
Concerns Regarding CZB Section 4.14 Impacts on Small Businesses in Cobble Hill

From Riley Hogg [REDACTED]

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To Zoning <zoning@cvrd.bc.ca>; PlanYourCowichan <planyourcowichan@cvrd.bc.ca>; legislativeservices <legislativeservices@cvrd.bc.ca>; Mike Wilson <mike.wilson@cvrd.bc.ca>

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express serious concern regarding the impacts of the proposed Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw (CZB), specifically Section 4.14, on small businesses and community vitality in Cobble Hill.

The CZB is intended to simplify and standardize zoning regulations across the Cowichan Valley Regional District, which is an understandable and worthwhile goal. However, as currently written, Section 4.14 introduces unintended consequences that disproportionately affect small, local, and mobile businesses—particularly food trucks such as Drifters Creamery.

Under the current framework, food trucks are only permitted as an accessory use tied to very specific primary uses and zones, rather than being recognized as independent small businesses. For example, in comparable zoning language, food trucks are restricted to operating only where they are secondary to permitted uses such as tourism or recreation sites. (CVRD)

This creates several serious issues:

First, it removes flexibility for small business owners. Mobile vendors like Drifters Creamery rely on the ability to operate in a variety of community spaces—events, local gathering points, and informal commercial areas. Restricting them to accessory-only status significantly limits where they can legally operate, reducing their viability.

Second, it creates an uneven playing field. Brick-and-mortar businesses retain clear zoning pathways, while mobile businesses—often with lower startup costs and serving as entry points for entrepreneurs—are effectively excluded from many areas unless tied to another approved use. This undermines local economic diversity.

Third, it negatively impacts community character. Food trucks contribute to Cobble Hill's identity as a vibrant, local, and community-oriented place. Businesses like Drifters Creamery are not just vendors—they are social hubs that activate public spaces, support local events, and provide accessible gathering points for residents and visitors alike.

Fourth, the restriction contradicts broader regional goals around supporting local food systems and small-scale entrepreneurship. The Cowichan Valley has explicitly identified the importance of strengthening local food access, supporting agriculture, and encouraging diverse economic

opportunities. Limiting mobile food vendors works against these objectives.

Finally, these changes risk reducing tourism and local engagement. Food trucks often serve as low-barrier attractions that enhance visitor experience, particularly in rural and semi-rural communities like Cobble Hill. Removing or restricting them diminishes the overall appeal of the area.

In summary, while the CZB aims to streamline zoning, Section 4.14 as currently structured places unnecessary and harmful constraints on small, locally owned businesses. It limits entrepreneurship, reduces community vibrancy, and contradicts broader economic and social goals.

I respectfully request that the CVRD reconsider this section of the bylaw and amend it to:

- Allow food trucks as a permitted primary use in appropriate zones
- Provide clearer and more flexible pathways for mobile vendors
- Support, rather than restrict, small-scale local businesses

Cobble Hill thrives because of its small businesses, not in spite of them. Policies that unintentionally restrict these businesses risk eroding the very character and economy the CZB seeks to support.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Riley Hogg