Cowichan Valley
Basket Society
Food Bank & Lunch Kitchen

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

Presented at the AGM
October 27, 2026

Ensuring no individual or family in the Cowichan Valley goes hungry either physically, spiritually or emotionally.

Thank You to Everyone Who Makes Our Work Possible

AGENDA FOR THE Annual General Meeting of the Cowichan Valley Basket Society

October 27, 2026 – 6:00 PM

Good evening, everyone,

Before we begin, we want to take a moment to acknowledge that we are gathering on the traditional territory of the Cowichan Tribes, part of the Coast Salish peoples. We're grateful to live, work, and come together in service on these lands. As a community-focused organization, we recognize the deep and ongoing connection the Cowichan people have to this land, and we honour their stewardship, culture, and history. May this gathering reflect our shared commitment to respect, equity, and reconciliation.

Prayer

AGENDA

- Remembrance of Sally Burrows
- Approve Minutes for previous AGM
- Board Chair Report
- Executive Director's Report
- Consideration of unaudited 2025-2026 draft Financial Statement review:
  - **MOTION**: To approve the unaudited Financial Statements for the year ending August 31, 2026.
- **Motion** to make the following amendment to the society by-laws Part 4.1 (d)
  - From – "the approval of the annual budget for the next year"
  - To – "presentation of the Board approved annual budget for the next year"
- Seven-Month Budget presentation to members
  - **MOTION**: To accept the 2026-2027 Board Approved Seven-Month Budget
- Resolution for External Financial Review
  - **MOTION**: To appoint Palmer Leslie Chartered Professional Accountants to conduct a financial review prior to the next Annual General Meeting.
- Election of Directors:

Identification of Independent Directors:

- Greg Candy one-year term remaining
- Stephen Sjoberg one-year term remaining

Board member nominations – Independent Directors to be voted on at the AGM

- Alan Brakefield for a Two-year term
- Beryl Dickey for a Two-year term
- Heidi Paul for a one-year term (until next AGM)

Identification of Organizational Directors:

The following individuals have been appointed by sustaining organizations to serve on the CVBS Board of Directors. Three of our five appointed board members are currently filled. We are waiting appointments by St Edward's Parish and House of Friendship.

- Joyce Van de Graf — Duncan Christian Reformed Church
- Wendy Caywood — Duncan United Church
- Peter Reynolds — New Life Church

- Vacant — Hiiye'yu Lelum Society (House of Friendship)
- Vacant — St Edward's Parish

Cowichan Valley Basket Society
Annual General Meeting
Minutes

January 27 2026
In person at 5810 Garden Street

In Attendance: There were 13 members in attendance, including 6 Board members.

Call to Order: Alan declared **a** quorum and the meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m followed by a short prayer by Richard and a land acknowledgment by Greg. It was noted that Lori John had to be somewhere else at 7:00 pm and accommodate her presentation would be moved on the agenda from #4 to the start.

AGENDA MOTION: It was moved by Lee and seconded by Sally to approve the agenda as amended. **CARRIED.**

PREVIOUS MINUTES MOTION: It was moved by Peter and seconded by Sally to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2024, Annual General Meeting. **CARRIED.**

CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2024-2025: Lori John of Palmer Leslie Chartered Professional Accountants provided an overview of the review carried out and noted that nothing has come to their attention that the financial statements do not present fairly. Highlights presented included:

- Total liabilities and Net Assets totaled $1,414,584. Total assets were down to $188k due to more than $178k in building improvements.
- Revenue generated of $1,219,938 was considerably higher from 2024
- Investment and rental income were down due to rates being down and loss of tenant
- Salaries and wages were up due to increased staff costs
- Program costs were up $13k
- There was an overall loss of $152,159 with $36,808 in cash and cash equivalents

There was a query regarding the $500,000 donation that came in in 2025. It was noted that only $100k of this amount is showing this fiscal year, and the remaining $400,000 will show up on next year's report.

MOTION: It was moved by Greg and seconded by Richard to approve the Financial Statements for the year ending August 31, 2025. **CARRIED.**

MOTION: It was moved by Lee and seconded by Sally to allow the Board to appoint Palmer Leslie Chartered Professional Accountants to conduct a financial review prior to the next Annual General Meeting. **CARRIED.**

CHANGE TO FISCAL YEAR END: Alan presented moving our fiscal year end from August 31 to March 31 to have us align more closely with government agencies and to get us out of the December AGM cycle. To do so we would have to ask Revenue Cananda to allow us to change to March and then we then would have 2025-2026 - continue as we have historically. We would then have a partial year September 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027 and move forward from there with a March year end. It was noted there will be a little bit of extra work in 2027 to make this happen.

