

Notice of Meeting and Meeting Agenda Transportation Committee

Wednesday, June 15, 2022

9:30 AM

6th Floor Boardroom
625 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

D. Screech (Chair), J. Loveday (Vice Chair), P. Brent, S. Brice, B. Desjardins, F. Haynes, B. Isitt, C. McNeil-Smith, R. Martin, R. Mersereau, L. Seaton, M. Tait, N. Taylor, C. Plant (Board Chair, ex officio)

The Capital Regional District strives to be a place where inclusion is paramount and all people are treated with dignity. We pledge to make our meetings a place where all feel welcome and respected.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1. [22-401](#) Minutes of the April 20, 2022 Transportation Committee Meeting

Recommendation: That the minutes of the Transportation Committee meeting of April 20, 2022 be adopted as circulated.

Attachments: [Minutes - April 20, 2022](#)

4. Chair's Remarks

5. Presentations/Delegations

****Please note, Re: Agenda Item 6.1.: Renewed Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan, delegations are limited to comments on "REGIONAL TRAILS" only.*

*Delegations on the overall Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan will be scheduled during the Regional Parks Committee meeting on June 22, 2022. ****

The public are welcome to attend CRD Board meetings in-person.

Delegations will have the option to participate electronically. Please complete the online application for "Addressing the Board" on our website and staff will respond with details.

Alternatively, you may email your comments on an agenda item to the CRD Board at crdboard@crd.bc.ca.

5.1. [22-406](#) Delegation - Corey Burger; Representing Capital Bike: Re: Agenda Items 6.3.: Regional Trails - Widening & Lighting Project and 6.4.: Temporary Closures of Regional Trails

6. Committee Business

6.1. [22-388](#) Renewed Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan

Recommendation: [The focus of this report is to review regional trails in the strategic plan and make a recommendation to the Regional Parks Committee (RPC). The complete Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan will be presented at the June 22, 2022 RPC meeting:]
The Transportation Committee recommends to the Regional Parks Committee:
That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues.

Attachments: [Staff Report: Renewed Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan](#)
[Appendix A: Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032](#)
[Appendix B: Public Engagement Report](#)
[Appendix C: First Nations Engagement Report](#)
[Appendix D: Presentation](#)

6.2. [22-393](#) Island Rail Corridor (E&N Corridor) Advocacy

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

Attachments: [Staff Report: Island Rail Corridor \(E&N Corridor\) Advocacy](#)
[Appendix A: Vancouver Island Rail Initial Business Case](#)

6.3. [22-350](#) Regional Trails - Widening & Lighting Policies

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

Attachments: [Staff Report: Regional Trails - Widening & Lighting Policies](#)

6.4. [22-347](#) Temporary Closures of Regional Trails

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

Attachments: [Staff Report: Temporary Closures of Regional Trails](#)
[Appendix A: Summary of Services Provided for Temp. Closures - Reg. Trails](#)

6.5. [22-396](#) Previous Minutes of Other CRD Committees and Commissions for Information

Recommendation: There is no recommendation. The following minutes are for information only.
a) Traffic Safety Commission minutes of March 8, 2022
b) Traffic Safety Commission minutes of April 12, 2022

Attachments: [Minutes: Traffic Safety Commission - March 8, 2022](#)
[Minutes: Traffic Safety Commission - April 12, 2022](#)

7. Notice(s) of Motion

8. New Business

9. Adjournment

The next meeting is August 3, 2022 @ 1:30 pm (Special).

To ensure quorum, please advise Tamara Pillipow (tpillipow@crd.bc.ca) if you or your alternate cannot attend.

Meeting Minutes

Transportation Committee

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

9:30 AM

6th Floor Boardroom
625 Fisgard St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

PRESENT

Directors: D. Screech (Chair), M. Alto (for J. Loveday) (Vice Chair) (EP), S. Brice, F. Haynes, P. Brent (for D. Howe) (EP), B. Isitt (EP), C. McNeil-Smith, R. Martin (EP), R. Mersereau, L. Seaton (EP), J. Bateman (for M. Tait) (EP), N. Taylor

Staff: R. Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer; L. Hutcheson, General Manager, Parks and Environmental Services; K. Lorette, General Manager, Planning and Protective Services; J. Leahy, Senior Manager, Regional Parks; E. Sinclair, Senior Manager, Regional and Strategic Planning; J. Hicks, Senior Transportation Planner, Regional and Strategic Planning; M. Risvold, Committee Clerk, IWS; M. Lagoa, Deputy Corporate Officer; T. Pillipow, Committee Clerk (Recorder)

EP - Electronic Participation

Regrets: Directors: B. Desjardins, D. Howe, J. Loveday, C. Plant, M. Tait

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Chair Screech provided a Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED by Alternate Director Alto, SECONDED by Director McNeil-Smith,
That the agenda for the April 20, 2022 Transportation Committee meeting be
approved.**

CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1. [22-174](#) Minutes of the February 16, 2022 Transportation Committee Meeting

**MOVED by Director Brice, SECONDED by Director McNeil-Smith,
That the minutes of the Transportation Committee meeting of February 16, 2022
be adopted as circulated.**

CARRIED

4. Chair's Remarks

There were no Chair's remarks.

5. Presentations/Delegations

- 5.1. [22-272](#) Delegation - Eric Doherty; Representing Greater Victoria Acting Together:
Re: Agenda Item 6.2.: Update on Transportation Priorities
E. Doherty spoke to item 6.2.

6. Committee Business

- 6.1. [22-258](#) Regional Parks Strategic Plan Update
L. Hutcheson introduced J. Leahy who spoke to Item 6.1.

Discussion ensued on the following:

- the competing priorities in the strategic plan
- addressing the future plans for widening and lighting trails in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan (RPSP)
- developing a funding strategy for trails initiatives within the RPSP
- the parking rates within regional parks
- highlighting for the committees any misalignment within the RPSP

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Director Mersereau, **SECONDED** by Director Taylor,
The Transportation Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the CRD Board change the name of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan to Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan upon adoption.

CARRIED

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Director Mersereau, **SECONDED** by Director Haynes,
The Transportation Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

To direct staff to include actions in the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan to improve the service levels for trails, including detour route considerations, trail maintenance, consideration of network expansion to address gaps and educational and enforcement activities to support mode shift and reduce users conflicts.

CARRIED

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Director Mersereau, **SECONDED** by Director Taylor,
The Transportation Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

To direct staff to develop a funding strategy for regional trails to accompany or support the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan, which also includes the widening and lighting plan.

MOVED by Director McNeil-Smith, **SECONDED** by Director Mersereau,
That the motion be amended to remove the wording "accompany or" after the wording "regional trails to...".

CARRIED

The question was called on the motion as amended.

MOVED by Director Mersereau, SECONDED by Director Taylor,

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

To direct staff to develop a funding strategy for regional trails to support the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan, which also includes the widening and lighting plan.

CARRIED

6.2. [22-261](#) Update on Transportation Priorities

K. Lorette spoke to Item 6.2.

Discussion ensued on the following:

- a brief update on the advocacy for the E&N Corridor
- the Transportation Demand Management action plan
- consideration of a different metric to measure emissions in the region
- the resources needed to increase school participation in active transportation
- that the baseline data needs to consider the unusual circumstances COVID presented

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Director Mersereau, SECONDED by Director Taylor,

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

To direct staff to, in conjunction with reporting on the 2022 Origin and Destination Survey, report back on options and implications on improving data collection in support of monitoring changes in active transportation, mode shift, and emissions reductions, including interim surveys that complement the Origin and Destination Survey and Screen Line surveys to help monitor daily trends for all transportation modes.

CARRIED

6.3. [22-263](#) Previous Minutes of Other CRD Committees and Commissions for Information

Discussion ensued on the membership application process of the Traffic Safety Commission.

MOVED by Director Brice, SECONDED by Director Taylor,

That the following minutes be received for information:

- a) Traffic Safety Commission minutes of February 8, 2022
- b) Transportation Working Group minutes of March 14, 2022

CARRIED

7. Notice(s) of Motion

There were no notice(s) of motion.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

9. Adjournment

MOVED by Director Mersereau, **SECONDED** by Director Brice,
That the April 20, 2022 Transportation Committee meeting be adjourned at 11:06
am.

CARRIED

CHAIR

RECORDER

REPORT TO TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022

SUBJECT **Renewed Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To present the renewed Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan for approval on an interim basis for one year.

BACKGROUND

The CRD Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan at its meeting of December 8, 2021, and extended the 2012-2021 Regional Parks Strategic Plan until July 2022. Staff led the development of an updated Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) between January and June 2022 (Appendix A). The Strategic Plan reflects current Board priorities, related CRD strategies and corporate knowledge. Input from First Nations, stakeholders, the Regional Parks Committee, Transportation Committee and the public has been considered during the development of the Strategic Plan. Feedback, in general, aligns with the proposed document (Appendices B and C). A presentation outlining the key transportation highlights of the Strategic Plan is provided in Appendix D. A more in depth Strategic Plan presentation will be provided at the June 22, 2022 Regional Parks Committee meeting.

The Regional Parks Committee provided input on the proposed direction for the new Regional Parks Strategic Plan. On February 9, 2022, the CRD Board accepted the proposed vision, mission, values and priority statements for stakeholder, First Nations and public input, and recommended that a lens of conservation and protection of biodiversity be applied to the priorities and processes (Appendices B and C). Engagement with stakeholder groups and the public occurred between February and April 2022. Engagement with First Nations is ongoing and feedback received prior to May 31, 2022 is included in Appendix C.

Engagement with First Nations was facilitated by a consultant using a series of engagement methods from February to June 2022. First Nations whose traditional territories lie within the CRD boundary were invited to provide comment for input into the strategic plan (Appendix C). Staff will continue to seek meaningful and respectful engagement with First Nations during the interim approval period of the Strategic Plan. An interim approval will also provide the opportunity to initiate reconciliation efforts identified in the Strategic Plan.

The Transportation Committee Terms of Reference was approved by the CRD Board on March 9, 2022. The purpose of the Committee includes providing input into the Regional Parks Strategic Plan. The Transportation Committee provided input on the Strategic Plan at its April 20, 2022 meeting. The Committee recommended that the CRD Board change the name of the Strategic Plan to "Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan". The Committee also recommended that the Board direct staff to include actions in the Strategic Plan to improve service levels for regional trails, including detour reroute considerations, trail maintenance, network expansion, education and enforcement activities to support mode shift and reduce user conflict. The Committee also recommended that the Board direct staff to develop a funding strategy for regional trails to support the Strategic Plan, which also includes the trail widening and lighting plan.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Regional Parks Committee:
That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues.

Alternative 2

That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is accepted as a draft for public, stakeholder and First Nations engagement and the current Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 is extended until June 2023.

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

The 2019-2022 CRD Board Priorities include ensuring appropriate funding for parks and trails infrastructure, improvements and maintenance by updating the Strategic Plan with consideration to ecological, recreation and reconciliation principles, land acquisition capacity, and expanded partnerships with First Nations and parks user groups. The 2019-2022 Corporate Plan envisions that residents of the region have additional land acquisitions and increased access to parks and recreational trails, and have access to convenient, green and affordable multi-modal transportation systems that enhance community well-being. These priorities are key drivers for this renewed Strategic Plan.

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

The region faces different challenges and opportunities since the Regional Parks Strategic Plan was adopted in 2012. The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is in alignment with a number of recent Board-approved strategies: Regional Growth Strategy, Regional Transportation Plan, Climate Action Strategy and the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report. The Strategic Plan creates strong linkages to Board directions, the engagement process, relevant legislation, guidance documents, operational knowledge and the feedback from public surveys.

Intergovernmental Implications

In developing this Strategic Plan, staff consulted representatives from other park agencies and other CRD divisions to understand how priorities for the CRD's regional parks may align with the goals and objectives of other agencies, with the aim of aligning desired outcomes between groups, strengthening partnerships, clarifying roles and responsibilities of the different agencies, and enhancing information sharing.

Working toward reconciliation with First Nations in the region is a foundational principle of the Strategic Plan. Fifteen First Nations have been invited to engage in the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan renewal and implementation in an ongoing and meaningful manner to determine how to strengthen relationships and what key priorities and initiatives are most important to work on together over the next 10 years. Priorities and actions included in the Strategic Plan draw on

past input and recommendations from First Nations in the region, such as those identified in the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report, as well as from input received to date from eight First Nations on the Strategic Plan update. WSANEC Leadership Council submitted a letter to the CRD on May 25, 2022 requesting additional information, and stating the Nations represented by the Leadership Council cannot support the Strategic Plan without further engagement. Staff recognize the limitations of the engagement timeline for First Nations to provide meaningful input and that First Nations communities have been under considerable strain over the past two years which, among other factors, have limited opportunity for dialogue. Staff recommend that the Strategic Plan be accepted on a one year interim basis in order to provide more time to engage and deepen an understanding of the issues and interests relevant to First Nations. An interim approval of the Plan will also provide the opportunity for reconciliation efforts identified in the plan to proceed.

Social Implications

A focus on accessibility and equity in the regional parks and trails system is included in the updated Strategic Plan. Initiatives that promote complete and connected communities by ensuring recreation, parks and green space can be easily accessed by transit, walking or cycling, and that strengthen an accessibility and equity lens in service delivery, are proposed that build on concepts in the Regional Growth Strategy and regional transportation priority areas. A focus on improving visitor experiences to regional parks and trails is also included in the updated Strategic Plan to encourage health and well-being, deliver interpretive education and foster stewardship.

Environmental & Climate Implications

Regional parks and trails are vital in helping to achieve the region's climate action, natural resource protection and active transportation goals. The Strategic Plan includes priorities for conservation research and monitoring, and for climate action and resiliency, including advancing regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction.

Service Delivery Implications

The CRD's Regional Parks division manages and operates the regional parks and regional trails system, while decision making is supported by advice and recommendations provided to the CRD Board through the Regional Parks Committee and the Transportation Committee. Changes to the operation and management of regional parks and regional trails will have service delivery implications.

The updated regional trails classification system proposes two distinct trail types to recognize the different functions: Urban Bike & Pedestrian and Rural Bike & Pedestrian. Priority regional trail improvement projects to be implemented over the next 10 years include: enhance high use sections of the Galloping Goose and Lochside by creating a separated-use pathway with lighting; E&N Phase 5, develop the Gulf Islands regional trail network; plan for and develop an extension of the Galloping Goose west. A funding strategy will be developed in fall 2023 to facilitate implementation of the regional trail initiatives identified in the Strategic Plan.

Financial Implications

Financial implications associated with service level adjustments identified by the updated Strategic Plan will be considered by the CRD Board in future service planning processes.

CONCLUSION

The CRD Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan provides a renewed vision, mission, values, priorities and actions to guide regional parks and trails service delivery from 2022 to 2032. This Strategic Plan was developed in consultation with agencies, stakeholders and the public, and with input from First Nations in the region. Interim approval of the plan for one year will provide additional engagement opportunities with First Nations. During the interim approval period, staff will continue to engage with First Nations in order to deepen an understanding of their issues and interests and allow reconciliation efforts identified in the Strategic Plan to commence.

RECOMMENDATION

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Regional Parks Committee:
That the Capital Regional District Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 be approved on an interim basis for one year while engagement with First Nations continues.

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032
Appendix B: Public Engagement Report
Appendix C: First Nations Engagement Report
Appendix D: Presentation

Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032

Territorial Acknowledgement

The CRD conducts its business within the traditional territories of many First Nations, including but not limited to BOKEĆEN (Pauquachin), MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat), Pacheedaht, Pune'laxutth' (Penelakut), Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay), Songhees, STÁUTW (Tsawout), T'Sou-ke, WJOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), WSIKEM (Tseycum), and x^wsepsəm (Esquimalt), all of whom have a long standing relationship with the land and waters from time immemorial that continues to this day.



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Organizational Overview

The Capital Regional District (CRD) delivers regional, sub-regional and local services to 13 municipalities and three electoral areas on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Governed by a 24-member Board of Directors, the CRD works collaboratively with First Nations and all levels of government to enable sustainable growth, foster community well-being, and develop cost-effective infrastructure, while continuing to provide core services to residents throughout the region.



Executive Summary

The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) is an overarching document that provides a long-term vision for regional parks and trails from 2022 to 2032. This updated 10-year Strategic Plan builds on the success of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. It is founded on the belief that regional parks and trails provide immense benefits to the region and that it is necessary to plan today to protect those natural areas that are vital to the long-term health of the region's natural environment, cultural heritage and the health of people and of our communities.

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated an update to the Strategic Plan in December 2021 and set the initial direction for a renewed vision, mission, values and priorities for engagement. This Strategic Plan has been developed with input from First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public, and draws on corporate knowledge and linkages with other CRD strategies.

The highlights of the Strategic Plan are: a commitment to build strong relationships with First Nations in the region and support Indigenous rights; increased efforts to conserve natural areas and cultural heritage; improvements to the visitor experience; preparations for and action on climate change; improved resiliency across the service; and enhanced access to and equity in regional parks and trails.

As the Strategic Plan is implemented over the next decade, monitoring and reporting will be conducted so that the status of actions can be tracked and progress towards achieving the goals can be realized. Minor or major amendments to the Strategic Plan may be considered by the CRD Board over time, in response to shifting priorities.

1. Introduction

In 2019, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board made it a priority to update the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. The CRD developed this Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (the Plan) between December 2021 and June 2022. The Plan updates the former strategy to reflect current challenges and opportunities affecting the region, as well as to incorporate recent CRD initiatives and priorities. The success of this Plan relies on a commitment to superior service delivery, cooperation with partners, and relationships with First Nations.

The Plan is structured as follows: the introduction sets out a renewed vision, values and principles, and mission statements and outlines the engagement process for the Plan update. Section 2 includes a review of the state of regional parks and regional trails in 2022. Section 3 establishes a classification system for regional parks and regional trails. Key priorities and initiatives for regional parks and regional trails are organized in five themes in Section 4. Section 5 outlines the monitoring and reporting structure for the Plan. A glossary of key terms is provided in Appendix A and supporting information is included in Appendices B-E.



Sea to Sea Regional Park



1.1 Vision

The vision identifies the desired future state of regional parks and regional trails in 2032:

We have an expanded and connected system of regional parks and regional trails that are rich in biodiversity, respect Indigenous cultural heritage and use, inspire stewardship, are resilient to change, and provide enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences.

The initial direction for the vision statement was set by the CRD Board at the outset of the Strategic Plan update process and input was received from First Nations, stakeholder organizations and the public throughout the engagement process.

This vision recognizes that the CRD must play a prominent role as a leader in expanding the system of regional parks and trails, in collaboratively and respectfully stewarding natural areas, respecting cultural use, and in facilitating health and wellbeing in the face of a changing climate and a rapidly growing region. This Plan sets the course for the CRD to learn from and work with First Nations communities, as long-term stewards of these lands, achieve a rich and resilient network of parks and trails and to encourage a new generation of stewards.

Reaching the desired vision will be successful if the CRD works closely with First Nations communities, other levels of government, organizations, institutions and residents in the region. A focus on equity and accessibility in the Plan is aimed at encouraging broader participation in regional parks and trails.

1.2 Mission

The mission defines the fundamental purpose of the regional parks and regional trails system, describing why it exists, what it does, and the level of performance to be met or surpassed. The mission for regional parks and regional trails is to:

- Operate and manage a connected system of regional parks for public enjoyment.
- Foster stewardship by learning from and working with long-term land stewards and by connecting people to nature.
- Operate and manage a regional trail network for active transportation and recreation.
- Be fiscally responsible and accountable in decision-making.



1.3 Values

The following values and guiding principles were identified during the development of this Plan. Values and principles define what is important to the CRD and will be applied to guide the implementation of this Plan:

Access: Regional parks and regional trails can be accessed by transit, micromobility, cycling and walking.

Accountability: Decision-making processes and financial management are transparent and based on the best available information.

Connectivity: Biodiversity depends on connected natural area corridors and complete communities depend on connected trail corridors and active transportation networks.

Conservation: Regional parks protect, restore and enhance the region's cultural heritage, biodiversity, and rare and unique ecosystems.

Education: Promoting literacy of the region's natural and cultural heritage increases awareness of the interconnectedness between humans and the nature and impacts of climate change.

Equity: Regional parks and regional trails are inclusive, culturally safe, and accessible to visitors of all ages, abilities and income levels.

Outdoor Recreation: Outdoor recreation benefits our health and wellbeing, connects us to each other and immerses us in nature.

Partnership: A commitment to developing meaningful partnerships with First Nations that respects Indigenous knowledge, First Nations governance and cultural use, as well as to developing partnerships with other levels of government and organizations in the region.

Reconciliation: A commitment to take action towards Indigenous reconciliation by respecting Indigenous laws and strengthening relationships with First Nations communities.

Resiliency: Regional parks and regional trails adapt to change by incorporating solutions that take action on climate change, recognize the value of Indigenous cultural knowledge, ensure sustainable service delivery and aim to benefit future generations.

Stewardship: A commitment to learning from and implementing approaches from First Nations, who are the long term land stewards, and inspiring residents and visitors to be stewards of the region's natural and cultural heritage by leading by example and showcasing best practices.



1.4 Engagement Process

In December 2021, the CRD Board initiated an update to the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. After initial input was received from the Regional Parks Committee and CRD Board to set the strategic direction of the Plan update, an engagement process was implemented between February and April to seek input on the Plan update from stakeholder organizations representing regional conservation, outdoor recreation and community interests, staff from other park agencies, and from the public (Figures 1 and 2). Collectively, the input received through this engagement process has contributed to the development of the vision, mission, values and principles, key priorities, initiatives and targets identified in this Plan. A complete engagement report accompanies this Plan.

The CRD's boundaries span the traditional territories of many First Nations, who have been taking care of the land since time immemorial. The CRD believes that a positive working relationship with First Nations is good for the whole region. Engagement with First Nations on the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is ongoing throughout the development and implementation of this Plan. An engagement report outlining First Nations input to date accompanies this Plan.

FIGURE 1. ENGAGEMENT PROCESS TIMELINE

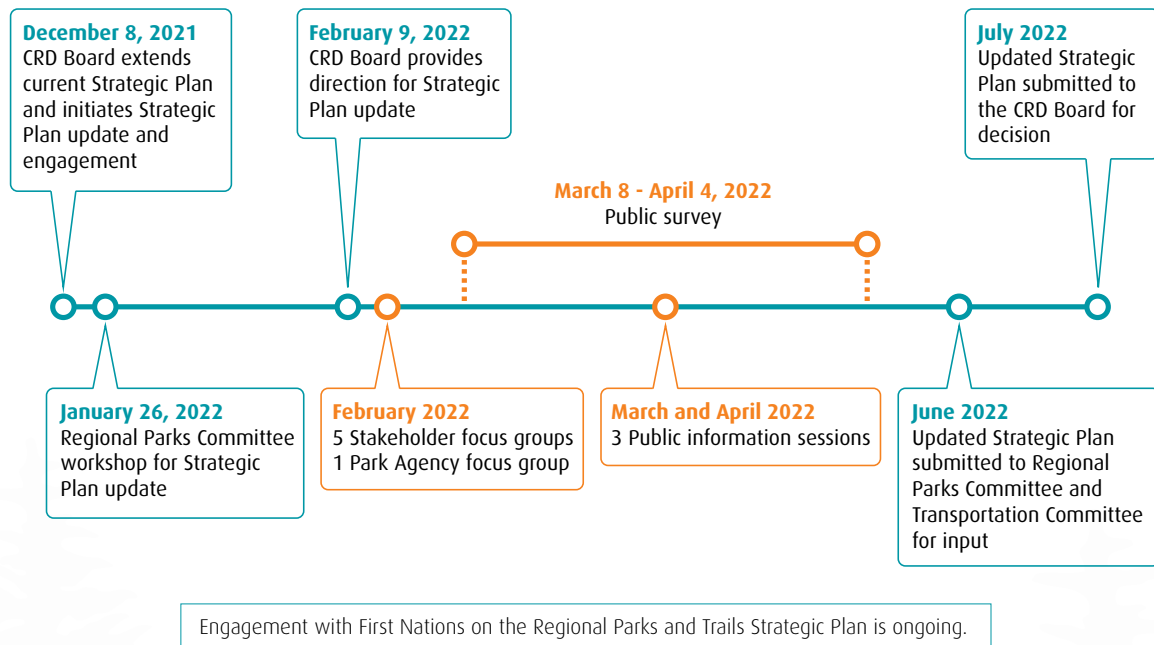


FIGURE 2. ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW





2. Regional Parks and Trails in 2022

2.1 Regional Parks Service

The CRD is the regional government for the 13 municipalities and three electoral areas that are located on the southern tip of Vancouver Island (Map 1). The CRD covers an area of approximately 238,000 hectares (ha) and extends from Port Renfrew in the west, to the Malahat and Saanich Inlet, to Victoria and the Saanich Peninsula, and Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands in the east.

The CRD provides over 200 services in the following categories:

- Regional, where all municipalities and electoral areas are served
- Sub-regional, where two or more jurisdictions are served
- Local, in the electoral areas where the CRD is the local government

The authority to provide a regional parks and regional trails service is granted by the Province of British Columbia (BC) to the regional district primarily through provisions outlined in the *Local Government Act*.

The CRD has provided a service for the provision and maintenance of regional parks and regional trails since incorporation in 1966. The service is a regional service provided to all municipalities and electoral areas in the CRD, as per the “Regional Parks Extended Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1989”, CRD Bylaw No. 1749. The CRD Board is the decision-making authority for the service. The CRD Regional Parks Committee provides input to the Board on matters pertaining to regional parks and regional trails. As of 2022, the CRD Transportation Committee also provides input to the Board on regional trail matters (mobility and recreation, including land acquisition, management, operations and programs for the Galloping Goose, Lochside and E&N regional trails). Funding for the service is primarily through property tax requisition, with additional funding received from non-tax revenue sources, borrowing and grant funding.

In 2022, there are 32 regional parks and four regional trails in the system, comprising over 13,200 hectares (ha) of land (Map 2). Regional parks contribute approximately 27% to the region's network of protected natural areas (Appendix B). Map 2 shows the current extent of parks and protected areas, including federal, provincial, regional and municipal. The CRD's protected watershed lands are also included, as they comprise a significant area dedicated to protection of the region's drinking water supply.

In contrast to most municipal or community park services, regional parks in BC tend to be larger parcels of land located outside of the central urban core and having more limited recreation facilities. Regional parks generally contrast the scale of the vast provincial and federal park systems, and differ from the conservation mandate of conservancies and trust funds. In the CRD, regional parks receive high levels of visitation, offer high-quality facilities, and make up the largest type of park, covering 5.5% of the region's land base (Appendix B). Regional parks are provided for public enjoyment and are compatible with the objectives of protecting biodiversity and cultural heritage. The dynamic of establishing regional parks for the purpose of public use and enjoyment, and for conservation, will become increasingly challenging with continued population growth and development pressure in the region.

Regional trails differ from neighbourhood-scale walking and cycling infrastructure, as they span municipal boundaries and serve as off-street greenway corridors for both active transportation and recreation. Regional trails also differ from provincially-designated Recreation Trails, such as the Kludahk Trail, and iconic hiking trail experiences, such as the Provincial Juan de Fuca Marine Trail and federal West Coast Trail. Regional trails will become increasingly important in supporting the regional transportation mode-shift towards active transportation and micromobility choices, and for improving health and wellness in the region's population.

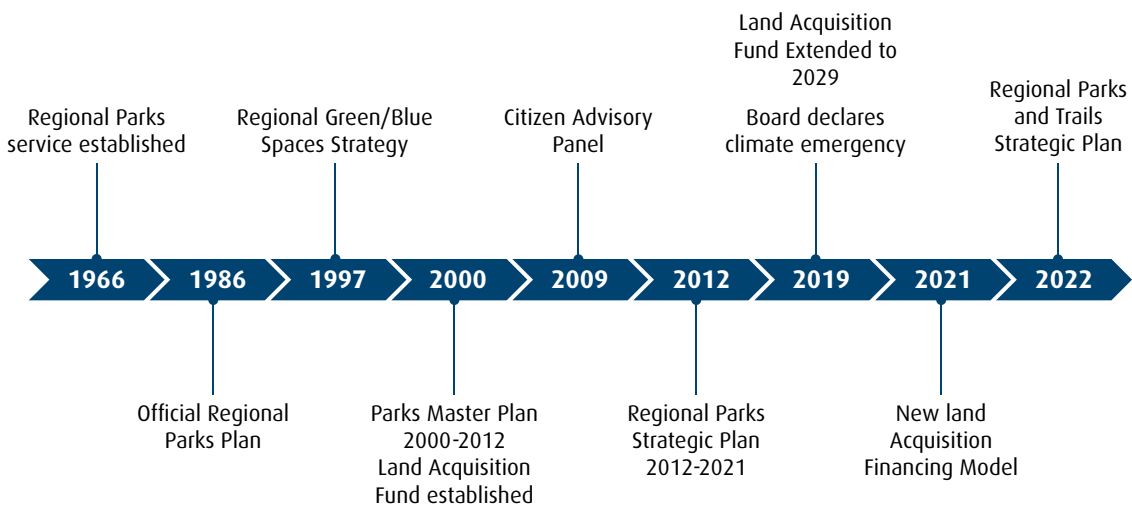




Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

The management of regional parks and regional trails has been guided by various plans and strategies over the years. The former Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021, developed with extensive involvement by a Citizens Advisory Panel, has provided guidance to service delivery over the past ten years. Many of the foundational principles in the former Strategic Plan are incorporated into this updated Plan, and emerging priorities over the past decade have been considered for inclusion in this updated Plan. Notable milestones impacting regional parks and regional trails are highlighted in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3. ACTION THROUGH THE YEARS



Capital Regional District Administrative Boundaries

Capital Region Municipalities

City of Victoria	District of Oak Bay
District of Saanich	Town of Sidney
Township of Esquimalt	Town of View Royal
District of Central Saanich	City of Colwood
District of North Saanich	District of Highlands
City of Langford	District of Metchosin
District of Sooke	

Unincorporated Areas

- Juan de Fuca Electoral Area
- Salt Spring Island Electoral Area
- Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area
- First Nation Reserves

Map Labels: Chetumal, Duncan, Cowichan Bay, Mil Bay, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Willis Point, District of North Saanich, Town of Sidney, District of Central Saanich, District of Saanich, Town of View Royal, City of Langford, City of Colwood, City of Victoria, District of Sooke, District of Metchosin, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area East Sooke, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area, Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area, Galiano, Prevost, Mayno, North Pender, Saturna, South Pender, Piers, Citadel, James, Sidney Island, Port Hardy, Moresby, Washington State, Canada U.S.A.

Inset Map: Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada U.S.A., Washington

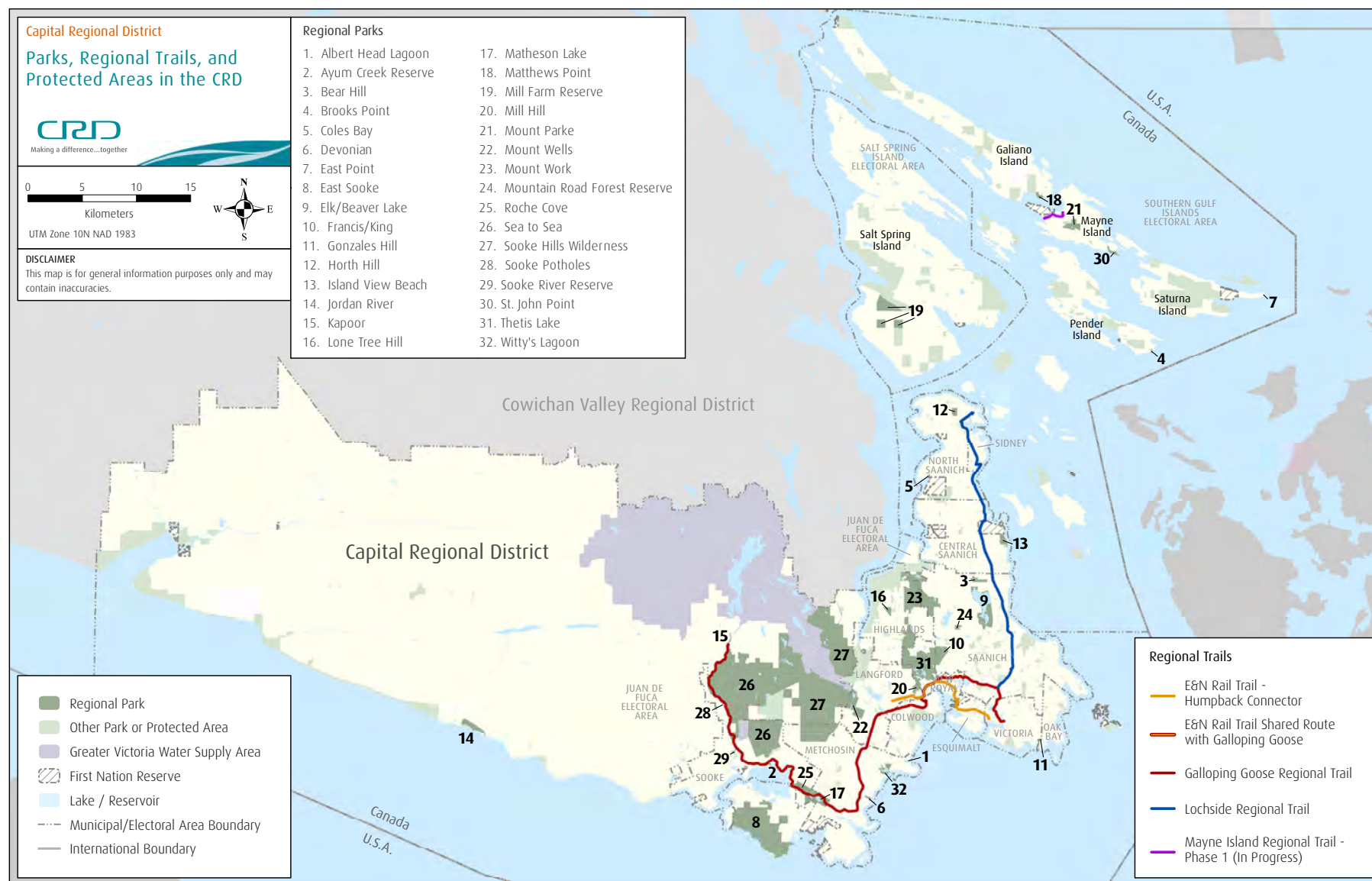
Scale: 1:366,355

Projection: Universal Transverse Mercator, Zone 10, North, North American Datum.

Disclaimer: Important: This map is for general information purposes only. The Capital Regional District (CRD) makes no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy or completeness of this map or the suitability of the map for any purpose. This map is not for navigation. The CRD will not be liable for any damage, loss or injury resulting from the use of the map or information on the map and the map may be changed by the CRD at any time.

Page Information: January 2017 | CRD_Administrative_Boundaries_11x17_2017.mxd | information@crd.bc.ca

MAP 2. PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS IN THE CRD





2.2 Cultural Setting

First Nations with traditional territory in the region follow Indigenous laws, assert Aboriginal Rights protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, and many First Nations are also signatories of the Douglas Treaties.

The CRD's 2018 First Nations Task Force Final Report (Final Report) recommends actions and next steps for the CRD's path towards more inclusive models of governance and decision making between the CRD and First Nations governments. The CRD's Statement of Reconciliation underpins this Final Report and guides the organization's initiatives at the Board, leadership and staff level. The CRD can support reconciliation in many ways. Such opportunities are identified in the Final Report including, but not limited to, incorporating traditional knowledge in park management decisions, offering cultural acumen staff training, and involving First Nations in restoration projects. The CRD Corporate Plan 2019-2022 further identifies the need for the CRD to undertake engagement with First Nations regarding greater collaboration and parks operations.

In 2019, the Province of BC enacted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, committing to upholding the human rights of Indigenous Peoples, and adopted a five-year action plan to advance reconciliation in tangible and measurable ways between 2022-27. Of particular relevance to regional parks and trails are: Article 11 that acknowledges Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs; and Article 31 that recognizes that Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions. These articles and actions will influence how the CRD and First Nations in the region work together over the next decade.

The CRD supports the *Heritage Conservation Act* through implementation of the CRD's Protection and Conservation of Heritage Sites Policy. The CRD recognizes the historical, cultural, scientific, spiritual and educational value of archaeological sites to First Nations, local communities, academic institutions, and the public.

Regional parks encompass many cultural heritage values that may or may not benefit from formal protection but are important in telling the history of the region. The CRD seeks to connect people to place through the delivery of interpretive programs, signs and information. An interpretive program was piloted in 2021 to explore the cultural significance of the region through a First Peoples lens. This program will be expanded in 2022.



2.3 Physical Setting

The CRD encompasses a complex geography and climate that includes a range of rich and diverse ecosystems. Regional parks are home to a number of culturally significant plants and animals for First Nations, including camas, saskatoon berry and sword fern. The CRD is located within three Biogeoclimatic zones: Coastal Douglas-fir (CDF), Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) and Mountain Hemlock (MH) (Map 3).

The CDF zone is home to the highest number of species and ecosystems at risk in BC, of which many are ranked globally as imperiled or critically imperiled. Only 0.3% of BC consists of CDF zone and it is the least protected zone in BC, with many of the protected areas being small, isolated parcels surrounded by development. A significant portion of the total CDF land base has been converted or altered by forestry, agriculture, mining and residential development (Map 4). There is only one subzone of CDF, recognized as CDFmm (Moist Maritime). The CRD currently protects 4% (2,850 ha) of the CDF occurring within the region, which comprises approximately 40% of the regional parks system as a whole (Appendix C).

The CWH zone covers approximately 11% of the province and is comprised of ten subzones, of which three occur within the CRD. While the CWH is relatively well protected across BC, two subzones that occur within the CRD are more heavily disturbed and less protected across their range, including CWH xm1 (very dry maritime - eastern) and CWH sm2 (very dry maritime-western). The CRD currently protects 6.4% (10,360 ha) of the region's CWH, which comprises 60% of the regional parks system (Appendix C).

The MH zone occupies approximately 4% of the province, along higher elevations (900-1,800 m above sea level) of the BC Coast. It consists of three subzones, of which only MH mm1 (moist maritime) occurs within the CRD in an area of 3,473 ha in size. The MH mm1 zone is generally well protected across BC, but is not currently protected by the regional parks system.

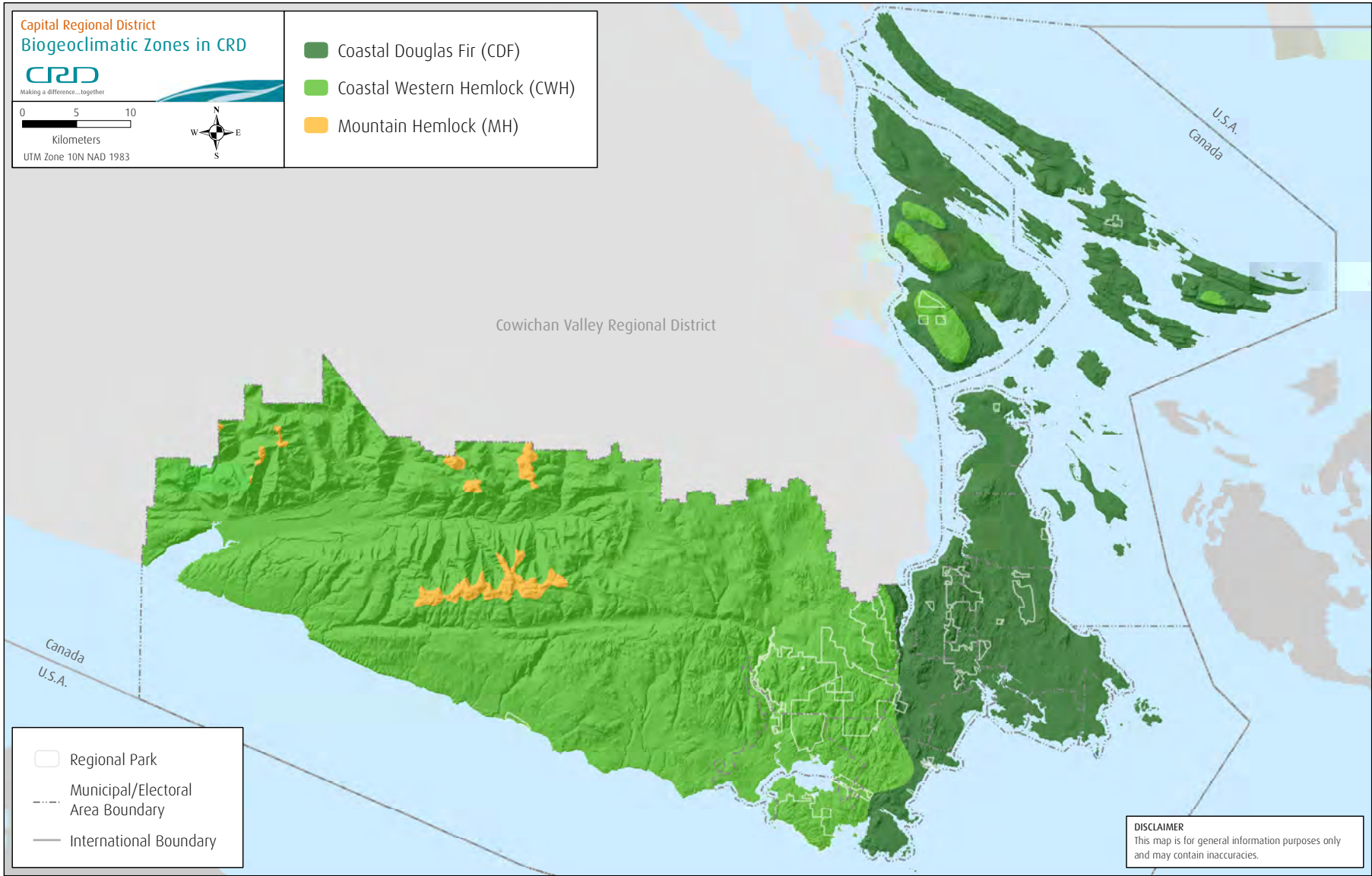
There are several species and ecological communities within the CRD at risk of becoming extinct. The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) provides federal legal protection for species at risk, and their associated critical habitat, in an effort to recover the species. Critical habitat is identified under SARA to protect habitat necessary for the survival or recovery of species at risk. While SARA applies largely to federal lands, the CRD is effectively responsible for providing protection for species at risk within regional parks. The BC Ministry of Environment Conservation Data Centre conducts provincial assessments of species and ecological communities at risk. The CRD supports conservation by complying with provincial and federal legislation for at risk species and ecological communities in regional parks.

Both federally and provincially listed species at risk, and ecological communities occur across the CRD. Federally, 72 species are known or expected to occur within region parks, comprising 88% of all at-risk species across the Capital Region. Critical habitat has been proposed or confirmed for 11 of those species, covering over 60% of existing regional parks land base. Provincially, 61 species at risk and 18 ecological communities at risk occur within regional parks, comprising 51% and 78% of all species and ecological communities in the Capital Region, respectively. This data may exclude some omitted information due to privacy or data sensitivity purposes.

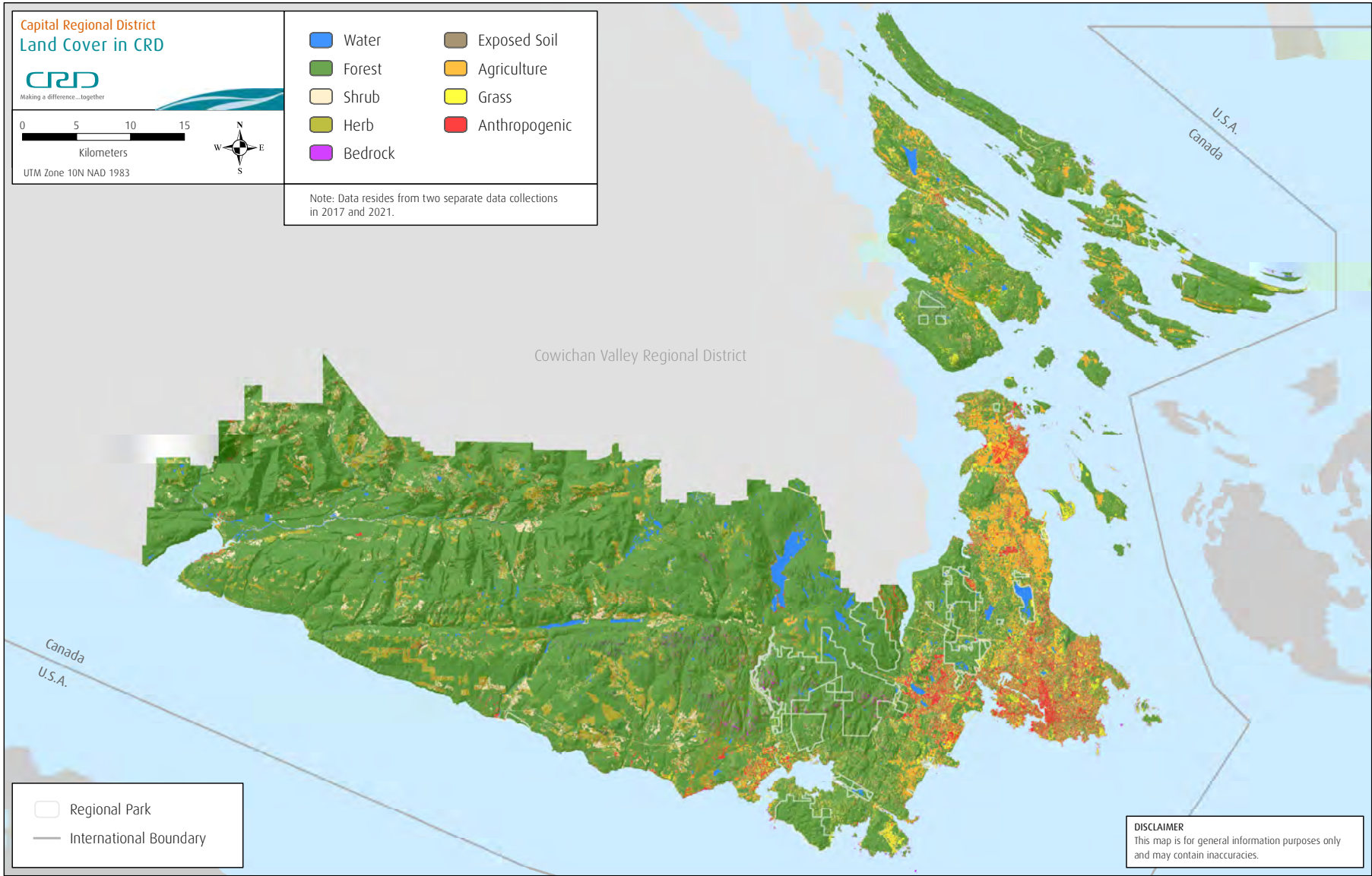
The region includes a mosaic of different land cover types that have changed significantly over the years. Map 4 provides a snapshot in time of the land cover categories comprising the region. The majority of regional park land is dominated by forest land cover (86%) with herb and water (lakes, streams and wetlands) comprising about 8% of regional parks. The remaining land cover in regional parks includes bedrock, grass and shrubs, and very minimal modern anthropogenic features (roads, built infrastructure). Although land cover and land use is in constant flux at the local level, the character of the region is not anticipated to change significantly on a broad scale over the next decade. The urban containment boundary identified in the CRD's Regional Growth Strategy plays a key role in protecting natural areas from outward urban expansion, as has the strategic acquisition of the green/blue belt over the past twenty years.

Regional parks are vulnerable to a number of stressors that threaten the ecological health, function and integrity of important ecological values, both within regional parks and the surrounding land. Threats to the region's ecological values include invasive species, hyperabundant species, urban development, industrial and agricultural land use, and significant or extreme weather events, such as fire, flood, drought, wind, and sea level rise. Ecological values are also vulnerable to pressures within regional parks related to facility development and visitor use. The CRD addresses and mitigates threats to ecological values in regional parks and trails through research, planning, active management, stewardship, monitoring and enforcement in collaboration with First Nations, community members, regional and provincial partners.

MAP 3. BIOGEOCLIMATIC ZONES IN CRD



MAP 4. LAND COVER ANALYSIS



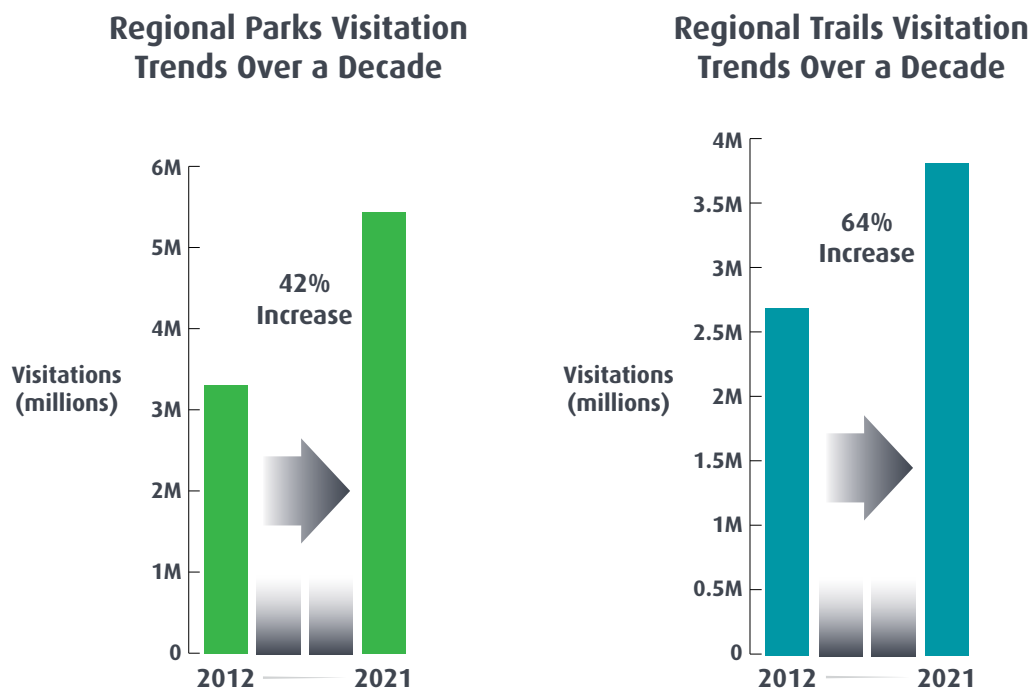
2.4 Visitor Experience

Regional parks and regional trails are vital to the region, supporting health and wellbeing, offering social connections, and improving quality of life. Regional parks provide over 300 kilometres (km) of trails and a range of opportunities for outdoor recreation, experiencing nature, learning about natural and cultural heritage, participating in park stewardship, and gathering for events. Regional parks primarily offer day-use activities, but there are currently three campgrounds operating in the system. The regional parks system includes near-urban, rural, and remote opportunities to access nature. Regional parks receive routine maintenance and improvements to ensure public safety, such as waste removal, vegetation clearing, and hazard assessments.

