

DATE: February 6, 2020**FILE:** 1700-02/2020/512**TO:** Chair and Directors
Committee of the WholeSupported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer**FROM:** Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer***R. Dyson*****RE: 2020 - 2024 Financial Plan – Regional Growth Strategy Service – Function 512****Purpose**

To provide the Committee of the Whole with the proposed 2020 - 2024 Financial Plan and work plan highlights for the Regional Growth Strategy service, function 512.

Recommendations from the Chief Administrative Officer:

1. THAT the proposed 2020 – 2024 financial plan for the Regional Growth Strategy service, function 512, be approved.
2. THAT staff be authorized to make an application for \$150,000 to the Union of BC Municipalities for grant funding through Stream No. 1 of the Poverty Reduction and Action Planning program to develop a regional poverty reduction action plan focused on housing affordability, children and youth, transportation and food security;

AND THAT the Comox Valley Regional District send a request to each member municipality requesting permission to make the grant application on their behalf;

AND FINALLY THAT the Comox Valley Regional District serve as the primary applicant to apply for, receive and manage the grant funding on behalf of the Village of Cumberland, the Town of Comox and the City of Courtenay.
3. THAT staff be authorized to make an application to the BC Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants program to undertake gap analysis work in support of a regional active transportation plan;

AND THAT the Comox Valley Regional District send a request to each member municipality requesting permission to make the grant application on their behalf;

AND FINALLY THAT the Comox Valley Regional District serve as the primary applicant to apply for, receive and manage the grant funding on behalf of the Village of Cumberland, the Town of Comox and the City of Courtenay.

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 2020 tax requisition is \$405,000, representing an increase of \$192,858 from 2019.
- In 2020, revenue is supplemented with two provincial grants (\$52,500 for completion of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and \$29,000 to undertake a woodstove exchange program).

- Based on an estimated residential tax rate of \$0.0213 per \$1,000 of assessed value, for a residential property assessed at \$500,000, the tax impact in 2020 is \$10.65.
- Personnel within the service has been increased to 1.97 FTE compared to 0.35 FTE in 2019 (and all years prior). The staffing increase was accomplished through the re-allocation of Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) staff within the planning services department.
- Through its strategic planning work, the board has established a full work plan for 2020 – 2022. Key projects pertain to: housing, air quality, active transportation, RGS monitoring and evaluation, and RGS education and outreach. In order to undertake this work, staff is proposing an increase in operating expenses (e.g. public outreach and communications, other professional fees).
- 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.
- Between 2013 and 2018, funding for the service was supplemented through the use of reserve funds in order to keep the requisition at a minimum. As such, work within the service was primarily reactive (e.g. defense of court challenges). In 2020, the board may consider a reserve contribution of \$26,755 as it begins its work re-building the service and using it more fully to accomplish its strategic priorities.

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Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

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

Board Strategic Drivers

The CVRD Board has set four strategic drivers to guide service delivery. Not all services will be influenced by all drivers. Table 1 notes the degree of influence the drivers have on projects and work plans.

Table 1: Board Strategic Drivers

Fiscal responsibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtained grant funding to undertake Regional Housing Needs Assessment and pursuing grant funding to implement findings. • Seek efficiencies through collaboration with all service participants. • Seek grants to further the board's strategic priorities. • Replenish the reserve fund. 	Climate crisis and environmental stewardship and protection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RGS acknowledges that a significant, concerted response to climate change is required. The proposed RGS monitoring project will assist in tracking progress on GHG emissions reductions, help identify policy gaps and identify opportunities for regional collaboration on mitigation.
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Community partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working closely with CV Community Health Network and CV Coalition to End Homelessness on the regional housing needs assessment. Working closely with member municipalities and K'ómoks First Nation. 	Indigenous relations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RGS recognizes K'ómoks First Nation as a key stakeholder of the service and identifies implementation agreements as a tool to support K'ómoks First Nation's social, environmental and economic objectives.
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Financial Plan Overview

The 2020 - 2024 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 summarizes the 2020 proposed budget as compared to the 2019 adopted budget. Significant variances from the 2019 adopted budget will be discussed in the financial plan sections that follow.

