

Capital Regional District

Meeting Minutes

Climate Action Inter-Municipal Task Force (IMTF)

Friday, September 12, 2025

9:30 AM

Room 488/MS Teams

Present: Councillor M. Gardiner (Victoria), Councillor D. Grove (Colwood), Councillor M. Wagner (Langford)

Electronic Participation: Councillor A. Baird (Highlands), Councillor M. Brame (Esquimalt), Director G. Holman (SSI EA), Councillor A. Mackenzie (View Royal), Councillor T. St-Pierre (Sooke)

Staff: M. Carolsfeld (Climate Action Coordinator), M. Greeno (Community Energy Specialist), S. Titmuss (Climate Action Communications Officer, Recorder)

Guests: R. Hawker (Introba), L. Westerhoff (Westerhoff Climate Strategies)

Regrets: Councillor A. Appleton (Oak Bay), Director P. Brent (SGI EA), Councillor J. Brownoff (Saanich), Councillor S. Duck (Sidney), Councillor S. Gray (Metchosin), Mayor P. Jones (North Saanich), Councillor S. Riddell (Central Saanich), Director A. Wickheim (JDF EA)

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am.

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Territorial Acknowledgement

- M. Greeno provided a Territorial Acknowledgment.

3. Approval of Agenda

- Agenda for [September 12, 2025](#) Climate Action Inter-Municipal Task Force meeting.

4. Adoption of Minutes

- Minutes from the [June 27, 2025](#) Climate Action Inter-Municipal Task Force meeting.

5. Municipal Roundtable

- Attendees provided brief updates regarding current projects and areas of interest in their respective municipalities and electoral areas. Discussion related to climate action plans, OCPs, urban lot edible landscaping, parking requirements, staffing updates, efficient service vehicles, EV charger installations, and natural asset management.

6. Climate Action Strategy Refresh Overview (Minutes provided by Introba)

- M. Carolsfeld gave a presentation of work done so far to refresh the climate action strategy that will cover the years 2026-2030. A timeline of the process was also given. L. Westerhoff then presented on the CAS draft strategies.

The following are minutes provided by Introba:

CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY REVISION – Intermunicipal Task Force Meeting

Date: September 12, 2025

Time: 1.5 hours

Location: Hybrid (Victoria, Teams)

Attendance:

CRD: Matt Greeno (MG – CRD), Maia Carolsfield (MC – CRD), Samantha Titmuss (ST – CRD)

Introba: Robin Hawker (RH – Introba)

WCS: Lisa Westerhoff (LW – WCS)

IMTF: Councillor Marg Gardiner (MG – Victoria), Councillor Mary Wagner (MW – Langford), Councillor David Grove (DG – Colwood), Councillor Meagan Brame (MB – Esquimalt), Councillor Alison MacKenzie (AM – View Royal), Councillor Tony St. Pierre (TSP – Sooke), Councillor Ann Baird (AB – Highlands), Councillor Gary Holman (GH – Salt Spring Island)

Objectives

- Hear about what's happening in communities in the region
- Share a summary of the CAS update purpose, process and draft outcomes
- Gather feedback on the draft strategies, critical gaps or risks, and alignment

2 General Comments & Questions

- (MG – Victoria): Do we have a copy of the proposed revisions to the vision, goals, and principles?
 - (MG – CRD): These haven't yet been finalized and will be brought to the Board for final approval in Fall 2025.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Is there an opportunity for the Environmental Services Committee to review the revised CAS earlier, rather than current proposal in Q2 2026?
 - (MG – CRD): The idea was to get direction on the core components first (e.g. goals, targets, principles, vision). We won't be able to do much more work on the CAS until the Board approves those core components.
- (MW – Langford): I understood that the Foodlands Service was very new. Why does the strategy say to expand it?
- (MC – CRD): The 2021 CAS had an action to "investigate a Foodlands Strategy". We now have one and have refined the strategy to support ongoing refinement/expansion/implementation.

