

OCTOBER 2026

What business owners in Electoral Areas A, B and C need to know about government decisions, projects and opportunities.

The Rural Comox Valley Business Newsletter helps local business owners stay ahead of decisions and opportunities that may affect their operations. Each month, we monitor CVRD meetings, planning applications, infrastructure projects, and more then provide a concise summary of what happened, what's coming next, and why it matters.

NOTE: Municipal projects, meeting schedules and public engagement opportunities can change quickly. We encourage readers to follow the source links provided and visit the official Comox Valley Regional District websites for the most up-to-date information.

Comox Valley Regional District: https://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/
Engage Comox Valley: https://engagecomoxvalley.ca/

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MEETINGS
Nov 17: CVRD Board Meeting
Nov 24: CVRD Board Meeting

Pre-Approved Secondary Dwelling Plans

Did you know?

About the Chamber of Commerce

NEWS

Oct 8: Stage 3 Water Restrictions Return

Business Impact: 🔴 Immediate Impact

Electoral Area: A, B, C

Stage 3 restrictions took effect October 8 for properties connected to the Comox Valley Water System. Restrictions include lawn watering, pressure washing driveways and boulevards, and certain vehicle-washing activities. The CVRD also warned that further restrictions could be required if river flows declined.

Why it matters
Landscaping, property maintenance, accommodation and other water-dependent businesses should verify which restrictions apply to their operations. These rules do not automatically apply to every rural property or independent water system.

FIND OUT MORE

Oct 17: Local Government Elections

Business Impact: 🔴 Immediate Impact

Electoral Area: A, B, C

The October 17 local government elections have determined representation for the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) for the next four-year term. Daniel Arbour was acclaimed as Electoral Area A Director, Arzeena Hamir was elected in Area B, and Norm McPhail was elected in Area C. Official results were released October 21.

Why it matters
The CVRD makes decisions that can affect rural businesses through land-use planning, development approvals, transportation, water and other services, infrastructure investment and regional budgets. The new Board will help shape these decisions over the coming term, making it important for businesses to follow meeting agendas and participate in consultations that affect their operations or future plans.

FIND OUT MORE

Oct: Building ermits show ongoing rural construction

Business Impact: 🟢 Opportunity

Electoral Area: A, B, C

The CVRD's October building-permit register includes a secondary-suite addition in Black Creek, a carriage house in Area B, a new home in Area C valued at $1.4 million, and other residential construction and renovation work.

Why it matters
The register provides a snapshot of local building activity that may be relevant to builders, tradespeople, suppliers and other businesses serving the construction sector.

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UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

The following meetings are open to the public and provide opportunities to stay informed or participate in decisions affecting businesses in Electoral Areas A (Baynes Sound–Denman/Hornby Islands), B (Lazo North) and C (Puntledge–Black Creek).

NOVEMBER MEETINGS

- **Nov 17, 2026: 4:00pm - 7:00pm:** Comox Valley Regional District Board
- **Nov 24, 2026: 4:00pm - 7:00pm:** Comox Valley Regional District Board
- **Nov 25, 2026: 1:00pm - 2:00pm:** Board of Variance

Public Hearings

- **Input Level**: Direct public commentary.
- **Details:** Held specifically for community members to speak or submit written comments regarding proposed bylaws (such as zoning or official community plan changes). Every attendee is given an opportunity to be heard directly.

Why it matters to businesses:
Public Hearings provide the best opportunity to influence decisions that could affect where businesses can operate, future development, housing, transportation, tourism and neighbouring land uses.

Advisory Planning Commissions (APCs) & Agricultural APC

- **Input Level:** Advisory public participation.
- **Details:** Composed of appointed local community members providing land-use and planning advice to electoral area directors. The regional district conducts the planning and land use management in the electoral areas, with the exception of the Islands Trust which is within Electoral Area A and which has its own planning service.Meetings are open to the public to observe.

Why it matters to businesses:
APC meetings are often the first place where rezonings, development permits, Temporary Use Permits and Agricultural Land Reserve applications are discussed. They provide an early look at projects that may affect business activity, investment and future growth.

Regular Board, Committee, & Commission Meetings

- **Input Level**: Observation and pre-arranged delegations.
- **Details**: Includes the CVRD Board, Electoral Areas Services Committee, and various recreation or service commissions. These meetings are not open for spontaneous general floor input, but the public may attend to observe or apply to appear as a formal delegation (up to 10 minutes) by contacting Legislative Services at least one week prior.

Why it matters to businesses:
These meetings are where many of the decisions affecting rural businesses are made, including budgets, transportation priorities, infrastructure investments, utilities, parks, economic development initiatives and planning recommendations.

Board of Variance

- **Input Level:** Affected property owners/applicants.
- **Details**: Open for persons who deem their property interest affected by a specific minor variance application under consideration.

Why it matters to businesses:
While Board of Variance applications are generally limited to individual properties, they can affect business operations, expansion plans, signage, building additions, parking requirements or the redevelopment of commercial and agricultural properties. Businesses considering renovations or new construction may benefit from understanding how minor zoning variances are reviewed and approved.

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Free Pre-Approved Building Plans Available for Secondary Dwellings

Business Impact: 🟢 Opportunity

Electoral Areas: Areas A, B & C

The Comox Valley Regional District has launched a new program offering free pre-approved building plans for detached secondary dwellings in Electoral Areas A, B and C. The plans are designed to streamline the building permit process, reduce design costs and make it easier for property owners to add secondary housing to their properties while meeting local zoning and BC Building Code requirements.

Why it matters

Access to housing remains one of the biggest challenges facing rural employers. Making it easier to build secondary dwellings can help increase rental housing options for employees, seasonal workers and family members, while also creating opportunities for local builders, designers, tradespeople and suppliers. Although the plans are pre-approved, property owners must still confirm their property meets zoning and site-specific requirements and obtain the necessary permits before construction.

FIND OUT MORE

Did You Know?

The CVRD has a role in Agricultural Land Commission applications.

Thinking about adding a non-farm use, building an additional residence or changing how an ALR property is used? The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) is often the first stop.

The CVRD reviews many applications under the Agricultural Land Commission Act, considers local zoning and land-use policies, and may seek input from its Agricultural Advisory Commission or Advisory Planning Commission. Depending on the application, the CVRD Board decides whether it can proceed to the provincial Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), which makes the final decision on the proposal.

Why it matters: Being permitted under local zoning does not automatically mean a use is allowed under ALC rules and an ALC approval does not override local zoning requirements. Before investing in a proposed development or change of use on ALR land, check both sets of rules with the CVRD.

The Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce

The Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce is a member-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening our local economy through advocacy, education, collaboration, and meaningful connections. We champion business success across the Comox Valley, ensuring the voices of our business community are heard at all levels of government while providing opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive together. This Rural Business Newsletter is part of our commitment to supporting the businesses that make the Rural Comox Valley a vibrant place to live, work, and do business.

Visit our the Chamber of Commerce Website

2026 Corporate Partners

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