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TO: Chair and Directors
Regional District Board

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: 2021 - 2025 Financial Plan – Regional Growth Strategy Service – Function 512

Purpose

To provide the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board with the proposed 2021 - 2025 Financial Plan and work plan highlights for the Regional Growth Strategy service, function 512.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the proposed 2021 – 2025 financial plan for the Regional Growth Strategy service, function 512, be approved.

Executive Summary

- The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) service is the key regional service to guide regional planning and decision-making on sustainability, growth, change and development. The three electoral areas (not including Hornby or Denman Island) and the three municipalities participate in the service.
- The proposed 2021 tax requisition is \$550,000, representing an increase of \$145,000 over 2020. In 2021, revenue is supplemented with \$294,000 in provincial grants.
- Based on an estimated residential tax rate of \$0.0277 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value, a residential property assessed at \$500,000 will have a tax impact in 2021 of \$13.85 (compared to \$10.65 in 2020).
- Personnel within the service is proposed to increase to 2.75 FTEs compared to 1.97 FTE in 2020 and 0.35 FTE in 2019 (and all years prior). This increase is attributed to a re-allocation of staffing within the organization as well as the creation of an additional position, being a policy and planning analyst.
- Through its strategic planning work in 2020 and 2021, the board has established a full work plan for 2021 – 2022. Key projects pertain to: poverty reduction, air quality, active transportation, RGS monitoring and evaluation, and climate change adaptation. In order to undertake this work, staff is proposing an increase in operating expenses of \$56,783 (e.g. other professional fees, public outreach).
- There are no capital projects associated with the RGS service. Rather, the RGS service is focussed on study work and collaborative planning; other services may be used to implement related capital initiatives.
- Rethink CV / COVID-19 Response – several of the board's/community's Rethink priorities will be addressed under the RGS service.

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Government Partners and Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

City of Courtenay	✓
Town of Comox	✓
Village of Cumberland	✓

Board Strategic Drivers

The CVRD Board has set four strategic drivers to guide service delivery. Table 1 notes the degree of influence the drivers have on projects and work plans. Each of the ongoing or proposed work plan initiatives respond to a minimum of two of the strategic drivers.

Table 1: Board Strategic Drivers

<p>Fiscal responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtained grant funding to undertake the regional poverty reduction strategy and active transportation network plan as well as air quality protection initiatives. • Seek efficiencies through collaboration with all service participants. • Replenish the reserve fund. 	<p>Climate crisis and environmental stewardship and protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RGS monitoring project will assist in tracking progress on corporate and community GHG emissions reductions, help identify policy gaps and identify opportunities for regional collaboration on mitigation. • Through the Transition 2050 project, significant public outreach and offer of incentives to encourage greater uptake in residential retrofits.
<p>Community partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CVRD has partnered with multiple community partners on most projects, including School District No. 71, the Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness, the Community Health Network, Social Planning Society, as well as provincial agencies and ministries. 	<p>Indigenous relations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to collaboration with K’ómoks First Nation and Wachiay Friendship Centre on specific projects, staff is seeking opportunities to design and implement projects based on the principles of OCAP, articles in the UN’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 calls to action.

Rethink Comox Valley / COVID-19 Response and Renewal

As a core service, the RGS is well positioned to address a number of the board’s priorities related to response and renewal. Development of a regional multi-modal transportation network that will respond to diverse needs is an important renewal action in supporting an inclusive and resilient


community. In 2021, the key project under the multi-modal transportation goal is the Active Transportation Network Plan.

Financial Plan Overview

The 2021 - 2025 proposed five-year financial plan for the Regional Growth Strategy service, function 512, including service establishment information, the requisition summary and the operating budget, is available within the full proposed budget binder, provided in both searchable PDF and e-reader formats, located on the CVRD financial plan web page at www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/currentbudget.

Table 2 below summarizes the 2021 proposed budget as compared to the 2020 adopted budget. Significant variances from 2020 adopted budget will be discussed in the financial plan sections that follow.

