COMOX VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mark R. Isfeld Secondary School, Courtenay, BC

LONG RANGE FACILITIES PLAN 2018 – 2027

BOARD REPORT

FEBRUARY 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Ministry of Education 2016/17 Capital Plan Instructions issued June 2016 require Boards of Education to develop and maintain a comprehensive School District Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP).

Ministry of Education Capital Plan Instructions state:

- *School Districts are to maintain a current, comprehensive LRFP that:*
  - *forms the basis for school districts' capital investment decisions;*
  - *aligns with best practices in asset management;*
  - *is a key component for district-wide capital planning; and*
  - *is a framework for other local programming and operational decisions.*

- *The LRFP should use a ten-year planning horizon with consideration for the longer term. The scope and emphasis of each LRFP will vary depending on the specific circumstances and priorities of each school district. School districts are required to develop and maintain a comprehensive LRFP, available upon Ministry request.*

- *The fundamental premise of the LRFP is to provide a mechanism for districts to demonstrate they are managing their facilities in an effective, economic and efficient way in support of their educational goals. The LRFP places the need for capital projects in a district-wide context and becomes the basis for submission of capital project requests by the district and for investment decisions by the Ministry.*

1.2 Note that the LRFP is a *Facilities Plan*, not an educational study of the appropriate grade structure of schools, the appropriate placement of district programs, nor the viability/desirability of neighbourhood schools.

1.3 In June 2016 School District 71 Comox Valley (SD 71) engaged Bill Low of Cascade Facilities Management Consultants Ltd (www.cascade-cslts.com) of Langley, BC, to prepare this School District Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) with direction and input from senior district staff and the Board's Facilities Committee.

2. DISTRICT VISION AND GOALS

2.1 SD 71 has a long tradition of providing effective educational programming to students in the Comox Valley.

2.2 The Objectives for the Long Range Facilities Plan are as follows:

a. To determine the 10 year enrolment projections by school;
b. To optimize district capacity utilization in schools, mindful of the Ministry of Education target of 85% (enrolment up to 7,500 students);
c. To consider and align the district's school grade configurations with long-term district structure planning; and
d. To plan alignment of school and district programs with school facility structures and resources.

2.3 SD 71 has gone through several grade structure organizations over the past 30 years. Early in this period, schools were organized into elementary, middle, and secondary. When enrolments declined and some elementary schools had to close, the decision was made to return to a previous organization of elementary Kindergarten to Grade 7, and secondary Grades 8 to 12. It was not possible to completely change the district grade structure in all schools, resulting in the current 2017/18 organization which includes one middle school and one community school to Grade 9. Refer to Section 4.

3. LRFP PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The purpose of the Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) is to guide facilities development decisions by both the district and the Ministry over the coming ten year period. The annual Capital Plan submission should always address specific needs already justified at the macro level by the LRFP.

3.2 Principles

- The 2018-2027 LRFP must take into account changes in school enrolment, future growth or decline in school-age population, building condition, and district philosophy on grade structure organization;
- The LRFP must identify and support the facility needs of any revised grade structure that the district has set as its next goal;
- The LRFP must recognize the importance of small rural schools as the heart of the community in isolated parts of the district;
- The LRFP must allow for Ministry of Education initiatives such as Full Day Kindergarten, Strong Start, and Neighbourhoods of Learning;
- The School District LRFP must support the unique First Nations cultural and educational development needs.

3.3 Objectives

- Provide viable educational facilities capable of accommodating the catchment population;
- Provide school facilities capable of providing a successful educational environment for the assigned grade structure;
- Provide healthy and safe physical facilities as schools; and
- Provide accessible community spaces in support of the local population's educational and cultural needs, recognizing the importance of the school building as a resource to the community.

4. EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROGRAMS

4.1 SD 71 serves the urban centres of Courtenay and Comox, the village of Cumberland, and the smaller unincorporated communities of the Comox Valley Regional District located in northeastern Vancouver Island. See Figure 4.1. The communities are mainly connected by Highway 19 (north-south). The population includes a small First Nations population. In the smaller communities north and south of the urban centre, the school is the main social centre. These include Miracle Beach, Royston, Hornby Island, and Denman Island.

Figure 4.1 – Comox Valley School District Geographic Location on the northeast coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia

4.2 **District Zones**. For the purposes of planning, it is recommended that the school district be organized into two zones: **Urban** and **Rural**. This varies from the political divisions and representation within the board of school trustees, but from the point of view of facilities management, is the most logical. Refer to the maps below.

a. Urban Zone includes all the schools in Courtenay and Comox (Figure 4.2a);

b. Rural Zone includes the outlying elementary schools: Miracle Beach and North Island Distance Education Centre (NIDES) in the north (Figure 4.2b), Cumberland in the southwest, and Royston, Denman Island, and Hornby Island in the south (Figure 4.2c).

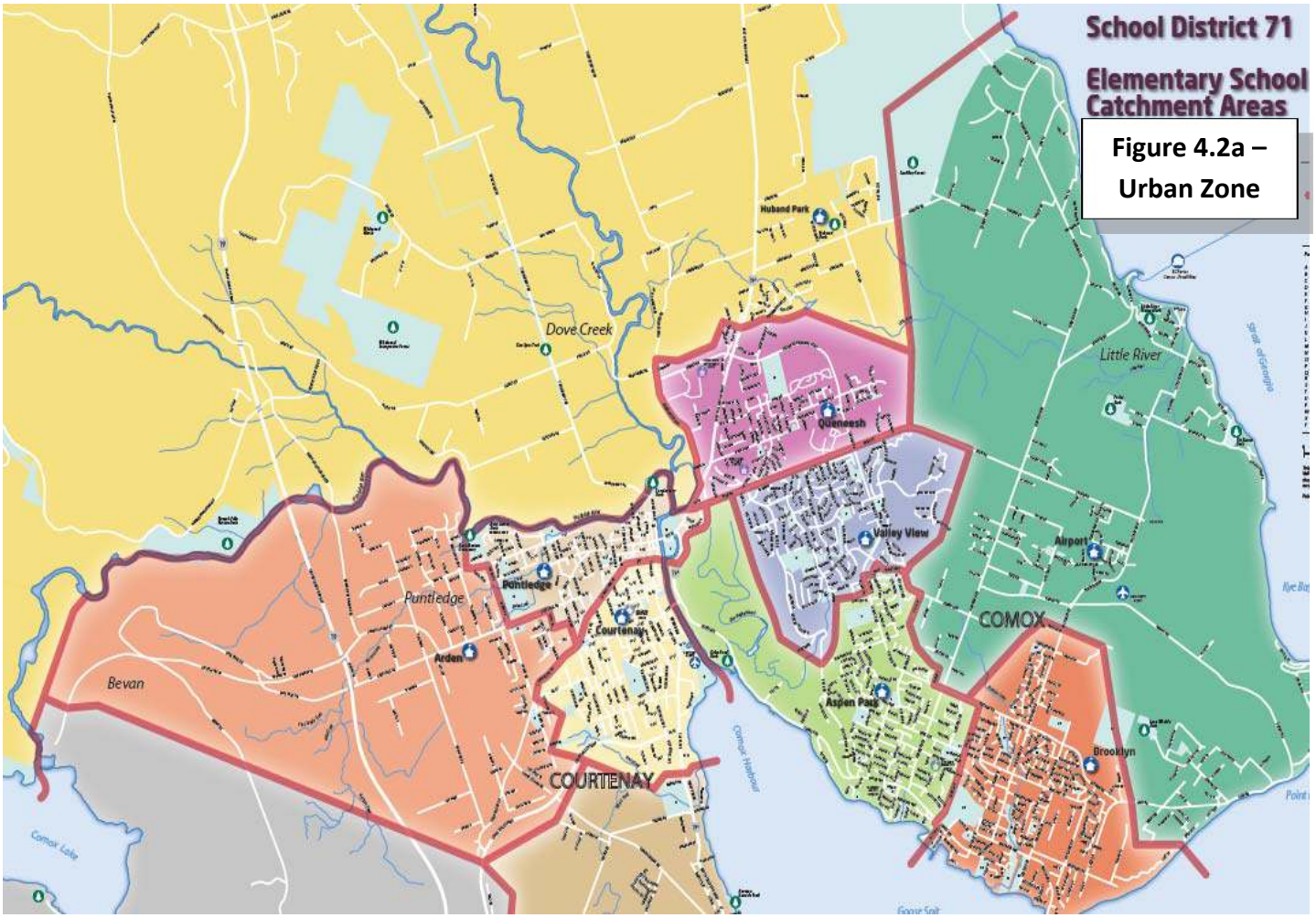


Figure 4.2a – Urban Zone

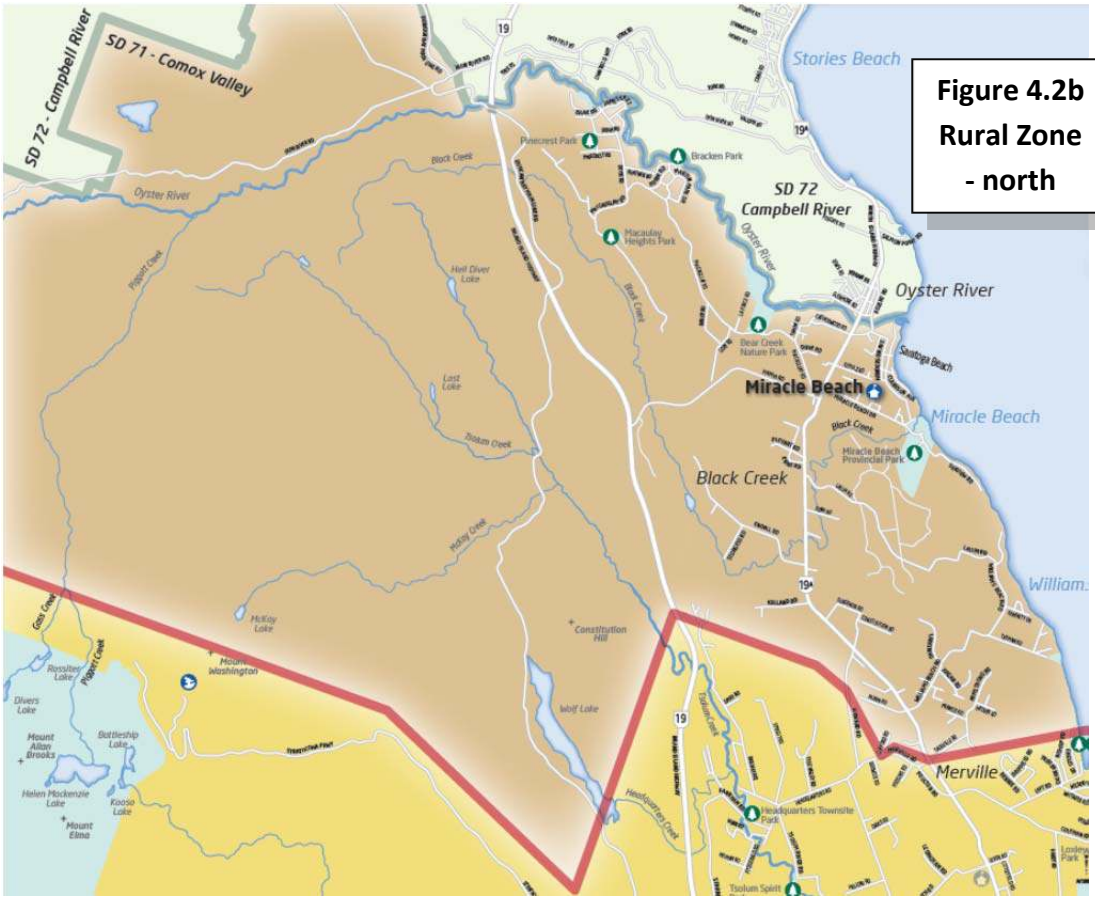


Figure 4.2b Rural Zone - north

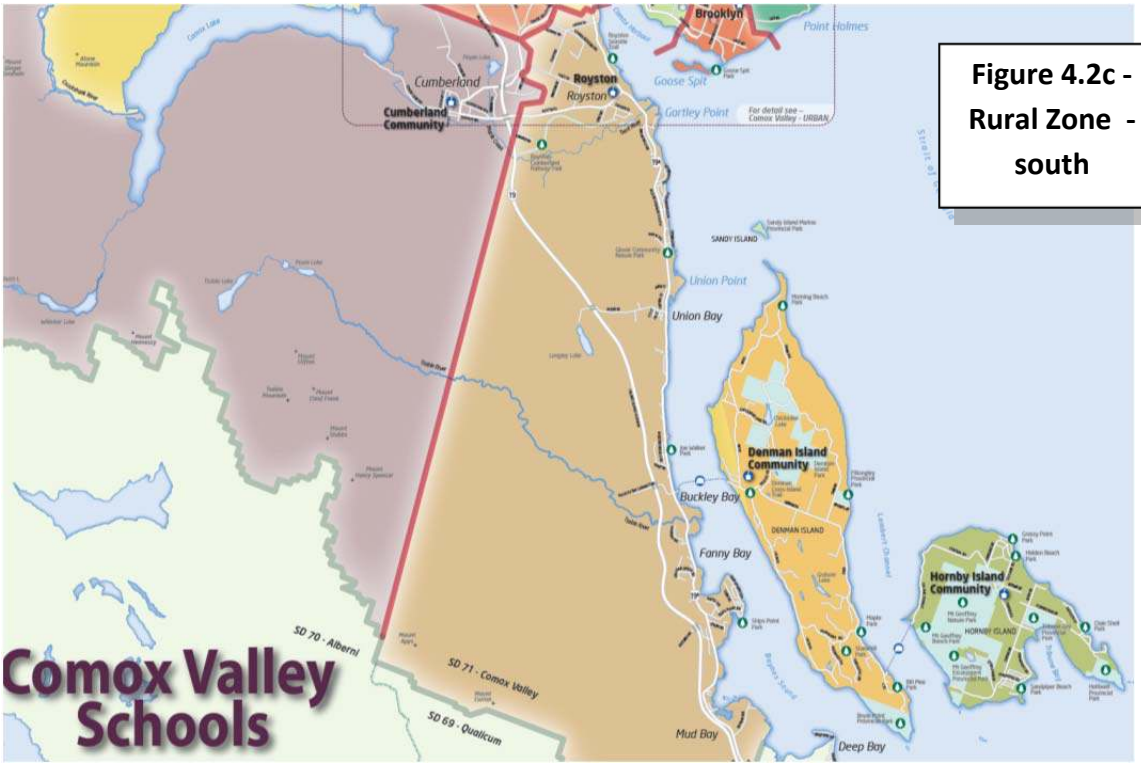


Figure 4.2c - Rural Zone - south

4.3 **Facilities in Service.** In 2017/2018 Comox Valley School District was operating and maintaining the following schools and other facilities:

- **ELEMENTARY** –
    - **Urban Zone**:
        - Airport Elementary (K-7);
        - Arden Elementary (K-5);
        - Aspen Park Elementary (K-7);
        - Brooklyn Elementary (K-7);
        - Courtenay Elementary (K-5);
        - Huband Park Elementary (K-7);
        - Ecole Puntledge Park Elementary (Dual Track with K-7 French Immersion, but K-5 for English stream);
        - Queneesh Elementary (K-7);
        - Ecole Robb Road Elementary (K-7 French Immersion);
        - Valley View Elementary (K-7)
    - **Rural Zone:**
        - Royston Elementary (K-6);
        - Cumberland Community School (K-9);
        - Denman Island Elementary (K-7);
        - Hornby Island Elementary (K-7);
        - Miracle Beach Elementary (K-7);

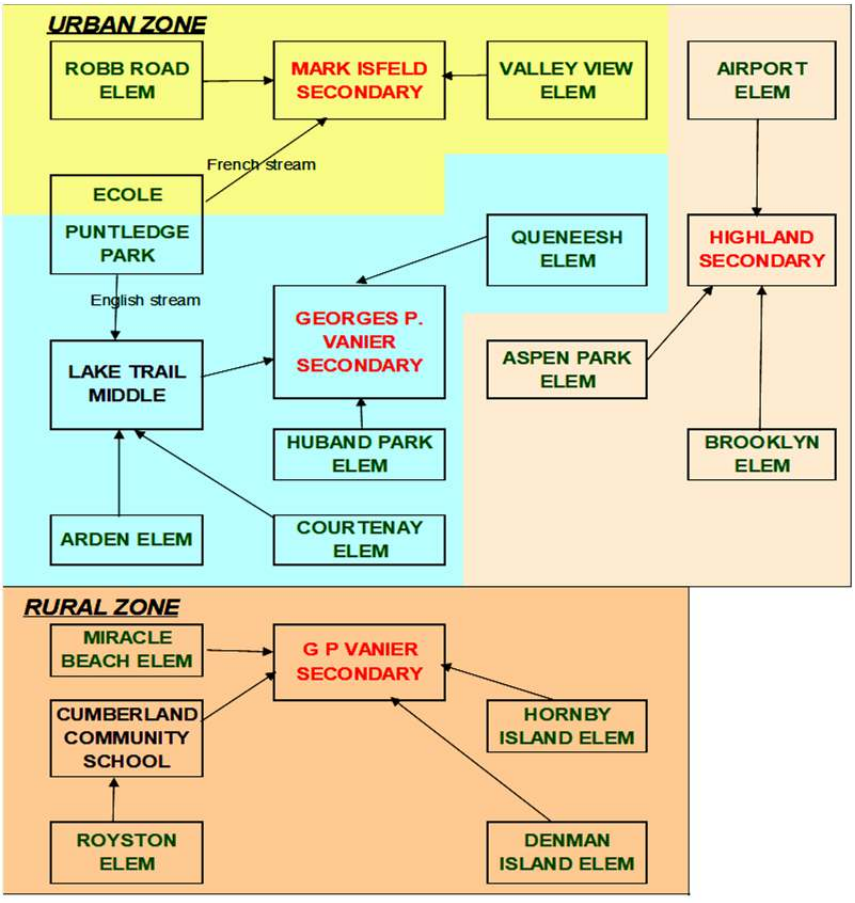
- **MIDDLE & SECONDARY –**
    - **Urban Zone:**
        - Lake Trail Middle School (6-9)
        - Highland Secondary (8-12);
        - Mark R. Isfeld Secondary (8-12 Dual Track);
        - Georges P. Vanier Secondary (8-12);
        - Glacier View Secondary Alternate School (8-12).
    - **Rural Zone:**
        - None

- **OTHER ACTIVE PROPERTIES –**
  - **Urban Zone:**
    - Sandwick Technical School;
    - Nala'atsi Alternate Program (First Nations Alternate) in two separate buildings on the Courtenay Elementary property;
    - School Board Office;
    - School District Facilities and IT Departments;
  - **Rural Zone:**
    - North Island Distance Education (NIDES) (K – 12) and Fine Arts e-Cademy (FAE) (K - 8) occupying former Tsolum School.

