



Community Assessment Report

Emily Carr Performing Arts and Education Centre

**A Neighbourhood Learning Centre to include a new West Shore
high school and performing arts centre**

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report assesses and summarizes the level of community support for, and interest in, the creation of two new high schools and in a major arts centre to be created in collaboration with School District 62 (SD62) and its planned new high school at Royal Bay in Colwood.

SD62 sits in the midst of communities that are growing at an extraordinary rate. Sooke has the largest number of available lots for development in the region and Langford, Colwood and View Royal are growing at an estimated 10-12 % per year. At a time when most areas in the province are experiencing school-aged enrolment declines, SD62 is facing enormous student population growth – a minimum of 55% increase in K-12 over the next decade.¹ School facilities are strained and at the bursting point at all levels, and in the case of Belmont Secondary School, seismically weak and requiring multi-million dollar improvements just to be brought up to proper standards.

Against this challenging backdrop SD62 has created an innovative and dynamic facilities plan for the future. This plan includes a business plan to build two new high schools in an exciting partnership with the municipalities of Langford and Colwood. This plan identifies two new locations: one each in Langford and Colwood. The plan takes advantage in Langford of the remarkable build-up of recreation facilities along Langford Parkway that would be shared by the Langford high school to be located on the old Glen Lake School site; saving SD62 and tax payers millions of dollars in further land acquisitions and recreation facilities development.

At the same time, an eleven acre school site has been purchased by the Ministry of Education within Colwood in the area now known as Royal Bay - the former Lehigh gravel pit. The City of Colwood has available to it 3-3.5 acres beside the SD62 land and it is this site and its neighbouring planned new high school that is the focus of this report.

The West Shore and Sooke districts are vibrant areas of cultural and artistic expression and community engagement in the arts. There is a wide variety of resident artists in the area and over the past five years there has been a concerted and ongoing consultation process about the needs of the community from a cultural and artistic point of view.

More than 18 months ago, an informal advisory committee was struck consisting of over 30 interested stakeholders groups considering the potential of creating an arts centre at the Royal Bay site. At the same time, the Ministry of Education has recently been promoting the idea of

¹ The Matrix Report

new schools as Neighborhood Learning Centres (NLCs)² available for local community needs beyond just the schooling needs of a particular student population.

This report explores community support for, and interest in, the two new high schools in SD62 and a possible major arts centre adjacent to and working in close partnership with a new Colwood based high school at the Royal Bay site. Approximately 500 individuals are estimated to have participated in this consultative process.

The report contains a summary of findings in both formal and informal consultations and includes all major related documents in its appendices.

The major finding of this report is that there is overwhelming and enthusiastic support for the planned two new high schools in Langford and Colwood and the emerging plans for the Colwood location to have a high school connected to an arts centre.

Over 94 % of community members including students who participated in the community survey indicated very strong support for the SD 62 plan for the two new schools. Over 96 % also showed their strong support for the particular idea about an arts and education centre connected to the planned new Colwood high school. Many respondents had specific ideas about what such facilities should contain and what the programming involved might look like.



**BUILDING SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITY THROUGH
EDUCATION AND THE ARTS**

... imagine ...

² The name for the performing arts and education centre has not been confirmed. At this point, the Emily Carr Centre for Performing Arts and Education is being used as a placeholder only.

“I have no doubt the presence of this venue will generate social, cultural, and economic wealth, in both tangible and non-tangible (but equally valuable) forms.”

Survey
Respondent

II. INTRODUCTION

Victoria’s West Shore is at an important crossroads in its development. The community has been calling for a new high school and cultural amenities for almost a decade. School District D62 (SD62), the City of Colwood, the WestShore Chamber of Commerce, Camosun College and the Canadian College of the Performing Arts, along with the West Shore Arts Council, aboriginal groups and a host of other community stakeholders, have been working together to develop an arts-focused Neighbourhood Learning Centre to be located in the heart of the West Shore. The complex – the Emily Carr Performing Arts and Educations Centre (EC Centre) - will include one of the regions two new secondary schools as well as a performing arts centre.

The EC Centre will be located on two property lots in Royal Bay. The arts-focused Neighbourhood Learning Centre and community space will be located adjacent to the school and connected through coordinated design, shared spaces, facilities use and programming. Utilizing a green design, the facilities will also provide community gathering and learning spaces, an aboriginal gallery and opportunities for the provision of post-secondary education, including ‘Centres of Excellence’. This concept builds on the Ministry of Education’s strong interest in the concept of new schools becoming Neighbourhood Learning Centres - places that serve not only the school population but the community as a whole. (Reference Appendix A.)

This project provides an exciting opportunity to meet many of the growing needs of the West Shore and the Sooke area. In addition to providing a savings on capital infrastructure costs, it will boost the local economy and increase business and tourism, while supporting a strong existing and emerging arts community.



Across BC, more and more schools are becoming Neighbourhood Learning Centres (NLC’s) – welcoming places where people of all ages can access learning and community services. Just like schools, each NLC is unique, reflecting the needs and priorities of the children, families and community it serves.

Source: Province of B.C.
www.gov.bc.ca

The WestShore Chamber of Commerce views the project as a win-win for the entire West Shore community (Langford, Colwood, Metchosin, Highlands and View Royal as well as Sooke). This is a project that will allow the region to capitalize on economic development opportunities and deliver improved education while supporting the social priorities identified by the cities of Colwood and Langford. The project has potential to put the West Shore on the map as an arts and recreation tourism destination, domestically and internationally. The project has the potential to put the West Shore on the map as an arts and recreation tourism destination, domestically and internationally.

The local communities are confident that other levels of government and private investors will rally behind the project as Canada and BC look for new strategies to leverage infrastructure costs and fuel local economies. Education and the arts offer proven and reliable ways to enhance healthy communities and greatly improve quality of life. Centres of excellence in technical innovation also fuel local economies while creating a skilled workforce for a sustainable future.

