

Resident Sentiment Towards Tourism: Cowichan Region



COWICHAN
SLOW DOWN
SAVOUR LIFE



This research was conducted on the unceded territories of the Quw'utsun, Malahat, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Halalt, Penelakut, Stz'uminus, Lyackson, Pauquachin, Ditidaht, and Pacheedaht Peoples.



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Introduction

Residents' sentiment toward tourism is generally a measurement of whether residents feel that the perceived benefits of tourism outweigh the perceived costs of tourism. Research has shown that resident sentiment can be influenced by factors such as (a) destination's stage of developmentⁱ, (b) place attachmentⁱⁱ, (c) proximity to tourism centresⁱⁱⁱ, and (d) economic dependency on tourism^{iv}. Practically, place attachment is linked with the length of residency in the destination, proximity is linked to transportation pathways (e.g., increased traffic) as well as geographic proximity to places where tourists gather, and economic dependency is characterized by being personally employed or having a household member employed in the industry (including business ownership).

Resident sentiment towards tourism gained greater prominence for destinations during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the early stages of the pandemic, there was reluctance to host visitors from international destinations that were already experiencing high infection rates. By May 2020 most British Columbians were concerned or very concerned about hosting visitors from international destinations (91%), the United States (91%), and other Canadian provinces (83%). Concerns related to hosting visitors waned as British Columbians and others accessed vaccinations (and boosters) and travel-related public health measures were lifted. However, as recently as November 2022 British Columbians were still somewhat or very concerned about host international visitors (57%) and US visitors (52%).

The importance of understanding resident sentiment has also been linked to overtourism. Residents in communities that experience high ratios of visitors to residents are the most likely to resent tourism development^v. Moreover, the seasonal influx of visitors can result in negative perceptions as residents experience episodic over-tourism. As noted above, previous research suggests that individuals who live closer to the tourism zone are more likely to view tourism negatively unless there the benefits (e.g., financial or access to amenities) outweigh the costs.

As the tourism industry continues to recover from the pandemic-related downturn it is increasingly important to determine how residents feel about tourism and visitors. Tourism is inherently a social exchange between hosts (residents) and guests (visitors) and the nature of this exchange influences how residents feel about tourism and how visitors feel about a destination. Therefore, destinations (and DMOs) must monitor how residents feel about tourism, tourism development, and the use of local resources for tourism purposes. The purpose of this study was to better understand how residents of the Cowichan Tourism Region (Malahat and Shawnigan Lake to Ladysmith and Yellow Point) feel about tourism and how likely they were to recommend their community and the region as a destination to visit.

Methods

Using convenience sampling and an online survey, data for this study were collected from December 2022 to mid-March 2023. The survey instrument used a validated scale^{vi} of positive and negative value statements about the costs and benefits of tourism. Additional questions focused on factors known to influence sentiment including (a) length of residency, (b) community of residence, (c) economic dependence on tourism, and (d) valuing of personal travel. Questions focused on potential infrastructure development (e.g., trail development) were also included. Using the net promoter approach,

Data collection was done through multiple channels including (a) face-to-face intercept, (b) distribution of cards with a link to the survey, (c) distribution of posters, (d) placement of ballot boxes (visitors were asked to provide their emails) at local businesses, (e) advertisements

placed in regional magazines, (f) social media ads on Facebook and Instagram, and (g) a press release shared by Vancouver Island University.

Face-to-face data collection was done in several communities and events throughout the region including Duncan, Chemainus, Ladysmith, Lake Cowichan, Shawnigan Lake, and Cowichan Bay. Researchers frequented public spaces (e.g., Transfer Beach Park on a sunny day) or community recreation centres for events like hockey and curling competitions.

Data Analysis

The online survey was started by 412 residents of the Cowichan Region; however, once incomplete surveys were removed the final sample included 338 participants. Surveys removed (n=74) included those where participants skipped more than 50% of the questions on the survey. The data from the final sample (n=338) were analyzed, and the results are presented in the next section; however, as participants did not answer all questions the identified sample size (n) may be less than 338.

Sample Profile

The Cowichan Region includes several larger municipalities that each have unique characteristics, tourism assets, and visitor patterns. Participants representing 20 different communities participated; however, for analysis, participant communities were recoded into larger geographic spaces. Table 1 identifies the five regions created and the communities included in each.

Most participants (92.3%) were permanent residents of the Region, felt that tourism was somewhat to very important to their quality of life (average 8/10; Figure 1), did not work in the tourism industry (84.1%), and did not have a household member working in the industry (84.8%). On average participants were 56 years old (Figure 2), had lived in the Region for 23 years (Figure 3), and took 6 domestic trips and 1 international trip per year.

Table 1: Region and Community of Residence

Region (sample size)	Community (sample size)	% of Sample
South Cowichan (n=79)	Cobble Hill (n=21)	24.1
	Shawnigan Lake (n=20)	
	Mill Bay (n=16)	
	Malahat (n=1)	
	Cowichan Bay (n=19)	
	Cowichan Station (n=2)	
Cowichan Lake (n=60)	Lake Cowichan (n=44)	18.3
	Youbou (n=9)	
	Mesachie Lake (n=1)	
	Honeymoon Bay (n=6)	

Duncan (n=84) 25.6

North Cowichan (n=80)
 Chemainus (n=29)
 Crofton (n=11)
 Maple Bay (n=27)
 Satlam (n=7)
 North Cowichan (n=6) 24.4

Ladysmith & Area (n=25)
 Yellow Point (n=2)
 Ladysmith (n=19)
 Saltair (n=3)
 Thetis Island (n=1) 7.6

Figure 1: Importance of Travel to Residents' Quality of Life

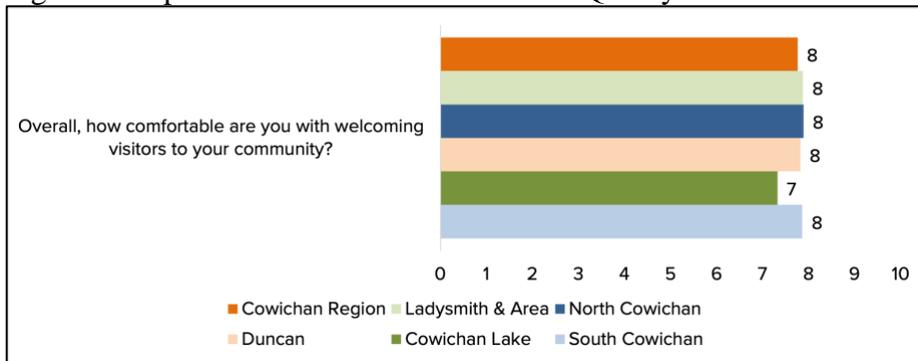


Figure 2: Residents' Ages (Groups)

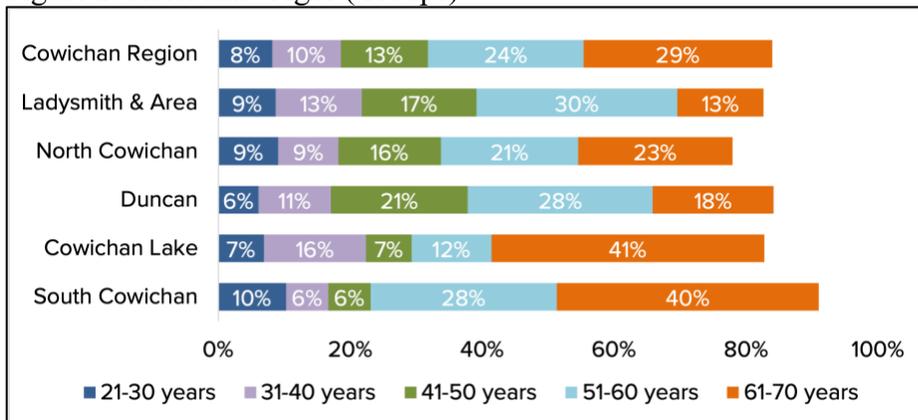
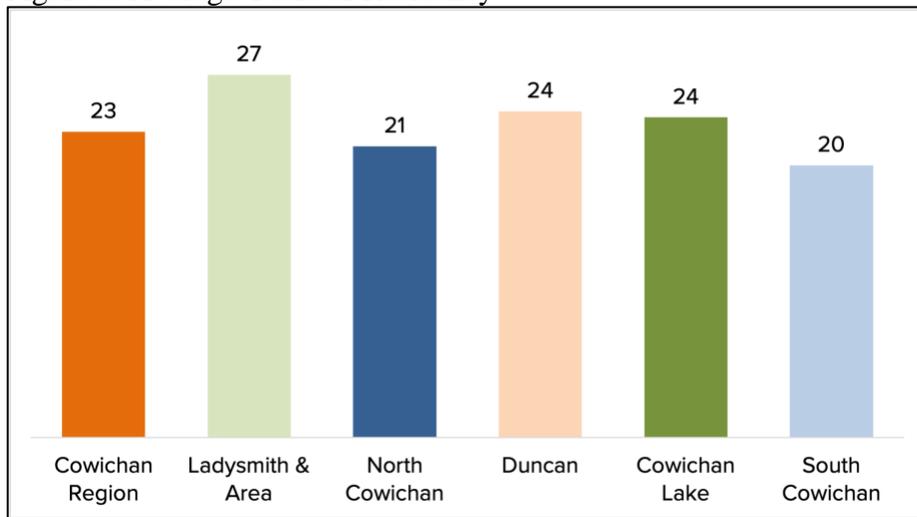


Figure 3: Average Years of Residency



Results

The results section is divided into several sub-sections that reflect the different questions that study participants were asked. The first section focused on how residents responded to the value and belief statements about tourism. Sub-section two includes results related to comfort in welcoming visitors to their communities and how supportive they are of increasing trails and pathways for cycling and the number of large events hosted in the Region. The third section explores the net promoter scores that residents gave their own communities and the Region overall. The final two sub-sections contain the open-ended comments made by participants.

Residents' Level of Agreement with Tourism Value & Belief Statements

Participants were asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with statements about the benefits and costs of tourism. Overall residents of the Cowichan Region (81%) agreed with the statement that *Overall tourism is good for my community*. People living in Duncan (88%) had the highest level of agreement and those in North Cowichan (71%) had the lowest level of agreement. Residents also agreed that tourism benefited their community by; (a) providing more to do (69%), (b) enhancing services (75%), (c) enhancing their community's image (82%), and providing good employment (72%). Figures 4 – 8 illustrate levels of agreement on each of the *benefits of tourism* statements by residents in each region.

Figure 4: Residents' Agreement that Tourism is Good for Their Community

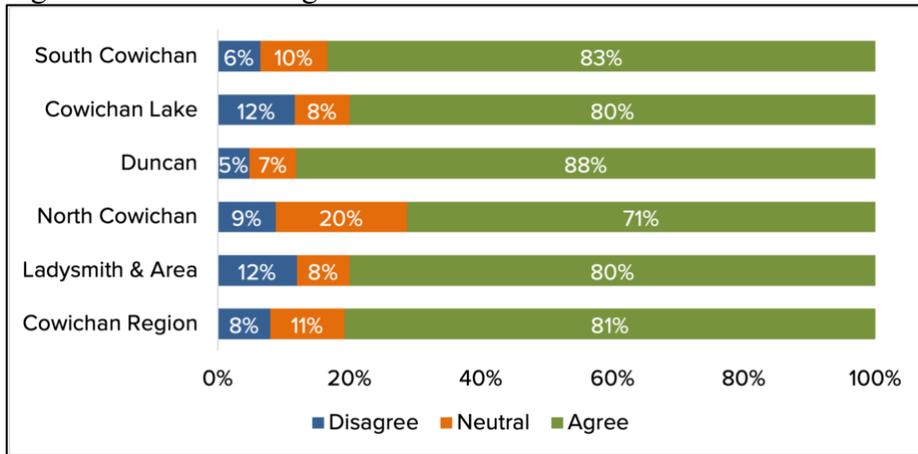


Figure 5: Residents' Agreement that Tourism Results in More to Do

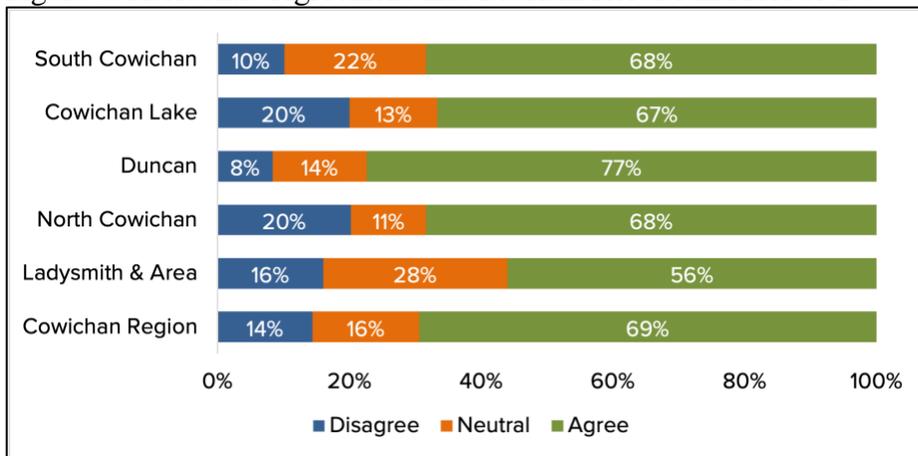


Figure 6: Residents' Agreement that Tourism Results in Enhances Services

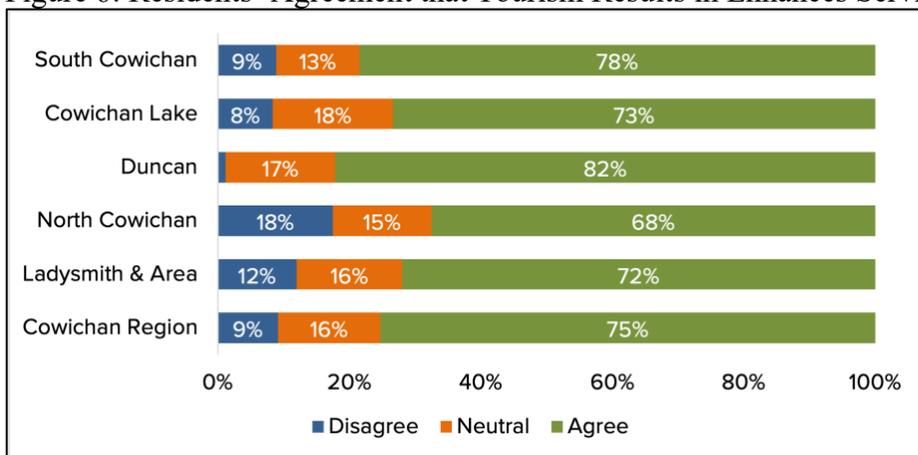


Figure 7: Residents' Agreement that Sports Tourism Enhances Their Community's Image

