

**REPORT TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2025**

SUBJECT **Board Priorities Annual Check In**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To report on progress made to advance the 2023-2026 Board Priorities and Corporate Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board identified and endorsed the following strategic priorities, and associated initiatives, in early 2023:

- Transportation
- Housing
- Climate Action & Environment
- First Nations
- Governance

Subsequently, staff prepared the 2023-2026 Corporate Plan (see Appendix A) to align with this direction. The Corporate Plan presents the work the organization needs to deliver over the Board term to meet the region's 16 most important needs (community needs) and advance the Board's vision and priorities. Initiatives listed in the Corporate Plan are delivered in conjunction with the critical regional, sub-regional and local services and regulatory requirements that the CRD is accountable for delivering.

The Board meets in the spring of every year (in the second through the fourth year of the Board's term) to review progress made and confirm the direction for the Board Priorities. This report has been developed to facilitate this review and provide evidence of the progress made over the last year. The following information has been provided:

- Appendix B highlights the progress made in advancing the 2023-2026 Board Priorities.
- Appendix C highlights the progress made in advancing the 2023-2026 Corporate Plan.

Operational outlook for 2026

Like many local governments in our region, CRD services have faced financial pressures due to higher labour costs, new capital costs, infrastructure renewal, and investment in critical systems and technologies, to name a few. These challenges have been further strained by a worsening national economic outlook, which is being monitored.

During the review of the 2025 provisional financial plan in fall 2024, the CRD Board considered potential adjustments to slow down or postpone activities and directed staff to explore options for conducting a review of services ahead of the 2026 provisional financial plan.

In response to these headwinds, the Executive Leadership Team have directed a pause for additional staff requests in 2026. From a planning standpoint, this means any staffing requirements identified will be deferred to future years, subject to direction from the CRD Board or from sub-regional or local services commissions. This will allow positions approved in 2025 to

be filled and will enable staff to reassess the organizational capacity in time for the development of new Board Priorities and Corporate Plan in early 2027. Staff are confident this direction will not limit the ability to advance and/or operationalize the remaining Board Priorities and Corporate Plan initiatives this term.

Next steps

Board direction shapes the annual service and financial planning process that identifies recommended initiatives, funding, timing and service levels to deliver next year's workplan. Staff prepare these recommendations through the summer for review by the Committee of the Whole in the fall.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Committee of the Whole recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the current level of effort on Board Priorities be maintained; and
2. That staff, through the service and financial planning processes, provide recommendations on funding, timing and service levels for 2026 in accordance with 2023-2026 Board Priorities and Corporate Plan.

Alternative 2

The Committee of the Whole recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the level of effort on Board Priorities be adjusted as directed by the Committee of the Whole; and
2. That staff, through the service and financial planning processes, provide recommendations in funding, timing and service levels for 2026 in accordance with the amended direction.

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

The 2023-2026 Corporate Plan identifies and prioritizes initiatives that advance Board Priorities and deliver the CRD's core services. Together, the initiatives and actions in the Corporate Plan respond to the region's collective community needs in consideration of Board priorities, within the CRD's established service mandates, approved plans and corporate priorities.

Staff report on the progress of initiatives and services on a regular basis. The Board oversees the Board Priorities through the Quarterly Board Priorities Dashboard which accompanies the CAO Quarterly Progress Reports. The Board also receives a progress report on the CRD Corporate Plan twice a year at the Board Priorities check-in and provisional budget meetings, which take place in the spring and fall respectively. During the year, standing committees and commissions also fulfill an oversight and/or advisory role in relation to services. The CRD Annual Report is published in the spring. This layered oversight ensures that there is transparency over progress made year-round and that adjustments can be made to policy in close consultation with the Board, where necessary.

Service Delivery Implications

Regional demand for services continues to increase, driven by population growth and community needs, and the Board has accelerated planned work on key priorities, such as the Regional Transportation Service. The corporate divisions which support organization-wide functions are also experiencing higher demand to meet the requirements of growing regional, sub-regional and local services.

In recent years, the CRD Board has balanced advancing an ambitious vision for the region with managing staff and budget pressures. Since 2023, significant organizational changes have also been underway, including the implementation of a new corporate organizational plan, CRD Evolves 2024-2025. This plan outlines impactful organizational changes aimed at enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.

Staff have carefully progressed work, while considering organizational capacity and operational imperatives and commitments. As the organization approaches the final year of the Board's term, staff remain well positioned to continue meeting the expectations set at the term's start.

Financial Implications

Through the 2023-2026 Board Priorities and Corporate Plan, the Board set the CRD on a path that furthers its vision to embrace cooperation, innovation and bold leadership in the delivery of services that contribute to a livable, sustainable and resilient region.

Should the Board decide to make changes to the Board Priorities, the CRD Corporate Plan, initiatives, and budgets will be thoroughly reviewed to re-align resources and workplans with the new direction. Changes will be reflected through the 2026 service and financial planning processes. This includes, but is not limited to, Board direction to include new initiative(s), expand the scope of initiative(s), and/or accelerate or decelerate effort on existing initiative(s). Resource implications would be identified in the provisional budget, brought forward by staff in October 2025.

CONCLUSION

Staff are progressing initiatives and actions identified in the 2023-2026 Corporate Plan, including Board Priorities. The Board determines resourcing through its annual review and approval of the provisional budget. To support the Board's decision-making, staff will provide recommendations on funding, timing and service levels through the service and financial planning processes. These will be reviewed through the standing committees and commissions and form the basis of the provisional budget.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee of the Whole recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the current level of effort on Board Priorities be maintained; and
2. That staff, through the service and financial planning processes, provide recommendations on funding, timing and service levels for 2026 in accordance with 2023-2026 Board Priorities and Corporate Plan.

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| Submitted by: | Fran Delgadillo Lopez, M. Sc., Manager, Strategic Planning |
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ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A: Capital Regional District 2023-2026 Corporate Plan
Appendix B: 2023-2026 Board Priorities – Progress Report
Appendix C: 2023-2026 Corporate Plan – Progress Report
Appendix D: CRD Corporate Plan Addendum (revised April 2025)