Imagine ... *a state-of-the-art secondary school with inspired young people who are learning by doing, where post-secondary study options are actively integrated to encourage multi-generational explorations in the visual and performing arts and to meet the growing demand for people skilled in new sustainable living technologies.*

Imagine ... *the smiling faces of families gathered for concerts, recitals, art exhibitions, plays and school graduations closer to home.*



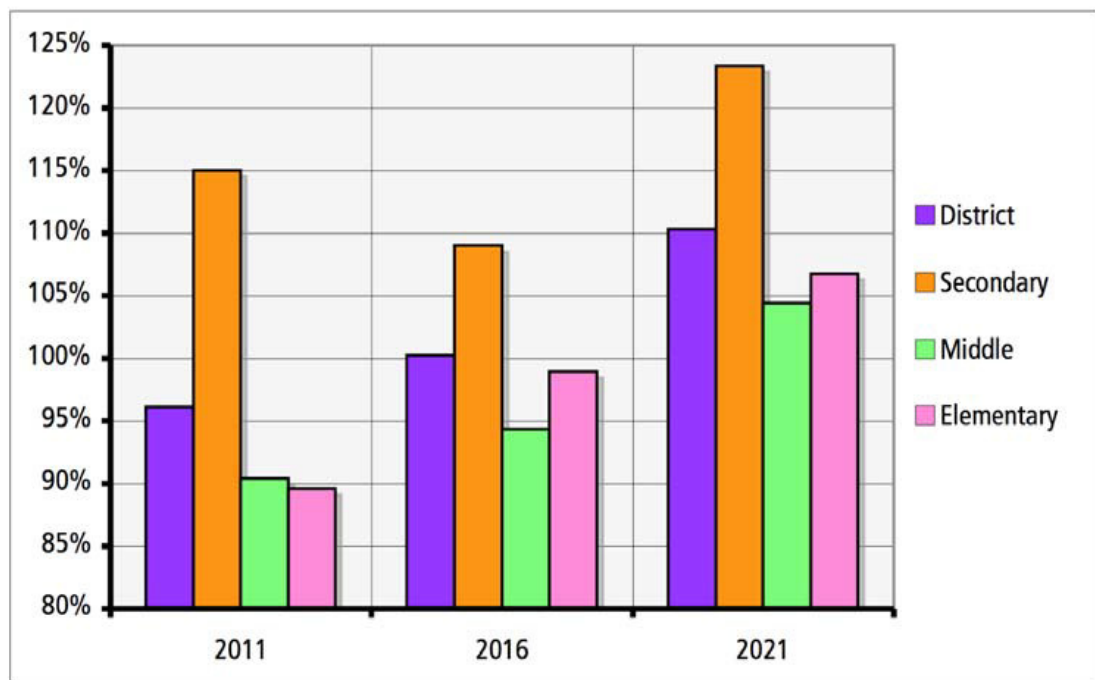
Imagine ... *the economic benefits to be enjoyed once the West Shore has a cultural home place to showcase the diverse talents of the many people who live here.*

III. BACKGROUND

While the West Shore and Sooke area is among the fastest growing regions of Canada, and expected to double in size in the next 15 to 20 years, the region faces numerous infrastructure challenges – especially as related to education and the arts.

It struggles with an over-crowded high school that has been slated for replacement for more than a decade. SD62 has been working for years to improve and add to its already taxed educational facilities. (Reference Appendix B - Facilities Plan Matrix Report plus 2010 Update.)

With the rapidly growing West Shore community, it is projected that current educational facilities will no longer meet the needs of the region, as identified in Chart 1.



Graph 1 - SD62 – Projected Capacity Utilization

The K-12 age cohort will increase by an astounding minimum of 55% in the next decade. In addition to capacity issues, Belmont Secondary School is in a deteriorating condition and considered by some to be unsafe. Families are starting to send their children outside SD62.

We asked **parents** and this is what they had to say:

- We need to give our children what they deserve - safe and modern schools that will have more educational opportunities that they can be proud of. Belmont has had its day and needs to go.
- We are in desperate need of new high schools. Belmont is too crowded and is in a terrible location for learning. The building is also in need of many physical updates. We would home school or move before our children attended Belmont. We would, however, love to stay in the West Shore and keep our kids in school!
- My wife and I have two children currently in elementary school, and we are very concerned about where they will go to high school. We are not willing to send them to Belmont as we don't feel the building is a safe environment for them.

Parallel to the needs for more adequate educational facilities, it was recognized that the community needs infrastructure and programming to support the arts community. The West Shore is home to world class artists, authors and musicians but despite almost 10 years of public consultation, research, reporting and bylaw development, the region still lacks core public arts and culture infrastructure.

The concept of a local Neighbourhood Learning Centre for the West Shore emerged from an ongoing community consultation process and collaboration between community leaders and stakeholders over the past 10 years, facilitated largely by the West Shore Arts Council.

Originally conceived as a solution to address the lack of arts infrastructure on the West Shore, the vision has evolved and developed to address a number of complementary needs for the growing communities.

It was recognized there was an opportunity for these parallel initiatives to come together in a way that would serve both the major stakeholders and the wider, rapidly growing West Shore community at large.

IV. REPORT OBJECTIVE

The West Shore Chamber of Commerce has been active in supporting the consultative process, while also supporting SD62 in having its voice heard regarding the need for new schools. It has been a catalyst in facilitating community stakeholder relations and continually forging ahead with the necessary next steps required to make the project a reality. The development of this report and associated research and/or community outreach is one of these necessary next steps.

The objective of this report is to identify and/or confirm the level of community support for the two new high schools and the EC Centre and provide recommendations that will lead to further development of the project.

To achieve this objective, the WestShore Chamber of Commerce has worked to:

- Reconfirm the need for two new high schools in the West Shore;
- Confirm the need for youth programming/spaces;
- Confirm the need for community educational facilities;
- Confirm the need and community desire for an arts and culture venue and programming; and,
- Explore the opportunity to synergize and leverage community resources and public/private sector support.



“Without arts, a community is just a place where your house is. Arts define a community and enrich it. To blend arts with schooling helps to create a future generation of artists and adults who appreciate the arts.”

Survey Respondent

V. THE VISION

The Emily Carr Performing Arts and Education Centre will be located on approximately 3 acres at Royal Bay, in the heart of the growing community of Colwood. The centre will be an innovative hub for education, arts, community and recreation at the same spot where Emily Carr once painted overlooking the spectacular Salish Sea.

In addition to a new 800-space secondary school, the EC Centre will be home to a Performance Arts Centre that will provide a unique cultural hub to West Shore residents and visitors alike, offering a full range of visual and performing arts with programming, and will help strengthen and build the regional economy.

