

## Appendix E: Public Feedback

### BACKGROUND

On April 30, 2025, the CRD Board (Board) directed staff to report back with specific recommendations on “[providing] options for service level feedback from the public (where services are public facing) to inform Board service level discussions”.

Public participation occurs when an organization proactively seeks input from individuals or groups outside of itself to inform decision-making or problem-solving. Typically, those engaged are the people most likely to be affected by the matter under consideration. This process helps strengthen trust and confidence in decisions while promoting transparency and accountability. More than simply sharing information and collecting feedback, it reflects a genuine commitment to listening and being influenced, within clearly defined boundaries.

In British Columbia, the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* outline the minimum requirements for when local governments must engage. These are generally considered baseline expectations and are often exceeded to ensure meaningful and inclusive participation.

Since 2014, the CRD Public Participation Framework has guided how the organization engages with regional communities and residents on strategic and operational matters. The framework outlines a spectrum of engagement, from informing and educating, to gathering information, holding discussions, engaging, and partnering. The framework seeks to empower staff to meaningfully align project scope, engagement process and CRD’s governance structure.

To support modern engagement practices, in 2021, the CRD created an administrative policy and procedures for staff and invested in the Get Involved online platform. This consistent digital channel helps participants easily recognize CRD-led initiatives and foster ongoing relationships with the community. Staff regularly use this platform and other tools, such as virtual information sessions, surveys and open houses, to gather public input on service delivery, particularly when updating strategic plans or master plans, or when proposing new services and programs. Recent examples are provided in Table 1 on page 3 of this Appendix.

In addition to these point-in-time engagement initiatives, the CRD regularly receives feedback through commissions, intergovernmental working groups, community and industry organizations, and other advisory groups. Staff also, on occasion, collect participant satisfaction data from program users (e.g. recreation programs) to help refine the program design and improve service outcomes.

In alignment with the CRD Accessibility Plan, a dedicated email ([accessibility@crd.bc.ca](mailto:accessibility@crd.bc.ca)) and online form have also been created for the public and staff to provide feedback about accessibility. This includes reporting any barriers to accessibility and inclusion encountered when accessing CRD services or facilities.

## PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

At the start of its term, the CRD Board reaffirmed its commitment to climate action, reconciliation with First Nations, and equity, diversity and inclusion. In alignment with these priorities, staff committed to enhancing public participation and engagement practices and frameworks to foster trust and understanding, guided by resident input and equity, diversity and inclusion principles (initiative 11b-1 in the CRD 2023-2026 Corporate Plan).

Since 2024, staff have been advancing this initiative, with a focus on developing a new engagement policy supported by an updated framework and toolkit. The approach is inspired by the work done previously by regional districts on Vancouver Island (Nanaimo, Comox Valley, Cowichan Valley) and aims to foster engagement that is more inclusive, equitable, and reflective of the region's diversity. It also maintains a strong emphasis on engagement that is impactful, relevant, timely, reliable, coordinated and evaluated. Staff will present the revised policy to the CRD Board for consideration in Q2 2026. This policy will be supported by a revised framework and toolkit for staff that will outline best practices and provide detailed guidance for planning, implementing and evaluating effective and meaningful public engagement.

To complement service-specific engagement efforts, the CRD Board also approved a regional resident experience survey in 2024. The last such survey was conducted in 2008-2009. The 2024 survey established a baseline understanding of residents' perceptions of the CRD, including awareness, trust and reputation. It also provided insights into how best to engage with residents and supported a metrics-based approach to strategic communications planning, transparency, accountability and relationships-building. The survey used a two-pronged approach: an online questionnaire and supplementary focus group-style interviews, with a particular emphasis on electoral areas. Staff reported the survey results in April 2025 and have since begun work on several initiatives to address opportunities identified. Relevant data collected through the survey has been incorporated in the new public engagement framework, including engagement preferences and common barriers to participation.

## IMPLICATIONS

### *Service Delivery Implications*

Work underway since 2024 aims to enhance internal practices related to public participation without adding additional staffing. For this reason, the framework and toolkit are being designed for use by staff across program areas to support consistent application of principles of public engagement, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Leveraging the current strategic planning and master planning processes to collect further public input related to service levels prevents duplication of effort in understanding the value of each service to residents.

### *Financial Implications*

Initiative 11b-1 was approved by the Board and initiated in 2024. It was scoped to require no incremental increase in corporate resources. Resources are instead determined on a project-by-project basis and staff will report back on activities, emerging trends and resource consideration as part of the ongoing service planning process.

## RECOMMENDATION

As practices are well-established and the strategic direction for improvements is set, no additional policy direction from the CRD Board is required at this time. An updated public engagement policy will be brought forward in Q2 2026 for further review by the Board.

