

**REPORT TO REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 2025**

SUBJECT **Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan – Public Engagement Summary**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To present a summary of the feedback received from engagement activities with the public and interested parties related to the 2025 Draft Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan and provide an update on next steps.

BACKGROUND

At the July 17, 2024 Regional Water Supply Commission (Commission) meeting, staff presented the draft 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan), along with the engagement plan. Feedback from the Commission was incorporated, and at the September 25, 2024 Commission meeting, the Commission endorsed the revised draft Strategic Plan and directed staff to proceed with a two phased engagement plan.

The first phase of engagement ran from August to September 2024 and focused on informing the public about the planning framework, understanding community priorities and asking for feedback on preferred ways to participate (in-person or virtual). At the November 20, 2024 Commission meeting, staff provided an update on Community Input (Phase 1) and indicated how the results would shape their approach to Community Feedback (Phase 2) and next steps.

The second phase of engagement ran from February 18, 2025 to March 31, 2025, during which time 452 survey responses were received. Overall, public responses to both phases of engagement indicate strong public support for the strategic plan commitments. Phase 2 also indicated strong public support for investments in: clean, safe and reliable water, adaptation to climate change, watershed management, and associated infrastructure investments. The public and municipal engagement activities and feedback is summarized in the Water We Heard Report (Appendix A).

In addition, on February 24, 2025, a municipal information and engagement session was held for regional engineers and Chief Administrative Officers.

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is also committed to engaging and involving First Nations in the development of the Strategic Plan. On March 4, 2025 the CRD sent letters to 14 First Nations whose traditional territory lies within the Regional Water Supply Area. The letter highlighted the CRD's intent to collaborate with First Nations on managing the water supply area and included a request to meet and provide feedback directly. Responses have been received from seven First Nations. A sample letter is attached (Appendix B).

Further discussions are required and are being scheduled with one First Nation. One First Nation has indicated they will be providing feedback, but staff have yet to receive their comments.

Next Steps

Public feedback from both phases of engagement along with the inputs from the First Nation consultation will be considered and incorporated in the final revisions of the 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan.

The final draft of the 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan will be presented to the Regional Water Supply Commission for review and approval later in 2025 and if approved, will be posted to the CRD website and Get Involved project page.

CONCLUSION

The Regional Water Supply Commission (Commission) endorsed the draft 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) and directed staff to proceed with the engagement plan in September 2024. The public engagement period has now ended, and feedback from the public and interested parties has been provided for the Commission's consideration. Once input from interested First Nations have been received, feedback will be incorporated in the final revisions of the 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan and brought back to the Commission for approval later in 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

Submitted by:	Alicia Fraser, P. Eng., General Manager, Infrastructure and Water Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A: What We Heard Report

Appendix B: Sample Letter - Request for Input