	• (TSP – Sooke): A lot of the Foodlands strategies are very high level and don't speak to the specific challenges underlying these issues, such as the barriers that local farmers face producing food. • (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re ecosystem health in GVSWA – what about electoral areas? • (GH – Salt Spring Island): It would be useful to discuss each of the main strategy categories one by one.
3	Activity 1: Discussing Alignment Mural Board: https://app.mural.co/t/integralgroup8214/m/integralgroup8214/1757370183606/beat76234930cf82188e6b93506d04af269f6335f Goal 1: Climate-focused Decisions • (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re 1-3 a fundamental issue for CRD and EAs particularly is the siloed nature of service delivery (e.g. Hartland revenues can't be used to help fund heat pump incentives). A provincial review of regional districts is being proposed at UBCM that could help deal with this siloed structure. • (MG – Victoria): Re 1-2 we already do a lot of capacity building, so perhaps it more about strengthening and continuing what we already do, rather than “expanding” • (MB – Esquimalt): Re 1-2 I'm hoping that it's not just CRD staff but also within our own municipalities. The more workshops we can have for our staff, the better. Then everyone can get on the same page. • (GH – Salt Spring Island): This is all good and my general reaction is that I like to see that we keep upping our game. Re 1-4 it would be helpful for the climate service to be evaluating the climate business case across CRD siloes, e.g., how does the \$50 million in 6 km regional trail widening compare with other possible climate investments or initiatives (e.g., incentives for heat pumps, EVs, retrofits). \$50 million would fund 25,000 individual incentives. • (MW – Langford): What do we already do for intermunicipal communication on these topics now? How are we integrating across departments and can we share tools/build synergy without slowing everything down too much? How can we move beyond just sharing information to actually working together? ◦ (MG – CRD) This is a big part of Maia's current role. There are regional Transportation and Emergency collaboration groups that Maia coordinates and they are very active and making real inroads. The Intermunicipal Working Group is also really active and there's a lot of opportunities. • (TSP – Sooke): I agree with GH. We've had a similar experience where we just completed a huge capital project; Had we coordinated better and shared the cost across the region, we should have accomplished so much more with that investment. • (TSP – Sooke): How are we communicating out to the public and addressing misinformation? • (DG – Colwood): Can we find a way to be more efficient with our public engagement, while still providing space to respect the diverse needs and expectations within each community? • From Mural (AB – Highlands): “Do the strategies under this goal align with your Council's climate priorities?” – Yes

- From Mural (AB – Highlands): Would like to see more public education as well. Need more example projects that demonstrate the actions...Like Regenerative Development for Millstream Meadows in Highlands.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): There is a significant need for efficient communication with First Nations.
- (MW – Langford): Re 1-2 staff growth or hiring is not possible.
- (MW – Langford): How do we consider minimizing legal challenges? First Nation consultants, local governments, and CRD could have conflicting ideas of the way forward.

Goal 2: Sustainable and Prepared Communities

- (MG – Victoria): There needs to be a focus on extreme weather preparedness.
- (MG – Victoria): Re 2-4 Is it appropriate for the CRD to liaise directly with municipal emergency teams or councils?
 - (MC – CRD) This is a role within our mandate.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re 2-3 would be good to include estimation of the costs of future climate impacts, relay this information to senior govts, and to join the class action against major oil companies to recover funding for future climate damage. Forgot to mention collaboration with Islands Trust within SSI and SGI EAs.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re 2-1, please include collaboration with senior governments and NGOs.
- (MW – Langford): Budget according to the cost benefit of being prepared for or preventing future costs. (e.g., value of spending now may save how much of future costs)
- From Mural (AB – Highlands): Also need to educate the public that the GHG inventories do not capture all GHG's...embodied GHG's matter even if the GHG's are not emitted in boundary.

Goal 3: Low-carbon Mobility

- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re 3-3 Regional Growth Strategy provisions to keep settlement patterns compact to support non-auto transportation and improved transit is very important.
- (MB – Esquimalt): Happy to see 3-2 - there is a place for that for sure.
- (TSP – Sooke): Is there anything we can add around public transportation and cycling? We have a unique opportunity with this Regional Service that can link up the cycling, trail and transit services. I think this strategy needs to have active and integrated transportation more teased out. Currently, most of the actions under this goal are very car-centric (EVs). There may be additional partnerships to be had to build up EV infrastructure (e.g. Destination Greater Victoria)
- (AM – View Royal): For 3-2 we had no issue finding the vehicles, but it was more difficult to access chargers for the vehicles (needs to be clarified).
- (MW – Langford): The transportation hierarchy should be walking, cycling, transit (rail & bus) and then car (EV). Current goals do look a bit too car-focused. Maybe in the future we can make the rail corridor work.

- (GH – Salt Spring Island): There could be some analysis done around the GHG savings from transitioning from car -> EV vs. Car -> cycling. I do agree with this transportation hierarchy, but I would like to see some analysis around the GHG and other benefits/trade-offs. We also really need to talk about settlement patterns – You can't do too much about settlement patterns that already exist, but we can do something about new development.
- From Mural (AB – Highlands): "Do these strategies align with your council's climate priorities?" - All except #2. LNG and H2 not green or low carbon.
- From Mural (AB – Highlands): Low carbon fuels are a dead end...especially when embodied carbon is included. Use only electrified fleets...even for heavy duty.
- From Mural (AB – Highlands): \$ might be better used to buy or give rebates for e-bikes
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): One last comment that enhancing internet connectivity to rural areas could facilitate remote working and reduce auto travel.
- (AB – Highlands) Does this include support for municipalities or corporate?
- (DG – Colwood) Need private investors, businesses to push innovations. We can support to pave the way.
- (MW – Langford) public transport is missing and cycling, e-bikes, and freight