The West Shore’s Performing Arts Centre could include:

- 800 – 1,000-seat Performance Hall
- 100-seat Black Box Studio
- Aboriginal Art Gallery
- Recording and Foley Studios
- Theatre Studios
- Pottery Studios
- Visual Arts Studios
- New Media Arts Studios
- Dance Studio
- Administrative Spaces
- Outdoor Exhibition and Performance Spaces



Figure 2: Artist Rendering of the Emily Carr Performing Arts and Education Centre



The West Shore’s Performing Arts Centre vision is based on the Shenkman Arts Centre in Ottawa/Orleans, and is a LEED™ design.

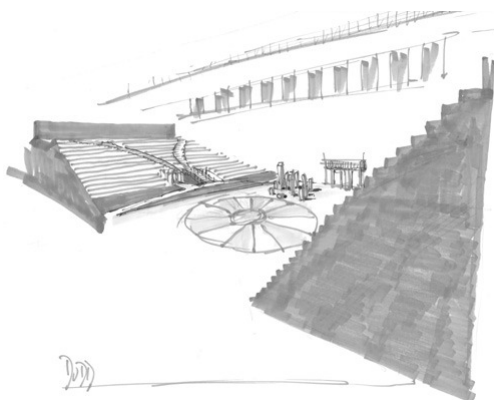


Figure 3– Amphitheatre Concept Sketch
This concept sketch by Jim Dodd shows how an amphitheatre could be used to connect the high school to the performing arts centre.

“With rapid growth and an already overcrowded and outdated Belmont, there needs to be change NOW.”

Survey Respondent

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

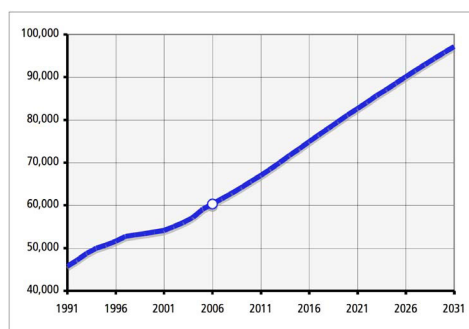
A) SIGNIFICANT GROWTH

The West Shore has been experiencing significant growth over the past several years. As a result, the needs of the communities have been escalating and are now presenting critical issues for the region.

It is projected that much of the future population growth in the Capital Regional District (CRD) will occur in Langford, Colwood and Sooke, with more than half of the development being in Langford. Collectively, the large developments of Royal Bay, Olympic View, Bear Mountain, Westhills and Sunriver comprise 38% of the total estimated housing units over the next 15 years. It is clear that there will be many more families living in SD62 encashment area.³

According to the Rapid Transit and Plan for the CRD completed by BC Transit “the West Shore will experience the fastest population growth in the CRD growing from 65,000 residents in 2008 to 122,000 residents by 2038, an 88% increase.” Some municipal projections call for a doubling of the West Shore population much sooner and perhaps as soon as within a decade. The call to prepare the community for rapid growth is now coming from multiple leadership voices.

The communities of Metchosin and Highlands are not pursuing high or rapid growth and prefer to remain as largely rural in nature. However, they are, and will be, impacted by these high growth activities in areas next door to them and they are also home to many artists, musicians and culturally oriented individuals who can be positively impacted in the development of the arts infrastructure for the West Shore and surrounding areas.



Graph 4 shows that the West Shore communities have grown in the recent past and are expected to continue to grow over the next 25 years. BC Statistics estimates that SSD population will increase by 61% from 2006 to 2031.

³ The Matrix Report

“New high schools are badly needed. Belmont is not suitable for the students that it presently has, and it is old and needs upgrades.

I hear horror stories about it from teenagers that go there. It is just not fair.”

Survey
Respondent

B) URGENT INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

Current infrastructure is desperately behind the growing demands resulting from this extraordinary population growth. It is imperative that government, private sector and community stakeholders work closely together to meet the current and growing needs of the West Shore.

Infrastructure needs cover a wide range of issues including, but not limited to, transportation systems, housing, waste water management, parks trails, social services and recreation. The urgent need for new schools and arts amenities fits in this broader context of a community that has already outgrown its infrastructure and will continue to do so until all levels of leadership respond to the needs of its citizens.

All schools in SD62 are already operating at over 90 % capacity – an unacceptable situation for safe and effective learning and healthy development.

C) INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

The West Shore is developing a reputation for innovation and creativity in response to its varied and complex needs that are resulting from the extraordinary growth. Following is a few examples of these unique initiatives.

- Through a series of unique public private partnerships, Langford has developed through a full range of public recreational offerings including Bear Mountain stadium and the new and extensive Sportsplex recreation complex emerging around the Langford City Centre which includes a new hockey rink and a new bowling alley. Recently Rugby Canada announced the relocation of its national headquarters to Langford – a tremendous win for the City with more to follow in its sports and recreation theme.
- The plan for a new high school in Langford will see it located at the old Glen Lake school site through a unique sharing arrangement between SD 62, the City of Langford and the private sector through the Westhills development group. This unique three-way partnership results in saving tax payers millions of dollars by SD 62 not having to invest in additional recreation facilities for the new high schools by sharing public facilities and utilizing private sector land.

“I have a son in Kindergarten and would LOVE new high schools for our growing community. I support this advancement 110%.”

Survey Respondent



- Young families are increasingly represented in the dominant demographics with the average adult age being 39. There is a huge influx of preschool-aged children as well as those in the K- 12 range. As a result, day care is another emerging challenge for the West Shore. The City of Langford and private and non-profit sectors have come together to find solutions. This includes securing space for the downtown YMCA to open further day care and potential recreation facilities in the West Shore over the next few years.
- The City of Colwood is applying sustainability principles to their activities and operations, including their new Solar Colwood initiative. This project will allow businesses and over 1,000 homes to utilize solar heated hot water and to install split ductless heat pumps, where feasible.
- In a strong act of collaboration, the cities of Langford and Colwood developed their Official Community Plans (OCPs) together, utilizing the same consultants.
- Metchosin has initiated a Healthy Communities Committee and is well known for its vibrant Community House and Metchosin Day.
- Highlands has recently initiated a new Official Community Plan based upon full sustainability principles.

Collaboration between Langford and Colwood in the development of their OCPs resulted in remarkably similar and complimentary plans with sustainability at their core.

These examples highlight the West Shore as a place of innovation and creativity. Harnessing this wellspring can bode well for the EC Centre project and further support its development.

