

**REPORT TO THE PARKS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2019**

SUBJECT **2019-2022 Parks & Environment Service Planning**

ISSUE

To provide the Parks & Environment Committee with an overview of relevant initiatives undertaken by the Parks and Environmental Services Department in 2019 and planned for 2020 to deliver on approved Board Priorities and the Corporate Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Board completed its strategic planning early in 2019 and subsequently approved the *Capital Regional District (CRD) Board Strategic Priorities 2019-2022*. Top priorities included:

1. Community Wellbeing – Transportation & Housing
2. Climate Action & Environmental Stewardship
3. First Nations Reconciliation
4. Advocacy, Governance & Accountability

Following Board confirmation of priorities, staff prepared the 2019-2022 CRD *Corporate Plan* to identify potential initiatives to advance Board priorities. The Corporate Plan also identified initiatives to deliver on the CRD's established service mandates, approved plans and corporate priorities. Progress on the priorities is reported quarterly under the corporate priorities dashboard.

Appendix A provides an overview of the Community Needs Summary – Climate Action & Adaptation, Appendix B: Community Needs Summary – Parks & Natural Resource Protection and Appendix C: Community Needs Summary – Landfill & Recycling. Each summary identifies the core service levels and a list of the new initiatives proposed for 2020.

The Service Planning process gathered information necessary to assemble a provisional budget for Committee and Board review. The purpose of this report is to explain how the Climate Action, Regional Parks and Environmental Resource Management provisional budgets connects to Board Priorities and the Corporate Plan.

A staff report (Appendix D) outlines the 2019-2022 Service Planning and Budget Process and was received at the October 2, 2019 Governance and Finance Committee.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

That the Parks & Environment Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the new initiatives proposed in the provisional budgets related to the Parks & Environment Committee mandate (Appendix A: *Community Needs Summary - Climate Action & Adaptation*, Appendix B: *Community Needs Summary - Parks & Natural Resource Protection and Appendix C: Community Needs Summary – Landfill & Recycling*) be advanced to the October 30, 2019 Provisional Budget review process.

Alternative 2

That the new initiatives proposed in the provisional budgets related to the Parks & Environment Committee mandate (Appendix A: Community Needs Summary - Climate Action & Adaptation, Appendix B: Community Needs Summary - Parks & Natural Resource Protection and Appendix C: Community Needs Summary – Landfill & Recycling) be referred back to staff for additional information.

DISCUSSION

Initiatives identified in the Corporate Plan (including Board Priorities) cannot be undertaken without resourcing. The Board determines resourcing through its annual review and approval of financial plans. To support the Board's decision-making, staff, through the service planning process, provide recommendations on funding, timing and service levels.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All of the initiatives from the Community Needs Summaries discussed in this report that have a resourcing impact in 2020 are presented in the following table.

Table 1: Community Needs Summary – Climate Action & Adaptation, Parks & Natural Resource Protection and Landfill & Recycling Initiatives 5b-4, 5c-1, 6a-8, 6b-4, 6d-1 and 9b-4.

#	Initiatives	Description	Budget Year	New FTEs for 2020	Budget Impact
Climate & Adaptation					
5b-4	GHGe Reduction through alternative fuel	Determine how to reduce Green House Gas Emissions through an alternative fuel source or by off-setting	2020 - 2022		Included in Provisional Budget
5c-1	Regional Sea Level Rise	Undertake detailed regional sea level rise modeling and mapping to inform local government of flood hazard plans and policies	2019 - 2020		Included in Provisional Budget

#	Initiatives	Description	Budget Year	New FTEs for 2020	Budget Impact
Parks & Natural Resource Protection					
6a-8	Capital Reserve	Increase in funding to Capital Reserve, in order to address high value and critical capital infrastructure in regional parks	2020		Included in Provisional Budget
6b-4	Enhance Parks Operations	Enhance operations service levels	2020	5.0 ongoing	Included in Provisional Budget
6d-1	Engage with First Nations	Undertake engagement with First Nations regarding greater collaboration and Parks management	2020		Absorbed within Core Service
Landfill & Recycling					
9b-4	Electronic Stewardship Attendant *	Electronics Stewardship Attendant	2020	1.0 Ongoing	Already Funded

Climate Action & Adaptation

5b-4

Starting in 2020 the CRD will offset 10,000 GJ of conventional natural gas to renewable natural gas (RNG) within CRD facilities. This was identified as an emissions reduction action in the CRD's Corporate Climate Action Strategy and will reduce the CRD's corporate emissions by approximately 500 tonnes of CO₂e/year, meeting the CRD's 2020 greenhouse gas reduction target. The incremental cost to the organization is \$90,000 per year for two years apportioned to the organization's five largest natural gas using facilities (i.e. CRD Headquarters, Integrated Water Services, Panorama Recreation Centre, SEAPARC Leisure Centre, and Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Treatment Plant). Staff will continue to investigate opportunities for RNG use within CRD facilities sourced from Hartland RNG Initiatives for future years, if approved by the Board.

5c-1

A sea level rise modelling and mapping initiative is currently underway as part of the Capital Region Coastal Flood Inundation Mapping Project in conjunction with tsunami scenario modelling

and mapping (in partnership with CRD Protective Services). Working with an inter-municipal project team, this Project aims to build upon past studies to provide additional regional information to local governments and other community stakeholders about coastal flood hazards related to tsunamis and future sea level rise. A total of \$705,000 in grant funding has been secured through the provincially and federally funded National Disaster Mitigation Program. \$329,250 in funding was provided up front by the Province of BC in 2019. \$375,750 in funding to be provided by Public Safety Canada by claim reimbursement in 2019 and 2020, in which, approximately \$40,000 is expected in 2019 and the remainder in 2020. The Project will be completed in mid-2020.

