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Regional Water Supply 2017 Strategic Plan

CRD
Making a difference...together

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Introduction

The Capital Regional District (CRD) supplies drinking water for more than 370,000 people, supporting residential, commercial, institutional, light industrial, agricultural and public safety uses across the Greater Victoria area on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. Greater Victoria is growing and factors affecting water supply continue to change. A safe and adequate supply of drinking water is critical to the livability and sustainability of Greater Victoria. Recognizing this, the CRD is committed to:



Provide high quality, safe drinking water



Provide an adequate, long-term supply of drinking water



Provide a reliable and efficient drinking water transmission system

This Strategic Plan for Regional Water Supply sets Commitments and identifies Strategic Priorities and Actions, with a planning horizon to the year 2050, that will guide the future direction for the Regional Water Supply Service. The Strategic Plan will also support CRD Board priorities, provide context for water servicing policy, and align with other CRD strategies and plans.



Sooke Lake Dam

Context for the Strategic Plan

In 1997, the service authority for Regional Water Supply transferred from the Greater Victoria Water District to the CRD under the Capital Region Water Supply and Sooke Hills Protection Act and Regulation, provincial legislation enacted to establish a new model for the delivery of Regional Water Supply.

The Regulation required the CRD to establish a strategic plan for water supply. The first strategic plan was completed in 1999 and has been reviewed and updated in 2004 and 2012. The previous plans have resulted in the implementation of a number of initiatives in the areas of water conservation, management of the watershed lands, investment in treatment and transmission infrastructure, climate change adaptation, and addressing changing trends in water use.

Moving forward, there will be a periodic review of the Strategic Priorities, and an update of the Actions set out in this plan every five years.



The CRD treats and
delivers an average of
130 million
litres of water every day.

Service Governance & Stakeholders

The water supply system operates under a CRD regional service, known as the Regional Water Supply Service, which is administered by the Regional Water Supply Commission, a Commission of the CRD Board.

The Regional Water Supply Commission is a body of 22 elected officials who represent and provide political leadership and decision making on behalf of the local authorities that receive water supply service. The Water Advisory Committee is the public advisory committee that provides advice to the Commission on matters related to the service including water supply, water quality, water conservation and stewardship of the water supply area lands.

There are many stakeholders involved in the supply and delivery of safe drinking water, each with specific roles and responsibilities.

Some of the key stakeholders are:

Canada

The Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality, published by Health Canada, set out the basic microbiological, chemical and radiological parameters and the physical characteristics, such as taste and odour, that water systems such as the Regional Water Supply System strive to achieve in order to provide the cleanest, safest and most reliable drinking water possible.

Province of British Columbia

The provincial Public Health Act and Regulation sets out the role and powers of health



The Regional Water Supply service provides bulk water to the municipalities listed below and the CRD, who operate water distribution systems that deliver water directly to customers across Greater Victoria.

- District of Central Saanich
- District of North Saanich
- District of Oak Bay
- District of Saanich
- Town of Sidney
- City of Victoria/Township of Esquimalt
- CRD Juan de Fuca Water System
(Serving Town of View Royal, City of Colwood, City of Langford, District of Metchosin, District of Highlands, District of Sooke, East Sooke in the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, Beecher Bay First Nation, Esquimalt First Nation, Songhees First Nation, T'Souke First Nation)

officials and the requirements for planning, reporting and regulation of activities that may affect public health, including the provision of drinking water. The Public Health Act works in concert with the Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation which pertains specifically to drinking water supply and protection requirements. The CRD also meets the requirements of the Water Sustainability Act which sets out requirements to ensure a sustainable supply of fresh, clean water that meets the needs of BC residents today and into the future.

