

# Cowichan Valley Regional District

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## **STRATEGIC PLAN** 2014 » 2018





The Cowichan Valley Regional District is one of 27 regional districts in British Columbia. It is comprised of nine electoral areas and four municipalities in the southern part of Vancouver Island. With a population of over 80,000 residents it covers a land area of 3,473.12 km<sup>2</sup>.







# CVRD OVERVIEW

## GOVERNANCE

The CVRD is governed by a 15 member Board comprised of appointed directors from four municipalities (North Cowichan has three appointees based upon population) and an elected director from each of the nine electoral areas. The CVRD Board elects a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson annually. The Chairperson is responsible for establishing the committee structure of the Board.

## SERVICES

The regional district provides a broad range of services to its residents. While a small number of these services are mandated by the Province (solid waste, emergency planning, land use planning), the majority of services provided by the CVRD are determined by the Board. However, services can only be provided with the approval of the electors who will receive them.

The services provided can be regional, sub-regional or local, they include the following examples:

<b>REGIONAL</b> Solid waste management, 9-1-1, emergency planning, administration, economic development, environmental services, regional parks, capital financing for hospitals	<b>SUB-REGIONAL</b> Land use planning, bylaw enforcement, building inspection, recreation centres, parks, transit	<b>LOCAL</b> Fire protection, water and wastewater systems, community parks, community centres, and critical street lights
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## FUNDING

Funds required to operate the various regional district services are generated through property taxes, fees and charges. Unlike municipalities, regional districts are required to match the costs and benefits of its services to the residents that benefit from them; this means residents pay for the services they receive.



# MESSAGE

## FROM BOARD CHAIR

The Strategic Plan sets the course for CVRD Board and staff. It provides a roadmap and strategic focus areas to help us collectively address challenges and opportunities.

Over the next few years, the Board will be dealing with the impacts of climate change and threats to precious water resources on several fronts. Completing flood protection works; mitigating the impacts of drought through pro-active steps such as water conservation and addressing water shortage at Cowichan Lake; working on a watershed governance model with our First Nations neighbours; and effective use of our zoning bylaws to regulate land use in our watersheds, will all be on the table.

In terms of how we do our work, the Board will strive for both sound fiscal management and strong public engagement. We will be addressing adequate reserve funding; asset management; recreation funding; and core service performance reviews. We will explore ways to improve our interaction with our community, including the Alternative Approval Process; general communications; functioning of our Commissions; and building bridges with First Nations.

The Board and staff will be working hard to achieve their goals for a transparent, well-run local government with a strong commitment to the environment and social issues.

Jon Lefebure, Chair  
Cowichan Valley Regional District

## CVRD DIRECTORS

**AREA A**  
Mill Bay/Malahat:  
Kerry Davis

**AREA B**  
Shawnigan Lake:  
Sonia Furstenau

**AREA C**  
Cobble Hill:  
Matteus Clement

**AREA D**  
Cowichan Bay:  
Lori Iannidinardo

**AREA E**  
Cowichan Station/Sahtlam/Glenora:  
Alison Nicholson

**AREA F**  
Cowichan Lake South/Skutz Falls:  
Ian Morrison

**AREA G**  
Saltair/Gulf Islands:  
Mel Dorey

**AREA H**  
North Oyster/Diamond:  
Mary Marcotte

**AREA I**  
Yubou/Meade Creek:  
Klaus Kuhn

**TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN**  
Bob Day, Vice-Chair

**TOWN OF LADYSMITH**  
Aaron Stone

**CITY OF DUNCAN**  
Phil Kent

**MUNICIPALITY OF NORTH COWICHAN**  
Jon Lefebure, Chair

**MUNICIPALITY OF NORTH COWICHAN**  
Tom Walker

**MUNICIPALITY OF NORTH COWICHAN**  
Kate Marsh





# PURPOSE OF STRATEGIC PLAN

**IN DECEMBER 2014**, the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board of Directors embarked on their four year mandate following the municipal elections. During 2015, through a series of workshops, the Board identified the challenges and opportunities in the region. Work then began on developing a plan that streamlined the issues, and prioritized actions to address them.