Regional trails are a separated, primarily off-street pathway system connecting urban and rural communities across the region. There are over 100 km of regional trails available for use 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. Regional trails serve as the anchor for the region's active transportation network and recreational greenway corridors.

System-wide visitation to regional parks and regional trails has increased by 54% since 2012. In 2021, regional trails received over 3.7 million visits and regional parks received over 5 million visits (Figure 4). Visitation rates are determined by a series of vehicle counters at parking lots and trail counters at various locations.

FIGURE 4. 10 YEAR VISITATION TRENDS



Residents of the region value the importance of regional parks and regional trails. The CRD's 2017 Regional Parks Resident Survey results indicate that the public supports outdoor recreation activities in regional parks provided there is no negative impact to conservation values and that the most popular recreational activities in regional parks are hiking, walking, horseback riding, cycling, camping, swimming, paddling, fishing and nature study. Regional trail use is predominantly by cyclists (80%) and pedestrians (20%) in the urban areas, with peak use to weekday morning and afternoon commute times. Regional trail use in the rural areas receives lower volumes and seasonal use, and includes cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians with peak use occurring on weekends and midday.

The CRD offers interpretive programs that deliver education and outreach about natural and cultural values in regional parks. In 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, interpretive programs reached over 3,600 students through school programs, 6,600 park visitors through public programs and park events, and over 2,000 residents through community outreach events. In addition, the CRD operates two nature centres in regional parks that are open to the public and, on average, see over 8,000 visitors a year. In 2021, the CRD piloted an interpretive program in regional parks that explores the cultural significance of the region through a First Peoples lens and is expanding the program in 2022. The CRD supports reinstating Indigenous place names through the regional park naming policy and interpretive signage.





Many opportunities are available for volunteers to be involved in regional parks and trails. The CRD offers volunteer positions as park naturalists, park stewards, mountain biking stewards, and trail ambassadors. There are also opportunities for volunteers to contribute to projects, such as park clean-ups, invasive species removal, restoration and vegetation planting. In 2021, approximately 460 volunteers committed over 5,500 hours to regional parks and trails. Additionally, the CRD holds two license agreements with community organizations for stewardship of mountain-biking trails in two regional parks. Expertise, in-kind contributions, and financial donations contribute to the overall enhancement of regional parks and regional trails and, through working with First Nations, volunteers and organizations, the CRD can strengthen connections with community members and better understand the visitor experience.

Certain uses may be allowed in regional parks and trails on a limited basis, subject to permit, as outlined in CRD Bylaw No. 3675, the “Capital Regional District Regional Parks Services and Facilities Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 1, 2010”. In 2021, 38 special event permits were issued for activities such as festivals and competitions, 63 commercial permits were issued for activities such as filming, training, dog-walking, use of picnic shelters, and research. The CRD recognizes the benefits of enhanced opportunities in regional parks and trails provided that, overall, natural areas and other park users are not negatively impacted.

The CRD delivers a compliance and enforcement program in regional parks and regional trails that emphasizes use of education to gain voluntary compliance leading to better protection of park and trail assets, safer and more enjoyable experiences, and better informed park and trail users. This work is conducted through community outreach, promotional campaigns, volunteers and the park ranger program. In 2021, park rangers conducted over 2,700 hours of patrols and CRD bylaw officers conducted over 1,800 hours of patrols to promote compliance with the “Capital Regional District Parks Regulation Bylaw No. 1, 2018”, CRD Bylaw No. 4225. While voluntary compliance far exceeds the number of ticket violations, the main infractions tend to be related to illegal parking, camping in unauthorized areas, possession of alcohol, off-leash dogs and failure to obey signs. The use of regional parks and regional trails is summarized in Figure 5.

FIGURE 5. USE IN REGIONAL PARKS AND REGIONAL TRAILS





Todd Creek Trestle - Galloping Goose Regional Trail

2.5 Park and Trail Facilities

The CRD's system of regional parks and regional trails is comprised of both natural assets and facilities, including over 13,200 ha of land and 300 km of park trails in 32 regional parks, and approximately 100 km of paved and gravel regional trails.

The CRD's 2019 Corporate Asset Management Strategy outlines how the CRD will apply an integrated approach, evidence-based decision-making, and life cycle management to renew infrastructure and determine appropriate levels of service for regional parks and regional trails

The CRD's 2019 Regional Parks Sustainable Service Delivery Plan Report Card provides a summary of the condition of assets in regional parks and trails and a snapshot of the services' financial state to help inform a future asset renewal program and ensure appropriate levels of service delivery.

There were an estimated 273 major engineered assets in regional parks and trails in 2019. Although the majority of engineered assets in both regional parks and regional trails are in good or very good condition, infrastructure such as dams, buildings and bridges have high replacement costs, need to meet public safety standards, and are critical for continued public use. Facilities such as trails, furniture and signage have varying lifespans and renewal needs but are also essential for providing a high quality experience to visitors.

Staff plan, implement, operate and maintain infrastructure in regional parks and regional trails to provide an appropriate duty of care and deliver the service to visitors. This work requires adequate numbers of skilled staff plus equipment, vehicles and supplies. The CRD typically retains contractors to conduct more significant construction and repair projects.

2.6 Investment

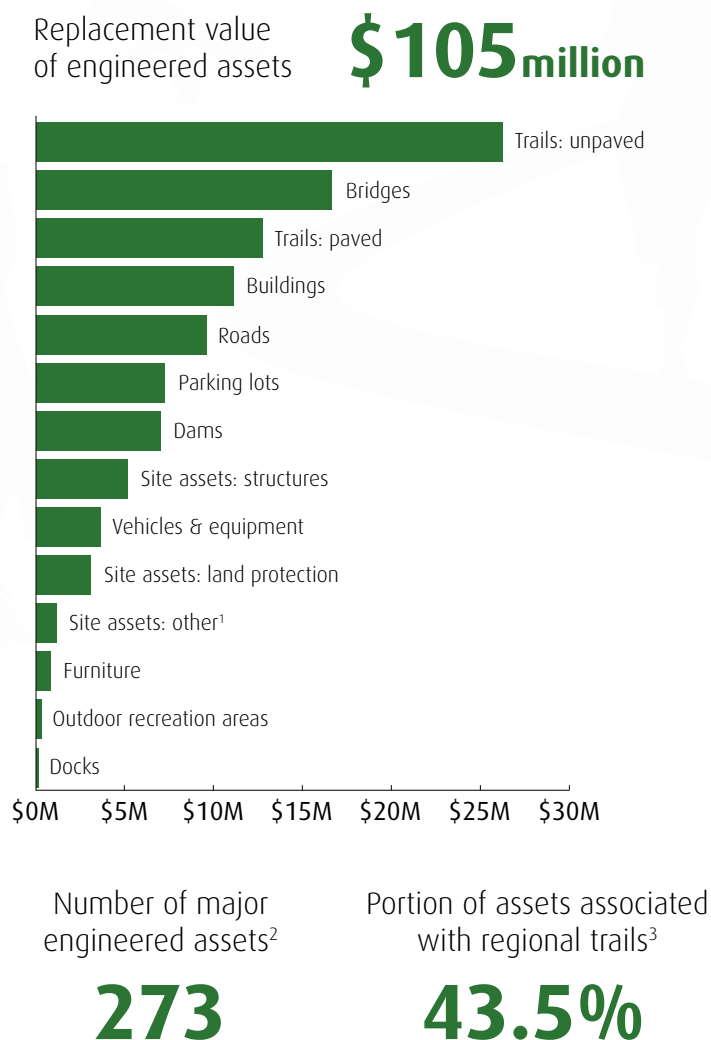
The regional parks and regional trails service is funded primarily through a regional property tax requisition. In 2022, the annual operating budget for regional parks and regional trails was \$16.7 million. The CRD Board Strategic Plan 2019-2022 prioritizes ensuring appropriate funding for parks and trails infrastructure, improvements and maintenance. The CRD Board has also endorsed the appropriateness of the property tax requisition as the primary revenue source for operating costs and continues to seek ways to relieve affordability pressure for taxpayers.

Non-tax revenue does provide a portion of the funding stream for regional parks and trails. Non-tax revenue is generated through the fees and permit provisions in CRD Bylaw No. 3675, "Capital Regional District Regional Parks Services and Facilities Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 1, 2010". Other sources of non-tax revenue may include: donations, facility rentals or lease agreements, bylaw infraction fines, and external grant funding. The CRD conducted a revenue generation review for regional parks in 2019 and determined approximately \$575,000, not including grant funding and bylaw infraction fines, was generated from non-tax sources. In 2022, non-tax revenue comprises approximately 3% of the annual budget for regional parks and trails. In 2022, tax requisition funded \$15.5 million towards the total annual operating budget of \$16.7 million. Additionally, grant funding enhances the overall budget but is dependent on available opportunities and successful applications.

The total 2019 replacement value for all built infrastructure over the current lifespan was estimated at \$105 million. The value of regional trails infrastructure costs make up over 40% of asset replacement value (approximately \$40 million) (Figure 6). These estimates were based on an estimated condition assessment and valuation of existing built assets and do not include enhanced or expanded assets already committed or contemplated in this Plan. Inflation, cost and availability of materials will continue to influence the estimated replacement value of built infrastructure. Due to these factors, the estimated 2022 replacement values for all built infrastructure in regional parks and regional trails over the current lifespan is estimated at \$120,750,000.

Additional financial resources are required to meet critical infrastructure renewal demands, as well as to address expansions to the regional parks and trails system, enhanced protection and monitoring of ecosystems and cultural heritage, improved facility design, planning, monitoring, engagement and outreach efforts. Although grant funding is typically relied upon to develop new facilities, there is increasing need to secure reliable and sustainable funds to support future enhancement to, and renewal of, regional parks and trails.

FIGURE 6. 2019 REPLACEMENT VALUE OF ENGINEERED ASSETS



¹The category of Site assets: other includes water systems, sign posts and utilities.

²The total number of major and minor assets is 3,700.

³Assets in the regional trails service include asphalt and gravel pavement, bridges and culverts, fencing, pit toilets, and amenities such as rest and water stations.

2.7 Land Acquisition

The CRD Board established a Land Acquisition Fund (LAF) in 2000 for the sole purpose of acquiring regional park land. The LAF was initially set at a rate of \$10 per average residential household and has increased over time. In 2010, the LAF was renewed and an increase of \$1 per year was approved. In November 2019, the Board extended the LAF to 2029 at the rate of \$20 per average residential household, with rates set to increase by \$1 each year through 2025 to a maximum of \$25 per average residential household. The LAF collected approximately \$4 million in 2021 for regional park land acquisition.

The CRD's 2022 Financial Plan incorporates a new approach to land acquisition that leverages borrowing capacity to purchase land that would otherwise be unattainable on a pay-as-you-go savings model. The new borrowing-power approach recognizes that, given the current economic development reality and high land costs in the region, land acquisition decisions need to accommodate opportunistic acquisitions of important lands versus saving for a cash purchase. This financing structure is anticipated to create a revenue stream that can be used to debt service up to \$50 million of land purchases over 15 years, thereby leveraging a net increase in land values in excess of \$100 million. The financing structure is aimed at managing revenue and cash flow to increase land acquisition capacity and provide value-added service delivery. Costs incurred for the securement and development of new regional park lands are considered at time of acquisition, and when a park management plan is developed, and are brought forward as budget increases.

The CRD's Regional Parks Land Acquisition Strategy (LAS) identifies criteria for selecting desirable parcels of the land to purchase as regional park. The LAS strives to achieve a 20% contribution of land acquisition funds from partners. To date, the CRD, with support of partners, has acquired approximately 4,800 ha of land since 2000. In that time, the regional park system has grown from 8,400 ha to more than 13,200 ha.

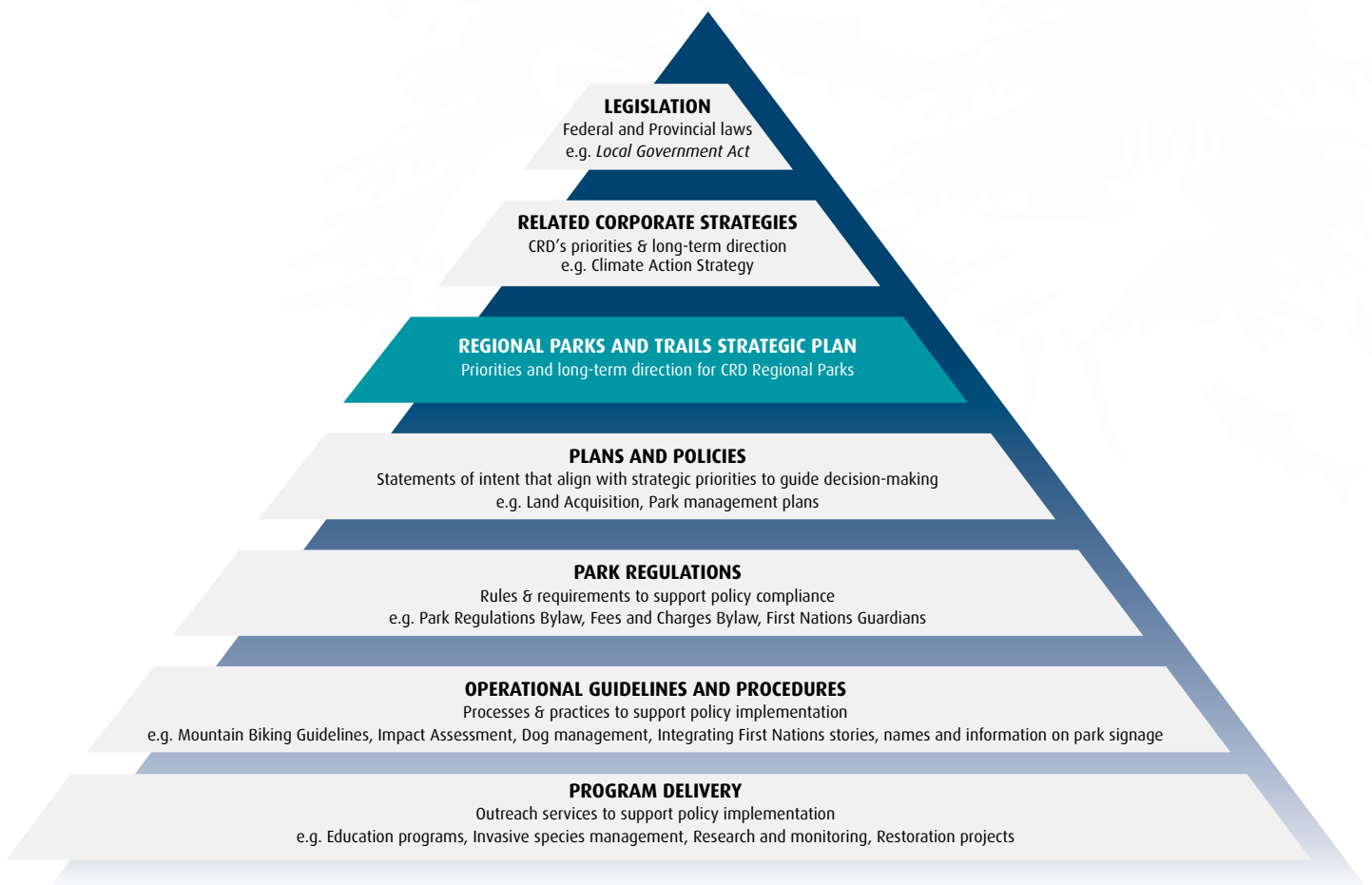
The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) requires municipalities to identify regionally significant park lands in the municipal context statements in their Official Community Plans. The CRD is committed to having meaningful discussions with First Nations, municipal, provincial and federal parks agencies operating in the region, as well as with land conservancy organizations and other potential partners when entering into land acquisition decisions.

3. Planning Framework

This updated Strategic Plan will help the CRD set priorities, respond to complex challenges, and guide the organization in making decisions that move towards a desired future state for regional parks and regional trails. This Plan will benefit staff, the Regional Parks Committee, Transportation Committee and the Board in making decisions that advance the vision. The updated Strategic Plan will provide better opportunities for First Nations engagement by providing a framework for collaborating on regional parks and trails initiatives with First Nations. The updated Strategic Plan is also intended to create a greater understanding of the CRD's priorities and commitments for regional parks and regional trails going forward.

This Plan applies to the overall management of regional parks and regional trails. The Plan's vision, mission, values and principles, priorities, actions and targets will be implemented through the various plans, policies, regulations and programs guiding regional parks and regional trails (Figure 7). Where existing park plans and policies are inconsistent with the Strategic Plan, updates will be undertaken to bring them into alignment. Financial support for implementation will be determined through operating and capital budgets approved by the Board.

FIGURE 7. STRATEGIC PLAN WITHIN THE HIERARCHY OF OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS



Since 2012, the CRD has adopted a number of key strategies, including the Regional Growth Strategy and Climate Action Strategy, and has committed to support reconciliation with First Nations that have traditional territory in the region. This Plan reflects how the regional parks and regional trails system can support the current CRD Board priorities 2019-2022, and the initiatives identified in the related CRD strategies identified in Figure 8 (Appendix D). Related CRD strategies are available at: www.crd.bc.ca/plans

FIGURE 8. CRD STRATEGIES WITH STRONG LINKS TO THE REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS STRATEGIC PLAN





3.1 Regional Park Classifications

A park classification system establishes the intended purpose for each park type. The concept of establishing a spectrum of regional park classifications was first adopted in the Official Regional Park Plan, 1987, and continued in the CRD Parks Master Plan, 2000, and the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021. The regional park classification system is established in Figure 9. Existing regional parks are classified as shown on Map 5, and Appendix E, and include: 11 Conservation Areas, 3 Wilderness Areas, and 18 Natural Recreation Area parks. Appendix E shows the current proportion of the regional parks system by classification type. A new Conservancy Area classification has been established in anticipation of emerging interests to protect natural or cultural features, primarily for their intrinsic value to First Nations. Consideration of a new park classification by the CRD Board would constitute a major amendment to this Plan. Consideration of classifying new regional park land or reclassifying existing lands by the CRD Board will constitute a minor amendment to this Plan.

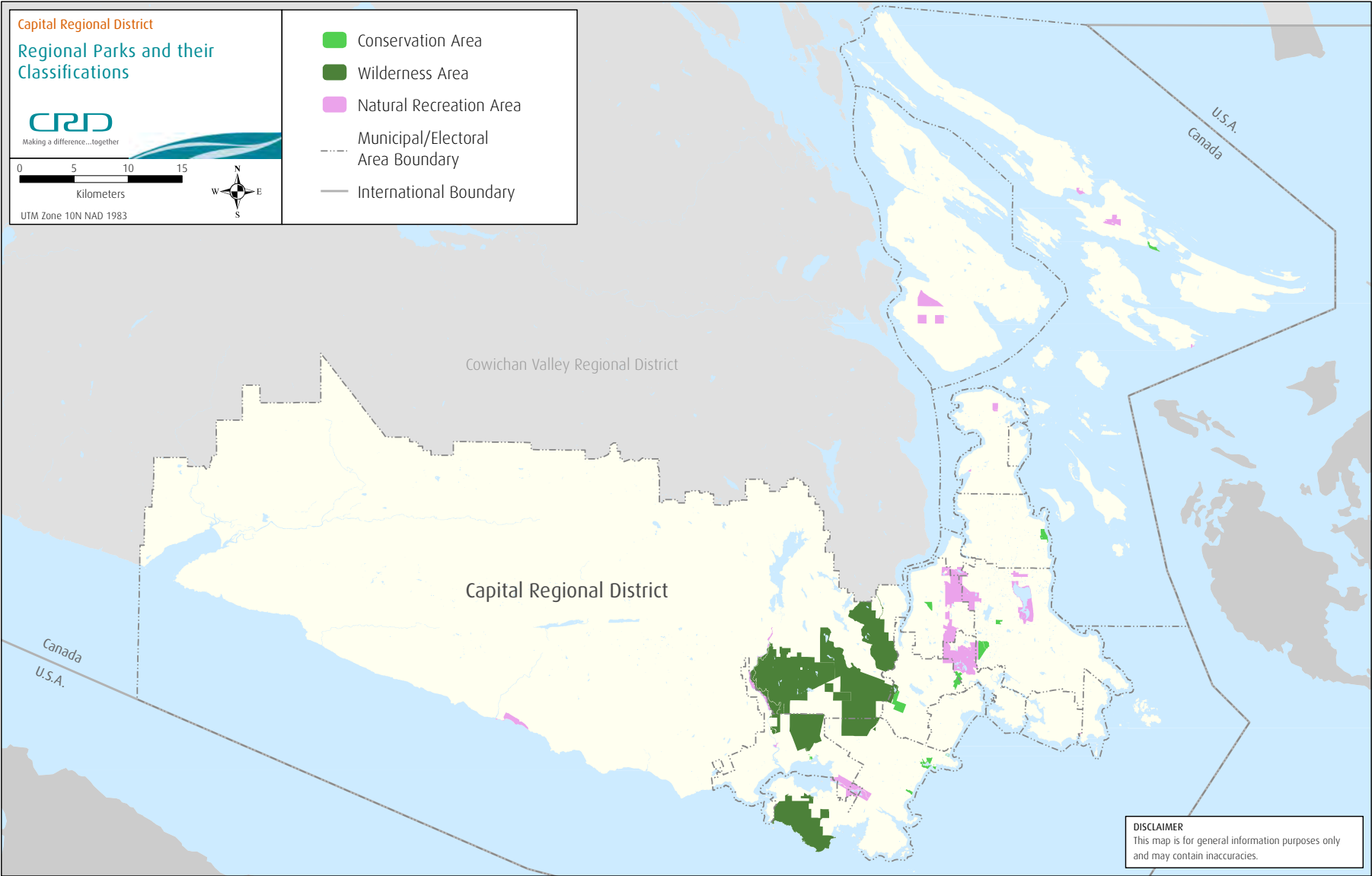
Park management plans set the policy approach for regional parks and will be reviewed and updated to align with this Plan. Of the 32 regional parks in the system in 2022, 18 have management plans, 1 has interim management guidelines, and 13 are without management plans. Of the 18 management plans, 8 have been approved within the past 15 years. Upon acquisition, a park is dedicated by bylaw and a park management plan is prepared and approved by the CRD Board to guide how that park is to be developed and what services will be offered. Park management plans that are informed by assessments of what regional park values are present, input from First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public provide a foundation for evidence-based decision-making and reflect current and future visitor use of regional parks in order to anticipate future pressures on the park and to respect interests and values. Park zoning is used to define appropriate uses, facilities and services offered within different areas of a park based on the present values. It is important that park management plans forecast challenges and opportunities that may impact a park over time, and include mitigation measures and financial considerations to guide decision-making. Regular monitoring and reporting on park management plan implementation provides accountability and transparency.

FIGURE 9. REGIONAL PARK CLASSIFICATIONS



Park Classification	Purpose
Conservation Area	To protect species or ecological communities at risk and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on interpretation of natural and cultural features.
Wilderness Area	To protect large, connected tracts of natural areas and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on remote and secluded outdoor recreation activities.
Conservancy Area	To protect natural assets and areas primarily for their intrinsic cultural use value where there is a traditional use agreement in place and to offer visitor experiences that enhance understanding and appreciation for Indigenous cultural use.
Natural Recreation Area	To protect a connected system of natural areas and to offer visitor experiences that are primarily focused on outdoor recreation activities.

MAP 5. REGIONAL PARK CLASSIFICATIONS



3.2 Regional Trail Classifications

A trail classification system establishes the intended purpose for each regional trail type. This Plan builds on the regional trail classification system established in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 and is established in Figure 10. Existing regional trails are classified as shown on Map 6 and include: Urban Bike and Pedestrian and Rural Bike and Pedestrian. Consideration of a new trail classification by the CRD Board would constitute a major amendment to this Plan. Consideration of classifying new regional trails or reclassifying existing regional trails by the CRD Board will constitute a minor amendment to this Plan.

The CRD's 2016 Regional Trails Management Plan and 2018 Gulf Islands Regional Trails Management Plan set the current policy approach for regional trails and will be reviewed and updated to align with this Plan. Regional trail management plans are prepared to guide how regional trails will be developed and what facilities are offered. Regional trail management plans are informed by the classification system, as well as by related strategies such as the CRD's 2014 Regional Transportation Plan, input from First Nations, interest groups and the public, and are approved by the CRD Board. It is important the regional trail management plans forecast challenges and opportunities that may impact the regional trails over time and include financial considerations to guide decision-making. Regular monitoring and reporting on regional trail management plan implementation provides accountability and transparency.



Selkirk Trestle - Galloping Goose Regional Trail



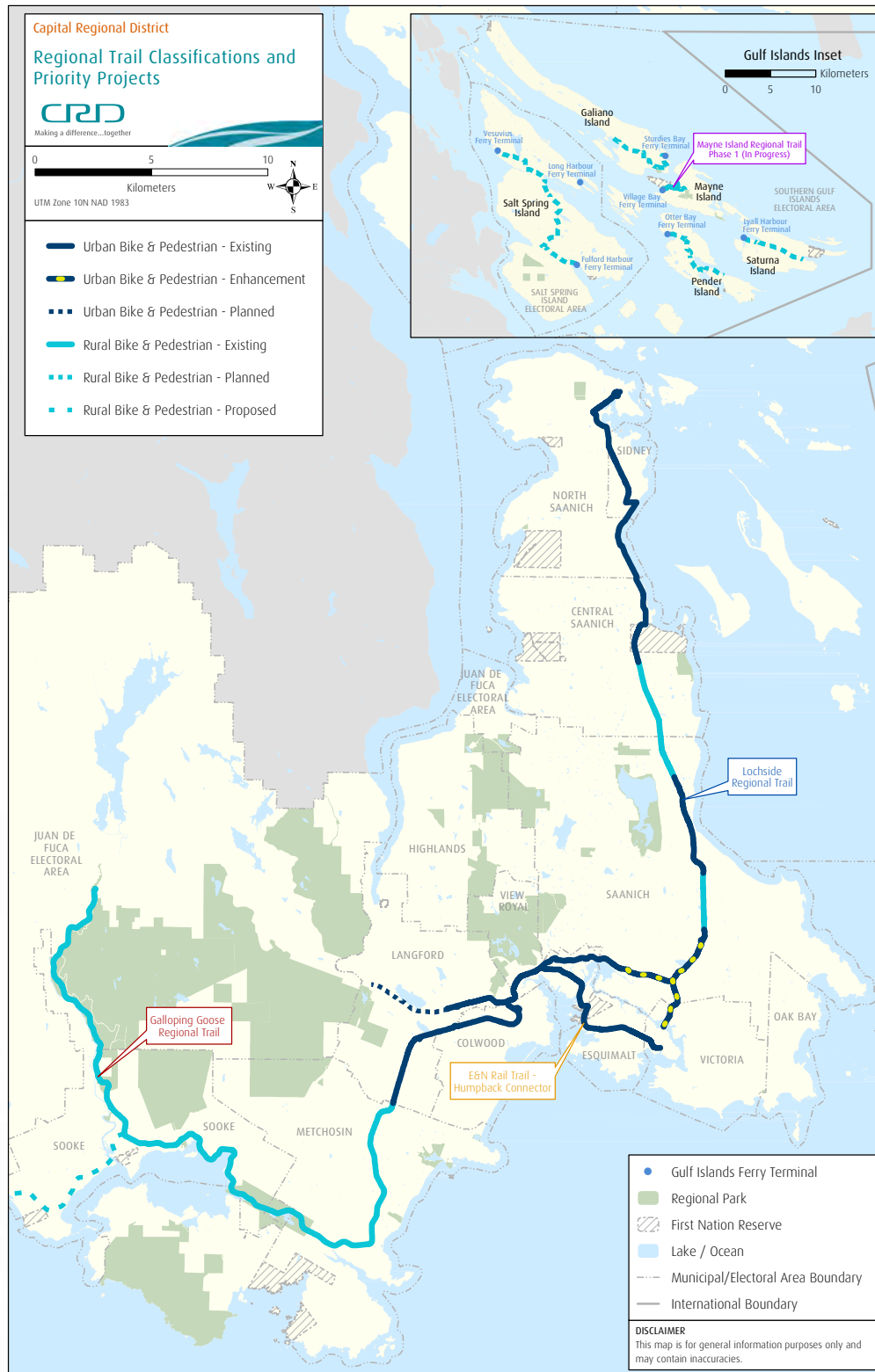
Credit: Bill Irvine

FIGURE 10. REGIONAL TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS



Park Classification	Purpose
Urban Bike & Pedestrian	To provide an off-street trail corridor in urban areas that is primarily for high volumes of active transportation at peak travel times and accommodates regular recreational use. Trail separation and lighting design standards will be applied to areas with high user volumes and greater trail user differential.
Rural Bike & Pedestrian	To provide an off-street trail corridor in rural areas that is primarily for active transportation and recreation with higher volumes during the summer season and on weekends. Trail design will be dual-direction, shared use with gravel surface, except in areas of higher user volumes or on-street separated facilities, where a paved surface may be considered.

MAP 6. REGIONAL TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS AND PRIORITY PROJECTS





Lochside Regional Trail

The CRD recognizes there are competing priorities for enhancing and expanding the regional trails network. The following priority projects are identified for the upcoming decade and are shown on Map 6:

- Enhance Urban Bike & Pedestrian trails in high use sections with a separated use pathway and lighting;
- Complete the E&N regional trail;
- Develop the Gulf Islands regional trail network;
- Plan for and develop an extension of the Galloping Goose to connect to Sooke and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.

The following criteria will be applied when prioritizing planning, enhancing and expanding the regional trails system:

- Tenure is established for the route corridor;
- Route has a greenway character that is primarily separated from motor-vehicle traffic;
- Route addresses an existing gap in the network that connects to communities;
- Public safety, regulatory requirements and critical infrastructure renewal takes precedent over regional trail expansion projects;
- User volume and user type differential data will inform where enhancements are prioritized;
- Enhancement projects can align with other planned work;
- Funding is secured.

The following guiding principles will be applied to minimize service disruptions on regional trails whenever possible:

- Isolate worksite to allow regional trail to remain open during the work activity;
- Minimize footprint of work site;
- Schedule work activity outside of peak visitation times;
- Provide early and ongoing communication to users;
- Provide a higher standard of care for detours on Urban Bike and Pedestrian trails.



4. Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priorities have been developed to guide the CRD towards its desired vision for regional parks and regional trails. The Strategic Priorities are presented in the following theme categories: Reconciliation; Conservation; Visitor Experience; Climate Action & Resiliency; Access & Equity. Supporting actions and timelines for implementation are provided for each priority.



Reconciliation

Goal 1: Strong, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations through working in partnership.

This Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan is a refreshed outlook on strengthening government-to-government relationships and understanding between the CRD and First Nations in the region.

The CRD commits to maintain an open dialogue with First Nations to confirm that Indigenous cultural values and cultural uses are respected and that the priorities and actions remain relevant and meaningful. The Plan will support ongoing engagement with First Nations in the operation of regional parks and regional trails in years to come. Currently, CRD staff are participating in training to better understand Indigenous harvesting rights and practices in regional parks. Work is also underway to formalize traditional use agreements with First Nations to better recognize traditional harvesting rights. At the same time, it is recognized that reconciliation initiatives will be long-lasting and evolve over time.

The CRD's Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action Dashboard highlights a number of areas where the CRD can focus program or policy development in regional parks and regional trails to support reconciliation. The CRD recognizes that each First Nation has individual interests, needs and capacity to engage in these initiatives. In addition to the reconciliation goal and supporting priorities and actions identified here, this Plan identifies many priorities and actions related to working with First Nations.

The CRD will work with First Nations as Treaty settlements are committed and as the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and action plan is implemented. The CRD supports working with First Nations on common interests and recognizes that how this is achieved will be an ongoing discussion with each First Nation and will evolve as priorities, capacities, and governance structures shift over time. This Plan supports the journey towards strengthened relationships with First Nations and overall increased cultural awareness and respect to improve management of regional parks and trails.



Culturally Modified Tree

The inner bark of the western red cedar is harvested in the spring from the sunrise side of the tree to encourage healing. The bark is then prepared for weaving by soaking it in water and beating it between two stones. It can then be woven into baskets, blankets, mats and hats.

Priority 1-1

Incorporate First Nation worldviews and knowledge in the ongoing management and operation of regional parks and regional trails.

Actions	Timing
1-1a Work with First Nations to develop and implement priority initiatives related to regional parks and regional trails, such as: • Integrating First Nations stories, names and other information on park and trail signage and communications material; • Recognizing traditional place names; • Developing cooperative management agreements, traditional use protocols and access agreements; • Information sharing; • Involving First Nations in land acquisition and park management planning and operations.	Ongoing
1-1b Develop a policy for supporting and clarifying Indigenous cultural use and cultural safety in regional parks.	Short-term

Priority 1-2

Work with First Nations Governments in service delivery initiatives.

Actions	Timing
1-2a Encourage and invite First Nations interpreters in regional parks.	Ongoing
1-2b Partner with First Nations in conservation and restoration projects.	Ongoing
1-2c Support First Nations guardians in the region.	Ongoing
1-2d Support business relations with First Nations that provide value-added and compatible services in regional parks and regional trails, such as campground operations.	Ongoing



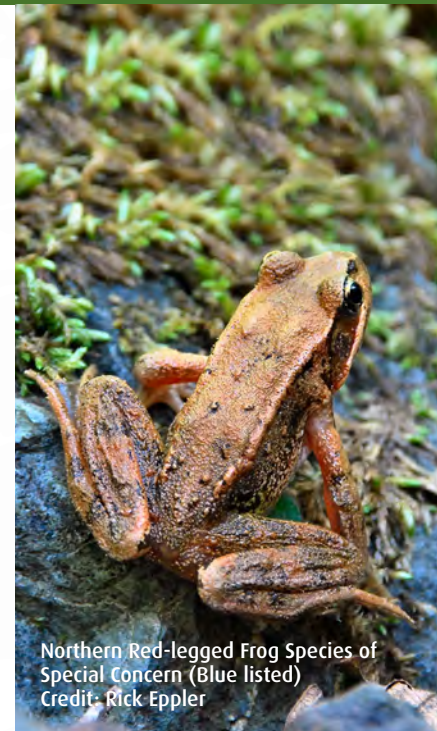
Conservation

Goal 2: Regional parks protect the region's natural assets and cultural heritage for future generations

Regional parks contribute to a large system of connected natural areas that protect natural assets, maintain ecological health, function and integrity, and provide important refuge for a diversity of species, from the threatened blue-grey tailed dropper slug to large carnivores, including wolves, bears and cougars. This complex and diverse system of protected areas is vital to ensuring long-term viability of natural areas, conserving biodiversity and building resilience to changing climates and increasing pressures on the landscape.

Regional parks also contribute to the protection of the region's cultural heritage and archaeological sites protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act*. These sites are culturally significant to First Nations and to post-contact settler history of the region. Careful protection and monitoring of these sites is important to ensure impacts from visitor use and climate change do not degrade their integrity. The CRD's Protection and Conservation of Heritage Sites Policy provides protocol and procedure for ground-altering works near registered archaeological sites and in areas of high potential. Increased staff awareness and involvement by First Nations in the assessment of these sites allows for traditional knowledge to be incorporated into efforts to protect these sites in perpetuity.

New approaches have been adopted by local governments across Canada to recognize that natural assets, such as forests, wetlands, lakes and streams, can provide equivalent or better services compared to engineered facilities, and at reduced costs. Through conservation efforts, the region can sustain ecosystem goods, such as clean air and water, and ecosystem services, such as nutrient cycling, water storage and purification. Important social, cultural and spiritual values can also be improved through natural asset management.



Northern Red-legged Frog Species of Special Concern (Blue listed)
Credit: Rick Eppler

The Northern Red-legged Frog *Rana aurora* can be found in many CRD Regional Parks. Frogs are often an indicator species, and when their numbers decline, it is often a sign of declining ecosystem health overall. Currently, the Northern Red-legged Frog is provincially listed as special concern in British Columbia. It is designated as a species of Special Concern in Canada.

The CRD's regional parks currently protect a number of important natural assets that provide beneficial ecosystem goods and services. Ensuring ecological health and integrity of natural assets over the long term is challenging as stressors on the park system increase, such as higher visitor use and extreme weather events related to climate change. Understanding the current ecological values and health status of regional parks is fundamental to their effective management and protection. Across the region, information about the ecology of the landscape has been documented for many years. The Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI) was conducted for East Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands from 1993-97, and updated in 2002, providing information on rare and fragile terrestrial ecosystems. In 2008, Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping was conducted across the CDF biogeoclimatic zone to further refine and categorize ecosystems identified in the SEI and update standards for data collection and mapping. Other information on ecological values across the CRD that supports conservation planning includes Predictive Ecosystem Mapping, Vegetation Resource Inventory and forestry data, soil mapping, terrain mapping and a number of resources on sea level rise and climate data. Additionally, many research projects have been conducted within regional parks that provide relevant local ecological information.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge is another important source of information that allows First Nations communities to apply their knowledge and practices to help protect their way of life. This knowledge is often specific to a location and includes the relationships between plants, animals, natural phenomena, landscapes and timing of events that are used for lifeways, including but not limited to fishing, hunting, trapping, berry picking, medicinal plant use, agriculture and forestry.

On a global scale, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity created a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 that aimed to achieve global protection of at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water and 10% of coastal and marine areas. Other ambitious movements to halt loss of global biodiversity are being undertaken by organizations, including the European Union, International Union for Conservation of Nature and the High Ambition Coalition, aiming to achieve protection of at least 30% of the planet's land and water. Canada is also working to conserve 25% of the nation's land and water by 2025 and 30% by 2030.

The CRD partners with organizations to protect and conserve important species and habitats across the region. A number of local, regional, provincial and federal organizations have identified priorities and best practices for regional conservation planning, such as: the Nature Conservancy of Canada Salish Sea Natural Area Conservation Plan; the Coastal Douglas-fir and Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership Conservation Strategy 2015-2020; 2014 Local Government Tools Supporting Species and Ecosystems at Risk Resource Guide for South Coast of BC; and Islands Trust Conservancy Regional Conservation Plan 2018-2027.

The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy aims to protect the region's landscape character, natural heritage and biodiversity by protecting, conserving and managing lands in accordance with the guiding principles of prioritizing ecosystem health and recognizing the benefits derived from healthy ecosystems. The CRD Board Priorities for 2019-2022 reinforce the need to protect and enhance the region's natural areas to achieve environmental resilience. The CRD can directly support the protection and enhancement of the region's natural areas and cultural heritage through park land acquisition, research, monitoring and restoration.

Conservation efforts require a coordinated approach at global, national, provincial and local levels and to include traditional ecological knowledge. The CRD aims to use the most current information, both within the parks system and at a regional scale, to support monitoring and protection of ecological and cultural heritage values over time. An approach that strengthens partnerships and supports evidence-based and transparent decision-making is critical in supporting conservation priorities in regional parks. The CRD will take a leadership role to proactively manage, restore, and protect ecological and cultural values, in regional parks and to support broader conservation efforts in the region.



Deltoid balsamroot
Listed as Endangered under the Species at Risk Act
Credit: Andrea Rangel

Priority 2-1

Take action to increase protection of biodiversity, ecological integrity and natural assets in the region through improved knowledge, proactive stewardship, and land acquisition.

Actions	Timing
2-1a Complete a State of Natural Values in Regional Parks Report that includes: a review of existing ecological values and an assessment of the ecological health in regional parks.	Short-term
2-1b Prepare and implement a Natural Areas Conservation Plan that includes: an analysis of current and future ecological data needs, including traditional ecological knowledge; goals and targets for research, protection, restoration and enhancement, and watershed management; impact mitigation strategies and methods for long-term monitoring and reporting.	Medium-term
2-1c Protect, restore, enhance and mitigate impacts to important habitat and sensitive ecosystems in regional parks by developing and implementing Impact Assessment and Best Management Practice Guidelines that are informed by research and incorporate traditional ecological knowledge.	Short-term
2-1d Develop a set of Demand Management Tools to mitigate ecological, cultural and recreation carrying capacity in regional parks.	Medium-term
2-1e Support global, national and local conservation targets by increasing protection of the region's large and connected natural areas, rare and at-risk species and ecosystems, natural assets, and representation of diverse ecosystems.	Long-term
2-1f Restore and enhance disturbed and fragmented habitats and ecosystems within regional parks.	Ongoing

Priority 2-2

Respect and protect cultural heritage sites and traditional cultural use practices.

Actions	Timing
2-2a Ensure parks staff receive training to improve understanding of cultural heritage conservation and Indigenous cultural use in regional parks.	Ongoing
2-2b Invite and incorporate First Nations knowledge in the implementation of the CRD's Protection and Conservation of Heritage Sites Policy in regional parks.	Medium-term
2-2c In partnership with First Nations, develop Cultural Heritage Protection Plans to identify, protect and monitor cultural heritage sites in regional parks.	Long-term

Priority 2-3

Work with partners in taking care of the region's species, habitats and natural areas.

Actions	Timing
2-3a Support, collaborate, participate and lead initiatives to share knowledge with First Nations, other levels of government, institutions and organizations on regional topics of conservation, biodiversity, species at risk, restoration, and invasive species management.	Ongoing
2-3b Enhance opportunities to and improve regional conservation knowledge by collaborating with partners to share open, transparent and accessible information on the region's natural values while respecting First Nations traditional ecological knowledge and information sharing protocols.	Long-term
2-3c Proactively seek, support and lead partnership opportunities.	Long-term
2-3d Work with First Nations to understand and monitor plants and animals of significance to Indigenous cultural use in regional parks.	Ongoing



Visitor Experience

Goal 3: Visitors to regional parks are involved in stewardship and have enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences

Outdoor recreation opportunities play an important role in the quality of life that attracts people to this region, benefiting mental and physical health, promoting social and community connectivity, and being relatively low-barrier to access. The motivating factors, or user objectives, for visiting regional parks and trails is unique to each individual and depends on the characteristics of the recreation setting. The CRD aims to support a fit for life approach in regional parks by providing a range of different opportunities for broad public use while supporting and protecting ecological values. Regional parks offer a range of visitor use experiences that benefit broad public enjoyment and that are compatible with other park users and with the natural setting.

Compatible outdoor activities in regional parks:

- Are immersed in the natural environment;
- Do not degrade the ecological integrity of the park;
- Are human-powered;
- Encourage an appreciation for and understanding of natural and cultural; and
- Do not significantly interfere with the enjoyment of other park users.

Non-compatible outdoor activities in regional parks:

- Require substantial artificial or built infrastructure;
- Significantly degrade areas of archaeological and cultural importance;
- Do not inspire an appreciation for nature;
- Interfere with the experience of other park or trail users;
- Generate greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, noise or other noxious substances; and
- Permanent commercial or non-park or trail uses.



These visitors are well prepared for a challenging hike over rugged terrain in Sea to Sea Regional Park.



With the increasing popularity of outdoor recreation come challenges for meeting user objectives, including ensuring safety, mitigating environmental damage, and resolving conflict between users. Providing quality outdoor recreation experiences can have positive impacts on increasing environmental and cultural awareness, enhancing stewardship values, and promoting user etiquette and compliance. Opportunities to encourage outdoor recreation, through group training, competitions and events supported through the permit program, are recognized as positive contributions to promoting healthy lifestyles, fostering social connections, and providing economic benefit to the region, provided such activities are sited appropriately and remain secondary to broad public use of regional parks and trails.

The involvement of not-for-profit organizations in stewardship of regional parks and trails can be mutually beneficial. Through formal agreements, organizations may contribute expertise, labour and materials to maintenance and restoration projects that result in improved facility design and user experience, and contribute by disseminating information through their membership. Stewardship opportunities in regional parks and trails offer participants an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of park management challenges, such as human impacts on the natural environment. The CRD invites guidance in these efforts from First Nations, as long-term stewards of the land and water.

Interpretive programs offered in regional parks have a positive effect on educating the public about natural and cultural values and connect people with nature. Programs can be further improved through incorporating First Nations world views. Continued emphasis on interpretive programming and communication material, especially aimed at youth, can encourage a new generation of stewards. Effective communication and messaging, through in-person and media outlets, can also increase public awareness of human impacts on the environment, improve users' preparedness for participating in outdoor activities, and increase awareness of regional park values. Consistent messaging can also target improved behaviour of regional parks and trail users, rather than relying on compliance and enforcement. Over time, rates of voluntary compliance with park regulations are expected to increase, as a result of improved communication and education efforts.

Continued engagement with park users helps the CRD to understand visitor use trends in regional parks. In addition, data sources, such as vehicle and trail counters and resident surveys, inform planning and operational decisions that enhance enjoyment of regional parks.

Priority 3-1

Offer compatible outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, healthy, safe and immersed in nature.

Actions	Timing
3-1a Develop and implement an Outdoor Recreation Plan that takes into account a range of desired user experiences, user objectives, compatibility, recreation setting characteristics, and establishes a method for long-term monitoring and reporting.	Short-term
3-1b Develop, update and implement Facility Standards and Outdoor Recreation Activity-Specific Guidelines that establish design standards, risk mitigation, and level of service requirements.	Medium-term
3-1c Undertake Resident Surveys to assess visitor use satisfaction and emerging trends related to regional parks.	Every 5 years
3-1d Update Park Use Permit opportunities giving consideration to Indigenous cultural safety, protection of cultural heritage and ecosystem integrity, park land carrying capacity, park classifications, equity, and non-tax revenue generation needs.	Medium-term
3-1e Update Emergency Response Plans for regional parks.	Ongoing
3-1f Expand compatible outdoor recreation opportunities in previously disturbed areas or areas with lower conservation values.	Long-term

Priority 3-2

Foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Actions	Timing
3-2a Develop and implement an Interpretive Program Plan and provide programs, that deliver natural and cultural heritage information, climate change education, promote health benefits of nature-based activities, and visitor compliance.	Medium-term
3-2b Develop a Volunteer Plan that includes a diversity of opportunities for individuals and organizations to participate in and contribute to regional parks.	Medium-term
3-2c Work with First Nations to provide park visitors with information about First Nations history and cultural use, and to improve cultural safety in parks.	Ongoing



Climate Action & Resiliency

Goal 4: Regional parks and regional trails are resilient and take action on climate change

The CRD Board declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has since committed to take action to address climate change within operations at the regional level and to take a leadership role to pursue carbon neutrality. The CRD's 2021 Climate Action Strategy recognizes that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must be reduced and sequestered. In order to respond to climate impacts, efforts must focus on understanding vulnerabilities, ensuring natural assets are resilient and ecological integrity is maintained, and preparing the region's infrastructure and lands.

The CRD can contribute to regional GHG reductions in regional parks and trails by integrating the corporate climate lens framework, making operational choices that reduce GHG emissions, and through the planning, design, and operation of the regional trails system, which serves as the anchor of the region's active transportation network. The CRD's 2014 Regional Transportation Plan put forth a multi-modal transportation network concept for the region that includes sections of regional trails functioning as separated, off-street active transportation corridors. Canada's Active Transportation Strategy, BC's South Island Transportation Plan and the CRD's Regional Growth Strategy target increased active transportation as a personal mobility choice and for enhancing individuals' health and wellbeing. As almost half of the region's GHG emissions come from transportation, the CRD can directly support a shift to low-carbon mobility choices by accelerating infrastructure improvements in regional parks and regional trails that support active transportation and low-carbon mobility choices.

Natural areas provide important ecosystem goods and services, such as carbon storage, water supply and temperature buffering functions, as well as improve resilience to extreme weather events. The CRD can manage ecosystem health and integrity in regional parks to support nature's capacity to mitigate against and adapt to a changing climate. This can be done through acquiring new lands, actively managing and restoring natural areas, building community awareness on climate action, and providing opportunities to engage in stewardship activities.



Yellow Sand-verbena
Species of Special Concern (Blue listed)
Credit: Sean Rangel

Yellow Sand-verbena *Abronia latifolia* is a Species of Special Concern that grows in coastal sandy habitats. This flowering plant is the sole source of food for the endangered Sand-verbena Moth, which is dependent on the plant for every stage of its life. Both species face further peril from rising sea levels due to climate change.

Extreme weather events such as flooding, drought and fire could have severe long-term detrimental effects on the regional parks land base, values, and fragile resources, such as archaeological sites, rare and sensitive ecosystems, outdoor recreation spaces, and critical infrastructure and facilities. Understanding and preparing for possible climate impacts to regional parks and regional trails is critical to assessing climate mitigation and adaptation measures and to making informed decisions. Information sharing and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge can further inform climate action and adaptation decisions, thereby increasing resiliency.