D) PUBLIC SECTOR COLLABORATION

While municipalities in the West Shore have separate political mandates and are uniquely different in culture and history, they often collaborate in many areas – especially as related to infrastructure needs. On items such as rail transportation and the use of the E&N rail lines, waste water treatment and highways improvements, several of the municipalities have come to common agreements and similar public positions. The key municipalities of Langford and Colwood are in total agreement with SD62’s urgent need for two new high schools and support the expansion plans.

WELL DONE!
The West Shore is seriously lacking in anything resembling culture. It's almost embarrassing.

Survey
Respondent

The EC Centre development plan will bring considerable private sector support to SD62 thereby saving the Provincial millions of dollars in capital costs and operational expenses. This emerging collaboration is a harbinger of future cooperation on many other fronts related to infrastructure needs and should be considered by the Ministry of Education as a remarkable example of community support in its own right.

E) ARTS AND CULTURE

The West Shore is home to world-class artists, musicians, authors, one of Canada's pre-eminent pottery exhibitions (Fired UP!) and the celebrated Metchosin International Summer School of the Arts. Despite almost 10 years of public consultation, research, reporting and bylaw development (including the award-winning Official Community Plan collaboration between the cities of Colwood and Langford) the West Shore sadly lacks any core public arts and culture infrastructure. Arts groups and the West Shore Arts Council have been visioning a community, world class facility for a number of years, recognising the wealth of talent in the local community and the need for facilities and increased opportunities to nurture this vital part of the community and local culture.



The multifaceted and unique nature of the West Shore Arts community includes visual aboriginal arts and craft, international leading edge photovoltaic, sustainable energy design, fine art glass and a vibrant stream of young talent seeking opportunity and further education.

F) BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The business case for nurturing arts, culture and heritage as part of a sustainable community has been well established through considerable research done at the local, regional, national and international levels over many years. Arts and culture generates \$5.2 billion annually in BC.⁴ World class facilities such as those proposed for the EC Centre and the potential to create a strong cultural tourism industry for the West Shore add to the potential list of community economic development opportunities.

As a result of a lack of facilities within existing education, community and arts infrastructure, each year thousands of local residents travel to other areas of the CRD for high school graduations, recitals and performances and community events and celebrations – all of which represent lost revenue opportunities for West Shore businesses.

⁴ http://www.bcartscouncil.ca/Fast_facts.html

“Creative arts are one of the most community building processes available to all peoples.”

Survey
Respondent

The OCPs designed by the Cities of Colwood and Langford and their residents have identified a number of key goals fundamental to all aspects of community planning and development.⁵ A project such as this addresses a number of these goals, including supporting a vibrant local economy, community health and wellness and nurturing and celebrating a sense of place.

F) SOCIAL NEEDS

The social case for nurturing the arts, culture and heritage as part of a complete education that enhances student performance has also been well-documented, via the Sooke School District’s own proud 25+ year history of producing exemplary visual and performing arts productions through the district’s Program for Academic and Creative Enrichment (PACE), among other noteworthy achievements.

Creating shared community spaces and lifelong learning opportunities addresses the need for networking and community-building throughout the West Shore. Rapidly growing communities need to increase their opportunities and abilities to connect, interact and grow their social infrastructure as so much is new. The EC Centre can facilitate this interaction through volunteer groups, artistic experiences, youth programming and family events and activities.

G) COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Investment in arts and culture is recognized by many countries as producing important social benefits that have strong positive impacts on both individual and community health, thus potentially reducing the demand on health care systems while enhancing quality of life.

Researchers in the United Kingdom, the United States and Sweden have found that participation in arts-based activities, whether passively as an observer or actively as a participant, activate mental and physical mechanisms which reduce tension, strengthen the immune system and protect against depression.



Arts activities contribute to increased social contact, more positive outlook, and a greater likelihood that seniors can live independently for a longer time.⁶

⁵ <https://colwood.civicweb.net/Documents/DocumentDisplay.aspx?ID=2557>

⁶ www.artshealthnetworkcanada.com

“It has been proven over and over again that children that are involved be it in sports or in the arts inevitably give back to the community by becoming healthy, valued, contributing citizens thus lowering crime and pressure on our healthcare system.”

Survey Respondent

The report states that “arts and culture have important contributions to make to at least seven of the twelve determinants of health defined by Health Canada.” It goes on to also share that the positive effects of engaging in community arts programs and more formal performances have a wide range of benefits including, but not limited to:

- Improved social connection and reduced anxiety and social isolation;
- Stronger community identification and pride;
- Development of community networks;
- Promotion of inter-cultural and inter-generational ;
- Reduced crime, youth delinquency and anti-social behaviour.



“An active engagement with the arts – whether as a participant, of as a viewer – is one effective way for individuals and communities to address issues of public health. To be ‘healthy’ is something that we all aspire to, recognising that prevention and health promotions are important in avoiding the costs and issues associated with acute care later on, down the road. Certainly experience has shown us in supporting community projects that the arts are effective in health promotion.”

Sara Chilvers, Former Program Director for Health and Social Development Vancouver Foundation.

Source: www.artshealthnetworkcanada.com

The arts have a very strong ability to assist both the young (especially youth-at risk) and seniors. For the young, arts-based education and activities have been demonstrated to:

- Effectively teach skills that are essential to success in life;
- Build healthy relationships with adults and their peers;
- Lead to success in school and higher academic achievement;
- Provide a way back into a productive life for many who have run into difficulties.

For seniors, even once-a-week participation in a professionally taught arts-based activity has demonstrated a positive impact on seniors’ physical and mental health.

“This is an exciting and innovative way to look at education and community. I am keeping my fingers crossed that my children will be able to benefit from such an environment.”

Survey Respondent

VII. COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND CONSULTATION

As previously mentioned, the vision of the EC Centre was developed over a number of years through community conversation, consultation, increased partnerships, innovative leadership and an expansion of the original vision to deeper collaboration. This process has further developed the project to now encompass greater purpose and provision of services to the West Shore, SD62 and the arts community. It is estimated that through an online survey, a youth survey and various community meetings with a wide variety of stakeholders approximately 500 people have participated in this process over the past 12 months.

The following outlines both research methodology and a summary of results from the comprehensive consultative process.