The 2014-2018 Strategic Plan reflects the collective vision of the Board and provides increased focus for the identified priorities. It will guide the CVRD Board and staff in making Cowichan communities the most livable and healthy in Canada.

It is critical the CVRD monitors and measures the implementation of this plan. Quarterly reports to the Board as well as an Annual Report will provide an opportunity for staff and the Board to communicate progress in achieving the various goals.



## VISION

Cowichan communities will be the most livable and healthy in Canada.

## MISSION

We serve the public interest through leadership, cooperation and a focus on community priorities and strengths.

## VALUES

<b>RESPECT</b> We respect our people, our land, and our diversity.	<b>ENGAGEMENT</b> We seek and appreciate public participation.	<b>QUALITY SERVICE</b> We provide efficient, effective, professional service.
<b>COLLABORATION</b> We achieve more through collaboration and cooperation.	<b>FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY</b> We are accountable for the prudent use of public funds.	<b>SUPPORTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT</b> We promote a happy, healthy, supportive workplace.
<b>INTEGRITY</b> We are honest and trustworthy.		

# STATEMENTS



# REGIONAL

STRATEGIC  
FOCUS AREAS







# EXCELLENCE IN REGIONAL LAND USE PLANNING

## GOAL

Supporting sustainable and coordinated growth and development in the region.

## WHY?

Land use planning within the CVRD’s electoral areas and municipalities can often occur in isolation and result in land use objectives and policies that do not fully consider regional implications or opportunities.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
1.1 REGIONAL INTEGRATED PLANNING STRATEGY Develop a regional planning strategy that addresses a range of land use issues and influences across all municipalities and electoral areas to ensure sustainable and coordinated management of growth and development.	Completion of a draft policy document	Q1 2017
	Adoption of a Regional Integrated Plan by member municipalities and electoral area directors	Q3 2017





# RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

## GOAL

Ensuring the impacts of climate change are understood and appropriate strategies and policies are developed to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate.

## WHY?

Climate change is increasingly impacting communities and the services provided by local government. Understanding, mitigating and adapting to climate change will enhance public safety and ensure future sustainability of our services and infrastructure.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
2.1 <b>CLIMATE CHANGE RISK ASSESSMENT</b> Undertake a comprehensive risk assessment of climate change impacts on land use planning, infrastructure, operations and public safety.	Establish climate change working group	Q2 2016
	Complete risk assessment	Q3 2017
2.2 <b>CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGY</b> Based on risk assessment outcomes, develop prioritized strategies for responding and adapting to the impacts of climate change.	Complete climate change adaption strategy	Q2 2018
2.3 <b>GHG REDUCTION STRATEGY</b> Develop strategies for the reduction of corporate greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and achievement of carbon neutrality.	Authorize strategic energy management plan	Q1 2016
	Complete corporate greenhouse gas reduction strategy	Q4 2016





# SOUND FISCAL MANAGEMENT

## GOAL

Striving for the highest degree of value, transparency and accountability in the management of the CVRD’s resources.

## WHY?

As the financial resources of the CVRD are derived primarily from property taxes and user fees, it is important residents have awareness and confidence that finances and human resources are utilized efficiently and responsibly.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
3.1 <b>SERVICE DELIVERY REVIEWS</b> Undertake a regular process to examine the delivery of various CVRD services to ensure the effective use of resources.	Develop priorities for future service delivery reviews	Q3 2016
	Complete external review of water and sewer utilities	Q4 2016
3.2 <b>ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN</b> Develop a comprehensive plan, strategies and associated policies to ensure sustainability of infrastructure and the services they provide.	Collect and compile sufficient asset data	Q4 2016 – 25% Q4 2017 – 50% Q4 2018 – 75%
	Complete infrastructure condition assessments	Q4 2016 – 20% Q4 2017 – 40% Q4 2018 – 75%
	Develop asset management strategies and plans	Q4 2017 – 20% Q4 2018 – 50%
3.3 <b>BUDGET TRANSPARENCY</b> Improve the financial planning process and supporting information to promote greater awareness of and confidence in the CVRD five-year financial plan.	Refine the annual budget calendar	Q1 2016
	Initiate a trial priority based budget process for the Solid Waste function	Q1 – Q4 2016
	Develop budget public engagement strategy	Q2 2016
3.4 <b>CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT</b> Implement a process for measuring the CVRD’s performance in delivering services and achieving objectives.	Complete 2014-2018 Strategic Plan	Q1 2016
	Initiate quarterly reporting	Q2 2016
	Complete 2016 Annual Report	Q2 2017





# PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES

## GOAL

Working in partnership with other stakeholders to better understand and protect the region’s water resources and promote sustainable water use.

