

Briefing on COVID-19 pandemic impacts in relation to the 2020 Service Plan

The global pandemic has not spared the region's communities, creating additional pressures on our health services and economy. The 2020 service plan was developed with consideration given to a number of factors, including community needs, economic conditions and the organization's capacity to take on additional activities.

During the Public Health and State of Provincial Emergency, the CRD, like other local governments, has taken direction from the Provincial Health Officer and Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General. Community updates and service updates have been published regularly on www.crd.bc.ca/about/news/covid-19-information.

The CRD has been able to weather impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic by taking prudent, proportional actions in response to provincial health orders.

As an essential services provider, the CRD was able to maintain its service levels across the board, with slight adjustments to work policies and procedures to ensure the health and safety of its people and the communities it serves. For example:

- Essential services and critical infrastructure that the communities rely on have continued to operate. This includes, but is not limited to, the Hartland landfill, water and wastewater services, solid waste management, access to park and trails and the operation of housing facilities.
- Critical construction and maintenance work has continued, with additional safety precautions taken to adhere to provincial health recommendations and guidelines.
- Other activities such as water quality monitoring and building inspections have also continued to take place.

The CRD was also able to step up its service levels on a number of fronts in order to facilitate regional, sub-regional or local actions. Examples include:

- Activation of a corporate Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to respond to the various Ministerial orders, policies and recommendations, and coordinate efforts internally and externally with partners at a regional, provincial and federal level.
- Extensive work with third-parties, such as BC Housing, Island Health and partners in electoral areas, to identify opportunities to support vulnerable populations.
- Identification and redeployment of suitable facilities, such as Summit and SEAPARC, to operate emergency shelter for at-risk populations.
- Increasing staff presence in parks and on trails to educate the public and monitor compliance with provincial health recommendations and guidelines. Increasing cleaning of public facilities.

Panorama Recreation Centre, Greenglade Community Centre, SEAPARC Leisure Complex and Salt Spring Island Rainbow Road Aquatic Centre have been closed until further notice to minimize the risk of transmitting COVID-19. In addition, activities requiring a high degree of collaboration and interaction with the public or stakeholders has been slowed down, postponed or moved to web-based channels.

The CRD Board Chair also requested that all Committee and Commission meetings be suspended after March 18 until further notice. All essential items have been directed directly to the CRD Board which has been meeting semimonthly and Commissions have been meeting only to consider essential business.