Table 2: Financial Plan Highlights

		#512 Regional Growth Strategy		
Operating	2020 Budget	2021 Proposed Budget	Increase (Decrease)	
Revenue				
Requisition	405,000	550,000	145,000	
Transfer from Reserve	15,190	14,879	(311)	
Senior Government Grants	201,500	294,000	92,500	
Other Revenue / Recoveries	102,646	1,000	(101,646)	
Prior Year Surplus	67,866	26,663	(41,203)	
	\$ 792,202	\$ 886,542	\$ 94,340	
Expenditures				
Personnel Costs	243,829	321,386	77,557	
Operating	508,373	565,156	56,783	
Transfer to other Governments	40,000	0	(40,000)	
	\$ 792,202	\$ 886,542	\$ 94,340	

Highlights of the 2021 - 2025 proposed financial plan for function 512 include:

Revenue Sources

The main source of revenue is tax requisition: proposed to be \$550,000 in 2021 representing a \$145,000 increase over 2020. In 2021, tax requisition is heavily supplemented with grant funding: Union of BC Municipalities' grant to support the Regional Poverty Reduction Strategy; BC Lung Association/Ministry of Environment and Island Health funding to support the 2021 wood smoke reduction program and the work of the Airshed Roundtable; as well as support from the Ministry of Transportation to undertake the Regional Active Transportation Network Plan.

Staff will continue to seek out opportunities for grant funding as well as other revenue sources such as Community Works funds (e.g. climate change initiatives) to supplement the requisition.

The proposed increase in requisition in 2021 is primarily attributed to the request for an additional staff position to assist in delivering the ambitious work plan and ensuring that the service is used to a more fulsome potential (e.g. versus alternative service establishment). The remaining portion of the proposed increase is attributable to an increase in “other professional fees” to ensure that subject matter expertise can be tapped into to support project delivery (e.g. support to develop the ArcGIS Hub site to monitor and evaluate progress of RGS implementation).

The proposed increase in 2021 represents a sustainable and prudent investment in the service. Staff suggests that this increase remains modest relative to the goals and objectives that the board has set as well as the degree to which the service could be used to address regional objectives. Staff has drafted project plans that outline the key 2021 initiatives (see Appendices A through H).

Personnel

Personnel allocations have been adjusted within the organization in order to meet the strategic priorities and focus of the board. In 2021, the proposed allocation of the 2.75 FTEs is:

- Long Range Planner (0.52 FTE)
- Planning Policy Analyst (0.65 FTE)
- Planning and Policy Analyst (70 per cent of a new 1.00 FTE)
- Senior Manager of Sustainability and RGS Planning (0.75 FTE)
- Manager of Transit and Facilities (0.05 FTE)
- General Manager of Corporate Services (0.05 FTE)
- Digital Advisor (0.03 FTE)

Given the full roster of projects identified as board priorities, consultant assistance will be required and is reflected in a proposed increase in operating expenses.

Operations

In 2021, the \$94,340 increase in operating costs is primarily related to a need for additional staffing and consulting assistance (i.e. other professional fees) to support the projects itemized below and detailed in the appendices. Staff note that undertaking the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Active Transportation Network plan as regional initiatives (versus each member municipality and electoral area doing separate projects) created efficiencies, including the ability to access greater provincial funding.

Staff is recommending that the following projects continue and/ or be initiated in 2021:

- Regional Poverty Reduction Strategy (to be complete by July 2021)
- Air Quality Roundtable (Year one of three year project ends in April 2021)
- 2021 Wood Smoke Reduction Program (January – December 2021)
- Regional Active Transportation Network plan (to be complete by April 2021)
- RGS monitoring and evaluation (ArcGIS Hub site to launch by early summer 2021)
- Transition 2050 implementation (ongoing)
- Community greenhouse gas emissions tracking (ongoing)
- Community climate action granting program (January – June 2021)

Appendices A through H provide more detail on these projects, identify their links to the board’s strategic priorities and drivers, and identify proposed budget details.

Capital

There are no capital projects associated with this service.

Reserves

This service does not have capital reserve funds.

The balance in the future expenditure reserve for the RGS service as at December 31, 2020 was estimated to be \$43,486. By the end of the 2021 - 2025 financial plan, the reserve balance is anticipated to grow modestly to \$56,581.

Tax Impacts

- Based on the 2021 completed assessment roll, the estimated residential tax rate for this service is projected to be \$0.0277 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value (versus \$0.0213 per \$1,000 in 2020).
- For a single residential property with an assessed value of \$500,000, the total tax impact is estimated to be \$13.85 versus \$10.65 in 2020.
- In accordance with section 339(2) of the *Local Government Act* (RSBC, 2015, c. 1), the setting of a maximum levy is not required for this service.

