



**United Way**  
Central & Northern  
Vancouver Island

## **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT The Cowichan Valley Affordable Housing Proposed Bylaw Change**

### **What proposed bylaw change is the CVRD considering?**

The Cowichan Valley Regional District is considering passing a bylaw that would provide an annual financial contribution to assist with costs related to affordable housing. The contribution would be managed by Cowichan Housing Association on behalf of the community.

### **How is United Way connected?**

United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island is part of the Cowichan Coalition to Address Homelessness and Affordable Housing. This year the Coalition developed a multi-year Community Plan to address the need for safe, affordable housing, which is one aspect of the housing continuum addressed in the plan.

One key recommendation in the plan: The need for local government support and more funding in order to move the dial on the housing crisis in our region.

Provincial and federal funding to tackle the issue usually comes with an expectation that local governments support solutions through funding and access to land, etc. The plan and recommendation regarding the CVRD's proposed bylaw change is a culmination of several years of community forums and work by several local agencies examining best solutions to the housing crisis.

### **Why is affordable housing important?**

The ability to access affordable housing is important for many reasons. A lack of housing has implications for the health, social and economic well-being of our community. Affordable housing meets the needs of the "missing middle," working families, seniors, and people on fixed incomes who are getting pushed out of the housing market due to increasing rent and decreasing availability. Moving the "missing middle" into affordable housing frees up space in the lower-tier housing market for people who are experiencing housing instability or homelessness.

### **Is there a lack of affordable housing in the Cowichan Valley?**

According to the CVRD, in our region rising housing costs are far exceeding increases in people's incomes, with a current deficit of 750 units. Many working people are having trouble finding housing that they can afford. This affects professionals new to the area, low wage workers, young families trying to enter the housing market, seniors on fixed incomes, and many others.

### **Why does United Way support this proposed bylaw change?**

United Way worked with the Comox Valley Regional District to get a similar plan for affordable housing up and running, and it has been a success. United Way has seen the need first-hand, funding several programs for families and seniors who are impacted by a lack of affordable housing. Recent statistics show that affordable housing is one of the most sought-after resources by Vancouver Islanders accessing the bc211 service, funded in part by United Way.

---

**United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island**  
#9-327 Prideaux St, Nanaimo, BC V9R 2N4

Central Island: 250 591 8731      Cowichan Valley : 250 748 1312  
Comox Valley : 250 338 1151      Campbell River : 250 287 3213

[www.uwcnvi.ca](http://www.uwcnvi.ca)

### **Why is it important that you voice your support right now?**

Getting the proposed bylaw passed is the next biggest step for affordable housing to move forward in the Cowichan region so that more people can have safe, affordable housing. Often the voices of the people who say “not in my backyard” are louder than the voices of the many local people who work in the field and have studied the issue along with best possible solutions. It’s also louder than the many people who care about helping others but don’t know that their voice is important or when and how to speak up. Not finding a solution isn’t a solution.

\*\* If just 10 percent of the local population votes against the proposed bylaw change, then it will not be passed and funding for solutions won’t be made available. Your supportive voice is vital to this project. \*\*

### **How can you support the proposed bylaw change?**

1. Go online to the CVRD PlaceSpeak website. Read more about the issue and post a comment or answer the poll in support of the change. <https://www.placespeak.com/en/topic/5746-affordable-housing-financial-contribution-service/>
2. Send an email or letter to the Cowichan Valley Regional District office voicing your support: 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, British Columbia V9L 1N8 or email: [housing@cvrd.bc.ca](mailto:housing@cvrd.bc.ca)
3. Attend a Cowichan Valley Regional District open house, where the CVRD board is seeking community input:
  - May 16 – Kerry Park Recreation Centre (Mill Bay); 4-7pm
  - May 17 – Eagles Hall (Ladysmith); 4-7pm
  - May 22 – Island Savings Centre (Duncan); 4-7pm
  - May 24 – Lake Cowichan Recreation Centre (Lake Cowichan); 4-7pm