4.4 Photos and descriptions of the schools – refer to the full LRFP.

4.5 School Communities. The September 2017 school organization and the flow of students from elementary to secondary is shown in the following Chart (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 – Organization in September 2017



4.6 **Facility Condition.** The following Figure 4.6a shows the Facility Condition Index for each school as determined by the Ministry of Education funded Capital Asset Management System (CAMS) building assessments.

In 2009 the Ministry of Education contracted VFA Inc, a Boston based facility capital planning and asset management company, to complete a facility condition assessment of all schools in the province.

The relative measure of the condition of the facilities is usually categorized into a five-tiered condition scale ranging from Excellent to Very Poor, as follows:

Rating	Condition	Remarks
under 0.05	Excellent	Near new; meets present and foreseeable future requirements
0.05 to 0.15	Good	Meets all present requirements
0.15 to 0.30	Average	Has significant deficiencies, but meets minimum requirements; some significant building system components nearing the end of their normal life-cycle
0.30 to 0.60	Poor	Does not meet requirements. Immediate attention required to some significant building systems. Some significant building systems at end of their life-cycle. Parts no longer in stock, or very difficult to obtain. High risk of failure of some systems.
over 0.60	Very Poor	Does not meet requirements. Immediate attention required to most significant building systems. Most significant building systems at end of their life-cycle. Parts no longer in stock, or very difficult to obtain. High risk of failure of most systems.

In July 2016, VFA carried out a new assessment in SD 71. It was apparent that the scoring criteria has changed significantly because the new Facility Condition Indexes (FCI) for Comox Valley schools were lower (better condition) than in the previous rating even where no upgrading has taken place. The current FCI scores are now more realistic – see Fig. 4.6a.

Figure 4.6a – Current Facility Condition Assessments scores compared to past

SD 71 COMOX VALLEY - FACILITY CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

CONDITION ASSESSMENTS CARRIED OUT BY VFA ON MINISTRY OF EDUCATION CONTRACT

Note - These FCI scores were revised by VFA on August 25, 2016, and again in 2017-18:

SCHOOL	2010 FCI	2015 FCI	2015 RATING	2016 FCI	2016 RATING	Current FCI	Current RATING
Source of Data:	**Note A**	**Note B**		**Note C**		**Note D**	
Airport Elementary	0.59	0.65	Very Poor	0.42	Poor	0.57	Poor
Arden Elementary	0.67	0.48	Poor	0.35	Poor	0.57	Poor
Aspen Park Elementary	0.08	0.14	Good	0.14	Good	0.22	Average
Brooklyn Elementary	0.14	0.11	Good	0.11	Good	0.21	Average
Courtenay Elementary	0.59	0.50	Poor	0.30	Average	0.40	Poor
Cumberland Community, former Elem	0.55	0.39	Poor	0.28	Average	0.42	Poor
Cumberland Community, former Sec	0.30	0.40	Poor	0.26	Average	0.33	Poor
Denman Island Elementary	0.32	0.26	Average	0.17	Average	0.34	Poor
Hornby Island Elementary	0.52	0.32	Poor	0.30	Average	0.42	Poor
Huband Elementary	0.12	0.12	Good	0.06	Good	0.23	Average
Miracle Beach Elementary	0.33	0.33	Poor	0.18	Average	0.29	Average
Puntledge Park Elementary	0.42	0.44	Poor	0.26	Average	0.50	Poor
Queneesh Elementary	0.13	0.16	Average	0.04	Excellent	0.18	Average
Robb Road Elementary	0.13	0.14	Good	0.13	Good	0.25	Average
Royston Elementary	0.32	0.38	Poor	0.28	Average	0.51	Poor
Valley View Elementary	0.17	0.22	Average	0.11	Good	0.26	Average
Lake Trail Middle School	0.26	0.51	Poor	0.34	Poor	0.56	Poor
Georges P. Vanier Secondary	0.76	0.46	Poor	0.29	Average	0.61	Very Poor
Highland Secondary	0.46	0.24	Average	0.24	Average	0.45	Poor
Mark Isfeld Secondary	0.27	0.28	Average	0.13	Good	0.32	Poor

Source of Data:

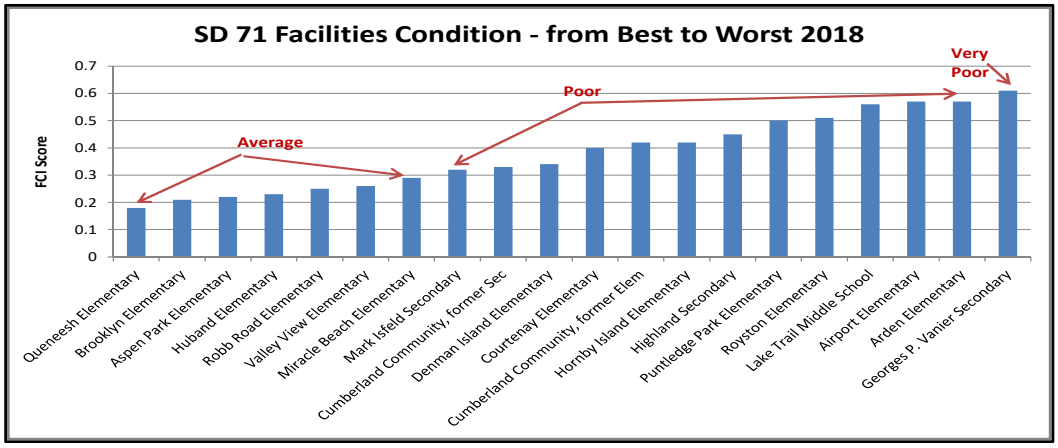
A. SD71 CAMS VFA Summary - Nov 27, 2010. (Brooklyn score in 2010 is former Cape Lazo School.)

B. SD71 CAMS Facility List Report - July 29, 2016

C. SD71 CAMS Facility List Report - Aug 25, 2016

D. SD71 CAMS Facility List Report - Jan 29, 2018

Figure 4.6c – Facility Condition Assessments Graph



4.7 As can be seen by the facility condition scores above, many of the school facilities are in need of improvement. A combination of capital projects and Annual Facilities Grant projects has been identified to the Ministry. The following projects were submitted to the Ministry:

Capital Plan Submission June 2017:

1. **Lake Trail Middle** – Seismic Upgrade;
2. **Courtenay Elementary** – Seismic Upgrade;
3. **Cumberland Community School** – Building Envelope Upgrade of junior secondary building;
4. **GP Vanier Secondary** – Replace moveable gym wall;
5. **Highland Secondary** – Replace moveable gym wall;
6. **Mark Isfeld Secondary** – Mechanical Upgrade;
7. **Royston Elementary** – Mechanical Upgrade;
8. **Cumberland Community School** – Mechanical Upgrade of junior secondary building;
9. **Mark Isfeld Secondary** – Sheet Flooring Replacement;
10. **Valley View Elementary** – Boiler Replacement;
11. **Ecole Puntledge Park** – DDC Replacement.

4.8 **Seismic Upgrading**. The 2015 Seismic Ratings of SD 71 schools is shown in Figure 4.8 of the full LRFP report.

Current Seismic Upgrading Projects

a. **Lake Trail Middle** – constructed in 1964. Initially Lake Trail Middle school was listed as having high seismic risk to only one block:

Block 4 – 1964 1-Storey Science/Shops and Arts. Two factors led to this becoming a more extensive project. First, the prior assessments were based on limited information and did not include a detailed assessment based on site visits by a structural engineer, and second, with the release of the Seismic Retrofit Guidelines 3rd Edition (SRG3), assumed ground force motions from a subduction earthquake on Vancouver Island have increased significantly. With a more detailed assessment it is likely Block 1 (1955 Old Gym) would have been assessed as having high risk under SRG2, and risk for Blocks 2 (1955 1-Storey Admin) and Block 3 (1955 2-Storey Classrooms) increased from Medium risk to High 2 risk under SRG3.

Seismic Project Identification Report (SPIRs) have been completed by a local structural

engineering firm, Herold Engineering, which have now confirmed High 2 risk for four of the five school blocks under SRG3. Only the new gymnasium and library (Block 5) constructed in 1999 is rated with low seismic risk. The project is awaiting provincial approval and funding.

b. **Courtenay Elementary** – 2-storey timber frame construction, built in two phases 1952 and 1960. The classroom block seismic upgrade will include: improved north-south foundations, improved roof diaphragm connections, and classroom/corridor walls upgraded to shear walls. The gym was previously seismically upgraded. A Project Request Fact Sheet (PRFS) is required.

4.9 **Surplus Property**. In the past, SD 71 has had to deal with declining enrolment at some schools and the resulting budget cuts. As a result, the board made tough decisions in past years to close a number of schools. Current surplus sites are:

- Union Bay school site – school closed. No tenants;
- Comox Elementary – school closed. Leased to Korean ESL program using four classrooms;
- Atlas Road site – 5 acre property contiguous with a City of Courtenay 5 acre property. Reserved for future development;
- Sandwick Technical School – part of Glacier View Alternate School.
- Harmston Park – in process of being disposed of, see Figures 4.9a and b in the full LRFP report.

4.10 **Location of Portable Classrooms.**

Portable classrooms are not included in the nominal capacity of the school at which they are placed. They provide flexibility in accommodating students at over-capacity sites and swing space for seismic upgrades and other renovation projects. There are 35 portable classrooms in Comox Valley School District. The inventory is shown in Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.10 – Portable Classroom Inventory

School District 71 Portable Inventory Updated: January 2018			
Ptbl No.	**School**	**Designated Use**	**Condition**
1	Aboriginal Education	offices	good
2	Airport Elementary	music room	fair
3	Arden Elementary	Full Day Kindergarten	good
4	Arden Elementary	classroom	good
5	Arden Elementary	classroom	good
6	Aspen Park Elementary	daycare	good
7	Cumberland Elementary	Full Day Kindergarten	good
8	Cumberland Elementary	Full Day Kindergarten	good
9	Denman Island School	computer lab	fair
10	Huband Park Elementary	classroom	good
11	GP Vanier	classroom	fair
12	GP Vanier	classroom	fair
13	GP Vanier	classroom	fair
14	GP Vanier	classroom	fair
15	GP Vanier	classroom	fair
16	GP Vanier	classroom	fair
17	Highland Secondary	empty	fair
18	Highland Secondary	storage	good
19	Isfeld Secondary	classroom	good
20	Isfeld Secondary	classroom	good
21	Isfeld Secondary	classroom	good
22	Isfeld Secondary	classroom	good
23	Isfeld Secondary	classroom	good
24	Isfeld Secondary	classroom	good
25	Miracle Beach Elementary	music room	good
26	Puntledge Park School	Full Day Kindergarten	good
27	Puntledge Park School	Full Day Kindergarten	good
28	Puntledge Park School	Full Day Kindergarten	good
29	Queneesh Elementary	daycare	good
30	Robb Road Elementary	Full Day Kindergarten	good
31	Robb Road Elementary	Full Day Kindergarten	good
32	Royston Elementary	music room	good
33	Royston Elementary	classroom	good
34	Valley View Elementary	Full Day Kindergarten	good
35	Vanier Daycare	private daycare	good

4.11 **District Programs**. The district supports a variety of programs at these locations:

- Aboriginal Education / Nala'tsi – located on the Courtenay Elementary site. Approximately 40 students;
- Glacier View Learning Centre – alternate education program for secondary students. Approximately 120 students;
- Sandwick Technical Education Program – affiliated with Glacier View. Approximately 20 students;
- French Immersion Program – elementary at Ecole Puntledge Park (dual track) and Robb Road (single track), and secondary at Mark Isfeld (dual track). Approximately 700 elementary and 400 secondary students;
- North Island Distance Education School (NIDES) – located at former Tsolum school. Approximately 1300 enrolled, equal to about 550 FTE, Grades K - 12;
- NIDES Fine Arts e-Cademy (FAE) – also located at the former Tsolum school. Approximately 125 students Grades K - 8;
- Montessori Program – at Queneesh Elementary. Approximately 150 students;
- Lifeskills Program – located at Mark Isfeld Secondary. Approximately 30 students;
- PREP Program – located at Vanier Secondary. Approximately 30 students;
- Behaviour Resource Services – located at Robb Road Elementary. Approximately 25 students;
- ENTER (Robotics Program) – elementary at Aspen Park and secondary at Highland Secondary. Approximately 50 students.

5. COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

SD 71 is located on Vancouver Island, sharing the same boundaries as the Comox Valley Regional District. This regional district was established in February 2008, following the restructure of the Comox Strathcona Regional District into two regional administrative areas: Comox Valley Regional District and the Strathcona Regional District. This change along with changes in the Canada Census Division and Subdivision boundaries between the Census years of 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016, has presented challenges in comparing data and undertaking trend analysis. The demographic information includes Census Canada data as well as projections generated by BC Statistics PEOPLE modelling. Best efforts were made in adjusting and applying the available data used to generate the estimates contained in this section. The 2016 Census data added to this report is preliminary and may be subject to undercount adjustments, therefore, the projections may need to be recalibrated with later data.

5.2 BOUNDARIES

SD 71, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), and the Courtenay Local Health District have the same boundaries and include the communities of Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland. A map of each administrative unit is shown as Figures 5.2a, b, and c in the full LRFP report. Therefore, demographic data that applies to these administrative units will simply refer to the Comox Valley.

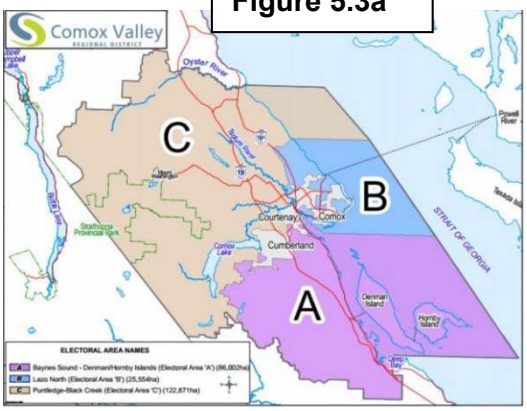
5.3 HISTORIC POPULATION

The Comox Valley has a distinct urban and rural dichotomy.

Comox, Courtenay and Cumberland comprise the “urban population centre” for the Comox Valley Regional District. From the Census population tables below, the majority of the residents reside within this urban core, increasing from 62.5% urban dwellers in 2006 to 64.7% urban dwellers in 2011. This follows the same pattern as in British Columbia as a whole, which increased, albeit more slowly, from 85% to 86% urban dwellers in the same period (Statistics Canada). Their rapid growth is evident from the figure below.

This is contrasted by the populations for the rural area outside of the three municipalities. The rural areas are made up of three Electoral Districts shown on the Figure 5.3a map. Much of the land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve and is farmland. When 2006 and 2011 populations are compared, two of the three Electoral Areas

Figure 5.3a



(A and B) are in decline. The third rural area (Area C) may also be in decline based on earlier 1996 to 2001 figures.

The 2016 Census statistics for provincial and national urban/rural growth are not yet available to determine if the urban/rural split has changed or to be more conclusive about the rural decline. In the meantime, it is reasonable to focus separately on the urban and rural areas in assessing school facility needs.

Table 5.3a: Estimated Populations of the Region and Communities

Location (and Notes)	1996	2001	1996 - 2001 change (3)	2006	2001 - 2006 change (3)	2011	2006 - 2011 change	2016	2011 - 2016 change (4)
Comox Valley				59,482		63,538	6.8%	66,527	4.7%
Comox (1)	11,069	11,172	0.9%	12,385	10.9%	13,627	10.0%	14,028	2.9%
Courtenay (1)	17,404	18,304	5.2%	2,2021	20.3%	2,4099	9.4%	25,599	5.7%
Cumberland	2,548	2,618	2.7%	2,762	5.5%	3,398	23.0%	3,753	10.4%
First Nations Reserves				272		251	-7.7%	n/a	
Comox Valley A (2)	6,988	6,762	-3.2%	6,973	3.1%	6,899	-1.1%	7,213	7.1%
Comox Valley B (Lazo North) (1)	8,074	7,941	-1.6%	6,970	-12.2%	6,939	-0.4%	7,095	2.0%
Comox Valley C (Puntledge - Black Creek)	8,615	7,584	-12.0%	8,099	6.8%	8,325	2.8%	8,617	3.2%

Notes applicable to Table 5.3a above:

(1) On-line data tables include notations that the boundaries of geographic areas may change from one census to another. Therefore, there may be a fair margin of error in comparing population figures between the Census periods.

