

Oyama

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Community

Rural Impact

Study



A Research Document
Produced by:
*The Oyama Community
Club*

(since 1914)

Registered Charity/Society # 11907-5265-RR0001

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to present the existing conditions within the community of Oyama and examine the community and school context. This document will also examine the contributions of Oyama Elementary Parents Advisory Committee and Oyama Community Club to the fabric of the community and its social capital. This document will present the potential cascade failure of the community's identity and sustainability following a closure of Oyama Elementary School.

2. History of Oyama

Interestingly, the name Oyama came from Ms. Irvine, who had been impressed with a Japanese General who had served in World War 1, and thought it would be a good name for the community. It appears to have been a good choice as it still remains today.

As early as 1867, (Canada's Confederation) Tom Wood and Cornelius O'Keefe drove cattle from Washington, U.S.A. to the north end of Okanagan Lake. In 1871, Tom Wood homesteaded at the south end of Wood Lake (eventually named after him) and raised cattle on the east benches above Wood Lake.



Early Oyama

In 1893 the first white settlers began arriving with the planting of orchards commencing in the early 1900's. Oyama Lake in the mountains to the east provided irrigation to the fruit growers. The wooden irrigation flume is still visible from Middlebench road today. Ranching also expanded and thrived during this time.



**Oyama
Pioneer
Orchardists**

The Wood Lake Fruit Lands Company was formed in 1907 and fruit growing became the predominant industry. The vast rangeland owned by Mr. Wood was subdividing rapidly into manageable parcels for the purpose of fruit growing. Extensive advertising for land availability saw the arrival of many new settlers. Individuals such as the Bovie Brothers, Albert Greer, Samuel Young, Tom Williams, Reverend Despard, the Dobsons, Trasks, C. Allison, A. Towgood, the Newtions, Bowshers, Whipples, Griffiths, Hicks, Lowe, Hayward, Townsend, Getty, McHardy, Dewars, Nelsons, Wynne, Phillips, Sadler and Campbell Brown and many others arrived between the years of 1907 and 1913. Many descendents of these still reside in Oyama. After World War 1 another influx of settlers arrived. There was an atmosphere of community then, as exists today, with settlers looking out for one another. As with most rural areas in early

times, it was necessary to be self-sufficient. Lacking the luxuries and conveniences we enjoy today, pioneers endured severe hardships

Responsible for their own livelihoods, they baked their own goods, bottled and preserved fruit, raised chickens etc. Vernon, a two to three hour drive by buggy, was the nearest destination for shopping. With local stores opening in 1908 through 1910, the need for trips to Vernon decreased.

As the population grew, the desire and need for public institutions became evident. Prior to church construction, services early on were held in the open air, in the Agricultural Hall (now known as the Oyama Community Hall), in private homes or in the old school house built in 1911. In 1920 and 1936 respectively, the Anglican and Catholic churches were built.

By 1916, the old one room schoolhouse was too small so a new two-room schoolhouse was built. Students wanting a higher level of education needed to attend High Schools in Vernon or elsewhere. In 1921 student enrolment required further expansion to the existing school. The basement was renovated by adding one more room.

A library was established in 1915 and in 1924 an exchange book program was implemented with neighbouring districts. A Rural Health Unit was organized in 1939 that provided limited medical treatment to residents. Electricity arrived in 1935, electric lighting was now in many of the homes, institutions and to the few operating businesses.

By 1906, fruit growing and packing was the major industry in Oyama. The Vernon Fruit Union was packing three thousand boxes per day, the season's packing was two

hundred and ten thousand boxes of apples and ten to twenty thousand boxes of soft fruits. Due to the success of fruit growing, other industries such as dairying, the raising of cattle and poultry diminished greatly.



Oyama Packing House 1949



The construction of the Canadian National Railway line through Oyama, coupled with significant road improvements, the transporting of goods over land became a more cost effective means of transportation than that of the steamboat. By the late 1940's, road improvements and increasing ownership of vehicles paved the way for tourist opportunities. Vacation

resorts including Blue Water Lodge, Amory Resort, Kalwood Inn and Longacres Ranch Hotel were impressive and thrived for many years as tourist destinations.

Many organizations established in the early 1900's greatly contributed to the economic, social and cultural growth of Oyama. These organizations include the Board of Trade, the Farmers Institute, the Kalamalka Women's Institute, the Kalamalka Agricultural Association, the Memorial Hall, youth groups such as the Boy Scouts, and the Girl Guides and the Royal Canadian Legion

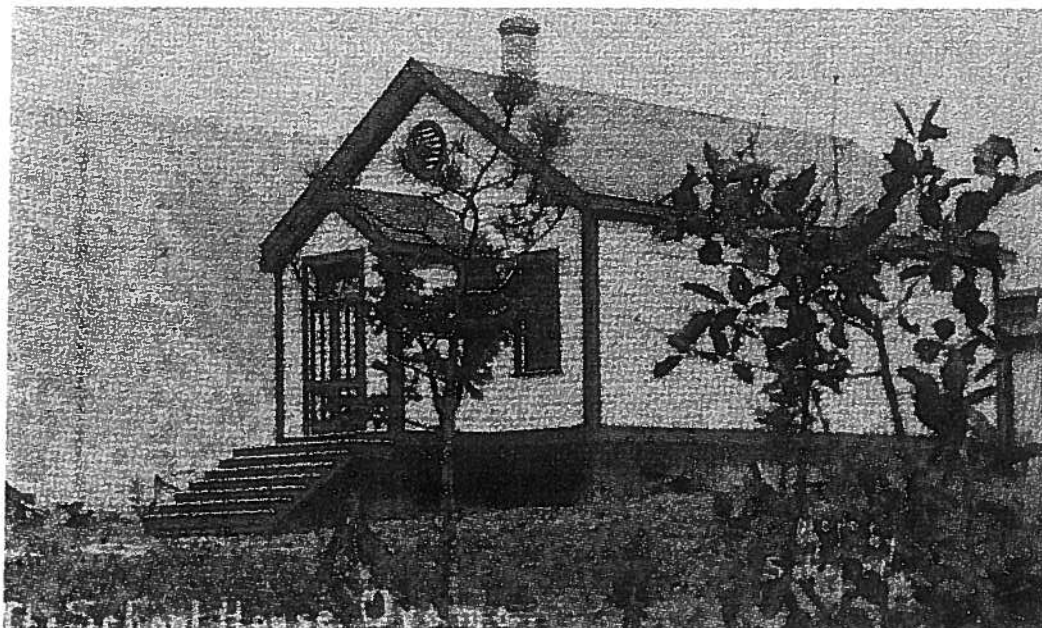
The Oyama Community Club, still very active in community events, continues to host programs and activities that provide both cultural and recreational services to the broad community.

