in community life - 72 votes

Actions recorded under this theme:

- New neighbourhood initiatives (Laitview)
- Extend Study Circle work in support of Study Circle goals (Maple Ridge Elementary)
- Strategic zoning to allow neighbourhood retail/food/meeting places (Maple Ridge Secondary)
- Develop an electronic newsletter for Pitt Meadows (Pitt Meadows Secondary)
- Create enhanced streetscapes (Maple Ridge Secondary)
- Develop leadership and life skills programs in Pitt Meadows (Pitt Meadows Secondary)
- Participatory events: a) Annual Block Party month b) Create urban green gathering spaces (Harry Hooge)
- Improve upon already structured volunteer programs (Mount Crescent)
- Walking buses (to get children to school) (Westview)
- Create Study Circles around citizenship with media support/sponsorship (increase citizenship) (Harry Hooge)
- Declare monthly "Random Acts of Kindness Day" (Thomas Haney)
- Organize a celebration to bring people together (Yennadon)
- Neighbours supporting neighbours – block watch (Riverside)

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Theme #2:

Neighbourhood involvement in community planning and decision making and the OCP – 66 votes

Actions recorded under this theme:

- Systems (including all levels of government and organizations) working together in the community, driven by the community (Yennadon)
- Municipal garden pick-up service (Maple Ridge Elementary)
- Attend Pitt Meadows Council meetings – involve ourselves in civic politics to affect change (Davie Jones)
- Look for opportunities to engage individuals, groups, neighbourhood organizations and the community in a greater dialogue leading to defined actions (Maple Ridge Secondary)
- Raise awareness of the need to develop more partnerships between large and small organizations, funders, levels of government and business (Mount Crescent)
- Take responsibility for getting out to vote and encouraging others to do so (Maple Ridge Elementary)
- Become involved in Cottonwood Park development process (Alexander Robinson)
- Create ways for our neighbourhood to have a voice in community planning and a stronger neighbourhood identity (Albion)
- Do an inter-agency natural resources plan (cross boundaries – inter-regional) (Harry Hooge)
- Get the community to promote itself more (Mount Crescent)
- Community based decision making (Whonnock)
- Transportation and sustainability (Whonnock)
- Create a voice for the neighbourhood (being heard by local government) (Riverside)
- Encourage the media to become more positive in how it portrays our community (Davie Jones)

Theme #3:

Valuing and supporting our youth – 46 votes

Actions recorded under this theme:

- Elected teen as youth representative/advocate with local government (Riverside)
- A townhouse complex co-op for the community of young parents (Moms for Action)
- A neighbourhood “Youth Mixer” event (Alexander Robinson)
- Challenge our youth to take action: Let them decide what they want through planning and decision making committees (Davie Jones)

Theme #4:

More community use of public facilities – 35 votes

Actions recorded under this theme:

- Using schools, halls, churches as a place to recreate or meet in the evenings or weekends (Laityview)
- Yellow bike program (Westview)
- Lobby for and activate a community school in Pitt Meadows (Pitt Meadows Secondary)
- Network of bicycle pathways throughout the community (Riverside)
- Require the municipality and business to sponsor the creation and maintenance of public art and landscaping (Maple Ridge Elementary)
- Utilize school space for other activities that benefit communities (e.g. healthy babies, book mobiles, free tutoring) (Yennadon)
- Do a professional study re; use of public facilities, including schools (Harry Hooge)

Theme #5:

More inclusion and accessibility – 7 votes

Actions recorded under this theme:

- Support our neighbourhood by developing a bulletin board or some way to communicate about what already exists in the community (businesses, community organizations, other resources) (Yennadon)
- Become the “City of Festivals” (Westview)
- Affordable recreation/activities for all to participate in (Laityview)
- Gay Pride and awareness events (Thomas Haney)
- Establish the “Order of Maple Ridge” (Alexander Robinson)

WHAT WE DISCOVERED IN THE STUDY CIRCLES

The Study Circle groups met once a week for four weeks, and discussed the following main questions:

Week 1:

What was it like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in?
How is it different for families today?
What is our vision for our neighbourhood?

Week 2:

What are families up against in our neighbourhood?
What are the strengths in our neighbourhood and community?

Week 3:

What things are already being done to help families?
What gives us hope that things can be better?
What are some broad approaches that could change things for the better?
What we can do as individuals, a group, a neighbourhood and community to make things better?

Week 4:

What are our top three approaches – what are their strengths and weaknesses?
What are the Action Ideas we want to bring forward?

THE MOUNT CRESCENT STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- Everyone knew their neighbours
People felt safe to let their kids go out and explore on their own
- Neighbours took responsibility for each others kids and looked out for each others
- Mothers stayed at home
- People stopped and talked on the street
- People were able to work close to home and not have to commute
- Lots of group activities in schools were offered
- We worked for what we got
- Kids respected adults

How it is different for families today:

- More single parent families values around single parent families have changed i.e. it is more tolerated than before.
- Approaches to parenting have changed
- It is economically more difficult to raise a family in this day and age.
- There is more crime and vandalism in our community than before
- People are more transient due to having to go to jobs to make ends meet. This leads to shorter periods of time living in a community.
- We don't feel we can let our kids go out and play unsupervised because we fear for their safety.
- There are harder and more dangerous drugs in our communities. We never had to worry about needles on the ground in our neighbourhood
- Kids are plugged in and do less playing outside the home

- It is not as easy to make it outside the home when you turn 18. Kids are leaving the home later these days.
- More families need incomes of 2 parents to make ends meet.

Our vision:

In 10 years we envision a neighbourhood where there is more human contact, people are safe, cared for and valued with a foundation of commitment, respect and trust.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Lack of affordable housing to get away from the bad parts of their neighbourhood.
- Surrounded by negative influences exposing the kids to deal with seeing drugs, domestic violence with the neighbours.
- Too many government cuts to valuable services.
- Irresponsible homeowners as neighbours
- Irresponsible parents in the neighbourhood
- Powerlessness - police and social services cannot do enough to solve the situation
- Not enough rec. facilities to accommodate all age groups
- Drug houses in the neighbourhood
- Same people are expected to volunteer to run programs.
- Too much red tape to become a volunteer.
- Poor transit system.
- Poor lighting in the neighbourhoods.
- No sidewalks
- Not enough volunteerism for programs

The strengths in our neighbourhood and community:

- Some valuable services
- Good community events e.g. Jazz and Blues festival, the Santa Claus parade
- Community is still fairly small
- Citizens willing to get involved
- Pride in homes and neighbourhood
- Great youth organizations e.g. soccer club
- Lots of people contribute
- Parks and Leisure try and accommodate
- Service organizations e.g. Lions Club etc
- More parent involvement in PAC
- Neighbours exchanging services
- Aware of Danger Zones
- People make an effort to get to know each other
- There is still familiarity in the community e.g. shop owners know who people are

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Community council meetings addressing homelessness
- More visible police
- More community dialogue happening with the purpose of solving problem
- Focus groups running e.g. study circles
- Community appears aware of problems
- Schools are opening doors and letting people and services in, operating as a connection resource between services
- Creativity of people to solve problems is enhanced

What gives us hope that things can be better:

- There are a lot of positive things to build on.
- The dialogue is happening and as a result people are feeling more optimistic
- We are here participating in these study circles pronouncing a belief that we can make a difference.
- We have experienced people with us who have been successful at making a difference.
- There are people among us who already give their time and affect change.
- It is easier to make a change at a local level than a systemic level.

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- We should have neighbourhood accessible resources
- We should draw more on outdoor - natural surroundings
We should capitalize on our local resources as opposed to going outside the community
- We need to develop more partnerships between large and small organisations
- Ensure basic needs are met for everyone
- Ensure communities are safer
- Encourage people to be more respectful of each other
- Ensure all services are universally accessible
- We should take ownership of the health of our neighbourhood
- We need to encourage people to volunteer and be part of the solution
- We need to be more aware of changes and be flexible to evaluate and address the changes

Our top three approaches:

1. We need to get people to volunteer and be part of the solution!

This approach appeals to us because of:

- Good use of our available resources
- Positive mentoring
- Develops capacity, individually and collectively
- People tend to take more ownership

Strengths of this approach

- The more people involved, the easier it is
- More economical
- Brings people together and promotes a more inclusive society
- Access to a variety of skills and abilities
- Creates a culture
- Louder voice to influence change

Weaknesses of this approach:

- Difficult to recruit
- Accountability, reliability and dependability can be fleeting
- Threatening to employment
- Volunteer coordination is difficult
- Difficult to show appreciation
- Potential for letting government off the hook

Examples of how this approach has worked or failed:

- Summer games – drawn in by the hoopla, let down by poor coordination, jobs were not broken down and made manageable – too big
- Trans Canada Trail – too much work dumped on
- Municipality – Paid coordinator – good framework
- Community services – volunteer bureau that matches volunteers to events

2. We need to develop more partnerships between large and small organisations!

This approach appeals to us because of:

- Partnerships and the sharing of ideas between large and small organizations

Strengths of this approach:

- Economic benefits
- Efficiency and reduction in duplication of services
- Promotes broader perspectives
- Modeling cooperation

Weaknesses of this approach

- Small organizations risk being swallowed up
- Time consuming in the beginning
- Boundaries blur
- Buck passing of responsibility and blame
- Inconsistency

Examples of how this approach has worked or failed

- CYFN – 40 agencies working together
- Health services becoming more integrated
- Big Brothers and Sisters
- Municipality
- Seniors Centre
- Volunteers
- Non profits
- Yennadon Boys and Girls Club
- Health unit, Parks and Rec., schools

3. We should capitalize on our local resources as opposed to going outside the community!

This approach appeals to us because:

- Self sufficiency

Strengths of this approach:

- Stimulates the local economy
- Creates employment
- Reduces travel
- Affordable
- Promotes appreciation of environment
- Enhances community pride

Weakness of this approach:

- Outside competition
- Can limit variety of things to do
- Insular

Examples of how this approach has worked or failed:

- European and Northern communities are more self sufficient
- Evergreen.com promotes beautifying communities
- Festivals locally
- Local family centres
- Volunteers cleaning up
- Corrections allowing inmates to help clean up

Our Action Ideas:

1. Improve upon already structured volunteer programs

As individuals we can:

- Get involved ourselves
- Recruit - make it sound good to people
- Show appreciation of volunteers, recognition
- Have a potluck at someone's house and celebrate volunteers
- Find out what is needed in our community for volunteers
- Make connections with the volunteer groups in our community

As a group/neighbourhood we can:

- Do a volunteer inventory of our neighbourhood
- Plan a project and recruit volunteers to do the project
- Work to engage seniors to become more active in the community

As a community we can:

- Educate people to help them understand where the needs are - i.e. addictions, housing, mental illness
- Develop more structured programs that recruit and place volunteers
- Tap into already structured volunteer programs; improve current programs - i.e. through the municipality, parks and leisure services.

2. Get the community to promote itself more

As individuals we can:

- Shop locally
- Tell family and friends of the tourism attractions in our own community
- Be positive about our community - show pride
- Participate in local festivals and celebrations
- Invite people out to experience our community
- Use what we do have - i.e. leisure centre
- Tell people about the Municipal websites and email it to friends

As a group/neighbourhood we can:

- Stay connected and maintain the connection
- Agree to promote our community events to our own respective neighbours

As a community we can:

- Encourage local business to hire locally
- Promote events more
- Promote the website
- Connect with the local chamber of commerce

3. Raise awareness for the need to develop more partnerships between large and small organizations, funders, levels of government and business

As individuals we can:

- Bring knowledge of what we know about different organizations
- Share knowledge
- Develop an inventory of our neighbourhoods - who knows what and who
- Share our knowledge of the needs in our neighbourhood
- Keep our eyes and ears open to possible partnerships

As a group/neighbourhood we can:

- Sit down and brainstorm with each other
- Promote the idea of study circles

As a community we can:

- Raise the awareness for the need to develop partnerships
- Have something in the paper regularly - promoting and informing people of new
- Partnerships as they develop - advertising dialogue forums and share knowledge
- Develop and build from existing structures
- More open houses

THE DAVIE JONES STUDY CIRCLE IN PITT MEADOWS

What it was like in the neighbourhood we grew up in:

- Safety, connection with others, shared values, knew neighbours, friendly people, no fears (i.e.: of being out at night), playing outside, fun, simple life, enough to eat, little change, few newcomers to community, shared family/community activities, people looked after each other, parents worked locally, care/respect for elders, homogenous communities.

How it is different for families today:

- Rapid change, fear of strangers/outsideers, don't know neighbours, different values, less friendly, no time for fun, fragmented family, isolation, less community support, long commutes to work, emphasis on material wealth, competition vs. cooperation, people too busy, new people moving into community all the time, heterogeneous communities, absolute poverty.

Our vision:

In 10 years we imagine a neighbourhood where all people are actively engaged in creating trust and a caring, safe community with a commitment to the well being of all members.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Are we providing alternatives for youths that they are really interested in, versus what we want them to do? (Lots of questions about Greg Moore Centre and lack of similar facility in Pitt Meadows).
- Could schools be opened in the evenings? –Why not make public schools available as community centres in after-hours? Are we valuing property and insurance more than people and especially children
- P.M. does not have a Social Planning Advisory committee.
- Lack of services: for entertainment and stores
- Lack of services for youth mental health (recent suicide has shocked a lot of people)
- Not valuing youth enough
- Speeding and traffic violation problems
- Lack of transit and transportation alternatives in P.M.
- Local employment
- Isolation of the elderly
- Guys say they feel safer than girls.
- Lack of good day-care and babysitting.
- Do not feel close to neighbours.

- Hard to meet people (from a widower)
- Local police does not check area enough
- Concerns regarding new bridge and ensuing traffic and what it does to the neighbourhood.
- Concerns re Wal-Mart Super box Store and what it does to small business
- Lack of things to do in Pitt Meadows for youths

The strengths in our neighbourhood and community:

- Spectacular scenery: mountains, dikes, lakes, rivers, wildlife)
- Golf courses
- Farms and access to farm produce
- Music Festival, Pitt Meadows Day,
- Movie Theatre
- Farm tourism (Corn Maze, pumpkin patch.)
- Pitt Polder Preservation Society and Alouette Field Naturalists are strong advocates
- Crafts studios
- Social activities for the elderly
- Women's' centre
- Library
- Museum
- First Nations Katzie Band
- Recreation Centre
- Skateboard Parks
- Parks
- Athletic Centre
- Arena/Tennis courts
- Basketball hoops in cul-de sac neighbourhoods and driveways
- Animal friendly town (horses, dogs)
- Airport
- Businesses are involved in the community
- Close to outdoor recreation
- Small community
- West Coast Express
- Volunteer agencies and services
- Quiet area (for most part)
- River recreation
- Block Watch
- Progressive and integrated School District
- Strong church presence
- Good medial /dental services
- Some small, close neighbourhoods (these have neighbourhood parties and are all really good friends; relatively homogeneous group)
- "Walk able " community
- "Communities in Bloom" participant
- Neighbourhoods where people walk the streets
- Welcome Wagon
- Good support by local merchants for community events (IGA card)
- Youth is an untapped resource!

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Fundraising (WIN house)
- Food bank

- Hot lunch programme at Eric Langton school
- Family ed centre
- Crisis lines.

What gives us hope that things can be better

- Study circle,
- Awareness of need for change at grassroots level
- Democracy as a continuous process requiring citizen involvement.

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- Using media in positive ways to highlight progress, good news in the local paper
- Encouraging arts, Swimming pool in Pitt Meadows
- Generating increased economic activity in the community, People buying locally i.e.: produce grown on local farms
- Youth employment that is meaningful, Accessible education at post secondary level, affordable education, local apprenticeship
Programmes for the trades, mentoring for youth, Political involvement of youth, exploring what works in other communities
- Connections with isolated groups i.e.: elders, cross age projects i.e.: elders and youth

Our top 3 approaches:

1. Local media to highlight positive aspects of the community

Strengths:

- Highly accessible to local people, economical, personal, create civic pride
- Weaknesses: no \$, no incentive for publishers/ advertisers

2. More youth involvement in committees, planning and decision making on issues affecting youth.

Strengths:

- Tapping into existing resource, creativity, relevance,
- Raise youth esteem, status in community, youth are our future, less crime, more responsibility

Weaknesses:

- Involvement is limited,
- Youth may be
- Lack of community support,
- Lack of incentives for involvement, no immediate gratification

3. Involving ourselves in civic politics to affect change

Strengths:

- Empowerment,
- Voice,
- Raise awareness, holds politicians accountable, raises sense of ownership/responsibility

Weaknesses:

- Time constraints,
- People too busy, people intimidated,
- Mistrust of process/individuals involved.

Our Action Ideas:

1. Challenge our youth to take action: Let them decide what they want through planning and decision making committees

As individuals we can:

- Support, but let kids decide what they want.

As a group we can:

- Target youth leaders and challenge them to get involved; develop possible programs for youth like First aid, Pet aid, Emergency preparedness

As a neighbourhood we can:

- Portable Basketball Tournaments, Leagues; parent involvement but youth run!! (Group has already started a basketball tournament!)

As a community we can:

- Establish places for youth to meet, like “Coffee House”, youth centre; encourage “youth study circles”; have youth awards and recognitions of achievements; Pitt Meadows Days floats and youth participation.
- Challenge and support, but don’t run it!!! Let the youth do “their own thing”

2. Attend Pitt Meadows Council meetings – involve ourselves in civic politics to affect change

As individuals we can:

- Ask more questions of elected officials; attend Council Meetings; attend School board Meetings; attend local organizations; inform ourselves of ongoing issues.