A) COMMUNITY CONVERSATION - ‘COLLABORATORY’

In 2007 the process resulted in a ‘Collaboratory’ event where interest groups and leaders from both the arts world and West Shore community at large came together to discuss and identify community priorities based on input received from outreach and engagement since 2005 and development of a West Shore Arts Strategy. The group identified a number of priorities and critical success factors, including the need to:

- Recognize the health and wellness value of a community strong in arts and culture;
- Provide inclusive access to programs, events and facilities, including aboriginal, and all age, income and ability groups;
- Ensure collaboration which is key to creating community and a strong arts, culture and heritage policy;
- Encourage aboriginal art and culture to enhance economic development opportunities;

Stakeholders The People

- Children
- Youth
- Adults
- Elders

- Local
- Regional
- National
- International

- Special Needs
- Multicultural
- Aboriginal
- Communities
- Professionals
- Amateurs
- Leaders
- Participants

- Teachers
- Facilitators
- Apprentices
- Mentors
- Mentees

- Artists
- Performers
- Learners
- Writers
- Designers
- Playwrights
- Crafts persons
- Filmmakers
- Sculptors
- Musicians
- Chefs
- Horticulturalists

- Healthcare Providers
- Patients

“This would be a dream come true.

Our family is well-versed in the performing arts and to have these kinds of facilities available for our young son makes me want to do anything to get involved and offer support.”

Survey Respondent

- Provide new events and opportunities; and,
- Identify potential priorities for a future arts facility.

The outcomes of this event paved the way for the development of the current vision, which now notably includes stronger partnerships with a number of stakeholders, including the School District and the City of Colwood. Many of the general programming and facilities needs were determined through this period, and potential stakeholders identified. These programming, facility and stakeholder groups were confirmed and developed during this latest stage of outreach and engagement.

Stakeholders
Groups and Organizations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ West Shore Chamber of Commerce ▪ City of Colwood ▪ Sooke School District 62 ▪ Including: ▪ Belmont Fine Arts Department ▪ Aboriginal Education Department ▪ Scia’new First Nation ▪ T’Sou-ke First Nation ▪ Pacheedaht First Nation ▪ Esquimalt First Nation ▪ Songhee First Nation ▪ Canadian College of Performing Arts ▪ Camosun College ▪ Sooke Philharmonic ▪ City of Langford 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ City of Metchosin ▪ City of Highlands ▪ City of View Royal ▪ West Shore Arts Council ▪ West Shore Parks and Recreation ▪ Victoria International Marina ▪ Tom Lee Music ▪ Light House Ballet ▪ Four Seasons Musical Theatre ▪ Intepid Theatre ▪ ProArt Alliance ▪ Victoria Conservatory of Music ▪ CRD Arts ▪ Juan de Fuca Arts and Crafts Guild ▪ Arts and Health Network
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“What a terrific opportunity for the students who will attend the school, as well as our community. This is a great way to integrate high school students into the community they belong to, rather than making them feel like their lives and school should be separate from their community.”

Survey
Respondent

B) ONGOING COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

Following the *Collaboratory* event, the WestShore Chamber of Commerce has continued to share the renewed story and vision of the EC Centre with the intent being to broaden community knowledge, share updates on the project proposal and support SD62 in their efforts to solidify the reality of the urgent need for additional schools. They also wanted to confirm the feedback received in previous stages regarding programming needs, interest and public opinion. Chamber staff consulted extensively with the Advisory Group and developed an online presence through the website, developed both a community survey and youth survey, attended numerous community outreach events, and facilitated an information mailing to all SD62 parents and engaged aboriginal leaders, students and cultural hubs.

The dedicated website, currently maintained by the WestShore Chamber of Commerce, was developed in 2011 to share the current vision of the EC Centre and facilitate further community dialogue. The website offers a broad range of information related to the EC Centre including project vision, background information, a listing of community partners and ongoing project updates. In addition to creating an extensive stakeholder list, the website has also allowed the Chamber to capture an email list of interested community members. The website is updated regularly with news and relative information as it becomes available- www.emilycarrwestshore.ca.

C) ONLINE SURVEY



A primary source of feedback was created an online survey offered on the website. To date nearly 400 people have participated in the survey. The survey covered questions regarding the SD62 new highs business proposal, the EC Centre vision, perspectives on the link between health and inclusion in the arts, programming preferences and the role of arts in participant’s life. The results have shown overwhelming support both to the SD62 business plan to sell the Belmont site to fund two new high schools and the Emily Carr Performing Arts Centre proposal. (Reference Appendices C & D –Survey Results.)

With over 94% of participants in support of both proposals, SD62 can be assured the majority of the community continues to support the project vision. 95% of survey participants also believe arts and culture play an important part in community health and wellbeing.

“I support the idea of integrating the school and the arts centre as long as doesn't unduly complicate or jeopardize the funding approval for the school.”

Survey
Respondent

In general, each of the proposed aspects of the Neighbourhood Learning Centre is supported by survey participants, particularly as related to the creation of youth friendly spaces, post-secondary learning opportunities and community spaces including an amphitheatre and community square.

Participants were invited to include comments in the survey. This input has provided a substantial overview of perspectives and issues that naturally arise from a project of this scope.

As mentioned, there was outstanding positive community support for both SD62 expansion plans and the EC Centre proposal. There was some uncertain or negative comments received expressing concern that the inclusion of the performing arts and education centre might delay the building of the new high school. If this was the case, some members of the community did not support the full project.

We asked the **community** and this is what they had to say:

- “The business case around building two schools is excellent and provides an outstanding opportunity to develop these schools at a very reasonable cost. It would allow our area to accommodate all the children that are currently here, as well as those who are going to move here! “
- “I completely support this plan! Belmont is already at capacity and it will not survive an earthquake. The West Shore is a rapidly growing community and a great place to raise a family but it needs two new high schools to support its growth.”
- “We have so many great artists and musicians in the West Shore. We should celebrate them and give people opportunities to express themselves.”
- “I have been appalled for many years by the wretched condition of the building at Belmont. Our words say we care about kids, but our expenditures tell a different story. This centre is bold, innovative and rich with possibilities.....just what I want my tax money to go for!”
- “The arts can offer an amazing amount of community spirit, involvement and identification. As a community grows, so must its celebration and showcasing of fine arts.”

