
FW: Special Electoral Area Service Committee: Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw

From Ben Maartman <ben.maartman@cverd.bc.ca>
Date Mon 3/30/2026 1:47 PM
To legislativeservices <legislativeservices@cverd.bc.ca>

From: Alisha Chicoine [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2026 12:12 PM
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Subject: Special Electoral Area Service Committee: Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw

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Dear Planning Staff and Area Directors,

I am writing as a concerned resident regarding the proposed Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw (CZB) currently under consideration. I want to begin by acknowledging the tremendous amount of work that has been undertaken to date on the Official Community Plan (OCP) and draft CZB, including the valuable contributions of Advisory Planning Commissions (APCs) that participated in community planning processes. Following more research since learning about this proposed change, from my perspective this is a significant initiative to streamline and modernize CVRD's land use regulations. However, I have significant concerns about the development and public consultation process, as well as policy gaps that warrant your immediate attention.

The harmonization effort presents significant opportunities to streamline regulatory processes that could benefit CVRD staff, residents, and businesses while helping achieve important policy objectives such as supporting housing needs and ensuring our community is prepared for climate change adaptation. However, this same broad scope means that unique, historically specific provisions in individual area bylaws may inevitably be lost or generalized and cause unintentional harms.

Given that this work is so expansive, it is inherently consequential, impactful, and complicated for the public to understand what is changing and why. I respectfully recommend that CVRD reconsider how it approaches its duty to engage and consult the public on this matter. It is unfair to affected community members to provide only narrow opportunities for input. Public hearings and correspondence or limited participation in APCs should not be the sole avenues through which residents feel heard.

This project would have strongly benefited from a broad and inclusive engagement plan that included comprehensive supporting materials to help gather constructive feedback from the community. It is simply overwhelming for much of the community to receive a lengthy draft of the CZB without clear tools to understand the proposed changes. Public education is a fundamental pillar of effective public engagement. Without a comparison matrix or similar

resources, community members are vulnerable to misinformation and unnecessary alarm. At the same time, some property owners are genuinely impacted by the proposed changes. They may have bought a parcel of land with plans to build a structure to house their ageing parent(s), and see that they no longer can. Or they are finding there will be restrictions on permitted uses that are more strict than what we see in neighbouring communities (see: hen limits). There are also so many questions about the short- and long-term implications with legal non-conformance.

While I appreciate the significant work completed to this point and understand it is guided by the OCP approved last fall, my review of the Ideas Book and policy goals reveal some impactful gaps. There is considerable emphasis on environmental and water protection without adequate balance for housing needs and consideration for ensuring public infrastructure meets growing demands, businesses can thrive and benefit the communities they serve, and that food sovereignty and affordability are maintained. I respect that these topics may have been part of the conversation, but current and expected future circumstances make it imperative that we think comprehensively about how the OCP and CZB impact folks' day to day lives. Consideration should include efforts to avoid displacing people and also creating more accessible housing opportunities, including accessory dwelling units, RVs, tiny homes, and other innovative housing solutions. These can be done with public safety in mind through clear regulatory processes that are not burdensome on taxpayer-funded administrative resources.

Consideration should also include comprehensive analysis on financial implications - both for the CVRD as an organization and for the community members. I understand that the 2026 budget includes costs associated with the CZB project, but has there been modelling and analysis for how this affects the community along income distribution, accessibility, and gender-based aspects? At first glance, I can anticipate these changes will impact different groups very differently - and that is something that public policy has a duty to consider fully. I am also concerned that many of these contemplated changes will add administrative burden, without a clear implementation plan for CVRD staff. This will inevitably lead to longer regulatory wait times and the need for more revenues through higher tax rates, without achieving the policy goals the OCP and CZB were built upon.

I am respectfully requesting that the CZB not proceed to first reading at this time. Instead, I ask that it be referred back to staff for further revisions. As well, CVRD should reconsider its approach to public education, consultation, and engagement on this very impactful legislation, and return with a process and product that feels genuinely built by and for the community it aims to serve. Restricted participation in APCs and information dissemination is not a complete strategy.

If the CZB must proceed to first reading, I think the public deserves to understand what the drivers are, and how their concerns will be reflected in future changes to the proposed legislative amendments.

Thank you for your consideration and continued service to our community. I would be happy to continue discussions and ways to support this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Alisha Chicoine | CVRD Area B Shawnigan Lake