

Our Place, Our Future

**BYLAW 4373
OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN
FOR THE ELECTORAL AREAS**

APRIL 2023



CVRD

The Cowichan Valley Regional District covers an area of 3,473 km² 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. Through colonization, First Nations have been forcibly relocated onto reserve lands, which 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 regional collaboration committed to relationships and reconciliation.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District 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.



Table of Contents

● Purpose	7
● Process	9
● Planning Context	13
PART ONE Introduction & Context	14
● OCP Vision & Goals	15
● Jurisdiction	22
● Equity Framework	24
● Socio-Ecological Wheel	26
● Growth Projections	27
● Housing Needs	30
● Growth Containment Objectives & System Boundaries	34
PART TWO Land Use Designations	39
● CVRD Transect & Land Use Designations	40
● Residential Land Use Designations	44
● Employment Land Use Designations	47
● Civic & Open Space Land Use Designations	50
● Local Area Plans	55
● Development Approval Information	56
● Temporary Use Permits	57
PART THREE Policy Direction & Options	58
● Mitigate & Adapt to the Climate Crisis	60
● Manage Infrastructure Responsibly	70
● Make Distinct, Complete Communities	81
● Expand Mobility Options	91
● Protect & Restore Natural Assets	100
● Strengthen Local Food & Agriculture	110
● Enhance Regional Prosperity	121
● Improve Governance & Implementation	129
APPENDIX ONE Performance Metrics	141

List of Figures, Images & Tables

Figures

1.1 The Living Tree Diagram	10
1.2 Ideas Fair posters	11
1.3 The flow of community goals to regulations	13
1.4 Coastal View character sketch	17
1.5 Coastal Seafront character sketch	17
1.6 Lakeshore Cottage character sketch	17
1.7 Lowland Rural character sketch	18
1.8 Highland Cabin character sketch	18
1.9 Social Equity Framework	24
1.10 Equity policy key	24
1.11 CVRD Socio-Ecological Wheel	26
2.1 Land use designation consolidation	39
2.2 CVRD Transect diagram	42
2.3 Range of Land Use Designations	43

Images

Shoreline in the CVRD	Cover
Treeline in the CVRD	Inside Front Cover
1.1 Autumn water	6
1.2 Farmhouse in a corn field	9
1.4 View from Mount Tzouhalem	14
1.5 Seals in the harbour	15
1.6 Cobble Hill Market	16
1.7 Coastal precedent	19
1.8 Lakefront precedent	19
1.9 Highland precedent	19
1.10 Great blue heron	21
1.11 Home in the CVRD	33
2.1 Mill Bay Marina walkway	39
2.2 Large lot rural example	44
2.3 Small lot rural example	44
2.3 Country suburban example	44
2.4 Large lot suburban example	45
2.5 Medium lot suburban example	45
2.6 Compact lot suburban example	45
2.7 Village residential example	46
2.8 Village core example	46
2.9 Mixed employment example	47
2.10 Crossroads commercial example	47
2.11 General commercial example	47
2.12 Village commercial example	48
2.13 Tourist commercial example	48
2.14 General industrial example	48
2.15 Light industrial example	49
2.16 Forestry & resources example	49
2.17 Agriculture example	49
2.18 Infrastructure example	50
2.19 Institutional example	50
2.20 Parks & open space example	50
2.21 Water example	51
2.22 Bike on a wooden bridge	52
2.23 Home with a stone chimney	55

3.1 Mill Bay Marina walkway	58
3.2 Marsh lookout	59
3.3 One World drawing	60
3.4 Low creek water	61
3.5 Solar panels	63
3.6 Home with solar panels and garden	68
3.7 Long grass with home in the background	69
3.8 Water pipe on exterior of building	70
3.9 Water treatment system	71
3.10 Mill site on the water	72
3.11 Water treatment plant	74
3.12 Waterfront swimming area	76
3.13 Rainwater collection barrel	76
3.14 Greenhouse	76
3.15 Union 22 building	81
3.16 Cowichan Bay float homes	82
3.17 Mixed-use building	84
3.18 Close-up of home glazing	88
3.19 People in a busy downtown	90
3.20 Driver helping woman from handiDart	91
3.21 Crosswalk	92
3.22 BC Transit bus stop	93
3.23 Bike on a wooden bridge	98
3.24 Kinsol Trestle walkway	100
3.25 Sandstone beach with driftwood	101
3.26 Yellow maple leaves over the Cowichan River	103
3.27 Blueberries on the branch	107
3.28 Couple and dog walking on a path	109
3.29 Red barn	110
3.30 Free-range kitchens	111
3.31 Child petting a cow	113
3.32 Roadside farm sign	114
3.33 Red brandy building	118
3.34 Farm buildings	120
3.35 Side of a building	121
3.36 People eating at in an orchard	124
3.37 Hand gesturing to a computer screen	129
3.38 Tracing neighbourhood lines	130
3.39 Winter landscape	139
3.40 Shoreline in the CVRD	140

Tables

1.1 Electoral Area Population Projections, 2021-2050	28
1.2 Electoral Area Dwelling Projections, 2021-2050	29
1.3 Electoral Area Housing Needs for 2027 and 2032	31
1.4 Electoral Area Projected Housing Need with Affordability Considerations	32
1.5 Electoral Area Projected Housing Need with Affordability Considerations	33
1.6 Electoral Area Population within and outside of GCBs by Milestone Year	34
1.7 Electoral Area Residential Lands within GCBs (hectares)	35
1.8 Electoral Area Residential Lands Outside the GCBs (hectares)	36

APPENDIX ONE

Images

1.1 Alpine forest with mountain background	1
1.2 Rainwater collection barrel	3
1.3 Shoreline in the CVRD	Outside Back Cover

Tables

1.1 Household proximity to amenities assessment targets	15
1.2 Total population within 400 m walking distance of public transit	18
1.3 CVRD managed park area by electoral area	20
1.4 Park area as a fraction of undeveloped land	21
1.5 Park area as a fraction of OCP park designation land	21
1.6 Agricultural land use in the CVRD	23
1.7 Percentage of ALR land in food/crop production	23
1.8 Number of businesses in the CVRD	26
1.9 Hectares of zoned employment land by gross category and electoral area	28
1.10 Area of industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land as a fraction of all employment lands	29
1.11 Area of industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land within industrial, commercial and tourism designated areas	29

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

—copyright 2022 John Edwards, poet laureate (Area H)



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 has been organized as follows:

PART ONE | INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

This part provides the plan's overall vision and introduces the eight policy goals. It also presents two guiding frameworks that support the development of the plan's objectives and policies. The Equity Framework and the Socio-Ecological Wheel both set 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, and the integrity of our environment.

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

This part 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 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.

Designations are organized in three categories:

- Residential
- Employment
- Civic & Open Space

PART THREE | POLICIES This part contains eight policy sections, each of which forms a policy chapter. These include:

- 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

The final section on governance and implementation provides guidance on enacting many of the objectives and policies found throughout the OCP. 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.

Across all three parts, two frameworks have been applied to give additional guidance on the climate crisis and social equity. The Equity Framework and Socio-Ecological Wheel contextualize the objectives and policies found within the OCP and provide suggestions for implementation that support more equitable and sustainable outcomes.

The OCP is made stronger by its alignment with a multitude of other CVRD strategies, master plans and other 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 updating to ensure the effective implementation of the vision, goals, objectives and policies of the OCP. These are listed in the section on governance and implementation.



Process

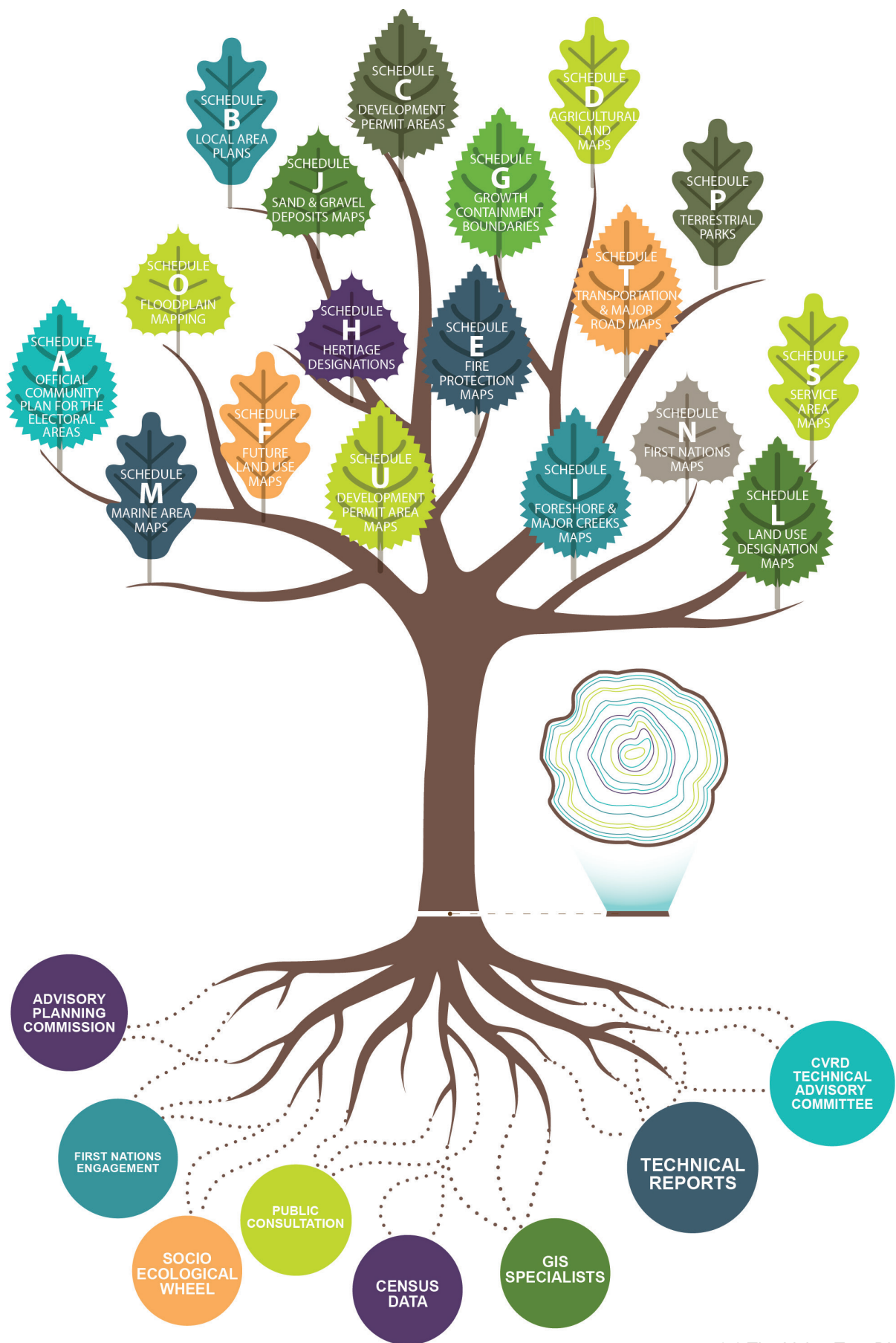
The CVRD's OCP planning process is captured in the Living Tree diagram (illustrated on the following page), which shows the OCP's growth and change over time and its fundamental roots in community engagement and previous work. Just like a tree, leaves and fruit can only blossom with a strong trunk and 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 coordinated 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, that will become Schedule B to the OCP.



1.1 The Living Tree Diagram

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.

GIS Specialists

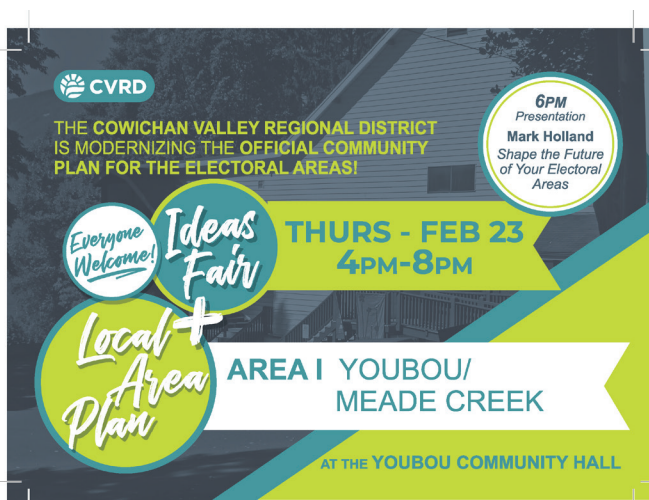
GIS based analysis based in housing, employment and population projections defined growth containment boundaries and land use designations.

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.



1.2 Ideas Fair Posters

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY 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.

Analysis (2019-2025)

- GIS analysis
- CVRD internal technical advisory review
- CVRD technical reports

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, 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, Penelakut Tribe (2022)
- Letters were written to Cowichan Tribes, Penelakut Tribe and the Ditidaht, Pacheedaht, Halalt, Stz'uminus, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Lyackson, Malahat, 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).

Open Houses (Winter 2020)

- Four open houses were held with over 400 participants focusing on the OCP's vision and policy direction.

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.

Advisory Planning Commissions (Ongoing)

- All APC members meeting held virtually.
- Individual APC meetings held virtually and in person.

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.

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 over 30 community volunteers to host their own Community Circles.
- More than 750 participants provided ideas and completed 125 workbooks.

Ideas Fairs (Winter 2022-2023)

- Ideas Fairs are a celebration of community ideas and participation in the OCP.
- 7 Ideas Fairs were held in 2022-2023.
- At the Ideas Fairs, electoral area communities were asked to share their local area planning priorities and confirm regional policy direction.

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 the community involvement informs the OPC process and content.

Final OCP Engagement

- Inter-governmental referrals to neighbouring and senior government agencies, local First Nations, School District 68 and 79, and the Agricultural Land Commission.
- Bylaw Reading and a Public Hearing.

Planning Instruments

Official Community Plan I 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.

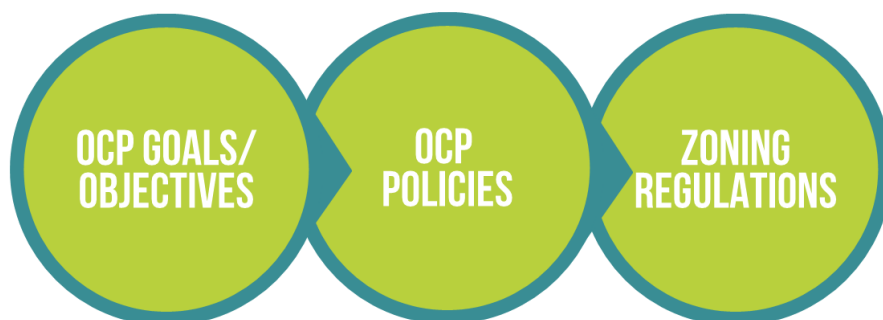
Land Use Designation I In an OCP, each property is given a land use designation, which represents what the community has envisioned for the future use and density of the parcel. Sometimes the designation broadly matches what is already built there. Other times, the designation prescribes something different—either a change in density, use or both. Land use designations are described in text and mapped to provide the spatial application of the designation.

Development Permit Area I 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 (an exemption). Development permit areas also include guidelines which can be in the OCP or the zoning bylaw.

Growth Containment Boundary I 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 in 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 growth containment boundary supports responsible growth management decisions and the effective delivery of infrastructure and community services.

Local Area Plans I Local Area Plans provide detailed and area-specific policies that capture and enhance the unique identities and characteristics of a community. Local Area Plan development is currently underway for several local areas that will form Schedule B of this OCP.

Zoning Bylaw I Implementation of the OCP belongs 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 provide specific regulations, and must be consistent with the OCP. The OCP goals and objectives are high level statements, which flow into focused policy and then into regulations. Figure 1.2 illustrates this increasing specificity.



PART ONE

Introduction & Context



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.





A collective of vibrant and distinct communities

“Community character” is defined by a range of elements: historical and intangible, permanent and impermanent.

From forests and farmland to coastal edges, 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. Understanding the natural setting and context of each community helps to define uniqueness and “sense of place.”

This understanding further supports the development of land use policies and design guidelines that are sensitive to the nuances of specific places and local communities. Simply put, this approach helps ensure that the rules governing future growth will result in development that is respectful of local culture and is rooted in the CVRD’s unique values and identity.

The character sketches on the following page explore more closely the many unique, character-defining elements associated with specific landscape types and traditional architectural styles and design responses found throughout the Cowichan Valley:

Coastal | defined by coastal edges and the waterfront

Lakefront | defined by inland water bodies and riparian areas

Highlands | defined by forests, resource lands and the backcountry

Lowlands | defined by woodlands and agricultural valleys.