MOTION: It was moved by Stephen and seconded by Greg to approve a new fiscal year end of March 31, to take effect in 2027. **CARRIED.**

2025-2026 BUDGET APPROVAL: Henry presented the new budget for the coming year and reflected how demand for our services has continued to rise in the community, with last year seeing a 20% increase. He noted staff costs, food purchased for hampers and supplies for the lunch program continue to be the three largest expenses.

The new budget shows a $54k increase in staffing costs, which is in line with providing a cost-of-living increase. He noted efforts to continue to work hard at raising additional funds and grants, so that we can one day provide compensation closer to the living wage.

It was noted that the total for contract services was missing from the budget presented and these additional costs of $36k would need to be added to the proposed budget of $1,406,612 which would increase it to $1,442,612.

MOTION: It was moved by Beryl and seconded by Richard to approve the 2025-2026 Budget as amended to $1,442,612. **CARRIED.**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Alan provided an overview of the year and thanked the staff, volunteers, Board and Executive Director Henry for their ongoing efforts. Highlights included:

- It was a year of challenge with increased need but also increased impact as we saw our volunteer numbers rise to provide more than 9,000 hours of support.
- More than 54,500 meals were served and 7,000 hampers to more than 16,000 people
- We saw our largest donation to date with concerned citizen donating $500k

- The Board remained focused on strong governance, accountability and long-term sustainability and is working toward completion of Food Banks Canada Standard of Excellence by end of March.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT: Henry noted it was a phenomenal year and shared with great pride the many challenges and successes. Highlights included:

- Our hamper program rose significantly by 20% with more than 1,000 new hampers. This number continues to rise, and we expect January to be another record month
- More than $120k worth of food was distributed each month, up from $95k in 2024
- Food recovery efforts increased from 32k lbs per month to 50k. We saw an increase in our waste as well from 4% to 10%
- Community support has been incredible and so important to carrying out our mission. More than 1400 donors supported this past year.

THANK YOU TO RETIRING DIRECTORS: On behalf of the Board of Directors Alan presented a special plaque to retiring Directors Richard Currie, Lee Smith, Chris Waddell and Joe Sam (not present) for their long term of service to the Basket Society. The plaques will be featured on the CVBS Wall of Honour. Each of the men in attendance expressed gratitude for their time in service and noted it had been an honour to contribute to the organization.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS:

Identification of Independent Directors: The following individuals put their names forth to continue in their roles until the next AGM.

- Heidi Paul (one-year term remaining)
- Beryl Dickie (one-year term remaining)

Identification of Organizational Directors: The following individuals have been appointed by sustaining organizations to serve on the Board until the next AGM.

- Nancy Colton – Duncan United Church
- Warren Jennings – St. Edward's Parish
- Joyce Van de Graf- Duncan Christian Reformed Church

It was noted that new representatives from the Hiiye'yu Lelum Society (House of Friendship) and St Edward's Parish would be appointed in the near future.

Independent Board Member Nominations: The following individuals put their names forth to serve as Independent Directors for a two-year term.

- Alan Brakefield
- Greg Candy
- Stephen Sjoberg

MOTION: It was moved by Richard and seconded by Jean to appoint the slate of Independent Board Member nominations and to ratify the Organizational Directors. **CARRIED**

ADJOURNMENT: 7:43 pm

Message from the Board Chair

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the 2025–2026 Year-End Report for the Cowichan Valley Basket Society.

This has been another year of significant activity, continued growth, and strong community support. Food insecurity remains a serious challenge throughout the Cowichan Valley, as rising food and housing costs place increasing pressure on individuals, seniors, and families.

Through it all, CVBS has continued to be there for our community - providing food, meals, and support while treating everyone who comes through our doors with dignity and respect.

Serving Our Community

Throughout the year, our food bank and daily meal program continued to experience strong demand, with thousands of people receiving food hampers, meals, and other assistance.

Behind every number is a person - a senior trying to stretch a fixed income, a family struggling with rising costs, or someone simply going through a difficult time. Our goal is not only to provide food, but to provide it in a welcoming and compassionate environment.

We also continued to benefit from the improvements completed during Phase One of our building project. The expanded hamper shopping, packing, and food-handling areas have made our operations more efficient for both staff and volunteers.

Building for the Future

A major priority this year has been moving forward with Phase Two of our **Building for the Future** project - a new storage and food-sorting warehouse on Garden Street.

