COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

BYLAW NO. 4373

A Bylaw to Adopt an Official Community Plan for Electoral Areas A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H & I in the Cowichan Valley Regional District

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WHEREAS Part 14 of the *Local Government Act* provides that a local government may adopt one or more official community plans;

NOW THEREFORE the Board of the Cowichan Valley Regional District in open meeting enacts as follows:

1. CITATION

This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as the "CVRD Bylaw No. 4373 - Cowichan Valley Regional District Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas Bylaw, 2024".

2. SCHEDULES

The following Schedules are attached to and form part of this bylaw:

(a) Schedule A – Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas
(b) Schedule B – Local Area Plans
(c) Schedule C – Development Permit Areas
(d) Schedule D – Agricultural Land Maps
(e) Schedule E – Fire Protection Maps
(f) Schedule F – Future Land Use Maps
(g) Schedule G – Growth Containment Boundaries and Areas
(h) Schedule H – Heritage Designation Maps
(i) Schedule I – Foreshore and Major Creeks Maps
(j) Schedule J – Sand and Gravel Deposits Maps
(k) Schedule L – Land Use Designations Maps
(l) Schedule M – Marine Area Maps
(m) Schedule N – First Nations Maps
(n) Schedule O – Floodplain Maps
(o) Schedule P – Terrestrial Parks Maps
(p) Schedule S – Service Area Maps
(q) Schedule T – Transportation and Major Roads Maps
(r) Schedule U – Development Permit Area Maps

3. REPEAL OF HARMONIZED OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

"CVRD Bylaw No. 4270 – Cowichan Valley Regional District Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas Bylaw, 2021" is repealed.

4. TRANSITION

Development permits for which complete applications had been made on or before the date of adoption of this bylaw may be issued in accordance with the applicable guidelines that were in force prior to that date, provided that the permit is issued within 12 months of the date of adoption of the bylaw. Development permit areas and associated guidelines are included in a separate bylaw (Bylaw No. 4485).

Considered in conjunction with the Cowichan Valley Regional District Financial Plan and the Liquid Waste Management Plan under Section 477(3) of the *Local Government Act*, the _day of ____, 2024.

Referred to the Agricultural Land Commission under Section 477(3) of the *Local Government Act* the _____day of _____, 2024.

Referred to the boards of education of School Districts No. 68 and 79 under section 476 of the *Local Government Act* the___day of _, 2024.

READ A FIRST TIME this ___ day of _____, 2024.

READ A SECOND TIME this _ day of _____, 2024.

PUBLIC HEARING this _____ day of _____, 2024.

CONDUCTED PURSUANT

TO PART 14, section 464 of

the *Local Government Act*

READ A THIRD TIME this ___ day of _____, 2024.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2024.

_____   _____

Chairperson   Corporate Officer

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT MODERNIZED OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW NO. 4373, 202X AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN FOR THE ELECTORAL AREAS

A BYLAW TO GUIDE AND DIRECT DECISION-MAKING ON ALL ASPECTS OF PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE ELECTORAL AREAS OF THE COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

DRAFT May 2024

Schedule A – Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas sets out the overarching framework for the OCP, including vision, land use designations and policy areas.

Schedule A – Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas Appendix I sets out performance metrics to measure the success of the plan. The performance metrics correspond to the policy goals objectives and policies.

Schedule B – Local Area Plans sets out local area plans within the electoral areas. Some local area plans are within two electoral areas. These plans contain more detailed and area-specific policies that capture and enhance the unique identities and characteristics of a community. Schedule B Local Area Plan maps are located in Schedule L.

Schedule C – Development Permit Areas sets out the development permit area designations and justifications. The exemptions and guidelines are located in a separate bylaw.

Schedule D – Agricultural Land Maps identify agricultural land reserve lands and lands designated agriculture.

Schedule E – Fire Protection Maps identify fire protection areas.

Schedule F – Future Land Use Maps identify future land use areas including special study areas, which are also mapped on Schedule L.

Schedule G – Growth Containment Boundaries and Areas maps growth containment boundaries and growth area lands within the growth containment boundary.

Schedule H – Heritage Designation Maps identify heritage designations.

Schedule I – Foreshore and Major Creeks Maps identify foreshore and major creeks.

Schedule J – Sand and Gravel Deposits Maps identify sand and gravel deposits.

Schedule L – Land Use Designations Maps identify land use designations. In addition, Schedule L includes the local area plan maps (the local area plans are located in Schedule B), the special study area maps (which are also in Schedule F), and temporary use designations (which will be moved to the new comprehensive zoning bylaw when adopted).

Schedule M – Marine Area Maps identify marine areas near the electoral areas. A separate Marine OCP will be developed.

Schedule N – First Nations Maps identify Indian Reserve lands near the electoral areas.

Schedule O – Floodplain Maps identify floodplains and dams.

Schedule P – Terrestrial Parks Maps sets out terrestrial parks and trails.

Schedule S – Service Areas Maps identify current service areas.

Schedule T – Transportation and Major Roads Maps identify major roads as identified by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Schedule U – Development Permit Area Maps identify designated development permit areas.

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN FOR THE ELECTORAL AREAS

(SCHEDULE A TO OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW NO. 4373)

PREPARED BY

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

The Cowichan Valley Regional District covers an area of 3,473 square kilometres (km^2) on Vancouver Island, between Malahat/Mill Bay and North Oyster. On the western edge of the region is the Pacific Ocean; the Salish Sea sits on the region's eastern border.

This vast region encompasses the unceded territory of many distinct First Nations that have occupied the lands and waters since Time Immemorial. Indian Reserve lands are outside of the scope of this plan.

First Nations in the region have unresolved claims to Indigenous Rights and Title, which are recognized and affirmed by the Constitution of Canada. Although it is the responsibility of the federal and provincial government to settle Indigenous Rights and Title claims, the implications of negotiations and settlement will be felt across the region, including the plan area.

The findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report and the commitments made by adopting the *Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA) in BC signal the imperative to address our colonial history and rebuild in a spirit of respectful relations. This official community plan is aligned with Cowichan 2050, a CVRD regional collaboration committed to relationships and reconciliation.

The CVRD is in the traditional, unceded territories of the Cowichan Tribes, Penelakut Tribe and the Ditidaht, Pacheedaht, Halalt, Stz'uminus, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Lyackson, Malahat, Pauquachin, Hupačasath, K'ómoks and Snuneymuxw First Nations.

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Sonnet 1186

"Awake"

When the frost peach wakes from winter sleep
And every black branch has jewels of pink
And mallards new somersaults turn
Amid rising rushes in the melting lake
Then a maple's tulip'd buds
Upon the end of every spur and shoot
        Once open their praying hands cannot abate
The sight of ochre yellows that hide within
From the throb and pull of spring

Each one resurrected from Fall's devastation
By the towering sun's celestial grace
As though each new mouth of leaves' too small
The joy of birth to constrain
In spite of distant summer's fires and winter's snows
That for now, below my farm's horizon, await

So what if every bud is fleet and yearly spent
And the season of pollen and leaf
Lasts but 'till the Equinox
Will demand again her painted tribute?

Great is the multitude of searching limbs
In this maple's heights
Whose god is spring's rising light
While an infinity beneath
Her messengers, the first lilies of April,
Have unfurled their parasols of cream
        The sun's majesty to adore from bended knees
And earthbound faithfulness to a universe
Beyond all measurement

Purpose

There are nine electoral areas and four incorporated municipalities in the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD). The electoral areas fall within the purview of this Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas (OCP), while the incorporated municipalities of Duncan, North Cowichan, Ladysmith and Lake Cowichan each have their own official community plans. This OCP provides policy direction for the electoral areas within a regional planning context.

Schedule A – Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas is organized in three parts:

PART ONE | VISION, GOALS & EQUITY FRAMEWORK

Part One provides the plan's overall vision and introduces the eight policy goals. It also presents a guiding equity framework that supports the development of the plan's objectives and policies.

The Social Equity Framework sets the stage for the CVRD's next evolution as a region where land use decisions are assessed against their impact on all residents, including those who are often left behind. It contextualizes the objectives and policies found within the OCP and provides suggestions for implementation that support more equitable and sustainable outcomes.

Additionally, Part One summarizes the findings of updated growth projections and housing needs analyses for the CVRD's electoral areas and links them to new growth containment boundaries (GCB) and land use designations.

PART TWO | LAND USE DESIGNATIONS & THE TRANSECT

Part Two contains the OCP land use framework—called the transect—and all land use designations, including development approval information and temporary use designations.

The transect is an approach to organizing the land use designations and communicating their characteristics. It structures the CVRD's various landscapes into transect landscape types: from natural and rural to village and urban settings. Generally, land use designations with densities below one unit per hectare (UPH) are only located outside of the GCBs, and those above one UPH are located inside the GCBs. This helps protect natural, agricultural and rural lands against sprawl while ensuring future development—whether it's housing, commercial centres, industry or key community services—is focused in areas where it can be well integrated.

Land use designations are organized in three categories for a total of 21 designations:

- Residential (eight)
- Employment (nine)
- Civic & Open Space (four)

1

Transect landscape types are organized in seven categories:

- Resource & Natural
- Rural & Agricultural
- Suburban
- Village
- Urban
- Downtown
- Special District

PART THREE | POLICIES

Part Three contains eight chapters:

- Mitigate and Adapt to the Climate Crisis
- Manage Infrastructure Responsibly
- Make Distinct, Complete Communities
- Expand Mobility Options
- Protect and Restore Natural Assets
- Strengthen Local Food and Agriculture
- Enhance Regional Prosperity
- Improve Governance and Implementation

APPENDICES I & II | PROCESSES, PLANS & PERFORMANCE METRICS

Appendix I Process and Planning lists the instruments that may be created and those that will be updated to align with the OCP. The OCP is made stronger by its alignment with a multitude of other CVRD strategies, master plans and documentation. Much effort has been made to ensure the contents herein are consistent with the region's other plans, where necessary. However, a range of other documents will require updates to ensure the effective implementation of the OCP's vision, goals, objectives and policies. These updates are listed in the section on governance and implementation.

Appendix II Performance Metrics presents metrics that will assist in monitoring progress on achieving the OCP's goals.

PART ONE: VISION, GOALS & EQUITY FRAMEWORK

1.1 OCP Vision & Goals

The following vision statement will guide future growth and development in the CVRD's electoral areas:

Surrounded by thriving natural environments and farmlands, the Cowichan Valley is a collective of vibrant and distinct communities.

Our connection to nature is at the heart of our identity.

Our communities, complete with shops, services, parks and playgrounds, are steps away from pristine forests, trails and water bodies. Sustainable local jobs, prosperous industries, diverse housing options and a flourishing public life inspire people of all ages and incomes to enjoy our rural way of life.

Growth is intentional and managed.

Our water and land resources are protected, our infrastructure is maintained responsibly, our agricultural landscapes are supported and celebrated, and our communities are complete, connected and co-exist with nature. Lands designated as Agricultural are reserved for agricultural and related uses.

Resilience to emerging trends will define our community's future.

Our ability to adapt and respond will be strengthened by our relationships with our residents, local First Nations, member municipalities, neighbouring regional districts and senior levels of government. Transparency, trust and openness in these relationships will allow our region to make responsible decisions, be accountable, embrace the future and thrive.

Derived from the OCP's vision are eight goals, which form the policy chapters. Central to each goal is the region's determination to address, using the jurisdictional powers at its disposal, several crises that have emerged over time: the climate crisis, the biodiversity crisis, the affordable housing crisis, the food system crisis and the inequality crisis. The eight goals are:

MITIGATE & ADAPT TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

MANAGE INFRASTRUCTURE RESPONSIBLY

MAKE DISTINCT, COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

EXPAND MOBILITY OPTIONS

PROTECT & RESTORE NATURAL ASSETS

STRENGTHEN LOCAL FOOD & AGRICULTURE

ENHANCE REGIONAL PROSPERITY

IMPROVE GOVERNANCE & IMPLEMENTATION

1.2 Jurisdiction

The OCP establishes objectives and policies for its land use designations and for the eight policy area goals. Broad objectives are applied to matters over which the Regional District does not have jurisdiction. Policies are applied to topics that are within the Regional District's jurisdiction.

Regional Districts have the authority to develop official community plans under the *Local Government Act* (Part 14, 4). The following section establishes the broad jurisdictional divisions between various levels of government and helps define where the CVRD has direct authority to apply policies as distinct from areas in which it will seek to influence through advocacy policies.

Federal

The federal government holds jurisdiction over important topics that impact local planning and development. These include:

- regulation of marine navigation (Transport Canada and the Coast Guard) and fisheries regulation (Department of Fisheries and Oceans)
- telecommunications (Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission) and
- aerodromes (Transport Canada)

Beyond jurisdiction, the federal government also plays a significant role in funding several of the initiatives the OCP hopes to achieve (e.g. major infrastructure works). It provides many funding programs for expensive projects that local government budgets could not complete because they do not have access to the necessary loans or funding. Often, funding for these projects must align with the federal government's priorities and address topics like the climate crisis, social inequity and economic development. Projects that receive funding include large-scale infrastructure (i.e., Mesachie Lake Wastewater Treatment and Collection Upgrade Project), transportation projects, ecological restoration, affordable housing, building retrofits, First Nations partnerships, agricultural innovation and more. The Federal Gas Tax Fund is perhaps the most well-known program that provides financial support to local governments.

Provincial

The provincial government holds jurisdiction over additional matters that significantly impact local planning and development. These include:

- major infrastructure and transportation projects (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [MoTI]), including roadside drainage infrastructure
- affordable housing (BC Housing)
- protection of riparian areas (Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy)
- agricultural land management (Ministry of Agriculture & Food)*
- water allocation and licencing (Ministry of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship)
- private managed forest land (PMFL), which makes up nearly half of all of the lands within the CVRD and is governed under provincial legislation (Ministry of Forests)

  Note: Notwithstanding any other provisions of this bylaw, all lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) are subject to the Agricultural Land Commission Act *(ALCA), the*

Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation (the Regulation), and any Orders of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). The ALCA and Regulations generally prohibit or restrict non-farm use and subdivision of ALR lands, unless otherwise permitted or exempted.

Like the federal government, the provincial government has significant access to funding and plays a similar role in financing important projects for local governments.

Regional Districts & Incorporated Municipalities

Regional District and incorporated municipality powers come primarily from the provincial *Local Government Act* and Community Charter.

Regional Districts provide services, including emergency management, planning for regional solid waste management and governance for electoral areas. Regional Districts have no role in roads and policing, as these services are municipal or provincial responsibilities. That said, Regional Districts can and do choose to provide a broader range of services, but only with the support of the electors or taxpayers.

Regional Districts are able to regulate land use and development in electoral areas using generally the same planning and land use management processes and tools available to incorporated municipalities, including zoning and official community plans. Regional Districts differ from incorporated municipalities insofar as they do not have a direct role in approving the subdivision of land (a provincial responsibility in non-municipal areas). However, through the powers of zoning, Regional Districts impact which lands can be subdivided.

First Nations

Modern Treaty Settlement | A modern treaty agreement through the BC treaty process is a mutual agreement between the federal and provincial governments and negotiating First Nation(s) that recognizes and reconciles pre-existing Indigenous Sovereignty. Treaty negotiations are based on recognition of Indigenous Rights and Title, and recognition and support for Indigenous Self-determination and Self-government. A First Nation implementing a modern treaty through the BC Treaty Commission process has their own constitution and lawmaking authority over treaty land and public services. Treaties also aim to foster new relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments based on mutual respect, trust and understanding.

As of the date this OCP was adopted, nine First Nations with Traditional Territory in the region are in Stage 5 of the six-stage BC Treaty Commission process. This includes the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, representing Cowichan Tribes, Penelakut Tribe, Halalt, Lyackson and Ts'uubaaasatx First Nations; Te'mexw Treaty Association representing Malahat Nation; Ditidaht and Pacheedaht First Nations, and K'ómoks First Nation. Hupačasath and Snuneymuxw First Nations are in Stage 4 of the BC Treaty Commission process.

Final treaty agreements may fundamentally alter regional governance, as First Nations with modern treaty agreements can join Regional District Boards with representation equivalent to that of a municipal or electoral area official.

1.3 Social Equity Framework

Across BC, our communities are experiencing growing inequities in resources, access and power.

The OCP considers a Social Equity Framework to better understand the needs of diverse populations in relation to the eight policy areas: climate crisis, infrastructure, complete communities, mobility, natural assets, food and agriculture, regional prosperity, and governance and implementation. Policies should continue to adapt to reflect equity considerations.

The Social Equity Framework identifies policies throughout the OCP that:

- should be considered given their benefits to diverse populations
- need greater consideration to ensure implementation doesn't harm, and may benefit, diverse populations

Equity is defined by the Equity Manifesto[1] as "just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper and reach their full potential." Equity recognizes that certain barriers prevent the full potential of diverse populations. These barriers have been constructed over time and are perpetuated through cultural practices, norms and institutional factors—such as policy. As policy is written and implemented, equity should be considered in analysis. The implementation section of this document includes an Equity Checklist that guides policy decisions.

Key Concepts

This page introduces key concepts relating to social equity, diversity and inclusion. These definitions and concepts may evolve over time.

Assumptions | Something we presuppose or take for granted without questioning. We accept these beliefs to be true and use them to interpret the world around us.

Accessibility | Accessibility involves removing the barriers faced by individuals with a variety of disabilities (which can include, but are not limited to physical, sensory, cognitive, learning and mental health) and the various barriers (including attitudinal and systemic) that impede an individual's ability to participate in social, cultural, political and economic life. Disabilities can be temporary or permanent. As we age, our abilities change; therefore, an accessible society is one designed to include everybody.

Equity | Refers to both the fair and just distribution of benefits and burdens to all affected parties and communities (distributional equity, including multi-generational) as well as the fair and inclusive access to decision-making processes that impact community outcomes (process

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[1] Policy Link. (2022) The Equity Manifesto. https://www.policylink.org/about-us/equity-manifesto

equity). In practice, taking an equitable approach means understanding and deliberately addressing current and historic under-representation and disadvantages.

Inclusion | Acknowledging and valuing people's differences to enrich social planning, decision-making and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive district, we each have a sense of belonging and acceptance, and we are recognized as valued and contributing members of society. Real inclusion takes place when those already included in the "mainstream" learn from those who are excluded and initiate change.

Intersectionality | The intersection, or crossover, of our many identities affects how each of us experiences the region and its communities. These intersections occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments, other political and economic unions, religious institutions and media).

Privilege | The experience of freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities afforded to members of a dominant group in a society or in a specific context.

Systemic barriers | Obstacles that exclude groups or communities of people from full participation in, and the benefits of, social, economic and political life. They may be hidden or unintentional but are built into the way society works. Existing policies, practices and procedures, as well as assumptions and stereotypes, reinforce them.

1.4 Growth Projections

In 2019, rennie & associates© prepared population and dwelling projections for the CVRD with an outlook to 2050. These projections were updated by Licker Geospatial in 2022 based on updated census population data, household and demographic information, recent development data and new growth containment boundaries (GCB) within the electoral areas. Projections for the CVRD (including both incorporated communities and electoral areas) were completed by Licker Geospatial using a historic trends-influenced forecast that assumes a near-term continuation of accelerated growth resulting from intra-provincial migration due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional factors considered in the projection include availability of developable land in the region as well as sufficient water capacity and expanded sewer infrastructure. Demographic projections assume the continued in-migration of young families to the area as well as significant in-migration of seniors to all electoral areas. Declines in fertility are expected to continue, as will overall declines in mortality, but not enough to stymie a steady growth rate between now and 2032 and on to 2050.

Overall population growth in the electoral areas is expected to increase to 1.16% annually between 2021 and 2027, which is an increase over the 1.06% growth rate experienced between 2016 and 2021. Between 2027 and 2032, population growth should slow to approximately 1.04% annualized. Given the structural and demographic trends outlined above, the CVRD expects an annual population growth rate of approximately 1.15% between 2021 and 2050.

Dwelling growth will mirror population growth, though at a slightly slower rate than population growth (reflecting increased occupancy of owner-occupied dwellings) with dwelling growth increasing from 0.88% annually between 2016 and 2021 to 1.08% between 2021 and 2027. Between 2027 and 2032, dwelling growth should slow to approximately 0.97% annualized. Overall dwelling stock in the region will increase at a rate of 1.04% annually between 2021 and 2050.

The tables on the following pages summarize these projections by electoral area.

Table 1.1 Electoral Area Population Projections, 2022–2050

Electoral Area	Total Population				
	2022	**2024**	**2027**	**2032**	**2050**
A	4,998	5,086	5,228	5,486	6,524
B	9,074	9,250	9,530	10,042	12,099
C	5,082	5,148	5,254	5,446	6,222
D	3,552	3,597	3,670	3,802	4,333
E	4,280	4,323	4,390	4,513	5,008
F	1,827	1,905	2,028	2,253	3,159
G	2,452	2,488	2,544	2,648	3,065
H	2,634	2,685	2,765	2,912	3,502
I	1,454	1,535	1,664	1,899	2,847
Total	*35,354*	*36,016*	*37,072*	*39,000*	*46,759*

Notes:

- Projections are based on demographic trends sourced from the 2016 and 2021 censuses and capacity for growth per updated GCBs.
- By 2032, the CVRD anticipates approximately 52% of growth occurring within the electoral areas and 48% of growth occurring in incorporated areas.
- Projections are based on historic trends and present capacity for growth within the region. They do not take into account large-scale developments that are currently in the planning phases.

Table 1.2 Electoral Area Dwelling Projections, 2022–2050

	Total Dwellings				
	2022	**2024**	**2027**	**2032**	**2050**
A	2,184	2,223	2,284	2,396	2,847
B	3,928	4,004	4,125	4,346	5,237
C	2,297	2,325	2,371	2,454	2,788
D	1,594	1,614	1,646	1,703	1,933
E	1,722	1,740	1,770	1,823	2,039
F	920	954	1,008	1,106	1,502
G	1,381	1,397	1,422	1,467	1,647
H	1,249	1,270	1,305	1,369	1,625
I	1,189	1,224	1,280	1,383	1,796
Total	*16,464*	*16,752*	*17,210*	*18,048*	*21,416*

Notes:

- Projections are based on Census 2021 and updated GCBs. In some areas, the GCBs are new.
- By 2032, the CVRD anticipates approximately 52% of growth occurring within the electoral areas and 48% of growth occurring in incorporated areas.
- Projections are based on historic trends and present capacity for growth within the region. It doesn't take into account large-scale developments that are currently in the planning phases.

1.5 Housing Needs

Using the population and dwelling projections above, a housing needs assessment was completed to illustrate potential dwelling requirements by unit size. This assessment is informed by projected demographics and household types, as well as current and anticipated preferences for unit typologies by demographic group. Housing needs were calculated using the following process:

- Through the population projections, determine net change in total population by demographic grouping (15- to 24-year-olds, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65 years and older) by electoral area.
- To estimate the net new number of households for each electoral area by demographic grouping, headship rates sourced from the 2016 census were used. Headship rates refer to the propensity for a given demographic grouping to form a household and therefore require a dwelling (for instance the headship rate of seniors in electoral area A is 58.9%, meaning there is one new household required for every 1.7 seniors).
- For each potential household, dwelling preferences were determined through structural type of dwelling information sourced from the 2021 census (for instance, 78.9% of households headed by seniors currently reside in single detached dwellings in electoral area A). Dwelling preferences were then accordingly distributed between demographic groupings.
- Finally, each required dwelling was transformed into room requirements based on building size probabilities sourced from the 2016 census (for instance, in electoral area A, 4% of single detached dwellings contained one bedroom, 17% contain two bedrooms, 41% contain three bedrooms and 37% contain four or more bedrooms).

It should be noted that this methodology for modelling future housing need composition is informed by existing trends represented in current and past censuses. Rather than reflecting the minimum number of bedrooms needed by a census family, this modelling reflects actual housing trends. Subsequently in this document, housing needs will be determined using income and affordability metrics, as well as core housing needs.

Table 1.3 Electoral Area Housing Needs for 2027 and 2032

Electoral Area	Housing Need By 2027			Housing Need By 2032		
	0-1br	2br	3br+	0-1br	2br	3br+
A	8	29	81	15	57	158
B	22	57	194	42	112	378
C	3	21	36	6	40	70
D	5	18	43	10	36	83

E	6	14	54	12	26	106
F	14	23	67	27	46	130
G	3	10	22	6	19	42
H	3	13	35	5	26	68
I	9	25	68	17	48	132
Total	*72*	*211*	*600*	*140*	*410*	*1,167*

Notes:

- Projections are based on the 2016 and 2021 censuses regarding dwelling type preferences, number of bedrooms per dwelling and headship rates by age group.
- Housing needs are determined by estimating population change by age grouping, applying headship rates to determine new generation and disaggregating households by dwelling type preference. Dwellings are then classified into bedrooms and summarized in the table above.

While modelling demand based on existing conditions can provide an estimate of how many and what kind of units will be needed, it does not address the affordability of those units. As such, additional information relating to income and wealth should be incorporated into the demand forecast.

The benchmark for a monthly Affordable Shelter Cost is calculated as 30% of annual (pre-tax) household income, per Statistic's Canada Core Housing Need definition. Under this definition, the monthly shelter cost that would be affordable to the average household can be calculated by multiplying the Median Household Income by 30% and then dividing the total by 12 (to disaggregate to monthly costs). This represents the average monthly total of all shelter expenses paid by households that own or rent their dwelling. Shelter costs for owner households include mortgage payments, property taxes and condominium fees, along with the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal services. For renter households, shelter costs include rent, the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal services.

Median income data and income deciles were used to gain an understanding of affordable monthly shelter costs for each range of income earners for each age group. These values were compared to the estimated monthly shelter cost of a dwelling purchased and rented in the CVRD. These costs were estimated using Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) primary rental market data for 2021, 2022 benchmark home sale prices, standard mortgage calculators and spending data related to utilities and property taxes. Seniors (65+) were attributed a higher down payment (thus lower monthly cost and higher affordability) than other age groups (50% in contrast to 20%). In British Columbia, 63% of seniors are homeowners. Furthermore, 32% of these senior homeowners have paid off their mortgages. It is assumed that

many of these BC residents who are choosing to immigrate to the Cowichan Valley will be able to afford a down payment considerably greater than 20%. As such, it is necessary to capture this concept of portable real estate wealth with an alternate assumption using a more realistic down payment for the senior category. Where the affordability of the average single detached dwelling did not align with the median income earning household (the fifth decile), the relative percentage gap of demand was shifted from single detached homes to more affordable attached units. Each income decile was assumed to represent approximately 10% of the population, and thus 10% of demand.