Many of these organizations and others are still operating today. Several old stores, inns, and other businesses have been gone a long time. In their place, new businesses have opened but many believe a shortage exists.

Fruit growing remains the major industry. There are however other industries such as sand and gravel operations, forestry and wood production. Ranching is limited to a few parcels in the eastern portion of Oyama.

3. Oyama School History

In 1909, six children were taught in the Lloyd's home on the east side, under the guidance of Miss Barbara Irving. Later they moved to a tarpaper shack and finally in 1911 the "White School House" was built. This one room building also held evening meetings, social gatherings and church services. By 1915-16 expenditures had risen to \$ 488.99, which included Miss Irving's monthly salary of \$ 21.65. The number of students had also risen and the decision was made to build a larger school. " Oyama Elementary School" was completed in 1917 on the site of the present school. It was valued, including furniture and 4 lots at \$ 7500. Sam Young provided the school with wood; six cords cost \$23.10. Electricity didn't arrive in the area until 1935 from Shuswap Falls and on July 30,1938 "It was decided to proceed with the installation of flush toilets in the school". More luxuries came in 1943 with "Mr. Bissells's room and Miss Dewar's be refloored during the Christmas recess and that the Secretary be empowered to purchase No. 3 maple flooring and other necessary material at the most advantageous price."



An extra room had been added in 1921 for high school students. As it was the only high school between Rutland and Vernon, students from Winfield "were allowed to attend subject to available space." Wages were still blossoming, in 1920 the principal, Miss Elliot received \$1100 and second grade teacher, Miss Brock, \$ 1000. In 1930, Mr. Martlow, the janitor made \$ 250 per year and \$.35 per hour for extra work.

The school's soccer team achieved notoriety winning the North Okanagan Pheasant Trophy 4 times and in 1943 won the Okanagan Valley Senior High School trophy. As well as sports, another highlight in the 40's and 50's was the May Day celebrations which, included a parade from the school to the hall with a band, a Queen's float, decorated bicycles, wagons and carriages. The tradition is still carried on at the annual Fun Days sponsored by the Community Club.

After 62 years the school was demolished and replaced by the present building. It had been hoped by many residents that it could be saved and used as a meeting hall, library or arts and crafts workshop but that was not to be. In 1979 Oyama lost another building that visually proclaimed the heritage that exists within this area. The existing school was built in 1979 and has been serving this community well for 23 years.

Background Information

4. Existing Conditions

a. Geography

Oyama is located in the Central Okanagan. The majority of homes and services are located on an isthmus. The Interior Salish people called our land K'Lakokum to describe the fertile valley that we live in. It means the land between, the land between two beautiful lakes that border us, the land between the mountains that surround us, the land between your grandparents and your grandchildren, the land between heaven and earth.

Oyama is also known as "The Jewel of the Okanagan". Oyama joined the District of Lake Country following its incorporation in 1995. It is one of four wards that make up this district.

b. Residential

The predominant land use is in the built up area (located on the isthmus). The isthmus area has developed with typically urban sized lots and a smaller subdivision is located on the westside of Highway 97. The surrounding area consists of larger rural lots outside the core area.



c. **Commercial**

A limited commercial area consisting of a store fixture outlet, Convenience store, arts & crafts retail outlet, ceramics studio, fruit stand, restaurant, tourist lodging, bed & breakfasts and home based businesses.



d. **Industrial**

As in the early 1900, fruit growing continues to be one of the main industries in Oyama along with agritourism. The northeastern section of Oyama is where the primary industrial uses are situated, the uses consist of mainly forestry related products & gravel extraction.

e. **Institutional**

The core institutional uses include a post office, library, Oyama Elementary, fire hall and Oyama Community Hall. There are two private senior care facilities located on the isthmus. Camp Hatikvah, is considered both recreational and institutional and provides a cultural and recreational component.



f. **Recreational**

A baseball field is located at the Oyama Community Hall, Soccer fields and the only playground equipment in Oyama are located at Oyama Elementary. A Regional District park, Kaloya, and local Pioneer Park (cared for by the Oyama Community Club) provide residents and tourists alike a beautiful setting on Lake Kalamalka for recreational pursuits both active and passive. The shores of Wood Lake, although not publicly dedicated, provide additional beach and recreation areas. A boat launch is located on the northeast side of Wood Lake.



g. Transportation

Forms of transportation used within Oyama include roadway networks, cycling, pedestrian, equestrian, rail and marine. The focus of the transportation system within Oyama is the road network. Within the Oyama there are currently 55 km of local roads.

The main collector road at present is Oyama Road. It provides service to and from agricultural, industrial, residential, and tourist/commercial and resource and recreational lands. Oyama Road begins on the northwest side of the isthmus and following the entire distance along the east bench to the Winfield Ward border.

Highway 97 runs along the west side of Wood Lake. Both of these transportation routes are for single lane traffic only.

h. Environment

Within Oyama there are numerous areas that are considered Environmentally Sensitive areas. There is a habitat in Oyama for numerous wildlife, fish, fowl and plant life that contributes to the natural beauty and character of the area. Currently the sewage disposal in Oyama consists of on-site septic systems.

5. Community School Context

Since 1914 the school and the Oyama Community Club have worked in cooperation. Many school Christmas pageants and spring concerts have been enjoyed at the community hall. Every June, the school PAC participates in the club's annual Fun Day helping out with the children's games. Both the school and community club contribute enormously to the fabric of the community. Many joint fundraisers have occurred which have resulted in items being purchased for both facilities. The Community Hall is also used for large PAC meetings. The beginning of the school year brings out residents both young and old to take part in the community breakfast on the first day back to school.



