



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### West Shore and Sooke Municipalities Fund Regional Coordinator to Strengthen Services for Children, Youth and Families

### The Village Initiative enters a new chapter, moving from collaboration to coordinated action across one of B.C.'s fastest-growing regions

**COLWOOD, B.C. — [May 25, 2026]** — Municipalities across the West Shore and Sooke are investing in a new regional coordinator position to strengthen supports for children, youth and families through [The Village Initiative](#), a growing regional network that has been building vital connections between more than **70 community service organizations and local governments** since 2019.

The funding commitment from the municipalities of **Colwood, Langford, Highlands, Metchosin, and Sooke**, and a citizen group from the **District of Metchosin** together with support from the **Sooke School District and Island Health**, marks a major step forward for The Village as it moves into a new chapter this summer.

The investment follows a business case brought forward by the Village's **Municipal Leaders' Advisory Team**. At the helm is **Colwood Mayor Doug Kobayashi** in collaboration with other local mayors including Mayors Scott Goodmanson, Marie-Térèse Little, Ken Williams and Councillors Jeff Bateman and David Grove, as well as Sooke School District Superintendent, Paul Block and Board of Education Chairperson, Amanda Dowhy, and Island Health Medical Health Officer, Melissa Wan.

"The wellbeing of children, youth and families is not the responsibility of any one organization or government — it takes all of us," said **Mayor Doug Kobayashi, Chair of the Municipal Leaders' Advisory Team**. "This investment is the best taxpayer bang for the buck and gives The Village the coordination capacity

needed to turn strong partnerships into action and better outcomes for families across our region.”

The Village Initiative first took root when the **Sooke School District** and **Island Health** began a conversation with community partners, including local governments, about how to better support the health and wellbeing of children, youth and families through an all-hands-on-deck approach — a true “village.” That need became more urgent in the wake of the global pandemic and its lasting impacts on young people and families.

With the financial support of West Shore and Sooke municipalities, the Sooke School District, and Island Health, the [Community Social Planning Council](#) (CSPC) will now oversee and coordinate The Village Initiative’s next phase. CSPC is a long-standing regional charitable/non-profit organization working to advance equity and improve quality of life across the Capital Region.

“We’re honoured to work alongside West Shore and Sooke community organizations, municipal governments, the Sooke School District and Island Health to help lead this important work in one of the fastest-growing areas of British Columbia,” said **Shelley Cook, Executive Director of the Community Social Planning Council**. “Families are navigating increasingly complex challenges. Strong coordination helps ensure community partners can respond together — earlier, smarter and with greater impact.”

**Miranda Levert** will serve as the new **Regional Coordinator**, building on years of groundwork laid by partners across the region.

“The Village has built a strong foundation and established critical momentum,” said **Miranda Levert, Regional Coordinator for The Village Initiative**. “We’re excited to build on that work as we move from a spirit of collaboration to coordinated action in support of the health and wellbeing of children, youth and families.”

“Since its inception, The Village Initiative has shown what’s possible when community partners and local governments come together around a shared commitment to children, youth and families,” said **Cindy Andrew, outgoing Village Director of Community Partnerships**. “With a dedicated regional coordinator in place, I’m confident The Village, in partnership with the Community Social Planning Council, is well positioned to transform shared municipal priorities into measurable, positive outcomes for families across the region.”

For more information, visit [thevillageinitiative.ca](http://thevillageinitiative.ca).

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## **About the Community Social Planning Council (CSPC)**

**CSPC** is a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to improving quality of life by building a more inclusive and equitable community. CSPC addresses social and economic barriers experienced by marginalized populations through community-based research, informing policy, advocacy, and direct service delivery. Founded in 1936, CSPC was the first social planning agency in the region. CSPC has continually evolved to respond to emerging social challenges and maintains a strong focus on poverty reduction and social justice.

## **About the Village Initiative**

**The Village Initiative** is a network of over 70 organizations working together to better support the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families across the fastest growing region in the Capital Regional District. The Village Initiative is dedicated to improving the capacity, coordination, organization, and infrastructure required to better serve the children, youth, and families of Westshore and Sooke.

## **About the Municipal Leaders' Advisory Team**

The **Municipal Leaders' Advisory Team** (MLAT) is a joint, collaborative initiative of seven municipalities— Colwood, Langford, Sooke, Highlands, Metchosin —with active participation from Sooke School District (SD62), The Village Initiative, and the Island Health Population & Public Health Team. The overarching MLAT objective is to work collaboratively across the West Shore-Sooke region to advance the best possible outcomes for children, youth, and families in the Region.

## **About the Regional Coordinator**

**Miranda Levert** is a Langford resident and incoming Regional Coordinator. She is currently completing her Master of Public Health and has worked with youth across the region through mentoring in Metchosin, support work in Colwood, and on the pediatric psychiatry unit at Victoria General Hospital in View Royal. Drawing from both professional and lived experience, including experiences of youth homelessness, Miranda is passionate about strengthening prevention and early intervention for children, youth, and families across the region.