Considerable work has gone into planning, design, fundraising, and building community and government support for the project. Our fundraising dinner, silent auction, matching campaign, and the generosity of donors throughout our community have helped move us closer to our goal.

A significant milestone was reached in September with the submission of our **Development Permit application**, moving the project another important step toward construction.

We have also continued discussions with local government and other potential funding partners as we work toward securing the resources needed to make the new facility a reality.

There is still work ahead, but we have made significant progress toward creating the capacity CVBS will need to serve our community well into the future.

Governance and Stewardship

The Board remains committed to strong governance, accountability, and responsible financial stewardship. This year our work included financial oversight, policy review, supporting our Executive Director and staff, and the significant achievement of **accreditation under the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence**.

Achieving this accreditation reflects the hard work and commitment of our Board, management, staff, and volunteers. It is also an important recognition of CVBS's commitment to strong governance, sound operations, and providing high-quality service to our community.

The Board also developed a new **three-year Strategic Plan** to guide CVBS through the coming years. The plan establishes clear priorities for strengthening our organization, responding to the changing needs of our community, and ensuring CVBS remains sustainable and well positioned for the future.

I sincerely thank our Board members for the time, experience, and thoughtful leadership they bring to CVBS.

Gratitude

The accomplishments of CVBS belong to the many people who make this organization work every day.

I want to thank our Executive Director, **Henry Wikkerink**, for his continued leadership, and our staff for the compassion, flexibility, and professionalism they demonstrate each day. This year, our staff also came together to make a collective donation to our **Building for the Future** matching campaign - a meaningful demonstration of their personal commitment to the future of CVBS.

To our volunteers, thank you for the countless hours you contribute to preparing hampers, serving meals, sorting food, and supporting our operations.

And to our donors, sponsors, businesses, grocery stores, farms, community partners, municipalities, and everyone who has supported CVBS throughout the year - thank you. Your generosity and trust make our work possible.

As we look to the coming year, we will continue responding to the growing need for food assistance, putting our new Strategic Plan into action, maintaining the high standards reflected in our Food Banks Canada accreditation, and moving Phase Two of our building project forward.

There will undoubtedly be challenges ahead, but this past year has once again demonstrated what can be accomplished when a community comes together to care for its neighbours.

It continues to be an honour to serve as Board Chair of the Cowichan Valley Basket Society. On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for your continued trust, generosity, and support.

Together, we are not only meeting today's needs - we are **Building for the Future**, helping ensure that CVBS remains strong and able to serve our community with dignity for many years to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Brakefield
Board Chair
Cowichan Valley Basket Society

CVBS 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

(2026-2029)

Cowichan Valley Basket Society
Food Bank & Lunch Kitchen

Approved by the Board on June 30, 2026

OUR PURPOSE (Why we exist)

To assist our guests experiencing food insecurity.

OUR PROMISE (What we deliver)

To provide a safe, non-judgmental environment that encourages healthy relationships & overall well-being.

OUR VALUES (How we act)

- People First
- Stewardship
- Empowering Others
- Collaboration and Cooperation

OUR SERVICE AREA

Duncan/North Cowichan and the Cowichan Valley

WHO WE SERVE

The unhoused and residents experiencing food insecurity in the Cowichan Valley.

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS – COWICHAN VALLEY BASKET SOCIETY

STRENGTHS (What we do well)

- Strong, dedicated staff and volunteers
- Trusted community relationships
- Recognized leadership in the social sector
- Dignified, no-cost services with caring support
- Established, consistent programs

WEAKNESSES (Internal challenges)

- Limited space constraining capacity and efficiency
- Fundraising capacity limits growth
- Building space limits staff and volunteer capacity
- Limited pathways for guest give-back

OPPORTUNITIES (Where we can grow)

- Expand and enhance facilities on existing property
- Scale food recovery through partnerships
- Grow donor base and sponsorships
- Strengthen community collaboration

THREATS (External risks)

- Rising food insecurity and demand
- Economic pressures on donations and supply
- Funding uncertainty
- Demand outpacing capacity
- Staff and volunteer burnout

PRIMARY 3-YEAR GOAL

Over the next three years, CVBS will meet rising food insecurity in the Cowichan Valley by expanding access to healthy food, increasing capacity, improving facilities, and creating a welcoming place where people experience dignity, hope, and opportunities to give back.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – 3-YEAR PRIORITIES (2026–2029)

PROGRAMS

- Meet service demand
- Improve healthy food & protein
- Respond to growing community need
- Increase connection & peer roles

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- Improve recruitment and retention
- Support wellness & leadership
- Build guest leadership and support roles

