



Making a difference...together

REPORT TO REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION MEETING OF MAY 20, 2026

SUBJECT 2027 Service Delivery – Staffing Requirements

ISSUE SUMMARY

To report back on the 2027 service plans and projected staffing requirements for meeting the commitments outlined in the 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan.

BACKGROUND

At the April 8, 2026, Capital Regional District (CRD) Board meeting, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) informed the Board that staff had been directed to limit requests for staffing resources and other budget requests to initiatives that have been: a) explicitly directed to advance by the CRD Board to support Board priorities, new service establishment or major project delivery, or b) critical programs where deferral would result in significant service disruptions or negative impacts (e.g., legal, safety or risk impacts). This was to maintain a proactive focus on fiscal discipline and to pave the way for a period of transition in late 2026 when a new Board will set its priorities for the next term. It was also noted that programs and associated resources that have been prioritized and recommended by a Commission or Standing Committee could also be incorporated in the 2027 financial planning process for the Board's consideration.

As part of the annual service planning process, the CRD Board receives information in the fall about proposed new initiatives that have resource and staffing implications for the subsequent year and considers the provisional Five-Year Financial Plan.

At the December 17, 2025, Regional Water Supply Commission (Commission) meeting, the Commission approved the 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan). The Strategic Plan outlines 11 priorities and proposes short-, medium- and long-term actions to be implemented in the next five to eight years to advance the commitments identified. The actions span all aspects of service delivery, including operations and capital delivery, demand management, asset management, public engagement, First Nations engagement and watershed protection. Though many of these identified actions will be supported by existing resources, the full extent of the effort required goes beyond existing capacity in certain areas.

In preparation for 2027, Infrastructure & Water Services (IWS) staff have reviewed the potential impacts of system growth and aging infrastructure on service delivery, in combination with Strategic Priorities outlined in the 2025 Strategic Plan. This report outlines the staffing needs required to mitigate service level risks in 2027 while progressing the key strategic priorities related to the implementation of the 2022 Regional Water Supply Master Plan (Master Plan). The following sections outline proposed initiatives that have impacts on the Regional Water Supply budget. This includes 2.5 new positions (2.5 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)) proposed for 2027 which was highlighted as a forecast in last year's planning cycle. Staff are also forecasting an additional 5.5 FTE positions in 2028. Forecasted positions will be brought forward for consideration in a future planning cycle. Summaries of each initiative are included below and in Table 1.

Initiatives Planned for 2027

The following provides further details on the key programs that have staffing implications in 2027. The impact of deferring the staffing plans associated with these programs in 2026 is highlighted in the Service Delivery Implications section of this report.

2a-2.3 Master Plan Program: The Master Plan Program outlines the staffing requirements to advance the planning and implementation of 21 major projects recommended by the 2022 Master Plan. These projects are critical to improving the resiliency of the Regional Water Supply system and providing sufficient drinking water to support the growing region and climate change adaptation. In 2026, four new FTEs were approved to support the implementation and are listed below for information as a reminder:

2026 (4 FTEs)	Senior Manager (filled) (<i>Infrastructure Planning and Engineering</i>)
	Operations Supervisor (filled) (<i>Water Operations</i>)
	First Nations Liaison (recruitment underway) (<i>First Nations Relations, Corporate Services</i>)
	Paralegal (recruitment underway) (<i>Legal Services & Risk Management, Corporate Services</i>)

For 2027, an additional 1.0 FTE is proposed, while another 1.0 FTE is forecasted for 2028:

2027 (1 FTEs)	Project Engineer (<i>Infrastructure Planning and Engineering</i>) – Required to support the planning required for the Master Plan projects – i.e. Filtration Siting study, Environment Assessment, Archaeological Assessment, First Nations engagement.
2028 (1 FTEs)	Senior Project Manager (<i>Infrastructure Planning and Engineering</i>) – Required to lead growing program of projects related to the Master Plan.