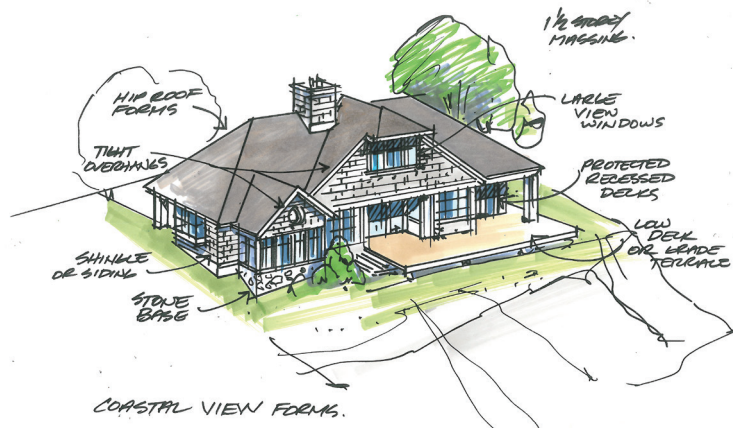
While OCP policy, zoning regulation and design guidelines must necessarily deconstruct specific attributes, such as building size, shape, elements and physical relationships (in order to effectively manage them), character sketches are intended to be integrative.

In simple terms, the following drawings illustrate typical and traditional architectural styles from the Cowichan Valley and give direction to the general forms and character that are preferred in the region. Within each typology there is a range.

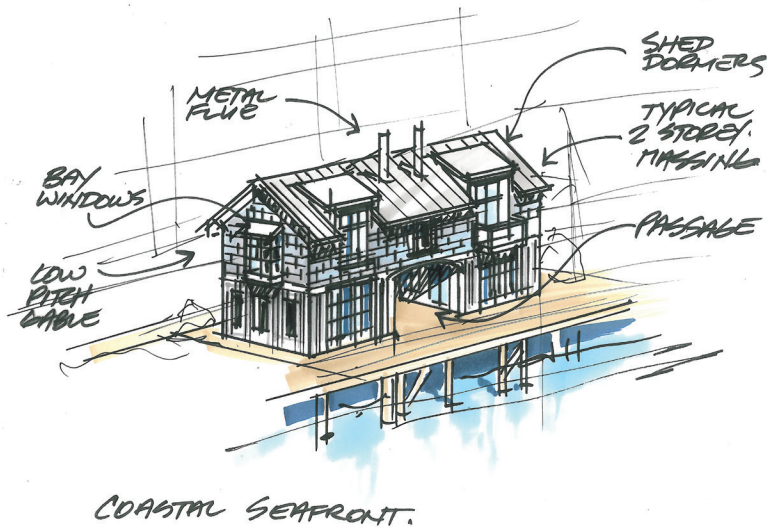
COASTAL

The “coastal” type is defined by low-pitch roof forms and more sprawling massing (in less-constrained sites), large windows to take in water views and the extension of interior rooms with decks and/or terraces that relate to outdoor spaces.

The “seafront” type is defined by character elements of low-pitch roof forms, bay windows and eclectic massing, with defining elements that often include shingle-style cladding, shed dormers and through-passages that connect to waterfront boardwalks and frame water views.



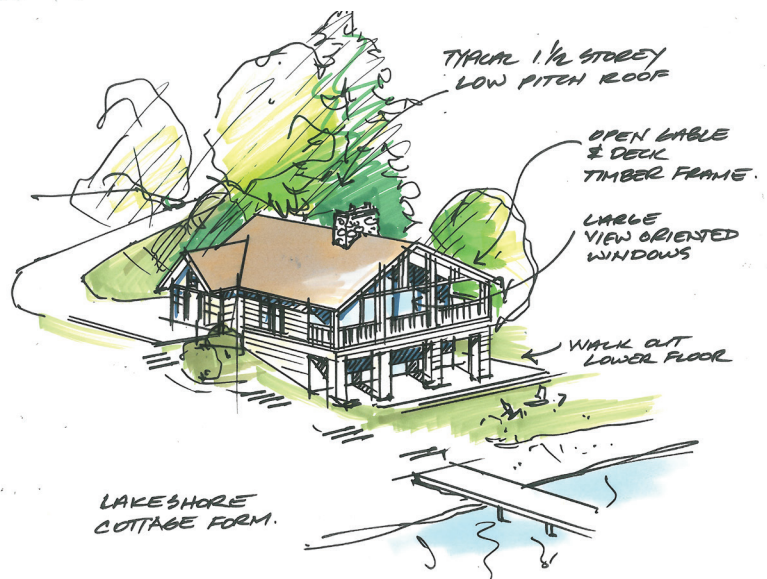
1.4 Coastal View character sketch



1.5 Coastal Seafront character sketch

LAKEFRONT

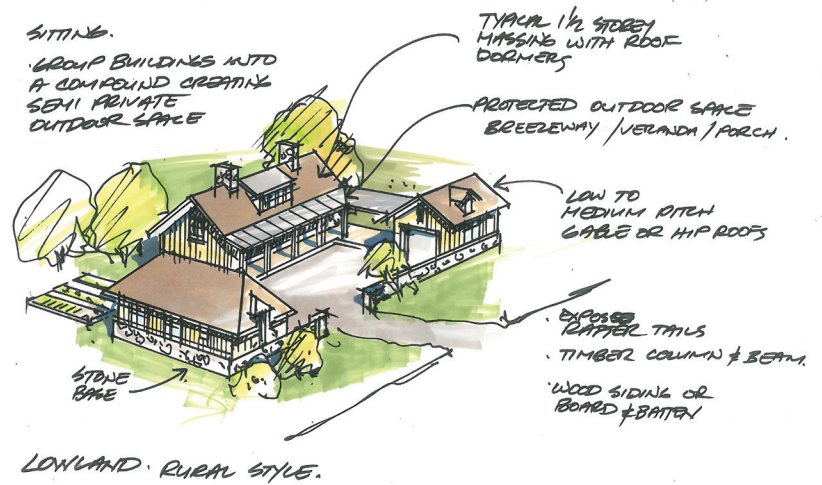
The “lakefront” type is defined by “cottage” character elements of low-pitch roof forms and exposed timber details/timber framing. Large, view-oriented windows are typically organized as part of open gable ends and generous decks that take advantage of water views. In hillside conditions, walk-out basements resolve stepped building forms to the natural grade.



1.6 Lakeshore Cottage character sketch

LOWLANDS

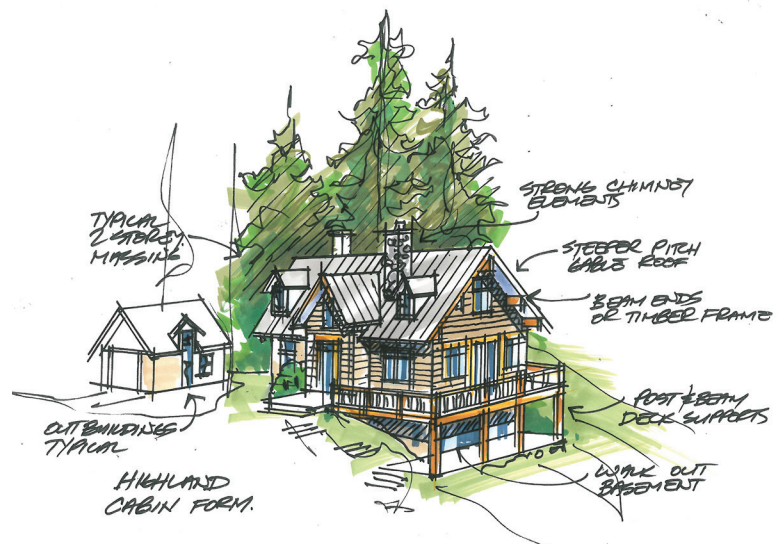
The “lowlands” type is defined by character elements of low-pitch roof forms, extended overhangs and covered porch structures. Typical of working landscapes and rural acreages, the building program is often divided into a collection of purpose-built structures (e.g., detached garage, wood-shed, barns) and organized around central, interior spaces (for arrival/access) and/or provide service to exterior spaces (e.g., garden shed).



1.7 Lowland Rural character sketch

HIGHLANDS

The “highlands” type is defined by “mountain cabin” character elements of relatively higher-pitched roof forms (associated with shedding snow loads), exposed timber details/timber framing and a greater extent of stone masonry reflective of native materials. Side decks connect to natural grade, and tighter massing is more vertical in response to terrain constraints in steep and/or forested hillsides.



1.8 Highland Cabin character sketch

Coastal Villages I Examples include: Cowichan Bay, Mill Bay and Saltair

These villages offer a direct and crucial connection to the sea. They often include an industrial port, recreational marina and/or ferry connection that help draw residents, employees and tourists. On the edge of these villages and more urban centres, residential subdivisions have emerged to supply relatively affordable single-detached homes. Some include compact lots, while others resemble more of an estate character.



COASTAL PRECEDENT

Lowland Crossroads & Rail Stations I Examples include: Cobble Hill, Cowichan Station, Diamond/North Oyster, Glenora and Sahtlam

Historically, several communities emerged along the southern railway of Vancouver Island. The increased connectivity helped grow local economies, create jobs and encourage clusters of development in close proximity to stations. Similarly, at the corner of major highway intersections, a small cluster of buildings—often a community hall, gas station and/or convenience store—supported a larger rural community. This pattern of development has and continues to help define the Cowichan Valley's many rural “crossroads” identities.



LAKEFRONT PRECEDENT

Lakefront Townsites I Examples include: Caycuse, Honeymoon Bay, Mesachie Lake, Shawnigan Lake and Youbou

On the shores of Shawnigan, Cowichan and Mesachie Lakes lie several communities that have a strong relationship with the water. While the forest industry and a mill may have been the original catalysts for development, now, patterns reflect the desire to be in close proximity to the scenic landscapes.



HIGHLAND PRECEDENT

Highland Settlements I Examples include: Malahat and Shawnigan Station

Constrained by steep slopes, thin soils and rocky hillsides, the highlands are a complex landscape dominated by forest ecosystems and resource uses with the exception of a few small communities. Ideally, these settlements are situated to take advantage of their prospect and associated views.

Eight OCP Policy Area Goals

Derived from the OCP's vision are eight goals. Central to the goals 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:



**1. MITIGATE & ADAPT TO
THE CLIMATE CRISIS**



**5. PROTECT & RESTORE
NATURAL ASSETS**



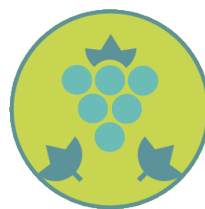
**2. MANAGE INFRASTRUCTURE
RESPONSIBLY**



**6. STRENGTHEN LOCAL
FOOD & AGRICULTURE**



**3. MAKE DISTINCT,
COMPLETE COMMUNITIES**



**7. ENHANCE REGIONAL
PROSPERITY**



4. EXPAND MOBILITY OPTIONS



**8. IMPROVE GOVERNANCE
& IMPLEMENTATION**



1.2 Jurisdiction

The OCP establishes objectives and policies for its land use designations and for the eight goals listed previously. 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 where 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 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);
- management of the agricultural lands (Ministry of Agriculture & Food)¹;
- water allocation and licencing (Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship); and
- private managed forest land (PMFL), which make up nearly half of all of the lands within the CVRD and are governed under provincial legislation (Ministry of Forests).

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

¹ 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.

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, 9 First Nations with Traditional Territory in the region are in stage 5 of the 6 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.

As of the date this OCP was adopted, 11 First Nations with Traditional Territory in the region are in stage 4 or 5 of the 6 stage BC Treaty Commission process. This includes the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, representing Cowichan Tribes, Penelakut Tribe, Halalt, Lyackson and Ts'uubaa-asatx First Nations; Te'mexw Treaty Association representing Malahat Nation; Ditidaht, Pacheedaht, Hupačasath, K'ómoks and Snuneymuxw First Nations.

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 Equity Framework

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

The CVRD applies an 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. As the CVRD learns more from the community, this framework should continue to adapt to reflect equity considerations.

The framework identifies policies within the OCP that:

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

Equity is defined 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 policy makers can use to understand the equity impacts of different actions.



1.9 Social Equity Framework

EQUITY POLICY

○ PRIORITIZE

△ IMPLEMENTATION
CONSIDERATIONS

1.10 Equity policy key

Social equity applies to each policy chapter and should be central in decision making.

These symbols appear throughout the OCP to identify policies that should be prioritized or need greater consideration to foster social equity in the CVRD.

Key Concepts

This page introduces some 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; and 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 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 so as 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 given 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.

Definitions adapted from the City for All Women Initiative (CAWI). Advancing Equity and Inclusion: A Guide for Municipalities, 2015.

1.4 Socio-Ecological Wheel

The Doughnut of Social and Planetary Boundaries model is a useful framework for this OCP. Kate Raworth, creator of the Doughnut, explains the concept as a compass for human prosperity in the 21st century, and the goal is to meet the needs of all people within the means of the planet. It consists of two concentric rings:

- A social foundation - to ensure that no one is left falling short on life's essentials.
- An ecological ceiling - to ensure that humanity does not collectively overshoot planetary boundaries.

Between these two limits lies a doughnut-shaped space that is both ecologically safe and socially just—a space in which humanity can both survive and thrive and where a regenerative and distributive economy can flourish. This framework underlies several of the policies within the OCP and should be considered when evaluating impacts of new developments.

An adapted version of the doughnut, the Socio-Ecological Wheel as seen below, has been created to situate and visualize the eight OCP goals as they relate to a social foundation and an ecological ceiling.



1.11 CVRD Socio-Ecological Wheel

1.5 Growth Projections

In 2019, rennie & associates® prepared population and dwelling projections for the CVRD with an outlook to 2050. These projections were subsequently updated by Licker Geospatial in 2022 based on new GCBs within the electoral areas, updated census population data, household and demographic information, as well as recent development data. Projections for the CVRD (including both incorporated communities and electoral areas) were completed 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 influencing growth 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, we expected 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.

Population Projections

	Total Population					
	2021	2022	2024	2027	2032	2050
Electoral Area A	4,955	4,998	5,086	5,228	5,486	6,524
Electoral Area B	8,990	9,074	9,250	9,530	10,042	12,099
Electoral Area C	5,050	5,082	5,148	5,254	5,446	6,222
Electoral Area D	3,530	3,552	3,597	3,670	3,802	4,333
Electoral Area E	4,260	4,280	4,323	4,390	4,513	5,008
Electoral Area F	1,790	1,827	1,905	2,028	2,253	3,159
Electoral Area G	2,435	2,452	2,488	2,544	2,648	3,065
Electoral Area H	2,610	2,634	2,685	2,765	2,912	3,502
Electoral Area I	1,415	1,454	1,535	1,664	1,899	2,847
Total	35,035	35,353	36,017	37,073	39,001	46,759

Table 1.1 Electoral Area Population Projections, 2021-2050

Notes:

- Projections are based on demographic trends sourced from the 2016 and 2021 censuses and capacity for growth per updated growth containment boundaries.
- By 2032, the CVRD anticipates approximately 52% of growth occurring within 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.

Dwelling Projections

	Total Dwellings					
	2021	2022	2024	2027	2032	2050
Electoral Area A	2,166	2,184	2,223	2,284	2,396	2,847
Electoral Area B	3,891	3,928	4,004	4,125	4,346	5,237
Electoral Area C	2,283	2,297	2,325	2,371	2,454	2,788
Electoral Area D	1,585	1,594	1,614	1,646	1,703	1,933
Electoral Area E	1,713	1,722	1,740	1,770	1,823	2,039
Electoral Area F	904	920	954	1,008	1,106	1,502
Electoral Area G	1,374	1,381	1,387	1,422	1,467	1,647
Electoral Area H	12,38	1,249	1,270	1,305	1,369	1,625
Electoral Area I	1,172	1,189	1,224	1,280	1,383	1,796
Total	16,326	16,464	16,752	17,210	18,048	21,416

Table 1.2 Electoral Area Dwelling Projections, 2021-2050

Notes:

- Projections are based on Census 2021 and updated growth containment boundaries.
- 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.

1.6 Housing Needs

Using the population and dwelling projection developed 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 (15-24 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 Census 2016 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 Census 2021 (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 Census 2016 (for instance, in electoral area A, 4% of single detached dwellings contained 1 bedroom, 17% 2 bedrooms, 41% 3 bedrooms and 37% 4 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 need.