Citizen/Public Relations

Significant public engagement is presently underway on the Regional Poverty Reduction Strategy and Active Transportation Network Plan projects. There is further considerable opportunity for public engagement relative to the recommended projects within this service. Staff will report back with communications plans/ engagement strategies on a project-by-project basis.

Attachments: Appendix A – “Poverty Reduction Strategy”
Appendix B – “Airshed Roundtable”
Appendix C – “Wood Smoke Reduction Program”
Appendix D – “Active Transportation Network Plan”
Appendix E – “RGS Dashboard”
Appendix F – “Regional Climate Change Initiatives”
Appendix G - “Community GHG Emissions Tracking”
Appendix H - “Community Climate Action Challenge”

Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Poverty Reduction Strategy

Poverty assessment enables communities to develop key actions to reduce local poverty and work towards an inclusive community. The Poverty Reduction Strategy focuses on the following priority action areas (identified in TogetherBC, the Province’s poverty reduction strategy):

- Housing
 - Using the 2020 Housing Needs Report findings to develop an implementation framework that will address how to make housing more affordable in the Comox Valley.
- Families, children and youth
 - Using the findings from the 2019 Comox Valley Childcare Inventory and Action Plan to provide insight into implementing support for families, children and youth in the region.
- Livable Incomes (Affordability)
 - Planning for food security
- Social supports
 - Exploring safe, reliable and affordable transportation options; access to opportunities.

Objective:

Long-term: To work towards implementing Goal 1 of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS): “Ensure a diversity of affordable housing options to meet evolving regional demographics and needs”; Goal 4: “Develop an accessible, efficient and affordable multi-modal transportation network that connects Core Settlement Areas and designated Town Centres...”; Goal 6: “Support and enhance the agricultural and aquaculture sectors and increase local food security”; and Goal 7: “Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety and well-being”.

Medium-term: To prepare a regional poverty reduction strategy based on local poverty assessment data to identify key actions, by jurisdiction, to reduce poverty in the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD).

Short-term: To undertake an assessment of local poverty with a focus on housing, childcare, food security and transportation.

Budget: \$120,000 (\$100,000 secured through grant funding and \$20,000 provided through RGS tax requisition in 2020 for community engagement and advertising).

Projected Start Date: September 2020

Projected Completion Date: July 2021

Year	Task	Budget
2020	Poverty assessment (data collection, community profile)	\$50,000
2021	Poverty Reduction Strategy (public engagement, strategy development)	\$70,000

*Estimate to be confirmed through financial planning processes.

Next Steps: A consultant has been retained to assist the project team, comprising municipal and K'ómoks First Nation staff, and representatives from support services and community groups. Community engagement February and March 2021. Staff report to board in early spring with findings to date.

Background: Project responds to a number of board priorities (e.g. housing, multi-modal transportation, RGS outreach, RGS data collection) and link with completed initiatives (e.g. 2019 Childcare Inventory) in order to develop a poverty reduction action plan that will support local poverty reduction.

Connection to Board's Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: Regional initiative with key community partners including, K'ómoks First Nation, the Coalition of End Homelessness and the Community Health Network.

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: This project is not significantly influenced by this driver.

Indigenous Relations: A core pillar of the Provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy is reconciliation.

The CVRD's project is similarly premised on reconciliation and specifically, aims to respond to Article 21 of the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: "Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security."

Fiscal Responsibility: Affordability for citizens is at the core of this driver. This project is grant dependent and will serve to connect a number of goals for an efficient and cost-effective process to work towards poverty reduction and improved affordability for citizens.

Project Lead: Planning services lead with support from member municipalities and key community partners.

Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: The Airshed Roundtable

Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) levels in the Comox Valley seasonally exceed provincial and national standards. Biomass burning (from residential heating and open burning) is the predominant source of PM_{2.5}. The health impacts of PM_{2.5} are of significant concern, particularly for cardiovascular and respiratory health. Children, the elderly and those with pre-existing conditions are particularly at risk. Recognizing the importance of the issue, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board identified improving air quality as a strategic priority in 2020. Air quality is a complex, and often polarizing issue, that touches on personal choice and behaviors, social norms, socioeconomic inequities, government regulation and cultural values. The Roundtable is part of a systems change model that is designed to help tackle “wicked” problems.

