

**REPORT TO GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 04, 2023**

SUBJECT **Service Planning 2024 – Open Government Community Need Summary**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide strategic context and an overview of services, initiatives and performance data related to the Open Government Community Need.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board approved the 2023-2026 Board Priorities on March 8, 2023. Staff then developed the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan which was approved by the CRD Board on April 12, 2023.

The CRD Corporate Plan presents the work the organization needs to deliver over the four-year term, along with the critical regional, sub-regional and local services, to meet the region's most important needs (i.e., Community Needs) and advance the Board's Vision and Priorities. Board Priorities, Corporate Plan initiatives and core service delivery form the foundation of the five-year financial plan.

The 2024 planning cycle marks the first year of the implementation of the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan. The CRD's annual service plans, known as Community Need Summaries, provide an overview of the operational and strategic context, services levels, initiatives, and performance data for each Community Need. They also provide details of the initiatives, associated staffing, timing and service levels required to advance the work in future years.

The Open Government Community Need Summary is attached as Appendix A. The desired outcome is coordinated and collaborative governance, and leadership in organizational performance and service review.

The CRD reports on the progress of its initiatives and services on a regular basis. The Board receives updates about the Board Strategic Priorities through the Chief Administrative Officer Quarterly Progress Reports. The Board also receives an overview of progress made on delivering the Corporate Plan twice a year at the strategic check-in and provisional budget meetings, which take place in the spring and fall respectively. The next strategic check-in will take place in spring 2024. During the year, standing committees and commissions also fulfill an oversight and advisory role in relation to the work.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Governance Committee recommends the Committee of the Whole recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That Appendix A, Community Need Summary – Open Government be approved as presented and form the basis of the Provisional 2024-2028 Financial Plan.

Alternative 2

The Governance Committee recommends the Committee of the Whole recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That Appendix A, Community Need Summary – Open Government be approved as amended and form the basis of the Final 2024-2028 Financial Plan.

IMPLICATIONS

Governance Implications

In 2024, staff have prioritized programs and initiatives that:

- Advance 2023-2026 Board Priorities or Corporate Plan initiatives;
- Operationalize capital investments; and/or
- Are necessary to maintain a core service level following a regulatory change or where there is a safety risk to customers, communities, or staff.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has reviewed and assessed all business cases and confirmed alignment with the criteria. ELT has determined that the consolidated package of work is appropriate and a proportional response to the CRD Board's and communities' expectations of the organization.

Financial Implications

To exercise constraint and cost containment, the CRD Board directed staff to keep the core inflationary adjustment to 3.5% through the 2024 Service and Financial Planning Guidelines. Staff and management have taken the necessary steps to mitigate the financial impact of proposed initiatives as well as cost escalation and high inflation rate experienced in 2022 through to 2023.

Financial and staff impacts for initiatives will be summarized and included in the provisional budget which will be presented at the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for October 25, 2023. Starting this year, this will also include a five-year forecast of staffing level changes, which will be reviewed annually.

Service Delivery Implications

Appendix A includes information about existing service delivery, operational considerations and performance. Additional information has been provided below about the proposed changes for 2024.

Staff are proposing to advance four new initiatives for the Open Government Community Need that have financial implications for 2024, as shown in Table 1. The key drivers for the initiatives are:

1. advancing a Board or Corporate Plan Priority; and
2. adjustments to core service levels to meet regulatory obligations.

Table 1. Open Government Community Need Initiatives (2024)

Initiative	Implementation year(s)	Staff impacts (2024)	Incremental cost (2024)	Funding source
12a-1.1 Privacy & Information Senior Analyst	2024-ongoing	1 New Ongoing	\$115,000	Requisition
12b-1.1 Build EDI principles into Public Participation Framework	2024	-	\$25,000	Requisition
12b-2.1 Citizen Experience Survey	2024	-	\$53,000	Requisition
12b-4.1 Meeting Management Improvements	2024-2025	-	\$40,000	Requisition

The information in Table 1 reflects the business case costs which ELT reviewed as part of their annual assessment of initiatives. The financial impacts generally reflect full program costs, however, the staffing costs reflect a Q2 2024 implementation; the full staffing costs will be reflected in the 2025 budget.