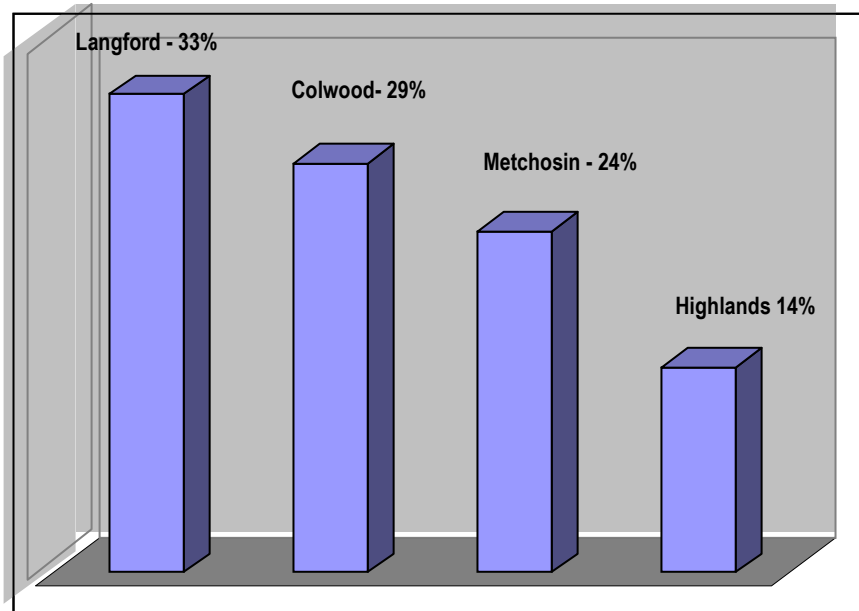
“Our words say we care about kids, but our expenditures tell a different story. This centre is bold, innovative, and rich with possibilities..... just what I want my tax money to go for!

Survey Respondent

D) YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND SURVEY

There is an increasing need for youth services in the West Shore. It is the intention to address youth needs in developing the Emily Carr Vision. Youth from SD62 and Greater Victoria were surveyed and engaged in conversation at a number of outreach events, including the ‘Off the Grid Festival’ in April 2011. Again the support for both the SD62 business plan and the Neighbourhood Learning Centre proposal was very strong at all events. Youth with a wide range of interests, contributed to the conversation and expressed their support and desire for opportunities to fulfill their interests, contribute to being part of community and share cross-cultural experiences with other members of their community. The youth represented a diverse cross section of young people from the WestShore in terms of ages, grade levels and in which community they resided. (Reference Graph 5 and Appendix E- Youth Survey Participant Profile).

Graph 5 - Youth Survey – Participant Profile – By Community



Through survey data and conversation there were several clear messages:

1. Young people are asking for youth friendly community events and festivals that include all-age music events with opportunities to share arts and cultural experiences with others and fellow artists.
2. They want to support local talent while creating job and economic development opportunities for the West Shore.
3. Youth want to have exposure to a gallery and engagement with, aboriginal culture and art.



Table 5 - Youth Survey Results – Personal Interest Priorities

	1	2	3	4	5	Totals	Percentage
Music	5	1	3	13	27	49	93%
Visual Art + Design	1	7	13	12	13	46	87%
Dance	9	8	9	5	14	45	85%
Books	1	5	10	12	16	44	83%
Performance Art, Musicals + Theatre	2	6	9	9	18	44	83%
Cooking	1	9	10	13	10	43	81%
Heritage	7	8	9	12	6	42	79%
Craft	10	5	12	5	8	40	76%
Film + Media	3	6	11	11	8	39	74%
Community Events + Festivals	2	2	8	8	19	39	74%

“I think opportunities for us to perform are very important so having space for festivals and an amphitheatre is great!”

Survey Respondent

Table 7 - Youth Survey Results – Interest in Emily Carr Centre Features

%	Features
89%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor Amphitheatre + Community Spaces for festivals.
85%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local talent while creating job and economic development opportunities for the West Shore.
74%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a Neighbourhood Learning Centre which includes a new high school + community facilities.
72%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more opportunities for post secondary education.
72%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth friendly spaces for youth culture.
72%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate indoor and outdoor space to link art + nature.
70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Art Gallery + Craft Museum.
47%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coast Salish Centre of Language + Heritage.

We asked our **youth** and this is what they had to say:

- 93% support the SD62 expansion plan
- 98% support the Emily Carr Centre proposal
- 93% think involvement in arts and culture can help people feel good.
- “Concerts are a great way to influence teenagers. Give us GOOD MUSIC.”
- “We need a new school!!”
- “I think opportunities for us to perform are very important so having space for festivals and an amphitheatre is great!”

“The West Shore will be all the poorer if this project doesn't go ahead. As a taxpayer, I am more than willing to see money being spent on this socially valuable enterprise.”

Survey Respondent

F) ABORIGINAL CONSULTATION

It is clear from previously noted priorities identified by numerous interest groups that the inclusion of all people and cultures is critical to fulfilling the integrated vision of a Neighbourhood Learning Centre in the West Shore. As the population grows and continues to diversify, integrating multiculturalism into facility design, programming and community development will become increasingly more important for community health.

Consultation with local aboriginal peoples has been an ongoing process throughout the development of the project. To date, a letter of support was graciously provided by Chief Gordan Planes from T'Souke First Nations with another promised from Chief Russell Chipps of Scia'new First Nation, Becher Bay. Engagement with other aboriginal is being pursued and a proposal to create an aboriginal project advisory committee is in process. Through the facilitation of Kathleen King-Hunt (SD62 Principal for Aboriginal Education) project partners have been able to broaden the proposed scope of First Nation programming, culture and design to be included in the EC Centre vision for the benefit and enrichment of all people.



Stylized eye logo for the Comprehensive Community Plan that represents T'Souke First Nation's visions for the future.

Designed by Willow Dodge.

G) FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING RESEARCH

Recent survey and data supports previous input received related to the most popular programming desires expressed by the West Shore community. Survey participants also confirmed that all aspects of arts and culture listed below hold importance in their lives and that they would like more opportunities and access to these types of programming. Aspects of arts and culture specifically noted include:

- education and learning opportunities
- music
- cultural and community events
- theatre, musicals and performing arts
- craft
- culinary arts
- heritage museum
- books and literature
- visual art and design
- film, video and multimedia

Recommended shared potential spaces include: school arts centre, cafeteria, event reception area, transit facilities and walking areas, parking, accessibility facilities, auditorium/convention space, multi-use space and flexible space.

