PLEA Community Services Society of BC

Tri-Cities and Ridge Meadows

Community Gang Consultation

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Prepared by: Karen L. Abrahamson
Consultant
kabrahamson@shaw.ca

Executive Summary:

Through April 2013, PLEA Community Services Society hosted three (3) community consultation meetings with youth-involved professionals in each of the Tri-Cities and Ridge Meadows communities. Attendees included youth justice, education, employment, recreation, sexual exploitation, police, diversion, social workers, mental health workers and others interested in the topic of youth gang involvement in their community.

The three sessions in each community were structured to build one from the other and included topics like:

- Who are gang entrenched youth in this community?
- Who are youth vulnerable to gang involvement in this community?
- What are gaps in services?
- What do we have?
- What is a vision for services in the future?
- What are the priority services/actions needed in the community?
- What would these priorities look like and who should be responsible for taking them forward?
- What is the most critical piece needed to support moving forward to address these needs?

Results of the sessions indicated Tri-Cities does not have a recognizable population of gang-entrenched youth, while Ridge Meadows has more gang-involved youth due to the presence of Hell's Angels in the community.[Note that while Tri-Cities has a Hell's Angels clubhouse, this was not identified as a factor during the consultation.] Both communities identified a significant gap in services that could partially be addressed through improved collaboration and leadership, but that would also require additional resources to address matters like the extension of the Skytrain line into Tri-Cities, and support for services like youth hubs (one-stop-shop), improved outreach and school-based programs. Both communities also viewed preventative actions such as enhancing community awareness and parent education as a priority.

Lastly, the participants indicated a need to identify a community leader to assume a leadership role in engaging senior managers across the community to begin working together on this issue. To support this, the forum participants felt that either an existing committee should be approached about assuming this responsibility, or else a new committee should be established to provide leadership and direction. To support this work, both communities indicated that a coordinator for the project should be established to ensure work is done and to help ensure accountability.

Introduction:

In January 2013, PLEA Community Services Society applied to the Department of Justice Canada, for funding to complete community consultations in Tri-Cities (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam,Port Moody, Anmore and Belcarra) and Ridge Meadows (Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows) areas of the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. The purpose of the consultations was to obtain community input into the issue of youth gang involvement, including:

1. Where there was an issue
2. What currently served these youth and
3. Initial planning regarding what could be done to better serve these youth.

The consultation was held over three mornings in each community area with each consultation feeding the following discussion. This report outlines the results of this effort.

Background:

Over the past decade, the Greater Vancouver area has seen an increase in gang involvement and gang violence. Various law enforcement and intervention initiatives have been implemented in the Metro Vancouver area to address this growth, but such interventions have not reached all areas. The Tri-Cities area is a suburban community of largely single family homes, but that character has been changing over the past five to ten years with increasing densification and growth. While Tri-Cities has had relatively little youth involvement in organized gangs, the extension of rapid transit (Skytrain) to this community has raised concerns that it will not only make the community more accessible to established gangs, but that it will increase potential recruitment of local youth into gangs and may increase the potential for violence in a very ethnically diverse community.

Ridge Meadows is also a suburban bedroom community, but with more rural areas still remaining. Ridge Meadows is undergoing rapid growth of both single family and townhouse development on what was previously undeveloped land. As a more rural community, it has long attracted groups that prefer to operate with less scrutiny. As a result Ridge Meadows has a long-established Hell's Angel's Clubhouse and numerous members are known to live and raise their families in the area. As a result, Ridge Meadows professionals describe existing linkages between youth and established gangs, and a culture of anti-social affiliation amongst some families.

The consultation process brought together professionals from across sectors to discuss the issues and to determine actions they can take to improve the gang situation in their community.

Methodology:

PLEA Community Services Society's Program Director for Youth Services in Tri-Cities and Ridge Meadows envisioned a process of community involvement/consultation to determine the scope of the issue in each community and to foster community discussion about what was needed to address the issue. To that end a series of three, half-day consultation sessions were planned in each of the communities.

The three sessions were planned to pose a series of questions to the participants with each session leading logically into the topic of the next session. In general the sessions:

1. Determined who the youth were and what services currently exist
2. Determined gaps in services and what steps would be needed to address the gaps
3. Specified where services should be delivered, what they would do, how they should be delivered and current community assets that might support implementation.

All of the sessions used a modified 'world café' style to allow ideas and individuals to interact and expand on each other's knowledge. Topic areas were as follows:

Session	Questions/Topics
1	1. Who are the community's gang-entrenched youth? (details of demographics and where they are located/come from) 2. Who are the youth vulnerable to youth gang involvement? (details of demographics and where they are located/come from) 3. What services currently exist in the community that serve gang-entrenched youth and youth vulnerable to gang involvement? 4. Are there examples of good youth programs elsewhere that should be looked at for this community? 5. Given what is occurring in this community and if services remain the same, what do we expect to see in 5-10 years time?
2	1. What are the gaps in services for gang-entrenched youth? 2. What are the gaps in services for youth at risk of gang involvement? 3. Blue-skying – what would a system of services look like to serve these youth and stop us from reaching the future outlined in session #1? 4. Identify 5 key areas of your blue sky direction and then identify what are the actions we can take together to achieve the Blue Sky status, given current services? (To get from where we are today to where we want to be, what are the steps? E.g. advocate, establish working group, research, need contracts/policies changed etc.)

	5. From the previous discussions, what are the top three priority actions to better serve gang entrenched youth and youth vulnerable to gang involvement?

3	1. For your assigned priority identify what the assigned effective program should look like, including:
	   a) where it would be,
	   b) what it would do,
	   c) how it would be delivered, etc. given your knowledge of the community and youth.
	   d) What best (promising) practices should be considered?
	
	2. For your assigned priority:
	   a) what partnerships and key assets in existence in the community could support the priority?
	   b) Who should be involved in the partnership?
	   c) What additional support is needed (beyond money)?
	   d) How do we move this project forward? (What steps need to be taken?)
	