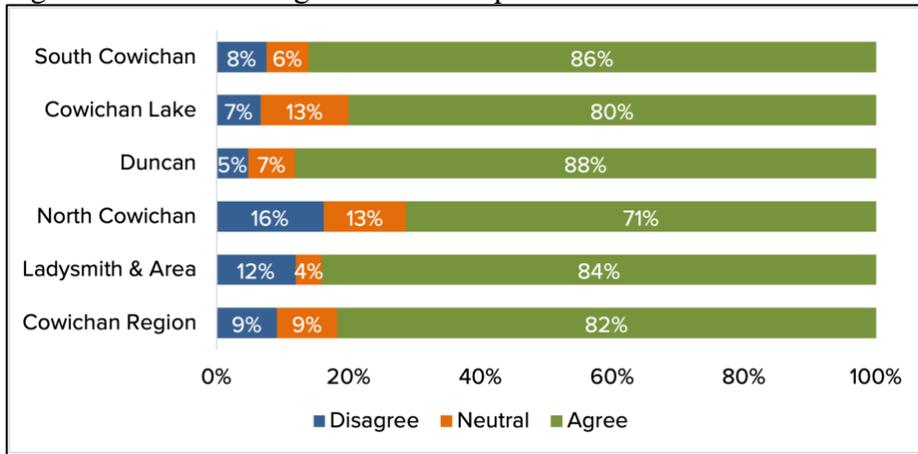
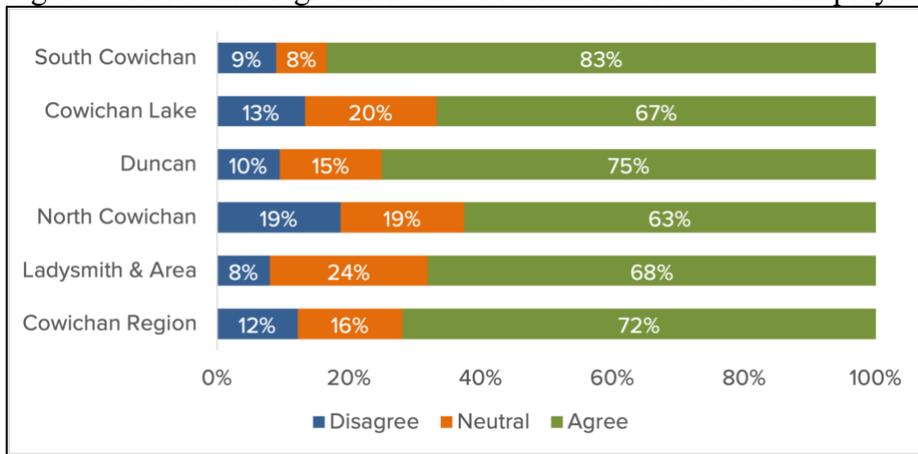


Figure 8: Residents' Agreement that Tourism Provides Good Employment



Residents perceived that tourism was good for their communities overall and most across the Cowichan Region (64%) disagreed that the *costs of tourism outweighed the benefits* (Figure 9) and 66% disagreed that *tourism is responsible for Cowichan's housing crisis* (Figure 10). However, there were some concerns about the impacts of tourism within the Region.

Figure 9: Residents' Agreement that the Cost of Tourism Outweighs the Benefits

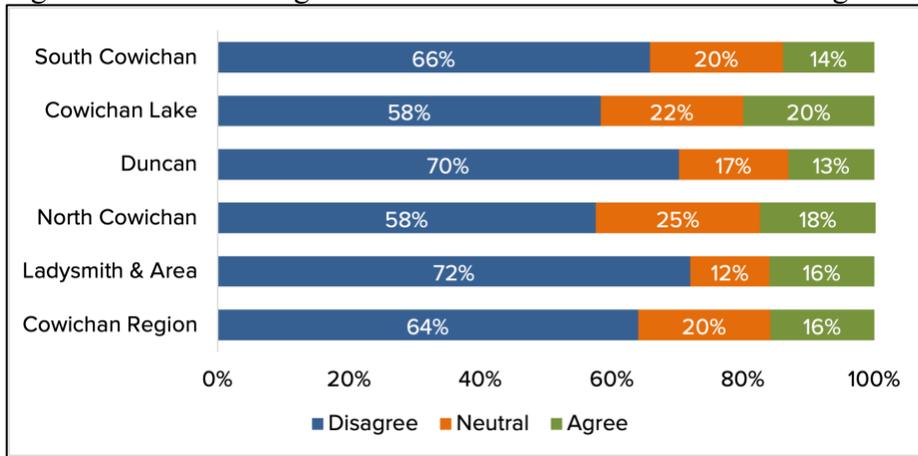
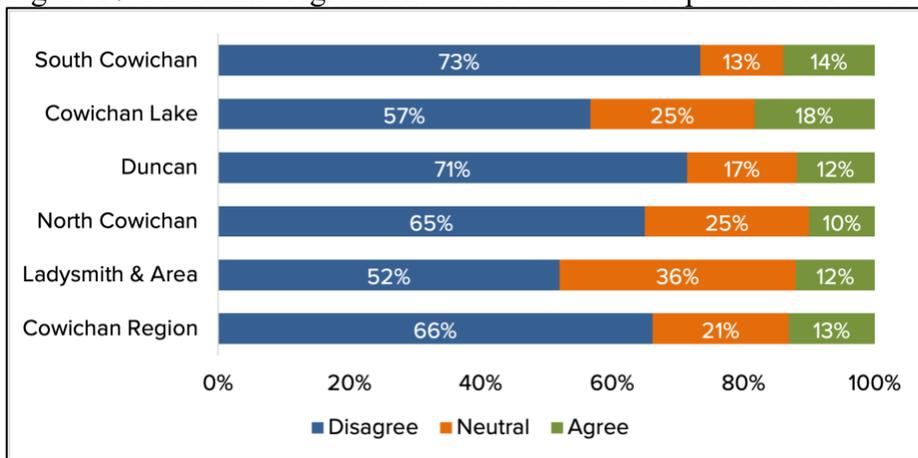


Figure 10: Residents' Agreement that Tourism is Responsible for the Housing Crisis



Statistically significant differences between communities were found related to concerns about tourism's impact on quality of life, crowding, and damage to parks and open spaces. More residents of Duncan (79%) disagreed that *tourism reduced the quality of life in their community* (Figure 11). Just over half of residents from Cowichan Lake (54%), North Cowichan (54%), and Ladysmith and Area (56%) disagreed that *tourism uses too many public resources*, whereas 71% of residents from Duncan disagreed (Figure 12). Residents of Cowichan Lake (23%) had the highest level of agreement that their *community is crowded because of tourists*; whereas only 6% of residents from Duncan agreed. Residents from Cowichan Lake (37%) also had the highest level of agreement that *tourism causes damage to parks and open spaces*. However, 28% of all residents in the Cowichan Region agreed that tourism is damaging parks and open spaces (Figure 13).

Figure 11: Residents' Agreement that Tourism Reduces the Quality of Life in Community

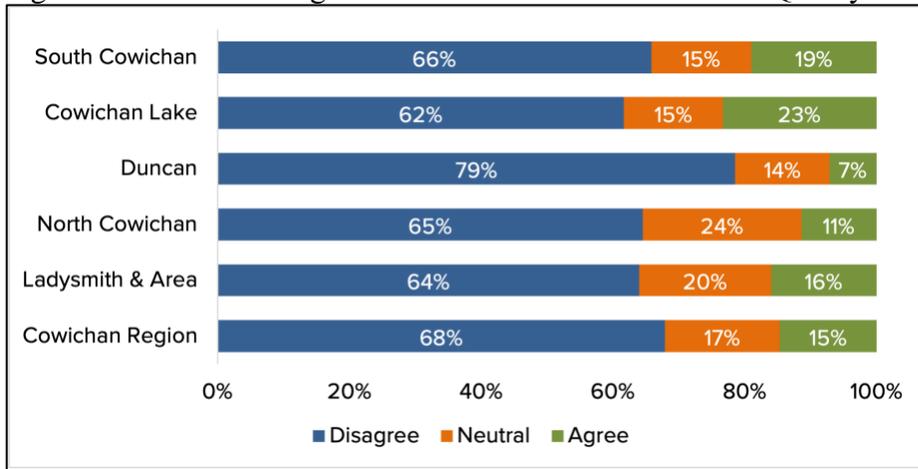


Figure 12: Residents' Agreement that Tourism Uses too Many Public Resources

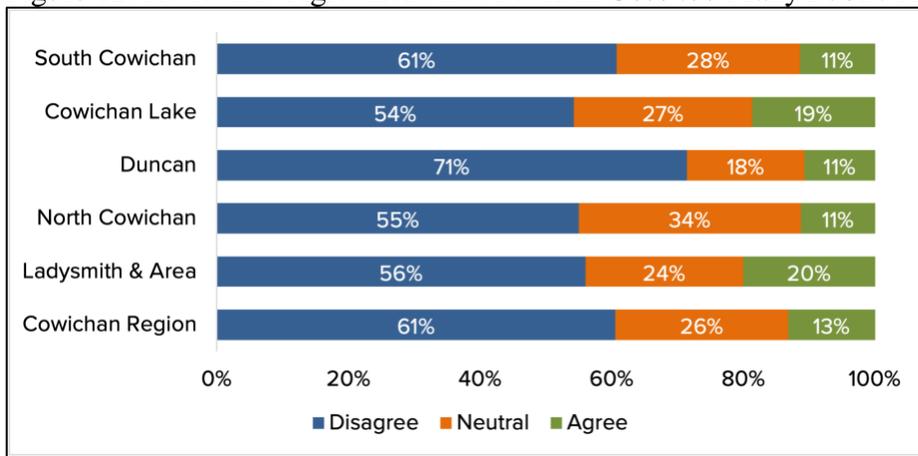
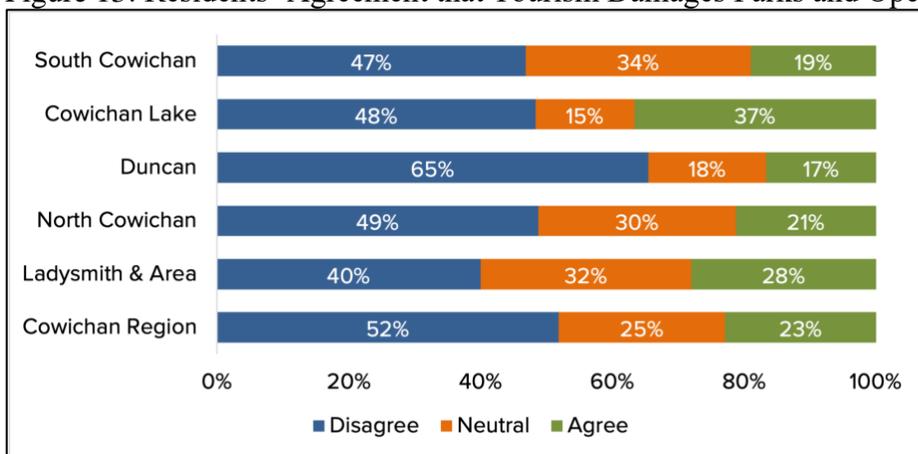
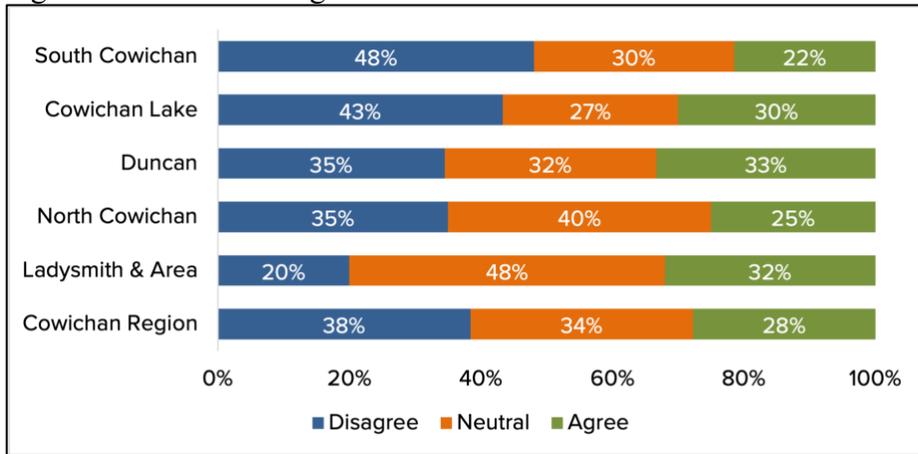


Figure 13: Residents' Agreement that Tourism Damages Parks and Open Spaces



Thirty-three percent of Duncan residents and 32% of residents in Ladysmith and Area agreed that *tourism increases the costs of goods and services*. Those living in North Cowichan (25%) and South Cowichan (22%) had the lowest level of agreement (Figure 14).

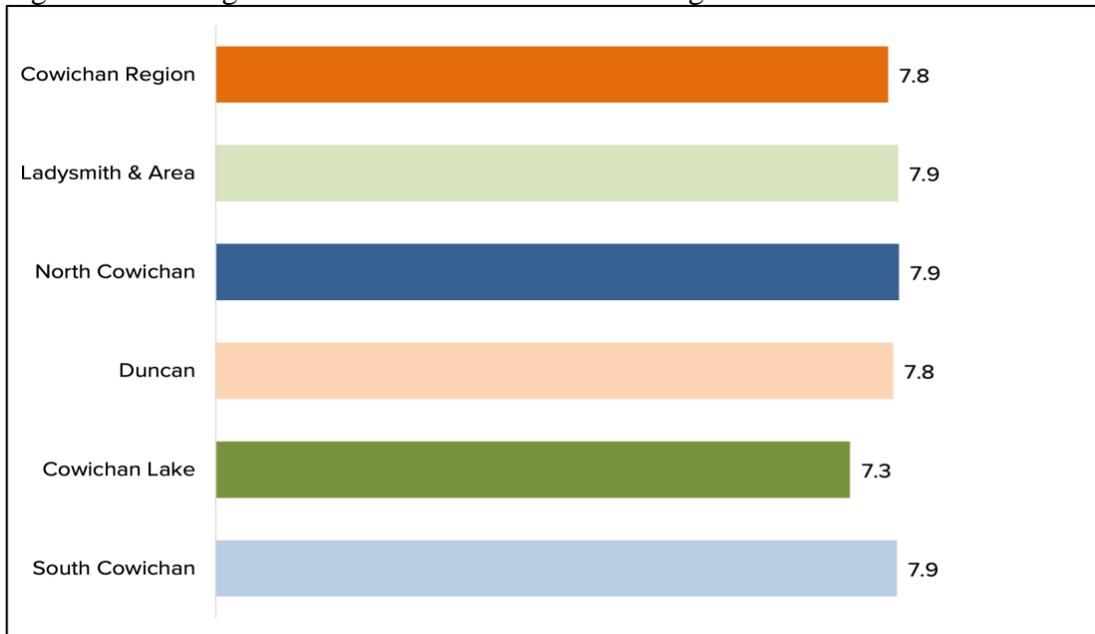
Figure 14: Residents' Agreement that Tourism Increases the Cost of Goods and Services



