

Sooke Senior Drop-In Centre Society

VISIONING FOR THE FUTURE

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1.0 Executive Summary

The Sooke Senior Drop-in Centre Society has been without a home for 2 years and our community has never had a Youth Centre. A number of other local organizations are looking for homes at this time as well. Now is the time to bring these groups and interested citizens together to help develop a plan for shared space with programs and activities for all ages.

The Sooke Region (Beecher Bay to Port Renfrew along the west coast of Vancouver Island) has a population of approximately 15,000. We have a relatively young population when compared to the provincial average.

The Region is undergoing rapid growth and change. Current annual population growth is 2.5% per year. Despite increased urbanization in the Sooke town core, the region still contains numerous isolated rural communities with poor transportation infrastructure, and is home to three first nations communities (T'souke, Pacheedaht and Scia'New), each of which faces unique challenges based on their history and geography. The region is demographically younger than its surrounding neighbors, and has previously identified significant gaps in existing social and health infrastructure¹.

At the same time; the world is rapidly aging: the number of people aged 60 and over as a proportion of the global population will double from 11% in 2006 to 22% by 2050. By then, there will be more older people than children (aged 0–14 years) in the population for the first time in human history.²

Local citizens, service providers, non-profit organizations, local politicians and volunteer groups all are aware of anecdotal evidence around isolation of seniors; Social Inclusion is a major factor in the Social Determinants of Health; connecting in the community and maintaining social supports are essential to good health and well-being throughout life³.

The objective of this document is to provide the back-ground information needed to support the search for a permanent home for a seniors drop-in centre. Also as a place to begin discussions, make connections and develop partnerships to work towards meeting the needs of our communities, whether this is a stand-alone, single capacity space; shared functionality; or a multi-use Community Centre with a range of co-located organizations working in partnership to support a variety of community needs.

¹ Sooke Community Health Survey 2006, PHSA Community Health Survey 2006, Stats Can 2006

² Age-Friendly Global Cities Guide and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

³ Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide: Part 8 Social Participation

2.0 Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the identified needs for a seniors drop-in centre to support seniors in the Sooke Region. This document is intended to provide a starting point for dialogues aimed at finding a permanent home for the Sooke Seniors Drop-in Centre Society and the services they offer. The Sooke Senior Drop-in Centre Board of Directors is open to a variety of options include a stand-alone or shared use facility.

3.0 Background and Need

3.1 Families in the Sooke Region have always 'looked after their own'. As the community grew a need developed to assist with seniors' care and activities in a more formal way. In 1945, Emily Nixon came to Sooke and shortly thereafter formed the Mothers Union in the Anglican Church. She was also recognized as the initiator of Sooke's Over 60's Club, the forerunner of the Old Age Pensioners (OAPO) organizations that followed. Members of the OAPO Branch #88 were instrumental, with Phyllis Johnson deserving special mention, in setting up the Sooke Elderly Citizens Housing Society and the Contact Community Assistance Society (Loan Cupboard & Contact drivers). In about 1969 Margaret Simpson moved to Sooke, joined the OAPO #88 and started driving for Contact. By 1975 Margaret was doing the cooking and clean up after 3 course meals on Thursdays and sandwich meals on Tuesdays, taking up the banner from Margaret Money who cooked throughout the 60's & early 70's. Faith Jacobson also deserve special mention for her efforts through the 1980's. Many people contributed to the successes that were to become the Sooke Seniors' Drop-in Centre. Margaret continued doing this for 25 years, with the help of many others in the community. Two OAPO branches, 109 & 88, were active in the Sooke area during the 1970s and 1980's and they eventually merged to remain as OAPO #88. The New Horizons Activity Society was formed in the 1980's which later became the Sooke Seniors Activity Society (SASS). SSAS raised funds to purchase and operate a bus to assist with seniors' transportation to events and shopping excursions.