As a group we can

- Request council involvement at forum April 3rd.; try to get civic politicians to interact with School board

As a neighbourhood we can:

- Liaise with Council and Trustees/Trustees

As a community we can:

- Update Municipal website

3. Encourage the media to become more positive in how it portrays our community

As individuals we can:

- Write letters to the editor; call in with ideas to report; put positive reports on Municipal website; encourage a youth column; alert papers to “good” stories.

As a group/neighbourhood we can:

- Ask community organizations to share stories; positive presentations; inform the community via the media about the importance of the Study Circles. Civic journalism; “Pitt Positives”

As a community we can:

- Share success stories of other grassroots organizations.

THE MOMS FOR ACTION STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhood we grew up in:

- Felt safer-playgrounds, forests; less theft; trust in youth; respect of elders; free camping etc; everything cheaper; no druggies; more gardens; more physical, imaginative play; home cooking.

How it is different for families today:

- Less safe; rents high; more expensive; disrespect of elders & each other; people don't seem to care for anything; society going downhill; people spend more time outside the home; definition of family has changed & is smaller; lots of drugs; poor housing; hard to live & advance on SA; lack of information; live among strangers, extended family not around; food banks; more resources for parents; teen parents have more acceptance; no outside space to play; no fresh veggies/fruit; houses built too close; neighbours don't connect; more facilities: pools etc; more violence; exposure to illegal activities; bullying; girls fighting; population has grown i.e.: schools; chances are reduced for a good education; poor health care: waiting for long time in emergency, lack of doctors & nurses; more transients.

Our vision:

A safe, friendly, caring, adventurous neighbourhood where we all live in clean, well-built, affordable homes

What families are up against in our neighbourhoods:

- Public schools-violence, drugs, over-crowded, class/curriculum cuts, teachers don't care.
- Not enough respect of each other or ourselves.
- Unsafe community areas-pools, gyms, etc.
- Drugs-too easy to access, too much, cheaper
- Lack of legal aid (only MCFD clients) not protected by the legal system
- Health care-long waits, no dental or prescriptions covered, doctors and nurses gone.
- Neighbours will not get involved
- Violence/theft
- Human Resources/welfare expectations too high/ no evening daycare or transportation/cuts unfair

- Transportation - no bus passes, how to get to a job if get one, no regular service, bad connections
- ESL classes-full time not helpful to single parents, need more teachers
- Food expensive
- Housing-little access to low income, rents too high

The strengths in our neighbourhoods/community:

- Support & Educational groups
- Leisure Centre
- Shopping has improved-more central, thrifts
- Health unit - community nurses, walk-in clinics
- Nature is close - parks, trails etc.
- Festivals - free events
- Library
- Far enough away but still accessible to Vancouver/small city feel
- Wildlife
- Extra foods/food banks
- Friendly
- Lots of resources-Cythera, women's Centre, Alcohol and Drug, hampers, Caring Place, Welcome Wagon.

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- Can be involved in activities that are positive
- Parenting groups
- Study circles
- Family Ed. And Resource Centre
- Counselling
- Library
- More low income housing may happen
- Value of green spaces/trees/nature/parks
- Involved city council
- Supportive social service agencies
- HR training programs/employment
- Parks & Leisure Services/ New facilities
- Local shopping
- Health Unit
- Others have done their own fundraising and developed centres
-e.g. Senior Centre, Greg Moore

Some approaches that could change things for the better:

1. Developing a park in the core

Why?

- Needed for a place for kids to play
- Family hang out
- Form of relaxation

Weaknesses:

- Vandalism
- Weather
- Finding land
- Getting approval
- Getting stuff we need
- Constant upkeep

2. Affordable Housing -Townhouse complex

Why?

- Need more
- Families deserve type of environment
- Worry free
- Neighbours close by
- Safe/clean
- No lonely feeling
- Affordable

Weaknesses:

- No space
- No approval
- Costly to develop
- Funding
- Voices might not be heard

3. Medical fees: Free to those not on social assistance

Why?

- Too costly to afford
- Children deserve good medical care
- Universal
- Health factor
- Cheaper in the long run

Our Action Idea:

A townhouse complex co-operative for the community of young parents. We want others who share our need to join us.

As individuals we can:

- Write a letter
- Be a spokesperson
- Do research computer, talk to neighbours/friends; family; workers
- Start a petition
- Make a phone call - \$ s; developers
- Do physical work -gardens, clean, carpentry, build, paint
- Cook/make snacks for town meetings; work parties
- Talk to others

As a group we can:

- Call a town meeting
- Work parties
- Combine voices
- Share with groups already involved in (spread the word)
- Group letter of signatures
- Arrange a meeting of MLA, Ken Stewart or with mayor

In our neighbourhoods we can:

- Petition our neighbourhoods
- Find out who has relevant skills -carpenter, backhoe, city hall for zoning information, cooks
- Find out more information based on members in neighbourhood

What can we do as a community?

- Make contact with people of influence, e.g. The mayor

THE ALBION STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- Isolated
- Wanting
- Relaxed Play Environment
- Could go places by yourself
- Walked to school
- Lots to do in the city with lots of schools
- Diverse Population
- Everyone in the neighbourhood knew each other and visited on their front porches
- Community came together to do things keeping with tradition (volunteered time to put in the outdoor rink)
- Informal
- Spontaneous
- Boring small town
- One car families
- Holidays closer to home
- Mothers at home one car
- Didn't know we were poor

How it is different for families today:

- Acceptance of Diversity
- Tolerance of Differences (Cultural, Ethnic, Blended Families)
- Information/Technology
- Kids now are more informed of what others have and compare what others have knowledge through technology
- Kids ask for more
- Didn't need an invite to come over
- Didn't compare material items
- Brand names are now in
- Different awareness of poverty
- Stigma of poverty
- Greater number of items to play with (skateboards, computers, etc)

Our Vision:

In 10 years we envision a safe neighbourhood that is made for people with good transportation, neighbourhood based facilities that are connected by trails and open spaces.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Need traffic control (can't back out of driveways on busy streets)
- Safety (late night parties from Planet Ice, Fields & Fairgrounds)
- Drugs (grow ops) in newer houses
- Lack of public transportation
- Dangerous to ride bikes down busy streets
- No school bus service
- Must have own vehicle to get around
- Lack of sidewalks
- Pedestrians are 2nd class
- Lack of street lighting
- Dangerous drop off situations in school zones
- There are trails that link between newer neighbourhoods but not between older homes
- Cars parked to drop off kids for school, children walking between cars and on streets to get to school
- Developers appear to be responsible by the city to put up sidewalks in new areas but sidewalks are all lacking in old area creating large spaces between sidewalk locations
- More litter (garbage on streets, in streams/creeks, from dogs)
No garbage pick up
- Community concept caught between rural versus urban
- Poverty on the rise for seniors
- Do we have adequate facilities for health care?
- Need to prepare for older population - care facility for senior should be located in neighbourhood not in central area
- Programs for youth required for ages 18+
- Lack of industry for jobs
- Education opportunities for youth
- Sense of being powerless to make improvements
- Focus is all in the core area now
- Youth Centre is under utilized for the rest of the community
- Could the Youth Centre be used for older youth 18-23?
- Break-ins in houses cause sense of personal violation lack of justice system support
- More support for victims and preventative programs such as lighting and neighbourhood watch
- Environment safety air, water
- Crime appears more violent (cars vandalized)
- Stats show crime down per capita but it does not appear to so in our neighbourhood (pockets of small petty crime to support drug addiction, less valuable items can be sold to support habits)
- Need to use schools more at night
- Want us to shop local but no opportunity for employment to shop local so we shop where we work which is mostly outside of the community
- District website work done outside of the community in Vancouver, why is a local company not doing the work?

The strengths in our neighbourhood and community:

- Natural resources parks, rural spaces that are picturesque with a place for wildlife
- People do care about their neighbours
- Front porches to gather and opportunity to gather on the streets
- Mailboxes (pick up mail) gives us an opportunity to talk to neighbours
- People get involved to help community members

- Quiet/Solitude
- Family based community
- Opportunity to reduce, recycle and reuse with no garbage pick up
- Good recycling program
- Great environmental groups
- Can compost in yards and in community disposal for leave and grass
- Albion Industrial area (mills, woods product companies, log homes) provide employment opportunity
- West Coast Express
- Albion Ferry can walk on
- Wildlife Viewing
- Quiet enough to hear animals (roosters, horses, coyotes, etc)
- Smell of farm animals
- Properties with history (e.g. Jackson Farm)
- Potential to preserve farmland, land projects and agricultural land reserve
- Hills and Ravines
- Bruce s Market
- Neighbourhood has known personal characters
- Youth Diversion department and programs
- Greg Moore Youth Centre close
- Community Health
- 2nd Hand stores
- Soup Kitchens
- Can deal with local vendors and get the same value as larger stores outside of the community for example Haney Sewing & Sound
- Local business merchants

Things that are already being done to help families:

In the community:

- Family Education Centre has good programs
- Most Churches have counselling and programs
- Simon Fraser Health Clinic
- Community Recreation Centre

In the Albion Neighbourhood:

- All weather and artificial turf sports fields
- Playground at back of Albion School
- Rainbow Bridge Park
- Kanaka Creek Park/Bell Irving Fish Hatchery/Cliff Falls
- Old Albion Park
- Albion Community Association \New Horizons Club

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- Study Circle process/involvement
- Blind optimism
- People having a collective principle of what good it can do for others
- Having a relationship with your community
- People will demand to have opportunities to do things outdoors or walking to visit friends

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

1. Official Community Plan (O.C.P.)

Appeal:

Influence
Power
More Municipal accountability
Is somewhat binding
Involvement from public

Strengths :

Point of Reference
Public Process
Good park space for Albion
Gives choice of where you live or where you want
Where you want to set up a business
Predictable
Accountability
People can rely on OCP
Has good intentions

Weaknesses:

Inaccessible to many people
Too fluid
Can change with influences
Non-binding

2. Creating a coalition of local people

Appeal:

Empowers us
More people more influence
Sharing resources
Brings different opinions to the table
Broad range of interest groups
Doesn't have to be formal
Meet new people
Learn about others

Strengths:

Activity is grassroots
Diversity of opinion
Rewarding
Network

Weaknesses:

Difficult to get people involved
Will our voices be heard?
Process labour intensive
Takes time

3. Provide transportation access to West Coast Express and buses only on busy streets

Appeal:

Fewer cars
Freedom of movement
Healthier
Less pollution
Less cost
More social

Strengths:

Service to more people in the community
Remove/reduce isolation
Can have input into our transportation

Weaknesses:

Infrequent service
Concerns appear not to be heard by transportation company
Would we use them?
Not enough routes
Not dependable
Expensive

Our Action Idea:

1. Create ways for our neighbourhood to have a voice in community planning and a stronger neighbourhood identity

As individuals we can:

- Stay informed of when there is a change or public forum to the O.C.P.
- Ask the Municipality to send a letter to the neighbourhood they are affecting
- Look at alternative to written notices – word of mouth, posters, through community groups
- Can read the O.C.P.
- Watch Council Meetings
- Raise issues that are happening in your neighbourhood
- Set up information booths
- Join a group in your community
- Express what you care about
- Go to land development meetings
- Speak to politicians

As a group we can:

- Try to increase group size by talking to others in the area
- Help with info process – Word of mouth “Did you hear that...”
- Join Albion Community Association and ask them to publicize the Association because many people in the area don’t even know it exists
- Express what you care about in a visual way
- Diversify opinions creating a broad outlook and caring which will make the synergy more powerful
- Booth at Agricultural Fair, Home Show, Bruce’s Market

- Do same things as the individuals as a group
- Culture Jam
- Request to meet with the planning department in initial stages
- Ask neighbours to look at development plan ahead of time

As a neighbourhood we can:

- Increase awareness of Albion Association
- Form an Albion Committee
- Community website to link to Maple Ridge website to advertise garage sales, car pools, babysitting/daycare
- Have some Festivals such as – Albion Festival, Harvest Festival, February Rain Festival
- Advertise Albion with bumper stickers, festivals, buttons
- Stick together and keep in touch with each other
- Get neighbourhood together and get to know each other
- Exchange names and addresses
- Get known to Council what we need and let them know what we need for transportation
- Let Translink know what we need for service – hours and stops
- Beautiful Exchange Day for other people's junk
- Request development forums

As a community we can:

- Get involved in the feedback process
- Neighbourhood OCP sessions
- Ward system forms for informal e.g. S.P.A.C.
- Advertise who you are as a community – website, parks & leisure guide
- Take more interest in other areas and support what they need by supporting other neighbourhoods
- Look at parallels
- Write letters to editor express development concerns/views
- Let developers know what's important to your neighbourhood/community e.g. natural landmarks
- Protection by-laws
- Signage, Community website

THE MAPLE RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- The population was multi generational;
- Adults were respected; children respected adults;
- Schools were respected institution; it was respectable to serve on the PTA; Safety was not an issue;
- Children would play outside year-round, into the night, take day-long excursions in the countryside or in the city, used public transit, unsupervised.
- Annual family visits as a group with neighbours;
- Children moved outside in a group;
- Children played inside

How it is different for families today:

- Parents not at home
- Changed make-up of family; e.g. one-gender parents or parents made up of one parent and a partner
- Family is a bigger idea i.e. includes neighbours (due e.g. to separation from family through immigration)
- Family means extended family including relatives.
- Closeness as a standard of measurement for the idea of family
- Mealtimes scattered (i.e. staggered or sequential)
- Going out eating out
- Peer pressure competes with family activities
- Intentionally interacting, establishing family context
- Children more often sit and watch and need adult goading and encouragement to use imagination and invention.
- More stuff
- Don't know neighbours now
- Moving "up" moving away; mobility
- Transportation by car

Our Vision:

A safe, self-sufficient, "centered," aesthetically pleasing, clean and green neighbourhood, where people know, trust and respect each other, and engage in activities together.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

Safety Concerns:

- Being more informed through the media, insurance's demands, and experiences generate more anxiety
- Small children, only going short distances, are supported in community
- Older children moving out further, are requiring supervision
- Not knowing neighbours
- Issues of trust and 'the unfamiliar'
- The fact that not only strangers may be 'dangerous'
- The issue of 'not talking to strangers' versus the need to talk to strangers
- In efforts to keep children safe, pre-empting the opportunity for them to learn how to
- We are telling /teaching children what not to do rather than what to do
- The need to give children tools to deal with and to recognize danger
- The need for them to tell parents and/or guardians

Neighbourhood:

- During the day: quiet i.e. no-one home
- At night: overly busy and crowded
- Cars
- People
- Activities to go to

Time Constraints:

- Too many activities
- Activities are overly structured
- Activities often require going outside community
- Activities involve parents/adults
- Activities involve cars and chauffeuring
- Families are dispersed; there is time (rush hours) and distance involved in preserving family ties

Stress Factors:

Concern about the steadily increasing price of housing and consequent mobility

Factors leading to mobility are strong:

- Moving house as families up-size or down-size as children grow and/or living requirements change
- Large developments of one-of-a-kind houses
- Cost of housing
- Community not meeting the needs for a diverse populace: With a varied demographic make-up, With varied levels of income, With varied interests

The stress associated with the commuting (by auto) that so many must do

'Cocooning" that is done in homes after the commute and the way that this impedes active community involvement

A disconnect: not knowing one's home community re: arts, sports, dining out etc.

Divided interests, responsibility, involvement in work community versus home community
"Success"

- Lack of clarity re definition of "success"
- Conflicting goals with regard to success

The strengths of our neighbourhood and community:

- Bike-able
- Lots of kids
- Having Study Circles
- Strong arts community
- Socially responsible business community
- Multi-generational
- Good variety of sports activities
- Parks and places to walk: wharf, dikes, rivers, golf courses
- Several neighbourhood parks
- Parks and Recreation
- Block Watch
- Good schools
- Maple Ridge has a 'Core'
- Churches
- Good local newspapers (2)
- 'Virtues are Reality' project
- A sense of being known, recognized and appreciated
- Shopping facilities generally sufficient
- Good library
- Good roads and street lighting, water, sewage treatment, garbage recycling.

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Diversion Program for Kids at Risk
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- Family Education and Support Centre
- CSC
- The Virtues Are Reality program
- The Heritage committee
- The Historical Society and the Maple Ridge Museum – preserving history and landmarks

What gives us hope that things can be better:

- Welcome Wagon
- Search for alternatives
- Sense of ability to control events locally e.g. a voice for peace

- What is reflected by contributions to newspapers by people in the community
- Picking one issue to contribute to or support, rather than too many to handle
- The belief that people are essentially of good will
- PAC – parents taking an interest in school programs
- Children's' ideas and openness
- The Health Unit – assisting young mothers
- Save On Foods support to parents in need

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- No need for security systems
- Municipal Ward System – so each geographic area of the Municipality has representation on Council
- Voting Incentive: a 1% tax deduction for voting
- Increased accessibility of Police Services
- Expansion of (the currently good) Community Policing
- Rapid and Public Transit within the community and to surrounding areas
- Reward system for living and working in the same community
- Centered, aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian oriented shopping centres/areas that include a park and public art. No sprawling, no strip malls, and no car-pollution
- Multipurpose (bicycle/walking/other) trails and routes, rivers' accesses, and a Warf - Kanaka Creek Park connection
- Establishing a custom of random acts of kindness
- Community Events
- Law in support of public art works, corporate landscaping and maintenance, and murals in hospitals and retirement homes, and on blind street walls
- Recycling green waste; Municipal chipping program is good
- Maintain our excellent arts and music events and programs

Our top 3 approaches:

1. Multi-purpose trails and routes:

Appeal/ strengths:

Environmentally friendly, healthy, interaction with others, calming along the water line, achievable and do-able.

