

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 24, 2023

Cannabis report explores current state of legal industry in Cowichan

DUNCAN, BC – A recently published Cannabis in the Cowichan Valley report provides a baseline from which to track the emerging legal industry in the region, as well as recommendations for supporting local businesses as they mature.

Non-medical cannabis was legalized in Canada in 2018, drastically altering the landscape of the industry. The Cannabis in the Cowichan Valley Report was commissioned by Economic Development Cowichan (EDC) in 2021 to gather data and establish a reference point for understanding the post-legalization state of the cannabis industry in the region. Craft Cannabis Association of BC (CCABC), a non-profit industry association supporting small-scale independent cannabis businesses, was contracted to gather and analyze data from Cowichan’s cannabis businesses.

“World-class cannabis has been grown in the Cowichan Valley for decades, contributing significantly to the economic well-being of this region,” said Sarah Campbell, Director of the Craft Cannabis Association of BC. “The transition to a legal market hasn’t been easy for many of our local businesses, and this work helps us better understand how we can help.”

In the fall of 2021, CCABC conducted a survey of the licensed recreational cannabis businesses operating within the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) and its member municipalities. The survey data was augmented by secondary research to provide context and comparison of the local information. The research resulted in 11 recommendations for nurturing the maturation of the legal cannabis industry in Cowichan, including proposed actions around sector development, local government policy, and advocacy. Implementation of these actions is anticipated to be undertaken collaboratively by CCABC, EDC, CVRD, and other partners, as resources and priorities allow.

“The legal cannabis industry has the potential to bring about positive outcomes for Cowichan, including the creation of new businesses and jobs that promote economic development, as well as the transition of legacy operators to the legal market,” said Barry O’Riordan, Manager of Economic Development Cowichan. “The opportunities and innovations related to the legal cannabis industry within a framework of responsible practices could further benefit Cowichan tourism given its renown for agritourism.”

This work will allow EDC to track changes in the industry as it matures and as recommendations from the report are implemented. The Cannabis in the Cowichan Valley report may be viewed at ecdevcowichan.com/cannabis.

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Barry O’Riordan
Manager, Economic Development Cowichan
250.709.1119
barry.oriordan@cvrd.bc.ca