	3. Which of these proposed programs should be pursued first in your community?

Participants at the sessions in both communities were invited from the following sectors:
- Youth justice (probation, youth justice agencies, police, youth justice consultants, Intensive support and supervision supervisors)
- Social Services (social workers, social service youth-serving agencies)
- Recreation (Municipal Parks and Recreation workers, Recreation Centers)
- Education (School District, Community Colleges)
- Employment (youth-serving Employment agencies)
- Local Aboriginal Band workers
- Provincial Gang specialists

Participants were asked to commit to attend all three sessions.

At each session, participants were provided with a review of the information gathered from the prior session, and were given the opportunity to amend the results of prior session, or to add to the results.

At the end of session 2, participants were asked to identify their top three priorities for action in their community. This information was collated and provided back to the participants at the

start of session 3. Participants were then offered the opportunity to add to, or modify the top five priorities, which then became the focus of the discussions on day 3. At the end of day three, each group was offered the opportunity as a large group to identify what first step could be taken immediately to start moving forward with their plans.

All sessions were followed by a light lunch funded through Department of Justice Canada as a thank you to the participants for their time.

Results:

The sessions were well attended in both communities, with a total of 76 attendances (average attendance 25) at all Tri-Cities sessions and a total of 67 attendances (average attendance 22) at the three Ridge Meadows sessions. Attendance generally did not wane over the three sessions, though some participants were called away due to their work constraints. Participants at the sessions represented the following agencies:

Tri-Cities	Ridge Meadows
- Children of the Street Society - City of Port Coquitlam - Communities Embracing Restorative Action - Douglas College - IRAYL - Ministry of Children and Family Development - PLEA Community Services - Pocomo - Port Moody Police - RCMP - Coquitlam - School District 43 - Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division	- Ridge Meadows Member of Parliament - Burnaby Youth Custody Centre - School District 42 - ISSP Custody Division - Vice Principal Maple Ridge Secondary - Ministry of Children and Family Development—Consultants, Community Services Manager - Maple Ridge Child and Youth Mental Health Team - Maple Ridge Employment Services Centre - Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows Parks and Leisure Services - Outreach Counsellor for Maple Ridge/ Pitt Meadows Community Services - Parks and Leisure - PLEA Community Services - RCMP Constables - RCMP Crime Prevention Program - Ridge Meadows Citizens on Patrol - Ridge Meadows Youth Diversion Program - Youth Probation Officer - Work BC Employment Centres

The discussions in the two communities indicated different issues and different populations of concern. For that reason, this section will report the results of the sessions separately for each community.

Tri-Cities (Coquitlam, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Anmore, Belcarra) –

Session 1 asked the participants to clarify who were Tri-Cities' gang-entrenched youth and youth vulnerable to gang involvement. The following key points were made.

Gang Entrenched	Vulnerable to Gang Involvement
a) Tri-cities has what are called 'pseudo-gangs' that are smaller groups that lack hierarchy, are less organized than true gangs, that are engaged in theft and intimidation. They were not seen as 'Gang-entrenched'. b) A significant number of these youth are from refugee/immigrant populations and stick together as a cultural group c) Many are low income and come from particular areas of the community d) Many have very low ambitions and thus poor prospects e) They have lack of connection to the community or family and the gang offers a sense of community, involvement and respect f) Lack of parental involvement is common. g) When become gang-entrenched they move from the community. h) There is some violence amongst these youth, but the activity of choice seems to be online. i) With the extension of the Skytrain Evergreen line into Tri-Cities, this will have a the significant impact of giving these youth easier access to gang-entrenched groups, thus there is more chance of recruitment/transition to more serious forms of gangs.	a) Youth lacking connection/attachment to school, home, employment and community b) Youth who lack positive role models c) Youth with drug connections d) Low functioning youth (diagnosed) e.g. FASD youth e) Isolated immigrant/refugee youth f) Youth lacking self esteem who are subject to peer pressure and who are seeking status. g) Youth from low income families h) Youth from violent/abusive relationships i) Youth as young as 8 years old. j) Youth from specific communities/neighbourhoods k) Youth from families where support/expectation/supervision (structure in the home) is lacking.

Session 1 also asked participants to identify good gang programs that could be considered for Tri-Cities. Suggested programs included:

- School-based Programs - WRAP program (Surrey), Vancouver school District Posse Groups, Genesis, Onyx, Community Schools/Neighbourhood Learning Centers
- Hub Programs - Broadway Youth Resource Center/Directions Youth Hub
- Employment Programs - Skills Link programs, Bladerunner, CUE, Pathfinders , Career Path
- Addictions Programs
- Mentorship programs – Kidstart

- Recreation programs
- IRAYL (gang program on Skytrain routes)

The final question of session 1 was to ask participants what Tri-Cities might look like in 5-10 years if nothing is done to address gang involvement. The responses included:

- Increased crime rates
- Significant strain on schools, recreation, mental health services
- Because the K-grade one population is increasing, there will be a bulge in youth in 10 years
- Suspect more organized influx of gang associations
- Mobility of youth and transient population
- Tri-Cities will become more culturally diverse and therefore there is the possibility of territorial conflict
- Increase in vandalism and petty theft
- Law enforcement will need to increase
- The presence of the College will bring other issues, better drugs as more youth use Skytrain to come to the area.
- The Skytrain presence will open the area to more serious gang presence.

Building from session 1, Session 2 asked participants to identify the current service gaps in Tri-Cities. They were identified as:

Organizational-
- Lack of communication between agencies (for many of the participants, this was the first time they had met each other)
- Coordinator role to foster communication across agencies and to work with kids outside of school
- Lack of one stop Hubs as a means to provide services to youth in youth-friendly, wrap-around environment
- Lack of a clear sense of what is out there in services (a map was suggested to address this)
- Lack of funding to support staff attendance at meetings – particularly for smaller organizations
- With five municipal areas in the Tri-Cities area (the two small communities of Anmore and Belcarra are included in the Tri-Cities area); each municipality has a different approach to youth issues.

Educational –

- Alternative options/incentive programs
- Means to connect to youth who aren't in school
- Alternative school options for as young as age 7-10 to keep kids in school longer
- There are no school programs focused on this issue. There needs to be school based program specifically working on gang involvement.
- Services in schools for younger children

Employment -

- Employment programs
- A transitional service for employment after a youth enters any service – there are long waitlists and youth often don't qualify.