Table 1.4 Electoral Area Projected Housing Need with Affordability Considerations, 2027

2027 Unit Demand – With Affordability Considerations				
Electoral Area	Before Affordability Considerations		After Affordability Considerations	
	Detached Units	Attached Units	Detached Units	Attached Units
A	102	16	88	30
B	251	9	225	35
C	59	2	47	14
D	56	8	51	14
E	78	1	64	15
F	109	2	72	39
G	36	1	28	8

2027 Unit Demand – With Affordability Considerations				
Electoral Area	**Before Affordability Considerations**		**After Affordability Considerations**	
	Detached Units	**Attached Units**	**Detached Units**	**Attached Units**
H	52	2	42	12
I	99	2	70	30

Table 1.5 Electoral Area Projected Housing Need with Affordability Considerations, 2032

2032 Unit Demand – With Affordability Considerations				
Electoral Area	**Before Affordability Considerations**		**After Affordability Considerations**	
	Detached Units	**Attached Units**	**Detached Units**	**Attached Units**
A	199	30	172	58
B	489	17	437	68
C	115	5	92	28
D	109	16	99	27

E	152	2	125	29
F	212	5	140	76
G	70	1	55	16
H	102	3	82	23
I	192	3	137	58

1.6 Growth Containment Boundaries

Growth containment boundaries identify lands where growth will be focused and where the majority of public investment will be directed.

Schedule G – Growth Containment Boundaries and Areas is a refinement and reassessment of the previous GCBs as identified in Bylaw 4270. Technical expertise and community engagement supported the development of the new GCBs and projected growth areas. Growth within the GCBs supports the effective delivery of infrastructure and community services. It is the intention that overtime, 80% of growth will occur within the Growth Containment Boundaries. In order for this to occur, zoning bylaws must be amended for consistency with the OCP.

For clarity, GCBs are a boundary and all lands within the boundary are considered growth areas.

Schedule G maps the growth containment boundaries and growth areas by:

- illustrating the line that separates areas of growth from rural areas; and,
- highlighting areas within the boundary as areas of growth.

The following table projects to 2050 the total new population within each electoral area within and outside the growth containment boundaries.

Table 1.6 Electoral Area Population Within and Outside the Growth Containment Boundaries, 2022–2050

Electoral Area	Total New Population by Milestone Year			
	2022		2024	
	Within GCB	Outside GCB	Within GCB	Outside GCB
A	74	13	151	26
B	139	31	286	64
C	60	4	123	9
D	42	2	87	4
E	13	28	27	58
F	47	28	97	58
G	34	1	71	1
H	27	22	55	46
I	78	1	161	1
Total	515	130	1,056	266

Electoral Area	Total New Population by Milestone Year			
	2032		2050	
	Within GCB	Outside GCB	Within GCB	Outside GCB
A	499	85	1,336	228
B	944	210	2,530	564
C	405	29	1,084	77
D	286	13	766	35
E	89	191	237	512
F	321	192	860	515
G	233	5	625	13
H	182	151	486	404
I	532	4	1,423	11
Total	3,490	880	9,349	2,358

Generally, land use modelling forecasts suggest that approximately 20% of new growth will occur outside GCBs, though this will vary significantly by electoral area. It should also be noted there is significant uncertainty with the distribution of growth inside and outside the GCBs as

depicted above, due to the fact that total growth has been averaged annually, which does not account for major developments completed during singular years.

Table 1.7 Electoral Area Residential Lands Within the Growth Containment Boundaries

Electoral Area	Area within GCB (hectares)						
	Large Lot Rural	Country Suburban	Large Lot Suburban	Medium Lot Suburban	Compact Lot Suburban	Village Residential	Village Core Residential
A	-	-	447	71	63	8	2
B	-	19	426	383	8	11	-
C	-	-	308	58	28	13	-
D	-	51	39	70	14	5	19
E	-	-	-	41	-	9	-
F	-	19	87	204	-	43	7
G	-	356	-	2	-	-	-
H	-	-	106	24	-	-	-
I	20	224	185	47	69	11	18
Total	*20*	*410*	*1,598*	*900*	*182*	*100*	*47*

Table 1.8 Electoral Area Residential Lands Outside the Growth Containment Boundaries

Electoral Area	Area Outside GCB (hectares)				
	Large Lot Rural	Small Lot Rural	Large Lot Suburban	Medium Lot Suburban	Village Residential
A	-	478	-	25	-
B	333	868	-	15	-
C	-	66	-	60	4
D	-	94	-	-	-
E	519	216	-	9	-
F	715	308	35	-	-
G	-	-	-	-	-
H	197	611	-	-	-
I	-	-	4	-	-
Total	*1,765*	*2,901*	*39*	*108*	*4*

The new GCBs are meant to achieve several objectives:

GCBO.1 Link servicing corridors with population growth, where investments in water and sewer infrastructure can be supported by future growth.

GCBO.2 Focus growth in strategic locations near village centres, jobs, public transit and other amenities.

GCBO.3 Formalize existing development patterns where growth and subdivision have already occurred outside the former GCB.

GCBO.4 Ensure densities outside the GCB are reflective of rural land use patterns (below one UPH) and densities inside the GCB are reflective of suburban and urban land use patterns (above one UPH).

GCBO.5 Prevent growth in wildfire interface areas and in areas that are outside of the CVRD's fire emergency response capacity.

Key changes to the GCBs from Bylaw 4270 the harmonized OCP include:

● Within Schedule G -- Growth Containment Boundaries and Areas, electoral areas A, B and C are mapped as one continuous growth area, linking Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill
● Additional growth boundaries and areas in Saltair (electoral area G), Diamond (electoral area H), Eagle Heights/Koksilah Village (electoral area D and E), Paldi (electoral area F) and an additional growth area located between Mesachie Lake and Beaver Lake (electoral area F).
● formalization of existing development patterns through expanded GCBs in Cowichan Bay (electoral area D) and Youbou (electoral area I).

The following suggested criteria assists in consideration of new rezoning applications:

● The CVRD does not support further expansion of the GCB, except where special study areas indicate the potential for future comprehensive development and/or infrastructure servicing needs.
● Growth is focused within the GCB.
● Growth is focused within existing centres and residential neighbourhoods, with some greenfield sites available for future development.
● Growth is not occurring in floodplain or hazard areas.
● Growth is not occurring on agricultural lands.
● Growth is occurring primarily in areas that have community water and sewer systems.
● Growth is focused in areas of higher population density, such as village centres and residential neighbourhoods with rural connections to centres.

See Appendix III Growth Containment Boundary for more information on the methodology.

Electoral Area A

Mill Bay is the focus of this GCB. The village is characterized by Brentwood College School and several commercial shopping centres, including key services and amenities. There is significant development pressure in the South Cowichan, and growth in the area is intended to provide more multi-unit housing options near the centre of the village and support the enhancement of servicing corridors, notably between Mill Bay and Shawnigan Lake. On Schedule G – Growth Containment Boundaries and Areas the, area A, B and C GCB is connected with corridors.

Electoral Area B

Shawnigan Lake is the focus of this GCB. The village is characterized by Shawnigan Lake School and a small commercial core at the intersection of Shawnigan Lake Road and Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road. There is also significant development pressure in the area, and growth in this area is intended to support multi-unit housing options near the centre of the village and the sustainability of servicing in the area, especially between Shawnigan Lake and Mill Bay and Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill.

Electoral Area C

Cobble Hill is the focus of this GCB. The village is characterized by several small commercial buildings along Fisher Road adjacent to the Cobble Hill Farmers Institute. The GCB extends out across the western side of the Trans-Canada Highway into parts of the electoral area that have developed with lot sizes consistent with other growth areas across the region. Growth in this area is intended to primarily support a potentially new employment hub near the Trans-Canada Highway and Chapman Road. Note there is a small number of parcels in electoral area A that are abutting electoral area C and located within the GCB that are considered part of the electoral area C local area plan.

Electoral Area D

Cowichan Bay is the focus of this GCB. The village is characterized by an active commercial waterfront along Cowichan Bay Road. The GCB extends to the Lambourne and Cherry Point neighbourhoods to the east. Very modest growth is expected in electoral area D and is intended to support multi-unit housing options near Wilmot and Pritchard Roads.

Electoral Area D/E

Eagle Heights and the Koksilah Village are the focus of this GCB. The area is characterized by an industrial business park adjacent to the Trans-Canada Highway and residential development largely consisting of single-family homes. Here, modest growth is expected and is intended to make more efficient use of the industrial lands.

Electoral Area F

Honeymoon Bay, Mesachie Lake and Paldi are the focus of these GCBs. Honeymoon Bay and Mesachie Lake are established small villages characterized by their proximity to the Cowichan Lake, while Paldi is an undeveloped greenfield site that has been zoned for future development. Growth in the area is intended to enhance the offerings of housing options, services and amenities in both Honeymoon Bay and Mesachie Lake, while providing a new, compact neighbourhood in Paldi.

To the northwest of Honeymoon Bay's GCB, several residential properties along South Shore Road, Tamea Road and Walton Road are zoned R-2 and yet are located within the Agricultural Land Reserve. These properties are of a fine-grained parcel fabric that prevents effective agricultural production. Notwithstanding other policies in this OCP, it may be appropriate to eventually connect them with community services even if they are located outside the GCB.

Electoral Area G

Saltair is the focus of this GCB. The area is characterized by suburban subdivisions near and on the seafront, along with a few commercial businesses on Chemainus Road. Modest growth is expected within the GCB as further subdivision of land at a scale similar to what already exists in the community.

Electoral Area H

The Diamond community is the focus of this GCB. It is characterized by a small community hall and theatre just north of Ladysmith. Modest growth in the area is intended to introduce some more compact housing options in Diamond, largely as subdivisions of existing parcels.

Electoral Area I

Youbou and Meade Creek are the focus of this GCB. The village is characterized by its linear shape following the northern shore of Cowichan Lake with a few commercial services and a community bowling alley. The GCB extends eastward to Laketown Ranch and toward the western extent of the historic village, near Arbutus Park. Growth is expected to occur in areas along Marble Bay Road and Meade Creek Road as key destinations for tourism and recreation.

PART TWO: LAND USE DESIGNATIONS & THE TRANSECT

2.1 Land Use Designations and the Relationship with the Transect

The OCP presents 21 land use designations. A transect communicates the relationship between the 21 designations and seven different landscapes.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District is home to a vast range of landscape types. To name them is to paint a picture of a diverse region where the local environment shapes human settlements and economic activity, which have evolved over time to create a range of different settlement patterns. Understanding the natural setting and context within which each community exists helps to define uniqueness and "sense of place." Within and across seven distinct landscape types, the "transect" illustrates a range of development intensity (from natural and rural to village and urban) to reflect and contextualize the different landform types and settlement patterns found throughout our vast region. See *Figure 2.1 A Guiding Framework*

The transect helps guide decisions about future growth that will result in development that is respectful of local culture and rooted in the CVRD's unique values and identity. This understanding further supports the development of land use designations and policies that are sensitive to the nuances of specific places and local communities. Twenty-one land use designations are situated in the transect that has seven landscape types. The relationship between the land use designations and landscape types is illustrated in *Figure 2.2 Land Use Designations and the Transect*.

Figure 2.1 A Guiding Framework | The CVRD Transect

RESOURCE & NATURAL   RURAL & AGRICULTURAL   SUBURBAN   VILLAGE   URBAN   DOWNTOWN   SPECIAL DISTRICT

Figure 2.2 Land Use Designations and the Transect
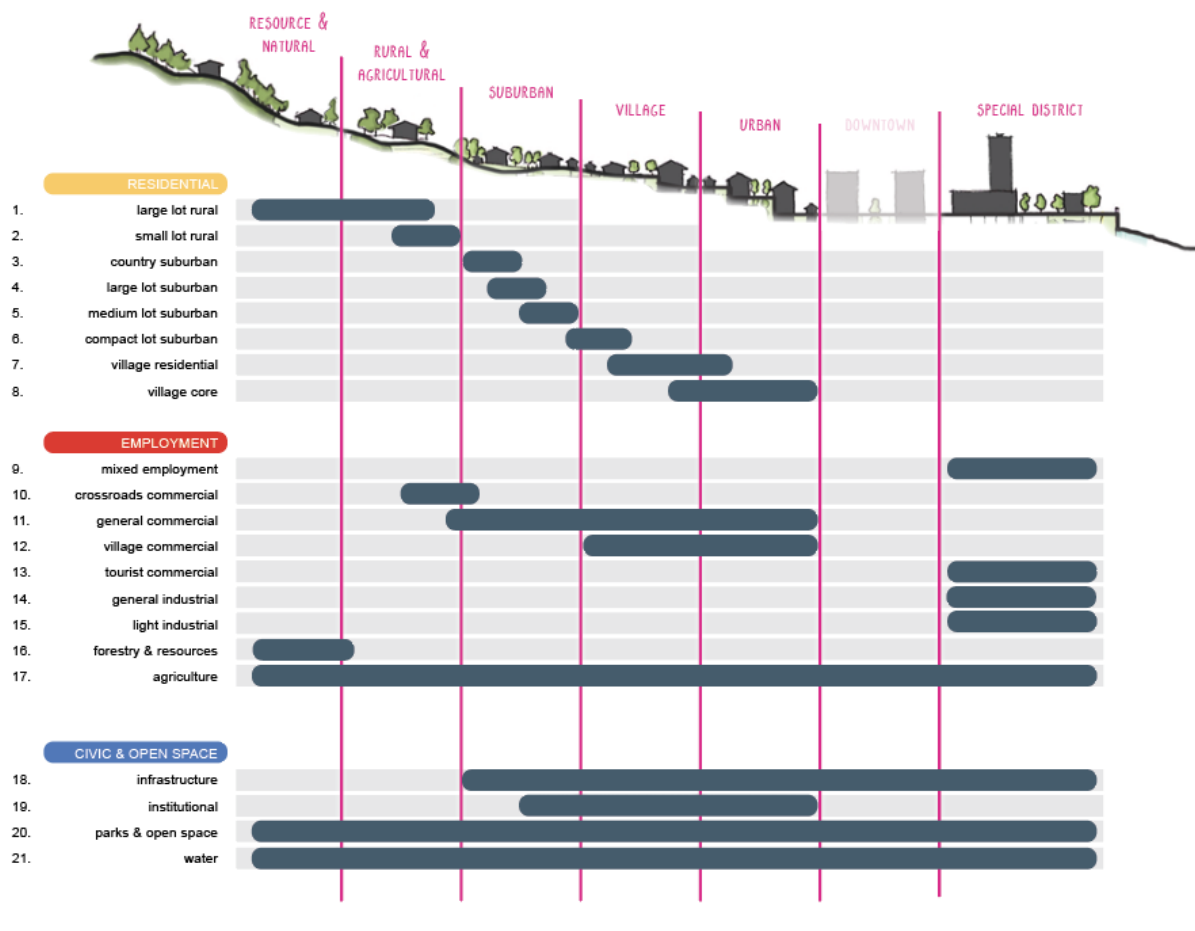
2.2 Transect Landscape Types

The transect has seven distinct landscape types:

- Resource & Natural

Resource and Natural landscapes are characterized by ecologically- and resource-rich woodlands, wetlands, aquatic environments, riparian areas and old growth forests. Balancing the important forestry sector while protecting critical wildlife and plant habitat is key to the region's environmental and economic sustainability.

These areas have very few inhabitants and do not have significant servicing to support future growth. Often, steep slopes and other natural hazards (e.g. flood risk, wildfire, etc.) also prevent development from taking place in these areas.

- Rural & Agricultural

Rural and Agricultural landscapes are characterized by diverse landforms and fertile soils, much of the lower lying areas of the region are farms ideal for productive agricultural uses. These are

lands in large part protected by the Agricultural Land Reserve and characterized by large-scale agricultural enterprises or small-scale hobby farms. The viability of these lands is important to the region's food security and economic vitality.

Apart from farmland and wooded residential lots, human activity in this part of the transect is somewhat limited to the occasional rural hamlet, which may include a community hall, service station or small market. Tourism is growing in these areas as vineyards and value-added agricultural uses (i.e. farm tours) become more popular.

- Suburban

Suburban landscapes are characterized by low-density residential subdivision, often developed in the shape of detached housing. This type of development is often the interface between a settlement and rural and agricultural landscapes but can occasionally appear isolated and buffered from a village core.

This is the most common type of residential development in the region. Pressure for more suburban development is increasing as residents in less affordable housing markets are looking to the Cowichan Valley. This development pattern also includes secondary and/or seasonal housing that can be found on lakeshores and seafronts throughout the region.

- Village

Village landscapes are characterized by village settlements which include a small mix of uses—primarily commercial and residential. These are the beating hearts of the Cowichan Valley, where local shops and businesses attract residents and tourists alike. They are generally the focus of human activity with enhanced walkability and connections to the regional bus service.

- Urban

Urban landscapes are characterized by a high concentration of uses, including multi-unit residential, commercial, institutional and industrial uses that exist within a highly connected environment with multiple transportation options. Apart from the incorporated municipalities, very few communities in the CVRD reach an urban pattern of development as illustrated in the transect.

Larger institutional uses, such as hospitals, schools and community/recreation centres along with major employers and commercial destinations, help create a more complete community where daily needs are never too far from home.

- Downtown

Downtowns represent the highest concentration of buildings, people and jobs within an urban context. While this part of the transect doesn't exist in the CVRD—except within its incorporated municipalities—it is included here for context and completeness.

- Special District

Special District is characterized by major, single-use destinations or attractions like fairgrounds, mills, ports or arenas that don't quite fit within the traditional patterns of development.

These areas require special consideration and attention as they commonly break from typical urban patterns, can be quite disruptive to their surroundings and generate significant traffic (e.g. Laketown Ranch, Duncan Airport).

2.3 Land Use Designations

The land use designations include density thresholds that align closely with local mobility capacities and strategic upgrade projects. The intent is to provide a standardized approach to land use, infrastructure and transportation infrastructure (asset) management across the region. They generally follow parcel boundaries and, though not shown on the maps, land use designations extend to the centerline of the road right of way.

Where land use designations split parcels, the boundary will be considered approximate. The Agricultural Land Reserve boundary is not always consistent with parcel boundaries.

Land use designations are mapped in Schedule L – Land Use Designations. Schedule L also includes the local area plan maps and the special study area maps.

Density Calculations

The following policies apply when calculating density for development.

Lands within the Growth Containment Boundary

Density for development within the GCB is determined based on net land area.

The following land is removed to determine net land area:

- Streams and water bodies (centre line of stream or water body to top-of-bank or high water mark); and,
- Utility rights-of way (e.g. power lines).

The following land is included in the net land area:

- Public road dedications; and,
- Park land dedications.

Lands outside the Growth Containment Boundary

Density for development outside the GCB is determined based on gross land area.

Interpretation

Land use designations corresponding to shorelines are to be interpreted as following the natural boundary of the water body as defined in the *Land Act*. "Natural boundary" means the visible high water mark of any lake, river, stream or other body of water where the presence and action of the water are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years, as to mark on the soil of the bed of the body of water a character distinct from that of its banks, in vegetation, as well as in the nature of the soil itself.

Residential Land Use Designations

Large Lot Rural

PURPOSE: Preserve natural and rural settings with large lots that are suitable for small scale agricultural uses (i.e. hobby farms) and where residential uses are situated in a safe and flat area, causing little disturbance to the surrounding environment. Properties in this designation do not typically have access to infrastructure services, such as water or sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Detached homes

DENSITY: Maximum 0.2 units per hectare (UPH) (plus permitted suites)

Small Lot Rural

PURPOSE: Protect rural settings with housing on lot sizes that are typically considered acreages and are suitable for small scale agricultural uses (i.e. hobby farms). Residential uses are situated in a safe and flat area, causing little disturbance to the surrounding environment. Properties in this designation do not typically have access to infrastructure services, such as water or sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Detached homes

DENSITY: Maximum 1 UPH (plus permitted suites)

Country Suburban

PURPOSE: Enable detached housing with country character, where homes face and front a street. Properties in this designation do not always have access to infrastructure services, such as water or sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Detached homes

DENSITY: Maximum 2.5 UPH (plus permitted suites)

Large Lot Suburban

PURPOSE: Enable detached housing with suburban character, where homes face and front a street and provide opportunities for clustering units into pocket neighbourhoods. Properties in this designation do not always have access to infrastructure services, such as water or sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Detached homes

DENSITY: Maximum 5 UPH (plus permitted suites)

Medium Lot Suburban

PURPOSE: Enable detached housing with suburban character and provide opportunities for clustering units into pocket neighbourhoods. Properties in this designation typically have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems. Transportation choices are more varied with some bus routes.

BUILDING TYPE: Detached homes

DENSITY: Maximum 15 UPH (plus permitted suites)

Compact Lot Suburban

PURPOSE: Enable detached housing with some ground-oriented duplexes and provide opportunities for clustering units into pocket neighbourhoods. Properties in this designation have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems. Transportation choices are more varied with greater access to bus routes.

BUILDING TYPE: Detached homes and duplexes

DENSITY: Maximum 30 UPH (plus permitted suites)

Village Residential

PURPOSE: Enable high-density detached housing forms and townhomes near village and urban centres. Homes face and front a street, with small lot configurations and ground-oriented plex housing (e.g. duplex, triplex, fourplex) and townhomes. Ground floor commercial uses in the form of live-work may be allowed through implementing a zoning bylaw. Properties in this designation have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems. Transportation choices are rich with access to bus routes.

BUILDING TYPE: Detached homes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and townhomes

DENSITY: Between 25 and 50 UPH (plus permitted suites)

Village Core

PURPOSE: Enable multi-unit housing to support village and urban centres. Residential forms include townhomes and low-rise apartment buildings. Ground floor commercial uses in the form of live-work and mixed-use buildings may be allowed through implementing a zoning bylaw. Properties in this designation have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems. Transportation choices are the richest with access to bus routes.

BUILDING TYPE: Townhomes, stacked townhomes and apartment buildings up to four storeys. Six storeys may be considered if the proposal contributes to the types of units needed in the community (as determined by the latest housing needs assessment).

DENSITY: Between 40 and 100 UPH (plus permitted suites)

Employment Land Use Designations

Mixed Employment

PURPOSE: Allow the greatest flexibility and diversity of employment uses, including light industrial, institutional, commercial, and office, and accessory residential uses. Mixed employment development is typically located on large lots along major highway corridors. Properties in this designation have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Buildings up to two storeys

DENSITY: Between 0.25 and 1.0 FAR

Crossroads Commercial

PURPOSE: Preserve rural settings and existing services to agricultural and resource-based areas outside of the ALR. Mix of small-scale commercial and industrial uses, like convenience

stores, markets and mechanic garages. Properties in this designation do not typically have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Small-scale buildings up to two storeys in height

DENSITY: Variable

General Commercial

PURPOSE: Enable medium and large format commercial malls and strip malls with off-street surface parking serving both local and regional areas. Encourage residential uses above the primary ground floor commercial uses. Properties in this designation have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Medium and large format retail centres up to two storeys in height

DENSITY: Up to 1.0 FAR (floor area ratio)

Village Commercial

PURPOSE: Enable commercial or mixed-use buildings (multi-unit residential and commercial uses) that function as settlement, village or urban gathering places and destinations. Uses include retail shops, restaurants, cafes, services and some tourism uses. Properties in this designation have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Single or multi-storey buildings up to four storeys

DENSITY: Between 0.5 and 1.5 FAR

Tourist Commercial

PURPOSE: Accommodate a variety of tourist and recreational commercial uses that span across natural and rural areas, and village and urban centres. This designation intends to protect and enhance the CVRD's burgeoning tourist industry.

BUILDING TYPE: Single or multi-storey buildings up to four storeys

DENSITY: Variable

General Industrial

PURPOSE: Enable industrial buildings and structures on large lots. This development type is typically oriented around circulation, loading areas, surface parking and storage space.

Accessory commercial uses are allowed. Development is typically located along major highway corridors for access, distribution of materials and tourism-related visibility. Properties in this designation have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Buildings up to two storeys

DENSITY: Variable

Light Industrial

PURPOSE: Enable industrial or mixed-use buildings (multi-unit residential and industrial uses) focused on artisan studios, manufacturing, assembly and/or repairing of materials with light impacts on infrastructure and on small lots. This type of development is typically located in or near village and urban centres or at a crossroads in more rural settings. Properties in this designation have access to infrastructure services, such as water and sewer systems.

BUILDING TYPE: Buildings up to three storeys

DENSITY: Between 0.5 and 1.5 FAR

Forestry & Resources

PURPOSE: Enable the large-scale extraction of natural resources, such as forestry, gravel and mines. These uses are generally located in isolated locations, far from villages and urban centres.

BUILDING TYPE: n/a

DENSITY: One caretaker unit per lot

Agriculture

PURPOSE: Accommodate and recognize the provincial Agricultural Land Use regulations that permit a variety of farming and non-farming activities, including basic production of agricultural products, value-added production activities and agritourism. Support the agricultural sector by accommodating supplemental employment opportunities, such as home-based businesses and value-added opportunities to maintain the viability of farm businesses.

BUILDING TYPE: n/a

DENSITY: n/a

Civic & Open Space Land Use Designations

Infrastructure

PURPOSE: Maintain existing and future civic infrastructure, like railways, pumping stations and water treatment facilities, across the region to ensure effective distribution of public utilities.

BUILDING TYPE: n/a

DENSITY: n/a

Institutional

PURPOSE: Protect and facilitate the development of buildings with institutional uses that support a complete community. This includes schools, recreation centres, fire halls, places of worship, libraries, social enterprises (where appropriate), other community-focused services and lands near employment centres. Accessory residential uses may be considered on institutional lands if providing needed workforce housing and/or affordable below-market housing.

BUILDING TYPE: n/a

DENSITY: n/a

Parks & Open Space

PURPOSE: Protect existing parks and create new parks, trails, fields and open spaces, including sensitive wildlife habitat and steep slopes.

BUILDING TYPE: n/a

DENSITY: n/a

Water

PURPOSE: Protect water bodies for their continued use as safe and adequate year-round potable water supply, and for tourism, recreation, sustainable commerce and their significant value as sensitive wildlife habitat.

BUILDING TYPE: n/a

DENSITY: n/a

The purpose of a special study area is to indicate that regardless of an underlying land use designation there may be special considerations that would alter the usual consequences of the underlying designation. For example, there may be specific zoning updates, infrastructure requirements or environmental considerations for some lands that are key to the successful implementation of this OCP.