The project has three distinct Tasks: first to develop a regional digital elevation model (approximately 10% of project budget), second to develop a regional storm surge and future sea level rise model and map (approximately 40% of project budget) and the finally, complete tsunami modelling under a variety of tsunami scenarios (approximately 40% of project budget) . On October 18th, the project team hosted a workshop with regional local governments to further refine the project outputs including confirming data sources, project methodologies and final outputs. Updates will be provided to local governments through the CRD Climate Action Inter-Municipal Working Group and Local Government Emergency Programs Advisory Committee as the project progresses.

Parks & Natural Resource Protection

6a-8

Staff have brought forward a report on this agenda titled Regional Parks – Sustainability that details a proposal to shift 25% of the current funding for the Land Acquisition Fund to parks capital infrastructure projects and seek a minimum of 25% funding from community partners for land acquisition. As the park system expands and the number of people who enjoy our parks grows, resources as currently allocated are no longer sufficient to meet either current or future demands. There are increasing pressures to build new, and maintain and replace existing park assets. This shift in funding, coupled with various budget optimization strategies detailed in the accompanying staff report, will maintain the buying power of the land acquisition fund as it is currently established, ensure adequate funding for renewal of existing infrastructure and maintain service levels for regional parks and trails into the future.

6b-4

As communities continue to grow around Regional Parks and Trails, there is significant pressure on a system that is already nearing capacity in some areas. In order to address park issues that involve recreational impacts, environmental impacts, and visitor use issues during busy park days, and to address increasing user conflicts and Bylaw infractions on trails and in parks, staff propose an additional five operations roles within Regional Parks. The focus of these roles will be on park servicing and maintenance in addition to compliance and enforcement and will include the following:

- Addressing user conflicts on trails and heavily visited parks
- Removal of homeless camps

- Address regulatory issues in the parks (e.g. dogs under control, homelessness, visitor use/recreational conflict)
- Monitor park use permits
- Park operations including servicing park facilities and conducting trail maintenance
- Operational programs such as: annual hazard tree inspections, weekly dam inspections, traffic and trail counter data collection, wildlife monitoring
- Implementation of compliance action plans, conservation action plan and recreation action plans

With regards to homeless camps, staff have removed over 50 so far this year within regional parks. Once established, these camps represent a significant workload, drain on resources, and potential environmental damage. One camp took 33 hours of staff time to clean up and over 60 bags of garbage were collected and disposed.

This past summer Thetis Lake Regional Park was highlighted as an area without adequate compliance and enforcement. This is one example where increased enforcement and a visible presence of a CRD authority in parks is required throughout the year, including weekends.

New funding for these positions, totalling \$265,000, is offset by reducing auxiliary wages within the budget by \$162,000. An additional \$25,000 for supplies, uniforms and IT equipment is required along with three vehicles totalling \$125,000.

6d-1

The scope of this initiative includes the development of an indigenous cultural curriculum that is developed collaboratively with First Nations. This work will be used to enhance current and future CRD staff and the public's understanding of the important connection between Indigenous Peoples and the land. This curriculum will also be used to provide cultural interpretation services to the public within regional parks. Regional Parks and First Nations Relations Division staff will map out a draft scope of services that will then be shared with nine (9) First Nations for review and input, and those First Nations who would like to participate will be invited to sit on a steering committee for the initiative. This work will be absorbed into the core service by realigning the existing interpretive programming offered in Regional Parks.

Landfill & Recycling

9b-4

With the continued expansion of extended producer responsibility (EPR) recycling programs to manage a wide range of end-of-life products including televisions, computers, telephones, audio equipment, outdoor power equipment and small appliances, a dedicated permanent attendant is required to receive these materials from residents and ensure that they are properly and safely sorted, segregated and packed for shipment to the appropriate stewardship agency. Providing residents with the option of recycling this wide range of consumer goods at the Hartland depot complements the many other solid waste and recycling services already provided. This service also provides a last chance recycling option for many goods that may otherwise end up in the

landfill. The CRD is paid service fees by the various EPR stewardship agencies to collect these materials on their behalf and these revenues fund more than half for this attendant. The balance of the funding for this position has been in place in the core budget for four years, and no additional funding is necessary to convert this term position to a permanent FTE.

BOARD PRIORITY IMPLICATIONS

Board approval of the budget/financial plans will enable staff to effectively and efficiently deliver services as outlined in the Board's priorities.

CONCLUSION

Effectively and transparently aligning financial planning to Board Priorities/Corporate Plans is considered a governance best-practise. A number of new initiatives have been identified that have budget or resourcing implications for 2020, 5b-4, 5c-1, 6a-8, 6b-4, and 9b-4 as identified in Appendix A, B and C. Adjustments to the existing funding allocation from the Regional Parks Land Acquisition Fund to infrastructure renewal, in addition to increased support for Regional Parks operations, represent investments in a growing parks system to ensure current and future demands are met.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Parks & Environment Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the new initiatives proposed in the provisional budgets related to the Parks & Environment Committee mandate (Appendix A: *Community Needs Summary - Climate Action & Adaptation*, Appendix B: *Community Needs Summary - Parks & Natural Resource Protection* and Appendix C: *Community Needs Summary – Landfill & Recycling*) be advanced to the October 30, 2019 Provisional Budget review process.

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Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

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Attachments: Appendix A – 2020 Community Needs Summary – Climate Action & Adaptation
Appendix B – 2020 Community Needs Summary – Parks & Natural Resource Protection
Appendix C – 2020 Community Needs Summary – Landfill & Recycling
Appendix D – 2019-2022 Service Planning and Budget Process