Island Health

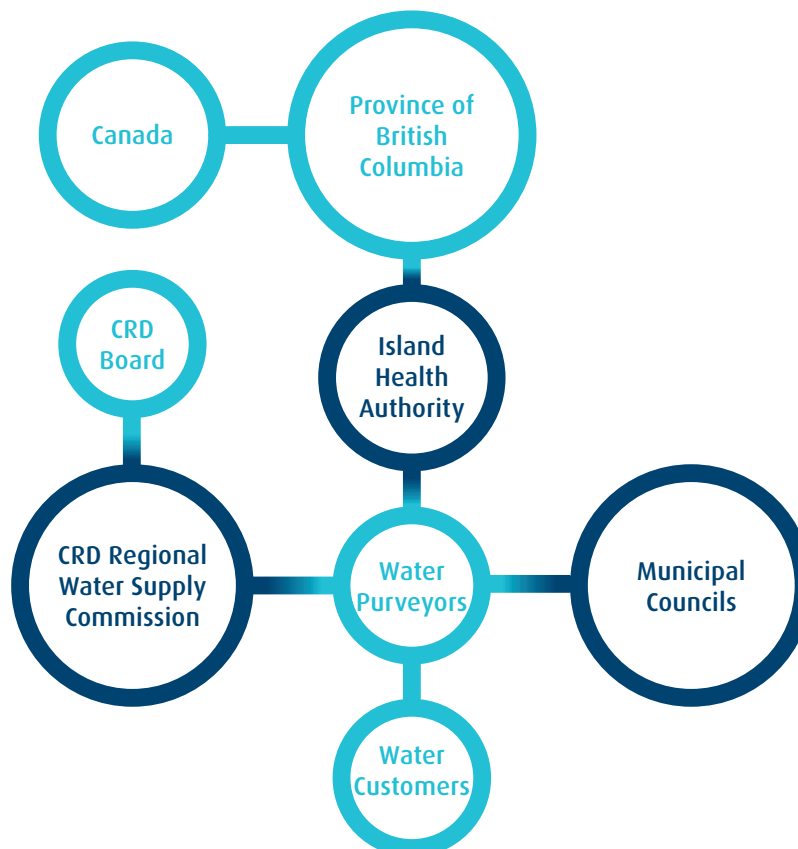
Island Health is the Vancouver Island Health Authority that administers and enforces the applicable provincial legislation through water system operating permits. The CRD holds operating permits with Island Health for the Regional Water Supply System and regularly reports drinking water quality information to Island Health.

Water Purveyors

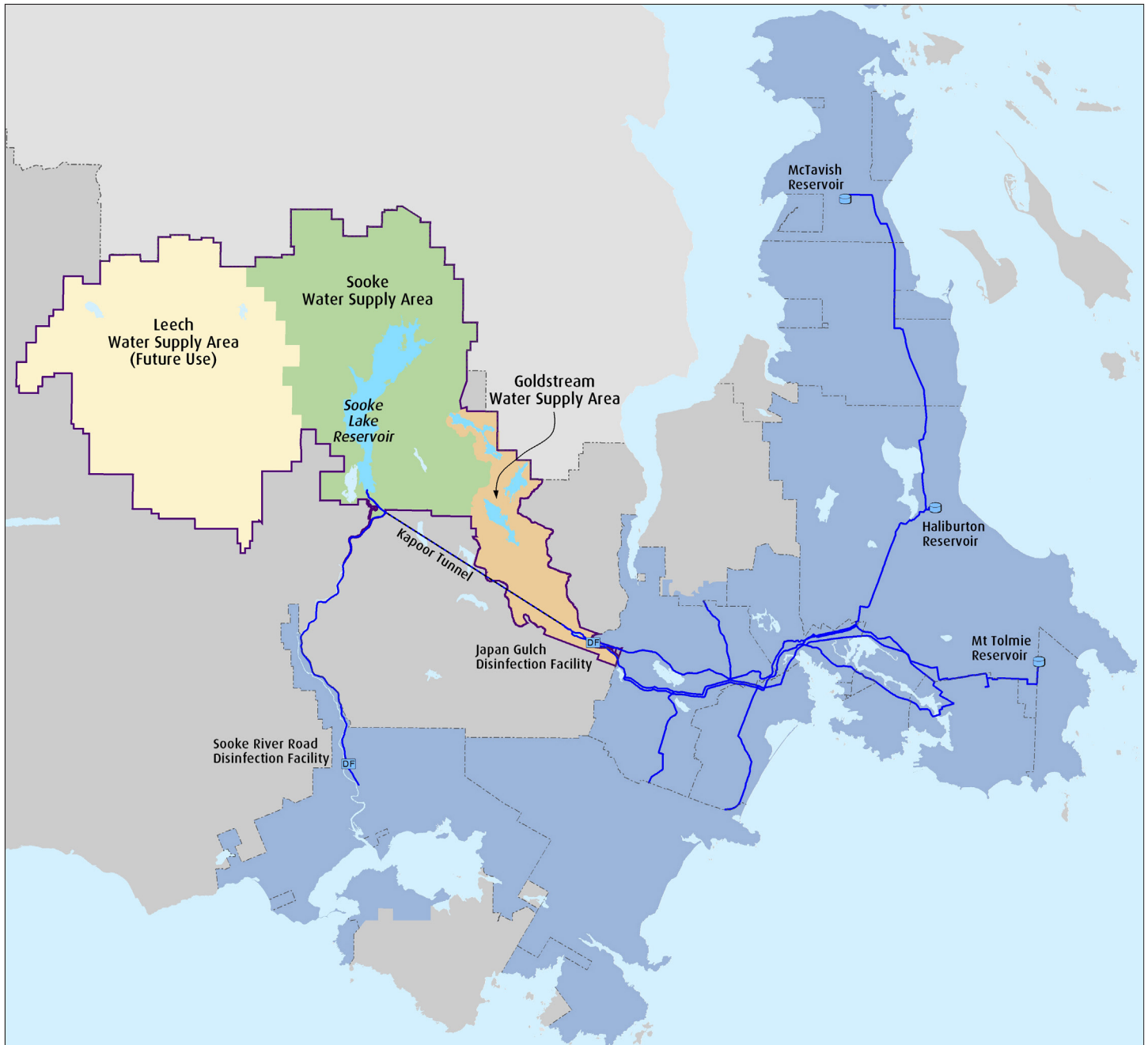
The CRD, municipalities and First Nations in the Region own and operate water systems that receive water from the Regional Water Supply Service, then distribute water directly to water customers. Water purveyors are responsible for the provision of safe drinking water as well as managing all other aspects of the distribution system.