2b-1.1 Dam Safety Program: The Dam Safety Program was started in 2024 to create a dedicated Dam Safety section within the Infrastructure Planning and Engineering division to manage dam safety risks proactively. The program will address the challenges of maintaining 23 water supply dams, ensuring compliance with the Dam Safety Regulation, and improving the resiliency of these critical assets. In order to address the growing list of dam-related deficiencies and undertake the ongoing operational activities, the CRD needs to continue to build the necessary in-house expertise and capacity. This capacity development is being proposed through additional staffing in 2028. Staffing adjustments were approved between 2024 and 2026 and the roles, which have been filled, are listed below as a reminder:

2024 (2 FTEs)	Manager, Dam Safety (<i>Infrastructure Planning and Engineering</i>)
	Team Lead (<i>Water Infrastructure Operations</i>)
2025 (3 FTEs)	Project Engineer – Dam Safety Regulatory Compliance (<i>Infrastructure Planning and Engineering</i>)
	Project Engineer - Dam Surveillance and Hydrology (<i>Infrastructure Planning and Engineering</i>)
	Dam Operator (<i>Water Infrastructure Operations</i>)
2026 (2 FTEs)	Project Engineer (<i>Corporate Capital Delivery Services</i>)
	Technologist Project Engineer (<i>Infrastructure Planning and Engineering</i>)

In last year's report to the Commission, staff indicated their intent to propose an additional 1.0 FTE Technologist position in 2027. In response to ongoing financial pressures facing CRD services, staff have elected to advance this position by reallocating one of the two Project Engineer positions approved for 2026 and deferring the recruitment of the Project Engineer role to 2028. Staff are confident that this adjustment can be accommodated without compromising progress towards full regulatory compliance.

2028 (1 FTE)	<i>Project Engineer Technologist</i> (<i>Infrastructure Planning and Engineering</i>)
---------------------	--

Ongoing management of CRD dams is critical to meeting the commitments outlined in the Strategic Plan, particularly the actions outlined in Commitment 3 “to provide efficient, effective and innovative operations of our water system infrastructure”.

11b-3.2 Staff and O&M Funding to Support Broadened Facilities Management Portfolio:

The CRD’s Facilities Management team, which is part of the Real Estate & Facilities Management division, is an in-house, full-service team responsible for the management, operation and maintenance of the CRD headquarters in downtown Victoria, as well as several other satellite buildings. The team ensures that facilities within the corporate portfolio are safely maintained, operate efficiently, and remain serviceable assets that support critical operations and occupant safety.

Starting in 2023, the Facilities Management team expanded its scope of service to provide increased building operations support at 17 water treatment facilities across the region. In 2025, the team also assumed full-service facility management responsibilities for the building at 479 Island Highway, which primarily houses Infrastructure & Water Services (IWS) operations. This facility presented significant challenges, as many building systems are at or near end of their effective service life and require enhanced maintenance support to remain functional. These service expansions were accommodated without additional staffing through workload redistribution.

Construction of IWS’ new 13,100 square-foot Field Operation Centre (FOC) is scheduled for completion in mid-2027, with system commissioning, development of maintenance manuals and schedules and other preparations for occupancy beginning in early 2027. This major capital project will support IWS’ field and technical operations for decades. To ensure this facility is properly managed and maintained, additional operating and maintenance funding will be required. Given the cumulative service increases, additional staffing is also needed to ensure Facilities Management can deliver services at a sustainable level.

This initiative proposes the creation of two new regular, ongoing positions (1.5 FTE) within Facilities Management. These roles will provide the essentials functions including office moves support, general facility clean-up, pest control and coordination of janitorial and other contracted services. They will also ensure that the building systems are maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications and warranty requirements, including the structure, building envelope, roofing, HVAC, elevator, electrical, grounds, and fire safety systems.

The initiative also proposes an incremental increase to the operating budget to support the ongoing operations and maintenances of the FOC. The proposed funding increase is based on industry-standard guidelines for managed-care performance levels and on the operating costs of similarly sized facilities within the existing portfolio.