FACILITIES

- Finish new storage building
- Improve storage, kitchen, and flow
- Plan future upgrades

FUNDING

- Raise building capital
- Grow donors, grants, sponsors
- Build reserves & stability
- Diversify revenue sources

1-YEAR PRIORITIES (2026–2027)

PROGRAMS

- Maintain hampers & meals
- Improve healthy food & protein
- Respond to rising demand
- Increase guest engagement

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- Strengthen coverage
- Improve recruitment and scheduling
- Support retention and wellness
- Launch peer roles

FACILITIES

- Secure funding and permits
- Advance storage building readiness
- Improve workflow and storage

FUNDING

- Complete building campaign
- Grow monthly donors
- Submit grants
- Increase sponsorships

MEASURES OF SUCCESS BY 2029

- More households and individuals served
- Increased food and protein distributed
- Funding secured for storage building
- New storage building completed
- Expanded capacity
- Strong team retention
- Growth in donor and grant revenue
- Increased guest engagement
- Positive guest experience

Executive Director's Report

Cowichan Valley Basket Society
September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026
AGM October 27, 2026

Another Year of Serving Our Community

As I look back over another year at the Cowichan Valley Basket Society (CVBS), I am thankful for what we have been able to accomplish together. It has been another busy year, with growing demand for our services, but also many reasons to be encouraged. Through the generosity of our community and the dedication of our staff and volunteers, we have continued to help individuals and families who are struggling to put food on the table. Our mission remains at the heart of this work: "Ensuring no individual or family in the Cowichan Valley goes hungry—physically, spiritually, or emotionally."

Despite the growing need, we have provided more food, helped more families, and strengthened our organization. In March 2026, we completed the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence. This involved considerable work by staff, our leadership team, and the Board to review and strengthen policies, procedures, governance, and operations. It was an important milestone in ensuring we continue to serve guests safely, respectfully, and responsibly.

Three-Year Strategic Plan

Another important accomplishment this year was updating our Three-Year Strategic Plan for 2026–2029, which the Board approved on June 30, 2026. The Board and I worked together to identify our priorities for the next three years, focusing on meeting the growing need for food assistance, supporting our staff and volunteers, improving our facilities, and ensuring financial sustainability. This plan will help guide our decisions as we continue to grow and serve our community.

Our Programs

Food Hampers

We distributed 8,687 food hampers, up from 7,556 the previous year—an increase of 15%. These assisted 3,781 unique individuals in 1,805 households. Of those receiving hampers, 28% were aged 18 and younger and 13% were aged 60 and older. These figures remind us how many working families, children, and seniors are struggling to afford food.

We continue to provide nutritious food, including produce, dairy, and protein, although donated meat and other protein remain in short supply. Food packed in hampers had an estimated value of nearly $1.3 million. This excludes the additional bread, fresh fruit, and vegetables available on our guest shelves, to which we have not assigned a value.

Christmas Gift Store

Our first Christmas Gift Store in December 2025 was a wonderful success. Thanks to generous donors and volunteers, more than 600 children received over 2,000 gifts, helping make Christmas a little brighter for families facing financial pressures.

Dining Room

We served 58,759 lunches, compared with 54,583 the previous year—an increase of 7.7%. Renovations included converting a former office into a sandwich and food preparation area, relocating the dining room entrance, and doubling the service kiosk so two volunteers can serve at once. These changes improved our ability to serve and address food safety. The dining room remains a place for food, friendship, and belonging, while our Sunday Sandwiches volunteers ensure food is available on Sundays and statutory holidays.

Guest Services and A Place to Be

Our Guest Services team offers a welcoming place where guests can be heard, encouraged, and connected with other supports. Along with Easy Carry hampers, clothing, and personal care items, we help people navigate services, including those of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. Often, having someone take time to listen makes a real difference.

