

Community Development and You!

Castlegar

November 18, 2006



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Introduction

This report summarizes the outcomes of a workshop of community leaders in Castlegar, BC. The workshop was part of the Community Development Education program at the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC). The generous support of the Vancouver Foundation made this workshop possible.

This report is divided into six sections. Section one offers an overview of the responses to the pre-workshop questionnaire which includes a list of current projects in the various sectors, several community priority issue areas, and the potential benefits of community collaboration. In section two, the discussion points from each of the four working groups at the workshop are provided.

In section three, a summary of participant responses to the question about what is working well in terms of community social planning in Castlegar is provided. Section four summarizes responses to the question about what could be improved in terms of community social planning in Castlegar. In the fifth section, a summary of participant responses to the evaluation questionnaire is provided. The appendices comprise the sixth section of the report, which includes the pre-workshop questionnaire, the agenda, workshop registrants and the Castlegar Community Social Planning contact information.

All comments are verbatim duplicates of workshop participant responses.

1. Comment Stations

Three comment stations were posted on the walls during the workshop: Current Projects, Priority Issues, and Potential Benefits of Collaboration. These general categories were partly populated with responses to the pre-workshop questions (see appendices). During the workshop, each participant was invited to add any projects, issues or describe ways they could benefit from collaboration. Once all participants were given an opportunity to contribute to the list, they were given three dots to place beside any one or combination of issues that they felt deserved priority status. The outcome of this exercise is represented in Table One on the following page.

1.1 Current Projects

- Health advocacy:
 - Support network for seniors
 - Reinstate 24/7 emergency
 - Reinstate home support programs
- Annual Take Back the Night March to promote awareness of issues to violence to women and children
- Prevention work re violence against women/domestic violence issues:
 - Community education
 - Supporting various programs

1.2 Priority Issue Areas

The table below represents the large group responses to the question about priority issue areas. The issues categories with the most dots became the focus areas for the small working groups.

Table One: Summary of Priority Issue Areas and Selections

Priority	Dots
Affordable Housing and Homelessness (especially youth, families and mental health clients)	4
Action on Community Wellness Survey - specifically physical activity options for residents	1
Funding for Mental Health: specifically post partum depression – includes community development MH issues	3
Supportive Women’s Centre – Abuse; post partum; drop-in support	5
To promote the development of Castlegar on a cultural and arts level	2
Strong partnership(s) with the media	1
Restore 24/7 emergency services	4
Adult Diversion – Domestic violence	1
Increase collaborative practice among early intervention professionals	1
Build Community Awareness of local social issues	6
Obtain funding for Food Security initiatives: i.e. Castlegar Farmer’s Market and Community Garden	1
Education for parents on the social disease of underage drinking	1
Creative strategies for youth development and community support	3
Shelter for vulnerable men	3
Advocacy for seniors re health care issues	1
Community Awareness on the issues of abuse to women and strategies around the issue for safety/prevention	5
Develop partnerships with business community	4
To fund an executive director for Social Planning Council to coordinate efforts and seek funding for initiatives	4

1.3 Potential Benefits of Collaboration

- Expand community response/collaboration on mental health issues
- Expanding violence against women in relationship committee (VAWIR) membership and response
- A multi-sector focus on addressing poverty and needs of working poor (opportunities, health & well-being)
- Make better use of media to promote community planning and efforts

2. Working-Group Discussions

After the group selected their issues areas, the larger group divided into four smaller groups. The outcomes of each discussion were recorded and are re-produced verbatim below.

2.1 Working-Group One: Community Awareness of Social Issues

- Use the SPC to support new and existing sector groups/committees, and pull together the key players to brain storm on social issues and develop action plans.
- Make meetings action-oriented, delegate work, and research existing models in other communities.

2.2 Working-Group Two: Homelessness and Affordable Housing

Action Plans for the community:

- contact 3 or 4 other communities to see what they are doing (eg. Kamloops, Vernon)
- find out what provincial government strategies are in place to support homelessness and affordable housing needs
- define types of homelessness that characterize our community and what types of supports are required. For eg. 1) emergency 2) low-need longer term 3) high-need longer term
- work with labour market – what do employers need to help those who could work but need support
- check with Salvation Army – what more could they offer to help out with this problem
- check with Mental Health & Addictions (IHA) – what more can they offer to support people to maintain their housing situations
- advocate for rehabilitative housing with Interior Health Authority (eg. maximum supports required for people needing detox prior to going to treatment centre)
- use media to help raise profile of the issue and to help us get a better sense of the problem. (For eg. ask the question “how many people have no fixed address?”)