Table 2: Financial Plan Highlights



2020
Proposed
Budget

#512 Regional Growth Strategy

Operating	2019 Budget	2020 Proposed Budget	Increase (Decrease)
Revenue			
Requisition	212,142	405,000	192,858
Transfer from Reserve	34,341		(34,341)
Senior Government Grants	52,500	81,500	29,000
Other Revenue / Recoveries		70,396	70,396
Prior Year Surplus		109,811	109,811
	\$ 298,983	\$ 666,707	\$ 367,724
Expenditures			
Personnel Costs	55,261	243,829	188,568
Operating	181,580	396,123	214,543
Contribution to Reserve		26,755	26,755
Deficit Prior Year	62,142		(62,142)
	\$ 298,983	\$ 666,707	\$ 367,724

Highlights of the 2020 - 2024 proposed financial plan for function 512 include:

Revenue Sources

The requisition is proposed to increase by \$192,858 from 2019 for a total requisition of \$405,000 in 2020.

In 2019, the board opted to begin investment in this service in order to better use it to its full potential. This represented a significant departure from past use of the service. In order to address key strategic priorities and support the board's strategic driver of fiscal responsibility staff proposes use of the RGS service versus new service establishment in order to undertake a number of key regional initiatives.

The proposed increase in 2020 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.

In 2020, the requisition is supplemented by two provincial grants: Union or BC Municipalities (UBCM) grant to support the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and a Ministry of the Environment/B.C. Lung Association to support the Woodstove Exchange Program (linked to the board's larger air quality improvement objectives).

Staff is seeking board approval to apply for two other grant opportunities through UBCM:

1. Multi-modal/active transportation planning; and
2. Poverty reduction strategy with a focus on affordable housing, transportation, children and youth, and food security actions.

Staff has drafted project plans in support of the above, as well as a number of other work plan items directed by the board, for the board's consideration (see Appendices A through F).

Personnel

Staffing has been re-organized within the planning services department in order to meet the strategic priorities and focus of the board. In 2019, sustainability initiatives were moved into the RGS service and a re-organization of staff occurred. The service is now supported by 1.97 FTEs compared to 0.35 FTE in prior years, as follows:

- Long Range Planner (0.52 FTE)
- Planning Policy Analyst (0.65 FTE)
- Senior Manager of Sustainability and RGS Planning (0.75)
- General Manager of Planning and Development Services (0.05 FTE).

No further changes in personnel are proposed at this time, however, given the full roster of projects identified as board priorities, significant consultant assistance will be required and is reflected in a proposed increase in operating expenses.

Operations

In 2020, the \$214,543 increase in operating costs is primarily related to a need for consulting assistance (i.e. "other professional fees") to support the projects itemized below and detailed in Appendices A through F. Staff note that undertaking the housing needs assessment as a regional initiative (versus each member municipality and electoral area doing separate projects) created an efficiency, including the ability to access greater provincial funding, that staff recommends replicating through key proposed 2020 projects.

Staff is recommending that the following projects continue and/or be initiated in 2020:

- Regional Housing Needs Assessment
- Establishment of Air Quality Advisory Council
- Regional active transportation planning
- RGS monitoring and evaluation
- RGS public education and outreach

- Regional poverty reduction planning

Appendices A through F 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, 2019 was estimated to be \$42,397. By the end of the 2020 - 2024 financial plan, the reserve balance is anticipated to grow to \$86,808.

Tax Impacts

- Based on the 2020 completed assessment roll, the estimated residential tax rate for this service is projected to be \$0.0213 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value (versus \$0.0119 per \$1,000 in 2019).
- For a single residential property with an assessed value of \$500,000, the total tax impact is estimated to be \$10.65.
- There is no maximum levy for this service.