Food Recovery

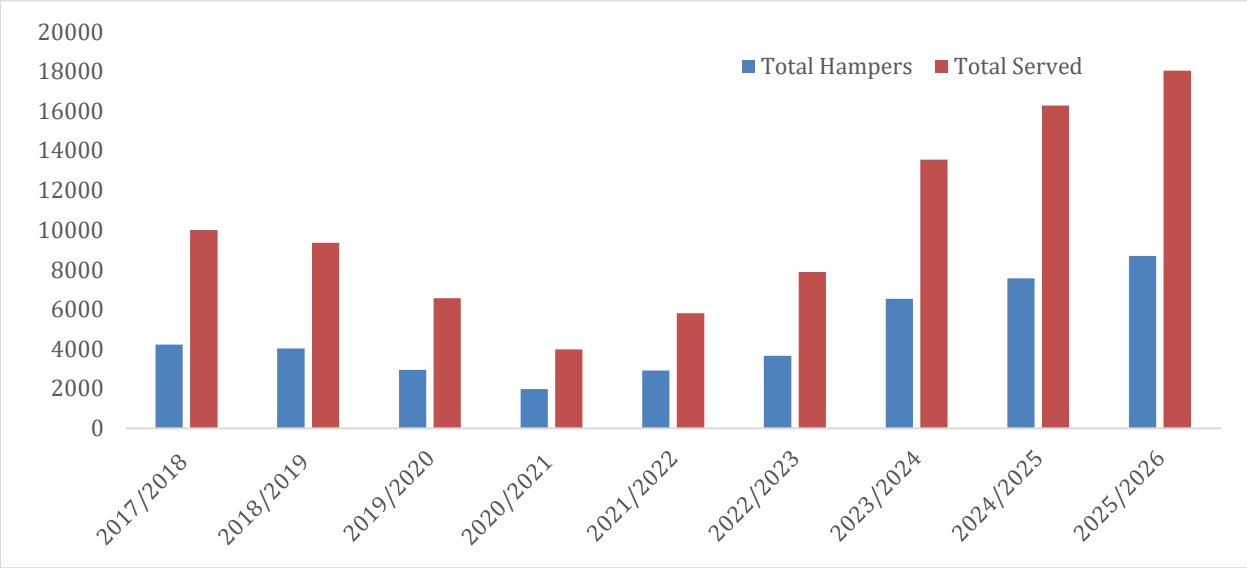
We recovered 742,544 pounds of food, valued at more than $2.5 million, compared with approximately 483,300 pounds the previous year. Thanks to local grocery stores and other businesses, approximately 90% of recovered food is redistributed through our hampers, dining room, and partner charities. This reduces waste and feeds people, but the increased volume places growing pressure on storage, vehicles, staff, and volunteers. Other community initiatives, including Toys, Toiletries, and Toques, also provide valued support to our guests.

Reflecting on Our Impact

Measure	2023/24	2024/25		2025/26	
Total Hampers Distributed	6,538	7,556	116%	8,687	115%
Total people served through hampers	13,548	16,270	120%	18,036	111%
Unique households	1,483	1,631	110%	1,805	111%
Unique hamper recipients	3,203	3,428	107%	3,781	110%
Estimated hamper food value	$970,184	$1,095,299	113%	$1,276,803	117%
Estimated food recovery value	$1,454,475	$1,862,246	128%	$2,696,086	145%
Lunches Served	55717	54583	98%	58759	108%
Volunteer hours	7463	7775	104%	11554	149%
Average Volunteer Hours Per Day	20	21	105%	32	152%

Our hamper distributions represented 18,036 individual instances of assistance, including repeat visits. The $1.27 million hamper-food value and $2.7 million recovered-food value should not be added together, because some recovered food is also distributed through hampers.

Growth in Food Hamper Assistance: 2017/18–2025/26



Building for the Future

Phase 1 was completed in August 2025, including a lobby joining our buildings, improvements to hamper distribution and guest flow, additional office space, dining room and kitchen upgrades, and a new 600-amp electrical service for future expansion.

Planning advanced significantly for **Phase 2:** a 4,900-square-foot warehouse and hamper distribution centre, estimated at

$1.225 million. Geotechnical testing is complete, and design and engineering work has continued. Today, we rely on shipping containers and basement areas for storage, requiring staff and volunteers to move food between locations. The new building will improve food handling, sorting, storage, and our ability to accept larger donations. It will also free up existing hamper space to expand A Place to Be.

Fundraising and Community Support

The generosity of individuals, businesses, foundations, churches, service clubs, and local grocers makes our work possible. By August 31, more than $600,000 had been raised toward redevelopment, with some already invested in Phase 1 and Phase 2 planning. At the same time, growing demand increases the costs of meals, hampers, staffing, and equipment. We must continue funding daily services while raising money for the new building.

Our Staff and Volunteers

To support growing programs, we established two coordinator positions focused on Food Hampers and Warehouse Operations, and Guest Services and Kitchen. We also welcomed new staff members, strengthening daily leadership and volunteer support.

When I look at the time our volunteers have given this past year, I am amazed. Approximately 150 volunteers contributed 11,554 hours in 2025–26, compared with 7,775 hours the year before—an increase of almost 49%. That works out to nearly 32 hours of volunteer service every day of the year, compared with about 21 previously. I see their dedication in so many parts of our work, and we could not accomplish what we do without them. At the same time, more volunteers also require staff time for scheduling, training, supervision, and coordination. Their generosity allows us to do far more, but it does not remove the need for adequate staffing.