- check with City of Castlegar to see if the Official Community Plan acknowledges the issues of homelessness and affordable housing and are there solutions proposed therein (eg. high density housing plans)
- seek a small research grant to help us gather important data

2.3 Working-Group Three: Supportive Women’s Centre

The table below was produced by participants in working-group three.

Table Two: Summary of Discussion Points on Developing a Supportive Women’s Centre

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Coordination/Committee	Community Services - Sandi	Invite participants - diverse
Vision		Second step
Proposal writing		
Strategic Plan	Place; funding; timelines	
Assets & Needs: - Coordinate women services - Self development - Self esteem classes - Child care - Nobody perfect - Parenting - VAWR - Drop in - Victim service - Women support - Community kitchen - Food & clothes cupboard - Coordinator to access to personal supplies	Police – stats, victim services	
Where is it happening? - How it works -	Other models: - Clearwater Safe Home (Tracey) - Vernon – People Place	
Committee members	Connie zibin – Koop Sandi – CRN Leanne – Victim Services Laura Barkwell – VAWR Walley Bursey – RCMP Spencer Buckland – IHA Jim Fenning – MH Fran Hensen - PH	Kris Taks – Safe Home Rona Park – CDCSS Rhonda Schmidt – Selkirk Deb McIntosh – City Susan – United Way Rhonda Sheers MCFD Jim Fisher – KFP Ed Pongracse – LCRFN Interested parties

2.4 Working-Group Four: Business and Social Planning Council

1) What needs to be done?

- Representative from Chamber of Commerce to be on Social Planning Council;
- Social Planning Council to issue invitation;
- Needs to be done immediately;

2) Who needs to take the initiative?

- The Social Planning Council, Chamber of Commerce and City Council are to meet for an information session (on equal terms) to discuss their roles and responsibilities and what their expectations of the other groups are;
- A facilitator will be agreed upon by the three groups;
- Social Planning council will organize;
- To be initiated in January;

3) When do they need to take these steps?

- A non-partisan person to ensure that the follow up is done on community issues, meetings, etc;
- This will be put forward for discussion at the meeting between Social Planning Council, City Council and Chamber of Commerce.

3. What is working well in terms of community social planning in Castlegar?

Participant responses:

- The Social Planning Council has developed an identity. They have had communications with city council. Well poised to becoming an influential community action group.
- Constructive, respectful discussions; good diversity (not just social service providers); good leadership; good city participation.
- Events like today where sectors come together to dialogue; the fact that today was so successful was because people are already beginning to understand and do community social planning; people in Castlegar are passionate about this place and want to see it grow and improve.
- There is actually a SPC in Castlegar – great; SPC has advisory status to City Council; broad membership from city groups/service organizations already in place; local SPC has provincial contacts such as SPARC BC; co-chaired committee, minutes online, regular

meeting times in Castlegar; SPC has been asked to plan and host community events – SPC seen as non-partisan group.

- Days like today when we have opportunities to connect, discuss, brainstorm, create, have a task and feel a sense of hope and anticipation for movement forward in creating a health community; keeping informed through email for those times I am unable to attend; the diversity of the group; the leadership, vision and determination of the participants.
- Group continues to exist and is developing vision and how to achieve the vision; sense of “growth” and credibility – e.g. recognition by City Council.
- The networking, monthly meetings, great way to distribute info.
- The SPC has been successful in attracting a broad range of folks to be “part of the process”.
- Our Chamber of Commerce is one of the best I have seen for implementing and following up on initiatives.
- I don’t have enough knowledge to know what is working well.
- My observation is that everyone has really great ideas and is respectful of their colleagues’ ideas and opinions. The people make up the community and the committee ... this community should be applauded for their positive, pro-active attitudes!
- Collaboration on issues – sub-committees beginning to form.
- Cooperation; wellness assessment; focus groups session for city councilors to talk to public; identifying gaps.
- On-going SPC meetings; working groups of SPC; beginning stages of municipal integration and buy-in; educational workshops, surveys, assessments in a variety of sectors/subjects.
- I am a recent “returnee” to Castlegar and area, so cannot be specific in my response to the question “What is working well?” currently. However, from my prior contact and work in community here, I know that there is a strong community “will” to work more effectively. This, I believe is a major pre-requisite to engaging in processes such as today’s focus. The success that I witnessed tells me that the community development process if promoted and continued is already underway. A big thank you and pat on the back to the organizing folks and to Scott/SPARC.
- Consistency of meetings; Rona Park involvement; getting more people to the table other than just to social service workers.

