

DATE: June 24, 2021**FILE:** 0400-70**TO:** Chair and Directors
Regional District Board**FROM:** Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative OfficerSupported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer*R. Dyson***RE: Assessment and Reconciliation Plan**

Purpose

To introduce a proposed scope of work that would develop a Reconciliation Plan to guide the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) in advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action. This would build on the Indigenous Relations Framework, which is intended as a foundational first step to guide the CVRD's work with indigenous peoples.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the board support developing mid- and long-term strategies to implement the Indigenous Relations Framework as described in the staff report dated June 24, 2021.

Executive Summary

In January 2021, the CVRD Board of Directors set a goal to develop mid- and long-term strategies to implement the Indigenous Relations Framework. The purpose of the proposed scope of work (appendix A to this staff report) is to help the CVRD undertake that work, with the outcome being a set of meaningful actions that build on the pre-existing policy, relationships and awareness at the CVRD. The scope of work describes the board's current foundational materials, including the Indigenous Relations Framework (January 2020) and the Statement of Reconciliation (January 2021). The scope of work also makes reference to relevant reports, policy and legislation such as the TRC Calls to Action, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Provincial Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act as the bases for specific actions.

The CVRD Board is committed to working with staff to communicate openly and honestly about Indigenous history and experience. It has never been more important to pursue this work within our organization. For this reason, education will be an important component of this scope of work.

In terms of timing, if the board approves the staff report recommendation, a request for proposals (RFP) would be issued immediately and a consultant could be chosen by mid-summer. The successful proponent would be asked to engage with the CVRD Board in October. The CVRD's partners, including the K'ómoks First Nation Chief and Council and member municipalities, would be kept informed about the project as it unfolds, including specific engagement as needed in order that mid- and long-term actions are meaningful. To conclude, the final report would be sought by November 2021 and a range of options/actions would be part of that deliverable. It is expected that the actions would range in terms of complexity and resources needed for implementation, and would drive future work plans including the potential for adding personnel or contract opportunities to advance the program.

As options to the staff report recommendation, the board may consider adjustments to the proposed scope of work and/or providing direction to move forward in alternative ways.

Prepared by:

J. Warren

James Warren
Deputy Chief Administrative
Officer

Government Partners and Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

K'ómoks First Nation	✓
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Attachments: Appendix A – Draft Scope of Work for 2021 Assessment for Advancing Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

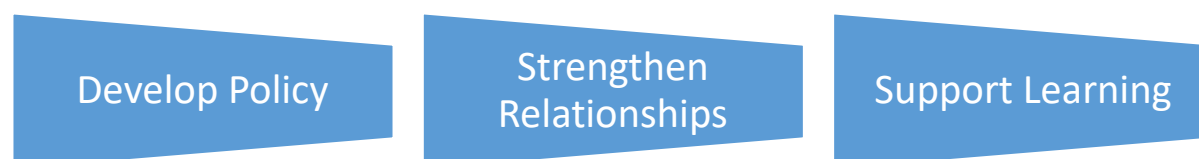
Scope of Work for 2021 Assessment for Advancing Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

Background

In January 2021, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board of Directors set a goal to develop mid- and long-term strategies to implement the Indigenous Relations Framework. The purpose of this contract opportunity is to help the CVRD undertake that work, with the outcome being a set of meaningful actions that build on the pre-existing policy, relationships and awareness at the CVRD.

The CVRD has adopted an [Indigenous Relations Framework](#) (January 2020) and the [Statement of Reconciliation](#) (January 2021).

The framework includes three action areas:



The statement of reconciliation focuses on four recurring themes:



A [January 2021 staff report](#) itemized the various focal points for the CVRD that related to CVRD projects and Indigenous relations and reconciliation, including work undertaken during 2020 and a proposed 2021 work plan. The 2021 work plan is noted here, with updates where available.