Prevention –
- Preventative programs – most programs are too reactive
- Parent resources, support and training (start when the youth are younger)
- Childhood mentorship program.
- Immigration services – education and general assistance to connect them to the community.
- Programs pointed at transition points in youth's lives as this is where they most often get lost

Other –
- No specific gang program – suggested use the same model as the domestic violence approach
- Mental health services and supports including outreach workers
- Housing, foster homes, safe houses
- Additional outreach workers
- Need a means to mandate youth attendance at programming

After identifying what gaps existed in the community, participants were asked to identify their vision of the community. In general the comments were as follows:

a) There will be a location (hub) where everyone is co-located or all services will come together and communicate
b) There will be improved communication across the communities and agencies
c) There will be additional services such as increased number of school liaison officers (police), foster homes, safe houses and the approach will be for the best solution as opposed to the least costly.
d) There will be prevention programs in place to address problems before they arise, rather than waiting to be reactive. E.g. Elementary, Middle School and Secondary will have school-based prevention and intervention re gangs that leads to disclosure and services
e) The community will become more involved and informed
f) No wrong door- a youth can go anywhere and gain access to the services they need
g) All services will be aware of all services available. There will be a listing of all community resources
h) Mental Health services will be readily available. Youth workers will be specifically trained with mental health. Anti-stigma campaigns around mental health issues. More supports for youth with low and intermediate mental health needs.
i) Outreach teams will be multidisciplinary.
j) Alternate schools will provide more alternatives for youth such as ½ day school and ½ day arts or trades.
k) A community coordinator will ensure communications across agencies e.g. a community schools coordinator
l) Programs will be available that have a leadership/mentorship component/peer program including peer programs for immigrant youth.
m) Alternative to suspension programs will be available in schools

n) Specific school/employment programs will exist for gang-vulnerable /gang entrenched youth
o) Cultural programming will exist
p) Wrap Around youth programming will address employment, education, self-esteem, child welfare, and housing.
q) Supports/training for parents will be available very early in the child's life.

From this discussion, groups of participants were asked to identify actions needed to achieve the future they envisioned and the entire group was asked to identify the priority actions. Based on the 'votes' the participants used to identify their priorities, the following (in descending order) were the group's perceived priorities for action.
1. No Wrong Door combined with an e-book of services resource book
2. Hubbing of services to improve communications across agencies
3. Supports/training in place for parents immediately upon the birth of a child (ideally this would be mandatory)
4. Collectively advocating for funding
5. Meet regularly by community/neighbourhood
6. Funded 'alternative to suspension' program in schools
7. Research what has been done in other communities
8. All services come together to conduct research and identify best practices
9. Resource reallocation
10. Prevention
11. Policies changed to prevent aging out.

Session 3 asked the participants to work with the top five priorities, and added in the issue of planning for the pending Skytrain extension as a sixth topic of discussion at the group's request. Participants were asked first to describe the program.

Program	Description
Alternative to School Suspension	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities): To Keep suspended youth still involved with education and reduce the opportunity for gang involvement. Suspended youth will be expected to attend a program instead of having free time while suspended. Where program will be: Depending on model, it could be in a modular classroom on school grounds or part of a hub. How program will be delivered: -Off-site program, - youth would be suspended, would go to the program and then return to regular school, but with heavy follow-up via a mentor and other resources. -In-school program – An in-school program would bring in external resources to the youth. It would offer different programs such as wilderness or recreational programming, etc.) Best practices to be considered: Abbotsford and Langley School Districts have an off-site model that costs $130,000/year for 1.5 full time youth workers. No School District Staff are involved and it serves 8 youth. Share also delivers an alternate to suspension for drug involved youth (Assets). Other information: Model 1: The offsite program would be based on the type of suspension (drugs or crime). It would be • Kids specific • Combination of school and prevention programming • Could be component of a hub • Would involve front line workers including teacher, outside resources (Share/PLEA), school liaison and a registered psychologist. Model 2: A modular classroom on site would include integrated services (school and other). It would have 'good' kids connected It would connect with Leadership program or practicum students as role models.
Agencies working together in communities/neighbourhoods	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities): To foster working in collaboration and partnership, not isolation and to improve communication and core research into the community/community

	resources.
	Where program will be: Community-wide, but also neighbourhood meetings
	How program will be delivered:
	• Common agreement/mandate required that allows information sharing. An organized agenda/mandate
	• A steering committee provides leadership and momentum, preferably with political buy-in at all levels. It must have a strong core of consistent people attending regularly. Should be senior staff to provide direction. They should set a schedule and common themes.
	• Line staff should be encouraged to meet regularly, similar to Hard Target.
	• Develop relationships between agencies in order to share information and work together.
	• All agencies (school, police, community) need to participate.
	• It will focus on strengths and assets instead of negative stigma
	• Funding/Resources should be allocated.
	• Provides opportunities for positive engagement with youth in order to gather community buy-in/
	• Utilizes facilities such as community schools/recreation centers.
	• Will be proactive in planning and meeting, not reactive.
	• Should be working toward an immediate response and wrap around programming and coordination of resources.
	• Works collaboratively on grant applications
	Best practices to be considered:
	• Hard Target Committee.
Skytrain prevention/planning	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities):
	• To have a plan in place to address the potential issues that will arise when Evergreen Line opens.
	• To increase communication across agencies.
	• To stop the progression/connection of Tri-Cities 'pseudo'-gangs with more organized gangs from outside the community.
	Where program will be:
	• Outreach to Skytrain terminals.
	• Locally where youth are.
	• Across community with educational/awareness programming for community.

