

Summary of Webinar on *Official Community Plan Renewal & Green Bylaws on the Sunshine Coast*

17 June 2025, 7:00 - 8:30 pm

*Co-hosted by the Halfmoon Bay Community Development Forum &
Roberts Creek Official Community Plan Committee*

1. Purpose of Webinar

With the renewal of Official Community Plans (OCPs) underway in the [SCRD](#), Sechelt and Gibsons, the Sunshine Coast Green Bylaws working group¹ organized a 90 minute webinar to present the recommendations in the [Green Bylaws for the Sunshine Coast Report](#), and to connect with other community groups along the lower Sunshine Coast. Specifically, the webinar aimed to:

- Bring together community groups interested in engaging in the OCP renewal process being led by the SCRd for rural areas.
- Raise awareness and inform participants about the Green Bylaws Report recommendations for the lower Sunshine Coast, explaining the problems they would address.
- Identify groups interested in continued engagement and joining the SCGB working group.
- Gauge interest in deeper Community Group conversation on Green Bylaws Recommendations (e.g. in-person workshop).

2. Agenda

<i>Welcome & Background to webinar</i>
<i>Overview of SCRd OCP Renewal project: A Community Group Perspective</i>
<i>OCP Renewal & Green Bylaws on the Sunshine Coast</i>
<i>Next Steps?</i>

3. Reference Materials

- [SCRd Let's Talk page](#) on OCP Renewal
- [SCRd OCP Renewal Background report](#), May 2025
- [Summary of Green Bylaws for the Sunshine Coast](#) (2 pages)
- [Issue Brief: Community Development Forum priorities for updating the vision for Halfmoon Bay](#) (2 pages)

¹ Current participants in the SCGB Working Group are: Suzanne Senger/SCCA, Meaghan Hennessy/RC OCPC, Mary Lou Hardy/x-RCCA, Darlene Tymo/HMB CDF, Duncan Smith/HMB APC & CDF, Alistair Higson/HMB CDF, Dawn Allen

4. Synopsis of Webinar

- [Link to the power point presentation](#)
- [Link to the recording of the 90-minute webinar](#)

The Sunshine Coast Green Bylaws Webinar was organized by a coalition of community groups, including the Halfmoon Bay Community Development Forum, the Roberts Creek OCP Committee, and the Sunshine Coast Conservation Association (SCCA). The goal was to inform and mobilize citizens around the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) Official Community Plan (OCP) Renewal and promote the Green Bylaws for the Sunshine Coast report developed in partnership with UVic's Environmental Law Centre.

[Background & Context:](#)

- Accelerating climate change, biodiversity loss, and poorly coordinated development on the Coast have sparked community concern.
- Multiple OCPs across five rural areas are outdated and inconsistent; the SCRD is now working to harmonize them into a single, integrated OCP with two pillars: Housing and Climate & Environment.

[OCP Primer:](#)

- Housing target: 3,000+ new homes in 20 years, with over 900 needed in the next 5 years.
- Environment & Climate pillar includes protection of ecosystems, improved hazard planning, and better integration of natural assets.
- SCRD is seeking to streamline its development permit areas (currently 54) and zoning bylaws.
- Engagement opportunities include public questionnaires, pop-up events, APC (Advisory Planning Commission) meetings, and community-driven outreach.

[Green Bylaws Presentation:](#)

- Advocates for planning tools to safeguard ecosystems while allowing smart growth. Five recommendations:
 - Plan for ecosystem connectivity
 - Adopt ecosystem health policies
 - Use binding mechanisms to steer development away from sensitive areas
 - Enhance environmental impact assessment
 - Base decisions on ecological science
- Emphasized local leadership (Halfmoon Bay) in applying this framework, including calls for an Environmental Development Permit Area (EDPA) to protect Coastal Douglas-fir forests.
- Attendees were encouraged to connect with their Area Directors, join APCs, and discuss Green Bylaws with neighbors.

· It was suggested that community groups could organize a follow-up, in-person roundtable to align local priorities across the Sunshine Coast.

Themes Raised in the Q&A and Discussion:

Desire for Coordinated, Cross-Community Planning:

- Repeated calls for opportunities to collaborate across communities—not just speak in silos to SCRD staff.
- Suggestions for a community-led regional town hall or roundtable to share ideas and identify shared values like “rural character.”

Skepticism About Public Engagement Methods:

- Concerns that surveys and pop-up booths don’t replace real dialogue.
- Multiple attendees emphasized the need for dialogue-based consultation, not just one-way information gathering.

Democratic Frustration and Role of Area Directors:

- Some felt SCRD’s planning process was too top-down.
- Emphasis on building relationships with elected Area Directors as the most effective way to shape the OCP.

Balancing Environmental Protection with Housing Needs:

- Tension between meeting housing targets and protecting natural ecosystems was a recurring theme.
- Participants emphasized the need for “smart growth”—densification in appropriate zones to reduce sprawl.

Implementation Questions About Green Bylaws:

- Questions about how to apply the report’s recommendations practically—especially creating an EDPA for Coastal Douglas Fir forests.
- Uncertainty about whether Green Bylaws can apply retroactively to private land.

Equity in Resource Allocation:

- A question about how infrastructure spending (e.g., sewer upgrades) is prioritized across the SCRD and how OCP inputs influence funding decisions.

Appetite for More Action:

- Attendees expressed interest in keeping the momentum alive.

- Proposals included forming a formal Green Bylaws delegation, submitting letters to the SCRD Board, and including other community groups/Areas in the SCGB working group.

5. Participants

Group	Area	Participants
<u>Pender Harbour Area Residents Association</u>	Area A	Sean McAllister, Brent Mulhall
<u>Pender Harbour Wildlife Society</u>	Area A	John Field
<u>Halfmoon Bay Community Association</u>	Area B	Jeff Muckle
<u>Halfmoon Bay Community Development Forum</u> , Halfmoon Bay APC*	Area B	Darlene Tymo, Alistair Higson, Duncan Smith*, Ellie Lenz*, Andy Jones-Cox*, Marcus Stein, Barbara Bolding*
<u>Roberts Creek Community Association</u>	Area D	Mary Lou Hardy
<u>Roberts Creek OCPC</u>	Area D	Meaghan Hennessy, Mark Bailey, Elaine Futterman, Joan Higgs
Elphinstone APC	Area E	Catherine Grey, Michael Sanderson, Mary Degan
<u>Elphinstone Community Association</u>	Area E	Jonathan Weintraub
<u>West Howe Sound Community Association</u>	Area F	Miyuki Shinkai (<u>SCLC</u>)
Town of Gibsons APC	Gibsons	Lee Ann Johnson
<u>Davis Bay, Wilson Creek, Selma Park Community Association</u>	Sechelt	Ray Parfitt
<u>East Porpoise Bay Community Association</u>	Sechelt	Greg Deacon, Lorraine Gallant
<u>Sunshine Coast Conservation Association</u>		Suzanne Senger

Streamkeepers

Shirley Samples