Water Customers

All water customers connected to a public water system are responsible for ensuring that the public system is not exposed to any contamination that could be introduced through private water plumbing systems by cross connection or backflow, and for using water responsibly, particularly when using water for discretionary purposes, to assist with management of the Region's water supply.



Regional Water Supply System



Regional Water Supply System – Serving Greater Victoria

Regional Water Supply Area:

20,549

HECTARES OF
PROTECTED
DRINKING WATER
CATCHMENT LANDS

- Primary Supply Source: Sooke Lake Watershed & Reservoir
- Secondary Supply Source: Goldstream Watershed & Reservoir System
- Future Water Supply Area: Leech Watershed

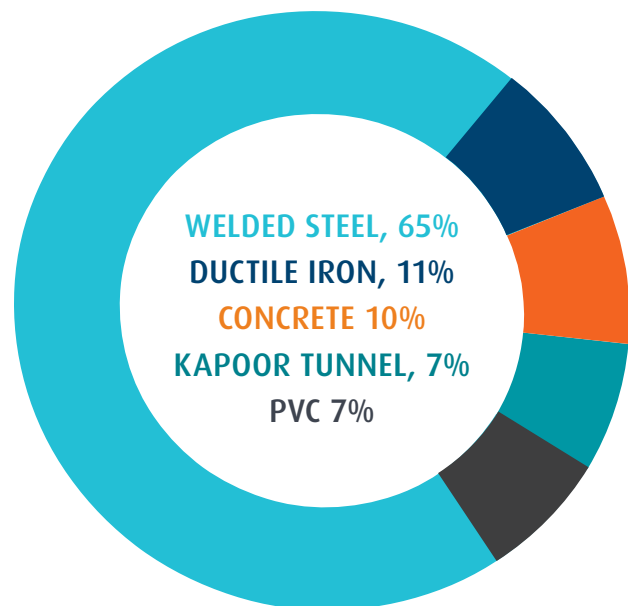
Water Treatment

- Unfiltered Source Water
- **Primary Disinfection:**
 - Ultraviolet light – targets parasites
 - Free chlorine – targets bacteria and viruses
- **Secondary Disinfection:**
 - Ammonia to produce chloramine – long lasting disinfectant



Water Transmission Mains

- 130 km of pipe and tunnel, size range: 400mm – 2,134mm in diameter
- Pipe construction and materials:



Bulk Water Supply Points to water distribution systems

187

POINTS

The Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan Overview

This update of the Strategic Plan for Regional Water Supply sets out the Commitments, Strategic Priorities and Actions for the Regional Water Supply Service.