(2) For 1996 and 2001, this area has been estimated by Cascade by combining the statistics for Comox-Strathcona Areas A and K. These two areas are combined into Comox Valley Area A for the 2006 and 2011 Census. On-line data tables include notations that the boundaries changed over the four Census periods. Therefore, there may be a fair margin of error in comparing population figures between the Census periods.

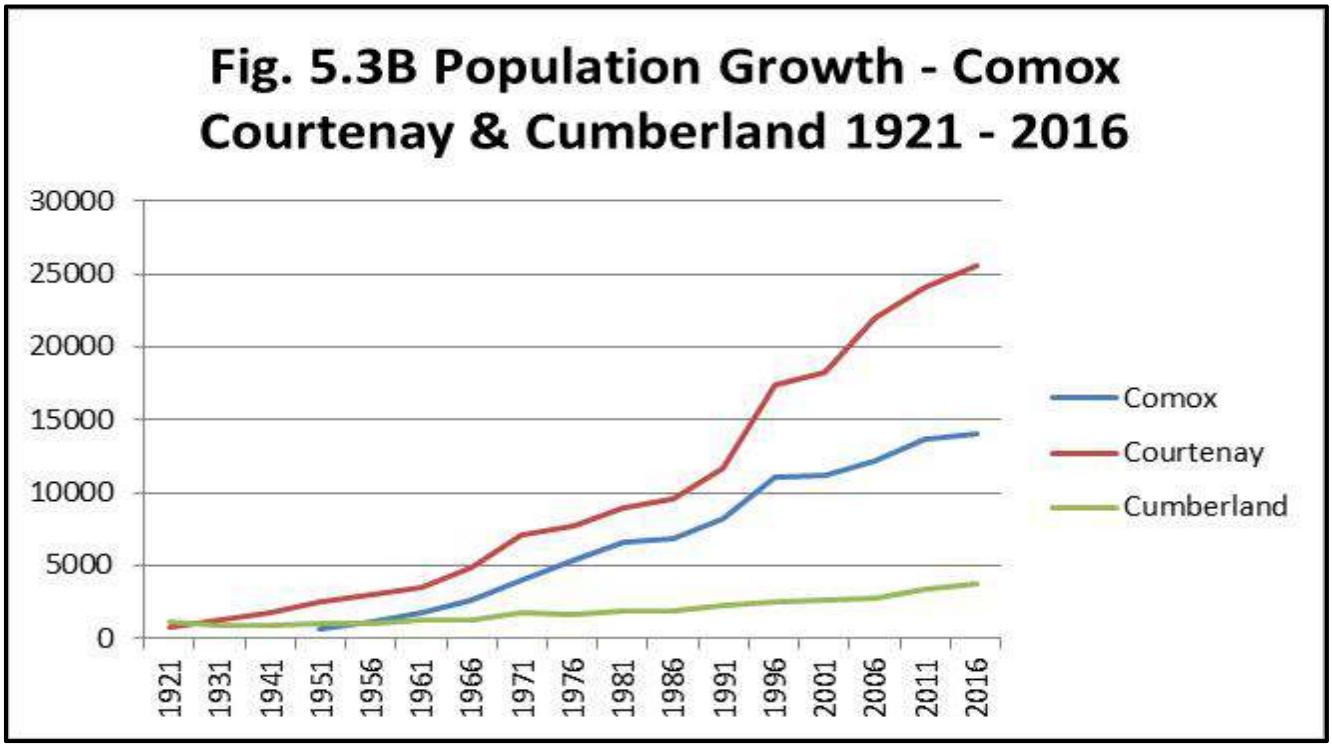
(3) May not be reliable because the boundaries of geographic areas may have changed;

(4) The boundaries between Courtenay and the three Electoral Areas have changed between the 2011 and 2016 Census. Some of the data sources have adjusted the 2011 Census figures to follow the new boundaries; therefore, there may be minor inconsistencies in the figures for the same year quoted for these four areas in this report.

Municipal population statistics are maintained by BC Stats using Canada Census for the urban centres over a significant period of time. These figures may not be exactly comparable due to changes such as annexations. An example is the population gain of 824 when land was annexed by Courtenay in 2002 (Source: the City of Courtenay Official Community Plan).

Notwithstanding such changes, the long period of time gives a good indication of the historical growth. Figure 5.3b below graphs the historic populations for Comox, Courtenay, and Cumberland. Since about 1931, Courtenay has had the highest population of the three centres. Both Comox and Courtenay show a history of growth. Cumberland has grown far less over the years in comparison to Comox and Courtenay and maintains a more stable population.

Figure 5.3b



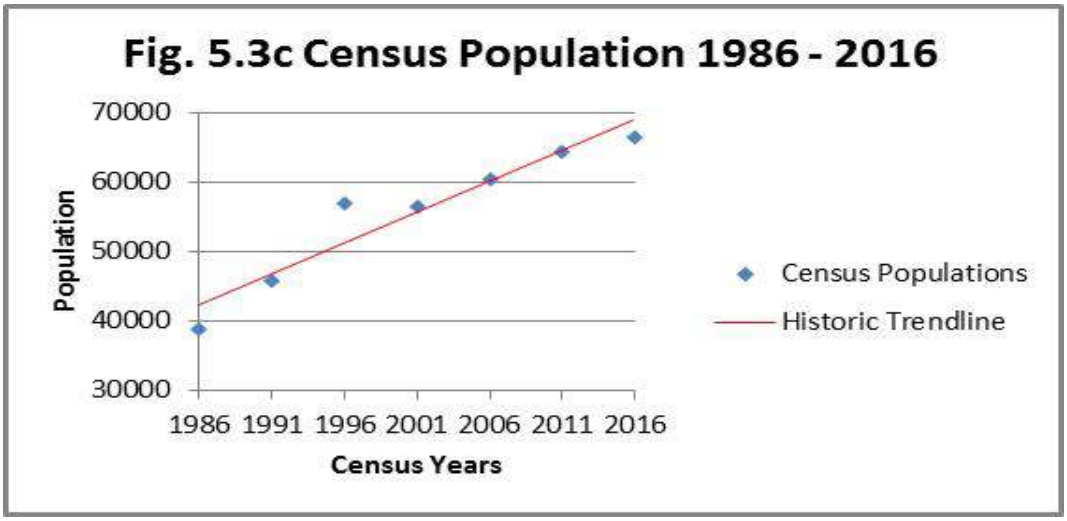
BC Stats also had developed data tables based on Canada Census data for consistent comparison of Regional Districts, but not on a community level. The numbers are different from above, but relatively close and comparable for the Census years. Table 5.3b shows BC Stats data for the Comox Valley for 1986 to 2011 and preliminary data from Statistics Canada for 2016:

Table 5.3b: Population of the Region

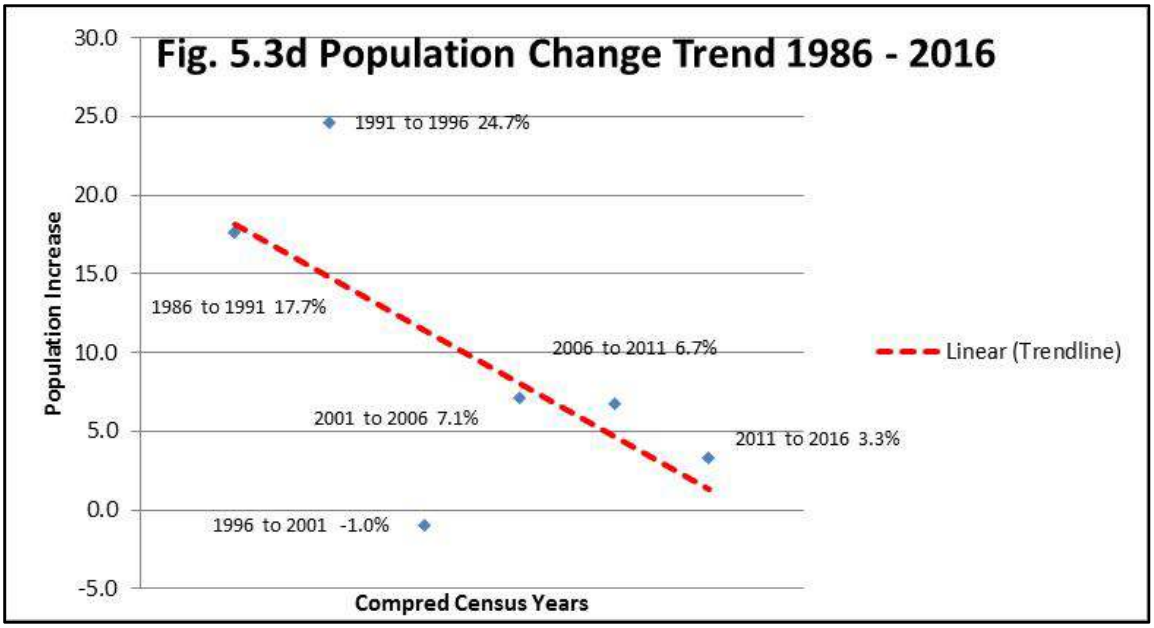
	Population	% Change
1986	38,798	n/a
1991	45,653	17.7%
1996	56,914	24.7%
2001	56,371	-1.0%
2006	60,365	7.1%
2011	64,417	6.7%
2016	66,527	3.3%

The area has gradually grown over the period of 1986 to 2016 (as shown in Figure 5.3c). The historic population line generally follows a steady linear increase, with some evidence of slightly reduced growth following the 1996 census. With the preliminary 2016 Census available now, it appears the previous growth rate is moderating.

Figure 5.3c



Plotting the growth rates reveals a potential pattern, namely the rate of growth between census years shows robust increase rates; however, the rate of growth is declining (Figure 5.3d). Considered together, the current trends suggest that the general population may not continue to grow at the same rapid rate that it has most recently.



5.4 AGE OF POPULATION

The age of the population for 2006, 2011, and 2016 is shown in the Table 5.4a below.

5.4.1 <u>Youth Age Groups</u>. Whereas between 2006 and 2011, youth age group **0 – 4 years** was increasing and all groups of **5 years and over** were in decline, the 2011 to 2016 statistics reveal a change. The change is that the age groups below 10 years of age being the break in growth. The **0 to 4** (+1.4 %) and **5 to 9** (+9.0 %) age groups are increasing whereas the **10 to 14** and **15 to 19** continue to decline. This suggests that there is a demographic "bump" moving its way through time that is very important when assessing the needs of the school age population.

5.4.2 <u>Adult Age Groups</u>. The greatest growth continues to be experienced by the seniors age category of **65 years and over.** Growth in this age group remains relatively constant with a 26.4% increase between the 2006 and 2011 census and a 25.5% increase between 2011 and 2016. The growth for the **45 to 64 years** age group declined significantly from 13.2% growth between 2006 and 2011 to a 2.5% decline between the 2011 and 2016 census. The

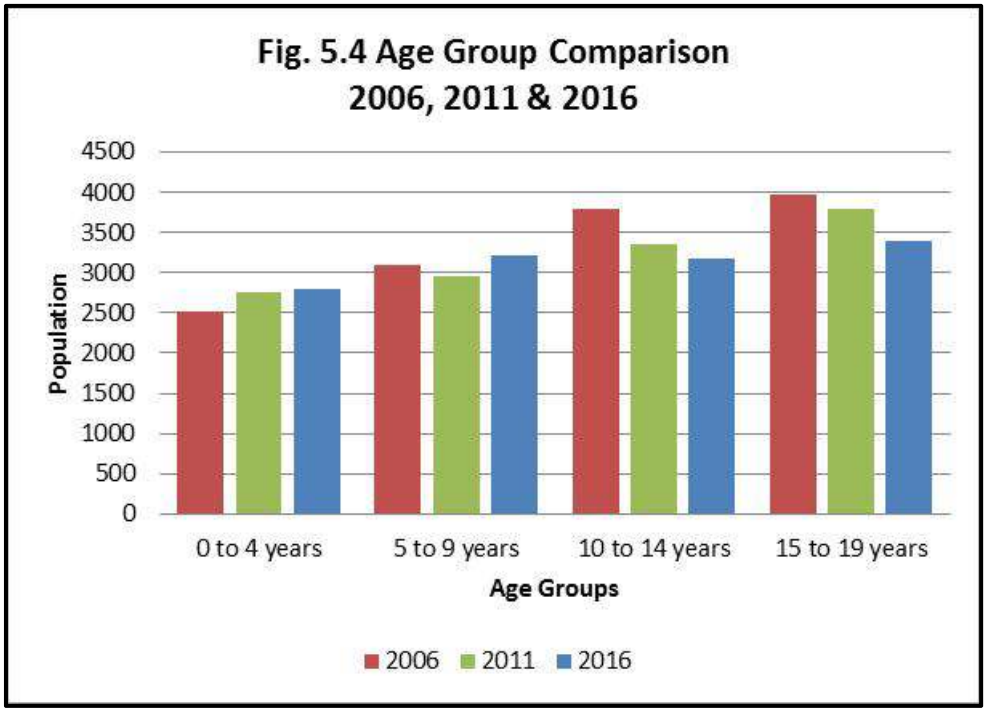
20 to 44 age group which declined slightly by 1.0% between 2006 and 2011, grew slightly by 2.2% between 2011 and 2016. Note that this is the child-bearing age group.

Table 5.4a: Population by Age Group

Note: The 2006 figures for age groups could not be adjusted for 2011 boundary changes. The total unadjusted and adjusted populations for 2006 are 58,825 and 59,482. The 2016 population is preliminary and subject to adjustment.

	2006	2011	% Change	2016	% Change
0 to 4 years	2,525	2,760	+9.3 %	2,800	+1.4 %
5 to 9 years	3,100	2,955	**-4.7 %**	3,220	+9.0 %
10 to 14 years	3,785	3,360	**-11.2 %**	3,170	**-5.7 %**
15 to 19 years	3,975	3,800	**-4.4 %**	3,395	**-10.7 %**
20 to 44 years	15,855	15,690	**-1.0 %**	16,035	+2.2 %
45 to 64 years	18,875	21,375	+13.2 %	20,835	**-2.5 %**
65 years and more	10,745	13,585	+ 26.4 %	17,060	+25.6 %

Figure 5.4 – Children Age Group changes



Another measure of the age of the population is the median age. This is the exact age where half of the population is older and half is younger. Using 2011 Census data, Comox Valley has a median age of 48.3 years, compared to the Vancouver Island/Coast Region median age of 46.5 years and BC as a whole being 41.9 years. Therefore, the population of the Comox Valley is slightly older in composition than the Island/Coast area and moderately older than the province in general.

5.5 ABORIGINAL POPULATION

A robust assessment of Aboriginal population and age characteristics is difficult. Not only do the boundary changes over the years affect the ability to compare numbers and establish trends, the statistics for some area are not reported. Statistics Canada suppresses all data for geographic areas with populations below a specified size for reasons of confidentiality. Where data is over this size, it is randomly rounded either up or down to a multiple of 5 or 10. Therefore there is ether no data or total value may not match the sum of a list of values. This applies to data collected in each Canada Census or the 2011 National Household Survey. 2016 data not yet available.

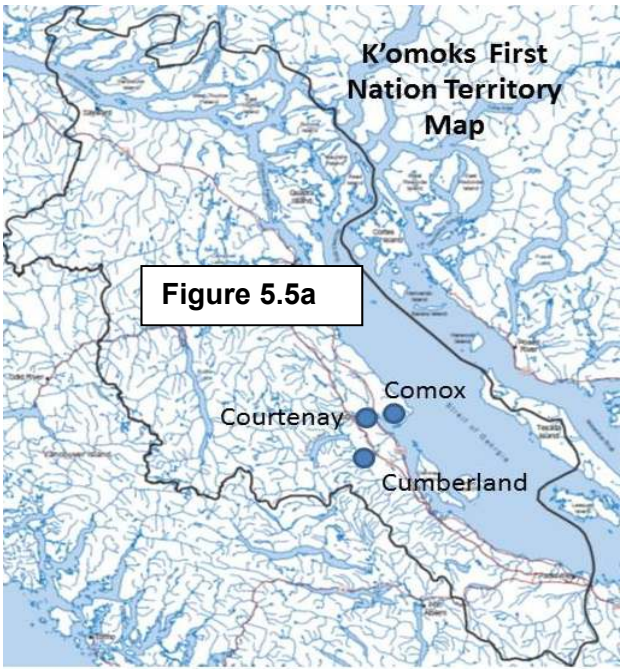


Figure 5.5a

The Comox Valley is located in the southern portion of the Territory of the K'omoks First Nation. The map to the right shows the K'omoks Territory with the three urban areas of Comox, Courtenay and Cumberland within the Comox Valley.

The following Table 5.5b shows the Aboriginal populations for Courtenay, Comox and the Comox Valley. The Aboriginal population in Courtenay has grown, but is a constant 5% of the total population of Courtenay in both 2006 and 2011. In Comox, the Aboriginal population increased in numbers as well as in percentage. The Aboriginal population made up 2.9% of the total population of Comox in 2006 and increased to 3.3% in 2011.