Activities Internal to CVRD	Action/Update
Elected Official and staff training	Staff based training conducted February 2021; Elected Officials training conducted March and April 2021 – Indigenous Corporate Training (ICT) sessions on awareness and reconciliation
Process improvements	CVRD staff participating as members of Planning Institute of BC (PIBC) Reconciliation Planning Committee to develop emerging best practices in planning practice. CVRD to consider application where relevant (report pending for fall 2021)
Mid- to long-term actions	Building on the framework and statement of reconciliation, intent is to seek a consultant to help develop mid- to long-term strategies to advance reconciliation.
Implementation of Cultural Heritage Policy	CVRD and K'ómoks First Nation (KFN) are working collaboratively on sewer conveyance project. CVRD investigating means to apply policy in planning and development activities.

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Activities to Build on External Relations	Action/Update
Community to Community Forums (C2C)	A C2C event was conducted in March 2021 with Merle Alexander, solicitor, and Jessica Wood, Assistant Deputy Minister with Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. Future C2C opportunities sought through provincial funding and with partners.
KFN Chief and Council meetings	Regular monthly meetings being held with KFN Chief and Council and CVRD Chair, Elected Officials and senior staff. Project list includes 30+ activities.
Referral management program	Ongoing referrals for CVRD planning and land use matters to KFN
Summer recreation programming	Programming opportunities with Wachiay Friendship Centre sought through funding programs (UBCM)

Methodology

The successful proponent will

- Become familiar with the CVRD's current framework, statement of reconciliation and ongoing work plan activities, including conducting interviews with the CVRD Board of Directors, members of the CVRD's executive management team and senior managers and the manager of external relations.
 - o NOTE: the current framework describes three action areas and to minimize additional changes or elements, the proponent is encouraged to reflect the current framework and statement of reconciliation as this work unfolds
- Conduct high level scan of activities related to Indigenous awareness and reconciliation by other municipal and regional districts that may be relevant as options for the CVRD
- Present initial findings to a CVRD Board of Directors meeting, with an intent to encourage dialogue with Directors on themes and principles associated with reconciliation and to solicit feedback on mid- and long- term strategies for advancing reconciliation (targeting October 2021).
- Develop a report as described under the deliverables below, including specific reference to relevant reports, policy and legislation such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Provincial *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

Deliverables

The successful proponent will deliver a final report by November 2021 that

- Assesses and summarizes the CVRD's current policy and practices related to Indigenous relations and advancing reconciliation
- Identifies a series of actions the CVRD can undertake over the mid- to long-term, organizing the actions around the Indigenous Relations Framework's three action areas. In particular,

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consideration should be given to some of the following statements for each focus area, though these statements are not to limit the series of recommended actions:

- a) **Develop Policy:** Reviewing existing bylaws, policies, forms, etc to determine updates or changes; describing de-colonizing (the work that an organization or non-indigenous person needs to do to ensure systems do not exist that perpetuate racism) and Indigenizing (putting new programs in place with an Indigenous lens) in relation to policy development and assessment; analyzing at a high level the Provincial Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and its application at the CVRD.
- b) **Strengthen Relationships:** Provide context of existing relationships and resources available to support those relationships; consider potential for activities coordinated between CVRD, KFN, Wachiay, etc; Explore ways to support Indigenous peoples in their pursuit of self-determination and self-governance. Recommended actions could include:
 - Develop new partnerships with KFN to support KFN's pursuit of economic development opportunities and conservation efforts (KFN's Cultural Heritage Investigation Permit)
 - Explore new opportunities to partner with First Nations outside of band and council
 - Develop signage or educational materials for the inclusion of Indigenous history
 - Add an indigenous relations lens to project and plan design.
- c) **Support Learning:** Learning and education can happen in many ways. Recommended actions can consider
 - some mandatory training aspects, including a model that extends throughout the CVRD (front-line staff to volunteers to community leaders)
 - opportunities for staff to have greater awareness of CVRD/KFN leadership meetings and relationships
 - greater awareness for the application of federal and provincial legislation as it is applied at the local level
 - acknowledging that advancing reconciliation can require building new skills for having difficult conversations, acknowledging our own biases and stereotypes
 - The report should describe the resources that may be required to implement the actions, preferred timing for any such actions and the rationale for the actions that advance reconciliation and strengthen Indigenous relations. The proponent should present a range of options, recognizing that the CVRD may opt to advance some or all of the options, depending on resources available at any given time and other priorities that may arise.