

**A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LADYSMITH  
AGENDA  
6:30 P.M.**

**Tuesday, August 5, 2025  
Ladysmith Seniors Centre  
630 2nd Avenue**

---

**Pages**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Town of Ladysmith acknowledges with gratitude that this meeting takes place on the unceded territory of the Stz'uminus First Nation.

Members of the public may attend meetings in person at the Ladysmith Seniors Centre or view the livestream on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCH3qHAExLiW8YrSuJk5R3uA/featured>.

**2. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Recommendation

That Council approve the agenda for this Special Meeting of Council for August 5, 2025.

**3. DELEGATIONS**

**3.1 Allan Neilson, Local Government Consultant**

**2**

Preliminary findings of the Economic Development Cowichan Service Review.

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COWICHAN – REVIEW

August 5, 2025

Town of Ladysmith Municipal Council

**NEILSON**  
STRATEGIES



# PRESENTATION

- The Assignment
- Context
- Preliminary Findings
- Discussion



# ASSIGNMENT

- Review economic development function (Economic Development Cowichan)
- Assess existing services (value)
- Identify potential changes to scope and/or level of services
- Consider and advise on delivery model

**NEILSON**  
STRATEGIES

April 8, 2025

Cowichan Valley Regional District  
175 Ingram Street  
Duncan, BC, V9L 1N8

**ATTENTION: CLAYTON POSTINGS**  
**DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

Dear Mr. Postings:

**REFERENCE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION (FUNCTION 121) SERVICE REVIEW**

Thank you for reaching out to me to discuss the interest of the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) in undertaking an independent service review of *Function 121 – Economic Development Division*. This letter confirms my interest in working with you on this project. The letter sets out my understanding of the assignment, and provides a proposed work program, budget and timeline.

**UNDERSTANDING OF ASSIGNMENT**

The CVRD Board of Directors has identified a need to review, in advance of the 2026 budget process, the Regional District's Function 121, which focuses on the provision of regional economic development services through Cowichan Economic Development, the CVRD's stand-alone economic development division. The service review sets out to:

- fully document and understand Function 121 as it exists today, including the full set of services undertaken, the levels of service provided, service funding and governance, and the method of service delivery
- assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the services and their delivery
- identify potential changes to the suite of services offered and/or the levels of service, in the context of other economic development services in the region, perceived economic development needs, existing service gaps and incidents of service duplication
- identify and assess potential changes to the suite of services and service levels
- identify current and future regional economic development challenges, including those that have helped to inform the direction set out in the *DRAFT Economic Development Cowichan Strategic Plan (2025-2029)*
- determine whether Function 121 services would be best delivered as a separate function by a stand-alone economic development division, as at present, or best delivered through a model that disperses responsibility for the work to other existing CVRD functions

A report on the service review, with recommendations on potential changes, is required by the Board for consideration leading up to the 2026 budget process.

Neilson Strategies Inc.  
(e) anelson@neilsonstrategies.ca (w) neilsonstrategies.ca (t) 778.214.3405  
Innovation Centre, 106-460 Doyle Avenue, Kelowna, BC, V1Y 0C2

# CONTEXT

- Large region with several jurisdictions, rural-urban character, range of needs, interests and expectations
- Different understandings of economic development – that is, what it is
- Tight – and tightening – budgets; resulting competition for resources
- Service that is inherently difficult to measure



# CONTEXT

- Relatively limited service in terms of budget and numbers
- Economic development ecosystem – different agencies, varying capacities





# SOME FINDINGS

- Considerable uncertainty around "what it is" and "what it does"
- On the whole, Directors – jurisdictions, too – feel less-than-optimal role in setting priorities and giving direction
- Broad scope of services at regional and local levels; need to tighten focus
- "Regional" economic development efforts supported; less certain about "local"