Working Together in Our Community

Food insecurity is often connected to housing, health, and income challenges. We continue working with community organizations, service providers, and local government representatives to help guests access support and raise awareness of the growing need in the Cowichan Valley.

Developments Since Year-End

Since August 31, we began the development permit process with the Municipality of North Cowichan for the new warehouse. Technical requirements, including floodplain considerations, remain to be addressed. We hope to be ready for construction once permits and funding are in place.

At our Feeding Our Community Gala on September 23, we announced an anonymous donor’s offer to match new donations dollar for dollar, up to $250,000, through November 30, 2026. As of October 14, $157,587 had been donated or pledged. This is an encouraging opportunity, but it remains important that support for the building does not reduce donations for daily food programs.

Looking Ahead

Another change ahead is our fiscal year-end. CVBS is moving from a September 1–August 31 fiscal year to an April 1–March 31 fiscal year. To make this transition, our next fiscal year will be a shorter, seven-month period, from September 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027. This will bring our financial reporting and budgeting onto the new schedule.

The demand for food assistance shows little sign of slowing. Our priorities are to sustain the programs guests rely on, maintain adequate staffing and volunteer support, and move Building for the Future toward construction. Financial sustainability will remain central as more hampers, recovered food, and meals require more resources.

Buildings and programs are important, but the people who come through our doors are what matter most. I often think of guests who arrive uncertain about asking for help. My hope is that each person leaves with more than food—with the knowledge that they are welcome, that they have been treated with dignity, and that someone cares.

Thank You

When I look back over this past year, I am thankful for what we have accomplished together. We have provided more food, helped more families, strengthened our organization, and made significant progress toward building for the future. But what matters most is not the number of hampers we distribute or meals we serve. It is the people behind those numbers. I want to express my sincere appreciation to our Board of Directors for their continued leadership, encouragement, and support. To our staff and volunteers, thank you for everything you do to make CVBS a welcoming place.

To our donors and community partners, thank you for believing in our mission and providing the resources we need to carry it out. And to our guests, thank you for allowing us to be part of your lives. My hope is that every person who comes through our doors leaves knowing they have been treated with dignity, that someone cares about them, and that they are not alone. Together, we are making a difference.

Henry Wikkerink
Executive Director
Cowichan Valley Basket Society

Cowichan Valley Basket Society

Annual Financial Report and Budget

2025/2026 Fiscal Year | Annual General Meeting – October 27, 2026

Financial Overview

The financial statements provided for the 2025/2026 fiscal year are draft and unaudited and are being provided for information purposes only.

The Cowichan Valley Basket Society finished the 2025/2026 fiscal year in a positive financial position, despite the continued increase in demand for our services.

Total income for the year was $1,585,626, compared to a budget of $1,411,381. Total expenses were $1,507,630, resulting in an operating surplus of $77,996, compared to a budgeted surplus of $4,769.

We are thankful for the generosity of individuals, businesses, charities and community organizations whose financial support has allowed us to continue providing food and assistance to those experiencing food insecurity in the Cowichan Valley.

Income and Community Support

Donations continued to be our largest source of income. Individual donations reached $414,603, exceeding our budget by almost $95,000. Donations from charities totaled $358,635, approximately $129,000 above budget.

Our Stuff the Truck program also had another strong year, generating $407,481 in donations. These funds are shared with other community organizations involved in addressing food insecurity, including Nourish Cowichan, Hiiye'yu Lelum/House of Friendship, Chemainus Harvest House, Lake Cowichan Food Bank, Ladysmith Resource Centre Food Bank and Cowichan Green Community in support of its Seniors Meals on Wheels program.

This partnership allows us to work together to address food insecurity throughout the Cowichan Valley, ensuring that donations benefit more people across our communities.

While donations were stronger than anticipated, grant funding remained a challenge. Program grants brought in $16,359 against a budget of $125,000. While this was considerably below expectations, we continue to seek additional funding opportunities to support our programs. This reinforces the importance of maintaining strong relationships with our donors while continuing to seek additional funding opportunities.

Expenses and Program Costs

Total operating expenses were $1,507,630, approximately $101,000 above budget. Much of this increase was related to additional program activity and the distribution of funds through Stuff the Truck.

Payroll, our largest operating expense, totalled $610,849, slightly below budget. Our hamper program expenses were $220,499, approximately $53,500 below budget, while lunch program expenses were $62,094, slightly above budget.