4. What could be improved in terms of community social planning in Castlegar?

Participant Responses:

- Social Planning Council needs new blood - a new chair – Rona is tired! Could liaise with Downtown Business Association and as they talked today with Chamber & City Council. Social Planning Council can benefit from a paid position ‘Social Planner’ to work with an Economic Development Officer. Castlegar doesn’t have either of these.
- IHA participation; longer term funding – stable funding for 2-3 years (not necessarily large amounts of money); broader leadership.
- More work done to bring a more diverse group to the table (all sectors); Social Planning Council needs to develop an organizational structure and preferably a funded coordinator.
- Regular column in local newspapers; broaden membership by hosting a social planning conference; link with other BC communities’ SPCs, e.g. Prince George; vary meeting times to allow for those who cannot attend Tues @ noon; market SPC as non-partisan and accept other hosting opportunities to highlight its skills/abilities.
- Celebrate, highlight what has been completed outside of the SPC – start bragging about our success so people want to become involved.
- Need to develop more working and action oriented sub-committees around various issues, so as to attract people who might not want to sit through monthly meetings but want to work with other sectors on a defined area (e.g. social housing, women’s centre, etc).
- More inclusion of members - meeting times are hard to attend because of work schedule; getting support on the issues brought forward, seems to down play some of the issues; being action oriented – lots of studies and research, but not seeing any forward movement on issues and concerns.
- “Environmental groups” seem not to be engaged at this point; there is a need for on-going (staff or contract) resources to keep the process “on track” (i.e. everyone is currently working ‘off the side of their desk’).
- The usual situation ... many good ideas brought from these workshops aren’t brought to their maximum potential – fizzle in a short time.
- The Social Planning Council seems to be an entity unto itself and needs to provide more community friendly information about what they are doing and why they are doing it.

- Wouldn't it be nice to have someone who could act as a liaison for the committee that could help the committee bring their ideas to fruition? A paid community development coordinator could help alleviate the stressors that members likely feel when adding "one more thing" to their already busy schedules.
- More sector representation; paid coordinator; more sub-committees.
- Expanded membership of SPC; more members attending meetings; paid coordinator.
- Collaboration; communication; man-power to look for and access funding grants, etc; volunteer burnout.
- What processes are being used; I don't know what is working; need info on what is being done/tried.

5. Evaluation Results

A total of 18 persons completed the evaluation form. The comments below are taken directly from the evaluation forms submitted by each participant.

Please indicate the sector in which you work.

- 7 x Social and/or community
- 2 x Social and/or community: Education – College instructor
- 3 x Government
- Government – RCMP
- Government – Public Safety
- Government & Social and/or community
- 2 x Social and/or community & Economic
- Economic

Please indicate how relevant this event was for your community.

Average for ratings: 4.8 out of a possible 5.0

- Wonderful opportunity to meet and discuss relevant social planning issues with others – some ‘new’ friends
- In a word - Awareness

Please indicate the degree to which you experienced each of the following:

a) Increased awareness and/or knowledge of community development ideas and resources

Average for ratings: 4.1

- Although I am well aware of community development – one learns more at every session

b) Improved skills for engaging in community development activities

Average for ratings: 3.8

- Although I am well aware of community development – one learns more at every session
- Skills were very evident in everyone who met today
- Skills did not seem to be part of the agenda

Please indicate your assessment of the effectiveness of the Learning Initiatives in Rural and Northern BC (LIRN BC) event in building new collaborative relationships and/or strengthening existing collaborative relationships between your organization and another organization in:

c) Your sector

Average for ratings: 4.2

- Meeting new “partners” always a bonus!
- Connections make for easier follow through
- Relationships within sector quite strong already – though new/fresh

d) A different sector

Average for ratings: 4.4

- Meeting new “partners” always a bonus!
- Nice representation of “new” folks
- Excellent opportunity for relationship-building

Please indicate your assessment of the degree to which the LIRN BC event increased your interest in exploring new ways of working with other organizations.

Average for ratings: 4.2

- I always enjoy all aspects of community development work
- Identified the need to, but not how to
- It seems so much more attainable now

How would you rate the event facilitator?

