

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Modernization of single Official Community Plan for CVRD electoral areas begins with Community Circle engagements

DUNCAN, BC – Following the multi-year harmonization process to create a single Official Community Plan (OCP) for all nine electoral areas in the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD), the next phase of modernizing this plan is ready to begin.

The first phase of public engagement for the modernization of the OCP for the Electoral Areas will see the creation of Community Circles, small groups of residents having guided discussions about the future of the Cowichan Valley. While CVRD staff will be facilitating a number of sessions in the coming months, residents have the opportunity now to create their own Community Circle with their friends and neighbours and contribute ideas to this important planning initiative.

“We were very fortunate to receive input from hundreds of residents across the region during the harmonization of this plan, and we really need your help again,” said Lori Iannidardo, Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “A plan like this is really only useful if it reflects the voices of our community members. As this is a fairly complex undertaking, we want people to be able to gather and share their thoughts in a meaningful experience, and Community Circles are one of the best ways we can achieve that.”

Beginning today, residents can sign up for one of four Community Circle Facilitator Training sessions that will provide the knowledge and tools needed to successfully lead one or more Community Circles in the coming months. Once trained, facilitators can form groups with family members, friends, neighbours and colleagues to discuss one or more of the policy goals of the OCP. The results of these Community Circle group sessions become valuable input for CVRD staff and consultants to use in the process of modernizing the OCP for the Electoral Areas.

“We recognize that our residents have a lot to say about the future of their communities, and providing the opportunity for community-led activities is the most flexible and accessible way for us to gather input,” said Coralie Breen, Manager of Planning – Strategic Initiatives for the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “This will be the first time we’ve used this format, and certainly represents one of the single largest public engagement undertakings for the CVRD to date. We hope people will be inspired to participate in at least one Community Circle in the coming months and help us plan the future of the Cowichan region.”

A suite of materials, including Community Circle facilitator guides and training sign-up, are now available for residents at www.planyourcowichan.ca.

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For more information, please contact:

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