Education and learning opportunities, cultural and community events, theatre, musicals and performance art, books and literature and music were highlighted as most desired for future opportunity in the West Shore. These general community results were similar to those found during consultation with local youth.

Targeted stakeholder groups were consulted and invited to contribute their potential requirements in both the school and community centre aspects of the proposal. Specifically detailed input around project needs was received from SD62, the Canadian Centre for Performing Arts and the Sooke Philharmonic Orchestra. (Reference Appendix F.) A detailed study to be conducted by well-known theatre consultant Richard Schick will provide a comprehensive examination of existing arts groups and other stakeholder's needs. (Reference Recommendation Seven.)



VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

REFERENCE: GOVERNANCE MODEL

The advisory committee will need to carefully examine all possible governance models for the arts centre portion of the EC Centre. As the City of Colwood designates land beside the new high school for the use of the arts centre, the property involved will need to be formally transferred or leased to new owners and/or a governing body.



RECOMMENDATION ONE:

It is recommended that a formal agreement be developed between SD62, those representing the various community stakeholders on the Advisory Committee, the new owners of the Royal Bay site and the City of Colwood for the transfer to, or lease with, the land and associated title to the appropriate body for use as an arts centre.

With respect to ownership, governance and control, one can assume SD62 will be responsible for all elements of the new high school. While the WestShore Chamber of Commerce may continue to have a leadership role in this exciting project, it is not the role or desire of the Chamber to own or control the project or assume title to the available land.

It is felt that a broad stakeholder group (such as the existing Advisory Committee) should form a non-profit society that would become responsible to receive the property from the City of Colwood and to 'own' the arts centre facility. This new society would be responsible for all fundraising and fiscal management; facilities design construction; and, management of the new arts centre.

Alternatively one of the non - profit societies currently involved with the project could propose to become the 'owner'.



RECOMMENDATION TWO:

It is recommended that a non-profit society be created that would own title to relevant available property in Royal Bay and take responsibility for the design, construction and management of the new arts centre facility. This society would best be made up of a founding Board of Directors that includes a wide range of stakeholders (including SD62 and aboriginal representation).

REFERENCE:

ONGOING COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The scope of assignment, and development of this report, did not provide the opportunity to explore *all* possible levels of community interest and engagement. While there is no reason to believe that greater community engagement will change the positive results, broader outreach with additional stakeholder groups will enhance the next stages of the process. Continued partnerships with the wide variety of stakeholders already involved will ensure that all interested parties stay informed and influence emerging plans, designs and the direction of community resources to be made available at the EC Centre.



RECOMMENDATION THREE:

It is recommended that SD62, in collaboration with the WestShore Chamber of Commerce, create and implement a formal stakeholder engagement plan, including a communications and engagement strategy that complements government relations activities (Reference Recommendation Five). This plan should include, but not be limited to:

- > *expansion of the project web site;*
- > *additional research related to parental, student and community views;*

- > ***further research and recommendations concerning Neighbourhood Learning Centre opportunities beyond cultural programming, especially youth services.***

As part of the engagement plan, previous input and issues raised by the community and key stakeholders should be taken into careful consideration in moving forward.

REFERENCE: ABORIGINAL ENGAGEMENT

SD62 has done a remarkable job of connecting with local aboriginal students and families and have significantly increased aboriginal student graduation rates under the leadership of aboriginal Principal Kathleen King-Hunt. Ms. King-Hunt is now facilitating the development of an aboriginal Advisory Committee for the EC Centre project, with the objective being to ensure that both cultural needs and sensitivities are addressed in building and programming plans. This includes the exploration of a gallery and store as an integral part of the design for the performing arts centre.



RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

It is recommended that SD62 and key arts centre stakeholders fully engage aboriginal leadership in the design and programming of the Emily Carr Performing Arts and Education Centre. The University of Victoria (First Peoples House) and Camosun College offer two relevant examples of community spaces that have been successful in servicing practical needs while also facilitating arts, cultural and community connection.

REFERENCE: GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

SD62 has been working diligently to gain funding approval from the BC Ministry of Education for the capital required to build the two new high schools in Colwood and Langford. It has garnered significant community and parental support and there has been extensive media coverage of these efforts. SD62 continues to work to secure capital approvals, however this continues to be an ongoing process.

Concurrent to the efforts of SD62, the new arts centre organization will be seeking grants from other public and private sector funders. It would benefit both organizations to work closely together in creating common messages and leverage resources and effectiveness in influencing various government levels to agree to partner in support of this unique opportunity and its attempt to address pressing community needs.



RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

It is recommended that SD62 and the new arts centre organization develop a comprehensive and shared government relations and communications strategy, in collaboration with the WestShore Chamber of Commerce. This plan should include carefully timed meetings and discussions with government officials and political leaders at all three levels as well as a collaborative media campaign to support one another's efforts.

REFERENCE: NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRE

As previously mentioned, the Ministry of Education strongly supports the concept of Neighborhood Learning Centres. The Ministry has stated that “The research is clear: the more caring adults there are in a student’s life, the better their attendance, attitude and achievement. By connecting students, families, schools and neighbours, Neighbourhood Learning Centres play an important role in developing successful learners and strong communities.”⁷



RECOMMENDATION SIX:

It is recommended that SD62 incorporate best practises related to Neighborhood Learning Centres as identified by the Ministry of Education in the design and programming for the new high school in Royal Bay. This Neighbourhood Learning Centre should be focussed on, but not restricted to, arts and cultural programming and be designed to compliment the performing arts centre to be built next door. Further consideration should be given to general youth services needs and the wider needs of the community as well as incorporation of ‘green’ design principles for the environmental health of users.

⁷ www.neighborhoodlearningcentres.gov.bc.ca

REFERENCE: PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE CONSULTANT

In the spring of 2011, the Advisory Committee made the decision to develop a costing and detailed plan for the arts centre portion of the Neighborhood Learning Centre proposal. Theatre consultant Richard Schick was recently recruited and has generously agreed to donate his services to complete a planning study/report that will involve ongoing detailed and continued consultation with key stakeholders. Mr. Schick is one of the top theatre consultants in Canada. (Reference Appendix G –Richard Schick Corporate Profile.)