Commitments

There are three key water supply Commitments the CRD makes today and into the future. These long term Commitments are foundational to the plan and to achieving the service authority and mandate. The Commitments are expected to remain virtually unchanged for decades.

Strategic Priorities & Actions

Each Commitment has supporting Strategic Priorities and Actions which will guide shorter term initiatives as well as service planning and delivery. It is expected that Strategic Priorities would be reviewed and updated every 5-10 years and Actions would be planned, budgeted and implemented over the five-year cycle.

Planning Horizon

The planning horizon for the development of the plan is to the year 2050 based on the following considerations:

- 2050 is the projected earliest date that the Leech Water Supply Area may be required to supplement the Sooke Lake Reservoir to meet regional water supply demand based on higher population growth rate projections
- Water supply system components can have a useful life as short as 15 years and as long as 80 years or more
- Approximately 30 years from now strikes a balance with what can reasonably be planned considering the projected water supply needs of the Region and other factors such as climate change and advances in technology, while looking far enough ahead to allow informed decision making regarding key infrastructure and financial decisions

Areas of Focus

There are six areas of focus that emerge from the Strategic Priorities and Actions that will influence operational, capital and financial aspects of the Regional Water Supply Service over the next five years and beyond. The six areas of focus are:



CRD BOARD PRIORITIES – SUSTAINABLE AND LIVABLE REGION

The current CRD Board Strategic Priorities include 12 priority areas and 51 strategic priorities, which support a vision for a sustainable, livable, vibrant, collaborative and service oriented Region. In addition, the CRD has identified corporate and core service priorities - the Drinking Water and Regional Infrastructure priority areas directly relate to Regional Water Supply and the importance of the service in supporting a sustainable and livable region. The Regional Water Supply Commission supports these priority objectives.



CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS – MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

Preparing for and mitigating or adapting to climate change will be necessary in the Capital Region. In the years to come, it can be expected that there will be warmer winter temperatures, more extreme hot days and longer dry spells in the summer, more precipitation in fall, winter and spring and more intense, extreme weather events. All of these weather changes can have an impact on water supply, water quality and the health and resilience of forests in the watersheds. The CRD will respond to the climate change challenges by integrating climate change implications into risk register and infrastructure management decision making and plans.



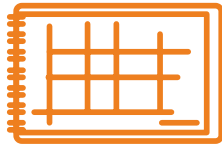
PREPARING FOR EMERGENCY AND POST-DISASTER WATER SUPPLY

Planning and preparing for the potential impacts of a destructive earthquake and other natural disasters on regional and municipal infrastructure is a priority for the CRD and municipal partners. Water supply and distribution in a post-disaster situation is a key aspect of regional emergency planning. Furthering infrastructure resiliency, coordinating emergency planning with other local governments and senior governments, and preparing for emergency water supply and distribution are priorities.



SUPPLY SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT – RENEWING EXISTING AND PREPARING FOR NEW INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure renewal is an integral component of the management of the Regional Water Supply System. The goal is to ensure that water supply infrastructure is replaced or upgraded prior to the end of its projected service life to ensure the system performs reliably, while maximizing the service life of the assets. Planning for new infrastructure related to water treatment requirements, to meet water supply and demand capacity expectations, and to address redundancy and seismic resiliency will be a priority.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE USE OF THE LEECH WATER SUPPLY AREA

The Leech Water Supply Area (LWSA) was acquired by the CRD in 2007 as the future water supply area for the Regional Water Supply System. The LWSA will serve as an additional water catchment area that will provide more water runoff into the Sooke Lake Reservoir when it is brought into service. Although the actual year the LWSA will be required will be subject to changing water demand and climate change impacts, as well as actual population growth rates, it is estimated that the LWSA will not be required to supplement the Sooke Lake Reservoir storage volumes until around 2070 with a moderate population growth projection or as early as around 2050 with a higher population growth rate projection. To prepare for the eventual use of the LWSA, further work is required to plan for the water quality impacts of the different raw water sources, rehabilitation of the water supply area forests and drainage structures, and infrastructure necessary to convey the LWSA flows into Sooke Lake Reservoir.