There is a rich level of parent and community participation present in the school life in Oyama as evidenced by our

strong group of parent and community volunteers. There are many community volunteers assisting with school teams, the math quest program, sport days, field trips and school concerts. Our children have also had the opportunity to learn built a canoe thanks to community volunteers. Our One to One reader program has seniors from our area donating their time to increase literacy within our community. This year's Christmas pageant included a skit that "spoofed" our local convenience store owner, which was very well received. There is currently one deaf child enrolled at Oyama Elementary and both students and many parents have taken the time to try to learn sign language to support and encourage this child and her family. We have sign language interpreters at many public events in Oyama and have developed a reputation as a supportive community for the hearing impaired. There is an extremely active and supportive relationship between the school, parents, and the community at large. Oyama residents truly live by the philosophy that "It takes a whole community to raise a child."



**Rayleigh Belsham
Demonstrating Her Sign
Language Name**

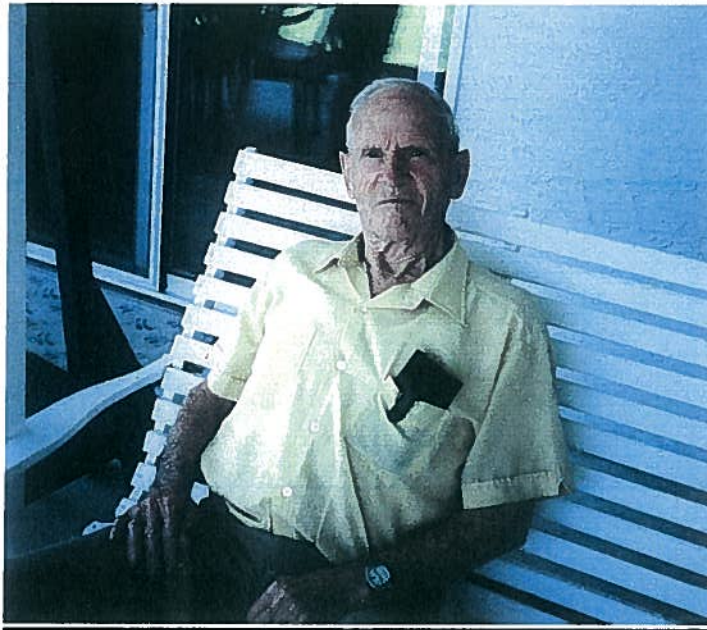
Oyama Elementary is the heart of the community. Every day the children of our community are reminded of the significance of the history of Oyama when they walk through the halls of Oyama Elementary and see the photos of the children from the past. Many of those children in the photos are the great-grandparents or grandparents of current students at Oyama Elementary.



Classroom Volunteers

Oyama Elementary's School Mission Statement states that we are committed to a child-centred program in which we celebrate the successes of each individual student. We strive to make our school and enjoyable place to learn by creating a bright, safe and secure environment that enables students to develop pride in their school and community, a positive self-concept, and an enthusiastic attitude toward life-long learning. This mission statement is embraced and supported throughout the community. Seniors and those without children often attend school events because they personally know the students and consider them part of their

own family. Many seniors in Oyama feel safer and more secure than their urban counterparts. Local seniors have expressed concern that the loss of the sense of community and reduced senior and child/adolescent contact will put them at increased risk for violent crimes such as home invasions. Currently, Oyama is a very close-knit community, where everyone knows their neighbours, which creates a safe and secure environment for both children and seniors.



6. Oyama Elementary Parents Advisory Committee

The Oyama Parents Advisory Committee has made significant contributions to the children of Oyama and the community at large. A number of fundraising endeavours have been taken on by the Oyama P.A.C. and their subcommittees. Volunteers from Oyama P.A.C. work with members from the community to help raise these funds. These fundraising activities included the Spring Fling, Oyama Fun Day, Christmas Raffles, casino income, other raffles, chocolate bar sales, gift sales, magazine sales and wrapping paper sales.

a. Contributions made directly to the community by Oyama P.A.C.

Several financial donations have been made in the past to community members who have suffered a serious illness or death within their families. The children and families of Oyama have embraced and supported those families in need, in the true sense of community.

Each year, a graduating student from George Elliot Secondary School receives a financial bursary from the Oyama Elementary Parents Advisory Committee. This bursary is awarded to an Oyama student to assist him/her with the costs of pursuing their post secondary education.

For the past few years, the Oyama P.A.C. has been a major financial supporter of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program (D.A.R.E.).



This program is run in cooperation with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other schools within our district. RCMP officer, Constable Scott West commits his time to drug awareness education in our community. The Oyama P.A.C. has helped cover the costs of the program such T-shirts, water bottles, information packages for the children and certificates. The P.A.C. also hosts the "graduation ceremony" where each child makes a personal commitment to avoid the pressures to begin using drugs. While these services may be provided at other schools, each graduating D.A.R.E. makes his/her personal commitment to the Community of Oyama. The Community of Oyama will continue to instil the values of the community and support and

encourage every child to help them keep this important commitment.

Last year, Oyama Elementary supported the Festival of Trees at the Capri Centre Mall to benefit the British Columbia Children's Hospital. The children of Oyama Elementary decorated a tree with handmade ornaments for the enjoyment of all the shoppers while raising \$ 275.00 for this worthwhile project.

The Oyama P.A.C. has recently donated ceramic tiles for a mural project, which will be permanently displayed in the Oyama Community Hall. These tiles will be hand painted by each child at Oyama Elementary. This mural project will be a legacy for the children of Oyama for generations to come. This mural will be a symbol of the integral role that children play in our community



**b. Contributions Made Directly to Oyama Elementary
by Oyama P.A.C.**

The following statistics represent funds raised by the Oyama PAC Hot Lunch program. These funds have been directly deposited into the Principal's Account.

Hot Lunch Contributions

1995-1996	\$2000
1996-1997	\$2010
1997-1998	\$2923
1998-1999	\$3661
1999-2000	\$2885
2000-2001	\$3376

The funds from the Principal's Account were used for the following items:

Unpaid School Supplies (Families)

Band instruments

Community Breakfast

Teachers Start Up supplies

Photos

Arts/Crafts

Special Curriculum Projects

Supplementary Resources

-Publications

-Calendar Newspaper

-Contest booklets

Replacement of kitchen supplies/baking supplies for students.