	Housing Need By			Housing Need By		
	2027			2032		
	0-1br	2br	3br+	0-1br	2br	3br+
Electoral Area A	8	29	81	15	57	158
Electoral Area B	22	57	194	42	112	378
Electoral Area C	3	21	36	6	40	70
Electoral Area D	5	18	43	10	36	83
Electoral Area E	6	14	54	12	26	106
Electoral Area F	14	23	67	27	46	130
Electoral Area G	3	10	22	6	19	42
Electoral Area H	3	13	35	5	26	68
Electoral Area I	9	25	68	17	48	132
Total	72	211	600	140	410	1,167

Table 1.3 Electoral Area Housing Needs for 2027 and 2032

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 dividing the sum 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 utilized 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 CMCH 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 5th 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.

	2027 Unit Demand - With Affordability Considerations			
	Before Affordability Considerations		After Affordability Considerations	
	Detached Units	Attached Units	Detached Units	Attached Units
Electoral Area A	102	16	88	30
Electoral Area B	251	9	225	35
Electoral Area C	59	2	47	14
Electoral Area D	56	8	51	14
Electoral Area E	78	1	64	15
Electoral Area F	109	2	72	39
Electoral Area G	36	1	28	8
Electoral Area H	52	2	42	12
Electoral Area I	99	2	70	30

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

	2032 Unit Demand - With Affordability Considerations			
	Before Affordability Considerations		After Affordability Considerations	
	Detached Units	Attached Units	Detached Units	Attached Units
Electoral Area A	199	30	172	58
Electoral Area B	489	17	437	68
Electoral Area C	115	5	92	28
Electoral Area D	109	16	99	27
Electoral Area E	152	2	125	29
Electoral Area F	212	5	140	76
Electoral Area G	70	1	55	16
Electoral Area H	102	3	82	23
Electoral Area I	192	3	137	58

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



1.7 Growth Containment Objectives and System Boundaries

The GCBs identify lands where growth will be focused and where the majority of public investment will be directed.

Schedule G – Growth Containment Boundaries is a refinement and reassessment of the previous growth containment boundaries. 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.

	Total New Population by Milestone Year											
	2021		2022		2024		2027		2032		2050	
	Within GCB	Outside GCB	Within GCB	Outside GCB	Within GCB	Outside GCB	Within GCB	Outside GCB	Within GCB	Outside GCB	Within GCB	Outside GCB
Electoral Area A	36	6	74	13	151	26	274	47	499	85	1,336	228
Electoral Area B	69	15	139	31	286	64	519	116	944	210	2,532	564
Electoral Area C	29	2	60	4	123	9	223	16	405	29	1,084	77
Electoral Area D	21	1	42	2	87	4	157	7	286	13	766	35
Electoral Area E	6	14	13	28	27	58	49	105	89	191	237	512
Electoral Area F	23	14	47	28	97	58	177	106	321	192	860	515
Electoral Area G	17	0	34	1	71	1	128	3	233	5	625	13
Electoral Area H	13	11	27	22	55	46	100	83	182	151	486	404
Electoral Area I	39	0	78	1	161	1	292	2	532	4	1,423	11
Total	253	63	514	130	1,058	267	1,919	485	3,491	880	9,349	2,359

Table 1.6 Electoral Area Population within and outside of GCBs by Milestone Year

Generally, land use modelling forecasts suggest that approximately 20% of new growth will occur within the 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 in Table 1.6, due to the fact that total growth has been averaged annually, which does not account for major developments completed during singular years.

	Area within the Growth Containment Boundaries (hectares)						
	Large Lot Rural	Country Suburban	Large Lot Suburban	Medium Lot Suburban	Compact Lot Suburban	Village Residential	Village Core Residential
Electoral Area A	-	-	447	71	63	8	2
Electoral Area B	-	19	426	383	8	11	-
Electoral Area C	-	-	308	58	28	13	-
Electoral Area D	-	51	39	70	14	5	19
Electoral Area E	-	-	-	41	-	9	-
Electoral Area F	-	19	87	204	-	43	7
Electoral Area G	-	356	-	2	-	-	-
Electoral Area H	-	-	106	24	-	-	-
Electoral Area I	20	224	185	47	69	11	18
Total	20	669	1,598	900	182	100	46

Table 1.7 Electoral Area Residential Lands within Growth Containment Boundaries (hectares)

	Area Outside the Growth Containment Boundaries (hectares)				
	Large Lot Rural	Small Lot Rural	Large Lot Suburban	Medium Lot Suburban	Village Residential
Electoral Area A	-	478	-	25	-
Electoral Area B	333	868	-	15	-
Electoral Area C	-	66	-	60	4
Electoral Area D	-	94	-	-	-
Electoral Area E	519	216	-	9	-
Electoral Area F	715	308	35	-	-
Electoral Area G	-	-	-	-	-
Electoral Area H	197	611	-	-	-
Electoral Area I	-	-	4	-	-
Total	1,764	2,641	39	109	4

Table 1.8 Electoral Area Residential Lands Outside the Growth Containment Boundaries (hectares)

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 include:

- A contiguous growth area across electoral areas A, B and C, linking Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill
- Containment of Saltair (electoral area G), North Oyster/Diamond (electoral area H) and Paldi (electoral area F) within new GCBs
- 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 and the expansion of utilities (e.g. sewer, waste, power, roads) is not supported in the ALR.
- Growth is occurring primarily in areas that have community water and sewerage systems.
- Growth is focused in areas of higher population density, such as village centres and residential neighbourhoods with rural connections to centres.
- New service areas should meet a minimum density of ten residents or ten employment jobs per hectare measured over a minimum developed area of ten hectares in order for transit service to be considered.

Growth Containment Boundaries by Electoral Area

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-family housing options near the centre of the village and support the enhancement of servicing corridors, notably between Mill Bay and Shawnigan Lake.

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 Lake-Mill Bay Road. There is also significant development pressure in the area and growth in this area is

intended to support multi-family 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 Community Hall. 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 new employment hub near the Trans-Canada Highway and Chapman Road.

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 Lanbourn and Cherry Point neighbourhoods to the east. Very modest growth is expected in Electoral Area D and is intended to support multi-family housing options near Wilmot and Pritchard Roads.

Electoral Area E

Eagle Heights and the Koksilah Business Park are the focus of this GCB. The area is characterized by an industrial business park adjacent to the Trans-Canada Highway. 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 this GCB. 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 zoning entitlements 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.

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 is expected 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 is 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 westward to the Cottonwood Creek area. Growth is expected to occur west of the established village site where zoning entitlements exist and in areas along Marble Bay Road and Meade Creek Road as key destinations for tourism and recreation.

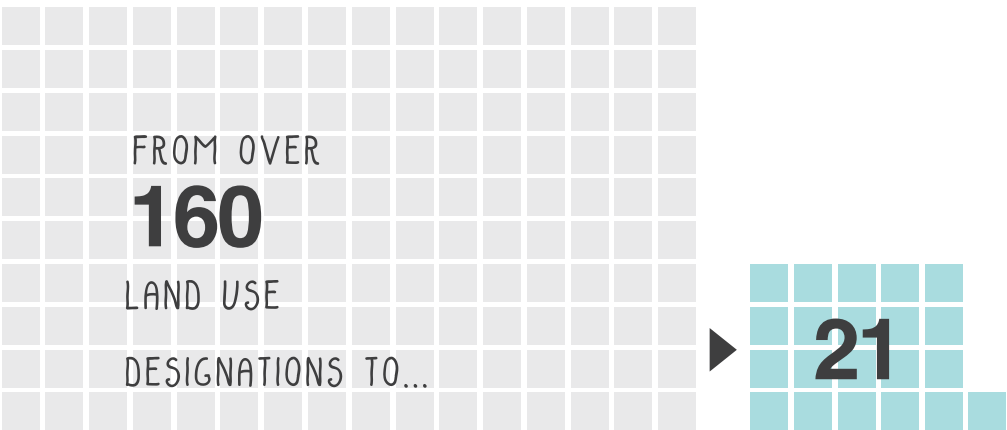
PART TWO

Land Use Designations



2.1 CVRD Transect & Land Use Designations

The Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas consolidates over 160 land use designations across various electoral areas into approximately 21.



2.1 Land use designation consolidation

Each of the land use designations includes 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. The transect is aspirational and provides the thematic framework for future work within local plan areas.

Each policy chapter includes policies for each of the CVRD transect’s sub-areas. These sub-areas are as follows, and their relationships to the land use designations are illustrated on page 40.

Resource & Natural

The CVRD’s resource and natural lands 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

With its diverse landforms and fertile soils, much of the lower lying areas of the region are ideal for productive agricultural uses. These are lands in large part protected by the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) 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

The suburban sub-area is one that is characterized by low-density residential subdivision in the shape of single 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

Many of the settlements that exist within the CVRD's purview have a core that fits within the village slice of the transect. Here lies a small mix of uses—primarily commercial and residential—that stem from servicing the needs of an industry, a stop along the railway or a seaport.

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

Apart from the incorporated municipalities, very few communities in the CVRD reach an urban pattern of development as illustrated in the transect. In these areas, a high concentration of uses, including multi-family residential, commercial, institutional and industrial, exist within a highly connected environment with multiple transportation options.

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

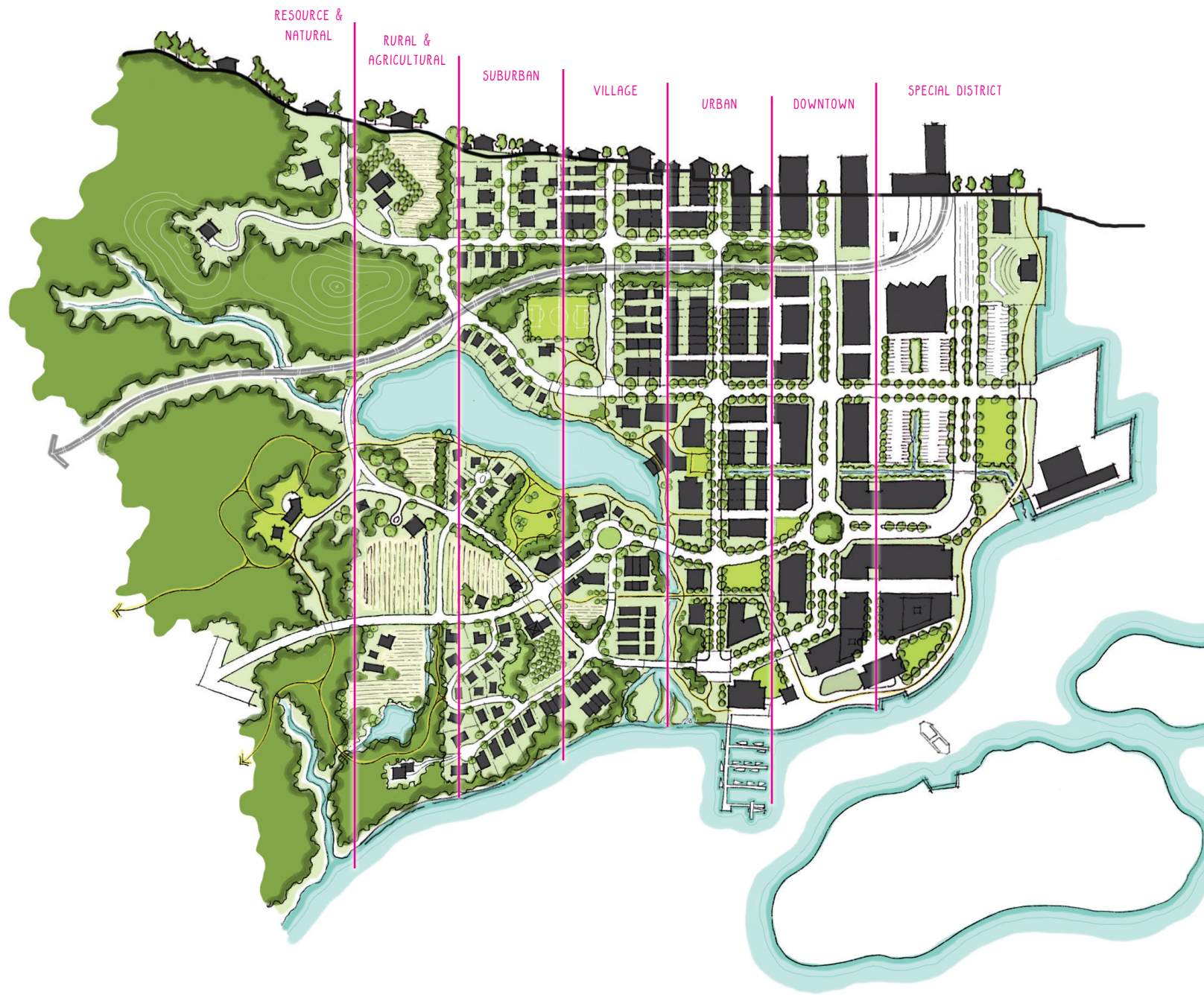
Downtowns represent the highest concentration of buildings, people and jobs within an urban context. While this part of the transect doesn't typically exist in the CVRD—except within its incorporated municipalities—it is included here for context and completeness.

Special District

For those areas that don't quite fit within the traditional patterns of development, a part of the transect is reserved for "special districts." These are often characterized as major, single-use destinations or attractions like fairgrounds, mills, ports, arenas and more.

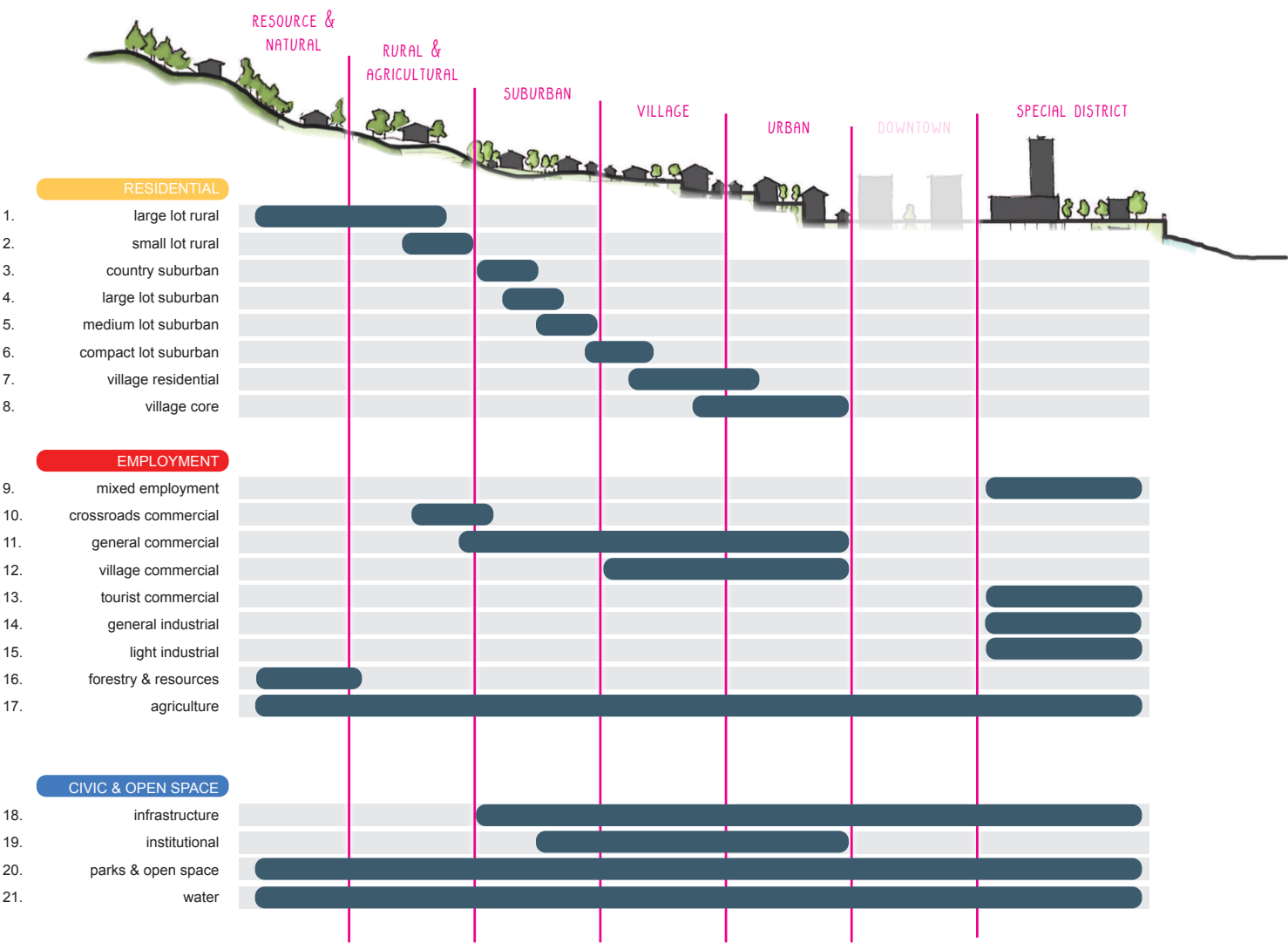
These require special consideration and attention as they commonly break from typical urban patterns, can be quite disruptive to their surroundings and generate significant traffic.