*Table 1. Non-exhaustive list of recent public engagement and elector approval processes for new services by Community Need*

### Advocacy

- See [Advocacy Strategy | Capital Regional District](#)

### Arts & Recreation

- Vancouver Island Regional Library Service Establishment and Borrowing Alternative Approval Process (AAP) (2019)
- Get involved: Panorama Recreation Strategic Planning (2021)
- Get involved: Developing the CRD Arts & Culture Strategic Plan (2023)
- Get involved: Arts Champions Summit: Growing Together (2023)
- Get involved: SEAPARC Recreation Strategic Plan (2024)
- Get involved: Sooke Skate Park Concept Design (2024)
- Get involved: Saanich Peninsula Recreation Facility Needs Assessment (2024-2025)
- Ongoing feedback forms and more detailed customer feedback for recreation programs

**Business Systems & Processes** – this community need only includes internal-facing services (e.g. Financial Services, Information Technology).

### Climate Action (including Wildlife Management)

- Canada Goose Management Service/AAP (2023)
- Biodiversity & Environmental Stewardship Coordination Service Establishment Process/AAP (2023)
- Regional Goose Management Service Establishment Process/AAP (2023)
- Get involved: Bowker Creek Blueprint Update (2025)
- Ongoing collaboration with advisory groups including the Intermunicipal Working Group (with staff from all the municipalities, Electoral Areas and Islands Trust) and Intermunicipal Task Force (with elected officials)

**First Nations** – Engagement with First Nations is distinct from public engagement and therefore not included in this summary. Ongoing regular leadership-level and staff-level engagement and meetings are held with all First Nations on a wide range of topics.

## **Housing & Health**

- Get involved: CRD Rural Housing Program (RHP) (2024)
- RHP community engagement with property owners (2024)
- RHP Southern Gulf Islands meeting (September 2024)
- Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission RHP Workshop (May 2024)
- Project specific community engagement (e.g. Oak Bay Lodge in 2021)
- Greater Victoria Point-in-Time Count (Biennial)
- Ongoing feedback received through the Tenant Advisory Committee
- For health, collaboration and partnerships with health service providers, academics and Island Health. Note that Island Health is responsible for health service delivery and identifying community needs.

## **Local Government (electoral area specific)**

- Centennial Park Salt Spring Island Master Plan (2016)
- Establishment of a Community Safety Service on Salt Spring Island AAP (2019)
- Magic Lake Estates Wastewater System Referendum (2019, following public consultation)
- Ganges Wastewater Borrowing Referendum (2019)
- Pender Island Health Care Centre Referendum (2021)
- Get involved: Rainbow Recreation Centre Master Plan (2021-2022)
- Get involved: Southern Gulf Islands Transportation Integration (2022)
- Get involved: Juan de Fuca Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan (2022)
- Southern Gulf Islands Transportation Referendum (2022)
- Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission Referendum (2022)
- Get involved: Salt Spring Island Active Transportation Network (2022-2023)
- Get involved: Magic Lake Estates Community Issues Survey (2023)
- Get involved: Portlock Park Master Plan (2023-2024)
- Get involved: Mount Maxwell Community Park Management Plan (2024)
- Get involved: Port Renfrew Official Community Plan Update (2024-2025)
- Get involved: Juan de Fuca Active Transportation Network Plan (2024-2025)
- Salt Spring Island LCC Strategic Plan (2024)
- Get involved: Mayne Island Parks & Recreation Commission Master Plan (2025)
- Get involved: Galiano Parks & Recreation Commission Master Plan (2025)
- Get involved: Ganges Crosswalk Analysis (2025)
- Ongoing feedback received through the Local Service Area Commissions/Societies

## **Open Government**

- Get involved: Financial Plan (survey conducted annually)
- Get involved: Regional Resident Survey (2024)

## **People**

- CRD Employee Experience Survey (2023, survey conducted biennially)

## **Planning**

- Regional Growth Strategy (public input ahead of update in 2018)

- Foodlands Access Service Establishment Process/AAP (2025)

### **Regional Parks**

- Get involved: Mount Work Regional Park Management Plan (2022)
- Get involved: Regional Parks Strategic Plan Update (2022-2023)
- Regional Parks and Trails Household Survey (2024, survey conducted periodically)

### **Safety & Emergency Management**

- Regional Emergency Management Partnership (REMP) Measuring Regional Public Preparedness Survey (2018)
- REMP Regional Extreme Heat Initiatives - survey of local emergency programs (2021)

### **Solid Waste & Recycling**

- Solid Waste Management Plan (2021)
- Solid Waste Market Research & Engagement Study (2024)
- Hartland Landfill hours feedback (2024-2025)

### **Transportation**

- Regional Transportation Service Establishment Process/AAP (2025)
- Origin Destination Travel Survey (2022, survey conducted periodically)
- Various regular data transportation mode data collections (Ongoing)

### **Wastewater**

- Get involved: Liquid Waste Management Plan Amendment (2024-2025)
- Get involved: Long-Term Biosolids Long Term Management Strategy (2024)

### **Water**

- Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan (2016-2017)
- Get involved: Regional Water Supply Master Plan (2022)
- Get involved: Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan (2025)
- Get involved: Proposed Regional Water Supply Development Cost Charge Program (2024)
- Get involved: Juan de Fuca Development Cost Charge Program Update (2024-2025)