

News Release

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Public and business input sought on economic future of the Cowichan region

DUNCAN, BC – Economic Development Cowichan (EDC) is creating a comprehensive Strategic Plan to guide its activities over the next 5 years, and has launched a series of surveys seeking input from business owners and the members of the public.

EDC is a regional function operating under the Strategic Services Department of the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD). Its work is guided by the CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan (2023-2026) and the current EDC Strategic Plan (2018-2022). However, much has changed since 2018, including a deepened understanding of how economic development can support economic reconciliation with First Nations, promote equity, and respond to the challenges of climate change.

“The community and business landscape in the region has shifted significantly since the last Strategic Plan was formulated in 2018,” said Barry O’Riordan, Manager of Economic Development Cowichan. “The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the imperative of economic reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and escalating concerns around labour markets, housing affordability, and climate change have radically transformed our economic terrain. We are excited to embark on this project to identify the best and most impactful actions Economic Development Cowichan can take over the next five years to strengthen our regional economy.”

The project will assess the economic outlook for the region, identify opportunities to further develop traditional and emerging economic sectors, review constraints to development, identify priorities and define actions that can be undertaken by EDC and others to build a stronger, more resilient regional economy.

EDC is inviting businesses and other organizations operating in the Cowichan region to complete a survey to identify key challenges they face and actions that should be taken to address these challenges over the next five years. A more general public survey is also being conducted to find out what residents see as the major economic development opportunities, issues and challenges facing the region, and what government and others should do to support economic development.

Visit planyourcowichan.ca/edc-plan to access both surveys.

The Economic Development Cowichan Strategic Plan is anticipated to be completed in 2024. To learn more about the project and opportunities to get involved, visit the project website at planyourcowichan.ca/edc-plan.

- 30 -

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