3.2 The Sooke Senior Drop-in Centre (herein after called 'the Drop-in Centre') Society (#S-46825) was established in 2003 'to provide a facility for seniors over 50 years of age to have the opportunity of visiting with both new and old friends, playing games, reading, knitting or just relaxing in comfortable surroundings.' Membership is open to any person having reached the age of fifty (50) years and who has residence in British Columbia.

3.3 In 2010 the Society was given notice to move as the building that housed the Drop In Centre was being sold. With no suitable space available at that time, the Sooke Volunteer Firefighters Association offered the temporary use of their Lounge at 2225 Otter Point Road, Sooke, B.C. until a more permanent home could be found. SSDIC and partnering seniors based organizations are tremendously grateful to the firefighters for their generosity and support. The arrangement while mutually beneficial in some ways also has some drawbacks and is not intended to be a long term location.

3.4 In 2010/2011, the Sooke District Council and District Administration were considering an option to establish a new home for SSDIC & other organizations in the development known as 'Mariners Village'. Informal discussions included a proposal that involved a flow-back of concession fees from the Developer to the District who would then act as a landlord and offer floor space to local community groups such as SSDIC. SSDIC Board worked on that basis until the Municipal elections of 2011, after which the discussions on this option ended.

During discussions with Mariners Village developers, 2000 + sq. ft. was proposed as the required space. SSDIC realized that their needs, while greater, were more likely to be successful pared to this number. It was also stated that their usage pattern was such that other community groups could share the floor space. Youth groups were the primary alternative user group considered at the time.

SSDCI believes this option should be kept open for review. Although it depends on the success of the Developer, there is perhaps still potential for this option to work. Further discussions and research have indicated that closer to 4000 sq. ft. would be needed to meet requirements inclusive of kitchen, office, storage & washrooms.

- The main requirements for a new Drop in Centre are:
- ✓ Central location
 - ✓ 2,000 – 4,000 square feet (inclusive of offices, kitchen, washrooms and activity space/s)
 - ✓ Street level access
 - ✓ Close proximity to public transport services
 - ✓ Convenient and ample parking
 - ✓ Handicap accessible space, including washrooms
 - ✓ Commercial kitchen facilities
 - ✓ Office and storage space

- Concerns, Challenges & Collaborations at the present SSDIC location:
- No definition of temporary
 - Don't want to move twice unless there are clear benefits
 - Some miscommunications – generally gets resolved
 - Very comfortable relationship with SVFA
 - Just started paying \$175.00 per month to District of Sooke for paper products.
 - Co-existing well with Firefighters

3.5 A number of locations within the Sooke Village core have been explored. For the purposes of this document 'village core' is defined as from the intersection of Westcoast Road & Maple Avenue to the intersection of Sooke Road & Phillips Road; and from the water-front up to the District of Sooke Municipal Hall. Pros and cons of each as relate to SSDIC's needs are listed below:

Old Drop In at Sooke Road Location:

Pros	Cons
Central Location	Configuration of 'L' shape
Kitchen was open for interaction with kitchen volunteers	Subject to vandalism
Configuration allowed quiet area separate from noisy activities	Leaky Roof
Lots of natural light.	Electrical deficiencies
Only downtown flag pole	Required assistance of firefighters to replace and raise the flag.
Parking satisfactory	



Fire Fighters Lounge (current location)

Pros	Cons
Excellent kitchen and bathrooms	Lighting
Very thankful for support and location	Stairs and slow, difficult elevator
Have strong men handy to assist	Parking
Win/win for both, extra people for lunches and they enjoy the service	Too small and poor configuration
Extra income by supplying training session lunches for volunteer trainees	Too many conflicting uses
Increasing partnership	Adapting to use not originally intended
Elevator	Lost some partnerships
Cost savings, allowing SSDIC to save towards new location costs	Membership down due to some difficulty for active members
	Membership down due to attrition - not doing promotion due to temporary location

Sooke Community Hall – Dining Room

Pros	Cons
Central location	Stairs to kitchen
	Timing conflict with current users
	Parking (especially when rear parking area locked)
	Continuous set up and take down
	Too small
	Feed meter for heat – often still cold
	Bathrooms very small and not fully accessible
	No storage