A Guiding Framework | The CVRD Transect



2.2 CVRD Transect diagram

A Range of Land Use Options



2.3 Range of Land Use Designations

Residential Land Use Designations



Large Lot Rural

PURPOSE: Preserve natural and rural settings with large lots, 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 or 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 single 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 single 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 single 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 single 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 & Duplexes

DENSITY: Maximum 30 UPH (plus permitted suites)



Village Residential

PURPOSE: Enable high-density single 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 a local area plan. 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, Duplex, Triplex, Fourplex, Townhomes

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



Village Core

PURPOSE: Enable multi-family 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 a local area plan. 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, 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, commercial and office. 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: Variable



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-family 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 tourism 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 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-family 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: n/a



■ Agriculture

PURPOSE: Accommodate and recognize the provincial ALR regulations that permit a variety of farming and non-farming activities, including basic production of agricultural products, value-added production activities and agri-tourism. 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) and other community-focused services.

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

Land Use Designation Overlays

Special Study Area – Infrastructure & Servicing

PURPOSE: Further study ways to enhance servicing sustainability in locations outside of the GCB.

Electoral Area B – South Shawnigan Lake

Nearly the entire edge 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. In order 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 providing 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 & Infrastructure and Servicing**

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

- 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 will be produced at the developer's expense.

Electoral Area A – Partridge Road

Parcels along Partridge Road have been identified for the possibility of much needed affordable seniors housing. Though this location would be ideal for such a project (e.g. proximity to commercial amenities and transit), water capacity constraints make building multi-family residential buildings in this area 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. A study of water services in this area should be done in coordination with the Comprehensive Development Special Study Area for the Couverdon Lands.

Electoral Area A – Couverdon Lands

Large parcels designated for Forestry and Resources southeast of the Mill Bay village have been subject to development interest. These parcels represent a significant amount of greenfield land that could help contribute to the region's pressing housing needs. Given the large scale of the parcels in question, development here may also help fund and secure a sustainable and connected water supply for Mill Bay. 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. This study should be done in coordination with the Malahat First Nation and the owners of the Partridge Road 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 – Duncan Airport

The long-term vision for the Duncan Airport and adjacent gravel pit operation is for a potential comprehensive development. This location, in close proximity to Eagle Heights and Koksilah Industrial Park, represents an opportunity to build a self-contained, complete and compact neighbourhood. Should the current uses reach their end of life and property owners decide to explore development options, key considerations include 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, buffers with nearby agricultural lands and more.

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. Past rezoning applications failed to proceed to development, and any applications to develop these lands should provide a master plan that considers the site's unique challenges. In particular, detailed information on how to provide sustainable and economically feasible infrastructure servicing is key.

Special Study Area – New Parks & Open Spaces

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 – Wake Lake

The Wake Lake Nature reserve provides critical habitat for two amphibians listed by Canada as species of Special Concern: the Western Toad and the Red-legged Frog. In order to further protect this sensitive habitat and the species within it, opportunities to expand the Wake Lake Nature Reserve and connect it through ecological corridors to other nearby habitat should be explored.

2.2 Local Area Plans

Local area plans are planning documents that provide greater detail on growth management, often needed for communities that are expected to experience rapid and/or significant change. These plans help shape growth in a way that contributes to more place-specific, well-designed and livable neighbourhoods.

Where community infrastructure is unable to accommodate growth and expanded capacity is not anticipated within current plans, no local area plans are necessary. Instead, community character statements will seek to respect the unique identity of communities as defined by local settlement patterns, landscapes and buildings.

Where growth is planned, measurable criteria defined within the OCP will provide clarity and consistency regarding what triggers the development of a local area plan. Specifically, local plans will be developed as growth management tools to address more critical local issues in detail, especially as they relate to the allocation of density and the provision of infrastructure.

Local area plans should be developed to define future land use and development in greater detail and specifically considering the necessary partnerships between the public and private sectors in implementing community visions. Specifically, each local area plan will contain more detailed policies, strategies and guidelines to address:

- specific land use and density provisions (block scale)
- park dedication, trails and open space planning
- infrastructure servicing and natural asset management
- employment lands
- circulation, access and accessibility
- housing diversity and affordability
- place-specific form and character
- resilience and adaptation to natural hazards
- development phasing and financing



2.3 Development Approval Information

The entire CVRD is designated as a development approval information area. 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 patterns including traffic flow
- local infrastructure
- public facilities, including schools and parks
- community services
- the natural environment of the affected area

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 ALR or any developments within 300 m of ALR 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 and 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 cost to the Regional District 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 4379 – Development Application procedures Bylaw, 2021, which is a bylaw that establishes procedures under which an owner of land may apply for an amendment to a bylaw or the issue of a permit.

2.4 Temporary Use Permits

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 temporary uses is included in Schedule L – Land Use Designations.

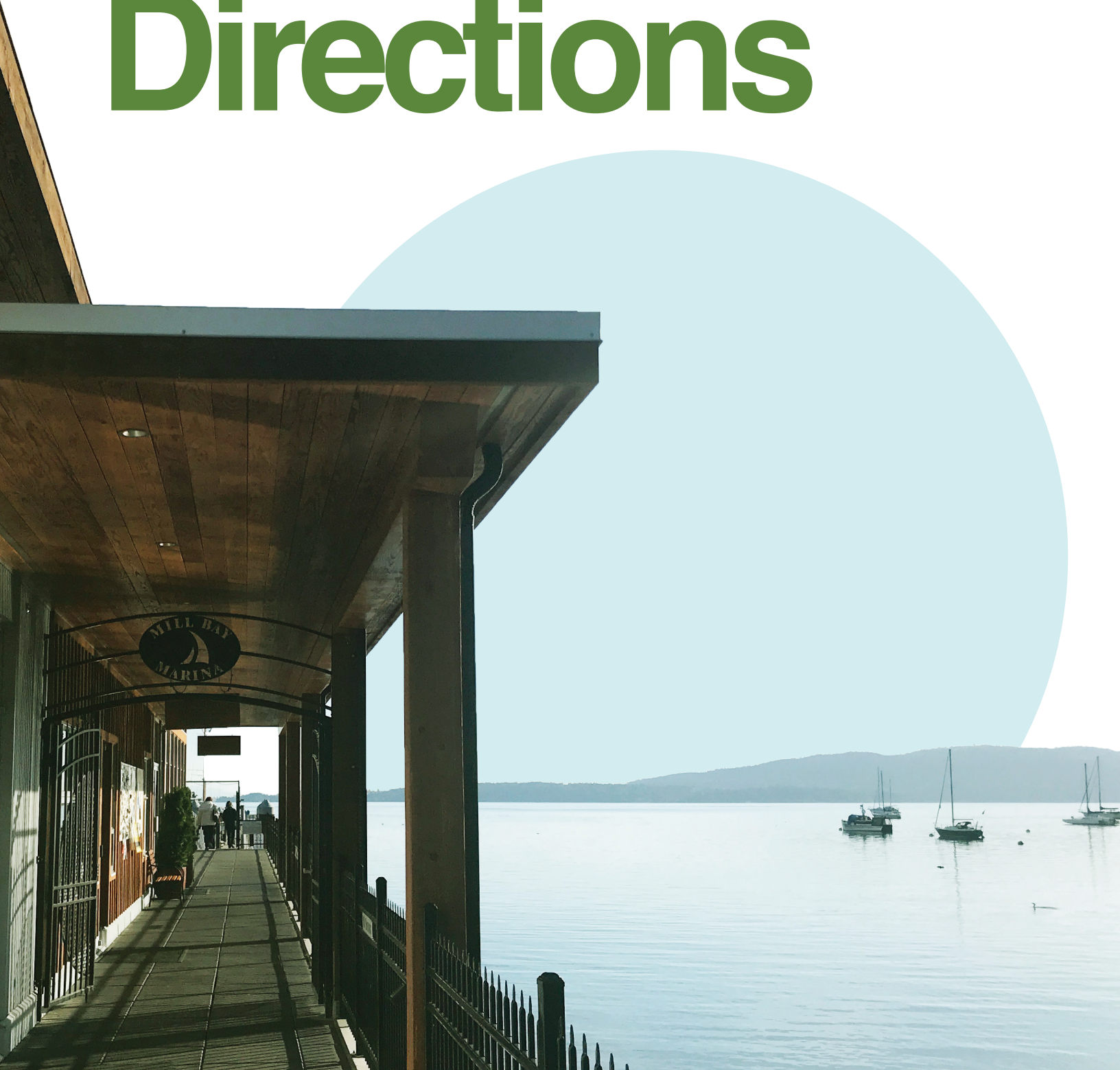
Policies

The CVRD Board:

1. Would consider holding a public meeting prior to deciding to issue a temporary use permit.

PART THREE

Policy Directions



Introduction

There are eight policy 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” (components, boundaries, etc.)
- **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—Governance and Implementation—addresses how the vision, objectives and policies of this document will be implemented.



POLICY CHAPTERS:



Mitigate & Adapt to the Climate Crisis



Protect & Restore Natural Assets



Manage Infrastructure Responsibly



Strengthen Local Food & Agriculture



Make Distinct, Complete Communities



Enhance Regional Prosperity



Expand Mobility Options



Improve Governance & Implementation

POLICY CHAPTER FORMAT:

Policy Chapter	
CONTEXT	Introduction
	Challenges
	Objectives
POLICIES	General Policy
	Policy by Transect Area



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 stabilising 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.¹

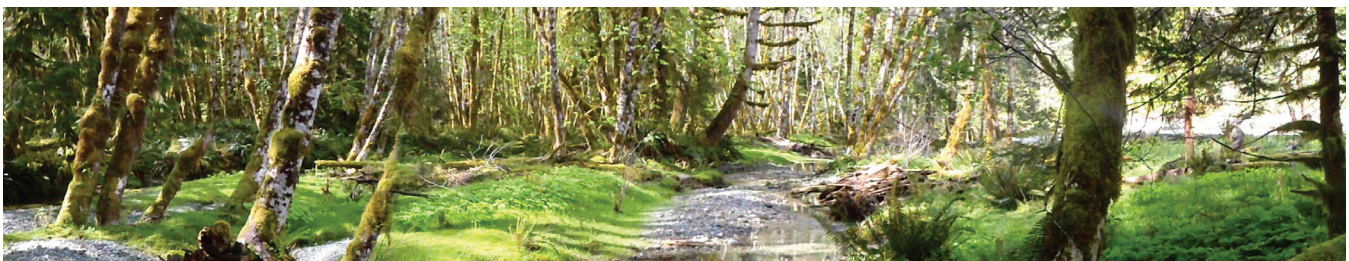
The Cowichan Region's climate has large variations over short distances because of complex geography. Areas with the least precipitation include the east coast of the region. The highest amounts of precipitation occur on the west coast of the region and upland areas in the interior of the Island. However, 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 are adapting and thriving.

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.

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 monitoring for course correction.



¹ 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/>

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. 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.¹ 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.

5. Extreme heat, flooding, landslides and wildfires

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.

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.

¹ Cowichan Valley Regional District. (2017). Climate Projections for the Cowichan Valley Regional District, page ii.

Relationship to Socio-Ecological Wheel

The objectives and policies in this chapter are strongly linked to the ecological ceiling in the Socio-Ecological Wheel. Some address electoral areas' contributions to climate change by providing direction on reducing greenhouse gas emissions (i.e. mitigation). Others are focused on ensuring the long-term resilience of natural assets in the face of a changing climate (i.e. adaptation). The latter have many co-benefits that can help reduce biodiversity loss, land destruction, and water and air pollution. It's important to consider how these objectives and policies are implemented, so the social foundations of communities are not negatively impacted. Centering equity will ensure individuals and families with lesser means can also participate in and benefit from the transition towards a more sustainable future.



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. ✱
- 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.4** Advocate to the Province and real estate sector that house energy efficiency metrics be disclosed at point of new home sale.
- CCO.5** Advocate to BC Assessment to collect and track primary and secondary heat sources, including the numbers of houses that have upgraded heat sources or have alternative energy sources and/or woodstoves.
- CCO.6** Advocate to the province and ICBC for mileage-based vehicle insurance.

RESILIENCE & ADAPTATION

- CCO.7** Improve resilience to climate change impacts, including climate-related natural hazards, by designing to reduce environmental, social and economic vulnerabilities and implementing climate adaptation strategies.
- CCO.8** Protect coastal development from the growing flood hazards and erosion related to sea level rise. Protect coastal development from the growing flood hazards related to sea level rise.
- CCO.9** Consider impacts of climate refugees in planning for communities as individuals and families seek more temperate areas, like the CVRD, from within Canada and internationally.

This symbol marks a policy that is linked to the Performance Metrics in Appendix 1.



General Policy

MITIGATION

- CC.1** Develop a Climate Crisis Mitigation Strategy and establish regional GHG reduction targets.
- CC.2** Encourage retrofitting of older buildings and green construction of new buildings to achieve energy efficiency and reduce 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** Where appropriate, 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.7** 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.8** Acquire green spaces, including planting additional trees, that contribute to climate change mitigation.
- CC.9** Collaborate with adjacent local governments and First Nations to provide a region-wide climate mitigation strategy, education and incentive programs to decarbonize the existing built environment.
- CC.10** Develop partnerships with industry and senior levels of government for the construction of large-scale solar and wind energy generation.
- CC.11** Implement mitigation recommendations found within the tools and resources developed by the BC Climate Agriculture Initiative (BC CAI) (climateagriculturebc.ca/issues-solutions)
- CC.12** 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.13** 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
- CC.14** Ensure new builds and retrofits are built to consider climate projections and impacts in both summer and winter.

RESILIENCE & ADAPTATION

- CC.15** Prepare a Hazard, Risk, & Vulnerability Assessment and communicate the findings to CVRD communities through a proactive strategy for outreach and education. ○▲

EQUITY POLICY

○ PRIORITIZE

▲ IMPLEMENTATION
CONSIDERATIONS



- CC.16** Update development permit areas to reflect the results from Natural Hazard Risk Assessments.
- CC.17** Continue to work with local First Nations on the development of coordinated and collaborative climate adaptation initiatives and programs.
- CC.18** Support species that are more resilient to climate change (i.e. native, drought-tolerant species, including those that provide nuts, berries and flowering plants that support pollinators).
- CC.19** Support 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.20** Conduct analysis of drought-related indicators to more fully understand climate impacts to soil, water supply and ecosystem health at the landscape level.
- 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.22** Support a public wood-chipping facility.
- CC.23** Increase the resilience of natural and built systems to more intense rain events, as well as drought-like conditions. ▲
- CC.24** Strengthen emergency management capacity to respond to weather-related emergencies. ✱
- CC.25** Incorporate climate change projections and risk assessments into electoral and regional planning and service delivery. ▲
- CC.26** Consider natural hazards (e.g. erosion, flooding and sea-level rise) to protect development from hazardous conditions and maintain the functionality of green and grey infrastructure.
- CC.27** Develop a coastal flooding mitigation strategy. ▲
- CC.28** Explore the possibility of a “no adverse impact” flood level policy for future developments on floodplains.
- CC.29** Develop hazardous land mapping as a component of a climate change adaptation strategy.
- CC.30** Encourage economic activities that are resilient and adaptive to climate change.
- CC.31** Encourage citizens and stakeholders to foster climate excellence in communities.
- CC.32** Support new development to include climate change adaptation methods and technologies in the design, change or modification of existing infrastructure or new services.
- CC.33** Support ongoing studies to identify and understand the risks associated with climate change.
- CC.34** Support the use of green infrastructure solutions.
- CC.35** Promote and support water conservation measures with residents, business owners and industry (e.g. xeriscaping, water audits, composting toilets, grey water recycling).
- CC.36** Where appropriate, design, manage and construct climate change-adaptive and risk-adaptive infrastructure and utilities.
- CC.37** Keep up to date with best practices for adaptation action, and work with local communities to inform climate impacts and equitable adaptation and risk mitigation planning.