Objective:

Long-term: To work towards implementing Goal 7 of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS): “Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety and well-being”.

Medium-term: To develop and implement an Airshed Protection Strategy to guide actions and monitor progress on air quality (Years two and three).

Short-term: To build capacity among regional partners to work together on the complex multi-jurisdictional issue of air quality.

2020 Budget: \$35,000

2021 Proposed Budget: \$50,000

2022 Proposed Budget: \$30,000

Project Start Date: April 2020 (Year one: April 2020-April 2021)

Projected Completion Date: Three year project with ongoing implementation and monitoring

Year	Task	Budget
2020 (Year 1)	Establish the Roundtable and Leadership Groups. Collaboratively create Airshed Protection Strategy scope.	\$35,000 (\$30,000 from requisition; \$5,000 2019 carry forward grant funding)
2021 (Year 2)	Complete Airshed Protection Strategy. Start implementation.	\$50,000 (\$30,000 from tax requisition; \$20,000 from VIHA Community Wellness Grant)
2022 (Year 3)	Continued implementation and monitoring of Airshed Protection Strategy	\$30,000*

*Estimate to be confirmed through financial planning processes in 2022.

Next Steps: Continue work with Roundtable and Steering Committee to develop an Airshed Protection Strategy.

Background:

In 2019, the CVRD struck a working group and hired SHIFT Collaborative to explore a framework for tackling air quality issues in the Comox Valley. Due to the polarizing nature of the issue, the framework suggested a collaborative approach. The Airshed Roundtable met for its establishment, facilitated discussions and goal development. In 2020 the Roundtable was established and structured as follows:

The Roundtable

The Roundtable is a forum to host a broad set of stakeholders with an interest in the issue. The Roundtable meets two to four times per year over the three year project period to share information, report out on activities, provide feedback and engage broadly. In addition, the role of the Roundtable is to contribute to education, outreach and relationship building across a broader group of stakeholders and into the wider public.

The Steering Committee Leadership Group

The steering committee plays a strategic role in moving the work forward. This group provides strategic direction on behalf of the broader Roundtable. As such, it is expected to reflect the diversity and wisdom of the broader collective, therefore consulting and engaging with the Roundtable. Active participants include: engineering staff from the City of Courtenay, planning staff from the Village of Cumberland and the CVRD, provincial staff from the Ministries of the Environment and Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, Island Health staff, and a professor from Vancouver Island University. This group meets more regularly to ensure work maintains momentum.

The Airshed Roundtable Coordinator

Pinna Sustainability has led the Roundtable activities as the Air Quality Coordinator. Pinna works with the CVRD staff to inform the Airshed Roundtable, facilitate the process including Roundtable and Steering Committee meetings and will support the preparation and writing of the regional airshed protection plan.

Board Direction

Board resolution (October 1, 2019):

“THAT the proposed framework for improving air quality in the Comox Valley as described in “A Regional Approach to Improve Air Quality and Health in the Comox Valley: Our Proposal” dated August 2019 be considered at the Comox Valley Regional District’s strategic planning session in October 2019.”

Connection to Board’s Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: Regional initiative with opportunities to partner with a broader range of stakeholders such as member municipalities, K’ómoks First Nation, provincial ministries, industry, public health and the general public.

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Smoke produced from indoor and outdoor burning causes a significant amount of air pollution, which negatively affects human health and the environment.

Indigenous Relations: K’ómoks First Nation’s staff is a member of the Roundtable.

Fiscal Responsibility: Proposal to undertake the work under existing RGS service and seek opportunities for grant funding as they arise.

Project Lead: Planning services is leading this project with Pinna Sustainability as the Airshed Roundtable coordinator.

Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Wood Smoke Reduction Program

Air Quality is one of the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board’s strategic priorities. Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) levels in the Comox Valley seasonally exceed provincial and national standards. Wood burning (from residential heating and open burning) is the predominant source of PM_{2.5}. The health impacts of PM_{2.5} are of significant concern, particularly for cardiovascular and respiratory health. Children, the elderly and those with pre-existing conditions are particularly at risk. The Province, partnered with the BC Lung Association, has supported the CVRD in funding a local wood smoke reduction program.