Coffee/Tea

Meals for Teachers/Accreditation Public Relations

Conferences

Field Trips
 Student positive performances
 -Treats
 -Pencils
 -Stickers
 Volunteer gifts (year end recognition gifts)

Equipment/Items Bought Directly by PAC:

Dishwasher/Colour Printer	\$1000	1996
Library Upgrade	\$17,600	1997
TV/VCR	\$1143	1998
Screen	\$564	1999
Plaques Gr 7 Graduation	\$500	1999
Computers (2)	\$2850	2000
Plaques Gr 7 Graduation	\$500	2000
Plaques Gr 7 Graduation	\$500	2001
Plaques Gr 7 Graduation	\$672	2002
Mixer	\$224	
Cordless Microphone	\$464	
Score Cards	\$88.27	
DVD		
Games for 8 Classes	\$1600	2003

7. The Oyama Community Club

a. Purpose of the Club

The Association is a non-partisan, non-profit, volunteer organization whose purpose is serve the community of Oyama by furthering and advancing whatever it may see fit for the benefit of the community. The association must make the Community Hall and grounds available for recreational activities, meetings, functions, reunions, receptions, etc



It is the responsibility of the Executive committee to ensure the proper use of funds in the form of grants, rents, donations and fees credited under the name of

the Oyama Community Club. We ensure adequate maintenance of the hall, grounds and cottage and assume responsibility for the care of the Oyama Pioneer/Centennial Park. The Club is also responsible for the maintenance of the Oyama Ball Field and for the care of the Oyama Community Cemetery.

b. History of the Oyama Community Club

The Oyama Community Club was originally formed as the Kalamalka Agricultural Association on February 21, 1914, when a charter was granted to the Association as a non-profit society. About thirty years later the name was changed to the Oyama Community Club and remained so to date. The club has grown over the years to take in our local cemetery and manage Pioneer Park. We now have a community hall, which is twice as large as our old one. The original hall was built together a bit at a time and served this community well for nearly a century. Our hall addition was completed in 1984, and was built with the aid of Federal and Provincial government grants. This renovation was done completely by hand including the foundation preparation in cooperation with a Canada Works project and local volunteer labour.

On January 23, 1914, the Hon. Price Ellison opened the Oyama Community Hall. The hall was built on a plot of land on the "Railroad" generously donated by Mr. Frank Rayburn. Historical accounts describe the opening of the new hall. A dinner was given by Egbert Trask and Mrs. Trask at Iris Point, dinner guests included Hon. Price Ellison, Frank Rayburn, Mrs. Rayburn, Hamilton-Lang, the trustees, and the members of the building committee. At eight o'clock a large crowd gathered at

the new hall and met the dinner guests. D.H.McClure occupied the chair for the evening. Speeches from the Hon. Price Ellison and other guests were followed by musical items supplied by local talent. Refreshments were provided by the ladies of the district, which was followed by a dance.

c. Community Contributions made by the Oyama Community Club

Our hall and grounds benefit thousands of people throughout the district annually. Our hall is used for our well-attended community meetings, school concerts, weddings and funerals. Our community hall along with the elementary school serves as the central hub of the community as it has done so since 1914. The Oyama Community Club serves the public in many fashions. Our club's premier event is Oyama Fun Day.



This event is one of Lake Country's largest outdoor events with the only parade held in our district.



Oyama Fun Day is a family orientated event with most of the activities free to the public. Last year our Fun Day was featured in a large segment on CHBC. The Oyama Community Club attempts to project a positive image for our club and the District of Lake Country through our events and activities.

The Lake Country Minor softball league, the Lake Country Men's and Ladies' softball and the Lake Country Mixed Softball League utilize the Oyama Community Club's baseball field & grounds. The Oyama Community Club does not charge any fee for the use of this field and maintains it through cooperation with these ball teams and its own fundraising. This year volunteers replaced the infield with the Oyama Pink shale, which resulted in a more professional field. This improvement also helped to make the field safer for players by removing the hard compacted soil and replacing it with a more suitable material. The cost of the materials alone for this project totalled nearly \$ 3000. Volunteer excavator operators and dump trucks drivers removed and replaced 100's of yards of material.



Our hall and grounds are also designated as an emergency evacuation site for the community and the Oyama Elementary School.

Our club also cares for the beach across from the hall known as the Oyama Station.



Last year we marked this historical site and planted flowers to beautify our community. The club also hosts a Spring Cleanup each April to help clean up our community. Many local volunteers give up their time for these worthwhile projects. The OCC also provides equipment and volunteers to the Canada Day Celebrations at Jack Seaton Park, and Okanagan Centre's "Centrepiece". Catering equipment is loaned for George Elliot graduation ceremonies each year.

This year, the executive of the Oyama Community Club have recently voted to give a deserving graduation student of George Elliot Secondary a financial bursary. Preference will be given to an applicant who is a

resident of Oyama and a youth volunteer within their community.

d. Social Events normally held by the Oyama Community Club in a calendar year

Event

Description

Spaghetti Dinner/Variety show

Fundraiser in cooperation with the Lake Country Big Band Association



OCC Annual General Meeting
Election of Executive Committee

Community input and evaluation of services provided during the past year.

Spring Auction

**Social activity and
Fundraiser**

Spring Cleanup

**Environmental
cleanup of the
community**

Easter Bingo

**Fundraiser & Social
Activity**

Oyama Fun Day

**Parade, children's
games, waterski
demonstration,
Senior's line dancing
demonstration,
balloon rides, etc.**



Swim lessons

A non-profit cooperative service provided jointly by the OCC and YMCA

Canada Day

Volunteers run children's field games

Centre Piece

Volunteers run children's field games at the local Historical society's major fundraiser for the year. (Okanagan Centre Ward)

Fall Fair at the Farm

Free activities such as pony rides, hayrides, apple bobbing, etc.

Halloween Celebrations

Free haunted house,
caramel apples,
games hot chocolate
and fireworks



Christmas Bingo

Fundraiser and social
activity

Children's Christmas Party

**Free children's activity
provided by the OCC**



- please note that these are activities normally scheduled and additional activities may be provided to the public depending on volunteer availability

e. Community Use of OCC facility

An honorarium rate (\$10) has been made available to the following weekly sporting activities, Ladies and Youth Soccer, Youth and Adult Badminton, Karate, Tai Chi, Yoga, Highland Dance, and a preschool/ parent playgroup.



The hall is used free of charge for community meetings, funerals, community teas, and large PAC meetings. The OCC also has an executive policy that allows the public to make an application for free or reduced rental of the facility if the renter's event contributes to the community at large.