Climate Crisis Policy (by transect sub-area)

RESOURCE AND NATURAL AREAS

- CC.38** Support ecosystem health through ecological management and restoration at the watershed scale.
- CC.39** Support the protection of old growth forests and mature trees that act as carbon sinks and help maintain watershed health.
- CC.40** Encourage the expansion and protection of forested areas.

RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS

- CC.41** Support agricultural practices that mitigate and adapt to climate change, such as crop practices that increase soil carbon sequestration.
- CC.42** Support agricultural practices that reduce impacts on aquifers and support healthy watersheds.
- CC.43** Support the protection of old growth forests and mature trees on farmland that act as carbon sinks.
- CC.44** Support ecosystem health and natural assets on farmland by partnering with agricultural operators to restore and maintain ecosystem services.
- CC.45** Support emergency planning for the agricultural sector, such as the development of livestock evacuation plans and on-farm flooding preparedness plans.

SUBURBAN AREAS

- CC.46** Support compact subdivision and development patterns that cluster housing units and protect adjacent natural areas.
- CC.47** Support increasing requirements for heat pumps and alternative energy systems.
- CC.48** Support subdivision and development patterns that enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity to nearby destinations, including transit stops.

- CC.49** Enhance suburban residential areas with complementary uses that promote short travel distances for daily needs.

- CC.50** Incorporate electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in new development.

- CC.51** Support the use of energy efficient building methods and materials with low embodied energy.

VILLAGE AREAS

- CC.52** Support subdivision and development patterns that enhance pedestrian, cycling and transit connectivity to nearby destinations.

- CC.53** Support development that protects and enhances the tree canopy while incorporating more permeable surfaces.

- CC.54** Support the use of energy efficient building methods and materials with low embodied energy.

- CC.55** Incorporate EV charging stations in new development.

- CC.56** 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.57** Support subdivision and development patterns that enhance pedestrian, cycling and transit connectivity to nearby destinations.
- CC.58** Support the use of energy efficient building methods and materials with low embodied energy.
- CC.59** Incorporate EV charging stations in new development.
- CC.60** Support high-density residential and mixed-use developments where daily needs are within walking distance.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

- CC.61** Support compact development patterns that cluster parcels and protect adjacent natural areas.
- CC.62** Support subdivision and development patterns that enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity to nearby destinations, including transit stops.
- CC.63** Support special energy districts.
- CC.64** Incorporate EV charging stations in new development.
- CC.65** Support the use of energy efficient building methods and materials with low embodied energy.







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.

The CVRD manages and operates various infrastructure systems across the Cowichan Valley. With ongoing efforts to create an OCP, 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.

The CVRD operates and maintains capital infrastructure assets in the electoral areas to serve residents which include:

- 19 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 annually (2021) of solid waste that is sent to the landfill. There are no landfills in the CVRD at this time; and 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 vehicles. This is also the result of a major shift to cooling loads and needs in summer where this demand did not exist in the past. National and provincial commitments to reducing 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.

1. 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.

2. 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, 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 coming from the mainland.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

3.2. MANAGE INFRASTRUCTURE RESPONSIBLY

Relationship to Socio-Ecological Wheel

The objectives and policies in this chapter are strongly linked to the social foundations in the Socio-Ecological Wheel. Providing residents with safe, affordable and efficient infrastructure services like potable water and sewer treatment is a key component of resident health and well-being. Opportunities exist to incorporate green infrastructure systems that can fulfill the basic needs of residents while also reducing the CVRD's impact on pollution, biodiversity, land destruction and climate change. Examples of these include stormwater management features like rain gardens, systems that reuse grey water, permeable pavement and more.



Objectives

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

WATER

- MIO.1** Align water servicing with the GCB. ✱
- 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.

WASTEWATER

- MIO.5** Update wastewater management plans to align and provide services within the GCB and review beneficial reuse. ✱
- MIO.6** Reduce the environmental impacts treated wastewater discharges have on watercourses and the environment.
- MIO.7** 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 AND DRAINAGE

- MIO.8** Address stormwater challenges at a watershed scale and address rainwater at a watershed scale.
- MIO.9** Preserve watercourses and natural drainage channels in their natural state and, where feasible, develop them as drainage rights-of-way.

- MIO.10** 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.11** Adopt universal access to garbage, recycling and organics collection at the curbside.

ENERGY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

- MIO.12** Plan for strategic asset management.
- MIO.13** Retain existing levels of servicing in communities and identify the appropriate level of services to meet the electoral areas' future projected needs. ✱
- MIO.14** Develop hazard, risk and vulnerability criteria for new development.
- MIO.15** Consider the full life cycle costs of new infrastructure systems.
- MIO.16** Discourage private infrastructure systems.
- MIO.17** Develop the foundational infrastructure that supports new and existing businesses.



MIO.18 If consulted, the CVRD would support applications being considered concurrent with a CVRD Board telecommunications policy. In the absence of a telecommunications policy, the Board would:

- Encourage the siting and design of new telecommunications equipment using the following criteria:
 - » New equipment located on existing structures (e.g. building rooftops, hydro transmission towers, utility poles).
 - » Towers and ancillary equipment designed to fit the surroundings and to minimize visual impact on surrounding properties.
 - » Towers and ancillary equipment with landscaped surroundings as a visual buffer.
 - » Minimize health impacts and appearance.
- Ensure a public consultation process is followed for new telecommunications equipment using the following process:
 - » The carrier will contact, via mail, the residents and occupants of all properties located within 300 m of a proposed telecommunication structure.
 - » The carrier will install a notification sign on the subject property consistent with notification requirements for other applications at the CVRD.
 - » Should no response be received from the public over a 21-day period, the carrier may move forward with the application to the CVRD for review.
 - » Should a response be received from the public, staff will determine whether a Public Information Session conducted by the carrier is necessary, and the proposal will be reviewed by the Electoral Area Directors.

GENERAL

MIO.19 Build a regional infrastructure risk registry.



General Policy

WATER

- MI.1** Improve water quality and supply by mapping and analyzing subareas 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 for aquifers.
- MI.6** 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.

WASTEWATER

- 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** Cooperate with the Municipality of North Cowichan, City of Duncan, Cowichan Tribes and electoral areas D and E to manage the Joint Utilities Board treatment plant and seek innovative approaches, such as greenway routes to the long-term management and funding of the facility.

- MI.11** Work with Island Health to develop public education communications on individual sewerage system maintenance rules and practices for new and aging systems.

- MI.12** Ensure individual onsite sewerage systems meet standards outlined in the “BC Sewerage System Practice Manual” and prevent ecological degradation.

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 on drainage as part of a development approval information requirement

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

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 PREPAREDNESS

MI.19 Develop a Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Assessment to better understand and consider both natural and unnatural hazards, such as heat waves, windstorms, earthquakes, wildfires and more that are putting communities at risk.

MI.20 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.21 Designate a network of neighbourhood support hubs within the region as locations to focus and coordinate assistance efforts and share resources. These are post-disaster locations where staff and trained volunteers will prioritize getting information and providing services to the public.

MI.22 Coordinate and integrate partner emergency plans to address priority risks, with an expectation of joint decision-making, unified communications and resource sharing. This should include:

- developing a regional concept of operations
- identifying public and private resources available in the region's concept of operations
- developing procedures to support regional supply chains, including transportation

MI.23 Plan, coordinate and regularly test emergency and disaster response services in conjunction with First Nations, municipalities and neighbouring regions. ○ ▲

MI.24 Support initiatives to form Emergency Preparedness Pods, such that every citizen of the CVRD is part of a Neighbourhood Pod, enabling citizens to help each other in the event of an emergency.

EQUITY POLICY

○ PRIORITIZE

▲ IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

GENERAL

- MI.25** Consult with local First Nations and explore opportunities for infrastructure service agreements where plans include shared priorities and goals. ○
- MI.26** Discourage further installation and expansion of private infrastructure services by incentivizing connection to public infrastructure services through a bonus density program.
- MI.27** Manage growth with the aim of ensuring at least 75% of new development is connected to infrastructure services over time.
- MI.28** 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. ✱ ▲
- MI.29** Monitor solid waste flows and seek to minimize and divert waste from landfills.
- MI.30** Update Waste Management Bylaw 1958 to require wildlife-safe methods of waste storage for buildings and subdivisions in wildlife areas.
- MI.31** 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 cost to the developer. ▲
- MI.32** Consider the creation of a bylaw to require the deconstruction, rather than demolition, of buildings to recover and reclaim old growth wood and other materials.
- MI.33** Encourage all waste collection receptacles are to be housed in a bear- or pest-proof enclosure.
- MI.34** Employ low-impact development practices for all residential, commercial, industrial and mixed employment land use designations. These 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.35** 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.36** When servicing infrastructure is routed through ALR lands:
- use transmission pipes instead of distribution pipes to reduce development pressures.
- MI.37** When servicing infrastructure is routed through PMFL lands:
- use the route that has the least impact on PMFL lands (i.e. shortest, fewest PMFL adjacencies, lands less likely to redevelop, etc.)
 - use density bonusing as a tool to provide greater consistency and clarity in negotiations with PMFL owners
- MI.38** 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.
- MI.39** Building and structure types and heights within the designated area shown in Schedule L, related to Airport Flight Pathways must align with federal *Aeronautics Act* and Transport Canada regulations to ensure safe and unobstructed aircraft operations.

Infrastructure Policy (by transect sub-area)

RESOURCE & NATURAL AREAS

- MI.40** Community-based built infrastructure is not supported to reduce land speculation and development pressures.
- MI.41** Work with PMFL owners and the Province to manage water and water quality issues.

RURAL & AGRICULTURAL AREAS

- MI.42** Avoid installation of water and sewer infrastructure to reduce land speculation and development pressures outside of the GCBs.
- MI.43** Consider treated wastewater for agricultural use.
- MI.44** Work with the Province to manage drainage and diking issues and assess and address flood risk. Note CVRD is also a diking authority.
- MI.45** Update the Agricultural Water Demand Model exercise in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and associated Agricultural Land Use Inventory work.
- MI.46** Work with producers to facilitate the development of on-farm water storage opportunities.

SUBURBAN AREAS

- MI.47** Ensure access to water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.
- MI.48** Require existing and new developments to tie into public infrastructure systems.
- MI.49** Ensure developments are designed to accommodate curbside collection systems, including access for curbside collection trucks.

VILLAGE AREAS

- MI.50** Ensure access to water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.
- MI.51** Require existing and new developments to tie into public infrastructure systems.

URBAN AREAS

- MI.52** Ensure access to water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.
- MI.53** Plan for fire flows that can control fires in multi-family residential buildings.
- MI.54** Require existing and new developments to tie into public infrastructure systems.
- MI.55** Ensure developments are designed to accommodate curbside collection systems, including access for curbside collection trucks.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

- MI.56** Ensure access to water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.
- MI.57** Connect these areas with high-speed internet.
- MI.58** Ensure alignment between high-intensity industrial uses and proximity to infrastructure servicing.
- MI.59** Plan for fire flows that can control fires in high-risk industrial settings.



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 within 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.

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-family, 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.

3.3. MAKE DISTINCT, COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Relationship to Socio-Ecological Wheel

The objectives and policies of this chapter are strongly linked to the social foundations in the Socio-Ecological Wheel. Many policies are related to ensuring residents have access to safe, stable and affordable housing, while providing services that support healthy lifestyles. This is key for individuals to achieve a high quality of life within thriving and prosperous communities. Further, if housing and other forms of development are built in a compact and connected way, the region has a greater chance at staying within its ecological ceiling by preventing natural land loss and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pollution.



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 Support high-quality development that enhances and benefits the whole community.

DCO.3 Build inclusive and attractive communities where daily needs and employment opportunities are close to home.*

DCO.4 Support multi-purpose warehouse/studio space in light industrial designations.

HOUSING

DCO.5 Improve and expand the range of housing options.

DCO.6 Coordinate housing policy development and implementation across the region in collaboration with the people who inhabit the electoral areas.

DCO.7 Develop a regionally-specific housing continuum and increase the right supply of housing across the spectrum of affordability.

DCO.8 Foster community understanding and support for affordable housing developments.

DCO.9 Enhance aging-in-place opportunities and accessibility in housing.

CHILD CARE

DCO.10 Enhance and expand child care in the areas consistent with the Cowichan Region Child Care Plan (2020).

DCO.11 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.12 Ensure child care locations that are more accessible and affordable for equal opportunity.

DCO.13 Support childcare sites to serve the entire community.

DCO.14 Develop indicators and targets for the creation and expansion of childcare spaces and programs.

DCO.15 Consider a child care resource position to regularly collect information on diversity within childcare centres and promote diversity best practices in childcare centres.

DCO.16 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.17 Protect archaeological sites of importance to First Nations.

DCO.18 Provide a wide range of parks and recreational opportunities aligned with community, tourism and resident needs.

DCO.19 Foster 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 families

DC.2 Increase the number of affordable housing options for lower income households by: ○

- waiving application fees for cooperative and non-market affordable housing projects
- considering parking requirement relaxation for rental and affordable housing projects, innovative development projects, projects close to transit or where ample street parking exists
- streamlining and fast-tracking multi-family or apartments in village and urban areas
- identifying and designating Regional District-owned lands as opportunity sites for non-profit and supportive housing projects
- supporting affordable housing options that meet the needs of diverse individuals in all residential land use designations in addition to the village commercial and institutional land use designations

DC.3 Consider incentivizing housing densification within GCBs through density, financial or procedural incentives.

DC.4 Establish rental housing affordability targets for households living on low incomes. ○

DC.5 Protect existing mobile home parks as an important form of affordable housing and advocate for the right of mobile home park tenants or leaseholders to be given first right of refusal to buy their land, if the owner plans to sell or redevelop.

DC.6 Encourage pocket neighbourhoods and clustered housing formats in single detached residential designations to revitalize communities. Private dwellings should be arranged around or among common space.

DC.7 Increase affordable housing options by increasing the supply of secondary suites and mobile home parks/manufactured homes, and support eco-friendly homes and increased infill development.

DC.8 Protect and maintain existing non-market and market rental housing stock.

DC.9 Support provision of housing to people with special needs and seniors, including housing that gives people the ability to age in place.

DC.10 Encourage residential housing with new commercial and industrial developments.

DC.11 Collaborate with non-profit and for-profit sectors (including BC Housing and other levels of government) to build a range of affordable housing options, including emergency shelters and supportive and transitional housing, especially in transit-accessible areas and within identified housing affordability targets.

DC.12 Encourage development to address housing options from across the CVRD's housing spectrum (as depicted in the 2021 Housing Needs Assessment).

EQUITY POLICY

○ PRIORITIZE



△ IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

DC.13 Follow direction from the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and Agricultural Land Reserve Regulation regarding secondary dwellings within the ALR.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

DC.14 Complete local area and/or neighbourhood plans in the following electoral areas through the annual budget process:

- Electoral area A
- Electoral area B
- Electoral area C
- Electoral area D
- Electoral area E
- Electoral area F
- Electoral area G
- Electoral area H
- Electoral area I

DC.15 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.16 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 (880cities.org). ○

DC.17 Work with residents, community groups, First Nations and developers to reveal place-based assets and stories as inspiration for building and landscape designs in new projects.

DC.18 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.19 Advance community placemaking initiatives.

DC.20 Improve the number of and accessibility to public places, including buildings and open spaces. ○

DC.21 Apply a lens of community health and well-being when reviewing and assessing the design of new development projects. ○

DC.22 When appropriate, refer development proposals to Island Health.

DC.23 Where appropriate, incorporate buffering between different land uses that may not be compatible. This is especially important outside of village centres to protect residential, rural and agricultural lands from visual, noise and other pollution of intensive commercial and industrial developments.

ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE

DC.24 Encourage cultural expression through public art pieces that reflect diverse community backgrounds, interests and needs. Explore funding mechanisms, such as Community Amenity Contributions, to help create more public art. ○△

DC.25 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.26 Support arts and culture by sponsoring events and funding infrastructure upgrades.

DC.27 Provide recognition for designated heritage properties by means of, for example, a commemorative plaque and/or interpretive sign. △

DC.28 Identify cultural heritage landscapes that contain heritage buildings, structures, vegetation and open space of architectural or historic significance and the arrangement of which represents distinctive cultural processes in the historical use of the land. △

DC.29 Support access to cultural, archival and museum collections that facilitate learning about the Cowichan Valley's past and present. △

PARKS & RECREATION

DC.30 Engage Community Parks Advisory Commissions in the acquisition of new parkland through:

- 5% dedication of subdivided land or cash-in-lieu of dedication
- electoral area capital budgets
- land donations
- community amenity contributions for rezoning applications

DC.31 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.32 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.33 Update the Regional Park & Trails Master Plan to align with this OCP and the Strategic Asset Management Plan.

