

COMOX VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Comox Valley Economic Recovery Initiatives Take Hold

Comox Valley, BC: Local governments within the Comox Valley are implementing and exploring options for economic recovery initiatives to support local businesses and communities. The Comox Valley [Economic Recovery Task Force](#) (ERTF) initiated by the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board, has been working with Comox Valley Economic Development (CVEDS) and a wide range of Industry Advisors and businesses throughout the region to capture key recommendations on recovery measures that will set strategic direction for a strong and resilient economy for the Comox Valley.

Submissions have been focused on actions and initiatives within an immediate time frame (response during pandemic) and long term (recovery after pandemic).

“Many of the submissions have highlighted the significant pressures that their industries have been facing through the first wave of this pandemic and with the winter season upon us, along with increasing cases of COVID-19, we must all work together to follow Provincial Health directives while we focus on strategies to support our businesses in these difficult times” said City of Courtenay Mayor, Bob Wells, who is also Co-Chair of the ERTF, with K’ómoks First Nation Hegus (Chief) Nicole Rempel.

The Comox Valley Regional District has released its [“Rethink Comox Valley”](#) plan which includes its work on supporting economic recovery, including strong support for the Comox Valley Economic Recovery Task Force (ERTF) and the work of its Steering Committee and Industry Advisors. CVRD staff and Directors have been working with the ERTF to support and consider recommended actions in strategic planning sessions, in preparation for 2021 work plans and budgets. In addition, the CVRD Board has approved an application for a Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program ([CERIP](#)) grant for Seal Bay Park to expand the Bates Road parking area and upgrade the Coupland Loop to an accessible trail, and has lent its support for an application to CERIP for a food hub and commercial kitchen at the Merville Hall.

The City of Courtenay has recently reviewed the ERTF recommendations and staff will be preparing a detailed report focusing on the many submissions exploring options and implications in response to the actions submitted by local industry and business associations.

In response to economic recovery for the local restaurant and hospitality sector, the City of Courtenay Council along with the Town of Comox, have approved the extension of

[outdoor patios](#) on both private and public land until October 31, 2021 thus providing much needed certainty for these businesses, while ensuring outdoor space can be utilized for social distancing requirements.

The Town of Comox has advanced a number of initiatives to support economic recovery based on the ERTF industry submissions including the Town's support to a CERIP grant for the Comox Valley Airport to support critical storm water management infrastructure required for future airport expansion.

With the growing importance of the Comox Marina and Marina Park for local residents and businesses, the Town has also approved an application to CERIP for the construction of a marine services building at the Comox Marina to support the marine sector.

In addition, the Town has taken steps based on the ERTF to provide support for local cultural events through promotion on social media, when requested by local non-profit societies, and a volunteer promotion campaign to be added to the [Recreation Strategic Plan](#).

Comox has also noted the need and importance for increased affordable day care spaces in the community, which has been a focus of many of the submissions from across the community. The ERTF Steering Committee has included childcare as one of its six pillars for economic recovery, along with shopping local /supporting local.

- 30 -

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