Other uses of the OCC facility include art shows, featuring a unique variety of local artisans, weddings, dances, youth functions, and agricultural shows.

f. Volunteer Base of the Oyama Community Club

The Oyama Community Club raises the bulk of its operating costs through fundraisers run entirely by volunteers from our community. The volunteer base is comprised of approximately 92% of parent volunteers from Oyama Elementary, 5 % Oyama volunteers over the age of 55, 2 % of the volunteer base is comprised of Oyama seniors over 65 and 1 % of volunteers are derived from other communities.

In order to clearly explain the crucial role that volunteers play in the operation and financial viability of the Oyama Community Club, we will discuss the involvement of volunteers during the organizing, preparing, and management of our annual Oyama Fun Day. Early in the year, a committee, usually the executive plans the events to be held at the annual Oyama Fun Day for that year. Letters for any sponsorships required are written and sent. Any sponsors that provide a free service such as the Remax Balloon are contacted early on to ensure availability. Volunteers who work in conjunction with the Oyama Community Club such as the Lake Country Waterski Club are also contacted. Core volunteers from the executive are assigned different events and contact other volunteers to form teams to run each event

Parade

The parade is organized by contacting various groups to encourage them to enter our parade and ensure its success. Several months before Fun Day, Parade Marshalls are assigned and the Lake Country Municipal Roads manager and the RCMP are contacted to

arrange parade route road closure. The media is also contacted for road closure announcements. Road closure signs are made and the Citizen's Patrol are contacted.

Parade ribbons are ordered and picked up by volunteers. Many volunteer hours are spent coordinating this free Oyama Community Club event.

Advertising

Volunteers contact newspapers and other media sources, design advertising, and solicit free advertising wherever possible. They hang posters and signs and serve as media contacts.

Pancake Breakfast

The breakfast committee sets the target number of breakfast to be served and volunteers pre-order sausages. Food safe courses are taken by volunteers, dry goods such as plates, plastic cutlery, napkins, coffee, sugar, pancake mix and syrup are purchased by volunteers ahead of time. These volunteers pay for the supplies with their own funds and are reimbursed once the treasurer receives the receipts. A volunteer cleans the hall's commercial griddle prior to Fun Day. The day before the Pancake Breakfast, the cooler is turned on, perishable goods such as eggs, milk, juice, etc. are purchased. A schedule of volunteers is drawn up to assign jobs such as pancake breakfast ticket sales, cooking, prep persons, and table bussing.

Silent Auction

This event, like the parade is one of the most labour intensive jobs of the Fun Day event. Letters of request are dropped in person, off at businesses, and requests are followed up. Items are received by the committee, tax receipts written, and bidding sheets are made. The silent auction committee also design and make the signs that acknowledge the sponsorships. Volunteers also write the thank you letters to the sponsors and deliver them. Volunteers are then scheduled into time slots to set up the silent auction and supervise the tables. At the close of the bidding, each sheet and bidder number are tallied and money is collected. Volunteers then deliver large items to the bidder's home.



Cow Plop

A volunteer farmer is contacted to check for the availability of cows. A paper grid is made. The day before the event, fencing is placed on the Oyama Community Club grounds and volunteers pace out the outdoor grid. The day of the event, cows are delivered by horse trailer.

Children's Field Games

Volunteers organize games, order and obtain ribbons, buy supplies such as ice cream, ice blocks and check supplies for tug of war, sack races, 3 legged races, etc. They also obtain a bullhorn and assign each volunteer a job for this event.

Dunk Tank

The dunk tank is borrowed from the Okanagan Centre ward, all necessary repairs are made, and the tank is delivered to the Oyama Community Club grounds by several volunteers and filled with water. Volunteers are obtained to run the event and sit in the tank.

Carnival Games

Volunteers organize this event, design games such as beanbag toss, lucky spin, fishpond and pocket lady. Toys and prizes are purchased prior to Fun Day. Volunteers man stations and relief volunteers are assigned.

Strawberry Tea

This event is a popular favourite of local seniors. Following the cleanup of the Pancake Breakfast, the tables are cleared, rearranged and decorated. Prior to Fun Day, the pies and desserts are prepared and all

supplies are purchased. Volunteer tea servers are organized.

Firemen's Burger Burn

Local volunteer firemen spend the day cooking up these tasty burgers and fried onions much to the delight of everyone!



Concession

Volunteers clean the outdoor concession prior to Fun Day, order the supplies, and draw up a schedule of volunteers for the event. Early in the day, garbage cans are placed out, decorations are hung and the necessary areas are roped off.

Volunteers are also required to clean up following Fund Day and ensure all acknowledgments and thank you's are distributed.

Prior to the event a volunteer treasurer is required to prepare the cash floats, gather receipts, reimburse volunteer and prepare a financial record and summary of the event.

Volunteers are the key to the success of this event. This positive, family oriented event could not be held without the generous donation of these volunteers time. This event, as in the many others held by the Oyama Community Club, 92% of the above volunteers are gathered from one to one networking at Oyama Elementary School. It has been the community club's past experience that the recruitment of volunteers is generally ineffective if attempted through letters, newspapers or phone calls. The majority of the volunteers are recruited from personal contact by coordinators.

g. Income Sources for the Oyama Community Club

The income of the Oyama Community Club is primarily raised through a variety of fundraisers which both raise money through food sales and silent auctions while providing essentially free activities for local children and their families. The Oyama Community Club strives to make our activities accessible for all the residents of our district regardless of their financial position. Other income is accumulated through rental of our hall, old post office building, memberships and through donations. Hall rental income is limited due to our rural

location and the competition from the urban centres of Kelowna and Vernon.

h. Expenses normally Incurred by the Oyama Community Club

Expenses normally occurred by the club include hall and grounds maintenance, capital expenses, equipment repairs, insurance, property taxes, advertising, newsletter expenses, cemetery expenses, and utilities.

8. Summary of Income and Expenses

During the fiscal year of 2001 (current figures not available at print time) there was a net income for the year of only \$2,744.80. In summary, the Oyama Community Club currently raises enough funds to keep in operation and provide small amount revenue to be kept in a contingency fund.