If the initiative does not proceed, Facilities Management will be unable to provide adequate support to its growing portfolio of facilities. This could result in maintenance delays, deferred maintenance, reduced asset lifespan, invalidation of building and/or system warranties and increased emergency repairs and capital costs over the long term.

Initiatives Planned for Future Years (2028-2029)

In addition to the initiatives listed above that have staffing implications in 2027, the following six initiatives have staffing implications in 2028 or beyond:

2028 (4.5 FTE)	2a-5.2 Equipment/Watershed Operator (1 FTE, Watershed Protection)
	2a-5.3 Seasonal Watershed Protection (2.25 FTE, Watershed Protection)
	2b-2.7 Contract Support Service (0.25, FTE shared with other services)
	2b-2.5 Utility Operator (1 FTE, Water Operations)
2029 (1 FTE)	2a-5.4 Forest Management Plan Implementation (1 FTE, Watershed Protection)

Given the current operational context, priorities and fiscal pressures, the following phasing adjustments have been made since last year:

- The Equipment/Watershed Operator, Seasonal Watershed Protection and Contract Support Service positions have been deferred from 2027 to 2028
- The Forest Management Plan Implementation position has been deferred from 2028 to 2029

Descriptions for these initiatives have been included in Appendix A.

Projected Future Initiatives

This report summarizes the staffing requirements to achieve the commitments of the 2025 Strategic Plan, based on the information currently available. Within the 2025 Strategic Plan, there are longer-term initiatives that have not yet been fully scoped, and additional information will be required to determine if existing resources can be optimized to undertake these initiatives or if additional skills or resources will be required.

NEXT STEPS

The 2027 Service Planning process began in February 2026. Following Board approval of the 2027 Service and Financial Planning Guideline, staff evaluated initiatives with staffing implications and reviewed potential downstream service implications. These initiatives were phased over a three-year period (2027-2029) and costed, in alignment with the Commission's interest in understanding the implementation path for the 2025 Strategic Plan and 2022 Master Plan. The proposed initiatives were subsequently reviewed by both the IWS leadership and the Executive Leadership Team. If the Commission wishes to proceed with any initiatives requiring staffing in 2027, a motion should be recommended for consideration by the Board. The provisional budget will be presented to the Board in September 2026.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

The proposed staffing additions in support of the 2025 Strategic Plan reflect an estimated incremental cost increase of \$180,000 in 2027, based on approved initiative business cases. This cost represents only new FTEs proposed for 2027 and are apportioned between operating and capital budgets. Due to the upcoming general election, the provisional CRD budgets are required to be presented earlier than in a typical year. This has resulted in a compressed service and financial planning timeline. To make effective use of the time and organizational capacity available, projected initiatives for 2028 and 2029, including their funding requirements and associated staffing needs, have been documented for planning purposes but will not be included in the provisional budget for Regional Water Supply this year.

A high-level estimate of projected salaries and associated costs for 2027 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1:

Cost Distribution by IBC	2027
2026 IBC: 2a-2.3 Master Plan Program (1 FTE)	180,000
Total Cost Increase	\$ 180,000

These costs will be integrated into both capital and operating budgets. The operating portion represents a 0.2% increase in total ongoing operating expenditure compared to 2026. The capital portion amounts to approximately 0.2% of the 2026 capital budget. Funding will be sourced through a combination of water sales revenue and Municipal Finance Authority (MFA) debt financing, with the intent to support rate stability and long-term financial sustainability.

A breakdown of projected funding sources is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2:

Funding Breakdown	2027
Operating Budget (Water sales revenue)	36,000
Capital Budget (Water sales revenue & debt)	144,000
Total Funding	\$ 180,000

In addition to the costs above, the RWSC would also support \$177,000 in additional labour allocation to support Facilities Services expanded facilities management portfolio and \$120,000 in other operating costs related to utilities, equipment and contracted services so support the new Field Operations Center. The labour costs will be charged to Regional Water based on a fee-for-service model.