Objective:

Long-term: To work towards implementing Goal 7 of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS): “Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety and well-being”.

Medium-term: Program alignment with the ongoing work of the Airshed Roundtable; the CVRD’s participation in the CleanBC Betterhomes Program and implementation of the CVRD’s Transition 2050 Residential Retrofit Market Acceleration Strategy (T2050).

Short-term: To administer a Wood Smoke Reduction Program that includes financial incentives to households who replace wood burning appliances and education on “smart burning” for residents who choose to use a wood burning appliance.

2021 Proposed Budget: \$76,500 (\$9,000 for education, outreach and advertising; \$67,500 for rebates)

Project Start Date: February 2021

Projected Completion Date: Ongoing

Year	Task	Budget
2021	2021 Wood smoke Reduction Program	\$76,500 (\$29,000 MoE/BC Lung Association Grant; \$20,000 Vancouver Island Health Community Wellness Grant; \$27,500 carry forward from 2020 Island Health Hotspot grant)

Next Steps: Advertise and promote the 2021 Wood Smoke Reduction Program according to updated changes and provide cross promotion with aligned program to help residents obtain higher rebate combinations.

Background:

Since 2016 staff have implemented the MOE's Provincial Wood Stove Exchange Program, which changes out wood stoves (five years or older) for cleaner heating options including heat pumps, gas or pellet stoves. The program aims to reduce wood smoke pollution by providing rebate incentives, education and outreach on wood smoke pollution reduction. The program aligns with the CVRD's strategic drivers for climate action and environmental stewardship and protection, Indigenous relations and community partnerships.

Board resolution (January 26, 2021):

“THAT the 2021 Wood Smoke Reduction program, outlined in the staff report dated January 20, 2021, be approved.”

Connection to Board's Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: Regional initiative undertaken in partnership with the BC Lung Association, MOE and Island Health.

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Program is intended to reduce PM_{2.5}: co-benefits include reduction in other air pollutants.

Indigenous Relations: K'ómoks First Nation has joined the 2021 Wood Smoke Reduction Program.

Fiscal Responsibility: Proposal to undertake the work under existing RGS service and use grant funding.

Project Lead: Planning services is leading this project.

Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Regional Active Transportation Network Plan

Active transportation planning is a contemporary transportation planning paradigm that assigns value to walking, cycling and other human-powered modes of transportation (e.g. wheelchairs) and recognizes the needs of all ages and abilities. An active transportation plan is based on the principle that an efficient and fair transportation system must be diverse.

Objective:

Long-term: To work towards implementing Goal 4 of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS): “Develop an accessible, efficient and affordable multi-modal transportation network that connects core settlement areas and designated town centres, and links the Comox Valley to neighbouring communities and regions.”

Medium-term: To implement priority projects as identified in the Active Transportation Network Plan; and to seek out other opportunities to advance regional transportation opportunities.

Short-term: To prepare a regional active transportation plan Short-term: To secure a commitment from member municipalities, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), School District No. 71, and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to work together on matters of regional transportation. To develop a regional active transportation network plan in accordance with the Ministry of Transportation’s Active Transportation Design Guidelines.

Budget: \$77,500 (\$30,000 included as RGS tax requisition in 2020; \$47,500 Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure grant).

Projected Start Date: October 2020

Projected Completion Date: April 2021

Year	Task	Budget
2020	Memorandum of understanding (MoU) – multi-modal transportation regional planning	Staff time
2020	Initiate active transportation network plan work	\$30,000 (from tax requisition)
2021	Complete Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP)	\$47,500 (grant funding)

Next Steps: MoU with parties for signature. ATNP community engagement underway. ATNP development.

Background:

Comox Valley Regional District Board resolution (July 30, 2019):

“WHEREAS transportation is a growing issue within the Comox Valley;

AND WHEREAS the establishment of unified regional policies and strategic transportation plans which incorporate all modes of transportation is aligned with the goals and objectives of the Comox Valley Regional Growth Strategy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board direct staff to engage the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI), School District No. 71 and member municipalities regarding the development of a Regional Transportation Implementation Agreement and provide a summary report of the feedback and other considerations respecting this proposed initiative, with a focus on the multi-modal transportation, planning and advocacy tasks described in appendix B of the staff report dated July 10, 2019 (service activities option #2) with a specific focus on:

- Greenhouse gas emissions reduction
- Public education
- Links between communities and destinations
- Active and healthy communities.”