9. Potential Cascade Failure of Community Identity & Sustainability post closure of Oyama Elementary

a) Residential

A recent real estate analysis conducted by a local licensed real estate agent concluded that the subsequent potential effects could occur following the closure of Oyama Elementary:

- housing values in the Oyama area may decrease
- single family homes may be difficult to sell
- affordable multi-family housing may never be an option within the ward of Oyama

b) Commercial

It is unlikely that the commercial core of Oyama would continue to grow post closure of Oyama Elementary.

Some current local business owners had this to say regarding the possible closure of Oyama Elementary;

“ I am writing to express my opposition to the closure of Oyama Elementary School. As a local business owner, I am fortunate to be on a first name basis with many of the children in attendance at our school. My business will be directly affected by the proposed closure, as the school children stop by daily on their way home to buy candy and shop for gifts for their friends and family. Oyama is a very close-knit community spirit, which is especially nurturing to young children. I feel privileged to live in an area where the children will stop by just to say hello, and have a business where they feel comfortable browsing at their leisure.”

Pam Kirstiuk, Cardale Cottage Craft & Gift Shoppe



Another owner had this to say:

“ The closure of Oyama Elementary may potentially cause loss of income to our convenience store but our greater concern lies with the loss of the sense of community in Oyama. If we have an incident of shoplifting or vandalism from a youth in our community we know that child and we can contact the parents and work something out. Businesses located in areas without this sense of community have only one option, to call the police. This action results in one of the following consequences, either the child is completely frightened by the police contact or they are completely unfazed, believing that no real consequence occurred. Neither of these scenarios is good for the child or society at large.”

Donnelda Cahley and Andrew Bakogee -
CobbleKreek Store

“ Our agritourism business would be affected by the loss of Oyama Elementary, we would likely experience a loss of income related to the absence of young families in our area. Our business benefits from word of mouth and personal referrals from local residents; this also could be potentially reduced.”

- R.A. Gatzke, Gatzke Farm Market

“ Currently I have one after school kids only ceramic class per week. This class runs from 2:30-4:00 pm. The closure of Oyama Elementary would eliminate this class and would directly decrease my sales by 10-15%. Indirectly, the school closure would decrease the amount of people who travel by my business. Out of sight out of mind. Many parents of school aged Children will come by while en route to or from the school for special projects. Although these customers do not form a regular class, I estimate a further reduction in business by 10%, bringing the total decrease in business between 20 and 25%.”

Joni Fey, Proprietor, Silver Lining Studio



c) **Industrial**

The current industrial facilities that exist in Oyama include a sawmill with forestry related products and a gravel extraction company.

The owner & operator of Oyama Forest Products had this to say regarding the possible closure of Oyama Elementary:

“The school is an integral part of this community. The loss of the school would affect my employees. It would be difficult to draw reliable employees to this area (especially those with young children) without a school in Oyama.”

- Ed Tarasewich, Oyama Forest Products

The production of agriculture may be affected to the degree that family farms may become a thing of the past in Oyama. The ability to keep families in the Oyama Ward without an elementary school may become very difficult.

d) **Institutional**

The following core institutional facilities will be discussed in regards to a potential cascade community failure following the closure of Oyama Elementary; the post office, library, fire hall, the Oyama Community Hall, seniors care facilities, Camp Hatikvah, and Oyama Elementary.

The post office: little effect is expected from the closure except that the service may be removed from the community if population continues to drop.

Oyama Regional Library: this service has already been threatened by closure in the past, the library is open two days a week, Tuesday's and Thursday's with its peak usage occurring directly after the dismissal of Oyama Elementary. It is likely that the library would have little chance of surviving budget cuts without that peak usage period. Yet another service would be lost to the residents and the community of Oyama.

Oyama Elementary: the closure of Oyama Elementary would not allow any children to be schooled in their own community, close to home which allows them to walk or cycle to school, go home for lunch, and to participate in activities after school, these opportunities are not available to children being bussed out of their community.



Oyama Community Club/Hall: The majority of the Oyama Community Club's income is derived from fundraisers within the community, 92% of community volunteers for these fundraisers are gathered from one to one networking through the school community. A financial viability study of the Oyama Community Club has concluded that it is unlikely that the club would be able to survive the closure of Oyama Elementary. (impact to the community will be more deeply discussed throughout this document)

Oyama Volunteer Fire Department

The decision to keep this fire department operational lies with the Lake Country Municipally. It is unknown if the closure of Oyama Elementary will affect this service.

Seniors Care Facilities

The two seniors care facilities located on the isthmus accommodate residents who have grandchildren who are currently being educated at Oyama Elementary. If young families continue to move out or no new families move in, the facilities will likely find themselves in financial difficulty. There is no reason to house seniors in a rural area if their families are not close by to support them.

Camp Hatikvah

As this facility is run almost completely from the Vancouver area, it is not expected to be impacted following the closure of Oyama Elementary.

e) **Recreational**

Baseball field located at Oyama Community Hall

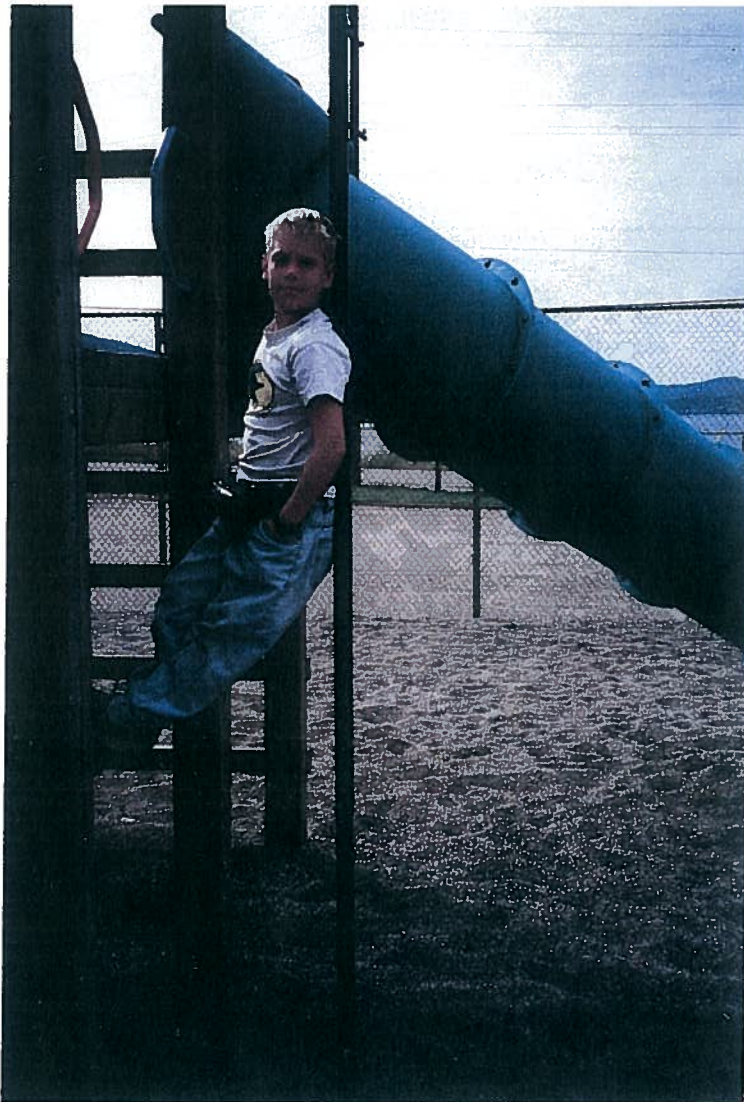
If the Oyama Community club dissolves, as it is anticipated post closure of Oyama Elementary, the baseball field utilized by the Lake Country Men's and Ladies Softball League, Lake Country Mixed Softball league, and the Lake Country Minor Softball League will be no longer available. This valuable recreational service will no longer be provided for these worthwhile sports programs.