Sooke Community Hall – Upper Hall

Pros	Cons
Elevator	No kitchen access
Stage	Bathrooms down too many stairs
Big enough	Set-up and take down
	no storage

Sooke Community Hall – Lower Hall

Pros	Cons
Central location	One bathroom up a couple of stairs – not handicapped friendly. Other bathrooms up more stairs, in Dining Hall which are not accessible when Dining Hall is in use.
	No storage
	Dark
	Electricity problems and electrical costs
	Not big enough

Legion - Upstairs

Pros	Cons
Commercial kitchen	Legion Membership requirements potentially an issue
Possibly big enough	storage
Location	Stairs and slow one person lift chair requires operator
A number of bathroom stalls	Set-up and take down
	Can't leave BINGO boards up
	Bathrooms not handicap friendly
	Parking

Legion - Downstairs

Pros	Cons
Dumbwaiter	Very small kitchenette
Space	Conflicting uses
Table & chair ready	Dark

Sooke River Hotel:

Pros	Cons
Historical relationship to community	Kitchen needs major renovations
On main road	Kitchen too far from serving areas
	Road ingress & egress challenging
	Kitchen shared with Chinese restaurant
	No handicap bathrooms
	Lighting
	Uneven floors
	Utility costs
	Too far from core



Old Mulligan's Building

Pros	Cons
View	Upstairs not accessible
Parking	Needs major renovations
Focus on park	No kitchen down stairs
On bus route	Restrooms inadequate and not 'accessible'
Commercial zoning in place to potentially provide support	Multi level – this could be a 'pro' when looking at shared needs
Lots of room for SSDIC's needs and others	
Shared space would reduce operating cost for all partners	

CASA Building

Pros	Cons
Beautiful one level building	Space available too small
Would be able to leave BINGO boards up	Parking often full with existing tenants
Lots of handicapped washrooms	Kitchen shared, potential scheduling conflicts
Commercial kitchen	
Kitchenette in room	
Would allow set-up to remain	
Additional rooms potentially available---	But not next to each other

The following alternate locations were also reviewed:

Saseenos Seafood/Woodworking Shop – newly leased, too far from core

Corner Church and Sooke Roads – building for sale, multi level floors

Evergreen Professional Centre – no elevator

SEAPARC Expansion – undetermined time frame

CRD Building – not big enough rooms

Ayre manor – undetermined time frame, negotiations needed

Knox Church proposal – conflict with proposed bistro and SSDIC's needs & services

Sooke Lions Murray Road development – undetermined time frame, negotiations needed

Mariners Village - cost

Village Foods – upstairs too small and no elevator

New Shields Road building - too small, no kitchens

Old Diamond Eye Care location - multi level floor/access, no kitchen

Couple of houses: Sooke Rd, across from Peoples Pharmacy, and Church Rd.
– too small and broken up rooms.

3.6 While at the original location on Sooke Road the SSDIC membership was 240 with approximately 90 active members regularly attending. One hundred light lunches were served per week and 2 hot meals each month, serving approximately 90 at each sitting. Two BINGO games were played per week with an average of 30 participants. Due to the change in venue the membership has dropped to 140 members (80 active). We now serve 50 to 60 lunches per week and 1 hot meal per month. Two games of



BINGO are offered each week with approximately 20 to 24 people attending.

3.7 With the advancing age of the 'Baby Boomers' the number of seniors will be increasing, together with many people retiring to new communities for a variety of reasons. A centrally located, fully accessible community/seniors' centre providing opportunities for connection and socialization will be a valuable asset to our community; ultimately it will be a necessity in order to support and accommodate our growing senior population.

3.8 SSDIC has been without a permanent home for two years now. With the current economy all local developments are at a standstill and the options which have been explored are beyond the capacity of SSDIC to pay market rent and utilities, or for lease hold improvements.