Citizen/Public Relations

There is 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 – “Air quality project scope”
Appendix B – “Active transportation project scope”
Appendix C – “Housing needs project scope”
Appendix D – “Poverty reduction project scope”
Appendix E – “RGS outreach and education project scope”
Appendix F – “RGS dashboard/scorecard project scope”

CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Improving Air Quality

Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) levels in the Comox Valley seasonally exceed provincial and national standards and biomass burning (from residential heating and open burning) is the predominant source. 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 for 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.

Objective:

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

Medium-term: To build capacity among regional stakeholders to work together on the complex multi-jurisdictional issue of air quality. To prepare an Airshed Protection Strategy to guide actions and monitor progress on air quality.

Short-term: To establish an Airshed Roundtable and supporting Leadership Group to tackle air quality issues in the Comox Valley. To administer a Wood Smoke Reduction Program (i.e. education and rebate program).

2020 Budget: \$110,396 (\$76,396 secured through grant funding; \$34,000 to be provided through tax requisition).

Projected Start Date: March 2020: Subject to board approval and funding.

Projected Completion Date: Ongoing

Year	Task	Budget
2020	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)
2020	Wood smoke reduction program	\$75,396 (\$71,396 secured through MoE/BC Lung and Island Health grant funding in 2019 and 2020; \$4,000 from tax requisition in 2020)
2021	Complete Airshed Protection Strategy. Start implementation.	\$30,000*
2022	Continued implementation of Airshed Protection Strategy	\$30,000*

*Estimates to be confirmed through financial planning processes in 2021 and 2022.

Next Steps: Hire a coordinator to lead the project (to be managed by CVRD staff). Establish Leadership Group and Airshed Roundtable and coordinate inaugural meetings. Advertise and promote wood smoke reduction education and rebate program.

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 structured as follows:

Roundtable

The Roundtable is a forum to host a broad set of stakeholders with an interest in the issue. The Roundtable could meet two to four times per year to share information, report out on activities, provide feedback and engage broadly. The Roundtable would be heavily engaged in the strategic planning process. In addition, the role of the Roundtable is in part to contribute to education, outreach and relationships across a broader group of stakeholders and into the wider public.

Leadership Group

A smaller group, selected to play 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 membership as needed, in formulating and carrying out the priorities of the collective. This group meets more regularly to ensure work maintains momentum.

Coordinator

An individual or organization, contracted to play a coordination role for the initiative. They need to be skilled in facilitation, listening deeply, relationship building and working with a diversity of opinions. Other jurisdictions struggled to maintain progress when the coordinator function was poorly resourced.

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, woodstove industry/fire wood producers, alternative energy professionals, forest industry, agricultural groups, health authorities, non-profits, seniors association, schools 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: proposal to invite K'ómoks First Nation to participate in the Leadership Group and Roundtable.

Fiscal Responsibility: proposal to undertake the work under existing Regional Growth Strategy service and seek opportunities for grant funding as they arise.

Project Lead: Planning services proposes to hire a coordinator to be managed by CVRD staff to support the collaborative initiative as well as a coordinator to administer the wood smoke reduction program.

CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Regional Active Transportation Planning

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 prepare a regional active transportation plan in accordance with the Ministry of Transportation’s Active Transportation Design Guidelines.

Short-term: To identify gaps and barriers in regional active transportation facilities, clarify jurisdictional roles, and identify opportunities for action.

2020 Budget: \$30,000 (\$30,000 included as RGS tax requisition in 2020; grant application will be submitted if approved).

Projected Start Date: May 2020: Subject to board approval.

Projected Completion Date: June 2022 (gap analysis work February 2021).

Year	Task	Budget
2020	Gap analysis	\$30,000
2021	Public engagement and policy development through RGS review	\$20,000*
2022	Active transportation plan	\$20,000*

*Estimates to be confirmed through financial planning processes in 2021 and 2022.

Next Steps: Undertake a gap analysis to assess current active transportation network/linkages and identify opportunities for regional connections between and among the electoral areas, K’ómoks First Nation lands, the City of Courtenay, the Town of Comox and the Village of Cumberland. Gap analysis to clarify jurisdiction and identify opportunities for action (e.g. policy and capital projects).