Soccer fields

As Oyama Elementary has the only soccer fields in the Ward of Oyama, this recreational facility will be lost following the closure of Oyama Elementary.

Adventure Playground Equipment

Currently Oyama Elementary has the only adventure playground equipment available to young children in the Ward of Oyama. This recreational service will be lost post closure of Oyama Elementary.



Kaloya Regional District Park

This Regional District funded park is unlikely to be affected by the closure of Oyama Elementary School.

Pioneer/Centennial Park

The Oyama Community Club would no longer care for this local park because it is anticipated that the OCC would fold post closure of Oyama Elementary.



f) Transportation

The current transportation usage in Oyama will be significantly affected by the closure of Oyama Elementary. There is currently no public transit service available to Oyama residents. A recent newspaper article in the Capital News by John McDonald (Sunday, February 9, 2003) reported that School District # 23 is currently looking at a number of options to solve the bussing budget deficit. One option is to scrap the yellow bus system all together. If this decision were reached, the children of Oyama would have no way of going to school even if they were ripped from their supportive community.

If the bus service would be provided by School District # 23, the children of Oyama would experience the minimum 1-hour bus ride to Winfield and back. Estimated at (1 hour day) x (194 school days) =(194 hours a year) x 8 years (kindergarten to Grade 7) = **1552 hours** lost away from family and enrichment activities.

Oyama currently has approximately 55 km of local roads. With more local children on a bus there would be increased traffic and pressures on the current road network. The main collector road at present is Oyama Road. Oyama road provides single lane traffic access only and it is only road over the isthmus. Oyama Road begins on the northwest side of the isthmus and following the entire distance along the east bench to the Winfield Ward border. This road is a long winding road that increases dramatically in elevation from north to south, and then at its steepest elevation at north end of

Oyama, this narrow road makes a sudden drop in elevation. For the past several years, many severe motor vehicle accidents have occurred on the stretch of highway between Winfield and Oyama. These accidents have necessitated the rerouting of highway traffic on to the Oyama road. Oyama Road is not suitable for semi trailer tractor use. It has many hairpin turns and is very narrow. This rerouting has resulted in several semi trailer tractors jackknifing along Oyama Road. Children living within the 4.8 kilometre walk limit set by the Provincial Government may be required to walk this narrow winding road and be exposed to hazards relating to the lack of sidewalks and the lack of streetlights. Children may also be exposed to other hazards such as wildlife and sexual predators. Highway 97 runs along the west side of Wood Lake. This route to Oyama runs along between a steep rock face and the shores of Wood Lake, this route is also single lane traffic only. The increased hazards relating to traveling the Highway 97 route include rock falls and heavy traffic. The current yellow bus system to George Elliot Secondary utilizes these already overburdened transportation routes and transporting the children from a closed Oyama Elementary would compound the existing community transportation difficulties.

g) Environment

If Oyama Elementary School closes, the opportunity for new housing developments in Oyama would be quite limited. Without more housing developments, the likelihood of a community sewer system being developed would be virtually non-existent. An impact may be felt in some environmentally sensitive areas within the Ward of Oyama and wetland environments could potentially be impacted if the current on site septic systems continue to be used.

10. Community School Context, Post Closure

There would be no school and community context. Oyama Elementary School and the Oyama Community Club would no longer exist. No school Christmas pageants or spring concerts would be enjoyed at the community hall. There would be no joint contributions between Oyama Elementary and the Oyama Community Club to the fabric of the community. No fundraisers or community use items would be purchased for these defunct facilities. No PAC meetings would be held at the Oyama Community Hall. There would be no community breakfast on the first day back to school held at Oyama Elementary. The opportunity for the community at large to interact with the school community would be lost.

The number of parent and community volunteers would be severely reduced. Due to time restraints and increased distance to the elementary schools in Winfield, fewer seniors would be able to drive the distance to help with such programs as the Volunteer Reader Program. Oyama parents are less likely to be able to help with the hot lunch program, math quest program, school teams, sport days, field trips, school concerts and attend school assemblies. Fewer parents would be able to pop to see their children in an elementary school in Winfield. Local business owners, orchardists and stay at home mothers are less likely to have the opportunity to volunteer for school activities. This would result in Oyama parents being less active participants in their children's education. The deaf child that is currently enrolled at Oyama Elementary would lose the community that has embraced her and the social support that exists for her and

her family would be gone. There would be no public events in Oyama with sign language interpreters and Oyama would no longer be considered a supportive community for the hearing impaired. The whole community would no longer be raising the children of Oyama. Currently if a child's home situation is less than ideal, members of the community lend a hand to the child and the family to provide a better quality of life for that child. That is what happens in a close-knit community like Oyama. Neighbours help each other, this type of social capital and caring does not happen in larger urban settings.