Our Guest Services program expenses were $48,828, exceeding our budget by approximately $11,500. These expenses are supported by funding from the United Way, helping us provide additional assistance and support to guests without placing the same financial burden on our general operating funds.

As the demand for our services continues to grow, we remain committed to managing our resources carefully while ensuring our guests receive the support they need.

Building for the Future

During the year, we received $402,441 in donations designated for our Building for the Future project. Of this amount, $310,744 was deferred for future use, while $91,697 was recognized as income to offset building project expenses during the year. Most of these expenses will be capitalized once the financial statements are finalized.

These funds are separate from the donations needed to support our daily food programs.

We are grateful for the community's support of this important project, which will help us increase our food recovery, storage, sorting and hamper distribution capacity in the years ahead.

2026/2027 Budget and Fiscal Year Change

This year, the Society is changing its fiscal year-end from August 31 to March 31. This means our next fiscal year will be a seven-month transition period, from September 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027. Following this transition, our regular fiscal year will run from April 1 to March 31.

For this seven-month period, we have budgeted:

Description	2026/2027 Budget
Total Income	$1,166,777
Total Expenses	$1,012,981
Budgeted Surplus	$153,796

The budget reflects our continued commitment to providing food and support to our guests while maintaining a financially sustainable organization.

Budget Comparison and Staffing

Comparing our proposed seven-month budget to the previous 12-month budget is challenging. However, when adjusted to reflect a full year, the largest increase is in staffing costs.

Over the past two years, we have made changes to our staffing structure to better manage the growth of CVBS and prepare for the future. We now have separate

leadership for Food Hampers, Food Recovery and Warehouse operations, and Guest Services and the Kitchen, along with additional administrative support.

Our staffing has increased from 10.47 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in 2024/25 to 11.17 in 2025/26 and a budgeted 12.07 in 2026/27. This represents an increase of approximately 10% in annual wage costs. Most of the additional staffing has been in Food Recovery, Warehouse operations and administration.

I have carefully reviewed our staffing needs and opportunities to reduce costs. However, with the continued growth in food recovery, the number of people we serve and the programs we operate, reducing staffing would likely mean reducing services.

I believe our current staffing levels are necessary to maintain our programs while ensuring we do not place an unreasonable workload on our staff and volunteers.

Program Costs

When our proposed seven-month budget is adjusted to reflect a full year, program costs remain very similar to our 2025/26 budget.

We continue to work hard at purchasing food responsibly, looking for the best possible prices and making every donated dollar go as far as possible. Through careful purchasing, food recovery and the generosity of our community, we have been able to manage our program costs despite the growing number of people needing our services.

Our goal is to continue providing nutritious food to our guests while being responsible stewards of the funds entrusted to us. As demand continues to grow, we will need to balance the amount of food we can provide with the resources available, without compromising the quality of our programs.

Projected Surplus

The projected surplus of $153,796 is higher than we would normally budget for. This is largely due to the timing of donations, as a significant portion of our annual donations is received toward the end of the calendar year. With our shortened seven-month fiscal year ending March 31, these donations will be received during this period, while the funds will help support our programs and operations well into the following fiscal year.

This larger budgeted surplus does not mean we have more funds than we need, but rather reflects the timing of when donations are received and when those funds are used to support our guests.

Looking Ahead

Although we finished the year with a surplus, we recognize that the need for our services continues to grow. Food costs, operating expenses and the number of people seeking assistance all place increasing demands on our resources.

Our challenge is to balance these growing needs with the financial resources available to us. We will continue to look for ways to operate efficiently, strengthen our fundraising efforts and ensure that donations are used responsibly.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to our donors, volunteers, staff and Board of Directors. Their generosity, dedication and support make it possible for us to continue serving our community.

We are thankful to finish the year in a positive financial position, and we remain committed to ensuring that no individual or family in the Cowichan Valley goes hungry.

