

Comox Valley Regional District

2018 Annual Report



comoxvalleyrd.ca   

Photo credit © Kim Stallknecht

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Introduction

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) is a partnership of three electoral areas and three municipalities, extending from Cook Creek in the south to the Oyster River in the north, west to Strathcona Park and east, including Denman and Hornby Islands. Regional Districts bring together rural and municipal representatives on regional issues and projects that benefit the whole community.

The CVRD serves as the local government for rural residents in Electoral Area A, Electoral Area B and Electoral Area C. The CVRD Board is made up of elected rural representatives from Electoral Area A, Electoral Area B and Electoral Area C, and appointed representatives from the member municipalities of Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland.

Working collaboratively, the CVRD provides approximately 100 services for the benefit of those living and visiting the diverse urban and rural areas of the Comox Valley. The CVRD provides a broad range of services including sewage treatment, parks and recreation, water supply, solid waste management and transit. Major regional projects such as the Comox Valley Water Treatment Project, biosolids composting facility and the new regional office building will ensure the CVRD continues to provide sustainable services for years to come.

This report looks back at 2018 and highlights the CVRD Board's strategic priorities, partnerships and projects aimed at improving regional service delivery for all residents of the Comox Valley.

Creating a Culture of Partnership with K'ómoks First Nation



The CVRD acknowledges that it is on the traditional unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, an important partner in water management and conservation in the beautiful Comox Valley.

Building on the K'ómoks First Nation (KFN) Protocol Agreement, signed in 2010, the CVRD remains committed to respectful and genuine engagement with its valued community partner. The CVRD has come to understand that the waters flowing through the valley hold a deep cultural significance to KFN's history and community. This water also plays an important role in the future of the community and its aspirations for growth and independence. Acknowledging this history, committing to working together as partners and acknowledging the strength of diversity in our community, are all important steps of reconciliation. These beliefs have and will continue to inform the CVRD's organizational culture.



In the spirit of partnership, the CVRD was pleased and honoured to sign a Mutual Benefit Agreement on water to confirm cooperation and collaboration with KFN in the management of water resources in the region."

In the spirit of partnership, the CVRD was pleased and honoured to sign a Mutual Benefit Agreement on water to confirm cooperation and collaboration with KFN in the management of water resources in the region. This agreement includes plans to extend water services in the future to K'ómoks lands south of Royston and greater participation by KFN in the management of regional water resources. By signing this agreement, KFN stated its support of the Comox Valley Water Treatment Project and the CVRD's water license application, which assisted greatly in gaining provincial and federal support of the project.

In 2019, CVRD elected officials and senior staff are looking forward to joining KFN in a Community to Community Forum to share knowledge, exchange information about governance structures and continue strengthening and building relationships. This forum represents one of the ways the CVRD and KFN are working together to ensure the continuation of a cooperative and collaborative government-to-government relationship that supports partnerships now and in the future.

What We Do

In 2018 **102 services** were delivered to residents in Courtenay, Comox, Cumberland, Electoral Areas A, B, and C including...

Water

Comox Valley Water Supply System – connecting **45,000** residents to clean, safe drinking water at an affordable price.



Sewer

Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Centre – ensuring that Comox and Courtenay's liquid waste is effectively managed to minimize environmental impacts and follow regulatory requirements.



Solid Waste

Comox Strathcona Waste Management Service – ensuring that garbage is properly dealt with along with household hazardous waste, compost and recycling.



Parks & Recreation

Managing and protecting regional parks, forests, beaches and over 100 kilometres of trails.

Supporting recreation facilities that encourage active, healthy lifestyles for all residents.



We Are Three Electoral Areas & Three Municipalities

The Comox Valley boundaries extend north to the Oyster River, south to Cook Creek and west to Strathcona Park and includes Denman and Hornby Islands. The CVRD acknowledges that it is on the unceded territory of the K'ómox First Nation.

Services provided vary from water, sewer and solid waste to street lighting and transit.



Each service or function is a stand-alone service. A five-year plan is prepared for each of the services.



Each service has its own revenue source and expenditure plan as well as reserves, debt and grant funds.