Weaknesses:

Litter, maintenance, pet waste

Other places this approach is used:

Ottawa, Victoria, Vancouver (Stanley Park), Whistler

2. Public Art Works & Landscaping

Appeal/strengths:

Visual, Tourism, Community pride, Inspirational, Relatively low cost, Community involvement

Weaknesses:

Vandalism, Graffiti, Maintenance, Funding

Other places where this approach is used:

Vancouver, Victoria, Fort Langley, Whistler, Seattle, Ottawa

3. Voting Incentive

Appeal/strengths:

More input, Combating apathy, Involvement of community, Easy to implement, Heightened awareness of issues

Weaknesses:

Cost of implementation, lost revenue

4. Centered Shopping Areas

Appeal:

No car pollution, Less congestion, Conducive to becoming acquainted with others, Economically beneficial to small businesses, Convenience, Tourist attraction, Convenience of walk-ability (no in and out of car, or re-parking between errands)

Weaknesses:

Requires high density, Parking, Distance from car when having a lot to carry.

Other places where this approach is used:

Granville Island, Seven Oaks, Fort Langley, Steveston, Whistler, Metro Town

Our Action Ideas:

1. Propose a Municipal Garden Pick-Up Service

What we can do as individuals:

- Join the "Adopt a Block" - 'Kids Can Too' (armed with mini bags and tongs) – walk with your child

What we can do as a group/neighbourhood:

- A 'Clean and Green' anti-litter campaign as a group or neighbourhood initiative;
- Block Watch
- Approach McDonald and Tim Horton to initiate a program offering refunds for their containers

What we can do as a community:

- Approach and lobby Government and Corporations to reduce packaging and to use only packaging that is re-useable, recyclable, and bio degradable

2. Require the municipality and business to sponsor the creation and maintenance of public art and landscaping

What we can do as individuals:

- Join or compose a committee that would find business sponsors of the arts
- Ask the municipality/businesses to sponsor
- Artist in Residence' work could serve the goal of public art
- Letters to the editor in support of public art and landscaping - using e-mail
- Involve those who serve sentences doing community service work in landscaping and artworks maintenance

- A once a year 2 page centrefold “Invitation to get Involved”, listing all local organizations, including Council’s standing committee as well as what they do, how to contact them and who to contact
- Take an active interest in the planning, coordination and status of the Maple Ridge Trail

What we can do as a group:

- Initiate competitions e.g. a garden competition working with the local garden club
- Organize a campaign in neighbourhood pride
- Revive the “Art in the Park” program Parks and Recreation used to offer

What can we do as a neighbourhood:

- A ‘Clean and Green’ anti-litter campaign as a group or neighbourhood initiative;
- Block Watch
- Approach McDonald and Tim Horton to initiate a program offering refunds for their containers

3. Take responsibility for getting out to vote and encouraging others to do so

4. Extend Study Circle work in support of Study Circle goals

What we can do as individuals:

- Invite a group of people and introduce the Study Circle process as a means to further our Study Circle’s goals and/or goals raised in the group

THE LAITYVIEW STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- Leave it to Beaver like neighbourhood
- The kids all played together because the parents knew one another
- Safe in terms of personal space and family safety
- You were worried about offending your neighbours
- You respected your neighbours
- More personal freedom to explore things
- Mother never drove
- Walked more places and more often
- Did not depend on the government for everything could facilitate things ourselves
- No TV s
- Unstructured physical activities were normal, and fun
- Parents trusted others
- Family unit was bigger

How it is different for families today:

- Media and technology certainly has a huge influence
- Through media and technology, families are much more informed
- Personal freedom and safety is less
- The fear of the unknown
- We demand accountability of everyone

- You do not feel the connection to your neighbourhood if you have not lived in the area for an extended period of time

Our Vision:

We envision our neighbours committed to working together in order to help build a safe, liveable, clean, and fun neighbourhood.

We envision:

- Long term commitment
- Mutual support (looking out for each other)
- Neighbourhood involvement
- Enhance the life of the residents
- An inclusive and open atmosphere
- Caring for each other
- Taking pride in our neighbourhood
- Looking after today and tomorrow

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Vandalism has increased in several locations including highly visible locations
- Mail boxes, and stop signs are being damaged
- Illegal suits (rentals) are increasing
- Recently, there is no long term commitment from residents
- Less friendly neighbours
- Lack of common neighbourhood values
- Renters can decrease property value if they do not take care of things (area specific)
- Owners of homes versus renters of homes
- A lot of time and energy spent to meet new neighbours
- Not having a common area in neighbourhoods
- Streets are not well lit
- Transportation can be a challenge
- Clean up after another owner s dog
- Lack of individual initiatives someone else can do it
- Litter is an issue in places
- Too many timelines and activities
- Not enough spontaneous activities
- Too many structured activities
- A breakdown of the family structure
- Not enough discussion of family by families
- Families not taking responsibility
- Our personal tolerance for things has decreased
- Not enough bike lanes
- Lots of traffic and crazy drivers during hours when school is starting or out
- Poor driving habits in general

Strengths in our neighbourhood/community:

- Open space
- Schools within walking distance
- Close to stores/shops
- Variety of restaurants
- Close to bus route
- Little turnover from long term residents
- Close to a provincial park
- Most take responsibility for themselves

- Lots of character
- Large trees
- Close to hospital
- Some green belts
- Close to industrial area if needed
- Hobbies can be locally developed
- Common events/functions/festivals
- Some neighbourhood functions
- Local artists/athletes/unique residents
- Small town character
- Usually free parking
- Diversity of age

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Block watch; lots of eyes
- Emergency response program to help with personal preparation
- Vial of life; medical info in the fridge
- Block parties, festivals
- Community garden in Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge
- Local businesses that help support these community gardens
- Focus of churches planning events for all to take part in
- Fire department hot summer nights program
- Community garage sales
- Adopt a block program
- Tapp C (early arson prevention program)
- Citizens on patrol
- Speed watch

What gives us hope that things can be better?

- Stability of the neighbourhood
- Consistency of many of the residents
- Our personal outlook of the neighbourhood has expanded due to study circles
- Our personal commitment to build upon existing programs/initiatives
- This study circle is a sign of hope
- P.A.C. (parents advisory committee)
- There are locations for neighbourhood improvement (i.e. community gardens)
- The importance of prevention vs. intervention

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- Open schools in evenings and weekends
- Schools become community centres or meeting places
- New neighbourhood initiatives such as: good will ambassadors, neighbourhood parties,
- Local coffee houses/nights, walking school buses
- Expand the definition of neighbourhood to make it a more global perspective
- Encourage strong, healthy, families
- Cost affordable activities for all to participate in
- Bring in experts on various topics such as vandalism

Our top 3 approaches:

1. Schools used as an opportunity for activity and meeting place in the evening and on weekends.

Strengths:

- Accessibility
- Buildings already exist
- Many different locations
- Walking distance for most
- Will encourage relationship building
- Can encourage seniors to be a part of this adopt a grandparent
- Will cut down on vandalism and crime
- Can serve age specific groups in different rooms
- Promote a family atmosphere
- Networking opportunities

Weaknesses:

- Cost of supervision and clean up
- Theft or damage to the facility
- Older schools have layout difficulties
- Insurance and liability

Is this approach used elsewhere?

- Neighbourhood development can be difficult to sustain

3. New neighbourhood initiatives.

Strengths:

- Some have been done before
- These can be used to teach and educate neighbours
- Can use the same infrastructure for different programs
- Different individuals can take on different roles
- Takes away from one person having to do it all
- A chance to be proactive rather than reactive
- Opportunity
- Awareness that the right resources are in place
- The ownership to do what we want

Weaknesses:

- Getting involvement of everyone
- Making things too specific
- Can only focus on a couple new initiatives to improve things
- How to accomplish results
- Needs a facilitator to keep the process moving forward or projects become individualistic
- Neighbourhood resources are not always available

Is this approach used elsewhere?

- Block parties
- Fen Stanton Place
- Mayo Place

3: Cost affordable activities/recreation for all to participate in.

Strengths:

- More participation by all
- Prevention is less expensive than intervention
- Parks provide low overhead costs to run activities
- Flexible opportunity
- Promotion can be done via word of mouth
- A healthy family = a healthy community

Weaknesses:

- Any fee, no matter how small is a barrier for someone, somewhere

Is this approach used elsewhere?

- Ridge Meadows Parks and Leisure to some extent
- Participation program
- Youth Centre: volunteer to pay back cost of activity

Our Action Ideas:

1. Using schools, halls, churches as a place to recreate or meet in the evenings or on the weekends.

What we can do as individuals:

- Volunteer to run an activity or organize a part of the opportunity
- Extend personal invitations to friends, family, neighbours

What we can do as a group:

- Make sure this study circle group attends future planning sessions
- Identify the to do's and share the work load
- Approach the halls, churches, schools to establish a partnership
- Keep it small and manageable

What we can do as a neighbourhood:

- Make sure ownership is available for others to get involved
- Make sure there is a purpose to this project
- Make sure all neighbours have an opportunity to be heard
- Provide a casual environment - not too structured
- Promote the opportunity as a competition between neighbourhoods

What we can do as a community:

- Show the benefits of this project to the schools and the public

2. New Neighbourhood Initiatives.

What we can do as individuals:

- Be a host for activity
- Have an initiative to put forth to the neighbours
- Promote initiatives/activities
- Support the initiatives/activities

- Keep it small and manageable

What we can do as a group:

- Talk to our neighbours and encourage ideas
- Support people with ideas by committing to the project from start to finish

What we can do as a neighbourhood:

- Promote initiatives/activities within our capability
- Use posters/flyers (hand delivered)
- A neighbourhood/street bulletin board

What we can do as a community:

- Have a neighbourhood newsletter that shows what s happening
- Have a community web site
- Use a community bulletin board to promote ideas
- Also use the super mail boxes for advertising

3. Cost affordable recreation/activities for all to participate in.

What we can do as individuals:

- Promote what is currently available to all
- Volunteer to take on an activity/program to reduce costs further

What we can do as a group:

- Promote what is currently available to all
- Protest higher prices

What we can do as a neighbourhood:

- Keep things small and manageable to reduce costs
- Do things within your capability or on your street
- Make activities more the day to day activities rather than big extravaganzas

What we can do as a community:

- Promote what is currently available to all

THE MAPLE RIDGE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDY CIRCLE

What was it like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- Stay at home mothers/parents gave more sense of safety in neighbourhood
- Parents accessible
- People more accepting of individual differences
- Few resources for single mothers
- Community/neighbour parenting
- Children had more freedom
- Everyone knew their neighbours
- Safety issues fewer for children
- Children came in when dark
- Religious segregation
- People helped one another more
- One room school
- Community was resource no government agencies
- Bike transportation for kids predominated

How it is different for families today:

- More single parents now
- Working mothers not available to care for own children, never mind neighbour's kids
- Problem of children developing self-reliance now when they are so protected
- Instant answers and services are expected now; MacDonald's syndrome
- Increased mobility of people less time to build community in one place, i.e. Moving from town to town
- Car usage and development of suburbia, distances that can now be traveled are detrimental to building community sense
- Kids entertained continually technology issues
- Over scheduling of family/kids activities

Our Vision:

An inclusive place that promotes people supporting one another. A neighbourhood with shared green spaces and resources (stuff) that encourage social interaction.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Vandalism
- Lack of informal farmers market (once a week basis)
- Drug dealing
- Need for municipal garbage pick up to avoid accumulation of garbage in yards
- I don't know anybody
- Car reliance kids not walking health issues; media driven ideas of streets being unsafe not reality
- Poverty latch-key kids; social isolation
- Decayed downtown core
- Anonymity
- A lack of neighbourhood meeting places
- Homelessness
- Lack of things for youth to do
- Not enough affordable recreational activities for kids
- Lack of social responsibility (littering, doggy do)
- Not enough non-competitive sports groups
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of local employment (commuting leaves little time for community activities)
- Irresponsible renters/landlords; poor repair of buildings, etc.

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- Street width too wide (encourages speeding and distances neighbours)
- Bicycle lanes safety issues
- Barren housing developments (physicality)

The strengths of our neighbourhood/community:

- Community social services
 - Seniors programs and housing
 - Adopt-a-block
 - Library and arts centre
- Community band and orchestra
 - Small venues offering live music (The Lost Unicorn)
 - Heritage building and Society
 - Horses; rural feeling
 - Large talent pool
 - Lots of access to second hand material
 - Excellent recycling program
 - Public schools, French immersion
 - Use of municipal buildings (schools) for a variety of community activities

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Parent participation in schools
 - Family Education Centre
 - Library
 - Women s Centre
 - Churches
 - Government

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- Improved Handicapped accessibility
- De-institutionalization of marginalized citizens
- Children (their Joy)
- People pulling together in a crisis
- Music
- World more open to Pluralistic
- Larger awareness of environment
- Ability of people to recognize good in others and acknowledge it.
- Objectivity
- Change in government- possibility for new ideas
- Improved recycling
- Growing dissatisfied with current suburban lifestyle
- Love people innately have for family; concern others generally have for one another
- People are starting to rebel from status quo

What broad approaches could change things for the better:

- Neighbourhood:
 - Improved street lighting-safety issues
 - Activities that bring people onto streets- safety in numbers
 - Improved use of schools/public buildings-sharing
 - Encourage more pride in and responsibility for public buildings and spaces
 - Enforce Crosswalks- Safety
 - Forget bureaucracy- Just do it
 - More police on patrol- on foot and bikes
 - Rezoning to allow food and beverages outlet in residential areas

- Narrower streets to slow traffic
- Higher Density
- Relocating 2 car garages
- Legalize street Hockey
- Competitions between neighbourhoods
- Encourage neighbourhood meetings
- Develop neighbourhood associations (Council representatives of neighbourhoods)

Community:

- Improved advertising of existing community services
- Busking
- Street Vendors
- Open Market area
- Higher density in core- residential/commercial mix
- Sidewalk cafes
- Encourage late night activities
- Undulating street scapes (enhanced)
- Benches, trees, green areas
- Traffic calming in core
- Outdoor public washrooms
- Coordinated business development group- business lighting
- Improved employment-job sharing
- Aggressive economic development strategy

Our top three approaches:

1. Aggressive, coordinated, and flexible economic development strategy:

Why this appeals to us:

- Long ranged, creates employment, attracts people to community, feasible

Strengths:

- As above

Weaknesses:

- Huge commitment and vision from local government and business

Examples of how this approach has worked or failed:

- Chilliwack

2. Enhanced and creative street scapes- benches, trees, info kiosk, busking, street vendors, sidewalk cafes, unorganized market area (farmers, crafts):

Why this approach appeals to us:

- Fun, easy to implement, cost-effective, little supervision required, has pulse, community togetherness

Strengths:

- As above

Weaknesses:

- Initial community participation, cost, upkeep for hard improvements to streetscapes

Examples of how this approach has worked or failed:

- Vancouver, North Vancouver, New West, Fort Langley

3.Strategic Zoning to permit food and beverage outlets in residential areas

Why this approach appeals to us:

- Walking distance, social contact between neighbourhoods improved, viable scale, more watchdogs in neighbourhoods, inclusive environment

Strengths:

- As above

Weaknesses:

- Potential for too much restrictive zoning, NIMBY isms

Examples of how this approach has worked or failed:

- Vancouver

Our Action ideas:

- 1. Look for opportunities to engage individuals, groups, neighbourhood organizations and community in a greater dialogue leading to defined action(s)**
- 2. Develop an aggressive economic strategy**
- 3. Create enhanced streetscapes**
- 4. Strategic zoning to allow neighbourhood retail/ food/meeting places**

What we can do as individuals:

- Participation in study circles
- Volunteering
- Perseverance
- Networking
- Passion
- Involvement
- Work with youth
- Initiate; talk to neighbours
- Letter to editor

What we can do as a group:

- Power in numbers
- Activism
- Sponsorship
- Parties
- Discussion groups (raise issues)
- Connect people with common interests (networking)
- Support system; networking

What we can do as a neighbourhood:

- Support each other; persevere
- Model, social and environmental values
- Local neighbourhood organizations
- Pursue goals collectively

- Co-op events
- Sharing equipment, tools
- Block parties
 - Street hockey
 - Neighbourhood water fights
 - Pot luck breakfast every Easter

What we can do as a community:

- As a community
- Street festivals
- Farmers markets
- Just Do It
- Block Watch; Adopt a Block
- High expectations
- Referendums; participatory democracy
- Initiative; perseverance
- Take risks
- Organize; build momentum

THE HARRY HOOGE STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- We knew everyone in our neighbourhood
- We were parented by the neighbours, too (pseudo aunts & uncles)
- We felt safe
- Homes were near amenities, centered around shops village style
- We had freedom to play outside, to be home by dinnertime or by dark
- Outdoor, creative play was the norm organized by kids
- We roamed the neighbourhood on foot and by bicycle with a sense of fearlessness
- Mealtimes were at routine times
- People did not move around much, stability in neighbourhood sometimes generations in same house, new houses were rare
- Social problems were accepted, we knew who was strange or had problems

How it is different for families today:

- Families more isolated
- Play and activities organized by groups, clubs, adults
- More sports opportunities available to girls now
- We drive kids everywhere
- Kids play not wanted in neighbourhood
- Kids used to have street smarts due to exposure to all types of people in neighbourhoods, now more fearful
- NIMBY more common
- Population is more fearful of youth "gangs" has a different meaning
- Kids seem disrespectful, not open, no eye contact
- Neighbourhoods don't feel as safe
- Fun is purchased (TV, computer, toys) rather than kid-directed in neighbourhood
- Few amenities in neighbourhoods

Our Vision:

In ten years, we envision a safe, attractive, pedestrian-oriented neighbourhood where neighbours know and care about each other with parks, green space, and access to goods and services. We work to solve our own problems and develop our own organized voice

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Neighbours don't know each other - isolation
- No cooperation/collaboration, no sense of responsibility
- Knowing means responsibility, may be avoiding responsibility - feeling overwhelmed
- Lack of support
- What is the line? Privacy. Being too involved can be a problem
- Break-ins, local crime, fear of break-ins, feeling vulnerable
- 50/50 re: break-ins (half the group has been broken into, half haven't)
- Rental, transients, suites not connected to neighbourhood - no sense of regard for neighbourhood
- Lone parent families increasing ~ children unattended, families overstretched
- Is anyone watching? Evenings in the neighbourhood. People aren't there - empty during the day & eves., people apathetic
- Graffiti problems, lack of respect, recognition from peers
- No consequences from community or family.
- Poor city planning - sprawl, clearing lots, roads added ad hoc
- Lots too small > economy of small lots is an illusion
- Lifestyle is busy People leave home (town) to work - commuters
- Commuting - time/money/empty neighbourhoods = crime
- Dogs & cats not contained, licensed - dangerous

The strengths in our neighbourhood and community:

- Beautiful setting/environment
- Houses are attractive
- Private lots, very nice
- Large tracts of rural land
- Townhouses
- Strata meetings help keep communications open
- Neighbourhood celebrations bring people together
- Neighbours help neighbours
- Lots of restaurants - variety
- People willing to get involved (our group!)
- Little stores, small shops, downtown area is walk able through-out ~ access for seniors
- See wildlife deer, raccoons, birds, and bears in your yard
- Good sports fields, arenas
- Lots of golf courses
- Attractive
- Exceptional community spirit
- ECRA centre, seniors centres, housing
- Neighbours do visit somewhat
- There are local destinations for walks e.g. MR Park, corner store
- People are walking, running
- Mature trees provide shade & beauty
- Rivers/streams protected by law
- Alouette river improving
- Volunteer groups! Active, lots of them
- Festivals

- Bike Patrol is coming back
- Arts programs in neighbourhood
- Yennadon school & community centre
- Proximity of outdoor recreation, so much to do!
- Rural areas accessible
- Some streets are quiet
- West Coast Express social, comfortable, soothing
- Police @ malls very helpful patrol
- Downtown core beautiful lots of amenities youth centre, skateboarding
- Underground parking helps
- Leisure Centre attendance is up

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Greg Moore Youth Centre
- Activities
- Social, dances
- Silver Valley Plan re: planning within community for environment, green space etc.
- Recreational programs at Yennadon in partnership with School District 42.
- Outdoor recreation programs
- ARMS programs rivers
- Kanaka Creek school activities during breaks
- Volunteer programs well promoted in local paper
- Volunteer @ desk Leisure Centre
- Weekly coffee meetings
- Good follow-up re: volunteers
- Community kitchen program
- Silver Valley Community Association and other groups that represent themselves
Dogwood
- Neighbourlink: all churches join together re: food, clothing, furniture etc,
- Food bank
- MRSS young mom s programs
- Affordable Recreation, Library/Parks & Leisure etc.

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- Seeing people helping each other
Having at least 2-3 people that accept and help in the neighbourhood
Seeing people advocate (e.g. ARMS)
Block watch, Adopt-A-Block, Community Policing access
Subcommittees for issues
How community rises to challenges. I.e. Santa parade, festivals
Volunteer mobilization re: crises
Assante Centre for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
Number of groups, diversity of groups, activities. (250 groups)

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- Make better use of services, buildings, and resources
- Change perception of how schools are used
- Recreation facilities should be managed by recreation departments who have the mandate for services including schools
- All public buildings should be controlled by the public not special interests
- Public buildings should become community facilities
- Citizens should advocate for efficient use of taxpayer resources.

Our top three approaches:

1. Access to public facilities and management of those public facilities.

Appeal:

Bang for the buck

Elimination of duplication of services

Locations are good! Community meeting place. Buildings are all accessible, conference facilities are there.

Strengths:

Possibility of meeting more neighbours

Creating a community centre

Focus opportunity for groups/activities i.e. Theatre

Increases ownership, care, conservation

Same as appeal

Weaknesses:

Challenges to manage and control currently controlled by School Board

Neighbourhood needs not being met

May be costly fees

Regulations restrictive no idea who decides

Scheduling individualized by school

Where this approach is used elsewhere:

In U.S./Britain, plans exist for community centres in schools

Yennadon has programs.

No charge for recreation program at Yennadon

Kanaka Creek (2000) open Saturdays and Sundays for use and homework

A few pockets of initiatives locally

2. Maintain the natural environment and the public access to it.

Strengths:

Number of levels of parks, regional, provincial and local are all close.

Waterways are unique

Creates the opportunity to play in natural environment

Child development

Quality of life increases

Its mostly free

It is for everyone- all ages, families

Well maintained and clean

Publicly owned locally parks planning is accessible

Dykes are accessible length

Kanaka Creek Park

Range of activities

Weaknesses:

Some fees are being charged

Parks are being closed

Parks are being run like businesses and becoming commercialized

Once precedent is set, the fees will increase

Some taxpayers may not be able to access

Loss of public control certain user groups are not included in planning (Provincial and Regional)
Lack of pathways/connections between green spaces

Where this approach is used elsewhere

Large number of support groups, ARMS, KEEPS, Haney Horseman, Search and Rescue, Outdoor Club, other environmental groups.

Blue Mountain planning process involved groups.

Silver Valley children in school involved in stream stewardship

3. Become involved in responsible citizenship through education and action.

Our Action ideas:

1. Create study circles around citizenship with media support/sponsorship (increase citizenship)

What we can do as individuals:

- Vote
- Volunteer
- Talk and listen to neighbours
- Educate others, children, youth
- Be an example; talk about issues
- Speak out, ask questions

What we can do as a group:

- Have a common voice
- Share ideas
- Create a forum
- Have diverse opinions
- Educate ourselves, learn issues
- Create support
- Explore different solutions/values
- Take action
- Talk to SPAC
- Participate in Circles if they get going

What can we do as a neighbourhood?

- Neighbourhood speakers during elections
- Create a neighbourhood association
- Tours organized by the neighbourhood

What we can do as a community

- Develop an action plan from the Circles
- Vote
- Host town hall meetings
- Take action on issues that are important
- Clarify public input; have a broad range
- Reach out to uninvolved groups and individuals
- Create opportunities for kids to attend Council, etc.

2. Do a professional study re: use of public facilities (including schools)

What we can do as individuals

- Ask questions – attend a group
- Be active in the community
- Form a group/coordinate
- Educate self on management of buildings to understand – develop a plan
- Find a starting point – start small
- Be rational, patient, persistent

What we can do as a group:

- Develop a plan – different strategies
- Have a common focus – e.g. school boards, different levels of government
- Divide up planning tasks
- Create diversity so that each individual has a role
- Think big – outside the box
- Be willing to compromise, find a starting point
- Involve other groups
- Be persistent, organized, committed
- Prepare a presentation to Parks and Leisure Services
- Ask for an opportunity to present

What we can do as a neighbourhood:

- Existing schools and land to have neighbourhood focus
- Find out what's happening in our neighbourhood
- Initiate meetings in our neighbourhood with parents and others

What we can do as a community:

- Organize, plan, find a common voice
- Vote
- Look at best practices all over

3. Do an inter-agency natural resources plan (cross boundaries – interregional)

What we can do as individuals

- Support environmental groups we already have (ARMS, AAB)
- Learn about environmental issues
- Teach our kids to love and respect the environment
- Plan special events focussed on the environment
- Listen to others about issues
- Give kids access
- Take individual action
- Join groups

What we can do as a group

- Lobby, be heard, focus, plan, learn issues
- Fundraise
- Become involved in planning
- Get on lists re: advocacy

What we can do as a neighbourhood

- Serve as stewards of resource
- Alouette River stewardship
- Take care of creeks
- Be involved in neighbourhood planning re: new development, re-zoning
- Keep neighbourhood clean
- Bring speakers to neighbourhood

What we can do as a community

- Create guiding principles/standards/rules about what we can/can't do
- Develop programs that involve all ages in environment - Integrate in schools

THE ALEXANDER ROBINSON STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- Felt safe
- People moved areas less
- Made own fun as kids
- Family was always #1
- Everyone helped each other
- Everything was in walking distance
- Trust in the community
- Dinners together - family time
- Church was the focal point of a community -Kitchen chats - people were always around in the home

How it is different for families today:

- More single parent homes vs. two parent
- Parents using after school care
- Children in various activities not just focusing on one -fast paced
- Consumer based society (pressure from peers to keep up (clothes)
- Many services available (hours available lacking)
- Increase in mobility
- Influence of media (T.V)
- Kids have more money
- Not as cultural friendly as it is today
- Increased security (locking doors)
- Taboo subjects are now talked about (sex, drugs)

Our Vision:

A walk able, sustainable, diverse and integrated neighbourhood where it is safe, people are empowered and they respect and trust one another. It is a place where we all foster a sense of neighbourhood; take pride in community events and value green space.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Lack of local shopping
- Lack of East/West transportation
- Not user friendly streets
- Dangerous bike routes
- Commuter neighbours
- Not enough creek and green space protection

- Bylaws- bureaucracy
- More visible drug use
- Crime (people don't want to get involved so there are no eyes on the street) - neighbours less likely to help out
- Not enough community use of schools
- Safety
- School generated speeding traffic
- Security
- Invasive species
- No time (less opportunity to socialize)
- Lack of trails
- Privacy is more common
- Lack of a community focal point (local pub)
- No social convenor - no eye contact
- Some people do not want to socialize
- The strengths of our neighbourhood/community:
- People volunteer
- Care for less fortunate
- Fabulous natural environment
- Lots of children still playing on the streets
- Friendly dog walkers
- New downtown core
- Making a start at protecting our streams
- Walking school buses (parents walking their children together)
- Blackberry patches
- Wildlife
- Within walking distance of the downtown core
- Some what neighbourly
- Still a safe neighbourhood
- ALR
- Lots of open space
- Horses allowed on roads
- Access to west coast express
- Lots of undeveloped land (potential for creating our dream)
- Community not dissected by barriers (potential to remain connected, little freeways)
- minimal visible poverty (well cared for neighbourhood)

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- People are approachable
- People can make change (willing to support causes)
- Community responses
- Donations (people willing to give back)
- Someone in neighbourhood to talk to (as a resource)
- Wildlife still present
- Children still play in the streets seem happy
- More venues to get together

Some broad approaches that could make things better:

- More public education on how to get involved in community
- Disseminate information
- Recruit neighbourhood champions (people with great ideas)
- Smiling at people
- Street hockey (creates more of a street party with parents watching their children)
- Incentives for volunteering (recognition of some sort)

- Taking personal responsibility
- Volunteer appreciation event (community festival)
- The order of Maple Ridge
- Youth mentoring youth/children (youth council)
- More youth events
- More school involvement (open gym for movie nights and other activities for community use)
- More transit
- Less bureaucracy
- People need to feel a part of the neighbourhood
- Better services for disadvantaged people, mental health, substance abuse, physically abused
- Welfare-better support for working poor
- Commitment to support local community shops
- Develop a strategy for people to work and shop locally
- Commercial marketing plan
- Improving public spaces so people want to walk around
- More opportunities for the Art community to be involved

Our top approaches:

1. Develop a strategy for people to work and shop locally:

- Giving people the opportunity to stay in the community is the first step
- Financial and environmental benefits: imagine the impact of re-investing money in your own community
- Technological advances allow us to work closer to home (Whonnock schools)

2. Youth mentoring youth/children:

- Neighbourhood outreach and role of neighbourhood schools -let's use it!
- Schools for recreation not just jails
- Examples of youth mentoring youth -Virtues R Reality, Youth Futures, Kanaka Creek

3. Improving public spaces:

- Higher design standards
- A plan to connect
- Use space better (open market)
- Look for inexpensive ways to beautify neighbourhoods (art opportunities, more events in core area)
- East Dewdney community (Alexander Robinson) maintaining trails, bike paths

Our Action Ideas:

1. Establish the “Order of Maple Ridge”

What we can do as a group

- Meet to define “The Order of Maple Ridge”
- Bring a petition to the Forum

2. A neighbourhood “Youth Mixer” event

What we can do as a group

- Connect youth from neighbourhood with Youth Council
- Pilot a youth/children park play program – recruit families
- Connect with Youth Council
- Set a date in May

3. Become involved in the Cottonwood Park development process

What we can do as individuals:

- Write letters to Parks and Leisure services

THE PITT MEADOWS SECONDARY STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- Felt Safe, played outside, no fear
- Caring and helping each other, even strangers and passer-bys (Hospitality)
- Had fellowship with each other
- Community Activities
- Sense of family in communities
- Quiet, peaceful
- Preserved and stored food
- Knew your neighbours
- Some safety concerns in larger cities
- Had block parties
- Young people were enterprising (organizing their own sports games)
- Trust people
- Mom was available at home
- Church was a big part of life
- Church work-bees (projects)
- Can leave your door unlocked
- There was community Justice
- People walked (or rode bikes) everywhere
- Shops were close (local)

How it is different for families today:

- People are more impersonal
- Security is a concern (lock doors) People drive everywhere
- Segregated sub-divisions (townhouse complexes)
- More organized sports (competitive)
- Entertainment is more costly
- Vandalism is a concern
- There s a sense on loss of a heritage
- People move more often
- Smaller towns still have a sense of community
- Both parents need to work
- Parents need to drive their kids to school

- More of a sense to have to protect children
- More time pressures and demands
- There are a lot more cars (environment & road safety concerns)
- Higher Expectations (houses, cars, cell phones, technologies)

Our Vision:

In 10 years we envision our neighbourhood as a place where everyone has a sense of community pride, feels safe, plays together, trusts and respects each other with a shared commitment for the betterment of our community.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Not feeling safe in our homes
- Lack of community involvement (volunteers)
- Priorities have changed in Law Enforcement (used to show up for stolen bikes, now not even for stolen cars)
- Police aren't t very visible
- Lack of local shopping in walking distance
- Not knowing your neighbours/neighbourhoods
- Lack of low income housing
- Increase train traffic (road hazard)
- Time pressures (for all the family)
- Lack of efficient public transit
- Women in Tug-o-War (Work and Home)
- High rental costs for local shops
- Concerns with personal safety (on the streets)
- Lack of integration between minorities (natives)
- Graffiti
- Gangs
- Peer Pressure
- Concern of losing Green Spaces
- Financial Pressure (including single parents)
- School expenses are high
- High cost of living
- High cost of education
- Economic uncertainty
- Stress of war and world events
- Children left alone more
- Over Developing (without proper planning)
- Loss of family and community identity
- No school lunch program
- Lots of vandalism to the schools
- Lack of Local Jobs
- Lack of enforcement of bylaws

The strengths of our neighbourhood/community:

- View of mountains
- People
- Community Pride
- Clean Town Nice looking (Hanging Baskets)
- Volunteer Fire Department
- Free Parks and Green Spaces
- Easy access to those parks and other activities
- Dikes, Biking, Golf, Lakes, River
- Friendly Businesses

- Nice Size of town
- Family Orientated
- Movie Theatre
- Close to West Coast Express
- Nice Hotel
- Community Garden
- Lots of Sports and Sports Facilities/Fields
- Lots of Volunteer Groups
- Pitt Meadows Day
- Airport Open House
- Community Police Station
- Corn Maze
- Recreation Centre and Library
- First Nations Neighbours
- Police Liaisons in Schools
- Wildlife
- Good Women and Senior Support
- Heritage Museum
- Lions Groups
- Tourism
- Blueberry/Cranberry Farms
- Good variety of designs for houses (mixed so it mixes people groups)
- Good support system for disability students
- Good response from City Workers
- A good Youth facility
- Green Awareness
- Have an Emergency Response Team

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Banting Middle School After-school program
- Women s Center has good programs
- E.L.S.A. (English Language Services for Adults)
- Transition booklet for newcomers to the community
- Welcome Wagon
- E.S.L. (English Second Language) phone program
- Larson Fest
- Punjabi Language School
- Fraser Valley New Mom s Program
- Crisis Line
- Teen Moms Program

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- We are here participating in the Study Circles
- There are lots of willing volunteers
- There is an enthusiasm to care for people and community
- There is a good group of volunteers helping law enforcement (Speed Watch, Aux Police)
- There have been good reports
- When the going gets tough the tough gets going
- Student Action Teams (seeing the youth take action)
- Lots of fund raising (a very giving community)

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- Leadership, Life skills, Employment
- More Positive Communication
- Community Schools, Ties, Desegregation
- Build Complete Community

Our top approaches:

1. Leadership, Life skills, Employment

Appeal:

Gives Empowerment, hope for the Future, and enhances wisdom which is vital to growth

Strengths:

Improves health of community, It takes a community to raise a child, it enhances human resources, it creates abilities to make positive choices

Weaknesses:

Need lots of people to be involved, need funding, general paranoia (one on one s, criminal checks, mistrust etc)

Used Elsewhere:

Not really, but some of the items in Part 1 question #2 could be

2. More Positive Communication

Appeal:

Encourages Similar Behaviour, brings more understand & awareness to situations and issues

Strengths:

A greater sense of community pride, identifies components of the community, bring more of a Pitt Meadows flavour. Avenue for celebrating community heroes and heritage.