11. The loss of the Oyama Elementary Parents Advisory Committee

Community Donations made by the Oyama Elementary Parents Advisory Committee such as, donations to families suffering a family crisis such as death or serious illness would likely no longer be made. It is not likely that a consolidated parents advisory committee would make these significant contributions to these needy families. A consolidated PAC from outside our community will not share the same sense of community that the Oyama P.A.C, shares with the residents of the community of Oyama.

The yearly \$ 500 George Elliot Bursary that is kindly donated by the Oyama Elementary P.A.C. to a graduating student would no longer be provided post closure of Oyama Elementary.

The Oyama Elementary P.A.C. would no longer fundraising for the D.A.R.E. program in their community. The children of Oyama would be making a pledge to avoid using drugs outside of their own community. These children would not have the interaction and support of their neighbours. The community of Oyama has traditionally placed our local children under our wings and protected and guided them through life's more difficult situations.

If Oyama Elementary closes, the contributions made by the Oyama Elementary Parents Advisory Committee to the Festival of Trees would no longer be made. The \$ 275 financial contribution to the British Columbia Children's Hospital would not be made on behalf of Oyama Elementary PAC.

From 1996 to 2003, the following items have been purchased for the school by the Oyama P.A.C.; dishwasher, colour printer, TV/VCR, projector screen, computers, grade 7 graduation plaques, sound mixer, cordless microphone, portable score card, DVD, microwave and games, these items total in cost at nearly \$ 30,000. If anyone has ever spent time working as a volunteer, they are well aware of how much time and effort is required to raise that kind of money. These items will devalue if removed from Oyama Elementary. Some of these items may be utilized in other schools or be simply placed in storage until they become obsolete. To allow this to happen would affront the value of the volunteers who spent their time and energy fundraising for Oyama Elementary.

Since 1995, approximately \$ 18,000 has been raised by hot lunch funds. The hot lunch program has been run completely by volunteer parents since it's inception. These funds have been directly deposited into the Principal's Account. The recognition of these volunteer contributions would vanish.

In summary, the Oyama Elementary Parent's Advisory Committee, despite the size of it's school and rural location, has raised almost \$ 50,000 since 1995. These financial contributions have been used to improve the quality of education and life of Oyama children, their families and their community.

12. The Loss of the Oyama Community Club

There would be no non-partisan, non-profit, volunteer organization specifically serving the community of Oyama, if the Oyama Community Club closed as a result of the closure of Oyama Elementary. There would be no Community Hall or grounds available for recreational activities, meetings, functions, re-unions, receptions and other activities. There would be no community evacuation site. There would be no financial bursaries given in the name of the Oyama Community Club to a George Elliot Secondary Student to further their post secondary education.

a) **Cascade Failure of the Social Events of the Oyama Community Club following the closure of both the Oyama Elementary and the Oyama Community Club.**

<u>Event</u>	<u>Description</u>
Spaghetti Dinner/Variety show	Event would be no longer be held.
OCC Annual General Meeting Election of Executive Committee	Event would no longer be held.
Spring Auction	Event would no longer be held.
Spring Cleanup	Event would no longer be held.
Easter Bingo	Event would no longer be held.
Oyama Fun Day	There would be no Parade, children's games, waterski demonstration, senior's line dancing demonstration or balloon rides (our most popular event would be lost)

Swim lessons
It is unknown if the YMCA would run these lessons independently within the Ward of Oyama

Canada Day
No community volunteers from Oyama would run the children's field games at the District of Lake Country's Canada Day Celebrations

Centre Piece
No community volunteers from Oyama would run the children's field games at the local Historical society's major fundraiser of year (held in the Ward of Okanagan Centre)

Fall Fair at the Farm
Free activities such as pony rides, hayrides, apple bobbing, would no longer be provided by Oyama Community Club

Halloween Celebrations
Free Haunted house, caramel apples, games hot chocolate and fireworks would no longer be provided.

Christmas Bingo
Event would no longer be held.

Children's Christmas Party
Event would no longer be held.

* please note that the above events and activities would be lost during a cascade failure of the community of Oyama as a result of the closure of Oyama Elementary and the Closure of the Oyama Community Club. Any additional activities held by the club would also be lost.

b) Loss of the Community Use of the OCC facility

The following weekly sporting activities would no longer be held following the cascade failure of the community of Oyama:

Ladies and Youth Soccer
Youth and Adult Badminton
Karate
Tai Chi
Yoga
Highland Dance
The preschool/ parent playgroup.

No community meetings would be held, as all indoor public gathering facilities would be lost in Oyama.

As there is no church operating in Oyama and if the Community Club facilities were lost no funerals could be held in our Ward, and no organization would be caring for the local cemetery. Community teas would not occur and there no longer be any of the cultural benefits that are provided by the Spring Splash art show within our community.

No weddings, dances, youth functions, or agricultural shows would be held if the cascade failure of the community of Oyama occurred.

c) **Loss of Volunteer Base for the Oyama Community Club**

92% of the volunteer base of the Oyama Community Club would be lost if the Oyama Elementary School was no longer in operation. As fundraising is the bulk of the Oyama Community Club's income, it is our conclusion, after much investigation, the closure of Oyama Elementary would result in the financial failure of the Oyama Community Club.

13. Conclusion

As you can see, evidenced by the enclosed statements, the closure of the Oyama School will have tremendous and far-reaching effects. The closure of this school is not limited to affecting a few parents with small children; it will have an enormous impact on our community as a whole.

Oyama Elementary and the Oyama Community Club are the heart and soul of this community. They have been intertwined together for nearly a century. If the community of Oyama were to lose Oyama Elementary, its heart would cease to beat and it's lifeblood would cease to flow. The identity of Oyama, it's history, and sense of community would vanish. All that would be left would be a smattering of rural houses with no connection to one another.

Once you eliminate young families from a community, you eliminate the concept of fresh thought, innovation, ideas and future growth. A community of seniors though immeasurably valuable will only sustain the area for a brief period of time and then it slowly ebbs from existence. This is a harsh but true fact of life. You have only to look to similar communities that have lost their schools to see the dire consequences that ensued. The lifeblood of the Okanagan lies in our tourism industry. If you remove young people from a community and subsequently the businesses that are sustained by those young people, what will be left to support your tourism industry?

What you may do today is not a form of progress but rather a detrimental setback that will affect this area for generations. The Interior Salish lived here for hundreds of years. They saw a future for our community; as we did when we moved here. Please allow us to continue to build on that future.

WE are K'Lakokum, the land between.

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