For Cumberland, only the total Aboriginal populations but not the age characteristics were available. The 2006 population is 225 people or 8.1% of the total population. For 2011, this population declined to 175 people making up 5.2% of the total population of Cumberland.

For the entire Comox Valley, the Aboriginal population was 2,900 people, making up 4.6% of the total population.

Table 5.5b: Aboriginal Population Statistics

	Courtenay		Comox		Cumberland		Comox Valley
	2006	**2011**	**2006**	**2011**	**2006**	**2011**	**2011**
Total Aboriginal identity population	1110	1205	360	455	225	175	**2910**
Aboriginal Population as a percentage of total population	5.0%	5.0%	2.9%	3.3%	8.3%	5.2%	**4.6%**
0 to 4 years	105	105	25	0			**170**
5 to 9 years	80	70	25	50			**240**
10 to 14 years	125	95	50	55			**255**
15 to 19 years	105	90	35	65			**325**

Sources: Statistics Canada 2006 Census and the 2011 National Household Survey. 2016 not yet available.

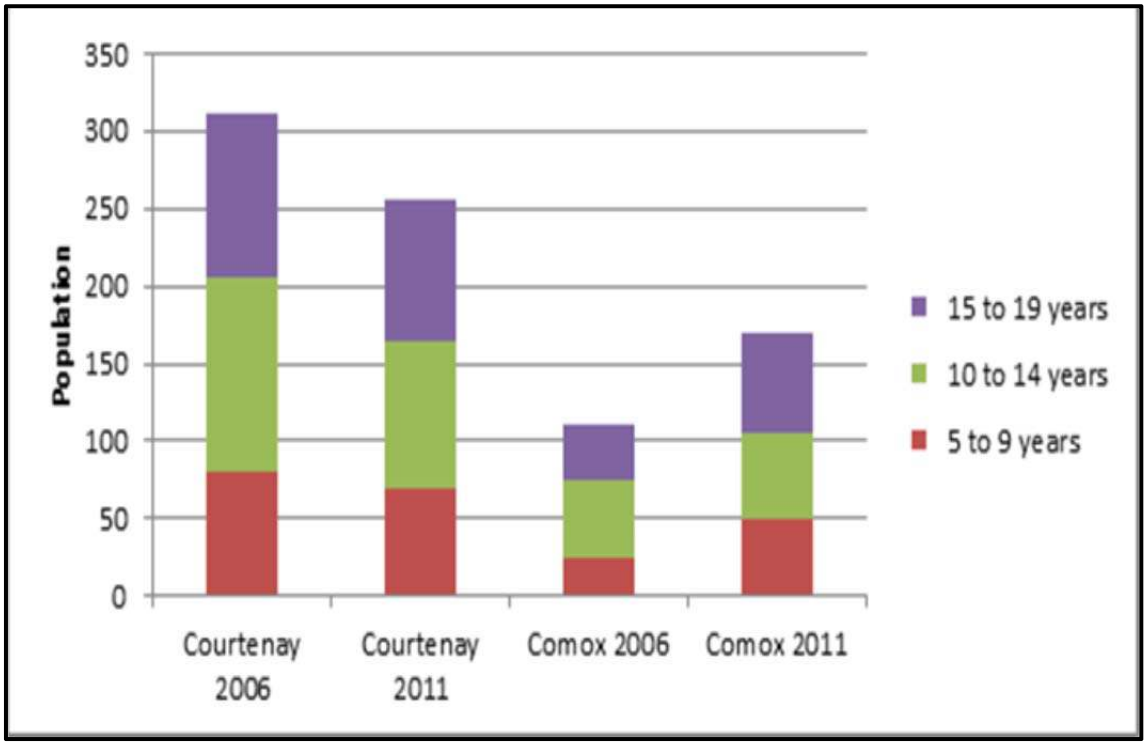
Where the data is available, a comparison of median age shows a striking difference between Aboriginal and the overall Comox Valley population data as shown in Table 5.5c:

TABLE 5.5c: Comparison of Median Age in Available Areas for the Total and the Aboriginal Population (2011)

	Total Population Median Age	Aboriginal Population Median Age
Comox	49.1 years	30.8
Courtenay	46.5	31.6
Comox Valley Area A	53.9	30.6
Comox Valley B (Lazo North)	50.1	n/a
Comox Valley C (Puntledge - Black Creek)	48.1	36.7

Figure 5.5d compares the Aboriginal school age characteristics for Courtenay and Comox for the census years of 2006 and 2011. This data not yet available for 2016 as of this date.

Figure 5.5d – Aboriginal School Age Characteristics for Courtenay and Comox



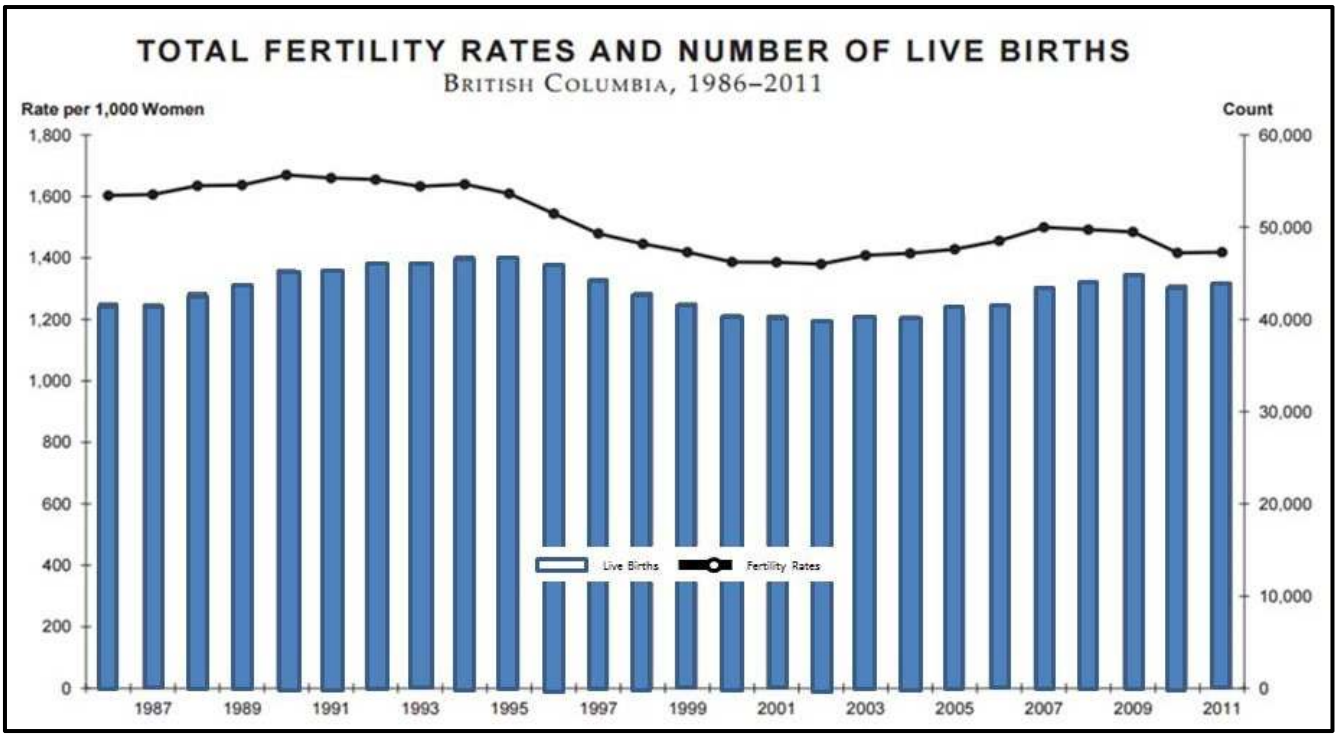
5.6 FACTORS INFLUENCING POPULATION

There are a number of factors influencing population growth.

5.6.1 Fertility rates in BC have changed over the years, becoming relatively level in recent years. Figure 5.6.1 concerning fertility rates shown below is from latest BC Vital Event Annual Report (2011). Historically fertility rates increased after World War II through the decades of 1950 and 1960. There is a pronounced decline until the late 1970s. This declining trend slowed with some variations, until a low in 2002, increased until 2007 after which fertility rates have leveled off.

In a report *Our Babies, Our Future: Aboriginal Birth Outcomes in British Columbia,* the authors observe that the younger population structure of Aboriginal population is BC is linked to a higher fertility rate for Aboriginal women compared to the non-Aboriginal women. According to the 2005 report by V. O'Donnell *Aboriginal Women in Canada*, in the period between 1996 and 2001, the fertility rate of Aboriginal women was 2.6 children compared with a figure of 1.5 among all Canadian women.

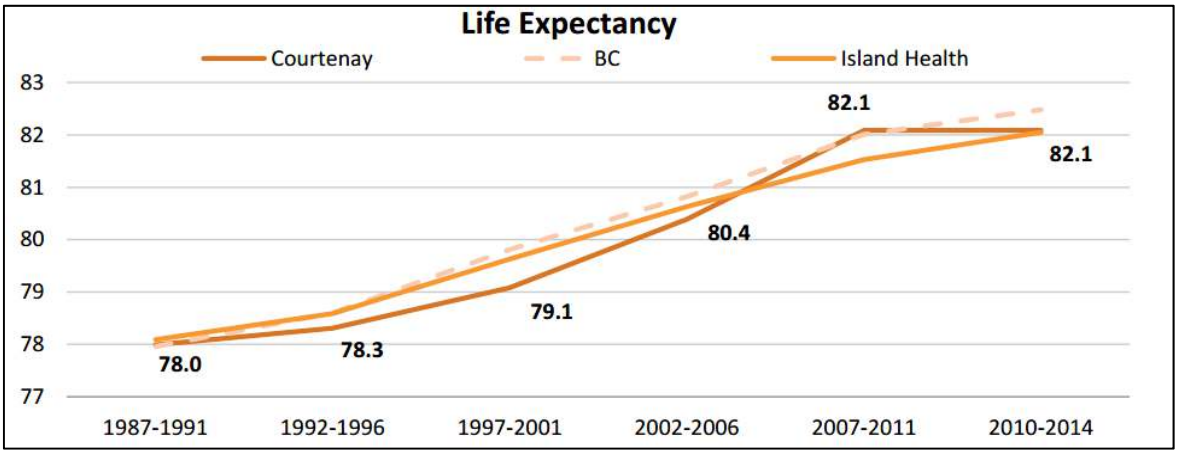
Figure 5.6.1 Fertility Rates



Source: [Trends in Vital Events – Vital Statistics Agency Annual Report 2011]

5.**6.2 Life Expectancy**. The increase in the **life expectancy** of residents in the Comox Valley mirrors that of Vancouver Island and the Province. A report produced by Local Health, show that the average life expectancy at birth has increased from 78.0 years in 1987-1991 to 82.1 years in 2010-2014. Refer to Figure 5.6.2.

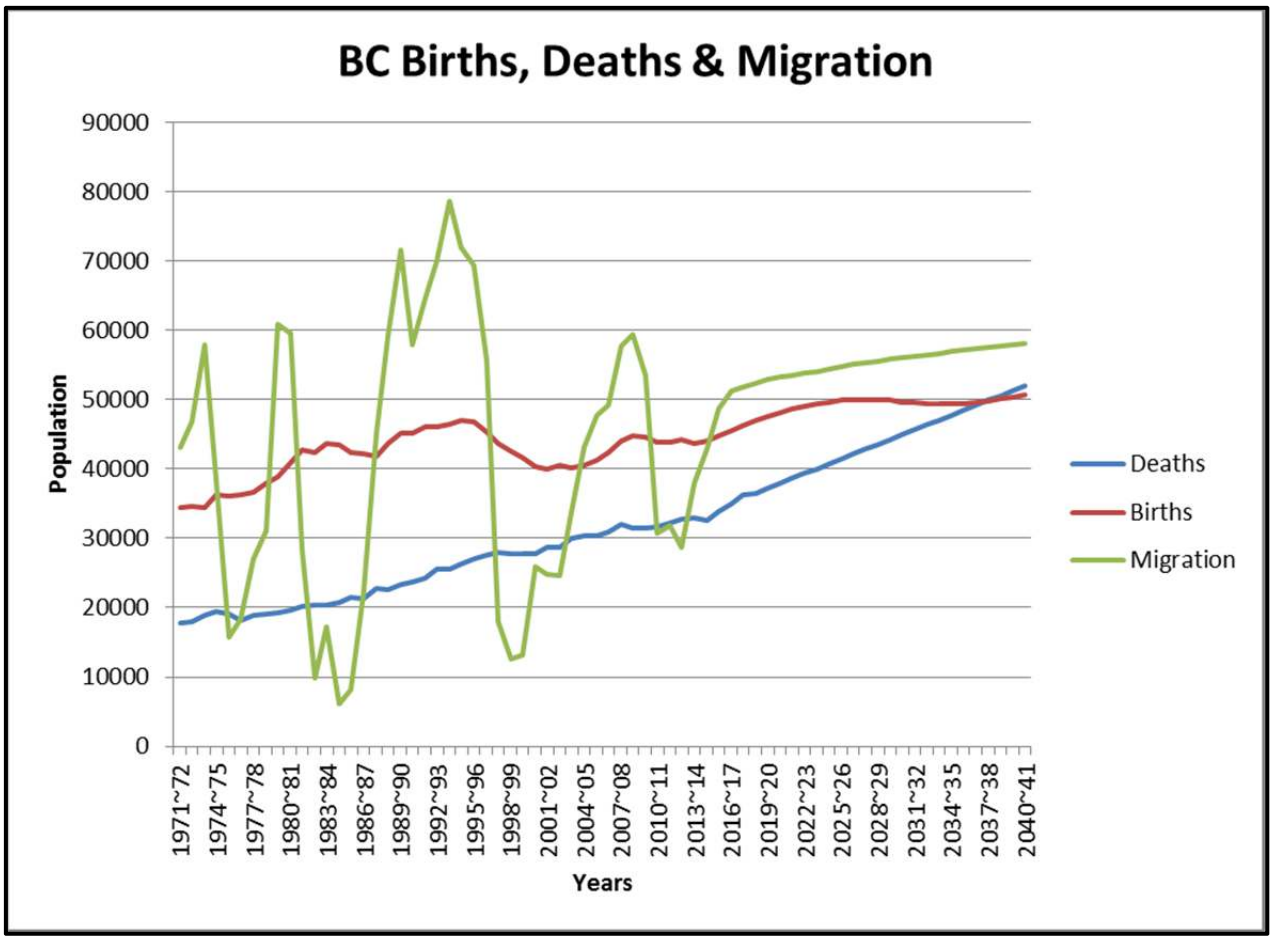
Figure 5.6.2



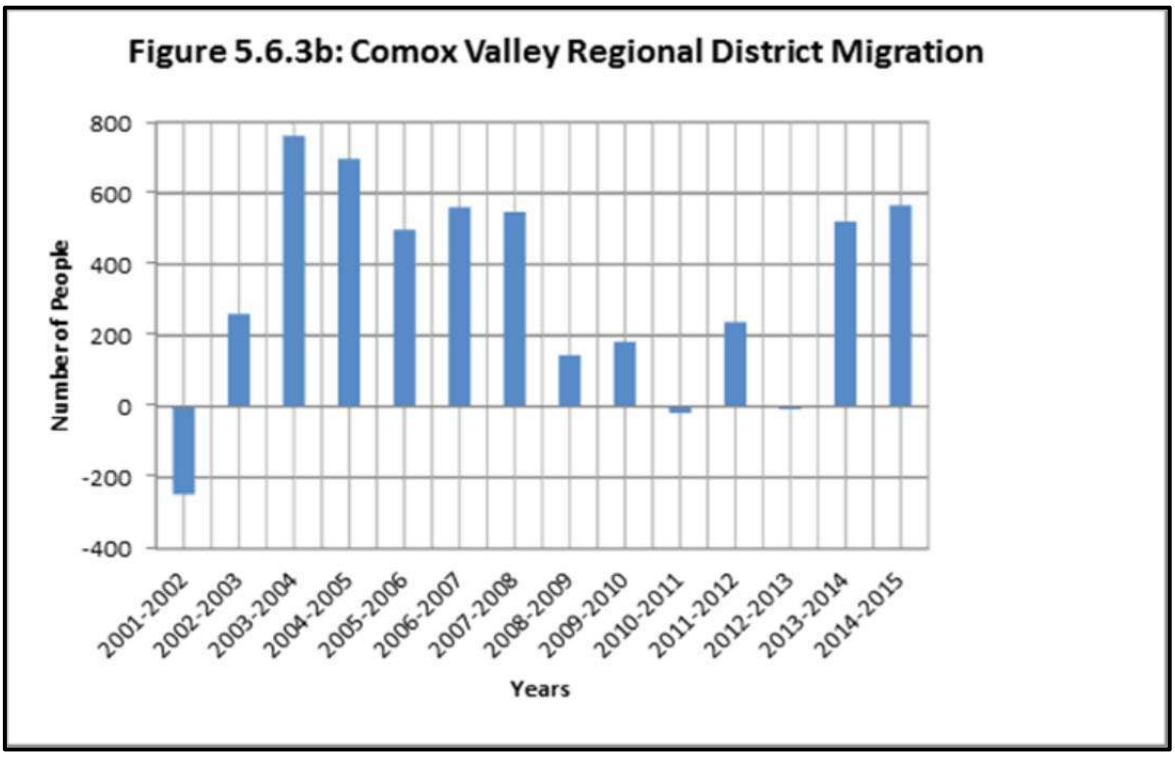
Life Expectancy in Courtenay Local Health District
Source: [2014 Local Health Area Profile Courtenay (71)] p. 13.