	How program will be delivered:
	Outreach – recognition of the progression of these 'pseudo' gangs and the need to intervene now. Provide an increased community presence Coordination of Translink cities across Tri-Cities.
	Community awareness/education – Outreach workers may deliver
	• Community forums to create awareness and ideas, increase community buy-in and educate the hard to reach parents.
	• Training for foster parents
	• Community awareness – like blockwatch/hotline, have both prevention and deterrence.
	• Provide gang-specific workshops that are cross funded and school based.
	Skytrain design and planning –
	• CPTED for Skytrain design
	• Make sure the terminals are 'boring' to discourage congregation
	Train workers-
	• Provide training for outreach workers
	• Allocate reasonable assets to initiative
	• Develop a relationship with Translink (e.g. discounts for ticket purchases to provide control of freedom of movement.
	Best practices to be considered:
	IRAYL
No Wrong Door	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities):
	To better link gang-involved or gang-vulnerable youth to programs that will deter gang involvement.
	Where program will be:
	Somewhere in Tri-Cities that is transit accessible. Should be youth friendly location and provide an opportunity to connect with services and grab a bite.
	Option 1:
	• Connected to current youth resources – youth centre or could be mobile
	Option 2:
	• Have a shelter attached to a program—weekends and evenings, a safe place to stay in order to access services.
	How program will be delivered:
	Option 1:
	• It would provide a youth-friendly and welcoming environment when and where the kids are (not just regular office hours). It

	may be delivered at Douglas College, given the proximity to the skytrain.
	• Hours of operation -24 hours.
	• At each youth service one staff would be designated the 'intake' person who would sit on the 'no wrong door' committee and would assist the youth in need.
	• Program contracts would be amended to allow a few open spaces to be available for these youth to attend (rather than gated, closed referrals) so that youth can be caught in the contemplative stage of change, rather than being placed on a waitlist.
	• Allocated program spaces would be available to all youth, not just MCFD attached youth.
	• Funding – we need to lobby for funding across organizations.
	• A safe schools coordinator is also needed.
	Option 2:
	• No wrong door worker
	• Stand alone program,
	• Worker linked to programs/resources and agencies
	• Service for parents/youth and other service providers
	• Youth are treated as individuals in their neighbourhoods, rather than as a numbers.
	Best practices to be considered:
	None mentioned.
	• Conduct Community Mapping utilizing volunteers and some paid staff such as practicum students. Deliver the program as a combination of Program and part of other workers' jobs.
	• Include community awareness such as 'who to call' awareness cards for youth.
Parent training	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities):
	a) Provides prevention parent education on general parenting starting pre-natal and continuing at all stages.
	b) To reduce the likelihood of gangs and pseudo gangs.
	c) To reduce crime and increase the safety of others.
	Where program will be:
	In schools and community centers, hubs and agencies including immigrant serving agencies, churches, libraries, public health, healthiest babies programs. It should provide non-judgemental, non-blaming safe approaches that start as easily as possible with parental education for all, with general parenting education at all stages of early life.

	How program will be delivered:
	• Parent education would be delivered starting prenatally and continuing at allstages.
	• Agencies and schools would identify 'high risk' kids and provide more targeted training on how to recognize high risk kids and how to get services.
	• Probation/courts/agencies are involved in getting parents to attend sessions.
	• Legal education provided for immigrants/refugees.
	• The program provides a welcoming and safe environment that reduces fear
	• The program would bring together groups of people similar to this group and put together relevant educational material.
	• Have counsellor services or mentor available for follow-up
	• Education sessions are delivered collaboratively among a variety of agencies.
	• Training delivered is comprehensive and delivered effectively.
	• School Program deglamorizes gang lifestyle.
	• Parents and kids programming when possible
	• Reach out to immigrant populations through immigrant agencies and population. Reach out to Language media.
	• Reach out to at risk families by:
	   − Using a resource they trust to gain access
	   − Respect them to entice them to come
	   − Develop resources
	   − Provide individualized education for involved families.
	
	Best practices to be considered: None mentioned.

Youth Hubs	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities): To improve access to youth services and coordination of youth services. Where program will be: • Tri-Cities is so large that ideally there would three hubs. • Use a recreation center or high school in each municipality. How program will be delivered: • The program would put services where kids are, through use of mobile professionals. • There would be one main coordinator (for information to move through) and more meetings with all players at the table. • Confidentiality issues would be hammered out. • It would require a clear community vision and buy-in. • Would include preventative programming, employment readiness, immigration services (starting with welcome wagon type services, medical services and a pocket food bank.

	• The program would operate beyond school hours. • It could include a suspension program so that there is increased connectedness to school as opposed to ostracizing the given the youth increased opportunity to engage in anti-social behaviour. Best practices to be considered: • BYRC (Broadway Youth Resource Centre • Directions • PCRS (Surrey)

Session 3 lastly asked participants to identify Key Partnerships/ Assets currently in the community, who should be involved, additional supports required, and logical next steps to take the projects forward.

Program	Partnerships/Assets/Supports and Next Steps
Alternative to school Suspension	Current Partnerships/Assets: • School District Who should be involved: • Police/MADD • Presentations (A and D) • Community organizations (SHARE, PLEA, CERA, YMCA) • Practicum students/volunteers • After school programs (Tri-Cities Youth Centres) • MCFD/CYMH – providing diagnosis. Additional Supports required: • Hub model • In school alternate classes • Communication between organizations Next steps to take the program forward: • Allow planning of different approaches in each school.
Agencies Working Together in Communities/Neighbourhoods	Current Partnerships/Assets: • Transition program for youth with special needs _ Douglas College • Active Youth Committee that includes police, school, probation and transit • Youth committee – research focused. • Pinetree school/community centre and Douglas partnership provides an opportunity to move this forward. Who should be involved: • Existing committees and all community agencies and local and provincial government • Transit

	• Individuals with expertise and knowledge of best practices. Additional Supports required: • School partnerships with other agencies. • Support from all levels of government. Next steps to take the program forward: • Establish senior group to lead the process by example.
Skytrain/Prevention	Current Partnerships/Assets: • Translink • Municipal and RCM Police. • Municipalities • Schools • Youth Probation • Youth workers Who should be involved: • Translink • Municipal and RCM Police. • Municipalities • Schools • Youth Probation • Youth workers • IRAYL • Public and Community engagement Additional Supports required: • Official City Plan with the design change that reflects transit stops that minimize issues. • Fares and turnstiles to give control • Presence as of day 1 that the line opens. Next steps to take the program forward: • Pre-engagement meetings should start now in the immediate areas to address the immediate influx/changes expected.
No Wrong Door	Current Partnerships/Assets: • MCFD • Community Agencies • City (PoCo, PoMo, Coquitlam) • Schools • Community Centres • Immigration • A and D/Counselling • Income Assistance • Police