## WHY?

Water is essential for everyone and every community. Responsible management and stewardship of our water sources is necessary to protect the quality and quantity of our water and to mitigate the impacts of increasing development, land use practices and climate change.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
4.1 <b>WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANS</b> Support the development of watershed management plans for high-risk watersheds in the CVRD.	Complete draft watershed characterization	Q1 2016
	Contribute to prioritization of watershed management planning	Q4 2016
	Complete draft watershed analysis	Q1 2017
	Complete risk assessment	Q2 2017
	Consider values/risks in land use planning processes and decisions and develop environmental recommendations	Ongoing
4.2 <b>WATERSHED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE</b> Work with the Province, First Nations and local partners to pursue opportunities for local watershed governance under new Water Sustainability Act regulations.	Work with the Cowichan Watershed Board on the water governance proposal to the Province of B.C.	Q2 - Q4 2016
4.3 <b>COWICHAN LAKE WATER STORAGE</b> Provide leadership in the development of long-term water supply and drought planning to support necessary community, economic and ecological needs	Support efforts to increase water storage on Cowichan Lake	2016
	Work with Province and others to develop financial and legal frameworks for drought management and response plans	2016
	Undertake process for creation of a service establishment bylaw as necessary	2016 - 2017





# ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITIES

## GOAL

Enhancing the CVRD’s engagement with residents and our communities and ensuring opportunities for local input to decision-making.

## WHY?

The CVRD is a mosaic of distinct and unique communities. It is important the regional district engage its residents, communities and neighbours to ensure their interests are heard and considered in local decision-making.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
5.1 <b>FORMALIZE FIRST NATIONS RELATIONSHIPS</b> Enhance relationships with local First Nations governments to ensure respective interests are communicated and considered.	Hold community-to-community forum with Lake Cowichan First Nations	Q1 2016
	Hold community-to-community forum with Ditidaht First Nations	Q2 2016
	Finalize framework for engagement protocols with First Nations	Q3 2016
5.2 <b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY/ GUIDELINES</b> Establish principles and structure for engaging residents on important matters that affect them and their communities.	Develop AAP policy and procedures	Q1 2016
	Complete community engagement guidelines	Q3 2016
5.3 <b>ENHANCING COMMUNICATIONS CAPACITY AND TOOLS</b> Develop capacity of staff and elected officials to effectively communicate with residents, communities and within the organization.	Implement Manager of Strategic Services position	Q1 2016
	Develop and deliver appropriate training	Q1 – Q3 2016
	Establish communications calendar	Q2 2016
5.4 <b>COMMISSION ROLES AND STRUCTURE REVIEW</b> Review purpose, scope and procedures of commissions and amend bylaws as necessary.	Present proposed Commission bylaw amendments to the Board	Q3 2016
5.5 <b>CONDUCT REGULAR HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS IN 2016 AND 2018</b>	Develop and distribute household surveys	Q2 2016
		Q2 2018





## ADVOCACY

### GOAL

Ensuring the region's interests are clearly communicated, promoted and defended with senior government on important issues affecting the CVRD.

### WHY?

Communities and residents of the CVRD are affected by decisions and programs of senior government. The CVRD has an important role in voicing local interests to senior government on matters that affect the regional district and its communities.