5.6.3 Growth and Migration. Considering **natural growth and migration**, deaths will begin to exceed births with the population generally aging. **In-migration**, although highly variable, will become the main source for growth once natural growth becomes negative. Provincial level data from BC Stats about BC births, deaths and in migration was used to generate the Figure 5.6.3a below. Because there was an apparent jog between the historic and projection periods, the initial projection data is smoothed out to reflect the most recent historic death statistics. For both projections, the number of deaths will become greater than the number of births in the 2030's and therefore any growth will be from migration into the province.

Figure 5.6.3a



People **migrating** into the Comox Valley Regional District add to the local population. Figure 5.6.3b shows the migration trend (mainly in-migration). Comox Valley is the destination of a small number of immigrants.

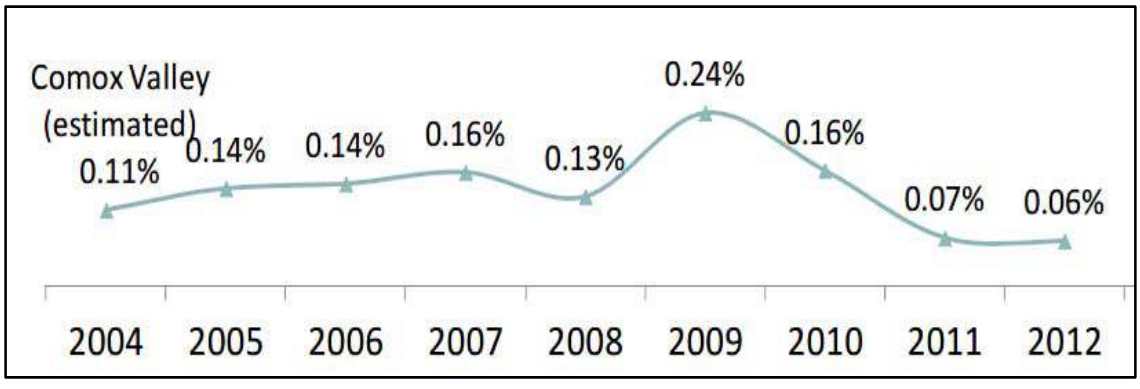


Source: BC Regional District Migration Components (Released Feb 2016)

Note that some of the data above is based on BC Stats tables for the Comox-Strathcona Regional District before the Comox Valley Regional District was created in 2008.

The population increase from immigration as a percentage of the total population shown in Figure 5.6.3c ranged between 0.24% in 2009 to a low of 0.06% in 2012.

Figure 5.6.3c - Migration as a Percent of Population



Source: Appendix A to *International Education in the Comox Valley: Current and Potential Economic Impacts* (2014).

5.6.4 Housing Affordability. There are some new factors that may have an influence on growth. A 2015 Angus Reid poll reveals that 150,000 families are struggling and are seriously thinking about moving away from Metro Vancouver to avoid that region's **increasing housing costs and transportation issues**.

To the extent that the Comox Valley has relatively more affordable house prices and available jobs, this could make the area more attractive. However, if the area's house prices also accelerate as elsewhere in BC, there may only be a limited advantage to migrate into the area.

The 2015 VanCity report *Help Wanted: salaries, affordability and labour exodus in Metro Vancouver*, among its conclusions, states that Metro Vancouver's housing crisis will motivate Millennials to migrate away in search of better opportunities.

The 2014 reports in Metro Press Metro Votes: *Young Vancouverites Fleeing to More Affordable Pastures* cites Statistics Canada numbers the Vancouver region is losing residents aged 20 to 30 to other provinces; resulting in a net loss of 1,571 residents in that age group in 2013 and 770 leaving the year before. Certainly the Comox Valley is more affordable for families than Metro Vancouver.

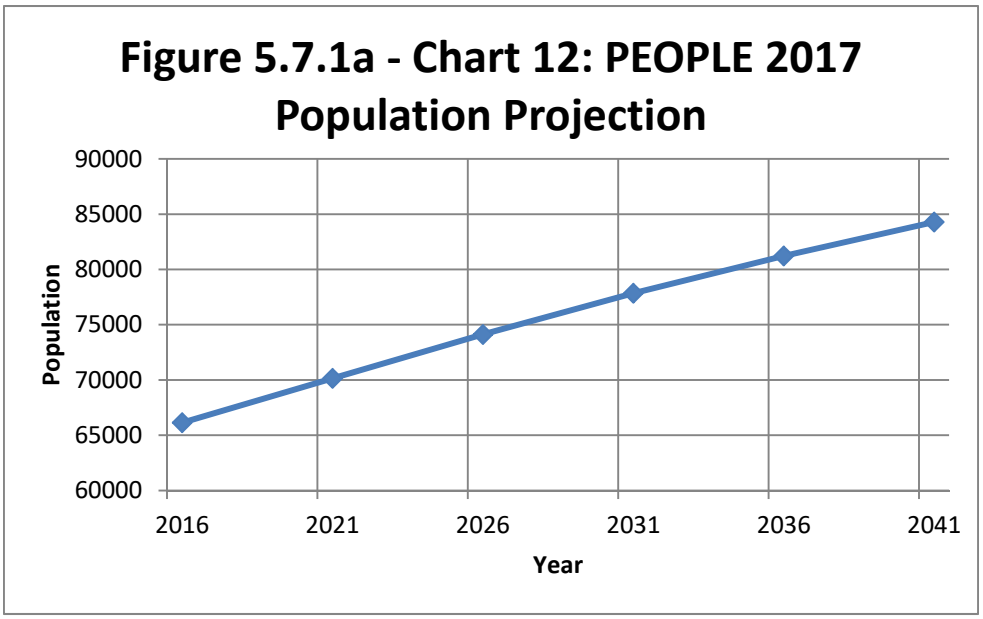
Anecdotally, locals have also identified Alberta oil patch workers locating their families in Comox Valley and commuting to work by convenient air services from here to Alberta.

5.7 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

5.7.1 General Population.

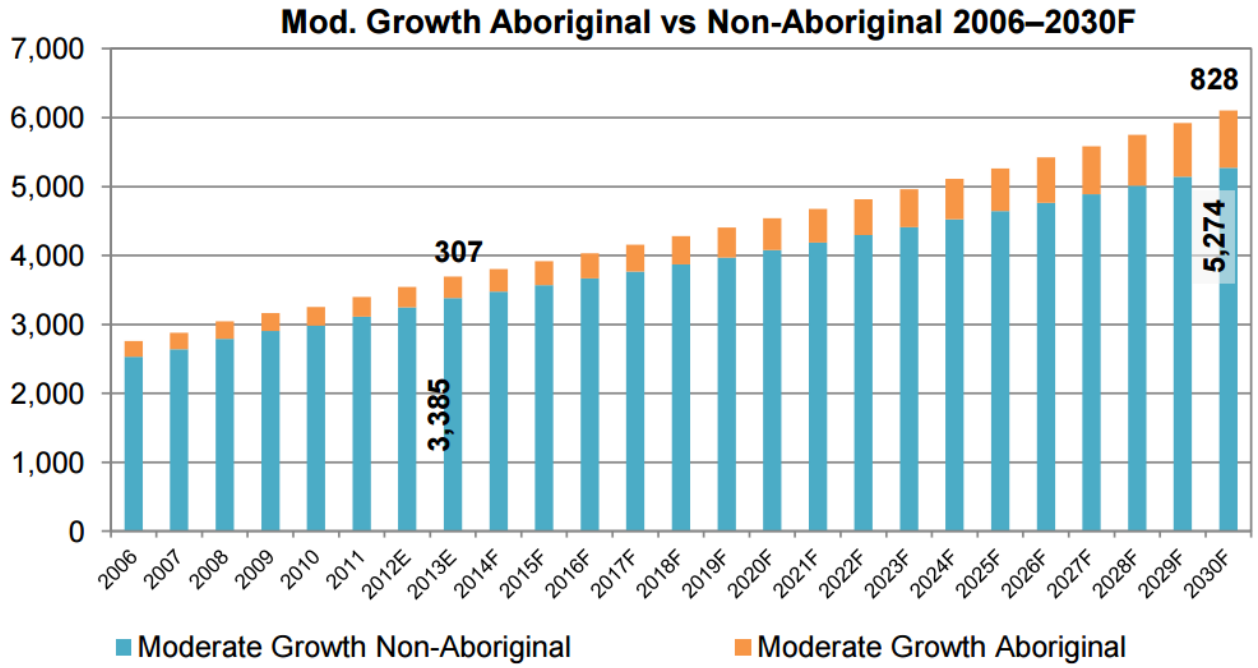
BC Stats projects future population, including population at the school district level. British Columbia provincial-level Population Projections, referred to as P.E.O.P.L.E., is a model that generates population figures based on trends and assumptions of future trends for the factors described in the previous section. P.E.O.P.L.E. population projection for the Comox Valley shown below in Figure 5.7.1a, were generated by BC Stats in August 2017, an update from the previous May 2015 version.

This August 2017 update still does not appear to take into consideration the 2016 Census. The update P.E.O.P.L.E. projection including the 2016 Census will become available in early 2018 and will provide estimates from July 2017 onward over the projection period to 2041. At that time, these projections may require adjustment. On a very general level, the projected population shown for 2016 in Figure 5.7.1a as the starting point for the 2016 – 2041 period, is very close to the actual preliminary 2016 Census figure for Comox Valley RD - the difference is just 1,680. Therefore, the BC Stats projection used as the base was corrected by this difference and may be used with a high level of confidence, subject to future updating.



Population projections for the Aboriginal population are available at the national and provincial levels, but not at the community level. The *Cumberland Official Community Plan* (OCP) includes a graph for Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal population growth shown in Figure 5.7.1b. It is based on a growth rate of 6% in the Aboriginal community and 3% in the general population.

Figure 5.7.1b - Graph from the Cumberland OCP



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5.7.2 School Age Population Projection

School ages are typically encompassing Census data ranging between 5 to 19 years of age. Thus the census categories of ages 5 to 9 years, 10 to 14 years, and 15 to 19 years are assessed in this section.

Knowing the number of students in these five year age groups allows understanding of the numbers of students that flow through the system and provide the capacity to accommodate them.

Tracking the trend for the preschool groups is valuable in determining the capacity for each year's incoming kindergarten.

The figures for the Comox Valley generated by the PEOPLE model are shown in Table 5.7.2a below and graphed in Figures 5.7.2a and b. Once the provincial PEOPLE projections are updated, these projections may require adjustment.

Table 5.7.2a - Preschool and School Age Population Projections

Years	Under 5 Years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	15 to 19 years
2016	2,804	3,116	3,046	3,441
2017	2,715	3,173	3,097	3,380
2018	2,691	3,184	3,125	3,336
2019	2,718	3,185	3,208	3,202
2020	2,770	3,114	3,341	3,194
2021	2,820	3,107	3,382	3,221
2022	2,890	3,063	3,450	3,246
2023	2,961	3,062	3,480	3,266
2024	3,026	3,121	3,499	3,338
2025	3,078	3,194	3,444	3,459
2026	3,118	3,275	3,449	3,504
2027	3,146	3,357	3,417	3,575

Figure 5.7.2a
Preschool Age Population Projections

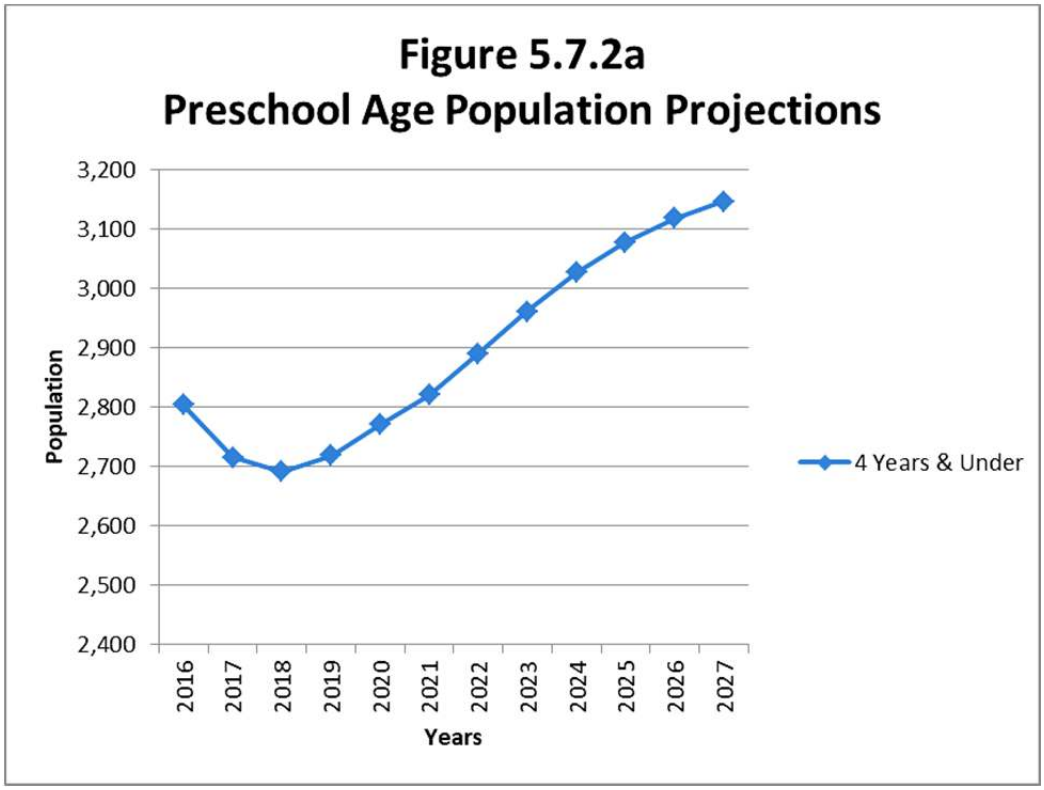
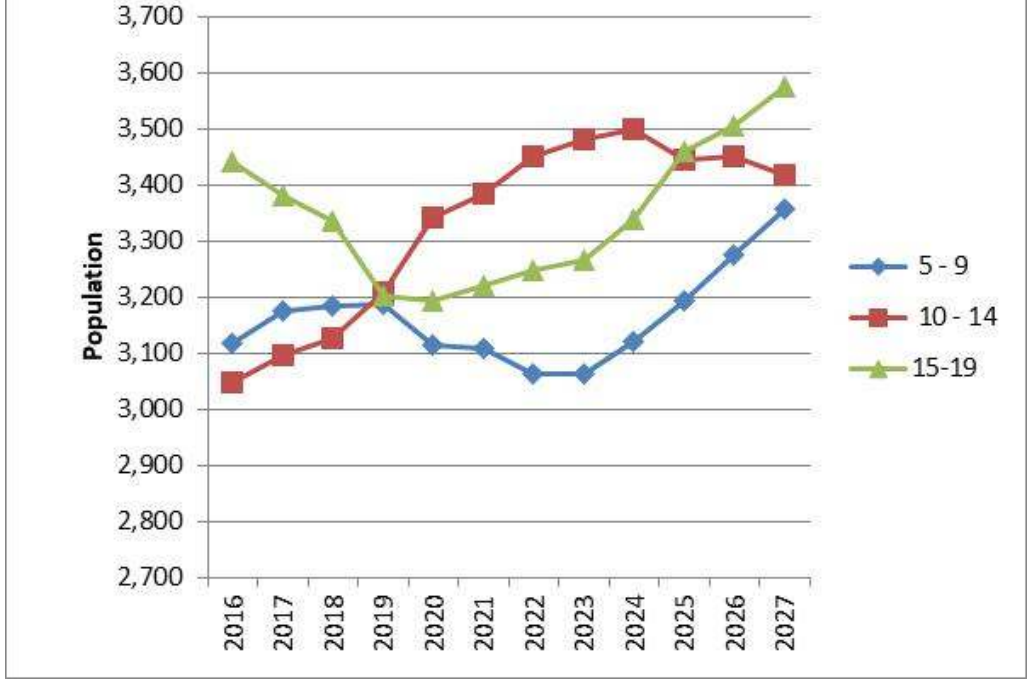