Effectively achieving the vision for regional parks and regional trails in the face of increased regional population growth, urban development pressure, changing visitor use expectations and use patterns, and major infrastructure renewal needs requires substantial investment and effective financial management. There are significant funding challenges and competing priorities for expenditures relating to acquiring and opening new parks, upgrading and replacing existing infrastructure, and funding programs to plan and manage the regional parks and trails system. Funding existing and future service delivery demands is also a challenge as the region becomes increasingly diverse and is exposed to disruptive and unpredictable events due to climate change.

Resident surveys conducted in 2017 provided evidence that the public supported an increase in funding to operate regional parks and regional trails and for continuation of the Land Acquisition Fund. These opinions about the level of funding demonstrate support for funding the following priorities over the next five years: repair and maintenance of facilities, environmental restoration projects, and acquisition of more parkland.

The CRD applies an asset management approach to build organizational resilience. Fundamental to adopting an asset management approach is ensuring consistent, systematic and standardized information about facilities to inform decision-making. The CRD embarked on an asset management program with the Regional Parks Sustainable Service Delivery Report Card in 2019, which focused on critical infrastructure renewal needs. Further development of an asset management program will assist with managing each facility's life cycle and determining appropriate levels of service and risk. Consideration can also be given to determining the feasibility of broadening the scope of asset management to include natural assets in the regional parks system.

It is important to balance the capacity of the CRD to operate and manage the system in a fiscally responsible manner, while continuing to expand and improve service, and to balance risks and benefits. In 2019, the CRD Board made it a priority to ensure appropriate funding for regional parks and trails infrastructure, improvements and maintenance. On finalization of this Strategic Plan, a financial plan will be prepared that will comprehensively address all aspects of the funding necessary for the CRD to achieve its vision for regional parks and regional trails.

Priority 4-1

Advance regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction.

Actions	Timing
4-1a Update the Regional Trails Management Plan with consideration to regional trail classifications, design standards, priority regional trail projects, and increasing connectivity.	Short-term
4-1b Plan for and implement priority regional trail enhancement and expansion projects.	Ongoing
4-1c Prepare a funding strategy to support implementation of priority regional trail enhancement and expansion projects.	Short-term
4-1d Work with municipalities to develop and implement Operational Guidelines for regional trail service disruptions.	Short-term
4-1e Develop and implement a Micromobility Policy that gives consideration to the use of electric micromobility devices, such as electric-assist bikes and electric scooters, in regional parks and regional trails.	Medium-term
4-1f Support, participate and collaborate in the planning and implementation of a regional active transportation network that improves connectivity, identifies system gaps, and establishes desired design standards and service levels.	Ongoing



Sea to Sea Regional Park
Credit: Mary Sanseverino

Priority 4-2

Support the development of complete and connected communities by improving access to regional parks by transit, electric vehicles, micromobility, walking or cycling.

Actions	Timing
4-2a Advocate for expanded transit service to regional parks.	Ongoing
4-2b Align implementation of parking fees where regional parks can be easily accessed by transit, walking or cycling as a disincentive to motor vehicle use, excluding vehicle parking for people with disabilities.	Short-term
4-2c Prioritize regional park and regional trail projects that improve multi-modal access between parks and communities.	Ongoing
4-2d Undertake a study of regional parks access points to inform parking lot safety improvements, multi-modal access, and low-carbon mobility incentives.	Medium-term
4-2e Plan for and implement Electric Vehicle and Electric Micromobility charging stations at high-use regional park accesses.	Medium-term

Priority 4-3

Align service delivery and infrastructure improvements in regional parks and regional trails with climate action.

Actions	Timing
4-3a Incorporate a Climate Action Lens into service delivery, facility development and asset renewal that prioritizes low-carbon and energy efficient investment in regional parks and regional trails.	Medium-term
4-3b Determine the feasibility of considering natural assets in an asset management plan for regional parks.	Long-term
4-3c Develop and implement an Asset Management Plan for regional parks and regional trails that achieves critical infrastructure life cycle renewal, is well-planned, managed, and funded, is consistent with legislative requirements and receives First Nations input.	Medium-term
4-3d Conduct a Service Level Review of regional trails to understand current levels of service, forecast emerging needs and required adjustments.	Medium-term



CRD Regional Parks crew putting out a fire.

Priority 4-4

Ensure the long-term and consistent management of regional parks and protected natural areas.

Actions	Timing
4-4a Implement a Park Management Planning Process that is efficient, adaptable, evidence-based, and addresses service level needs, financial implications and climate mitigation measures.	Ongoing
4-4b Engage and involve First Nations governments, stakeholders and the public in the preparation and implementation of park management plans to ensure transparency, knowledge sharing and adaptability.	Ongoing
4-4c Support protection of the CRD's Greater Victoria Water Supply Area from unauthorized activities, incompatible adjacent land uses, and from climate-related weather events through park management, land acquisition and sharing information.	Ongoing
4-4d Work with partners to share knowledge, assess and identify options to improve regional parks capacity to mitigate against and adapt to a changing climate, including ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, water storage, and buffering severe weather events.	Medium-term
4-4e Support monitoring of ecosystem health in the CRD's Greater Victoria Water Supply Area and investigate expanding to regional parks.	Ongoing

Priority 4-5

Strategically acquire and manage natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment, and access to green space for a growing population.

Actions	Timing
4-5a Work with First Nations, Municipalities and Electoral Areas, and organizations to identify regionally significant parkland and determine alignment of goals and objectives.	Ongoing
4-5b Work with First Nations to update land acquisition criteria to incorporate cultural use values and areas of cultural significance.	Short-term
4-5c Update regional park land acquisition criteria and prioritize land acquisition that reflects CRD Regional Parks values, including consideration of areas that contribute to climate change mitigation, enhance biodiversity, buffer urban development, increase connectivity of natural areas, improve ecological integrity, and provide increased area and diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities.	Ongoing
4-5d Support the long-term protection of the region's natural assets through inventories, monitoring, land acquisition and partnerships.	Ongoing



Volunteers removing invasive species in Mill Hill Regional Park



Access & Equity

Goal 5: Regional parks and regional trails are inclusive and accessible

Regional parks and regional trails are a public good that belong to everyone in the region. The benefits of experiencing and interacting with nature for physical and mental well-being are felt by many. Medical professionals from the World Health Organization to Doctors of BC are advocating for equitable access to nature to safeguard the physical and psychological wellbeing of residents. Factors such as lack of access to transportation and proximity to parks can be barriers preventing members of society from enjoying the benefits of parks and trails. Increased benefits of accessing nature and public spaces can be realized when they adapt to the needs of diverse populations, such as people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, mobility levels and income brackets. The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy supports development of complete communities that include more opportunities to walk, cycle and use public transit conveniently. Ideally, recreation and green space can be easily accessed in a 10-minute walk or 15-minute bike ride. BC's Active Transportation Guide recommends specifications to be followed in the development of active transportation infrastructure while offering design choice to improve the user experience for all ages and abilities.

The concept of equity recognizes that people may require different resources or opportunities to meet a goal, as they have different needs and circumstances. Aspects of equity relate to procedural and distributive fairness. Procedural equity is the representation of multiple perspectives in decision-making. Distributive equity refers to spatial or locational access to a service and the related social factors affecting access to those services. Efforts to increase equitable, or fair, access to parks and protected areas are being promoted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (Aichi Target 11) at the global scale to provincial initiatives offering free park passes. Understanding barriers to accessing parks and trails in the CRD is limited, but a new partnership initiative to apply a gender equity lens to regional trails is being piloted in 2022.



Accessibility mats like this one located at Thetis Lake's main beach allow for access to the water for visitors with mobility aids.



Accessibility is about creating communities and offering services that enable everyone to participate fully without barriers. The 2018 *Accessible Canada Act* aims to achieve a barrier-free Canada by 2040 by identifying, addressing and preventing accessibility obstacles. The *Accessible British Columbia Act* and upcoming regulation will require public-sector organizations to develop accessibility plans and public-feedback mechanisms. A barrier is anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment or functional limitation. New accessibility standards being developed and applied at the federal and provincial levels will inform regional efforts to improve accessibility.

Priority 5-1

Enhance health and well-being by providing equitable access to regional parks and regional trails.

5-Actions	Timing
5-1a Develop and apply an Equity Lens to inform management and operation of regional parks and regional trails.	Ongoing
5-1b Conduct an Inclusion and Accessibility Assessment of regional parks and regional trails that assesses barriers and deterrents to access.	Short-term
5-1c Replace the 2003 Universal Access Plan for Regional Parks with new Accessibility Guidelines that provide objective information about the visitor experience, such as descriptions of trail terrain, length, and slope, to empower visitors to make appropriate individual choices and to better align user expectations with self-preparedness and ability.	Medium-term
5-1d Develop a Park Use Permit Policy that gives consideration to providing equitable access to programs, ensuring events and commercial activities align with CRD Regional Park values, and that fees reflect impacts on park facilities and users.	Medium-term
5-1e Work with First Nations to improve Indigenous cultural safety in regional parks.	Ongoing



5. Monitoring & Reporting

Over the next ten years, the actions contained within this Strategic Plan will form the basis of service plans and work plans that are approved by the Board annually as part of the financial planning process. Collaboration with CRD divisions, First Nations Governments, municipalities, park agencies, and stakeholders will be integral to this process.

As progress is made in the implementation of this action plan, knowledge and understanding of impacts to regional parks and regional trails will continue to develop. To remain flexible and adaptable, and to support consistent implementation over time, CRD staff will:

- Prepare a funding strategy to accompany implementation;
- Continue to identify opportunities for external grant funding and partnerships;
- Share knowledge and best practices with others;
- Participate in professional development to improve service delivery;
- Continue to monitor data to track progress over time;
- Evaluate progress and adjust actions, as needed.

5.1 Performance Indicators and Reporting

Progress on the implementation of the 10-year Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan will be reported annually. Figure 11 summarizes the intended reporting indicators identified for each strategic priority area proposed for annual reporting. For each goal area, an action status will reflect general progress made towards all actions supporting that goal. This helps to summarize at-a-glance progress made on actions that may not be easily measurable or reflected in another indicator, such as actions that are ongoing or taking place over a long period. For other measures, an icon is provided to indicate the desired direction of the indicator over time (increasing or decreasing), if applicable.

Minor amendments to the Strategic Plan will be brought forward when necessary to update factual information and to update the park and trail classifications, as new additions to the system are identified and established.

Major amendments to the Strategic Plan will involve First Nations, stakeholder and public engagement and will be considered by the CRD Board for approval.



Thetis Lake Regional Park

FIGURE 11. ANNUAL INTENDED REPORTING INDICATOR

Goal area	Intended reporting indicator
 Goal 1: Reconciliation	 1-1 Reconciliation workplans are developed with each First Nation
	 1-1 Traditional use agreements are initiated with all First Nations in the region
	 1-2 Increased participation in Indigenous perspectives programs and presentations
	 1-2 Increased number of conservation and restoration projects in partnership with First Nations
	 1-2 Increased number of economic opportunities made available to First Nations
 Goal 2: Conservation	 2-1 Increased area of regional park land protected
	 2-1 Increased area of regional park land restored
	 2-1 Increased protection of at risk species and ecosystems in regional parks
	 2-2 Increased percentage of First Nations collaborating with CRD on cultural heritage protection projects
	 2-2 All staff receive cultural awareness training
	 2-3 Increased conservation and research partnerships

FIGURE 11. ANNUAL INTENDED REPORTING INDICATOR

Goal area	Intended reporting indicator
 Goal 3: Visitor Experience	 3-1 Maintain high rates of visitor satisfaction
	 3-1 Increased area available for compatible outdoor recreation
	 3-2 Review and update interpretive program content every 4 years
	 3-2 Increased number of volunteer hours
 Goal 4: Climate Action & Resiliency	 4-1 Increased use of regional trails
	 4-1 Completed regional trail priority projects
	 4-1 Minimized regional trail service disruptions
	 4-2 Increase Electric Vehicle charging stations at park accesses
	 4-3 Reduced operational greenhouse gas emissions
	 4-3 Maintain critical infrastructure in good condition
	 4-4 Increase the percentage of parks with management plans less than 15 years old
	 4-5 Increased area of regional park land
 Goal 5: Access & Equity	 5-1 Improved accessibility to regional parks and regional trails
	 5-1 Cultural awareness information is incorporated into new park kiosks



Appendix A: Glossary

Archaeological Site: A heritage site or object protected by the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

Accessibility: The quality of being easily used, approached or understood by a wide range of people and, in some cases, adapted for specific uses.

Biodiversity: The variability among living organisms from terrestrial, marine and other ecosystems, and includes variability at the genetic, species and ecosystem levels.¹

Conservation: The practice of preserving, protecting and/or restoring the natural and cultural environment and species within for future generations.

Cultural Heritage: Includes tangible and intangible heritage embedded into artifacts, sites or monuments that have a diversity of symbolic, historic, artistic, aesthetic, ethnological, anthropological, scientific or social values.²

Ecosystem Goods and Services: Provision of services by natural systems that benefit the region and thereby offset, complement or, in some cases, eliminate the need for engineered solutions, such as but not limited to soil quality and stability, water treatment and storage, recharge of aquifers, and air quality regulation.

Facility: A piece of equipment, infrastructure or amenity in a regional park or regional trail, such as but not limited to: trails, signs, benches or bridges.

Fit-for-Life: Describes the majority of individuals' level of participation in an activity, where their motivation for participation is driven primarily by the enjoyment of engaging in the physical activity; participation may include recreational-level competition and training but is not the primary motivation.³

Invasive species: Any species not native to a particular ecosystem whose introduction causes, or is likely to cause, economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.⁴

Level of Service: a measure of the quantity, quality and reliability of service performance in relation to service performance goals, including consideration of legal requirements, community expectations and technical standards.

Micromobility Device: Small, lightweight modes of transportation designed for individual use that may have an electric motor, such as but not limited to, bicycles, electric bicycles, scooters, electric scooters, self-balancing devices.

Natural Assets: A biophysical or biological attribute of a natural ecosystem.

Outdoor Recreation: Physical, social and intellectual activities that are immersed in a natural outdoor setting, are dependent on the natural landscape, are compatible with and relatively low-impact on the natural environment, and that directly or indirectly foster appreciation for the natural environment.

Recreation Setting Characteristics: The qualities and conditions of a specific area that influence users' experiences and motivations to recreate there.⁵

Resilience: The capacity of social, economic and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event, trend or disturbance, responding to reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identify, and structure while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning and transformation.⁴

Stewardship: Responsible use and protection of the environment and cultural heritage through conservation and sustainable practices to improve ecosystem resilience and human wellbeing.

Sustainable service delivery: the process of providing services to the community with the lens of economic, social and environmental well-being, today and into the future.⁶

Traditional Ecological Knowledge: The knowledge, practice and belief concerning the relationships of living beings to one another and to the physical environment that has been developed by First Nations over centuries of living as part of the environment.

User Experience: The intrinsic reward individuals gain from participating in an activity.

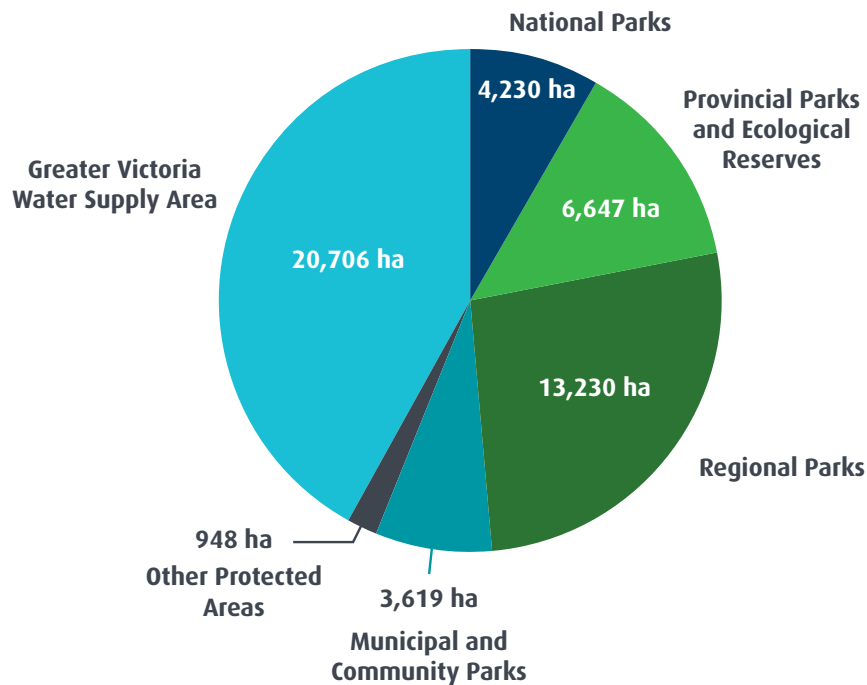
User Objectives: The user experience an individual seeks or the reason why an individual chooses a particular recreation activity or location.

References:

1. IPCC, 2014, Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability.
2. Adapted from: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics.
3. Adapted from: Sport For Life, Long-term Development in Sport and Activity Framework.
4. BC Ministry of Forests, 2008, Glossary of forestry terms in British Columbia.
5. Bureau of Land Management, Planning for Recreation and Visitor Services.
6. CRD, 2019, Corporate Asset Management Strategy.

Appendix B: Parks and Protected Areas in the CRD

Parks and Protected Areas



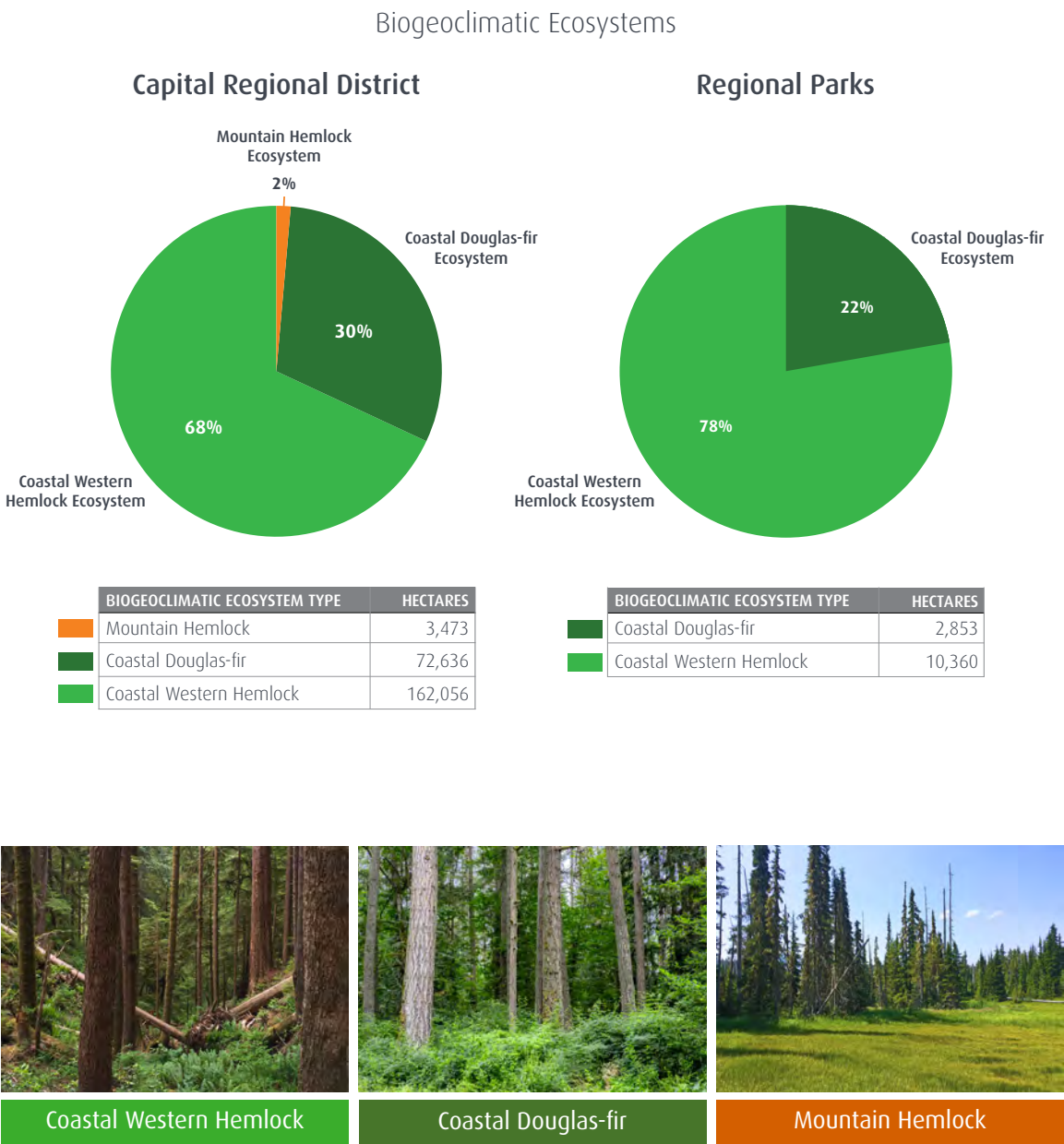
PROTECTED AREA TYPE	HECTARES	% of CRD Land Base
National Parks	4,230	1.78%
Provincial Parks and Ecological Reserves	6,647	2.79%
Regional Parks	13,230	5.56%
Municipal and Community Parks	3,619	1.52%
Other Protected Areas*	948	0.40%
Greater Victoria Water Supply Area	20,706	8.7%

Total Parks and Protected Areas	49,380	20.75%
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Total CRD land base	238,000
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*Note, this may not include a complete data set of privately protected lands that are protected in fee simple or conservation covenants

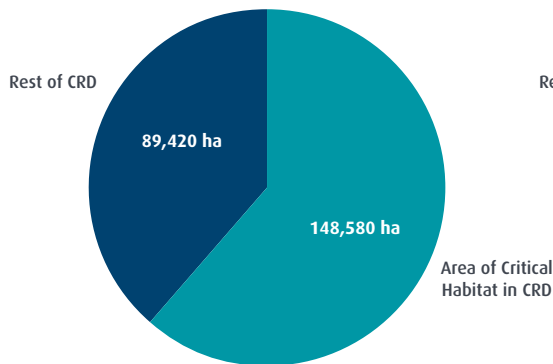
Appendix C: Ecosystems and Species at Risk in the CRD



Appendix C: Cont.

Area of Critical Habitat designated for Species at Risk

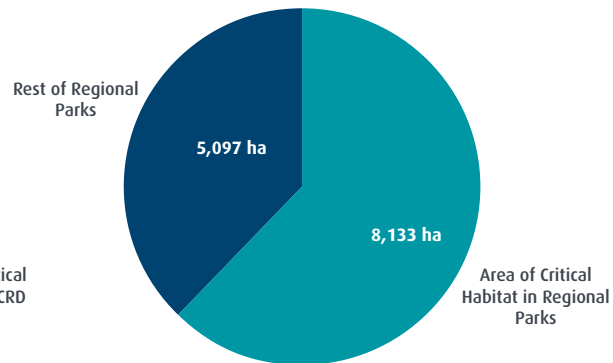
Capital Regional District



CRITICAL HABITAT (AREA)	HECTARES
Area of Critical Habitat*	148,580
Rest of CRD	89,420

* Identified for species at risk

Regional Parks



CRITICAL HABITAT (AREA)	HECTARES
Area of Critical Habitat*	8,133
Rest of Regional Parks	5,097

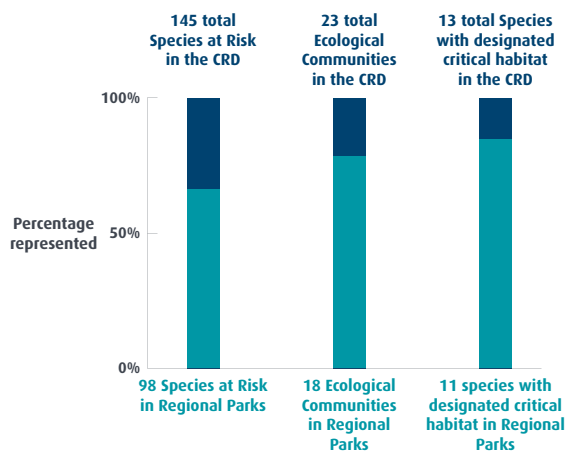
* Identified for species at risk

Regional Parks Representation of Species at Risk, Ecological Communities, and Critical Habitat in the CRD

SPECIES AT RISK	COUNT
In the CRD	145
In Regional Parks	98

ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES	HECTARES
In the CRD	23
In Regional Parks	18

CRITICAL HABITAT	COUNT
In the CRD	13
In Regional Parks	11



Appendix D: Related CRD Strategies and Plans

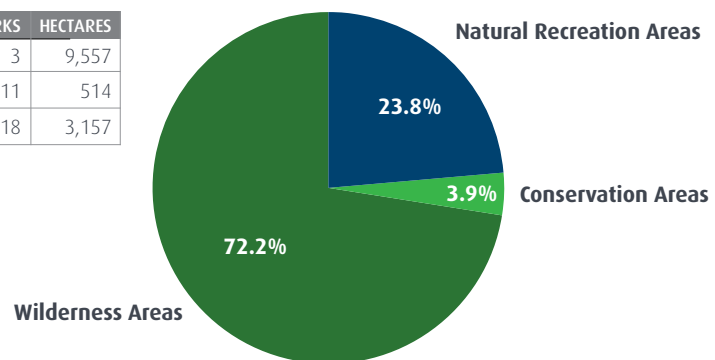
CRD Plans intersecting with regional parks and trails	Regional Parks and Trails Strategy Goal				
	1	2	3	4	5
2019-2022 Board Priorities	•	•	•	•	•
Advocacy Strategy (2019)	•	•	•	•	•
Climate Action Strategy (2021)		•	•	•	•
Corporate Asset Management Strategy (2019)			•	•	•
Corporate Plan (2019-2022)	•	•	•	•	•
First Nations Task Force Final Report (2018)	•	•		•	•
Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy (2016)				•	
Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategy (1997)		•		•	
Regional Growth Strategy (2018)		•	•	•	•
Regional Parks Land Acquisition Strategy (2020-2021)		•	•		
Regional Parks Strategic Plan (2012-2021)		•	•	•	
Regional Trails Management Plan (2015)			•	•	•
Regional Transportation Plan (2014)			•	•	•
Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan (2017)				•	
Statement of Reconciliation	•	•		•	•

Appendix E: Regional Park Classifications

	REGIONAL PARK	CONSERVATION AREA	WILDERNESS AREA	NATURAL RECREATION AREA	HECTARES
1	Albert Head Lagoon				7
2	Ayum Creek				6.4
3	Bear Hill				48.7
4	Brooks Point				6
5	Coles Bay				3.6
6	Devonian				13.5
7	East Point				0.8
8	East Sooke				1,458
9	Elk/Beaver Lake				443
10	Francis/King				107
11	Gonzales Hill				1.8
12	Horth Hill				36
13	Island View Beach				52
14	Jordan River				100
15	Kapoor				12.6
16	Lone Tree Hill				31
17	Matheson Lake				157
18	Matthews Point				24
19	Mill Farm Reserve				315
20	Mill Hill				71.6
21	Mount Parke				91
22	Mount Wells				121
23	Mount Work				754
24	Mountain Road				19.8
25	Roche Cove				160
26	Sea to Sea				3,979
27	Sooke Hills Wilderness				4,120
28	Sooke Potholes				72
29	Sooke River Reserve				7
30	St. John Point				27
31	Thetis Lake				923
32	Witty's Lagoon				56

Regional Parks Land Base by Classification

PARK CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER OF PARKS	HECTARES
Regional Wilderness Areas	3	9,557
Regional Conservation Areas	11	514
Regional Natural Recreation Areas	18	3,157





| Capital Regional District

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Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan

Public Engagement Report

Capital Regional District | June 2022



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1. Executive Summary

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012–2021 in December 2021. The Regional Parks Committee conducted a workshop to set the direction for the Strategic Plan update in January 2022 and the CRD Board approved this material for engagement in February 2022.

Engagement opportunities on the Strategic Plan update were provided between February and May 2022. The aim of the engagement process was to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public about the park strategic planning process—to seek input and information from affected First Nations, agencies, stakeholder groups and individuals about the proposed vision, mission, values and key priorities to guide regional parks and trails over the next decade. This report includes a summary of the engagement process and responses received. A separate report is provided outlining engagement with First Nations.

Key stakeholder organizations were invited to participate in a series of focus groups on the Strategic Plan update in February 2022. In total, 44 stakeholder groups participated in one of five focus groups. Agencies with interest in parks and protected areas were invited to participate in a focus group or interview. Staff from seven agencies participated in a focus group and an interview. Three interviews were held with user groups who self-identified as having interest in the Strategic Plan update. An online survey was available between March 8 and April 4, 2022. A total of 1,228 surveys were completed. Three online information sessions were held with 26 members of the public participating.

Feedback received from the engagement process is highlighted in the Response section of this report. The Moving Forward section discusses the key concepts that were considered for incorporating into the updated CRD Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan.

2. Introduction

The Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 has set the overall vision, goals and objectives for regional parks service delivery over the past 10 years. The 2012-2021 Strategic Plan was primarily led by a volunteer Citizens Advisory Panel (CAP) and included extensive engagement with stakeholders, the public, government, First Nations and other park agencies. The Strategic Plan considered many of the trends, challenges and values that are still relevant today, such as increased visitation to regional parks and trails and the need for increased environmental protection. At the same time, many things have changed in the region since the adoption of the plan in 2012. For example, climate action and reconciliation with First Nations are key priorities of the CRD.

The CRD Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 on December 8, 2021 and a workshop was held with the Regional Parks Committee in January, 2022 to set the direction for the Strategic Plan update. On February 9, 2022 the CRD Board directed staff to seek input from First Nations, stakeholders, other agencies and the general public on a proposed vision, values, mission statement, and priorities and to apply a lens of conservation and protection of biodiversity to the priorities and process.

A new Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan will be brought forward in July 2022 that will set the direction for regional parks and trails over the next decade.

3. Purpose of the Engagement Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the engagement process and to highlight responses and key themes received related to the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update.

The goal of engagement is to receive feedback from First Nations, stakeholders, user groups and the public on the proposed vision, values, mission, and key priorities that were approved by the CRD Board in February, 2022 to be considered in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update (Appendix A). Feedback received through the engagement process from government agencies, stakeholder groups and the public is summarized and analyzed in this report and considered in the updated Strategic Plan. A separate report includes feedback received from First Nations.

The CRD is committed to involving First Nations, stakeholders, agencies and the public in the development of strategic plan. The aim of the engagement process was to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups, agencies and the public about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update process, and to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups to assist the CRD with setting the future direction for regional parks and trails. Other goals of the engagement process included information sharing, dialogue and discussion, building ongoing relationships, developing understanding and trust, and producing a Strategic Plan that reflects organizational needs and public interests. The engagement process allowed interested individuals and groups to actively contribute to the Strategic Plan before the plan was updated. Engagement was one of the early steps in the update process and used to gather traditional and local knowledge about regional parks and trails, learn what is important to people,

identify issues and priorities, and to seek a range of suggestions for what should be considered in updating the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

4. Engagement Period

This report includes a summary of the engagement activities completed and responses received between February and May 2022 from stakeholder groups, government agencies and the general public. A separate report includes a summary of engagement with First Nations.

The engagement process for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update commenced in February 2022 with a media release and the launch of a project site on the “get involved” webpage: www.getinvolved.crd.bc.ca (hereafter ‘project webpage’). Focus groups and interviews were held between February and March 2022. An online survey was available from March 8 to April 4, 2022. Information sessions were offered online on March 1, March 16 and April 1, 2022. Communication materials were published through the engagement process on the project webpage, on social media and in newspapers. Engagement with First Nations was facilitated by a consultant beginning in February 2022.

5. Who Was Engaged

5.1. First Nations

Fifteen First Nations whose traditional territory lies within the CRD boundary were invited to participate in the Strategic Plan update process. A separate engagement report outlines the First Nations engagement process.

5.2. Park Agencies

Six agencies with direct or overarching jurisdiction, or a related interest in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update, were invited to provide input and expertise. These included: Parks Canada; Cowichan Valley Regional District; BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (BC Parks and BC Recreation Sites and Trails); Islands Trust Conservancy; and BC Parks and Recreation Association. Representatives of these agencies received written notification of the Strategic Plan update and an invitation to participate in an interview and/or focus group session to share information and provide feedback.

5.3. Stakeholders

A total of 85 stakeholder groups were identified for participation in focus groups. Three broad categories of stakeholder groups to be invited to participate in the focus groups were identified, as follows: cultural/social interests, conservation interests and outdoor recreation interests. A balance of stakeholders from each category were invited to each focus group to promote a diversity of perspectives in the discussion. A list of the stakeholder groups selected to participate in the focus groups is provided in Appendix B.

5.4. User Groups

Approximately 200 user groups known by the CRD to have an interest in regional parks and trails were notified by email about the Strategic Plan engagement process and opportunities for input. The user groups were selected

from a master contact list maintained by Regional Parks and includes organizations that may represent a recreation, conservation, youth, or accessibility interest, and are currently active. Private businesses were not selected to be contacted.

Additional groups identified through the snowball sampling technique that did not meet the stakeholder selection criteria but who self-identified as having a special interest in participating in the Strategic Plan update were invited to participate in an interview. These user groups included:

- South Island Disc Golf Society
- Vancouver Island Slackline Association
- Local experts.

5.5. General Public

An online survey was made available to the general public through a link on the project webpage between March 8 and April 4, 2022. The survey included 16 questions with both quantitative and qualitative responses. A total of 1,228 surveys were completed. Survey methodology is outlined in Appendix B and survey responses are included in Appendix D.

The general public in the CRD were notified of the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update via media releases, newspaper advertisements and social media. The public was directed to the project webpage and had the opportunity to register to receive notifications about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update. Between February 9, 2022 and May 1, 2022, there were approximately 2,400 visits to the project webpage, with 1,228 visitors engaging by taking the survey, 1,400 informed by viewing photos, downloading documents, and visiting the FAQ page, and 2,200 becoming aware about the project by viewing at least one page (Figure 1). Visitation peaked in March and April 2022 when the online survey and information sessions were available.

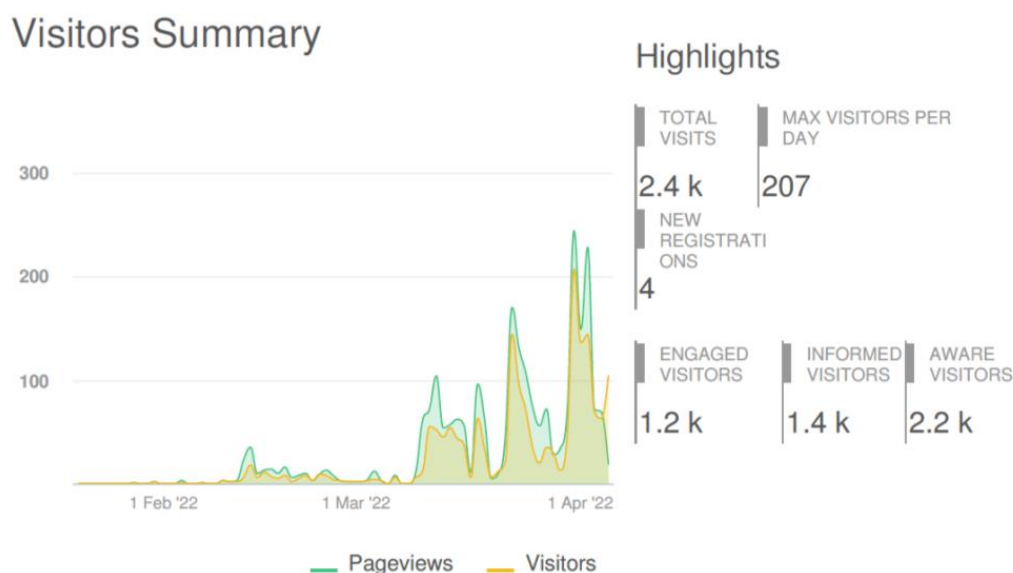


Figure 1: Visitation to project webpage between February 9 and May 1, 2022.

6. Engagement Methods

The project scope and engagement process for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update were approved by the CRD Board in February 2022. A number of tools and approaches were used to engage First Nations, agencies, stakeholders, user groups and the public including: focus groups, interviews, an online survey, public information sessions, advertising, a project webpage and social media. The engagement methods are outlined in detail in Appendix B.

7. Responses

The following is a summary of the feedback received related to the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update.

7.1. First Nations

See separate First Nations engagement report.

7.2. Park Agencies

A focus group and an interview were held with staff representatives from Cowichan Valley Regional District, Islands Trust Conservancy, Parks Canada (Gulf Islands), BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails BC, and the BC Parks and Recreation Association. While these agencies preferred not to offer comments about the values and principles, vision, mission and priorities proposed for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan as it was beyond their capacity and role, comments and suggestions were offered about how to strengthen partnerships, align desired outcomes between groups, clarify roles and responsibilities of the different agencies and enhance information sharing.

7.3. Stakeholders

7.3.1. Feedback about the Values and Principles

Overall, stakeholders were supportive of the proposed values and principles. Minor changes to the wording and additional values were offered by stakeholders, including leadership, partnership, stewardship, connectivity, education, and accountability.

7.3.2. Feedback about the Vision

Stakeholders suggested the proposed vision statement encompasses too many ideas and concepts, potentially making it difficult for CRD Regional Parks to achieve. Stakeholders indicated that the term 'exceptional' is too subjective to be included in the vision. Stakeholders also pointed out the importance of including the word 'compatible' in front of outdoor recreation. Stakeholders proposed moving some of the important concepts into the mission and value statements, such as cooperation, respect, resiliency, and cultural heritage. The following new concepts were proposed by stakeholders to strengthen the vision: connectivity, active transportation, inspiring stewardship and education. These concepts are already present in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 and stakeholders suggested they become prominent in the updated plan.

7.3.3. Feedback about the Mission

Stakeholders suggested the mission statements could be simplified and should better reflect the dynamic relationship between conservation and compatible outdoor recreation. The function of regional trails for active transportation was suggested to be highlighted, as well as the role the CRD plays in providing environmental education and leadership. Additionally, stakeholders stressed the importance of incorporating a lens of First Nations reconciliation, accessibility, equity, and climate action in all the services the CRD provides, where feasible.

7.3.4. Feedback on the Priorities

Stakeholders reviewed a series of priority statements that focused on the following themes: conservation and recreation; access and equity; climate action and resiliency; and reconciliation. The proposed themes were generally supported and aligned with stakeholder's views. However, the priority statements were deemed by some stakeholders as too complex and needing to be broken down. While the compatibility of conservation and outdoor recreation was debated, stakeholders shared common views towards the role of both conservation and compatible outdoor recreation in developing nature stewardship. Stakeholders indicated the need for incorporating research, best practices and education to ensure protection of biodiversity and to provide quality compatible outdoor recreation opportunities. Other suggestions offered by stakeholders included: more responsive park management and planning; expanding land acquisitions; buffering development; active transportation and transit opportunities; consideration of commercial activity in parks; improving facility design; improving transparency and accountability; and taking a leadership role in research, collaboration, and promotion of parks through marketing and communications. Prioritizing reconciliation with First Nations was supported by stakeholders and perceived as most appropriate to determine through direct engagement with First Nations. Stakeholders expressed general interest in learning about cultural heritage and reconciliation activities, where appropriate.

7.3.5. Additional Comments

Stakeholders were given the opportunity to add any further comments about regional parks and trails. The majority of the comments were about general support and appreciation for regional parks and trails and about opportunities to network with other stakeholder groups. Other comments focused specifically on: obtaining clarification about regional park bylaws and management processes; different levels of government jurisdiction across the region; impact of humans and increasing visitation; land acquisition criteria; and specific facility development, among others. It was stressed by the facilitator that the focus group was on the Strategic Plan update and those important comments would be noted and redirected to the appropriate planning processes concerning regional parks and trails. Comments from the stakeholder focus groups are listed by theme in Appendix C.

7.4. User Groups and Public

A total of 1,228 online surveys were completed and submitted. The main themes reflected in the comments include:

- Respondents' age was evenly split between categories, with the exception of younger people whose participation was lower. The majority of respondents to the survey live in Saanich (27%), Victoria (19%) and Langford (11%) and are couples with dependent children (41%), followed by parent(s) with one or more dependent children (28%) and adults living alone (14%).

- The majority of participants to the survey responded that it is very important to have the proposed values and principles of conservation (80%) and recreation (80%) in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan, followed by resiliency (74%), equity (66%), accessibility (62%) and reconciliation (58%).
- More than half of the respondents to the survey identified stewardship (52%) and education (43%) as additional values to be included in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update.
- The majority of respondents (83%) support to strongly support the proposed vision for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan.
- All five mission statements proposed for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan obtained more than 65% of respondents support to strongly support.
- When asked what should the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan give priority to over the next 10 years, the themes that scored the highest support were: land acquisition (High=66%), biodiversity protection (High=58%), and providing buffers between parks and urban development (High=50%). All other priorities scored lower, ranging between medium-high to medium-low priority.
- Respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments about how CRD Regional Parks can support reconciliation with First Nations. A total of 734 comments were received. The opportunities most commonly identified by respondents were: promoting the sharing of Indigenous knowledge through education, interpretation, and programming (n=266) and consulting First Nations directly in regard to regional parks and trails management (N=153) so to ensure their priorities are met.
- Respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments about regional parks and trails. A total of 932 comments were received, with many providing multiple feedback statements and suggestions about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update. For conservation, respondents were concerned about the overuse and impacts they witnessed in the regional parks and trails (n=65) and suggested to focus on biodiversity and ecosystem preservation (n=132) and land acquisition (n=100). For outdoor recreation, respondents suggested, in general, to offer more opportunities to recreate in regional parks and trails (n=83), with some specific stakeholder groups advocating for more disc golfing (n=138), mountain biking (n=120) and horse riding (n=47) opportunities. Respondents (n=113) took also the opportunity to express their appreciation towards the CRD and the possibility to participate in the survey.

7.4.1 Additional Input from User Groups

Three interviews were conducted with representatives from user groups who self-identified as having interest or knowledge in the Strategic Plan update. The main themes reflected in these interviews were: compatible outdoor recreation; stewardship; decision-making processes; conservation and protection of biodiversity; research and evidence-based decision-making.

A total of 15 public comments were submitted to the parksplanning@crd.bc.ca email. The main themes reflected in these submissions include: the engagement process; park development and park uses; conservation; regional trails; climate change; health and well-being; and governance.

The feedback obtained aligned with previous comments provided by stakeholders through the focus groups and by the public through the survey.

7.4.2 Additional Input from Municipalities

A letter was received from the District of Metchosin, dated May 3, 2022, regarding the Strategic Plan update (Appendix E). The main themes reflected in this submission include: conservation and biodiversity lens, protection of wildland areas, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and securing habitat for apex predators.

8. Moving Forward

The Regional Parks Committee held a workshop in January 2022 to set the direction for engagement on the Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. At its February 9, 2022 meeting, the CRD Board proposed a renewed vision, mission, values and principles, and strategic priorities based on the themes of conservation & recreation, access & equity, climate action & resiliency, and reconciliation. This material was presented to First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public for feedback between February and May 2022. At its meeting of April 20, 2022, the Transportation Committee recommended the Plan be called Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan and that specific content relating to regional trails be included. This emphasis on the regional trails function of the CRD regional parks service has been strengthened throughout the Plan and particularly through the concepts of connectivity, mobility, active transportation and accessibility.

While engagement results indicated overall support for the proposed vision, stakeholder feedback suggested the desired future state of regional parks and trails should be simplified in an attempt to make the vision more obtainable. Based on this feedback, the concept of cooperation has been removed from the vision but inserted into sections of the Plan that address stewardship and partnerships. The concept of respecting Indigenous cultural use and cultural heritage has been strengthened. Stakeholder feedback about the vision suggested adding concepts of connectivity, active transportation, inspiring stewardship and education. The vision has been amended to add the concept of connectivity to reflect the function of regional trails, active mobility in general, and the importance of connected greenspaces. The vision has also been amended to add the concept of inspiring stewardship, of which an element is education. A glossary has been included in the updated Strategic Plan to clarify terms used throughout the document.

Throughout the engagement process, the values of conservation and outdoor recreation received the most support. The other proposed values and principles (accessibility, equity, reconciliation and resiliency) received support as well. Refinements to the wording of the values and principles has been done in an attempt to better reflect their meaning. The additional values and principles of accountability, connectivity, education, leadership, partnerships, and stewardship were suggested by stakeholders and incorporated into the public survey questions. The public survey results indicate strong support for including education and stewardship as values in the updated Strategic Plan. The values of accountability and connectivity received less support overall but have been included as they provide a stronger foundation for the Plan and were themes heard throughout the engagement process. These values and principles have been developed and incorporated into the updated Strategic Plan. Edits to the values and principles have also been made to better reflect the role of regional trails in the CRD.

While more than 65% of public survey respondents support or strongly support all five mission statements proposed for the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan, stakeholders suggested the mission statements should be simplified to better reflect the dynamic relationship between conservation and compatible outdoor recreation, reflect the function of regional trails for active transportation, as well as how regional parks provide opportunities for environmental education and stewardship. The mission statements have been revised to highlight these core functions of the service. All other concepts originally proposed in the mission statements have been removed as they are adequately represented elsewhere in the Plan and their importance is not lost.

The engagement materials presented a series of priority statements that focused on the following themes: conservation & recreation; access & equity; climate action & resiliency; and reconciliation. Overall, the engagement process indicated that the priority statements were deemed as too complex and needing to be broken down or streamlined.

Overall, the engagement process highlighted that prioritizing reconciliation was perceived as most appropriate to determine through direct engagement with First Nations. The engagement process also revealed general public interest in learning about cultural heritage and reconciliation actions, where appropriate. The priorities for reconciliation have been given prominence in the Plan and the proposed actions support ongoing engagement with First Nations to determine how to strengthen relationships, respect Indigenous laws and cultural use, and make tangible progress towards reconciliation. Continued efforts by the CRD to deliver cultural awareness education and adhere to cultural heritage protection are also included in the Plan.

The main topic of interest and importance throughout the engagement process was the dynamic between conservation and recreation. Many common views were expressed about the role of both conservation and compatible outdoor recreation in developing nature stewardship. The Plan attempts to focus on how conservation and recreation may be compatible to achieve the mutual goal of nature stewardship and how to address causes of tension between conservation and outdoor recreation through improving research, planning and monitoring to improve transparency, protection of natural assets and cultural heritage, and improve outdoor recreation experiences. The concepts of conservation and visitor experience have been addressed separately in the Plan in order to ensure each is given due consideration and the duality between the concepts does not detract from their importance. The conservation priorities of land acquisition and environmental restoration and monitoring are highlighted in the Plan, and were the priorities with highest rates of support by public and stakeholders. The outdoor recreation priorities of developing partnerships, incorporating best practices/improving facility design, and doing responsive park planning are highlighted in the Plan, and were the priorities with the highest rates of support by public and stakeholders. Also, knowledge sharing, improved communication and education are key elements raised in the engagement process and have been incorporated into the Plan.

Climate action and resiliency ranked of high interest to participants in the engagement process. The key priorities suggested by participants include: buffering urban development with new park land, working with government agencies to connect green spaces and apply a climate action lens to service provision. These aspects have been incorporated into the Plan.

Of the priorities presented under the access and equity theme, feedback received through the engagement process indicated the highest level of support for providing accessibility to parks and trails for people of different ages, abilities and incomes and for enhancing connectivity between communities and parks. The role of regional trails and transit in providing low-barrier access between communities and parks was highlighted throughout the engagement process, and have been incorporated into the Plan.

In addition to the input received through the engagement process, staff have also incorporated relevant priorities and actions from related CRD strategies and corporate commitments into the updated Strategic Plan. These related CRD strategies underwent separate engagement processes and have been approved by the CRD Board. Staff expertise has also been incorporated into the updated Strategic Plan to refine terms, review for consistency and alignment between divisions.

How the input received to date from First Nations has been incorporated into the Strategic Plan update is included in a separate report.

9. Limitations

The CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update was initiated in December 2021 and the delivery of an updated Strategic Plan was set for June/July 2022. It is possible that such a short timeline may limit the engagement abilities of participants. Significant limitations to in-person engagement were experienced due to COVID-19 public safety measures. Many of the typical community events and open houses utilized during a planning process were not feasible. Technological tools were heavily relied on during this engagement process due to COVID-19 public safety measures. Lack of access to, and knowledge of, technology can be a limitation to those wishing to participate. Finally, the project timeline and allocated resources constrain the project to an extent.

Appendix A: Engagement Materials

CRD

Regional Parks Strategic Plan Update 2022



March - April, 2022
Public Input

Vision 2032

We work cooperatively and respectfully to steward and expand an exceptional system of regional parks and trails that is rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage, resilient to change, connects people to nature and provides healthy outdoor experiences for all.



Mission



Ensure regional parks and trails are resilient by delivering a sustainable service that is adaptable and takes action on climate change.



Foster stewardship of ecological and cultural resources by informing, engaging and collaborating with the public, volunteers, partners, and First Nations.



Provide access to regional parks and trails that facilitates healthy, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences for all.



Secure a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region's biodiversity and cultural landscapes.



Work with First Nations in taking care of the land and water.