The planning document will incorporate all major features and associated costs related to an integrated arts centre. These features include a large indoor theatre, a small second theatre, rehearsal studios for theatre and music, and public spaces including an aboriginal art gallery. (Reference Appendix H – Performing Arts Centre Feasibility - Richard Schick.)

The report will also include recommendations related to the sharing of facilities and programming between the high school and the arts centre.



RECOMMENDATION SEVEN:

It is recommended that SD62:

- 1 (a) Carefully consider full implementation of all recommendations related to SD62 outlined in the Schick Report, once received.**
- 1 (c) Works closely with project partners to assist in implementing recommendations specific to them.**

REFERENCE: COORDINATION WITH EXISTING SD62 THEATRE SPACES

SD62 already has two community theatre spaces, Isabelle Reader Theatre in Langford and the theater at Edward Milne School in Sooke. Any consideration of facilities programming, development and maintenance with respect to SD62 should also include the use and operating costs of these facilities and other arts facilities held within the SD62 area.



RECOMMENDATION EIGHT:

It is recommended that SD 62 develop an integrated arts facilities plan that takes into account both the new proposed spaces and existing ones so that usage, costs, marketing and programing can be integrated, coordinated and shared.

REFERENCE: RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT/FUNDRAISING

Once the design and costing for the Performing Arts Centre is completed by Mr. Shick, it will be important to have a comprehensive feasibility study completed related to fundraising. This study should identify private sector support required for additional elements of the EC Centre that will not be funded by the Ministry of Education. The study should be carried out by a professional fundraiser and contain a comprehensive capital campaign plan that tests the possible amounts to raise and identifies the resources required to achieve the targets.



RECOMMENDATION NINE:

It is recommended that SD62 and project stakeholders engage a fundraising consultant to test the feasibility of a capital campaign to support both the construction design and operating start up costs of the arts centre as well as any items desired in the Neighbourhood Learning Centre not put forward for funding by the Ministry of Education. This feasibility process should be overseen by a joint committee of the SD62 and stakeholder groups, including representatives from all interested municipalities.

REFERENCE: NAMING OF THE CENTRE

There have been many suggestions for the naming of the arts centre. Most recently it has had the 'place holding' name of the Emily Carr Performing Arts Centre. Carr did actually paint from and on the actual site where the centre will be located. On the other hand some have suggested that the name should be 'Royal Bay' to reflect the name of the development taking place around the site. The Ministry of Education has been promoting Neighbourhood Learning Centres and this should be carefully considered as well. Alternatively, others have suggested the name West Shore Arts Centre to both emphasize its regional nature and down play performing arts in light of the many other functions the centre may have such as visual arts and aboriginal cultural activities.



RECOMMENDATION TEN:

That a branding or naming process for the Centre takes place after the feasibility study is completed as that process will identify the most likely components and elements of the Centre. At the same time a specific community involvement process perhaps even a contest could generate names or possibilities for consideration along with focus groups of key stakeholders. This process should also take into account the name of the new high school and Ministry of Education guidelines and best practices with reference to a Neighbourhood Learning Centre.

VIII. CONCLUSION

A) CLOSING COMMENTS

“Sounds
WONDERFUL. I
will move back to
the WestShore if
these amenities
exist.”

Survey
Respondent

There is overwhelming community support for the two new high schools plan put forth by SD62. The rationale and need are well understood by the community and the innovative and cost savings implications are also understood and appreciated by a wide range of stakeholders.

The vision of a Performing Arts and Education Centre in partnership with the new high schools at Royal Bay in Colwood is also very well supported by the community. A wide range of stakeholders and communities of interest are very excited about this idea and are eager to participate and have more input as the plans develop. This level of support and interest creates tremendous opportunity beyond serving the needs of SD62 and the arts community.

During previous and more recent consultation, it has been widely discussed that the EC Centre may become the ‘jewel in the crown’ of the CRD’s internationally respected arts scene, presenting many opportunities to the entire region. These opportunities include increased tourism, industry leadership and multiple opportunities for substantial economic development and job opportunities for the West Shore. These possibilities and opportunities for wider reaching benefits are important to keep in mind as programming and facility priorities are clarified and the project vision develops and crystallizes.

Through the qualitative and quantitative information gathered during this latest stage of community engagement, it has been confirmed that many people within the West Shore and Sooke communities feel aligned not only with the school and centre proposals, but also with the priorities set out by the original 2007 arts *Collabatory* event.

The desire for community space and events, youth spaces, music and visual art and design, theatre, literature and learning opportunities is strong from diverse sectors throughout the West Shore. As the West Shore population continues to grow at an extraordinary rate, providing opportunities and facilities that support a healthy culture of inclusion, expression and intergenerational sharing will become increasingly more crucial to support and maintain a healthy community.

EXCELLENT PLAN!
LET'S DO IT!
Survey Respondent

B) NEXT STEPS

SD62 expects that the Ministry of Education will soon announce capital funding plans for the province generally. While it is not known whether this announcement will include their requests for the two new high schools, SD62 has consistently heard from Ministry staff that the plan makes sense. SD62 is optimistic that a positive funding announcement will be forthcoming soon. Against this backdrop plans are continuing for the private sector development of the Royal Bay site with a new owner expected to be announced shortly with subsequent submissions and evolving plans for that location to the City of Colwood.

The study by Richard Schick is now underway to best determine a finer level of detail around the exact facility and programming needs for the arts and education centre. Mr. Schick and Royal Roads University MBA student Heather Calabrese are doing a detailed consultation with many stakeholder groups, allowing a feasibility report to be developed for the Advisory Committee and SD62 to review upon completion. This report will include preliminary costing along with programming and facilities advice.

SD62 should carefully monitor the evolving development on the Royal Bay site, and when and if a new owner/developer is announced, begin discussions immediately with those parties and the City of Colwood about SD62 needs for both the new high school and their interest in the performing arts and education center idea. SD62 should ask theatre consultant, Mr. Schick, to present (in collaboration with the WestShore Chamber who is sponsoring the study) his report and its results and recommendations to the Board at a subsequent meeting. Finally SD62 should carefully consider the ten specific recommendations included in this report. (Reference Appendix J – Summary List of Recommendations.)

The WestShore Chamber of Commerce thanks SD62 for the opportunity to work with the District and many community stakeholder groups on this important project.

A RENOWNED PERFORMING ARTS AND EDUCATION CENTRE FOR THE WEST SHORE

... **imagine** ...