

Ask Judith: Arts and Culture FAQ

Did you know that arts and culture is a significant contributor to economic growth?

Nurturing arts, culture and heritage as part of a sustainable community brings considerable economic benefits. Arts and culture generates \$5.2 billion annually in BC.

What are the plans for the arts and cultural centre with the Royal Bay high school?

The West Shore is a vibrant area of cultural and artistic expression and community engagement in the arts, with a wide variety of resident artists in the area. 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.

School District 62 (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 a concept for an arts-focused Neighbourhood Learning Centre to be located beside and integrated with the Royal Bay High School, on land owned by the City of Colwood. A survey of more than 500 community members found overwhelming and enthusiastic support (96%) for this *Emily Carr Performing Arts and Education Centre* an arts and education centre. You can download a copy of the Community Assessment Report at westshore.bc.ca/ or www.emilycarrwestshore.ca/docs/EmilyCarrCentre-CommunityAssessmentReport-9-2011.pdf

This concept would create a new school, neighbourhood learning centre, a performing arts space to serve the region, and place for people of all ages to explore and experience dance, theatre, music, pottery, visual arts, cultural learning – and more. It would provide opportunities for leisure and learning, create local jobs, and help to bring Colwood's Official Community Plan vision to life.

World class facilities such as those proposed for the Emily Carr 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.

I am looking forward to working with community partners to make this progressive vision a reality.

What else is happening in Colwood's arts community?

If you haven't already checked it out, visit the **Coast Collective Art Centre**, 3321 Heatherbell Road in Colwood or online www.coastcollective.ca/. A group of five local artists working together with a land developer have created a new and different kind of art centre—beautiful surroundings—an affordable showcase for fine art—a place to visit, relax and learn—a place to bring people together to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Colwood and the West Shore.

Changes won't happen overnight. But we are moving in a good direction. Please support a positive new council who will

Keep Colwood Moving Forward