

Draft Cowichan Wellness Plan

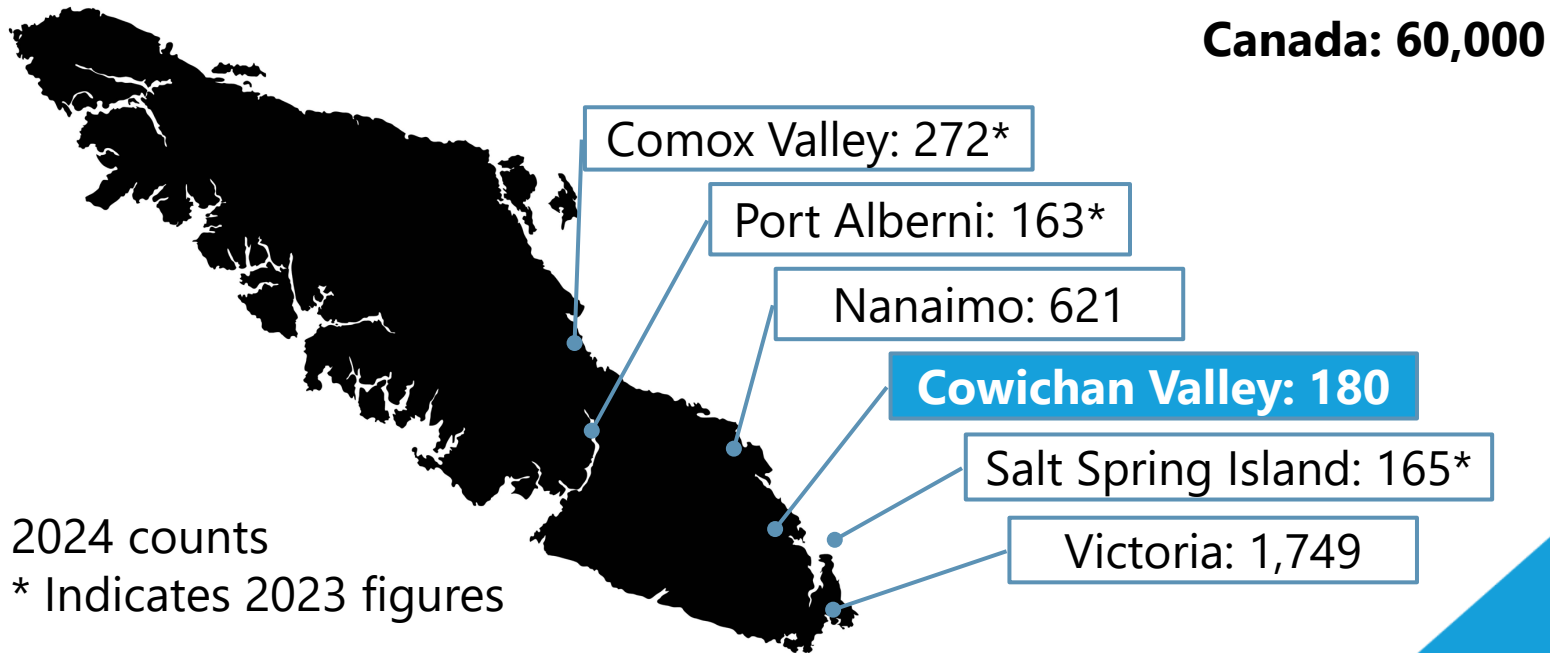
Presentation to North Cowichan Council

October 7, 2025

Context and current situation



People experiencing homelessness



2024 counts

* Indicates 2023 figures

- *Cowichan Wellness Plan* presented to Council November 20, 2024
- Developed by a coalition of non-profits, local governments, First Nations, BC Housing, and Island Health
- Identifies the regional gaps in housing, shelter, and treatment space
- Phased approach (3 phases)
- Council referred to staff for feedback for North Cowichan context



Existing inventory



Village housing (Trunk Road) | 34 units



Supportive housing (Paddle Road) | 52 units



Shelter beds (Warmland on Lewis Street) |
24 units + 30 shelter beds + 15 extreme weather beds



Supportive recovery (Cowichan Tribes) |
24 beds



Supportive recovery (Cedars Recovery) |
24 beds

Housing and future needs



Future inventory



Addiction & recovery (Norcross Road) | 20 beds



Supportive housing (White Road) | 48 units



Temporary winter shelter (former Ramada Hotel) |
extreme weather beds

Housing needs (next 5 years)

North Cowichan Affordable Housing Policy & North Cowichan Housing Needs Report:

- 96 units **transitional** or **supportive** housing needed (2-3 projects)
- 130 units **affordable rental** (households in extreme core housing need)
- 168 units affordable **rental or ownership** housing
- **Shelter** space
- **Day time drop-in** centre



Phase One (1 to 3 years)

Temporary Supported Solutions



- Acquisition or lease of 7x sites for Village-style projects across the region
- Acquisition or lease of 2x sites for RV parking
\$9 million



- Purchase of modular units and provision of site servicing
 - Supportive zoning
\$6 million



- Skilled employees to provide trauma informed, culturally grounded supports to those with the most complex needs
 - Site maintenance
\$8 million annually

Shelter Space

Acquisition or lease of site(s) for up to 30 additional shelter spaces with additional capacity as warming/cooling centres
\$1million

Culturally grounded renovation of existing space(s)
\$500,000

Skilled employees to offer trauma informed, culturally grounded supports to permanent shelter operations as well as increased capacity during extreme weather events
\$1million annually

Treatment

- Acquisition of existing site for 20 treatment beds
- Supportive recovery options
\$2 million

Culturally grounded renovation of existing space and purchase of 20 modular sleeping units
\$1.5 million

Skilled employees to deliver trauma informed, culturally grounded treatment with pre-and post-treatment options
\$2.6 million annually

Phase Two (2 to 4 years)

Supports for Seniors



Purchase of 4 existing, multi-bed residences
\$4 million



Renovations to each to ensure suitability and cultural safety within rooming house
\$2 million



- Skilled employees to provide trauma informed, culturally sensitive daily supports
 - Site maintenance
\$2 million annually

Income Supports

n/a

The infrastructure required - relationships with local non-profits with the capacity to administer resources

Investments in housing loss prevention measures:

- Emergency/crisis supports
- Rent subsidies
- Guaranteed Basic Income

Outreach Supports

n/a

n/a

- Enhance and expand mental health services, offering trauma informed, culturally grounded supports
- Pre- and post-treatment supports
 - Peer Support options

Phase Three (5 to 10 years)

Supported Housing



Purchase of 2 development sites for supportive housing projects
\$2 million



Construction of 2 x 50-70 unit buildings
\$20-24 million



- Skilled employees to provide trauma informed, culturally grounded daily supports
- Site and building maintenance
\$2.8 million annually

Second Stage Housing

Purchase of development sites or existing buildings to offer transitional housing

Renovation of existing space to meet specific needs of those leaving mental health or addictions treatment

Skilled employees to deliver trauma informed, culturally grounded treatment and daily supports
\$1.6 million per site annually

Affordable Housing

Investments in affordable housing options in response to need identified in the Housing Needs Assessment - for our workforce and low income families and seniors

North Cowichan's role

- ✓ Develop a clear vision of the municipal 'ask'
- ✓ Advocate to senior levels of government
- ✓ Purchase/lease municipal land
- ✓ Ensure servicing is in place
- ✓ Support rezoning, development permit, building permit applications
- ✓ Require Good Neighbour Agreements with operators
- ✓ Liaise with the community to listen and work on solutions

Outside of North Cowichan's role

- ✓ Construct or renovate buildings (BC Housing)
- ✓ Provide operating dollars (BC Housing)
- ✓ Operate facilities (non-profits)
- ✓ Capacity building & training (Province & non-profits)
- ✓ Social Work (Province & non-profits)
- ✓ Income supports (provincial & federal government*)

*Limited role for North Cowichan

How North Cowichan can help



Supported housing Identify (and acquire) 2 sites for Village-style projects; 1 site could transition to supportive housing | 1-3/2-4 yrs



Shelter space Contribute towards site(s) for up to 30 shelter spaces + capacity as extreme weather centres | 1-3 yrs



Treatment Contribute towards post treatment sober living residential options | 2-4 yrs

How North Cowichan can help, cont'd



Income support Funding toward rent bank through Cowichan Housing Association | 2-4 yrs



Political support Provide political supports for sites. Develop a package of North Cowichan needs for senior levels of government | 1-4 yrs

Recommendation

- THAT the Committee of the Whole directs staff to:
 - return with a report outlining two sites for village style housing
 - work with the City of Duncan and CVRD to identify a location for a year round 24/7 shelter
 - prepare an advocacy package for Council to deliver to senior levels of government
 - prepare a report on potential locations for overnight sheltering within municipal parks



Next steps

- Provide a formal response to Cowichan Wellness group to confirm North Cowichan's support and defined role within the plan
- Develop a detailed *Memorandum of Understanding* with North Cowichan, Duncan, Cowichan Tribes, BC Housing, and Island Health
- Collaborate with non-profit sector to operate and support projects with funding from the provincial and federal governments