» Cowichan District Hospital replacement

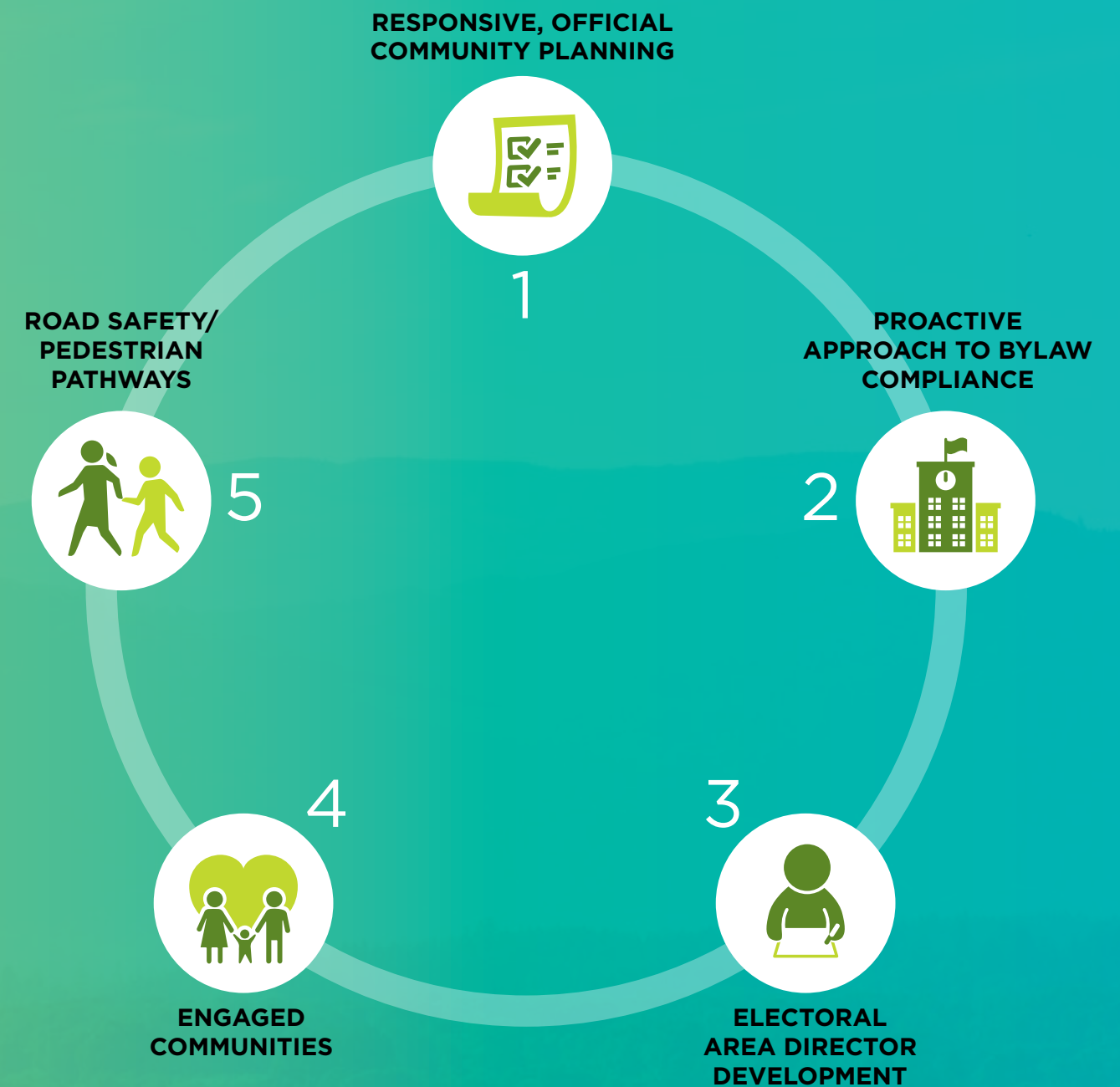
» Standards on private forest lands

» Water Sustainability Act regulations



# ELECTORAL AREA

STRATEGIC  
FOCUS AREAS







# RESPONSIVE, OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLANNING

## GOAL

Enhancing the capacity for OCP reviews and updates as well as harmonizing regulation for common land use objectives and policies, where possible, while respecting the character and aspirations of each community.