Residents' Support for Welcoming Visitors and Increasing Tourism Development

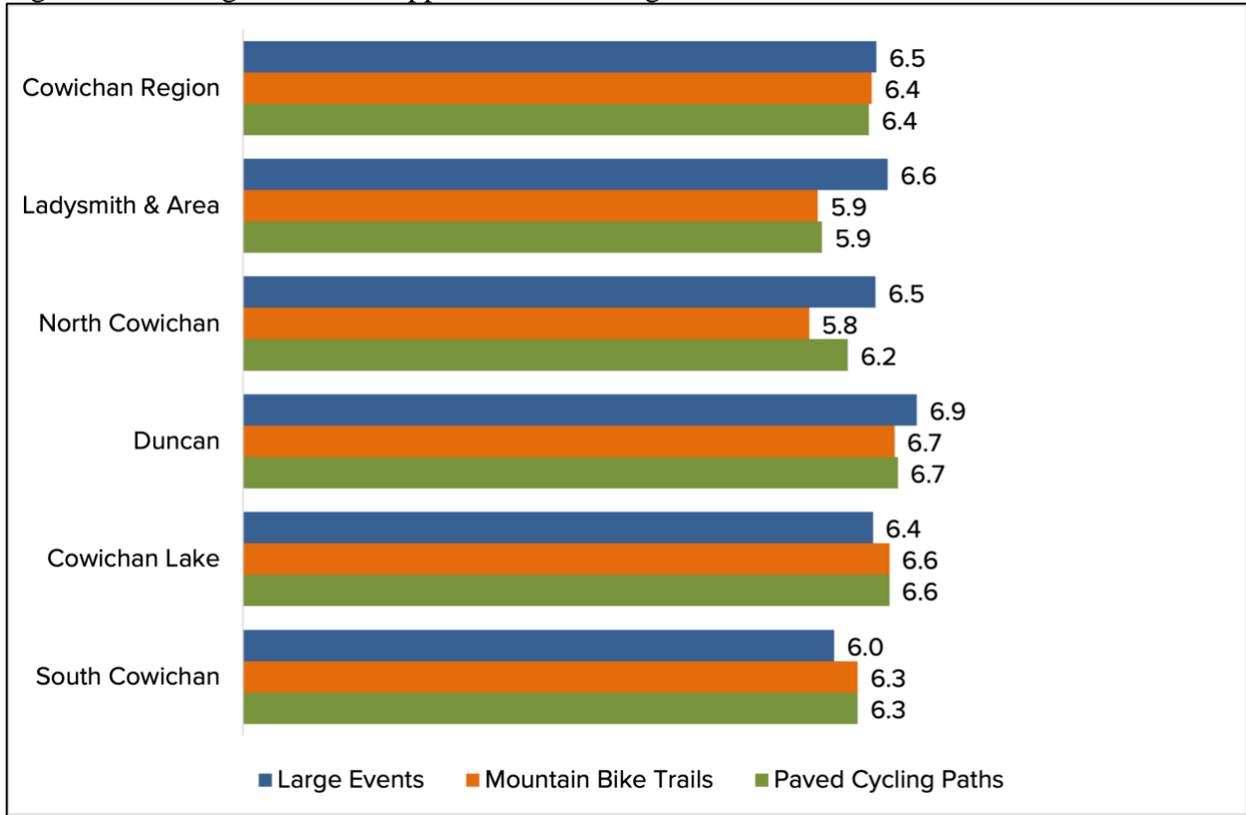
Participants of this study were asked to indicate on a scale of 0 – 10, how comfortable they were with welcoming visitors and how supportive they were of specific types of tourism development. Analysis revealed that residents in the Cowichan Region ($M = 7.8$) were comfortable with welcoming visitors. Residents in all sub-regions had average scores higher than the neutral mid-point of five (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Average Level of Comfort with Welcoming Visitors



On average was low to moderate support for increasing the number of large events ($M = 6.5$), mountain bike trails ($M = 6.4$), and paved trails ($M = 6.4$). The lowest level of support for increasing the number of mountain bike trails was in North Cowichan ($M = 5.8$) and the highest level was in Duncan ($M = 6.6$). The results for each community are presented in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Average Level of Support for Increasing the Number of Events and Trails



Net Promoter Scores and Reasons for Ranking

Net promoter scores (NPS) are typically considered an indication of satisfaction and loyalty. There are two parts to measuring NPS, asking how likely participants are to recommend the destination/product/service and why they provided that recommendation. When applied in the context of residents it is even more vital to examine the comments as residents may be reflecting their views of hosting visitors as much as their pride in their community. The NPS is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors (rank 0-6) from the percentage of promoters (rank 9-10). Passives (rank 7-8) are those who are not a threat to your destination as they are unlikely to speak poorly about your destination, but they are also unlikely to recommend it.

With a NPS of 44, the residents of the Cowichan Region clearly indicated their pride in their home communities. Residents of Ladysmith and Area (63) had the largest NPS and those in North Cowichan (38) lowest (Figure 17). Figure 18 illustrates the percentage of detractors, passives, and promoters in each sub-region.

Figure 17: Net Promoter Scores for Each Community by its Residents

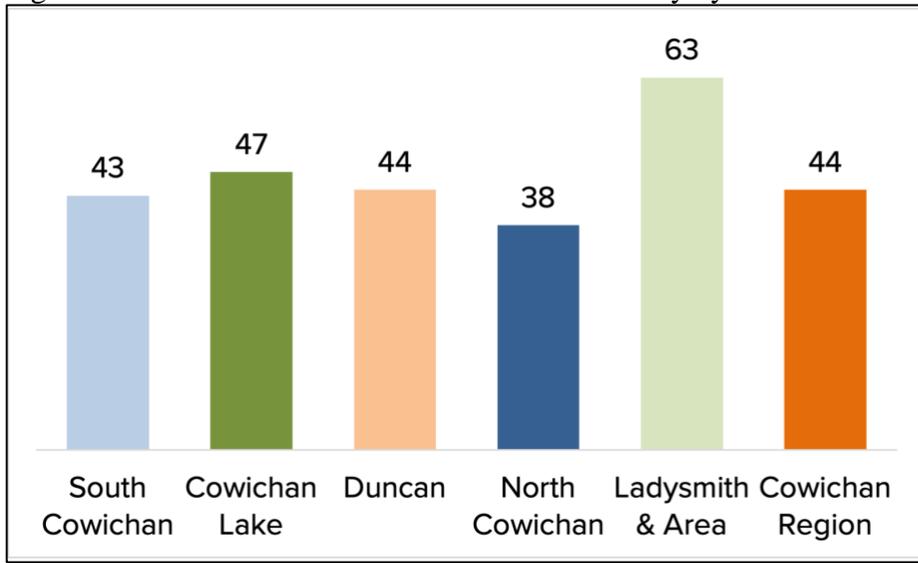
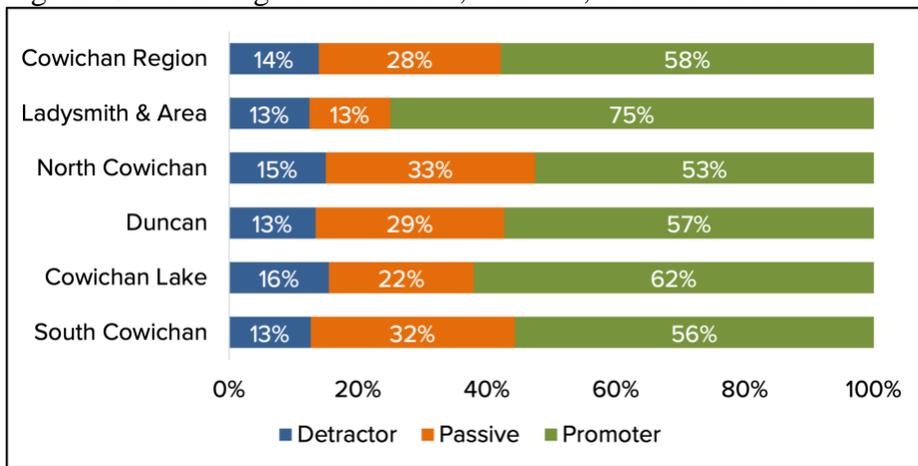


Figure 18: Percentage of Detractors, Passives, and Promoters for Each Community



Comments by participants were divided by NPS categories but were not sorted by the community; however, some clearly identify the sub-region that they are speaking to (e.g. tubing in Cowichan Lake). Detractors (Table 2) made note of crowding, not wanting visitors, homelessness in the community, and the negative impacts of visitors. Passives (Table 3) provided a mixture of positive (beautiful landscape) and negative statements (homelessness and negative impacts). They also compared their communities to other Island destinations and found them lacking. Supporters’ (Table 4) comments illustrate a very strong sense of civic pride based on the natural beauty of their communities.

Table 2: Comments Made by Detractors About their Home Communities.

- Because tourism just makes the locals lives more difficult
- Depends on the weather
- Don’t want too many visitors

- Duncan... our image is bad with all the homelessness in our area. People who visit here for the first time are turned off. We need to deal with this first before we can promote tourism.
- Hard to find accommodation
- Homeless people have taken over our community
- I am neutral on inviting friends or colleagues to my community.
- I am not in favor of rampant tourism.
- I do not give recommendations at all, for anything, for any reason.
- I don't feel the need to promote visitors to come to my community. If they want to take the time to research potential travel destinations, they can find out for themselves if they want to come to my community or not
- I love visitors to my home.
- I moved to the Island to live in a small uncrowded community. The fewer people that know about this area, hopefully the fewer that will come.
- i prefer quiet streets
- If a friend is coming to visit ME I will show them around. However we need to STOP inviting anyone to our SMALL land mass. Currently benefitting some high-end business owners and no one else.
- It is a shabby seaside and very small community with no parking.
- It is too expensive and there are lots of other nicer places.
- It's a pissing contest between CVRD and MNC. Neither have the best interests of residents at heart
- It's better to come in summer, winter is boring
- My city sucks. It's full of homeless and addicts.
- My friends are cyclists not atv or motorbike or car racers. Tourism from atvs etc is damaging to the land, dangerous for pedestrians and horse riders, and noisy
- My friends are local and already live here.
- Nice place but lots of problems as well (homelessness primarily)
- No parking, no sidewalks, very dangerous speeding through our community. Most places are closed more than 2 days per week.
- Not a great place to visit if you're not a senior. And I don't have a lot of friends that are seniors.
- Not much here for them
- Not much to do here. I live rural.
- Not much to see or do here
- Overcrowding of natural settings
- Roads and facilities are overcrowded. Parks and trails do not have enough parking during tourist season. Costs of tourism promotion increase property taxes of residents.
- Small town and it's pretty busy takes longer to move around now
- The highways are already too crowded, and tourists don't pay attention when driving.
- There isn't a lot exciting to talk about
- There is not a lot there and buildings are run down

- There's limited infrastructure and maintenance of areas where there is no resources to properly maintain and monitor
- This area is mostly ugly, very little is pleasing to the eye until you hit the back country. Not enough incentive to visit here. We need to beautify downtown area, have more festivals and powwows.
- Too crowded
- Too many homeless, trash, run down looking town
- Tourists come in their thousands, and we are a small community of around 3000. Our Heritage River has been monetized, and the drinking, yahoing and using our property river edges for a bathroom is appalling. The music festivals provide no statistics on rape, drug use and abuse, nor on drinking or fighting. Because the music festivals are on private property, all this unsavory behaviour is well hidden.
- Vandalism, drugs, homeless
- We're all quite boring
- While I agree with biking and hiking trails. I very much disagree with the tubing which is ruining our river and feel really bad for people who own property on the river and have to put up with all the foul language, garbage and crowds
- Would have been higher but we lack some basic essentials like transportation and accommodation

Table 3: Comments Made by Passives About their Home Communities.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot to do and see in this part of the Island. Close to Victoria but still very natural.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to outdoor activities and environment. There is however an overwhelming lack of indoor activities (racquet sports, courts, billiards, youth and adult activities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although I believe my community has a great deal to offer there is a serious lack of hotel/motel spaces available.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful hiking trails and ocean paths.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful place to share, love it here
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful scenery, wineries, friendly people.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful. Access to lakes, rivers, oceans mountains
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because I think they would enjoy the beauty of it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because it's the best place in the world, but I don't want it to change from being nature oriented to becoming gimmicky with too many people.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because the area doesn't really have great tourism for people of all ages. Just seems like small-town stuff on a small-town budget. I give it a higher rating simply because I would want to visit with my friends and family that come to the area. Instead, it seems like a place where people drive-thru in order to get somewhere.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because the infrastructure and overall vibe in Duncan and surrounding areas are getting worse. Take a walk around Duncan, you'll see.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because there is so much to do

- Because this region has a lot to offer in terms of recreational activities and the weather, we have made it accessible for year-round enjoyment and possibilities
- Claim and relaxing
- Cowichan currently has good community amenities and outdoor recreation opportunities
- Cute place but limited number of things to do
- Depends a bit on what they are into - most want a relaxing nature-based experience with some nice sights and good eats (and wine). Come on over! For those who want a cityscape, well, visit Victoria and come up for a visit.
- Even though it is post Covid I prefer not to have too many random visitors to the community
- Great place to spend a few days to relax
- I am conflicted about the environmental costs of tourism. It seems humanity has so many crises right now and to solve them the ways way travel have to change. Each year our emissions go up, in spite of attempting to seriously reduce them.
- I am finding I love it here (moved to the valley in 2021), particularly the forest trails, ocean and estuary walks, arts, culture, music, and agriculture
- I live in a tourist community
- I love living here, my friends and family are similar to me, so I take them hiking and exploring
- I love my community, but the town has not maintained their attractions
- I think there need to be more activities for young kids to be involved in. Kids concerts etc.
- I think they would enjoy visiting the vineyards.
- I think we live in a wonderful place, however we're losing community because of the numerous air BnB's
- I want to show them my community
- I would give a higher rating but there are so many spots throughout VI with their own unique appeals.
- Inviting someone here from my own inner circle is distinctly different from wanting tourism to increase. The impacts to our natural resources are widely different. For example, look at how Horseshoe Bay has been impacted by excessive use by ferry passengers vs.. Crofton and its ferry dock.
- Is quiet and nice
- Is quiet, sometimes too quiet
- It has great outdoor recreation and agritourism opportunities
- It is a fair answer.
- It is my home, and as such I will share my experiences, features etc.
- It would depend on what kind of 'visit' they are looking for...
- It's beautiful and many outdoor activities are available from Cowichan Bay including cycling TCT, kayaking and other boating, fishing, hiking, etc. There are also good restaurants

- It's a beautiful area - recreation central. Just wish there was a more robust enforcement on the river and parking
- It's a beautiful area to visit
- It's a beautiful place should be shared with the world, but respectful to it residence & too much tourism is not good for quality of life
- It's a great place to visit
- It's a very small community with limited activities. But what we have is nice.
- It's beautiful but not really set up for tourism
- it's a beautiful place with lots of outdoor things to do
- It's a great place to visit but hesitate to let the secret out
- Lack of hotels and visitor accommodations especially for large scale events
- Lots to do in Cowichan.
- Lots to offer
- Love the island and all its diverse communities especially the Cowichan Valley. We are original settlers ourselves (1809) and tourism will only expand everyone infrastructure and services.
- Love where we live Want to share
- My community is beautiful. Tourism dollars can support the infrastructure that makes it special.
- My community is lovely. I believe in investing in improving the quality of life for residents. This makes it a good place to visit.
- My community, in Crofton, is beautiful with the sea walk and the hiking trails and I think people enjoy these things
- need more events and promotions
- Need more exciting things here
- Need more things to do
- Nice community want more people to know the place
- Nice place
- Nice to have tourism, but not much available or properly promoted.
- No reason
- Not many things to do, summer is better
- Not much to do especially in winter
- Not very appearing in this time of year [winter]
- Proud of what we have to offer
- Rains a lot
- Represents my subjective opinion
- Seaside community with accessible park and quaint downtown
- Still has a long way to go before it will be a year-round destination. Currently there are very limited recreational activities available for the off season.
- The area for the most part has a lot to offer and as it is so spread out for the most part tourists and other visitors are generally, with the exception of large events, are not concentrated in one area at a time.