Goal 4: Low-Carbon & Resilient Buildings and Infrastructure

- (MG – Victoria): What is the CRD's actual role in this area?
 - (MG – CRD): It is limited and mostly in terms of supporting municipal programs and public access to incentives.
- (LW – WCS): Most of these actions pertain to CRD assets, but 4-2 and 4-3 speak most to supporting municipal programs and services.
- (TSP – Sooke): Important to truly promote low carbon building materials and opportunities to reduce GHGs and resilience.
- (MW – Langford): How could the CRD support mass timber? Would this be an educational campaign?
- (MW – Langford): Bylaw templates are really helpful because we are re-inventing the wheel a lot. For some reason, when there are templates, we're not able to use them and I'm not sure why. I would like to look into the barrier here.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re section 4, heat pump incentives / facilitation not specifically mentioned - reduces GHGs, costs, and also an adaptation measure for future heat-related impacts.
- (MB – Esquimalt): 4-3 would that include CRD developing policy guidelines
- (MB – Esquimalt): It would be good to have some unification across the region for some policies
- From Mural (AB – Highlands): Focus on Operational GHG's is only one piece. Where do embodied GHG's fit?
- From Mural (AB – Highlands): Everything seems so siloed. If CRD was to commit to Living Building challenge it would be an enormous step to both educate the public and implement the entire CAP.
- From Mural (AB – Highlands): Where does water resilience fit?

- (MG – Victoria) A single recessed stairway leads to high risk in established area with utility wires.

Goal 5: Resilient Ecosystems and Foodlands

- (MW – Langford): I'm thinking about wetlands, gary oak meadows, and sensitive ecosystems. With the province putting such a push on housing, we're left unable to protect some of our natural assets. Mixed messaging. Ecosystems don't get enough value. It comes down to messaging – what is the \$ value for ecosystem services relative to housing.
- (MB – Esquimalt): I 100% agree on the value of trees and ecosystems. My other concern about foodlands is the importance of preserving farmlands, which I'm not seeing as much in the strategies and example actions.
- (TSP – Sooke): The term Foodlands may be too high level; can we instead talk about food sovereignty. What we really want to focus on is producing more food locally. There are agricultural lands in Sooke and other rural areas that are not being used. Can we think of incentives and financial support for farmland use? These properties are actually getting penalized for not being used.
- (DG – Colwood): We have brownfield land available for development. We should be encouraging the type of businesses and production that is complementary to climate action (e.g. agricultural technology, vertical farming, etc.). I'm particularly interested in enhancing more private/public community gardens and foodlands.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re section 5, the Foodland Access Service needs to focus more on facilitating succession planning / tenure arrangements that promote access to private farmland (e.g., Young Agrarian approach) including establishment of community gardens.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re section 5, my understanding is the new CRD Biodiversity Service does not include funding for individual projects, which if included would be of great help to very active, capable NGOs in pursuing initiatives re invasive species, forest management, etc. My understanding is that most food scraps within the CRD are shipped out of region, which if composted would enhance land fertility and food production.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re section 5, no mention of CRD Parks service which should be working more closely with First Nations, senior governments, and NGOs to protect and better manage land within the CRD. Why not a goal of 25% protected land within CRD. Particular focus on species at risk, rare habitats, wetlands/water storage.
- (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re section 5, I already mentioned water supply areas within EAs, not just Greater Victoria.
- From Mural (AB – Highlands): Great Strategies. WRT ecosystems I would add that in addition to protecting ecosystems we also need regeneration... we need to repair damage to bring back ecosystem function. Land repair can occur both with native species and with edible foodscapes, as appropriate.
- (TSP – Sooke) Create urban edible landscapes.
- (TSP – Sooke) Rapid growth pressures the existing limits and increases demand on food systems, calling for more reduction. Could education create a culture shift?

	Goal 6: Waste Reduction • (MG – Victoria): Waste management and recycling opportunities are limited on the island. I have to bring paint cans and broken pottery to the mainland. Resolving this gap is not discussed enough. • (TSP – Sooke): I understand that actions at Hartland can help to reduce GHG from processing, however there's a lot of GHG associated with trucking waste out to Hartland. I'd like to see more measures around reducing waste locally and managing waste locally (e.g. reuse, local recycling programs). • (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re section 6, see my comment re food scraps shipped out of region and composting. • (GH – Salt Spring Island): Re section 6, key strategy would be to advocate greater support from Recycling BC to improve recycling opportunities for multi-family developments, commercial sector, soft plastics, fair funding support for EA depots. • From Mural (AB – Highlands): No discussion about LESS liquid waste. Consider education and incentives around waterless toilet innovations. SAVE water and reduced liquid waste. It's legal in BC. Solids can be used for hot composting (like the system on SSI) Urine can be used for fertilizer or urine diversion (via a bidet) to regional waste disposal. • From Mural (AB – Highlands): Less centralized liquid waste treatment increases adaptation and resilience. • From Mural (AB – Highlands): RNG is not ideal as it supports the entire LNG industry. • (MG – Victoria) Mattress or curb-side pickup is lacking. There are curb-side items everywhere. • (MG – Victoria) Punishment for creating waste is not effective. Providing waste collection services is. • (DG – Colwood) What are the GHG benefits of composting? • (TSP – Sooke) Call out circular economy. • (GH – Salt Spring Island) Provide funding support for EA depots.
4	Plenary Discussion: • (TSP – Sooke): I really appreciated the pre-work and process leading up to this meeting, and the approach to engaging us.
5	Next Steps • Feedback from today will be summarized & shared back to verify accuracy, and will inform updates to the final strategy & action list • September-November: CAS draft development • December: Final reviews + ELT presentation • March/April: ESC and Board