MILL BAY/SHAWNIGAN LAKE/ COBBLE HILL

British Columbia

Region Profile

Photo: Mill Bay Marina

MILL BAY/SHAWNIGAN LAKE/
COBBLE HILL, BRITISHCOLUMBIA
Region Profile

Location: Southern Vancouver Island, British Columbia
Key Economic Sectors: Agriculture, tourism, light industrial
Population: 18,340 (Statistics Canada 2016)
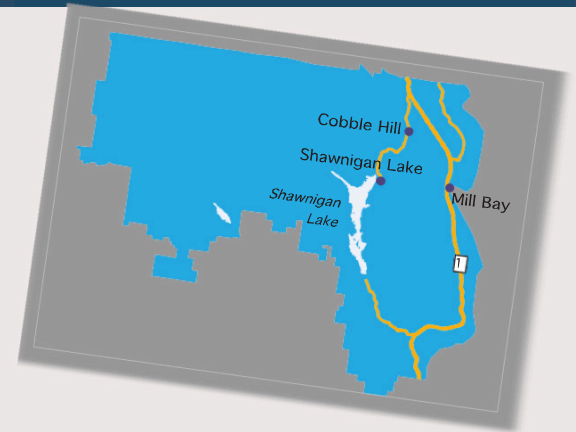
INFORMATION FOR INVESTORS

Together, Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill are sometimes referred to as the South Cowichan Region. Each community has its own unique and distinct characteristics that sets it apart from the others and from outlying areas.

UNIQUE AREA

Located close to Victoria, the area is a place of extraordinary beauty and unique socio-economic, cultural and environmental significance. Mill Bay is known as the departing point for the Saanich Peninsula and the historic Malahat Drive. Shawnigan Lake is a popular recreational destination with its population typically doubling during the summer months. Cobble Hill is known for its agricultural surroundings, recreational activities and, more recently, its vineyard and its award-winning wines.

Photo: Tourism Cowichan

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The area has several sectors with interesting investment opportunities.

- **Tourism** — The area has the ability to expand upon its agricultural, winery, culinary, artisanal and recreational tourism.

- **Forestry** — Building on a strong base that local mills provide, value-added wood products are a possibility.

- **Agriculture and secondary agricultural businesses** — Wineries, dairy farms, organic produce farms and food processors are a growing sector of the economy.

- **Technology/light manufacturing** — The Community Plan encourages the establishment of a business/industrial park along the Trans-Canada Highway.

- **Professional services** — The beautiful natural environment provides an ideal setting for small professional or home-based businesses.

GOVERNMENT/ COMMUNITY PLANNING

The area encompasses some 38,500 hectares, and consists of all land and water surfaces within Electoral Areas A (Mill Bay/Malahat), B (Shawnigan Lake) and C (Cobble Hill). The Cowichan Valley Regional District governs the area. Directors are elected every four years, one from each Area.

The 2011 Official Community Plan has several key principles of interest to investors, including:
- Protect and enhance agricultural and working forest lands
- Direct new development to existing communities
- Encourage local economic development

MALAHAT FIRST NATION

Malahat Economic Development Ltd. is open for business. Run by the Malahat First Nation, the organization seeks and responds to potential partnerships, investments and projects that result in new revenue streams to support the Nation.

They are open to private initiatives from small and medium enterprise, licensing, intellectual property applications and all manner of enterprise. Current activities include the development of commercial office space, a marina and new housing for members. The Malahat First Nation welcomes inquiries for other developments.