	Who should be involved: As above. Additional Supports required: • Buy in from the partners Next steps to take the program forward: • Another forum an invite other community partners • Someone to coordinate and hold agencies accountable • Agency to take the lead and seek out volunteers • Make as one year project and work on community collaboration and 'buy-in' for agencies/resources (including those who did not attend the PLEA forums). • Establish a volunteer committee (monthly) to provide oversight.
Parent Training	Current Partnerships/Assets: • Some programs already exist • Packages are given out at Day Care and through high schools • Resources exist – need to get worked out for general population. Who should be involved: • Schools, community Centers, hubs, and agencies, churches, libraries, Public Health, MCFD Additional Supports required: • Additional population-appropriate resources Next steps to take the program forward: None listed
Hub	Current Partnerships/Assets: • Schools • Police • Community agencies • MCFD Who should be involved: • Key personnel from the School District • Translink • Fraser Health • Immigration services • City workers • Sports Associations • Businesses

	Additional Supports required:
	• Make use of reallocation of services (i.e. school counsellors work out of hub so all kids can access them)
	• Shuttle tickets specifically to hub for free so youth can always get to the hub.
	Next steps to take the program forward:
	• Provincial and Municipal buy in
	• Home and foster partnerships

At the end of session 3 the large group convened and discussed overarching priority actions to move forward with the planning. The group identified a need for:

1. Establishing (or using existing) a collaborative community committee to begin taking this agenda forward.
2. A coordinator to assist with leadership, coordination and collaboration.

At the end of session 3, nineteen participants completed a consultation evaluation and all indicated that they either agreed or strong agreed that the consultation process:

- linked them with other providers,
- produced realistic results, and
- provided an overall satisfactory process.

Fifty eight percent indicated that as a result of attending the session they knew more about youth gangs in their community. Participants indicated that they liked the consultations because they:

- met new people from various agencies
- networked with the community,
- brainstormed on several topics and ideas,
- appreciated the openness and sharing of ideas, and
- obtained an improved understanding of existing services.

Conversely, participants had the following suggestions for future improvements:

- More specific information on youth gangs—the session focused more on at risk youth.
- There could have been more regarding how to follow-through and fund the good ideas, otherwise these will be barriers.
- Include representation from other groups such as politicians and government officials—people with the ability to move ideas forward.
- Include representation from community mental health teams
- Include representation fromTranslink
- Include more information and education about youth gangs as well as have key speakers knowledgeable about the youth gang target population.
- more time and notice for invitations to be sent out in preparation for the sessions
- More time to network with the various agencies in attendance.
- Further sessions focused on an action plan to move forward with the ideas presented.

Ridge Meadows (Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows) –

Session 1 asked the participants to clarify who were Ridge Meadows' gang-entrenched youth and youth vulnerable to gang involvement. The following key points were made.

Gang Entrenched	Vulnerable to Gang Involvement
a. 13-18 year old Caucasian males seeking respect b. Children of multigenerational criminally involved families - learned behaviour, protect family, taught or completely unaware c. Drug trade/dealers, sex trade, identity theft (mail), violence, unspoken d. Hell's Angels control through the community e. Geographic areas of concern include downtown core of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, poor areas, Hammond, Katzie Reserve f. Lack of parental involvement/support g. Notion of families versus 'the system' h. Youth in care brought into the community who don't have connections so they connect with the wrong people i. Gangs are more covert- they don't wear colors and aren't visible.	a. Most have parents who apparently don't care or who have anti-social attitudes b. Middle and upper class youth also vulnerable c. Youth with Hell's Angel's family affiliations. d. Prison family affiliations e. Parents with limited awareness of what their kids are doing f. Youth with marginal school involvement g. Youth with mental health/addiction issues (FASD) issues h. Aboriginal kids i. Youth lacking connection to family, school and community. Often hang around in downtown core j. Sexually exploited females

Session 1 also asked participants to identify good gang programs that could be considered for Ridge Meadows. Suggested programs included:

- Career Path,
- UNYA Community Support
- Boys and Girls Club USA,
- Breaking the Cycle
- Teen Resource,
- Forensic Services
- Family Education Center (has cost attached)
- Parent education

This group took time to discuss qualities of programs they would like to see. These qualities included:
- Wrap around
- Spectrum Approach – prevention, early intervention, intensive, suppression
- Need youth addictions programs
- Need better communication of what is available
- Wait time for service does not meet need – needs to be immediate

The final question of session 1 was to ask participants what Ridge Meadows might look like in 5-10 years if nothing is done to address gang involvement. The responses included:

- Increased crime, violence, drugs and gang war
- New gangs, large and small, recruit more youth
- Lack of services – leads to staff burnout, waitlists, disappearing services
- Political shift – changing mandates, barriers, funding changes
- Increased addictions, mental health
- Risks of homelessness, prison population, couch surfing
- Gentrification of Neighbourhoods is leaving people with nowhere to go
- Community culture shift- and eventual acceptance, complacency, mistrust of the system, services and reputation
- Backlog of the Justice System leads to an enforcement model and less relationship-based services
- Change of school type - increased alternate and outreach
- Current services become redundant- they need to be flexible and adaptive
- Services can't meet demand due to funding.

Building from session 1, Session 2 asked participants to identify the current service gaps in Ridge Meadows. They were identified as:

Organizational-
- Integrated gang committee – not just 'at risk' kids- start identifying gangs and territories, trends, multidisciplinary, community mobilization
- Services available outside of normal business hours
- Training for service providers on gang recruitment, activities, what to watch for in their kids etc
- Fewer gated services and decreased waitlists
- More 'wrap around' services when youth are younger
- Building relationships – have experienced workers share expertise and knowledge with younger workers who can more easily relate, or have seniors tell their story
- Provide drop-in services
- Community mobilization – integrated approach with all services at hand and involved
- Raise awareness in the community, not just the usual faces- politicians also need to be involved.