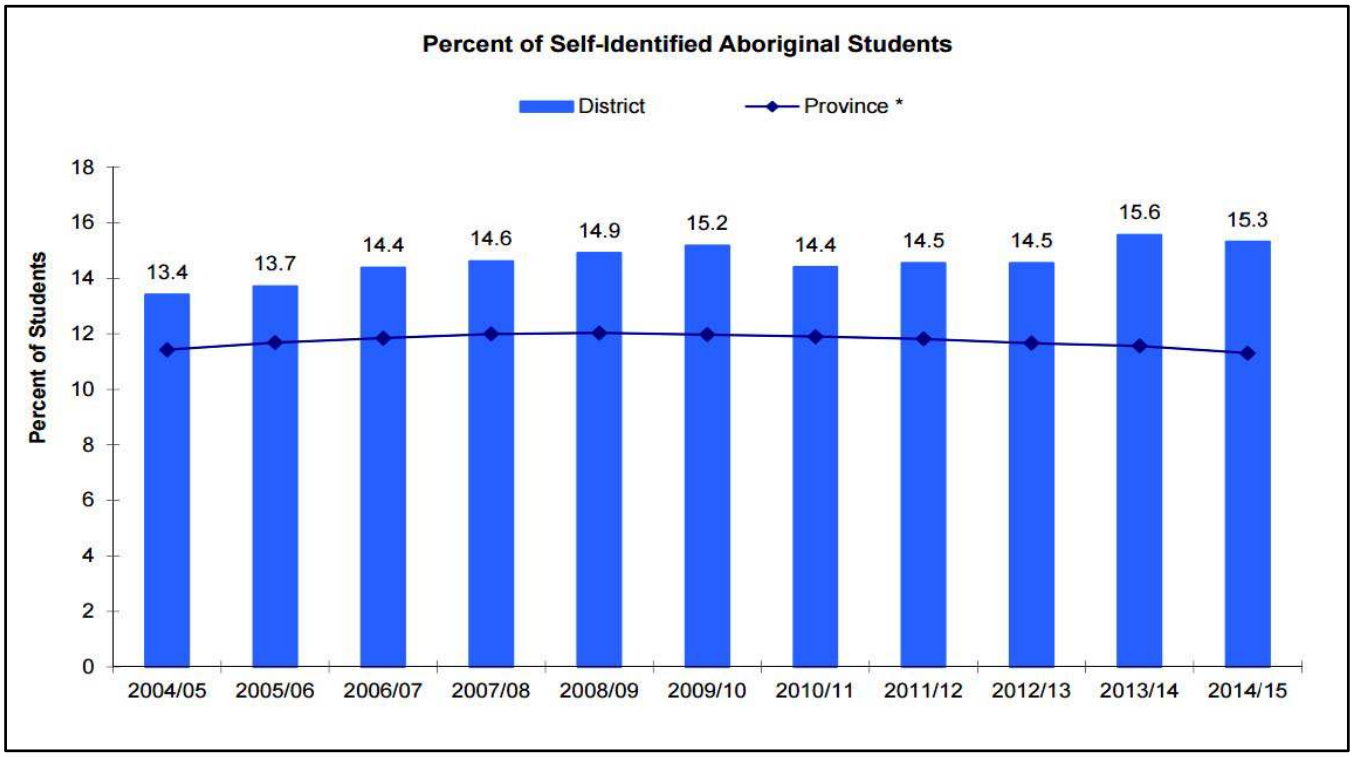
Figure 5.7.2b
School Age Population Projections



5.8 ABORIGINAL STUDENT POPULATION

The Ministry of Education's report *Aboriginal Report 2010/11 - 2014/15 How Are We Doing?* reports on the Aboriginal populations within various School Districts in BC. Between 2004/5 and 2014/15, the Aboriginal student population was fairly steady, having an average of 1,372 students. In terms of the school population, the Aboriginal students have been slightly increasing as a percent of the overall school population, due to the higher fertility rate of the Aboriginal population compared to Canada as a whole. Aboriginal students in SD 71 make up a higher percentage of the overall school population in comparison to British Columbia as a whole, as shown in Figure 5.8 below:

Figure 5.8



5.9 HOUSING AVAILABILITY

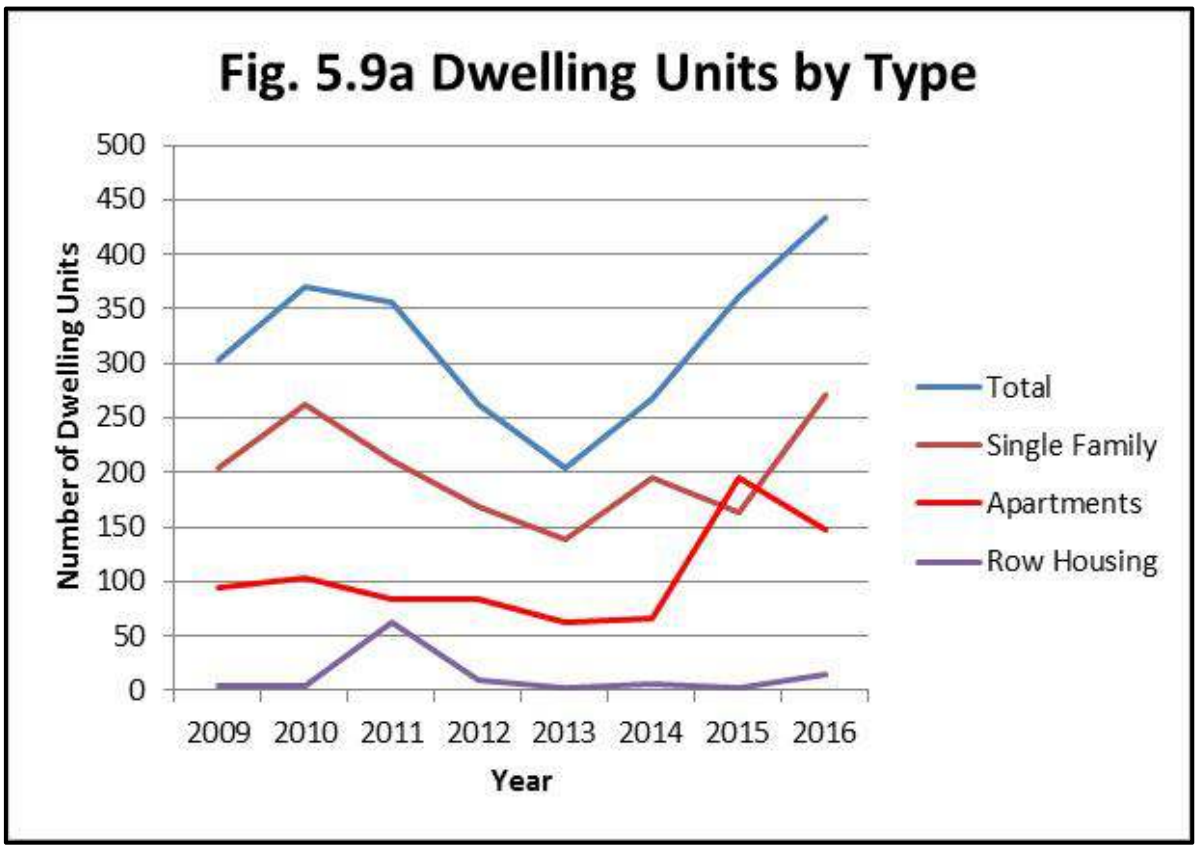
Residential Building Permits. Housing construction in the Region by type of dwelling unit (single family houses, row housing and apartments) is shown in Figures 5.9a and b.

The number of dwelling units constructed peaked about 2010 (371 starts) and 2011(356 starts), dipped down and began to rise steadily from 2013 (204 starts) returning and exceeding the 2010 peak in 2015 (361 starts) and 2016 (434 starts).

Most of the units constructed are single family. Apartments outpaced Single Family construction starts in 2015, returning to their more historical levels in 2016. This 2015 peak may be due to large projects such as Veyron in Courtenay.

Row housing makes up a very small proportion of the overall number dwelling units constructed.

Figure 5.9a



In the six year period between 2010 and 2016, Courtenay has had more dwelling units constructed than in each of the other communities and the rural areas of the Comox Valley, except in 2009 when Comox led in the number of dwelling units constructed. The Rural Area and Comox are in the mid-range and Cumberland had the least number of new dwelling units constructed. The distribution of new dwelling units by municipality is shown in Figure 5.9b.

Figure 5.9b

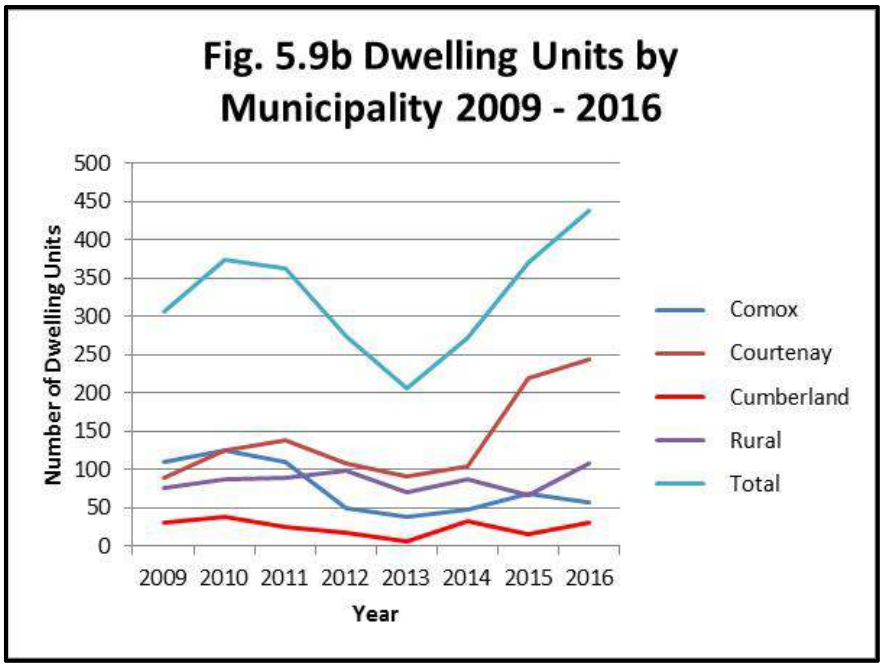


Figure 5.9c in the full LRFP report demonstrates that the majority of dwelling units are constructed in the urban areas. Construction in the rural area has been relatively stable over the six year period of 2009 to 2016, averaging 27.2% of all dwelling units constructed in the Comox Valley.

6. ENROLMENT PROJECTIONS AND SCHOOL CAPACITIES

6.1 The Demographic Analysis in Section 5 leads us to the following conclusions as they affect public school enrolments:

a. School age population growth will be very low compared to previous forecasts and optimistic municipal housing scenarios. General population growth will mostly occur in empty-nest families (singles and retirees);

b. The slow increases in school age population will occur mainly in the urban areas of Courtenay and Comox and the village of Cumberland, while rural schools enrolments will remain stable;

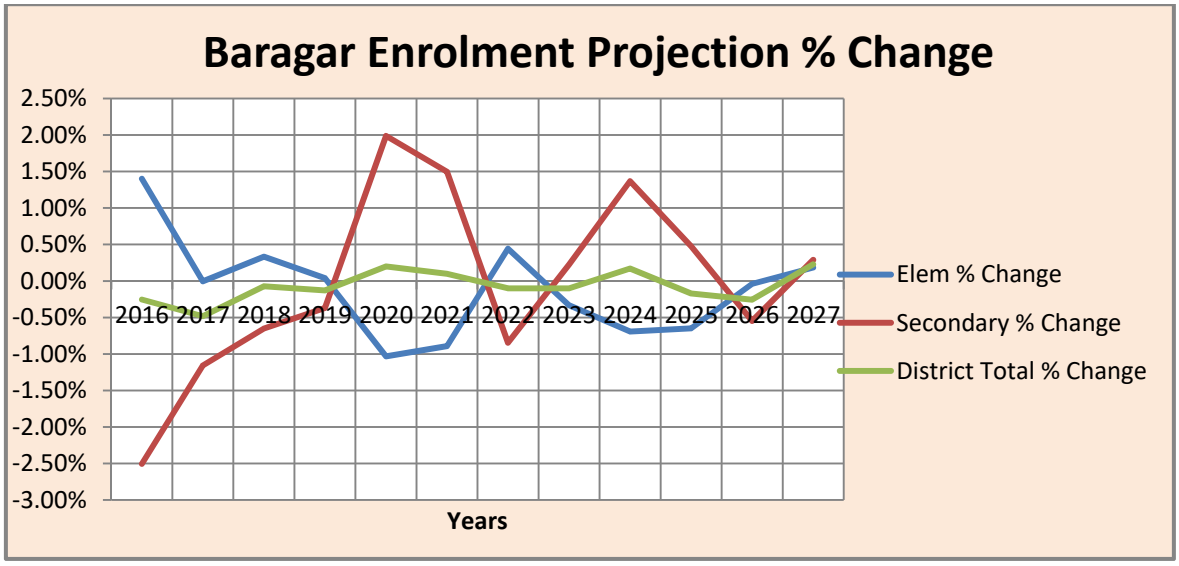
c. New housing developments, such as in West Courtenay, especially the Arden area, are more likely to result in a shift of students within the district rather than an overall increase (greater than our forecast);

d. Unforeseen new employment opportunities, not currently identified, are the only factors which could result in a future influx of families with school-age children.

6.2 The previous SD 71 Enrolment Projection was based on Baragar Demographics and was previously used for all the analysis during the 2015/2016 public consultation related to recommendations flowing from the previous 2012 Long Range Facilities Plan. That enrolment projection was provided as Figure 6.2 in the full LRFP report.

6.3 That previous Enrolment Projection showed the student population increase or decrease for each school by year. The simplified graph in Figure 6.3 summarizes the expected % change for the district using that Baragar Demographics models. It should be noted that these models do not include "local factors" such as employment opportunities, housing availability, new developments, opening of new private schools, etc.

Figure 6.3 – 2015 Baragar Demographics Percentage Enrolment Changes



6.4 Analysis of three different enrolment projections for the Comox Valley for the next five and ten years show wildly varying percentage changes for the elementary and secondary school populations. **Figure 6.4 – Previous Projections Enrolment Changes**

STUDY PERIOD % CHANGE - PREVIOUS PROJECTIONS									
	old LRFP			Baragar			BC Stats - all School Age		
ELEMENTARY	Forecast	Change	% Change	Forecast	Change	% Change	Forecast	Change	% Change
2016	4185			4127			5447		
2021	4189	4	0.10%	4062	-64.2	-1.56%	5647	200.2	3.68%
2026	4180	-9	-0.21%	4011	-51.6	-1.27%	6146	499	8.84%
Elem change 2016 to 2026		**-5**	**-0.12%**		**-115.8**	**-2.81%**		**699.2**	**12.84%**
MIDDLE & SEC	Forecast	Change	% Change	Forecast	Change	% Change	Forecast	Change	% Change
2016	3142			2919			3434		
2021	3203	61	1.94%	2957	37.2	1.27%	3274	-160.4	-4.67%
2026	3367	164	5.12%	2976	19.6	0.66%	3427	153	4.67%
Mid/Sec change 2016 to 2026		**225**	**7.16%**		**56.8**	**1.95%**		**-7.4**	**-0.22%**

Note that the 2012 LRFP and Baragar Demographics predicted declining elementary enrolment and increasing middle and secondary enrolment. On the other hand, BC Stats predicted growth in elementary school age population and a decline in secondary school age children.

6.5 The work in this strategic study indicates a need for a **new Enrolment Projection**, discarding both the previous version from the 2012 LRFP, the Baragar projection from 2015, and BC Stats which was based on the 2011 Census. The new Enrolment Projection is presented in Figure 6.5a and b below.

Figure 6.5a – Proposed Percentage Enrolment Changes

ENROLMENT PROJECTION % BY CASCADE IN 2017					
YEAR	ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE			SECONDARY	DISTRICT
	RURAL ELEM	URBAN ELEM & MIDDLE	GROWTH AREA ELEM/MID	URBAN SECONDARY	AVERAGE OF ALL SCHOOLS
2017	1.80%	2.60%	3.38%	0.50%	2.07%
2018	1.80%	2.00%	2.60%	2.00%	2.10%
2019	1.70%	1.90%	2.47%	1.10%	1.79%
2020	1.40%	1.70%	2.21%	0.75%	1.52%
2021	1.20%	1.40%	1.82%	0.50%	1.23%
2022	1.00%	1.30%	1.69%	0.40%	1.10%
2023	1.00%	1.30%	1.69%	0.30%	1.07%
2024	1.00%	1.25%	1.63%	0.40%	1.07%
2025	0.90%	1.20%	1.56%	0.60%	1.07%
2026	1.00%	1.30%	1.69%	0.70%	1.17%
2027	1.00%	1.30%	1.69%	0.80%	1.20%
2028	1.00%	1.30%	1.69%	0.90%	1.22%

Notes

1. Use Urban Elem % to generate enrolment forecast for Cumberland Community School for all grades.
2. Use Growth Area % (Elem/Mid) for identified areas of housing growth, eg. West Courtenay area: Arden El, Courtenay El, Puntledge El, Lake Trail Middle.

