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REPORT TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2024

SUBJECT **Service Planning 2025 – Community Need Summaries**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide strategic context and an overview of Capital Regional District (CRD) services, initiatives and performance data by Community Need as set out in the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan.

BACKGROUND

The CRD Board approved the 2023-2026 Board Priorities on March 8, 2023. Subsequently, staff developed the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan which was approved by the CRD Board on April 12, 2023.

The CRD Corporate Plan outlines 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 2025 planning year marks the penultimate year of the implementation of the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan. Much of the work envisaged through the CRD Board Priorities and the Corporate Plan is now being progressed. The CRD's annual service plans, known as Community Need Summaries, provide an overview of the operational and strategic context, service levels, initiatives, and performance data for each Community Need. Appendices C to R provide the Community Need Summaries for 2025.

Through the service planning process, staff capture information about new initiatives in an internal planning document called an Initiative Business Case (IBC). IBCs are submitted when a new piece of work (initiative) is being advanced that is new and/or over-and-above core service delivery, requires new funding over-and-above existing core budgets, or requires new staffing capacity. IBCs are also required for any other staffing adjustments, such as conversion of existing term or auxiliary positions to regular ongoing. IBCs capture all the relevant information about a new initiative in a consistent manner to support evidence-based decision-making.

For 2025, staff have identified 49 initiatives in support of the 16 community needs that will have incremental budget implications. A further 11 initiatives have been forecasted for 2026, and one initiative has been forecasted for 2027. Appendices A and B contain further information about all initiatives. Note that three initiatives¹ proposed for 2025 were not originally listed as initiatives in the CRD Corporate Plan but were identified by staff as necessary to maintain services levels and meet community expectations.

The key drivers for the proposed initiatives are:

1. Initiatives that advance 2023-2026 Board Priorities or the Corporate Plan;
2. Initiatives that operationalize capital investments; and/or
3. Initiatives that are necessary to maintain a core service level following a regulatory change or where there is a safety risk to customers, communities, or staff.

¹ Highlighted in the Community Need Summaries for Local Government, Transportation and Water.

Through the provisional budget review process, standing committees and commissions with delegated authority over service budgets can direct staff to make changes to preliminary service budgets. The changes directed to date are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Changes to service plans directed by regional, sub-regional and local commissions:

Direction	Staff response
<p>On September 12, 2024, at the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission the following motions arising related to the Local Government Community Need were carried:</p> <p><i>“That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission direct staff to amend the 1.459 SSI Pool & Park land Five Year Financial to plan to increase hours for one regular part-time staff in 2025 for the pool.”</i></p> <p><i>“That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission direct staff to amend the 1.459 SSI Pool & Park land Five Year Financial to defer funding for “SIMS Facility Maintenance Staffing” until 2026.”</i></p>	<p>The amendment has been made in time for the provisional financial plan approval in October 2024.</p> <p>The initiative is listed as 16b-1.2 SSI Parks & Recreation Staffing.</p>
<p>On September 12, 2024, at the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission the following motions arising related to the Local Government Community Need were carried:</p> <p><i>“That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission recommends to the Capital Regional District Board to approve funding to the 2025 Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission Administration budget for a full-time administrative support.”</i></p>	<p>At the September 24, 2024, budget review meeting with the Salt Spring Island Electoral Area Director, staff were directed to remove initiative 16b-1.3 SSI Administration Staffing from consideration for 2025.</p> <p>The amendment has been made in time for the provisional financial plan approval in October 2024.</p>

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has assessed all proposed initiatives and has determined that the combined package of work is appropriate and a proportional response to the CRD Board’s and communities’ expectations of the organization. To ensure that there is adequate organizational capacity to progress the packages of work proposed, the ELT has phased the initiatives over three years. Future year initiatives have been highlighted in Appendix A and the Community Need Summaries for transparency.

Financial Implications

The financial implications of the Community Need Summaries, core service level adjustments, and new initiatives are addressed in the CRD 2025 Financial Plan Provisional Approval report, to be presented at the same meeting as this report. Since 2023, this report has included a five-year forecast of staffing level changes, which is reviewed annually.