4.0 Objectives

The objectives of this document is to generate discussions and create opportunities to develop partnerships, which would ultimately provide a permanent home for a seniors' drop-in centre whether this is a stand-alone, single capacity space, shared functionality, or broad use Community Centre.

A Successful Seniors Drop In Centre will be measured:

- In the number of participants, number and type of programs offered, and the hours the facility is in use.
- By number of funding partners, number of seniors and seniors organizations (both government and service) participating in the project,
- Community survey/ interview sample of attitudes to seniors and youth pre and post project.

Critical Success Factors

1. **Collaboration:** Broad intersectoral support among organizations who share common goals, network, communicate and/or work together to plan, deliver, review and evaluate their engagement with both seniors and young people, with a clear delineation of responsibilities.

- Partnerships that include provincial and municipal governments, business and non-profits working together with a clear common vision. Although no formal approaches for partnership have been made at the time of the writing of this document, the SSDIC Board has identified an extensive list of potential project partners (see list below)
- Funders are engaged in the process – providing not only financial support but also mentorship, in-kind resources, and project development assistance.

2. **Evaluation:** How are we doing? And how do we know?

- steering committee engagement, all potential stakeholders being an active part of the decisions, process and activities; evaluation surveys around attitudes at the beginning and as the process evolves

3. **Seniors Participation:** Seniors are involved in the development, implementation, review and evaluation of a community centre/seniors centre.

4. **Access:** SSDIC commitment to be responsive to the needs of all local citizens regardless of age, gender, race or cultural background or socioeconomic status.

5. **Support:** A community steering committee representing local organizations, and mentors to provide appropriate, adequate and ongoing support.

6. **Sustainability:** Drop-in Centre and steering committee and community partners develop and implement strategies that increase the longevity and recurrent funding of the Community Centre.

5.0 Major Deliverables

Currently, the main functions of SSDIC are:

- ✓ Providing inexpensive lunches (soup and or sandwich, etc.) which are currently served Monday, Tuesday and Thursday each week, with hot meals served the first Wednesday of each month.
- ✓ The Better Breathers club meets at the drop-in centre on the second Wednesday of each month.
- ✓ B.C. Pensioners & OAP #88 meet on the third Monday of each month at noon for lunch with a meeting following.
- ✓ Sooke Senior's Activity Society (Bus) hold their monthly executive meetings and AGM at the centre.
- ✓ Sooke Crisis Centre hold their AGM at the centre.
- ✓ Sooke Contact Society (Loan Cupboard & Transportation) used to meet at the centre but have moved to the Legion.
- ✓ The current generic menu supports BINGO activity every Tuesday and Thursday. It also includes the prices charged for the hot lunch on the first Wednesday of each month. SSDIC shuts down for the summer months of July and August due to shortage of volunteers, and usually the last two weeks of December. This is an executive decision reviewed each year. In the current location, SSDIC also caters for the Sooke Firefighters training sessions. Other catering has also occurred.
- ✓ Due to the generosity of the Sooke Volunteer Firefighters' Association SSDIC has been able to save additional funds to support this project. The Society currently has approximately \$20,000.00 to put into leasehold improvements or associated costs. At the current rate of income the Society could reasonably afford to pay a maximum of \$1,000.00 per month, inclusive of utilities, for ongoing costs.
- ✓ Assets currently owned by the Drop-in Centre:
 - 3 freezers
 - 2 fridges
 - 1 commercial gas range
 - 1 household stove

- 16-18 folding tables
- 100 chairs
- 2 display cases for pamphlets
- 1 office desk and chair
- 2 old computers
- BINGO equipment
- Dishes, cutlery, pots, pans

6.0 Stakeholders

There are four sources of potential stakeholders (those people interested in the final product):

- *The program that owns or sponsors the project*
- *Programs external to the sponsoring program that either affect or are affected by the project*
- *Customers of the program(s) affected by the project*
- *Organizational areas responsible for support of the project deliverables.*