Educational –

- Education programs that support youth who lack parental support for education
- High school and elementaryEducational programs for youth, adults and families
- Teach youth skills (de-escalation) and have those youth go to skate park and teach other youth
- Focus on the value of education, positive alternatives
- More relationship-based school prevention
- Increased education
- Workshops for parents/families about gangs and drugs

- Low cost programming (Family education center)

Employment -

- Employment services – need extended hours
- Additional employment programs for youth. E.g. programs like pathfinders that build self-esteem

Prevention –
- Work with parents and families early on and in some cases prior to them having kids
- support the youth in families without threatening or judging the criminal enterprise of the family
- Empowering families by creating community awareness and a sense of priority
- Community and after school activities for youth that build a sense of belonging.
- Services for younger youth before they get gang involved
- Look at younger siblings of known gang members.

Other –
- Street level outreach workers
- Mentorship by former gang members
- outreach where kids can do activities at different locations
- Addictions/mental health and housing programs
- Transportation/distance to programming
- Programming for youth specifically (A and D groups, gang, violence, leadership) that are relevant to youth

After identifying what gaps existed in the community, participants were asked to identify their vision of the community. In general the comments were as follows:

- Provincial Government buy-in that ensures support and integration across Ministries
- Risk factors will be identified in a list to assist with identification and allowing dedicated rapid response before issues arise
- A Core team of workers will provide case management while the youth receives services that they need
- There would be an alternative to suspension program and an open door after school program – drop-in – would have counsellors, food, free activities with no paperwork, to maintain youth's connection to mainstream school
- Parents engage with their children and with community resources.
- A Hub model established as a one-stop-shop delivery of services to both gang entrenched and youth vulnerable to gang involvement.Low barrier drop-in – no referrals, free daycare, food, no waitlists, no limits, immediate
- Funding for programs will be multiyear and sustainable
- Community awareness leads to community mobilization.
- There are mandated services for youth under 12 and there are outreach workers for the youth.
- Create safe zones for vulnerable youth within the community.
- Invest in early intervention and prevention.

- Services are capable of assisting youth when they need it. There are no waitlists.
- Work with parents, particularly from vulnerable neighbourhoods.
- Municipalities have social planning capacity that helps connect the services.
- Mental health services are provided at a younger age. Providers are flexible, and trained to serve the spectrum of mental health disorders.
- Schools and communities have prevention programs that focus on parenting, educational, support, mentoring
- Additional resources like addiction services, housing, counselling, employment services.
- System is more coordinated/more user friendly/more open door/urgent response. Will meet youth where they are at – availability of workers during non-regular hours
- Service provision across agencies is coordinated.
- Outreach to rural areas
- Focus on after school programs for groups of youth that hang around together
- Use former gang members to teach at risk youth about the dangers of gang involvement
- Use victims of gang violence to speak
- Better connect Greg Moore Center to information about youth gangs.
- Focus on relationship building with youth
- 24 hour service available
- Local politicians and Business are involved in the issue.

From this discussion, groups of participants were asked to identify actions needed to achieve the future they envisioned and the entire group was asked to identify the priority actions. Based on the 'votes' the participants used to identify their priorities, the following (in descending order) were the groups perceived priorities for action.

1. Creation of a collaborative Hub in school/Community
2. Create/obtain community 'buy-in'
3. 24 hour accessible services
4. Amalgamation of community services under one board
5. Outreach workers
6. Determining risk factors and where they exist
7. Forum on gangs to promote parental awareness
8. Fun proactive prevention
9. Alternative to suspension program
10. Parental engagement within family and with resources
11. Culturally sensitive services
12. Professional training for working with gang-involved youth
13. After School Supervised programming
14. Enhance relationship-based work with youth

Session 3 asked the participants to work with the top five priorities, asked participants were asked to describe the program.

Program	Description
Hubs	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities): • Address needs of many youth in the community including gang entrenched/at risk youth. • Recreational/relationship building activities educational programming for youth and parents school component, counselling, health clinic, presentations and forums (e.g. ex-gang members), employment services, space for SW and PO, youth workers, mental health, police, not just traditional work hours. Where program will be • Good if each neighbourhood had its own hub, possibly in schools, community centers (Greg Moore) • Need to find space to accommodate vision. Preferable to have hubs in downtown core. • Need to be accessible to transportation How program will be delivered • More physical than virtual hubs • Challenge of not having enough staff. Possibly rotating. • Different agencies, resources would provide service • Balance both drop in and scheduled services. Intake workers to assess needs. • Not traditional working hours (day and evening, 7 days a week) Agency staff can rotate time (don't need to be there all the time) • No barrier, open door, no need for a referral. Some challenges surrounding information gathering • Need for buy-in from different agencies and community for resources. There is no new money. • Need to be flexible and adapt to change. • School involvement essential-developing relationships amongst partners so that trust is developed. • Need for preventative programs in the hub. Best practices to be considered • Need to be collaborative approach. Need to identify a lead group/agency. Clarify the mandates. Need an MOU and Mission statement. • Need an integrated management information system. • Need to use partnerships and committees to identify how to more forward, who needs to be involved (who are the players) • Needs to have youth involvement to identify needs and programming • Developing relationships amongst partners so that trust is developed. Confidentiality is important. • Need for consistency with workers • Need to get municipal buy in and buy in from all levels of government.

Obtaining Community Buy-in	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities):
	• Goals/Objective is for kids and community to be safe – community forums/round tables/topics
	• Use opportunities like community critical incidents.
	Where program will be
	• Schools/Libraries/Community Centers, Neighbourhoods/Pitt Meadows/Maple Ridge
	How program will be delivered:
	• Map/card – centralized inventory
	• Advertising blitz- AGMs – sports and dances
	Best practices to be considered:
	• Leadership – someone in charge of project and accountability
	• Collaboration
	• Integration
	• Cooperation
	• Motivation – need and goal
	• Presentation to Council
	• Map
	• Crime Prevention Portfolio
	Other information:
	• Identify key stakeholders – Asante High
	• Schools
	• Churches
	• Social Workers
	• Parents/kids
	• Income assistance
	• Hospital
	• RAP-Surrey School
	• A and D
	• City Councillors
	• Elementary Schools
	• Katzie
	• Organized sports,
	• Diversion Programs
	• Courts and Crown.
	Activities would be community response, forums – awareness
	• Series of round tables (topics)
	• Where, Schools/Libraries
	• Community Centre
	• Pitt/MRID/neighbourhoods
	• How – do through education/awareness/prevention/intervention
	How to draw people in – perception of need, no hopelessness.