Values and Principles



Accessibility – We provide access to nature for all ages and abilities



Conservation – We work together to protect, restore and celebrate the region's natural and cultural landscapes



Equity – We work together to ensure regional parks and trails are inclusive and maintained as a common good



Reconciliation – We are committed to work towards reconciliation with First Nations



Recreation – We offer outdoor recreation experiences that improve our health and well-being



Resiliency – We take action on climate change by being adaptive and using resources sustainably with a view to benefiting future generations

Additional Values and Principles:

Leadership

Partnership

Stewardship

Connectivity

Education

Accountability

Conservation & Recreation

- Conserve biodiversity
- Enable outdoor recreation
- Work with partners
- Foster stewardship



Access & Equity

- Enhance health & well-being
- Promote complete and connected communities
- Ensure economic fairness
- Accessibility & equity lens



Climate Action & Resiliency

- Align sustainable service delivery with climate action
- Advance regional active transportation
- Develop partnerships
- Acquire and manage natural areas



Reconciliation

- Incorporate First Nations reconciliation objectives
- Provide space for cultural use
- Strengthen engagement
- Support shared prosperity



KEY PRIORITY STATEMENTS REGIONAL PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN

February 2022

Conservation & Recreation

- Take action to conserve biodiversity through acquiring land, restoration and monitoring of ecosystems across the region (UN; LAS; RGS, 2.1; RPSP, p.9)
- Enable users to recreate and have outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, safe and compatible (RPSP, p.9 & 12)
- Work with partners in taking care of the land and water and providing sustainable outdoor recreation (Board, #6d & #6b-1 & #6b-2; RPSP, p.10; LAS)
- Foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing and leading by example (RPSP, p.10)

Access & Equity

- Enhance health and well-being by providing nature and outdoor recreation experiences for all ages and abilities (Board, #6e; RPSP, p.9)
- Promote complete and connected communities by ensuring recreation, parks and green space can be easily accessed by transit, walking or cycling (RGS, 3.1 & 4.1; RPSP, p.9)
- Ensure economic fairness by managing regional parks and trails as a common good (RGS 5.1; Revenue, p.4)
- Strengthen an accessibility and equity lens in service delivery

Climate Action & Resiliency

- Align sustainable service delivery and infrastructure improvements with climate action (RGS 7.1; CAS, 1.1 & 5.1; RPSP)
- Advance regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction (CAS, 3.7; RPSP; RGS, 4)
- Develop partnerships for the long-term consistent and connected management of green space and ecosystem services (RPSP; Board, #5a-5).
- Strategically acquire and manage natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment and access to green space for a growing population (RGS 7.1, CAS, 5.1; RPSP)

Reconciliation

- Incorporate First Nation worldviews, knowledge and reconciliation objectives in the management of natural assets and cultural heritage (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; RNTF, p.44-45)
- Provide space for cultural and ceremonial use, food and medicine harvesting, traditional management practices and reclaiming Indigenous place names (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45)
- Strengthen engagement with First Nations in service delivery initiatives (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45; LAS)
- Seek partnerships, share information and deliver fair and equitable services in working with First Nations on achieving their economic goals (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45)

Reference Abbreviations:

Board	Capital Regional District 2019-2021 Board Priorities
CAS	Climate Action Strategy 2021
FNSR	First Nations Statement of Reconciliation
FNTF	First Nations Task Force Final Report, 2018
LAS	Land Acquisition Strategy 2020-2021
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), Bylaw No. 4017, 2018
RPSP	Regional Parks Strategic Plan (RPSP) 2012-2021
Revenue	Draft Revenue Generation Strategy, 2021
UN	United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030

Appendix B: Engagement Methods

Interviews

Interviews were offered by CRD Regional Parks staff to representatives from park agencies with interest in the region who could not attend a focus group, and with experts or representatives from user groups who did not meet the stakeholder selection criteria and self-identified as having interest in the Strategic Plan update. Four interviews were conducted in February and March 2022. Interviews were held by phone or virtually by Zoom or Teams and lasted approximately one hour. CRD staff took notes during the interviews for later analysis and review.

Project Webpage

A project webpage was established on the CRD's Get Involved online platform in February 2022 and was updated for the duration of the Strategic Plan update (<https://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-parks-strategic-plan-update>). The project webpage includes an overview of the Strategic Plan update process, the proposed vision, values, mission statements, and priorities accepted by the CRD Board for engagement, as well as outlines opportunities for input, CRD staff contact information, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and key documents informing the Strategic Plan update.

Information Sessions

Three online information sessions were held via the Zoom platform on March 11, March 16 and April 1, 2022. Each session included a presentation about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update and a question and answer session. Each webinar lasted one hour. A total of 26 participants attended the three webinars.

Letters/Emails

Email notices were sent to approximately 200 user groups with potential interest or expertise related to regional parks and trails. Email notices were also sent to seven park agencies with a direct interest in the Strategic Plan update.

A project email account was created for receiving comments and inquiries about the Strategic Plan update: parksplanning@crd.bc.ca. A total of 15 email submissions were received from members of the public or individuals representing a user group or special interest group. One letter was received from the District of Metchosin (Appendix F). Delegations and written submissions provided to the CRD Board are not included in this report.

Social Media

Social media posts were made on the CRD's Facebook and Twitter accounts during February, March and April 2022, directing people to the project webpage and online survey. These posts went out to 7,813 followers on Twitter and 5,500 followers on Facebook. As well, some stakeholder and user groups shared information and links to the project webpage on their own channels. Facebook ads were boosted throughout the survey process, with a link to the project webpage to complete the online survey. The targeted demographic for these ads were people living in the region aged 18-65+. Figure 2 outlines the level of engagement with the Facebook ads.

Reach	Reactions	Shares	Link Clicks	Comments
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19,356	44	25	911	7
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Figure 2: Facebook Ad Engagement

Advertising

Two media releases were issued by the CRD on February 9 and March 18, 2022 outlining the Strategic Plan update and engagement process, and encouraging the public to complete the online survey. Multiple news outlets received the media release. An article was published by Black Press Media on March 11, 2022.

Print ads were published in multiple newspapers during March and April 2022, while the online survey was available (Figure 3). The ads directed readers to the project webpage to complete the online survey. Ads were posted in Black Press Media papers and the Times Colonist (Figure 4).

Publication	Date
Oak Bay News	March 10, 2022
Peninsula News	March 10, 2022
Sooke News Mirror	March 10, 2022
Goldstream News Gazette	March 10, 2022
Saanich News	March 10, 2022
Times Colonist	March 8, 2022

Figure 3: Newspaper Ad Dates

Public Feedback Opportunity



**The Capital Regional District Is seeking Input on the
Regional Parks Strategic Plan Update**

CRD Regional Parks protects and manages over 13,300 hectares of natural areas in 32 regional parks and three regional trails on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.

The updated Regional Parks Strategic Plan will set the direction for regional parks and trails over the next decade, defining the vision for our regional parks and providing guidance for the CRD to consistently achieve desired outcomes.

Learn more, attend information sessions and take the survey online at: getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-parks-strategic-plan-update



Figure 4: Newspaper Advertisement

Online Survey

An online survey was made available through a link on the project webpage from March 8 to April 4, 2022. The survey included 17 questions with both quantitative and qualitative responses. Some survey questions had multiple statements to be completed.

Close-ended questions were measured through a five-point rating scale ranging from strongly support to strongly oppose or by offering pre-determined categories. Close-ended questions were used to reduce the response burden for participants. Open-ended questions were also included to allow respondents the option to offer additional comments and clarify their responses. Questions about participants' demographic characteristics (i.e., age, residency) were also included in the questionnaire.

Analysis

The Engagement HQ's analytics framework provided by the Get Involved platform was used to analyze descriptive statistics, which are reported as a percentage for all quantitative questions of the survey. Content analysis was performed to analyze qualitative comments provided by participants in a replicable and systematic manner. Specifically, all qualitative data were categorized using codes, which allowed identifying code themes and response patterns.

Rationale

It is important to acknowledge that the aim of the survey was to offer an easy-to-access venue for the public to provide input about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update. The information obtained through this participation tool is not intended to be representative of the whole population of the capital region. Hence, the data reported in this document will not be generalized to the broader population.

The survey was used to ensure that insights, concerns and experiences of participants interested in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update dialogue are documented and considered. The information retrieved through this participatory tool complement the insights provided by the other engagement approaches reported in this document. The data in this report should therefore be interpreted in conjunction with the overall engagement process outcomes.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Privacy Impact Assessment

All responses in the survey were voluntary, thus participants had the choice to skip any question they did not wish to answer. All information was collected in compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (see <https://www.crd.bc.ca/freedom-of-information>). A Privacy Impact Assessment (CRD PIA #21-055) was developed for this project to ensure research involving humans was conducted in compliance with ethics and local legislation.

Stakeholder Focus Groups

Focus groups are an ideal participation methodology to involve stakeholders in providing feedback on a defined topic through facilitated discussion. Participants are encouraged to engage on topics as well as to respond to and reflect on narratives conveyed by other participants in the group.

Key stakeholder groups were invited to participate in one of five focus group sessions to provide feedback on the proposed vision, values, mission, issues and key priorities to be included in the Strategic Plan update. A diversity of perspectives and experiences was sought for participation in each focus group. Each focus group aimed to include 18-20 participants representing different stakeholder interest groups.

Staff developed objective criteria to select key stakeholders for participation in a series of focus group discussions about the Strategic Plan update in February 2022. Stakeholder groups were selected from a master contact list compiled by Regional Parks. The master contact list is updated by staff based on local knowledge, previous contacts, past participation in engagement activities, referrals, and general interest inquiries. The master contact list currently identifies approximately 200 stakeholder groups in the CRD, British Columbia and Canada potentially interested in the CRD's regional parks management and projects.

The rationale and criteria for stakeholder selection were provided in the stakeholder engagement report provided to the February 9, 2022, CRD Board meeting. The rationale was to achieve a diversity of perspectives and experiences for participation in focus groups discussions about the Strategic Plan update. The following selection criteria were applied to evaluate the suitability of stakeholder groups for participation in the focus groups:

- being located in the CRD (yes=1 or no=0).
- representing a broad outdoor recreation, conservation/nature and/or cultural/social interest (yes=2 or no=0).
- having knowledge and experience related to CRD Regional Parks (yes=2 or no=0).
- having an interest and experience in working in multi-stakeholder groups (yes=1 or no=0).
- self-identifying as a First Nation (yes=1 or no=0).

Similar criteria have been successfully applied by the CRD to engage a diversity of stakeholder groups in previous engagement processes, including, recently, the Mountain Biking Advisory Committee and the Land Evaluation project.

A snowball technique was also used to expand the list of possible interest groups. Snowball sampling is a recruitment technique in which invited stakeholders are asked to assist in identifying other potential subjects that may have been missed from initial screening. The same criteria used to select the initial stakeholders was applied to potential subjects for consistency in selection.

Stakeholder groups receiving a score between five and seven were selected to be invited to participate in focus groups. A list of the stakeholder groups invited to participate in focus groups about the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update are included in Table 1. Of the 88 stakeholder groups invited, 44 participated in a focus group session.

Targeted emails/phone calls were used to invite stakeholders to the focus groups. Through the invitation, CRD staff explained the purpose of the focus group and requested confirmation of interest to participate. If no interest was expressed, other stakeholder groups representing a similar interest, but possibly having lower scoring criteria, were invited to participate to ensure representativeness in opinion across groups participating to the focus groups. An online poll was circulated to all interested stakeholder groups offering a range of 18 possible dates and times to participate in a focus group. Dates and times for the five focus group sessions were selected by CRD staff based on the availability of participants.

A total of five focus groups were conducted with stakeholders in February 2022. Each focus group was held virtually on Zoom and lasted approximately two hours. The focus groups were attended by 44 stakeholder groups: 27 representing outdoor recreation groups, 12 representing conservation groups, and 5 representing community groups.

An additional focus group was conducted with representatives from seven park agencies with interest in the region. This focus group was held virtually on Zoom and lasted approximately one hour. Representatives from five agencies attended.

The focus group sessions were taped for later analysis and review by CRD staff. The results of the focus group sessions will be used to inform further public engagement, to incorporate into the Strategic Plan update, and will be provided to the Regional Parks Committee and CRD Board for consideration.

Table 1: Stakeholders selected to participate in focus groups

Community Interests	Stakeholder Group [* indicates the stakeholder group participated]
Economic	Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce Tourism Victoria Urban Development Institute Tourism Association Vancouver Island
Community	Greater Victoria Placemaking Network* Creating Community Wellness Society South Island Prosperity Project Parks and Recreation Foundation Victoria Metchosin Foundation Victoria Foundation Community Social Planning Council

	Sooke Region Communities Health Network
Education	Royal BC Museum* YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea
Accessibility & Equity	Victoria Disability Resource Centre Community Living Victoria* SPARC BC Power To Be Building Bridges Community Support*
Youth & Family	Post-secondary Student Societies Camosun College Student Society* Family Services of Greater Victoria
Conservation	Stakeholder Group
Nature Stewardship	Victoria Natural History Society* Greater Victoria Nature Hood* Gorge Waterway Action Society (GWAS) Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary* Raincoast Conservation Foundation Pacific Wild Alliance Salt Spring Island Conservancy Galiano Conservancy Association
Land Stewardship	Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT)* The Land Conservancy (TLC)* Ancient Forest Alliance Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia
Wildlife	Juan de Fuca Salmon Restoration Society* SeaChange Conservation Society Wilderness Committee Peninsula Streams Society* Goldstream Volunteer Salmon Enhancement Association* Rocky Point Bird Observatory World Fisheries Trust Watershed Watch Salmon Society Coexistence with Carnivore Alliance*
Invasive Species	Coastal Invasive Species Committee*

Experts	University of Victoria* Camosun College Royal Roads University* Vancouver Island University University of British Columbia
Outdoor Recreation	Stakeholder Group
Rock Climbing	South Island Climbing Association (SICA)* Climbers' Access Society of British Columbia*
Hiking & Running	Southern Vancouver Island Nature Trails Society* Alpine Club of Canada* Vancouver Island Trail Association Kludahk Outdoors Club* Juan de Fuca Community Trails Association* RunVictoria* Outdoor Club of Victoria Victoria Club Tread* Salt Spring Island Trail & Nature Club*
Geocaching & Orienteering	Victoria Orienteering Club*
Horse Riding	Backcountry Horsemen of BC - South Vancouver Island* Capital Regional Equestrians* Elk Beaver Lake Equestrian Society*
Dog Walkers and Associations	Capital Region Association of Dog Professionals* Citizen Canine Dog Owners Association*
Mountain Biking & Cycling	Sooke Bike Club* South Island Mountain Biking Society (SIMBS)* Dirty Girlz Bike Club* Capital Bike (formerly Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition and Greater Victoria Bike to Work Society)* Wheelhouse Cycling Society* Cycling BC*

Water Sports	Surfrider Foundation Vancouver Island* Victoria City Rowing Club Rowing BC* Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC Amalgamated Conservation Society Diving Industry of Victoria Association South Island Sea Kayaking Association* Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club (VCKC) Victoria Fish and Game Protective Association* (snowball)
Youth & Community	Victoria Youth Paddling Club* Greater Victoria Youth Rowing Society* KidSport YMCA/YWCA Vancouver Island Outdoor Recreation Council of BC

Appendix C: Focus Group Responses

Focus group recordings were transcribed and any personal information that would make persons or organizations recognizable was removed. All the comments provided during the focus groups are listed in Table 2. Comments are divided based on the proposed strategic plan material, listed in no particular order, and grouped into broad categories for the purpose of analyzing themes.

Table 2: Stakeholder comments grouped by theme

Comments about vision, mission, and values statement	
General	Strongly support, surprised to see climate change above recreation in list
	Hard to oppose. Mother statements. How can we support these values through implementation?
	Vision is nebulous
	Mission statement needs to put collaboration first before 'informing...'. Mission – doesn't speak to interrelationship. Need cohesive statement, interdisciplinary statement
Prioritization	Necessary to establish priorities, alternative is conflicting needs
	Many issues/barriers. How are we going to get to vision given current reality? ie. Wear and tear on parks, huge problems, lack of parks west of Sooke, FN, Forestry, tourists, lack of understanding, small land base protected.
	Recognize all priorities are good but how do they interact? How do we deal with conflict? Need to prioritize values? Have a framework for decision-making. How can conservation be paramount?
	Doing nothing is prioritizing status quo
First Nation	Important to include reconciliation
Equity & Accessibility	Equity, inclusiveness, access needs to be broadened (i.e. support different languages)
	Hard to use parks without car. No car = no access to parks. No bus service. Need transit to trailheads, buses should have bike racks, multiple trailheads, access parks at various points. Accessibility should not = owning car.
	Agree with what is presented but not prioritized. Support accessibility but not at cost of sustainability.
Climate change & resiliency	Transportation corridor/use not reflected. Need land for trails – guide us to come together. Land is not for all uses. Climate change is major challenge
	Consider “regenerative” sustainability principles, not just protection but “enhancement” of environmental, social and cultural aspects
Conservation & Biodiversity Lens	Regional parks are faced with impossible task of providing conservation and recreation. There is no vast land base to resolve the tension

	Lens of conservation most important, define the top interest, give guidance to Board. But land isn't pristine, baseline is rapidly changing due to development and logging, need higher respect for recreation. Main focus is to conserve environment. Trail degradation from use needs to be managed by creating alternate routes around sensitive areas
	Board motion to have lens of conservation and biodiversity is not represented here. Should be the overarching principles. Agree. What does it mean 'lens of conservation and biodiversity'?
	Vision and values – where is biodiversity value highest? Not all use is appropriate everywhere. Buffer zones are needed. Conflict with wildlife is highest at boundaries of parks. Need corridors for connectivity, connect islands of nature
	All-important but need to be focused on conservation and biodiversity. Need to look forward. We are on verge of crisis and collapse. Need protection. Challenge is need walls around growth. Find places with natural integrity, stop development, have buffer zone, connected natural areas.
	A way to protect areas by making them controlled access. If left to public will, uncontrolled, then degradation will occur and ecology will be undermined. Way to manage ecological impact is: control access/use ex: Thetis Lake has massive use, CRD controls where people walk with well-defined trails and split rail fences.
	Thetis Lake is a recreation park with fishing, swimming etc. what about maintaining the environment there? CRD spends huge money on aerator at Elk Beaver Lake but not addressing invasive fish species. How do we correct this in the Vision?
	Observed people not understanding what they're doing in parks i.e. not prepared to be in nature (flip flops). Many rogue trails. Population growth increasing Victoria to Otter Point, clear cuts everywhere are squeezing out animals. Put animals first in some places. It's a problem
	Wilderness really acts as corridor for wildlife habitat, a greenbelt, and some parks could be long term regeneration of logged land.
Land Acquisition	Seems CRD is tackling not enough land buying. CRD is an urban environment not a wilderness environment. Commercial interests are taking wilderness away.
	Grateful for CRD parks. If CRD doesn't buy it then it will get developed. Protected in perpetuity it becomes natural.
Recreation	Add to recreation 'connection to nature' or 'relationship to nature'
	Tension between bikers and hikers, e-bikes, mountain bikes. Margin is fuzzy. Damaging to the environment. Trails should be for both biking and hiking. Need to rely on respect and a hierarchy of users (ie. yield to hikers), not more regulations. Damage to trails from users is a concern.

	Need for studies trails and access. Sees increase population and use. People use apps and maps to discover new places, most use in front country parks, day trips, easy access areas. Objective should be to create sustainable trails. Many old existing trails are down watercourses, eroded and braided. Need to create exciting trails, flows trails that are interesting to the user. This should be in front country areas where facing pressure. Concentrate human use away from wilderness areas and areas of ecological sensitivity, wildlife.
	Condense areas for recreation then set aside rest for wilderness.
User Groups	Where is mention of non-motorized recreation? Absence of clarity, Strategy needs to include self-contained wording to clarify and have no assumptions on this. Same with word Inclusive – what does this mean?
	Where are motorized sports going to go? May be conflict if don't offer an opportunity for them. Agree that need to clarify non-motorized. Motorized sports use Tanksy and logging roads. They are a nuisance but need somewhere to go. Mission statement needs to clarify excludes motorized recreation. Supports no motorized use, environmental protection is key. More accessible places have more damage.
	Orienteering requires off trail walking, can lead to tension. Group tries to keep minimal impact but technically nowhere allowed to go in parks.
	"Compatible" uses, concerned with dogs. Should provide dog parks. Dog parks not great for all dogs, sterile environment, dogs need stimulation, should enforce behavior like we do with motorized use, but enforcement costs \$. Dog professionals self-police, educate. Good example of underutilized partner of CRD.
Communication	Evolution of signage, biking should be restricted to certain trails, there is a sense that biking inherently leads to degradation. Need clarity on rules
Education & Etiquette	See increase in number of emergency responses in parks. Educating people is missing from material. Need to create respect for nature. Garbage, accidents etc. all result of lack of education
	Agree with everyone. Need to add etiquette messaging. Elk Lake has large conflict between users but it doesn't need to be there. Result of lack of education and etiquette. Yield signs not enough, not working.
	CRD education is not accessible to most people using social media. Opportunity to partner with stakeholders to promote messaging through their group forums which are more trendy and effective. Outreach needs to focus on etiquette, trail standards, no rogue trail building, and unsanctioned trails are due to people being bored with the experience or the trails not functioning for their purpose.
Stewardship & Partnerships	Multifunctionality: ability to have different uses, different by season etc... A way of addressing conflict. Need to foresee conflict between uses and beings. Create stewards: how successful has CRD been in creating stewards? I.e. through

	interpretive programs, kid programs. Are we growing a new generation of stewards? Need to create stewards of all ages and abilities.
	Pleased that we are communicating with FLNRO and MOSAIC. Access agreements are needed over forest land, some parks have no access. Higher levels of government need to end long term logging tenures.
Comments about priority statements	
General	'Enabling' users is too passive. Consider 'Promote' recreation. Making people aware of facilities and park use contributes to healthy lifestyle. Give people a push, be more direct, sell or 'market' the facilities.
	'Enable' is interesting choice of word, support it. Implies the idea that CRD helps groups take part in their activity. "take action" seems above and beyond what CRD Parks' role is. Enable is a good balance between priorities. Strongly support the "enable users to recreate" statement. This applies to surfing at Jordan River. Groups do water quality testing at Jordan River to ensure it is 'safe' to be in water
	Provide space is vague. Opportunity?
	Regional Growth Strategy and current strategic plan include goals for access to parks. Complete communities, parks should be accessed within close proximity to neighborhoods by walking and biking. Do gap analysis on this. Municipal role to coordinate park acquisition. Everyone should have access to nature. How to restore land? Evaluate other values of land if protected. Also need broaden regional trail network, include other municipal trails.
	Suggests Connectivity – where is this concept? Connectivity. System being connected for all creatures and humans for different purposes i.e. Transportation and species habitat. Connectivity doesn't indicate transportation strongly enough. Need transportation lens on trail network
	The themes/categories for priority statements will never be perfect, but it all makes sense. Could separate out transit. Transit is applicable to accessibility and equity as well as climate. Ex. Size of parking lot at Thetis is concern. Teenagers have hard time accessing parks.
	In the vision what does 'exceptional' mean? Each activity will have a different definition of what is an exceptional system. I.e. Langford has a 'world class' climbing park but what does it mean. Nothing has happened for climbing in CRD parks for over 20 years.
	8 sets of priorities seems too much. Need a clear statement upfront what is #1 priority. Would not want to be held accountable to achieving this list if I was manager. Too many challenges to address.

	Provincial government, CRD and municipal agencies all deal with climate change, collapse of biodiversity, deal with growth/development. Contentious issues, have to make tough choices. Need to direct growth elsewhere
	CRD needs to be accountable for implementation. Also, access and conservation could be counter-active. Need a framework for transparency and accountability. Ex: wilderness area vs recreation area, spectrum of ecosystem vs. human priorities. Develop accountability table that outlines what takes priority. Strengthen this classification framework
	Classification system can address these issues. Rowing is grandfathered in. Levels of classification can be more specific, talk about habitat, recreation.
Conservation & Recreation	Overarching goal should be to connect us with nature and to enjoy nature. Enjoying nature is what connects us all to the place and to each other. "Create and maintain recreation infrastructure such that users can recreate and enjoy nature." 'Take action' is strong, 'enable' is not strong enough
	Biodiversity – does this mean 'representative ecosystems' or 'species at risk' or? How is ecosystem representation targeted? Does it also mean acquire land for recreation? Nature needs half – also needed to be more specific to how it applies to each neighborhood in region. Rare butterfly on edge of highway only needs small space. Nature's needs are different for different species. Need to be informed about what species need to survive.
	Where is 'lens of conservation and biodiversity'? Seems implicit. Need more explicit statement? Is conservation meaning exclusion zones, has exclusionary connotation. Need to define what this means. Or does it mean stewards and a relationship with environment? Conservation implies protecting environment over other interests. Support creating kid stewards. Add Education to mission and values. Conservation – hard to define but necessary. Doesn't need to connote exclusion. Use metrics or principles or Mitigation Framework to capture conservation values. Statements need to connote respect and understanding of what each species needs
	Recreation and conservation theme seems odd – conservation and recreation seem opposite. Conservation and recreation are not compatible. The plan implies they are but not sure how
	Conservation and recreation are not a contradiction. The values are determined by a relationship to and ownership of an area. A fear response imagining recreation causes degradation is not helpful. Which is more important conservation or recreation? Pure conservation = no recreation. 'Balance' between them. Where there are high conservation values, limit recreation. Depending on the location the outcome might be different depending on factors

	Conservation and recreation – go hand in hand but cause challenges. Characterized as priorities, get handle on ‘balance’. Use the term loosely. How are they reconciled? Use ‘no net losses of biodiversity to define this. Or Mitigation Framework (how you achieve no net loss: try not to disturb, if yes then minimize disturbance, if no then restore, if can’t then offset or compensate elsewhere.” Use this framework to set goals
	‘Promotion’ idea is used by BC Parks to diffuse use in high volume areas by attracting people to lesser known parks. Highlight diversity of spaces.
	Bullet #1 Conservation & Recreation theme – sounds like ecological reserves. Bullet #2 change to create new trails and opportunities (frame more positively)
	Recreation is mechanism to inculcate caring for nature
	We impact nature by being here, driving, using trails
	Add transportation to Conservation & Recreation theme heading. No. 3. Need to recognize transportation function of parks and trails, not just bike and pedestrian trails. Galloping Goose history as rail line, now recreation corridor, conflicts arise. Uses changes, need thought. MOTI should be in charge of transportation. CRD takes over different functions beyond Regional Parks.
	Conservation & recreation – access to recreation and create buffers on or outside park. Work with municipalities on this. Concentrate use in front country, set aside vast areas with lower density activity
	Conservation should be upfront in Plan. Be clear that conservation and biodiversity is primary objective. Recreation has to be compatible with the primary objective of conservation and biodiversity. Under the foster stewardship statement- add education.
	Put recreation first then conservation 2nd and add buffer zones, use infrastructure to keep people in right place
	If live in urban areas then focus is recreation. If live in Sooke then conservation is key.
	Conservancy groups establish exclusion zones with their land acquisition – how to find the balance between human use and conservation
	What about engaging all the animals and plants who don’t have a voice? How do you incorporate their input? Ask them what they need. Bring in experts to speak for the species.
	Like the idea. Recreation is viewed in opposition to conservation but equally strong values for recreation. Need to break down silos. We will get further together. Create a culture of conservationists through recreation.
	Conservation focus on endangered species. Does CRD have a Species at Risk plan? Applying a biologist’s lens and looking at climate mitigation: there is nothing to access if nature is destroyed or degraded. Be more explicit about what

	conservation means for CRD. What is CRD's commitment to conservation? What is CRD's approach to climate mitigation?
	Conservation is high priority but need to fund more land for recreation use. Acknowledge intent to offer users/taxpayers what they want and expect. Conservation is strongest value but people expect to do the activity they love. This goes towards raising/inculcating stewards.
	See this dynamic between human use and conservation. The activity is an opportunity to connect to nature (not just exercise). Build appreciation and awareness about connecting with nature, create allies for environment
Land Acquisition	Emphasis on what kind of land is acquired i.e. Land for trail runners, mountain biking etc. Need to know what land needs to be conserved.
	Setting direction for land acquisition? What about this? What is land acquisition criteria and why not more land purchased west of Sooke. Values for climate mitigation, biodiversity, combat rapid rate of destruction. Value for different values, ie. Recreation. Logged forests can be restored, not pristine to begin with as history of logging over past 1-200 years. Strategic direction for land acquisition is missing from material. Current criteria is for intact ecosystems only.
	CRD is trying to do the impossible. Need more public space through land acquisition. Now operating with limited land base. Closing areas to recreation might push pressure to other places. Dilute people. Don't close things off.
	Urban development adjacent to park boundary is issue. Ex. JDF trail has windfall from adjacent clear-cut. No buffer to protect park values. Adjacent development needs to protect the park values. Lack of buffers around parks. Discuss buffers with municipalities. I.e. View from Sea to Sea Park to Central Mountain detracts from park vista value.
	Support offshoots from Galloping Goose to various destinations. Sooke Hills Wilderness Trail is very steep. Need contiguous areas. I.e. South Side of Mt. Wells Park.
	Fiscal responsibility for managing and opening banked parks and trails. Is fiscal responsibility a value/principle?
User groups	Where can e-bikes go? Need to address the dangers of high velocity e-bikes on trails, particularly the Galloping Goose. Offer more bike parking
	Support overnight kayaking, need overnight parking, boat launches, marine rescue considerations, Island View Beach ideal location
	Aging, need suitable facilities for older folks and equestrians. Maybe separating bike paths from other recreation uses.
	Could have restricted areas, provide access only to groups participating in program, like Sooke watershed tours

	Access and equity. Our Group's mission statement is "enhance health and wellbeing..."very similar to what is listed in priority statement. Support increasing parking fee if transit is provided.
	Parks are for everyone, not just bikers or mountain climbers. CRD could raise level of enjoyment of all, put in amenities like allow snack bars (but too away as led to garbage), and more water fountains. Thetis and Elk – amenities needed.
	Example is rowing at Elk Lake. I don't take it for granted. Need to work to maintain public support. Advocacy – role to ensure members understand conservation values. Groups are leaving CRD because the park culture is not supportive of their objectives. Need to understand complexity of multi-stakeholder interests or will lead to alienation of stakeholder groups. Create space for users rather than force out.
	Concerned by whether CRD should be everything to everybody. CRD has an established stakeholder following. Majority could say rowing doesn't fit in CRD parks therefore it is no longer allowed. Concerned if certain uses get taken away. Rowing does not seem to be reflected here in this material. Need to consider 'sport'. Needs to be acknowledged so expectations are set. Talk about how sport complements/supports conservation, accessibility, health. Ex: rowing boathouse has reduced footprint. There are shared values.
	Inherent competition between user types e.g. Events (triathlons) vs. individual users. Identify certain parks for multiple users, need communication plan. Recognize it is annoying when events are on, need transparent communication. Review what is the rationale for allowing or not allowing events through permit system.
	Is there appetite to include sport as well as recreation? Sport can live under umbrella of recreation but also 'sport for life' and 'competition'. Challenge of being sport host or event host: sense is they are working against /counter to CRD park values. Not much support for events. Competition seems an unwelcome activity in CRD parks. Rowing society and user group includes UVic, Youth Rowing, Claremont Sport, Rowing Canada. Elk Beaver Lakes have 100s rowers a day including coaches, volunteers, regattas, events. We understand pressures that events have: safety, parking, impact on other users. If rowing is included as recreational use in park then identify where does 'sport' fit in? where does sport tourism fit in CRD parks?
	More education about horse impacts on environment, we are good stewards with eyes on ground.
Education	"Shaping" experience. Currently there are no park stewards present in parks, obvious trail damage, lack of trail improvements, need trail standards. Need to set expectations for maintenance.

	Consider streamlining users into parks (i.e. Mt Work), develop facilities for certain user groups, but problem is users become territorial, consider rotating uses around system. Issue is lack of transit, hard for youth to access parks (i.e. Elk Lake) as no transit, busy highway.
	Prioritize education, more than 'informing'. Next generation – need to increase awareness of nature. CRD's approach is too casual, need to create future leaders to care about parks
	Where is education in this material? 'foster stewardship' implies education but not clear. 'leading by example' what does this mean? Focus should be on etiquette (ie. no fires, no waste, dogs) to achieve conservation. Education should focus on species, biodiversity.
	Education is a big part. Give more consideration to education as a priority. People value things when they understand them. Education should be part of plan now and going forward. Increasing population requires more education, more publicity about programs
	Education. Often push back to plans when brought to public and controversy results if not enough education about plan. Opportunity to educate? How does the plan apply to problems on the ground? How are people enrolled in this plan? Educate public about why the priorities in plan are important.
Management & Infrastructures	Need evidence-based research program (involving partners)
	Need to see a commitment by CRD to create and maintain infrastructure for all themes. Add 'strengthen maintenance of park infrastructure'. Maybe under access & equity. Need a "variety" of outdoor recreation to "connect with nature"
	A priority should be to have updated all management plans for all parks and have a schedule for renewal. Also should have a standard for facilities. Set renewal targets for management plans, need to capture changing trends, set a commitment to update plans and address changes.
	Management plans are not flexible enough, too 'set in stone', need to incorporate changes every 1-2 years. Planning is always behind, not dynamic enough. What about holding a forum?
	Need safe access (link to infrastructure)
	Support expanding facilities for recreation.
	Concerned about implementation of past plans ie. Concerned that trail in Mill Farm has not been completed
	Concern with management when looking at land's carrying capacity and heavy recreational use. Need to be practical.
Communication	More signage. Education is more than signage, more interpretation, learn from experts

	CRD has good data and mapping but how is data linked to park webpage?
Stewardship & Engagement	Prompt relationship with partners, foster stewardship and partnerships with stakeholders. Need way to maintain relations with stakeholders (annual renewal sessions). Groups have used and maintained sites for decades. Strengthen relationship with groups like SICA. Elk Beaver Advisory Committee is example. Need data collection and data sharing
	A disconnect between strategic plan and management plan engagement, need ongoing involvement of stakeholders in implementation. Be responsive to needs of stakeholders. Review of strategic plan is opportunity for input, how do we input ongoing through implementation?
	Need involvement through all processes from strategic planning to tactile planning and infrastructure development, program evaluation.
	Promoting activities (ie. Songhees Friendship Centre, climbing activities with FN youth & Vic Native Friendship Centre) – build relationships and trust. Rec leaders interested in getting support to collaborate on enhancing recreational opportunities
	Friends of Parks model, could expand this concept to monitor the state of the park system, monitor invasive species, etc.
	Cross pollinate across groups i.e. Volunteers, organizations, users. More than just a website, need to share contact and get people together.
	Individual users vs. stakeholder groups. Values are different. Focus on groups as stewards or champions. Stakeholder groups can support delivery of CRD messages. Not just CRD's responsibility. Need a marketing strategy to educate public on what are CRD's values and goals. Also need champions to connect people with the cause. Success through partnerships.
	Events. Need social networking bench/platform to showcase when events are occurring, like a community intranet for people to know what is happening in parks. Hold stakeholders in the process, have more engagement that lasts.
	Targets – commit to climate action and conservation. Need species monitoring targets. Other models? Copy or learn from other methods and organizations. Collaborate, student partnerships, policy development to action/implement on the ground. Sharing knowledge/partnerships is key.
First Nation	Reconciliation – build bridge between First Nations and non-indigenous people (through park signage, sharing info, traditional uses, learning from First Nations cultures). Reconciliation, CRD has role to lessen cultural divide. Show our common interest in parks
	Support of land acquisition for treaty and reconciliation. Collaboration and reconciliation. Co-Learning with First Nations, have deep ties with places. True partnership to steward. Economic development will be challenge! Commercial

	enterprise i.e. harvesting. How to deal with this or balance it? Be aware of emerging theme, anticipate and avoid breakdown of relationship with First Nations
	Interrelation between First Nations and conservation. Many interrelationships in the material. Consider info graphic or diagram to represent material to show interconnections
	Need to extend land acquisition goal to recreation and FN priorities.
	Reconciliation #1 “management of natural assets...” too limited. Extend to land acquisition. “Provide space for” is vague. Important concept but needs clarifying.
	Reconciliation #1 FN lens TEK tied to conservation – should move up under Conservation theme?
	Regional Growth Strategy struggled with Douglas Treaty rights. Some reconciliation is above Regional Parks plan.
	Reconciliation – what about indigenous language? Names of mountains, Alpine Club created interactive map. Also use First Nations plant names and uses. This is educational opportunity. Names tell stories, words have power. History can be told through naming. This should be separate bullet. First Nations tree names, used as medicine, First Nation parks and place name.
	Use DRIPA as lens through which everything is viewed/considered. A decolonizing lens. Fostering stewardship – get at the root of what it means. What is CRD’s responsibility to align conservation and recreation.
	Reconciliation seems like appendage to conservation and management. What about ‘co-management’ of parks. Land acquisition is an opportunity for co-management. Transition crown lands to First Nations. FN collaboration should occur through all goals.
Climate change & Resiliency	What can we do for climate change? We can make change on environmental stewardship by taking action on invasive species, this is doable. But how do we mitigate damage to infrastructure from climate change?
	Active Transportation – make it easier to get around without cars. Trend is more parking lots, and bigger ones, this contradicts climate action. Also need to consider mitigation efforts that do not destroy nature (i.e. Flood mitigation, hard/built approach vs. natural methods).
	Existing land base – recognize small tradeoffs for larger gain ie. Paving trails is bad but reduces car use, therefore net positive. Larger picture.
	Parks would benefit from transit service, more bike stands, carpooling. If parking is problem then people are discouraged from visiting and might find alternatives. Increase trail connectivity. I.e. Sooke Hills Wilderness Trail does not link to rest of park. Reduce car dependency. Give options. Not just access by relying on car

	'Urban containment' under climate action, what is this? The idea of 'containment' is supportable, but short of buying land, how is this achieved? Lofty goal, how does Parks achieve it? Might be beyond Regional Parks' mission/ability. Too big for Parks service alone. Separate out 'urban containment by...' highlight in Vision, at higher level or clarify HOW to achieve this. Ex. Land acquisition criteria would be different to achieve urban containment than to achieve conservation of natural areas
	Connectivity (network, transportation lens). Urban containment may be more municipal than Regional parks.
Accessibility	As an aging member, accessibility and inclusion are priorities. Problem with aging population is how do you make parks accessible to older people? Could be another conflict between conservation/recreation
	Accessibility for all ages and abilities good, but accessibility is not extensive. People with access issues want increased access to parks to address health and well-being
	There is room for improvement. How can it be implemented? Curious about last Strategic Plan accomplishments, specifically about planning and opening land banked parks and trails and the classification system
	Access and equity - need access to parks by transit. Reality is that car use is high. Address car parking overflow where there is no transit.
	Tension about events creating times when park is over capacity. Need to partner with Transit. People with disabilities rely on vehicles, lack of spots for disabled car parking
	Access and equity – go farther than 'apply lens'. Identify and understand barriers to accessibility in parks and trails.
	Students have seat on Transit Commission. There is a limited envelope of funding and competing priorities. Hard to change transit routes because of this.
	Accessibility can balance with conservation from equestrian rider perspective. Preserve access to parks. Access is getting limited with development in region. Need more consultation. Promote leave no trace concept through their equestrian group. Willingness to work with all users. Users are also eyes on ground and can share information when see habitat loss.

Appendix D: Online Survey Responses

A total of 1,228 online surveys were filled out between March 8 and April 4, 2022. Below is a summary of the online survey responses.

Section 1: Values & Principles

QUESTION 1: How important is it to have each of these proposed values and principles in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan?

- **Accessibility** – we provide access to nature and communities for all ages and abilities
- **Conservation** – we protect, restore and enhance the region’s biodiversity
- **Equity** – we keep regional parks and trails inclusive and maintained as a common good
- **Reconciliation** – we commit to reconciliation with First Nations
- **Recreation** – we offer compatible outdoor recreation experiences that inspire nature stewardship and that improve our health and well-being
- **Resiliency** – we take action on climate change with a view to benefitting future generations

The majority of participants to the survey responded that it is very important to important to have the proposed values and principles of conservation (80%) and recreation (80%) in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan, followed by resiliency (74%), equity (66%), accessibility (62%) and reconciliation (58%).

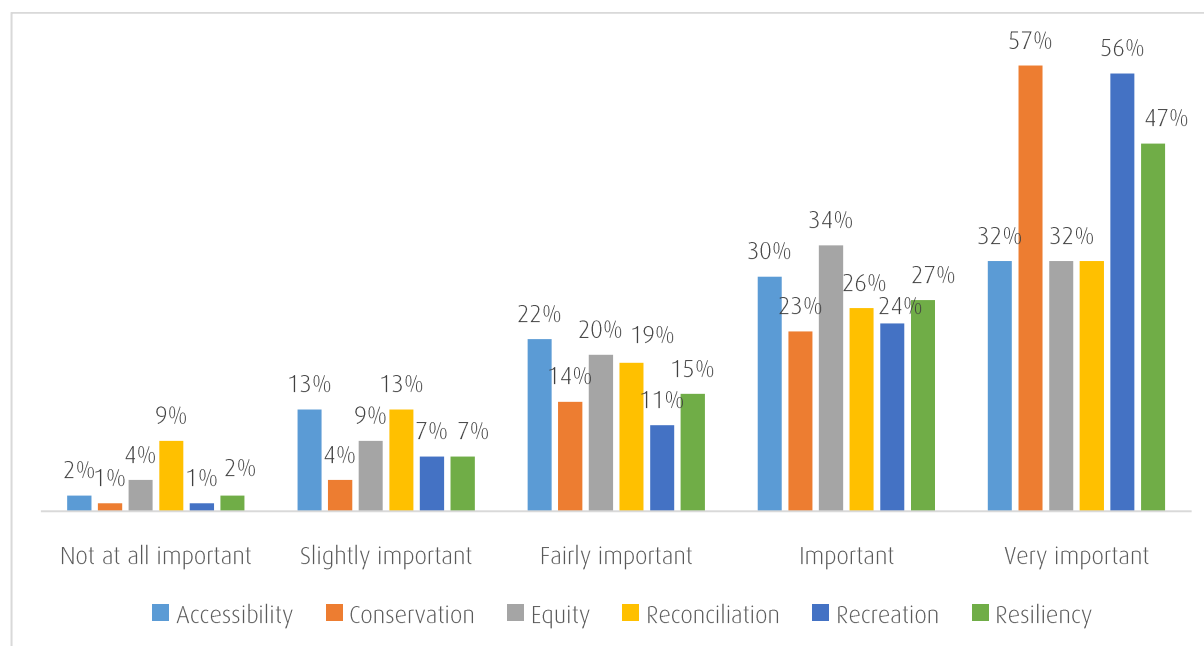


Figure 1: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the importance of the proposed values and principles in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan.

QUESTION 2: Should any additional values be included in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update? Check all that apply.

More than half of the respondents to the survey identified stewardship (52%) as an additional value to be included in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. Education (43%) was also recognized by most respondents as an additional value to be included. All of the other values proposed are supported by approximately 30% or less of the respondents (Figure 2).

A total of 93 comments were offered by respondents in the category 'Other'. Such comments either refer to the values already proposed in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan or to themes not related to values (e.g., enforcement, land acquisition, etiquette, etc.). Respondents also suggest to define the additional values proposed so to clarify their meaning.

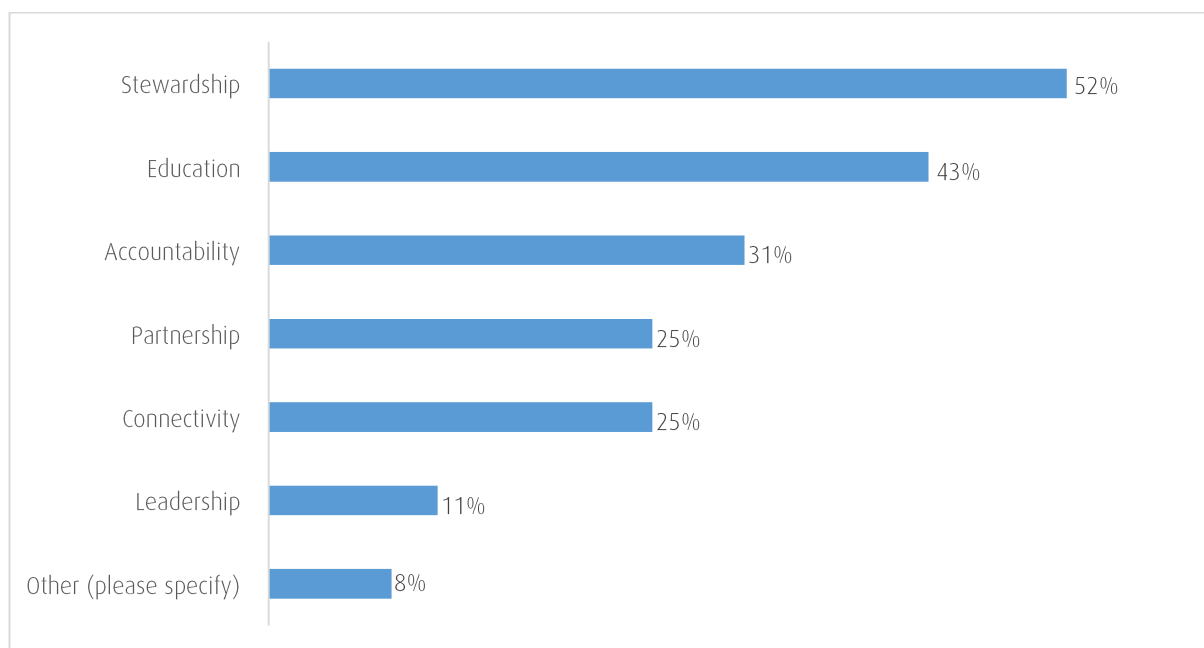


Figure 2: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about which additional values could be included in the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Section 2: Vision

QUESTION 3: Do you support or oppose the proposed vision statement: "We work cooperatively and respectfully to steward and expand an exceptional system of regional parks and trails that is rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage, resilient to change, connects people to nature and provides healthy outdoor experiences for all"?

The majority of respondents (83%) support to strongly support the proposed vision for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

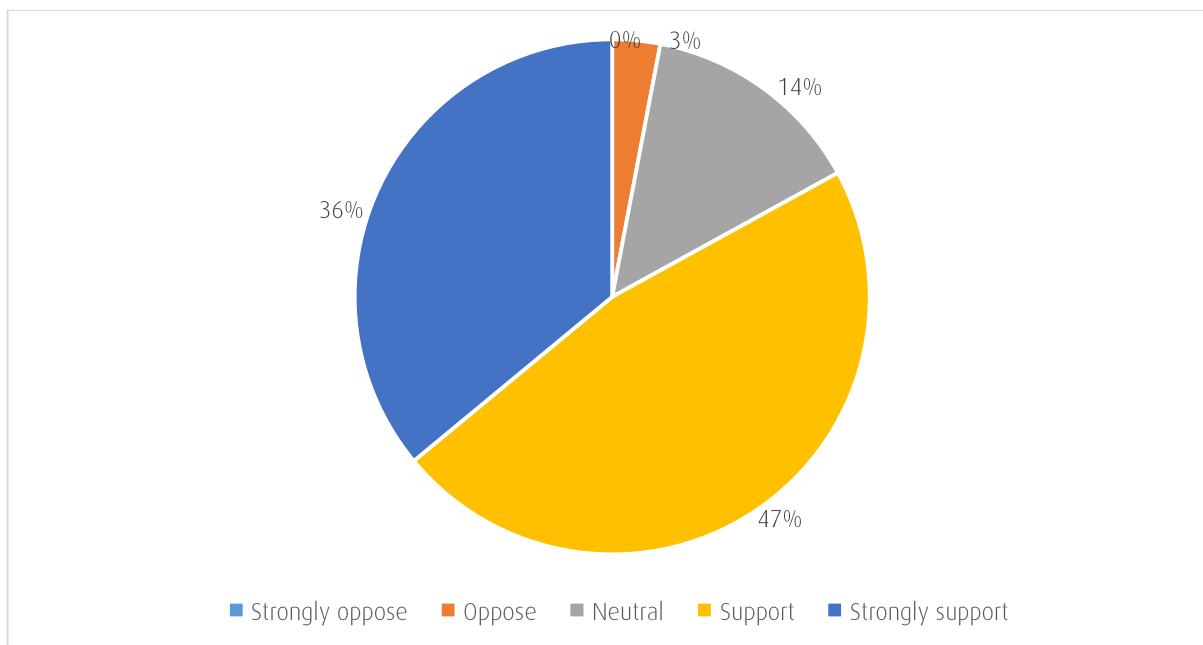


Figure 3: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the vision proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who did not support the proposed vision (3%) believe that the statement includes too many concepts (n=14), is too complicated (n=11), misses some ideas (n=8) or is unobtainable (n=6). Other comments offered by those opposing the vision (n=20) believe that the statement is vague, open to interpretation and/or is trying to please too many and opposing interests.

Section 3: Mission

QUESTION 4: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Ensure regional parks and trails are resilient by delivering a sustainable service that is adaptable and takes action on climate change"?