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.

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

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

CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Regional Affordable Housing

Undertake a housing needs assessment in order to better understand the region’s current and projected housing needs and to establish key baseline data to support development of a regional action plan to address housing needs.

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.”

Medium-term: To prepare a regional affordable housing strategy (“Phase 2”)

Short-term: To complete the regional housing needs assessment (“Phase 1”)

2020 Budget: \$77,500 (\$52,500 secured through grant funding in 2020; \$25,000 to be sought through grant funding).

Project Start Date: August 2019 (Phase 1: housing needs assessment).

Projected Completion Date: June 2022 (Phase 1 housing needs assessment complete April 2020).

Year	Task	Budget
2020	Complete housing needs assessment (“Phase 1”)	\$52,500
2020	Public engagement on Phase 1 findings and next steps for action	\$25,000*
2021	Public engagement and policy development through RGS review	\$30,000**
2022	Affordable Housing Action Plan	\$25,000**

*Grant funding dependent – UBCM poverty reduction strategy

**Estimates to be confirmed through financial planning processes in 2021 and 2022.

Next Steps: Complete the regional Housing Needs Assessment. Public engagement on needs assessment findings. Application to Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) for poverty reduction strategy grant funding for action plan.

Background:

Comox Valley Regional District Board resolution (May 28, 2019): “*THAT the board endorse preparation of a Regional Housing Needs Report, prepared by Comox Valley Regional District staff, in partnership with the member municipalities, in order to meet the provincial housing needs report requirements;*

AND THAT staff be authorized to make an application to the Union of BC Municipalities’ Housing Report Grant Program for grant funding, with the Comox Valley Regional District serving as the primary applicant and grant manager, to collect data, undertake public consultation and prepare a regional housing needs report;

AND FURTHER THAT subject to the approval of the housing needs grant application, the 2019 – 2023 financial plan for the Regional Growth Strategy service, function 512, be amended to include other Professional Fees of \$125,000 in 2019 to be funded by \$125,000 in Provincial Conditional Grants;

AND FINALLY THAT staff work with our municipal partners to prepare a project scope of work and report back with a scope of work for a regional housing needs report for endorsement by the Board in fall 2019.”

Connection to Board’s Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: regional initiative with opportunities to work with member municipalities, K’ómoks First Nation, Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness, Comox Valley Community Health Network.

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Project not significantly influenced by this driver.

Indigenous Relations: key opportunity to look at how housing challenges may be affecting indigenous citizens differently than non-indigenous citizens. Housing needs data may assist K’ómoks First Nation’s Comprehensive Community Plan policy review and implementation work.

Fiscal Responsibility: proposal to undertake the work under existing RGS service; phase the work over three budget years; secured grant funding for needs assessment component; and recommend seeking grant funding through UBCM for implementation of the provincial poverty reduction strategy.

Project Lead: Planning services lead with support from member municipalities, K’ómoks First Nation, Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness, Comox Valley Community Health Network.

CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Regional Poverty Assessment and Reduction Strategy

Poverty assessment enables communities to develop key actions to reduce local poverty and work towards an inclusive community. Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) project would focus on the following priority action areas (identified in [TogetherBC](#), the Province's poverty reduction strategy):

- Housing
 - Using the 2019 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.
- Income supports (Affordability)
 - Planning for food security.
- Social supports
 - Exploring safe, reliable and affordable transportation, build on work of Transit Future 2020 plan.

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 CVRD.

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

Budget: \$105,000 (\$85,000 to be secured through grant funding and \$20,000 provided through RGS tax requisition in 2020 for data collection and outreach).

Projected Start Date: September 2020: Subject to Board approval and grant funding.

Projected Completion Date: September 2021.

Year	Task	Budget
2020	Poverty assessment (data collection, engagement)	\$105,000* (\$85,000 grant funding*; \$20,000 tax requisition)
2021	Poverty Reduction Strategy	\$85,000*

*Subject to grant application approval

Next Steps: make application to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) poverty reduction grant fund. Scope project with project team (K'ómoks First Nation and member municipalities) and key community partners, including Coalition to End Homelessness and Community Health Network.