	• Common Goal – kids/community safe/ • How to deliver – forums – identify what's here and missing • Centralized inventory card – all inclusive instead of fragmented. • Centralized hotline – resource mapping – city website—practicum student GPS Best Practices – Leadership – take on Project longevity – dedicated • Collaboration • Integration • Crime prevention portfolio/City (like Surrey) • Cooperation – common interest kids and community safe • Motivating • Present to Municipal Council
24 Hour Service	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities): • Increasing rapport with Street Youth • Getting youth off the street • Informing youth of services available • Reduce other workers caseloads Where program will be: Youth Centre –youth outreach workers based out of Greg Moore. How program will be delivered • Pilot project workers until 2 am (e.g.) to see how many calls come in between 2 am and 6 am. Be connected with all agencies • Follow-up services after initial contact with outreach workers. • Need to clarify age range for youth up to 19 or older. Transition programs for youth after age 19 • Information to youth informing them of services that would be available to them after they turn 19 • More accessible employment services Best practices to be considered: • Parental engagement. **Other information:** There are already 24 hour services • Emergency housing at MCFD afterhours and Iron Horse safe house • 24 hour drop-in centre for youth (somewhere to eat, shower, get counselling, medical advice) Need to also consider- • Funding – • Government buy-in • Volunteers

	• Apply for grants/donations • Community buy-in (free food, free clothes, donated services) • Form steering committee • Find location (donated – school?) • Contact doctor's offices to see about donating their services once a week. Offer free condoms/birth control • Community public health nurse • Use community network van to offer services • Coordinate with a steering committee all the great things that are already happening in the community to combine events to form bigger more coordinated events • Recreation place for youth to hang out. • Address transportation issues • Make sure we access all regions by having an out-reach bus or Community Network van go to various areas. • Outreach workers • Spread the word about a hub – pass out information • Lack of resources from school onwards • Youth centre open earlier/later • Phone 'hub' service youth can call or text and get referred to proper agency.
Outreach Workers	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities): • Build the capacity of workers to have the skill sets to engage the youth and build relationships. Where program will be • Most at risk youth not likely to attend schools or community centres. How program will be delivered • Workers to engage youth with community centers and other outreach or services. • Resource sharing and collaboration – prevent fragmented approach • Teen Resource Committee to identify at risk youth; more front-line workers; program updates; outreach workers participation essential; Need consistent presence from all agencies. • Communication between these committees and service planning process • Community Care team: identifies at risk youth; administrators from agencies/ministries; collaborate and coordinate services Best practices to be considered: • Outreach workers need to share information with each agency involved to identify who is at risk and how to coordinate services. • Utilize engagement strategies like the POCOMO bus – food or other incentives.

	Other information: Effective Qualities of Outreach Workers- • Ability to move to where the youth are and to stay involved for the long term • Knowledgeable of community resources • Flexibility with innovative approaches • Involvement at early age – volunteer involvement • Ability to maintain positive relationship • Good mediation skills • Accessible – where other at risk youth can be identified and engaged.
Community Services Come Together	What program will do (Goals/Objectives/Activities): • Single 'Uber' committee responsible for planning between resources and the follow-through of the plan • Strong leadership from each • An 'Uber' leader, someone who is willing and able to follow-up with resources to make sure everyone is accountable Where program will be: • Within the community How program will be delivered • Monthly meetings where plan is put in place where problems are identified and solutions are created. During the month the Uber leader follows up to ensure the plan is followed through Best practices to be considered: Build on strengths: Maple Ridge has excellent committees already. The uber one should build on this. **Other information:** • Child and Youth Family Network (CN Network) examples of what currently exists. How can we enhance what is already there? • Alouette Heights – Greg Moore (meeting monthly) Community Care team • Bring resources together to identify who is doing what, eliminate duplications • "all" the agencies/resources come to one committee instead of spread out over several • Main goal would be to share services with each other – not an information sharing committee, but based on action (training role etc.) • Requires buy-in from agencies, local and provincial government to cut through red tape (confidentiality) • Option 2: Requires a common worksite where reps from each agency can access their work • There must be dedicated resources • Youth center/school – in central location

Session 3 lastly asked participants to identify Key Partnerships/ Assets currently in the community, who should be involved, additional supports required, and logical next steps to take the projects forward.

Program	Partnerships/Assets/Supports and Next Steps
Hubs	Key Partnerships? Assets currently in community: • Cities/local government • Local business – Chamber of Commerce • Rotary/Lions • Religious Groups • MCFD/Health, Education, Employment, other • Ministries • Community agencies • Sporting Associations • Aboriginal and other cultural groups • Immigrant services • Parents • Police • Libraries Who should be involved: All of the above. Additional support needed: • Leadership • Space/Location • Total community buy in • Funding through grant applications (community network) How to Move Forward: • Through existing committees identify roles and responsibilities • Lobby decision makers • Presentations to Councils (youth involvement) • Have statistics • Need success stories • Identify achievable goals.