Most respondents (74%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

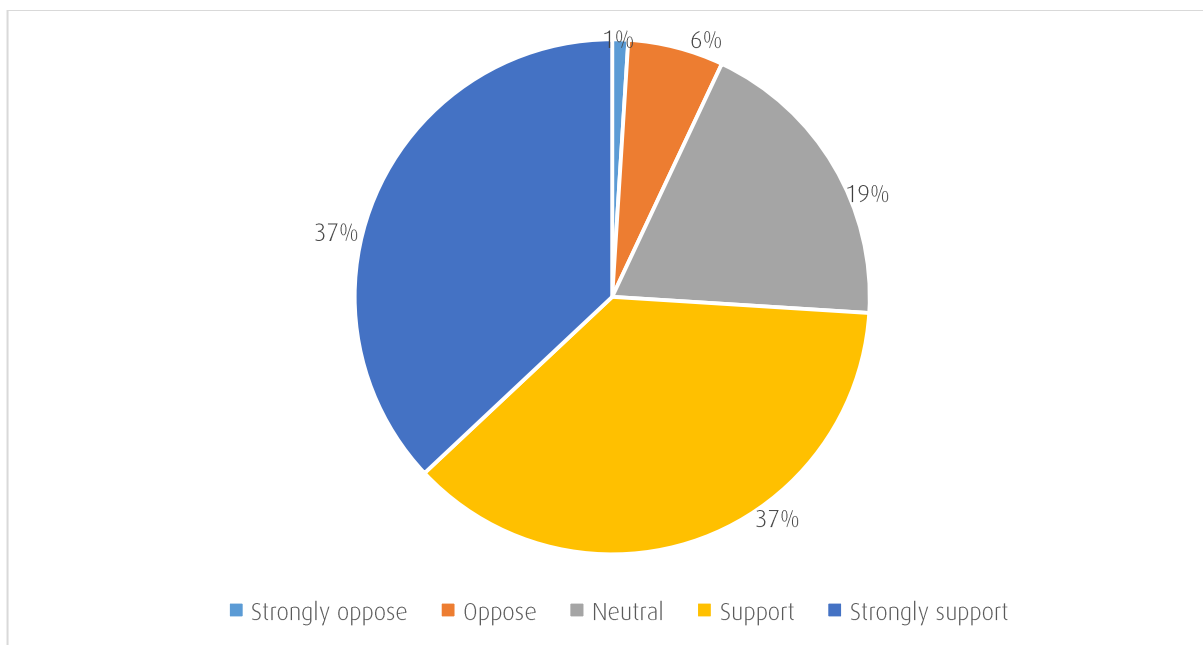


Figure 4: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Ensure regional parks and trails are resilient by delivering a sustainable service that is adaptable and takes action on climate change" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (7%) believe that the statement is unobtainable (n=25), includes too many concepts (n=21) and is too complicated (n=16). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=41) stated that the meaning is unclear and open to interpretation. Some respondents questioned the importance of having climate change as a mission statement in the Regional Parks Strategic Plan update since it is out of scope and being a result of good park management. Additionally, some participants expressed the need to clarify the terminology used in the mission statement, such as what "delivering sustainable service" means.

QUESTION 5: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Foster stewardship of ecological and cultural resources by informing, engaging and collaborating with the public, volunteers, partners, and First Nations"?

Most respondents (79%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

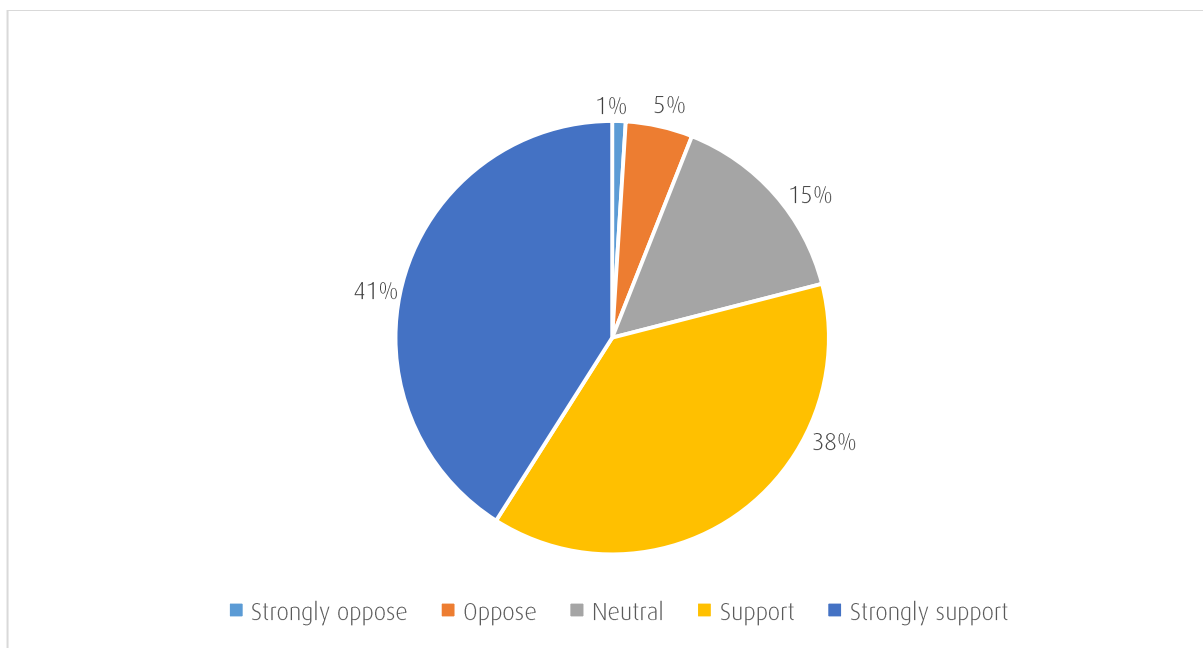


Figure 5: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Foster stewardship of ecological and cultural resources by informing, engaging and collaborating with the public, volunteers, partners, and First Nations" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (6%) believe that the statement is unobtainable (n=17), too complicated (n=16) and misses ideas (n=14). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=30) are that its meaning is too general and politicized, as well as open to interpretation. Some respondents do not support separating people in different groups and suggest to use more inclusive language that encompasses all groups.

QUESTION 6: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Provide access to regional parks and trails that facilitates healthy, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences for all"?

Most respondents (81%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

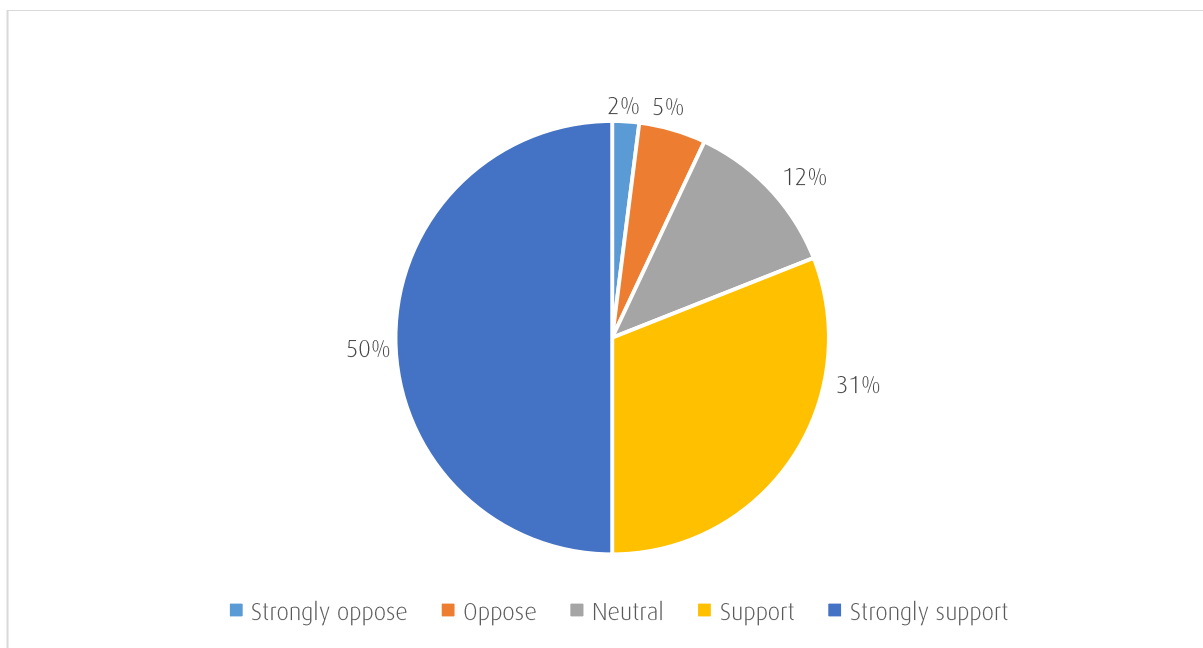


Figure 6: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Provide access to regional parks and trails that facilitates healthy, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences for all" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (6%) believed that the statement misses ideas (n=14). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=61) provide insights on such missing ideas as respondents specified that the statement as proposed is oriented solely towards recreation, without any element of biodiversity conservation. Respondents also feel that the statement could be misinterpreted and be highly subjective. Especially the terminology "for all" is criticized as respondents feel that while regional parks should be for all, not all outdoor recreation should be accommodated everywhere in regional parks.

QUESTION 7: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Secure a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region's biodiversity and cultural landscapes"?

Most respondents (84%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

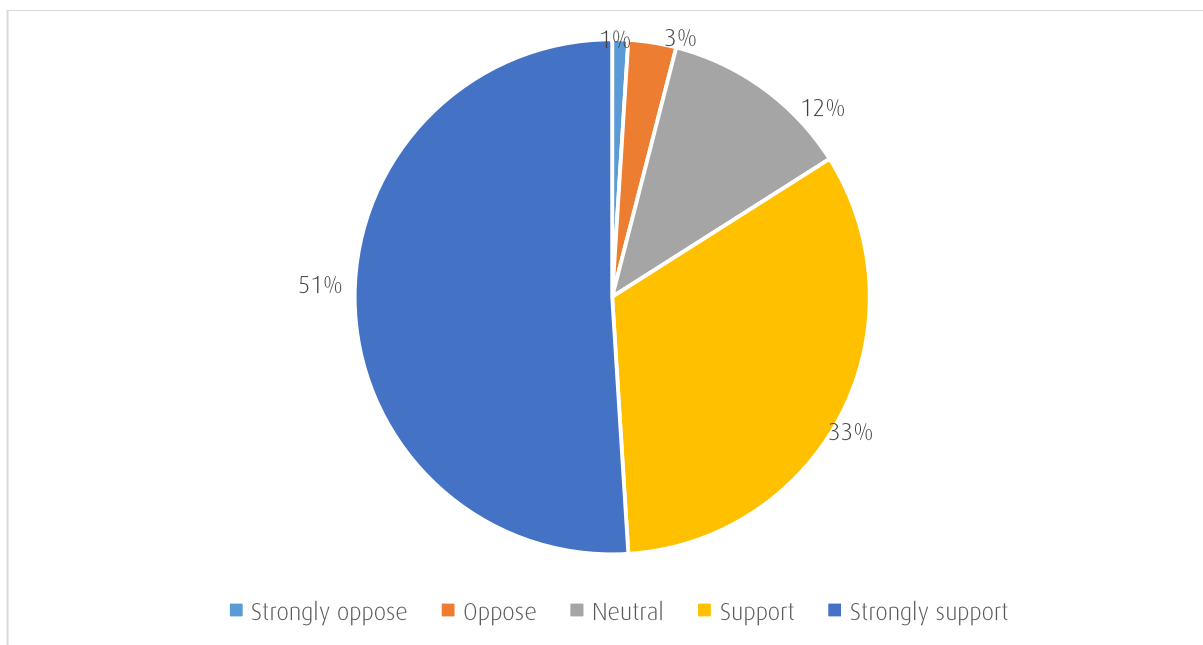


Figure 7: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Secure a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region's biodiversity and cultural landscapes" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (6%) believe that the statement is too complicated (n=11) and unobtainable (n=10). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=30) are about concerns around limiting recreational use for biodiversity protection. Respondents feel that parks should have a dual mandate of providing recreation and conservation, thus separating these concepts in two mission statements creates antagonism rather than balance between these components. Respondents also feel that the statement is vague and that some terminology is unclear, especially the term "cultural landscape".

QUESTION 8: Do you support or oppose the proposed mission statement: "Work with First Nations in taking care of the land and water"?

Most respondents (69%) support to strongly support the proposed mission statement for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

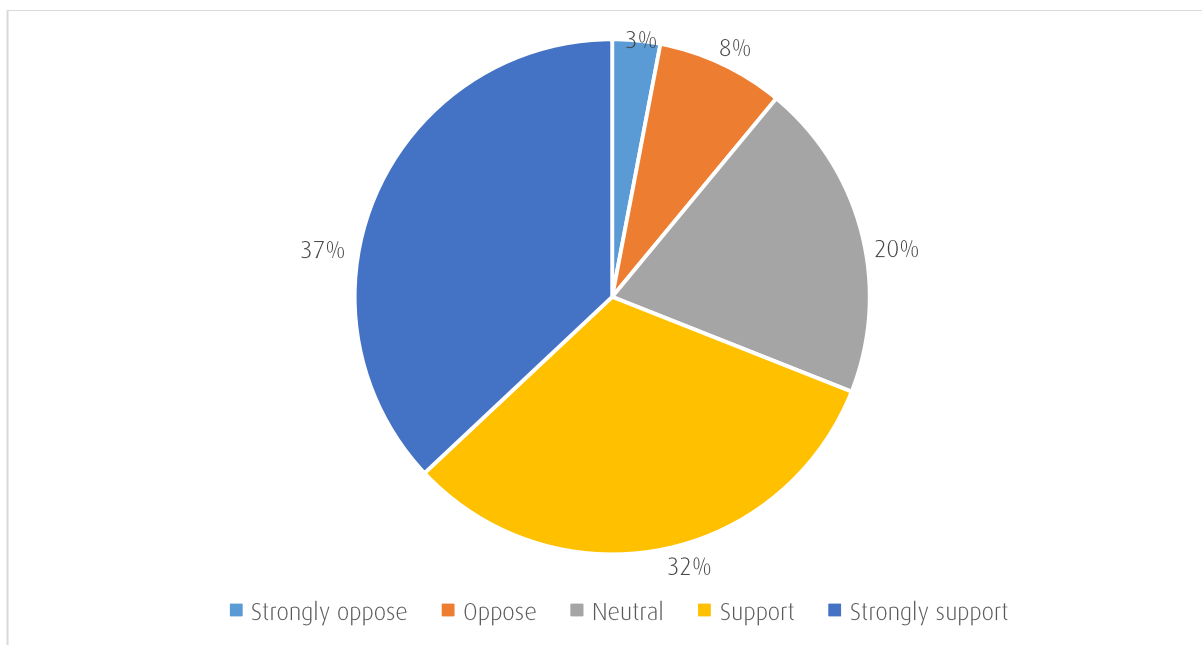


Figure 8: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about the mission statement "Work with First Nations in taking care of the land and water" proposed for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

Those who do not support the proposed mission statement (11%) believe that the statement is unobtainable (n=36) and misses ideas (n=29). Other comments offered by those opposing the mission statement (n=59) are that the wording used is limiting because respondents believe everyone should care of and benefit from the land and water within the regional parks and trails system. Respondents are also concerned that this statement singles out a group, thus clashes with the idea of fostering stewardship across diverse groups proposed in the first mission statement. Some respondents suggest to focus the mission statement on building lasting relationships with First Nations and to commit to stewarding the land and water in alignment with First Nations traditional knowledge and practices.

Section 4: Priorities

QUESTION 9: "What should the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan give priority to over the next 10 years for conservation and compatible outdoor recreation"?

Based on respondents feedback on conservation and compatible outdoor recreation (Figure 9), high priorities with more than half of the respondents support were:

- acquire more land (High=66%)
- protect biodiversity (High=58%)

Additional high priorities identified by respondents were:

- undertake environmental restoration and monitoring (High=44%)
- develop partnerships with outdoor recreation groups (High=41%)
- provide compatible outdoor recreation experiences (High=38%)

All of the other priorities listed in the survey were evaluated by participants as high/medium to medium priorities.

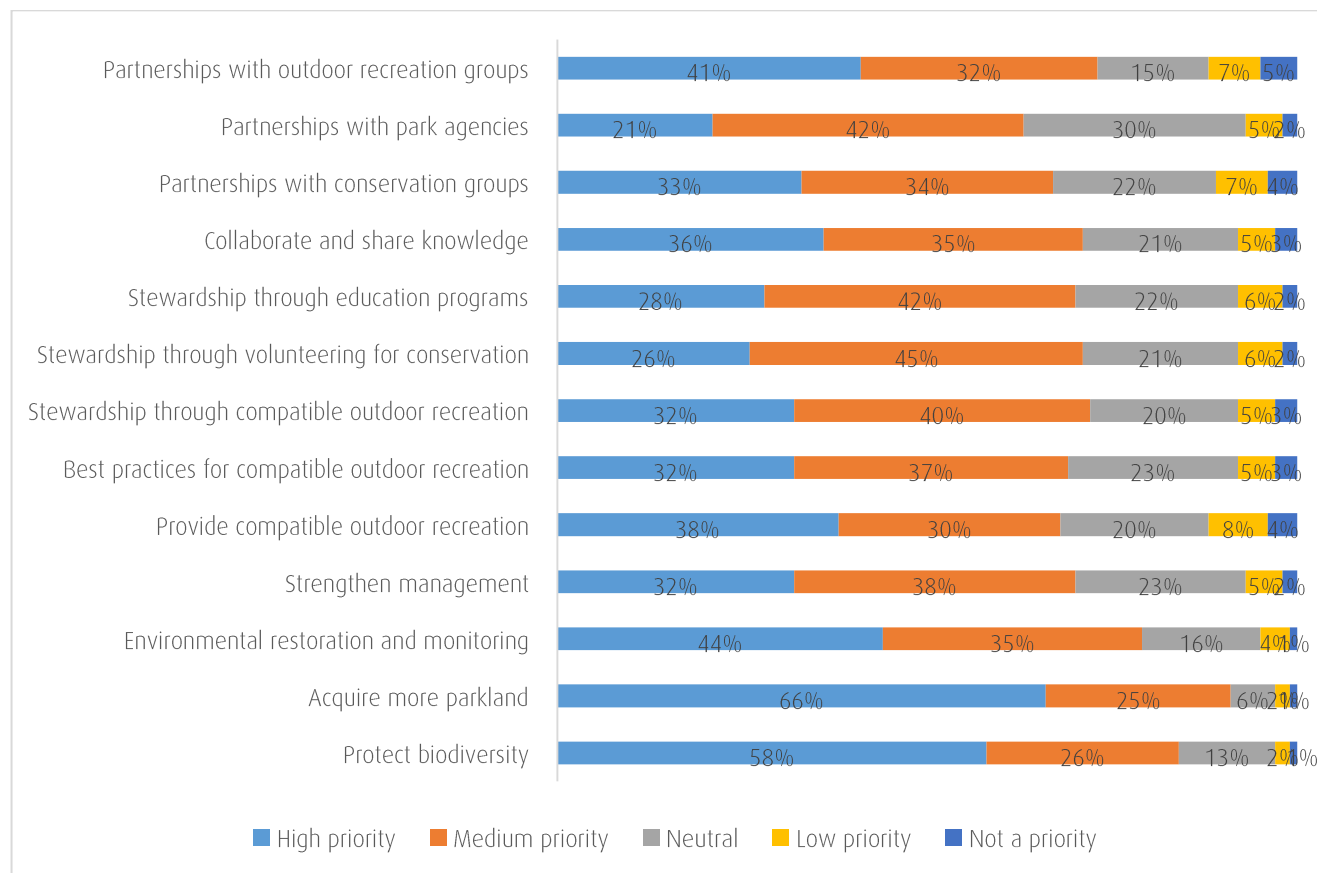


Figure 9: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan priorities over the next 10 years for conservation and compatible outdoor recreation.

QUESTION 10: "What should the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan give priority to over the next 10 years for access and equity"?

Based on respondents feedback on access and equity (Figure 10), high priorities identified by respondents are:

- provide accessibility to parks and trails for people of different ages, abilities and incomes (High=40%)
- enhance connectivity (High=39%)

All of the other priorities listed in the survey were evaluated by respondents as high/medium, medium or low priorities.

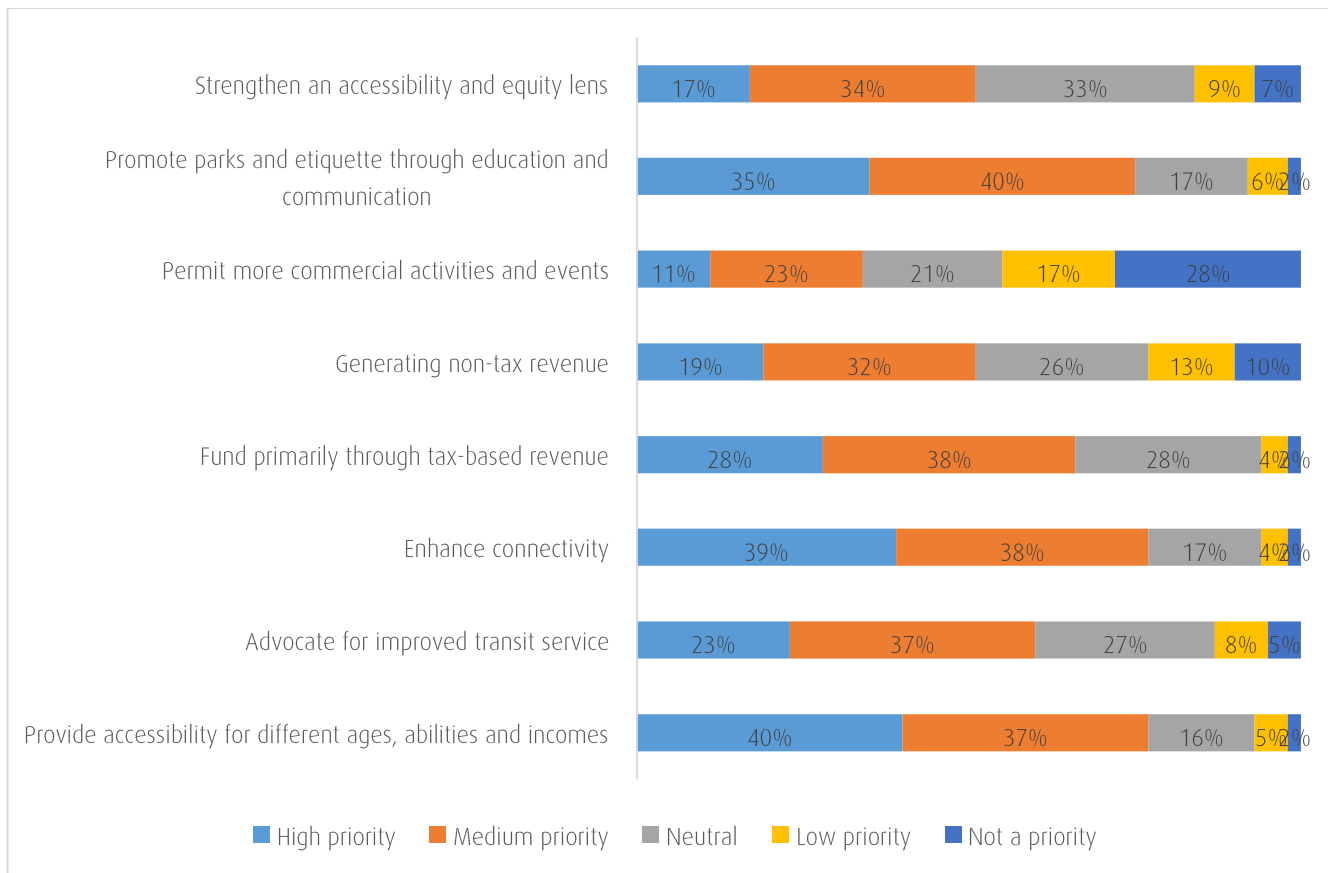


Figure 10: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan priorities over the next 10 years for access and equity.

QUESTION 11: "What should the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan give priority to over the next 10 years for climate action and resiliency"?

Based on respondents' feedback on climate action and resiliency (Figure 11), high priorities identified by respondents are:

- Provide buffers between parks and urban development (High=50%)
- Work with government agencies to connect green spaces (High=45%)
- Apply a climate action lens (High=41%)

All of the other priorities listed in the survey were evaluated by participants as medium priorities.

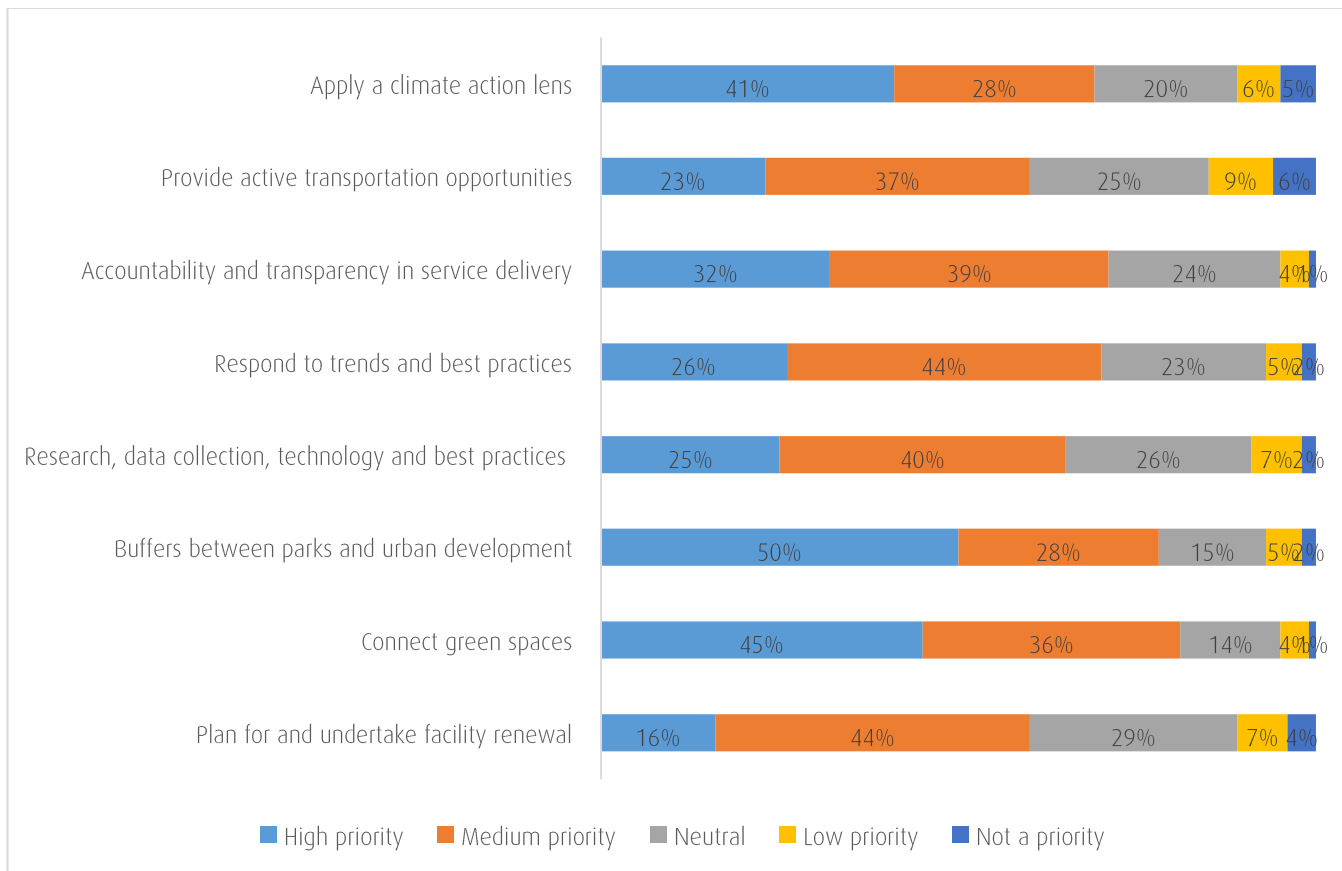


Figure 11: Percent breakdown of respondents' opinion about CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan priorities over the next 10 years for climate action and resiliency.

QUESTION 12: "What do you see as opportunities for how CRD Regional Parks can support reconciliation with First Nations"?

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments about how CRD Regional Parks can support reconciliation with First Nations. A total of 734 comments were received, with many providing multiple suggestions about the possible opportunities CRD Regional Parks could support in the spirit of reconciliation. The most suggested opportunity identified by respondents (n=266) is promoting the sharing of Indigenous knowledge through education, interpretation and programming in CRD Regional Parks. Another suggestion offered by respondents is that CRD Regional Parks engages and consults First Nations directly in regard to regional parks and trails management (N=153) so to ensure their priorities are met. Using Indigenous place names (n=105) and strengthening partnerships and collaborations with First Nations followed as a suggestion (n=90). Other recommendations provided by participants to the survey in relation to First Nations are to support cultural traditional uses (n=77), provide employment (n=52) or foster economic prosperity in other ways (n=48), and implement resource management practices (n=42). It is important to highlight that some respondents (n=53) feel that reconciliation is better suited to other levels of government or other CRD activities and departments rather than Regional Parks.

Section 5: Demographics

QUESTION 13: "In which age category do you fall"?

Respondents age was evenly split between categories, for the exception of younger people whose participation was lower (Figure 12)

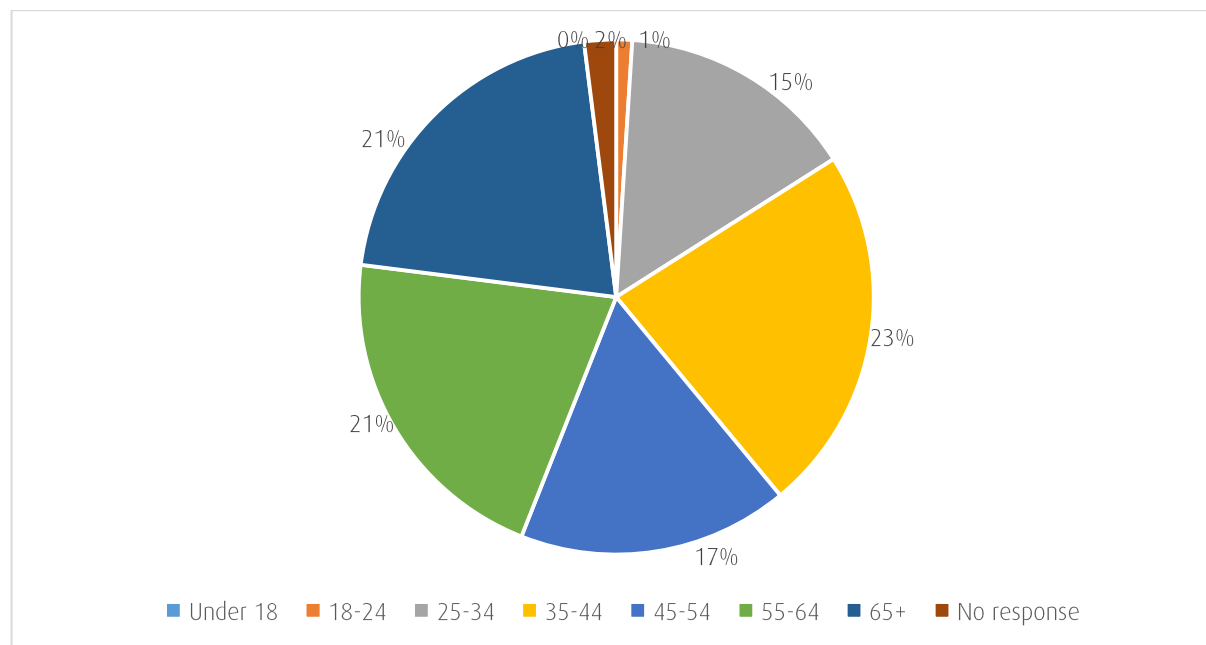


Figure 12: Age distribution of those who took the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update survey.

QUESTION 14: "Where do you live"?

The majority of respondents to the survey live in Saanich (27%), Victoria (19%) and Langford (11%).

Municipality of Residence	Respondents Rate
Beecher Bay First Nation (SC'IANEW)	0%
Central Saanich	5%
Colwood	3%
Esquimalt	4%
Esquimalt Nation	0%
Highlands	2%
Juan de Fuca Electoral Area	3%
Langford	11%
Metchosin	3%
North Saanich	4%
Oak Bay	4%
Pacheedaht First Nation	0%

Pauquachin First Nation (BOŦÉĆEN)	0%
Saanich	27%
Salt Spring Island Electoral Area	1%
Sidney	1%
Songhees Nation	0%
Sooke	4%
Southern Gulf Island Electoral Area	2%
T'Sou-ke Nation	0%
Tsartlip First Nation (WŦOŁŁP)	0%
Tsawout First Nation (SŦÁUTW)	0%
Tseycum First Nation (WŚIKEM)	0%
Victoria	19%
View Royal	3%
Other (please specify)	4%

Table 13: Residency of those who took the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update survey.

QUESTION 15: “Please indicate the type of household in which you live”?

The majority of respondents to the survey are couples with no dependent children (41%), followed by parent(s) with one or more dependent children (28%) and adults living alone (14%).

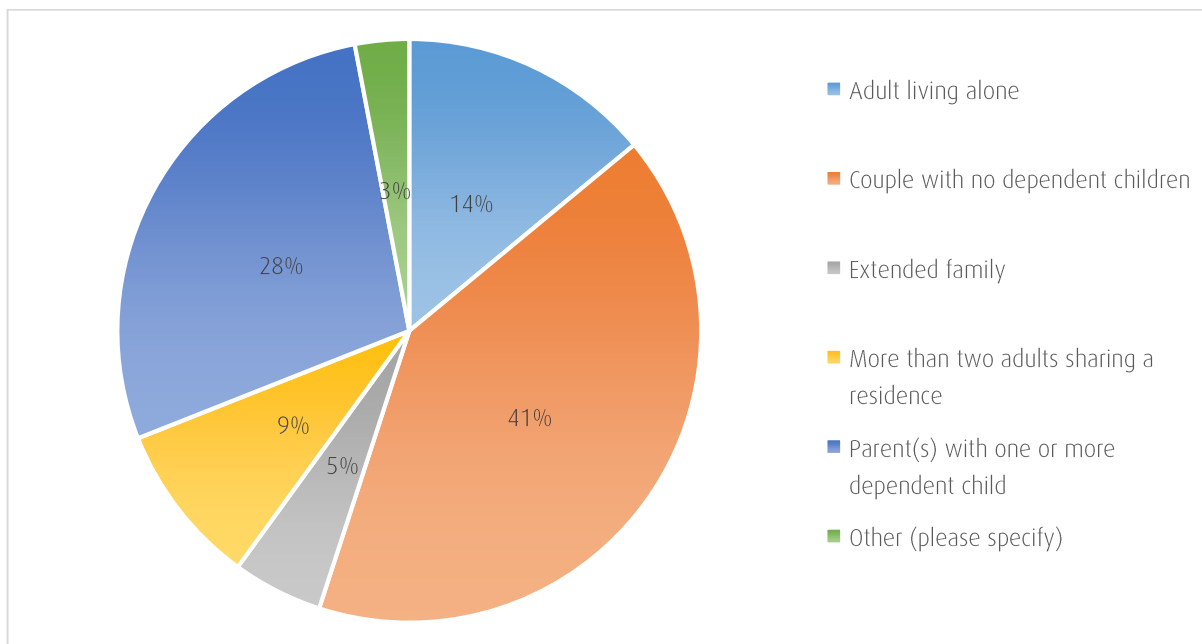


Figure 14: Household distribution of those who took the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update survey.

Section 6: Other Comments

QUESTION 16: “Do you have any other comments about your regional parks and trails?”

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments about regional parks and trails. A total of 932 comments were received, with many providing multiple feedback statements and suggestions about the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. Most respondents’ comments focused either on conservation or outdoor recreation themes. For conservation, respondents were really concerned about the overuse and impacts they witnessed in the regional parks and trails (n=65) and suggested to focus on biodiversity and ecosystem preservation (n=132) and land acquisition (n=100). For outdoor recreation, respondents suggested in general to offer more opportunities to recreate in regional parks and trails (n=83), with some specific stakeholder groups advocating for more disk golfing (n=138), mountain biking (n=120) and horse riding (n=47) opportunities. Respondents also offered suggestions on how to improve regionals parks and trails management (n=52), advocated for more and improved facilities (n=52) and stressed the importance of providing more education (n=52) and better accessibility (n=42). Another emerging theme was dog management, with some respondents advocating for dog off-leash opportunities (n=21), while others reporting issues related to dog out of control and the need for leashing policies (n=62). Respondents (n=113) took also the opportunity to express their appreciation toward CRD Regional Parks and the possibility to participate in the survey.

Appendix E: Letter from District of Metchosin



DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

File No. 0360-20-08

May 3, 2022

CRD EXECUTIVE OFFICE
Received

MAY 16 2022

Board of Directors
Capital Regional District
625 Fisgard Street
PO Box 1000
Victoria, BC V8W 2S6

Dear CRD Board Directors:

Re: CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan

The District of Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee through Metchosin Council would like to provide input to the proposed vision, mission, values, principles, and priorities for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. We recognize that the Board directed a lens of conservation and biodiversity be applied to the process and Plan. We support that position.

We recognize that CRD Regional Parks are varied in size, ecological composition, and function. Our concern is the protection of the wildland portion of CRD Regional Parks that now or could in the future provide habitat to the large mammals, including predators, which would naturally perform their ecosystem functions in these areas. Examples would be the Sooke Wilderness Park, the Sea-to-Sea Wilderness Park and much of East Sooke Park.

We would like to see a separate vision and mission statement for these wildland areas within a park or encompassing the whole park. Specifically, we are concerned with two critical ecological functions that must be maintained within the wildland area of CRD Regional Parks: sequestering carbon and supporting biodiversity. Ecosystems that sequester carbon are being lost at an alarming rate, yet these ecosystems are critical for mitigating climate change.

Supporting biodiversity ensures the ecosystem continues to ensure clean air and clean water. Maintaining biodiversity in wildland parks must take into consideration all living things, from micro-organisms to apex predators.

Given the continual land conversion on southern Vancouver Island, wildland parks are increasingly important refuges for apex predators. Human contact must be minimized to support the ecosystem as a whole and ensure that the apex predators continue to live and breed within the wildland parks. Applying maximum protection to the wildland areas also ensures the future of these areas for carbon sequestration.

4450 Happy Valley Road, Victoria, B.C. V9C 3Z3
Administration Office (250) 474-3167 Fax 474-6298
Building Inspection Department (250) 474-3196 Fax 474-6298

Thank you for your consideration in applying maximum protection to wildland ecosystems within the CRD Regional Parks as part of your CRD Regional Parks management plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Reams", written over a circular stamp or seal.

John Reams
Mayor

cc. Larissa Hutcheson
General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services

Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan

First Nations Engagement Report

Capital Regional District | June 2022



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1. Executive Summary

The Capital Regional District (CRD) began engagement with First Nations, stakeholders and the public in February 2022 on an update to the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021, sharing a new vision, mission, values and principles and priorities for feedback.

The CRD Board has stated its commitment to engage First Nations communities respectfully and appropriately in regional strategies, decision making and shared interests. Input was initially sought from 15 First Nations whose traditional territories overlap the CRD and whose ancestors have been taking care of the land since time immemorial. Implementation of the new plan will include ongoing consultation and engagement with First Nations.

This report summarizes the input received from First Nations between February 16 and May 31, 2022 and is reflective of key interests expressed by First Nations who were available to participate. The report includes key themes that emerged in the feedback received. Given the restricted timeframe for engagement on the Plan development and the intense demands on First Nations communities over the past two years, this input is not reflective of the interests and concerns of all First Nations, nor should it be considered comprehensive in all cases, given time constraints.

Through meetings, email and phone communication, initial input has been received to date from: Esquimalt Nation, T'Sou-ke First Nation, Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) First Nation, Penelakut Tribe, and Lyackson First Nation, and the WASANEC Leadership Council on behalf of the WJOLELP (Tsartlip), WSIXEM (Tseycum) and SXÁUTW (Tsawout) First Nations. Songhees First Nation had no specific feedback to provide prior to May 31, 2022. Communication is ongoing with Quw'utsun (Cowichan Tribes) and MÁLEXEL (Malahat), Pacheedaht, BOKÉCEN (Pauquachin), Halalt and Stz'uminus (Chemainus) First Nations. Communication has yet to be initiated with Ts'uubaa-asatx (Lake Cowichan), Tswwassen, and SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nation.

Key themes heard during the engagement include the need to consider how to ensure the rights to Indigenous cultural practices within regional park areas traditionally used for hunting, fishing, harvesting and gathering are protected; the need for education and consideration of the public around cultural uses; the need to consider creative ways to support the protection of lands by Indigenous peoples for conservation; and an interest in working together on the co-management of lands to ensure their preservation and enhancement.

Recommendations based on the feedback include the collaborative development of Nation-specific work plans between the CRD and First Nations on specific areas of interest; revision to statements in the proposed vision, values and priority statements to reflect input heard to date; and an openness to further adaptation, as needed, during plan implementation to reflect the priorities of First Nations who have not had the opportunity to provide input to date.

2. Introduction

The CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 has set the overall vision, goals and objectives for a regional parks service over the past 10 years. The 2012-2021 Strategic Plan was primarily led by a volunteer Citizens Advisory Panel (CAP) and included extensive engagement with stakeholders, the public, government, First Nations and other park agencies. The Strategic Plan considered many of the trends, challenges and values that are still relevant today, such as increased visitation to regional parks and trails and the need for increased environmental protection. At the same time, many things have changed in the region since the adoption of the plan in 2012. For example, climate action and reconciliation with First Nations are key priorities of the CRD.

The CRD Board initiated an update of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021 on December 8, 2021 and a workshop was held with the Regional Parks Committee in January 2022 to set the direction for the Strategic Plan update. On February 9, 2022 the CRD Board approved a proposed vision, values, mission statement, and priorities for engagement and to apply a lens of conservation and protection of biodiversity to the priorities and process.

The CRD Board directed staff to engage all First Nations in the region in an early, meaningful and ongoing manner in the development of the Strategic Plan. Consistent with the CRD Corporate Plan goal to strengthen relationships with First Nations, and CRD Board priority to work with First Nations to create new regional planning and decision-making systems together on their traditional territories. The CRD embarked on consultation with First Nations regarding the Strategic Plan update with assistance from a consulting firm.

A new CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan will be brought forward for approval in July 2022 that will set the direction for regional parks and trails over the next decade. The CRD acknowledges the limited opportunity for First Nations to engage on the Plan development and invites ongoing dialogue with First Nations to fully develop and implement the Plan.

3. Purpose of the Engagement Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the engagement process with First Nations and to highlight responses and key themes received related to the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update.

The goal of engagement is to receive feedback from First Nations on the proposed vision, values, mission, and key priorities that were approved by the CRD Board in February 2022 to be considered in the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update (Appendix A). Feedback received through the engagement process is summarized and analyzed in this report and considered in the updated Strategic Plan, which will be presented to the Board in July 2022. A separate report includes feedback received from agencies, stakeholders and the public.

4. Engagement Period

This report includes a summary of the engagement activities completed and responses received between February and May 2022 from First Nations. Engagement with First Nations is ongoing and will continue throughout finalization and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

5. Focus of Engagement

The CRD is committed to involving First Nations respectfully and appropriately in the development of regional strategies, decision making and shared interests. The aim of this engagement process was to inform First Nations with traditional territories in the CRD about the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update process, to seek input and information from interested and affected Nations on the proposed vision, mission, values and key priorities for the Strategic Plan update, and to discuss interests and ideas to assist the CRD with future decision making about regional parks and trails. Other goals of the engagement process included information sharing, dialogue and discussion, building ongoing relationships, developing understanding and trust, and producing a Strategic Plan that reflects First Nation's interests, organizational needs and public interests. Engagement was one of the early steps in the Strategic Plan update process and used to gather traditional and local knowledge about the regional parks and trails, learn what is important to First Nations, identify issues and priorities, and to seek a range of suggestions for what should be considered in updating the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

6. Who Was Engaged

First Nations whose traditional territory lies within the CRD boundary were identified to engage in the Strategic Plan update process. Engagement on the Strategic Plan update has occurred with 15 First Nations to date and ongoing engagement will be expanded to include 18 First Nations governments (Appendix B). No contact has yet been made with Ts'uubaa-asatx (Lake Cowichan), Tsawwassen and SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nations.

7. Engagement Methods

The project scope and engagement process for the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update were approved by the CRD Board in February 2022. A team of consultants were retained by the CRD to conduct engagement. To accomplish an engagement program that provides meaningful opportunities for input within the timeframes identified for the project, the consultants used a number of approaches to engage First Nations. Hence, engagement methods varied depending on the preferences and priorities identified by First Nations.

7.1. Letters and Information Package

First Nations were provided with an introductory letter from the CRD in late January 2022, notifying of the upcoming engagement on the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. First Nations were provided with a second letter and information package from the consultant in early March when the CRD's Get Involved online engagement platform was officially live. The information package included:

- Overview of the update to the Strategic Plan.
- Highlights of First Nations content in the current Strategic Plan.
- Information about the CRD's timeline for this update.
- Invitation to meet one-on-one or engage with CRD in an alternative method.
- Invitation to submit a written response on how to improve the content of the Strategic Plan.
- Workshops may be considered, if desired, to meet with multiple Nations.
- Offer of capacity funding.
- Summary of what CRD has already heard from First Nations in past conversations and processes.

7.2. Meetings, Emails and Phone Calls

First Nations were contacted by both phone and email with follow-up information, meeting requests, and other information as requested. Follow-up attempts to contact Nations were conducted by phone and email to determine interest in providing input. Meetings took place with individual First Nations, in-person or virtually, as requested. Follow-up meetings occurred to confirm feedback shared was properly captured and additional thoughts could be shared, as appropriate. The following table outlines the contacts made with First Nations during the engagement period:

First Nation	# emails, phone calls, meetings	Status of Feedback
Beecher Bay	5	Input received from Beecher Bay CAO
Cowichan Tribes	8	No confirmation of an interest to meet before May 31
Esquimalt	6	Input received from Esquimalt Executive Director
Halalt	10	No confirmation of an interest to meet before May 31
Lake Cowichan	0	No contact initiated
Lyackson	7	Initial input received from Lyackson Consultation Coordinator; Interest in further engagement with Chief and Council; Insufficient time for feedback before May 31.
Malahat	8	No confirmation of an interest to meet before May 31
Pacheedaht	11	No response after multiple attempts

Pauquachin	13	No capacity to engage before May 31
Penelakut	9	Initial input received from Band Manager and Member of Elders Committee.
Semiahmoo	0	No contact initiated
Songhees	15	No feedback provided within the timeline identified.
Stz'uminus	7	Chief expressed interest in meeting but no date confirmed
Tswawassen	0	No contact initiated
T'Sou-ke	25	Input received from Chief and Council
WSANEC (Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum)	27	Information provided by CRD as requested. Letter received from Director of Operations: not in support; additional information requested; extension to provide feedback requested.

Table 1: Contact with First Nations during the engagement period.

8. Responses

Feedback was provided through meetings, phone calls, emails and written submissions, according to the preferences of each First Nation.

The following is a summary of the feedback received from First Nations between February 16 and May 31, 2022, related to the CRD Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan update. This summary has not been reviewed by First Nations.

A letter, dated May 25, 2022, was received from WSANEC Leadership Council, representing Tsartlip, Tsawout and Tseycum First Nations, requesting additional information and stating that support for the Strategic Plan cannot be provided without further engagement (Appendix C).

Chemainus, Songhees, and Stz'uminus First Nations also expressed interest in providing feedback but were not able to do so before May 31st.

Lyackson and Penelakut have provided initial feedback on the Strategic Plan update and expressed interest in further engagement opportunities. Beecher Bay, T'Sou-ke, and Esquimalt have provided input and are open to further dialogue.

Responses have not yet been received from Pacheedaht, Halalt, Malahat and Pauquachin First Nations and Cowichan Tribes. Continued efforts to engage these Nations are underway.

8.1. Responses on Vision, Mission and Values

The following section describes specific feedback provided on the proposed vision, mission, values and principles for the Strategic Plan update.

8.1.1. Proposed Vision

Some First Nations stated challenges of commenting on a vision statement for CRD regional parks and commented on the need for public education around land and greater dialogue with the CRD on the vision statement, but appreciated it is a good starting point.

8.1.2. Proposed Mission

No feedback has been received on the proposed mission statements to date.

8.1.3. Feedback on Proposed Values & Principles

A First Nation commented on recognition of the spirit behind identifying reconciliation as a proposed value is based on an ongoing conversation within Canadian society sparked by UNDRIP and DRIPA and that working with First Nations in fostering stewardship of the lands and waters is within the CRD's purview. However, it was cautioned that reconciliation is a broad term and collaborative dialogue on what that means to a relationship between the CRD and First Nations is needed. It was suggested by First Nations that long-term, positive, and meaningful relationships should be developed with specific, measurable goals and objectives to work on and towards together.

8.2. Feedback on Proposed Priority Statements

During the engagement process, First Nations were asked to share any specific priorities or efforts they wished to undertake regarding regional parks and trails, and/or for any other feedback they wished to share. The following points were shared:

- Meaningful consultation on the CRD's plans for regional parks was noted as an ongoing need and interest.
- The importance of a broader relationship with the CRD and open, clear dialogue to help in building a lasting and productive relationship.
- Improved understanding of the CRD's roles and responsibilities for regional parks and trails.
- Improve dialogue to develop a shared understanding of what reconciliation in action means for the CRD and First Nations.
- The protection of land and water and opportunities for collaboration.
- Establishing clear understanding of Indigenous rights.
- Protection of areas within regional parks and trails for cultural use, potentially through agreements or other mechanisms.

- Providing proactive education for the public about Indigenous rights and cultural use, including interpretive signage and place naming.
- Improving cultural safety for Indigenous peoples in regional parks.
- Working with partners on establishing protected areas.
- Working with partners on conservation efforts and inventories.
- Participation throughout planning process and on interests related to archaeologically sensitive areas, environmental implications, economic benefits and considerations, protection of cultural practices, and any infringement of Douglas Treaty rights.
- Working towards co-management of regional parks through agreements or other mechanisms.