Special study areas and future land use areas are mapped in Schedule F – Future Land Use Maps.

Special Study Area - Infrastructure & Servicing

PURPOSE: Identify areas where additional study is needed to provide sustainable infrastructure and servicing in locations outside of growth containment boundaries for reasons including health, environmental protection and cooperation.

Electoral Area A – Bamberton
South of Mill Bay village, the Malahat Nation owns the Bamberton lands, which are located adjacent to the Trans-Canada Highway, south of the lands known as Ocean Terrace. These lands are key to the economic development and prosperity of the Malahat people. Development in this area requires collaboration between various adjacent landowners to coordinate infrastructure servicing, access points from the Malahat Highway, and the protection from hazardous slopes, maintaining ecosystem integrity and scenic views.

The Malahat Nation has identified the need for more economic opportunities and housing for its members in general and particularly in the Bamberton Special Study Area. The intent is to convene the various landowners and the Malahat Nation in and adjacent to those areas to identify common goals and ensure development plans are aligned and adapted to servicing capacity.

The OCP holds space for the Bamberton Special Study Area to align land use on adjacent lands in collaboration with the Malahat Nation and complementary to the Malahat Nation's strategic plan and vision for these important lands that have the distinct potential to transform the economic and social outcomes of the Nation and electoral A – Mill Bay/Malahat residents.

Electoral Area B – South Shawnigan Lake
Nearly the entire waterfront of Shawnigan Lake has been developed with residences, many of which are serviced by private septic systems. Some septic systems are older and require maintenance or upgrading and this can impact the lake's pollution levels. To keep Shawnigan Lake healthy, an infrastructure and servicing study is needed to determine how best to prevent further pollution from entering this important water body. Options may include exploring financial incentives to homeowners for septic system upgrades or investing in a sewer system that would connect properties around Shawnigan Lake.

Electoral Area H – Woodley Range

A large rural lot subdivision exists just north of the Woodley Range Ecological Reserve and south of the Chuckwagon neighbourhood. It is connected by Prospect Drive and Aho Road, and homes in this area have required potable water to be trucked in because of a lack of capacity in the wells servicing the properties. A study is required to determine the best course of action for servicing these homes with a more sustainable source of potable water.

Special Study Area - Comprehensive Development

PURPOSE: Parcels that require a comprehensive development plan showing the general layout of the ultimate buildout of the property, including:

- land use strategy
- infrastructure and servicing
- siting of buildings
- mobility, connections and road network
- environmental protection
- parks, open spaces and public spaces

Special studies of this type will be undertaken as part of the development application process and studies will be produced at the developer's expense.

Electoral Area A – Central Mill Bay
Parcels along Partridge Road and extending north up Mill Bay Road and west across the Trans-Canada Highway have been identified for potential redevelopment given their central location and proximity to Brentwood College School. These areas could accommodate much needed affordable housing for the region; however, water capacity constraints make building multi-unit residential buildings a major challenge. A better understanding of these constraints, along with the identification of and investment in new potable water sources, is needed to build such key community-serving developments. Solving the challenge of water capacity and sources for the Mill Bay Village will require a concerted effort among multiple property owners and developers. A study of water services in this area may be completed in coordination with the Comprehensive Development Special Study Area for the Benchlands, at the developer's expense.

Electoral Area A – Benchlands
Large parcels designated for Forestry and Resources southwest of the Mill Bay village represent a significant amount of greenfield land that may help secure a sustainable and connected water supply for Mill Bay, and in turn, contribute to the region's pressing housing needs. A development application for these lands must include a study of the local water supply constraints and provide options for the long-term improvement of capacity and connection of the water system.

The Benchlands area also represents a key opportunity for new trails and park space, elements strongly noted in community engagement, as well as greater vehicular and active transportation corridors, particularly along a private forestry logging road (that may be named Haul Road upon dedication) to improve connectivity throughout the South Cowichan.

This study should be done in coordination with the Malahat First Nation and the owners of the Central Mill Bay Special Study Area properties. The Malahat First Nation has several key land holdings south of Mill Bay village. They have identified an interest in using these lands for future development. The challenge of water supply is a concern here, too, and all parties have an opportunity to seek mutually beneficial solutions that include a more connected and sustainable water supply.

Electoral Area E – Langtry Road
The Duncan Airport and adjacent gravel pit operation are compelling lands for potential future development. The airport is serviced and the location, in close proximity to Eagle Heights and Koksilah Village, represents an economic development opportunity. Should the current uses reach their end of life and property owners decide to explore development options, key considerations include the remediation of the lands, working in collaboration with Cowichan Tribes whose reserve lands are immediately to the northwest, the protection of the tree canopy that currently surrounds much of the airport and gravel pit, infrastructure servicing, and buffers with nearby agricultural lands. There are two parcels within this Special Study Area: one is within a New Parks & Open Space Special Study Area, and the other is within a Comprehensive Development Special Study Area.

Electoral Area I – Youbou Lands
Over the years, lands immediately west of the Youbou village site along Youbou Road and North Shore Road have been subject to development interest. It is a complex site with significant challenges related to riparian areas, water supply, topographic features and more. These lands are subject to a phased development agreement from 2010 that allows a range of residential and non-residential uses and the provision of community amenities and features. The land use designation under the OCP Bylaw 4373 is consistent with the phased development agreement. The phased development agreement has a limited term, and should it expire in 2030, the land use designation should be reviewed in consultation with the community's vision.

Special Study Area - New Parks & Open Space

PURPOSE: Indicate the requirement for a land dedication or rezoning that would provide a new public park or open space in line with local community needs.

Electoral Area B – Shawnigan Village
In accordance with the Shawnigan Village charrette land use concept, it is anticipated that the redevelopment of a parcel along Shawnigan Lake Road would provide a new public park. More details will be provided through a local area plan for Shawnigan Village.

Electoral Area E – Koksilah Road
Certain lands in the Eagle Heights area are characterized by steep slopes and a dense tree canopy. It is anticipated that a future development located near the intersection of Koksilah Road and Phillips Road will set aside land for the protection of the tree canopy and steep slopes.

Electoral Area E – Langtry Road
The Duncan Airport and adjacent gravel pit operation are compelling lands for potential future development. The airport is serviced and the location, in close proximity to Eagle Heights and

Koksilah Village, represents an economic development opportunity. Should the current uses reach their end of life and property owners decide to explore development options, key considerations include the remediation of the lands, working in collaboration with Cowichan Tribes whose reserve lands are immediately to the northwest, the protection of the tree canopy that currently surrounds much of the airport and gravel pit, infrastructure servicing and buffers with nearby agricultural lands. There are two parcels within this Special Study Area: one is within a New Parks & Open Space Special Study Area, and the other is within a Comprehensive Development Special Study Area.

Electoral Area E – Wake Lake

The Wake Lake Nature Reserve provides critical habitat for two amphibians listed by Canada's *Species at Risk Act* as species of special concern: the Western toad and the Red-legged frog. To further protect this sensitive habitat and the species within it, certain recommendations are applied in the area:

- Prioritizing the location and long-term protection of hibernacula of all female Western toads.
- Buffering toad hibernation sites to protect the hibernation structure and other important surrounding habitat features.
- Avoiding construction of new roads, especially where migration corridors exist and in and around breeding sites (i.e. within 1 km of Wake Lake or other identified breeding sites).
- Seasonal road closures (where possible, e.g. Riverbottom Road during the summer toadlet migration).
- Identifying potential migration corridors that intersect with existing roads and installing suitable underpasses and directive fencing at those locations.
- Educating local homeowners and drivers about toad movement patterns and road issues (e.g., the use of signs near migration corridors, discouraging night driving during migration periods).

Additionally, opportunities to expand the Wake Lake Nature Reserve and/or connect it through ecological corridors to other nearby habitats should be encouraged. Restored habitat dedicated to the CVRD that is connected to the Wake Lake Park System shall be credited towards UPH at a 2:1 ratio. For example, on a 45 hectare lot designated Large Lot Rural (with a density of 0.2 UPH and a unit yield of 9 units), if 20 hectares of habitat is restored and dedicated to the CVRD:

- 20 hectares dedicated, calculated at 0.4 UPH = 8 units
- 25 hectares remaining, calculated at 0.2 UPH = 5 units
- Total unit yield on the remaining 25 hectares = 13 units

To qualify for this density bonus, a qualified environmental professional (QEP) must be engaged to assess and sign off on the habitat restoration efforts and to ensure they have been carried out as required.

Electoral Areas B, C, D & E – Xwulqw'selu Sta'lo' (Koksilah) Watershed

The Xwulqw'selu Sta'lo' (Koksilah River) watershed is located on the traditional territories of the Cowichan Tribes and Malahat First Nation. It holds cultural and spiritual significance for the Quw'utsun Mustimuhw (Cowichan Peoples) and is central to their origin stories. The watershed is home to diverse ecosystems, including rare wetlands, mature Coastal Western Hemlock forests, and important aquatic systems supporting culturally and economically significant

species, such as chinook, coho, chum, steelhead and resident trout. The Watershed also hosts a significant agricultural community, rural tourism, forestry lands, parks and year-long recreational opportunities.

The watershed is a critical water source for several communities including Cowichan Station and Glenora. Several neighbouring countries also rely on water from aquifers which partially underline the Koksilah watershed. Despite its importance, the watershed is more vulnerable to droughts and floods compared to other watersheds, due to limited natural surface area storage, and increasing stress from human activity. The CVRD has an important role to play in protecting the Xwulqw'selu Sta'lo' watershed for future generations. The goal is to protect lands and waters from the impacts of new development and restore streamside areas to enhance watershed ecosystems and habitat.

The Special Study Area objectives are consistent with the Xwulqw'selu Watershed Planning Agreement (S-xats-thut tst – We Agree) vision to improve water quality, protect against contamination of aquifer, address climate change impacts, restoration of ecological balance, return to healthy fish populations, increased summer water levels and decreased water flows in winter.

2.4 Local Area Plans

Local area plans build upon the vision, objectives and policy in Schedule A of the OCP. These plans help shape growth in a way that contributes to more place-specific, well-designed and liveable complete communities. Local area plans have a defined boundary and areas included in the boundary are defined as local plan areas.

Local area plans:

- Provide greater detail on growth management for communities that are expected to experience change.
- Provide local, specific policies that guide growth in village and community hearts so that the qualities of these areas that people love and cherish are preserved and enhanced into the future.
- Provide area-specific objectives and policy to address daily needs, infrastructure, transportation and housing.
- Preserve and enhance the qualities that people love and cherish about their community.
- Are guided by the transect, which provides the thematic framework.

The local area plans are included in the following electoral areas with names that may or may not match the name of the electoral area:

Electoral Area	Local Area Plan
A – Mill Bay/Malahat	Mill Bay
B – Shawnigan Lake	Shawnigan Lake
C – Cobble Hill	Cobble Hill

D – Cowichan Bay	Cowichan Bay
D – Cowichan Bay E – Cowichan Station/Sahtlam/Glenora	Eagle Heights/Koksilah Village
F – Honeymoon Bay/Mesachie Lake/Paldi	Honeymoon Bay/Mesachie Lake/Paldi
G – Saltair	Saltair
H – North Oyster/Diamond	Diamond
I – Youbou/Meade Creek	Youbou/Meade Creek

Local area plans are in development at the time of writing OCP Schedule A and are located in Schedule B – Local Area Plans.

2.5 Development Approval Information

The entire CVRD is designated as a development approval information area. That means the CVRD may require, by bylaw, information on the anticipated impact of a proposed activity or development on the community, including but not limited to, information regarding impacts on:

- transportation
- local infrastructure
- stormwater management
- public facilities and services
- natural environment
- hazardous conditions
- economic and social development
- archaeological and cultural heritage resources; and,
- climate action

Policies

The CVRD Board:

1. Ensures that any new development incurs all costs associated with any required infrastructure upgrades or servicing requirements.

2. Supports, in recognition of several of the electoral areas being rural communities with agricultural uses, obtaining, for any development of non-farm uses and subdivision within the Agricultural Land Reserve or any developments within 300 m of Agricultural Land Reserve lands, where appropriate, an assessment of the likely impact of the development on surrounding agricultural uses, including a report prepared by a professional agrologist.

3. Supports drainage impact assessments at the cost of development for any wetlands, creeks and sensitive areas.

Justification

1. The natural environment of the CVRD supports an ecosystem of great diversity, including rare species of plants, plant communities and animals. It also supports human habitation. Information may be required to understand conditions and put in place mitigation strategies to limit or reduce any potential impact that development may have.

2. Any new development could increase the traffic flows along any road within the regional district. Many of the electoral area roads are designed for limited traffic flows. They do not have curbs, gutters or sidewalks. Information may be required to understand the potential impact that increased traffic generated by new development may have upon transportation patterns, including traffic flows, transit and associated infrastructure, and other non-vehicular road users.

3. New development may affect the provision of fire and police in the regional district. The regional district is served by paid, on-call and volunteer fire departments. Policing is provided by the RCMP, and the Regional District is responsible for planning and responding to emergencies in the electoral areas. As development could have a significant impact on fire services and increase the Regional District's cost of providing the service, information may be required on the possible impact that development may have upon the provision of these two services.

4. New development may affect the provision of basic infrastructure services—water, sewer, drainage, solid waste management, parks and schools. As development could have a significant impact on these services and increase associated costs to the Regional District, information may be required on the possible impact that development may have upon the provision of these services.

5. Given the topography and the rich biodiversity of the regional district, the plan area has numerous environmentally sensitive features that may require a thorough analysis prior to development. This might include an analysis of any liquid waste management, water, drainage, species and ecosystems at risk, biodiversity and cumulative impacts to ensure that there is no adverse effect on human health or the natural environment.

See CVRD Bylaw No. 4545 – Development Approval Information Bylaw, 2024, which is a bylaw that establishes procedures for requiring development applicants to provide development approval information.

2.6 Temporary Use Designations

Land must be designated as a temporary use area in order for temporary use permits to be considered. Temporary use permits may be considered by the CVRD Board to allow specific land uses to occur for a short period of time. The permit can contain detailed requirements, such as the buildings that can be used, the time frame of the permit and other conditions. Such permits are provided at the discretion of the CVRD Board and are only in effect for a limited time. The designation of land for consideration of temporary uses is included in Schedule L – Land Use Designations. The policies for temporary use respective to each electoral area are

included in Schedule A and will be included in the new comprehensive zoning bylaw, which is in development at the time of writing the OCP.

General Policy

    2.4.1 The CVRD Board:
    1. Would consider holding a public meeting prior to deciding to issue a temporary use permit.

Sonnet 1153

"The Colour Blue"

The Steller's jay is dressed in azure clothes
But his patch of blue's an anomaly true
In a world that's monochromatic
Under a fall of powder snow
That's softened every crown of willow
And on the lake has turned grey ice to white
And from cedar branches has stolen begging hands
Till on frozen knees they wait without respite

In summer he'd be nothing new
Among the rhododendrons and bee-loud rosemary
The swallows and the sparrows
And all the other southern immigrants who come
When providence is bountiful in a summer Eden
But when the sky's the colour of smoke and slate
And thick with promise of more snow tonight
His raucous voice is louder still
As if the sleeping farm his shrieks would wake
And the spikes upon his Viking crown
Have more than usual an annoyed and angry look

He waits at every winter dawn inside his hazel tree
Hungry for my silhouette to see and speak intent
For the shower of sunflower seeds I will spill
And with black gold stain his immaculate field below

Because both of us this place need to thrive or no
And without me I wonder what that Steller's jay would do
Or without I see his colour blue I'd be the lesser too

PART THREE: POLICIES

Introduction

There are eight policy area goal chapters.

Seven of the eight policy chapters are organized according to a "systems approach" by first identifying and defining current conditions and challenges and then proposing a set of objectives and policies to address them. This structure includes:

- Introduction – introduces the policy goal with a general description and definition of each "system," including components and boundaries.
- Challenges – identifies current challenges to those systems and highlights associated sources of those challenges.
- Objectives – explores objectives (e.g. high-level strategic direction) to best address identified challenges.
- General Policies – further examines a range of policies (and associated metrics, where identified) to effectively address implementation of the objectives as explored.
- Policy by transect sub-area – sets out additional policies by transect area.

The eighth and final chapter—Improve Governance and Implementation—addresses how the vision, objectives and policies of this document will be implemented. It introduces key intergovernmental relationships, establishes direction on greater collaboration, lists the instruments that should be created or updated to align with the OCP, and presents metrics to help monitor progress on achieving the OCP's goals.

3.1 Mitigate & Adapt to the Climate Crisis

Introduction

This policy chapter describes objectives and policies on climate change that align with the CVRD's Corporate Strategic Plan to promote climate action initiatives, reduce our own greenhouse gas emissions and protect our communities from the adverse impacts of climate change. We are committed to mitigating and adapting to the climate crisis to ensure that our region is ecologically safe for current and future generations of people who choose to live here.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) works with thousands of leading climate scientists whose consensus is that human activity is causing direct consequences to our environment and climate. It estimates global temperatures have now risen by about 1.0°C since pre-industrial times but stabilizing the climate at 1.5°C is still possible. It would require broad-based economy-wide transformations and would represent a much smaller risk to the environment and our communities than 2°C.[2]

The Cowichan region's climate has large variations over short distances because of complex geography. Areas with the least precipitation include the east coast of the region. The highest amounts of precipitation occur on the west coast of the region and upland areas in the interior of the Island. However, these conditions are expected to change over the next century as GHG emissions continue to rise and disturb our natural and built environments.

The CVRD is currently addressing the climate crisis through a two-pronged approach: climate mitigation and climate adaptation. Mitigation means changing behaviours to reduce the causes of climate change—such as burning fossil fuels or removal of forests and important natural (green) infrastructure, such as wetlands. Adaptation is about increasing the ability to withstand these impacts. By planning for wetter winters, drier summers, more intense storms and a number of other significant changes, the CVRD can ensure its landscapes, buildings and residents will continue to adapt and thrive.

BC's provincial target is to achieve a 40% reduction of 2007 GHG emission levels by 2030, as part of the *Climate Change Accountability Act*. Reducing GHG emissions requires a multi-faceted strategy, including transportation policies to reduce reliance on cars and increase transit ridership and alternative modes; moving agricultural systems to a more ecologically sustainable foundation with lowered GHG emissions; and increasing food production. BC Transit is moving toward electric buses, fleet testing in Victoria to start, but these buses will not likely be available in Cowichan for seven to ten years. See Schedule T for the Transportation and Major Roads maps.

The *Local Government Act* requires the CVRD to establish GHG emission reduction targets at the community level in the OCP and to identify mechanisms to achieve and undertake ongoing

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[2] Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2023). Synthesis Report of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6): Summary for Policymakers. https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/spm/

monitoring for course correction. The CVRD's GHG emission reduction targets can be found in Objective CCO.1.

Challenges Born out of the Climate Crisis

1. Impacts to air and water quality and quantity

In a region with significant low-lying coastal areas and floodplains, sea level rise will present multiple land use planning challenges across the region. Climate models project an increase in annual average temperature of almost 3°C in our region by the 2050s[3]. There will be a doubling in the number of summer days above 25°C from an average of 16 days/year to 39 days/year. This will impact future water and cooling demands, which in turn impacts our ecosystems, watersheds and communities. Overall precipitation amounts are expected to decline, with more precipitation expected to fall during extreme storm events.

2. Threats to ecosystem biodiversity

Decrease in snowpack, frost days and summer precipitation, combined with increasing temperatures, will cause tree growth to decline and mortality rates in vulnerable species to rise. Certain tree species in our region's mountains and lowland valleys may migrate to different elevations in search of suitable temperature and precipitation conditions. Water shortages during the dry spells and associated increases in water cost may have a significant impact on the viability of forestry in our region over the long term. Recent heat waves have decimated marine animals, and many types of insects, birds and fish are decreasing in numbers.

3. Risks to silviculture activity

Increased risk of extreme rain events in winter, with their increased erosion potential, can be expected to challenge harvest opening sizes, cutblock orientation, road-building and deactivation practices, slope-stability practices, blow-down prevention, forest regeneration, rotation lengths and commercial viability.

4. Risks to agricultural activity

As the fall, winter and spring months become wetter and the summer months become hotter and drier, agricultural lands will face significant environmental challenges. It is expected that more frequent flooding and waterlogged soils may result in reduced productivity, as well as crop loss and damage. Summers will continue to lead to increasing drought risk and place pressure on water resources for irrigation and livestock watering needs. Additionally, an increase in extreme weather events, such as severe winter storms, threatens livestock health and has the potential to damage agricultural infrastructure.

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[3] Cowichan Valley Regional District. (2017). Climate Projections for the Cowichan Valley Regional District, page ii.

In the face of more frequent and extreme weather patterns, including the risk of extreme heat, flooding, landslides and wildfires, emergency preparedness will be crucial to maintaining healthy and safe communities and the agricultural sector. The impacts on riparian ecosystems will also be felt with streams drying up and/or flooding more regularly. Further, public health, air quality, heat stress and economic impacts will place the region's social fabric at risk. See Schedule E for Fire Protection maps.

6. Sea level rise

Sea levels are rising as a result of climate change, which is causing melting polar ice caps and the expansion of water at higher temperatures. Coastal communities in BC are anticipating a rise in sea levels of approximately one metre by 2100 and two metres by 2200. This threatens the integrity of the shoreline along with infrastructure and uses that are in proximity to the coast. This includes threats to sensitive ecosystems, marinas, bridges and industries that require access to the sea.

Relationship to Social Equity

Many climate mitigation efforts run the risk of benefiting the wealthy only. When implementing policies that reduce greenhouse gasses and combat the climate crisis, maintaining affordability is key. For example, requiring more energy-efficient homes might mean higher housing costs. However, putting individual water metres in affordable housing units allows residents to track their water usage, allowing them to save money on their utility bill and consume less water. Partnering with local Indigenous communities to learn and implement traditional forest management practices and other climate mitigation practices is another way of incorporating equity into climate action. Further, marginalized populations are often located in precarious places that may require climate mitigation measures. Understanding the connection between hazardous areas and lower income neighbourhoods is important to mitigate the impacts of the climate crisis.

Objectives

Key objectives include reducing greenhouse gas emissions through more sustainable transportation modes, strengthening building energy efficiency, and diverting waste from landfills while adapting our natural and social environments to a changing climate.

Mitigation

CCO.1 Reduce transportation, building and solid waste GHG emissions, according to the following targets:

- Transportation: from 200 kilotons (kt) in 2007, to 120kt by 2030 and 40kt by 2050

- Buildings: from 53kt in 2007, to 32kt by 2030 and 10.6kt by 2050
- Solid waste: from 5.9kt in 2007, to 3.54kt by 2030 and 1.18kt by 2050

CCO.2 Advocate to the Province for authority to regulate building emissions.

CCO.3 Advocate to the Province and real estate sector that house energy efficiency metrics be disclosed at point of new home sale.

CCO.4 Advocate to the province and ICBC for mileage and weight-based vehicle insurance.

Resilience & Adaptation

CCO.5 Consider the impacts of climate refugees in planning for communities as individuals and families seek more temperate areas, like the CVRD, from within Canada and internationally.

General Policy

Mitigation

CC.1 Develop a Climate Crisis Mitigation Strategy for the electoral areas that provides a clear path to achieving GHG emission targets—as noted in Objective CCO.1—in collaboration with adjacent local governments and First Nations to provide education and incentive programs to decarbonize the existing built environment.

CC.2 Encourage retrofitting of older buildings and green construction of new buildings to achieve energy efficiency and reduce GHG emissions.

CC.3 Encourage electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in new development.

CC.4 Establish requirements for heat pumps and alternative energy systems and incentivize them through reduced setbacks and/or zoning variances for green building features. Where appropriate, transition away from woodstoves, which emit a number of pollutants including fine particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

CC.5 Create incentives for rooftop solar systems and energy storage (e.g. allowing solar and ventilation features within setbacks, excluding spaces occupied by heating and cooling apparatus from floor area ratio [FAR] calculations).

CC.6 Minimize waste generation and encourage greater diversion of all waste materials, including organics, recyclables and construction and demolition waste, from solid waste streams, with the goal of achieving zero waste.

CC.7 Acquire green spaces, including planting additional trees, that contribute to climate change mitigation.

CC.8 Develop partnerships with industry and senior levels of government for the construction of large-scale solar and wind energy generation.

CC.9 Aim to reduce the use and distribution of natural gas in new developments as a primary heat source and support more robust electrical grids and renewable energy alternatives to lower the dependence on the provincial grid.

CC.10 Support region-wide information campaigns to give people the information needed to help them reduce their emissions. This may also include:

- citizen-led climate education and engagement initiatives
- business climate education and engagement initiatives
- school district climate education and engagement initiatives

Resilience & Adaptation

CC.11 Prepare a Hazard, Risk, & Vulnerability Assessment and communicate the findings to CVRD communities through a proactive strategy for outreach and education.

CC.12 Update development permit areas to reflect the results from Natural Hazard Risk Assessments.

CC.13 Support species that are more resilient to climate change (i.e. native, drought- tolerant species, including those that provide nuts, berries and flowering plants, which support pollinators).

CC.14 Develop a coastal flooding mitigation strategy that supports erosion control measures to protect against sea level rise along key foreshore areas, encouraging the use of natural systems and/or green infrastructure wherever possible.

CC.15 Conduct analysis of drought-related indicators to more fully understand climate impacts to soil, water supply and ecosystem health at the landscape level.

CC.16 Manage wildfire risk as a result of drier summers, and reduce the impacts of forest fire on buildings, property and public safety and health. Explore the creation of community wildfire protection plans in at-risk areas.

CC.17 Strengthen emergency management capacity to respond to weather-related emergencies.

CC.18 Incorporate climate change projections and risk assessments into electoral and regional planning and service delivery.

CC.19 Consider natural hazards (e.g. erosion, flooding and sea-level rise) to protect development from hazardous conditions and maintain the functionality of green (refers to trees, fields, forests, swales, and other landscaped areas) and grey infrastructure (refers to treatment plants, pipe networks, roads and other built structures).

CC.20 Develop hazardous land mapping as a component of a climate change adaptation strategy.

CC.21 Encourage economic activities that are resilient and adaptive to climate change.

CC.22 Encourage citizens and stakeholders to foster climate excellence in communities.

CC.23 Support new development to include green infrastructure solutions and climate change adaptation methods and technologies in the design, change or modification of existing infrastructure or new services.

