

REPORT TO GOVERNANCE AND FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026

SUBJECT CRD Reconciliation Action Plan

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide an update on work underway to develop a CRD Reconciliation Action Plan, to share draft components of the Plan, and to request Board direction on next steps.

BACKGROUND

Plans to develop a CRD Reconciliation Action Plan were brought forward as part of 2022 First Nations Relations Division service planning and then paused to focus first on strengthening government-to-government relationships with First Nations and to learn more about priorities and what actions the Nations would like the CRD to take to further reconciliation.

Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) and Protocol Agreements signed with First Nations in 2024 and 2025 commit the CRD to working collaboratively with First Nations to advance various priority topics across areas of mutual interest.

In 2025, the CRD retained a consultant to support the development of a five-year CRD Reconciliation Action Plan (the Plan). In September, staff reached out to all 19 First Nations with territory in the capital region, inviting input and engagement on the Plan through two phases. To date, based on response and interest by First Nations, meetings regarding the Plan have been held with 12 of the 19 First Nations. In this phase 1 engagement, First Nations were invited to provide feedback on key components of the Plan, guiding principles, their interest in sharing a First Nations profile, and any other high-level input prior to drafting. Phase 2 engagement will be for First Nations to review the draft action items and other Plan components.

In recognition that First Nations often express frustration in having to repeat themselves, staff have reviewed and incorporated previous feedback from First Nations to inform the first draft of the Plan. In particular, priority topics in MOUs and Protocol Agreements as well as feedback provided through numerous CRD initiatives, including Government-to-Government Relationship Building, Inclusive Governance, Indigenous Employment Scoping Project, Regional Parks Strategic Plan, Regional Parks Land Acquisition Strategy, Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan, and other planning and project-specific engagement related to transportation, climate action, affordable housing, community parks, environmental protection, cultural heritage conservation, recreation, and more.

Through the fall, the FNR division met with all CRD operational divisions, and with executive leadership. Each division was asked to review the priority topics raised through MOUs and other First Nations engagement and identify potential action items for inclusion in the draft Plan, including both ongoing and new initiatives. Initiatives were further refined through a lens of operational feasibility.

The draft content for the Plan, including draft guiding principles, goals and other components, is outlined in the attached presentation. The matrix of draft action items outlines for each initiative

which CRD divisions are lead and support, whether it is new or ongoing, the proposed timing, and whether it is currently funded (Appendix A).

The next step, pending Board direction, is phase 2 of First Nations engagement. Staff will share the draft components of the Plan including the draft action items with all 19 First Nations, to invite their review and feedback. Staff will then revise the Plan where possible, in collaboration with First Nations and executive leadership. The revised Plan will then be brought back to the Board for approval. Once the Plan is approved, action items requiring new resourcing will be brought to the Board for consideration as part of annual service planning.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Governance and First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the Board direct staff to share the draft Reconciliation Action Plan with First Nations for their review and input, and where possible, work with First Nations to incorporate their feedback; and,
2. That staff report back to the Board with the revised Plan for final approval.

Alternative 2

That this report be referred back to staff for additional information.

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

One of the key recommendations from the 2018 CRD First Nations Relations Task Force Final Report was for the Board to direct staff to draft a program of future concrete actions to support the CRD's commitment to reconciliation.

The 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan includes item 15a-3, to partner with First Nations to develop, monitor and report out on an organization-wide Reconciliation Action Plan. More generally, the Plan furthers the CRD's Statement of Reconciliation, and all Board and Corporate priorities related to strengthening relationships with First Nations. The Plan also furthers implementation of CRD commitments made to First Nations through government-to-government MOUs and Protocol Agreements.

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

Where CRD strategic plans include a focus on reconciliation, action items in the Plan reflect these existing commitments. For example, the Regional Parks Strategic Plan and the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan.

Financial Implications

Implementing the Reconciliation Action Plan will have financial implications across CRD service delivery, as CRD divisions collaborate with First Nations on a variety of initiatives. Some of the initiatives are already resourced and underway. Other initiatives are new but can be absorbed within existing operational budgets. Some new initiatives, or known future initiatives, will require additional resourcing. The matrix of draft action items (Appendix A) indicates whether each item can be fully or partially absorbed within existing financial plans, or not. In most cases, this

assessment represents whether CRD is resourced to support the work and does not reflect any capacity funding that may be offered to support First Nations involvement. Action items requiring new or additional funding will be brought forward by the lead divisions for Board consideration on a project-specific basis or as part of annual service planning.

First Nations Implications

The CRD Statement of Reconciliation, adopted in 2018, recognizes that commitment to reconciliation alone is not enough; that action is needed to show the CRD is taking measurable steps towards a better relationship with Indigenous peoples. This framing is frequently echoed by First Nations who call on the CRD to undertake tangible actions to demonstrate commitment to reconciliation and government-to-government relationships.

The 2023 CRD Indigenous Employment Project Final Report recommended developing an organization-wide reconciliation strategy as one step towards supporting Indigenous employment and culturally safe and supportive workplaces at the CRD. The 2024 CRD Government-to-Government Relationship Building Initiative Summary Report recommended moving forward with collaboratively developing a Reconciliation Action Plan and that it be guided by the themes and priorities heard through recent government-to-government discussions with First Nations. The report reflected feedback from First Nations that concrete actions that respond directly to the issues and interests raised by First Nations is essential to building lasting relationship.

By embedding reconciliation principles and initiatives across the organization, the Plan provides necessary guidance to operationalize Government-to-Government MOUs and Protocol Agreements, and to enable meaningful responses to First Nation priorities more broadly.

Priorities and key areas of focus outlined in this plan have been shaped and guided through past and ongoing engagement with First Nations staff and leadership, however, the draft actions are not exhaustive. Concerted efforts to grow and maintain respectful relationships with First Nations communities will need to continue, with a role for staff and leadership at all levels of the organization.

The Plan will outline the CRD's ongoing, upcoming and future initiatives to tangibly advance reconciliation over the next 5 years, while recognizing the need to leave space for emerging opportunities and to remain responsive to evolving relationships with First Nations, changing community priorities, and the CRD's organizational realities and financial constraints. Transparent annual reporting will provide an accountability mechanism.

CONCLUSION

A CRD Reconciliation Action Plan will help operationalize and deliver on Board priorities related to First Nations relations and CRD commitments in Government-to-Government MOUs and Protocol Agreements. Draft goals, action items and guiding principles for a Reconciliation Action Plan have been developed based on feedback and priorities of First Nations, with input from CRD operational divisions and executive leadership.

RECOMMENDATION

The Governance and First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the Board direct staff to share the draft Reconciliation Action Plan with First Nations for their review and input, and where possible, work with First Nations to incorporate their feedback; and
2. That staff report back to the Board with the revised Plan for final approval.

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Reconciliation Action Plan Draft Action Items
Presentation: CRD Reconciliation Action Plan