

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 17, 2022

Public and business input sought on potential workforce housing solutions for Cowichan

DUNCAN, BC – Economic Development Cowichan has launched a survey seeking feedback from workers and employers on strategies to address the shortage of workforce housing in the region, in anticipation of developing a Workforce Housing Strategy later this year.

Housing needs in Cowichan are well known. Recently, the lack of sufficient housing has led to significant price increases and affordability issues. The benchmark price of a single-family home in Cowichan has increased by 115% in the past 5 years, and the vacancy rate for private apartments in the Duncan area is just 0.6%. The 2021 Cowichan Regional Housing Needs Assessment report estimates that 4,955 new housing units are needed in Cowichan by 2025. Meanwhile, Canada is in the midst of a labour shortage, and Cowichan businesses are struggling to attract and retain the few available workers, who cannot find an affordable place to live in the region.

“The Cowichan Valley Regional District understands the critical importance of taking immediate steps to address the affordable housing needs of Cowichan’s workforce, and the connection to labour supply issues,” said Brittany Taylor, Acting Manager of Economic Development Cowichan. “The Workforce Housing Strategy will focus on concrete actions to address the housing shortage as it relates to employment.”

As part of the preliminary research for the Strategy, Economic Development Cowichan is seeking public input through a set of online surveys, one for employers and one for workers. The information provided will help uncover the impact that housing has had on employers and workers in the region. The data will be used to develop a picture of workforce housing needs in the Cowichan Valley and help identify important solutions to explore as part of the Workforce Housing Strategy. The surveys were developed in partnership with [Cowichan Housing Association](#).

Visit planyourcowichan.ca/workforce-housing to complete the surveys by June 17, 2022.

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