Average for ratings: 4.8

- Good speaker; well organized; good pace; knowledgeable; friendly
- Great job, Scott!
- Fabulous!

Please indicate your assessment of the logistics and event materials of the event.

Average for ratings (logistics): 4.6

Average for ratings (event materials): 4.6

- I have been fortunate enough to engage in these types of community building processes before in Alberta, BC and Ontario. I am always struck by how affirming and productive they

have the potential to be. Today was a great example of a well organized, productive day.
Thank you, Scott and organizers.

- It was a very good session. Thank you.
- Great day, well worth the time. Thank you.

6. Appendices

6.1 Pre-Workshop Questionnaire



Castlegar Social Planning Council needs your input!

**Please complete this short questionnaire
in preparation for the November 18th Workshop.**

All responses will be compiled and posted at the November 18th workshop so that we can all see what other sectors in our community are working on and learn about the potential for collaborating our efforts. Please don't hesitate to call with any questions or comments. We look forward to your reply.

1. What sector(s) in the community are you part of (Health, Recreation, Education, Public Safety, Arts & Culture, Economic, Environment, Social Services)?
2. What project(s) or initiative(s) has your sector/group undertaken in the past year?
3. What are your sector's current top three (3) priorities for the near future?
4. How could you benefit from collaborating with others sectors to help you achieve your priorities?

**Please return this form to: Sandi McCreight, Castlegar Social
Planning Council
smccreight@hotmail.com Phone: (250) 365-2104**

6.2 Agenda

9:30 **Introductions**

9:40 **Presentation:** *Community Social Planning*

- Explore a developmental approach to community social planning
- Look at successful BC examples

10:10 **Reading the Writing and Answering the Questions**

- Have a snack, walk the room and read the responses on the wall to the following three pre-workshop questions: 1) What project(s) or initiative(s) has your sector/group undertaken in the past year? 2) What are your sector's current top three priorities for the near future? 3) How could you benefit from collaborating with other sectors to help you achieve your priorities?

10:30 **Selecting Issues**

- Select a limited number of priority issues for the purposes of the collaboration exercises. We will use the dotocracy method to make these selections.
- Item to report: List of categorized and selected priorities.

10:50 **Collaborating on Priority Issues**

- In smaller groups, the participants use the SPARC BC partnership guide book to explore ways of collaborating on priority issues.
- Item to report: List of prospective collaborations.

12:00 **Lunch**

12:30 **Identifying Action-Steps and Challenges**

- In small groups, participants clarify the steps that need to be taken, the challenges inherent to each step and which groups will take the next steps.
 - Items to report: Description of next steps, who is taking them and what the corresponding challenges are

1:40 **Reflecting on Community Social Planning in Castlegar**

- This final exercise invites participants to reflect on social planning processes in Castlegar. Participants will be asked to write answers to the following questions: What is working well? What could be improved? All responses will be collected for ongoing planning purposes.

1:50 **Evaluating the Workshop**

6.3 Workshop Registrants

Name	Organization
Stockhausen, Julia	Infant Development Pr. Kootenay Family Place
Koehler, Raymond	Consultant Economic Development
Orser, Diana	Public Health
McCracken, Frank	Flamingo Motel
Park, Rona	Castlegar Community Services & CSPC
Hamilton, Roberta	Selkirk College
Schmidtz, Rhonda	Selkirk College Human Services
Jones, Jean	
McCreight, Sandi	Community Response Network Kootenay Food Strategy Comm.
Godderis, Ann	Trail Transition House
Murphy, Derek	Consultant
Olheiser, Susan	United Way
Duff, Kirk	City Council
McIntosh, Deb	City Council Heritage Society
Suzanne Lehbauer	Chamber of Commerce
Const. Wally Bursey	RCMP
Kozak, Leanna	Castlegar Victim Services
Christianson, Tracy	
Melnyk, Mark	Home Hardware
Penfold, George	Selkirk College Nelson

6.4 Castlegar Social Planning Council Contact Information

Rona Park, Co-chair (250) 365-2104 ext. 29
Jim Fenning, Co-chair (250) 304-1846

Mailing Address:

CSPC

C/O 1007-2nd Street, Castlegar, BC V1N 1Y4

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

2nd Tuesday of each month (Except July and August)

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

@ The Station Youth Centre, 825 Columbia Avenue.