DEMAND MANAGEMENT - ADDRESSING CHANGING TRENDS IN WATER DEMAND

It is expected that the trend of declining per capita water demand across the Capital Region will continue at a rate of approximately 1% per year over the next 10 years. The declining demand is largely related to declining indoor demand resulting from ongoing household conversions to low flow fixtures and high efficiency appliances, as well as declining outdoor demand as public attitudes and behavior towards discretionary outdoor water use change. However, it remains a priority to achieve a further reduction in per capita water use in order to defer the need to build water supply, treatment and transmission capacity in the supply system, until it is necessary to support population growth. Water conservation and understanding the value of water will continue to be key elements of demand management.



COMMITMENT:

Provide high quality, safe drinking water

1 Manage and protect the Greater Victoria Water Supply Area (GVWSA).

- Continue to actively protect the GVWSA and water supply infrastructure from unauthorized activities and seek opportunities to acquire ownership and control of the remaining catchment lands and critical adjacent lands to act as a buffer.
- Reduce risk to water supply and ecosystems from contaminants and invasive plants, animals and pathogens by completing a biosecurity risk assessment and implementing biosecurity mitigation measures.
- Implement the GVWSA climate change adaptation initiatives to reduce the impact of the potential types, magnitude and rate of climate change on GVWSA ecosystems, water quality and infrastructure.
- Assess the need for more active forest management to protect and enhance forest health and resilience.
- Reduce risk of landscape level wildfire by designing and implementing forest fuel management treatments.



47.6M m³

of drinking water was delivered in 2016 through the regional water supply system



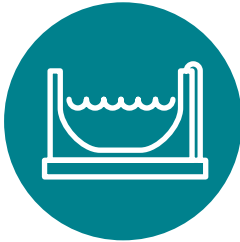
CRD Water Quality Laboratory

2 Maintain a multi-barrier approach to drinking water quality protection.

- Continually evaluate the effectiveness of the water treatment processes.
- Use the Regional Water Supply Service drinking water safety plan in operational and capital project decision making.
- Maintain multiple accreditations to ensure highest quality drinking water testing.
- Continue to develop and refine the Utility Operator Training Program and ensure adherence to Environmental Operator Certification Program requirements.
- Identify and implement progressive and innovative training and development opportunities with respect to utility operations and management for departmental staff.

3 Maintain a risk register for the Regional Water Supply System that identifies potential risks to water quality, water supply and water transmission and provide mitigation and adaptation measures.

- Regularly review Regional Water System hazards, risks and vulnerabilities and update the risk register.
- Continue the emphasis on wildfire prevention, early detection and suppression capability, preparedness, forest fuel management and post-fire rehabilitation planning to reduce and mitigate the risk of a large-scale wildfire affecting the water supply area and source water quality.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate the implications of the reliance on unfiltered source water and the absence of a filtration step in the water treatment process.
- Conduct specific seismic risk evaluations of critical assets.



COMMITMENT:

Provide an adequate, long-term supply of drinking water

1 Plan and prepare for future water supply needs to meet demand considering impacts of climate change, population growth, and per-capita demand rates.

- Evaluate climate change impacts and risks on water supply and incorporate mitigation and adaptation recommendations in operating and capital plans.
- Update service population and service population growth rate forecasts with current census data, considering municipal Official Community Plan land use and population directions, to estimate growth related water demand.
- Establish long-term per capita demand rate projections and Demand Management Program objectives to achieve rates and determine annual water demand by sector.
- Undertake regular monitoring and assessment of the physical, chemical, and biological parameters of the Leech Water Supply Area (WSA) source water and determine a plan to address potential water quality, ecological and ecosystem implications at Sooke Lake Reservoir resulting from diversion of Leech WSA source water (Leech River water) to Sooke Lake Reservoir (ie. combining source waters).
- Develop a plan to undertake more 'intensive' monitoring of Leech River water quality to inform treatability recommendations and long term treatment strategy.
- Determine conceptual 'hard' capital infrastructure plan to design and construct the necessary infrastructure to divert Leech WSA flows to Sooke Lake Reservoir.
- Conduct a feasibility study to explore the design and construction of supply and transmission infrastructure at Sooke Lake Reservoir to provide increased resiliency, including consideration of a deep northern intake and a secondary transmission pipe between the reservoir and the treatment facilities.
- Undertake biannual Supply System hydraulic modelling to confirm system capacity.