Figure 6.5b – Proposed Enrolment Forecast

2017 LRFP ENROLMENT PROJECTION BASED ON ALL FACTORS (draft 14 R1 as of 30 Nov 2017 with W. Courtenay grade changes)													
SCHOOL	**ZONE**	**GRADES**	**2017/18 ENROL** *Note 2*	**2018/19**	**2019/20**	**2020/21**	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
ELEMENTARY	**excluding Strong Start students**												
Airport El	urban	K - 7	139	142	144	147	149	151	153	155	157	159	161
Arden El (Note 4)	urban, growth	K - 5	315	323	331	338	345	350	356	362	368	374	380
Aspen Park El	urban	K - 7	341	348	354	360	366	370	375	380	384	389	394
Brooklyn El	urban	K - 7	329	336	342	348	353	357	362	366	371	376	380
Courtenay El	urban, growth	K - 5	172	176	181	185	188	191	195	198	201	204	208
Cumberland Comm - El	urban elem	K - 9	476	486	495	503	510	517	524	530	536	543	550
Denman Is El	rural	K - 7	50	51	52	52	53	54	54	55	55	56	56
Hornby Is El	rural	K - 7	42	43	43	44	45	45	46	46	46	47	47
Huband Park El	urban	K - 7	379	387	394	401	406	412	417	422	427	433	438
Miracle Beach El	rural	K - 7	234	238	242	246	249	251	254	256	258	261	264
Ecole Puntledge Park El	urban, growth	K - 7	462	474	486	496	505	514	523	531	540	549	558
Queneesh El	urban	K - 7	439	448	456	464	471	477	483	489	495	501	508
Ecole Robb Road El	urban	K - 7	471	480	490	498	505	511	518	525	531	538	545
Royston El	rural	K - 6	225	229	233	236	239	241	244	246	248	251	253
Valley View El	urban	K - 7	354	361	368	374	379	384	389	394	399	404	409
Sub-total Elem & Cumberland, excl Navigate			**4428**	**4521**	**4611**	**4693**	**4762**	**4826**	**4891**	**4955**	**5017**	**5084**	**5153**
MIDDLE & SEC													
Cumberland Comm - Mid		7 - 9	*These middle school grades included in Cumberland Community School in elementary group above.*										
Lake Trail Middle	urban	6 - 9	317	325	334	342	351	360	370	379	389	399	410
GP Vanier Sec	urban	8 - 12	968	987	998	1006	1011	1015	1018	1022	1028	1035	1044
Highland Sec	urban	8 - 12	579	591	597	602	605	607	609	611	615	619	624
Mark Isfeld Sec	urban	8 - 12	943	962	972	980	985	989	992	996	1001	1008	1017
Sub-total Middle/Sec excluding Cumberland			**2807**	**2865**	**2901**	**2929**	**2951**	**2971**	**2988**	**3008**	**3034**	**3062**	**3094**
Total K - 12			**7235**	**7386**	**7513**	**7623**	**7713**	**7797**	**7879**	**7963**	**8050**	**8147**	**8247**
Alternate Schools: Nala'atsi, Glacier View		8 - 12	123	125	127	129	131	132	133	135	136	137	139
Navigate Academy		K - 8	128	127	127	127	128	128	129	130	131	132	132
In District Grand Total			**7486**	**7639**	**7768**	**7879**	**7972**	**8057**	**8141**	**8227**	**8317**	**8415**	**8518**
Distributed Learning	NIDES	*Note 3*	1775	1764	1767	1765	1773	1781	1787	1797	1814	1826	1833
Grand Total			**9261**	**9403**	**9534**	**9644**	**9745**	**9838**	**9929**	**10025**	**10131**	**10241**	**10351**

Notes

1. Use Urban Elem % to generate enrolment forecast for Cumberland Community School for all grades.
2. Source for 2017/2018 Actual Enrolments is Headcount Enrolment figures from schools as of 30 Sept 2017 - Form 1701 (as of 13 Oct 2017).
3. District is gaining Distributed Learning students from other districts (ie. SD 40) because of its successful NIDES program, according to SD 71 sources.
4. Use Growth Area % (Elem/Middle) for identified areas of housing growth, eg. West Courtenay: Arden Elem.Courtenay Elem, Puntledge Elem, Lake Trail Middle.
5. Puntledge English students go to Lake Trail after Grade 5, French students stay to Grade 7.

6.6 Capacity Utilization

6.6.1 The Ministry of Education manages the province-wide school infrastructure needs by examining Capacity Utilization, the percentage of occupancy compared to building capacity.

Nominal versus Operating Capacity. Historically the Ministry established a school "**Nominal Capacity**" based on 25 students per classroom for Grades 1 – 12 and did not include Kindergarten. It was excluded because at that time it was a half-day program. This has changed with full day kindergarten which has resulted in more blended classes such as K-1 across the province. Nominal capacity now includes the Kindergarten classrooms.

The **Operating Capacity** is the effective capacity of the school recognizing mandated maximum class sizes of 25 students for Grades 4 – 12, 21 students for Grades 1 – 3, and 19 students for Kindergarten. To determine Capacity Utilization, the Nominal Capacity of a school is used. The Ministry record of Nominal Capacity of a school can be amended by submission of a Design Aid Sheet for the school, showing the feasible usage of all spaces.

The lower the capacity utilization, the less efficiently a district is using its facilities. The district is maintaining, heating, and cleaning "unoccupied" space. The Ministry calculates this for every school as well as for the total district.

6.6.2 The Ministry clarified its target capacity utilization factors in the 2016/2017 Capital Plan Instructions issued in June 2016. For School District 71 (Comox Valley) the target average across the district was 85% capacity utilization. However, the threshold to a higher utilization factor of 90% is a district enrolment total of 7,500 students, which will occur during the life of this Long Range Facilities Plan. The Ministry instructions state: "for most areas, a forecast of 10 years is the standard for anticipating growth and should be included when assessing utilization."

On September 27th, 2016, the Ministry issued a letter to school districts removing the District Average Capacity Utilization Guideline Table from the Capital Plan Instructions, and stated that districts still have to optimize available space to alleviate capital investment needs. Therefore it is important to report capacity utilization, especially in neighbouring schools, when seeking approval for a space related project.

6.6.3 Current Capacity Utilization factors in Comox Valley schools in 2017/2018 are shown in Figure 6.6.3a as follows:

Figure 6.6.3a - CAPACITY UTILIZATION

SCHOOL	GRADES	NOM CAP	OPER CAP	2017-18 Enrol	CAP UTIL
Airport Elem	K - 7	380	317	139	43.8%
Arden Elem	K - 5	315	268	315	117.5%
Aspen Park Elem	K - 7	360	330	341	103.3%
Brooklyn Elem	K - 7	340	290	329	113.4%
Courtenay Elem	K - 5	365	337	172	51.0%
Cumberland - El	K - 6	175	168	301	179.2%
Denman Island Elem	K - 7	115	89	50	56.2%
Hornby Island Elem	K - 7	165	135	42	31.1%
Huband Elem	K - 7	390	345	379	109.9%
Miracle Beach Elem	K - 7	265	229	234	102.2%
Puntledge Park Elem	K - 7	570	467	462	98.9%
Queneesh Elem	K - 7	550	527	439	83.3%
Robb Road Elem	K - 7	525	476	471	98.9%
Royston Elem	K - 6	265	226	225	99.6%
Valley View Elem	K - 7	430	383	354	92.4%
ELEM TOTAL		5210	4587	4253	92.7%
				ELEMENTARY	
Cumberland - Mid	7 - 9	375	375	175	46.7%
Lake Trail Middle	6 - 9	550	550	317	57.6%
GP. Vanier Sec	8 - 12	1125	1125	968	86.0%
Highland Sec	8 - 12	800	800	579	72.4%
Mark Isfeld Sec	8 - 12	850	850	943	110.9%
MID & SEC TOTAL		3700	3700	2982	80.6%
				MIDDLE/SECONDARY	
TOTAL:		8910	8287	7235	87.3%
				TOTAL	TOTAL

Notes

1. SD 71 target set by Ministry of Education is 85% Utilization.
2. If enrolment exceeds 7,500, the target rises to 90%.
3. Cumberland Elem and Middle buildings now make up a Community School. Each building accommodates a mixture of K - 9. The total capacity of the school is Nominal 550 and Operating 543. Enrolment is 476. The individual building capacity utilization above is irrelevant.
4. Portable classrooms do not count toward school capacity.

The impact of a district being below the Ministry capacity utilization factor is that priority for capital projects from that district can be reduced when the Ministry assesses competing district submissions. To have capital projects accepted into the funding approval flow, it is very desirable to exceed the Ministry capacity utilization. Currently the target is 85% for SD 71, but once enrolment reaches 7500 students the target will be 90%.

Creating Two Zones: Urban and Rural. It is recognized by the Ministry of Education that in isolated rural communities, the under-utilized school cannot be closed. It is a vital part of the community infrastructure and supports more than just the K – 12 education services. The 2016/2017 Capital Plan Instructions issued June 2016 state *"While utilization guidelines are intended to be applied as an average across the school district, they may also be applied at a "sub-district" level due to unique geographic features … or at a "family of schools" level where there are extremes in enrolment variances across the school district."*

It is appropriate to consider Capacity Utilization in two separate zones in SD 71: urban and rural. The rural schools will likely never reach their capacity, but cannot be considered for closure as they are essential components of the community.

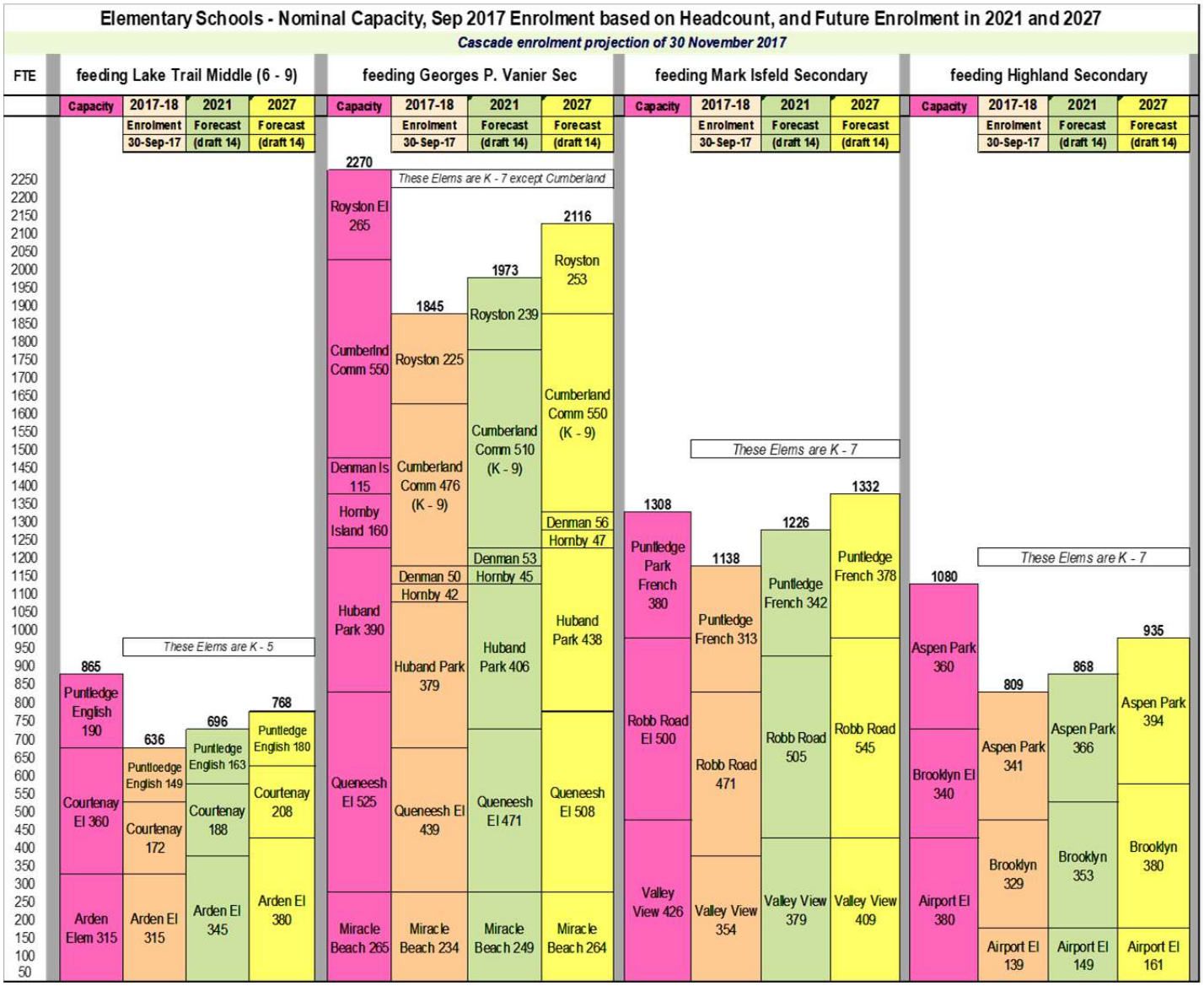
Using two zones, the Capacity Utilization is shown in Figure 6.6.3b of the full LRFP report. The Urban Zone achieves the target utilization of 85%, while the Rural Zone remains just under which is acceptable for school populations of less than 1,500 students.

Notwithstanding the 2016 relaxation of the requirements for achieving the target utilization levels, Ministry staff indicate that space-related capital projects will still be assessed against capacity availability in other schools in the district.

Capacity utilization in the secondary schools is unbalanced. This could be improved between the three schools by any or all of the following measures: boundary adjustments, feeder school assignments, or relocation of programs of choice.

6.6.4 **Enrolment vs Capacity**. Within the Families of Schools, grouped into families based on the secondary schools and Lake Trail Middle, it is useful to compare current and future enrolment against the school Operating Capacity. See Figures 6.6.4a and b.

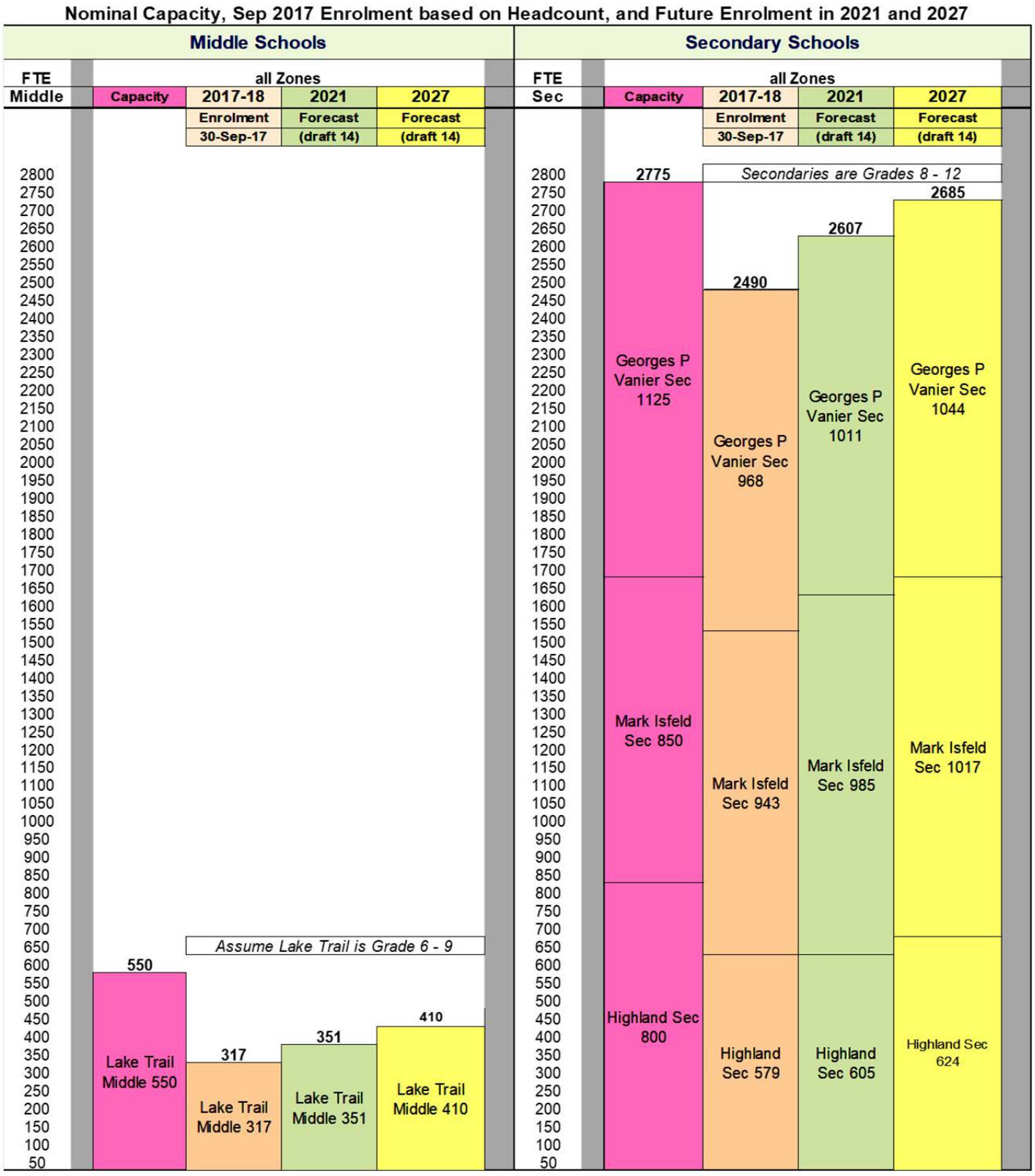
Figure 6.6.4a – Elementary Capacity vs Enrolment – Current Organization (Sep 2017)



Note that most of the current excess capacity exists in the elementary schools which feed Georges P Vanier Secondary. However it must be acknowledged that this excess capacity mostly exists in the two rural schools on Denman and Hornby Islands.

The schools feeding Mark Isfeld Secondary will reach capacity late in this 10 year planning period.