CC.24 Promote and support water conservation measures with residents, business owners and industry (e.g. xeriscaping, water audits, composting toilets, grey water recycling).

CC.25 Support ecosystem health through ecological management and restoration at the watershed scale.

Climate Crisis Policy (by transect sub-area)

Resource & Natural Areas

CC.26 Support the protection of old growth forests and mature trees that act as carbon sinks and help maintain watershed health.

CC.27 Encourage the expansion and protection of forested areas.

Rural & Agricultural Areas

CC.28 Support agricultural practices that mitigate and adapt to climate change, such as crop practices that increase soil carbon sequestration.

CC.29 Support agricultural practices that reduce impacts on aquifers and support healthy watersheds.

CC.30 Support emergency planning for the agricultural sector, such as the development of livestock evacuation plans and on-farm flooding preparedness plans.

Suburban Areas

CC.31 Support compact subdivision and development patterns that cluster housing units and protect adjacent natural areas.

CC.32 Support subdivision and development patterns that enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity to nearby destinations, including transit stops.

CC.33 Enhance suburban residential areas with complementary uses that promote short travel distances for daily needs.

Village Areas

CC.34 Support development that protects and enhances the tree canopy while incorporating more permeable surfaces.

CC.35 Support development in village areas that help build complete neighbourhoods with a mix of uses and where daily needs are within walking distance.

Urban Areas

CC.36 Support high-density residential and mixed-use developments where daily needs are within walking distance.

Special Districts

CC.37 Support compact development patterns that cluster parcels and protect adjacent natural areas.

CC.38 Support consideration where feasible of district heating systems.

3.2 Manage Infrastructure Responsibly

Introduction

This policy chapter addresses infrastructure related to water, stormwater, wastewater, solid waste and energy systems, along with emergency preparedness. The objectives and policies within align with the CVRD's Corporate Strategic Plan to demonstrate strong fiscal stewardship and to manage current and future demand for water resources in ways that recognize and respect resource limits and the needs of our natural environment. We are committed to managing our infrastructure to ensure it is fully functional, resilient against disaster and ecologically sustainable.

It has never been more important to provide strong direction related to responsible infrastructure management and ensure that land use policy is aligned with the provision of regional services.

At the time of writing, the CVRD operates and maintains capital infrastructure assets in the electoral areas including:

- 21 water systems
- 16 sewer systems
- 9 drainage systems
- 17 streetlighting systems
- 3 recycling centres
- 1 transfer station
- dikes and flood early warning systems

The CVRD's water and sewer utilities serve a range of 30 to 900 households, which is very small in comparison to typical small local government utility systems that may serve approximately 10,000 households.

To help maintenance and ensure resident safety, the CVRD employs a 24/7 emergency response system with electronic monitoring and control via a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. The infrastructure is mostly in good condition but around 15% is considered in poor to very poor condition. Current works include $18.25 million of upgrade projects in about nine utility systems.

The CVRD Drinking Water and Watershed Protection program will establish watershed plans and guidance to inform land use planning and carrying capacity as well as long-range infrastructure needs.

Solid waste management

The CVRD produces approximately 463 kg/person of solid waste annually (2021) that is sent to the landfill. There are no landfills in the CVRD at this time; therefore, the CVRD's solid waste is trucked off Island to a landfill located in Washington, United States. The costs associated with

this trucking mean the CVRD has some of the highest tipping fees of any jurisdiction in BC. It also has a high level of GHG emissions associated with solid waste because of the transportation.

A Solid Waste Management Plan is targeting the reduction of waste to approximately 250 kg/person in a move toward a zero-waste goal through increased recycling, composting and other measures. Associated with this goal, the CVRD wants to increase its recycling capacity, reduce illegal dumping, increase drop-off convenience for many types of waste and increase the system's resilience.

Energy systems

BC's electrical energy system is managed through BC Hydro, a crown corporation, and natural gas is provided through Fortis BC. The carbon content of BC's electricity grid is relatively low because most of its electricity is created through hydro power generating systems. Some energy still comes from natural gas plants in the province, and the province is continuing to invest in more hydro power infrastructure. The demand for electricity is expected to rise significantly in the future as all new vehicles in BC are slated to be zero-emission by 2035, and most of the new vehicles will then be electric. Demand will also increase because of a major shift to cooling loads and needs in summer that did not exist in the past. National and provincial commitments to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050 will further drive demand for green electricity.

There are opportunities for decentralized, small-scale electricity generation in the region including solar, wind, biomass and waste-to-energy generation systems. All CVRD infrastructure, including operations facilities and parks, will be designed to prioritize climate resilience/energy efficiency.

Challenges to Local Systems

The following are five significant challenges to the CVRD's local infrastructure systems.

Life cycle considerations

Several existing water and sewerage utilities are reaching end of life and require replacement and/or upgrading to meet provincial standards. Across the region, studies have indicated negative environmental impacts associated with current sewage discharges into the ocean, Cowichan River (joint utilities sewage lagoons) and Cowichan Lake, while other systems require upgrading to meet current standards and to comply with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's regulations (e.g. Mesachie Lake). This is compounded by climate risks, which are changing rapidly. Additional lifecycle considerations are required for infrastructure in areas subject to flooding.

Limits to capacity

Liquid waste is managed in the region through community sewer systems and wastewater treatment facilities operated by the CVRD and municipally operated systems in Ladysmith, North Cowichan (Crofton, Chemainus and Maple Bay), Duncan and Lake Cowichan. Some wastewater treatment plants are at or nearing capacity and require expansion and/or

amalgamation with neighbouring utilities. Population growth will continue to drive up the need for increased capacity. There are also waste system challenges with only two days worth of waste storage. Our energy system has vulnerabilities due to increased windstorms causing more power outages and our power source primarily coming from mainland BC.

Oversight and maintenance

On-site sewage disposal and treatment systems are generally regulated through the Sewerage System Regulation, under the *Public Health Act*. If a sewage treatment and disposal system or septic system is not maintained properly, effluent quality can decline sharply, overloading the drain field and possibly posing health risks in the general community. Such a situation may also lead to environmental degradation, if not addressed appropriately. Design and construction of septic systems by registered onsite wastewater practitioners or professional engineers and long-term maintenance of these systems are important. Furthermore, the cumulative impacts of septic systems should be considered in the development approval process.

Increasing costs, revenue shortfalls

Safety and environmental standards are ever increasing, adding pressure and costs on maintenance and operations of the systems. Each service is established in a separate bylaw and operates under its own budget. Revenues cannot move between services and, given the poor economies of scale, it can be difficult to resolve infrastructure issues without relying on grants or other revenue streams.

Takeover of private systems

In the past, there have been efforts to take over existing utilities from improvement districts and private systems. This requires formal consent and usually a petition, but very often it comes with significant liabilities. Private systems being acquired may be out of compliance, lacking in servicing capacity, contaminated and more. A moratorium on takeover of existing systems is in place until a new takeover policy is approved.

Relationship to Social Equity

Water, wastewater and drainage are often perceived as neutral and technical policy topics. However, the dominant approach to water infrastructure sees water as a resource to be managed. Indigenous worldviews see water as a living being with cultural, physical, spiritual and healing importance. Historical discrimination has inhibited Indigenous communities' access to secure infrastructure and servicing investments and the ability to co-govern the natural assets that characterize their lands. Notable are the drainage impacts of land use and infrastructure decisions on First Nation reserve lands. When intact forested lands are replaced with impermeable surfaces and lack adequate drainage and water retention infrastructure, effects on the hydrologic cycle can be felt downstream in lower elevation areas. Further, some residents living in rural areas are not always there by choice but rather for affordability reasons. These areas are sometimes lacking crucial infrastructure and services, which may further inequities. See Schedule S for the Servicing maps.

Objectives

Key objectives include responsible infrastructure management through long-range plans that address growth demands, operational efficiency, and financial and environmental sustainability.

Water & Wastewater

MIO.1 Focus water servicing improvements and wastewater management plans to areas within the GCB and relevant Special Study Areas.

MIO.2 Protect water in line with the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Plan.

MIO.3 Protect and value the region's water resources and promote sustainable water use.

MIO.4 Support water desalination plants where appropriate.

MIO.5 Protect the environment, with particular attention to the discharge of treated wastewater effluent and stormwater into the receiving environment (e.g. groundwater, fresh surface water, marine water and soil).

Stormwater & Drainage

MIO.6 Address stormwater challenges at a watershed scale.

MIO.7 Preserve watercourses and natural drainage channels in their natural state and, where feasible, develop them as drainage rights-of-way.

MIO.8 Advocate for changes to logging practices that impact the water cycle, cause flooding, harm fish habitat and wash invaluable non-renewable topsoil into the ocean, especially in the Koksilah watershed.

Solid Waste Management

MIO.9 Adopt universal access to garbage, recycling and organics collection at the curbside.

Energy and Asset Management

MIO.10 Plan for strategic asset management.

MIO.11 Retain existing levels of servicing in communities and identify the appropriate level of services to meet the electoral areas' future projected needs.

MIO.12 Develop hazard, risk and vulnerability criteria for infrastructure in new development and build a regional infrastructure risk registry.

MIO.13 Consider the full lifecycle costs of new infrastructure systems.

MIO.14 Discourage private infrastructure systems.

MIO.15 Develop the foundational infrastructure that supports new and existing businesses.

MIO.16 Consider Statement of Concurrence requests for telecommunications antenna structures in conjunction with the CVRD Telecommunications Antenna Structure Siting Policy for the Electoral Areas.

General Policy

Water

MI.1　Improve water quality and supply by mapping and analyzing sub-areas where water supply is stressed and by applying investments accordingly.

MI.2　Continue the installation of water meters across the region and retrofit those at existing businesses and residences.

MI.3　Support rainwater quality control for development sites near freshwater and marine environments, and downslope and upslope from agricultural areas.

MI.4　Consider long-term resilience of water systems to provide necessary water to communities.

MI.5　Establish aquifer protection development permit areas.

MI.6　Develop consistent procedures to consult with jurisdictions dependent on a given water supply prior to approving new development within that watershed or water supply.

MI.7　Collaborate with stakeholders to ensure the delivery of sufficient quantities and the efficient use of water for agricultural productivity.

MI. 8   Support all wastewater disposal agencies to:

- consider cumulative effects of ineffective individual onsite sewage disposal systems

- ensure wastewater systems are not subject to flood inundation

- consult affected landowners with respect to corrective measures

- enforce legislative requirements

- encourage safe re-use of effluent and biosolids in conjunction with agriculture and/or aquaculture operations

MI.9   Identify highest priority opportunities for consolidation of private and public septic systems in village centres.

MI.10   Discourage individual sewer systems on lots smaller than 1 hectare.

MI.11   Seek innovative approaches such as greenway routes, to the long-term management and funding of the Joint Utilities Board treatment plan.

MI 12   Work with Island Health to develop public education communications on individual sewerage system maintenance rules and practices for new and aging systems.

Stormwater & Drainage

MI.13   Explore creative strategies to address drainage issues at both the watershed and parcel scale, pre- and post-development, including:

- leveraging other processes (i.e. liquid waste management plan processes) to find drainage solutions
- using feasibility funds to assess and better understand current drainage issues
- assessing road density in areas with sensitive drainage issues
- considering low-impact development approaches to address increasing precipitation levels and their effects at multiple scales
- advocating for the establishment of integrated stormwater management plans in partnership with the Province
- requiring developers to include study on drainage impacts as part of a development approval information requirement

MI.14   Establish integrated stormwater management plans at a watershed scale by working with the Province in relation to its rights-of-way to better understand drainage issues.

MI.15   Develop integrated stormwater management plans for key watersheds to ensure chemical and biological contaminants do not enter rainwater flows and to reduce the impacts of localized flooding. Plans should:

- include review of stormwater management and other nonpoint sources of pollution with all new development applications
- develop stormwater and runoff management guidelines

MI.16 Support rainwater management techniques in the design and construction of new developments to control quantity and quality of rainwater runoff.

MI.17 Support rainwater storage for businesses and residences.

MI.18 Minimize impervious surfaces and maximize infiltration to reduce runoff, particularly in developments upstream and/or upslope from agricultural areas.

Emergency Management

MI.19 Prepare Risk Assessments for foreseeable hazards, including the impacts of climate change, transmissible diseases and environmental toxins, while considering impacts on equity and sites of heritage value. Risk assessments are to prioritize cultural safety and incorporate available local Indigenous knowledge.

MI.20 Develop emergency management plans based on risk assessments that include electoral areas and address four stages:

1. Mitigation: focuses on identification, removal or reduction of hazards to either reduce the likelihood of emergencies or to reduce their potential impacts;
2. Preparation: focuses on building knowledge and capacity in anticipation of emergencies;
3. Response: focuses on taking measures to respond to an emergency, including to prevent or reduce the impacts of the emergency;
4. Recovery: focuses on taking measures to restore health, safety and well-being after an emergency.

MI.21 Incorporate available Indigenous knowledge, cultural safety and considerations from relevant risk assessments into emergency management plans while mitigating the impact on vulnerable people, animals, places and properties.

MI.22 Consult and collaborate with First Nations throughout all phases of emergency management, including early engagement in developing risk assessments, emergency management plans and agreements on areas of collaboration.

MI.23 Encourage residents and organizations to mitigate and prepare for risks through an understanding of potential impacts and how they may be vulnerable by presenting consistent risk information to the public through multiple sources.

MI.24 Coordinate and regularly test emergency and disaster response services in conjunction with First Nations, municipalities and neighbouring regions.

General

MI.24 Consult with local First Nations and explore opportunities for infrastructure service agreements where plans include shared priorities and goals.

MI.25 Discourage further installation and expansion of private infrastructure services by incentivizing connection to public infrastructure services through a bonus density program.

MI.26 Manage growth with the aim of ensuring at least 75% of new development is connected to infrastructure services over time. New service areas should meet a minimum density of ten residents or ten employment jobs per hectare (ha) measured over a minimum developed area of 10 ha in order for transit service to be considered.

MI.27 Avoid expansion of any services outside of growth containment areas except:

● those developed for health, fire safety, environmental protection, agricultural support or sea level rise adaptation reasons;
● where necessary for the takeover of private infrastructure systems and more efficient servicing (e.g. looping of network);
● where necessary for secondary suites and accessory dwelling units (ADU); or,
● for specified projects as identified by the Board.

MI.28 Monitor solid waste flows and seek to minimize and divert waste from landfills.

MI.29 Update Waste Management Bylaw 1958 to require wildlife-safe methods of waste storage for buildings and subdivisions in wildlife areas.

MI.30 Ensure infrastructure services, such as water and sewerage systems, are installed prior to new development and ensure development contributes to service efficiency. Ensure required infrastructure upgrades are at the developer's expense.

MI.31 Encourage all waste collection receptacles to be housed in a bear- or pest-proof enclosure.

MI.32 Employ low-impact development practices for all residential, commercial, industrial and mixed employment land use designations. These practices include:

• protecting natural features that catch and retain water, such as wetlands, streams and forest corridors
• disturbing land as little as possible when laying out streets and lots
• reducing the size of building footprints
• emphasizing cluster developments where appropriate
• minimizing stormwater generation and runoff, for example by reducing contiguous paved areas or by using pervious materials for surfacing

MI.33 Work with the Province and the PMFL owners to discuss the long-term impacts of climate change on the region's natural resources and impacts on our communities, including increasing natural hazards.

MI.34 When servicing infrastructure is routed through Agricultural Land Reserve lands, use transmission pipes instead of distribution pipes to reduce development pressures.

MI.35 When servicing infrastructure is routed through PMFL lands use the route that has the least impact.

MI.36 Support the maintenance, upgrades and consolidation of community infrastructure systems with the help of funding from grant opportunities and other senior levels of government programs.

Infrastructure Policy (by transect sub-area)

Resource & Natural Areas

MI.37 Private utilities or strata corporation common property utilities not supported to reduce land speculation and development pressures.

MI.38 Work with PMFL owners and the Province to manage water and water quality issues.

Rural & Agricultural Areas

MI.39 Avoid installation of water and sewer infrastructure to reduce land speculation and development pressures outside of the GCBs.

MI.39 Consider treated wastewater for agricultural use.

MI.40 Update the Agricultural Water Demand Model exercise in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and associated Agricultural Land Use Inventory work.

MI.41 Work with producers to facilitate the development of on-farm water storage opportunities.

Suburban Areas

MI.42 Ensure access to water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.

MI.43 Require existing and new developments to tie into public infrastructure systems.

MI.44 Ensure developments are designed to accommodate curbside solid waste collection systems, including access for curbside solid waste collection trucks.

Village Areas

MI.45 Ensure access to water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.

MI.46 Require existing and new developments to tie into public infrastructure systems.

MI.47   Ensure access to water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.

MI.48   Plan for fire flows that can control fires in multi-unit residential buildings.

MI.49   Require existing and new developments to tie into public infrastructure systems.

MI.50   Ensure developments are designed to accommodate curbside solid waste collection systems, including access for curbside solid waste collection trucks.

Special Districts

MI.51   Ensure access to water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.

MI.52   Encourage connections to high-speed internet.

MI.53   Ensure alignment between high-intensity industrial uses and proximity to infrastructure servicing.

MI.54   Plan for fire flows that can control fires in high-risk industrial settings.

3.3 Make Distinct, Complete Communities

Introduction

This policy chapter addresses the diverse needs, services and amenities that contribute to healthy and complete communities and provide residents with a high quality of life. The objectives and policies align with the CVRD's Corporate Strategic Plan to create healthy, livable and efficiently serviced communities and to make available a range of housing options and housing tenures for residents at different income levels and stages of life. We are committed to making distinct, complete communities with a strong social foundation that cherish the diversity and unique characteristics of the region and its landscapes.

The CVRD's electoral areas consist of a diverse collection of communities, each with distinct histories, landscapes, settlement patterns, economies and many other defining characteristics. The historic use of lands and water by First Nations has shaped these landscapes, while the ongoing presence of First Nations people continues to enrich our communities.

The CVRD recognizes the link between a distinct community and a thriving community. Building complete communities—where residents have access to their daily needs within reasonable proximity of home—provides the foundation on which the unique traits of the villages, towns and rural crossroads can be showcased and cherished by residents and visitors alike.

Additionally, the board has adopted an extended service bylaw that establishes services relating to heritage conservation. This land use regulation tool can be used to allow recognition of the historical value and character of certain sites within the plan area, as seen on Schedule H – Heritage Designations. Heritage buildings or properties have sufficient historical value or character to justify conservation. Heritage designation is a legal protection and is mainly intended to record, recognize and commemorate heritage buildings and properties. Decision-making within the context of this plan and its implementation should include the community in its entirety, recognizing the cultural diversity that exists, and making special efforts to include groups that are not usually recognized.

This chapter explores the various ways in which the CVRD can direct communities toward a future where residents have their daily needs nearby and within the unique and diverse settings the CVRD provides.

Challenges to Communities

The following are three main factors in the electoral areas that make creating distinct and complete communities a challenge.

1. Urban & rural sprawl

Increasing development pressures from larger urban centres like Victoria and Nanaimo, and to a lesser degree the CVRD's incorporated municipalities, have contributed to sprawling subdivisions in far flung parts of the region. Urban and rural sprawl is the phenomenon that occurs when less expensive lands outside of urban areas are prioritized for low-density, single-use and car-oriented developments. These developments are typically far from existing

infrastructure, amenities, services and jobs, and they rely on people driving long distances to do most of their daily activities. It is costly not only for those living in the subdivisions (i.e. higher transportation costs) but also for society (i.e. cost of operating and maintaining infrastructure). Often, these types of developments fragment the region's beautiful landscapes and ignore the local architectural styles that make the CVRD's communities special.

2. Housing costs

As a desirable place to live with easy access to nature, growth in the CVRD is primarily linked to residents moving from other areas. New residents are often seeking more affordable homes than what can be found in Victoria, Nanaimo or even the Lower Mainland. Compared to the rest of BC, housing is generally more affordable for owners, but somewhat less affordable for renters. According to the Housing Needs Assessment, from 2016 to 2019, prices for market ownership homes increased considerably each year. This suggests that since 2016, the region's supply of available land has been insufficient to meet growing demand. Other findings from the report include:

- Current housing sizes are unsuitable for resident needs. Most households need only one bedroom.
- An aging population represents a greater need for aging-in-place housing options, accessible housing units and co-operative housing models.
- Younger community members face housing instability and unaffordability.
- There is an acute shortage of rental housing.
- Housing costs are misaligned with regional wages and pushing residents to more affordable communities further away from their jobs.
- Current housing options are not adequately sized or culturally appropriate for First Nations.
- There is a need for more non-market housing, including supportive and emergency housing options.
- Affordable housing options for families are hard to find.

3. Out-of-character development

Many communities across the province struggle to define "character" when assessing new development. Some will focus on the scale and density of buildings, others on the architectural design or preservation of existing tree stands. While form and character development permit areas can help define the look and feel of multi-unit, commercial, industrial and intensive residential uses, the large majority of the electoral areas' residential types are lower-density, single detached homes, which cannot be subject to development permits.

Relationship to Social Equity

Policies that support the retention of existing affordable housing, as well as the development of new affordable housing, are fundamental to ensuring an equitable community. Implementation of housing policies should consider various housing needs, such as transitional housing, larger homes for multigenerational families, proximity to services and access to green space. Moreover, affordable housing should be clustered nearby transit and services to ensure those

who cannot afford a vehicle and/or expensive housing have access to their daily needs. Childcare facilities should be clustered nearby employment centres or co-located with schools. The buffering of land uses is important for affordable housing projects, which are often located in least favourable locations. Policies relating to heritage and culture should have a focus on local Indigenous communities and prioritize the reclamation of places and heritage elements connected to Indigenous history.

Objectives

Key objectives include the planning and design of communities that address resident desires for protecting the unique character of villages and landscapes, and enhancing affordability, great public spaces, safety, health, well-being and inclusivity.

Complete Communities

DCO.1 Plan for compact communities that can accommodate population growth and demographic change within the GCB.

DCO.2 Build inclusive and attractive communities where daily needs and employment opportunities are close to home.

DCO.3 Support multi-purpose warehouse/studio space in light industrial designations.

Housing

DCO.4 Improve and expand the range of housing options that respond to regional needs across the spectrum of affordability, in collaboration with First Nations, community groups, service providers and residents.

DCO.5 Foster community understanding and support for affordable housing developments.

DCO.6 Enhance aging-in-place opportunities and accessibility in housing.

Child care

DCO.7 Enhance and expand child care in the areas consistent with the Cowichan Region Child Care Plan (2020).

DCO.8 Support eligible group, preschool or school age childcare facilities required to relocate to enable them to quickly resume their services and remain in compliance with licensing requirements under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and child care licensing regulation.

DCO.9 Ensure childcare locations that are more accessible and affordable for equal opportunity, while serving the entire community.

DCO.10 Develop indicators and targets for the creation and expansion of childcare spaces and programs.

DCO.11 Consider a child care resource position to regularly collect information on diversity within childcare centres and promote diversity best practices in childcare centres.

DCO.12 Explore opportunities to acquire sites, either through purchase or lease agreements, to be made available to childcare operators to support target spaces and programs.

Parks, Recreation, Heritage and Culture

DCO.13 Protect archaeological sites of importance to First Nations.

DCO.14 Provide a wide range of parks and recreational opportunities aligned with community, tourism and resident needs.

DCO.15 Sponsor artistic and cultural pursuits and activities.

General Policy

Housing

DC.1 Encourage a greater supply of housing units through development approvals with the aim of ensuring:

- vacancy rates of rental units are above 3%
- housing addresses the specific needs of diverse individuals, as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment, including:
  - Indigenous peoples
  - seniors
  - youth
  - people with disabilities
  - low-income individuals and households

DC.2 Follow direction from the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation regarding secondary dwellings within the ALR.

DC.3 Monitor the available purpose-built rental stock of all electoral areas and based on the health of the rental housing market, consider requests to the Province to adjust which electoral areas may opt in or opt out of the principal residence requirement of the *Short-Term Rental Accommodation Act*.

Community Design

DC.4 Complete master, local area and/or neighbourhood plans in all electoral areas through the annual budget process.

DC.5 Work with regional partners and First Nations to prepare and implement a Regional Growth Strategy, provide strategic transportation linkages and meet the needs of regional communities.

DC.6   Support development that contributes to healthy and happy public spaces suitable for 8- and 80-year-olds, following the spirit of the 8-80 community framework.

DC.7   Work with residents, community groups, First Nations and developers on community placemaking initiatives to reveal place-based assets and stories as inspiration for building and landscape designs in new projects.

DC.8   Support shared use agreements between the school district and Regional District, community groups and local First Nations to make greater community use of school buildings and lands.

DC.9   Encourage buildings of a design compatible with local character and the development of industrial and commercial buildings that are well integrated with adjacent rural and residential uses through buffering, low-impact lighting and the protection of public view corridors and transportation access.

DC.10   Improve the number of and accessibility to public places, including buildings and open spaces.

DC.11   Apply a lens of community health and well-being when reviewing and assessing the design of new development projects.

DC.12   When appropriate, refer development proposals to Island Health.

Arts, Culture & Heritage

DC.13   Encourage cultural expression through public art pieces that reflect diverse community backgrounds, interests and needs. Explore funding mechanisms, such as amenity charge bylaws, to help create more public art.

DC.14   Identify cultural conservation issues and update the Community Heritage Register to protect and enhance landscapes, buildings and features of cultural significance. Include First Nations in the consideration of sites, landscapes and buildings.

DC.15   Support arts and culture by sponsoring events and funding infrastructure upgrades.

DC.16   Support access to cultural, archival and museum collections that facilitate learning about the Cowichan Valley's past and present.

Parks & Recreation

DC.17   Engage Community Parks Advisory Commissions in the acquisition of new parkland through:

- 5% dedication of subdivided land or cash-in-lieu of dedication
- land donations
- amenity cost charges
- parkland acquisition reserve funds

DC.18 Where possible, cluster parks and open space (including areas for active and passive recreation use) within and/or adjacent to existing community "nodes" that accommodate institutions and social facilities, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, retail and restaurant areas (in the case of village centres) and other community amenities.

DC.19 Provide access to a diverse range of recreation programs and services in communities across the region. Explore innovative program and service delivery that can be facilitated outdoors or in schools and community halls through shared use agreements.

DC.20 Update the Regional Park & Trails Master Plan and the Strategic Asset Management Plan to align with this OCP.

DC.21 Expand and provide access to the recreational trail system while conserving natural areas to encourage healthy living and appreciation for the outdoors.

