

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



March 11, 2021

Cowichan businesses to benefit from new social procurement partnership

DUNCAN, BC – The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is developing a directory of local businesses delivering community values to be used for more immediate and routine purchasing needs.

Businesses will be able to get their name onto this directory by completing a simple form through a Request for Information (RFI) process that the CVRD have launched in partnership with the Coastal Communities Social Procurement Initiative (CCSPI). By participating in the directory, local businesses will gain access to potential opportunities for their business, capacity building and knowledge for other opportunities for both Regional District purchasing needs as well as those of other Vancouver Island communities involved in the CCSPI.

“We know our local businesses are passionate about their community and we want to foster a culture of purchasing from businesses that add social value into our communities where we can,” said Aaron Stone, Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “This directory is a natural first step to identifying suppliers who can readily respond to some of our more routine purchasing needs but may have been intimidated by government purchasing opportunities in the past.”

This social value directory will focus on lower dollar, routine, purchasing needs by the Regional District for things like building supplies, landscaping, food and catering, events, signage, etc. Through the Request for Information form, businesses will be asked to provide information on how they are structured, and how they promote and provide social and community values such as local employment, youth and apprenticeship training opportunities, community development and partnerships within the community.

“We recognize that government purchasing is not an area that most local businesses readily think of, or respond to,” said Erin Annis, Procurement Officer for the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “With this directory we are looking to create simple opportunities for straight forward participation by small businesses who are delivering community value in our region. This allows us to focus some of our existing spending on reinforcing these social values and the spin off benefits generated for the region.”

Every year, local governments on Vancouver Island and coastal communities award contracts for goods and services valuing approximately \$1.5 billion annually. Social procurement means that at the same time as this money is spent on improving communities, local benefits delivered through procurement will be increased through economic development, local employment, increased affordability and greater access to services. Industry partners that provide services to government also stand to benefit from social procurement.

The CVRD is hosting an information session webinar on April 1, 2021 for an overview of the process, a walk-through on completing the Request for Information forms and to answer questions from prospective business owners. For more information about this initiative and to register for the information webinar please go to: <https://ccspi.ca/suppliers/>

More about CCSPI:

The Coastal Communities Social Procurement Initiative (CCSPI) aims to better leverage tax dollars to achieve positive social outcomes for communities throughout the coast. The CVRD participates as a member. For more on the CCSPI please go to: <https://ccspi.ca>

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Erin Annis
Procurement Manager
Cowichan Valley Regional District
250.746.2583
erin.annis@cprd.bc.ca