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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SOCIAL PLANNING COWICHAN RELEASES “IMPLICATIONS OF REGIONAL GROWTH: Part One”

Social Planning Cowichan has been researching and preparing recommendations related to quality of life for all citizens in Cowichan, given population growth patterns. “Implications of Regional Growth: Part One” documents the population growth, the increased number of Seniors and the impact on complex residential health care, including the quality of life in these settings.

Regional growth projections for Cowichan show a steady growth in the future. The 2006 BC Census data has Cowichan’s population at 76,940. By 2016 Regional growth population is predicted to be 88,137 up by 11,197 people from 2006. By 2036, the Regional population projection is 106,970 people living in Cowichan. The greatest increase in population is those 65 and over.

The number of Seniors aged 75+ living in the Cowichan Valley Regional District is approximately 6,914 according to population projections extrapolated from the 2006 BC Census data. Based on these numbers the increase for this age group will be over 30 percent by 2016. While the natural population increase is expected to slow in the Region as deaths outnumber births by a widening margin, the number of seniors 75+ will increase to 9,183 in the next 7 years. This represents 2,289 new 75+ Seniors in the Region during this period.

While many Seniors will continue to remain healthy and active into their 80’s, many will need some care. The rate typically used by health care planners for the complex residential care end of the spectrum for Seniors care is 95 to 100 beds per 1000 population aged 75+, according to the Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer. Based on this rate, the current need for beds in the Cowichan Region is approximately 85-119. By 2016, 918 beds will be needed to facilitate the needs of Seniors in the Region, an overall increase of 440 beds.

There are currently seven facilities in the Cowichan Region that offer services at the complex residential care end of the spectrum: one in Ladysmith (The Lodge on 4th), one in Chemainus (Chemainus Health Care), four in Duncan (Cerwydden, Cairnsmore Place, Sunridge Estates and Cowichan Lodge, and one in Shawnigan Lake (Acacia Ty Mawr). The combined total of residential beds for these facilities is 572. Out of the seven facilities four are run by for-profit organizations and three by non-profit organizations (Cowichan Lodge, Cairnsmore and Chemainus Healthcare).

The “Implications of Regional Growth: Part One” report can be read on the Social Planning Cowichan website: www.socialplanningcowichan.org.

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