Weaknesses:

Need people to submit information, need funding, could have potential bias, may not be accurate, competition could be a problem

Used Elsewhere:

In other communities, letters, web sites, newsletters etc

3. Community Schools, Ties & Desegregation

Appeal:

All inclusive

Strengths:

Promotes Safety, Gives Back to the Community, Enriches the Community, Brings Unity to Community, Uses Resources Efficiently, Encourages Independence

Weaknesses:

N.I.M.B.Y., When bringing different people groups together there s a larger potential for conflict,
And of course, funding and the involvement of people

Used Elsewhere:

Some programs are in other communities as stated earlier

Our Action Ideas:**1. Develop an Electronic Newsletter for Pitt Meadows****As a group we can**

- Research and develop a proposal

2. Develop leadership and life skills programs in Pitt Meadows**As individuals we can**

- Be a mentor
- Provide encouragement
- Take initiative to promote new ideas
- Provide skilled resources

As a group we can

- Network
- Value and respect different ideas
- Continue Study Circles
- Open communication
- Stay connected with each other
- Do research

As a neighbourhood we can

- Get to know our neighbours and their needs
- Get to know available resources
- Get neighbourhoods involved in the community

As a community we can

- Ask for federal and provincial funding
- Include local Council
- Provide funding
- Watch for opportunities
-

3. Lobby for and activate a Community School in Pitt Meadows**As individuals we can:**

- Be more involved with our schools
- Lobby school district

As a group we can:

- Cross age and culture boundaries
- Stay connected with each other
- Do research
- Network

As a neighbourhood we can:

- Encourage more volunteerism
- Hold multi-cultural events
- Get to know each other
- Get to know the needs of the neighbourhood

As a community we can

- Allow more access to school facilities
- Include local Council
- Provide funding

THE WESTVIEW STUDY CIRCLE**What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:**

- People had respect and concern for others when driving on neighbourhood streets
- Used to stay home to play outside and recreate more
- Little things were not a problem, liability was not in the forefront
- Kids would wander off around the neighbourhood and parents wouldn't worry about them. It would be dark before parents would call their kids to come in
- Crime was not affecting the way we lived our lives. It was not in our community
- Media was more positive, not as much bad and negativity
- The degree of danger in our society/community was less
- Felt more safe walking the streets
- Used to build relationships with people in the neighbourhood- families would share responsibilities of the children i.e.: I'll watch your kids for you, then the favour was returned.
- Moms used to stay home and raise the children one parent was taking time and direct approach to raising the children
- With parents home there wasn't as much cost for community programs to watch children
- Bullying was dealt with by the individual it was handled
- You went to school, you had no other options
- We used to be able to afford to send the kids to a hockey game and on the bus
- Used to be gender differences but not as protective or worried about the females of the community
- Television did not contain sexual exploitation, level of violence and content as it does now during prime viewing hours.
- Used to be safe venturing out at all hours
- You knew what was acceptable to other parents and you felt comfortable that they would respect your values while your child was there
- Used to get visitor kids to call home to let parents know where they are

How it is different for families today:

- It seems like we socially accept the unsafe and dangerous driving throughout the community
- We do not feel safe yet we do not have ACCESSIBLE facilities for all neighbourhood youth. Transportation is an issue; cost and alternatives are also a problem
- Video games, computers and Television have made us stay in and not play outside and get to know each other
- Liability is preventing the positive things that neighbourhoods are trying to do i.e.: basketball nets and signs to slow down

Building Community Solutions – Phase II Report, April 2003

- Most parents constantly worry and watch their children
- Crime has put fear into our lives it affects everything we do. We take precautions like alarms before something happens
- Media impacts our perception of the community negatively. It has little positive content and is filled with bad things that happen
- Degree of danger, the likelihood that your community or yourself will encounter danger is higher than it was
- You feel safe in the community but you do not feel safe for your children i.e.: walking to 7-11
- People are so busy working they don't know each other, they don't take the time. People certainly don't share the responsibilities like they used to
- Both parents work and service providers are raising the children, for minimum wage
- We all pay for childcare because both parents must work just to make ends meet, have we lost our priority?
- Bullying is out in the open but it is making kids leave the school and becoming a bigger problem, epidemic
- You have home school, pace yourself school, go to 3 schools a year or don't go to school at all. It also isn't being monitored, we don't have a handle on youth who are dropping out we don't know the numbers or who they are
- It's not safe and not affordable, instead we drive them where they need to go and wait for them outside. The amount of freedom we give our kids is less
Scared for the female of the community, they are more subjected to violence
- You don't know your kid's friend's parents. You don't know their values or if it is right for you to ask.
- Television contains all of this and is taking away parents' ability to be parents; kids can view pornographic material at 8:00pm on channel 39. It is difficult to patrol what kids are watching all the time; this is an increasing challenge
- Youth go from one place to stay to another, parents are rarely called and so don't care

Our Vision:

Smaller, safer and friendlier neighbourhoods

What families are up against in our neighbourhood?

- Lack a sense of community in neighbourhood people are friendly but it doesn't feel connected
- Transient community – not many long-term residents. People are coming and going more.
- People are finding support outside their neighbourhood
- We need a crisis to all pitch in and help (fallen tree)
- It would be nice to have a slower paced community where people took the time
- Disconnected from ethnic neighbours
- Parents seem to need more help from police
- Face more barriers: employment is more difficult and transportation poses a barrier
- Parents feel they have no options when dealing with their children
- There is little balance of the rights of parents when dealing with their children
- Parents often feel overwhelmed by the behaviour difficulties of their children
- Good paying jobs are lacking in this community
- The definition of good paying job is changing: the example was given that a vet had over 200 applicants for a 10.00 per hour position

- Good paying jobs require people to leave this community
- If there were good paying jobs available in Maple Ridge it would have an over all positive impact on the community; the local business would profit and it would allow parent s to be home more, it would also raises the overall standard of living in the community
- Our priorities are mixed up
- We need more neighbourhood events
- Parents cannot afford recreation opportunities for their children and the family
- There is a lack of parenting and guidance
- Parents are lacking the real knowledge of what there children are doing or being exposed to (on streets, at school, from peers)
- Parents lack skills and need access to parenting education
- Kids acting out because parents not willing to face reality
- Parents not willing to put the WORK into raising kids (get them out of my hair attitude)
- Parents give up
- The lack of parenting skills and bad parenting carries over to the next generation, who become the same sort of parents themselves
- Lack of lighting and sidewalks expose families and children to danger

The strengths of our neighbourhood/community:

- Friendly
- Diverse
- Family
- Environment
- Lakes, Trees and Parks
- Support (neighbours will help when asked)
- Education/Skill sharing (neighbours share their skills, plumber in neighbourhood will help if you have a problem with your sink)
- Neighbour has great rose garden
- Shopping is close by
- Facilities – First class leisure centre
- Block events – fireworks
- Churches – accessible and many
- Free activities
- It take a whole community to raise a child – we have raised many 1st class individuals who have gone on to become leaders and famous – Brendan Morrison and Greg Moore are just a few
- Community Heroes – We have many local hero's who have made an impact in our community and beyond (Lola Chapman)
- Special Feeling – there is a feeling you get here, it makes you stay
- Community spirit
- Community Energy
- Volunteers- dedicated and hard working
- Youth Centre- gives youth a voice in the community and opportunities to make a difference in their community
- Community support services
- Food Bank – our food bank is doing alright compared to many other communities, this is do to the community support here
- Support networks
- Special Events
- Social activists

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Block watch
- Neighbourhood – earthquake preparedness

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- People are friendly and open-leadership is needed
- Salvation Army and other organizations
- Churches are a source of community
- Our list of strengths, gives us hope
- Our study circle, gives us hope
- Maple Ridges strength is its people

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- Transportation
- Affordable Services for all ages
- Keep Maple Ridge Rural
- Hold Politicians Accountable
- Balance family and work
- Open schools for community use
- We need to create jobs in community
- Responsible planning
- Tourism
- Infrastructure
- Neighbourhoods - strengthen
- Bike lanes, lights sidewalks
- Youth services
- Reduce charge for public service (Leisure Centre)

Our top approaches:

1. Keep rural part of community/plan with responsibility

Why this appeals:

Growth has contributed to negatives

Maple Ridge will stay beautiful

Legislation (ALR) to protect rural assets

Legislate Heritage designations

Strengths:

Balance community growth

Insure responsible development

Ethical – it is ethical

Weaknesses:

Resistance from developers etc. (greed)

Is this approach being used elsewhere?

Calgary- heritage homes – in the East of Canada

ALR

2. Balance work and community/create jobs/minimize commute

Why this appeals:

Cost, save time with commutes, time will go back to neighbourhoods and family and builds a viable economy

Strengths:

Better community
Business will bring in money
All around positive – will benefit everyone

Weaknesses:

Initial investments required to start process

Is this approach being used elsewhere?

New Brunswick-Marketing-call centre capital of Canada
Conceptualized, laws, “Build it and they will come”

3. Tourism

Why this approach appeals:

Environment, arts, tourism- people (city of festivals)
Increase jobs

Strength:

It's already here - we can market what we all ready have here

Weakness:

Might get complacent; people not knowing about it

Is this approach being used elsewhere?

Whistler Fort Langley, commercial Drive, Steveston, New west quay, Cultus Lake

4. Affordable, accessible community services for all ages

Why this approach appeals:

Allows interaction-Connecting
Healthier Youth, Seniors, everybody
People will stay here
Services create volunteerism witch creates community

Strengths:

All the above
Seniors housing and facilities and youth centre

Weaknesses

Cost- Investment may be seen as cost
Prevention is hard to sell
Not enough involvement by people

Is this approach used elsewhere:

Mission Leisure centre free in A.M
Abbotsford-Maple Ridge Toonie swim at Leisure centre already
Winnipeg-City run community centres – FREE

5. Transportation info structure bike lanes and people-Light sidewalks safety

Why this approach appeals

Increases safety and interaction with people
Makes services accessible
More frequent busses/smaller busses
More people coming to maple ridge
Creates jobs
More money into community
Over all health of community
Increases tourism

Weakness:

Initial investments

Is this approach used elsewhere?

Vancouver-sky train system, Burnaby, New West
Ottawa bus system and bike system

Our Action Ideas:

1. Walking buses (to get children to school)

What we can do as a group/community:

- Coordinate; get people to buy into the idea
- Find volunteers and participants
- Involve PAC, teachers, parents, kids, older students
- Pilot project – enlist one school, then advertise

2. Become the “City of Festivals”

What we can do as a group/community:

- Talk to Council, Festival Society

3. The Yellow Bike Program

What we can do as a group/community:

- Find bikes (recycling, donations, police, etc.)
- Find volunteers to paint bikes yellow (scouts, seniors, others)
- Find volunteers to maintain bikes (prisons, etc.)

THE RIVERSIDE STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- Childhood friendships, everyone/ neighbours looked out for each other, free to do whatever (knew when to be home for supper and bed). In PoCo played in the bushes/ forests/ rivers-freely- building rafts and floating in the river near where "Brianna was found all these years later", more two parent (single) employed families, had financial struggles- still was a happy child.
- Freedom, quiet, friends, community, knew everyone, spent little time inside, sports, good neighbours.

How it is different for families today:

- More stress, more opportunity, both parents work- need more daycare, 2 parent families was the norm, more awareness, more restrictions on parents, evolving, more respect then, there is less discussions, protective, there is more interfering w/ parenting

Our Vision:

In 10 yrs. we envision a clean neighbourhood where people know and respect each other through local activities.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Isolation, feeling unsafe
- Threatened closure of services (e.g. paediatric ward)
- Disparity between accessibility of services and ability of those to pay for it e.g. sports and other leisure opportunities for kids are less accessible for low-income families etc.
- These kids who don't have the same opportunities may be the ones who are bored ten years from now
- No where to ride bikes and play without being transported by their parents (realistic ways for children to start experiencing independence)
- Economics affecting parenting i.e. single parents working two jobs, unable to spend quality time with children
- Lack of childcare
- Rapid development is outpacing infrastructure
- Need for a mixture of housing in a neighbourhood i.e. low cost and higher cost housing together in an area
- Lack of industrial tax base
- Poor transportation options
- Youth bored; this neighbourhood is in the middle between the two youth centres therefore less options for the youth here
- Lack of safe areas to walk i.e. sidewalks
- Vandalism, theft
- Facilities (e.g. schools) are not easily accessed by outside organized groups
- Homelessness; need to educate the majority about homelessness
- Lack of school playground

The strengths in our neighbourhood/community:

- The neighbourhood comes together in a crisis
- Communities in bloom
- Adopt-a-block
- Hammond stadium is a place that people take their dogs to run around and it gives neighbours an opportunity to meet and get to know each other

- Spectacular place for nature walks, jogs, hikes and swimming (if you have transportation)
- Virtues club - works with all ages, children youth and parents; homework assistance; games; youth events; community events; people are not self absorbed but learn to contribute; youth develop skills included on resumes and for work experience credit at schools
- Parks and Rec youth council
- Community association
- Festivals

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Virtues Club
- Broadened view of the community
- Anti vandalism task force spearheaded by the school district
- Some communities have newsletters delivered to everyone's houses listing everything that is going on e.g. Whonnock Hall newsletter

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- When I see kids going to the Virtues Club and respecting one another
- People being respectful
- Being positive and optimistic even a 10% change can make a difference
- Enough people are recognizing there s a problem; it isn't just localized people want change
- When I remember who the bullies were when I went to school and see how successful they are now, I have hope that people can change
- Schools are taking a more active role with children
- There are more programs for single parents
- More programs in general e.g. Cythera
- The community outside of Abbotsford (Augustan?) that has mixed housing in the middle of nowhere with one school and one store. Another example is False Creek
- Study circles
- Hopeful because of the respect for teens and what they re doing
- Children helping children
- Children doing Adopt-a-Block of their own free will

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- Every neighbourhood needs a leader/motivator
- Reconfiguring neighbourhood planning municipal planning needs to consult more with and listen to neighbourhoods
- Improve transportation i.e. public transit
- Increased awareness and involvement
- Work to eliminate apathy
- More services for youth
- Utilizing existing resources more efficiently
- Safer ways for children to gain independence i.e. safer roads and community
- We quickly need to address homelessness
- Greener community
- Safer neighbourhoods; feeling safe

Our top approaches:

1. More services for youth

Why this approach appeals:

Stops vandalism, graffiti, restlessness, drug issues, loitering, drinking, and speeding

Strength of this approach:

Provides opportunities, open doors; helps encourage mutual respect and more caring youth

Weakness of this approach:

You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink - providing more services doesn't guarantee that youth will use them

Examples of this approach being used here or elsewhere:

Youth bowling for Big Brothers and Sisters fundraiser - fun for youth and provided them with an opportunity to be caring and supportive of others

2. Improve transportation

Why this approach appeals:

Everyone has equal access to services

Strength of this approach:

Includes everyone; is more democratic

Weakness of this approach

Not time efficient

Could be costly

Examples of this approach being used here or elsewhere:

Skytrain is efficient, accessible and useful in other communities

3. Safer neighbourhoods; feeling safe

Why this approach appeals:

Being able to sleep restfully at night

More of a sense of openness to communicate with neighbours

This is a fundamental building block; if people don't feel safe, they can't begin to reach out to deal with other issues affecting the neighbourhood

Strength of this approach:

Starting point for everything else (fundamental building block)

Weakness of this approach:

If people assume they're safe, they don't take precautions (e.g. I didn't think anyone would ever break into my house because we have Hell's Angels in the neighbourhood and no-one is going to take a chance of breaking into an Angel's house)

4. Reconfiguring neighbourhood planning

Why this approach appeals:

Addressing traffic/ road safety

Aesthetics

Environmental issues (green spaces)

Mixed housing variety of types of housing (cost etc.) in a neighbourhood

Strengths of this approach:

Being listened to; city hall responds to input from neighbourhoods

Weakness of this approach:

Could be costly

Some neighbourhoods may not be heard

Not all neighbours might want the same things e.g. Some people may want traffic circles at their intersections while others might not; would the majority rule?

Examples of this approach being used here or elsewhere:

Traffic circles in East Vancouver were the result of people in a neighbourhood working to make their roads safer

Our Action ideas:

1. Neighbours supporting neighbours – block watch

What we can do as individuals:

- Get to know neighbours
- Share holiday plans with neighbours
- Make sure windows and doors are locked
- Be willing to take responsibility for your neighbourhood/community
- Familiarize yourself with your surroundings

What we can do as neighbours:

- Look out for each other
- Develop a buddy system
- Make a formal commitment to join Block Watch or volunteer with community patrol
- Make a connection from one immediate neighbourhood to another
- Communicate with neighbours – barbecues, garage parties, block parties, etc.
- Contact the Community Policing office rep.