DC.22 Support the creation of a new outdoor recreation park in electoral area F, along Pacific Marine Road south of Mesachie Lake.

Complete Community Policies (by transect sub-area)

Resource & Natural Areas

DC.23 Mitigate safety issues and apply buffers where recreational activities intersect with forestry and resource lands in balance with Regional Conservation Strategy to support key ecosystems, species and natural processes.

Rural & Agricultural Areas

DC.24 Protect existing small-scale, rural and agricultural-supporting commercial and community uses while respecting the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation.

DC.25 Support value-added farm uses and farm viability that contribute to the celebration of agriculture and local food production while respecting the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation.

DC.26 Support secondary or accessory agricultural activities and services, such as agricultural product processing, farm equipment sales or maintenance, production of soil amendments, vertical farming, indoor cannabis production, slaughterhouses and/or abattoirs, composting and agricultural waste management.

DC.27 Mitigate safety issues and apply buffers where recreational, industrial, institutional, residential and/or commercial activities are adjacent to agricultural land.

Suburban Areas

DC.28 Enhance suburban areas by providing employment lands, parks, access to transit and other amenities.

Village Areas

DC.29 Support village areas that have a mix of uses.

DC.30 Support live-work building forms and senior facilities.

DC.31 Provide great access to transit, active transportation options, parks and shopping.

DC.32 Enhance village areas with arts, culture and community facilities.

Urban Areas

DC.33 Support urban areas that have higher residential densities and the greatest mix in uses.

DC.34 Support mixed-use, multi-storey apartment buildings and multi-unit dwellings that reflect local housing needs.

DC.35 Provide a rich number of arts, culture and community facilities.

DC.36 Consider density bonusing for adaptable and accessible units in the zoning bylaw.

Special Districts

DC.37 Support accessory retail and office uses in mixed employment and industrial lands.

DC.38 Discourage large malls and other commercial developments that draw from village and urban markets.

DC.39 Provide access to transit.

3.4 Expand Mobility Options

This policy chapter addresses the transportation systems that allow residents to move around the Cowichan Valley in a safe, effective and low-impact way. The objectives and policies within align with the CVRD's Corporate Strategic Plan to support the development and use of alternative transportation opportunities in the region. We are committed to ensure that our transportation network in the CVRD offers safe, resilient, affordable, sustainable mobility options for all.

The issue of mobility is central to creating a sustainable OCP. Our daily life demands a wide range of mobility options: roads and street networks (from highways to backcountry service roads), regional transit systems, trails and cycle paths that connect within and beyond the region.

The CVRD's main authority related to transportation planning is in partnership with BC Transit to coordinate transit service delivery. It also has a role in addressing inter-regional issues and providing a voice on matters of regional importance in communications with the provincial and federal governments.

The Cowichan Valley's electoral areas are auto-dependent, with approximately 90% of commuting done via personal vehicles. This auto-dependence is responsible for generating most GHGs in the unincorporated areas (79% versus 58% provincially, Community Energy and Emissions Inventory, 2010). Further auto-dependency results from limited populations in rural areas unable to access transit options.

The regional transit provider, BC Transit, operates a fleet of 31 buses and has 17 routes:

Conventional fixed-route | Cowichan Valley Regional Transit Services are offered in partnership with BC Transit, the CVRD and First Canada, the operator. Scheduled local transit service is available throughout the CVRD with the exception of electoral areas G (Saltair) and H (North Oyster/Diamond), which do not currently participate.

Custom handyDART | handyDART service offering convenient door-to-door shared transportation in the Cowichan Valley is also available for people who cannot use scheduled bus routes because of a disability. Custom transit (handyDART) service is available to participating areas (four municipalities and seven electoral areas and within 1.5 kilometres (km) of a fixed route.

Nanaimo commuter | New Inter-regional route between Nanaimo and Cowichan Valley implemented March 28, 2022.

Victoria commuter | At the time of writing the OCP, weekday commuter transit service is available between the Cowichan Valley and Greater Victoria Monday to Friday (except statutory holidays). While ridership has grown to approximately 450,000 rides a year for all transit services

combined, expanding mobility options also goes hand in hand with effective land use planning. The OCP can enhance means of travel to residents by planning for residents have access to daily needs within close proximity of where they live through the development of the local area plans (see Schedule B). Villages and communities that have a greater mix of uses and supportive residential densities nearby are more walkable and transit friendly.

Challenges to Local Systems

The following are four main challenges to expanding mobility options in the CVRD.

1. Geography and population density

Linking a region of such vast geographic extent (3,473 km^2) and with low population densities is the single greatest practical limitation to regional mobility.

2. Lack of authority

The CVRD does not have authority in the design of the electoral areas' road networks or in the allocation of space in the rights-of-way. This has led to a transportation system and road designs that only accommodate vehicle use. There is very little in the way of pedestrian or cycling infrastructure, even in village cores where walking and biking could be convenient options for residents.

3. Unintegrated land use & transportation systems

The fragmented nature of development in the electoral areas, at low densities and in areas that have few services, encourages car dependency and produces a greater amount of GHG emissions. There is an identified need for greater connectivity between communities.

4. Gaps in the (trails) network

At present, trails within the CVRD are primarily managed as assets within the parks (e.g. recreation) portfolio including the Cowichan Valley portion of the Trans-Canada Trail, which is considered an active transportation trail. By the end of 2022, there were 210 community parks across the nine electoral areas covering over 1,280 ha. of land. As well, there were 51 km of managed community trails in the electoral areas (not including 72 km of the Cowichan Valley Trail). See Schedule P – Terrestrial Parks Maps. The new Active Transportation Plan (2023) sets out a plan to connect trails and should be considered when new development applications are considered.

Relationship to Social Equity

Neighbourhoods with substantial transit access should have affordable housing to ensure lower-income individuals, who often rely on transit, can conveniently get around. Women and diverse groups who rely on public transit typically take multiple trips at extended hours—clustering services nearby transit routes may help these users with daily needs. Incentives for electric cars

typically benefit the wealthy. Upon implementation, considerations should explore how policies regarding electric modes are accessible to lower-income individuals. The prioritization of sustainable transportation runs the risk of adversely impacting those with mobility challenges. Accessible parking should be prioritized, as it is essential for those who cannot walk, bike or easily take transit. When designing trails and cycling routes, consider how such infrastructure can accommodate the needs of wheelchairs, electric scooters and those with vision or hearing impairments.

Objectives

Key objectives include reducing car dependency through integrating mobility options with land use and providing convenient and comfortable active transportation and public transit options.

Integrated Modes

MOO.1 Integrate land use patterns and densities with transportation systems and investments.

MOO.2 Establish a safe, efficient, equitable and cost-effective integrated multi-modal system.

MOO.3 Support equitable investments in transportation services to improve transportation accessibility to all population segments.

MOO.4 Support necessary infrastructure for ride sharing.

MOO.5 Support bicycle and car share businesses.

MOO.6 Quantify the life cycle cost of transportation infrastructure and consider within the approval process of new development.

MOO.7 Provide zoning information on planning referral reports and share with Island Health to ensure correct determinations for approvals with MoTI.

MOO.8 Work with the Malahat First Nation to advocate for BC Ferries to move the Mill Bay Ferry terminal to a more suitable location with a ramp that accommodates buses.

Walking, Rolling & Public Transit

MOO.9 Increase the proportion of trips made by non-vehicle modes.

MOO.10 Advocate for MoTI to incorporate pedestrian safety features at intersections where appropriate, such as:

- extended curbs to reduce crossing distance
- marked pavement crossings
- enhanced lighting and clear sightlines

MOO.11 Advocate for MoTI to incorporate, within road allowances, cycling routes or multi-use paths. Advocate for these routes and paths to be separated and protected,

especially in village and urban areas and in proximity of schools. Promote their use for e-bikes, scooters and other appropriate sustainable modes of transportation. Prioritize in existing cycle tourism locations and with linkages to existing trail networks and urban areas.

MOO.12 Enhance local and regional transit service efficiency and effectiveness.

MOO.13 Support volunteer groups building trails when and where appropriate.

Vehicle Modes

MOO.14 Reduce reliance on single-occupant car travel.

MOO.15 Minimize impacts of road and parking infrastructure on the region's rural qualities.

MOO.16 Limit road density per km^2 in efforts to protect watershed health.

MOO.17 Advocate for the Province to reduce speed limits to 30 kilometres per hour (km/h) in residential neighbourhoods and implement traffic calming measures to prioritize safety.

MOO.18 Reduce truck traffic travelling through village centres by working with MoTI to designate preferrable truck routes.

MOO.19 New roads should support the existing road network and identify gaps in local, collector and arterial roads to support new development, local travel and regional travel.

MOO.20 Encourage the use of electric vehicles and bicycles and the installation of EV charging stations in key locations by developers and property owners, through incentives.

General Policy

Integrated Modes

MO.1 Support initiatives that increase sustainable transportation mode share (transit, cycling, walking).

MO.2 Review development proposals against a new hierarchy of transportation modes, placing an emphasis on active transportation, transit and goods movement above private automobiles, especially within the GCB.

MO.3 Reduce travel distances by planning uses closer together and creating more direct connections to destinations, including transit stops.

MO.4 Support a Vancouver Island Transportation Plan and regional transportation plan to improve intermodal coordination and safety of all travel modes.

MO.5 Improve coordination of transportation infrastructure and services within electoral areas and between adjacent municipalities and jurisdictions.

MO.6 At subdivision, advocate for compact development with smaller block sizes and with streets in an interconnected network to support sustainable transportation modes.

Walking & Rolling

MO.7 Implement the regional Active Transportation Plan.

MO.8 Provide opportunities for rest with benches at regular intervals or at scenic points along trails.

MO.9 Support outdoor recreational trail use within the Vancouver Island Rail Corridor where appropriate.

MO.10 Develop a plan to complete the Cowichan Valley Trail as a regional transportation connector.

MO.11 Support new development proposals for subdivision that incorporate greenway routes that improve pedestrian and cyclist pathways and connect to arterial roads per cycling and parks plans.

MO.12 The design of future arterial and collector roads should give consideration to accommodating transit stops and transit priority measures (CVRD Transit Service Standards and Performance Guidelines 2016).

MO.13 Support the development of public beach access points.

Public Transit

MO.14 Support BC Transit in its initiatives to make transit more effective and user-friendly by

- updating the Transit Future Action Plan (2012) to establish short- and medium-term improvements over the next one to five years
- installing bus shelters in as many locations as possible
- incorporating real time and automatic bus locators
- expanding handyDART and regular service
- finding suitable locations for expanded park and ride facilities along key bus routes including safe bike lockers

MO.15 Encourage non-profit organizations or other service providers to establish alternative transportation services and mobility options not offered by BC Transit.

Vehicle Modes

MO.16 Encourage new parking facilities in mixed-use, multi-unit and employment centre developments are EV ready in the modernized zoning bylaw.

MO.17 Ensure adequate parking areas and secure bike parking adjacent to major destinations like parks, trails and beaches.

MO.18 Use design strategies to minimize the visual impacts of vehicle parking on the region's rural landscapes.

MO.19 Review vehicle parking requirements in the zoning bylaw to avoid an oversupply of vehicle parking for new developments, including in industrial areas well-connected to transit and ensure the provision of bike racks and secure bike facilities in new developments.

MO.20 Conduct ongoing identification of specific community roads and roadside pathways to support multi-modal transportation.

MO.21 Ensure new development provides access that limits impacts to major transportation networks.

MO.22 Develop a road network in a manner that encourages the use of a public transportation system along major routes where practical, and which

- includes development and identification of gaps in the supporting road network of local collector and arterial roads supporting new development, local travel and regional travel
- minimizes traffic impact on residential and agricultural areas
- ensures a high level of protection for the environment
- reflects the rural character of the regional district
- encourages roadside paths and infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists
- encourages commuter car-share and co-op programs

MO.23 When contemplating major new road and highway infrastructure, provide the opportunity, in collaboration with MoTI, for a meaningful public process of community engagement.

MO.24 Minimize impact of transportation infrastructure on environmentally sensitive areas.

MO.25 Minimize potential conflict between transportation infrastructure and hazard lands (e.g. flood risk, landslide/slip, wildfire interface).

MO.26 Reduce the impact of roads and road infrastructure on hazard areas.

Mobility Policy (by transect sub-area)

Resource & Natural Areas

MO.27 Work with stakeholders to manage safety where mobility related to both resource extraction and recreational users interact.

MO.28 Support the development of regional and Island wide trails that provide safe mobility corridors for outdoor recreational users through resource lands to other areas of crown land.

Rural & Agricultural Areas

MO.29 Support the safe use of roads by agricultural equipment.

MO.30 Support low-cost cycling infrastructure through rural and agricultural areas to increase safety.

MO.31 Support the development of trails in rural and recreational areas in ways that do not create conflict with agricultural activities.

Suburban Areas

MO.32 Support initiatives that shift modal share from vehicles to transit and active transportation modes for travel between suburban areas and areas of employment, shopping, education and recreation.

Village Areas

MO.33 Support connectivity and transportation initiatives that increase transit and active transportation uses within village areas.

MO.34 Work with MoTI to establish 30km/h zones in villages.

MO.35 Work with MoTI on initiatives to pedestrianize streets within village areas.

Urban Areas

MO.36 Support transportation initiatives that increase transit and active transportation uses within urban areas.

MO.37 Work with MoTI to establish 30km/h zones in urban areas.

MO.38 Work with MoTI on initiatives to pedestrianize streets within urban areas.

Special Districts

MO.39 Support transportation initiatives that increase transit and active transportation uses to special districts (schools, universities, hospitals, event grounds and others).

3.5 Protect & Restore Natural Assets

Introduction

This policy chapter addresses the region's natural assets and the strategies that will support their protection and restoration. The objectives and policies within align with the CVRD's Corporate Strategic Plan to strengthen, in collaboration with our partners, our airshed planning efforts, improving the quality of the air we breathe and to support efforts aimed at ecosystem protection and preservation. We are committed to protecting nature for the benefit of nature, for current and future generations of humans, and for the well-being of the entire region.

The CVRD is committed to protecting its natural assets and diverse ecosystems, including its natural environment, for the benefit of the entire region and the current and future generations of people who choose to live here. "Natural assets" are the stock of natural resources and ecosystems that provide a yield of intrinsic and economic benefits to communities and the world around us. They include wetlands, forests and grasslands, parks, farmlands, lakes, rivers and creeks, watersheds and soils.

The health of these natural assets underpins the economic, recreational and cultural well-being of the CVRD and its electoral areas. Accordingly, protection of our natural assets is a prime concern with the following systems as top priority:

- Species and ecosystems at risk (particularly in the ecologically rich coastal zone)
- Terrestrial & aquatic ecosystems – sensitive ecosystems, riparian protection, marine uplands and foreshore
- Aquifers and surface water quality
- Urban forest enhancement and air quality
- Connectivity, biodiversity corridors and conservation targets

The CVRD also considers green infrastructure when appropriate—for example, to protect natural drainage systems.

The OCP sets a clear direction for the prioritization of natural assets within local decision making. The CVRD is currently developing a conservation strategy that will identify and establish landscape and watershed level conservation targets as well as mechanisms to reach those targets by way of enhanced regulatory frameworks, stewardship and CVRD parks strategies.

In addition, the CVRD is currently examining the potential to incorporate some natural assets into its asset management system when those natural systems are identified in the watershed management plans or are within the CVRD's control and provide or impact critical services.

Schedule I – Foreshore and Major Creeks Maps identify foreshore and major creeks.

Schedule J – Sand and Gravel Deposits Maps identify sand and gravel deposits.

Schedule M – Marine Maps identify marine areas near the electoral areas. Note that there will be a separate Marine OCP forthcoming.

Schedule O – Floodplain Mapping identifies floodplains and dams.

Challenges to Natural Assets

The following are four main challenges to protecting natural assets in the CVRD.

1.Human footprint in natural areas

For context, and as reported by the Cowichan Valley 2010 State of the Environment Report, the human footprint—including development and logging—now covers more than 75% of our land base, affecting its ability to supply and maintain basic ecological values and services. Community plans across the region anticipate more growth with hundreds of thousands of new residents and visitors to the region increasing pressures on these natural assets.

2.Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation

Loss, fragmentation and degradation of habitat—primarily associated with urbanization and resource extraction—is the greatest stress to the overall health of natural systems. Erosion and sedimentation of wetlands, waterways and the marine foreshore are key factors in the degradation of these most valuable habitat types. Additionally, point-source and non-point-source pollution from roadway runoff (including heavy metals, fuel, disintegrating rubber and plastic) and agricultural runoff (including fertilizers, organics, pesticides and herbicides) further degrade water quality, air quality and ecosystem health.

3.Increase in invasive species

Invasive species are the second greatest threat to biodiversity in the world, after habitat loss. Once introduced, invasive species outcompete and displace local species. Invasive species impact natural assets by degrading soil, increasing erosion and impacting water quality; choking out habitat for native wildlife; and potentially increasing the risk of wildfire. In BC, it is estimated that 25% of our endangered species are negatively impacted by invasive species.

4.Climate change

Climate change represents a significant threat to natural assets with a range of impacts across the entire region: winters are milder and wetter with more frequent flooding and increased erosion; summer drought frequency is higher, contributing to increased wildfire risk; and the aggregate changes—and increased variability—result in greater disruption to natural systems overall. Pressure on endangered ecosystems is increasing as the climatic conditions under which those ecosystems evolved are changing. Because of the large human footprint and extensive degradation of natural ecosystems, the ecosystems themselves are much less resilient to the added stress of climate change. For example, we are seeing the rapid spread of invasive plants and insects and diseases into the dry Douglas-fir forest ecosystems.

Biogeoclimatic zones may migrate with climate change, and natural spaces for this migration must be held.

The Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone provides key benefits that sustain human health and well-being, including clean air and water, nutrient cycling, carbon storage, and timber and non-timber resources.

Relationship to Social Equity

The knowledge and inputs of Indigenous groups—who have been stewards of the land for millennia—should be central to all natural asset management policy implementation. The CVRD can partner with local Indigenous groups to help manage natural systems, landforms, airsheds and the marine environment. Some groups are disproportionately impacted by inadequate environmental conditions including air, noise and light pollution. When reducing pollution, polluted areas where these groups live should be prioritized. Green and environmental improvements tend to increase quality of life and property values, pricing out vulnerable residents and attracting wealthier ones. This contributes to the perpetuation of environmental injustice, which is also seen when hazardous areas are located near low-income neighbourhoods. During implementation of natural asset policies, such as enhanced tree canopy cover and protection of environmental areas, displacement and pricing out of existing residents should be considered.

Objectives

Natural Asset Framework

NAO.1 Develop watershed management plans and continue to support the development of a Watershed Sustainability Plan for the Koksilah River Watershed in partnership with Cowichan Tribes, Ministry of Forests, Environment Canada and the Cowichan Watershed Board and under the *Water Sustainability Act*.

NAO.2 Develop additional watershed management plans, including for Bush, Manley, Porter, Shawnigan, Stocking and Walker Creeks, and, where appropriate, integrate in an asset management framework.

NAO.3 Strengthen current regulatory frameworks to ensure avoidance, and, if necessary, mitigation of and compensation for impacts to natural assets.

Sensitive Ecosystems

NAO.4 Improve and protect connectivity between sensitive ecosystems, parks and protected areas, and allow for the movement of species among them.

NAO.5 Ensure growth and development is consistent with the protection of watercourses, wetlands, riparian areas, aquifers and sensitive ecosystems.

NAO.6 Provide ongoing public education on regional environmental stewardship.

NAO.7 Acknowledge and promote the importance of forested lands as carbon sinks.

NAO.8 Encourage the use of ecosystem-based sustainable forestry practices to preserve and protect the forest, its biodiversity, integrity and ecological service.

NAO.9 Advocate for forest management practices that include cultural and prescribed fires to help reduce the intensity of naturally occurring wildfires.

NAO.10 Reduce and manage invasive species, pests and diseases that affect native ecosystems.

NAO.11 Advocate modifying the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* to increase protection and management of riparian areas and to consider the long-term sustainability of water supply and quality, maximize carbon sequestration and minimize watershed damage.

Watersheds & Airsheds

NAO.12 Ensure land use and growth consider the limits of water supply.

NAO.13 Ensure that development and land use activities support the natural hydrologic cycle, including groundwater recharge.

NAO.14 Protect the quality and quantity of water and encourage stewardship.

General Policy

Natural Asset Framework

NA.1 Establish a Natural Asset Management Framework that includes:

- identification and assessment
- watershed management plans as guiding documents that inventory priority natural assets
- evaluating the condition of identified natural assets
- planning and development permit areas
- priorities defined by risk identification
- scenario exploration
- green infrastructure
- implementation strategies

NA.2 Develop a CVRD Conservation Strategy with targets linked at either a biogeoclimatic or watershed scale, with particular attention to Coastal Douglas-fir and Garry oak ecosystems.

NA.3   Consider including ecosystem performance standards for comprehensive development sites.

NA.4   Leverage efforts to protect natural assets through partnerships with First Nations, land trusts and environmental non-governmental organizations.

Terrestrial Ecosystems

NA.5   As part of efforts to increase the percentage of lands dedicated and managed as protected natural areas, commit to the UN Biodiversity goals of 30% of all land and water to be protected by 2030 and 50% by 2050.

NA.6   Identify restorative development opportunities (e.g. biomimicry) and low-impact development standards.

NA.7   Protect natural environment areas identified for preservation in the development process through a restrictive covenant or acquisition of park land.

NA.8   Seek to protect species at risk and monitor the scale and change of species listed as at risk in the region.

NA.9   Review the CVRD Invasive Plant Species Strategy and bylaw to expand beyond hogweed.

NA.10   Support retaining areas of mature tree cover and vegetative areas and preserving other natural features in all development, particularly any development in environmentally sensitive areas and areas of steep slopes.

NA.11   Decrease the percentage of natural areas impacted by development and logging.

NA.12   Increase the canopy cover and encourage the planting of Western red cedar.

NA.13   Develop and maintain a list—and up-to-date mapping, if available—of environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife corridors, older second-growth forest and seasonally flooded agricultural fields.

NA.14   Protect migratory routes used by wildlife (e.g. amphibians, elk, bears) by ensuring infrastructure allows for safe crossings.

NA.15   When a lot is being prepared for development, encourage environmentally sensitive lot clearing, drainage, and individual water supply and effluent disposal systems, recognizing that these systems are interrelated.

NA.16   Foster shared responsibility among all levels of government and the community for protecting and restoring mud flats, watershed, estuary and coastline health, wetlands, alpine meadows, vernal pools and Garry oak ecosystems.

NA.17   Support community conservation covenants, enabling adjacent landowners to cooperate in the protection of their land.

NA.18 Seek authority from the Province to establish a municipal-type tree cutting bylaw for protection of trees on private property.

Aquatic Ecosystems

NA.19 Discourage development immediately adjacent to a mudflat, marsh or delta area.

NA.20 Support the rehabilitation of damaged natural aquatic spawning and rearing areas and encourage restorative development in consultation and partnership with First Nations, local and senior levels of government, community groups and property owners.

NA.21 Manage streambank erosion to maintain or enhance fish habitat and other natural resources.

NA.22 Recognize aquatic habitats and resources as environmentally sensitive sites to be protected and restored.

NA.23 Develop "Living by Water" foreshore management education materials to help property owners protect creeks and rivers that cross or are adjacent to their property.

Watersheds & Airsheds

NA.24 Strengthen rainwater management policy as measured against pre- and post-development hydrograph performance (based on monitoring).

NA.25 Review floodplain maps on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date given changing conditions.

NA.26 Use water balance models and aquifer management to inform land use decisions.

NA.27 Protect Cowichan Valley community watersheds as defined under the *Forest & Range Practices Act* with the intent of

- conserving the quality, quantity and timing of water flow
- preventing cumulative hydrological effects having a material adverse effect on water

NA.28 Support the Cowichan Airshed Roundtable and associated work plan by

- reducing the number of high-polluting wood burning fireplaces and old woodstoves, where appropriate, and encouraging low-polluting heating sources
- discouraging vehicle idling
- supporting car-sharing programs and low-emissions vehicles
- reducing open outdoor burning on lands, including forest and agricultural lands, within the plan area by supporting or developing a mulching and composting system

- supporting the elimination of pollution resulting from commercial shipping anchorages in Cowichan Bay and Saltair.

NA.29 Implement air, noise and light pollution reduction measures and explore International Dark Sky Community designation beyond Electoral Area D – Cowichan Bay to reduce illumination of the night sky.

Marine & Foreshore

NA.30 Consider the creation of an eelgrass protection marine development permit area.

NA 31 Develop coastal flood protection bylaws.

NA.32 Develop a plan for marine areas that may include use designations as a separate schedule to the OCP.

Natural Assets Policy (by transect sub-area)

Resource & Natural Areas

NA.33 Recognize healthy forests, healthy watersheds and healthy aquifers are foundational to the CVRDs natural assets.

NA.34 Support sustainable resource management and watershed-scale planning initiatives to most effectively manage natural assets.

NA.35 Limit road density to protect watersheds.

NA.36 Discourage proposed development in these areas.

Rural & Agricultural Areas

NA.37 Recognize agricultural soils, riparian areas and woodlands as foundational to the CVRD's natural assets.

NA.38 Manage and control the impact of development on surface and groundwater resources.

NA.39 Support regenerative agriculture practices within local agricultural planning to support soil and water health.

NA.40 Limit road density to protect watersheds.

NA.41 Minimize road building and extension of servicing infrastructure within rural areas.

Suburban Areas

NA.42 Support low-impact development approaches to clustering of development and retention of functional landscapes.

NA.43 Encourage landscape retention (e.g. contiguous habitat and/or corridors) and native-plant-based landscape design.

NA.44 Support tree retention on private property.

Village Areas

NA.45 Support low-impact development approaches and retention of functional landscapes.

NA.46 Support expansion and enhancement of active pedestrian connections (e.g. trails) to natural areas.

NA.47 Support plans and designs that incorporate natural asset management considerations, including but not limited to rainwater management, soil and tree retention and native plant species in landscape design.

Urban Areas

NA.48 Support low-impact development approaches and retention of functional landscapes.

NA.49 Support plans and designs that incorporate natural asset management considerations, including but not limited to rainwater management, light pollution reduction, soil and tree retention, and native plant palettes in landscape design.

Special Districts

NA.50 Require natural asset inventories and management strategies be developed within and specific to special districts.