Figure 6.6.4b – Secondary Capacity vs Enrolment – Current Organization (Sep 2017)



7. ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED

7.1 Comox Valley School District serves a relatively compact geographic area, with the population concentrated in the two urban centres of Courtenay and Comox. The Village of Cumberland is an area transitioning from rural to urban, with Cumberland Community School providing excellent education opportunities in the elementary and middle grades. The rural areas to the north and south of these centres are served by small elementary schools. In particular Hornby and Denman Islands, connected to the main Vancouver Island by car ferries, are each served by their own elementary school. These two schools are important social centres for the two islands, and must be retained to serve at least the younger grades of the local population. Miracle Beach Elementary and Royston Elementary similarly serve small rural communities and provide important social centres for the communities to the north and south of the urban area.

7.2 There is operating and organizational flexibility available to the district in considering adjusting the catchment areas of some schools and district programs. Similarly, given the relative proximity of the three secondary schools, there are some opportunities to change the assignment of feeder elementaries to particular secondaries and to vary the program offerings at the three secondaries to influence student enrolment choice.

7.3 **Elementary**. Looking at the elementary enrolment versus capacity in Figure 6.6.4a, the group of most concern comprises those schools currently feeding GP Vanier Secondary. This also includes Lake Trail Middle which feeds Vanier after Grade 9.

7.4 **Middle and Secondary**. Considering the secondary situation in Figure 6.6.4b, the total capacity of the three secondary schools combined is adequate to accommodate the secondary population over the coming ten years. This is definitely the case if the two existing middle schools (Lake Trail and Cumberland Community School) continue to accommodate Grades 8 and 9. Individual overcrowding, such as in Mark Isfeld Secondary, could be addressed by catchment boundary adjustments, relocation of choice programs between the secondaries, and by a future addition to the school. Furthermore some pressure on the secondary schools could be reduced by increasing enrolment at:

- Lake Trail Middle (by adjusting its catchment boundaries and/or adding another feeder elementary) to improve its capacity utilization; and/or
- Cumberland Community School Grades 7 – 9 (by adjusting its catchment boundaries).

7.5 **Phasing Out Middle Schools**. If the Board wishes to phase out one or both of the remaining middle schools in the district (Lake Trail Middle and Cumberland Community School senior grades), accommodating those Grade 8 and 9 in the secondary schools is problematic and will require more portable classrooms or a permanent addition to at least one of the secondaries. Currently the Grade 8 - 9 students at Lake Trail and Cumberland could

be accommodated in the 285 surplus spaces in the existing secondary schools, but this situation would quickly become untenable.

7.6 **Improving Capacity Utilization**. The following schools, as seen in Section 6.6.3, are very under capacity:

- Airport Elementary
- Courtenay Elementary
- Denman Island Elementary
- Hornby Island Elementary
- Lake Trail Middle

Some strategies for improving the use of these schools include:

a. Relocating district programs from more crowded schools;
b. Adding another French Immersion program;
c. Closing part of a school building to all access and adjusting the official capacity with the Ministry via submission of a "Design Aid Sheet";
d. Introducing or moving a Strong Start program;
e. Leasing out the surplus space;
f. In the case of Lake Trail Middle, redirecting one or more additional elementaries to feed this middle school.

7.7 **District Program Location**. During the development of this LRFP, consideration was given to moving the district programs located at the former Tsolum School: namely North Island Distance Education (NIDES) (K – 12) and Fine Arts e-Cadamy (FAE) (K – 8).

The FAE program at NIDES uses 6 classrooms and a music room. If relocation to another facility was desirable, there are three location options that could provide the needed physical space:

a. Courtenay Elementary – there are 6 rooms that are not core instruction at the school. They are dedicated to Strong start, Aboriginal head start, Challenge, and Boost. It would be very difficult to pull those services from that school. Furthermore this school is in the West Courtenay area which is the fastest growing enrolment area in the district. Therefore Courtenay Elementary space will be needed for future enrolment growth;

b. Highland Secondary – there could be 6 rooms made available. However the majority of the FAE students are elementary age students. Not an appropriate location in a high school;

c. Lake Trail Middle – The school has filled up with the addition of a grade six cohort. To make space available the international program would have to be moved and some consolidation of other classes would have to occur. Again, the majority of FAE students are younger than the population in this school, so not recommended. Furthermore this school is in the West Courtenay area which is the fastest growing enrolment area in the district. Therefore Lake Trail space will be needed for future enrolment growth.

7.8 **French Immersion Secondary Program Location**. Mark Isfeld Secondary is the dual track secondary school for the district, accommodating the secondary level French Immersion program. Due to its popularity, the program attracts students from throughout the district and the school is over-capacity while Highland Secondary and Vanier Secondary are below capacity. See Section 6.6.3. During the development of this LRFP, consideration was given to moving the dual track program from Isfeld to Highland or Vanier.

It was determined that moving the 434 French Immersion students from Isfeld to Highland or Vanier would create severe overcrowding at either of these schools with concomitant program, resources, and staffing disruption, therefore this option was not further considered.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS

8.1 **Starting Point**. Over a long working period of more than a year, various options were developed and considered by the Board's Facilities Committee. Work on rationalizing the feasible options was interrupted by the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) Ruling in November 2016 on class size and composition. Coping with the organizational changes forced by this decision resulted in setting aside the draft Long Range Facilities Plan until the new "start point" was established with respect to grade configurations and school communities.

8.2 **Option Development**. The intent of developing options for the Board to consider was to see if the LRFP could provide a path to standardize the grade structure in the district. The current grade structure provides a middle school model in part of the district and an elementary-secondary model in another part of the district. There are advantages to standardizing the matriculation of students through the schools, especially with respect to program offerings, staffing specialist teachers, and optimizing choices. Therefore the options developed, in addition to the "stability" option of keeping the current organization, were variations on providing consistent elementary-secondary grade structure or providing consistent middle school grade structure across the district. Even so, these discussions recognized the desirability of retaining a community school at Cumberland and of perhaps allowing non-standard grade levels in the two island schools.

8.3 **Review Process**. Over many months, the Board's Facilities Committee and senior staff reviewed various potential organizational changes and their impacts upon district schools. All of these considerations had some negative outcomes. Most importantly, imminent policy-related changes discussed in Section 9.3 would have a major impact on any premature decision to change the current organization.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 **Criteria for Recommending A Course of Action**. Four criteria were developed to assist in selecting the best course of action.

Figure 9.1 – Criteria for Selection

DEFINITION OF CRITERIA USED		
NO.	**CRITERIA**	**DESCRIPTION**
1	Organization improved from existing	Is the proposed organization/grade structure more consistent across the district? Does it facilitate delivery of programs? Do student cohorts move together from school to school?
2	Students and programs accommodated	Can in-catchment students be accommodated in their neighbourhood school? Can district programs be accommodated at appropriate schools?
3	Capacity utilization improved	Are fewer schools either too full (over-capacity) or too empty (under capacity)? Is the number of portable classrooms needed minimized?
4	Family disruption minimized	Is the effect on parents and students daily lives minimized, avoiding issues such as changing schools, longer commutes, bypassing a neighbourhood school enroute to the school of attendance, etc.

9.2 **Evaluation**. The committee-developed organizational models were evaluated against the above criteria. This process led to the Recommendations which follow.

9.3 **Imminent Issues Affecting Recommendation**. A number of issues in the near future suggest not being hasty in deciding upon any change to the district-wide re-organization. These include:

a. June 30, 2019 expiration of the Teachers' contract – new negotiations may affect class sizes and composition, changing school capacities;

b. Government initiative toward $10/day Daycare – including potential requirements to accommodate more daycares in existing schools;

c. Current district Program Reviews underway – results may include new programs of choice or relocation of existing programs;

d. Strong parental resistance to further adjustment of the district school grade structure during a school board election year (2018); and

e. Enrolment pressures not predicted in the LRFP enrolment projection in Section 6.5.

9.4 **Recommendations**. In consideration of these imminent issues described above, the recommendations at this time are as follows:

a. **LRFP is dynamic.** The Long Range Facilities Plan is owned and managed by the Comox Valley School District even though it is filed with the Ministry of Education. The plan can be updated and changed whenever necessary to reflect changing circumstances including significant enrolment and program changes. In sharing this January 2018 LRFP with stakeholders, it is recommended that it be emphasized that it is a dynamic plan which can be changed as necessary by the local board.

b. **Stability**. Grade structure reorganizations in the recent past have caused significant disruption in the district. Therefore, while maintaining in the Long Range Facilities Plan consideration of reorganization in future years of the plan, only move forward with the stability provided by the following organization:

- **Stability Model** – current mixed grade structure with Lake Trail as a 6 – 9 middle school and Cumberland as a K – 9 community school;

c. **Recommended Structure**. Continue with the current organization, for the immediate future, while the issues described in Section 9.3 play out. The effects of these impacts may generate reconsideration of the other organizational models in future years.

9.5 **Recommendations Regarding Facilities Needs**. In addition to the recommendations above related to Option Selection, certain facilities developments are recommended regardless of the grade structure in the district, based on building conditions and functionality, as follows:

a. **Seismic Upgrade of Lake Trail School** – enrolment growth and examination of all scenarios show that this facility is required to accommodate students throughout the life of this plan. Its current condition is unacceptable, therefore Project Development Report (PDR) for this seismic upgrade should be approved to allow implementation in the coming year;

b. **Seismic Upgrade of Courtenay Elementary School** – this school will also be required in the West Courtenay area for the foreseeable future. Given its current seismic rating, a seismic upgrade is a high priority therefore the Project Request Fact Sheet (PRFS) to support this project should be prepared and submitted this summer;

c. **Addition to Mark Isfeld Secondary** – all scenarios show that this school will be over-capacity. Enrolment growth will limit the feasibility of current accommodation adjustments and use of portable classrooms. An addition of 200 students should be planned for this school. Therefore this project should be a high priority in the capital plan and a Project Request Fact Sheet (PRFS) should be developed following adoption of this LRFP;

d. **Replacement of Ecole Puntledge Park** - enrolment growth and examination of all scenarios show that this facility is required to accommodate students throughout the life of this plan. Its current condition is unacceptable and beyond economic repair or upgrade. Therefore replacement of this school should be a high priority in the capital plan and a Project Request Fact Sheet (PRFS) to support this project should be developed following adoption of this LRFP;

e. **Replacement of the School Board Office** – the administration facility no longer meets the space and functionality requirements of the school board. As the district grows, this shortcoming will worsen. At the same time, the Student Services Department also needs better work space. Notwithstanding the fact that Ministry of Education capital funds would not be provided for this need, viable options for replacing the board office using local capital and other initiatives need to be developed;

f. **Disposal of Surplus Lands** – as pointed out in Section 4.9, the school district owns several non-functional land holdings. Disposal of at least some of these will reduce liability as a land-owner and generate local capital for other needs.

10. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

10.1 This LRFP contains facilities-related projects that are local initiatives only as well as projects requiring approval and capital funding from the Ministry of Education. Figure 10.1 outlines the implementation plan for both types of projects. The first three steps for Ministry capital projects are:

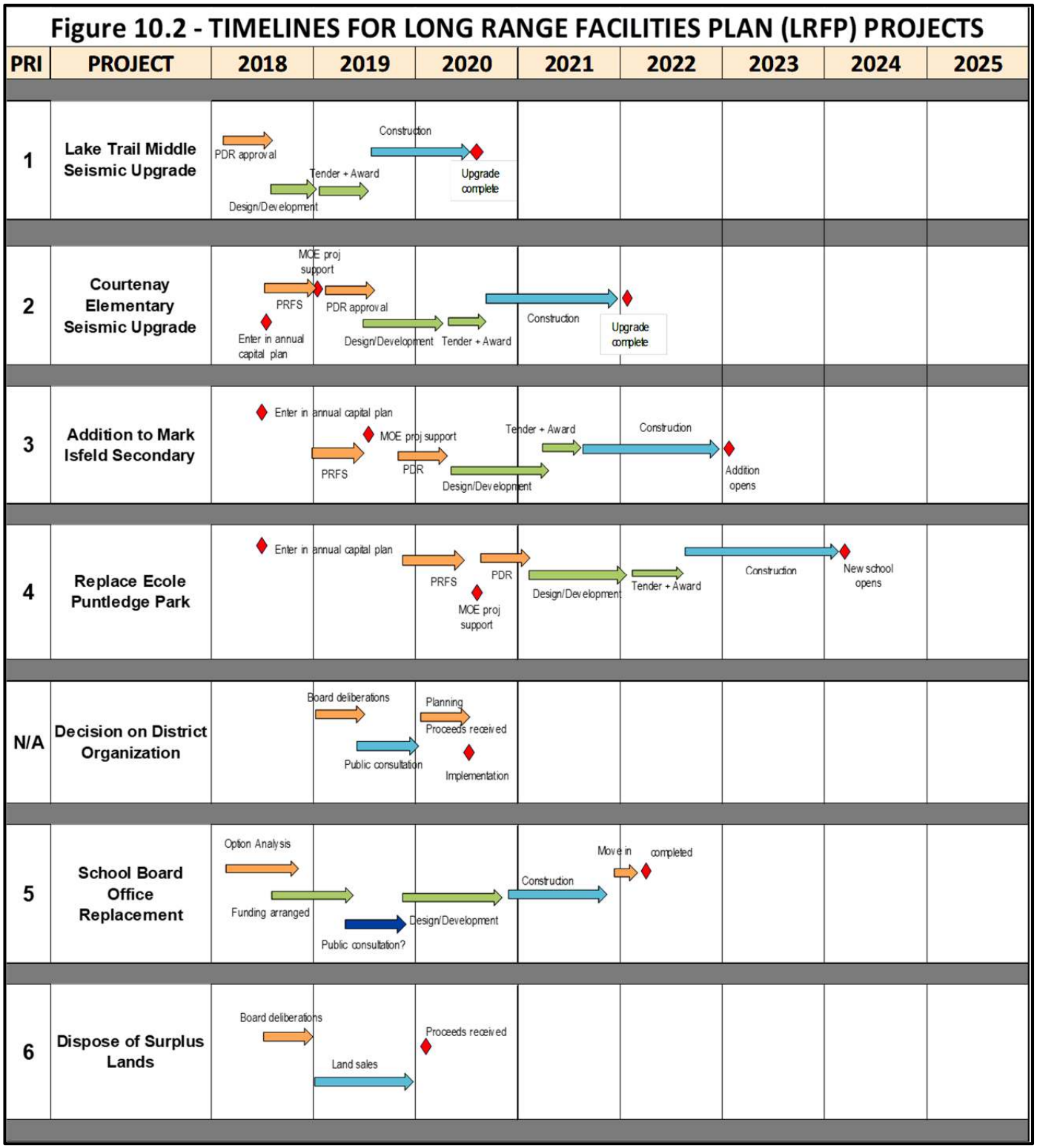
- Identify the project in the LRFP;
- List the project in the annual capital program submission (usually late spring) even if timed for future years; and
- Prepare and submit a supporting Project Request Fact Sheet (PRFS).

These steps are required at the district level and it is unlikely that there would be any interest or support at the Ministry level until these documents are in place.

Fig. 10.1 - LRFP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

LRFP Priority	MOE Submission Call Date	Capital Plan Year Start	Project Name	Short Description	Board Action
1	Previously submitted	2018-19	**Lake Trail Middle** - Seismic Upgrade	Seismic upgrade and related renovations to this middle school.	Awaiting MOE approval of Project Development Report (PDR).
2	May 2018	2019-20	**Courtenay Elementary** - Seismic Upgrade	Seismic upgrade and related renovations to this elementary school.	Project Request Fact Sheet (PRFS) in 2018
3	May 2018	2019-20	**Mark Isfeld Secondary** - Addition	Construct an addition to increase the capacity of Isfeld Secondary by 200 to 1050 students.	Project Request Fact Sheet (PRFS) in 2019
4	May 2018	2020-21	**Ecole Puntledge Park** - Replacement	Replace Ecole Puntledge Park with a new K-7 school	Project Request Fact Sheet (PRFS) in 2020
n/a	N/A	N/A	**Decision on District Organization**	Review the LRFP recommendations with the newly elected board, and consider grade structure for future. If change agreed, plan for Sept 2020.	Board deliberations in Spring, Public consultation in Fall 2019
5	N/A	N/A	**School Board Office** - Replacement	Replace existing school board office with appropriate sized functional facility.	Complete option analysis in 2018
6	N/A	N/A	**Surplus Lands** - Disposal	Dispose of some of the parcels of surplus lands held by the school district.	Initiate in 2018

Figure 10.2 - TIMELINES FOR LONG RANGE FACILITIES PLAN (LRFP) PROJECTS



11. CONCLUSIONS

11.1 Comox Valley School District has experienced significant stress in recent years. Earlier, declining enrolment led the Board to reorganize the district and eliminate middle schools. This was the most viable option at that time given low enrolments in some schools and unacceptable capacity utilization. In 2017, with resolution of the teacher contract and resulting creation of additional classes, plus surprising enrolment growth in parts of the district, the Board had to reorganize the grade structure in West Courtenay again, making Lake Trail a Grade 6 - 9 middle school and reducing its feeder elementaries to K – 5.

11.2 As described in Section 9.3, at least five potential disruptive issues are pending which will require re-examining the district organization in the near future. For this reason, it is prudent for the LRFP recommendations in Section 9.4 to emphasize stability in the assignment of grades and feeder schools for the next few years. Accordingly, although there will be stakeholders who will advocate for or against organizational changes, such changes are not recommended at this time.

11.3 It is important with the completion of the LRFP process that the district put in place the documentation required by the Ministry of Education to support needed capital projects described in Section 10.1. These include the final version of this plan, the updated annual Capital Plan Submission, and Project Request Fact Sheets (PRFS) for imminent projects.

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