What we can do as a community:

- Educate parents to educate their children and youth

2. Elected teen as youth representative/advocate with local government

What we can do as individuals:

- Encourage youth and adults to attend the Forum
- More parent/child interaction and bonding
- Find common ground between adults and youth

What we can do as a group:

- Encourage youth leadership – things done for youth, by youth
- More organized clubs
- More awareness of programs, services and opportunities for youth
- Develop a youth resource book
- Develop mutual respect

What we can do as a neighbourhood/group:

- Encourage Virtues model in other neighbourhoods
- Be more aware of neighbours and interacting with neighbours of all ages
- Propose next step

What we can do as a community:

- Add youth candidates to the ballot or a representative elected by high school students with a rep. from each school – find ways for youth who are not in school to participate

3. Create a voice for the neighbourhood (being heard by local government)**What we can do as individuals:**

- Attend Council meetings – carpool

What we can do as a neighbourhood/group

- Survey neighbourhood for issues to present
- Joint meetings with other neighbourhoods

4. Network of bicycle pathways throughout the community**What we can do as a group:**

- See what paths are already in place
- Make suggestions to engineering department

THE WHONNOCK STUDY CIRCLE**What was it like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in?**

- Safe
- Healthy water and air
- “Known” community
- Natural environment
- Endless resources
- Stability – someone at home with family
- Extended family – geographically close by

How is it different for families today:

- Unsafe
- Pollution
- Faceless community
- Restrictions
- Finite resources/sustainability
- Financial stress and both parents working
- Broken families

- Isolation

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Too many cars in neighbourhood
- Not enough transit
- Isolation " no one is home"
- "Too busy" to have community involvement
- Modern paranoia
- Dogs being unsafe
- Globalization " box stores" like Wal-Mart
- Isolation, hard to get to know your neighbours
- Lack of services for seniors (in their own homes)
- No public space to get together & provide "hub"
- Lack of community connection
- Illegal operations (grow op's) affect neighbourhood safety.
- Youth & drugs

The strengths of our neighbourhood/community

- Community ties, younger members taking care of older residents
- Neighbours look out for one another
- We have access to nature, parks...
- Wildlife, tree's & beauty, clean air, water from a natural source.
- No light pollution, or noise pollution.
- Local stewardship is demonstrated
- Artistic talent
- Rural qualities
- Unique identity
- Safety, tolerance present in community
- Adopt a block.

Our Vision:

"In ten years we envision a neighbourhood where the qualities, which motivated our residence in this area, will have retained their validity and will be recognized not only in our immediate community, but by the district too, as values which cannot be recreated by man. These qualities, identified by the participants of this Circle, include

trees
 terrain
 lakes
 air quality & water quality
 quiet
 nature
 trails
 wildlife
 absence of industry
 neighbourly respect."

Some approaches that could change things for the better:

1. Find ways to talk to one another & have a way to connect i.e.: have a Community Hub, a community inventory of skills; use a barter system.

Appeal:

It's the base of the community"

Strength:

Enhances community connection, good role modeling

Weakness:

Government absolves itself from being responsible. Control issues"

#2 Improved Public Transportation i.e.:(minibus, carpools, handy dart, bike lanes)

Appeal:

Mobility & environmental issues

Strength:

Accessibility, pollution, cost, reduction in youth crime, job accessibility

Weakness:

Pollution, environmental issues, cost, inefficiency

#3 Access and Services to our community, i.e.: Seniors Connect program, Youth Connect program.

Appeal:

Acknowledges strengths of work done in bigger communities

Strength:

Builds local community, lower overhead, increases participation, decreases pollution, programs or services can be tailored to local needs

Weakness:

Cost, control issues/ turf issues

**Community based decision making i.e.: increased community representation- use of the "Ward" system, more effective link with council, "moving" council meetings
Community schools concept, ownership of public buildings & access to them.**

Appeal:

Empowerment of local community /citizens

Strength:

Relevant to community, gives community a "voice", anecdote to cynicism & apathy, increases community involvement, it's hard to dismiss a strong community group

Weakness:

Hard to initiate, perceived illegitimacy from Government

Our Action Ideas:

1. Improve connections in the Community.

What we can do as individuals:

- Get involved in Hall Associations and the Historical Society.

What we can do as a neighbourhood/group:

- Block parties

What we can do as a community:

- Focus on community schools and neighbourhood associations and public spaces; public celebrations and festivals
- Preserve "historical" buildings [i.e. post office and feed store] and other features

2. Transportation and Sustainability

What we can do as individuals:

- Less driving and more recycling.

What we can do as a neighbourhood/group:

- Look at local pickup for recyclables.

What we can do as a community:

- Adopt Natural Step program
- Minimize the negative impact of vehicles on the community and maximize other means of transport i.e. public transit, bus, car pools], trails [horse and walking] and cycling lanes and paths.
- A trail built around Whonnock Lake and other improvements to and expansions of the parks inventory.
- Become a model for other communities re: smart growth and sustainability.

3. Community-based decision-making

What we can do as individuals:

- Get involved in Hall Associations.

What we can do as a neighbourhood/group:

- Initiate neighbourhood forums.

What we can do as a community:

- Initiate community forums.
- Develop a strategy with the Social Planning Committee to increase the effectiveness and cohesiveness of local associations - create new hall associations or neighbourhood associations where none exist
- Enhance linkages between associations and Municipal Hall
- Identify spokespersons for community and neighbourhoods

- Initiate community forums on various themes i.e. transportation, inventory of services, etc.
- Increase involvement in local community groups
- Create a linkage for local associations
- Focus on assets and strengths that youth, seniors etc. bring to neighbourhoods and improve access to recreational, health, cultural and literacy services in town or develop satellite services locally
- Promote a ward system for municipal governance.

THE THOMAS HANEY STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- Felt safe "never told don't go there"
- One parent at home, one worked (some case mom or dad)
- Kids played outside with other kids you could hear and see them
- Freedom to be a child
- Kids walked to school
- Kids received lots of support through high school and university
- One bathroom was enough
- Families did things together like camping

How it is different for families today:

- Family structure not as solid now
- High divorce rate
- Young adults on their own
- As family grows up they separate
- More on your own for university and high school
- Parents full time chauffeurs
- Rush, rush - fast pace
- Don't know neighbours
- More TV VCR video games etc. less kids playing outside and together
- 3 bathrooms not enough
- Different priorities
- Media hype focuses on negative and gives youth a bad name
- Children asked to make mature decisions at an earlier age
- Can no longer just drop in
- Grand parents not involved
- Youth inaccurately seen as trouble

Our Vision:

"Our vision for an ideal neighbourhood is a village that is welcoming, inclusive and where people feel safe. Where different generations live together, are compassionate and respectful of the needs of others. They work together on projects for the betterment of their neighbourhood. Where children can move about and play safely outside, there are common green areas to walk and paths to bike." We see a community where "what happens in the large will be reflected in the small".

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Growing senior population
- Some areas are more unsafe
- Poverty, homelessness
- Transportation not effective
- Affordable housing
- Off loading of responsibility by government
- Homeless youth

The strengths in our neighbourhood and community:

- Strong seniors' community and centre
- Most folks are friendly
- Community spaces emerging
- Generous individuals and business
- Youth programs and centre
- Partnership and clustering of programs
- Many strong community based social service agencies
- Ability to change and create
- High volunteerism
- Study circles
- Celebration of diversity
- Taking charge of change

Things that are already being done to help families:

- School and neighbourhood anti bullying programs
- Zero tolerance to drugs in some schools but could lead to "NIMBY" (not in my back yard)
- Peer counselling - listening to people that have been there
- Unity & diversity potluck
- Community FUN
- Caring Place (Salvation Army facility)
- 4 pillar approach to drugs in Vancouver and elsewhere
- Heritage pride
- Greg Moore youth Ctr.,
- Sports, recreation and outdoor
- Seniors located downtown near facilities
- New theatre and arts ctr.

Some broad approaches that could change things for the better:

- Drug and rehab for youth
- Programs for multicultural seniors
- Things for youth not interested in sports
- Community youth mural project
- "Participatory" community festivals and events
- Bike, scooter, wheel chair and stroller paths and urban no car zones
- Gay and lesbian support groups and gay pride day
- Maintain and promote rural character
- Community kiosks to better publicize and market what we have to offer and what is going on
- Dedicate a monthly good neighbour and "random acts of kindness day
- Positive mindset backed by action

Our top approaches:

"1a." Participatory events

Luminarie festival, parade of the lost souls, various multicultural street festivals in Vancouver and elsewhere
Get people out and involved not just watching & are fun
Does not cost much
Builds community pride - And identity

1b. Urban green

Gets people to slow down and enjoy their neighbourhood
Support local small merchants
Community pride reduces crime
Promotes eyes on the street safety

2a. Urban non vehicle options

Edmonton, trans-Can trail, Galloping Goose trail, Vancouver, Portland many examples
Needs to be built in to all urban and transportation designs as long term planning
Reduces pollution
Promotes healthy life style choices

2b. Monthly community random acts of kindness day

National youth initiative publicized across the country last year
Gets people thinking positively of the community and others
Kindness is contagious
Identifies the community as a positive welcoming place
Good publicity for business (people want to come here)

3a. Youth non-sports programs

Non-judgemental
Explores feelings and expression
Supports all physical, mental and emotional abilities for all people

3b. Gay pride day and community education

Vancouver and most urban cities are models
Has mainstream acceptance but youth are often left out
Promotes tolerance understanding and fun

3c. Neighbourhood info kiosks

Let people know what is going on locally "micro media"
Small communities, villages, and tourist oriented place use this to promote local talent, events, local opportunities, notices announcements and information

Our Action ideas:

Participatory events – a) Annual "Block Party Month", b) Create urban green gathering spaces

What we can do as individuals:

- Take it upon ourselves
- Get involved with existing projects and events (e.g. Caribbean festival, Art in the Woods, Luminare Festival of Lights)
- Volunteer
- What we can do as a group:
 - Set up local information kiosks
 - Hold a garage sale to cover cost of events
 - Start new, fun participatory events like slug races
 - Plant flowers on boulevards and spaces close to where you live and walk

What we can do as a neighbourhood

- Hire a coordinator if necessary to lead the organizing (Commercial Drive did this successfully)
- Hold a block parties and invite and encourage other blocks to attend and repeat the idea
- Start recurring traditions
- Have blocks and neighbourhoods put floats in parades and challenge other blocks to do the same
- Ask Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge Councils to declare Block Party – Know Your Neighbour Month
- Get media coverage
- Do group potluck, corn roasts, etc.
- Invite other blocks
- Write a manual on how to hold a block party

What we can do as a community:

- Contact organizations that are operating successfully like the Parade of Lost Souls, Luminarie Festival and Gay Pride Day
- Promote participatory rather than spectator events
- Support multi cultural events such as Unity in Diversity
- Involve kids and youth in planning
- Locate gardens (decorative and food) in unused urban spaces. Put benches and tables to encourage people to slow down, sit down, enjoy local merchants and features; develop pride and commitment to beauty and welcoming spaces – form a group to identify sites
- Encourage municipality and merchants to put benches on busy main streets
- Incorporate mini green and rest areas into urban plans
- Connect with groups that have been greening public space e.g. BEST, ARMS, Haney Horsemen, garden societies, etc.
- Get schools, churches and merchants to open up their space to common gardens
- Involve kids, youth and seniors
- Use contests, recognition and promotion through media

2. Declare monthly "Random acts of Kindness Day"

What we can do:

- Ask Councils to declare
- Ask media to recognize and appreciate
- Create economic impact from being known as "the City of Random Acts of Kindness" (businesses and families look for healthy communities to locate in)

3. Gay Pride and awareness events

What we can do:

- Contact advocacy and event organizers to get ideas and assistance
- Incorporate into local events and parades
- Identify and make available support groups for youth

THE YENNADON STUDY CIRCLE

What it was like in the neighbourhoods we grew up in:

- No Fear
- Not Worried About Safety
- Outside A Lot
- Knew Everyone
- Walked/Biked
- Less Dependent On Parents
- Time Was Unstructured Outside Of School
- Mom Was Home. Grandparents Were Often Around
- Kids came home For Lunch
- Work was A Contact Place
- Spent A Lot Of Time With Friends
- No Fences

How it is different for families today:

- Kids Are Vastly Overprotected
- More Information
- People Are Isolated
- Lives are Planned
- Parents Don t Want Children Unhappy
- Both Parents Work
- Access To Media Generates Fear
- Rural Kids Have Urban Mentalities
- Communities Don t Have Places For Kids To Be
- Church Connection Isn't As strong

Our Vision:

Our Community creates a healthy, nurturing environment, which will positively affect and be a role model for the broader community, one that respects unique (recreational, rural, environmental) qualities of the community.

What families are up against in our neighbourhood:

- Time pressures - busy lives.
- Childcare access locally. Choices.
- High % people commute long hours.
- Lack of work opportunities in the community.
- Lack of public transport
- Overuse of the car (environment expense).
- Lack of social meeting places (going can be a problem).

- Community planning may force commercial facilities centralize.
- Silver Valley plan includes commercial areas.
- Homeless people living in Golden Ears Park.
- Traffic
- Vandalism (esp. mail boxes) parks, schools, garbage cans
- Thefts, security
- Lack of diversity in neighbourhoods leads to deserted streets in daytime (going?).
- Encroachment onto private property by parties etc. due to isolation.
- Wildlife increasing due to lack of habitat.
- Lack of options for seniors.
- Lack of inclusion of seniors/others.
- A greater understanding of our demographics is needed.
- Low % of parkland compared to other areas

The strengths of our neighbourhood/community:

- Neighbourhood:
- Proactive
- Involved
- Connected through action
- A lot of creative, unique individuals
- Physical environment
- A rural Character
- Recreational Opportunities
- You can really count on your neighbours
- A stable population = ownership & Culture
- There is recreation offered in our area
- The opportunity to shape our future
- Connections to other community groups
- A river runs through it
- Remoteness/Isolation yet close to town
- The School

Maple Ridge Strengths:

- The community is a manageable size
- Events, festivals: many time venues
- We have a heart (town centre)
- Youth Centre, Art Centre, library, etc
- Community theater (s)
- ECRA centre (seniors)
- A Broad base of experience and diversity within the wider community

Things that are already being done to help families:

- Anti-vandalism Campaign starting this week
- Road safety- ICBC- Safer schools
- Attention to the homeless issue by municipal council
- Proposed Bike Park possibly near Albion
- Festival organization, Community events, new Arts centre

What gives us hope that things can get better:

- Community initiative for transportation, etc to address problems
- Successes in other communities as a result of public opinion

Some approaches that could change things for the better:

- Creating a mind set, a will, in municipal government that change should be driven by neighbourhood wants and needs
- The neighbourhood must notice those wants and needs
- Use technology in a positive way to engage the populace
- Utilizing existing facilities and making more use of them (e.g. neighbourhood schools)
- All working together. Leadership, Community Responsibility, Partnerships,
- Consolidate needs and uses
- Neighbourhood must engage a larger cross-section of their population
- Openness, Flexibility, Accountability, Efficiency
- A system to engage people in a meaningful way and educate them
- Risk is that small interest groups are heard disproportionately
- Patience because the process though slow is valuable in itself
- Balance needs of newcomers for old timers
- This neighbourhood has so much potential for change and need to be involved
- Bureaucracy needs to be flexible and take account of the needs and wants of neighbourhoods
- Community school concept - cradle to grave involvement
- We have room and opportunity for change so we must take diverse needs and desires into account

Our top approaches:

1. Creating a mind set, a will, in municipal government that change should be driven by neighbourhood wants and needs

Strengths:

Solutions are not imposed on the neighbourhood

Encourages involvement

People have a voice and are listened to

People are more positive

This approach is being used by community groups but with a narrower focus

Also in the Silver Valley plan

Also through municipal elections

2. The neighbourhood must notice those wants and needs

Neighbourhood assoc.- to be more vision oriented not reactionary to feel that they have the power to effect change

We can learn from others and gather strength from a group of like-minded others

4. Use technology in a positive way to engage the populace

Strengths:

Can be easy, efficient, can reach a large audience

People can join in from home

Weaknesses:

Less engaging, less personal, can be misinterpreted

Not universally accessible

5. Utilizing existing facilities and making more use of them (e.g. neighbourhood schools)

Strengths:

Readily available, pleasant space, economically feasible
Close, brings community together
Time schedule already exists
Help to combat vandalism
Community school programs

Weaknesses:

Funding

6. All working together Leadership, Community Responsibility, Partnerships,

Strengths:

Working together draws previous discussion together
Allows community to plan activities appropriate to the area
The place becomes a centre for building identity
Sharing of responsibilities
Head for a new model to overcome problems with funding
Weakness getting people to participate on an on-going basis
Gaining consensus from a diverse group

Weaknesses:

Competing priorities
Organization - finding leaders

Our Action ideas:

1. Organize a celebration to bring people together

2. Support our neighbourhood by developing a bulletin board or some way to communicate about what already exists in our community (businesses, community organizations, other resources)

3. Utilize school space for other activities that benefit communities (e.g. healthy babies, book mobiles, free tutoring)

4. Systems (including all levels of government and organizations) working together in the community, driven by the community.