Connection to Board’s Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: Regional initiative with opportunities to work with member municipalities, K’ómoks First Nation, School District No. 71, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, active transportation advocates, accessibility and social inclusion advocates, and healthy built environment advocates (e.g. Island Health).

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Active transportation can help to reduce vehicle trips, congestion, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Indigenous Relations: Proposal to engage K’ómoks First Nation in the design of the project beginning with the gap analysis work and confirm opportunities to advance Nation’s objectives.

Fiscal Responsibility: Proposal to undertake the work under existing RGS service; phase the work over two budget years and seek opportunities for grant funding as they arise.

Project Lead: Planning services lead with support from CVRD community parks, transit services, member municipalities, School District No. 71, K’ómoks First Nation and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Dashboard

Launch a digital dashboard that tracks a series of performance indicators to measure progress towards achieving goals and objectives of the RGS. The purpose of the dashboard is to create accessible data and transparency on performance indicator evaluation (e.g. “scorecard”). The dashboard supports data driven decision-making by providing consistent access to data and monitoring to a range of audiences including regional and municipal staff, as well as elected officials and the community. The indicators (linked to RGS policy) allow for bench marking of the Comox Valley Regional District’s (CVRD’s) progress today and provide an understanding of how the community is tracking towards RGS goals.

Objective:

Long-term: To create a central open data repository to support data-driven decision making and establish an ongoing RGS performance monitoring and evaluation tool. Tool to support metrics that arise through strategic priorities.

Medium-term: To create accessible data and transparency on performance indicator evaluation in order to share with the public and municipal partners. To explore opportunities to streamline internal and external processes related to data collection and sharing to support more efficient and coordinated regional project work in the future. To assist with scoping future RGS review processes.

Short-term: To develop and launch an RGS dashboard that identifies the CVRD’s progress towards achieving the goals and objectives of the RGS (including targets). Staff will use the development of the dashboard to undertake an RGS indicator analysis and evaluation in order to monitor the RGS more effectively. To support “real time” feedback on progress (e.g. data updated as produced). To develop a product that is enabled through the existing terms of the CVRD’s contract with ESRI Canada.

2021 Budget: \$40,000 (provided through RGS tax requisition in 2020 and 2021).

Projected Initiation Date: March 2020

Projected Completion Date: Ongoing (updating indicators and targets as newest data is available).

Year	Task	Budget
2020 - 21	Dashboard Development	\$40,000

Next Steps: Staff is working with a contractor (ESRI) to develop and launch the dashboard on an online platform on the CVRD’s website. Staff are targeting a public launch date in spring 2021.

Background:

RGS monitoring and evaluation is a key statutory requirement of RGS legislation.

The board has identified development of a Sustainability Scorecard as a strategic priority. Further, in its declaration of climate crisis, the board identified the following priority for action:

“(develop) an approach to monitor and report on the impacts of climate change as well as progress toward greenhouse gas reductions.”

Connection to Board’s Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: The dashboard will depend on multiple organizations to provide data and in turn will make data widely available.

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Monitoring Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reductions is a component of the board’s directed action on responding to the climate crisis. Data collection, monitoring and evaluation of the RGS’ goals and action items relative to its established GHG targets will facilitate the above and illustrate gaps in policy/action. Planning services is working to ensure compatibility between the dashboard software (ESRI) and the emissions tracking software (Sofi) in order to include tracking data on the dashboard site.

Indigenous Relations: The dashboard will evolve over time to include data and information as it becomes available. Community partners, including K’ómoks First Nation, will have an opportunity to explore the dashboard and determine what data might be useful to be the nation moving forward.

Fiscal Responsibility: Staff propose to undertake the work under existing the RGS service using a combination of professional fees (to cover ESRI consultant fees) and staff resources in order to build in house capacity, to promote shared learning and to prepare for future dashboard maintenance.

Project Lead: Planning services is leading this work with support from CVRD Information Systems and GIS. Planning services has retained an external contractor (ESRI) to prepare the analytics platform for the CVRD website.

Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Transition 2050 and CleanBC Municipal Top-up Rebate Program

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) committed to climate action by joining the Partners for Climate Protection program in 2006, signing the BC Climate Action Charter in 2007. To support the commitment, planning services has been engaged as a partner in the Transition 2050 project to reduce regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through residential energy retrofits. The CVRD is also participating in the CleanBC Municipal Top-Up rebate program to enable home owners to access deeper home energy retrofit upgrades (i.e. heat pump installation).

Objective:

Long-term: To work towards implementing the goals and objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and the Comox Valley Sustainability Strategy and to reduce GHG emissions by at least 50 per cent below 2007 levels by 2030, 60 per cent by 2040 and 80 per cent by 2050 as identified in the BC Climate Action Charter.

Medium-term: To advance implementation actions identified in the recently completed CVRD Residential Retrofit Market Acceleration Strategy (2020) and to work collaboratively with municipal partners on implementing the strategy.

Short-term: To support CleanBC Better for Homes Rebate program through marketing, promotion and education campaigns.

Budget: \$32,250

Year	Project	Start	Completion	Budget
2021	Transition 2050/CleanBC Municipal Top-Up Rebate Program	2020	Ongoing	\$32,250 (carbon offset carry forward)

Next Steps:

Staff is working with City Green Solutions, CleanBC, partner municipalities and industry stakeholders to promote rebate programs and identify future opportunities for implementation. Staff will provide the CVRD Board with progress updates as required.

Background:

On September 29, 2020, the CVRD Board received the Residential Retrofit Market Acceleration Strategy as information and authorized staff to identify opportunities for coordination and report back on implementation actions through the 2021-2025 financial planning process. On November 17, the board approved a reallocation of \$32,250 to support the implementation of the Transition

2050 strategy. Staff is working with project partners to advance the implementation actions identified in the strategy in order to reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions through energy retrofit upgrades.

Connection to Board's Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: Transition 2050 is funded as part of the RGS planning service, providing the opportunity for regional collaboration with key community partners including, K'ómoks First Nation, the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox and the Village of Cumberland through information sharing and coordinated implementation actions.

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Transition 2050 acknowledge that a significant, concerted response to climate change is required. The implementation actions outlined in the strategy will assist in reducing regional GHG emissions, identify opportunities for regional collaboration on mitigation and provide opportunities for homeowners to save on energy costs.

Indigenous Relations: Opportunities for information sharing and project coordination could facilitate future partnerships and/or grant opportunities.

Fiscal Responsibility: Transition 2050 has been funded by Federation of Canadian Municipalities grant funding with support from the CVRD RGS professional service fees. In 2020, the board approved reallocating \$32,250 to support implementation actions. Staff will seek opportunities for grant funding as they arise.

Project Lead: Planning services is leading this project.

Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Community Wide Green House Gas (GHG) Inventory Project Plan

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) committed to climate action by joining the Partners for Climate Protection Program in 2006 and signing the *BC Climate Action Charter* in 2007. Under the *BC Climate Action Charter*, local governments have the obligation to measure, report and reduce community emissions. Community emissions are GHG emissions from residents, businesses and industries within the community. Monitoring and reporting community GHG emissions will support aggressive actions to address GHG emissions.

Objective:

Long-term: To work towards implementing the goals and objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and the Comox Valley Sustainability Strategy and reduce GHG emissions by at least 50 per cent below 2007 levels by 2030, 60 per cent by 2040 and 80 per cent by 2050.

Medium-term: Establish an efficient means of monitoring and reporting GHG emissions through a sustainability management system that aligns with best practice. This will support the CVRD in meeting our *Climate Action Charter* commitments to address community wide emissions. Also, to monitor and analyze community GHG emissions and the sustainability performance of the community. To collect region-wide emissions data.

Short-term: Establish region-wide inventory quantification delivered through GHG Accounting Software using Software as a Service (SaaS) for the delivery. Link data to the RGS digital dashboard.

Budget:

Year	Task	Budget
2021	Community GHG Emissions Tracking (software for improved tracking, visualization and analytics)	\$6,500 (from tax requisition)
2022	Refine collection and data sources	\$10,000*

*Estimate to be confirmed through 2022 financial planning process

Next Steps:

Prepare Inventory Reporting and Sustainability Management System and Community GHG emissions tracking system.

