



**REPORT TO CORE AREA LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2023**

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**SUBJECT**     **Service Planning 2024 – Wastewater Community Need Summary**

**ISSUE SUMMARY**

To provide strategic context and an overview of services, initiatives and performance data related to the Wastewater 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 Wastewater Community Need Summary is attached as Appendix A. The desired outcome is efficient and effective management of the region's wastewater.

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 Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee recommends the Committee of the Whole recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

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

*Alternative 2*

The Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee recommends the Committee of the Whole recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That Appendix A, Community Need Summary – Wastewater, 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 Boards' 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.

The 2024 operating costs include non-negotiable collective agreement increases from 2023 coupled with chemical and carbon media cost escalations and additional landfill tipping fees for biosolids delaying the receipt of tipping fee revenue contributed to the 2024 core operating cost increase exceeding the 3.5% threshold.

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.

A separate supplemental service budget report will be submitted to the Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee.

*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 Wastewater 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;
2. operationalizing capital investments; and
3. adjustments to core service levels to maintain safety.

Table 1. Wastewater Community Need Initiatives (2024)

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Implementation year(s)</b>	<b>Staff impacts (2024)</b>	<b>Incremental cost (2024)</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
1a-1.1 Lab Technician (Core Area)	2024-2026	1 Term Extended	\$111,000	Requisition
1a-2.1 Environmental Monitoring Program – Environmental Technician Odour	2024-2026	1 Term Extended	\$111,000	Requisition
1a-2.2 Facilities Maintenance Worker	2024-ongoing	1 Term Converted	\$106,000	Other
1b-4.1 Biosolids Coordinator	2024-2027	1 Term Extended	\$111,000	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 reflect full program costs, including cost of staffing.

**1a-1.1 Lab Technician Core Area**

Lab Services are an essential component of wastewater service delivery and help ensure fewer contaminants enter the marine ecosystem. Since the CRD began operating the McLoughlin Wastewater Treatment Plant, Lab Services has relied on a term-based Laboratory Technician 2 position to fulfill ongoing operational requirements identified by Integrated Water Services. This position will expire in December 2023.

Initiative 1a-1.1 seeks to extend the term position for three years to ensure service levels are maintained to support the wastewater service going forward. This position is in the Environmental Services division.

**1a-2.1 Environmental Monitoring Program - Environmental Technician Odour**

Environmental monitoring is required by provincial regulators for all seven of the CRD’s wastewater treatment plants. The CRD has relied on a term-based environmental and wastewater sampling technician position since the implementation of the federal wastewater regulations in 2012. It was envisioned that the role would be reviewed once the McLoughlin Point Wastewater Treatment Plant was operational, and the ongoing wastewater sampling and odour support needs were determined. The position is expiring in December 2023.

The complexity and scope of monitoring requirements has increased with the commissioning of the new McLoughlin Point Wastewater Treatment Plant. In response, initiative 1a-2.1 seeks to extend the term position for three years to maintain service delivery and continuity of sampling and odour complaint response support to Integrated Water Services, and other internal divisions. This position is in the Environmental Services division.

**1a-2.2 Facilities Maintenance Worker 4**

Facilities Management (FM) continues to grow as the CRD centralizes maintenance and operations roles throughout the organization. In 2023, FM took on the responsibility of maintaining the buildings (pump stations) for the core area conveyance line to allow Integrated Water Services staff to concentrate on the systems. This transfer was phased over two years and a term position was recruited to provide temporary support to FM. The division is now expanding into other wastewater sites on a fee-for-service basis. It also provides project management services for a variety of projects cross-organization, from new building construction to interior renovations.

Initiative 1a-2.2 seeks to convert the term position to regular ongoing to ensure the Facilities Management & Engineering Services division can deliver the maintenance plan moving forward.

**1b-4.1 Biosolids Coordinator**

The management of biosolids is an integral component of the new core area wastewater system. Day-to-day coordination of core area biosolids has been more challenging than anticipated and is only expected to become more complex as short-term management options are implemented and operationalized, and as staff develop the long-term planning and ongoing management plan. The current auxiliary position expires in March 2024.

Initiative 1b-4.1 seeks to extend the term position for three years to ensure continuity of service to Integrated Water Services and its need to manage core area biosolids and optimize its distribution for beneficial reuse. This position is in the Environmental Services division.

**CONCLUSION**

Capital Regional District (CRD) staff are progressing initiatives identified in the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan, including the CRD 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 Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee recommends the Committee of the Whole recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

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

Submitted by:	Alicia Fraser, P. Eng., General Manager, Integrated Water Services
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P. Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT**

Appendix A: Community Need Summary – Wastewater