# SOME FINDINGS

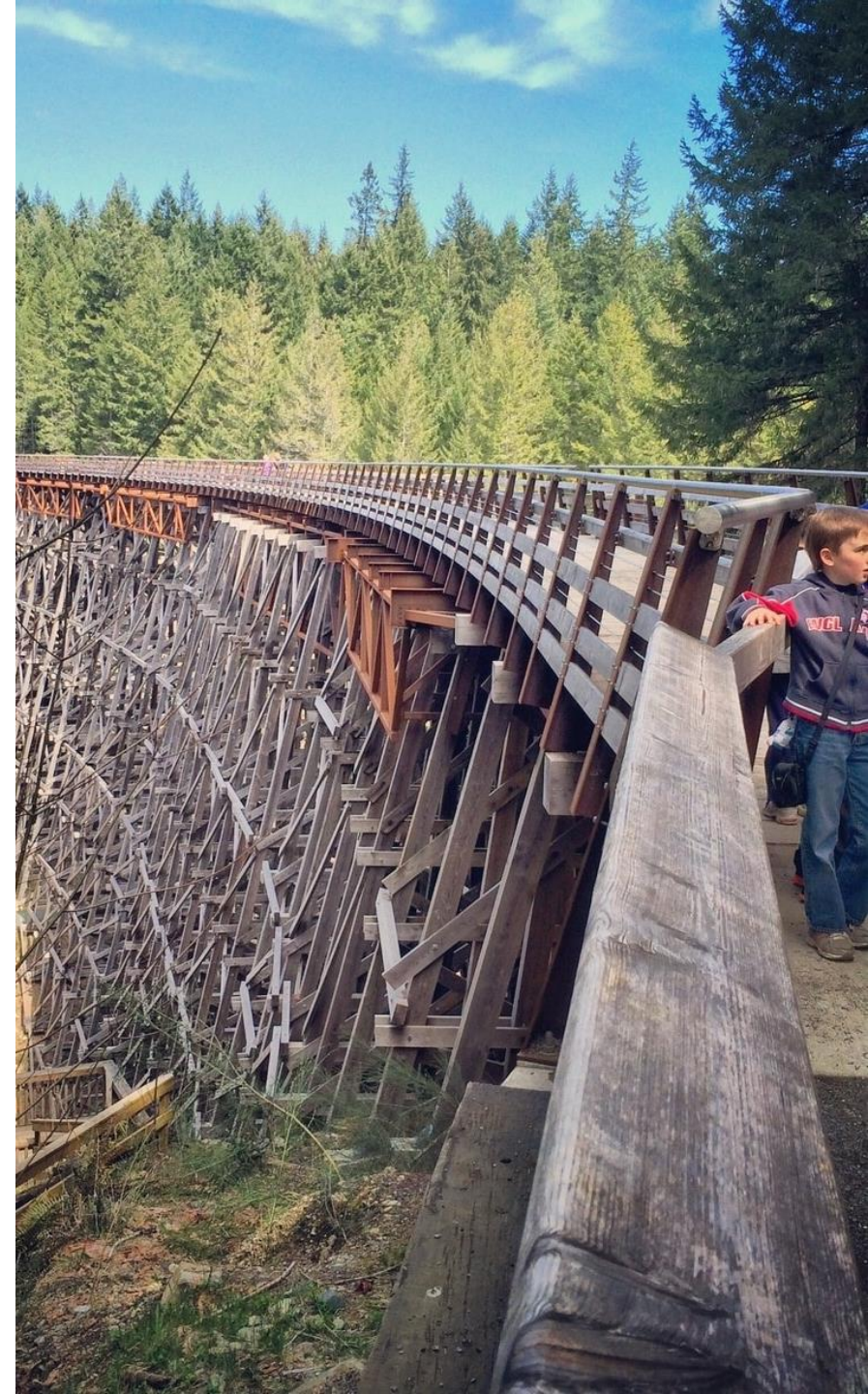
- Sector focus strongly supported in some cases (agriculture); not in others (tech)
- Intelligence (knowledge), advocacy, coordination (convening), partnering – all important
- Oversight and integration important to most (not all) – informs discussion on delivery
- Communication to Board and member municipalities important to address





# SOME FINDINGS

- ▶ Barriers to economic development exist outside of service – need to address



# DISCUSSION

- Do you feel that Economic Development Cowichan provides value to the Town of Ladysmith?
- What are the types of activities on which EDC, as a regional service, should be focusing its resources?





COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COWICHAN – REVIEW

August 5, 2025

Town of Ladysmith Municipal Council

**NEILSON**  
STRATEGIES