

The Fiscal Farce of the South Cowichan Concept

Shortly after I moved to the Cowichan Valley there was a referendum to create a municipality called South Cowichan. This choice then was soundly defeated and rightly so. Anyone who has a modicum of fiscal sense knows it takes a varied tax base (five of them) to support a municipal entity. The five essential tax bases namely are Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Agricultural and Forestry. Did the proposed entity have these then? No. Does it have them now? No.

The same group that was promulgating the concept then is at it again; this time led by Director Giles and Director Harrison. Not only are they trying to establish this needless entity but they are promoting it through the back door of a combined "Official South End Community Plan". An OCP is not worth the paper that it is written on. It is not a cabinet document and can be easily changed by zoning bylaws and revisions. A Growth Management Plan would serve us much better to retain our rural ambience, preserve our water resources and allow for long term population-increase planning.

Do we in this RURAL area of the Cowichan Valley really need our taxes to go up by thousands of dollars to service a Mayor, a Council, a Planning Department an Engineering Department etc, etc, when we already have these services in place within the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD)? Once again I reiterate; there is no such entity as "South Cowichan". It is a misrepresentative concept being pushed by the same old political hacks that got voted down 15 years back. The very same people pushed through the recent referendum for a Kerry Park pool when we had one that was defeated only 6 years ago! How many times do we have to run around this same track and thereby waste our tax dollars in doing so?

A prime example of fiscal responsibility would be to utilize our CVRD resources to establish a Regional Recreation funding agreement where all the taxpayers in the region would all pay approximately \$78/100,000 of assessed property value and thus eliminate the two tiered payment for use of our CVRD pool; have Kerry Park repaired and/or funded adequately. I for one am sick and tired of this misguided non taxpayer representing concept of "South Cowichan". If there is ever a referendum to create such an entity it will go the same way as the recently concluded Kerry Park pool referendum!

So far this misguided conceptualization has consumed approximately \$250,000 of our tax dollars and we have nothing to show for it! Wouldn't Kerry Park be in much better shape if that money had been spent there?

I may reside in the Electoral area of Cobble Hill but I live in the Cowichan Valley. I would much rather see these misguided efforts and badly spent tax dollars directed towards empowering our CVRD (Board and staff) so that they can provide us with better and more fiscally responsible services.

Sincerely,

John Middleton

Ex Cobble Hill (Area-C) Director and member of the Friends of Saanich Inlet

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For more information check us out on the web: <http://friendsofsaanichinlet.org/>