12a-1.1 Privacy and Information Senior Analyst

The CRD must comply with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA). This means responding to Freedom of Information requests in a timely manner and developing comprehensive Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA) for new initiatives. The Privacy & Information Services Division supports the organization with this work, reinforcing the importance of privacy safe and FOIPPA compliant practices, as well as policy and program activities and adjustments in response to legislative changes.

Recent changes to the FOIPPA legislation are forecasted to significantly increased the scope of work for the Division, particularly related to PIAs. The Division is currently made up of one manager and one part-time analyst. As such, current staff capacity to respond to legislative changes is limited. The proposed FTE position will be a part-year implementation in 2024, with an anticipated start date in April.

Initiative 12a-1.1 seeks to create a new regular ongoing Privacy and Information Senior Analyst to support the annual increases to PIA work already impacting the Division, which are expected to compound due to the FOIPPA legislative changes.

12b-1.1 Build EDI principles into Public Participation Framework

The CRD Public Participation Framework guides current engagement practices. The framework was developed in 2014 and does not reflect the CRD Board and organizational commitments to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) principles and lessons learned in recent years.

The framework should be updated to include these principles and supported by a new toolkit to enable staff across the organization to effectively plan and deliver public engagement initiatives that are inclusive, gather feedback from a wider range of residents, address barriers to participation, and ultimately support more inclusive representation and decision making.

The Corporate Communications Division has held preliminary discussions with the Regional District of Nanaimo and confirmed they would be willing to share their policy and toolkit, which were developed in collaboration with the Cowichan Valley Regional District, Comox Valley Regional District and City of Courtenay in 2019. Staff will look for opportunities to collaborate with these organizations, where feasible.

Initiative 12b-1.1 seeks a one-time increase to the Corporate Communications core budget to hire a consultant to share their expertise in this emerging area, including advice on targeted outreach to groups or organizations that represent underrepresented communities.

12b-2.1 Citizen Experience Survey

A citizen survey is a tool that can increase transparency, improve accountability, build relationships with citizens, and contribute to informed decision making. A CRD wide resident satisfaction study has not been conducted for several years so currently there is a data gap and no baselines by which to create metric-based approaches to strategic communication planning. Recent insights from the Employee Engagement Survey point to a need to explore the sentiment towards the CRD in the region.

To address this gap, the Corporate Communications Division would like to conduct a Citizen Experience Survey in 2024. Initiative 12b-2.1 seeks a one-time increase to the Corporate Communications core budget to engage a research consultant to frame the survey questions, conduct the research, analyze the data, and develop baseline of data to inform service planning, communication strategy and outreach activities moving forward.

12b-4.1 Meeting Management Improvements

Meeting logistics play a crucial role in supporting active civic participation and engagement among diverse community members. As the regional population grows, so do community expectations and, more practically, the representation on the Board which is proportional to population.

To meet the demand from the community the Legislative Services Division would like to progress the following meeting logistics improvements:

- 1) Improvements to the audio-visual equipment in the Fisgard Street and Salt Spring Island Middle School boardrooms to improve the quality of broadcast,
- 2) Improvements to the functionality of the meeting management software used, including to add an automated voting dashboard and create an ability to scale up the technology for use by all local service committees and commissions, and
- 3) Redesign the Fisgard Street boardroom to provide additional seating to accommodate extra directors and additional First Nations representation.

Initiative 12b-4.1 seeks a one-time core budget increase to start preparing for these major changes. A more specific approach and implementation costs will be presented through the 2025 service planning cycle.

CONCLUSION

CRD staff are progressing initiatives identified in the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan, including the Board Priorities. The CRD Board and commissions with delegated authorities determine resourcing through the annual review and approval of the provisional financial plan. To support decision-making, staff provide recommendations on funding, timing and service levels through the service and financial planning processes.

RECOMMENDATION

The Governance Committee recommends the Committee of the Whole recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That Appendix A, Community Need Summary – Open Government be approved as presented and form the basis of the Provisional 2024-2028 Financial Plan.

Submitted by:	Andy Orr, Senior Manager, Corporate Communications
Concurrence:	Kristen Morley, J.D., General Manager, Corporate Services & Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Community Need Summary – Open Government