What we can do as individuals:

- Get involved in neighbourhood groups
- Stay aware of what is going on
- Keep your eyes open/ notice; question; provide feedback
- Take initiative
- Facilitate and empower
- Get your voice out there; letters to the editor
- Post information – i.e. mailboxes, bet.
- Link with others
- Create groups
- Do your part
- Lead by example

- Participate
- Talk to your neighbours

What we can do as a group

- Share ideas
- Develop and follow an action plan
- Give each other strength and encouragement
- Support to carry on initiatives we have as individuals
- Find ways to identify and promote our community

What we can do as a neighbourhood

- Get ideas from the broader community
- Utilize community groups to connect with one another
- Neighbourhood group meetings

What we can do as a community

- Work on creating cohesiveness
- Target an issue
- Find a “win” (early)
- Phone fan outs
- Create occasions for people to meet
- Have a liaison with government

HOW THE STUDY CIRCLES HAVE AFFECTED WHAT WE WILL DO

- ☺ Changed attitude on approaching neighbours
- ☺ Will be more proactive
- ☺ Awareness was raised on how to affect change
- ☺ I'm less cynical
- ☺ I now feel I can take action, with or without Phase 3.
- ☺ I have more awareness of the community
- ☺ Have changed my general outlook
- ☺ We want to do the best we can for our neighbourhood; more confident to approach Pitt Meadows Council with concerns; more willing to speak up at council meetings; know there are others who think like I do; hopeful that good things come out of these circle studies.
- ☺ Like to do something now - feel committed
- ☺ More confident - feels like you *can* do it!
- ☺ Become involved in neighbourhood conversations
- ☺ Look more closely at local papers
- ☺ Reply to notices of land use
- ☺ Feel more connected to larger community
- ☺ Want to write editor of newspaper to have a section for Municipal Sections to correspond to important issues such as OCP changes. The section could have a different font and log so that it is noticed
- ☺ Continue with our ideas
- ☺ Willing to at an individual and block level to take on initiatives and projects and to meet in the future
- ☺ More aware of focusing on wider issues
- ☺ Have a yearly neighbourhood gathering
- ☺ Follow up on environmental plans
- ☺ Get Block Watch going
- ☺ To become involved; to stay involved; good to see people involved

- ☺ If this goes ahead at the forum, I'd be willing to take part
- ☺ Try to organize more garage parties and potlucks to connect my neighbourhood
- ☺ More determined to become involved
- ☺ Identified a gap between my feelings and my actions
- ☺ Increased my willingness to get involved in my neighborhood and my community
- ☺ Encourages me to get more involved in my community
- ☺ Be more involved in the community
- ☺ Encouraged me to be involved in community meetings, etc.
- ☺ Continue discussing these ideas and work with others to implement them.
- ☺ I have identified some good issues to personally promote and get involved in.
- ☺ Would like this to be an ongoing process.
- ☺ Likely to become more active in community and decision making
- ☺ Yes – I may adopt it in my teaching of adults
- ☺ Be involved
- ☺ Promote local shopping & respect for each other's needs.
- ☺ Commit to participating in change & try to find volunteer opportunities that I can do with my children.
- ☺ I will re-commit to shopping or using local business.
- ☺ Gave me more reason to be a part of the community.
- ☺ No change whatsoever, except that I have even less belief that people want a more inclusive society.
- ☺ Continue to think on ways to improve attitudes in our community and neighborhood.
- ☺ Get involved!
- ☺ To get more involved.
- ☺ Will make me more involved in affecting change.
- ☺ I will remain involved within the community as in the past.
- ☺ Made me understand people's perspectives regarding solutions.
- ☺ I'm more willing to act.

- ☺ I have no idea.
- ☺ Has made me more confident to approach the political arena.
- ☺ Hope to volunteer time for community activities.
- ☺ Encouraged me to be willing to try to make a difference
- ☺ Energized me to take some positive steps on my block
- ☺ Continue to be involved, neighborhood minded
- ☺ None
- ☺ Made me more aware of my role in the neighbourhood
- ☺ Take personal responsibility and focus on the small things I can do
- ☺ Participate in my neighbourhood/community more
- ☺ Make more of an effort to better myself and my community.
- ☺ It makes me think about myself and how I'm going to raise my children in ten years.
- ☺ It has made me want to contribute more to the community.
- ☺ Keep involved.
- ☺ Be more aware of what is going on in my community.
- ☺ Diversify.
- ☺ Find a committee and join one that best meets the needs of my concerns.
- ☺ I want to become more involved in my community to make some of the issues in our circle a reality.
- ☺ More motivated (for now).
- ☺ Very little
- ☺ Not sure yet...need to distil the information
- ☺ Be more of an activist, more open to change
- ☺ I have renewed hope, and a stronger commitment to do what I can do now!
- ☺ Will be more active, proactive and involved
- ☺ I will be more aware of community activities and be more involved in the community
- ☺ My awareness and involvement has been raised

- ☺ Be more friendly with my neighbours, maybe go to a council meeting
- ☺ Be more active in issues that I'm interested in (more effective ways were learnt)
- ☺ Accept other peoples opinions
- ☺ I will be more involved in my community
- ☺ Work towards a career in human resources
- ☺ It has given me more self confidence
- ☺ Useful tool for gathering information
- ☺ I will participate
- ☺ Well, it has just began to raise my awareness now I plan to get involved in issues
- ☺ Be open to joining another group
- ☺ More thought into what my involvement is in this area
- ☺ Increase willingness to participate in this type of forum
- ☺ Inspired to follow up
- ☺ Feel I'll be more involved in others to work on issues that matter to me
- ☺ I'm more concretely hopeful about changes I want to see
- ☺ Does not affect
- ☺ Not too sure – I probably won't be in the area in the future
- ☺ Pay more attention to development in our community
- ☺ Be more involved in community issues
- ☺ Not much – I am already very involved in the community. I think I will look more to my neighbours for support and ideas.
- ☺ I am encouraged to volunteer whenever possible.
- ☺ I am encouraged that I can be involved and make a difference in my community.
- ☺ I will be more focused on building a positive community.
- ☺ I know I want to volunteer more.
- ☺ I am encouraged to be more directly involved in my community
- ☺ I am ready to act – develop program in leadership/mentoring – I know I have some support and got ideas from group.

- ☺ Be more involved with my neighbours
- ☺ I will probably find ways to “get more involved”.
- ☺ None since I am already very involved in the community

WHAT WE LEARNED IN THE CIRCLES THAT SURPRISED US

- 👤 Lots of people that are concerned about the same things
- 👤 How our concerns are similar; how unhappy some people are in their neighbourhoods because of lack of interaction and problems
- 👤 A lot of people have the same concerns/ideas
- 👤 We *can* build a townhouse!
- 👤 Childhood memories are the same over generations
- 👤 Size of Circle doesn't matter - still generates a lot of ideas etc.
- 👤 Actually *doing* something by having an official forum
- 👤 None of us involved are a member of the Albion Community Assoc. and neither was a member of the Association
- 👤 How large Albion is!
- 👤 Meeting interesting and nice people
- 👤 We all have similar concerns and beliefs about our neighbourhood
- 👤 The importance of commitment to your street and neighbourhood if you want to see change or make a difference
- 👤 Sharing lawnmower idea
- 👤 Neighbourhood coffee house/meeting place idea
- 👤 How good facilitators were
- 👤 Diversity
- 👤 Range of people involved, their interests, and commonalities
- 👤 Passion and interest; commitment to process
- 👤 Respectfulness
- 👤 That there were so few Study Circles in Pitt Meadows

- 👤 Format, style not dry
- 👤 Learned a lot
- 👤 Different perspectives, ways of interpreting
- 👤 Much better than expected, different ranges, perspectives
- 👤 So many people had similar ideas
- 👤 Good representation of ages and gender
- 👤 Virtual TV community has replaced the traditional home life

HOW THE STUDY CIRCLES AFFECTED THE WAYS WE THINK ABOUT NEIGHBOURHOODS AND FAMILIES

- 👤 Thinking more about knowing neighbours
- 👤 We are willing at an individual and block level to take on initiatives and projects and to meet in the future
- 👤 Opened up conversations at home about neighbours and how we enjoy the neighbourhood
- 👤 Belief in: if not me, who?
- 👤 Excited about joining together to make community a better place
- 👤 Sense of hope for kids/family
- 👤 We have a lot of work to do; different from when we grew up; not aware of such lack of cohesion in neighbourhoods
- 👤 Made you think about past & today
- 👤 Everyone wants to live closer together, be connected & less lonely
- 👤 Different cultures can connect
- 👤 Perceived lack of safety & caring
- 👤 New appreciation for Bruce's Market
- 👤 Younger generation are trying to go back to the old way
- 👤 Think about neighbours differently and want to talk them and have deeper conversations regarding our community and neighbourhood issues

- ☞ Desire for inter-generational communication e.g. informal spaces
- ☞ Families/community dysfunction not necessary could be better; raised hopes that improvements can be made
- ☞ Rekindled memories; now want to build a stoop/veranda to be more involved in life on my street
- ☞ Study Circles have affected the way I see the big picture - my inspiration, how I see how a little group can make a difference
- ☞ Learned I didn't think enough about having fun
- ☞ How do we reach people who aren't here
- ☞ Shows how far away we are from where we want to be
- ☞ We have heard many new ideas; we all want the same things; we feel comforted by this.
- ☞ Opened my eyes around youth issues -became aware of more negative issues going on.

**WHAT WE FOUND MOST VALUABLE ABOUT THE STUDY
CIRCLES/ WHAT WORKED WELL**

- ☺ Sense of community and hope
- ☺ Had to stretch; think out of box
- ☺ Useful to witness degree of knowledge neighbours have re: community and what makes a good one
- ☺ Study circle was a way to connect with people in the neighbourhood
- ☺ Voices were heard
- ☺ Everybody was here because they care, even if their opinions vary
- ☺ Few people in our Circle - still generated lots of ideas
- ☺ Excitement level increased
- ☺ Getting to know these people
- ☺ Feel empowered to make change
- ☺ Interesting ideas of others
- ☺ See the support of the group
- ☺ Hope to make a difference; connections; to actively do something

- ☺ Interaction of all people and opportunity to meet
- ☺ Learning about the difference between debate and dialogue; to think about our own reaction to other's ideas
- ☺ Become more aware; personal growth; take it from rhetoric to doing; taking ownership
- ☺ Exchange of ideas and fun
- ☺ The value of commitment, welcoming, and tolerance
- ☺ Life experience sharing
- ☺ Thought provoking (different ways of looking at things, taking action into own hands)
- ☺ Theory vs praxis (practical grounding)
- ☺ Different perspectives (youth, seniors, middle aged)
Gives everyone a voice
- ☺ More committed to local involvement
- ☺ The most valuable thing was hearing about other people's views - other people's experiences
- ☺ Knowing we could make a difference
- ☺ Small group comfortable
- ☺ Organized projects, laid out well
- ☺ Flow worked well
- ☺ Questions worked well
- ☺ Input was valued
- ☺ Nobody afraid to speak
- ☺ Feel empowered to make change
- ☺ Learning different perspectives; dialogue and debate; good general input from all; everybody's experience is so different
- ☺ Ground rules
- ☺ Being active/involved
- ☺ Smaller size made everyone feel more comfortable to talk
- ☺ Felt listened to
- ☺ Sense of humour

- ☺ Open to others, welcoming, inviting
- ☺ Good facilitators
- ☺ Humour
- ☺ Food/goodies were a connector
- ☺ Met interesting and nice people
- ☺ Made me think about neighbourhood
- ☺ More curious, hopeful and energized
- ☺ Renewed civic pride and consciousness
- ☺ Exchange of ideas and fun
- ☺ Cooperation and listening by participants - nice size group
- ☺ We all share the same concerns and values
- ☺ The value of commitment, welcoming, and tolerance
- ☺ Open, non judgmental
- ☺ Chance to talk
- ☺ We did not stereotype issues
- ☺ Positive conversation
- ☺ No debates
- ☺ Respect for opinions
- ☺ Lack of judgment
- ☺ Acceptance of others
- ☺ Commitment to process
- ☺ Study circle was a way to connect with people in the neighbourhood
- ☺ The discussions were good because there was lots of involvement, everyone was respectful, the layout was organized well....and everyone played nice!
- ☺ Group formed cooperation, trust and openness
- ☺ Sharing ideas; synergy; comforted that our community is safe.
- ☺ The information, co-operation, respectfulness, diversity.
- ☺ The people

- ☺ Created a broader outlook on community and its issues
- ☺ Different age groups participated
- ☺ Everyone spoke and shared
- ☺ Listening to other people's ideas and concerns
- ☺ Hearing others perspectives
- ☺ Developing plausible ideas and solutions to current issue
- ☺ Meeting with new people and listening to their views
- ☺ Seeing how each of us want to be a part of positive change in our community
- ☺ Learned about peoples different views and about neighbourhoods, community
- ☺ Meeting new people; listening to other people's ideas, makes me feel very positive about our community
- ☺ The synergy developed by brainstorming
- ☺ Brainstorming, discussing different experiences
- ☺ Group communication and brainstorming
- ☺ Hearing others views
- ☺ Meeting my neighbors, sharing ideas, being respected for my thoughts
- ☺ Hearing other points of view.
- ☺ Meeting like-minded concerned citizens
- ☺ Unique opportunity
- ☺ People care
- ☺ Being able to express my views – share with others
- ☺ The freedom to discuss ideas on uncontrolled forum – i.e. no concern about practicality but to bring forth ideas
- ☺ Listening to people I wouldn't ordinarily want to listen to.
- ☺ Having a diverse group to talk seriously with about important issues.
- ☺ Meeting a diverse group of people from the neighbourhood.
- ☺ Though provoking – caused me to think more creatively re: solutions to my own family's challenges within our neighbourhood.

- ☺ Listening to each others backgrounds and opinions – Diverse Group.
- ☺ Hearing others concerns and realizing that my neighbourhood may be unusual
- ☺ Different opinions and expressions
- ☺ Learning the difference between dialogue & debate
- ☺ The initial discussions were very amenable
- ☺ Exchanging ideas about community issues – turned out that issues raised were very common (youth)
- ☺ Challenged my beliefs and willingness to do
- ☺ Many good ideas
- ☺ Meeting people & sharing concerns for our world today. I am leaving with a greater sense of hope.
- ☺ Meet your neighbours. Hope for the future.
- ☺ Brainstorming
- ☺ Interactive participation and brainstorming
- ☺ Brought people together to discuss issues
- ☺ Increase awareness of common concerns/issues
- ☺ Commitment of participants
- ☺ Participation by all; respectful discussion
- ☺ Sharing ideas concerns
- ☺ Just the themes of commitment, welcoming and tolerance are critical to a healthy neighbourhood
- ☺ The peoples ideas.
- ☺ Hearing about issues in the community and ways to better the community.
- ☺ Different age groups.
- ☺ Nice people.
- ☺ Being able to share my ideas in an organized setting and contribute to the community.
- ☺ Share input.
- ☺ How well people can communicate sitting in a circle compared to sitting in rows.
- ☺ Others opinions.

- ☺ The goals and outcomes.
- ☺ Talking about local issues in a very formalized and effective way.
- ☺ To see the commitment and passion of others.
- ☺ Sharing ideas.
- ☺ Almost everything.
- ☺ The sharing of ideas, the buying in of people.
- ☺ Opportunity to share beliefs with other folks in my neighbourhood
- ☺ The diversity, openness, respect
- ☺ Sense of community and hope
- ☺ People getting together & sharing & having fun solving problems
- ☺ The diversity of the people involved and the variety of different opinions
- ☺ That there is a community concern/interest
- ☺ I was lonely and the interaction was wonderful
- ☺ Diversity of opinions
- ☺ Listening to other opinions
- ☺ Cross-spectrum of people engaged in a deeply committed to change in their neighborhood community
- ☺ Ability to connect with community orientated people
- ☺ The ability of people connecting on a personal level
- ☺ The discussion
- ☺ Meeting new people
- ☺ Vision building exercise at the beginning
- ☺ It raised my awareness of many issues
- ☺ Sharing ideas, meeting neighbours
- ☺ Meeting people in my area
- ☺ Learned more about the neighbours
- ☺ Meeting new people and exchanging ideas

- ☺ Ideas
- ☺ Camaraderie
- ☺ Finding a community of people who care about similar issues – feeling empowered to make change
- ☺ Different ideas and approaches to similar issues
- ☺ Meeting people
- ☺ Finding people with similar ideas and beliefs
- ☺ Realizing how large and diverse our community is
- ☺ Heard very interesting comments re neighbourhood etc.
- ☺ To meet recent arrivals in the neighbourhood and to hear their views on problems they find in this neighbourhood, also how they wish to see this neighbourhood develop
- ☺ Learning more about this community of Albion
- ☺ Learning more about the political process – town council developers
- ☺ How the process evolved
- ☺ Interaction with people who are concerned about the health of their community
- ☺ Hearing different perspectives
- ☺ Meeting new people
- ☺ Grass-roots change
- ☺ Learned more about Pitt Meadows Community and the needs of this community
- ☺ It provided a great opportunity for community initiatives and ideas
- ☺ Hearing from others – that their concerns and passions were similar to mine
- ☺ How our focus changed and what we found to be important
- ☺ Finding out that others had similar concerns as I did
- ☺ Learning about issues in my neighbourhood

**WHAT WE WOULD CHANGE IN ANOTHER ROUND OF STUDY
CIRCLES/WHAT WE LIKED LEAST**

The top 5!