## WHY?

Current OCP reviews can take up to two years to complete. This contributes to increasingly out-of-date OCPs that require extensive updates when they are eventually reviewed. Additionally, providing consistency in how common land use objectives and policies are defined will assist developers in applying the policies and objectives across the region.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
1.1 <b>GAP ANALYSIS OF EXISTING OCPS AND ZONING BYLAWS</b> Review all existing land use bylaws to identify challenges and opportunities for improved consistency.	Review zoning bylaw general regulations for the electoral areas against best practice. Propose a priority list for identified amendments	Q4 2016
1.2 <b>BYLAW AMENDMENTS AS REQUIRED</b> Undertake necessary bylaw amendments to address gap analysis.	Adopt a minimum of three comprehensive zoning bylaw amendments	Q4 2017
1.3 <b>DEVELOP A TRIAL FORMAT FOR AN ACCELERATED REVIEW OF AREA F OCP</b> Endeavour to include Area I during Area F review, where appropriate, as a trial to address common areas of interest/impact and generate input to the Area I OCP review.	Complete OCP draft for Area F	Q4 2016
	Adopt new Area F OCP	Q3 2017
1.4 <b>DEVELOP FIVE-YEAR OCP REVIEW STRATEGY</b> Review purpose, scope and procedures of commissions and amend bylaws as necessary.	Present a proposed five-year strategy to the Electoral Area Services Committee (EASC)	Q4 2016
1.5 <b>CONDUCT A REVIEW OF AREA I OCP</b>	Complete OCP draft for Area I	Q4 2017
	Adopt new Area I OCP	Q1 2018





# PROACTIVE APPROACH TO BYLAW COMPLIANCE

## GOAL

Enhance public awareness of relevant regulatory bylaws in order to reduce the number of infractions and mitigate costs of pursuing enforcement and remediation.

## WHY?

Many bylaw infractions are not intentional and result from a lack of awareness of the various regulatory bylaws in the CVRD.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
2.1 Develop a welcome/information letter program for all new property owners in electoral areas	Develop format for each electoral area	Q2 2016
	Distribute letter to all new property owners	Q3 2016
2.2 Initiate targeted information campaigns for problematic enforcement issues	Research best practices for enforcement campaigns	Q3 2016
2.3 Identify gaps in current enforcement powers and authorities and advocate for enhanced enforcement authority	Review current deficiencies in enforcement powers and authorities	Q4 2016
	Revise/amend CVRD regulatory bylaws as necessary	Q4 2017
	Submit appropriate resolutions/recommendations to Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) and Province.	Ongoing





# ELECTORAL AREA DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT

## GOAL

Develop Director’s knowledge and capacity to fulfill their range of responsibilities as an elected official and community representative.

## WHY?

Electoral Area Directors are required to make decisions on a variety of complex issues. Education and information sessions will provide enhanced background knowledge and awareness of matters that may come before the Directors, EASC and Board.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
3.1 Establish 12 month lunch and learn calendar	Complete calendar and have endorsed by EASC	Q1 2016
3.2 Professional development on public engagement and facilitation tools	Recommendations for appropriate professional development opportunities provided to EASC	Q3 2016





# ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

## GOAL

Support and empower volunteer involvement to ensure rewarding and beneficial relationships for the CVRD and its volunteers.

## WHY?

The CVRD values community participation, particularly in terms of volunteerism and public input to decision-making.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
4.1 Develop strategy and guidelines for use of volunteers in CVRD functions	Research volunteer delivery programs offered by other local governments	Q2 2016
	Identify range of possible volunteer opportunities and administrative support requirements	Q4 2016
	Present draft strategy and guidelines to the EASC	Q2 2017





# ROAD SAFETY/PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS

## GOAL

Improve pedestrian/cyclist safety on rural roads by developing a network of on-roadway and off-roadway pedestrian pathways and trail linkages.

## WHY?

Many of the major rural roads within the CVRD have insufficient shoulders to safely accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.

ACTIONS	MEASURE	TARGET
5.1 Develop inventory of critical pedestrian pathway requirements	Identify key roadside pathway community connections between Electoral Areas, member municipalities and adjacent regions	Q2 2016
5.2 Lobby AVICC for increased participation of Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure in developing rural pedestrian pathways in highway right of ways	Attend AVICC and UBCM workshops and Minister meeting at annual conventions.	Q2 - Q3 2016