The following potential stakeholders (internal and external) have been identified. Stakeholder interests must be considered throughout the project:

Stakeholder	Represented by	Comments
Sooke Senior's Drop In Centre	Carol Pinalski David Bennett Vicki Bennett Martin Quiring Gerry Quiring Irene Healy Susan Winter	
Ayre Manor	Melanie Hennig	
Better Breathers Club	Irene Healy	
BC Pensioners & OAP #88	Shirley Lowe	
Contact Loan Cupboard	Dianne Campbell	
District of Sooke	Dave Gawley	
Edward Milne Community School Society	Heather Walsh	
Edward Milne Community School (Special	?	

Stakeholder	Represented by	Comments
Needs Class)		
Integrated Health Network (VIHA)	Helen Bucholz	
Healthy Choices Inspires Youth	Ted Dever	
Juan de Fuca Electoral Regional Director	Mike Hicks	
Pacific Centre Family Services Association	Mitzi Dean	
Pacheedaht Youth	Tara Munro	
Pulling Together: Wrap Around Project	Jim MacSporran	
Rotary Club of Sooke	Lori Messer	
Royal Canadian Legion Br. 54	Camille	
SD#62 - School Based Social Work program	Krista Stafford	
SEAPARC - Sooke & Electoral Area Parks & Recreation	Linda Finch	
Seniors Advocate	Betty Tully	
Sooke Elderly Citizens Housing Society	Carol Mallett	
Sooke Family Resource Society	Nicky Logins	
Sooke Home Learners	Chris Manning	

Stakeholder	Represented by	Comments
Sooke Harbourside Lions	Laure Spence	
Sooke Lioness Club	Ellen Morton	
Sooke Lions Club	Al Bedows	
Sooke Meals on Wheels Society	Alma Anslow	
Sooke Moon Community Wellness Society	Moonfist	
Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce	Kari Osselton	
Sooke Region Historical Society	Lee Boyko Elida Peers	
Sooke Region Literacy Project	Jodi McDonald	
Sooke Region Volunteer Centre Committee	Marlene Barry	
Sooke Residents in Need Society (Crisis Centre)	Joan Titus	
Sooke Transition House Society	Arlene Rees	
Sooke Transition Towns Society & Canadian Seniors Co-Housing Society	Margaret Critchlow	
Sooke Senior's Activity Society (Bus)	Kay Forde	
Sooke Youth Council	Ebony Logins	

Stakeholder	Represented by	Comments
T'Sou-ke Nation Health Office	Rose Dumont	
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Rosemary Bonanno	
Walking Group	Laura Smith	
West Coast Family Medical Clinic	Ellen Anderson	
Youth Navigator & Youth Service Provider Network	Sally Brumovsky	

7.0 Examples of other Seniors Centres

In their research, SSDIC visited a number of seniors centres throughout the greater Victoria area to learn from what each had to offer:

Cordova Bay

- Began about 4 years ago when five people recognized the need for a Drop in Center for seniors in the neighborhood to socialize. They approached the District of Saanich, and when they heard Cordova Bay Elementary school was scheduled to close, they engaged the School District. After numerous discussions, it was agreed the school would remain open, and the space would be shared between the students and the seniors. The arrangement worked so well that two years later an annex was added to accommodate the growth of the Seniors Center. The cost of the construction was shared between the District and the seniors who lobbied local businesses and achieved donations of money, materials and labour. They now have over 300 members and growing. They have a commercial kitchen for lunches, and they can cater to gatherings.



- Cordova Bay 55+ uses the space Monday to Friday, 9:00 – Noon (except in July and August when it is Tuesdays only).

- Cordova Bay Community Place Hours uses the space Monday - Friday, 9:00 – 4:00 for members to drop in, use the computers or library, work on a puzzle and chat with other members.
- Saanich Recreation also offers other programs to members and to the public after 4 pm on weekdays and on weekends.
- CB55+ memberships for 2012 cost \$40 a year. There are many groups to join, exercise classes, computer training, and other courses offered, great speakers and events to enjoy. In order to participate in CB Place activities, you must be a member; new members come from all over Greater Victoria.⁴
- The centre covers approximately 4000 sq. ft.
- Of the centers toured, this is the flagship of them all in what was seen as meeting SSDIC's needs.