Henry Wikkerink
Executive Director
Cowichan Valley Basket Society

GL	Account	Unaudited Draft Income and Expense Sept. 1, 2025 to August 31 2026 actuals				Budget for Sept. 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027 *7 Month Transition Yearend change*	
		YTD Actual Draft	% of Total Revenue	YTD Budget	YTD Budget VS Actual	Budget	% of Total Revenue
	Income						
4010	DONATIONS - BUSINESS	63,100	4.0%	85,000	-21,900	58,000	5.0%
4013	DONATIONS - CHARITIES	358,635	22.6%	230,000	128,635	230,000	19.7%
4014	DONATIONS - GIFT CERTIFICATES	20,994	1.3%	30,000	-9,006	30,000	2.6%
4015	DONATIONS - GIFTS IN KIND	38,097	2.4%	30,000	8,097	30,000	2.6%
4016	DONATIONS - INDIVIDUAL	414,603	26.1%	320,000	94,603	300,000	25.7%
4018	DONATIONS - STUFF THE TRUCK	407,481	25.7%	325,500	81,981	350,000	30.0%
4022	DEFERRED REVENUE -GC	-29,344	-1.9%	29,000	-58,344	-40,000	-3.4%
4025	GRANTS PROGRAMS	16,359	1.0%	125,000	-108,641	45,000	3.9%
4026	RECEIVED CAPITAL GRANTS	9,281	0.6%	20,000	-10,719	16,000	1.4%
4030	INTEREST EARNED	1,006	0.1%	1,000	6	600	0.1%
4041	UNITED WAY	138,604	8.7%	136,160	2,444	79,427	6.8%
4042	COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER	10,670	0.7%	34,000	-23,330	20,000	1.7%
4043	CONTRACT SERVICES	37,987	2.4%	36,721	1,266	43,750	3.7%
4045	PROGRAM DONATIONS.	4,326	0.3%	9,000	-4,674	2,000	0.2%
4200	SUNDAY SANDWICH.	2,100	0.1%		2,100	2,000	0.2%
4600	Misc income	30	0.0%		30	0	0.0%
4900	DEVELOPMENT FUND.		0.0%			0	0.0%
4902	DEVELOPMENT FUND DONATIONS	402,441	25.4%		402,441	0	0.0%
4903	DEVELOPMENT FUND DEFERRED	-310,744	-19.6%		-310,744	0	0.0%
4900	Total DEVELOPMENT FUND.	91,697	5.8%	0	91,697	0	0.0%
	Total Income	**1,585,626**	**100.0%**	**1,411,381**	**174,245**	**1,166,777**	100.0%
	Expense						
5010	ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION	2,735	0.2%	4,000	-1,265	3,000	0.3%
5100	AUTO & TRAVEL	10,816	0.7%	9,280	1,536	6,500	0.6%
5300	BANK CHARGES AND INTEREST	11,181	0.7%	8,000	3,181	9,000	0.8%
5450	DISCRETIONARY EXPENSES	12	0.0%	2,000	-1,988	2,000	0.2%
5500	LICENCES, DUES & FEES	9,720	0.6%	9,500	220	6,500	0.6%
5611	BUILDING PROJECT	91,697	5.8%		91,697	0	0.0%
5600	OCCUPANCY COSTS	84,219	5.3%	91,700	-7,481	57,677	4.9%
5650	OFFICE EXPENSES	6,265	0.4%	6,500	-235	5,000	0.4%
5700	PAYROLL EXPENSE	610,849	38.5%	615,362	-4,513	411,704	35.3%
5750	PROFESSIONAL & CONSULTING	9,372	0.6%	14,500	-5,128	6,100	0.5%
5800	PROGRAMS		0.0%			0	0.0%
5810	CHRISTMAS DINNER	0	0.0%	200	-200	200	0.0%
5830	HAMPERS	220,499	13.9%	274,000	-53,501	158,500	13.6%
5850	LUNCH PROGRAM	62,094	3.9%	56,750	5,344	43,500	3.7%
5860	SUNDAY SANDWICHES	2,400	0.2%	3,000	-600	4,000	0.3%
5870	TTT CHRISTMAS EXP	4,541	0.3%	9,000	-4,459	4,000	0.3%
5880	STAFF & VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION	1,914	0.1%	3,000	-1,086	2,000	0.2%
5890	STUFF THE TRUCK-QUAL.CHARITIES	292,389	18.4%	232,500	59,889	250,000	21.4%
5891	GUEST PROGRAM	48,828	3.1%	37,320	11,508	13,300	1.1%
5800	Total PROGRAMS	632,666	39.9%	615,770	16,896	475,500	40.8%
5899	FUNDRAISING EVENT COSTS	0	0.0%		0	0	0.0%
5900	GIFT IN KIND EXP	38,097	2.4%	30,000	8,097	30,000	2.6%
	Total Expense	**1,507,630**	**95.1%**	**1,406,612**	**101,018**	**1,012,981**	86.8%
	Operating Surplus	**77,997**	**4.9%**	**4,769**	**73,228**	**153,796**	13.2%
	Other Income/Expense						
	Other Income						
6200	FOOD RECOVERY DONATIONS	**2,703,869**			**2,703,869**		