3.6 Strengthen Local Food & Agriculture

Introduction

This policy chapter addresses the protection of agricultural lands and food systems to ensure community resilience and the celebration of locally grown produce. We are committed to helping our farmers grow more food, to creating affordable food security for everyone, and to building a resilient and sustainable local food system.

Protection of our food system is vital for the sustainability of the Cowichan Valley. More specifically, our agricultural lands and productive soils are defining features of the Cowichan Valley's ambience and beauty, and the food system's associated industries form an important sector of our local economy.

Food systems "encompass the entire range of actors and their interlinked value-adding activities involved in the production, aggregation, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of food products that originate from agriculture, forestry or fisheries, and parts of the broader economic, societal and natural environments in which they are embedded."[4]

Food security is a multi-faceted condition that ensures community residents have access to a safe, affordable, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a system that maximizes community self-reliance, environmental sustainability and social justice.

Agricultural lands also sustain the development of non-food products, such as nursery crops, medicinal plants, and plants and animals for textiles, fur and fibre.

The CVRD has supply chain vulnerability with a limited amount of food being grown on the Island. The CVRD's regional agriculture plan will establish clear priorities for strengthening local food and agriculture beyond farmland protection to include the full spectrum of production, processing, storage, distribution, consumption and nutrient cycling/composting. Local area agriculture plans will continue to play an important role in detailing opportunities.

Schedule D – Agricultural Land Maps identifies lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve and lands designated agriculture.

Challenges to Local Food & Agriculture

The following are six main factors in the electoral areas that make strengthening local food and agriculture a challenge. It is also noted that the OCP supports enforcement of regulations within the ALR as a key pillar of a sustainable agricultural community and provides clarity for investors for economic development purposes.

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[4] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2018). Sustainable Food Systems: Concept and framework, page i.

1. Land conversion and land use conflict

Non-farm uses, such as golf courses, illegal soil/fill deposits, excessive residential uses and subdivision of land, reduce the agricultural viability of the farmland and, over time, can lead to permanent degradation and increased likelihood of alienation of farmland from being agriculturally productive. Additionally, incompatible uses at the edges of active farming practices can create conflict.

2. Water resource availability

The lack of summer moisture is perhaps agriculture's most severe limiting factor within the CVRD. Encouraging water storage over wet winter months so that water resources for irrigation continue to be available during summer can significantly impact the health, diversity and resilience of the local food system.

3. Climate impacts

As temperatures rise and extreme weather events (e.g. extended droughts, extreme rainfall, wind and snowstorms) occur more frequently, impacts will include crop disease and disruptive pest patterns, decreased water availability, flooding events and decreased crop and livestock productivity.

4. Availability of labour and farm worker housing

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the already difficult task of securing labour within the agriculture and food sector. The challenges of attracting and retaining labour limits agricultural productivity and creates uncertainty for farming businesses. Providing housing for agricultural labourers is also difficult due to limited residential development opportunities within the ALR.

5. Rising cost of living and farming

The overall costs of living and farming (e.g. production) are in large part determined by the increasing cost of land and inputs, such as fuel and feed. Operating expenses for agricultural producers are also increasing relative to their revenue gains. High demand for residential use of farmland puts cost pressures on agricultural land and reduces access to land for current and new producers.

6. Lack of food processing infrastructure and connections in supply chains

Limitations in regional infrastructure to support the "farm to table" supply chain reduce the feasibility of bringing a wide range of products to market. Without infrastructure, such as abattoirs, storage and distribution hubs, and food processing facilities, it is difficult for farming activities and food businesses to expand the local food sector.

Relationship to Social Equity

Local food production should support food security for all. Convenient access to affordable, culturally appropriate food is key, as is supporting culturally diverse food production practices. Additionally, farm workers, who are frequently immigrants, lower-income and/or from racialized communities, often face poor living conditions. COVID-19 highlighted the poor conditions many immigrant farm workers experience across the country. Supporting their quality of life with safe and secure housing in close proximity to services and amenities is important. Access to agricultural land is becoming increasingly difficult for young farmers. Exploring new affordable models of agricultural land ownership and leasing that encourage a new generation of farmers to launch their careers should be prioritized.

Objectives

Agricultural Lands

FAO.1 Preserve and protect ALR lands and support initiatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to assist farming to be economically viable, while planning for a wide range of agricultural activities in line with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation.

FAO.2 Maintain or increase the amount of land in the Agriculture designation and ensure early consultation with the ALC with respect to any land use changes that affect the ALR.

FAO.3 Encourage agricultural economic diversity, including connections between agriculture and tourism, local agricultural processing and value-added agriculture.

FAO.4 Encourage environmentally friendly agricultural practices, including programs such as the Environmental Farm Plan, Farmland Advantage, supporting biodiversity and ecosystem services, and improved water storage and management.

FAO.5 Protect groundwater as an important resource to support agriculture industries in locations where potential land use conflicts can be mitigated.

FAO.6 Ensure that agricultural economic development strategies align with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation.

FAO.7 Ensure that residential uses within the ALR align with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation.

Agricultural Productivity

FAO.8 Use tools such as the provincial Agricultural Land Use Inventory and federal Census of Agriculture to monitor the status of agricultural land, including the amount of actively farmed land and other indicators, with the objective of promoting agricultural viability and food production.

FAO.9 Enable food production (including community garden plots), processing and distribution that will foster a place-based food economy that increases local food security and opportunities for agricultural production.

FAO.10 Prioritize food production on agricultural lands and develop access to markets for local foods.

FAO.11 Encourage residents to grow their own produce.

FAO.12 Explore the creation of an Agricultural Land Trust to support agricultural production, research and innovation.

General Policy

Agricultural Lands

FA.1   Identify areas where local agriculture plans, which would address agricultural infrastructure issues, cold storage, abattoirs, secondary processing and site-based retail, are needed.

FA.2   Only support subdivision applications that meet the criteria of the ALC's Homesite Severance policy.

FA.3   Encourage agricultural land leasing and the accommodation of agricultural land lessees. Collaborate with external organizations, such as Young Agrarians, to identify opportunities to increase agricultural opportunities on public lands.

FA.4   Do not support applications to the ALC for houses larger than 500 square metres (m^2).

FA.5   After the CVRD has forwarded applications for non-farm use to the ALC and the ALC has approved the application, the CVRD may consider the application with the condition that the non-farm use:

- provides significant benefits to local agriculture
- does not require the extension of community water or sewer services
- will not use productive agricultural lands
- will not preclude future use of the lands for agriculture
- will not harm adjacent farm operations

FA.6   Educate neighbours about the impacts of normal farm practices, such as odour, noise, traffic and the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*.

FA.7   Discourage non-agricultural development for properties exempt from the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* under section 23(1) (e.g. less than 2 acres [ac.] in size).

FA.8 Plan for uses that are compatible with agriculture along the ALR boundary. Require generous setbacks and buffers when developing lands adjacent to the ALR to prevent conflicts and encroachment through a development permit application when non-ALR land is being subdivided, developed or re-developed.

FA.9 Establish Environmental Farm Plan best management practices to more farms within the region to promote sustainable and regenerative agriculture.

FA.10 Support the number of farms with water storage options to reduce the impacts of agriculture on strained aquifers and watersheds.

FA.11 Only consider outdoor recreation uses on non-ALR lands where it can be demonstrated that there is no reduction in the amount of land being used for agricultural purposes and no impact on surrounding agricultural uses on lands designated Agricultural and Rural.

FA.12 Protect and support the continued designation and use of agricultural land for agricultural purposes regardless of soil types and capabilities. Locate agricultural structures to maximize the agricultural potential of prime soil resources.

FA.13 Locate buildings and structures, including farm help housing, on agricultural parcels in close proximity to one another and wherever possible, near the existing road frontage. Follow the homeplating guidelines as per the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries' "Guide for Bylaw Development in Farming Areas".

FA.14 Promote the use of conservation programs on agricultural land to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Conservation efforts will:

- recognize the important role that agricultural land plays in providing ecosystem services
- protect environmentally sensitive areas identified through current statutory provisions (e.g. Species at Risk) and identified through current federal, provincial and local inventory programs
- not unduly restrict agriculture as a priority use on the property

FA.15 Preserve contiguous areas of agricultural land and avoid severance by transportation and utility corridors. Minimize the impact of road and utility corridors through agricultural lands, using only those lands necessary and to the maximum capacity prior to seeking new corridors. Ensure provisions are made for farm traffic to cross major roads.

FA.16 Encourage partnerships between the agriculture community, senior governments and private enterprise to promote the development of the agriculture sector.

FA.17 Support agritourism uses that are directly associated with and supportive of established farm operations as a primary use to strengthen the economic vitality of farms.

FA.18 Consider consistent zoning regulations across all electoral areas in relation to tourist accommodations, allowing bed and breakfast uses to operate in a principal residence with a maximum of four bedrooms.

FA.19 Support alcohol production facilities and farm retail sales on ALR lands where this is consistent with ALC policies and regulations.

FA.20 Discourage the use of agricultural lands for public or institutional uses, such as schools, fire halls, parks and churches.

FA.21 Work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to develop an Agricultural Land Use Inventory and associated Agricultural Water Demand Model.

FA.22 Work with the ALC and Ministry of Agriculture and Food to ensure zoning bylaws and other CVRD policies and bylaws are based on up-to-date provincial regulations to enable agriculture to grow and thrive.

FA.23 Support the CVRD watershed program public education, the partnership for water sustainability with the Cowichan Watershed Board, the BC Climate Agriculture Initiative, the BC Environmental Farm Plan program and other provincial initiatives in the promotion and uptake of efficient agricultural water use techniques, such as drip irrigation instead of spray irrigation.

FA.24 Establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee.

FA.25 Support First Nations food rights.

Food Production

FA.26 Inventory local food system resources, identify gaps and define strategies for resource sharing and long-term planning in support of long-term community sustainability.

FA.27 Support the establishment of local food markets as key elements of the local food system.

FA.28 On Rural, Suburban and Urban lands, support and encourage a range of small-scale, non-commercial agricultural uses that include, but are not limited to:

- agriculture on private lands including front yards, backyards, hens and beehives
- agriculture on public lands that include edible landscaping on residential boulevards, park land, backyards and rights-of-way
- investment into the development of new community gardens on public and private lands
- nitrogen/phosphorus loading considerations

FA.29 Support a viable and diverse agricultural industry including new food processing, value-added and agritech initiatives.

FA.30 Encourage agriculture production that increases local food production and reduces GHG emissions.

FA.31 Identify the need for local agricultural strategies and work collaboratively across the region to update the Cowichan Regional Area Agricultural Plan (2010) and update/align with the 2010 Cowichan Food Security Plan.

FA.32 Investigate and advocate for local processing (e.g. abattoir) to support local livestock producers. Look for opportunities to partner with local food organizations and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food in the regional food hub initiatives and Feed BC, Buy BC and Grow BC programs.

FA.33 Ensure lands designated next to ALR land are not Heavy Industrial.

FA.34 Review the region's approach to aquaculture.

Food & Agriculture Policy (by transect sub-area)

Resource & Natural Areas

FA.35 Support agroforestry practices, such as silvopasture, to diversify productivity of resource lands.

FA.36 Support food forest initiatives.

Rural & Agricultural Areas

FA.37 Recognize the authority and jurisdiction of the ALC for ALR lands within the bylaw area.

FA.38 Protect lands within the ALR for agricultural and related uses.

FA.39 Plan for a longer growing season and different crop potential.

FA.40 Ensure sizing and siting guidelines for all land designated as Agriculture outside of the ALR is consistent across the agricultural landscape.

Suburban Areas

FA.41 Support the growing of food in suburban areas.

Village Areas

FA.42 Support the growing of food in village areas.

Urban Areas

FA.43 Support the growing of food in urban areas.

Special Districts

FA.44 Support plans that incorporate local food systems (production, processing, storage, distribution, consumption and/or nutrient cycling/composting) within programming and design of public spaces.

FA.45 Consider waste-to-energy opportunities to support agricultural production.

3.7 Enhance Regional Prosperity

Introduction

This policy chapter addresses the region's employment activities and resident access to the jobs of the future. The objectives and policies within align with the CVRD's Corporate Strategic Plan. We are committed to increasing the levels of economic resilience, security and prosperity for residents of the Cowichan Region.

The region's economy is centred upon traditional resource-based activities and the services sector. However, a growing focus on technology, advanced manufacturing and value-added agriculture is shaping where and how people work in the Cowichan Valley.

The changing nature of work, a focus on economic diversity and regional aspirations to reduce the region's environmental footprint are all factors in how employment lands are envisioned in the OCP.

An analysis of industrial lands in the Cowichan region reveals that approximately 78% of the land base is zoned Forestry and 0.44% is zoned Industrial. However, the suitability of this zoned industrial land is not ideal for industrial purposes. Of the 478 ha. of vacant Industrial lands, just 21% of it has an optimal profile, or slopes of 5% or less. The average size of these vacant parcels (1.2 ha) is relatively small and could not accommodate most medium or large industries. Additionally, the location of these zoned lands is not always in alignment with the objectives of the OCP, which intend to designate such employment lands in proximity to villages where access to active transportation, transit infrastructure, workforce housing and other services and amenities are more common.

With population projected to continue growing and considering past employment trends, industrial land demand calls for an additional 19-38 ha (47-94 acres) by 2026. According to stakeholder consultation conducted by Economic Development Cowichan, the large majority of the demand (75%) is for 0.2-0.8 ha zoned and fully serviced lands in close proximity to the highway.

At the same time, the emerging tech industry is experiencing high growth across the province and the high paying jobs in this sector are key to providing excellent living standards and economic opportunities in the region. Given new trends in remote workplaces and the ability for businesses to move their offices online, the Cowichan region is increasingly attractive for professionals looking to escape the big city and settle in areas with a more direct connection to the natural environment and excellent recreational opportunities.

Challenges to Economic Prosperity

The following are five main factors in the electoral areas that are posing challenges to regional prosperity.

1. Rising global energy and resource needs

As regions become central players in making energy more secure, clean and sustainable, there is growing pressure to use the CVRD's wealth of natural resources to help sustain local energy demands. This challenge means transforming from a linear to a circular economy (an economy that is restorative and regenerative and keyed to local inputs) and taking advantage of renewable resources.

2. High impact industrial areas

Certain industrial uses, like advanced manufacturing and food processing, are more resource intensive than others. They often require significant water flows to support production and wastewater treatments to protect the environment from pollutants. When high-impact industrial uses are located far from existing infrastructure, the cost to build, operate and maintain that infrastructure is high. Careful planning is key to ensure this type of industry does not become a burden on the CVRD's infrastructure systems.

3. Bedroom communities

Located between Victoria and Nanaimo—two fast-growing urban centres—an increasing number of residents are moving to the Cowichan Valley in search of affordable home ownership and commuting out of the region for employment. This trend threatens the region's economic and environmental sustainability. Designating employment lands in close proximity to where people live and diversifying local economies are essential components to the continued success of the electoral areas' communities.

4. Year-round tourism

The region's tourism sector is highly influenced by the changing seasons. In the summer months, visitors have a wealth of activities in which to participate, and people flock from all over to enjoy the natural and agricultural bounty offered by the region's diverse landscapes. Holiday homes and cottages are filled with visitors escaping the city and quiet villages are lively. As the season's change, colder and wetter winters—while still the warmest in Canada—emerge and tourist activity slows down considerably. This ebb and flow of visitors to the region impacts communities and their ability to provide year-round services to full-time residents.

5. A changing commercial sector

As traditional brick and mortar commercial retail and services shift to an online environment, leasing commercial units can become a challenge. COVID-19 has only accelerated this change, and big box retail is increasingly adapting to more of a distribution role. Small-scale and local shopping that provides a unique and "boutique" experience is less affected by this economic trend, but flexibility in commercial uses is seen as essential to ensuring the vitality of shopping centres.

Relationship to Social Equity

Consider how the implementation of economic policy can support local initiatives and community organizations. All too often, incentives for economic innovation benefit larger corporations and the wealthy. Consider how the implementation of economic innovation policies can contribute to a more circular economy and benefit all members of the community. Expanding home-based businesses to other forms of housing can provide greater economic opportunity for residents who cannot afford single detached homes.

Objectives

Employment Lands

RPO.1 Provide employment lands consistent with community needs and population growth projections.

RPO.2 Protect existing industrial lands and support the expansion of industrial development that meets the objectives of the OCP and community employment and economic development needs.

RPO.3 Ensure sufficient serviced industrial land in close proximity to distribution routes, access to public transit and workforce housing.

RPO.4 Align high impact industrial lands with servicing infrastructure.

RPO.5 Align the regional economic strategy with CVRD growth management strategies.

RPO.6 Manage the interface between employment, residential and agricultural lands.

RPO.7 Consider establishing living wage employment generation per square foot (ft^2) of development targets.

RPO.8 Foster stewardship of the land while encouraging sustainable economic development based on restorative and regenerative uses of the region's natural resources.

RPO.9 Communicate the value of economic activity in the region to the public.

Circular & Innovative Economy

RPO.10 Attract green enterprise and expand renewable energy production to build a circular economy.

RPO.11 Encourage innovation, adaptability and flexibility in commercial development.

RPO.12 Attract emerging industries to the Cowichan region and support tech networking.

Tourism

RPO.13 Expand tourism opportunities, including agritourism.

RPO.14 Expand tourism infrastructure and explore the potential of off-season activities and attractions.

Employment Lands

RP.1　Consider pre-zoning industrial designated lands that are well-serviced or in close proximity to necessary services and near Highway #1.

RP.2　Encourage clustering and co-location of industries and support the production and retail aspects of a business in the same development, while increasing height and reducing parking requirements where located in proximity to transit, bike lanes and/or densely populated areas.

RP.3　Encourage the use of Eco-Industrial Park and Agri-Industrial Park zones with clear definitions and consider the use of incentives for competitive advantage.

RP.4　Consider the expansion of uses in Industrial zones to include clean technologies like bio-gas.

RP.5　Encourage out-migration of heavy industry from the Koksilah Village and from areas above the Cassidy aquifer to a less sensitive area (e.g. not adjacent to a residential neighbourhood or on top of a vulnerable aquifer).

RP.6　Explore incentives, either financial or through bonus density, for office space in villages.

RP.7　Support a diversity of commercial and light industrial uses that generate employment opportunities, provide living wages and contribute to the local economy.

RP.8　Identify existing brownfield or contaminated sites in the region for remediation purposes.

RP.9　Support initiatives aligned with the development of rail & air transportation hubs on the island (e.g. Port Alberni Trans-shipment Hub).

RP.10 Explore economic development partnerships with local First Nations that are mutually beneficial, and support initiatives including:

- Malahat Business Park
- Stz'uminus Waterfront Plan at Oyster Bay

RP.11 Discourage the conversion of industrial and commercial lands to residential to preserve employment lands.

RP.12 Support flexibility and adaptability of uses and forms in existing and new commercial development.

Innovative Economy

RP.13 Consider the creation of a Cowichan Tech Park where tech businesses can benefit from the advantages of clustering.

RP.14 Create a Cowichan Internet and Cellular Connectivity Strategy to expand and provide greater access to high-speed internet service, including expansion of fibre optic networks throughout the region.

RP.15 Establish a connectivity vision for the region around key community objectives to achieve greater economic, environmental and social outcomes.

RP.16 Encourage service providers to improve connectivity in underserved communities to the national standard (currently 50/10 and LTE).

RP.17 Leverage economic development opportunities associated with a new district hospital.

RP.18 Support home-based businesses in residential areas that contribute to the local economy, lessen auto-dependency, respect the natural environment and water resources, and enhance neighbourhood character.

RP.19 Encourage businesses and development that attract and maintain a highly skilled workforce.

RP.20 Encourage innovative industries, including developers of green technologies, health science research, agriculture and others to locate within the regional district.

RP.21 Recognize the value of post-secondary institutions as key to innovation and collaborate with Vancouver Island University (VIU) on economic development initiatives, such as innovation hubs or maker spaces.

RP.22 Explore the potential of a VIU satellite campus in the electoral areas in close proximity to transit and a village core.

RP.23 Support community-based economic development efforts and initiatives, including local investment funds, cooperative development and social enterprise development.

Circular Economy

RP.24 Support storage space for deconstruction and material reuse markets.

RP.25 Support the progressive rehabilitation of resource-based activities, such as viable agricultural land or reforestation, that is compatible with the applicable regional OCP designation, surrounding environment and existing uses.

RP.26 Heavy and resource-based industries should minimize impacts on surrounding land use, while ensuring and contributing to the quality of life and residents and the natural environment.

Tourism

RP.27 Encourage the growth of tourism as a keystone industry that will help the region diversify its economy.

RP.28 Protect scenic landscapes and view corridors along the Malahat Highway and Highway 18 through the development of detailed and place-based view analysis as part of the local area plan processes for electoral areas A, F and I.

RP.29 Promote outdoor recreational activities and regional parks as key tourist destinations.

Enhance Economic Prosperity Policy (by the transect sub-area)

Resource & Natural Areas

RP.30 Support the sustainable use of natural resources.

RP.31 Support the collection, processing and distribution of raw materials that support a transition to a circular economy.

RP.32 Support the development of local and renewable energy sources to power a circular economy.

RP.33 Support the expansion of regenerative eco-tourism opportunities.

RP.34 Balance outdoor recreational needs with development of resource lands.

Rural & Agricultural Areas

RP.35 Provide small-scale and low-impact tourism, commercial and industrial uses that support the needs of rural and farming communities.

Suburban Areas

RP.36 Improve access to local shops and services.

RP.37 Support home-based businesses and light industrial uses (e.g. artisan studios) compatible with residential areas.

Village Areas

RP.38 Support small-scale commercial developments with active ground floors that align with the character and identity of a village or settlement node.

RP.39 Support home-based businesses and light industrial uses compatible with a village setting.

RP.40 Support live/work and small-scale mixed-use developments that help diversify the community's economy.

Urban Areas

RP.41 Support live/work and mixed-use development with active ground floors.

RP.42 Encourage the development of office space, research facilities and post-secondary institutions.

Special Districts

RP.43 Provide access to a wide variety of strategic employment lands, including high tech, advanced manufacturing, green enterprise and filming studios.

RP.44 Limit the amount of new development in the shape of big box and power retail shopping centres.

3.8 Improve Governance & Implementation

Introduction

This policy chapter addresses how the vision, objectives and policies of this document will be implemented. The objectives and policies within align with the CVRD's Corporate Strategic Plan to serve, strengthen and connect Cowichan communities through collaborative governance. We are committed to improving our governance and implementation in order to make responsible decisions, be accountable, embrace the future and thrive.

Even the best plans require an implementation strategy. This OCP sets a bold new vision and policy framework for the CVRD's electoral areas. However, achieving the goals laid out in this document and making progress on our desired future will require more than simply writing it down in a plan. It will require a focused effort across the entire organization, regular monitoring, relationship building, equitable implementation and adaptation in the face of changing circumstances.

In order to ensure ongoing implementation and applicability, the OCP is intended to be a "living" document that lays out the vision and goals to guide our community's growth and success over the long term. Annual implementation reports and associated housekeeping amendments may be brought forward as part of the implementation strategy to address changing community needs.

The following chapter provides direction for five key components:

- Relationships
- Alignment with other instruments
- Equitable consideration
- Monitoring progress
- Performance metrics

Together, these components will help steer change in the electoral areas towards the common vision outlined in this plan.

Relationships

Relationships are the cornerstone of progressing towards the OCP's goals, objectives and policies. Engagement with First Nations and other levels of government and collaboration with communities is foundational.

First Nations

The CVRD approaches engagement with First Nations based on British Columbia's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA), which recognizes and upholds Indigenous

Self-determination, human rights, cultural, economic and social development, and the right to good-faith consultation and participation in decision making, as determined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

Where electoral areas and Indian Reserves have adjacent lands, there is importance to engage and communicate in the planning and provision of servicing. Through the development of this OCP, neighbouring First Nations were engaged in a spirit of good relations. Potential collaboration exists in many areas, including infrastructure servicing, emergency preparedness, economic development, housing, health, stewardship, trail planning, marine planning, cultural heritage, arts and culture. Schedule N – First Nations Maps identifies Indian Reserves (as defined by the *Indian Act*) near the electoral areas.

Eleven First Nations are currently negotiating treaties in the region. Addressing unresolved Rights and Title is a responsibility shared between First Nations and the provincial and federal governments. The CVRD will participate where applicable and work co-operatively toward local resolutions. Final treaty agreement(s) will impact First Nations and non-Indigenous communities; and therefore, this OCP should be revisited concurrent with treaty implementation.

Incremental Treaty Agreements (ITA) are legally binding pre-treaty agreements between the Province and negotiating First Nation(s) that provide transitional benefits in advance of a final treaty settlement and demonstrate a commitment to concluding treaty. As of the date of writing this OCP, seven ITAs have been signed in the region: Ditidaht First Nation (2013), Malahat Nation (2013), Pacheedaht First Nation (2013), Halalt First Nation (2020), Penelakut Tribe (2020) and Cowichan Tribes (2019). The most recent ITA will transfer 312 hectares of land along the Cowichan River to Lyackson First Nation and Cowichan Tribes.[5]

While the transfer of land in an ITA is intended to honour the spirit and vision of Indigenous Self-determination, land use authority remains with the local government until such time as lands are added to reserve or a final treaty agreement is ratified, at which point the lands become treaty settlement lands under the land use authority of the signatory First Nation.

Land use management decisions by the CVRD Board on lands subject to an ITA and in the scope of this OCP will seek to respect the inherent right of First Nations Self-governance.

GI.1   Engage with First Nations in the future direction of the region.

GI.2   Review the principles and processes that guide place naming and evolving practices to foster reconciliation in local processes.

GI.3   Co-create engagement protocols and reconciliation agreements with First Nations.

GI.4   Establish an Indigenous Advisory Committee.

GI.5   Protect First Nations archaeological, heritage and other cultural interests.

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[5] Province of BC (2024), Incremental Treaty Agreements.
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/first-nations-negotiations/incremental-treaty-agreements

GI.6   Work with the federal government on matters that are within their jurisdiction:

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada on protecting watercourses and establishing modernized policies for marine and foreshore environments.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada to protect species at risk and enhance natural assets by building on and expanding the federal SARA safety net.

Provincial Government

GI.7 Work with the province on matters that are within their jurisdiction:

- MoTI to analyze and resolve drainage issues and approvals for subdivision.
- MoTI and BC Transit to reduce car dependency and provide safe and sustainable transportation options.
- BC Housing to build a wider range of affordable and below-market housing options.
- ALC and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to ensure a thriving agricultural industry.
- The Province to support the goals in the *Water Sustainability Act* to ensure a sustainable supply of fresh, clean water that meets the needs of BC residents today and in the future.
- Ministry of Forests to ensure watershed/water supply and quality and sustainable forest practices.
- Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and BC Assessment to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk through private land ownership incentives.