Environmental & Climate Action

Advancing the actions identified in the 2025 Strategic Plan, which include moving forward with the implementation of the 2022 Master Plan, directly supports the CRD’s Climate Action Strategy by embedding climate resilience and environmental stewardship into the long-term planning and operation of the region’s water system. The 2025 Strategic Plan emphasizes the need to protect and adapt the watershed and critical water infrastructure in response to increasing climate variability, including more extreme weather events, prolonged droughts, and wildfire risks. By

prioritizing risk-based infrastructure investment, these plans align with and operationalize the CRD's broader climate mitigation and adaptation goals.

Key projects, such as the addition of water filtration and a second deep intake in the Sooke Lake Reservoir, are proactive climate adaptation measures. Filtration will strengthen the system's ability to maintain water quality in the face of increased turbidity events tied to severe storms, wildfire runoff, and ecological shifts, events that are projected to become more frequent and severe with climate change. Similarly, a second deep intake improves system redundancy and operational flexibility, enabling a more stable supply under changing seasonal patterns and potential water quality disruptions. Together, these investments are not just technical upgrades—they are foundational climate adaptation tools that reinforce the CRD's commitment to delivering safe, reliable drinking water in an increasingly uncertain environmental future.

First Nations Reconciliation

The 2025 Strategic Plan directly supports the CRD Board's 2023–2026 Priority of “strong relationships with First Nations based on trust and mutual respect, partnerships, and working together on shared goals” by advancing tangible, ongoing actions that build stronger relationships with First Nations and reflect the region's commitment to shared stewardship. The Plan recognizes that the lands and waters within the Regional Water Supply Area lie within the traditional territories of numerous First Nations, and commits to working collaboratively with them to protect, manage and access these critical areas. This approach is in alignment with the Board's objective to “foster strong relationships with First Nations” and to “invite, respect and incorporate Indigenous leadership and traditional knowledge to enhance initiatives and strategies”.

Service Delivery Implications

The service delivery implications of deferring the implementation of the 2027 initiatives are outlined below.

2a-2.3 Master Plan Program: The infrastructure investments outlined in the 2022 Master Plan ensure IWS continues to meet the commitments made in the 2025 Strategic Plan while adapting to the needs of the growing population, climate adaptation and improved seismic resiliency. If the Project Engineer position does not proceed, this will ultimately impact the planning efforts required to move forward with the implementation of the 2022 Master Plan and will delay realizing the goal of improving the overall resiliency of the Regional Water Supply system.

The following planning projects would be impacted by a removal or deferral of the position:

1. Filtration Plant Planning and Preliminary Design – includes initial studies such as:
 - Project definition study outlining the project's purpose, scope and objectives, including integration with other system components and review of current and future technologies.
2. Deep Northern Intake and Sooke Lake Pump Station Planning and Conceptual Design – includes initial studies such as:
 - Project definition study outlining the project's purpose, scope and objectives, including integration with other system components and review of current and future technologies (including floating intake versus fixed, tunneled versus overland etc.).

CONCLUSION

This report outlines the five-year staffing requirements needed to support the implementation of the 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan and provides information on the potential implications of deferring these staffing additions. The proposed positions address anticipated gaps in capacity related to project planning and delivery, dam safety and operations support.

Delaying or removing the addition of the 2.5 Full-Time Equivalents proposed for 2027 may impact timelines for initiating major capital projects identified in the 2022 Regional Water Supply Master Plan. These implications have been identified based on current service needs, resourcing levels and the projected scope of work.

This phased staffing plan is intended to align with strategic priorities and provide the internal capacity needed to support ongoing service delivery, infrastructure planning and regulatory compliance over the next five years.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Submitted by:	Alicia Fraser, P. Eng., General Manager, Infrastructure and Water Services
Concurrence:	Nelson Chan, MBA, FCPA, FCMA, Chief Financial Officer & General Manager, Finance & Technology
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A: Summary of Initiatives Planned for Future Years