- The Cowichan Valley is beautiful but could use more attraction type activities. Like a bike park similar to Stevie Smith park in Nanaimo and a BMX track / moto cross track
- The lake and nature
- The murals
- The natural beauty of our region
- The snow day is horrible, other than that is ok
- The tourism variety is plentiful, however I think there is more to at can be done to enhance tourism in the Cowichan Area
- There are a lot of naturally beautiful areas to see. And explore. Buy you don't have to change them to accommodate tourism. i.e., paved parking lots
- There are many beautiful vistas to explore
- There are too few options for accommodations, accessible transportation and public spaces.
- There is room for improvement.
- This is a beautiful area with lots of outdoor activities and other activities.
- Very proud of the natural beauty of my community
- Want others to see the beauty of our area with respect, that does not always happen
- We have many areas that would be of interest to someone looking to have a leisurely time away. Cowichan Bay, Maple Bay, Lake Cowichan. Within driving distance to Victoria and Nanaimo.

Table 4: Comments Made by Promoters About their Home Communities.

- 50 years of living here have me proud! Very much appreciate contributing high level of eco-tourism to the community and creating a world destination at OUR ECOVILLAGE
- A taste of nature if you're from mainland
- As a student, I think Cowichan is a perfect place to study quietly and relaxing away from the crowd
- Beautiful?!
- Beautiful area.
- Beautiful area as long as it's respected by tourism.
- Beauty & Diversity.
- Because Cowichan is a beautiful area with lots of walks, hikes, water activities, First Nations experiences, etc.
- Because Cowichan is awesome!!
- Because family and friends should always be welcome. Unconnected tourists clog up the small towns and have zero respect.
- Because I currently do incite people to witness the beauty of my community.
- Because I live in a beautiful place where there is many splendid things to see.
- Because I love the community I live in and want to promote it to others so my community can grow and get more resources it needs

- Because I think they would enjoy being here.
- because it has beautiful trails and outdoor experiences
- Because it is a place worth visiting
- Because it is absolutely beautiful here.
- Because it is beautiful, safe and friendly.
- Because it is so beautiful and less developed, and I'd like to keep it that way. The rolling farms and trees are lovely. It's not tourism killing the land, it's all the new housing developments
- Because most tourists are friendly ppl and I love them to come to our museum
- Because of our beautiful lake and our local museum
- Because our community is awesome and has an amazing variety of things to offer visitors.
- Because the Cowichan Valley is a beautiful place with a diverse range of activities
- Because the Cowichan Valley region (and the island in general) is one of the most beautiful places in Canada and has so much to offer to all ages and interests.
- Because we live in Youbou, and it is one of the most beautiful places on the Island. I also love the Cowichan valley.
- Cause I love it here
- Charm of small towns
- Chemainus has a great arts vibe with lots of opportunities for art aficionados
- Cowichan Bay is beautiful
- Cowichan is a beautiful and fun area
- Cowichan is an undervalued gem.
- Cowichan is beautiful and I would love to share some hidden gems with other respectful folks.
- Cowichan is beautiful. I'm not from here but don't intend to leave. I love the ocean, river, forests, I enjoy downtown Duncan and the Duncan farmers market, it's a nice simple place to visit, a beautiful backdrop to connecting with people
- Cowichan is full of activities to enjoy
- Cowichan valley is one of the most beautiful places in the world and we should showcase it! And be proud!
- Cowichan valley is so beautiful and has a lot to offer, hiking, biking, wine tours, kayaking, beautiful downtown
- Great outdoor activities. Friendly diverse community. So many communities within the Valley.
- Great summer destination with lots of outdoor activities.
- Great wineries, bucolic landscapes, great hiking
- grew up at a campground/resort, still have friends who relocated here to live
- I already have
- I am always inviting people to the Cowichan valley. It is a great place to explore nature. As long as we don't keep cutting the six mountains!
- I am extremely supportive of showing and exploring all aspects of the wonderful piece of our planet that I draw on for the true quality of life with trusted people.

- I believe that it helps the economy, health and profile of our community
- I believe that the Cowichan Valley has Just about everything that would interest a visitor and Vancouver Island is one of the most diverse and beautiful Places to visit.
- I enjoy sharing our community with others
- I have lived here 45 years; it is the most beautiful area in Canada. Lakes, river, mountains and terrific scenery. I would invite friends from other provinces to visit our beautiful area. We have hockey, curling and top-notch restaurants.
- I have lived in every Province and Territory in Canada and can honestly say that the Cowichan Valley is paradise.
- I invite my friends all of the time. Many of us live in CVRD.
- I just love this area and think people skip it on the island
- I like it there are interesting things to do
- I like others to witness the natural beauty and friendly community.
- I like to show off the beauty and diversity of our Valley.
- I live in a beautiful, spacious place that I enjoy sharing with friends and family.
- I live in an incredible place! I want to share that with my friends and colleagues. There are many things to do in my community, something for everyone
- I live in Chemainus. Our town focussed on tourism and we need to bring in more tourists to keep the economic engine going.
- I live in Saltair - the beaches, parks, coffee, bike trails
- I love ♥ my town and my area 😊
- I love living here
- I love my area. Bring a few tourists but not too many at a time to disrupt things
- I love my community
- I love my community and want to share it
- I love my community. There is plenty to see and do, and I want people I know to enjoy it.
- I love my town, and think it's the best place
- I love where I live
- I love where I live and believe it offers something for everyone
- I love where I live and enjoy sharing that with my loved ones
- I love where I live and like to share its beauty.
- I love where I live and what there is to do here. Proximity to water and nature
- I love where I live. I would have given it "10" if my community wasn't plagued with open drug use and areas that are full of litter and garbage from street dwellers.
- I moved here last June and have treated my entire stay as if I were a tourist. I love the trails, the community events, the local breweries, the mountains, the weather; I could go on and on. This Island is Beautiful.
- I own and run a B&B and enjoy letting our guests know of and hearing their reaction the next day of our trails and tourist facilities.

- I think Cowichan has a lot of natural wonders that are attractive to people from elsewhere.
- I think Cowichan Valley is so beautiful with so much to offer
- I think my community has a lot to offer in terms of outdoor recreation and hospitality.
- I trust my friends and colleagues to engage respectfully and the way in which I feel our tourism product needs to be built; we don't need more ADVENTURE MACHO product - we need earth loving and inclusive tourism product with an emphasis on cultural and art activities - not sport.
- I used to be proud of this area.
- I will give 10 if we got more things to do rather than nature
- I would like to show off the town and it's also good for the economy
- I'm a big fan of my own community! It's beautiful, we have relatively easy access to water and mountains, but even more importantly good food/restaurants and wine/wineries. And we're friendly folks.
- I've only heard positive experiences from people visiting the valley. We've hosted friends and family and they enjoy the area.
- Is calm and beautiful
- is great , worth to explore the nature
- Is nice
- Is post Covid let's welcome people
- Island community is beautiful, and we like more people to know the beauty of the island
- It is a beautiful place to be with lots of outdoor activities to take part in
- It is a great community.
- It is a lovely place to visit
- It is beautiful and would like to share it with others.
- It is beautiful, we have a lake/river and trails
- It is what I already do. Cowichan is a hidden gem, and the gems are hard to find without local input.
- It's a beautiful area not known to many and I'm very proud of our region! Lots of things to see and do, eat, drink here.
- It's a beautiful region.
- it's a great place to see and visit
- It's beautiful here most of the year. But, in the summer the lake becomes too crowded with noisy boats.
- It's because I had travelled extensively, in personal arrangements and as part of my tourism profession and I recognize a potential and a good thing when I see it.
- It's a beautiful area and I'd like visitors to have the opportunity to experience it!
- It's a beautiful location with a rich environmental and cultural value for tourists
- It's a beautiful spot
- It's a unique area, especially when compared to the Mainland.
- It's beautiful great weather lots to do and friendly

- It's Cowichan community
- it's pretty here, all the trees and waters, and lots to do,
- Lake Cowichan has golf, swimming, biking, camping in the summer months. Winter, it has SOME off-road sledding. Very quiet, zero, attractions.
- Like to share one of the most beautiful parts of Canada.
- Live right across from Baldy Mountain trail
- Lots to experience, especially the wonderful indigenous culture. Plus, the downtown has evolved into a place that welcomes tourists.
- Love it here
- Love it here, why not share
- Love my place.
- Love this community and like to show it to my friends and family
- Love to welcome and meet new people.
- My community is beautiful is the sun comes out or summer
- My community is not on the radar for many tourists, but it has so much to offer that I think it should be
- My community is relaxed, friendly and welcoming. It is a great place to experience and get away from the big cities and fast-paced life.
- Natural beautiful outdoors
- Nature, ocean, weather, history
- Nice area with chill vibes and farms
- Nice natural space for outdoor people
- Opportunities for local tourism are good -- but not quite as good as they could be.
- Our community is a beautiful place and beautiful people, the weather is beautiful in summer, and we can do lots of outdoor thingy in summer.
- Our friends are outdoor people so have lots of activities here, hiking, cycling, kayaking, etc.
- Overall good people diversity
- Please welcome more tourists to our community to enjoy the nature
- post covid we should welcome people to explore the Cowichan area
- Post Covid we welcome people to visit us
- Proud of the community
- Proud to show off what we have to offer in the Cowichan Valley, and where I live, but I don't want to tempt them to move here. ;)
- Quiet and less visitors
- Relaxing
- rural lifestyle with an abundance of parks and nature based outdoor activities
- Simple, beautiful, natural
- So much to do and see here, and so many beautiful places to visit
- That's why I live here
- The Bay, Estuary, people
- The beautiful environment and recreational opportunities - especially the ocean activities and mountains.

- The beauty of the Cowichan Valley. The diversity from whale watching to wineries and farm markets to galleries and local festivals to remote hiking trails, and the Kinsol trestle. Perhaps most importantly, we on average are the warmest part of Canada in the winter, the Warmlands... Many tourists want to come here to escape winter in their frozen prairie provinces. I believe we should be promoting the Warmlands to encourage off-season tourism. Also, we need clarity from the CVRD on short term rentals and the expectations for building and byelaw enforcement. There are currently hundreds of vacation rentals that are hiding from the CVRD. This does not seem a viable way to build a progressive tourism sector.

- The best place to live work and play

- The community has less thing to do than before

- The Cowichan Valley is beautiful and has a ton to offer

- The Cowichan valley is such a rich cultural place with many things to do! It's beauty that can't be replicated elsewhere

- The Cowichan Valley is very scenic with lots of opportunities for outdoor recreation for biking, hiking, water sports, and fishing. There are also lots of unique destinations within the valley to keep visitors entertained - Cowichan Bay, Cobble Hill, Shawnigan Lake, Maple Bay, Crofton, Chemainus, and Ladysmith. The vineyards are a big draw too.

- The Cowichan valley is an amazing place. With vineyards, amazing clean rivers and lakes. Food is good & for a small rural community there is an abundance of things to do that covers all age and ability groups.

- The natural beauty of the area alone is enough to promote the Cowichan Valley. I have loved visiting Vancouver Island my whole life and like to share what I have found now as a resident here with others.

- The trails and outdoor recreational opportunities are exceptional, and I enjoy showcasing them.

- The Valley has an incredible blend of natural resources and a brilliant business community and should be supported.

- The Valley is beautiful, and I am proud to be a resident. It's not crowded like Victoria, there are many interesting restaurants, wineries, and shops, lots of hiking trails.

- The Valley is my home.

- The weather, proximity to beaches and old growth trees

- This area offers almost any type of leisure activity you can ask for. Competes with any place in the world

- this is a great place with many interesting hiking trails and a great pub.

- This is an amazing place: small family farms, artisanal wines, cider and spirits and so much natural beauty.

- This place was good enough we paid a fortune to permanently live here

- Tourism is all of us, locals, visitors, I believe this overall tourism improves the economic impact on the community

- Visiting with them while they are here as tourists

- Visitor welcome to visit in spring and summer, winter is too boring.
- Warmest place in BC
- We are a bit away from the main known attractions of the Island and can offer some unique experiences.
- We are a rural area without high density
- We have beautiful mountains, a river for tubing on and a large, gorgeous lake.
- We have much to offer in the way of recreation and also in the extreme beauty of the area. We are also a gateway to many destinations.
- We live in a beautiful area and it's nice to have visitors
- We live in a beautiful area, and we are proud to show it to others.
- We live in a beautiful part of Canada; everyone should be able to enjoy it

Participants were also asked how likely they were to recommend the Cowichan Region in general. Except for residents of Duncan, the NPS for the region (Figure 19) was slightly lower than the NPS for each community. Figure 20 shows the percentage of detractors, passives, and promoters for the region overall and in each sub-region.