Incorporated Municipalities

GI.8   Collaborate with all incorporated municipalities (District of North Cowichan, City of Duncan, Town of Lake Cowichan and Town of Ladysmith) to ensure alignment of visions and goals and coordinate technical information, regional plans and strategies to guide sustainable land use into the future.

Alignment with other Instruments

The CVRD has many plans and strategies that provide direction for planning and development, the environment, transportation, engineering, parks, recreation and culture in the electoral areas. Some of these plans and strategies already generally align with the OCP and may require a small update, while others may require a rethink in approach and outcomes.

Instruments to Update

There are several instruments that have a direct impact on the growth and development of the electoral areas and that should be updated following adoption of the OCP as part of the

implementation strategy. The following list of instruments should undergo a critical review to align with the vision, policies and regulations of this OCP. The list also includes the departments responsible for each instrument.

Climate Projections for the Cowichan Valley Regional District (Land Use Services/Environment)

Infrastructure and Servicing Master Plans (Operations)

Works and Servicing Bylaw (Operations/Land Use Services)

Instruments to Create

The following plans and policies will be developed over the next ten years to further support the vision, policies and regulations of this OCP.

Affordable Housing Plan (Land Use Services)

Climate Mitigation Strategy (Land Use Services)

Conservation Strategy (Environment)

Natural Asset Framework including Watershed Management Plans (Environment)

Marine Plan (Land Use Services)

Regional Agriculture Plan (Land Use Services)

Stormwater Management/Drainage Bylaw (Land Use Services/Operations)

Zoning Bylaw (Land Use Services)

Equitable consideration

The following Social Equity Checklist should be considered during the implementation of all policies or actions. Particular attention should be placed on the policies that need further consideration upon implementation, as marked with the symbol below. Note that this checklist may adapt as it is used and further input is received from diverse groups.

△ IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Social Equity Checklist

Step 1 | Self-reflection

☐ Reflect and identify your own social position. Consider intersecting factors such as race, gender, age, sexuality, ability, education level, income, years lived in the CVRD and other relevant factors.

How does your positioning impact your perspectives during this policy review?

☐ Using demographic data (ideally disaggregated by race and gender), consider how the action will affect/serve people and places. In particular, consider diverse populations.

Which people and places will be impacted by the action? What effects or impacts will the action have on people and places? How long will the action have an impact? (Short, medium and/or long term?)

☐ Identify the affected groups, including those who have historically not been included. Identify their role in decision making.

Step 3 | Assess community context

☐ Understand the history of the policy topic.

What is the historical context of this policy/action as it relates to colonization and dispossession of Traditional Territory?

☐ Learn about the affected communities' priorities and concerns through inclusive and meaningful engagement. Ensure communication materials consider cultural factors, language barriers and visual and auditory impairments.

☐ Understand who will benefit from the policy.

Who has benefitted, or is benefitting, from this policy? How accessible are the benefits of this policy?

☐ Understand who is excluded from these benefits or who may be harmed by this policy.

Can the benefits of the policy be targeted in ways to reduce historical or existing disparities? Who may be excluded from these benefits? Who might be harmed? What may be the unintended consequences of this action?

☐ Identify potential unintended equity-related consequences of this policy. What impact will this action have in the future?

Step 4 | Analysis and decision process

☐ Project how various scenarios will affect community priorities and concerns.

☐ Evaluate each alternative to understand who will be disproportionately burdened or benefit.

Who will disproportionately be burdened or benefit today? In the future? Directly? Indirectly?

Include alternatives that target root causes to eliminate disproportionate burden.

Prioritize alternatives by equitable outcomes.

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☐ Communicate the implementation of the policy with the community. Particularly engage with affected communities.

☐ Advance equity opportunities when possible.

How might we hire, source or promote diverse groups when implementing this action?

☐ Measure and evaluate the intended outcomes in collaboration with affected communities.

How will advancing equity be articulated in your action/policy to ensure it is visible, explicit and measurable? Are there accountability systems to identify unintended consequences?

How might course corrections be handled if needed?

Step 6 | *Continuous learning*

☐ Evaluate if the policy appropriately responds to community priority and concerns, particularly of diverse populations.

☐ Learn alongside the community to adjust policies as community priorities change.

☐ Communicate progress to all stakeholders.

This equity checklist was adapted from other similar checklists, including the King County Equity Impact Review.

Monitoring progress

The long-term vision described in this plan and its accompanying objectives and policies will take many years to achieve. To ensure the CVRD's electoral areas are headed in the right direction, this section lists a range of key metrics that will help electoral area directors, Regional District staff, and the broader community measure and monitor progress.

Performance metrics

The performance metrics are grouped by the OCP goals and include additional general growth management metrics to better understand where focus may be needed over the years to successfully implement the whole plan. Performance metrics can be found in Appendix II of the OCP.

APPENDIX I: PROCESS AND PLANNING

Process

The CVRD's OCP planning process is captured in the Living Tree diagram, which shows the OCP's growth and change over time and its fundamental roots in community engagement and previous work. Just like a tree, leaves and fruit can only blossom with a strong trunk and solid roots.

Some of the roots include significant efforts on the Cowichan 2050 Regional Collaboration Framework, the harmonization of the electoral areas' previous official community plans, and technical reports. The OCP remains aligned with the CVRD's Corporate Strategic Plan as the two documents connect and grow together to support more sustainable and co-ordinated growth and development in the region.

From there, the trunk rises with the strength and stability of community and stakeholder engagement, which foster growth in the tree branches and leaves. The OCP's vision, goals and broad policy categories sprouted from these branches and have blossomed into the OCPs 18 Schedules. The tree will continue to blossom over time as the branches and leaves are informed by continued community input.

The OCP is intended to bring clarity and simplicity to a range of complex issues that the CVRD's electoral areas face. Community engagement efforts held in 2020 refined the OCP's eight policy goals, each of which forms a policy chapter. These chapters, along with the proposed growth containment boundaries and land use designation maps, were the subject of engagement activities in 2022 and 2023.

The feedback and input captured through the various engagement activities revealed the communities' priorities and wishes for the electoral areas and have nurtured a final—but always growing and bending—OCP for consideration by electoral area directors. It will also provide the framework for future, more detailed local area and neighbourhood planning which will become Schedule B to the OCP.

Contributors

Residents, advisory commissions, technical expertise and First Nations were engaged in the development of this OCP:

Advisory Planning Commission Meetings

Experienced volunteers from each of the nine electoral areas provided review to the OCP project team throughout the OCP development.

First Nations Engagement

Engagement with First Nations included letters, meetings and presentations to discuss the OCP and areas of mutual interest in the spirit of reconciliation.

Public Consultation

Community members participated in multiple engagement opportunities from 2020 to 2023, including open houses, Community Circles and Ideas Fairs and local area planning workshops to advance complete community assessments. In 2024, consultation with Advisory Planning Commissions was focused on Complete Community assessment reports, looking at population and housing projections, analysis and scenarios. In 2025, additional consultation with the Advisory Planning Commissions is planned on the local area plan implementation plans and performance metric frameworks.

GIS Specialists

GIS-based analysis of housing, employment and population projections defined growth containment boundaries and land use designations. An interim Housing Needs Report will be completed in 2024 and include projections to 2044. All growth projections in Schedule A will be updated accordingly.

CVRD Technical Reports

Technical reports, including slope hazard and climate risk assessments, environmentally sensitive areas mapping and wildfire protection plans formed the basis of development permit area designations.

CVRD Technical Advisory Committee

In depth, interdisciplinary analysis was provided from CVRD departments including planning, environment, engineering, parks, emergency services, transit, GIS and other departments.

Summary of Engagement

Community engagement in the development of this OCP means involving the community in shaping the plan's vision, goals, policies and local area planning priorities. All phases of community engagement were based on the following principles: *open, inclusive, prepared, transparent* and *collaborative*. Like the care that goes into nurturing healthy growth, future engagement will continue to grow and evolve, nurtured by knowledge harvested from these experiences.

1. Analysis (2019-2025)

- GIS analysis
- CVRD internal technical advisory review
- CVRD technical reports

2. Open Houses (Winter 2020)

- Four open houses were held with over 400 participants focusing on the OCP's vision and policy direction.

3. Digital Engagement Tools (Ongoing)

- Creation of the PlanYourCowichan.ca engagement platform.
- Explanatory videos to communicate the story of the OCP development and policy goals.
- Launch of the OCP Story Map—a visual representation of key components of the OCP.

4. Community Circles (**Spring 2022**)

- Community Circles are virtual or in person "kitchen table" conversations on the OCP's policy goals and local area planning priorities.
- The CVRD hosted 18 Community Circles and trained more than 30 community volunteers to host their own Community Circles.
- More than 750 participants provided ideas and completed 125 workbooks.

5. Advisory Planning Commissions (**Ongoing**)

- All APC member meetings held virtually.
- Individual APC meetings held virtually and in person.

6. CVRD Electoral Areas Services Committee (Ongoing)

- As OCP policy and maps were drafted, presentations were made to the nine electoral area directors who form the EASC to seek feedback and confirm direction.

7. Ideas Fairs (Winter - Fall 2022-2023)

- Ideas Fairs are a celebration of community ideas and participation in the OCP.
- Seven Ideas Fairs were held in 2022–2023.
- At the Ideas Fair, electoral area communities were asked to share their local area planning priorities and confirm regional policy direction.
- Eighteen local area plan workshops were held in October and November 2023 in eight communities where communities were asked to rank housing priorities, daily needs, transportation and infrastructure future needs.

8. Ideas Book (Ongoing)

The Ideas Book captures the ideas from the Community Circles and Ideas Fairs. Like the Living Tree diagram, the Ideas Book is a living document that will continue to change and demonstrate how community involvement informs the OPC process and content. The Ideas Book is updated after each consultation and is available on planyourcowichan.ca

9. First Nations Engagement (2020–Ongoing)

- Letters were written to Cowichan Tribes, Penelakut Tribe and the Ditidaht, Pacheedaht, Halalt, Stz'uminus, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Lyackson, Malahat and Pauquachin First Nations to inform of the project and seek input on how First Nations would like to be involved in the process (2020).
- Meetings were held with staff from Malahat Nation, Cowichan Tribes, Lyackson First Nation and Penelakut Tribe (2022).

- Letters were written to Cowichan Tribes, Penelakut Tribe and the Ditidaht, Pacheedaht, Halalt, Stz'uminus, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Lyackson, Malahat and Pauquachin First Nations to both inform of the OCP and welcome engagement and discussion (2023).
- Letters were written to inform K'omoks, Hupacasath and Snuneymuxw First Nations (2023).
- A complete communities assessment grant provided support for in-depth consultation with Malahat First Nation and Tsu-ts'uubaa-asatx First Nation on planning in 2023–2024.

10. Informal and Final OCP Engagement

- Inter-governmental referrals to neighbouring and senior government agencies, local First Nations, School Districts 68 and 79, and the Agricultural Land Commission. Schedule D – Agriculture Maps and Schedule T – Transportation Maps were informally referred to the Agricultural Land Commission and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure prior to formal referrals.
- Bylaw readings and a public hearing.

Planning Instruments

Official Community Plan | An official community plan includes high level statements of a community vision, goals and objectives for the future. The function of this OCP is to guide future decisions of the CVRD Board. The OCP is intended to be informative, indicating the overall direction of land use management in the region.

Land Use Designation | In an OCP, each property is given a land use designation, which represents what the community has envisioned for the future use and density of the parcel. Sometimes the designation broadly matches what is already built there. Other times, the designation prescribes something different—either a change in density, use or both. Land use designations are described in text and mapped in Schedule L to provide their spatial application.

Development Permit Area | Development permit areas are a tool for managing development on a site-specific basis where the characteristics and/or context of the development site call for more finely tuned design standards than are contained in the applicable zoning bylaw. Development permit areas are designated in an OCP. If proposed for land in a development permit area, development such as subdivision, building construction and alteration, and alteration of land (in natural environment and hazard areas) are required to have an approved development permit before proceeding. The OCP describes the special conditions or objectives that justify the designation and conditions under which a development permit wouldn't be required (exemptions). Development permit area guidelines and exemptions are included in a separate zoning bylaw. Development permit areas are designated in Schedule C and mapped in Schedule U – Development Permit Area Maps. Development permit guidelines and exemptions are located in a separate zoning bylaw.

Growth Containment Boundary | The growth containment boundary is a land use policy area within an OCP that identifies where growth is intended to be focused and where the majority of public investment in infrastructure and servicing will be directed. This OCP has several identified growth containment boundaries in the electoral areas with intended growth focused within the

GCBs that are fully serviced. Growth containment boundaries take into consideration factors such as water supply, servicing challenges, land use details, development applications, past growth and more. The GCB supports responsible growth management decisions and the effective delivery of infrastructure and community services. Growth containment boundaries contain sufficient land for growth consistent with the housing needs assessment.

Local Area Plans | Local area plans provide detailed and area-specific policies that capture and enhance the unique identities and characteristics of a community. Local area plans are located Schedule B of this OCP.

Zoning Bylaw | Implementation of the OCP is located in regulatory bylaws such as a zoning bylaw. The zoning bylaw describes permitted uses of land and contains regulations related to building design, setbacks, heights and more specific uses. The zoning bylaw provides specific regulations, and as properties become subject to rezoning applications, those applications must be made consistent with the OCP. New provincial legislation identifies lands in zoning bylaws where public hearings are no longer required.

The OCP goals and objectives are high level statements, which flow into focused policy and then into regulations. Figure 1.3 illustrates this increasing specificity.

Figure 1.3 Increasing Specificity Goals, Policies, Regulations

APPENDIX II: PERFORMANCE METRICS

List of Tables

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Introduction

Appendix One I Performance Metrics includes the dashboard of performance metrics for Bylaw 4373 – Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas (OCP). The structure of the OCP and the dashboard of metrics are linked in a hierarchical relationship that connects the performance metrics to the goals through objectives and policies.

A dashboard of metrics provides many benefits to a community plan including:

- providing clarity to qualitative policies by adding a quantitative (measurable) dimension
- providing feedback on the progress of implementing policies and achieving objectives over time

Many policies are important for shaping discussion, choices and decisions, but they may not have aspects that are easily measured.

When selecting metrics that can adequately track the performance of the policy areas, it is important that each metric:

- has easily available and accessible data
- is tracked in a consistent manner at regular intervals to show consistency and change
- falls under the responsibility of a CVRD department or other government organization, which would also oversee the mandate to report on it
- is linked directly to the spatial boundaries, jurisdiction and actions of the CVRD

The following dashboard provides several key metrics that will be used to monitor implementation of the policies in each policy area in the OCP.

How to Read this Document

Each of the performance metrics corresponds with a Schedule A policy area.

1. Commercial and Residential Building Emissions

- **Description**: This indicator measures residential and commercial electricity and natural gas consumption in gigajoules (Gj) and kilowatt hours (kWh).
- **Relevance**: In this context, energy sources can be used as a proxy for GHG emissions. This metric helps track progress toward reducing climate impacts and becoming a more energy efficient community. To reduce community GHG emissions, a reduction in energy use is required. Land use changes can influence built form, which affects building energy use and resulting emissions. These factors make this indicator a useful measure of the impacts OCP land use policies have on climate outcomes.
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
    - CCO.1 Reduce transportation, building and solid waste GHG emissions.
    - CCO.2 Advocate to the Province for clear local government authority to enact property assessed clean energy financing bylaws, which would allow building owners/operators to finance energy efficiency, renewable energy and other environmentally-related building upgrades through property taxes.
    - CCO.3 Advocate to the Province for authority to regulate building emissions.
    - CCO.9 Build resilience through design to reduce environmental, social and economic vulnerabilities.
    - CC.2. Encourage retrofitting of older buildings and green construction of new buildings to achieve energy efficiency and a reduction in GHG emissions.
    - CC.3. Develop guidelines to support improved energy efficiency and recovery from retrofits and new development.
    - CC.4. Encourage energy efficiency and the use of renewable, clean energy to reduce reliance on fossil fuels in all decision-making.
    - CC.5. Incentivize a shift away from use of woodstoves and oil and gas furnaces to reduce emissions and impacts on public health.
    - CC.6. Create incentives for rooftop solar systems and energy storage.
    - CC.14. Support region-wide information campaigns to give people the information needed to help them reduce their emissions.
    - CC.15 Ensure new builds and retrofit are built to consider climate projections and impacts in both summer and winter.
- **Data sources**: Provincial GHG Emissions Inventory, BC Hydro and FortisBC.
- **Data**: Residential and commercial electric total consumption (kWh) and gas total consumption (GJ).
    - 2019 Residential Total Electric Consumption: 289,716,109 kWh; 3,090 TCO2e
    - 2019 Residential Total Gas Consumption: 105,256 GJ; 5,249 TCO2e
    - Based on the old Provincial Community Energy and Emissions Inventory, buildings had **53kt** of emissions in 2007, so this should be reduced to **32kt** and **10.6kt** in 2030 and 2050, respectively
- **Desired Trend:** Decrease in per capita electric and gas consumption; narrowing the gap between provincial average and CVRD.
- **Methods:** This will not take data processing—just reporting.
- **Reporting protocols**: This information is available through the provincial emissions tracking program and should be available for inclusion in each reporting cycle with minimal resources.
- **Limitations**:

- Uncertainty in the modelled data: Because of uncertainties in changing consumer behaviour (i.e. during covid-19 people were home and used more energy) and new technologies that increase household efficiency (like heat pumps), it is difficult to predict what will be introduced or the rate of uptake, uncertainty in modelled population.
- Non-utility heating sources are subject to significant uncertainties and are therefore excluded from this metric.

2. Passenger Vehicle Transportation Emissions

- **Description**: This indicator measures annual carbon emissions resulting from passenger vehicles registered to a residence in the CVRD. This includes travel within and outside of the CVRD.
- **Relevance**: Carbon emissions resulting from passenger vehicle use are an effective and meaningful measure of community contributions to climate change and GHG emissions reduction strategies. Land use changes can impact passenger vehicle use habits at the community scale, making vehicle transportation emissions a useful measure of the impacts of OCP land use policies.
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
  - CCO.1 Reduce transportation, building and solid waste GHG emissions.
  - CCO.9 Build resilience through design to reduce environmental, social and economic vulnerabilities.
  - Land use composition directly impacts GHG emissions
  - CC.49, CC.53, CC.58, CC.64 Support subdivision and development patterns that enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity to nearby destinations, including transit stops.
  - CC.50 Enhance suburban residential areas with complementary uses that promote short travel distances for daily needs.
  - CC.51, CC.56, CC.61, CC.66 Incorporate electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in new development.
  - CC.57 Support development in village areas that help build complete neighbourhoods with a mix of uses and where daily needs are within walking distance.
  - CC.62 Support high density residential and mixed-use developments where daily needs are within walking distance.
- **Data Sources**: Annual Provincial Inventory.
- **Data**: Passenger vehicle emissions (tCO2e).
  - This was prepared by disaggregating the total transportation emissions from the 2021 National Inventory Report using the CVRD population. This approach assumes that all communities in the Province have the same per capita transportation emissions. Using this approach the CVRD had **200kt** of emissions in 2007, so by 2030 and 2050 this should be reduced to **120kt** and **40kt**, respectively.
- **Interpretation**:
  - Total transportation emissions.
  - Per capita transportation emissions.
  - Per capita transportation emissions compared to provincial averages.
- **Desired Trend:** Per capita decrease in tCO2e; narrowing the gap between provincial average and CVRD.
- **Methods:** This will not take data processing—just reporting.
- **Reporting protocols**: This information is available through the provincial emissions tracking program and should be available for inclusion in each reporting cycle with minimal resources.
- **Limitations**:
  - Uncertainty with modelled data: Data is created using estimates of annual vehicle kms travelled, which has a low degree of certainty due to disparate or incomplete

data sources. Other uncertainties in modelling include potential for incomplete base ICBC data, methodology does not account for idle time, traffic.

Goal #2 - Manage Infrastructure Responsibly

3. Serviced customers inside the GCB for all community services

- **Description:** This metric records the number of people within the GCB who are serviced by community water and sewer services, compared to those within the GCB not connected to water and sewer services.
- **Relevance**: Compact growth should occur in serviced areas, and monitoring growth of these areas provides important information for planning and investment decisions. This metric allows the CVRD to track whether a growing portion of the population within the GCB is being serviced.
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
    - MIO.1 Align water servicing with the GCB.
    - MIO.4 Update wastewater management plans to align and provide services within the GCB and review beneficial reuse
    - MIO.10 Plan for strategic asset management
    - MIO.11 Retain existing levels of servicing in communities and identify the appropriate level of services to meet the electoral areas' future projected needs.
    - MIO.14 Discourage private infrastructure systems.
    - MI.4. Consider long-term resilience of water systems to provide necessary water to communities.
    - MI.9. Identify highest priority opportunities for consolidation of private and public septic systems in village centres.
    - MI.27 Discourage further installation and expansion of private infrastructure services by incentivizing connection to public infrastructure services through a bonus density program.
    - MI.28 Manage growth with the aim of ensuring at least 75% of new development is connected to infrastructure services over time.
- **Data Sources**: CVRD utilities, BC Stats.
- **Data**:
    - Residents connected to water servicing by GCB.
        - Electoral areas A, B and C: 8,293
        - Electoral area D: 1,825
        - Electoral area E: 1,085
        - Electoral area F: 480
        - Electoral area G: 630
        - Electoral area H: 525
        - Electoral area I: 875
    - Residents connected to sewer servicing by GCB.
        - Electoral areas A, B and C: 3,293
        - Electoral area D: 1,570
        - Electoral area E: 1,130
        - Electoral area F: 30
        - Electoral area G: 0
        - Electoral area H: 0
        - Electoral area I: 140

- **Interpretation**:
    - Total population with water servicing: 13,848
    - Total population with sewer servicing: 6,243
    - % of population with water servicing inside GCB: 82%
    - % of population with sewer servicing inside GCB: 37%
    - Change year over year: N/A
- **Desired trend:** Total population with CVRD managed servicing should go up year over year; proportion of CVRD managed serviced population within the GCB versus without should go up year over year.
- **Methods:**
    - Identify service area polygons and GCB polygons.
    - Sum GCB population in service areas and GCB population outside service areas.
    - Report as number and percentage.
- **Reporting protocols**: Maps of service areas are continuously being updated. GIS can undertake a population or household count within service areas and the GCB to identify the number currently serviced.
- **Limitations**:
    - Does not account for non-residential activity.
    - Does not account for daytime population.
    - Does not account for unified sewer and water service.

4. Fire & Emergency Response Capacity & Coverage
- **Description**: This metric shows the percentage of the community that is covered by emergency services.
- **Relevance**: As the population of the CVRD grows, it is expected and desired that growth should occur in a compact manner, reducing sprawl. This should result in most of the population growth occurring in areas already serviced, reducing the need for emergency services to sprawl further, thus increasing efficiency.
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
    - CC.21. Manage wildfire risk as a result of drier summers and reduce the impacts of forest fire on buildings, property and public safety and health. Explore the creation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans in at-risk areas.
    - CC.24. Strengthen emergency management capacity to respond to weather-related emergencies.
    - MI.29 Avoid expansion of any services outside of future growth areas except those developed for health, fire safety, agricultural support or sea level rise adaptation reasons.
    - CC.24. Strengthen emergency management capacity to respond to weather-related emergencies.
- **Data Sources**: CVRD emergency services, census population.
- **Data**: Percentage of population with fire service protection by electoral area:
    - Area A: 100%
    - Area B: 94%
    - Area C: 100%
    - Area D: 100%
    - Area E: 98%
    - Area F: 94%
    - Area G: 100%
    - Area H: 100%

- o Area I: 95%
- **Interpretation**:
  - o Area covered: 35,310 hectares (ha)
    - ▪ 60,000 ha. including the municipalities—relevant to fire department capacity as the departments serve the municipalities and electoral areas simultaneously.
  - o Change year over year: N/A
  - o New population within service areas vs new population outside service areas: N/A
- **Desired trend:** Increase in the percentage of the community covered by fire and emergency services.
- **Methods:**
  - o Identify service area polygons.
  - o For each electoral area, sum population within polygons.
  - o For each electoral area, divide population serviced by total electoral area population and present as a percentage.
- **Reporting protocols**: The maps of emergency service coverage are available and continually being updated. GIS can take the information and undertake a dwelling unit count to identify what percentage of units in each electoral area are covered. It is expected to take one to two days of GIS time per reporting cycle to update.
- **Limitations**:
  - o Census data is not updated annually.
  - o Capacity of improvement districts to expand service area boundaries.

Goal #3 - Make Distinct, Complete Communities

5. Housing starts per year
- **Description**: This metric monitors ongoing supply of housing in the region—it measures the number and composition of new housing units built.
- **Relevance**: Monitoring the supply of housing is necessary as a means of understanding growth in the region. Vital questions this metric answers include:
  - o Is housing supply keeping up with population growth?
  - o Is an adequate amount of the housing starts occurring in the GCB (i.e. in compact and serviced areas), thus preserving rural and agricultural areas?
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
  - o DCO.1 Plan for compact communities that can accommodate population growth and demographic change within the GCB.
  - o DCO.4 Improve and expand the range of housing options.
  - o DCO.6 Develop a regionally-specific housing continuum and increase the right supply of housing across the spectrum of affordability.
  - o DC.1. Manage the supply and demand of housing units.
  - o DC.13. Encourage development to address housing options from across the CVRD.
- **Data Sources**: BC Gov data on building permits – Single, Row, and Apartments datasets.
- **Data**: Number of housing starts in the CVRD.
  - o June 2021–June 2022: 126 SFDs, 69 apartments, 0 row houses
- **Interpretation**:
  - o Change year over year: N/A

- Unit composition: by bedrooms, if possible – may be available with permit data: N/A
- Progress towards housing needs from updated HNA
- **Desired trend:** Increasing or stable number of housing starts, desired dwelling mix is being achieved.
- **Methods:** For each of the three datasets (Single, Row Dwellings and Apartments), CVRD must be identified. From the Total CVRD value, the municipalities must be subtracted.
- **Reporting protocols**: The Province is tracking this data regularly. It is readily available from the Province's website for each reporting cycle.
- **Limitations**:
  - Without knowing the type of units (i.e. number of bedrooms) or electoral area, this only partially addresses housing needs.