Jarvis Lake in the Leech Water Supply Area

2 Develop a higher level of public understanding of the drinking water supply system and value of water through education and engagement.

- Continue to improve Regional Water Supply service and system information available to the public through a variety of media streams, to raise awareness around specific topics including water supply and conservation, and supply infrastructure investment.
- Continue to promote the value of the drinking water resource through Water Supply Area public and school tours and other outreach.
- Continue to have two-way dialogue with the Water Advisory Committee regarding water supply matters.
- Explore opportunities for mutually beneficial collaborative partnerships to carry out research and monitoring initiatives in the water supply area and across the system.



9,628

Hectares of protected catchment lands within the Leech Water Supply Area acquired in 2007 for future drinking water supply area.



COMMITMENT:

Provide a reliable and efficient drinking water transmission system

1 Maintain a capital planning process and appropriate investment in water supply infrastructure to ensure reliable system performance

- Complete a short term (annual and 5-year), medium term (5-10 year), long term (10-20 year) and long range (20-50 year) asset management plan – informed by asset condition and remaining service life assessment, water operation and maintenance history, water audit, changing regulatory requirements, Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (HRVA) recommendations, and system capacity requirements.
- Explore Regional Water Development Cost Charges to fund future growth related supply system infrastructure improvements.
- In collaboration with municipal and First Nations water purveyors, establish water supply service agreements.

2 Continually review cost effectiveness of service respecting operations and maintenance and capital investment decisions.

- Continue to review reactive, preventive and predictive operations and maintenance history and confirm operation and maintenance service levels for the Regional Water Supply Service that consider best practices and reliability centered maintenance approach.
- Consider life cycle costs with new infrastructure design and asset replacement.
- In asset replacement decisions, balance maximizing infrastructure service life with infrastructure reliability.
- Optimize capital investment taking into consideration priority, annual and long term budget and water rate impacts and resource availability to deliver the projects.



Japan Gulch Ultraviolet Disinfection Plant

3 Develop and manage emergency bulk drinking water supply systems for Greater Victoria.

- Establish emergency and post-disaster water supply protocols and obtain necessary supplies, materials and equipment to implement protocols. Establish water purveyor support roles and responsibilities in emergency water supply and distribution.
- Outline how an emergency/post disaster drinking water supply can be supported by regional emergency management plans and available senior government supports under certain conditions.

4 Continue to focus on retaining and recruiting experienced and professional employees responsible for the Regional Water Supply System engineering, system operation and maintenance, and management of the water supply area.

- Develop a succession plan to ensure key positions are backfilled by experienced and knowledgeable employees, and that system knowledge is preserved.
- In alignment with CRD organizational development initiatives, provide learning and development opportunities for employees.

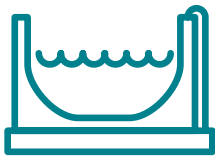


Over \$130 million has been invested in supply system infrastructure renewal since 1995.

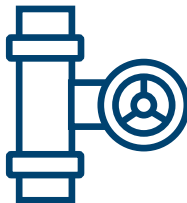
Commitments



Provide high quality, safe drinking water



Provide an adequate, long-term supply of drinking water



Provide a reliable and efficient drinking water transmission system

Advancing the Strategic Plan

A safe and adequate supply of drinking water is critical to the livability and sustainability of Greater Victoria and the Capital Region. The Greater Victoria area is fortunate to have a well established water supply system and a climate that has allowed for the replenishment of source water.

The Commitments outlined in the Plan will ensure that the CRD continues to provide clean, safe, reliable drinking water to the communities we serve. The Strategic Priorities and Actions will guide service planning and delivery over the coming years. The CRD will be responsive to factors affecting the uncertainty of water supply, such as climate change and future water demand, while ensuring the long term Commitments to our customers remain our priority.

Progress and outcomes will be tracked and reported annually to the Regional Water Supply Commission and the CRD Board to ensure the ongoing achievement of the Commitments, Strategic Priorities and Actions in the Strategic Plan.

The photos in this document were taken within the boundaries of the Capital Regional District, and we wish to acknowledge Helene Cyr whose work is featured here.