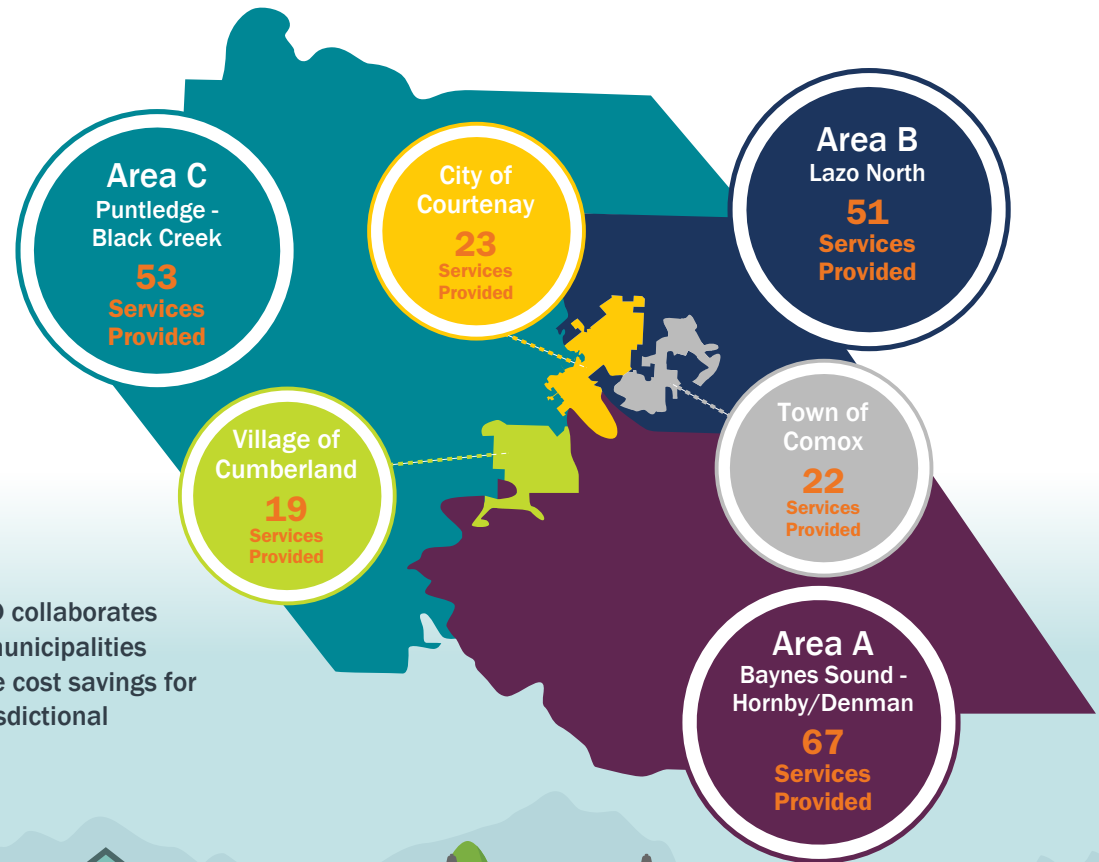
No ability to transfer funds from one service to another.



Only those municipalities or electoral areas that sign up for a service pay for the service.

The CVRD Board includes members of municipal council and electoral area directors who determine direction and approve all projects and expenditures in the best interest of every resident.

The CVRD collaborates with its municipalities to provide cost savings for cross-jurisdictional services.





Bruce Jolliffe, Chair
Comox Valley Regional District

Message from the 2018 Board Chair

After ten years serving our region, in the fall of 2018, I stepped away from politics. As I look back on my time with the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), I am so proud of where we have come from and where we are going. 2018 was an exciting year for our organization, filled with many important advancements in several projects.

Significant progress was made on the new Comox Valley Water Treatment system including acquiring the land for the new water treatment plant, signing the water agreement with K'ómoks First Nation and most importantly solidifying 62.8 million dollars in grant funding from the provincial and federal governments. The new water treatment plant will eliminate the need for turbidity related boil water notices; remove the risk of viruses, parasites and bacteria in our drinking water; and ensure residents within the region have access to safe, reliable, high quality drinking water for decades to come. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2019 and the plant will be fully operational by 2021. To provide interim relief to turbidity-related boil water notices, this past year the CVRD installed UV reactors in the existing treatment plant, adding a second level of water treatment and raising the allowable turbidity (NTU). This interim relief is expected to reduce boil water notices by up to 80 per cent. The UV reactors will be moved to the new facility when construction is completed.

This past year, the CVRD Board made significant investments into the enhancements of our regional transit service. 4,000 new service hours were dedicated to the Comox Valley Transit system to help increase service levels, improve connections and route restructuring to enhance services to high density areas and connect people to key destinations. We listened to the feedback provided by residents and will continue to make our local transit system effective, efficient and affordable.



The CVRD's goal is to unite its member municipalities and rural areas, find areas of collaboration and work cohesively together for the best interests of the community."



Work also continued on the new CVRD office building, which is being funded by redirecting existing lease payments towards debt repayment. Our new regional office will provide a permanent home for CVRD operations and staff and will serve as a post disaster emergency operations centre during emergency events. Our new location on Harmston Avenue will help revitalize the downtown core, provide space-sharing opportunities and relocate the regional office out of the floodplain. Construction of our new facility was awarded to Knappett Projects Inc. this past summer, with completion expected in fall 2019.