Figure 19: Net Promoter Scores for the Cowichan Region by Sub-Region

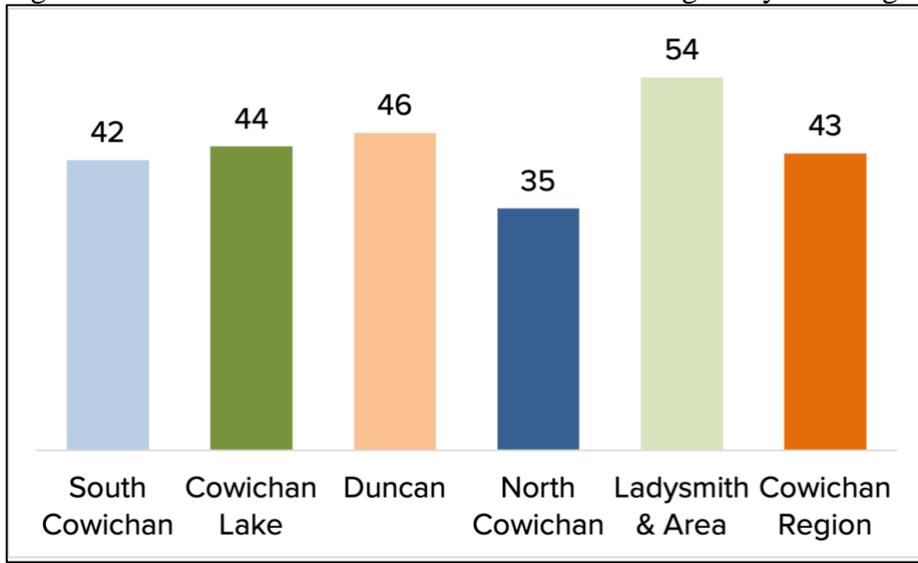
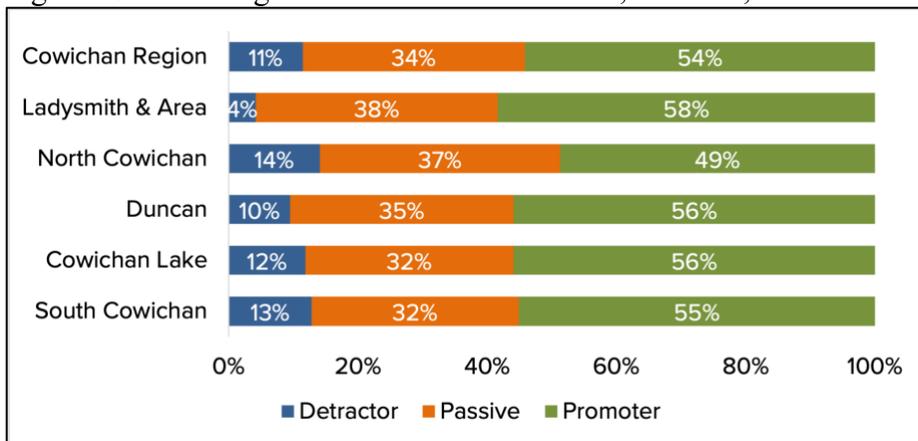


Figure 20: Percentage of Cowichan’s Detractors, Passives, and Promoters by Sub-Region



Comments below are linked to the NPS ranking related to the Cowichan Region in general. Several participants simply indicated that their answers remained the same as those for their community – those were deleted. Comments were divided by NPS categories but were not sorted by sub-region. Detractors (Table 5) made note of crowding and that their community was better than other areas of the Cowichan Region. Passives (Table 6) once again provided a mixture of positive and negative statements. Supporters’ (Table 7) comments illustrate a very strong sense of regional pride based on natural beauty and the feeling that there were a lot of activities and attractions available in the Cowichan Region.

Table 5: Comments Made by Detractors About the Cowichan Region

- Again, Cowichan caters to seniors. Not a senior.

- All the Island is gorgeous

- Because I hate the Cowichan valley

- Do not care about other places

- I am limited to what is offered in Cobble Hill. Also, transportation is hard, unless you have a car.
- I am neutral on inviting friends and colleagues to the Cowichan valley.
- I do not give recommendations at all, for anything, for any reason
- I don't have a list of things.
- I don't want the traffic
- It just doesn't come up. Other parts don't have the ambience mine does.
- Love my island, not a fan of crowds
- Negative native attitude towards non-native people
- The only thing I do to entertain visitors is river tubing, or drive the back country, which is getting harder with all the darn gates up.
- Let them research areas themselves.
- Some areas have the same problems this community has.
- Some nice things to see
- The Kinsol trestle is nice.
- The maintained tourist attractions and towns are more enjoyable outside of my city of residence
- There are other places on the island worth to visit
- There are some great venues to visit.
- Too crowded
- Very expensive. Lots of better places to go.
- Very little promotion of tourism options around the valley
- Visiting can be nice so just feel neutral

Table 6: Comments Made by Passives About the Cowichan Region

- Again, beautiful natural areas to explore
- Again, it is so beautiful here I'd love to see more people enjoy it rather than just drive through on their way to Tofino from Victoria
- Again, we live in a beautiful area, with lots of great restaurants, arts, sports, recreation opportunities.
- All of Cowichan valley has something to offer
- Great people. Great wine. Beautiful country.
- As above. I am enjoying discovering every community in the valley
- Because it's the best place in the world, but I don't want it to change from being nature oriented to becoming gimmicky with too many people.
- Because Ladysmith has that amazing 'main street'...Victoria has Chinatown and the seawall near Ogden Point. The historic downtown with Castles. Butchart Gardens. Goats on the Roof. Rath Trevor Beach, etc. The Cowichan area has....a very VERY SHORT seawall in Crofton. (Why isn't it longer?) Scattered about murals in Chemainus (which are okay to see once) and the one or two blocks of downtown Chemainus - with only a few cute shops. It's a bit ridiculous that the Christmas shop is open by appointment only. They should consider moving and giving that spot to someone else who will use it in a better way. But overall,

there really isn't a draw to this place. Just a bunch of random small things that amount to nothing. Cowichan Bay is cute and charming - but not really any interesting enough places that make me want to spend any time there.

-
- Because of overcrowding or high usage of popular destinations. Take a drive through Cow Bay in the summer It's an accident waiting to happen.
 - Because there are so many lovely spots and interesting things to do.
 - Because there are wonderful places to see on the island
 - Because there is such a range of options that visitors should experience.
 - Cleaner and safer
 - Depends on the person and what he or she wants to do
 - Depends on time of year and locations being recommended
 - Depends what kind of activity people are interested in doing.
 - Ditto. Lots to see and do
 - each area has it's own unique attributes .
 - Each area has such diversity to enjoy
 - Go hiking in green spaces
 - Good outdoor recreation opportunities
 - Good walks
 - Great community mostly
 - I already share other regions that are great to friends.
 - I am fairly familiar with the entire Cowichan Valley being born here but having lived in Youbou for the past 16 years feel more familiar with the Lake area.
 - I believe helping other communities has an impact of helping our own community
 - I know a bit less about other communities so couldn't be sure what to suggest; I haven't lived here that long myself.
 - I know my own community best.
 - I like people to go somewhere else
 - I love in what I consider close to the beat spot.
 - I love the surrounding areas, everywhere on the island is worth the trip
 - I really like the Cowichan valley.
 - I think many of the communities in the Cowichan Valley are beautiful and people would enjoy visiting them. I just feel bad that some communities, like Lake Cowichan, gets overrun with tourists which can ruin the environment.
 - I think there are many things to do in this and surrounding areas esp. Shawnigan Lake, Lake Cowichan, Ladysmith, Chemainus
 - I think there is much unique things to see and do here and may satisfy people's longing for new experiences.
 - I would recommend other parts of the Cowichan Region, for one-two things to do. Chemainus - Murals, Cowichan Lake - Hiking/swimming, Cowichan Bay - Shopping, Duncan - Totems and shopping, etc.
 - It is beautiful here and I trust friends to not destroy the natural beauty whereas tourists don't respect our communities
-

- It would depend on the people and the community. Different interests.
- It's beautiful here
- lots of beautiful places to see throughout the south-east
- lots of good places to see in every direction
- Lots of great stuff to do.
- Lots of outdoor activities
- lots of outdoors to go to
- Lots to do and see
- Lots to offer but very little availability of hotels/motels.
- Lots to see and do
- Love activities in Cowichan: museums, hiking, restaurants
- My friends like the same things I do
- Need more things to do more trails more eco-tourism more accommodations and camping
- Nice area to visit.
- not much to do
- Oceans rivers forests vineyards foodie
- Our region has lots to offer to tourists
- Outdoor activities available.
- parking is lacking in many areas and is needed because of the distance and terrain (hilly) in many areas. Having the TC Trail completely connect between all the communities north to south in the Cowichan region would help
- Please visit other places
- Represents my point of view
- Same more exciting events are needed
- Same thing, great hikes
- Some areas are better than others such as Ladysmith, Cowichan Lake and Malahat
- Summer time the island is a better
- The entire Cowichan area is of interest --not just one location.
- The Island has many beautiful places to explore but would encourage supporting local first.
- The other communities are even smaller than Lake Cowichan and so have fewer services to offer.
- The rural areas with wineries etc. are nicer than Duncan proper (which is where I live)
- The valley is wonderful
- There are beautiful things to see a do in our area.
- There are lots of beautiful spots in area, I just don't want my area over run
- There are many great businesses to explore while enjoying the natural sights along the journey to them.
- There are many wonderful places in Cowichan

- There are regions around us that offer things that cannot be compared or replicated in our area (Tofino, Victoria etc)
- There are things around to see
- There is so much to do in just a short distance
- There are some pretty cool things to do!
- They don't have the problems we do i.e. they get a better quality tourist.
- This is a beautiful area with lots of outdoor activities and other activities.
- Tourist attractions are spread out in the valley.
- Unique communities
- Victoria etc -- Ucluelet/Tofino -- beauty surrounds

Table 5: Comments Made by Promoters About the Cowichan Region

- Again, beautiful environment and recreational opportunities.
- Again, so much to offer in all areas of the Valley
- Again, this area is full of beautiful nature.
- Again, so many interesting things to do ... e.g., Cedar loop with farm stands, Crow & Gate, and Thetis Island.
- All communities in the Cow Valley have unit personalities and something to offer tourists. Either recreationally or culturally
- All parts of the valley have something of offer. I talk to tourists in my work at a public library and often talk about what they can see around the valley.
- All the communities in the region have unique qualities lots of hidden gems
- All the regions are worth visiting, each having a unique vibe.
- amazing place to live and visit - something for everyone
- Beaches, old growth trees
- Beautiful area on the island
- Beautiful things around the community
- Beauty. Diversity
- Because it is beautiful, there is so much outdoor beauty to experience - hiking, lakes, rivers, and ocean. Plus, wineries, breweries and activities.
- Because our island has so much to offer.
- Because that's what I think
- Because the area is rich in interest, and they are tourists
- Because there is so much diversity to discover nature-wise. Also, food, wineries and farms.
- Because Vancouver Island is the best
- Because we live in a beautiful part of Cowichan
- Because we live in an incredible area
- Charm of small towns
- Clam, nice, lot of greens
- Come to my town and visit the next one too!
- Cowichan has many distinct eclectic communities stitched together

- Cowichan is beautiful
- Cowichan Lake is beautiful, cobble hill charming
- Cowichan people have a lot to offer ... Cowichan is proud indigenous community
- Cowichan region is dotted with a wide variety of things to do and see.
- Cowichan Valley has so much to offer
- Cowichan Valley is a big place and there's lots to do.
- Cute little communities
- Cuz I live here
- Each community is unique
- Each community is unique and make for great days trips.
- Enjoy the nature
- Great attractions, access to the ocean and forests.
- Great things to see, do, wineries lovely, ocean parks beautiful
- I have been traveling around the Island since my arrival, from Tofino/Ucluelet beaches to Campbell River, Parksville, Ladysmith, Duncan, Mill Bay...all the way to Victoria via the Pacific Marine Road (one of my favourite drives) Everywhere I go, it's beautiful. Each town is charming, and there are so many shorelines to explore.
- I love the Cowichan Valley and each community has something unique to offer
- I love this place with all my heart
- If you expand tourism to the whole region instead of just our community, there are lots of options for all interests.
- Is good, the surrounding community make the region more fun to explore.
- Is ok the community around
- It is great area
- It's a beautiful place
- It's a beautiful region
- It's a cool place.
- It's beautiful
- Ladysmith, Cowichan Bay, farmers' markets, wineries, whale watching
- Ladysmith, Victoria, Lake Cowichan, Port Renfrew, Chemainus all have a lot to offer
- Local farms are awesome
- Lots of around if u like nature
- Lots of outdoor activities. Mountains if they don't log them.
- lots to do
- Lots to do and many fun things for all.
- Lots to see and do.
- Lots to see in the Cowichan Valley and each community has a different vibe
- Love Lake Cowichan.
- many great places for hiking, sweet all for carriage driving
- Many interesting and picturesque places to recommend.
- Many outdoor activities and beautiful scenery, all within a relatively small area.

- Many things to do around the region during summer
- More year-round opportunities for recreation and activities.
- Need more thing to do
- Nice areas to explore
- Nice for people to see communities that other options for activities etc.
- Not too many visitors
- Other communities have invested in tourism and have more to offer
- Other communities have just as much to offer. Again, an incredibly beautiful place. I also think tourism and attraction to sites contribute to their preservation and existence, ex forests, parks, waterways, local wineries and food producers
- Our religion is awesome, more people should explore here.
- Pleasant vibe and warm
- Proud of all communities in the region
- Quiet and relaxing
- Everything is here on the island
- Lots to explore and experience.
- Great variety of high-quality things to do.
- Seaside villages, restaurants, wineries, golf, SUMMER season.
- ALL of Cowichan is awesome!
- So many diverse activities throughout the area. So much to see and do.
- So many wonderful places to explore and share
- So much to do and see
- So much to see around the region
- Some other areas are more attractive
- South Cowichan wineries
- The area is lovely and has many interesting things to do and see.
- The Cowichan valley has many lovely communities
- The Cowichan valley has potential to be like Napa Valley in California
- The Cowichan Valley is beautiful and has a ton to offer
- The valley is amazing
- The variety of interesting towns great to visit.
- The whole area is amazing! We have trails, shopping, hiking, biking, boating and beautiful beaches
- The whole island has something to offer, each its own way
- The whole island is worth visiting
- The whole Valley is my home.
- There are lots of amazing places
- There are interesting happenings all over
- There are many beautiful areas in the Cowichan Valley to enjoy.
- There are so many great places to visit in the Cowichan Valley area!
- There are so many wonderful places in the Valley from wineries, to markets, to the rivers, lakes and mountains. Great communities abound. It is a superb place.

- There is always more to see and discover
- There is lots to see and experience mainly outdoor activities.
- There is much to discover here with trail networks, marine environments, restaurants, wineries, etc. The only thing I would like to see is an effort by local businesses to give local residents a break on pricing so that they can experience what's on offer perhaps in the shoulder seasons when tourists are not as plentiful, and those locals can spread the word to visitors in upcoming seasons. Word of mouth is always the best advertising in my opinion.
- There is so much to do and see all around the valley
- There is so much variety in the communities of the Cowichan. They are all interesting, attractive and worth a visit.
- There's many great places that aren't at my back door.
- There's lots to see all through the region
- They are good
- They may spend money in our area
- To see this incredibly amazing place that we work live and play on
- To share the beauty of the community I live in and share with others
- Tourism is all of us, locals, visitors, I believe this overall tourism improves the economic impact on the community
- Visit in June with better weather
- We all benefit as word-of-mouth travels
- We are very lucky to live here, and others should at least be able to visit here.
- We have great areas.
- We have lots of diverse communities with varying histories, cultures, and activities.
- We have much to offer.
- We live in a world class area.
- We live in such a beautiful part of the world
- We live in the beautiful, wholesome part of the world.
- Well ... Communities around might be better
- whole area is beautiful
- Worth to explore
- Yes, visiting us and make the community more alive.

Essential Activities and Places to Visit

Participants were what *can't miss activities or attractions* they would recommend in their communities (Table 6) and the *one place in the Cowichan Region* that visitors had to visit (Table 7). Comments have been screened to remove any offensive or unrelated content but otherwise were left verbatim.