Background:

The CVRD previously used data from the provincial Community Energy and Emissions Inventory (CEEI) to measure GHG emissions. However, the CEEI did not provide a comprehensive quantification methodology, the data only covered strategic emission sources rather than all potential GHG emissions within a jurisdiction and the CEEI data has not been continually updated. Although local government's participation in measuring and reducing community GHG emissions in BC is

mostly voluntary, it aligns with the CVRD's goals in the RGS and Sustainability Strategy, as well as, the CVRD Board's strategic priorities. Due to the challenging nature of GHG emission accounting methods staff retained consulting assistance to support and review up to date protocols for community GHG measurements and develop a community-wide GHG inventory framework using appropriate software.

Connection to Board's Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: Regional initiative with key community partners including member municipalities and the K'ómoks First Nation

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: The project accounts for climate change and the measurement of community GHG emissions for GHG emission management.

Indigenous Relations: Not significantly influenced by this driver.

Fiscal Responsibility: Engaged a community contribution company to assist with framework development. Will seek grant opportunities as they arise.

Project Lead: Planning services is leading this project.

Comox Valley Regional District Road to 2030: Comox Valley Climate Action Challenge

Project: The Comox Valley Climate Action Challenge is a participatory challenge that supports and accelerates community-led climate action initiatives. Interested community members with high impact climate action projects that create benefits and Green House Gas (GHG) emission reductions for the community can apply for the competition and stand a chance to be awarded some of the grant funding.

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, supporting community projects could boost declining financial supports for organizations while meeting the goals of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), being the “Comox Valley Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 120, 2010”, to reduce community GHG emissions. The Road to 2030 Competition that aims to catalyze community-led climate action that supports the RGS’s target of 50 per cent GHG emission reductions by 2030.

Objective:

Long-term: To support the objectives of the RGS and to catalyze community-led climate action and GHG emission reductions as outlined in Goal 8 of the RGS: “Minimize GHG emissions and plan for adaptation.” To use carbon offset funding within the community to reduce local emissions.

Medium-term: To build on experiences of year one and develop a replicable program for future years.

Short-term: Design, launch and administer a granting competition that will identify GHG reduction programs in the community and provide support and awareness for GHG initiatives in the community.

2021 Proposed Budget: \$31,170

Project Start Date: January 2021

Projected Completion Date: Ongoing

Year	Task	Budget
2021	Retain consultants, design launch and administer the Road to 2030 competition	\$31,170 (\$ 4,000 for consultant and \$ 27,170 for competition fund distribution)

Next Steps: To launch the program and engage the community throughout the four months’ timeline outlined for the competition.

Background: In 2019 the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) purchased verified carbon offsets to maintain carbon neutrality. Staff was directed to explore using the remainder of the budget to establish a Community Climate Action Granting Program. The granting program could support

community projects that are unlikely to have the scale or capacity to participate in the traditional carbon offset market. Ideally, the grant program would support projects that can quantify GHG emission reductions related to other strategic priorities.

Board resolution (September 15, 2020):

“THAT the report dated September 3, 2020 regarding a recommendation to establish a Climate Action Community Granting Program to support the CVRD Board’s strategic priority to reduce our impact on the environment and accelerate our actions to adapt and respond to climate change impacts be received.

THAT staff be authorized to negotiate and finalize a one-year agreement with GHG Accounting/ Local Carbon Fund to establish a Climate Action Community Granting Program at a cost of up to \$4,000 drawn from the \$31,170 granting program budget.”

Connection to Board’s Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: CVRD staff have proposed a partnership to SD No. 71 that would involve up to three students in the application review and adjudication process.

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: The granting program will aim to reduce community GHG emissions working towards the GHG reduction objectives of the RGS.

Indigenous Relations: CVRD staff are proposing a partnership with K’ómoks First Nation and the Wachiay Friendship Centre for involvement in the application review and adjudication process.

Fiscal Responsibility: Proposal to undertake the work under existing RGS service; use carbon offset funding and provide grants to local individuals and/ or organizations.

Project Lead: GHG Accounting in partnership with the Local Carbon Fund will manage and be supported by CVRD staff to coordinate the competition.