

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



May 31, 2024

CVRD considers creation of bylaw to ensure its facilities remain respectful public spaces

DUNCAN, BC – The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is considering the creation of a bylaw to ensure its facilities remain safe and respectful spaces for its staff and the public.

The CVRD is committed to providing public spaces where all individuals (including Directors, employees, and members of the public) are treated with mutual respect and dignity. As such, the CVRD recognizes the potential need to establish a Respectful Spaces Bylaw that will ensure public spaces are free of harassment, bullying, intimidation, violence and discrimination. It is anticipated that this bylaw would also seek to prohibit, regulate, and impose requirements in relation to inappropriate and/or nuisance behaviours.

The CVRD has recently experienced such challenges across the organization at various service locations, such as recreation facilities, Bings Creek Solid Waste Management Complex, and the Ingram Street Head Office. Many communities across the country are dealing with similar social issues in public spaces, and the Municipality of North Cowichan and Town of Ladysmith are two jurisdictions within the CVRD that currently have policies or bylaws to address them. While the CVRD had previously considered the creation of an operational policy to address these issues, it was determined that a bylaw would be a more appropriate tool as it provides greater authority and accountability when addressing inappropriate behavior that compromises safety.

“It is imperative that we take a formal approach to addressing some of the recent incidents in our public spaces, and provide necessary mechanisms to better resolve future instances of inappropriate behavior,” said Aaron Stone, Chair of the CVRD Board of Directors. “However, before adopting and implementing the bylaw, we want to ensure that residents have input. This is an opportunity to shape a potential bylaw so that it’s reflective of community concern and provides for a safe and welcoming environment for all.”

The CVRD is seeking public feedback on the areas of focus that will make up a Respectful Spaces Bylaw in the form of a short survey through its Plan Your Cowichan engagement website. The survey is now open for 30 days to residents to provide input, and will close on June 30, 2024.

To participate in the Respectful Space Bylaw survey, please visit:

www.planyourcowichan.ca/respectful-spaces-bylaw

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Kris Schumacher
Manager, Communications & Engagement
250.701.2631
kris.schumacher@cvrd.bc.ca