

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cowichan Businesses Invited to Join New Business Continuity Planning Program

Duncan, BC: Economic Development Cowichan and Community Futures Central Island are partnering to deliver a new Business Continuity Planning Program, funded by the Province of British Columbia through the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP).

The Cowichan region has been selected as one of three BC communities to participate in this pilot initiative aimed at helping small businesses prepare for the unexpected and build long-term resilience.

This free program is open to eight Cowichan-based businesses that:

- Provide essential goods, services, or expertise to the community (e.g., food producers, trades and construction companies, retailers, healthcare providers, child care, environmental services); or;
- Have experienced or are vulnerable to business disruptions such as drought, wildfires, tariffs, or road closures.

Participants will receive a Business Fitness Test, a water audit (for drought-impacted businesses), one-on-one coaching to develop a customized continuity plan, and peer support from local entrepreneurs. The program runs over 6-9 months and is valued at \$5,000, but offered free of charge to participants.

“This program is about helping businesses protect their operations, employees, and customers in the face of increasing uncertainty,” said Barry O’Riordan, Manager of Economic Development Cowichan. “We’re proud to support a proactive approach to business resilience in our region.”

Funded by the Province of British Columbia and delivered by Community Futures Central Island, this is a first-of-its-kind pilot to support rural BC businesses in preparing for climate and economic risks.

Businesses can apply online at: <https://forms.gle/4e9Z8HRsyGR9jybr8>

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