Obtaining Community Buy-in	Key Partnerships/Assets in the community • City Council • Existing tables/Committees • Government Agencies • Community Agencies • Schools • Integrated Case Management Structure Who should be involved • Katzie /Aboriginal Groups • City Council • Families/Youth • Organized Community Rec Clubs- sports. Arts, dance, cadets, scouts, rotary Where additional support is needed: • Leadership role • Established Memoranda of Understanding between the parties • Community Fairs, • Media Community education forum • Resources/money How to move Forward: • Present to Council (ID who would be responsible for this) • ID Leader – role/who/what • Engage volunteers through media, newspaper • MOUs – created between agencies/community • Creation of subcommittee from here to move forward :ID people • Report back provisions • Present at community events to push agenda • Get topic – keeping community and kids safe out to public • Investing in community, neighbourhood caring.
24 Hour Service	Key Partnerships/Assets currently in community • CN Committee (Community Network) • MCFD • Police • Fraser Health • There should be a subcommittee formed of the CN committee. Who should be involved • Accessing relevant partnerships through the CN Committee Where additional support is needed • Time • Buy-in from community partners • Coordinator/grant writer

	• Political support- provincial and municipal How to move Forward: Presentation to CN Committee to get buy-in from agencies.
Outreach Workers	Key Partnerships/ Assets currently in community: • CYFN – Child Youth and Family Network • Directors of agencies/ministries – can direct priorities of agencies • Teen resource committee • Community care team • Police • MCFD • Partner agencies – PLEA Community Services Society, Maple Ridge Community Services, ASTR, Alouette Addictions, Alouette Homes start safe house Alternate Schools. Who should be involved: Aren't currently: • Cultural groups • Katzie Band Council • Civic Leaders • Public – community forums, identify issues/concerns, foster community involvement Where additional support is needed: • Buy in from community leaders, civic, agency and ministerial • Provincial leaders/MCFD – allocation of funds/programs • Federal leaders – youth justice funding initiatives. How to move Forward: • Consistent agency collaboration and commitment • Committee involvement • Share information • Efficient allocation of resources
Community Services Come Together	Key Partnerships/ Assets currently in community: • Existing committees (community care, youth diversion, CN Network, RCMP) Who should be involved: • All youth resources (PLEA, Greg Moore, SD 42, MCFD, Act 2, Child and youth mental health) other communities also share information and knowledge (SURREY WRAP) • Also include adult services to work with family involved in gangs • Individuals from resources that can impact change within their respective agency. Where additional support is needed:

	- An environment of honest dialogue - Local representation from government (civic, provincial, federal) - Long term commitment from government and resources. How to move Forward: - Strong 'uber' leader to get buy-in from community agencies (for time, manpower and some funding) perhaps CN Networks? Other committees? - Someone respected with access to EDs of agencies and resources who can educate about the need for such a program.

At the end of session 3 the large group convened and discussed overarching priority actions to move forward with the planning. The group identified a need for:

1. Establishing (or using existing) a collaborative community committee to begin taking this agenda forward.
2. A coordinator to assist with leadership, coordination and collaboration.

At the end of session 3, fifteen participants completed a session evaluation of the Ridge Meadows sessions. All participants indicated that they "Agreed" or "Strongly" agreed that the consultation processes:

- assisted them in linking with other providers,
- produced realistic results, and
- that the consultation was a satisfactory process.

Seventy three percent of participants indicated that they left the sessions knowing more about gangs in their community after attending the session. When asked what they liked about the consultations, the common themes were:

- the ability to network,
- working collaboratively,
- being provided with lots of information,
- group interactions, and
- discussions with many different viewpoints from different agencies.

Other comments included, it was a "step in the right direction" and the session provided practical steps to take.

Suggestions for future improvements included:

- more representation from political people and those "in power" to make the ideas move forward;
- include other community agencies and the local school system that had not attended the sessions.
- have presentations from service people (such as the RCMP) already involved in the gangs from the community—current events, trends, what to look for and what they're commonly seeing.

- Consider holding a single full day session as it was a significant time commitment to come to all three sessions.

Discussion:

At the end of the three sessions the priority projects identified in each community were:

Tri-Cities	Ridge Meadows
Alternative to Suspension	Hubs
Agencies Working Together in Neighbourhoods/communities	Create Community Buy-In
Parent Training	24 hour services
No Wrong Door	Outreach workers
Hubs	Community Services Come Together
Skytrain prevention	

Differences in the community, such as the pending arrival of the skytrain in Tri-Cities and the differing assessments of the communities regarding gang-entrenched youth, contributed to the differing community results. Tri-Cities participants were clear that they did not have truly gang-entrenched youth in their area, while Ridge Meadows indicated that the presence of Hell's Angels in their community has led to more gang entrenchment. In both communities, however, the forums resulted ina strong push to recognize the importance of prevention if the community was to have any long term impact on gang involvement.

Results of both series of discussions focused on three areas:
1. Community Capacity building
2. Prevention
3. Improved community services.

The community capacity area related to the need for strong leadership and coordination in order to take the issue of gang involvement forward. Agencies indicated that currently there is fragmentation and that what is needed is:
a) Strong leadership either from municipalities, or government to set the stage for working together
b) An interagency committee that will assume responsibility for taking forward planning (could be existing committee or new one)
c) A coordinator to help lead the agenda and assist with ensuring interagency accountability.

Taking forward this planning structure will have a limited cost attached for coordination time, but it is critical to providing leadership to take this forward.

The prevention discussion differed somewhat across the communities, but still focused on the need to have initiatives focused on communities and families. In Tri-Cities this took the form of a parent training initiative that might build upon what is already being done through Early and Middle Childhood programs, but that would educate parents about what to look for re gang involvement. Tri-Cities also

had plans to prepare for the advent of the Skytrain line into Tri-Cities, to first stop youth from congregating at the Stations, and also to use outreach workers to link youth to community services.

In Ridge Meadows the focus was more on awareness raising because of recruitment amongst more middle class youth and the need to also heighten awareness in particularly risky neighbourhoods. Taking forward these initiatives will require some additional funding, however community awareness forums could be undertaken with relatively little additional funds if a coordinator is available to lead the planning. Additional funding might be used to leverage parent education initiatives already in the community.

With regards to improved community services, both communities wanted to see the development of hub-type one-stop-shop services. Both also wished to address barriers currently built into the current system of services that relate to waitlists, hours of operation and youth accessing services where youth are. Taking these programs from a vision to operation will require additional funding.

Conclusion:

Participants in both communities appear interested in taking this planning forward. Doing so will require initiative on the part of community leaders to gain the support of senior managers in the various community agencies. While PLEA Community Services Society hosted the forum discussions, this leadership does not necessarily fall to that agency. In fact it may be better if influential government partners provide initial leadership that will bring together community agencies such as PLEA in a collaborative consortium that can then, as a community, seek funding for their gang-related initiatives.