Photo: Highlight Studio

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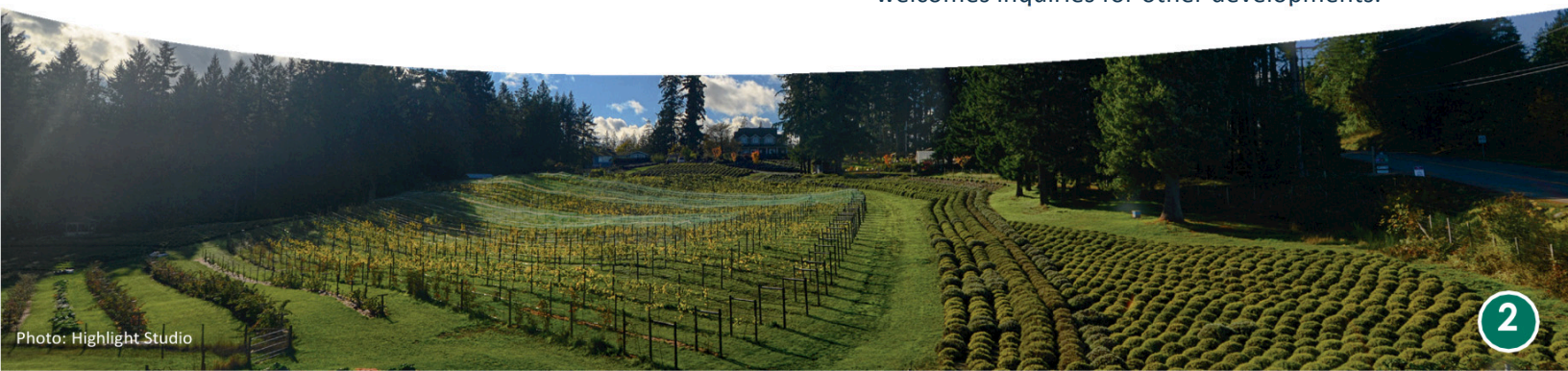
LIVING IN THE AREA

Our rural lifestyle, natural beauty, affordable housing and distinct, vibrant communities continue to attract residents to the area. Come and see it for yourself!

There are many reasons for living in the area, including its close proximity to both Victoria and the rest of the Cowichan Region. A stable economy, unlimited recreational opportunities, growing wineries, a strong artisanal sector and specialty shops all combine to create a relaxing yet active lifestyle.

TRANSPORTATION

- **Highways:** Trans-Canada Highway runs through the Region.
- **Bus services:** Greyhound offers service from Duncan. The Cowichan Valley Commuter Bus leaving from Duncan provides an alternative to driving to the Victoria Region for work.
- **Air service:** Passenger flights and cargo service are available from nearby Victoria International Airport.
- **Local buses:** Regular service within the Region and throughout the Cowichan Valley. HandyDART service for seniors.
- **Ferry:** Regular ferry service to the mainland and USA is available from Victoria. The Mill Bay/Brentwood Bay ferry is Vancouver Island's most beautiful shortcut to Victoria.

EDUCATION

Within the area are three public elementary schools and Frances Kelsey Secondary School. It is also home to two private schools, Shawnigan Lake School and Brentwood College School.

Post-secondary and business training is offered at the Duncan campus of Vancouver Island University, or in Victoria at the University of Victoria or Royal Roads University, a 30-35 minute drive away.

The area's public library, located in Mill Bay, provides free Internet access and other educational resources.

Photo: Highlight Studio

HEALTHCARE

Cowichan District Hospital in Duncan delivers healthcare on a daily basis. The Victoria General Hospital is about a half-hour drive away.

The area has family doctors and a range of healthcare professionals, including physiotherapists, massage therapists, chiropractors, psychologists, counsellors and dentists.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Enjoy excellent fishing, swimming, boating, windsurfing and kayaking on Shawnigan Lake or in Mill Bay. On land, you can camp, hike and bike or take a horseback ride along the Cowichan Valley Trail. Or perhaps you'd like to cross the Kinsol Trestle, a wooden railway trestle that provides a spectacular crossing of the Koksilah River.

Kerry Park Recreation Centre houses an ice rink and a host of school and adult ice hockey teams, as well as curling. The Shawnigan Lake Community Centre has a dance studio and gym.

The area celebrates many festivals. You can enjoy spring to fall farmers markets and the Cobble Hill Agricultural Fair. Year-round, you can visit artists' studios, have a glass at the local winery or enjoy a fine meal in cafés and restaurants.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Move to the area for an opportunity at a better life. You will find yourself surrounded by great people in a beautiful, distinct and welcoming community.

Economic Development Cowichan
www.ecdevcowichan.com
250.746.7880

Malahat First Nation
www.malahatnation.ca
250.743.3231

Photo: Tourism Cowichan