Table 6: Can't Miss Activities and Attractions in the Cowichan Region

- Various beaches
- 39 Days of July

- 39 Days of July Festival
- A hike along the Cowichan River.
- A hike on a nice trail
- A visit to the local natural places, mountain trails, rivers, lakes.
- A walk in Cowichan Bay
- A winery.
- Agri-tourism, outdoors hiking and biking, whale watching
- Alderlea Farm!
- All that is available.
- All that the time let them
- Any waterfront
- Aquatic centre
- Auto racing
- Awaken the Dragon Educational Walking Tour - Public art Installation being built at OUR ECOVILLAGE
- B.C. Forestry Museum
- Bands in Waterwheel Park summer evenings.
- BC Forest Discovery Center
- BC Forest Discovery centre
- BC Forest Discovery Centre
- Beach
- Beaches
- Biking the Cowichan trail or the Chemainus trail... connecting these trails and extending them to reach Victoria & Nanaimo would be my tourism dream.
- Birds of prey .
- Boating, fishing,
- Boating, swimming and fishing
- Bodies of water
- camping
- Camping
- Camping in summer
- Chemainus
- Chemainus wall painting
- Chemainus candy shop
- Chemainus murals
- Chemainus Murals
- Chemainus theatre
- Chemainus Wall painting
- cinnamon bun
- Climbing Mesachie Mountain. The view is of mostly unspoiled lake and mountains.
- Cobble Hill Quarry park and the PUB.
- Cow Bay docks, tubing the Cowichan, winery tasting tours

- Cow bay/koksilah river estuary walks, cowichan river access and swimming in summer
- Cowichan Bay
- Cowichan footpath
- Cowichan lake
- Cowichan lake and its swimming areas in summer. Rarely crowded, pristine water. Vineyards, Hand of Man, fishing sea or river. Too many things
- Cowichan lake tubing
- Cowichan lake waterfront
- Cowichan Lake/ river activities. SUMMER only.
- Cowichan river
- Cowichan river (we need a park in the cliffs roads area)
- Cowichan river and Cowichan Lake
- Cowichan bay
- Crofton mill
- Crystal Falls in early spring
- Depends on activity level but the Sony Hill hike is nice
- Downtown Duncan
- Downtown farmer's market
- Downtown Farmers' Market
- Duncan downtown farmers market
- Duncan Farmer's market
- Duncan Farmer's Market
- Duncan Farmers Market
- Duncan farmers market.
- Elk in Youbou
- Enjoy nature
- Enjoying Cowichan Lake.
- Fair
- farmers market
- Farmers market
- Farmers market every Sat.
- find art events, hiking, camping, swimming, visiting great restaurants.
- Floating down the Cowichan River
- FN culture
- For first time mobile friends we take them to Stony Hill, as we were taken on our return after 31 years.
- Forest centre
- Forest Discovery Centre
- Forest Discovery centre Equestrian trails
- Forest Museum
- Get out on the water and look back at the land--it becomes obvious when seen from that perspective. Also hike up Mt Zhouhalem

- Getting out on the water (ocean). My relatives visit and their number one favourite activity to a boat ride or kayaking.
- go kayaking
- Goats on a roof 
- Going for a swim in the river or lake and hiking
- Good question, perhaps Duncan summer market and if they keep it up music in the park, Forest discovery center, Hand of Man Museum in Maple Bay
- Gravel Biking
- Great dining in Cow Bay
- Hand of Man
- Hand of Man museum
- hand of man museum, maple bay
- Hand of Man, Kinsol Tressle, Winery tours, Train Station Museum, totem tour
- Hand of Man, wineries, downtown Duncan, Duncan Farmers Market, duncan Day, christmas Kick-off, Earth Day - all in downtown Duncan.
- Harbour tour
- Hard to choose just one but if I must... the hiking trails would be it.
- Have a Caesar at the Masthead restaurant. Best in Canada!
- Hike in the wood
- Hikes
- Hikes, lakes and rivers. All things natural.
- Hikes, vineyards, swimming holes, tubing,
- hiking
- Hiking
- Hiking and biking and paddling and rowing
- Hiking and or biking
- Hiking and tubing
- Hiking in the trails
- Hiking local mountains
- Hiking our local trails, visiting Cowichan Bay, visiting wineries, visiting Ladysmith
- Hiking skutz falls or anywhere along the Cowichan river
- Hiking Stoney Hill or Mount Prevost. Riding Mt. Tzouhalem
- Hiking to Koksilah Ancient forest
- Hiking trails, Forest Museum, Malahat Sky Walk
- Hiking, beach access, golfing
- Hiking, biking, fishing, the lake and river
- hiking, merridale cider
- hiking/biking the trails
- I want people by and large, to stay away from my community.
- If you like big events, there is Sunfest
- Islands Folk Festival
- Just enjoying the pristine lake
- Just relaxing in Cow Bay and visiting local wineries.

- Kayaking at Transfer Beach
- Kinsol Trestle
- Kinsale Trestle, Cowichan Bay
- Kinsol Trestle, and Hiking Baldy Mountain (on a clear day). Then, take them to the Duncan market, and some wineries - I can't nail it to one activity.
- Kinsol Trestle
- Kinsol Trestle, BC Forest Discovery Centre, Vancouver Island Motorsport Circuit for a VIKA event
- Kinsol trestle, Duncan farmers market, cobble hill fall fair and cowichan ex
- Kinsol trestle.
- Kinsol, farmers market, trails
- Kinsoll Trestle
- Ladysmith Light Up the Night
- Lake
- Lake cowichan tubing
- Lake town ranch musical events, swimming, walking trails
- Legislative Building in Victoria, Cowichan Bay, Malahat Skywalk, Duncan Farm Market on Saturday, Genoa Bay Cafe, Blue Grouse Winery, Crow and Gate Pub near Yellow Point Lodge,
- Local wineries.
- Malahat drive, old growth forests, beaches
- Malahat skywalk
- Malahat Skywalk
- Malahat Skywalk, Cobble Hill Mountain, Kinsol Trestle
- Market
- McAdam park
- mountain biking
- Mountain biking
- Mountain biking and hiking.
- murals
- Museum and the lake
- museums, towns and water
- Music and arts
- Music festivals
- Natural beauty
- Natural beauty, wineries
- No longer available, but the can't miss activity used to be saltwater fishing.
- none - hoards of tubers have ruined the river and unmuffled jet boats with blaring "music" has ruined the peaceful enjoyment of both the lake and the river
- Not sure - depends on their ages/interests etc.
- Nothing cow valley sucks
- Nothing in particular, some friends might like maple Bay more than Cowichan River or vice-versa. It's

- Ocean
- Ocean ecoventures
- Our forests
- Outdoor
- Outdoor recreation
- Outdoorsy adventures - hiking biking camping swimming boating
- Pacific Northwest Raptors / Kinsol Trestle
- Paddle boarding
- Raptors and Cow Bay wooden boat centre
- Ride bikes on CVT (not paved and awesome the way it is) or hike.
- River swim in summer
- River tubing
- Rivers
- Saturday market
- See murals
- see the sea
- See wall paintings
- Sightseeing around the valley
- Sky walk
- So many to name but certainly the Forest Museum and the wineries
- Stoney hill
- Stoney Hill hike
- Stoney Hill Regional Park
- Stony hill, hike, followed by the lunch at the Genoa Bay Cafe
- Swim in the lake during summer
- Swimming and tubing
- Swimming hiking and camping
- The backcountry trails. So much potential for more bike trails.
- the BC Forest Discovery Centre
- The BC Forest Museum is a cultural treasure, and I would say very important to our community. Therefore I would suggest the Forest Center.
- the beaches, duncan days , music in the park for 30 days
- The cowichan river
- The Cowichan, Koksilah, and Chemainus Rivers -- world class whitewater!
- The Duncan Farmers Market
- The lake in summer
- The malahat skywalk is really cool and offers a good idea of the surrounding area
- The Mountain bike network within North Cowichan
- The natural splendor of the unspoilt places around the valley
- The ocean and hiking
- The only thing that would be interesting are the sea lions in Cowichan Bay in the fall.
- The Raptor Centre

- The Raptors
- The Raptors in Duncan
- The shopping in Cowichan Bay.
- The vineyards and the forestry museum
- The water. Either the lake or the ocean is so accessible.
- The waterway and forest
- The wineries
- The winery tours
- Theatre
- There are so many: Tour of Totem Poles in Downtown Duncan, strolling through little shops, winery tours, mountain hikes, Bioluminescence Tours
- There is no can't miss activity
- There is nothing in this region I'd recommend. Victoria, Tofino & North Island are much more can't miss than anything in Cowichan.
- There isn't one
- There isn't one thing that stands out, but Stoney Hill park and Cow Bay are favourites.
- There's not much here.
- This is a silly question to me because I would never assume to predict the response of another person to my tastes.
- Too any to list
- Too long to list
- Totem tour, hockey stick, Cowichan Bay, Discovery center
- Totem trail, Duncan
- Trans Canada trail
- Transfer Beach
- Transfer beach park
- Trestle trail, especially Kinsol
- Tubing on the Cowichan river
- Tubing on the river.
- Tubing the river
- Tubing, camping, water sports and bike trails
- Tubing, hiking
- Tubing. Ed's coffeehouse.
- Tubing/swimming in rivers and lakes.
- Vineyards, sailing
- Visit beach
- Visit the Totem Poles
- Visit trail parks
- Visiting Cowichan valley
- Visiting Mt Tzouhalem
- Visiting parks
- Visiting the artisanal wine, cider, dairy and the amazing hikes.

- Visiting the gulf islands. Using the hiking trails
- Visiting wineries
- wading in luminescent water at boulder beach on summer evenings
- Walking on the six mountains- particularly Prévost, Maple and Stoney Hill
- Walking or hiking or cycling the TCT near Kinsol Trestle
- Walks in the forest
- Watch wild animals in woods
- Water sport
- water sport in spring and summer
- Water sports and skiing on the same day.
- Water sports, everything else needs more development.
- Whale watching
- WildPlay
- Wine tasting.
- Wine Tours!
- Wineries
- Wineries and Kinsol Trestle
- Wineries and other liquor industries
- Wineries, trails, and towns
- Wineries!!
- Winery and cidery visits. We are the Napa valley of the north.
- Winery visit
- X-Country Mountain Biking
- Youbou, Lake Cowichan, Kinsol Trestle, Bright Angel Park, Views from top of the Malahat, Maple Bay / Genoa Bay

Table 7: The One Place Visitors Should Go in the Cowichan Region

- Cowichan First Nations exhibit if it was still open in Duncan so maybe Malahat skywalk.
- Again not one highlight. Best idea is to get off the highway and explore. Also forgot to mention above- Transfer Beach Park.
- Again, hard to nail down based on the visitor. If they drink wine, I'd recommend all the wineries. If they are in to hiking/biking, the Canada Trail
- Any Camping ground
- Any parks
- Any waterfront, ocean
- Anywhere along the river
- Anywhere but Lake Cowichan. 🚫
- Anywhere in nature
- Anywhere in nature, the lakes the beach the ocean
- Anywhere they have the opportunity to get out on the water (ocean) and/or see the ocean whether it's a beach walk, a hike with ocean views, or dining by the sea.

- Baldy mountain and mt tzouhalem
- Bayview Brewing
- BC forest discovery center
- BC Forest Discovery Center
- BC Forest Discovery Centre
- BCFDC
- Beach
- Beaches
- Birds of prey .
- Bright Angel Park
- Bright Angel Park and the Kinsol Trestle
- Camping in the wood
- Can't put only one
- Canada trail with kinsol trestle
- Can't name just one
- Cedar. Yellow Point, Crow & Gate Pub
- Chemainus
- Checkout the history of the valley: Forestry museum, Maritime museum in Cowichan Bay. I would say the Indigenous sites, but the available museums are inadequate, and run down.
- Chemainus
- Chemainus - if it's just one stop with no room for anything else
- Chemainus theatre
- Chemainus Theatre & Dinning
- Chemainus to see the murals
- Chemainus
- Cobble Hill Mountain
- Cow bay
- Cow bay
- Cowichan bay
- Cowichan Bay
- Cowichan Bay (to see the sea lions)
- Cowichan Bay but all over the region as well
- Cowichan Bay of course including True Grain Bakery
- Cowichan Bay Village
- Cowichan Bay, cute shops and good food and nice to walk around the estuary, it has it all!
- Cowichan Bay.
- Cowichan lake
- Cowichan Lake
- Cowichan lake or river
- Cowichan lake tubing
- Cowichan Lake.

- Cowichan region
- Cowichan river
- Cowichan River
- Cowichan River Trail
- Cowichan, koksilah and Chemainus rivers
- Cowichan lake
- Depending on their interests. Mountain biking near Duncan is great. Winery tours thought region. The raptors center is also amazing.
- Depends on the person. Forest Museum, swimming - Cowichan or Shawnigan lakes
- depends on the time of year
- Depends what they like I do t think there is one overwhelming attraction
- depends what you're preferences are
- Discovery centre
- Downtown Duncan
- Downtown Duncan and one outdoor experience
- Downtown Duncan, especially on market days.
- Duncan
- DUNCAN
- Duncan a beautiful city with a vibrant downtown
- Duncan downtown
- Duncan dt
- Duncan Farmer's market
- Duncan farmers market
- Duncan, Parksville, Ladysmith
- Duncan...preferably on a Saturday morning to enjoy the market. Followed by lunch somewhere in town.
- Farmers markets
- Forest discovery centre
- Forest Museum
- Forest trails / Cowichan valley trail
- Forest, where has trails
- Hard to choose, but probably Cowichan Bay.
- Hike on any of the advertised trails. Leave the unadvertised places for locals.
- Hiking
- Hiking the trails
- Hiking trail
- Hiking trails
- Hiking trials
- Home
- I can't pick just one place.
- I don't know that I can focus on one place exactly there are too many places that have a lot to offer. Downtown Duncan has good shops, art galleries, the market

etc. It really depends on what people are looking for. Outdoor activities take me out to the lakes, trails and ocean.