Regional and sub-regional commissions have considered the financial implications of the relevant proposed programs of work, including the Regional Water Supply Commission, Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission, Saanich Peninsula Wastewater and Water Commissions, Sooke and Electoral Area Parks and Recreation Commission, the Peninsula Recreation Commission, and the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission. Some local service committees and commissions will be reviewing their provisional budgets between now and the end of the year; any recommended amendments will be reflected in the final financial plan approval in March 2025.

Staff also brought forward operating and capital budget reports in the fall to standing committees and commissions for most services with an annual budget of \$5 million or more, including the Core Area Liquid Waste Management, Regional Parks, Environmental Resource Management, Legislative and General Government and Facilities Services, and Land Banking and Housing. These budgets represent approximately 86% of the total CRD operating budget.

Service Delivery Implications

Appendix A presents a multi-year roadmap of planned initiatives for 2025 and beyond. The initiatives are grouped thematically to offer an improved view of upcoming activities and changes in the short and medium term. For each grouping, staff have provided background information about the approach taken, as well as a description of each initiative. Presenting initiatives in this manner is a new approach introduced this year in support of the provisional budget process. Appendix B presents a short summary for each new initiative.

There are five thematic groupings presented in the appendix.

- 1. Building and operating regional housing:** Access to affordable housing is a CRD Board Priority. As the largest social housing provider on Vancouver Island, the Capital Region Housing Corporation (CRHC) manages over 50 properties and 2,000 homes. To advance this Board Priority and address the community's expectations, the CRHC is rapidly expanding its affordable housing stock through new developments and redevelopments. Staff are advancing new initiatives to increase staffing capacity to manage the increasing workload and to ensure compliance with funding agreements.
- 2. Adapting to service growth:** Over the past five years, from 2019 to 2023, the CRD has experienced increased demand for core services driven by community needs and regional population growth, including a 22% rise in park visitors, a 7% increase in the rolling average of water demand, and a 23% increase in refuse volumes. Staff are advancing new initiatives and resource adjustments to maintain and/or improve service delivery and to explore new service opportunities. Detailed data on service growth and operational factors are available in each Community Need Summary.
- 3. Strengthening the corporate foundation:** Support services facilitate coordinated and collaborative organizational governance and service delivery through a suite of internal professional services that are essential to CRD service delivery and organizational performance. As operational services grow, the internal demand for support services such as Finance, Human Resources (including Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility support), Occupational Health and Safety, First Nations, Legal, Information Services and Technology, increases, consuming more staff capacity and requiring additional resources. Staff are advancing new initiatives to increase capacity and/or enhance service delivery.
- 4. Futureproofing through technology investments:** Over the past decade, the CRD prioritized operational service improvements and infrastructure, leading to a decline in internal technology capacity. Staff are advancing new initiatives and resource adjustments to modernize the use of technology, digital tools and processes, guided by two new strategic plans (Technology and Digital Transformation), and to address legacy gaps and align with organizational goals.

5. **Supporting the Electoral Areas:** The CRD Board has directed the creation of a new Electoral Area Services department to consolidate oversight of most services for Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island, and the Southern Gulf Islands under a new General Manager. The consolidation of numerous services into a department represents a considerable organizational change. This grouping of initiatives is therefore focused on 2025 only, with proposed adjustments to service levels to address gaps in service levels or to respond to service review recommendations. The new General Manager will evaluate future service delivery needs, once in place.

Climate, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, and First Nations Implications

All initiatives included considerations of impacts on Climate Action, First Nations Reconciliation and Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility.

CONCLUSION

CRD staff are progressing initiatives identified in the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan, including the 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

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

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Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: New Initiatives (2025-2029) - Overview
- Appendix B: New Initiatives (2025-2029) - Descriptions
- Appendix C: Advocacy
- Appendix D: Arts & Recreation
- Appendix E: Business Systems & Processes
- Appendix F: Climate Action
- Appendix G: First Nations
- Appendix H: Housing & Health
- Appendix I: Local Government
- Appendix J: Open Government
- Appendix K: People
- Appendix L: Planning
- Appendix M: Regional Parks
- Appendix N: Safety & Emergency Management
- Appendix O: Transportation
- Appendix P: Solid Waste & Recycling
- Appendix Q: Wastewater
- Appendix R: Water