9. Limitations

The CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan update was initiated in December 2021 and the delivery date for an updated Strategic Plan was set for June/July 2022. First Nations engagement on the Strategic Plan update was limited by this restricted timeline and did not allow for deeper discussion and input at the outset of the Plan development.

Fifteen First Nations were initially identified for engagement on the Strategic Plan update. Subsequently, it was determined that three First Nations were not included in the initial engagement outreach. An invitation to start dialogue on the Strategic Plan priorities will be offered after direction is received from the CRD Board.

First Nations communities have been under considerable strain over the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, provincial fires and floods, and the discoveries of unmarked graves of children adjacent to former residential schools. Given these, and many other factors of relevance to individual Nations, the opportunity for dialogue on the Strategic Plan update was limited. Therefore, this report is not reflective of the views of all First Nations identified for engagement. Dialogue is ongoing to deepen an understanding of the issues and interests raised by First Nations and this feedback will be reflected in the ongoing work of the CRD and is not included in this report.

10. Moving Forward

The Regional Parks Committee held a workshop in January 2022 to set the direction for engagement on the Regional Parks Strategic Plan update. At its February 9, 2022 meeting, the CRD Board proposed a renewed vision, mission, values and principles, and strategic priorities based on the themes of conservation & recreation, access & equity, climate action & resiliency, and reconciliation. This material was presented to First Nations for feedback between February and May 2022.

Based on feedback received by First Nations to date about strengthening awareness and improving accommodation of Indigenous cultural use in regional parks and trails, the vision has been modified to include improved respect for cultural heritage and cultural use.

The mission statements have been revised to highlight the long-standing stewardship of the land and water by First Nations and ways the CRD can learn from and work with First Nations on conservation efforts.

First Nations stressed the importance of strengthening relationships between the CRD and First Nations and putting reconciliation commitments into action. The values and principles have been revised to recognize this feedback. Additionally, the conservation and stewardship values focus on the importance of protecting cultural heritage and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge.

Information has been included in the Plan that aims to further clarify the role and responsibility of the CRD in relation to the provincial *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the *Heritage Conservation Act*, the CRD's Statement of Reconciliation, and initiatives such as the calls to action identified in the CRD's Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report.

With respect to First Nations interests in working with partners, including the CRD, in expanding conservation efforts and protecting land and water, a new Conservancy Area regional park classification has been developed that contemplates protection of natural assets primarily for the intrinsic cultural use values present. The Plan also highlights opportunities for establishing traditional use agreements with First Nations for use of regional parks and trails, as well as ways to improve cultural safety during cultural use activities, such as improved public awareness initiatives.

First Nations stressed the need to establish and maintain working relationships with the CRD. A goal of the Plan is to have strong, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations in the region. Recognizing emerging changes impacting First Nations and CRD governance, the Plan identifies the need to remain flexible to accommodate specific priority interests and capacities going forward, such as conducting inventories or developing interpretive signage that reflects Indigenous cultural heritage, and to involve First Nations in service delivery initiatives, such as campground operations.

Protection of archaeological sites and cultural heritage was identified by First Nations as a priority for the CRD. A focus on cultural heritage conservation has been included in the Plan, as well as ways to incorporate First Nations traditional knowledge in conservation efforts.

Appendix 1 – Engagement Materials

CRD

Regional Parks Strategic Plan Update 2022



March - April, 2022
Public Input

Vision 2032

We work cooperatively and respectfully to steward and expand an exceptional system of regional parks and trails that is rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage, resilient to change, connects people to nature and provides healthy outdoor experiences for all.



Mission



Ensure regional parks and trails are resilient by delivering a sustainable service that is adaptable and takes action on climate change.



Foster stewardship of ecological and cultural resources by informing, engaging and collaborating with the public, volunteers, partners, and First Nations.



Provide access to regional parks and trails that facilitates healthy, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences for all.



Secure a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region's biodiversity and cultural landscapes.



Work with First Nations in taking care of the land and water.

Values and Principles



Accessibility – We provide access to nature for all ages and abilities



Conservation – We work together to protect, restore and celebrate the region's natural and cultural landscapes



Equity – We work together to ensure regional parks and trails are inclusive and maintained as a common good



Reconciliation – We are committed to work towards reconciliation with First Nations



Recreation – We offer outdoor recreation experiences that improve our health and well-being



Resiliency – We take action on climate change by being adaptive and using resources sustainably with a view to benefiting future generations

Additional Values and Principles:

Leadership

Partnership

Stewardship

Connectivity

Education

Accountability

Conservation & Recreation

- Conserve biodiversity
- Enable outdoor recreation
- Work with partners
- Foster stewardship



Access & Equity

- Enhance health & well-being
- Promote complete and connected communities
- Ensure economic fairness
- Accessibility & equity lens



Climate Action & Resiliency

- Align sustainable service delivery with climate action
- Advance regional active transportation
- Develop partnerships
- Acquire and manage natural areas



Reconciliation

- Incorporate First Nations reconciliation objectives
- Provide space for cultural use
- Strengthen engagement
- Support shared prosperity



**KEY PRIORITY STATEMENTS
REGIONAL PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN**

February 2022

Conservation & Recreation

- Take action to conserve biodiversity through acquiring land, restoration and monitoring of ecosystems across the region (UN; LAS; RGS, 2.1; RPSP, p.9)
- Enable users to recreate and have outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, safe and compatible (RPSP, p.9 & 12)
- Work with partners in taking care of the land and water and providing sustainable outdoor recreation (Board, #6d & #6b-1 & #6b-2; RPSP, p.10; LAS)
- Foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing and leading by example (RPSP, p.10)

Access & Equity

- Enhance health and well-being by providing nature and outdoor recreation experiences for all ages and abilities (Board, #6e; RPSP, p.9)
- Promote complete and connected communities by ensuring recreation, parks and green space can be easily accessed by transit, walking or cycling (RGS, 3.1 & 4.1; RPSP, p.9)
- Ensure economic fairness by managing regional parks and trails as a common good (RGS 5.1; Revenue, p.4)
- Strengthen an accessibility and equity lens in service delivery

Climate Action & Resiliency

- Align sustainable service delivery and infrastructure improvements with climate action (RGS 7.1; CAS, 1.1 & 5.1; RPSP)
- Advance regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction (CAS, 3.7; RPSP; RGS, 4)
- Develop partnerships for the long-term consistent and connected management of green space and ecosystem services (RPSP; Board, #5a-5).
- Strategically acquire and manage natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment and access to green space for a growing population (RGS 7.1, CAS, 5.1; RPSP)

Reconciliation

- Incorporate First Nation worldviews, knowledge and reconciliation objectives in the management of natural assets and cultural heritage (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; RNTF, p.44-45)
- Provide space for cultural and ceremonial use, food and medicine harvesting, traditional management practices and reclaiming Indigenous place names (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45)
- Strengthen engagement with First Nations in service delivery initiatives (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45; LAS)
- Seek partnerships, share information and deliver fair and equitable services in working with First Nations on achieving their economic goals (Board, #3a-3 & #6d; RPSP; FNSR; FNTF, p.44-45)

Reference Abbreviations:

Board	Capital Regional District 2019-2021 Board Priorities
CAS	Climate Action Strategy 2021
FNSR	First Nations Statement of Reconciliation
FNTF	First Nations Task Force Final Report, 2018
LAS	Land Acquisition Strategy 2020-2021
RGS	Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), Bylaw No. 4017, 2018
RPSP	Regional Parks Strategic Plan (RPSP) 2012-2021
Revenue	Draft Revenue Generation Strategy, 2021
UN	United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030

Appendix 2 – First Nations with Traditional Territories in CRD

First Nations with traditional territories within the CRD boundary were identified to engage in the Strategic Plan update process. Engagement activities will be ongoing throughout development and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

To date, engagement on the Strategic Plan update has commenced with the following First Nations:

1. Pacheedaht First Nation
2. Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) First Nation
3. T'Sou-ke Nation
4. Esquimalt Nation
5. Songhees Nation
6. WJOLÉLP (Tsartlip) First Nation
7. BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin) First Nation
8. S7ÁUTW (Tsawout) First Nation
9. WSÍKEM (Tseycum) First Nation
10. MÁLEXEL (Malahat) First Nation
11. Stz'uminus (Chemainus) First Nation
12. Quw'utsun (Cowichan Tribes)
13. Halalt First Nation
14. Lyackson First Nation
15. Penelakut Tribe

Engagement will be expanded to include the following First Nations:

1. Ts'uubaa-asatx (Lake Cowichan) First Nation
2. Tsawwassen First Nation
3. SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nation

Appendix 3 – Letter from WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council



WSÁNEĆ
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ENHANCING RECOGNITION OF, AND RESPECT
FOR, WSÁNEĆ DOUGLAS TREATY RIGHTS AND
WSÁNEĆ ABORIGINAL RIGHTS AND TITLE

May 25, 2022

Judy Kitts and Sarah McPherson
Strategic Communications and Consultation
Jemma Scoble and Associates Consulting Inc.
Via e-mail: kittsjconsulting@gmail.com and sarah@jscobleconsulting.com

Re: File: 0620.20 - CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATES

ÍY SŁÁĆEL Ms. Kitts and Ms. McPherson,

Welcome to WSÁNEĆ Territory. I am contacting you because you are responsible for project management and community consultation regarding the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC) interest in the Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Parks Strategic Plan and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF) Community Parks Strategic Plan updates. I also understand that the Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021—which outlines the vision, mission and goals for regional parks and trails—expired and that the CRD Board has extended its term until an updated strategic plan is prepared and brought forward to the Regional Parks Committee (planned for June 2022).

The WSÁNEĆ Technical Advisory Committee (WTAC) met on May 17, 2022 to review the Briefing Materials that we received in March, which included the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan: Draft Vision, Mission, Values & Principles, and Priority Statements. The WTAC also reviewed staff input on where improvements could be made to improve the 2012-2021 Strategic Plan with a focus on WSÁNEĆ interests, and they spoke about some initial ideas for input and key priorities for the next 5-10 years. There was an extensive discussion, and the consensus was that more thought and broader community input would be required prior to providing a response to the proposed Vision, Mission, Values & Principles, and Priority Statements.

Given the above, the WLC requests an extension to the given deadline (May 31, 2022) in order to further consider the incorporation of WSÁNEĆ interests into CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan and how to reconcile WSÁNEĆ land-based interests with the potential for an expanding regional park system. To this end, we request additional information, based on references in the 2012-2021 Regional Park Strategic Plan, including:

1. **Current level of protection:** Almost 20% of the CRD landbase was protected in 2012 – 11% in protected areas and 8.4% in the Greater Victoria Water Area (p. 24). What is the present level of protection, given acquisitions over the past ten years?

WSÁNEĆ LEADERSHIP COUNCIL | 800B STELLY'S X RD. | BRENTWOOD BAY BC | V8M 1J4 | 778-351-4999 | WWW.WSANECC.COM



2. **The proposed regional parks and trails:** In the expired/extended Plan, the CRD provides a map with a vision/plans for the system over the next ten years and beyond (p. 79): We did not receive anything comparable for the 2022-2031 period, even though the proposed vision includes provisions to “work cooperatively and respectfully to steward and *expand* an exceptional system of regional parks and trails”. Can you provide an updated map illustrating areas of interest for expansion, and commit to further engagement on ideas for future acquisition of lands?
3. **WSÁNEĆ Management of “Cultural Landscapes”:** We note in the draft mission the intent to collaborate on securing a diverse and connected system of regional parks and trails that protect and restore the integrity of our region’s biodiversity and “cultural landscapes.” Our culture has been ignored and our people have often been made to feel unwelcome and excluded from regional parks. We wish to discuss further how to truly recognize what the CRD calls “cultural landscapes” and work toward alternative management and decision-making models for these places.
4. **Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF) Community Parks Strategic Plan updates:** We have yet to receive any information on the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area (JdF) Community Parks Strategic Plan updates. When can we expect to collaborate on proposed updates?

After extensive discussion, the WTAC asked that WLC staff bring the 2022-2031 Updates back to the WTAC for further discussion. With the extent of alienation that has already occurred in our homelands, these updates are contentious. As a result, we are conveying the WTAC’s request for additional information and that we can not support the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan updates without further engagement. Please contact Laurie Whitehead, Referrals Manager, at laurie.whitehead@wsanec.com to follow up with the requested information and to schedule a meeting to discuss extending the timelines.

Sincerely,

Gord Elliott, Director of Operations
WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council



WSÁNEĆ
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ENHANCING RECOGNITION OF, AND RESPECT
FOR WSÁNEĆ DOUGLAS TREATY RIGHTS AND
WSÁNEĆ ABORIGINAL RIGHTS AND TITLE

cc: Chief Don Tom, Chairman, WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council
WLC Staff (Justin Fritz, Laurie Whitehead and Dave Paul)
Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Iain Lawrence, RPP, MCIP, Senior Manager, JdF Local Area Services
Don Closson, Manager, Juan de Fuca Community Parks & Recreation, CRD
Mike Macintyre, Manager, Planning & Development, Regional Parks, CRD
Caitlyn Vernon, Manager, First Nations Relations, CRD

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Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022 – 2032

June 15, 2022
Transportation Committee

Presentation Outline



1 Strategic Plan Update Process

2 Engagement

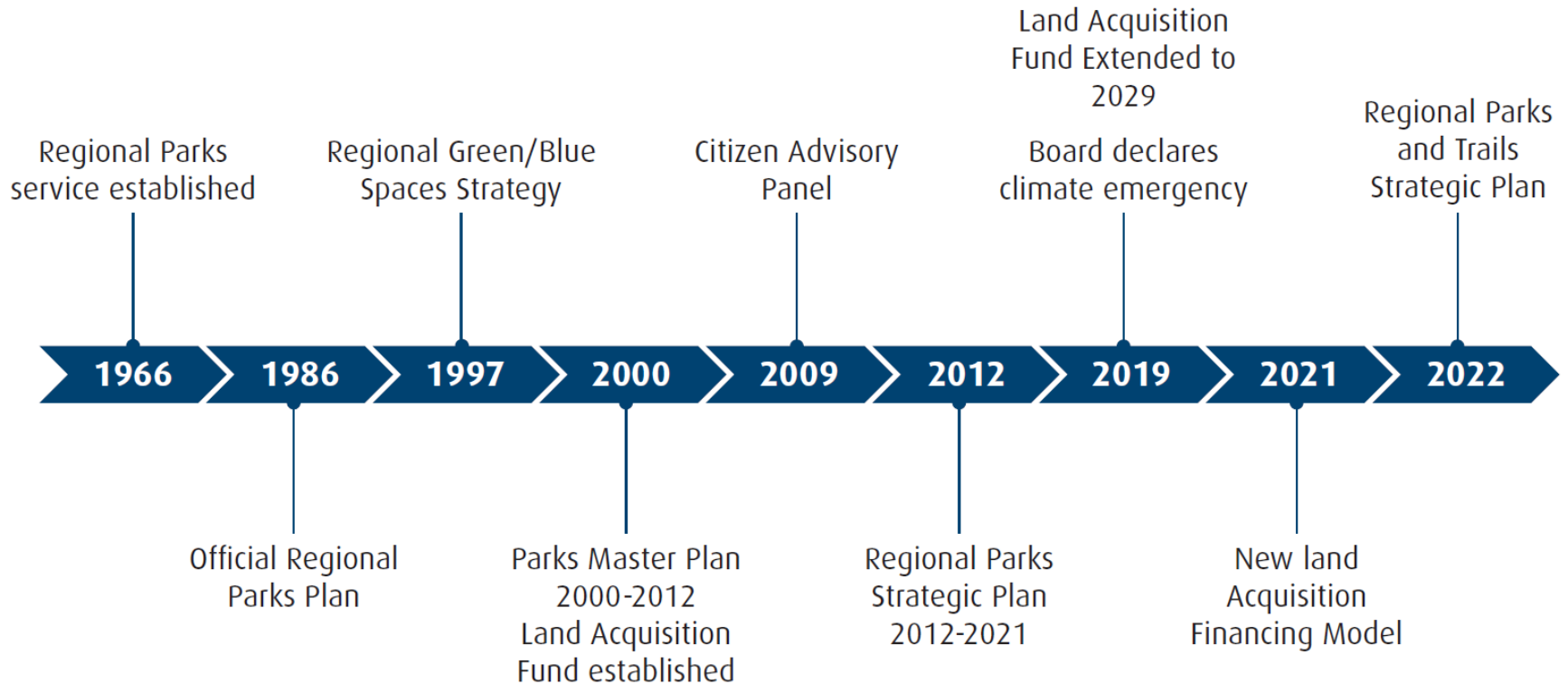
3 Vision, Mission, Values

4 Regional Trail Classifications

5 Priorities

Update Process

CRD

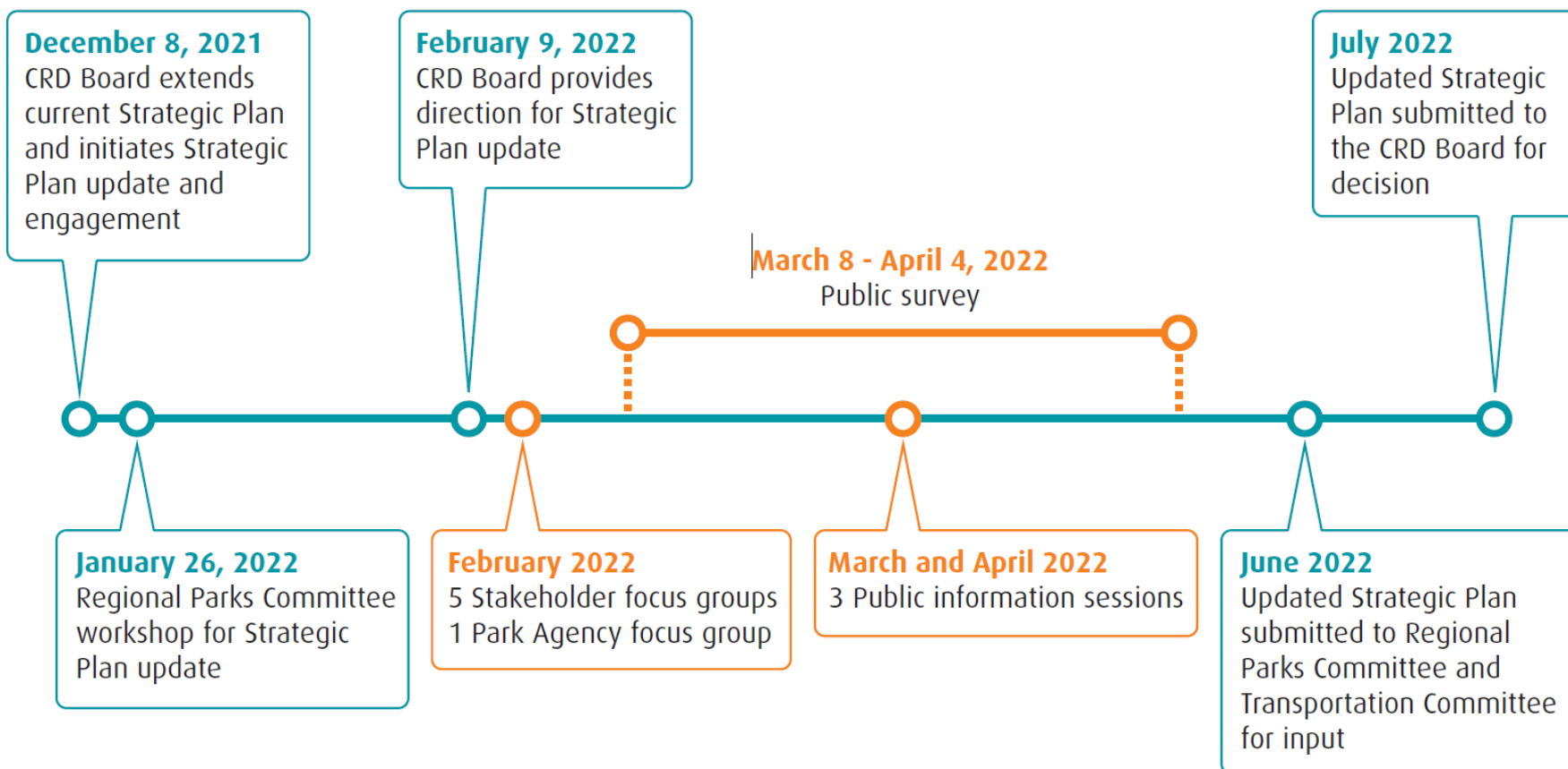


Update Process



Update Process

CRD



Engagement with First Nations on the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan is ongoing.

Engagement

CRD



2,400

Visits to project webpage



44

Stakeholder groups attended
5 focus groups



1,228

Completed surveys



26

Attended 3 public information
sessions



19,000

Reached on Social Media



15

First Nations invited to engage
long-term

Summary of First Nations Input

- Define reconciliation and put into action
- Importance of developing meaningful relationships, building trust and improving understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Need for increased awareness of Indigenous rights and cultural use practices
- Interest in land acquisition, conservation, stewardship, planning, partnerships and economic prosperity
- Limitations to participation relate to capacity, priorities and timeline

Summary of Stakeholder and Public Input

- Vision could emphasize connectivity, regional trails and stewardship
- Mission could be simplified and reflect regional trails function
- Values of most importance are conservation, recreation and resiliency
- Values to add are accountability, connectivity, education, partnership and stewardship
- Priorities of most importance are: land acquisition, biodiversity protection, buffering urban development
- Emphasize role of conservation and outdoor recreation in developing stewardship
- Put First Nations first and determine priorities through direct engagement

Vision

CRD

We have an expanded and connected system of regional parks and regional trails that are rich in biodiversity, respect Indigenous cultural heritage and use, inspire stewardship, are resilient to change, and provide enjoyable outdoor recreation experiences.



Mission



- Operate and manage a connected system of regional parks for public enjoyment.
- Foster stewardship by learning from and working with long-term land stewards and by connecting people to nature.
- Operate and manage a regional trail network for active transportation and recreation.
- Be fiscally responsible and accountable in decision making.

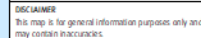
- Access
- Accountability
- Connectivity
- Conservation
- Education
- Equity
- Outdoor Recreation
- Partnership
- Reconciliation
- Resiliency
- Stewardship

Regional Trails Classification



To provide an off-street trail corridor in urban areas that is primarily for high volumes of active transportation at peak travel times and accommodates regular recreational use. Trail separation and lighting design standards will be applied to areas with high user volumes and greater trail user differential.

To provide an off-street trail corridor in rural areas that is primarily for active transportation and recreation with higher volumes during the summer season and on weekends. Trail design will be dual- direction, shared use with gravel surface, except in areas of higher user volumes or on-street separated facilities, a paved surface may be considered.



Reconciliation

- 1-1 Incorporate First Nations worldviews and knowledge
- 1-2 Work with First Nations in service delivery initiatives

Conservation

- 2-1 Take action to increase protection of biodiversity
- 2-2 Respect and protect cultural heritage and cultural use
- 2-3 Work with partners in taking care of the region's natural areas

Visitor Experience

- 3-1 Offer outdoor recreation experiences that are enjoyable, healthy, safe and immersed in nature
- 3-2 Foster stewardship through program delivery, knowledge sharing, and collaboration

Climate Action & Resiliency

4-1 Advance regional active transportation opportunities that contribute to greenhouse gas reduction*

4-2 Support the development of complete and connected communities by improving access to regional parks by transit, electric vehicles, micro mobility, walking or cycling*

4-3 Align service delivery and infrastructure improvements with climate action*

4-4 Ensure the long-term and consistent management of natural areas

4-5 Strategically acquire and manage natural areas to address climate mitigation, urban containment, and access to green space for a growing population



↑ 4-1 Increased use of regional trails

↑ 4-1 Completed regional trail priority projects

↓ 4-1 Minimized regional trail service disruptions

↑ 4-2 Increase Electric Vehicle charging stations at park accesses

Access & Equity

5-1 Enhance health and well-being by providing equitable access to regional parks and regional trails



5-1 Improved accessibility to regional parks and regional trails

Monitoring and Reporting

- Provision for considering major or minor amendments
- Annual reporting cycle
- Performance indicators to track progress

REPORT TO TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022

SUBJECT Island Rail Corridor (E&N Corridor) Advocacy

ISSUE SUMMARY

To present the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board advocacy next steps in support of Island Rail Corridor (formerly referred to as the E&N Corridor) protection.

BACKGROUND

The Island Rail Corridor is an approximately 295 km rail corridor owned by the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF). ICF is responsible for infrastructure maintenance and repair along the corridor to ultimately restore rail service on Vancouver Island. The ICF is governed by a 12-member Board of Directors composed of six members representing regional districts and six members representing First Nations whose territories are wholly or partly within the geographic area of the corridor. Since 2011, numerous studies have been completed by ICF and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) to define a scope of work for corridor repairs and identify the level of public investment required from local and senior levels of government. Current estimates range from \$326.5 million (M) to \$728.8M, depending on scope and assumptions.

As senior governments, both the federal and provincial governments provide funding for transportation infrastructure as a matter of public interest. In its 2020 South Island Transportation Strategy (SITS), MoTI identifies the Island Rail Corridor as a component of the existing transportation network on the South Island and calls for exploring the use of the corridor for commuter rail as a long-term action. MoTI's current funding priorities for the region are focused on implementing BC Transit's RapidBus service, supporting post-pandemic BC Transit ridership recovery and various transit, active travel and safety improvements on provincial highway corridors. Through different granting streams, MoTI also supports local government-led road projects, including for active travel. The federal government's position on the corridor is unknown at this point.

The CRD Board has consistently recognized the Island Rail Corridor as a key component of the regional transportation system. The 2014 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) identifies the Island Rail Corridor as part of its Regional Multi-Modal Transportation Network and calls for the long-term protection of the corridor for transportation. The RTP is based on robust technical and policy analysis and input from member municipalities and partner agencies responsible for RTP implementation. The RTP has informed all CRD advocacy positions on the Island Rail Corridor.

Since 2019, the CRD Board has been guided by its Advocacy Strategy. The strategy identifies that successful advocacy should be targeted, focused, and requires message discipline and consistency. For this reason, the CRD Board Priorities anchor the organization's advocacy efforts, aligned to the region's defined initiatives and desired outcomes. Advocacy tactics identified in the strategy can include formal letters, requests for meetings, presentations, partnering with agencies, campaigns, advisories and announcements. Primary level target audiences identified in the strategy include the Premier's Office, the Minister and executive of MoTI, the Minister and executive of relevant federal government ministries and elected officials representing the island federally and provincially.

The 2019-2022 Board Strategic Plan identifies protection of the E&N Corridor for transportation as a priority initiative. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) quarterly updates have regularly reported progress on this priority. On May 11, 2022, the CRD Board confirmed its 2019-2022 Board priorities with the following motion:

“That the CRD Board heighten its advocacy regarding protection of the E&N Corridor as a transportation corridor including reinstatement of passenger and freight rail services.”

In May, 2022, ICF released an initial business case for rail (Appendix A), seeking to build support for senior government investment in corridor repairs and subsequent rail operation. The ICF Executive Director has been invited to present the business case at the July 13, 2022 CRD Board meeting.

The CRD advocacy position to protect the Island Rail Corridor for transportation is targeted, focused and consistent. The advocacy position is based on a CRD Board Priority and supported by technical and policy direction from the RTP. The target audience to date has been ICF and MoTI. Tactics used to date include letters, meetings, presentations and partnerships. Notable advocacy achievements include:

- A long term priority in SITS to explore the viability of commuter rail on the Island Rail Corridor between Victoria and the West Shore.
- Two meetings between the Board Chair and Vice Chair with MoTI Minister Rob Fleming to explore opportunities for taking a partnership approach to Island Rail Corridor protection.
- Regular staff-level meetings with MoTI executive and staff to establish a partnership and share information about corridor protection efforts.
- The CRD is a partner in the ICF, with a CRD representative on the ICF Board of Directors.

IMPLICATIONS

Service Delivery Implications

Using the CRD Advocacy Strategy, staff have analyzed opportunities to heighten advocacy based on target audience roles in securing Island Rail Corridor protection. Based on this analysis, staff will heighten advocacy by:

1. Deepening partnerships with MoTI.
2. Exploring potential for partnerships with the four other regional district boards along the Island Rail corridor.
3. Targeting engagement with relevant federal ministries at both the political and senior staff level through letters and meetings.

Staff can implement the heightened advocacy approach within existing work plans.

Advocacy for reinstatement of passenger and freight rail service is the responsibility of the ICF, as the entity that owns the corridor and is responsible for its infrastructure and assets. The CRD has a representative on the ICF Board of Directors. Such representation demonstrates a successful partnering tactic, where the CRD can advance its priorities through ICF membership.

Per the Advocacy Strategy, it is best for the CRD to remain targeted, focused and consistent in its advocacy objectives: to protect the Island Rail Corridor as a transportation corridor, in alignment with the strategic direction set out in Board priorities and policy and technical direction in the RTP.

Intergovernmental Implications

The Island Rail Corridor crosses the land of 14 First Nations and bisects the reserve lands of seven different First Nations, including Esquimalt and Songhees within the CRD. CRD staff understand that there are ongoing unresolved claims related to interests within and along the Island Rail Corridor, including land ownership. Resolution of these Indigenous claims is critical to understanding any viable uses of the corridor.

The ICF initial business case indicates they expect senior levels of government to resolve outstanding Indigenous claims. Within the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the British Columbia *Declaration Act*, both the federal and provincial governments are responsible for ensuring that Indigenous interests and rights are integrated into decision-making about the future use of the Island Rail Corridor.

In relation to one of the unresolved claims, the BC Court of Appeal¹ decision made on September 14, 2021 found that the federal government has not provided a position or commitment on the rail corridor. This appeal court ruling upheld an initial finding from the BC Supreme Court² on June 30, 2020 that “*in light of ICF’s continued maintenance of the rail corridor, the interest of the stakeholders in restoring rail service, and the provincial government’s consideration of restoring the rail corridor as a public transportation option.*” The BC Court of Appeal found that the matter could be brought back before the court in 18 months (i.e., March 2023) if the federal government does not make a determination regarding its intent for the corridor.

The approach to heightened advocacy reflects the BC Court of Appeal decision. Heightened CRD advocacy is best targeted to relevant federal ministries as the senior government funder that has not yet provided a position on whether preservation of the corridor is in the public interest. Advocacy will focus on building federal government support to protect the corridor for transportation. Heightened advocacy will also focus on deepening a partnership approach with MoTI to define and achieve shared objectives for the corridor. This could include creating a process for determining a viable long-term use of the corridor for transportation. In continuing to undertake this advocacy, note that senior government decisions to make significant public investment in the rail corridor could impact the level of funding available for other regional transportation priorities such as active travel and improvements to transit and road safety.

Heightened CRD advocacy will also target the four other regional districts located along the corridor. Tactics will focus on creating partnerships to identify and confirm shared interests in corridor use.

Financial Implications

Staff can implement the heightened advocacy approach within existing service budgets.

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

Undertaking heightened advocacy for protection of the Island Rail Corridor supports delivery of Board Priority 1(b) “Protect the Island Rail Corridor as a transportation and participate in a Provincial working group to come to agreement on the future use of the Island Rail Corridor.”

¹ Court of Appeal of British Columbia, *Snaw-Naw-As First Nation v. Canada (Attorney General)*, 2021 BCCA 333

² Supreme Court of British Columbia, *Snaw-Naw-As First Nation. Attorney General of Canada and Island Corridor Foundation*, 2020 BCSC 979

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

Informed by the RTP, the CRD Board has consistently advocated for the protection of the Island Rail Corridor. It is likely that heightened advocacy could result in a process to come to agreement about the viable future use of the corridor. A possible future use could include reinstatement of passenger and freight rail services.

The current regional objective to protect the Island Rail corridor for transportation could require refinement should such a process be initiated. Three CRD plans and strategies should guide refinement of regional objectives for the Island Rail Corridor: the RTP, the CRD Climate Action Strategy and the CRD Statement of Reconciliation. Any process to identify a viable use for the corridor should include full participation of impacted First Nations in decision-making. Further, rail service reinstatement has not been subject to the policy and technical analysis that supported creation of the RTP and has not been endorsed by partners responsible for RTP implementation. A partnership approach to work with all affected parties to come to agreement on the future use of the corridor is aligned to existing CRD plans and strategies.

CONCLUSION

The CRD Advocacy Strategy identifies that successful advocacy should be targeted, focused, and requires message discipline and consistency. The CRD Board has consistently advocated for Island Rail Corridor protection, informed by its RTP and prioritized for action in the 2019-2022 Board Strategic Plan. On May 11, 2022 the Board approved a motion to heighten advocacy regarding Island Rail Corridor protection. Based on this motion, these documents and a review of current context, staff have identified three approaches to heighten advocacy for corridor protection:

1. Deepen partnerships with MoTI.
2. Explore the potential for partnerships with the four other regional district boards along the Island Rail corridor.
3. Target engagement with relevant federal ministries at both the political and senior staff level through letters and meetings.

Staff and the CRD Board can begin immediate implementation of the heightened advocacy approach.

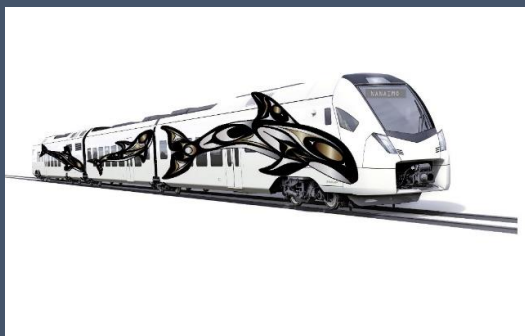
RECOMMENDATION

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

Submitted by:	Emily Sinclair, MCIP, RPP, Senior Manager, Regional and Strategic Planning
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ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Vancouver Island Rail Initial Business Case



Vancouver Island Rail

Initial Business Case

Island Corridor Foundation – May 2022

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Executive Summary

Today, Vancouver Island is a diverse economic and cultural centre that regularly ranks among Canada's most desirable places to live, work, and play. Over the past several years the Island has experienced tremendous economic and population growth which has created challenges for the Island transportation network. Increases in congestion and travel time, and reduced network reliability have combined to limit affordable, accessible, and environmentally sound transportation options.

Transportation options on the Island for the movement of people are primarily auto or highway-centric and are heavily focused on personal automobiles. This is of particular importance to those without access to a personal automobile, who cannot afford to or choose not to drive. Lack of access to an efficient transportation network serves to limit accessibility to jobs, affordable housing, education, and supportive services and inhibits resident connectivity.

The same lack of transportation options applies to the movement of freight on Vancouver Island, resulting in increased costs to Island residents and limiting economic opportunity for the Island. Consumer goods transported to the Island are delivered almost entirely by barge or BC Ferries and distributed throughout via the Island highway system. The same applies to the movement of products originating on Vancouver Island or freight that could be handled through island ports for furtherance to destinations off the island. The lack of rail service to Island ports deprives shippers of combined efficiency of rail and island ports, and therefore the opportunity to compete with other west coast ports, by limiting access to and from markets throughout North America.

Transportation is the single largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, growing at a rate of 23% between 2007 and 2019 with auto emission estimated to be 41% of provincial emissions. Continued reliance on road transportation as our primary transportation method combined with investments that will induce growth in road transportation, will only exacerbate this trend and threaten our ability to meet our environmental goals of an overall reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The business case presented proposes to restore passenger and freight rail service to Vancouver Island by upgrading the existing Island Rail Corridor. The business case draws on the Island Rail Corridor Condition Assessment (IRCCA), commissioned by the British Columbia provincial government in 2020, as the basis for the proposal and is intended to be a decision-making tool to assess the strategic and economic rationale for restoring rail to the Island.

The proposed solution provides for a robust commuter system operating within the Capital Regional District (CRD), intercity commuter services into the CRD, regional trains between areas outside the CRD, as well as freight operations throughout the entire Island, with particular emphasis on our ports.

Business Case Results

The proposed service, fully integrated into the existing transportation network, will:

- provide a safe, efficient, reliable, and resilient transportation link between Island communities
- provide improved access to specialized services, businesses, and entertainment options
- enhance and accelerate the growth of Island economies by providing access to new markets by connecting our economic centres and port facilities and lowering costs for shippers to access the North American rail system
- promote environmental sustainability by providing an intercity and commuter passenger service that provides an alternative to reduce reliance on automobile and highway transportation
- add service for disadvantaged members of communities

Economic Case Results

Project Cost

In the development of the business case, a review of the service options outlined in the Island Rail Corridor Condition Assessment was undertaken. A Hybrid Intermediate Phase approach was chosen as the preferred option and will deliver very similar results at a much lower cost:

Combined Cost	
Hybrid Intermediate Upgrade	\$368,000,000
Soft Costs	\$5,000,000
Siding Capacity Upgrades	\$5,000,000
Station Platforms	\$3,000,000
Total Construction Costs	\$381,000,000
Rolling Stock Costs	\$50,000,000
Total Project Costs	\$431,000,000

Table 1 Economic Case Results

Economic Impact of Construction

The Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) commissioned an economic impact report on the upgrades to the rail corridor. The report was based on a 2020 construction budget of \$304 million and revealed that the impact of the construction is estimated to be \$470 million and will support an estimated 2,200 person-years of employment in the B.C. economy, with total labour income of \$147 million. This is an average of \$67,000 per year for a full-time position.

Operating Revenue and Costs

Operating revenue and costs have been determined based on the train service and frequency outlined in the business case. The operating revenue has been determined using conservative, anticipated, and optimistic scenarios. The costing is based on the operation of a scheduled railway that can accommodate the estimated ridership and freight services outlined in the business case and therefore costs have been fixed for all three scenarios.

There will be some cost variability in the operation of excursion services however the operation of excursion trains is assumed to be a cost-plus operation, ensuring profitability. While the excursion market represents a considerable revenue opportunity, given its variability and need to build the services to suit market conditions, the business case does not include revenue for excursion services.

	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Costs</i>
<i>Conservative</i>	\$12.7 million	\$12.8 million
<i>Anticipated</i>	\$16.7 million	\$12.8 million
<i>Optimistic</i>	\$23.4 million	\$12.8 million

Table 2 Operating Revenue and Costs

The most conservative scenario estimates the service will be in a break-even position at start-up, with anticipated revenues and costs providing operating profits.

Recommendation

The business case confirms there is an urgent need to provide safe, efficient, reliable, environmentally friendly, and economically viable transportation options on Vancouver Island. The business case demonstrates that rail can contribute to the immediate and long-term transportation needs of the Island, is economically viable, and will contribute to a robust and environmentally sustainable inter-regional transportation network.

The business case was developed as a tool to assess the strategic and economic rationale of restoring rail to the Island and to provide the basis for an approval in principle by stakeholders to further project development.

Upon approval, it is recommended that the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) and the ICF form a joint multi-disciplinary team to oversee the development of an Updated Business Case.

Background

Built in 1886, the Vancouver Island Rail Corridor has served the Island's population and industries for over 135 years. Over its history, the corridor has served as one of the key components of the transportation network on the Island, moving people and freight over a 290-kilometer system spanning from Victoria to Courtenay and Parksville to Port Alberni.

Originally constructed by Robert Dunsmuir, the corridor was sold to Canadian Pacific in 1905 which had continuous operations on the Island until the late 1990's when it turned passenger operations over to VIA Rail and sold off its freight operations to Rail America in 1998.

It became clear in 2003 that Rail America intended to cease rail operations. Recognizing the socio-economic importance of the corridor the five Regional Districts and 14 First Nations wherein the corridor operates formed the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) to acquire, preserve, and develop the rail corridor on Vancouver Island.

The ICF was successful in acquiring the corridor in 2004 however decades of limited capital investment, and insufficient maintenance had greatly diminished its ability to carry freight and passengers efficiently and effectively. The VIA Rail passenger service was ceased in March 2011, due to deteriorating track conditions and the inability of the rail operation to maintain the train speeds required to meet the market demands of the passenger service.

Today, freight service is restricted to the Nanaimo operating area, while always maintaining safe operations, under less-than-ideal conditions, through an operating agreement with Southern Rail of Vancouver Island (SVI).

Funding to repair a significant portion of the corridor was achieved in 2015 however the funding was put on hold and finally canceled following the filing of a lawsuit against the ICF. The lawsuit was dismissed on June 30th, 2020, and dismissed again on appeal on Sept 14, 2021, with conditions. The Appeals court held that while the corridor could be held for railway purposes it could not be held indefinitely. To address this issue the court put in place a time limitation of 18 months for Canada to determine whether it will approve funding for infrastructure improvements on the segment of the corridor involved in the lawsuit. If Canada does not make the determination the case can be brought back to the court.

In 2018 the Premier held a roundtable meeting of stakeholders to discuss the future of the corridor. The stakeholders consisted primarily of First Nations, Regional District representatives, and Mayors. Support for the restoration of rail service on the corridor was almost unanimous among the stakeholders. Following the meeting, the province undertook an in-depth assessment of the corridor to determine its condition and to develop an understanding of the costs associated with restoring the corridor.

The Island Corridor Foundation has utilized and expanded upon the provincial assessment to develop an initial business case. The business case can be used as a tool to support evidence-based decision-making for investment in the rail corridor to provide commuter, inter-regional, freight, and excursion rail services on the Island.

First Nations Recognition and Consultation

The construction of the railway is an important part of Vancouver Island's history and has been a source of both pride and controversy. The building of the railway was one of the conditions for BC to join Confederation and were included in "The terms of union" within the British North America Act.

The terms of union required the government of Canada to undertake the construction of the railway. For its part, the government of British Columbia was required to convey, to the government of Canada, a tract of land "not to exceed 20 miles on each side of the said line". The exact conveyance was then entrenched in the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway act of 1875.

Over the course of the next 9 years the government of Canada worked to find a suitable contractor to undertake the construction of the railway and once an agreement was reached with the contractor conveyance of the land had to be made. The first transfer of land was done under the settlement act of 1884, and then two further grants were made in 1905 and 1910. Once completed the grants conveyed an approximate 20-mile-wide property amounting to 2 million acres of land, that ran from Esquimalt to a point north of Campbell River. The combined grants are known as the E&N Land Grant and have been the source of frustration and controversy since the inception of the railway.

At the time of the grants, neither the Federal nor Provincial governments recognized the rights of First Nations. There was no consideration given to the impact of the grants on First Nations and their traditional territories and there was no compensation offered for lands taken. This has been a central issue for island First Nations since the time of the grant and remains unresolved today.

The ICF recognizes and acknowledges the aboriginal title and rights of First Nations along the corridor, in which the ICF holds a fee simple interest, and the potential right of reversion to the First Nations that may apply if the corridor is not used for railway purposes. The issues emanating from the original land grants must be justly, and equitably, settled by the governments of Canada and BC, and in keeping with the recommendations and commitments of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Given the history and nature of these issues, and the role government must play in their settlement, the business case does not address the necessary consultation, accommodation, and reconciliation process that need to be undertaken or the potential costs associated with that process as they are the responsibility of government and must be resolved regardless of this project. ICF strongly encourages governments to resolve these historical grievances.

ICF is a foundation that has both First Nations and Regional Districts as equal partners in the ownership of the rail as well as in governance. Through this governance structure, First Nations play a major role in determining the future of island rail. ICF is committed to working with First Nations along the rail to resolve any issues they may have with the rail corridor and operations. ICF's commitment is laid out in its Declaration on Aboriginal Title.

Problem Definition

Today there are few transportation options for the movement of people on Vancouver Island. The options that do exist for the movement of people are primarily auto or highway-centric and are heavily focused on personal automobiles. This is of particular importance to those without access to a personal automobile, who choose not to drive or can't afford to drive. Lack of access to an efficient transportation network serves to limit accessibility to jobs, affordable housing, education, and supportive services and inhibits residents' connectivity.

The same lack of transportation options applies to the movement of freight on Vancouver Island. Consumer goods arriving on the Island are delivered almost entirely by barge or BC Ferries and distributed throughout via the Island highway system. The same applies to the movement of industrial products moving to and from the Island. The lack of rail service to our Island ports deprives those ports of the efficiency of rail and access to and from mainland markets throughout North America. The lack of options for freight handling reduces market efficiency, increases costs, and places the safety and security of a critical supply chain at risk.

The current transportation network on Vancouver Island is reliant on a road network that is, in many areas, limited to a single highway that is susceptible to closure and delays from the volume of automobile traffic, accidents, weather events, and maintenance impacting the movement of all passenger and freight movements.

Transportation is the single largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia at 41% of all emissions with road transportation accounting for 68% of those emissions. Perhaps of greater concern is that greenhouse gas emissions have grown at a rate of 23% from 2007 to 2019. Continued reliance and investments on an auto centric transportation system will only exacerbate this trend and threatens our ability to address our environmental goals through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

A fully developed and integrated rail system on Vancouver Island would be of significant benefit in addressing each of these issues.

Key Factors

The primary transportation infrastructure supporting North-South travel on Vancouver Island is along the east coast of the Island, Highway 1 from Victoria to Nanaimo, Hwy 19 from Nanaimo to Courtenay and beyond to the northern most communities of the Island, and Highway 4 from Parksville to Port Alberni and those communities on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

Public passenger transportation services across the Island are provided by a combination of BC Transit bus services, and private bus services, between communities. BC Transit provides limited operations between the communities of Duncan and Victoria four times daily, and from Shawnigan Lake to Victoria twice daily. BC Transit has also recently started a new bus service operating between Duncan and Nanaimo with 7 planned trips daily. In addition, private bus services operate twice daily between Courtenay and Victoria and points in between.



Table 3 Transit map

Travel Time Variability and Reliability

A lack of options for improvement or expansion of the Island highway system, combined with continued population growth, will serve to further exacerbate travel time variation, and will reduce travel time reliability on the Island.

In September of 2020 the provincial government released its South Island Transportation Study which highlighted the challenges in travel time variability and reliability on the South Island stating:

“Greater variation in travel time indicates reduced reliability”

Unpredictable Travel Times

A typical vehicle trip in 2019 from Mill Bay to Victoria would take approximately: **43 minutes** during the morning peak and as long as **66 minutes** on some days.

With expected growth, by 2038, this same trip would take: up to **87 minutes** on a typical day and up to **144 minutes** with variability of conditions.

Table 4 South Island Transportation Strategy MOTI Sept 2020

The South Island Transportation Strategy set out as one of its goals to:

“Improve the safety and reliability of the transportation network

Safe, reliable and cost-effective networks for all travel modes are critical for the movement of people of all ages and abilities and goods throughout the region, and are necessary to support all of the goals of this Strategy.”

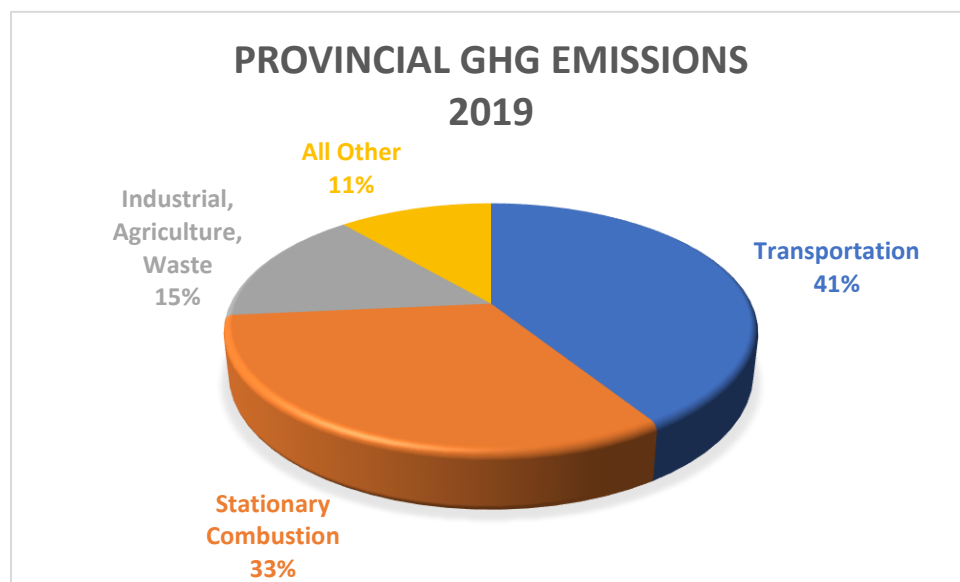
Freight transportation on the Island is limited almost entirely to truck and trailer operations or a combination of rail movements that are transloaded to truck and trailers. Trucks are reliant on the single highway system on the Island and are susceptible to travel time variation and reduced travel time reliability as all other highway traffic.

Environmental Sustainability

Transportation is the single largest contributor to greenhouse gas emission in British Columbia and represents the biggest threat to our ability to significantly reduce emissions targets set out in

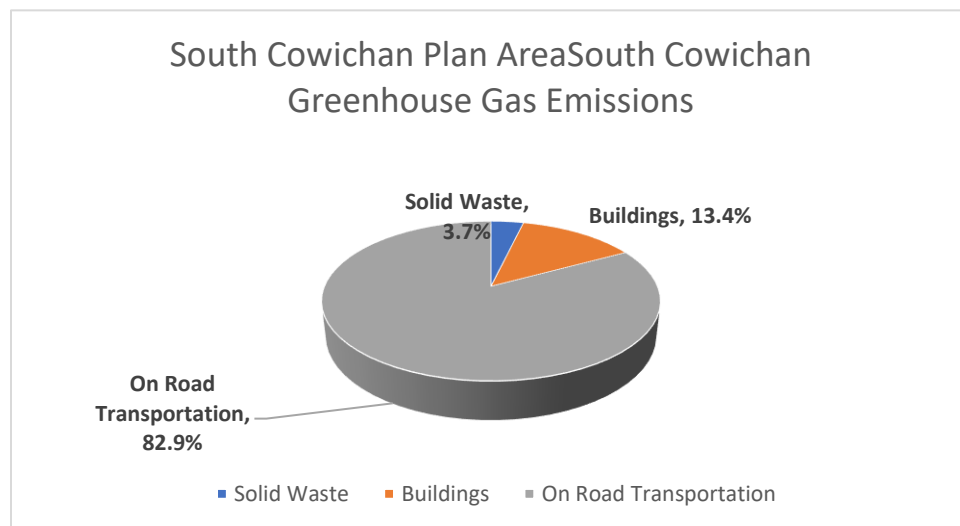
the province's legislated emissions reduction targets.