Finally, important progress continues to be made on our new Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP). To plan for the future, the CVRD is using an LWMP process to identify the improvements required for the sewer system in Courtenay and Comox and to engage the public in the creation of a future vision for the sewer service. From open houses and public tours of the pollution control centre on Brent Road, to various facilitated workshop sessions, the CVRD is working hard to develop a plan that properly reflects community interests. Working together and hearing the concerns, opinions and thoughts of residents will help build a strong plan for the future.

These are just three of the many projects your Regional District has focused on this past year. I encourage you to continue reading this report to learn more about the CVRD and the many initiatives the Board has concentrated on in 2018.

The CVRD's goal is to unite its member municipalities and rural areas, find



areas of collaboration and work cohesively together for the best interests of the community. The CVRD provides the mechanism for collaborating with our local First Nation, improvement districts, provincial and federal governments, and other regional districts.

On this note, I would like to thank all my fellow directors and the CVRD staff for their dedication these past ten years. All your hard work is paying off and I look forward to seeing continued advancements on projects to improve services to the region.

Bruce Jolliffe, Chair
Comox Valley Regional District





2018 Comox Valley Regional District Board

Front row (sitting) Erik Eriksson, City of Courtenay; Bruce Jolliffe, Electoral Area A (Baynes Sound – Denman/Hornby Islands) (CVRD Board Chair); Bob Wells, City of Courtenay (CVRD Vice-Chair)

Back row Gwyneth Sproule, Village of Cumberland; Edwin Grieve, Electoral Area C (Puntledge – Black Creek); Larry Jangula, City of Courtenay; Rod Nichol, Electoral Area B (Lazo North); Manno Theos, City of Courtenay; Ken Grant, Town of Comox; Barbara Price, Town of Comox

Comox Valley Regional District

2018 Financials



Management's Responsibility for Financial Reporting

These summarized financial statements have been prepared by management from the complete financial statements for inclusion in this annual report. They provide a brief financial overview of the regional district's financial position at December 31, 2018 and the results of its operations for the year ended December 31, 2018.

Management maintains a system of internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded and that transactions are authorized, recorded and reported properly.

Management also maintains a program of proper business compliance.

The board of directors is responsible for reviewing and approving the financial statements and for ensuring that management fulfils its responsibilities for financial reporting and internal control.

MNP LLP, Chartered Professional Accountants, the regional district's independent auditor, has conducted an examination of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally

accepted auditing standards and has expressed an opinion in the auditor's report which accompanies the complete audited financial statements available at the regional district office or online at www.comoxvalleyrd.ca.



E.J. Dunlop, CPA, CGA
Officer responsible for Financial Administration,
pursuant to Section 237 of the Local Government Act
March 21, 2019



Independent Auditors' Report On The Summarized Financial Statements

To the Board of Directors of the Comox Valley Regional District:

Opinion

The summarized financial statements, which comprise the summarized statement of financial position as at December 31, 2018 and the summarized statements of operations and cash flows for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial statements of the Comox Valley Regional District as at and for the year ended December 31, 2018.

In our opinion, the accompanying summarized financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements, in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Summarized Financial Statements

The summarized financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Reading the summarized financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements and the auditor's report thereon. The summarized financial statements and the audited financial statements do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on the audited financial statements.

The Audited Financial Statements and our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated March 21, 2019.

Management's Responsibility for the Summarized Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summarized financial statements in accordance with management's criteria for aggregation of the balances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summarized financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard 810, *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

Courtenay, British Columbia
March 21, 2019

MNP LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants

MNP LLP



Comox Valley Regional District Summarized Statement of Financial Position as at December 31, 2018 (Audited)

	2018	2017
Financial Assets		
Cash	\$ 34,918,442	\$ 60,268,990
Portfolio investments	58,941,283	38,257,983
Receivables and security deposits	7,362,800	3,749,176
Debt recoverable from member municipalities	13,564,744	15,299,179
Total Financial Assets	<u>114,787,269</u>	<u>117,575,328</u>
Liabilities		
Payables, other liabilities and deferred revenue	10,566,288	10,242,479
Short-term debt	23,161,427	25,329,607
Long-term debt	27,594,218	31,272,596
Restricted revenue	13,316,061	15,534,226
Provision for landfill closure and post closure	25,337,253	23,966,159
Total Liabilities	<u>99,975,247</u>	<u>106,345,067</u>
Net Financial Assets	<u>14,812,022</u>	<u>11,230,261</u>
Non-Financial Assets		
Prepaid expenses	795,608	798,470
Inventory of supplies	259,113	260,367
Tangible capital assets	138,787,942	122,335,638
Total Non-Financial Assets	<u>139,842,663</u>	<u>123,394,475</u>
Accumulated Surplus	<u>\$ 154,654,685</u>	<u>\$ 134,624,736</u>