DC.34 Expand the recreational trail system to encourage healthy living and appreciation for the outdoors

DC.35 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.36** Provide access to recreational trails and parks while conserving natural areas.
- DC.37** 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.38** Provide access to recreational trails and parks while conserving natural areas.
- DC.39** 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.40** 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.41** 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.42** Mitigate safety issues and apply buffers where recreational, industrial, institutional, residential and/or commercial activities are adjacent to agricultural land.

SUBURBAN AREAS

- DC.43** Support mixed-income suburban neighbourhoods with the sensitive infill of affordable and rental housing options, such as mobile home parks and secondary suites.
- DC.44** Support suburban areas with multi-modal transportation strategies and infrastructure in partnership with MoTI.
- DC.45** Support home-based businesses.
- DC.46** Support childcare facilities.
- DC.47** Enhance suburban areas by providing employment lands, parks, access to transit and other amenities.

VILLAGE AREAS

- DC.48** Support village areas that have a mix of uses.
- DC.49** Support home-based businesses and live-work building forms.
- DC.50** Support child care and seniors facilities.
- DC.51** Provide great access to transit, active transportation options, parks and shopping.
- DC.52** Enhance village areas with arts, culture and community facilities.

3.3. MAKE DISTINCT, COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

URBAN AREAS

- DC.53** Support urban areas that have higher residential densities and the greatest mix in uses.
- DC.54** Support mixed-use, multi-storey apartment buildings and multi-family dwellings that reflect local housing needs.
- DC.55** Support childcare facilities.
- DC.56** Provide a rich number of arts, culture and community facilities.
- DC.57** Consider density bonusing for adaptable and accessibility units in the zoning bylaw.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

- DC.58** Support accessory retail and office uses in mixed employment and industrial lands.
- DC.59** Discourage large malls and other commercial developments that draw from village and urban markets.
- DC.60** Support childcare facilities.
- DC.61** Provide access to transit.



4 Expand Mobility Options



Introduction

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, and in the development and maintenance of trails. 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.



3.4. EXPAND MOBILITY 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** | Weekday commuter transit service is available between the Cowichan Valley and Greater Victoria via Routes 66 and 99, Monday to Friday (except statutory holidays), with six daily trips departing the Cowichan Valley early in the morning. Trips return from Victoria in the late afternoon and evening. Inter-regional transit service on Saturdays between the Cowichan Valley and Greater Victoria via Route 44 Victoria and Route 44 Duncan is also available with three daily round trips.

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 provide more means of travel to residents by ensuring residents have access to daily needs within close proximity of where they live. 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 km²) 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 right-of-ways. 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 with the exception of the Cowichan Valley portion of the Trans-Canada Trail, which is considered a “transportation” trail. By the end of 2015, there were 206 community parks across the nine electoral areas covering over 1,131 ha. of land. As well, there were 47 km of managed community trails in the electoral areas (not including 72 km of the Cowichan Valley Trail).

Relationship to Socio-Ecological Wheel

The objectives and policies of this chapter are strongly linked to the social foundations in the Socio-Ecological Wheel. Regional mobility is crucial for residents to access jobs, education, services and, more generally, to partake in the CVRD's bounty of natural beauty. Moreover, active transportation modes, like walking and biking, provide great health benefits. By expanding mobility options and reducing car dependency, the region can also reduce its GHGs. Emissions related to transportation are major contributors to the CVRD GHG inventory, which would in turn help the region stay within its ecological ceiling.

Objectives

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

INTEGRATED MODES

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

MOO.2 Support high-quality development that enhances and benefits the whole community.

MOO.3 Build inclusive and attractive communities where daily needs and employment opportunities are close to home.

MOO.4 Support multi-purpose warehouse/studio space in light industrial designations.

HOUSING

MOO.5 Improve and expand the range of housing options.

MOO.6 Coordinate housing policy development and implementation across the region in collaboration with the people who inhabit the electoral areas.

MOO.7 Develop a regional specific housing continuum and increase the right supply of housing across the spectrum of affordability.

MOO.8 Foster community understanding and support for affordable housing developments.

MOO.9 Enhance aging-in-place opportunities and accessibility in housing.

CHILD CARE

MOO.10 Enhance and expand child care in the areas consistent with the Cowichan Region Child Care Plan (2020).

MOO.11 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.

MOO.12 Ensure child care locations that are more accessible and affordable for equal opportunity.

MOO.13 Support childcare sites to serve the entire community.

MOO.14 Develop indicators and targets for the creation and expansion of childcare spaces and programs.

MOO.15 Consider a child care resource position to regularly collect information on diversity within childcare centres and promote best practices in diversity to childcare centres.

MOO.16 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


MOO.17 Protect archaeological sites of importance to First Nations.

MOO.18 Provide a wide range of parks and recreational opportunities aligned with community, tourism and resident needs.

MOO.19 Foster artistic and cultural pursuits and activities.


General Policy

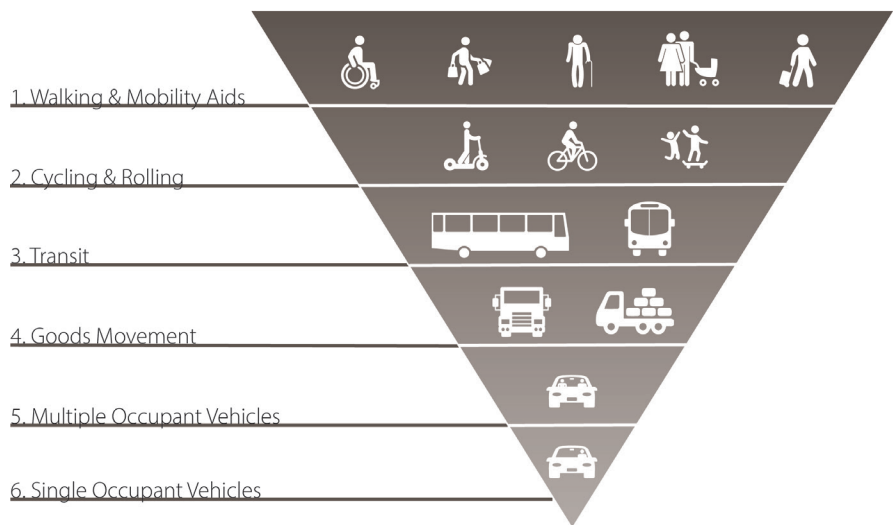
INTEGRATED MODES

- 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.
- MO.5** Support the development of a regional transportation plan to improve intermodal coordination and safety of all travel modes.
- MO.6** Improve coordination of transportation infrastructure and services within electoral areas and between adjacent municipalities and jurisdictions.

- MO.7** At subdivision, advocate for compact development with smaller block sizes and with streets in an interconnected network to support sustainable transportation modes.
- MO.8** Work with the Malahat First Nation to advocate for BC Ferries to move the Mill Bay Ferry terminal to a more suitable location, and upgrade the ramp to allow buses.
- MO.9** Through collaborative partnerships, develop effective transportation solutions for our communities via the development of trail networks and pedestrian and cycling paths that improve transit travel opportunities by providing safe and accessible connections to bus stops.

WALKING AND ROLLING

- MO.10** Complete and implement a regional Active Transportation Plan.
- MO.11** New development should be designed to be pedestrian-friendly and provide safe access to nearby trails, paths and transit. 



3.1 Transportation Mode Hierarchy



EQUITY POLICY

 **PRIORITIZE**

 **IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

MO.12 Provide opportunities for rest with benches at regular intervals or at scenic points along trails.

MO.13 Support recreational trail use within the Vancouver Island Rail Corridor.

MO.14 Promote the use of bikes and e-bikes to get around the region. Support initiatives that seek to popularize these sustainable modes of transportation and explore ways to integrate charging station infrastructure in new developments. ○

MO.15 Consider park and bike facilities connected to major cycling infrastructure.

MO.16 Develop a plan to complete the Cowichan Valley Trail as a regional transportation connector.

MO.17 Support new development proposals for subdivision considering greenway routes that improve pedestrian and cyclist pathways and connect to arterial roads per cycling and parks plans.

MO.18 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).

PUBLIC TRANSIT

MO.19 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.20 Ensure park and ride facilities are safely designed and appropriate for a range of weather conditions. ○

MO.21 Support compact development near transit and within service areas that have capacity for growth. ○

MO.22 Encourage non-profit organizations or other service providers to establish alternative transportation services and mobility options not offered by BC Transit.

VEHICLE MODES

MO.23 Update the zoning bylaw to ensure new parking facilities in mixed-use, multi-family and employment centre developments are EV ready.

MO.24 Ensure adequate parking areas and secure bike parking adjacent to major destinations like parks, trails and beaches. ▲

MO.25 Use design strategies to minimize the visual impacts of vehicle parking on the region's rural landscapes.

MO.26 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.27 Conduct ongoing identification of specific community roads and roadside pathways to support multi-modal transportation.

MO.28 Ensure new development provides access that limits impacts to major transportation networks.

EQUITY POLICY

○ PRIORITIZE

▲ IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS



3.4. EXPAND MOBILITY OPTIONS

MO.29 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.30 When contemplating major new road and highway infrastructure, provide the opportunity, in collaboration with MoTI, for a meaningful public process of community engagement.



Mobility Policy (by transect sub-area)

RESOURCE & NATURAL AREAS

- MO.31** Work with stakeholders to manage safety where mobility related to both resource extraction and recreational users interact.
- MO.32** Support safe mobility corridors or trails for recreational users through resource lands to other areas of crown land.
- MO.33** Support the development of regional and Island-wide trails.
- MO.34** Minimize impact of transportation infrastructure on environmentally sensitive areas.
- MO.35** Minimize potential conflict between transportation infrastructure and hazard lands (e.g. flood risk, landslide/slip, wildfire interface).
- MO.36** Reduce the impact of roads and road infrastructure on hazard areas.

RURAL & AGRICULTURAL AREAS

- MO.37** Support the safe use of roads by agricultural equipment.
- MO.38** Support low cost cycling infrastructure through these areas to increase safety.
- MO.39** Support the development of trails in rural and recreational areas in ways that do not create conflict with agricultural activities.

SUBURBAN AREAS

- MO.40** 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.41** Support connectivity and transportation initiatives that increase transit and active transportation uses within village areas.
- MO.42** Work with MoTI to establish 30km/h zones in villages.
- MO.43** Work with MoTI on initiatives to pedestrianize streets within village areas.

URBAN AREAS

- MO.44** Support transportation initiatives that increase transit and active transportation uses within urban areas.
- MO.45** Work with MoTI to establish 30km/h zones in urban areas.
- MO.46** Work with MoTI on initiatives to pedestrianize streets within urban areas.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

- MO.47** Support transportation initiatives that increase transit and active transportation uses to special districts (schools, universities, hospitals, event grounds, others).



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 protect 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 can set 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 where those natural systems are identified in the watershed management plans or are within the CVRD control and provide critical services or impact critical services.



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 (see Socio-Ecological Wheel – Biodiversity Loss).

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 (see Socio-Ecological Wheel – Biodiversity Loss).

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 (see Socio-Ecological Wheel – Climate Change).

3.5. PROTECT & ENHANCE NATURAL ASSETS

Relationship to Socio-Ecological Wheel

The objectives and policies of this chapter are strongly linked to the Socio-Ecological Wheel. Healthy and resilient natural assets support greater biodiversity, the absorption of carbon from the atmosphere and adaptation to a changing climate. The erosion of natural assets is strongly linked to the climate crisis in which we find ourselves and keeping ecosystems intact requires reducing air and water pollution and preventing sprawl. Added benefits include the health and well-being of residents who subsequently have access to thriving parks that are rich in biodiversity and a stronger connection to flora and fauna.



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, mitigation and compensation for impacts to natural assets.

SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS

NAO.4 Include the outcomes of the Regional Conservation Strategy in land use decisions and seek opportunities to restore impacted ecosystems, protect ecosystems and manage environmental flows.

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.7 Provide ongoing public education on regional environmental stewardship.

NAO.8 Acknowledge and promote the importance of forested lands as carbon sinks.

NAO.9 Encourage the use of ecosystem-based sustainable forestry practices to preserve and protect the forest, its biodiversity, integrity and ecological service.

NAO.10 Advocate for areas of forests that can be cleared for fire safety purposes and firewood gathering.

NAO.11 Reduce and manage invasive species, pests and diseases that affect native ecosystems.

NAO.12 Direct new development away from hazard areas including floodplains and steep slopes.

NAO.13 Advocate for stricter enforcement of development permit violations.

NAO.14 Advocate modifying the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* to increase protection and management of riparian areas in resource lands.

WATERSHEDS & AIRSHEDS

NAO.15 Ensure land use and growth consider the limits of water supply.

NAO.16 Ensure that development and land use activities support the natural hydrologic cycle, including groundwater recharge.

NAO.17 Coordinate watershed management plans for regional watersheds and restore the natural hydrologic regimes of watersheds.

NAO.18 Protect the quality and quantity of water and encourage stewardship.

NAO.19 Minimize air and noise pollution to protect public and environmental health.

NAO.20 Where appropriate, use and incentivize clean home heating systems as primary home heating systems, and transition away from woodstoves, which emit a number of pollutants, including fine particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

NAO.21 Advocate for the *PMFL Act* to be reviewed to consider the long-term sustainability of water supply and quality, maximize carbon sequestration in the forest and soil, minimize watershed damage and increase protection in resource lands.

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
- a decision-making process based on the business case vis a vis natural asset management (non-political decision making).

NA.2 Develop a CVRD Conservation Strategy with targets linked to an area-based soil measure 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 Increase the restoration and maintenance of ecosystem services on farmland by protecting natural assets through programs such as the provincial Farmland Advantage initiative (<http://farmlandadvantage.ca>).

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.

NA.9 Seek to protect species at risk and monitor the scale and change of species listed as being at risk in the region.

NA.10 Review the CVRD Invasive Species Strategy and Bylaw to expand beyond hogweed.

NA.11 Support retaining areas of mature tree cover and vegetative areas and preserving other natural features for all development, particularly any development in environmentally sensitive areas and areas of steep slopes.

NA.12 Decrease the percentage of natural areas impacted by development and logging.



NA.13 Increase the canopy cover and encourage the planting of Western red cedar. ○▲

EQUITY POLICY

○ PRIORITIZE

✱ METRIC

▲ IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

NA.14 Protect life and property from hazardous conditions by limiting, controlling and mitigating development on hazardous lands and floodplains.  

NA.15 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.16 Protect migratory routes used by wildlife (e.g. amphibians, elk, bears) by ensuring infrastructure allows for safe crossings.

NA.17 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.18 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.19 Advocate for a greater voice for local government in protecting environmentally sensitive areas on PMFLs.

NA.20 Support Community Conservation Covenants, enabling adjacent landowners to cooperate in the protection of their land.

NA.21 Protect and improve the carbon sequestration and ecosystem values of natural systems, including forested lands, agricultural lands and wetlands.

NA.22 Seek authority from the Province to establish a municipal-type tree cutting bylaw for protection of trees on private property.


AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS

NA.23 Discourage development immediately adjacent to a mudflat, marsh or delta areas.

NA.24 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.25 Manage streambank erosion to maintain or enhance fish habitat and other natural resources.

NA.26 Recognize aquatic habitats and resources as environmentally sensitive sites to be protected and restored.

NA.27 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 AND AIRSHEDS

NA.28 Protect and restore watersheds as per their watershed management plans.


NA.29 Strengthen rainwater management policy as measured against pre- and post-development hydrograph performance (based on monitoring).

NA.30 Review floodplain maps on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date given changing conditions.

NA.31 Use water balance models and aquifer management to inform land use decisions.

NA.32 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.33 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.34 Implement air, noise and light pollution reduction measures and explore International Dark Sky Community designation to reduce illumination of the night sky.

MARINE AND FORESHORE

NA.35 Consider the creation of an Eelgrass Protection Marine development permit area.

NA.36 Develop coastal flood protection bylaws.

NA.37 Marine policy as a separate marine schedule to the OCP will be developed 2024.



Natural Assets Policy (by transect sub-area)

RESOURCE & NATURAL AREAS

NA.38 Recognize healthy forests, healthy watersheds and healthy aquifers are foundational to the CVRDs natural assets.

NA.39 Support sustainable resource management and watershed-scale planning initiatives to most effectively manage natural assets.