Esquimalt Recreation Centre

- Begun as Silver Threads Service Organization, this was taken over by the Esquimalt Parks and Recreation. They then hired a Seniors Programmer who coordinates drop in programs. There is no direct senior's membership, they are members of the Recreation Center, for which they have access to all of the facility including fitness and the pool. There is a lounge and storage for their use. It is municipally funded, and covered by paid staff.



⁴ Information taken from <http://cordovabay55plus.org/about/>

- Esquimalt Recreation Centre offers a wide variety of programs designed specifically for adults 50 years and older. Lunches are held 12:00 – 1:00 on the last Wednesday of each month, September to November in the seniors lounge. A Seniors (60+) one year pass costs \$280.00. There are also drop-in and other scheduled rates.⁵

Juan de Fuca Seniors Centre

- This centre is funded by five municipalities and run by over 500 volunteers; it offers a full range of activities to its members. An expansion was done two years ago with a \$600,000 grant from the Government and funds raised by the senior volunteers. It is believed to be beyond what is required in Sooke.
- Started in 1970, the original group gathered in the Colwood Hall, at the Parks and Recreation Centre and at the 55+ Club in Langford. This group was instrumental in having a Referendum in 1976 to create the Seniors Citizens 55+ Activity Centre.
- The organizations conducted major fund-raising campaigns to make the new centre a reality. The original membership was 102. They have elections once a year and the volunteers get nominated for the each position. The centre and building are managed by the elected executive and board of directors; though driven by volunteers. They have no paid salaries, with the exception of the custodian who is supplied and paid by West Shore Parks and Recreation (WSPR).
- To utilize the programs, members must join the Association. Once membership is paid, the programs are free, although there are some materials costs for some programs. A number of Sooke Region residents who travel to Colwood to participate in the programs offered here.



⁵ Information taken from <http://www.esquimalt.ca/parksRecreation/programsRegistration/50Plus.aspx>

- The current 1200 membership represents approximately 25% of the West Shore over 55 populations. Current membership fee is \$95.00 per year.⁶

Sydney SHOAL Centre



- In 1974, a group of Saanich Peninsula residents, concerned with the need to address social issues facing the community, formed the Citizens' Advisory Committee. The Saanich Peninsula District Community Resource Centre grew out of that Committee's drive to develop a community-based network of social services in Sidney and the Peninsula. Strong leadership and community support enabled the Resource Centre to grow and evolve into Peninsula Community Services. Over the years, Peninsula Community Services expanded both its role in the community and its service area. In 2005, this led to a change of

operating name, from Peninsula Community Services to Beacon Community Services. Now a family of over 1,300 employees and 400 volunteers, Beacon continues to provide the resources residents need to live healthy, productive lives.

- Assisted Living residential care is combined with a community-based recreation and volunteer services activity centre for adults. SHOAL Membership is \$46 per year and includes:
 - Reduced rates on courses and classes and special admission rates for fitness classes, bridge, games, lapidary and more.
 - Free attendance to crafts, ceramics, knitting, weaving and other activities
 - Birthday month celebrations
 - A 10% discount on facility rentals for private functions
 - Participate in special events, socialize with friends and meet new ones
 - Attend free seminars and workshops



⁶ Information is taken from <http://jdfseniors.shawbiz.ca/index.htm>

- Beacon Community Services Membership is included (a value of \$10)⁷

8.0 Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made for the project:

- There is sufficient support in the communities of the Sooke region to nurture the development of a Community Centre designed to meet a number of needs within our communities.
- Community groups, businesses, citizens and local government can work together on a project like this, to the mutual benefit of all.

⁷ Information taken from <http://www.beaconcs.ca/pages/aboutus.html>