



Economic Development Cowichan » ecdevcowichan.com

Contact Amy Melmock, Manager, EDC: amelmock@cvrd.bc.ca

December 2018 Update:

EDC Collaborates on New Development

Tech, Trails, Agriculture and Investment Top the Agenda

REBOOTING THE COWICHAN TECH STRATEGY

Earlier this year, EDC's Cowichan Tech Strategy highlighted the need to initiate local tech training and promote the region to potential tech investors. With more than 33 tech companies in our region, and a host of new federal and provincial support programs coming on stream, EDC wants to bring these recommendations to life!

This summer, EDC co-hosted an event with Vancouver Island University Cowichan Campus, Apple Canada and School District 79 aimed at creating a new tech training certificate program in Cowichan. EDC is also collaborating with the Vancouver Island Coastal Economic Association (VICEDA) to attract new tech players to the Island. *"Tech is big in BC and getting bigger. From digital media to clean tech, the industry generates \$26 billion in GDP along with 90,000 jobs."* Cowichan Tech Strategy 2018

WHEELING IN A HIKING & CYCLING ACTION PLAN

Community Futures Cowichan is putting the wheels on a new Hiking and Cycling Action Plan that is bringing together the CVRD, the Town of Lake Cowichan and Ts'uibaa-asatx (Lake Cowichan) First Nations. The plan uses trails development as the launch pad for economic and community revitalization.

In the wake of the plan's recent completion, a new Cowichan Trailblazers Society has formed to spearhead trails development in Cowichan Lake Region. Community members, cycling enthusiasts and businesses are now keen to participate in expanding the trails network in the Cowichan Lake region! EDC is on board to work with Community Futures on accessing resources to assist with trail development.

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ALL ABOUT AGRICULTURE

Earlier this year, EDC joined forces with BC Agriculture to take part in a province-wide Land Lease Program initiated by the Young Agrarians. At a recent event in Cobble Hill, local land matcher Azja Jones Martin azja@youngagrarians.org met with more than 60 participants interested in developing leases on their farms. To complement this exciting program, EDC is digging deep in 2019 on new avenues for food and beverage processing that will drive demand for local agricultural products.

LADYSMITH ORGANATIONS JOIN HANDS ON NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

EDC is facilitating a new collaboration with the Town of Ladysmith, Stz-uminus First Nation, the Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce, Ladysmith Downtown Business Association, Nanaimo Airport and Community Futures Central Island that has resulted in the Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy. Visit the EDC website at www.ecdevcowichan.com to see the full report!

FILM

In the past year, nearly a dozen productions were shot in Cowichan, ranging from small documentaries, to television series to a major feature film. The estimated direct spend by production companies on accommodations, food, and services in the region tops \$450,000 for 2018, and an estimated 9.8 million international viewers will be exposed to Cowichan as a result of the productions shot here. The promotional work of Film Cowichan, combined with the cooperation and support of local municipalities, residents, and businesses has made these benefits to our local economy possible.

ON THE HORIZON

- Join us January 24 from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Blue Grouse Winery to hear the results and follow-up activities stemming from the EDC Wine, Craft Brewing and Distilling Study. RSVP by contacting jenns@cvrld.bc.ca
- VIEA's new Foreign Trade Zone designation (FTZ-VI) will be the subject of an industry breakfast meeting on February 21. For more information, contact Amy Melmock at amelmock@cvrld.bc.ca
- Watch for the release of the Cowichan Industrial Land Use Strategy in early 2019.