

**REPORT TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017**

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**SUBJECT 2018 Service Plan Summary Discussion**

**ISSUE**

A summary of organizational service planning information and themes that will be prevalent in the 2018 budget process is provided to allow for Finance Committee and Board discussion and to inform other Committees and Commissions.

**BACKGROUND**

The Capital Regional District (CRD) provides a broad range of services to businesses, institutions, organizations, visitors and over 378,000 residents of the region. Regional services are provided to the entire region; sub-regional services are provided to groups of participating municipalities, First Nations and three Electoral Areas; and local services are provided to individual municipalities, Electoral Areas or to defined areas within the region.

The planning process, which is outlined in Appendix A, begins with the development of the service plans covering a four year span, with the current service plans covering 2015-2019 and are updated each year to allow for changes, both internal and external to the organization. A service plan update summary is then developed to illustrate any deviations that have occurred from the previous year. The service plan summary outlines changes in assumptions, trends, and issues, highlights anticipated performance to budget, updates division initiatives, and outlines required service adjustments and staffing levels. The updated service plans and service plan summaries will be presented to committees and commissions throughout October and November

CRD services generally fall into one of three categories:

1. Regional services which have either been mandated due to regulatory requirements or established with clear advantages with respect to operating efficiency, planning and the ability to leverage and make effective use of capital investments;
2. Sub-regional services with oversight by commissions which recommend operating budgets (including transfers to reserve funds) and capital expenditure plans annually; and
3. Services that are provided to a defined area within the region, also with oversight by a Commission of volunteers.

The Priorities Dashboard tracks the implementation of Board and Corporate priorities. These priorities have resulted in investments for initiatives that accomplish Board objectives, respond to community needs, and improve efficiency while considering the overall fiscal capacity and maximizing the potential to leverage grants.

**2018 Service Plan**

The Corporate Service Plan Update Summary (Appendix B) provides an organizational overview of the service plan update summaries that will be reviewed by Committees and Commissions in October and November. Changes in Assumptions, Trends, and Other Issues categorizes the primary themes from all service plans into three groupings:

- a) Alignment to regulatory or legislative compliance,
- b) Impacts due to external situational factors, and
- c) Internal organizational impacts

***Alignment to regulatory or legislative compliance***

As the organization realizes continued growth, there is a need to realign the organization to reflect the scope and scale of similar local governments in administrative oversight, controls, regulatory and legislative frameworks.

The CRD is entering into increasingly complex partnering, operating, and third party agreements in support of strategic and corporate priorities. With Board endorsed policies on Climate Action, Risk & Asset Management as examples, the downstream impact of incorporating these emphases into all agreements is formidable. Furthermore, with many long term agreements expiring, there is a need to align renewed agreements with modern terms and conditions, and aforementioned Board supported policies and decisions. Through recent experiences this can result in challenging negotiations with existing providers.

There has also been an increase in recent years on the number of available grant opportunities in addition to the application, due diligence, and associated agreement requirements. Most funding programs require the recipient to adhere to stringent application, expenditure tracking and reporting guidelines, along with strict and often short deadlines.

***Impacts due to external situational factors***

External factors impacting the organization can have both positive and negative effects for the CRD and subsequently the municipalities and the region.

A strong and vibrant regional economy has resulted in a surge of development activity and population growth. The resulting direct and indirect impacts on current systems have led to a need for additional short and long term capital investment, various infrastructure improvements, and upgrades to maintain service levels within the region. Incremental ongoing operational maintenance, repairs and routine replacements will be required to support these systems as various services are impacted; for example, water connections and flow volume increases against current capacity. Subsequently, there is also an impact on internal staff capacity to maintain the pace of growth and expected service levels. Positively, development activity has resulted in additional revenue through increased volumes, in particular at Hartland landfill and wholesale water distribution.

Furthermore, a maturing organizational workforce combined with the capital region having one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country, will cause the CRD to continue to face challenges in staffing positions, especially those that require unique or specialized skills. This confluence will have both direct and indirect impacts on employee retention and turnover, vacancy duration, knowledge transfer, and transition periods of new personnel.

***Internal organizational impacts***

As the CRD has grown into a \$500M organization, it is well positioned to drive a renewed internal focus on organizational resilience in alignment with corporate and strategic priorities for effective and efficient service delivery.

In order to achieve this, an Organizational Development Plan was developed as a key deliverable and engagement tool to enhance organizational resilience and promote revitalization. The plan's

multi-year organization wide implementation is designed to ensure a high performing organization by building a culture that is engaged, responsive, adaptive and aligned with our service mandate. It supports the implementation of the 2015–2018 Corporate Plan and focuses on strengthening the foundational core of the organization through employee development, communication, and engagement.

In the third quarter of 2017, the Chief Administrative Officer was informed by the Auditor General for Local Government the CRD had been selected for a performance audit of the organization's business continuity and emergency plans and processes. The CRD plays a critical role in providing necessary services to the community and should be equipped to ensure a comprehensive, coordinated and organized approach to emergency management. The audit will assess the effectiveness of emergency management plans and programs and will focus on emergency management, business continuity management, and key elements including related policies and procedures. A key focus for the CRD will be on developing and refining business continuity and emergency planning systems, and will do so by following industry best practices that are relevant to the size and complexity of the organization.

Furthermore, there continues to be increases in the complexity of relationships with First Nations requiring further capacity building for CRD in deepening relationships. With current staffing levels, relationship building has been successful, but deeper engagement may be required for implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) calls to action. There is also an operational need to involve First Nations in shared decision making moving forward.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

Because of the size and complexity of the organization and distributed location of operations throughout the region, there are many agreements and contracts that are negotiated and held in different locations. There is currently no central repository for completed contracts, agreements, or records management. This creates a significant risk to the organization that agreements are or will expire without a renewed contract or that wording and language is outdated or in need of standardization. An appropriate system along with policies and procedures will safeguard the CRD and will improve the process of knowledge transfer and continuity.

Investing in the development of organizational systems and setting up relevant processes and procedures are necessary to manage business, financial and legislative risks. Creating standardized processes will also assist staff in supporting services in both efficiency and effectiveness. Optimal and even automated reporting procedures will contribute to reducing manual processes, reconciliations, and in turn decrease the risk of significant errors.

With the regional growth rate exceeding and expected to continue to exceed the national average over the next 25 years, the CRD must implement systems, infrastructure, and appropriate resources to meet the steady demand on mandated, directed, delegated, and contractual and emergency services. In response to these challenges, one avenue the CRD should consider is additional shared service opportunities among the municipalities, electoral areas, and partner agencies. There is ongoing engagement and discussion among the region's CAOs and staff to proactively identify such opportunities.

## **CONCLUSION**

The service planning process is an integral component of implementing the Board's strategic priorities and providing ongoing service delivery. Service plans define the work that will be performed over a four year period and provide the foundation for building operating and capital budgets. This report has been developed to provide an overview of the themes that will be prevalent when reviewing the service plans and service plan summaries for 2018.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Finance Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the 2018 Service Plan Summary Discussion report be received for information and referred to Committees and Commissions for information as part of the 2018 service and financial planning process.

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Appendix A: CRD Planning Process

Appendix B: Corporate Service Plan Update Summary