NA.40 Limit road density to protect watersheds.

NA.41 No proposed development in these areas.

RURAL & AGRICULTURAL AREAS

NA.42 Recognize agricultural soils, riparian areas and woodlands as foundational to the CVRD's natural assets.

NA.43 Manage and control the impact of development on surface and groundwater resources.

NA.44 Support regenerative agriculture practices within local agricultural planning to support soil and water health.

NA.45 Encourage and support ecosystem services that farmland provides through landscape retention, riparian restoration and native-plant-based landscape remediation.

NA.46 Limit road density to protect watersheds.

NA.47 Minimize road building and extension of servicing infrastructure within rural areas.

SUBURBAN AREAS

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

NA.49 Encourage landscape retention (e.g. contiguous habitat and/or corridors) and native-plant-based landscape design.

NA.50 Support tree retention on private property.

VILLAGE AREAS

NA.51 Support low-impact development approaches and retention of functional landscapes.

NA.52 Support expansion and enhancement of active pedestrian connections (e.g. trails) to natural areas.

NA.53 Support plans and designs that incorporate natural asset management considerations, including but not limited to rainwater management, soil and tree retention and native plant palettes in landscape design.

URBAN AREAS

NA.54 Support low-impact development approaches and retention of functional landscapes.

NA.55 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.56 Require natural asset inventories and management strategies be developed within and specific to special districts.





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 help our farmers grow more food, to create affordable food security for everyone, and to build a resilient and sustainable local food system.

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.

Protection of our food system is vital for the sustainability of the Cowichan Valley. More specifically, our agricultural lands and productive soils are a defining feature of the Cowichan Valley's ambience and beauty; its 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.”¹

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 can 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.



¹ Sustainable food systems. Concept and framework. 2018. [fao.org/3/ca2079en/CA2079EN.pdf](https://www.fao.org/3/ca2079en/CA2079EN.pdf) Accessed Nov 2020.

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.

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, reduces 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 pest patterns, water availability, flooding events and overall 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 reduces 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 Socio-Ecological Wheel

The objectives and policies of this chapter are strongly linked to both the planetary boundaries and social foundations in the Socio-Ecological Wheel. The land dedicated to agricultural use in the CVRD is extensive, and the role these lands play in securing food for local residents is significant. For the region to stay within its ecological ceiling, these agricultural lands should be treated as part of the natural systems they inhabit. This means encouraging a regenerative approach to farming and supporting biodiversity and ecological services on farmland. Moreover, to ensure residents have access to secure sources of healthy and affordable food, the region can strengthen the relationship between food production, processing and sales in CVRD communities.



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.
- 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** Recognize and preserve the agricultural land base of the plan area for a wide range of agricultural activities in keeping with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and *Agricultural Land Reserve Regulation*.
- FAO.4** Encourage agricultural economic diversity, including connections between agriculture and tourism, local agricultural processing and value-added agriculture.
- FAO.5** 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.6** Protect groundwater as an important resource to support agriculture industries in locations where potential land use conflicts can be mitigated.
- FAO.7** Ensure that agricultural economic development strategies align with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and *Agricultural Land Reserve Regulation*.
- FAO.8** Ensure that residential uses within the ALR align with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and *Agricultural Land Reserve Regulation*.
- FAO.9** Review and modernize the region's approach to aquaculture.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

- FAO.10** 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.11** Enable food production, processing and distribution that will foster a place-based food economy that increases local food security and opportunities for agricultural production.
- FAO.12** Prioritize food production on agricultural lands and develop access to markets for local foods.
- FAO.13** Encourage residents to grow their own produce.
- FAO.14** Increase local food production opportunities, such as community garden plots, to assist in improving food security and mitigating climate change impacts.
- FAO.15** Explore the creation of an Agricultural Land Trust to support agricultural production, research, and innovation.



General Policy

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

FA.1 Encourage 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) outside of productive farmland and into industrial and/or commercial areas.

FA.2 Identify areas where local agriculture plans, which would address agricultural infrastructure issues, cold storage, abattoirs, secondary processing and site-based retail, are needed.

FA.3 Permit a full range of agricultural and complementary uses in the ALR and encourage value-added activities and agricultural processing that can improve farm viability that is consistent with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Agricultural Land Reserve Regulation*.

FA.4 Only support subdivision applications that meet the criteria of the Agricultural Land Commission's Homesite Severance policy.

FA.5 Encourage agricultural land leasing and the accommodation of lessees of agricultural land. Collaborate with external organizations, such as Young Agrarians, to identify opportunities to increase agricultural opportunities on public lands.



FA.6 Do not support applications to the ALC for houses larger than 500 square metres (m²).

FA.7 After the CVRD has forwarded applications for farmworker housing in recognition of federal and provincial policies and regulations related to the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program and Temporary Farmworker Housing initiatives to the ALC and the ALC has approved the application, the CVRD may consider the following:

- When possible, encourage farm help housing to be located within the GCB on non ALR land, providing access to amenities for workers and minimizing the impact of non-agricultural activity on farmland.
- If on ALC parcels, ensure parcels have BC Assessment "farm" status and meet the following conditions:
 - » Agriculture is the principal use on the parcel.
 - » The applicant demonstrates Farm Tax status.
 - » The applicant demonstrates that on-site housing for farm workers is necessary for the overall operation of the farm. The primary consideration is whether the scale of the farm operation is large enough that permanent help is deemed necessary.
 - » Clustering and siting of temporary farm worker housing minimizes impact on farmland and buffering is provided to mitigate impacts on adjacent lands.
 - » Temporary farm work housing, such as accommodation on non-permanent foundations, is the preferred solution where farm worker housing is justified.
 - » Farm worker housing is safe and appropriate.

EQUITY POLICY

PRIORITIZE

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- FA.8** Consider applications for temporary farm workers housing in non-temporary residential structures only when:
- the principal farm building and the farm operation have been in place for at least five years
 - the temporary farm workers will be living in the housing at least eight months in a calendar year
 - use of covenant to ensure removal or decommissioning of the housing if not used for two years
- FA.9** 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:
- is consistent with the zoning bylaws and the OCP
 - provides significant benefits to local agriculture
 - does not require the extension of municipal services
 - will not use productive agricultural lands
 - will not preclude future use of the lands for agriculture
 - will not harm adjacent farm operations
- FA.10** Educate neighbours about the impacts of normal farm practices such as odour, noise and traffic, traffic and the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*. ▲
- FA.11** Retain agricultural zoning designations and 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.12** 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 DPA application when non-ALR land is being subdivided, developed or re-developed.
- FA.13** Establish Environmental Farm Plan best management practices to more farms within the region to promote sustainable and regenerative agriculture. ▲
- FA.14** Support the number of farms with water storage options to reduce the impacts of agriculture on strained aquifers and watersheds.
- FA.15** 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.16** Discourage subdivision of rural settlement areas and all land in the ALR to smaller parcels for residential use and encourage large minimum parcel sizes within the ALR.
- FA.17** 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.18** 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 to Bylaw Development in Farming Areas".
- FA.19** Secondary dwellings within the ALR may be considered in alignment with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Agricultural Land Reserve Regulation* and with any further conditions that the CVRD may choose to apply through zoning regulations.

FA.20 Promote the use of conservation programs 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.21 Recognize and protect the needs and activities of farm operations when considering adjacent and nearby land uses. ○

FA.22 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.23 Encourage partnerships with the agriculture community, senior governments and private enterprise to promote the development of the agriculture sector.

FA.24 Support agri-tourism uses that are directly associated with and supportive of established farm operations as a primary use.

FA.25 Support alcohol production facilities and farm retail sales on ALR lands where consistent with ALC policies and regulations.

FA.26 Discourage the use of agricultural lands for public or institutional uses, such as schools, fire halls, parks and churches. ▲

FA.27 Work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to develop an Agricultural Land Use Inventory and associated Agricultural Water Demand Model.

FA.28 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.29 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.

FOOD PRODUCTION

FA.30 Inventory local food systems resources, identify gaps and define strategies for resource sharing and long-term planning in support of long-term community sustainability.

FA.31 Support the establishment of local food markets as key elements of the local food system. ○

FA.32 In Rural, Suburban and Urban lands, support and encourage a range of urban agriculture using approaches 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.33 Support a viable and diverse agricultural industry including new food processing, value-added and agri-tech initiatives.

3.6. STRENGTHEN LOCAL FOOD & AGRICULTURE

- FA.34** Encourage agriculture production that increases local food production and reduces GHG emissions. *
- FA.35** Identify the need for local agricultural strategies and work collaboratively across the region to update the 2001 Regional Agricultural Plan and 2013 Implementation Plan and update/align with the 2010 Cowichan Food Security Plan.
- FA.36** 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 FeedBC, BuyBC and GrowBC programs.
- FA.37** Ensure lands designated next to ALR land are not Heavy Industrial.



Local Food & Agriculture Policy (by transect sub-area)

RESOURCE & NATURAL AREAS

- FA.38** Support agroforestry practices, such as silvopasture, to diversify productivity of resource lands.
- FA.39** Support food forest initiatives.
- FA.40** Support conservation of forest ecosystems (e.g. within resource and natural areas) as integral to the health of agricultural systems.
- FA.41** Support sustainable forestry practices that minimize impacts on watersheds that serve as irrigation and livestock watering sources for agricultural operations.

RURAL & AGRICULTURAL AREAS

- FA.42** Recognize the authority and jurisdiction of the ALC for ALR lands within the bylaw area.
- FA.43** Protect lands within the ALR for agricultural and related uses.
- FA.44** Minimize conflicts between farm and non-farm uses.
- FA.45** Support and promote the economic viability of the agriculture sector.
- FA.46** Plan for a longer growing season and different crop potential.
- FA.47** Ensure sizing and siting guidelines for all land designated as Agriculture outside of the ALR is consistent across the agricultural landscape.

SUBURBAN AREAS

- FA.48** Prevent the conversion of agricultural lands both within and outside the ALR to suburban (e.g. non-farm) uses.
- FA.49** Support opportunities for affordable farm worker housing to reduce pressure for non-farm uses on agricultural land.
- FA.50** Support the creation and development of food hubs and other initiatives that can increase food production.
- FA.51** Support opportunities to strengthen the local food system through the creation of food storage, processing and distribution centres within suburban (e.g. serviced) lands and adjacent to population centres.
- FA.52** Support the growing of food in suburban areas.

VILLAGE AREAS

- FA.53** Support opportunities to strengthen the local food system through seasonal and year-round farmer's markets.
- FA.54** Support opportunities for affordable farm worker housing to reduce pressure for non-farm uses on agricultural land.
- FA.55** 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.56** Support the growing of food in village areas.

URBAN AREAS

- FA.57** Support opportunities for permanent market spaces to support local producers year-round.
- FA.58** Support opportunities for affordable farm worker housing to reduce pressure for non-farm uses on agricultural land.
- FA.59** 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.60** Support the growing of food in urban areas.

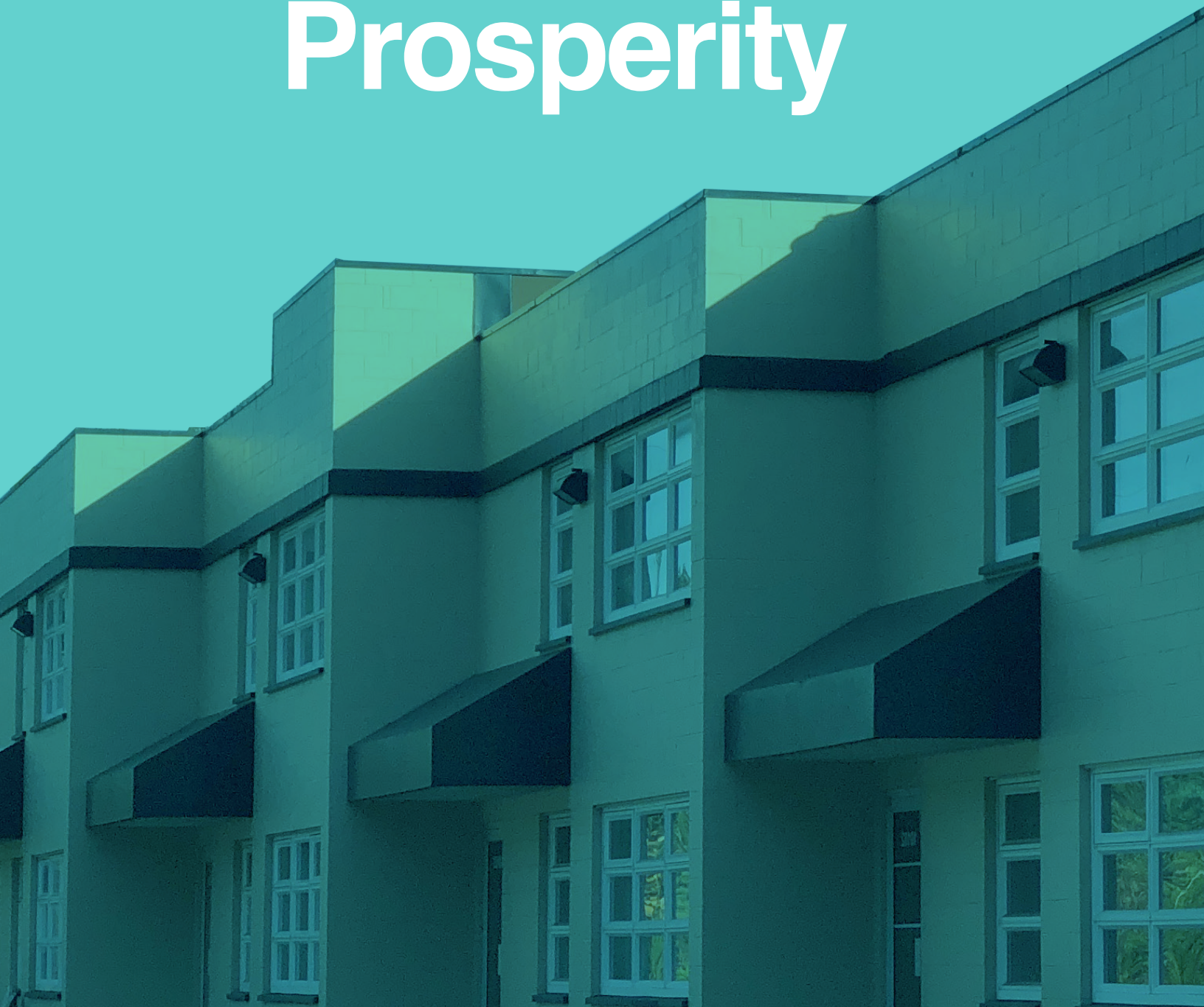
SPECIAL DISTRICTS

- FA.61** 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.62** Consider waste-to-energy opportunities to support agricultural production.





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 increase 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 for 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. by 2026. According to stakeholder consultation conducted by Economic Development Cowichan, the large majority of the demand (75%) is for 0.5-2 ac. 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 waste water 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 area's 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 Socio-Ecological Wheel

The objectives and policies of this chapter are strongly linked to the Socio-Ecological Wheel. Economic development is necessary to ensure residents can find well-paying local jobs to keep them above the social foundations and sustain a rewarding quality of life. An added benefit of attracting jobs to local communities that contribute to a circular economy is that they can help reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Commuting shorter distances is better for our health and the environment while industries that find ways to recycle waste are less likely to burden our waste management systems.



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 meets 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 (ft²) 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.

General Policy

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.
- RP.3** Encourage the intensification and more effective use of space in existing industrial developments, including increasing height and reducing parking requirements where located in proximity to transit, bike lanes and/or densely populated areas.
- RP.4** 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.5** Consider the expansion of uses in Industrial zones to include clean technologies like bio-gas.
- RP.6** Encourage out-migration of heavy industry from the Koksilah Industrial Park to a less sensitive area (e.g. not adjacent to a residential neighbourhood or on top of a vulnerable aquifer). ○
- 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.

- RP.10** Limit land use activities on industrial land that do not generate employment opportunities.
- RP.11** Identify existing brownfield or contaminated sites in the region for remediation purposes. ○
- RP.12** Support initiatives aligned with the development of rail & air transportation hubs on the island (e.g. Port Alberni Trans-shipment Hub).
- RP.13** 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.14** Discourage the conversion of industrial and commercial lands to residential to preserve employment lands. ✱

INNOVATIVE ECONOMY

- RP.15** Consider the creation of a Cowichan Tech Park where tech businesses can benefit from the advantages of clustering.
- RP.16** Create a Cowichan Broadband Strategy to expand and provide greater access to high-speed internet service, including expansion of fibre optic networks throughout the region. ▲
- RP.17** Establish a connectivity vision for the region around key community objectives to achieve greater economic, environmental and social outcomes.