- I'd rather not have visitors - so don't want to advertise attractions. Leave them for residents, taxpayers!
- It depends on their interests.
- Just one? Cowichan bay
- Kaatza Station Museum
- Kinsel trestle
- Kinsell tresell
- Kinsol Tressel, bright Angel park, Duncan farmers market
- Kinsol trestle
- Kinsol Trestle
- Kinsol Trestle / Malahat Skywalk
- Kinsol Trestle and Trail
- Kinsol Trestle in Cowichan Station and in Duncan, the Forest Museum
- Kinsol. Stoney hill. Breweries. Lake Cowichan
- Kinsole trestle
- Kinsole Trestle
- Kinsoll Trestle
- Lady smith transfer beach
- Ladysmith
- Ladysmith Transfer Beach Park
- Ladysmith waterfront
- Ladysmith. There is something for everyone there. Nature hikes, ocean, and small town shops.
- Lake Cowichan
- Lake Cowichan
- Lake Cowichan for a swim
- Lake Cowichan.
- Lakes
- Lakes and rivers along w cultural like museums and art galleries
- Malahat
- Malahat lookout
- Malahat skywalk
- Malahat Skywalk
- Malahat Walkway
- maple bay
- Maple bay
- Maple Bay
- Mesachie Mountain. Access at the end of Forestry Road.
- Mill Bay Road hike along the sea shore.
- Mount Tzouhalem
- Mountain

- Mountaintops (Tzou, Prevost, Maple)
- Mt Tzouhalem
- Mt. Tzouhalem
- Museums rivers lakes and retail stores
- No one place. The beauty of this area is the plethora of options - everything from world class hiking, to award winning wineries, incredible clear lakes and stunning ocean views. It's paradise
- Not sure - depends on individual interest
- Ocean
- Oceanside
- Old town bakery
- Oh my gosh... too many to answer just one...
- OUR ECOVILLAGE, Alderly Farm, Cowichan Bay for slow food eats/whale watching.....
- Our North Cowichan parks.
- Out of the area
- Port Renfrew, Cow Bay,
- Promise Valley Farm
- Raptor centre
- River
- River or lake
- See the Raptor demonstration
- Shawnigan Lake
- Shultz falls, Marie canyon
- Skutz Falls
- Skywalk
- Stoney Hill
- Stoney hill regional park
- Stoney Hill Regional Park
- Stony hill
- Stony Hill
- Swuqus
- Take the back road from Ladysmith thru to Chemainus then Crofton then Maple Bay then out to Cowichan Bay. The driving through places is nice with some class 1 scenic drives.
- TC trail head - Glenora (hike or equestrian trails)
- the Kinsol Trestle
- The BC Forest Discovery Center.
- The best way to experience the Cowichan Valley in one place would be to visit the farmer's market in Duncan
- The Cowichan River
- The Duncan Market
- The highway out of here

• The highway since it gets them out of here
• The Kinsol trestle
• The Kinsole Trestle
• the lake
• The mountains
• The outskirts of the towns. Lots of trails and views
• The Raptor Centre
• There are so many unique and beautiful places, one place may not satisfy all who visit.
• There is no one place the whole valley is a gem.
• There's so many places of interest in the Cowichan valley
• Thetis island
• They should visit the old rail line on foot or on a bicycle and experience the variety and scope of the forests and waters.
• the Raptors
• To the Six mountains.
• Too long to list
• Too many to choose. Ladysmith and transfer beach.
• Tour the wineries and cideries...sorry I guess that's not just one.
• Transfer beach
• Transfer beach in Ladysmith
• Trestle
• Tubing down the river!
• Up a mountain or to a bay (or both)
• Victoria
• Vineyards
• walking trails
• water
• waterfront
• Waterfronts/wine touring.
• We take friends to the wineries.
• Wine tour
• Wine tours
• Wineries
• Winery tour
• Youbou

General Comments

Participants were provided with an opportunity to give additional feedback to the research team. The comments were screened to remove irrelevant or offensive content but were otherwise presented as submitted (Table 8).

Table 8: General Comments Made by Residents of the Cowichan Region

-
- There is still so much untapped potential when it comes to tourism in our community. More quality lodging just in the Duncan area alone would ease the compression on what would otherwise be open to longer-term rentals, the availability of which would help with attracting qualified service industry workers into the region. There also still exists a lack of understanding of my rad ways the healthy tourism sector can improve the lives of the residents. Tourism is essentially a form of export industry with the advent of goods and services being consumed on location. Tourism paves the way for other economic benefits, as each tourism dollar spent in the region tends to spin multiple times and remain in the region. Also, social and cultural benefits are many, as tourism enriches both the visitors and the hosts through shared experiences. In the grander scheme of things, Tourism promotes greater intercultural connections and thus plays a significant part in deepening our understanding of the complex world we live in. There is no doubt that broadened horizons and understandings through tourism and travel aid in promoting diplomatic solutions to many things that ail our world. Tourism is a vehicle of peace.
-
- A bike path from Lake Cowichan to Honeymoon Bay. (Or around the lake. A bypass for logging roads through Lake Cowichan. Improve the highway to Port Renfrew and onto Sooke.
-
- Additional training is required to prepare tourism workers to greet and communicate with visitors appropriately
-
- As biking is becoming more and more popular there needs to be more trails for recreational biking not just mountain biking without forgetting that recreational equestrians are here too and are an economic staple for the valley.
-
- As I grew up on the island, the things changed a lot here, if more tourism can make community develop more, then yes plz .
-
- As much as I believe tourism is an important part of the region's economic development, I believe that it shouldn't be the sole focus. As we saw with the pandemic and other events happening in Canada ie. floods, fires, protests that can severely impact tourism we need a diverse marketplace that will aid in sustaining people should tourism be cut off for one reason or another. For example: Added value manufacturing is important as well as agriculture so that if supply is disrupted we still are able to produce what we need. There can be crossover interests in tourism but those kinds of operations have to be solidly sustainable for the stability of our society. The cost of land is of primary concern and having the housing to support local workers who would like to have a hope of one day owning their own home. As much as I have enjoyed being part of the island and calling it my home, I have seen over my lifetime how it is a playground for the rich and famous and is becoming less friendly to those who's aim is to live here and make a life. Governing bodies need to be constantly looking at checks and balances that will help the average person to not just survive here but thrive here. Part of that is certainly going to come in the form of tourism jobs but how tourism affects the underpinnings of keeping a stable economy I don't quite know or understand. I would like to see a focus on
-

keeping our natural resources to be used by local manufacturers and not sent as raw logs to Asia. That might not be related to tourism but if we want to maintain the beauty of our resources and still harvest responsibly we need to keep working towards supporting workers/businesses here not shipping our raw logs out to other countries to process. Basically I think it comes down to we can't have it both ways...natural beauty = tourism, harvesting responsibly = local stability, processing resources = stable jobs for times when there are downturns in tourism.

-
- Better accessibility. Often times trail heads / areas overflowing with vehicles. Ie Skutz falls. Secondly there is HUGE undeveloped potential for world class ATV / Motorcross trails (old forest service roads) in around the CVRD. Locals utilize them with or without permission and it's highly frowned upon for some reason. Take an example from Okanogan Valley / Kelowna where ATV areas are promoted, permitted, and monitored for safe enjoyability for many. Plus is a beacon for outdoor enthusiasts of all interests. There is this perception in CVRD that motor sports are bad. Most people I know that do backcountry motor sports are extremely responsible, environmentally in tune and respect the places they go. Yes they make mud, but they also pick up garbage , report poachers, fires, etc. Yes, some folks make a huge mess areas close to town which gives the rest of us a bad name. Put some money or support to create some safe unloading areas away from population centers, monitor usage and work on supporting those that use it to create a destination. But considering the farce surrounding the speedway this valley is not supportive to ALL interests. But CVRD wants to cut trees and get easy money. We have millions of dollars of FSRs being under utilized. But forestry comes first on crown / leased land. South Island could use a Legal, safe, non-intrusive ATV / Motorcross / 4x4 area....increase local sales of vehicles when people know they have a local area to play. Hotels / campgrounds / etc...food Suggestion. Areas behind Mt Sicker / Mt Provost / Lake Cowichan have ample secluded areas to put a trail head to head out to extensive decommissioned, Under utilized FSRs. Some also want it all to themselves. I see world class trail system. Like the North 1000 ATV trail system capturing Campbell river, gold river, port hardy, etc, etc. bringing tourism dollars into all those communities. Rant over.
-
- Bike trails is not that practical how about more events
-
- Bikes on the forest trails are destroying things for animals and walkers.
-
- Bring more so maybe our downtown will fill up again and no longer be ghost towns
-
- Building our community with a smart plan
-
- Can't stress enough the negative impact of tubing.
-
- Chemainus is weirdly quiet in the summer - I moved to Saltair in 2020 and have never seen it busy, this surprised me and i'm not sure if its a post-pandemic thing or not
-
- Clean it up so the community and tourists can enjoy it
-

- Clean up the town, needs colour, rundown buildings repaired or demolished. More ocean access with beaches. Better bus service.

- Converting rails to trails should be a priority! The unused railway represents a terrific opportunity to expand hiking, cycling, horseback routes that will appeal to locals and visitors alike.

- Covid restrictions has taken a terrible toll on tourism overall. Visitors who were once welcomed were later denounced. It is hard to come back from that. There is still a fear among people that hampers tourism because of this.

- Cowichan needs more nice motels, hotels, as relying on air b and b etc is not good for the overall economy.

- Each area is unique

- Eco-tourism, etc should top the list. Don't bring in loud noisy events as that's not the nature of the valley.

- Encourage 'clean' camping/hiking...pack out what you pack in. Please respect residents and community spirit

- Encourage hiking, cycling and human powered watercraft. Discourage fossil fuelled entertainment.

- Expanding existing walking paths would be great; esp the path along Wilmot, if it connected with Whippletree and Bench Street and down to the Village

- Good for boating

- Help keep our mountains whole. They matter to tourism!!

- Highway 1 is not built for a huge influx of tourists. Summer is disastrous getting to and from work. Bypass larger towns like Duncan.

- Holding a beach or ocean event in summer will attract more tourists and bike lane is not a good idea

- Huge variety of options to see & do throughout the seasons

- I don't like tourism because it makes a costume out of cultures for people that don't care to learn about those same cultures they are wearing for fun.

- I expect it. I am thankful to live in a beautiful community and I know people want to see it. I think eco-tourism contributes to conservation and supports our natural parks/trails and other tourism supports our businesses/employment which in turn keeps them available to residents.

- I feel like Cowichan is left out of all the things Nanaimo and Victoria have.

- I hope the E&N railway runs again to give non-vehicle access to the area

- I love the place I live, but it need development and more young people

- I think my community attracts a lot of "bad" tourists that disrespect our natural environment, plus there are so many of them that come in the summer it takes the enjoyment away from the locals for example dining out. The tourist dollars are spent mostly on liquor and at sunfest, not really sure it has a great benefit to most local businesses unless you're the tube shack or the liquor store.

- I think there are so many opportunities to attract more tourists to the region. Creating trails on Mt. Richards trails with Crofton being the accommodation and dining hub is a fantastic idea. There should be a central park area for a

permanent market and entertainment area to compel tourists to stop like Goats on the Roof. Lake Cowichan has become a devastating eyesore due to their clear-cut logging practices. Don't let that happen to Cowichan.

- I think user fees should be in place for a number of activities so many people show up for the day use the parks & Mountains & lakes etc... & some leave a mess... and off they go back to Victoria or Vancouver not staying in Cowichan and spending very little money in the Valley, so they don't support our infrastructure and tax base "aka users" so user fees to support the infrastructure for these Parks, Mountains ,lakes . Never mind it's usually a free-for-all for parking not safe for everyone and no enforcement of rules especially on the weekends when it's needed because bye-law officers usually don't work on the weekends

 - I want my community to be charming and have more amenities but I don't like how Country Grocer hikes up the prices during the busy times and that the beaches are becoming more crowded

 - I would hope we don't promote specific types of tourism that may be harmful to the environment and ruin what we have here. For example, promoting the Cowichan region as a mountain biking destination (like Cumberland) I feel would be detrimental to our less developed mountains and ruin quiet areas. I want quiet spaces to stay quiet.

 - I would like more walking trails. Such as along Mill Bay Road.

 - I would like one of the benefits of tourism to be an increase in active transportation. Still too many of our regions are not well connected and even our streets are not 'easy' to manage. If folks are staying out where I live, to make it to the Saturday market is technically a lovely 20 minute walk, but only the locals really know the short cuts that make the walk actually more pleasant. Walk and cycling people! We live in the 'Warm Land' - we should be out moving!

 - I would like our public infrastructure to be improved.

 - I'd love to see the Cowichan Tribes visitors' site reopened for tourists.

 - I'm a member of the Vancouver Island whitewater paddlesport community. We are currently proposing a modest whitewater play feature on the Cowichan River. I'd love to discuss this with the Tourism sector!

 - I'm very concerned about damage to our ecosystem from tourism - it would be great to educate tourists on how to minimize their impact by changing the type of sunscreen they use, properly disinfect their fishing/ boating gear before entering a different waterbody, and identifying where they can recycle and dispose of waste properly.

 - if tourists are respectful of where they are then I love to have them. but a number of them litter and our rude to local community members along the river and the lake. so some sore of rules and regulations should be thought of. the use of bike trails is great but again their are those who speed by the walkers and also ride their motor bikes on bike and walking trails. more signage, more sitting areas would be nice. No fires and keeping people out of our parks during heat waves would be great.
-

- If tourists were more responsible- they would be welcomed. Unfortunately they leave garbage everywhere, speed through town, and stain the resources. Traffic becomes intolerable on HWY 18 with the onslaught of campers and trailers. There is not enough law enforcement or bylaw officers to go after offenders. Wildlife is highly affected - bears are killed at an alarming rate because of garbage, the river will be overflowing with tubers. The environment here is already extremely stressed by the excessive logging so the questions becomes `do we want tourism at any cost? When does the forest industry have preference over wildlife, nature, tourism and the community? And how to reduce reliance on logging and open up more public access to the lake for tourism?

- Imperative to factor in environmental management of nature based tourism.

- Important to find a balance. Not too many visitors but not too few either. And need to respect that the attractions are natural so don't want to destroy them.

- Impossible to get to town on weekends due to tourism. Farm stands are being stolen from by tourists. Tourists degrade trails

- Improvement for the infrastructures

- Indoor events in rainy season and winter.

- it has been my observation that tour buses stop in Chemainus only to use the washrooms

- It is a wonderful place to work play and stay

- It is important to preserve natural habitat and wild spaces as we expand tourism in our valley because these are the features of our ecosystem that make it great and a desirable place to visit. Reconciliation with local first Nations must underpin every initiative as we are in their unceded territory and must grow our community with respect.

- It is the path into the future for the Cowichan.....and must include Q'w'utsun Peoples!

- It makes the town of Cowichan Bay unable to visit in the summer due to parking and the weekend traffic on the Malahat makes transit unbearable. We need an alternate road.

- It requires strong infrastructure, committed funds, and housing for the employees

- It truly is one of the most spectacular and sought out international mountain bike destinations in the world with 1st class amenities and incredibly diverse terrain and riding challenges/styles.

- It would be exceptional if the railroad was re-installed. I believe that it would be a benefit to tourism to allow visitors the embrace the entire Island

- It would be nice if the Cowichan tribes would reopen their centre.

- It would be nice if there was something that could actually draw people to the area. Something that makes it a destination rather than a place that you just drive through. It would definitely make the community more attractive if there was some sort of decorative feature on the highway going thru each town. Chemainus looks industrial. Duncan looks like a mess of drive thru restaurants and box stores with industrial. Aesthetics is LACKING. And people are visual.

These communities look ugly, therefore there is no draw to want to get off the highway.