In total, transportation accounts for 41% of all greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia



In the Cowichan Valley Regional District motor vehicle related transportation is by far the largest contributor to overall emissions.

Regionally, it represents an estimated 82.9% of the GHG emissions, as a result of driving to work, school, shopping and other daily activities

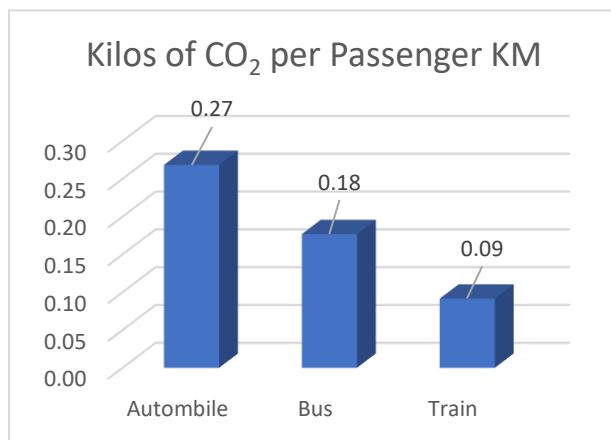


*<https://www.cvr.ca/DocumentCenter/View/7621/3510-SouthCowichan-OCP>

Our continued reliance on personal automobiles, and investments in transportation infrastructure that induces increased use of personal automobiles, threatens our ability to lower our greenhouse gas emissions to a level consistent with the objectives of the provincial Clean Transportation program:

“The Ministry is working toward an interconnected transportation network that will support a clean, sustainable economy, address climate change, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and bring B.C.’s communities together through coordinated transportation services people can count on.”

Road transportation is the single largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and as such it is also the largest target for potential reduction. Significant reductions in road transportation emissions can be achieved through modal shifts in both the passenger and freight operations.



Modal shift to public transportation is one of the most effective actions individuals can take to reduce their individual carbon footprint.

Automobile travel produces 1.5 times the CO₂ per passenger kilometre of a bus and 3 times that of a commuter train.

Trains are four to five times more efficient than trucks. Just one locomotive can haul a tonne of goods more than 220 kilometres on a single litre of fuel, while removing upwards of 300 trucks from our congested roads in the process

Economic Development

Vancouver Island enjoys a diversified economy that includes technology, advanced manufacturing, agri-foods, value-added wood manufacturing, and post secondary education. The recent designation of Vancouver Island as free trade zone promises to enhance economic activity on the island.

The Island has a significant amount of under-utilized and undeveloped industrial land with deep water access available for development. Island ports are actively implementing strategies to optimize their unique strengths and potential through the use and expansion of their facilities. It is critically important that transportation infrastructure can support continued growth.

Rail provides economic advantages to Island-based industry by providing efficient and cost-effective access to markets throughout North America and the world. Given the fixed nature of rail, it provides investment certainty and promotes and attracts economic development. Additionally, Vancouver Island ports, combined with rail, can serve as loading and unloading facilities with rail connections throughout North America.

Vancouver Island is also a premier travel destination that attracts millions of people to the Island each year. Overall tourism revenue in the province was approximately \$22.3B in 2019 before the pandemic with Vancouver Island accounting for an estimated 19% of all tourism in the province.

In its November 2021 report, Destinations Canada, a crown corporation that promotes Canada as a tourism destination, defined some challenges that Canadian Tourism is facing and the critical role transportation plays:

“In the short to medium term, availability of transportation — both air and ground — will be limited, posing barriers to connecting travelers with their destinations.”

“Access to ground transportation is increasingly limited across the country. Currently, it is inconsistent and expensive, creating challenges to the movement of travelers once in-destination.”

“In other cases, route cutbacks may leave single operators serving some destinations with a negative impact on pricing for travellers. Together, reduced air access and limited ground transportation will directly impact both the cost and ease of travel from one destination to the next destination.”

Vancouver Island has seen a reduction in available ground transportation services with the loss of regional rail and bus transportation. Limited availability for transportation has created barriers to travellers and combined with the constraints of the highway system, exposes visitors to the same closures, delays, and transportation risks faced by residents. Left unaddressed, these challenges will become more prominent and reduce the marketability of Vancouver Island as a premier travel destination risking a significant economic contributor to the Island economy.

Demographics and Population Growth

Vancouver Island continues to experience significant year over year population growth. As of July 1, 2020, of the 162 reported B.C. municipalities, sixty were larger municipalities with a population over 10,000, and thirty small municipalities had fewer than 1,000 population. When ranked by population growth during 2019-2020, six out of the top ten large municipalities were on Vancouver Island.

Name	2019 Population	2020 Population	Change	% Growth
Langford	42,024	44,069	2045	4.9%
Sooke	14,573	15,083	510	3.5%
Colwood	18,908	19,373	465	2.5%
Courtenay	28,184	28,862	678	2.4%
View Royal	11,574	11,829	255	2.2%
Parksville	13,407	13,685	278	2.1%

Table 5 Prepared by BC Stats: Demographics and Population Growth

The rail corridor operates through five of the seven regional districts on Vancouver Island. Over the next 16 years each of the regional districts is projected to continue to experience significant growth, adding almost 170,000 new residents to the Island.

Projected Growth: Regional Districts	Population (2016)	Population projection (2028)	Population projection (2038)	Growth 2016 -2038
Capital Regional District	419,852	483,409	541,781	29%
Cowichan Valley Regional District	87,551	97,201	104,792	20%
Regional District of Nanaimo	162,617	190,382	212, 156	31%
Comox Valley Regional District	69,484	82,473	91,165	31%
Alberni Clayoquat Regional District	32,305	34,818	35,581	10%
Totals	771,809	888,283	985,475	28%

Table 6 Projected Growth: Regional Districts

Sources: BC Population Estimates & Projections

The pace of population growth on Vancouver Island has put considerable pressure on the existing constraints of the transportation network. The Island is forecast to continue its dramatic pace of growth, estimated to be 28% from 2016 to 2038. Growth will drive further, and significant, deterioration in our ability to move people and freight safely, reliably, and efficiently.

Stakeholder and Advocacy Support

Stakeholder and Advocacy groups have demonstrated strong support for the restoration of rail service on Vancouver Island:

Premier's Stakeholders Roundtable Meeting - Dec 2018

At a meeting hosted by the Premier in 2018 approximately 35 representatives of Island stakeholders including First Nations, Municipalities and Regional Districts recommended that the Island corridor should be considered key infrastructure and that rail service should be restored to the Island to ease traffic congestions and boost economic development

Capital Regional District Mayors Letter – Feb 2019

The thirteen mayors of the Capital Regional District send a joint letter to the Premier asking for immediate action to get the train running between Langford and Victoria and a commitment to the entire corridor.

Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) resolution – April 2019

The AVICC passes a resolution asking that the province take immediate action to provide sufficient funding to restore the railway infrastructure of Vancouver Island and to ensure the corridor remains intact and available for future generations.

BC Chamber of Commerce Resolution – July 2020

The BC Chamber of Commerce passes a resolution recommending that the Provincial government work with the Federal government to:

- ensure that the Island Corridor remains intact and is designated as a transportation corridor with priority given to rail infrastructure
- fund phased improvements and upgrades to the E&N Rail Corridor to ensure it returns to operation and is capable of providing commuter and inter-city rail service, with an initial priority on commuter rail service in the greater Victoria area
- Commit to ongoing operational funding for the E&N Rail Service so it can function as a commuter and inter-city rail service, per the phased improvement plan.

Transport Action Canada – Strategic Railway Fund Request

In its submission to the House of Commons Finance Committee, the advocacy group Transport Action Canada puts forward repairs to the Island corridor as one of eight priority rail projects in Canada to be funded by the Federal Government

The Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) Survey – October 2020

The ICF conducted a public survey in September of 2020 to provide Vancouver Island residents with an opportunity to share their views and comments about rail service.

The survey gathered over 3500 responses from Island residents with over 80% agreeing that we need to revitalize rail services on the Island. Key in the findings is that 87% of respondents use a private car for their commuting needs and that 89% of respondents would consider using rail if it met their needs. In addition, 81% of respondents believe rail is an important or very important environmentally friendly transportation option.

Strategic Vision

The Island Corridor Foundation envisions that the proposed train service, fully integrated into the existing transportation network, will provide a safe, efficient, reliable, and resilient transportation link between communities across Vancouver Island. The service will include commuter, inter-regional, freight, and excursion trains, tailored to the specific and unique needs of each of the residents, businesses, and communities on Vancouver Island and will fully support the environmental goals set out in CleanBC.

Strategic Outcomes and Benefits

Transportation

Fully integrated passenger rail services will provide an enhanced transportation capability for travel across Vancouver Island connecting communities as far north as Courtenay, and as far south as Victoria. It will provide Island residents, and visitors, especially those who are unable, or unwilling to drive, with an alternative option to travel within their own communities or across Vancouver Island.

The integration of the passenger rail system is critical to the success of the new rail system to address first and last mile capabilities for users of the system. Usage of the system will be dependent on users' capabilities to easily access the system and their ability to efficiently travel from their point of origin to their destination.

Rail passengers will not be exposed to congestion and disruptions along the road network and will enjoy affordable, cost-effective transportation services with improved safety and greater travel time certainty.

Langford to Victoria will be equipped with a commuter service to avoid and reduce traffic congestion between the western communities and Victoria, providing an affordable, efficient, and reliable means of transportation for commuters that will reduce the dependency on personal vehicle transportation.

The integration of rail service with BC Transit services should attract additional riders to the BC Transit system through an overall expansion of available transportation service.

Quality of Life

A fully integrated passenger train service on Vancouver Island will improve the quality of life of island residents.

Northern communities will have improved access to specialized services, businesses, and entertainment options found in the two largest metro areas on the Island. In addition, residents will have a safe and reliable transportation option to access medical services only found in the large metro areas.

Housing price increases in the most populous Island areas have resulted in Island residents seeking housing in lower priced markets that are often significant distances from the job. Rail will provide these commuters with a safe, more efficient, and reliable commuting option. Rail will also facilitate regional land use planning targeted at transit-oriented developments with an emphasis on density leading to increased availability of affordable housing in areas where it is most needed.

Visitors and Island residents will also enjoy improved access to the tourism and recreational services available throughout the Island.

The rail system will provide users with a host of quality of life benefits that could include lowered costs, convenience, alternatives, and less travel time, depending on their unique situation.

Economic Development

Introducing rail service to Vancouver Island will support economic and regional development on the Island. Improvements to our transportation system will enhance the movement of people, expertise, and ideas between the various regions of the Island.

Rail is a proven and reliable tool in driving development and economic growth. Connecting our economic centres and port facilities to the North American rail system will enhance and accelerate growth of the Island economies by gaining access to new markets and lowering costs of landed products. Improving usage rates at our deep-water ports supports their long-term viability and provides a unique opportunity to improve capacity limitations at all west coast ports.

Rail service will also boost, grow, and develop the tourism industry on Vancouver Island.

Environmental Sustainability

In March 2021, to help meet provincial greenhouse gas targets, the Province established new 2030 emission reduction targets that outline a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 29% in the transportation sector. Road transportation accounts for approximately 68% of all greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector and therefore it is critical that steps be taken to target reductions specific to road transportation.

A fully integrated rail system will promote environmental sustainability by providing a commuter passenger transportation alternative for island commuters and inter-regional long-distance trips between island communities. Modal shift from personal automobiles to trains will result in an overall reduction in transportation related emissions. Likewise, a modal shift of freight from trucks to rail will also result in an overall reduction in transportation-related emissions.

Equity

The introduction of an integrated rail service will be complementary to, and in addition to, existing shuttle, long haul bus, and BC Transit services and will be of particular benefit to those who:

- have accessibility needs that make it difficult to board and ride a bus;
- do not have a family member, friend or caregiver who can provide a ride;
- are unable to afford alternative travel modes or lack access to a personal vehicle

Rail is particularly important for communities that are remote, have increased distance and travel time or generally have very limited safe and reliable transportation options.

Alignment with Government Policy and Planning

The proposed Strategic Vision is in alignment with BC Government Policy and Planning and will have a positive impact on each of the goals outlined in the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Service plan for 2021 to 2024 released in April of 2021.

Goal 1:	Invest in rural and urban infrastructure improvements that help build a strong, sustainable economy
Goal 2:	Improve transportation network efficiency to provide British Columbians with safe and reliable access to the services they depend on
Goal 3:	Invest in transportation options that enhance network efficiency and support climate change objectives
Goal 3.1:	Support local economies and communities through the continued development of a multi-modal transportation system
Goal 3.2:	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector

Table 7 MOTI 2021/2022 – 2023/2024 Service Plan – April 2021

Proposed Solution

The Island Corridor Foundation proposes to move forward with the restoration of the Island Rail Corridor to support ongoing passenger and freight operations as outlined in this business case. Restoration of the corridor will require maintenance upgrades to the existing corridor and infrastructure to support the level of service defined in the business plan.

The introduction of rail service will provide enhanced transportation options for Island residents and visitors, reducing variability and improving network reliability. A new rail system will ensure equity and access to an efficient and affordable transportation network for all Island residents and visitors while taking meaningful steps towards meeting the goals and objectives set out in the CleanBC Transportation Plan.

Restoration Options Review

The development of the business case for the restoration of rail on Vancouver Island relies on the Island Rail Corridor Condition Assessment (IRCCA) commissioned by the British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) and released in 2020.

The 2020 WSP Island Rail Corridor Condition Assessment (IRCCA)

The British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) engaged WSP Canada Group Ltd. (WSP) to conduct a detailed evaluation of the base asset condition of the Island Rail Corridor on Vancouver Island. The assessment scope included the entire length of the rail corridor, Victoria to Courtenay (Victoria subdivision), Parksville to Port Alberni (Port Alberni subdivision), Wellcox Spur and Wellcox Yard. The assessment of the corridor covered railway infrastructure, grade crossings, bridges and rockfall activity.

The IRCCA report was built upon previous studies, including the 2009, Hatch Mott Macdonald report entitled “Evaluation of the E&N Railway Corridor: Baseline Reference Report” This report states *“The Railway condition is considered not to be compliant with BC Safety Authority Regulations and Rules Respecting Track Safety (Part 30) for Common Carrier Railways in the following areas:*

- *Vegetation growth in the ballast section and crossing approaches*
- *Clusters of decayed ties and decayed ties under the rail joints*
- *Worn, loose rail joints and frozen bolts.”*

The WSP Team undertook site investigations between June and August 2019 and applied a Good/Fair/Poor rating for each track element to develop an overall condition assessment of each track component of the railway. The report states:

“Overall summarized results indicate that the railway corridor is in Poor to Fair condition, with the Victoria subdivision in a Poor to Fair condition and the Port Alberni subdivision in a Poor condition. The main issues contributing to the condition of the railway include but are not limited to:

- Uncontrolled vegetation within and adjacent to the rail corridor*
- Number of decayed ties exceed Transport Canada’s “Rules Respecting Track Safety – 2012” regulations for Class 2 and Class 3 Track*
- Single shoulder plates and angle joint bars are older technology and negatively impact track performance.”*

Other capital and maintenance issues raised in these reports include the implementation of new automatic crossing signal conditions, which are currently impaired by vegetation or not up to current track safety standards.

IRCCA Report Recommendations

The IRCCA report recommended a phased in improvement approach to the restoration of rail service and provided costing information for each of the three phases:

- **Initial:** Re-establishes minimum freight and passenger service
- **Intermediate:** Upgrades higher freight loading for increased freight and passenger volumes and speeds
- **Ultimate:** Supports higher freight and passenger volumes

The phasing rationale is based on carrying out improvement work on the railway to meet Technical Safety BC and Transport Canada maximum allowable operating speeds. In each phase, a rail traffic volume Use Case is assigned and provides a corresponding track class speed and load characteristics.

Furthermore, breaking the corridor into six different segments allows flexibility for phased improvements to be implemented based on demand changes. Each phase is summarized below:

Initial Phase Improvement

Includes costs to upgrade infrastructure to re-establish a minimum rail freight and passenger service along the rail corridor.

Passenger Service	2-4 passenger trains per day 2-4 freight trains (10-20 car trains) per day
Track Characteristics	Class 2 Track Standard (25 mph Freight, 30 mph passenger). *
Track Loading	Not suitable for sustained 286,000 lb car loading
Upgrade Cost	\$326,448,391

Table 8 Initial Phase Improvement

*Speeds refer to maximum safe allowable operating speed as per Technical Safety BC and Transport Canada's regulations

Intermediate Phase Improvement

Includes costs to upgrade infrastructure beyond the Initial Phase. This phase will support higher freight loading (286k lb rail car loading) which will accommodate increased freight and passenger volumes and increased train speeds throughout the corridor.

Passenger Service	4 passenger trains/d up to 8 trains/d
Freight Service	4 freight trains (10-20 car trains)/d up to 4 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) or 133 cars/d total
Track Standard	Class 3 Track Standard (40mph Freight, 60mph passenger)*
Track Loading	286,000 lb car loading
Upgrade Cost	\$552,023,932

Table 9 Intermediate Phase Improvement

*Speeds refer to maximum safe allowable operating speed as per Technical Safety BC and Transport Canada's regulations

Ultimate Phase Improvement

Includes costs to upgrade infrastructure beyond the Intermediate Phase. This phase will support higher freight and passenger volumes than the Intermediate Phase. This phase is optimal for the implementation of a commuter rail service.

Passenger Service	More than 8 trains/d
Freight Service	Freight volumes above 4MTPA or 133 cars/d
Track Standard	Class 3 Track Standard (40mph Freight, 60mph passenger)*
Track Loading	286,000 lb car loading
Upgrade Cost	\$728,778,304

Table 10 Ultimate Phase Improvement

*Speeds refer to maximum safe allowable operating speed as per Technical Safety BC and Transport Canada's regulations

Summary of IRCCA Phase Improvements

	Track Standard	Passenger Trains/Day	Passenger Speed MPH	Freight	Freight Speed MPH	Max Load	Upgrade Cost in Millions
Phase							
Initial	2	2-4	30	2-4 Trains 20 to 40 Cars/Day	25	263,000	\$326.5
Intermediate	3	4-8	60	4 Trains 133 cars/day	40	286,000	\$552.0
Ultimate	3	8+	60	+133 cars/day	40	286,000	\$728.8

Table 11 Summary of IRCCA Phase Improvements

The Initial Phase

The initial phase allows for passenger and freight service; however the level of service is not adequate to support passenger or freight operations. This is primarily due to reduced operating speeds making this level of service non-competitive with existing transportation options and the number of trains would be insufficient to manage commuter movements in the Langford – Vic West Corridor. Additionally, the maximum loading capacity is below industry standard and therefore not supportable.

The Intermediate Phase

The Intermediate Phase provides for a level of service that allows for the operation of passenger and freight services, as well as peak hour commuter service in the Langford – Victoria Corridor. The intermediate phase is closely aligned to the immediate needs of the Island and the service is scalable, providing flexibility to meet future demand when appropriate. Load capacity under the intermediate phase is at industry standard.

The Ultimate Phase

The Ultimate Phase offers very similar levels of service for both passenger and freight operations but allows for increased train frequency for both passenger and freight operations. This level of service and frequency is not contemplated within the next ten years, and it would be difficult to justify the additional investment required under this phase.

Recommendation of the Island Corridor Foundation

The level of improvement will be key in the success of the restored rail system. The improvement phases outlined within the IRCCA will support varying numbers and types of trains as well as varying operating characteristics and efficiencies.

The structure of the IRCCA does allow for the sequential implementation of each phase, with improved capabilities and increased costs with each phase. The phased approach would allow for the timing of investment in the corridor to meet demand, however it could also have the effect of limiting the marketability of the service and thereby diminishing its ability to succeed if investment is poorly timed.

ICF Adjusted Intermediate Phase

In reviewing each of the available upgrade plans it is clear the intermediate phase would be sufficient to meet the immediate needs of the Island, however the ICF has developed an adjusted intermediate phase that will deliver very similar results at a much lower cost.

The IRCCA intermediate upgrade plan calls for 115 lb rail to be installed on the entire corridor to allow for 286,000 lb loading capability across the entire system and to improve ride quality for passenger operations. There is need to have 286,000 lb loading capability in areas where there is likely to be high density rail operations, as is envisioned in the Nanaimo to Port Alberni corridor, however the remainder of the system is likely to have light freight operations which would allow for 263,000 lb loading and low-density passenger operations. The adjusted plan envisions the installation of heavy rail from Nanaimo to Port Alberni and in the Westhills-Victoria corridor.

Passenger Service	4 passenger trains/d up to 8 trains/d
Freight Service	4 freight trains (10-20 car trains)/d up to 4 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) or 133 cars/d total
Track Standard	Class 3 Track Standard (40mph Freight, 60mph passenger) *
Track Loading	286,000 lb car loading in heavy freight zones; 263,000 lb loading outside of heavy freight zones
Upgrade Cost	\$368,000,000 – Adjusted to estimated 2023 Costs

Table 12 ICF Adjusted Intermediate Phase

**Speeds refer to maximum allowable operating speed as per Technical Safety BC and Transport Canada's regulations*

The adjusted intermediate phase is the recommended approach and has been used to determine the cost of restoration.

Statement of Estimating Risk, Accuracy & Contingency

The business case relies on the costing data and information contained within the IRCCA report. The adjusted intermediate phase costs have been updated to 2023 costs.

The IRCCA properly included contingency cost factors related to the upgrade of the rail corridor. Contingency should be viewed as an offset for coping with risk and uncertainties associated with the planning and implementation of the project and should consider the complexity of the project.

The IRCCA report had identified and applied a 50% contingency to the project costs and while this is still higher than expected, the business case includes the 50% contingency.

In addition to the contingency costs, the IRCCA report also provided for a “MOTI Contingency”. In review with the Ministry, they clarified the additional costs are more properly described as “Soft Costs” and are outlined below:

<i>Soft Cost</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Dollars</i>
<i>Construction Supervision</i>	10%	\$34.72 Million
<i>Engineering</i>	12%	\$41.72 Million
<i>Project Mgt & Supervision</i>	10%	\$34.72 Million
<i>Total</i>	32%	\$111.16 Million

The impact of the fully applied MOTI soft costs to the project would result in an additional cost of approximately \$111 Million. While the soft costs as outlined may be appropriate in the context of new construction, requiring significant design and supervision, this project is based on upgrading an existing rail system described in the IRCCA as:

“...the railway corridor is in Poor to Fair condition, with the Victoria subdivision in a Poor to Fair condition and the Port Alberni in a Poor condition. The main issues contributing to the condition of the railway include but are not limited to:

- Uncontrolled vegetation within and adjacent to the rail corridor;*
- Number of decayed ties exceed Transport Canada’s “Rules Respecting Track Safety - 2012” regulations for Class 2 and Class 3 Track; and*
- Single shoulder plates and angle joint bars are older technology and negatively impact track performance.”*

Correcting these issues is considered a maintenance activity within the rail industry and would typically be undertaken by a qualified rail construction contractor with experience managing these types of projects. The project would require minimal engineering and supervision and given the nature of the work to be done, soft costs for the project are estimated to total \$5 million.

Additional Costs not included in the IRCCA

Siding Capacity Upgrades - \$5,000,000

The IRCCA reviewed the right of way capacity and the potential need for double tracking to provide for additional capacity and redundancy and determined that double tracking was not required to attain the levels of service contemplated in the report. While double tracking is not required there are areas that would provide significant benefits to the efficient operation of the railway through new or expanded siding capacity.

Increased siding capacity will provide flexibility for maintenance, reduce track switching delays, and minimize train conflicts in high density traffic areas. The exact locations and lengths of the sidings would be determined based on the level of service and equipment chosen.

Stations - \$3,000,000

The Business case envisions the establishment of twelve stations along the corridor

STATIONS	
Northern Terminus	
INTERCITY STATIONS	- Courtenay - Qualicum Beach - Parksville - Nanaimo - Ladysmith - Duncan - Shawnigan Lake
COMMUTER STATIONS	- Westhills - Langford - Six mile - Esquimalt - Johnson St. Bridge
Southern Terminus	

Table 13 Stations

Each station will be equipped with a 100m x 5m concrete platform, a 5m x 2.5m covered shelter and a ticket machine. A cost of \$250,000 is associated with the construction of each of these stations, resulting in a total cost of \$3,000,000 for station construction along the entire line.

Rolling Stock - \$50,000,000

There is a wide array of rolling stock that could be utilized in this service as outlined in the IRCCA. Each of the available equipment options has their own unique operating features, benefits, and costs.

While an in-depth review must be undertaken prior to the acquisition of rolling stock, the business case envisions the use of six “push-pull” trainsets consisting of two bi-level cars and powered by GM Diesel-Electric locomotives. This configuration has been chosen as they are widely used in North America as a flexible long commuter rail option. Go Transit in Greater Toronto and the Hamilton area and the West Coast Express in the Lower Mainland both employ this equipment.



Table 14 Rolling Stock

This option was also chosen for its ability to easily adapt to new, low carbon or zero carbon, locomotive power as it becomes available.

The service levels within the business plan will require four trainsets in daily service and a minimum of two trainsets to allow for planned maintenance intervals and equipment failures. Acquiring new equipment could take between 2 to 4 years from the time of ordering.

There can be significant price differentials in equipment types and given long lead times, suitable used or lease equipment may need to be acquired to support the anticipated start up. For the purposes of the business case a cost of \$50,000,000 is assumed to be the highest cost associated with equipment acquisition.

Total Estimated Project Costs

Combined Cost	
Hybrid Intermediate Upgrade	\$368,000,000
Soft Costs	\$5,000,000
Siding Capacity Upgrades	\$5,000,000
Station Platforms	\$3,000,000
Total Construction Costs	\$381,000,000
Rolling Stock Costs	\$50,000,000
Total Project Costs	\$431,000,000

Table 15 Total Estimated Project Costs

Cost Escalation and Inflation

The business case was developed utilizing the costs outlined in the IRCCA report issued in 2020 and escalated for inflation to reflect estimated costing to 2023.

Year	Escalation
2020	Base year
2021	3.0%
2022	5.5%
2023	6.0%

Environmental Assessment

Most of the work to be completed under this plan is classified as maintenance activity on an existing right of way that is commonly performed on an annual basis by Canadian and other North American railways. As such, it's restricted to the track encompassing only the steel rail and fittings, wooden ties, and clear crushed rock ballast section of an existing railway track structure and vegetation control measures. The proposed upgrade work is not subject to environmental assessment under the Environmental Assessment Act.

In cases where new construction is to be completed under this plan, like the construction of new sidings or passing tracks, or new stations, they will be subject to environmental review.

No activity is to be conducted under this plan that will have any potential for adverse impact to the environment and/or fisheries.

Train Operations

Business case train operations have been developed based on the performance characteristics of the Adjusted Intermediate Phase plan and consider the unique needs of the regions the trains will operate in.

The service proposal provides for four train sets to be used in scheduled passenger service on the Victoria Subdivision. In all cases it is assumed that train operations will be integrated with local transit service to provide the best possible service. A properly integrated system will result in modal shifts that will bring efficiencies to BC Transit operations and improve ridership on the bus system.

The scheduled passenger services will have two trainsets which will operate strictly as part of the commuter system between Westhills and Victoria West, and two trainsets will operate as intercity commuter and regional trains.

Freight service and excursion services will operate based on market conditions and demand. The service proposal provides for initial freight service consisting of one freight train each day, operating to various locations through the week. Freight service by location and frequency will be determined based on demand for each unique location and integrated with connecting barge services to and from the Island. Excursion services will be operated on an as is required basis.

Passenger Operations

Train 1 – Victoria Commuter 1

The first train serves as a Victoria commuter train that operates between the Westhills Station and the station located in proximity to the Johnson St. Bridge in downtown Victoria. This train will operate in this corridor from 6am-9am and 3pm-6pm, to move commuters during rush hour, and will not operate during non-commuter hours.

Train 2 – Victoria Commuter 2

The second train operates during the same commuter windows as train 1 (6am-9am & 3pm-6pm), while also operating less frequently throughout the day in this same section of track (Westhills Station to Johnson St. Station) to act as an alternative means of transportation for midday travel in Victoria. This midday service will offer 1 trip to and from Langford to Victoria every hour.

Trains operating in the commuter corridor will take approximately 30 minutes to travel between Westhills and Victoria. The timetable includes a one-minute stop at each of the stations on the route. The following table is an example of a timetable for one of the trains operating within the commuter corridor:

Commuter Timetable		
Northbound		Southbound
6:30	Victoria	6:30
6:41	Esquimalt	6:18
6:48	Six Mile	6:12
6:51	Atkins	6:08
6:55	Langford	6:05
7:00	Westhills	6:00

Table 16 Victoria Commuter

Train 3 – Intercity Train 1

The third train on the line operates as an intercity train that originates and terminates in Duncan. This train leaves in the morning heading towards Victoria, providing transportation for passengers commuting over the Malahat to Victoria. The train then makes a northbound trip from Victoria to Courtenay, and then back down to Victoria. Finally, it ends with one final run from Victoria to Duncan in the late afternoon returning commuters to the Shawnigan, Cobble Hill, and Duncan areas.

Train 4 – Regional Train

The fourth train operates as a regional train that originates in Courtenay. This train makes two roundtrips to Victoria from Courtenay each day. Its first departure is at 5:54 AM from Courtenay, allowing for a late morning arrival in Victoria. This train will then travel back to Courtenay, then make another trip down to Victoria during the mid-day, and finally a last trip back to Courtenay, arriving just after 8pm, at the end of the day in Courtenay.

Intercity and regional trains operating between Courtenay and Victoria stop at twelve stations along the route. Travel times between Courtenay and Victoria are scheduled to take 3 hours and 50 minutes, and travel times between Duncan and Victoria are scheduled to take 1 hour and 32 minutes and, in all cases, include a one-minute station stop. The following table is an example of a timetable for one of the trains operating between Victoria and Courtenay:

Timetable		
Northbound		Southbound
16:51	Victoria	9:44
17:02	Esquimalt	9:32
17:09	Six Mile	9:25
17:12	Atkins	9:22
17:16	Langford	9:18
17:21	Westhills	9:13
17:57	Shawnigan Lake	8:37
18:22	Duncan	8:12
18:48	Ladysmith	7:46
19:08	Nanaimo	7:26
19:39	Parksville	6:55
19:49	Qualicum	6:45
20:41	Courtenay	5:54

Table 17 Regional Train

Passenger Train Frequency

Train frequency was developed based on the need to provide a level of service that would make the service attractive and likely attain the highest level of modal shift and could be supported by the physical characteristics of the line once the required improvements have been made.

The following chart depicts the frequency of trains contemplated within each of the corridors within various operating windows. Trains originating in Courtenay and Duncan will operate to Victoria and are counted in the operating windows in the Westhills to Victoria corridor:

Train Frequency		
Segment	Operating Window	Total Trains
Westhills to Victoria	06:00 to 9:15	7
Victoria to Westhills	15:00 to 17:30	8
Westhills to Victoria	09:15 to 15:00	4
Victoria to Westhills	09:15 to 15:00	5
Duncan to Victoria	06:00 to 8:30	2
Victoria to Duncan	15:00 to 17:00	2
Nanaimo to Victoria	Daily	3
Victoria to Nanaimo	Daily	3
Courtenay to Victoria	Daily	3
Victoria to Courtenay	Daily	3

Table 18 Train Frequency

Freight Operations

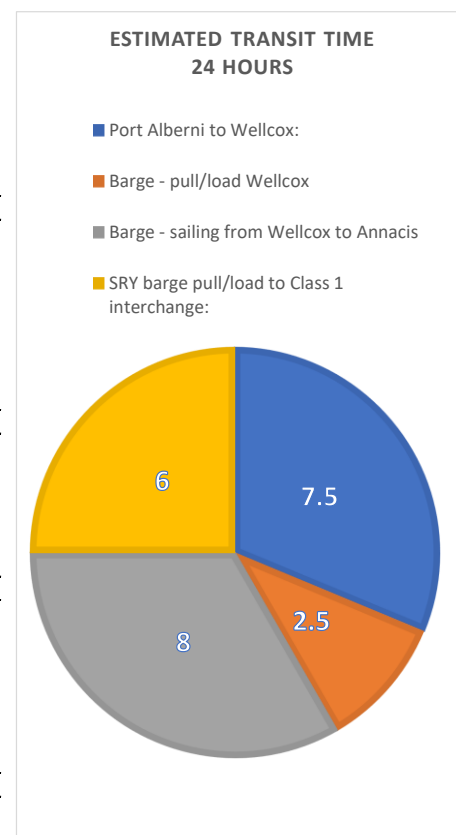
Currently all rail cars arrive or depart Vancouver Island by rail barge that connects the Island with the Southern Railway of British Columbia. Today, freight operations and rail car movements on the Island are restricted to the Nanaimo operating area.

The business case has provision for a freight operation that will service the entire Island, with an emphasis on providing shippers with a consistent, reliable rail service. The business case provides for freight service 5 days per week with two trips per week to Port Alberni and one day per week to the North and South of Nanaimo.

Critical to the success of the business case will be the ability to provide efficient service to and from Port Alberni for freight to and from North American markets. The following table outlines the proposed schedule for the movement of goods from Port Alberni to rail connections on the mainland.

Transit time from Port Alberni to Class 1 interchange:

	duration (hrs)	example schedule
Port Alberni to Wellcox:		
Port Alberni Train released		12:00
Train prep (paperwork, air tests, train inspections)	1	
Depart Port Alberni		13:00
arrive Parksville	2.25	15:15
arrive Wellcox yard	1.25	16:30
Interchange time to Seaspan Ferries	3	19:30
Port Alberni to Wellcox:	7.50	
Barge - pull/load Wellcox		
	duration (hrs)	example schedule
Barge arrival		19:30
Pull barge	1	20:30
load barge	1	21:30
Barge prepares to depart	0.5	
Barge ready for departure		22:00
Barge - pull/load Wellcox	2.50	
Barge - sailing from Wellcox to Annacis		
	duration (hrs)	example schedule
Barge departs Wellcox		22:00
sailing time to Annacis	6	4:00
Interchange time from Seaspan to SRY	2	6:00
Barge - sailing from Wellcox to Annacis	8.00	
SRY barge pull/load to Class 1 interchange:		
	duration (hrs)	example schedule
Barge arrival		6:00
pull barge	1	7:00
load barge	1	8:00
SRY interchange with Class 1	4	12:00
SRY barge pull/load to Class 1 interchange:	6.00	
Total transit time Port Alberni to Class 1 Interchange:	24.00	



The Port of Port Alberni enjoys a 2-to-3-day turnaround sailing time for Pacific Rim freight. The ocean and rail service will provide shippers with a competitive alternative to the Port of Vancouver and help relieve the current pressure and congestion at other west coast ports.

Excursion Operations

Excursion train operations would be provided on a demand basis with operations focused on cruise ship calls, visiting tourists, and as a rolling special event venue or transportation provider to Island events (sporting events, ski trains, etc.)

Excursion trains must be a high-quality hospitality product. This requires each run to be much more than a train ride. Destination, on board staff, and themed services play a key role in maintaining the demand for the service. Critical to success is guest experience and therefore partnering with an experienced tourist rail operator is considered as a first step in establishing excursion operations.

The operations of Excursion trains will be on demand by design to capitalize on cruise ship/tourism opportunities and to provide special event transportation.

Operational Costs

10 Year Maintenance Plan / Operational Plan/ Capital Plan

The estimated cost of maintenance and operations for the recommended service plan have been modeled over a 10-year period and are based on known 2021 labour and material rates and the recommended service levels in the Adjusted Intermediate Phase.

Infrastructure Maintenance Costs

Infrastructure maintenance costs include expected material and installation costs for track repairs, ballast resurfacing, culvert replacement, and bridge maintenance and repair. The costs are based on known costs and labour rates.

Train Operations Costs

Train operations costs include all expenses related to the day-to-day operations of the railway other than Infrastructure Maintenance Costs. Train operation costs, include management and unionized employee wages, fuel, G&A expenses, car hire, purchased services, etc. for the operation of the recommended passenger service level and includes the costs for a daily freight service.

Equipment Maintenance Costs

Equipment maintenance costs include all labour expenses and an estimated amount for parts replacement for equipment outside of warranty.

	Infrastructure	Train	Equipment	
	Maintenance	Operations	Maintenance	Total
Year				
1	1,816,631	10,565,361	397,823	12,779,817
2	1,862,047	10,879,104	407,769	13,148,922
3	1,908,598	11,203,171	417,963	13,529,735
4	1,956,313	11,537,945	428,412	13,922,674
5	2,005,221	11,883,822	439,122	14,328,170
6	2,055,351	12,241,218	450,100	14,746,675
7	2,106,735	12,610,563	461,353	15,178,658
8	2,159,404	12,992,308	472,887	15,624,606
9	2,213,389	13,386,921	484,709	16,085,027
10	2,268,723	13,794,889	496,826	16,560,438

Table 19 Equipment Maintenance Costs

Capital Requirements

Due to the significant capital investment for the track rehabilitation infrastructure upgrade work, it is not foreseen that any significant capital work will be required in the first 10-year period.

Rather than increased capital requirements, a maintenance plan including a tie replacement program, and rail spot replacement approach will be implemented to keep the right of way, track, and bridges in optimal operating condition.

Annual Operating Revenue

Operating revenue for the project is derived primarily from Passenger Services and Freight operations defined as:

- Local Commuter
 - Operations with service between Westhills and Victoria West
- Intercity Commuter
 - Operations between Duncan and Victoria
- Regional Trains
 - Operations between Courtenay and Victoria
- Freight Service
 - Operations from Nanaimo to all points on the system
- Excursion Trains
 - On demand services throughout the Island

Local Commuter Revenue

Local commuter revenue was derived utilizing the South Island Transportation Strategy (SITS) and the 2017 Capital Regional District Origin-Destination Survey Report to determine the number of daily trips into and out of the downtown core. The data was further analyzed by community origin and destination to determine the total number of trips each day.



Table 20 Local Commuter Revenue

South Island Transportation Strategy – Technical Paper #2 – Sept 2020

The SITS identified a total of 27,000 daily riders on the Rapid Transit Corridor encompassing the Westshore and Saanich Peninsula corridors. Once adjusted for growth and considered in conjunction with the 2017 Capital Regional District Origin-Destination Survey report, it was determined there are approximately 35,000 people commuting to and from Victoria that would be within the catchment area that could be serviced by the train directly, or through a combination of train and other modes.

Rail would be a new entrant into the transportation network, so revenue has been determined using a modal shift capture and applying an anticipated fare rate structure within the local commuter corridor and applied to estimated one-way trips.

Modal shift was determined by comparing the unique characteristic of individual origin and destination pairs, including first and last mile analysis, total transit time, and costs associated with various modes including personal automobile, bus, cycling, and walking.

Rate levels were determined based on comparable rates for BC Transit.

Table 21 shows anticipated rates and rates of usage for each rate:

90 Minute Fare	Usage	Day Pass	Usage	Monthly Pass	Usage
\$4.00	45%	\$11.00	5%	\$105.00	50%

Table 21 Anticipated Rates

Table 22 shows the annual revenue for Commuter service at various modal shift capture rates

Capture Rate	Passengers	Total Annual Revenue
4%	1428	\$1,322,328
6%	2142	\$1,983,492
8%	2856	\$2,644,656
10%	3570	\$3,305,820
12%	4284	\$3,966,984
14%	4998	\$4,628,148
16%	5712	\$5,289,312
18%	6426	\$5,950,476
20%	7140	\$6,611,640

Table 22 Annual Revenue for Commuter Service at Various Modal Shift Capture Rates

At the start of operations, it is estimated that the new rail system will realize a modal shift of somewhere between 4% and 6% and increasing to 8% within one year resulting in revenues of approximately \$2.6 Million annually.

Intercity Commuter Revenue

Intercity commuter revenue was derived utilizing the South Island Transportation Strategy (SITS) which identified approximately 30,000 passengers per day traveling into the Capital Regional District from North of the Malahat. When adjusted for growth and the inclusion of passengers traveling from the Cowichan Valley, the number of passengers is estimated to be approximately 32,000 passengers each day.

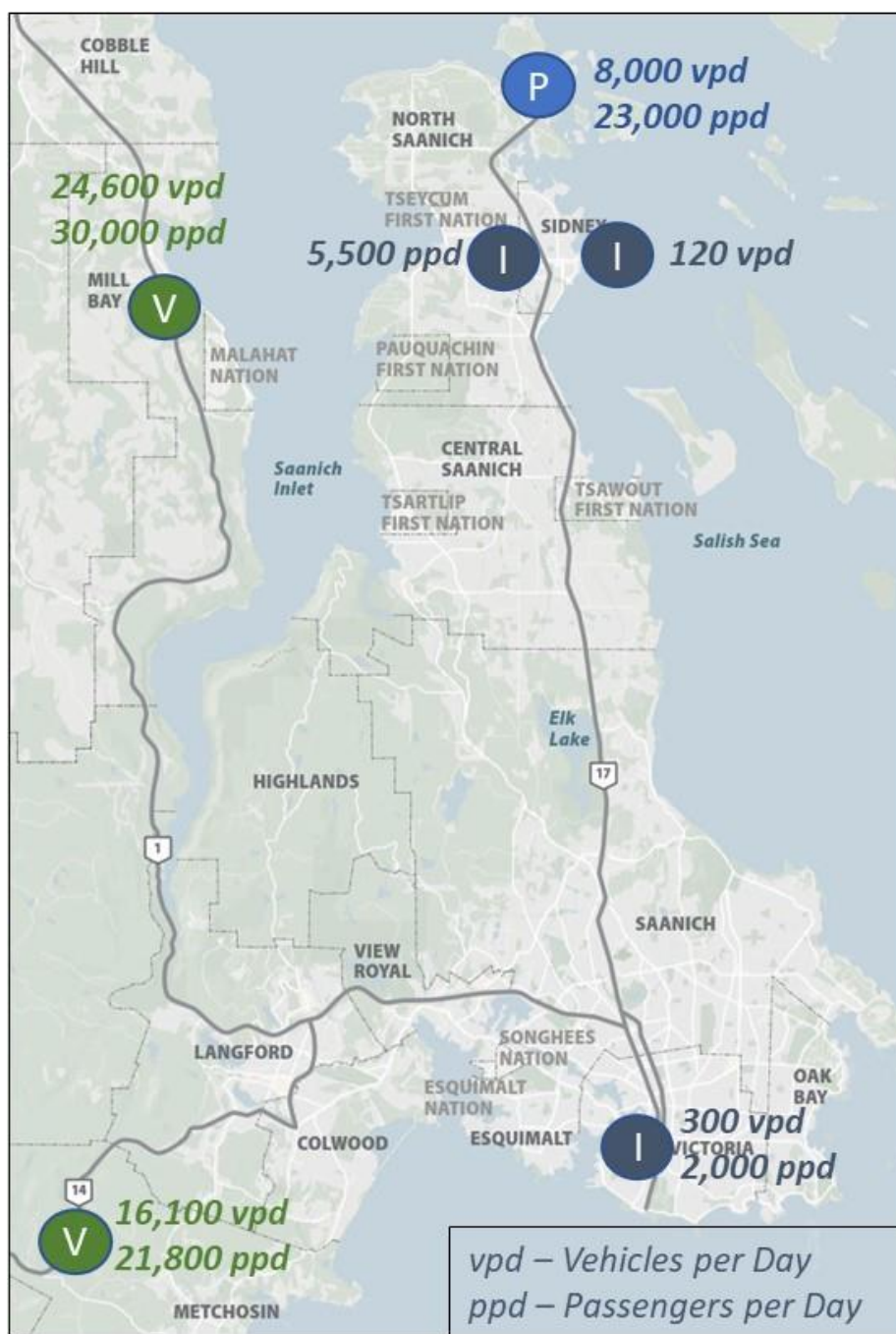


Table 23 Intercity Commuter Revenue *South Island Transportation Strategy – Technical Paper #2 – Sept 2020

Intercity Commuter Rail represents travelers into the Capital Regional District from a variety of origination points north of the Malahat. Revenue has been determined using a modal shift capture rate and applying an anticipated average fare rate structure within the intercity corridor and applied to the number of estimated one-way trips. Rate levels were determined based on comparable rates for BC Transit for the travelers from the Cowichan Valley to Victoria and bus rates on the Island Link bus service.

Modal shift captures shift from all other available transportation options within that segment of the corridor including buses and personal automobiles.

Those daily trips were then given a fare based on the following rates and usage levels of each fare:

90 Minute Fare	Usage	One Way Fare	Usage	Monthly Pass	Usage
\$11.00	25%	\$19.00	25%	\$200	50%

Table 24 Fares

Table 25 shows the annual anticipated revenue at various modal shift capture rates

Capture Rate	Total Daily Commuters	Total Annual Revenue
4%	1,287	\$3,322,954
6%	1,930	\$4,984,432
8%	2,573	\$6,645,909
10%	3,217	\$8,307,386
12%	3,860	\$9,968,863
14%	4,504	\$11,630,340
16%	5,147	\$13,291,818
18%	5,790	\$14,953,295
20%	6,434	\$16,614,772

Table 25 Annual Anticipated Revenue at Various Modal Shift Capture Rates

At the start of operations, it is estimated that the new rail system will realize a modal shift of somewhere between 4% and 6% increasing to 8% within one year, resulting in revenues of approximately \$6.6 Million annually.

Regional Train Revenue

Regional train revenue represents revenue for all passenger movements with origination and termination points outside the local and intercity commuter operations. There is a vast array of potential origin and destination points that could be used by passengers on any one of the trains travelling between Courtenay and Victoria. Some potential origin and destination pairs:

Duncan to Nanaimo
Courtenay to Nanaimo
Parksville to Mill Bay
Shawnigan Lake to Nanaimo
Qualicum to Courtenay

Given the number of origin and destination pairs, and the lack of available data on traffic patterns between each of the pairs, the business case utilizes an average rate for regional service and an estimated number of daily passengers to determine the anticipated annual revenue. It is assumed the majority of these trips will be between major centres and as such the average one-way rate was determined using the current bus fares between larger centres such as Courtenay, Nanaimo, and Duncan.

Total Daily Passengers	Avg One Way Rate	Annual Revenue
100	\$20	\$600,000
150	\$20	\$900,000
200	\$20	\$1,200,000
250	\$20	\$1,500,000
300	\$20	\$1,800,000
350	\$20	\$2,100,000
400	\$20	\$2,400,000
450	\$20	\$2,700,000
500	\$20	\$3,000,000

Table 26 Regional Trains Revenue

At the start of operations, it is estimated that the regional trains will realize 150 to 200 one-way passenger trips each day, increasing to 300 one-way passenger trips each day, resulting in revenues of approximately \$1.8 Million annually.

Other Passenger-Related Revenues

VIA Rail Contribution

Prior to the suspension of passenger service in 2011, passenger services on the Island were the responsibility of VIA Rail Canada, consistent with VIA Rail Canada's mandate:

*VIA Rail Canada Inc.'s mandate is to **operate the national passenger rail services on behalf of the Government of Canada**, offering intercity rail services and ensuring rail transportation services to regional and remote communities.*

A new train service agreement was negotiated with VIA Rail in 2015 wherein VIA would provide annual deficit funding in the amount of \$1.45 million, the equipment necessary to operate the service, and insurance. The operator would be responsible for the cost of operating the service, including crews, fuel, rolling stock maintenance and repair, fuel, etc. All ticket sales revenue would be given to the operator.

The service contemplated in this business case includes intercity rail service to regional communities and is therefore within the mandate of VIA Rail Canada. It is anticipated that a new train service agreement will need to be negotiated with VIA Rail Canada. Given the passage of time and the increased level of service contemplated in the business case it is estimated that a new train service agreement could result in a minimum \$3.5 million funding agreement. Under the previous agreement VIA was required to provide the necessary equipment for the service and as such an opportunity to share the cost of new equipment for this service.

BC Transit Funding

The business case provides service that will operate within the Duncan to Victoria corridor and the new Duncan to Nanaimo corridor. Once train service is operational those services provided by BC Transit would become redundant. While not included in the revenue base for the business case the cost of those services could be allocated to the train service or utilized to support feeder transit to the train service.

Duncan to Victoria - \$1.4 million

Duncan to Nanaimo - \$1.0 million

Total Allocation - \$2.4 million

Total Combined Passenger Revenue

Table 27 shows the expected ticket revenues for each type of service by modal shift as well as expected revenue from VIA funding and Transit allocation:

	Modal Shift			
	4%	6%	8%	10%
Local Commuter	\$1,322,328	\$1,983,492	\$2,644,656	\$3,305,820
Intercity Commuter	\$1,983,492	\$4,984,432	\$6,645,909	\$8,307,386
Regional Trains	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000
Total Passenger Revenues	\$5,105,820	\$8,767,924	\$11,090,565	\$13,413,206
VIA Contribution	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000
Total Revenue	\$8,605,820	\$12,267,924	\$14,590,565	\$16,913,206

Table 27 Total Combined Passenger Revenue

Modal shifts of between 4% and 6% are anticipated at start up and represent attainable ridership numbers by early adopters. Ridership is expected to increase once the service is proven, allowing for improved adoption rates by riders and as such a 8% modal shift is considered attainable within a one-year period.