6. Number (percentage) of households **within the GCB** in proximity to amenities
- ● **Description**: This metric monitors the share of residents living within a convenient proximity to key amenities. Key amenities include schools, employment lands, shopping centres, recreation facilities, parks and transit. Convenient proximity can be considered to be a 5–10 minute walk, or a 5–20 minute drive.
- ● **Relevance**: In an effort to promote growth within already compact and serviced areas, it is important to monitor whether the growing population has access to amenities within their community or whether they need to travel a substantial amount to access key resources. This allows us to monitor whether the population growth is spreading out or continuing to cluster in the GCBs. Encouraging walkability and short drives also progresses climate crisis mitigation goals.
- • **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
  - • DCO.3 Build inclusive and attractive communities where daily needs and employment opportunities are close to home.
  - • DC.35. Where possible, cluster parks and open space (including areas for active and passive recreation use) within and/or adjacent to existing community "nodes".
  - • DC.50 Enhance suburban areas by providing employment lands, parks and access to transit and other amenities.
  - • DC.51 Support village areas that have mixed uses.
  - • DC.54 Provide great access to transit, active transportation options, parks and shopping.
  - • DC.56 Support urban areas that have higher residential densities and the greatest mix in uses.
- ● **Data Sources**: Building permit data, CVRD GIS data and census household data.
- ● **Data**:

Table 1: Number (percentage) of households with the GCB in proximity to amenities

Amenity assessments	Percent meeting target
Percent of households within a 10-minute drive of schools	79%
Percent of households within a 10-minute drive of childcare	96%
Percent of households within a 20-minute drive of employment lands	100%
Percent of households within 1600 m (20 minutes walking) of shopping centres	54%
Percent of households within 800 m (10 minutes walking) of transit stops	70%
Percent of households within a 30-minute drive of recreation facilities and parks	100%

- ● **Interpretation**:
  - o Rate of growth within x distance of x amenity compared to rate of growth in the rest of the region: N/A
- ● **Desired trend:** Increase in percent of households in proximity.
- ● **Methods:**

- o Identify all amenities of interest as points: schools, employment lands, shopping centres, transit stops.
  - o Using the CVRD street network, create a driving network (for use with ArcGIS network analyst).
  - o Using the amenities as source locations, create drive time polygons per agreed upon drive shed. Carry out the same process for walk sheds.
  - o Sum households in the GCB within drive sheds, per amenity.
  - o Present population as percentage of total households within GCB.
- **Reporting protocols**: This metric will be GIS analysis heavy and may take upwards of two days to complete per reporting period. The methods will consist of gathering point locations of key amenities, creating walking and driving polygons around them based on a road network, and summing population at the block level within those polygons.
  - o Employment lands are defined as: clusters of job producing actual use codes greater than 40,000 square feet (ft^2).
  - o Shopping centres are defined as: clusters of retail actual use codes greater than 10,000 ft^2.
- **Limitations**:
  - o Census data is not updated annually.
  - o The distances and travel times chosen are a best fit metric but may not accurately measure need for all households, as consumer behaviour is difficult to predict and characterize.
  - o Employment spaces and grocery store data is difficult to accurately source. Shopping centres are used as a key retail amenity as they best represent a stable, diverse offering of retail opportunities. Access may be greater than modelled by this measure, especially to grocery stores and smaller produce markets. However, an accurate database of stand-alone stores is difficult to achieve due to closures, moves and lack of knowledge of product offerings (for example, a specialty salsa store would be classified as a food store when using business licence data, but certainly does not contribute to a resident's access to grocery stores). While introducing some uncertainty, using shopping complexes offers a more conservative but reliable measure.

Goal #4 - Expand Mobility Options

7. Percentage of population within 400 m of a transit stop
- **Description**: This indicator measures the population that are within a convenient walking distance (400 m, or 5–10 minutes) of a public transit stop.
- **Relevance**: Encouraging growth in compact areas and aiming to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicle trips demand that population growth be targeted toward areas with easy transit access. This will provide a higher number of residents with diverse transportation options, will decrease GHG emissions and will increase community interconnectivity.
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
  - o MOO.1 Integrate land use patterns and densities with transportation systems and investments.
  - o MOO.2 Establish a safe, efficient, equitable and cost- effective integrated multi-modal system.
  - o MOO.3 Increase the proportion of trips made by non- vehicle modes.
  - o MOO.4 Enhance local and regional transit service efficiency and effectiveness.

- o MOO.13 Reduce reliance on single-occupant car travel.
- o MOO.14 Minimise impacts of road and parking infrastructure on the region's rural qualities.
- o MO.47 MO.44 MO.41 MO.40 Support transportation initiatives that increase transit and active transportation uses to special districts (schools, universities, hospitals, event grounds, others).
- o MO.1 Support initiatives that increase sustainable transportation mode share (transit, cycling, walking).*
- o MO.13.Support compact development near transit and within service areas that have capacity for growth.
- ● **Data Sources**: BC stats population, CVRD GIS, BC transit.
- ● **Data**: Total population within 400 m walking distance of public transit.
- ● **Interpretation**:
  - o Change over time: N/A

Table 2: Percentage of population within 400 m of a transit stop

Amenity Assessment	Percent meeting target
Percent of CVRD population within 400 m (5 minutes walking) of transit stops	18%

- o The above, as compared to RDN, Alberni-Clayoquot and provincial averages

- ● **Desired trend:** Increase in percent of population within 400 m of a transit stop
- ● **Methods:**
  - o Identify all bus stops.
  - o Using the CVRD street network and stops as source locations, create 400 m walk sheds around each stop.
  - o Sum population within the walk sheds.
  - o Present as percent of total population by electoral area.
- ● **Reporting protocols**: This data is compiled through a combination of census data and updated maps from BC Transit. It will take approximately two days of work for GIS to update this information for every reporting cycle.
- ● **Limitations:**
  - o Does not take into account bus frequency, time of day or reliability of transit service.

Goal #5 - Protect and Restore Natural Assets

8. Percentage of green space protected from development
- ● **Description**: This indicator measures the percentage of green space that is reasonably protected from development. Reasonable protection from development may look like restrictions on development or extra studies required pre-development. Green space includes provincial, national and CVRD managed park areas, as well as environmentally sensitive areas.
- ● **Relevance**: Protecting natural areas and green space is key to maintaining the spirit of the CVRD. In an effort to maintain the natural appeal of the region while also encouraging

increased density in some areas, it is important to monitor the protection of biodiversity and ecological landscape from the pressures of development.

- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
    - NAO.5 Improve and protect connectivity between sensitive ecosystems, parks and protected areas, and allow for the movement of species among them.
    - NAO.6 Ensure growth and development is consistent with the protection of watercourses, wetlands, riparian areas, aquifers and sensitive ecosystems.
    - NAO.11 Direct new development away from hazard areas including floodplains and steep slopes.
    - NA.8. Protect natural environment areas identified for preservation in the development process through measures such as dedication to the region, establishing a restrictive covenant or rezoning to park land.
- **Data Sources**: CVRD GIS data.
- **Data**: Provincial, national, regional and CVRD managed park area by electoral area; Sensitive ecosystems.

Table 3: Percentage of population within 400 m of a transit stop

Electoral area	Area (ha)
A	45.65
B	508.37
C	28.67
D	30.17
E	115.58
F	35.25
G	35.67
H	54.79
I	390.13
Regional	886.73
Sub-Regional	20.84
Provincial and Ecological Reserve	18,485.94
National	**8,468.39**
Total	**29,106.19**

Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory	**5,144.18**

- **Interpretation**:
  - Park area as a fraction of undeveloped land.
    - Equivalent to about 9%. "Undeveloped" is defined as non-water parcels without a primary use code. The caveat to this measure is that it is difficult to identify where undeveloped land may be used as an unofficial park and recreation area by residents. It is highly likely that much more of this land is used as an unofficial and undesignated park.

Table 4: Park area as a fraction of undeveloped land

Undeveloped land	297,887.71 ha
Undeveloped land that is park	26,239.75 ha
% of undeveloped land that is park	9%

  - Park area as a fraction of OCP park designated land

Table 5: Park area as a fraction of OCP park designated land

OCP Parks and Open Space	27,277.62 ha
Parks within OCP Parks and Open Space	25,536.40 ha
% of OCP Parks and Open Space that are park	94%

- **Desired trend:** Increasing or stable percent of green space protected from development.
- **Methods:** Sum of all areas by electoral area.
- **Reporting protocols**: Reporting on this metric is relatively simple, requiring summing areas.
- **Limitations**: Need a stronger definition of reasonably protected areas or introduce a continuum of conservation strength to the indicator, which is time consuming.

Goal #6 - Strengthen Local Food & Agriculture
9. Land in food/crop production
- **Description**: This indicator measures the percentage of the CVRD's land base that is being actively farmed and what the current use is.
- **Relevance**: This metric will help to track agricultural productivity and inform plans and policies to increase food system productivity.
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**

- FAO.11 Use tools such as the provincial Agricultural Land Use Inventory and federal census of Agriculture to monitor the status of agricultural land, including the amount of actively farmed land, and other indicators, with the objective of promoting agricultural viability and food production.
  - FAO.13 Prioritize food production on agricultural lands and develop access to markets for local foods.
  - FAO.14 Encourage residents to grow their own produce.
  - FAO.15 Increase local food production opportunities, such as community garden plots, to assist in improving food security and mitigating climate change impacts.
  - FA.31. Inventory local food systems resources, identify gaps and define strategies for resource sharing and long-term planning in support of long-term community sustainability.
- **Data Sources**: Agri Census.
- **Data**: Agricultural land use in the CVRD.

Table 6: Land in food/crop production

Classified Farm Type – Land Use	Number of Farms
Oilseed and grain farming	2
Vegetable and melon farming	45
Fruit and tree nut farming	56
Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production	45
Other crop farming	92
Cattle ranching and farming	79
Hog and pig farming	4
Poultry and egg production	67
Sheep and goat farming	38
Other animal production	70
Total number of farms	498

- **Desired trend:** Increased or stable amount of land area in food/crop production.

- **Interpretation**: Percentage of ALR land in food/crop production.

Table 7: ALR land in food/crop production

ALR Area	18,995 ha
Total Farm Area (census)	10,635 ha
Percent of ALR being Farmed	56%

- **Methods:** No data processing necessary, just reporting.
- **Reporting protocols**: This information is available from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the Ministry of Forests through a special request. It will take approximately one day of time per reporting cycle for GIS to arrange to get this information from the Ministry and spatialize it.
- **Limitations:**
  - Active farming does not always mean food production and does not measure what crops are being farmed; thus, it is not a complete measure of agricultural productivity.
  - Does not account for changes in food production due to extreme weather events.
  - Agricultural census is only every five years.
  - As of 2021, the agricultural census does not capture hobby farms, which means hobbyists growing their own food will not be counted. While the OCP objectives could see progress with hobby farms and minor operations, there is currently no way to count them.

Goal #7 - Enhance Regional Prosperity
10. Growth of business in the region
- **Description**: This metric shows how the number of businesses in the CVRD is changing.
- **Relevance**: To support population growth in the region, growth of businesses is necessary to support an expanding and prosperous economy providing both jobs and services.
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
  - RPO.12 Attract emerging industries to the Cowichan region and support tech networking.
  - RPO.1 Provide employment lands consistent with community needs and population growth projections.
  - RPO.10 Attract green enterprise and expand renewable energy production to build a circular economy.
  - RP.7. Explore incentives, either financial or through bonus density, for office space in villages.
  - RP.8. Support a diversity of commercial and light industrial uses that provide living wage employment and contribute to the local economy.*
  - RP.9. Develop key industrial business parks through a servicing and highest and best use lens.

- o RP.14. Consider the creation of a Cowichan Tech Park where tech businesses can benefit from the advantages of clustering.
  - o RP.18. Leverage economic development opportunities associated with a new district hospital.
  - o RP.19. Encourage diverse economic opportunities that attract and retain young families.*
- **Data Sources**: Business Location Counts by Employee Size—BC open data.
- **Data**: Number of businesses in the CVRD.

Table 8: Change in number of businesses in the region

Electoral Area	Total businesses 2021	Total businesses 2020	Total businesses 2019
A	1,020	993	1,005
B	2,161	2,143	2,225
C	1,030	1,050	1,099
D	751	745	746
E	1,104	1,087	1,094
F	248	231	223
G	658	664	685
H	621	604	633
I	172	159	161

- **Interpretation**:
  - o Number of new businesses compared to growth in population: N/A
- **Desired trend:** Increase in number of businesses in the region.
- **Methods:**
  - o Download "Business Locations by Census Subdivision (municipalities and non-incorporated areas) (XLSX)" and select the CVRD electoral area records.
- **Reporting protocols**: This information is available from the Province and needs to be compiled and presented in table format.
- **Limitations**:
  - o Unavailability of business licences.
  - o Inadequate reporting for the number of employees.

11. Industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land (aka employment lands)

- **Description**: This indicator monitors the supply of employment zoned land in the region. Zoning is an implementation tool of the OCP; the OCP can enable and encourage rezoning for employment lands.
- **Relevance**: A growing and prospering economy is necessary to support population growth in the CVRD. Maintaining a supply of employment lands ensures preparedness and support for economic growth opportunities.
- **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
  - RPO.2 Protect existing industrial lands and support the expansion of industrial development that meets the objectives of the OCP and meets community employment and economic development needs.
  - RPO.13 Expand tourism opportunities, including agrotourism.
  - RPO.14 Expand tourism infrastructure and explore the potential of off-season activities and attractions.
  - RP.1 Consider pre-zoning industrial designated lands that are well-serviced or in close proximity to necessary services and near Highway #1.
  - RP.9 Develop key industrial business parks through a servicing and highest and best use lens.
  - RP.19 Encourage diverse economic opportunities that attract and retain young families.*
  - RP.29 Encourage the growth of tourism as a keystone industry that will help the region diversify its economy.
  - RP.43 Improve access to local shops and services.
  - RP.46 Support small-scale commercial developments with active ground floors that align with the character and identity of a village or settlement node.
  - RP.51 Encourage the development of office space, research facilities and post-secondary institutions.
  - RP.52 Provide access to a wide variety of strategic employment lands, including high tech, advanced manufacturing, green enterprise and filming studios.
- **Data Sources**: CVRD GIS zoning layers.
- **Data**: Hectares of zoned employment land by gross category and electoral area.

Table 9: Industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land (aka employment lands)

Electoral area	Category	Area (ha)
A	Commercial	19.21
A	Tourist Commercial	32.36
A	Industrial	173.51
B	Commercial	13.94
B	Tourist Commercial	5.23

B	Industrial	57.62
C	Commercial	18.11
C	Tourist Commercial	2.93
C	Industrial	65.29
D	Commercial	33.18
D	Industrial	40.54
E	Commercial	4.08
E	Tourist Commercial	15.39
E	Industrial	123.78
F	Commercial	9.91
F	Tourist Commercial	43.49
F	Industrial	64.40
G	Commercial	8.73
G	Tourist Commercial	0.78
H	Commercial	9.23
H	Tourist Commercial	24.91
H	Industrial	65.06
I	Commercial	3.94
I	Tourist Commercial	23.00
I	Industrial	77.58

- **Interpretation**:
  - o Area of industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land as a fraction of all employment lands

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Table 10: Area of industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land as a fraction of all employment lands

Categories	Sum of Area (ha)	Percentage of total
Commercial	121.1	13%
Industrial	667.8	71%
Tourist Commercial	148.1	16%

o Area of industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land within industrial, commercial and tourism designated areas.

Table 11: Area of industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land within industrial, commercial and tourism designated areas.

OCP Designation	Zoning Category	Area (ha)
General and Light Industrial	Industrial	510.23
General and Light Industrial	Commercial	0.79
Tourist Commercial	Commercial, Tourist Commercial	129.28
General and Village Commercial	Commercial, Tourist Commercial	79.92
Mixed Employment	Commercial	3.20
Mixed Employment	Industrial	9.54

- ● **Desired trend:** Increase or stable area of employment lands.
- ● **Methods:**
  - o Select all land zoned industrial and summarize by electoral area.
- ● **Reporting protocols**: This data should be continuously updated as changes occur, and thus can be reported on an annual basis.
- ● **Limitations**:
  - o Zoned employment lands may not necessarily actively be used as such.
  - o OCP policy does not directly equal zoning; rather, it is a desired consequence of the OCP.

12. Number of instruments (plans) updated or created as a result of the OCP
   - **Description**: This metric monitors ongoing intra-regional cooperation and collaboration efforts.
   - **Relevance**: The OCP is an effort to steer the CVRD toward the vision outlined in the plan. However, the CVRD already has plans and strategies meant to direct planning and development, the environment, transportation, parks and recreation. While some of these may already align with the OCP, it is important that they are reviewed and updated to ensure ongoing alignment with the vision and goals of the OCP. In addition, other plans and policies can be developed to further support the OCP.
   - **Examples of Relevant OCP Policies:**
     - GI.1. Zoning Bylaw for the Electoral Areas (in process) (Land Use Services)
     - GI.2. Parks, Recreation & Trails Culture Master Plan (electoral areas A to E have plans that need to be updated and could add F–I for a full representation of all electoral areas) (Parks)
     - GI.3. Infrastructure & Servicing Master Plans (on-going updates with Operations)
     - GI.4. Transit Future Action Plan 2012 (on-going) (Community Services)
     - GI.5. Development Cost Charge Bylaw (identify key areas) (Operations)
     - GI.6. Community Amenity Contributions Policy (in development) (Land Use Services)
     - GI.7. Regional Agriculture Area Plan (Land Use Services)
     - GI.8. Works and Servicing Bylaw (schedule amendments needed from Engineering) (Operations)
     - GI.9 Climate Change Adaptation and Risk Management Strategy (Land Use Services/Environment)
     - GI.10 CVRD Invasive Species Strategy and Bylaw (Land Use Services)
     - GI.11 Natural Asset Framework including Watershed Management Plans (Environment)
     - GI.12 Cultural Heritage Strategy (Land Use Services)
     - GI.13. Regional Transportation Plan (Community Services)
     - GI.14 Local Agriculture Plans (initiated) (Land Use Services)
     - GI.15 Cowichan Broadband Strategy (Economic Development)
     - GI.16 Coastal Flooding Mitigation Bylaw and Strategy
     - GI.17 Climate Crisis Mitigation Strategy (Land Use Services)
     - GI.18 Bulk Water Supply Plans (Environment)
     - GI.19 Marine Plan (Land Use Services)
     - GI.20 Affordable Housing Plan (Land Use Services)
     - GI.21 Regional Food Security Plan (Economic Development)
     - GI.22 Stormwater Management/Drainage Bylaw (Operations/Land Use Services)
     - GI.23 Conservation Strategy (Environment)
     - GI.24 Local Area Plans (Land Use Services)
     - GI.25 Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (Environment)
     - GI.26 Vancouver Island Transportation Plan (Community Services)
     - GI.27 Demolition and Construction Bylaw (Land Use Services)
     - GI.28 Regional Growth Strategy (Land Use Services)
     - GI.28 Build and maintain relationships with local First Nations, including the Cowichan Tribes, Ditidaht, Penelakut, Halalt, Stz'uminus, T'suubaa-asatx, Lyackson, Malahat, Pacheedaht and Pauquachin First Nations.

- ○ GI.36 Collaborate with all incorporated municipalities (District of North Cowichan, City of Duncan, Town of Lake Cowichan and Town of Ladysmith) to ensure alignment of visions and goals.
  - ○ GI.37Collaborate with all incorporated municipalities (District of North Cowichan, City of Duncan, Town of Lake Cowichan and Town of Ladysmith) to coordinate technical information and regional plans and strategies to guide sustainable land use into the future.
- **Data Sources:** None.
- **Data**: Checklist of the plans and strategies outlined in the OCP.
- **Interpretation**: Percent of plans updated.
- **Reporting Protocols:** Minimal work—this will just be a checklist of all the plans/strategies to be updated and plans/strategies to be created, and those items that have been updated/created will be checked off.
- Limitations:
  - ○ This is a primarily qualitative measure.

APPENDIX III: GROWTH CONTAINMENT BOUNDARY AND AREA METHODOLOGY

Growth Containment Boundaries

From 2006 to 2021, approximately 82% of population growth and 79% of dwelling growth in the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) occurred outside of the growth containment boundary (GCB). When analyzing all dwellings constructed since 2006, approximately 48% of units were built outside of the GCB. Bylaw 4373 – Official Community Plan (OCP) has a new land use strategy that has a goal to reverse this overtime to 80% of population growth and dwelling growth inside GCBs. It is designed to focus growth within areas that can be effectively serviced and at densities that make development economically feasible and attractive. Conversely, this land use strategy should also discourage further subdivision of rural lands located outside the GCB.

Delineation of GCBs usually focuses on identifying areas that are generally appropriate for growth or intensification. However, it is not possible within the OCP to establish whether every parcel within the GCB is appropriate for growth. Normal development application procedures associated with zoning, subdivision and development permit decisions will address suitability for development parcel by parcel within the GCB.

Through several workshops, the project team identified areas within each of the electoral areas that are well served for potential growth and allocated land use densities accordingly. The new GCB is meant to achieve several objectives:

- Link servicing corridors with population growth, where investments in water and sewer infrastructure can be supported by future growth.
- Focus growth within strategic locations near village centres, jobs, public transit and other amenities.
- Formalize existing development patterns where growth and subdivision have already occurred outside the former GCB.
- Ensure densities outside the GCB are reflective of rural land use patterns (below one unit per hectare) and densities inside the GCB are reflective of suburban and urban land use patterns (above one unit per hectare).
- Bill 44 *Housing Statutes Amendment Act* obliges the Regional District to enable additional secondary suites and ADUs on parcels that might be outside the GCB. When calculating capacity for growth the units permitted outside the GCB are counted. This will be updated with the Housing Needs Report in 2024.

The new GCB is thus a more defensible line, supported by land use designations and future servicing plans.

Schedule G maps the growth containment boundaries and growth areas by:

- illustrating the line that separates areas of growth from rural areas; and,
- highlighting areas within the boundary as areas of growth.

As noted in Section 1.6 of the OCP, Growth Containment Boundaries, the growth anticipated within each GCB is shaped by land use designations that fit each electoral area's unique characteristics. For instance, the GCBs in the south Cowichan (electoral areas A, B and C) are

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characterized by more multi-unit housing options and a greater mix of uses than the GCBs in more rural electoral areas like G & H, where suburban subdivisions replicating existing development patterns will be more common.

Once the new GCB was established, population and dwelling projections were updated with the following methodology.

Population and Dwelling Projections

Licker Geospatial completed population and dwelling projections as an update of previous analyses undertaken by rennie intelligence. These analyses are publicly available here. An update was requested to reflect two key considerations:

1. Population and dwelling growth have occurred between the original 2016 and updated 2020 baseline years; therefore, rebaselining the population and dwelling projections for 2050 was required; and
2. The development of an updated growth containment boundary, which is part of the OCP (land use and servicing updates) will result in the redistribution of growth based on a redistribution of developable land.

Rebaselining the populations and dwellings was relatively straightforward. First, the change in dwellings from 2017–2020 was determined using BC Assessment's information on the parcel's development year. This amount was then subtracted from the previously estimated 2017–2050 change in dwellings to rebaseline dwelling totals to 2020. As dwelling growth and population growth are only tenuously linked (i.e., population change is a function of births, deaths and migration as well as increased dwelling supply), it was also required to rebaseline population growth to both 2020 and 2050, which was completed using BC Stats 2020 population estimates that leverage similar data points used in the prior work. For both elements, it was noted that the 2020 estimates were almost entirely in line with the original projection to 2020 and no significant alterations to the 2050 overall growth estimates were required.

To redistribute population and dwellings to reflect updated GCBs and land uses, Licker Geospatial reused the methods developed in the prior work (i.e., three redistribution scenarios based on developable lands and servicing) but substituted updated inputs that reflect changes to land use designations and servicing. Additionally, the team tested two additional scenarios that incorporated allowable densities as well as developable lands to reflect evolving concepts regarding capacity for growth (see next section). Accordingly, the team created five scenarios to test the effects of both the old and new GCBs on growth distribution in the region:

1. Scenario 1: 90% of growth occurs only within electoral area GCBs and growth is redistributed between electoral areas based on proportion of developable lands inside and outside the GCBs. *(Same method as the previous projections but with new inputs.)*
2. Scenario 1A: 90% of growth occurs within electoral area GCBs. Growth is redistributed by capacity for new residential development (i.e., allowable densities on developable lands) *(This is a new method.)*
3. Scenario 2: 90% of growth occurs within both electoral area and municipal GCBs. Municipal refers to the District of North Cowichan, the City of Duncan, the Town of Lake Cowichan and the Town of Ladysmith. Growth is redistributed between electoral areas

and municipalities based on proportion of developable lands inside and outside the GCBs. *(Same method as the previous projections but with new inputs.)*

4. Scenario 2A: 90% of growth occurs within both electoral area and municipal GCBs. Growth is redistributed between electoral areas and municipalities by capacity for new residential development (i.e., allowable densities on developable lands) *(This is a new method.)*

5. Scenario 3: 75% of growth occurs within areas serviced by sewer and water areas, and 25% of growth occurs in unserviced areas. Growth is redistributed between electoral areas based on proportion of developable lands inside and outside of serviced areas. *(Same method as the previous projections but with new inputs.)*

The relevant parcel areas (hectares of potentially developable residential lands) that meet each of these criteria were calculated for each electoral area and municipality, where applicable. These areas were then used to proportionally divide out the previously calculated increases in dwellings from 2020 to 2050.

Of note, for each of the scenarios the project team did not specify the special study areas as residential lands because, while these lands may be redeveloped into the future, they require considerably more study and analysis, especially with regard to drinking water.

Once all dwelling projections were recalculated by scenario, a consensus model was created that combines all five of the scenarios above and takes the average of each projection to establish a mean dwelling or population change from 2020 to 2050. This is a conservative approach typically used in scenario modelling that captures uncertainty in projections and recognizes the fact that any of the above five scenarios are equally valid in terms of their effect on distribution of development potential.

From the consensus model, 2020 dwellings and population numbers were calculated at the sub-regional level, and 2050 dwelling and population growth distributions were established. Additionally, net new dwellings and population were calculated for each year, using the future growth rates estimated in the previous work (i.e., declining growth rates to 2050). Finally, disaggregate population projections, assumed birth, death and migration rates, and population yields per dwelling unit derived from the previous modelling were also implemented into the current modelling to create more accurate estimates of future population.