-
- It would be nice to have more “be a tourist on your own island” - guided bus tours, particularly for seniors, but also for anyone who’d rather leave the driving to someone else so they could enjoy the gorgeous scenery - and with a guide to talk about interesting history, etc. Tourism shouldn’t just be for folks from afar.
-
- It's a critical industry and one we should value. However it does need to be managed sensitively regarding impact on residents. Input should always be sought for major changes/developments.
-
- It’s a fine balance. I don’t want this place to have hiking trails like Deep Cove, in Vancouver where I’m from - lined with people single-file. But I do think this area is special and I love to share it with visitors.
-
- Just that Thetis Island and Yellow Point are 'hidden' gems!
-
- Keep growing the community while keep the local culture diversity
-
- Keep it nature oriented not gimmicky and not over developed. For example, there are already too many trails on Maple Mountain - don't make more! Bicycle friendly roads with shoulders to ride safely on. Trails like CVT or TCT don't need to be paved! Safe bicycle parking places in towns for bicycle tourists who are passing through. Can always find places to lock bike up but with all the gear (such as camping gear, clothing, etc) attached I don't like to leave my bike. As a long distance cycle tourist, I spend a lot of time in towns where I feel my bicycle and gear are safe, grocery shopping, drug stores, restaurants, bike shops, tourist shops, etc. Bicycle valets like Victoria and Vancouver have in summer would be great. I would use it and cycle tourists would be drawn to Duncan and other towns if they had it.
-
- Keep our town safe while increase tourism
-
- Keep this beautiful place uncrowded. Don't try to attract people to come here.
-
- Less bike lane , there is no enough lane for car and is dangerous for the bike to beside the car on the highway or island highway
-
- Less is more. Being flooded by tourists over the most beautiful summer months means that we really wait until they are gone before returning to our favorite spots.
-
- Like to see hiking and mountain biking trails with trail head markers and maintained.
-
- Make it better like mainland
-
- Make it easier for tourists to access information on the whole picture. They shouldn't have to dig for information from numerous sources.
-
- Maybe tourism will nudge the politicians to step up and take an active role in reducing the negative effects of drug use and homelessness in our communities. As a tourist, I would not want to venture into an area plagued with open drug use and homeless camps.
-
- Milder climate great wineries, friendly people great communities
-

- more connected safe biking / walking trails so people can do loops around the region

- More eco friendly options. Big trees are a huge draw, so preserving more forests and restoring more forests is a good idea.

- More events and activities for family with kids

- more events are welcome! more tourism as well, however, dont overload the capacity of the places

- More events in the rainy and winter seasons

- More events like island agricultural shows to educate the next generation.

- More events more activities more variety of the community

- More nicer hotel and lodge in a better location plz

- More tourism but also remember the environmental friendly part!

- More tourism is good especially in summer, but we come in winter as well. Even though the snow and temperatures are horrible, find a way to make it work. Spa sauna !?

- More visitors please, we need bring up the economy

- Mountain biking is not the only draw to the Cowichan valley for tourist so Richards mt should stay as hiking and equestrian

- Moved from Nanaimo few decades ago, love the community here and super nice for seniors to live. However, we also want young generation to inject to the community and grow it. The island is growing.

- Need accommodation both hotels and camping

- Need better clarity on costs and benefits. North Cowichan trails funded DIRECTLY by forestry revenues. Tourism revenues are INDIRECT. Decision makers and the public need to be clear on the differences and how facilities are to be maintained and built. Garbage, soil compaction and erosion and dog waste are problems, as well as an underestimation of the fire hazard in these forests.

- Need improved infrastructure

- Need more parking in scenic areas

- Need more parks, campgrounds. Travelling cyclists bring in more dollars than RVs as they use more local things, restaurants, accommodation, stay longer in area. Outdoor activities like kayaking, hiking, touring need to be promoted and natural scenery preserved. Tourism here is not shopping malls but natural beauty and clean air.

- Need the rails removed on old unused (and should not be used) railway, creating more walking and cycling trails

- Needs more development.

- Needs to be embraced more by business and local government

- Nice place everyone needs to visit

- No bike trail plz

- Not a fan of tourism Cowichan marketing

- Not all tourism activities need to be "organized" - natural beauty of the area - agri- tourism (wineries) should also be given credit as attract many visitors

- Not enough - we are working on it! There are arts events, huge music events, with smaller, more local ones starting up, great restaurants, great places to stay, or camp. More infrastructure is needed to protect our Heritage River, upkeep of walkways. There are lots of trails for biking and hiking. It is beautiful

- not sure mountain biking is a sustainable activity on forest trails, better than motorized sports I suppose... I think you should poll cyclists extensively before spending on asphalt, some cyclists like me, like gravel paths...

- Not sure why the visitor Center is closed on many weekends and a number of major long weekends

- Only problem in Cowichan Bay is the parking issue

- Open up and expand the race track. To have international events.

- Overrated

- People in charge need to look at what the area has to offer through a tourist eyes

- Plan ahead.

- Plan more parking spaces

- Please connect the Trans Canada trail all the way to Transfer Beach

- Prices are already ridiculous in the valley.

- proceed slowly, carefully

- Promote Cowichan culture and art by showing indigenous people places and arts

- Promote more island communities

- Promote more VI on BC mainland

- Promote tourism get more tourism year around

- Provide enforcement for illegal camping and illegal forest dumps, plus patrol the lake for high speed , loud boats and drinking while driving a boat.

- Public transit need to improve and more services for seniors

- quality of life down because of lake town

- Quiet peaceful, don't want our community full of outsiders.

- Re bicycle trails — there are far too many bikers on Mount Tzouhalem and the parking lot on Kaspia Rd. Is a disaster in a residential neighborhood. Develop more trails somewhere else. If tourism means logging old growth forest won't be needed for jobs, then I am in favour of it but please use some common sense and involve the community in planning.

- Regarding this survey, you need more detail. For instance I am NOT in favour of paving over existing trails like the trans Canada but I would be in favour of paving short trails in smaller parks for accessibility. Completely different situations. Same w mountain bike trails. In certain areas yes, but in other areas where horses are, no.

- Represents a positive influence on community

- Road systems are poor for volume of traffic during peak travel times & alternate transportation is not available. Parking is also a problem
- Roads desperately need fixing Concerned about urban sprawl Atvs are getting more dangerous in neighbourhood
- Save our rural setting by not approving high density small lot development.
- Short term rentals should be heavily taxed or banned outright.
- Should be encouraged. Better hospitality - places to stay and restaurants would help
- show our waters ,in pics
- Since the weather is so cloudy in winter, more winter activities should be promoted and involved residents
- Some of your questions are too general. "Too much tourism" will look differently to different people, without definitions/examples.
- Some solutions to the homeless/drug problems are going to be needed asap. It is becoming harder and harder to overlook and may keep tourists away.
- Something needs to be done about logging trucks on Southshore Road. They need a truck route. The area could use another bridge in case of emergency and all the empty buildings need to be either taxed or given incentives to clean up
- Street people are a negative effect
- Thank you for your work in promoting are area.
- The area is nice but it is limited in go-to spots that are not outdoor based
- The area is so beautiful that it should be shared with all that come, like me.
- The bridge into town is an eyesore and has so much potential to be a bright welcome to the warmland. So much you can do with LED's, First nations and local artists.
- The community is awesome with natural sceneries like no where else, promote the tourism here is a great idea.
- The conflict around housing for residents vs vacation rentals.
- The Cowichan valley could be the Napa valley of BC. The wineries and farm to table restaurants are already here - now we just need to promote it better
- The effect to the local First Nations, the lack of inclusion of First Nations in tourism opportunities and our values in this study, addressing appropriate/inappropriate places of use for tourism, conflicts between traditional practices and public use. The second matter that I'd address, is that I travel 4-6 times per year for work, not tourism, I travel 1 every other or every third year for tourism, I travel every year to visit family in the US. The purpose of the travel wasn't didn't have enough breadth, but while traveling for work, or to visit family touristy activities do take place.
- The entire infrastructure of the Cowichan Valley needs to be considered when it comes to visitors. Parking, amenities, roadways, security, garbage collection, and so on

- The one thing that is lacking is the rail corridor. Tourism is now entirely dependent on cars, and the very poor bus system. Restoring the train would be fantastic for both residents and visitors.

- The tourism industry has to come to terms with the cost to our communities in the form of green house gas emissions. The extreme weather events caused by climate instability are wreaking havoc on the travel industry

- The valley struggles with a lack of large employers--I think tourism is vital and easy for us.

- There are not too many local shops that offer basic "souvenirs " such as key chains, post cards etc

- There are too many tourism committees/organizations. There needs to be one Regional one, and work together for the benefit of all. Duncan-Cowichan Chamber. Duncan Tourism Committee. Cowichan Tourism. VI Tourism. CVRD Economic Development. Downtown Duncan BIA.

- There is more to damage than see.....

- There is so much to see and do on Vancouver Island, that the list is endless.

- There is something for everyone

- There is still so much to discover in Cowichan as a tourist in my own town.

- there needs to be more parks and hiking trails spaces to accommodate an increasing population

- There needs to be more promotion of ocean related activities. I often call the boater the forgotten tourist. We also need better transportation options, (like Uber, access to buses, collaboration of other businesses) to make it easier for boaters to visit places on shore.

- There should be an environment assessment conducted based on the estimated annual number of tourists that travel to CV (300,000 - 400,000). Environmental costs of water, waste and carbon emissions to start and a financial costs to property taxes to service the tourist industry as well.

- Time for new leadership at Tourism Cowichan!!! In a BIG way!

- Tourism is a bit of a two edged sword. When I think of communities (Kamloops, Kelowna, Prince George) who get much for their holding tournaments etc. there is a certain amount of disruption associated with this.

- Tourism is a boost to our local community

- Tourism is environmentally disastrous. It monetizes the environment, not for the benefit of local residents, but largely for the benefit of outsiders, who encroach on public amenities for their personal gain.

- Tourism is good , but is my community really suitable for it.

- Tourism is good for the community should be promoted we would like to see the tourism grow in here

- tourism is of benefit but it needs to be sustainable and most importantly the environment and the indigenous people of our community must take Priority.

- Tourism is very important for our region and we should embrace it

- Tourism needs to contribute to community infrastructure to be sustainable

- Tourism product development is more important than tourism marketing. MRDT and local govt funding should primarily be spent on our outdoor recreational assets.

- Tourism ruins communities for the environment and the locals that have to deal with the chaos. Take Lake Cowichan for example. Every summer our entire town is filled with drunken tourists tubing down the river and attending sun fest and other festivals at lake town. Not only are they driving drunk risking lives, and they make every store 1000x busier for the locals just trying to do there normal household shopping, and our stores consistently run out of things while they are here. Add to that the damage they cause to the river and beaches and homeowners property while tubing and boating etc on the lake. No thanks. I love our community for it's peacefulness and surrounding nature activities, which is ruined each summer by the influx of tourists

- Tourism should engage the local population and provide opportunities for attractions, art, music and nature.

- Tourism would be greatly enhanced if the logging industry was more selective in their practices. Nobody comes to a place to see clear cuts.

- tourists don't show much respect to locals or our environment

- Tourists need to be taught to respect the local areas, like not leaving Coffee cups everywhere.

- Transportation needs to be improved- it's difficult for people to get from one place to another if you don't have a vehicle

- Tubing has increased since the pandemic this could be due to Lake Town Ranch and or Domestic travel

- Understandable resistance from people who were employed in lucrative forest work need reminding that employment has changed and the benefits outweigh the negatives

- Very important to keep the advertising of events going and even increasing

- We are so fortunate to live here, I'm happy to share

- We do not have enough accommodation options. Locally, since Deer Lodge closed, there are not enough accommodation in Mill Bay or Cobble Hill. We are missing out on lots of tourism with the Malahat skywalk so close by and yet few places for tourist to stay in Mill, Bay, or Cobble Hill.

- We enthusiastically welcome tourism as an asset to our communities. We hope that in planning for the increasing demand on our tourism infrastructure, authorities prioritize the maintenance of what makes this place special - keeping it wild and beautiful. Extra care paid to providing amenities to ensure that an influx of visitors doesn't spoil the quality of life for residents, wildlife and other visitors is of paramount importance to our family. Amenities such as garbage receptacles + collection, public washroom facilities, safe parking, litter pickup, paving sidewalks or maintaining road shoulders in areas where summer tourism creates an uptick in pedestrian use, appropriate allocation of funding to law enforcement to handle the uptick in problems arising from rowdy summer visitors etc.

- We have a great community centre . We have a local orchestra and a band as well as many other music events for activities .

- We have great trails and parks and amazing community events and volunteers

- We lack the policing needed to combat drinking on the river, or unmuffled boats on the lake

- We LOVE the SNOW here!!

- We need a good public art gallery ...example the gallery in Courtenay

- We need better transportation to and from Victoria.

- We need housing more then tourism.

- We need more beach access and campgrounds

- We need more parks

- We need more Pull Out Rest Stops. We need clearer signs for Tourist attractions, Emergency Hospital, RCMP etc. and.....Camping /RV spots upgraded.

- We need more tourism revenues, please promote the community.

- We need more tourist accommodation. Where I live there are no legal short term vacation rentals. We need good bylaws for short term rentals. Currently, there are no CVRD policies, and many residents 'hide' from ByLaw enforcement. This is not a realistic way to develop tourism for the Cowichan Valley, Please call me on 250 532 2100, I would be happy to provide more material for your research.

- We need more tours and places to stay

- We need our privacy

- We need progressive, sustainable, earth friendly, inclusive tourism product to be built.

- We need to be mindful about bringing in hordes of tourist such as what happens in Lake Cowichan every year. Tourism is fine, as long as it doesn't harm the environment and the community

- We need to move away from logging near towns if we ever want tourism to succeed. Clear cut logging is ugly and unsustainable in addition to robbing the wildlife of their natural habitat. Until we can see the value of mature forests that are accessible to the public I really doubt that lake Cowichan will ever be on the tourism map for anything other than water sports and drinking heavily.

- We need to support more Cowichan Tribes tourism initiatives. It would be good to have the cultural centre up and running again. We need more resort style accommodations.

- We want visitors but not mass tourism Like Mainland.

- Well managed tourism is great for the area. Purpose built accommodations and regulation will take care of the airbnb issue turning long term accoms into tourist accoms

- While I am in favor of tourism, I believe viewing tourism as an environmentally friendly industry is inaccurate as it is based on unnecessary travel and the spending of excess wealth for the sake of leisure.

- While I love the natural beauty of our region, I think that placement of new trails/parking lots/access to wild spaces must be done thoughtfully (also in conjunction with local Indigenous communities) to reduce impact on sensitive habitats and important cultural spaces.
 - Youbou has one of the least developed Tourism plans. I feel strongly that we should be developing a plan and get it marketed.
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Conclusions & Recommendations

Residents of the Cowichan Region have a strong sense of local and regional pride. They are generally supportive of tourism in their communities and the region. However, there are concerns in some communities about crowding, impacts on the natural environment and overuse of local resources. Tourism Cowichan and local community planners should monitor these perceptions and actual levels of crowding and impact to ensure that residents remain supportive of tourism.

Comments provided by residents illustrate the high level of importance that residents give to the natural environment of the Cowichan Region. Detractors were clearly concerned about the impacts of tourism on that landscape. Tourism Cowichan can use the comments as local testimonials about the Region and as an indication of what is important to locals.

Residents' sentiment is a vital component of successful tourism planning and management. It is recommended that Tourism Cowichan consider continuing to monitor how residents of the Cowichan Region experience tourism.

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