- Ⓞ The timetable was rushed – particularly the last session (15 responses)
- Ⓞ Have better demographic representation in our Circle - more youth, disabled people, ethnic diversity (9 responses)
- Ⓞ Too much repetition in last session (5 responses)
- Ⓞ Narrowing down to just three priorities out of lots of priorities – some ideas may be lost (3 responses)
- Ⓞ No coffee (3 responses)

Other comments:

- Ⓞ More opportunity to have critical responses and look at both sides of the issue with an opportunity for debate
- Ⓞ Could have had access to more resources – maps, Council representation at one of the meetings
- Ⓞ Change name – “Study” sounds like work/hard to understand (“Circle” good)
- Ⓞ Inform people that they can participate in other groups - e.g. Monday did not work
- Ⓞ Public report, Newspapers
- Ⓞ Food - not enough cola
- Ⓞ Oprah would be there!
- Ⓞ Separating strengths, groups etc. Too many categories
- Ⓞ Lack of trust in the process when trying to get people to come out to the first session
- Ⓞ More participants
- Ⓞ Have the group work on a mini project over the 4 week period
- Ⓞ Timekeeping
- Ⓞ Time of night didn't work
- Ⓞ Lack of critical response to ideas
- Ⓞ Sometimes processes were unclear
- Ⓞ Pre-formed questions
- Ⓞ Group backed off from significant discussion

- Ⓞ Would like to have achieved more concrete stuff in last session
- Ⓞ When group went off topic
- Ⓞ I had to get off my keister to get there!
- Ⓞ A few people seemed to dominate
- Ⓞ Sometimes getting off topic
- Ⓞ Would like more time for connecting/chatting
- Ⓞ Length of time it took
- Ⓞ I ate too many cookies!
- Ⓞ Meeting every 2 weeks would have been easier
- Ⓞ Ego's, opinionated people. Good ideas were not listened to. Opposing ideas became heated debates. Some participants had set agendas. Some closed minded ideas from some people
- Ⓞ Sitting for 2 hours
- Ⓞ Sometimes lacked direction/focus
- Ⓞ Lack of critical responses to ideas

BUILDING COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS – PHASE II

OUTCOMES OF PILOT STUDY CIRCLES (Held in November, 02)

SUMMARY

Participation:

- ✓ Two pilot Study Circles were completed.
- ✓ The groups met 4 times in two hour sessions, from November 7 – 28th
- ✓ Group 1 had 10 participants at start-up, and 9 at completion. One person dropped out because of a back injury.
- ✓ Group 2 had 8 participants at start-up. Attendance was “up and down” because of other commitments and illness. One person dropped out following the second session.
- ✓ 11 participants completed evaluations.

What we learned:

- ✓ Facilitator's must be trained
- ✓ Important to have a recorder
- ✓ We need to make sure that participants understand the difference between dialogue and debate.
- ✓ The Study Circle guide needs to be modified considerably – more focussed
- ✓ The community has many strengths
- ✓ Issues relating to youth, poverty and a healthy community were explored. The Building Strong Neighbourhoods for Families guide, is very much in line with the Steering Committee's goal of “a health community”. The other issues of youth and poverty emerge as sub-topics of this goal.
- ✓ Participants need to be very clear on what each step of the process is designed to do, and should be reminded of this at each session
- ✓ Groups should have at least 10 people to allow for drop-outs
- ✓ Participants have the opportunity to learn a great deal about themselves and each other.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ We proceed to arrange for 20 Study Circles in schools around the community, to be held the weeks of February 17, 24 and March 3,10, and a community forum at the end of March (after spring break).
- ✓ Other Circles may be held to accommodate groups that will not attend sessions at the schools, e.g. Mayo Place, West Coast Family Resource clients, Parenting youth.
- ✓ We approach all community groups to send representatives of their group to a Study Circle.
- ✓ One Steering Committee member is assigned to assist with the logistics of each group.
- ✓ Marketing of the Study Circle program includes: a brochure, sign up sheets, Newspaper advertising in January, advertising through schools and community groups, a website, the CIP condensed report and the Filling the Gaps report.
- ✓ We approach a college, university or high school for assistance with evaluation of the Study Circles.
- ✓ Marketing of the project takes a positive approach (we are a community with lots of strengths, how can we build on these).

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS IN PILOT CIRCLES

What worked well?

Setting ground rules at the start
Inclusion of each person in the group
The space
The food
Trust/safety in the group
Getting to know each other in session 1
Facilitators, recorders
Writing the question we were working on (on the flipchart).

What did you find most valuable?

Everyone participated
The wording of the questions caused a lot of dialogue
“Funneling down” and creating linkages
Everyone participated
The knowledge and experience of everyone at the table
Finding that people are not as cynical as I am
It’s an inclusive process

What didn’t work:

Broadness of the topic – need more focus – “neighbourhood” approach would work better
Session 2 – too negative – needs to be balanced with positive – or SWOT exercise
Only had youth perspective in one of the two groups
We didn’t re-visit the vision we created at the first session

What happened that surprised you?

More difficult to facilitate than I expected
The ‘depth’ we went to
I learned new things about myself
My reflections on my role in the group – I’m wearing different “hats”
I’m inspired to become more involved (youth participant)
By the end, I say that this process could work at the neighbourhood level

How has this process affected the way you think this community works?

It confirmed the positive ideas I had – might move here now!
We were able to balance our weaknesses with strengths
I learned a lot about youth (long time resident)
I learned a lot about the community (new resident)
I saw the adult perspective (youth)
It broadened my awareness

How has the process affected what you will do?

I want to facilitate a Study Circle (3 people)
As a facilitator I would be more directive – to keep things on track
I’m going to get to know my neighbours
I want to learn more about how to connect with people – professionally and with my neighbours
I know the community resources better now, and will access them for my clients

What effect, if any has the Study Circle has upon:

Your ability to discuss issues openly and frankly:

Increased 8, No Change 3

Your understanding of your own attitudes and beliefs:

Increased 6, No Change 5

Your understanding of others' attitudes and beliefs:

Increased 10, No change 1

Your ability to communicate more effectively with others who may have different beliefs:

Increased 6, No Change 5

What did you like most about the Study Circle Program?

Getting to know members of the community

The ability to get to know more about the people involved

The ability to learn about different processes for getting things done

Learning more about each other

Good process to initiate dialogue

The personal views discussed in the first session

The sharing of ideas, learning about different aspects of my community I wasn't aware of before

The potential for building a healthier community

Networking, educating, fun

The vision and the attempt to make a difference

What did you like least about the Study Circle Program?

The format

The lack of direction

Difficult to be able to follow the process

The unfocussed nature of the questions asked

Not enough balance between identifying what is bad and good in the community

Using "issues" from the US, too structured and negative.

**Comments from Youth at Loon Lake Study Circle Presentation
Saturday, December 7, 2002**

What's it's like to live in my neighbourhood

Good things

Everyone knows everyone
Youth Centre
Stores close to home
A lot of schools

Not so Good

Lighting fires – crime, vandalism
Drugs, theft, fights
Traffic accidents, aggressive drivers
A lot of traffic
Vandalism, Alcohol

Ideal Neighbourhood –Just Imagine

Neighbourhood bar-b-que's
Kids can play without fear.
People take care of their things – litter free
Drug free, smoke free environment
No Road Kill
Cooperation
No more fires – no pyromaniacs
Neighbourhood activities
More safety
More parks, more BMX tracks in parks
Affordable or free transportation

What Can We Do? What Can You Do?

Police our neighbourhoods
Get to know our neighbours
Get involved in politics
Promote drug and alcohol free activities/events
Make it a personal choice to not use drugs and alcohol
Adopt a block

Evaluation:

What Worked

Everyone was involved
The set up helped me focus

What Could be different

more group activities, more active stuff

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE STUDY CIRCLES PARTICIPANTS

Ages of participants:

| | |
|-------|-----|
| 15-19 | 8% |
| 20-25 | 4% |
| 30-40 | 15% |
| 40-50 | 43% |
| 50-55 | 13% |
| 55-60 | 1% |
| 60+ | 16% |

Gender of participants:

| | |
|---------|-----|
| Female: | 64% |
| Male | 36% |

How participants heard about the Study Circles:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| New media: | 37% |
| From a friend: | 21% |
| At work | 11% |
| Community group | 13% |
| Steering committee | 4% |
| Church | 4% |
| School | 4% |
| Other | 6% |

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Study Circles Facilitators:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Alice Sellers | Maria Raynolds |
| Andrew Pinch | Mark Giesbrecht |
| Brian Patel | Maureen Mason |
| Brian Townsend | Melanie Wozniak |
| Candace Gordon | Michael Dickson |
| Chelsea Meadus | Mike Schroeder |
| Chris Small | Monica Grant |
| Chuck McCafferty | Nicole Tarasiuk |
| Danielle Dymtrenko | Olivia Rozinkin |
| Dave Speers | Pat Shiratti |
| Dawn Beavon | Ramona Sosath |
| Donna Clay | Robert Hornsey |
| Grazyna Zambrzycki | Robert Prince |
| Ian Brooks | Ross Leadbetter |
| Jeanine Nelson | Scott Jackson |
| Jenn Baillie | Sharon Sargent |
| Jim Kelly | Sheena Sharpe |
| Karen DeLong | Sheila McLaughli |
| Karin Clevon | Soraya Mohajeri |
| Kathy Booth | Tony Cotroneo |
| Linda King | Tracee Rowland |
| Liz Krieg | Vicki McLeod |
| Liz Schofield | Wendy Townsend |
| Lucille Therien | Wendy West |

*With apologies to those who were trained and did not facilitate because of lack of registration.

Pilot Study Circle Participants

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Alice Sellers (facilitator) | Herb van Horne |
| Andrew Teunissen | Jim Kelly (facilitator) |
| Cheryl Ashlie | Lucille Therien (facilitator) |
| Chris DiGiamberardine | Robert Prince |
| Colleen Bieber | Sharon Sargent |
| Debbie Miller (facilitator) | Shawn Mohajeri |
| Diane Speirs | Sheila McLaughlin |
| Donna White Steele | Wendy West |
| Eric Phillips | |
| Total: 17 | |

Study Circles – Participants:

Adam Wieherdt
Agnes Willerton
Alison Patchett
Andrea McInnes
Andrea Spring
Andy Cleven
Anna Mieszkowska
Arlene Dodding
Barbara Gratton
Beth Asham
Bonnie Soroke
Carlos Contreras
Beverley Contreras
Bonnie Pattyn
Brenda Baik
Candice Corder
Carol Botting
Caroline Wilkin
Cathy Hiebert
Charline Hooper
Chris Luke
Christina Grabowski
Christine DiGiamberardine
Chuck McCafferty
Cindy Westover
Colleen Luke
Dan Olson
Dan Reaume
David Logan
Debbie Kennedy
Devorah White
Diane Toth
Don Jolley
Doug Friesen
Duncan Keist
Elizabeth Geluch
Ellen Webb
Emma Lagerstrom
Eric Phillips
Fourouzan Sadeghi
Gail Finnson
Garth Phillips
Gavin Roache
Dorothy Folz
Harry Folz

Harry Nicholson
Heather Stein
Hilda Emery
Ingrid Hofflin
Ingrid Uttuslien
Jack Hughes
Janet Amsden
Jessica Kroes
Jo Anne ten Brink
Joanna Pastorek
Joanne Olson
Joel Deyoung
John Lea
John Pastorek
Joy Gallop
Judie McCrindle
Judy Dueck
Kelly Swift
Kelsey Allard
Ken McCrindle
Ken Scott
Ken Swain
Ken Williams
Kim Day
Kimie Takausagawa
Laura Levan
Lawrence Cook
Leslie Harvey
Linda Lambie
Linda Reynolds
Linda Vogel
Lisa Codd
Lisa Fierro
Lois Hammond
Lola Chapman
Lou Keating
Louise Manseau
Maggie Coulter
Marguerite Marchand
Marie Bourgeois
Marje Gribbling
Mary Gould
Mary McLeod
Maureen Gibb
Maureen McKay

Melissa Jaffray
Michael McMurray
Michael Ritzkner
Mike Gildersleeve
Mike Murray
Mike Schroeder
Moreno Rossi
Mrs M. Coulter
Nadine Karroll
Nona Coles
Norma Murray
Norma Tilgner
Patty Mooney
Patty Morrison
Paul Gill
Penny Daflos
Peter Jongbloed
Quirina Gamblen
Ray Grabowski
Rayne Tarasiuk
Rebecca Friesen
Rick Butler
Rita Neudorf
Rose Doyle
Ross Blackwell
Ryan McCaffrey
Sandra Taylor
Sandy Wakeling
Shanti Ang
Sheila Pratt
Shelley Linton
Sheryl Mountenay
Simon Floris
Teri-Lee Binnie
Terry Nielsen
Tom Murray
Tom Waterhouse
Tracy Cole
Tracy Finnsson
Wendy Fitzjohn
Moms for Action (4 participants)

Total: 134

* A further 25 people registered, but did not at

Forum Participants:

| | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Adam Wieherdt | Garth Phillips | Michael Dickson |
| Alex Ward | Gavin Roache | Mike Gildersleeve |
| Alice Floris | Gerry Edwards | Mike Murray |
| Alice Sellers | Ghodsieh Vostaghim | Mike Schroeder |
| Alison Hartley | Helen Browell | Mike Suddaby |
| Alison Patchett | Helene Maisonmeewe | Monica Grant |
| Andy Cleven | Ian Brooks | Nadine Karroll |
| Anna Mieszkowska | Ingrid Hoflin | Nona Coles |
| Arlene Dodding | Jack Hughes | Norma Tilgner |
| Barbara Gratton | Jaymi Hill | Patty Mooney |
| Barry Lyster | Jerry Toth | Patty Morrison |
| Bernie Smandych | Jessica Kroes | Paul Gill |
| Betty Clarke | Jessica Russell | Peggy Lambert |
| Beverley Contreras | Jim Kelly | Penny Daflos |
| Bill Archibald | Jim Rule | Peter Roy |
| Bill Hartley | Joanne Olson | Ray Grabowski |
| Bill Wouterloot | Joel DeYoung | Ray Koob |
| Bonnie Soroke | Johanna Beemster | Rebecca Friesen |
| Brian Patel | John McDonald | Rick Butler |
| Brian Townsend | Joy Gallop | Robert Hornsey |
| Bridgit McDonald | Kal Kelly | Robert Moslinger |
| Candace Gordon | Karin Cleven | Robert Prince |
| Carol Botting | Kashmir Dhaliwal | Rose Doyle |
| Carol Munro | Kathie Ward | Ross Blackwell |
| Chelsa Meadus | Kathy Elliott | Ryan McCaffrey |
| Cheryl McKeever | Kashmir Dhaliwal | Sandy Wakeling |
| Chris Luke | Kathie Ward | Scott Jackson |
| Christina Grabowski | Kathy Elliott | Shanti Ang |
| Christine DiGiamberardine | Ken Williams | Shawn Mohajeri |
| Chuck McCafferty | Kim Barron | Sheena Sharp |
| Connie Schmid | Kristal Trepanier | Sheila Pratt |
| Craig Speirs | Krystall Steele | Sheryl Mountenay |
| Daisy Quon | Laura Levan | Simon Floris |
| Dan Olson | Laurie Mackie | Soraya Mohajeri |
| Dave Speers | Linda King | Sue Wheeler |
| David Cole | Linda Lambie | Tara Blokzyl |
| David Logan | Linda Mawhinney | Tom Waterhouse |
| Dawn Beavon | Lisa Codd | Tony Cotroneo |
| Deb White | Lisa Fierro | Tracee Rowland |
| Debra Eisel | Lou Keating | Tracy Cole |
| Diane Speirs | Louise Manseau | Wendy Townsend |
| Diane Toth | Lucille Therien | Willemina Reusz |
| Donna White | Mani Dhaliwal | |
| Doug Friesen | Maria Raynolds | |
| Elizabeth Geluch | Mary Browett | |
| Elizabeth Ince | Mary Fulton | |
| Ellen Webb | Mary McLeod | |
| Eric Phillips | Maureen Gibb | |
| Forouzan Sadeghi | Maureen Wouterloot | |
| Fred Lesiuk | Mehrderd Sadeghi | |
| Gail Finnsion | Mel Wozniak | |

Total: 145

The Steering Committee

Alanna Robson, MCFD
Alice Sellers, Virtues 'R' Reality Youth Society
Andrew Teunissen, Parks and Leisure Services
Arlene Cristall, Public Health Services, Fraser Health Authority
Cpl Bernie Smandych, Ridge Meadows RCMP Community Policing
Candace Gordon, District of Maple Ridge Municipal Council
Cheryl Ashlie, School Trustee
Christine DiGiamberardine, Family Education and Support Centre
Colleen Bieber, Community
Daisy Quon, United Way of the Lower Mainland
Dawn Beavon, Community
Diane Speirs, Community
Eric Phillips, Port Hammond Community Association
Fran Haughian, Friends in Need Foodbank
Gail Finnsen, Bowman Employment Services
Gurjeet Sivia, Fraser Health Authority
Herb Van Horne, Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows Community Services
Ian Brooks, Community
Jim Kelly, Alouette Addictions
Joan Schmidt, Cythera Transition House Society
Jo Anne ten Brink, Whonnock Community Association
John Maddalozzo, Ridge Meadows Child Development Centre
Karin Cleven, Community
Keli Anderson, f.o.r.c.e, Society for Kids Mental Health Care
Kim Hammer, Community
Laura Wood, Ridge Meadows Women's Centre
Lee Bell, Community
Lillian Lusk, Ministry of Human Resources
Linda King, Community
Linda Lambie, Bowman Employment Services
Lola Chapman, Youth Justice
Margaret Leibbrandt, Douglas Students' Union, CFS Local 18
Mike Schroeder, Ridge Meadows Ministerial Association
Michelle Ninow, United Way of the Lower Mainland
Sharon Sargent, West Coast Family Resource Society
Shawn Mohajeri, Baha'i Community of Maple Ridge
Sheila J. McLaughlin & Associates, Housing Consultants
Sheryl Moutenay, MCFD
Sue Wheeler, Parks and Leisure Services
Tom Saare, (KEEPS)

Project Sponsored by District of Maple Ridge Social Planning Advisory Committee, Ridge Meadows Child Youth and Family Network, United Way of the Lower Mainland - Communities in Action