EQUITY POLICY

○ PRIORITIZE



▲ IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- RP.18** Improve connectivity in underserved communities to the national standard (currently 50/10 and LTE). ○
- RP.19** Leverage economic development opportunities associated with a new district hospital.
- RP.20** Encourage diverse economic opportunities that attract and retain young families.
- RP.21** 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.22** Encourage businesses and development that attract and maintain a highly skilled workforce. ✱
- RP.23** Encourage innovative industries, including developers of green technologies, health science research, agriculture and others to locate within the regional district. ▲
- RP.24** 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.25** Explore the potential of a VIU satellite campus in the electoral areas in close proximity to transit and a village core.
- RP.26** Support community-based economic development efforts and initiatives, including local investment funds, cooperative development and social enterprise development.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- RP.27** Support storage space for deconstruction and material reuse markets.
- RP.28** Support the progressive rehabilitation of resource-based activities to an appropriate after-use, such as viable agricultural land or reforestation, that is compatible with the applicable regional OCP designation, surrounding environment and existing uses.
- RP.29** 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.30** Encourage the growth of tourism as a keystone industry that will help the region diversify its economy. ▲
- RP.31** Encourage and support agri-tourism activities that improve farm economic viability, in alignment with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and *Agricultural Land Reserve Regulation*.
- RP.32** Promote outdoor recreational activities and regional parks as key tourist destinations.
- RP.33** Protect scenic landscapes alongside highways and rural routes to support the tourism sector.
- RP.34** Encourage the growth of tourism industry associated products.

Enhance Economic Prosperity Policy (by transect sub-area)

RESOURCE & NATURAL AREAS

- RP.35** Support the sustainable use of natural resources.
- RP.36** Support the collection, processing and distribution of raw materials that support a transition to a circular economy.
- RP.37** Support the development of local and renewable energy sources to power a circular economy.
- RP.38** Support the expansion of regenerative eco-tourism opportunities.
- RP.39** Balance recreational needs with development of resource lands.

RURAL & AGRICULTURAL AREAS

- RP.40** Support sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices.
- RP.41** Support the development of local and renewable energy sources that power a circular economy.
- RP.42** Support the expansion of agri-tourism and value-added agricultural uses that align with the ALC's objectives.
- RP.43** Provide small-scale and low-impact tourism, commercial and industrial uses that support the needs of rural and farming communities.

SUBURBAN AREAS

- RP.44** Improve access to local shops and services.
- RP.45** Support home-based businesses and light industrial uses (e.g. artisan studios) compatible with residential areas.
- RP.46** Support flexibility and adaptability of uses and forms in existing and new commercial development.

VILLAGE AREAS

- RP.47** Support small-scale commercial developments with active ground floors that align with the character and identity of a village or settlement node.
- RP.48** Support home-based businesses and light industrial uses compatible with a village setting.
- RP.49** Support live/work and small-scale mixed-use developments that help diversify the community's economy.
- RP.50** Support flexibility and adaptability of uses and forms in existing and new commercial development.

URBAN AREAS

- RP.51** Support live/work and mixed-use development with active ground floors.
- RP.52** Encourage the development of office space, research facilities and post-secondary institutions.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

- RP.53** Provide access to a wide variety of strategic employment lands, including high tech, advanced manufacturing, green enterprise and filming studios.
- RP.54** Limit the amount of new development in the shape of big box and power retail shopping centres.
- RP.55** Support flexibility and adaptability of uses and forms in existing and new commercial development.



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.

The following chapter provides direction for four key components:

- Relationships
- Alignment with other instruments
- Equitable consideration
- Performance Metrics

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



Relationship Building

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.

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.

Where electoral areas and First Nations share borders, there is particular 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.

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 cooperatively 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.

FIRST NATIONS

- GI.1

Engage with First Nations in the future direction of the region.
- GI.2

Integrate DRIPA and the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada Calls to Action.
- GI.3

Advance DRIPA goals, such as First Nations participation in regional district governance, reviewing the principles and processes that guide place naming and evolving practices to foster reconciliation in local processes.
- GI.4

Co-create engagement protocols and reconciliation agreements with First Nations.
- GI.5

Establish an Indigenous Advisory Committee to advise on intergovernmental relations.
- GI.6

Develop new opportunities with First Nations where shared priorities exist.
- GI.7

Protect First Nations archaeological, heritage and other cultural interests.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

GI.8 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.9 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/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.10 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.11 Collaborate 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.

CVRD DEPARTMENTS

GI.12 Land Use Services supports internal divisions mandated to deliver services outlined in this document.

Alignment with other Instruments

The CVRD has many plans and strategies that provide direction for planning and development, the environment, transportation, engineering and 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 a number of instruments that have a direct impact on the growth and development of the electoral areas that should be updated following adoption of the OCP as part of the implementation strategy. The following is a list of instruments that should be updated and undergo a critical review to align with the vision, policies and regulations of this OCP. It also includes the departments responsible for each instrument. ✱

GI.13 Zoning Bylaw for the Electoral Areas (in process) (Land Use Services)	GI.22 Climate Projections and Impacts Analysis 2017 (Land Use Services/Environment)
GI.14 Community Parks & Trails Master Plan (electoral areas A to E have plans that need to be updated and could add F to I for a full representation of all electoral areas) (Parks)	GI.23 CVRD Invasive Species Strategy and Bylaw (Land Use Services)
GI.15 Infrastructure & Servicing Master Plans (on-going updates with Operations)	GI.24 Vulnerability and Risk Assessments (related to flooding, fire, drought, sea level rise, continuity of service and asset management)
GI.16 Transit Future Action Plan 2012 (on-going) (Community Services)	GI.25 Natural Hazards Risk Policy 2019 (Environment)
GI.17 Development Cost Charge Bylaw (identify key areas) (Operations)	GI.26 Asset Management Climate Impact Analysis and Framework 2021 (Environment)
GI.18 Community Amenity Contributions Policy (in development) (Land Use Services)	GI.27 GHG Mitigation Strategy 2012 (Land Use Services/Environment)
GI.19 Regional Agriculture Area Plan (Land Use Services)	GI.28 Energy Management Plan for CVRD Buildings, Community Centres and Assets 2013 (Land Use Services/Environment)
GI.20 Works and Servicing Bylaw (schedule amendments needed from Engineering) (Operations)	GI.29 Residential Retrofit Strategy and Recommendations 2020 (Land Use Services)
GI.21 Climate Change Adaptation and Risk Management Strategy (Land Use Services/Environment)	

Plans to Create

The following plans and policies will be developed from 2024 onwards to further support the vision, policies and regulations of this OCP. ✱

- | | |
|---|--|
| GI.30 Natural Asset Framework including Watershed Management Plans (Environment) | GI.39 Marine Plan (Land Use Services) |
| GI.31 Cultural Heritage Strategy (Land Use Services) | GI.40 Affordable Housing Plan (Land Use Services) |
| GI.32 Regional Transportation Plan (Community Services) | GI.41 Regional Food Security Plan (Economic Development) |
| GI.33 Local Agriculture Plans (initiated) (Land Use Services) | GI.42 Stormwater Management/Drainage Bylaw (Operations/Land Use Services) |
| GI.34 Cowichan Broadband Strategy (Economic Development) | GI.43 Conservation Strategy (Environment) |
| GI.35 Coastal Flooding Mitigation Bylaw and Strategy | GI.44 Local Area Plans (Land Use Services) |
| GI.36 Climate Crisis Mitigation Strategy (Land Use Services) | GI.45 Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (Environment) |
| GI.37 Adaptation Strategy Work Plan (Land Use Services/Environment) | GI.46 Vancouver Island Transportation Plan (Community Services) |
| GI.38 Bulk Water Supply Plans (Environment) | GI.47 Demolition and Construction Bylaw (Land Use Services) |
| | GI.48 Regional Growth Strategy (Land Use Services) |

Equity Checklist

The following 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 (marked with this symbol ▲). Note that this checklist may adapt as it is used and further input is received from equity-priority groups.

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?

Step 2 | Identify who will be affected

□ 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 barrier 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.

Step 5 | Implement

- 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 equity priority 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.

Performance Metrics

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 performance metrics that will help electoral area directors, Regional District staff, and the broader community measure and monitor progress.

The performance metrics are grouped by the OCP goals and include additional general growth management metrics as a way to better understand where focus may be needed over the years to successfully implement the whole plan. More detail on each metric can be found in Appendix I of the OCP.

MITIGATE & ADAPT TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

PM.1 Commercial & residential building emissions | This indicator measures residential and commercial electricity and natural gas consumption in gigajoule (Gj) and kilowatt hour (kWh).

PM.2 Passenger vehicle transportation emissions | 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.

MANAGE INFRASTRUCTURE RESPONSIBLY

PM.3 Serviced customers inside the GCB for all community services | Compact growth needs to be in serviced areas. 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.

PM.4 Fire & emergency response capacity & coverage | This metric shows the percentage of the community that is covered by emergency services.

MAKE DISTINCT, COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

PM.5 Housing starts per year | This metric monitors ongoing supply of housing in the region—it measures the number and composition of new housing units built.

PM.6 Number (percentage) of households within the GCB in proximity to amenities | 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 is considered a 5-10 minute walk or a 5-20 minute drive.

EXPAND MOBILITY OPTIONS

PM.7 Percentage of population within 400 m of a transit stop | This indicator measures the population within a convenient walking distance (400 m, or 5-10 minutes) of a public transit stop.

PROTECT & RESTORE NATURAL ASSETS

PM.8 Percent of green space protected from development | 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.

STRENGTHEN LOCAL FOOD & AGRICULTURE

PM.9 Land in food/crop production | This indicator measures the percentage of the CVRD's land base that is being actively farmed and its current use.

ENHANCE REGIONAL PROSPERITY

PM.10 Growth of business in the region | This metric shows how the number of businesses in the CVRD is changing.

PM.11 Industrial, commercial and tourism zoned land | This indicator monitors the supply of employment zoned land in the region. Zoning is an implementation tool of the OCP, which means the OCP can enable and encourage rezoning for employment lands.

IMPROVE GOVERNANCE & IMPLEMENTATION

PM.12 Number of instruments updated or created as a result of the modernized OCP | This metric monitors ongoing intra-regional cooperation and collaboration efforts.



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

—copyright 2022 John Edwards, poet laureate (Area H)



CVRD

APPENDIX ONE

Performance Metrics



Table of Contents

MITIGATE AND ADAPT TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS	4
1. Commercial and Residential Building Emissions	5
2. Passenger Vehicle Transportation Emissions	6
MANAGE INFRASTRUCTURE RESPONSIBLY	8
3. Serviced Customers Inside the GCB for all Community Services	9
4. Fire & Emergency Response Capacity & Coverage	11
MAKE DISTINCT, COMPLETE COMMUNITIES	13
5. Housing Starts per Year	14
6. Number (percentage) of Households within the GCB in Proximity to Amenities	15
EXPAND MOBILITY OPTIONS	17
7. Percentage of Population within 400m of a Transit Stop	18
PROTECT & RESTORE NATURAL ASSETS	19
8. Percent of Green Space Protected from Development	20
STRENGTHEN LOCAL FOOD & AGRICULTURE	22
9. Land in Food/Crop Production	23
ENHANCE REGIONAL PROSPERITY	25
10. Growth of Business in the Region	26
11. Industrial, Commercial and Tourism Zoned Land	28
IMPROVE GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION	30
12. Number of Instruments Updated or Created as a Result of the OCP	31

Introduction

Appendix One I Performance Metrics includes the dashboard of performance metrics for the Official Community Plan for the Electoral Areas (Bylaw 4373/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 was important that each metric:

- have easily accessible available data
- are tracked in a consistent manner at regular intervals to have consistency and show change
- fall under the responsibility of a CVRD department or other government organization, which would also oversee the mandate to report on it
- are 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.





Mitigate & Adapt to the Climate Crisis

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 have the ability to 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.

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
- 2019 Commercial Total Electric Consumption: 128,759,573 kWh; 1,373 TCO₂e
- 2019 Commercial Total Gas Consumption: 79,943 GJ; 3,987 TCO₂e

INTERPRETATION

- Energy use per capita:
 - » 2019 Per Capita Total Electric Consumption: 11,520 kWh per person
 - » 2019 Residential Per Capita Total Electric Consumption: 7,975 kWh per person
 - » 2019 Per Capita Total Gas Consumption: 5 GJ per person
 - » 2019 Residential Per Capita Total Gas Consumption: 3 GJ per person
- Energy use per household:
 - » 2019 Per Household Total Electric Consumption: 25,320 kWh
 - » 2019 Residential Per Capita Total Electric Consumption: 17,530 kWh
 - » 2019 Per Household Total Gas Consumption: 11 GJ
 - » 2019 Residential Per Capita Total Gas Consumption: 6 GJ
 - » Emissions per capita
 - » Emissions per capita: 0.377 TCO₂e
 - » Emissions per capita with imports: 0.716 TCO₂e
- Emissions per household
 - » Emissions per household: 0.829 TCO₂e
 - » Emissions per household with imports: 1.57 TCO₂e

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 have the ability to impact passenger vehicle use habits at the community scale, making vehicle transportation emissions a useful measure of the impacts of OCP land use policies.

DATA SOURCES

Annual Provincial Inventory.

DATA

Passenger vehicle emissions (tCO₂e).

- Currently Unavailable

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.



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.

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.

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%
- Area I: 95%

INTERPRETATIONS

- 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.
- Change year over year: N/A
- 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

- Identify service area polygons.
- For each electoral area, sum population within polygons.
- 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

- Census data is not updated annually.
- Capacity of improvement districts to expand service area boundaries.



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:

- Is housing supply keeping up with population growth?
- 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?

DATA SOURCES

[BC Gov data](#) on building permits – Single, Row and Apartments datasets.

DATA

Number of housing starts in the CVRD.

- June 2021–June 2022: 126 SFDs, 69 apartments, 0 row houses

INTERPRETATION

- 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.

DATA SOURCES

Building permit data, CVRD GIS data and census household data.

DATA

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 1,600 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

- 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

- Identify all amenities of interest as points: schools, employment lands, shopping centres, transit stops.
- Using the CVRD street network, create a driving network (for use with ArcGIS network analyst).
- Using the amenities as source locations, create drive time polygons per agreed upon drive shed. Carry out the same process for walk sheds.
- Sum households in the GCB within drive sheds, per amenity.
- 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.

- Employment lands are defined as: clusters of job producing actual use codes greater than 40,000 square feet (ft²).
- Shopping centres are defined as: clusters of retail actual use codes greater than 10,000 ft².

LIMITATIONS

- Census data is not updated annually.
- 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.
- 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.



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.

DATA SOURCES

BC stats population, CVRD GIS, BC transit.

DATA

Total population within 400 m walking distance of public transit.

INTERPRETATION

- Change over time: N/A

Amenity Assessment	Percent meeting target
Percent of CVRD population within 400 m (5 minutes walking) of transit stops	18%

- 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

- Identify all bus stops.
- Using the CVRD street network and stops as source locations, create 400 m walk sheds around each stop.
- Sum population within the walk sheds.
- 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

- Does not take into account bus frequency, time of day or reliability of transit service.



Protect & Restore Natural Assets

8. Percent 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.

DATA SOURCES

CVRD GIS data.

DATA

Provincial, national, regional and CVRD managed park area by electoral area; Sensitive ecosystems.

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.

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

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.



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.

DATA SOURCES

[Agri Census.](#)

DATA

Agricultural land use in the CVRD.

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.

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.



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.

DATA SOURCES

Business Location Counts by Employee Size—[BC open data](#).

DATA

Number of businesses in the CVRD.

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

- Number of new businesses compared to growth in population: N/A

DESIRED TREND

Increase in number of businesses in the region.

METHODS

- 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

- Unavailability of business licences.
- Inadequate reporting for the number of employees.

11. Industrial, Commercial and Tourism Zoned Land

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.

DATA SOURCES

CVRD GIS zoning layers.

DATA

Hectares of zoned employment land by gross category and electoral area.

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

Electoral Area	Category	Area (ha)
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

- 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%

- 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

- 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

- Zoned employment lands may not necessarily actively be used as such.
- OCP policy does not directly equal zoning; rather, it is a desired consequence of the OCP.



Improve Governance & Implementation

12. Number of Instruments 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.

DATA SOURCES

None

DATA

Checklist of the plans and strategies outlined in the OCP (p.133).

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.