Background: Project has the opportunity to synthesize a number of board priorities (e.g. housing, multi-modal active transportation, RGS outreach, RGS data collection) with completed initiatives (e.g. 2019 Childcare Inventory) in order to develop a poverty reduction strategy that will support realization of the Provincial “Together BC” poverty reduction strategy and legislation.

Connection to Board's Strategic Drivers:

Community Partnerships: regional initiative with key community partners including, K'ómoks First Nation, the Coalition of End Homelessness, 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 would similarly be premised on reconciliation and specifically, aim 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 CVRD transit services, member municipalities and key community partners.

CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Service Project Plan

Project: Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Education and Outreach

Ongoing RGS outreach is an important element of achieving regional collaboration on regional goals and objectives, including housing, active transportation, air quality and climate change action.

Objective:

Long-term: To work towards implementing all 8 goals of the RGS by improving public awareness of the RGS and establishing the RGS as the regional plan to improve quality of life and well-being and manage growth in the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD).

Medium-term: To undertake core foundation work to support an update of the RGS in 2021/22.

Short-term: To increase general public awareness of the Plan and its purpose; to establish a citizens' advisory committee; and to identify gaps in policy, monitoring and targets.

2020 Budget: \$50,000 provided through RGS tax requisition in 2020.

Projected Start Date: April 2020: Subject to board approval.

Projected Completion Date: June 2022/ongoing.

Year	Task	Budget
2020	Gap analysis	\$50,000
2021	Public engagement and policy development through RGS review	\$50,000*
2022	Statutory bylaw amendment process outreach.	\$25,000*

*Estimates to be confirmed through financial planning processes in 2021 and 2022.

Next Steps: Develop a communications plan for board's consideration. Establish an RGS advisory committee. Use the RGS technical advisory committee and RGS steering committee to prioritize RGS awareness within each local government's service and program delivery.

Background:

CVRD Board strategic priority: RGS education and outreach.

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, local non-profit service providers, Comox Valley Economic Development Society.

Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection: Project presents an opportunity to infuse the RGS with regional climate change mitigation and adaptation planning as well as strengthened policy to protect the natural environment and re-inforce the principle of precaution.

Indigenous Relations: proposal to engage K'ómoks First Nation in the design of the project beginning with the gap analysis work.

Fiscal Responsibility: proposal to undertake the work under existing RGS service; phase the work over three budget years and seek opportunities for grant funding as they arise. Note that many of the projects will generate data to inform the RGS update.

Project Lead: Planning services lead with support from CVRD transit, engineering services, community parks, communications, emergency management services and member municipalities.

CVRD 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 the 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) 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.

Medium-term: To launch an RGS dashboard that identifies the CVRD’s progress towards achieving the goals and objectives of the RGS (including targets).

Short-term: To provide accessible and current data in the format of a community profile including demographics, labour force, transportation mode, education and housing data.

2020 Budget: \$45,000 (provided through RGS tax requisition in 2020).

Projected Start Date: March 2020: Subject to board approval and funding.

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

Year	Task	Budget
2020	Community profile	\$10,000
2020	Data collection	\$10,000
2020	RGS indicators and target assessment	\$25,000
2021	Dashboard development	\$20,000*

*Estimate to be confirmed through financial planning processes in 2021.

Next Steps: Work with contractor to launch community profile via a dynamic online platform on the CVRD’s website. Work with consultant to review RGS indicators and identify data gaps.

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: regional initiative with key community partners including K’ómoks First Nation, member municipalities, School District No. 71 and non-profit service providers. 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.

Indigenous Relations: Staff propose to invite K’ómoks First Nation to participate in the scoping of data collection and customization of the dashboard.

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

Project Lead: Planning services will take the lead with support from CVRD communications, GIS and IT. Planning services proposes to hire a consultant to prepare the analytics platform for the CVRD website.