Freight Operation Revenues

Background

The last remaining rail freight system on Vancouver Island was operated on the Island rail corridor by CP Rail as an integrated barge and rail service. In 1998 CP took steps to limit its participation in the service through the sale of its terminal operations to Seaspan. Under the terms of the sale, CP retained responsibility for the marketing of rail services on the Island and the delivery of cars to terminal facilities, while Seaspan provided barging services.

The new agreement resulted in a single weekly sailing which had the effect of substantially increasing rail transit times and increasing the overall cost to shippers. In addition, CP's retention of the marketing responsibility allowed CP to set the rates and determine the routing of all cars to and from the Island, creating a lack of access to competitive rail carriers and increased rates.

In the years leading up to the agreement, traffic on the system averaged approximately 8,000 carloads per year, however by 2002 the number of cars handled had dropped to 800 cars per year. The drop in carloads made continued service to areas beyond Nanaimo unsustainable, resulting in a suspension of service beyond Nanaimo.

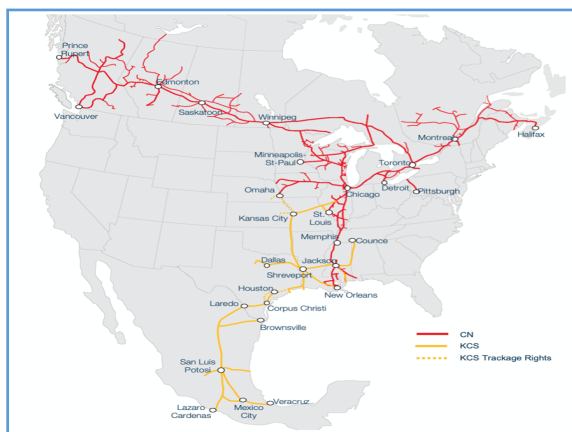
The suspension in service has resulted in a lack of opportunity to attract investment in production and distribution facilities, has left shippers with few competitive transportation options, and has restricted the marketability of port facilities on Vancouver Island. It has also resulted in a significant number of trucks moving on our highways, contributing to travel time variability, reduced reliability and safety, and increased greenhouse gas emissions.

Today

The operating environment for the upgraded rail system on Vancouver Island will be significantly different from the operating environment in 2002.

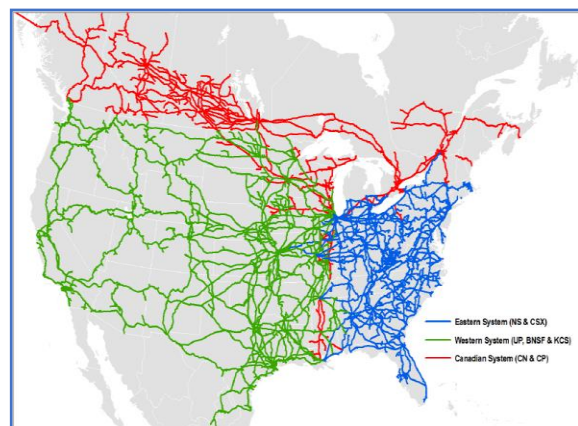
All aspects of rail service on the Island, including rail and barge services, are currently provided by Southern Rail of Vancouver Island (SVI) in partnership with Seaspam and Southern Railway of British Columbia (SRY). Strategic investments by SRY in facilities like the Annacis rail barge terminal, and loading facilities in Nanaimo, have continually improved rail operations.

All marketing and sales activity is now managed by SRY ensuring shippers are benefiting from market driven pricing and service. Shippers now have access to a competitive rail market with access to four major railways providing seamless service to North American markets.



CP Rail

2002



SVI Rail Link

2022

This expanded access is of particular importance today as an efficient, cost-effective rail service, combined with the benefits of the Foreign Trade Zone Vancouver Island, will also provide a competitive advantage for Island-based export businesses.

The suspension of service outside Nanaimo remains in effect and traffic is limited to cars that can be delivered to destination in the Nanaimo area or cars that can be transloaded to truck at transload facilities located at the Nanaimo rail yard and then taken by highway to their destination. Despite the suspension of service, SVI has managed to increase shipments to approximately 1,200 carloads per year.

Propane cars are delivered by rail to the customer, whereas all other products such as raw materials for manufacturing or agricultural products, must be transloaded to trucks to be taken to their destination.

While rail shipments to the Island have seen consistent growth over the past several years, that growth has been limited due to the inefficiencies, and additional costs, associated with the need to transload products from rail car to truck for final delivery. The lack of direct rail service into and out of our ports has completely closed those markets to rail.

Freight Revenue

Freight revenues have been based on the implementation of a haulage agreement between the rail operator on Vancouver Island and the Southern Railway of British Columbia (SRY) that would provide for a static price for each car originating or terminating on Vancouver Island, regardless of its origination or termination point.

Haulage agreements are common within the railway industry and are particularly useful to small carriers who lack the marketing and sales organizations to support rate-making activities with larger carriers. Haulage agreements are particularly effective when a significant interdependence exists between the carriers involved in the agreement. While rail service is contemplated between the Island and Washington state ports, most cars would likely flow through the SRY at their Annacis Island facility.

The haulage agreement would need to be negotiated, however for the purposes of the business case a per car rate of \$1,100 has been utilized. The following table provides for the annual revenue based on the number of cars handled each year:

Annual Cars	Revenue per Car	Total Revenue
2,000	\$1,100	\$2,200,000
2,500	\$1,100	\$2,750,000
3,500	\$1,100	\$3,850,000
4,000	\$1,100	\$4,400,000
4,500	\$1,100	\$4,950,000
5,000	\$1,100	\$5,500,000
8,000	\$1,100	\$8,800,000

Table 28 Freight Revenue

It is assumed the current 1,200 carloads to and from the Island would continue once rail service is restored. Continued growth beyond the existing 1,200 carload base is dependent upon the ability of the new rail system to compete with existing transportation modes on price and service, to effect modal shift, provide Island ports access to rail, and to create new markets that do not exist today through the attraction of industries best served by rail.

Prior to the suspension of service, the system handled an average of 8,000 carloads per year with most of those cars originating from, or destined for, the Port of Port Alberni. Most of that traffic is still moving today and could be shifted back to rail. For the purposes of determining the revenue that could be realized from freight, a target of 50% of the previous freight movement has been established, resulting in revenues of \$4,400,000. Once rail service has been proven, and shipper confidence restored, continued growth significantly more than the previous 8,000 carloads is anticipated.

Combined Revenues and Costs

Total revenues include all train operations except for excursion trains. Excursion train revenues will provide another profitable revenue stream, however, given the on-demand nature of these operations and unique requirements for each train, it would be very difficult to provide an accurate estimate of revenue. Revenue contribution from VIA Rail as well as an expected transfer of current regional transit funding make up the balance of the revenue.

Revenues	Conservative	Anticipated	Optimistic
Passenger Ticket	\$6,445,282	\$8,767,924	\$11,090,565
VIA Contribution	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,00
Freight	\$2,750,000	\$4,400,000	\$8,800,000
Total Revenue	\$12,695,282	\$ 16,667,924	\$23,390,565

Table 29 Combined Revenues and Costs

Revenues have been provided over a range from Conservative to Optimistic. Passenger services account for the largest share of the revenue and relies on various levels of modal shift within each of the passenger operations.

Total annual operating costs reflect the expected operating costs for the new operation. The costs include all aspects of the operation including passenger and freight operations and assumes a new independent ownership structure to support operations.

Costs have been provided for the level of service and train frequency defined in the Adjusted Intermediate Phase proposal and will support the optimistic scenario as outlined in the combined revenues. The preponderance of the costs are related to scheduled train operations and therefore costs will have minimal fluctuation between the conservative and the optimistic scenarios.

Annual Operations Costs	
Infrastructure Maintenance	\$1,816,631
Train Operations	\$10,565,361
Equipment Maintenance	\$397,823
Total Costs	\$12,779,815

Table 30 Annual Operating Costs

Train operations costs include all labour for train operations, maintenance of way, equipment and management, as well as fuel, car hire, equipment leases, purchased services and G&A expense and based on known operating experience.

Revenue Vs Costs

The following graph shows the revenues and cost under each of the potential scenarios:

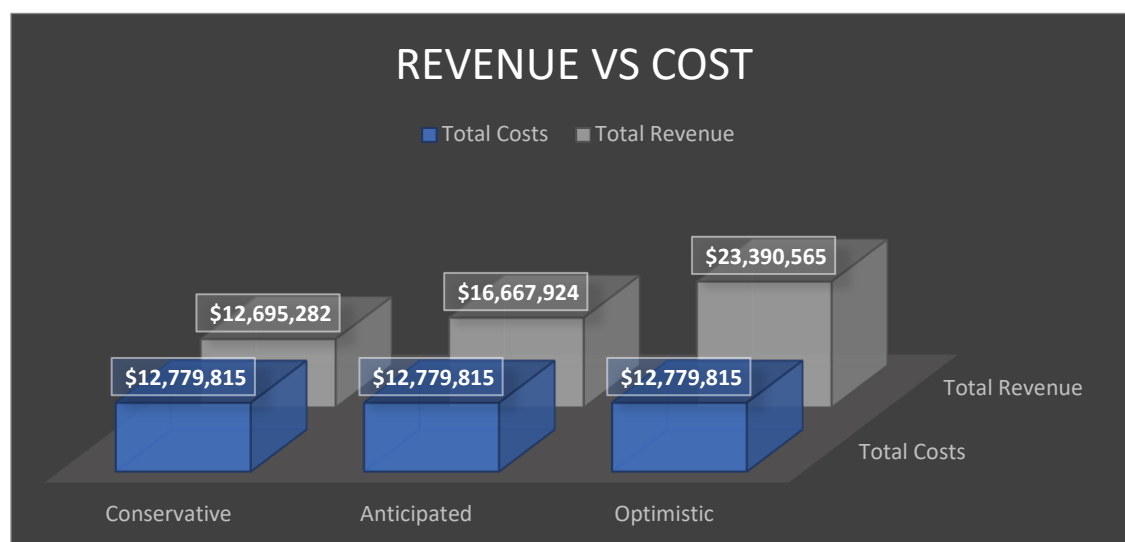


Table 31 Revenue vs. Costs

The Conservative estimate assumes low ridership numbers that would be expected upon start up of operations. The Anticipated revenues are based on a slightly higher modal shift that should be attainable by the second year of operation as the efficiency and reliability of the service is proven. At its most conservative estimate the operation will operate at a break even position.

While gains in modal shift for passengers will have a positive contribution to the new rail system, the biggest opportunity for revenue growth and profit lies within the freight operations.

The new rail system will allow for an aggressive campaign to attract more freight movements both locally and internationally as businesses gain confidence in rail as an efficient and reliable means of moving their products. Perhaps more significantly, rail service will make our ports in Port Alberni and Nanaimo more competitive with other west coast ports and could be utilized as alternate ports, reducing congestion and wait times at mainland ports, and the number of ships anchoring in waters around the Island while they wait for access to Vancouver.

The Conservative revenue scenario assumes a doubling of the current number of carloads handled and was based on known potential shippers that have demonstrated an interest in rail service, or who have contacted SVI or ICF with development interest. The Optimistic revenue scenario represents a return to the number of carloads handled prior to the suspension of service. That freight continues to move today over the highway system and as such would be susceptible to modal shift to the new rail system.

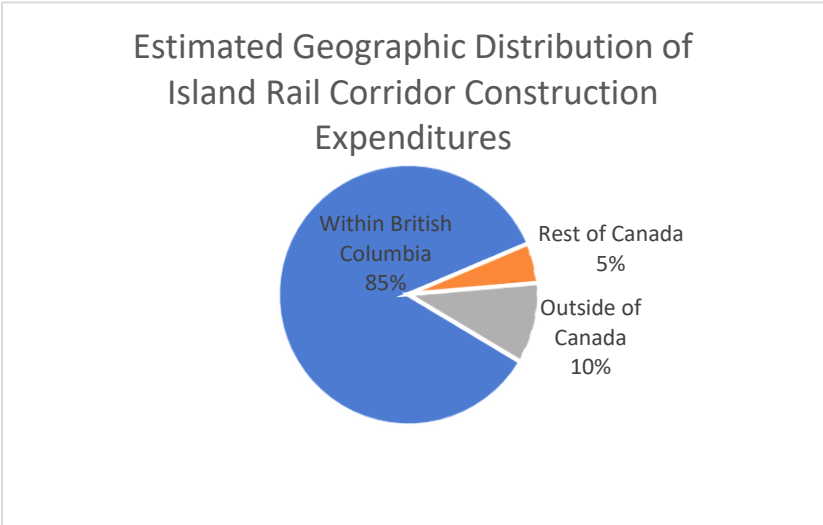
Economic Impact of Investment

In October of 2020 the ICF engaged Vann Struth Consulting group to develop a report to estimate the economic impact of restoring the Island Rail Corridor to operational condition.

The analysis focused only on the construction expenditures for rehabilitating the corridor. Construction costs were based on an April 2020 assessment prepared for the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI).

The report focused on the implementation of the ICF’s Adjusted Intermediate Phase development which, at the time of the report, was based on 2020 dollars. Each major line item in the project budget was analyzed to identify the most likely source for the required material or service. In most cases, the items can be sourced from British Columbia (including Vancouver Island).

The only class of material that is certain to be sourced internationally is steel products, including rails and other components. These are assumed to be sourced through a British Columbia wholesaler, in which case the wholesale margin is the only part of the expenditure that is retained within B.C. It is possible that some of the specialized technical services that are required will come from the rest of Canada or the U.S.



In total, an estimated 85% of construction expenditures for the project are expected to be sourced from British Columbia companies.

Table 32 Estimated Geographic Distribution of Island Rail Corridor Construction Expenditures

The overall economic impact of this project was developed utilizing the costing data provided in the IRCCA and were based on a construction cost of \$302 million and have not been updated to reflect the updated IRCCA costs in the business case of \$368 million:

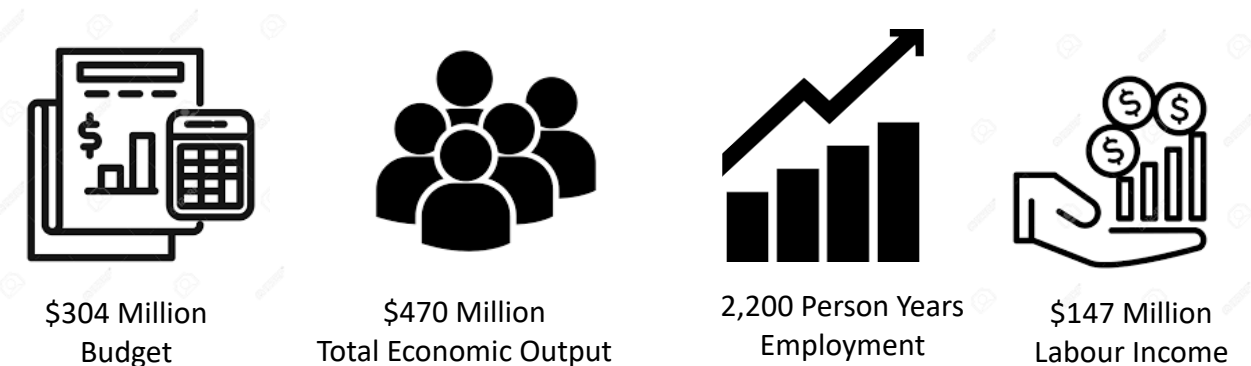


Table 33 Economic Benefits to Vancouver Island and BC

A construction budget of \$304 million will support an estimated 2,200 person-years of employment in the B.C. economy, with total labour income of \$147 million. This is an average of \$67,000 per year for a full-time position.

It is not possible to say exactly how much of the B.C. impacts are felt directly on Vancouver Island, but there will be many opportunities for construction positions for Island-based workers as well as related impacts in accommodation and food services, fuel and equipment suppliers, and possibly wood manufacturers, aggregate producers, and other suppliers of construction materials.

The project will return significant positive economic benefits to Vancouver Island and British Columbia.

Business Case Summary and Conclusion

The following summarizes each of the case evaluations, provides a recommendation on the chosen solution to be advanced for preliminary design, and highlights additional work or investigations that are required to confirm the findings of this business case.

Strategic Case Evaluation

The restoration of rail service on Vancouver Island provides strategic benefits aligned with the planning and policy objectives of the Province of British Columbia.

Strategic benefits are divided into five key areas:

Transportation

Passenger rail service will provide:

- Enhanced transportation capability between Island Communities
- Improved connectivity between municipalities from Victoria to Courtenay
- Provides a needed transportation alternative to the Island highway system
- Rail provides greater travel time certainty for users
- Rail is affordable and accessible

Quality of Life

Passenger train service on Vancouver Island will improve the quality of life of residents through:

- Improved access to the major metro areas on the island
 - Access to specialized services, businesses, and entertainment options
- Improved commute times – more time at home and less time commuting
- Improved access to tourism and recreational services throughout the Island

Economic Development

Passenger and Freight rail service will accelerate growth of Island economies by

- Enhancing the movement of people, expertise, and ideas between the various regions of the Island
- Connecting economic centres and port facilities to the North American rail system
 - Access to new markets through economies offered by rail
- Lowering the cost of landed products
- Improving usage rates of our deep-water ports, adding to the long-term viability
- Improving capacity limitations at all west coast port facilities
- Providing a safe and efficient transportation option to Island visitors

Environmental Sustainability

Rail service will promote environmental sustainability by:

- Reducing overall transportation-related emissions
 - providing an inter-city and commuter passenger service effecting modal shift from our current auto-centric transportation network
 - reducing the number of trucks used in freight service on our island highways

Equity

Rail service will provide transportation services and options for Community members who:

- live in remote areas who have increased distance and travel time
- have accessibility needs that make it more difficult to board and ride a bus
- do not have a family member, friend or caregiver who can provide transportation
- have a low income and are unable to afford alternative travel modes
- do not have access to a personal vehicle or are unwilling or unable to drive.

Financial Case Evaluation

Capital Requirements

The proposed solution requires an estimated \$431 million investment and provides for a robust commuter system operating within the Capital Regional District (CRD), intercity commuter services into the CRD, regional trains between areas outside the CRD, as well as freight operations throughout the entire Island with particular emphasis on our ports.

The \$431 million investment covers the costs of construction and equipment acquisition for a fully operational passenger and freight rail system as outlined above. This equates to an investment of \$1.5 million per kilometre. While this is a significant investment it is far lower than similar public rail investments in British Columbia, which are estimated to exceed \$300 million per kilometre. The cost of the project on Vancouver Island is significantly lower given it is a restoration of an existing right of way, there are no land acquisition costs, and the majority of the right of way is located in rural areas.

Operating Revenue and Costs

Operating revenue and costs have been determined based on the train service and frequency outlined in the business case and in all scenarios the revenues exceed costs on an annual basis.

	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Costs</i>
<i>Conservative</i>	\$12.7 million	\$12.8 million
<i>Anticipated</i>	\$16.7 million	\$12.8 million
<i>Optimistic</i>	\$23.4 million	\$12.8 million

The revenue in the business case is based on modal shift of passengers and freight primarily from known highway users. Low modal shift rates were used to provide a low risk view of the financial impact of the rail service. There is a considerable opportunity for improved financial performance as incremental improvements over the stated modal shifts will result in higher profit levels given the scalability of service without corresponding increases in cost.

Economic Impact of Investment

The construction activities associated with this project will provide a much needed, immediate, and direct benefit, to the Island economy. The project is estimated to generate \$470 million in total economic output with 85% of construction expenditures being sourced from BC companies and with many of the raw materials sourced from Vancouver Island. The project will also provide Island workers with \$147 million in income.

Conclusion

The business case is an overview of the benefits and costs associated with the restoration of rail service on Vancouver Island and confirms an urgent need to provide safe, efficient, reliable, and economically viable transportation options for the Island.

The business case demonstrates that rail is an economically viable transportation option that can address the immediate and long-term needs of the Island and will contribute to a robust and sustainable inter-regional transportation network.

Next Steps

The business case was developed to be a tool to assess the strategic and economic rationale of restoring rail service to Vancouver Island and to provide the basis for an approval in principle by stakeholders to further project development.

Upon approval it is recommended that:

- the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and the ICF form a joint multi-disciplinary team to oversee the development of an Updated Business Case with a refined project scope to determine:
 - the project planning process
 - available funding options
 - operational and management control of the new rail system

The Updated Business Case will also develop a preliminary project design that includes:

- Train operations modelling to confirm service design specifications
 - Determine optimum station placement
 - Confirm run times
 - Identify and confirm optimum locations for passing tracks
- Detailed service analysis to fully integrate the new system into the transportation network
 - Review connecting transit and ferry services to maximize connectivity
 - Rationalization of parallel and redundant services
- Review rolling stock requirements, equipment availability and options to maximize rider benefits in the most cost-effective way
- Detailed design and cost estimates for all rail infrastructure including the right of way, crossings, signals, and station infrastructure
- Confirm and update all capital, operating, and maintenance costs as new data becomes available



Making a difference...together

REPORT TO TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022

SUBJECT Regional Trails – Widening & Lighting Policies

ISSUE SUMMARY

In November 2021, the CRD Board requested that staff report back on current endeavors and the advisability of developing new policies relating to lighting and trail improvement/widening.

BACKGROUND

The Regional Trails Management Plan (RTMP, 2016) guides management of existing and future regional trails, including the Galloping Goose, Lochside and E&N regional trails, for a 15-year horizon. The RTMP further outlines permitted uses, trail development standards and management policy direction.

Based on direction in the RTMP, a Regional Trails Widening Study was prepared in 2020 to consider widening, separating and lighting two high-use urban sections along the Goose and the Lochside regional trails, respectively. The study recommended a separated-use pathway design with lighting be implemented, and provided specifics regarding the type of lighting to be used and a priority sequence for implementation. In October 2021, the CRD Board directed staff to actively develop partnerships and pursue grant funding opportunities, including submission to the federal Active Transportation Fund, to support implementation of the separated-use pathway design with lighting.

If approved by the Board, the updated Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) describes strategic priorities aimed at climate action and resiliency, as well as access and equity. Proposed actions to meet these strategic priorities include a number of initiatives that will improve the multi-modal transportation functionality of regional trails. Developing policy to support the successful implementation of these actions is recognized as an important step to be undertaken through an update to the RTMP, bringing it into alignment with CRD strategic priorities that have shifted since 2016.

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

A CRD Board priority is to plan for and deliver an effective long-term regional multi-modal transportation system and to increase use of public transit, walking and cycling. The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy includes a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 61% from 2007 levels by 2038. Climate action has been a CRD Board priority since 2009 and, in 2019, the CRD Board declared a climate emergency. Regional trail improvements, such as widening, separation of uses and lighting on regional trails, may encourage more people to shift from gas vehicle use to active modes of transportation.

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

In 2021, the CRD Board approved regional transportation priorities to reduce congestion, advance mode share targets for walking, cycling and transit use and take action on climate change. The Regional Transportation Plan (2014), and related Regional Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (2011), guide planning and development of a regional multi-modal transportation network. Policy direction relating to both widening/separating of uses and lighting is consistent with these plans' directions to increase options for, and use of, alternate modes of travel.

Intergovernmental Implications

The CRD's regional trails are located on, or near, the traditional territories of many First Nations and are managed under leases and licenses of occupation negotiated with the province and a number of municipalities. These governments and their agencies will be consulted on policy development relating to regional trails.

Social Implications

When the Regional Trails Management Plan was developed (2014-2016), the CRD provided no lighting along regional trails and had no plan to light regional trails. During the 2020 Widening Study's public engagement process, lighting was identified as a way of improving trail user experience and safety. A lighting policy for the regional trails will help to determine how and where lighting will be implemented and will be developed through a public engagement process for an updated RTMP.

Environmental & Climate Implications

The 2020 Widening Study proposes use of LED efficient lighting, the most environmentally sustainable choice outside of solar. Standardized design and service levels are recognized in the Strategic Plan as a key element of planning and implementing a regional active transportation network.

Service Delivery Implications

As regional trail widening and lighting are undertaken across the regional trail system, there will be resource implications associated with the planning, design, development and maintenance of the system. Lighting of regional trails and widening/separating use on regional trails is considered an increased service level requiring more staff time to manage and maintain.

Financial Implications

In 2022, the estimated cost for the initial 2 km of the Galloping Goose widening and lighting project, including engineering design, project management and construction, is \$6 million. The Strategic Plan identifies the need to develop a funding strategy to support priority regional trail enhancement and expansion projects, including: separated use pathway with lighting enhancements in high use sections of the Galloping Goose and Lochside regional trail development.

CONCLUSION

The Regional Trails Management Plan includes policy direction relating to when the CRD will consider widening a regional trail and/or separating uses into use-specific paths but does not provide design standards or implementation criteria. The Regional Trails Management Plan does not include policy direction for when lighting will be provided on regional trails. Once approved, the Strategic Plan identifies updating the Regional Trails Management Plan to include actions supporting a regional active transportation network, including the establishment of design standards and the development of policy supporting widening/separating and lighting. A funding strategy to support these initiatives is identified as a short-term strategy in the Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RFP, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

**REPORT TO TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022**

SUBJECT Temporary Closures of Regional Trails

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide information on the process for temporarily closing regional trails.

BACKGROUND

At the November 10, 2021 Capital Regional District (CRD) Board meeting, staff were directed to report on the current process for temporarily closing regional trails and whether it is advisable to develop a policy for the closures.

The CRD operates and maintains a 100-kilometre regional trail network comprised of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, Lochside Regional Trail and the E&N Rail Trail – Humpback Connector. On occasion, staff have to implement service disruptions on the regional trail network to address operational issues or complete infrastructure repairs. When work activities are required on the regional trails, staff explore opportunities to complete the work without closing the regional trails. However, when temporary closures are required, staff utilize a set of operational guidelines that are adaptable to the variety of circumstances associated with each closure. The operational guidelines include a hierarchy of controls, including public communications in advance of the closure, temporary traffic control devices, and may include an engineered traffic management plan to implement a detour route around the closed area. Staff report that when a temporary closure of a regional trail is implemented with these measures, public complaints and inquiries are minimal. The operational guidelines are outlined in Appendix A and have been shared with the CRD Regional Transportation Working Group

There is no CRD Board approved policy with respect to regional trail closures or detour routes. Detour routes are developed to provide passage around closed sections of regional trails and they are subject to municipal or provincial government review or a permit process as the detour routes are outside of the CRD's jurisdiction. There is no regional consistency on the review or permit process for the detour routes. In order to streamline closures and have consistency across the region, a shared approach to regional trail closures and detour routes should be developed by the Transportation Working Group prior to the development of a CRD Board approved policy.

IMPLICATIONS

Intergovernmental Implications

On July 14, 2021, the CRD Board directed staff to advance advocacy and implementation actions developed for each of the priorities, including the creation of a Regional Transportation Working Group. The Transportation Working Group has discussed the need to update the CRD Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan's planned cycling network. Once the network has been updated, the working group will prepare a key project list, implementation sequence and supportive actions to advance network completion. Supportive actions include matters such as a shared approach for trail closures, detours and trail crossings.

Financial Implications

Costs associated to implement temporary closures are as follows:

Temporary Closures of Unpaved Sections of Regional Trails

- Temporary closures of unpaved sections of regional trails cost \$1,000 to \$3,000 for staff time and material. If additional on-site traffic management is required, costs range from \$500 to \$1,000 per day.

Temporary Closures of Paved Sections of Regional Trails

- Temporary closures of paved sections of regional trails cost \$2,000 to \$5,000 for staff time and material. An engineered traffic management plan costs \$3,000 to \$5,000. If additional on-site traffic management is required, costs range from \$500 to \$1,000 per day.

Service Delivery Implications

Temporary closures to sections of regional trails are provided through the CRD Regional Parks temporary closure process. Staff will continue to work with the Transportation Working Group to develop a shared approach to trail closures and detours.

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

One of the CRD Board's priorities includes to plan for and deliver an effective long-term regional multi-modal transportation system and to increase use of public transit, walking and cycling. The increased planning, communication efforts and signed detour routes that are implemented when paved portions of the regional trails are temporarily closed ensure that active transportation can still be achieved during the service disruption.

CONCLUSION

When the CRD is required to close a portion of a regional trail, efforts are taken to minimize the impacts of the service disruption. Staff currently utilize a set of operational guidelines that focus on public communication and site safety to implement temporary closures of a regional trail. To develop a policy for trail closures and detour routes, the Transportation Working Group must establish a shared approach on how closures and detour routes are reviewed, approved, and implemented across the region.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, RPF, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Summary of Services Provided for Temporary Closures on Regional Trails

**SUMMARY OF SERVICES PROVIDED
FOR TEMPORARY CLOSURES ON REGIONAL TRAILS**

June 2022

Temporary Closures of Unpaved Sections of Regional Trails

Unpaved sections of the regional trail network are typified as having lower visitation levels than paved portions and have higher levels of recreational use. Temporary closures generally contain the following elements:

Temporary Closures of Unpaved Sections of Regional Trails	
Type of Closure	Services Typically Provided
Planned Short-Term Closure (generally shorter than 2 days)	- Public communications issued prior to closure - On-site signage installed prior to closure - On-site traffic management, as required
Unplanned Short-Term Closure (generally shorter than 2 days)	- Public communications issued as soon as possible - On-site signage installed as soon as possible - On-site traffic management, as required
Planned Long-Term Closure (generally longer than 2 days)	- Public communications plan developed and implemented (news release, alerts, stakeholder notification) - On-site signage on site prior to closure - On-site traffic management, as required
Unplanned Long-Term Closure (generally longer than 2 days)	- Public communications plan developed and implemented as soon as possible (news release, alerts, stakeholder notification) - On-site signage as soon as possible - On-site traffic management, as required

Temporary Closures of Paved Sections of Regional Trails

Paved sections of the regional trail network are typified as having higher visitation levels than unpaved sections and have more active transportation use. Temporary closures generally contain the following elements:

Temporary Closures of Paved Sections of Regional Trails	
Type of Closure	Services Typically Provided
Planned Short-Term Closure (generally shorter than 2 days)	- Public communications issued prior to closure - On-site signage installed prior to closure - On-site traffic management, as required
Unplanned Short-Term Closure (generally shorter than 2 days)	- Public communications issued as soon as possible - On-site signage installed as soon as possible - On-site traffic management, as required
Planned Long-Term Closure (generally longer than 2 days)	- Public communications plan developed and implemented (news release, alerts, stakeholder notification) - On-site signage on site prior to closure - Develop engineered traffic management plan and provide signed detour route prior to closure (subject to municipal approval/permits) - On-site traffic management, as required
Unplanned Long-Term Closure (generally longer than 2 days)	- Public communications plan developed and implemented as soon as possible (news release, alerts, stakeholder notification) - On-site signage as soon as possible - Develop engineered traffic management plan and provide signed detour route as soon as possible (subject to municipal approval/permits) - On-site traffic management, as required

**CRD TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
Tuesday, March 8, 2022**

Members: Kash Akinkuowo, RoadSafetyBC (EP)
Corey Burger, Capital Bike (EP)
Dr. Frederick Grouzet, Centre for Youth and Society, UVic (EP)
Shawn Haley, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (EP)
Fred Haynes, CRD Director (Chair) (EP)
Sgt. Andy Harward, CRD Integrated Road Safety Unit (EP)
Todd Litman, Walk On, Victoria (EP)
Joe Perkins, Media (EP)
Dr. Paweena Sukhawathanakul, Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health, UVic (Vice-Chair) (EP)
Colleen Woodger, ICBC Road Safety and Community Involvement (EP)

Associates: John Hicks, CRD
S/Sgt. Jason Bland, Saanich Police (EP)
Sgt. Davindar Dalep, Oak Bay Police (EP)
Cpl. Andy Sanchez, Sidney/North Saanich RCMP (EP)

Regrets: Hailey Bergstrom-Parker, Child Passenger Safety Program, BCAA Community Impact
Ron Cronk, Vancouver Island Safety Council
Rudi Wetselaar, Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement
Angela Wheeler, Island Health

Recording Secretary: Arlene Bowker

EP – Electronic Participation

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 pm.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

John Hicks provided a territorial acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED by Colleen Woodger, **SECONDED** by Corey Burger, that the agenda be approved with the following additions to be added under Other Business as 7(a) and (b). **CARRIED**

- Update on the Transportation Working Group
- Questions to police members re data collection when ticketing

3. Approval of Minutes – February 8, 2022

MOVED by Colleen Woodger, **SECONDED** by Corey Burger, that the minutes of the meeting held on February 8, 2022 be approved. **CARRIED**

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Haynes commented that he is looking forward to today's discussions.

5. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6. Priority Business

➤ **Budget Update**

The budget is going through the final approval process. We are in a very healthy position with a budget of approximately \$70,000 plus the carryover which is still being finalized. The carryover will be between \$20,000-\$30,000 depending on how the scholarship money will be classified.

John Hicks said that he is working with CRD Legislative Services on a framework for releasing donated scholarship funds to a third party, so we have the capability to award additional scholarships.

➤ **BCACP Calendar**

- March – Distracted Drivers Campaign/Occupant Restraint Campaign
- May – High Risk Driving Campaign
- July – Summer Impaired Driving Campaign

The purpose of putting the BC Association of Chiefs of Police calendar initiatives on our agenda is to act as a reminder for the Commission re the focus of our partners and to try and frame our advertising to support them. ICBC, RoadSafetyBC and other partners use the BCACP traffic enforcement calendar to structure their own campaigns. Colleen Woodger commented that BCACP sets the provincial calendar for the year. ICBC assists with enforcement and advertising and run additional awareness campaigns to support the BCACP campaign with social media and regional activities. Frederick Grouzet confirmed that an ad on distracted driving will be produced as part of the Commission advertising plan on Chek.

7. Other Business

7(a) Update on the activities of the Transportation Working Group

John Hicks advised that the Board directed CRD staff to form a working group amongst partner organizations which includes the 13 municipalities, 3 electoral areas, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and BC Transit. The working group meets every two months. Each partner has provided baseline information as to where they are in terms of their safety policy, transportation demand management, reporting, and key targets. The information shared showed some gaps and work will be done with the group to fill in those gaps. The focus at the next meeting is largely related to the regional trails network and looking at how we can work together to make the connectivity as consistent as possible. There is also a lot of other work going on in terms of transportation demand management, and the group is getting involved in considerable new work as well so the work plan is still being defined.

Todd Litman referred to the discussion the Commission had a few months ago regarding the potential to reduce traffic speeds on regional roads and what that would look like, along with other engineering strategies discussed. Are there opportunities for the Commission to look at some of these and see what an ambitious regional traffic safety program would look like? John Hicks noted that Saanich staff will be reporting back next week with an update on the proposed default speed limit. There are also off table conversations taking place with the smaller, more rural municipalities on how their safety needs can best be met, recognizing that they are different. The electoral areas and Metchosin and the Highlands are working differently than the broader group, specifically on these plans.

Chair Haynes advised that Saanich Council has given unanimous support for the engineering report on a new approach to advance traffic safety in Saanich which basically moves away from an auto centric approach to a user centric approach. It is an extensive report and will build the foundation for what is moving forward to committee next week, along with information coming from the Saanich Active Transportation Advisory Committee. Also, within three weeks, it is hoped to have a Council agenda item re approval for the pilot project on reducing speeds on residential roads to 30 km/h.

Todd Litman would like to see the Commission get regular updates from the Transportation Working Group and possibly have some interaction with them.

7(b) Questions to police members re data collection when ticketing

Corey Burger requested information on what kind of demographics are collected when a road safety ticket is issued. S/Sgt. Bland responded that for any violation ticket issued, the requirements to be provided as per the provincial form are name, date of birth, driver's license number or BC ID number, and address. Ethnicity is not collected. There is no means to collect specific data on a person being unhoused so the address would be left blank. There is no subsequent report issued for violation tickets issued so there wouldn't be any data regarding this on the Police Records Information system.

Corey commented that in other jurisdictions there are some differences related to violation ticket numbers for housed and unhoused people, as well as ethnicity, and lesser so for gender. As a Commission, we might want to put our minds to how we could achieve traffic safety for people that are disadvantaged. If the baseline data is not available, it will be difficult to figure that out.

The question was raised as to whether someone could get a driver's license without a fixed address, however, the answer wasn't readily available and would need to be looked into. Colleen Woodger commented that when there is a collision, just the basic information is collected, and ethnicity is not included. If there are specific questions on what can be pulled from ICBC data, Colleen can find a contact for that. Kash Akinkuowo commented that RoadSafetyBC would be open to providing any data they have.

Action: Chair Haynes will report back re demographic/data collection information

Action: Kash Akinkuowo will provide available data to members prior to the April meeting

8. Member Updates

➤ RoadSafetyBC – Kash Akinkuowo

- RoadSafetyBC is supporting the distracted driving campaign and the occupant restraint campaign as per the BCACP calendar.

➤ ICBC – Colleen Woodger

- Schools are having in person presentations for their Grade 11 and 12 students with road safety speaker Kevin Brooks talking about his choices and telling his story.
- Visited a number of schools this past month to do work around graduated licensing.
- Volunteers are coming back and lots of training is taking place.
- This week there will be some work in Oak Bay re the distracted driver campaign and then out on the Peninsula on Friday there will be joint forces awareness and enforcement. Appreciate all the municipal enforcement support with this campaign and hopefully will get the message out as there are too many vulnerable road users injured by distracted driving.
- Attended the Let's Get Visible kickoff at UVic. It was a great day.

➤ Youth and Children – Hailey Bergstrom-Parker

- No update

➤ Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health – Dr. Paweena Sukhawathanakul

- The report prepared by graduate student Helia Sehatpour in conjunction with Paweena which summarizes the literature review on the effectiveness of the red-light camera program on health and safety, collisions and fatalities will be circulated. Kash Akinkuowo and his team at RoadSafetyBC are working on a more extensive evaluation of the program.

➤ CRD – John Hicks

- The Board has directed that some work take place on equity in transportation. Will be working with the Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria to look at developing an equity lens re transportation and doing some quality deduction and reasoning for the distinction in gender usage on the regional trail network, i.e., looking at what the barriers are and then considering mitigation strategies.
- The Let's Get Visible campaign kickoff took place at UVic on March 1. It was a great day with over 500 participants. Thanks to Oak Bay Police for their incredible support. We are also looking forward to seeing the results of their pilot project for a crosswalk safety program.
- Chair Haynes commented on information received from Saanich Parks staff on the use of parks and trails in Saanich and the ability to track usage using data from iPhones. There has been a significant increase in parks and trail usage. John Hicks noted that the CRD does gender counts through their manual counts and does look at other information but need to make sure we are using the same data points for all our examinations. John will touch base with Saanich engineering.

➤ Integrated Road Safety Unit – Andy Harward

- Working with ICBC on their distracted driving campaigns in Oak Bay and on the Peninsula.

- **Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement – Rudi Wetselaar**
 - No update
- **Vancouver Island Safety Council – Ron Cronk**
 - No update
- **Capital Bike – Corey Burger**
 - Winter Go by Bike Week took place last month.
 - Have recently launched a bike lending library so parents can borrow bikes for kids. This is their first foray into this so will see what the uptake is.
 - Chair Haynes asked about the possibility of recycling discarded bikes from Hartland Road. Corey commented that there are other bike organizations in North America that do it. Bike Edmonton has been very successful with this and run two community owned non-profit bike shops. There are some issues to consider before Capital Bikes takes something like this on, but they are always looking for new opportunities.
- **Walk On, Victoria – Todd Litman**
 - No update
- **Municipal Police Forces – Sgt. Davindar Dalep, Oak Bay Police**
 - Happy to be out at the Let's Get Visible kickoff at UVic.
 - They will be joining IRSU with the distracted driving campaign and also doing some traffic safety lectures at schools.

John Hicks commented on the great role the police play and said he can not overstate how much of a difference it made having a police member present at the kickoff.

- **BC Transit – Dallas Perry**
 - No update
- **Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure – Shawn Haley**
 - Keating Cross Rd. project sitting at 90% detail design. Further discussions on funding taking place and hopefully a decision will be made by spring to go forward with that.
 - Mt. Newton Cross Road transit queue jumper project currently out for construction and should be completed by the end of summer
 - Starting some work on the Malahat this week with tree cutting and falling and there will be some short duration closures.
 - Highway 14 – Otter Point to Woodhaven. Large project which will hopefully be completed by the end of 2022.
 - Highway 14 – Gillespie interchange project currently underway. A new park and ride area will be built. Large project to be completed in next two years.
 - In terms of minor projects, there are over 60 road recovery sites happening from atmospheric floods. Giant culvert failure on Pat Bay Highway across from Plant Health Laboratory.
 - Shawn has recently accepted a new position as Operations Manager for Service Area 1 – Chemainus to Victoria. The person who is appointed to the Road Area Manager position will be sitting on the Commission.
- **Island Health – Angela Wheeler**
 - No update
- **Working Group for UVic Centre on Youth and Society Joint Project – Dr. Frederick Grouzet**
 - Still in the process of making a video with Chek media on driving at night and paying attention to vulnerable road users.
 - Working with Tik Tok influencers on road safety messages.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on April 12, 2022 at 12:30 pm. On motion, the meeting adjourned at 1:22 pm.

CRD TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
Tuesday, April 12, 2022

Members: Kash Akinkuowo, RoadSafetyBC (EP)
Corey Burger, Capital Bike (EP)
Dr. Frederick Grouzet, Centre for Youth and Society, UVic (EP)
Shawn Haley, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (EP)
Sgt. Andy Harward, CRD Integrated Road Safety Unit (EP)
Todd Litman, Walk On, Victoria (EP)
Dr. Paweena Sukhawathanakul, Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health, UVic (Vice-Chair) (EP)

Associates: Natalie Bandringa, CRD (for John Hicks)
S/Sgt. Jason Bland, Saanich Police (EP)

Regrets: Hailey Bergstrom-Parker, Child Passenger Safety Program, BCAA Community Impact
Ron Cronk, Vancouver Island Safety Council
Fred Haynes, CRD Director (Chair)
Joe Perkins, Media
Rudi Wetselaar, Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement
Angela Wheeler, Island Health
Colleen Woodger, ICBC Road Safety and Community Involvement

Recording Secretary: Arlene Bowker

EP – Electronic Participation

The meeting was called to order at 12:35 pm. In the absence of Chair Haynes, Vice-Chair Sukhawathanakul acted as Chair. Quorum wasn't met so items discussed will be for information only.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Vice-Chair Paweena Sukhawathanakul provided a territorial acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

No quorum

3. Approval of Minutes – March 8, 2022

No quorum

4. Chair's Remarks

No remarks

5. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

➤ **Update on Transportation Working Group**

Natalie Bandringa gave an update. The next meeting of the Transportation Working Group is on May 9. Various municipalities, the CRD and UVic have applied to the Federal Active Transportation Fund. The CRD is working with the Community Social Planning Council on the equity study that that we've been asked by the CRD Board to engage with them on. John Hicks has put out a call for credentials for the origin-destination study. Also, the Salt Spring RFP went out.

➤ **Demographics/data collected from collision information**

Corey Burger noted that he intends to bring forward a motion to the May meeting to look further at approaches to collect more demographics when a road safety ticket is issued. The mandate for data to be collected would need to come from someone other than us and that would mean action by the CRD Board on our behalf. If we were to ask for this data, what would that look like in practice for the police? Vice-Chair Sukhawathanakul noted it would be a systemic change and we would have to investigate what the procedures would be for implementing it.

Corey Burger commented that his motivation for wanting to see this demographic information collected comes from data he has seen elsewhere around disparities in ticketing as they relate to the unhoused population, black population, indigenous population, and, to a lesser extent, other communities of colour and also income disparities. What we know from data that is collected locally is that there is a disparity in street checks and that street checks are disproportionately being done on people who are indigenous or black. We need to get the actual data to see if disparities in ticketing also exist locally. Once we have that information, the Commission and community at large can have a discussion on what to do about it.

Sgt. Andy Harward from CRD IRSU, commented that, as discussed at last month's meeting, whether a person is housed or unhoused is not addressed on a violation ticket, and there is no means to put a person's ethnicity on a violation ticket. Also, when doing traffic enforcement, vehicles that are speeding are hundreds of metres away, so it is next to impossible to determine a person's ethnicity from that distance. Issues around making these kinds of changes would need to be raised at an area chiefs' meeting.

We need to look more at the feasibility of this and how we would obtain this information as it would be quite complex. We can start the conversation, but it would need to be passed on to the Transportation Committee and the CRD Board.

Action: Bring forward to the next meeting for discussion and possible motion

6. Priority Business

➤ Budget Update

The only change to the budget was the payment to the Oak Bay Police re their funding application for a crosswalk safety program as approved at the February meeting.

Vice-Chair Sukhawathanakul noted that another member is needed for the sub-committee that evaluates applications for funding. Sub-committee members fill out an evaluation form to assess the application and then provide it to Paweena who does a summary. Currently there is one pending application that needs review. Please let her know if you would be interested.

➤ Commission Membership

Action: Not discussed. Bring forward to the next meeting.

➤ Cst. Sarah Beckett Memorial Scholarship

Advertising will commence for the Cst. Sarah Beckett Memorial Scholarship which will be opening in May. The application will be posted on our website.

➤ BCACP Calendar

- May – High Risk Driving Campaign
- July – Summer Impaired Driving Campaign
- October – Distracted Drivers Campaign/Occupant Restraint Campaign

The purpose of putting the BCACP calendar initiatives on our agenda is to act as a reminder for the Commission re the focus of our partners and to try and frame our advertising to support them. We could do the advertising ourselves or support any of our partners with additional funding to expand their campaigns.

7. Other Business

Corey Burger raised the topic of the Commission's role in clarifying issues around insurance, particularly for cyclists. He referenced media reports of a cyclist in Vancouver who has been billed by ICBC after they found him partly responsible for a crash and noted that this brings up a lot of challenging issues.

Recently, Capital Bike met with Minister Ma to discuss what they see as a policy problem. On one side, ICBC is looking to reduce costs, and on the other side there are organizations trying to increase

the number of people walking and biking which will be more difficult if there are additional costs and uncertainty.

If people don't know what the rules of the road are and unknowingly are breaking them, that's a traffic safety issue. One of the key things we do as a Commission is educating users about safely using the road system and we need to be able to provide good answers as to what that means. We need clarity as to what the law says today, and we need to decide if there are places where the law currently is causing people to unknowingly make risky decisions legally or financially as that is a traffic safety problem. Also, a secondary piece that needs to be resolved is which bylaw the Commission operates under.

Vice-Chair Sukhawathanakul noted that there does seem to be some ambiguity regarding the current laws around the legal implications which can lead to ambivalence and challenges with using active forms of transportation. Our educational campaigns need this information.

Once we have established what the rules are, the Commission can have an extensive discussion about what that means from a traffic safety perspective and then ultimately take that back through the Transportation Committee.

Colleen Woodger will provide contact information for Corey to reach out to ICBC.

Action: Bring forward to the next meeting

8. Member Updates

➤ RoadSafetyBC – Kash Akinkuowo

- Kash has shared the intersection safety camera report with the RoadSafetyBC team. It is currently under review and once that is complete, he will bring comments back to the Commission.

➤ ICBC – Colleen Woodger

No update

➤ Youth and Children – Hailey Bergstrom-Parker

No update

➤ Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health – Dr. Paweena Sukhawathanakul

No update

➤ CRD – Natalie Bandringa (for John Hicks)

- Monterey Middle School will be the only school joining the CRD Ready Step Roll active school travel planning for next year and we are excited to start working with them.
- Will be taking next year as a reflection time and doing an evaluation of the program.
- There is the opportunity to move into sustainable workplace commuting travel planning and a partnership similar to the Ready Step Roll Program has been started. The first workplace will be a pilot with DND – CFB Esquimalt.

➤ Integrated Road Safety Unit – Andy Harward

No update

➤ Commercial Vehicle Safety Enforcement – Rudi Wetselaar

No update

➤ Vancouver Island Safety Council – Ron Cronk

No update

➤ Capital Bike – Corey Burger

- The GoByBike launch is April 20 in Market Square.

- Capital Bike partnered with a UVic civil engineering group to do a joint application to the Federal Active Transportation Fund which will take their street sense project and deploy it in the combined project area of Tillicum Road and Gorge Road.
- A meeting was held with Minister Ma recently and she seemed very excited about the prospect of a newer, expanded TDM project that goes beyond GoByBike Week. They talked a lot about taking the good work that has been done and making a bigger project.
- There is lots happening in the region with various municipalities working on their active transportation plans.

➤ **Walk On, Victoria – Todd Litman**

No update

➤ **Municipal Police Forces**

No update

➤ **BC Transit – Dallas Perry**

No update

➤ **Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure – Shawn Haley**

- As mentioned last month, Shawn has accepted a new position with MOTI. He doesn't have a replacement yet for his area manager role, although it will likely be Tina Rogers. He would still like to sit on the Commission, so it might be Tina as well as himself.
- Work is ongoing on capital projects, as well as district projects. Reach out to Shawn if you have any questions.

➤ **Island Health – Angela Wheeler**

No update

➤ **Working Group for UVic Centre on Youth and Society Joint Project – Dr. Frederick Grouzet**

- They are ready to work on the script for another video with Chek News. and are looking for input on what the focus should be for messaging. The suggested topics from focus groups are (1) driving while fatigued; or (2) not paying attention to other road users, e.g., when merging, etc.

Police members commented that fatigue is a form of impairment and youth need to be highly educated that it is just as risky as impairment by alcohol or drugs and messaging in that regard is really on point. After additional discussion, it was agreed that the messaging in the video should be around the risks of driving while fatigued.

9. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on May 10, 2022 at 12:30 pm. The meeting adjourned at 1:28 pm.