E.J. Dunlop, CPA, CGA
Officer responsible for Financial Administration,
pursuant to Section 237 of the Local Government Act (RSBC 2015)
March 21, 2019



B. Wells
Chair of the board

Comox Valley Regional District Summarized Statement of Operations

Year Ended December 31, 2018 (Audited)

	2018 Budget	2018 Actual	2017 Actual
Revenue			
Property taxes	\$ 32,194,270	\$ 32,150,764	\$ 30,344,621
Sales of services and other revenue sources	22,100,634	23,025,655	22,897,159
Government transfers	10,654,735	2,761,113	2,686,337
Grants in lieu of taxes	271,537	519,656	490,227
Contributions from others	-	7,960,650	3,823,431
Investment income	75,000	1,472,068	616,550
Total Revenue	<u>65,296,176</u>	<u>67,889,906</u>	<u>60,858,325</u>
Expenses			
General government services	7,218,687	4,771,638	4,415,931
Protective services	4,458,584	4,309,338	3,878,162
Transportation services	2,992,157	2,799,800	2,017,454
Environmental health services	22,279,911	22,630,218	19,070,606
Public health and welfare services	693,297	626,339	140,151
Environmental development services	3,222,999	3,051,763	2,873,763
Recreation and cultural services	9,294,451	9,670,861	9,262,573
Total Expenses	<u>50,160,086</u>	<u>47,859,957</u>	<u>41,658,640</u>
Annual Surplus	15,136,090	20,029,949	19,199,685
Accumulated Surplus, beginning of year	<u>134,624,736</u>	<u>134,624,736</u>	<u>115,425,051</u>
Accumulated Surplus, end of year	<u><u>\$ 149,760,826</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 154,654,685</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 134,624,736</u></u>

Comox Valley Regional District Summarized Statement of Cash Flows

Year Ended December 31, 2018 (Audited)

	2018	2017
Operating Transactions		
Annual Surplus	\$ 20,029,949	\$ 19,199,685
Changes in non-cash operating balances		
Prepaid expenses and inventory of supplies	4,116	(766,949)
Receivables and security deposits	(3,613,624)	(372,896)
Accounts payable and other liabilities	421,500	985,678
Restricted revenue	(2,218,165)	(230,784)
Deferred government transfers	(97,691)	2,498,249
Items not utilizing cash		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	5,926,210	4,681,499
Loss on disposal of tangible capital assets	551,655	129,477
Landfill closure and post closure allowance	1,371,094	(1,246,020)
Actuarial adjustments and other items	(790,674)	(1,296,728)
Transfer of tangible capital assets from others	(390,450)	(65,543)
Cash Provided by Operating Transactions	21,193,920	23,515,668
Capital Transactions		
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(22,566,717)	(20,081,204)
Proceeds from disposal of tangible capital assets	27,000	91,703
Cash Applied to Capital Transactions	(22,539,717)	(19,989,501)
Investment Transactions		
Cash Applied to Investment Transactions	(20,683,300)	(27,078)
Financing Transactions		
Short-term debt issued	-	9,600,000
Long and short-term debt repayments	(3,321,451)	(2,278,223)
Cash Provided by Financing Transactions	(3,321,451)	7,321,777
Change in Cash	(25,350,548)	10,820,866
Cash, beginning of year	60,268,990	49,448,124
Cash, end of year	\$ 34,918,442	\$ 60,268,990

Comox Valley Regional District

Advancing Strategic Priorities in 2018





New Comox Valley Regional Office Building Progresses

The new regional office building, located on Harmston Avenue, will provide several benefits to the region including helping to revitalize Courtenay's downtown core, providing opportunities for space-sharing initiatives, allowing continued service during emergency events and offering a specifically designed post-disaster emergency operations centre (EOC) for crisis situations.

The project was identified in 2014 as a strategic priority for the CVRD Board following flooding that closed down the current CVRD offices on Comox Road. The goal of the initiative was to relocate the office outside the floodplain to ensure residents were able to continue to receive their services in times of need. The CVRD Board determined that instead of making lease payments of \$330,000 per year, it would



The goal of the initiative was to relocate the office outside the floodplain to ensure residents were able to continue to receive their services in times of need."

redirect these funds, along with reserve fund contributions, towards debt repayment and own the office.

In 2017, the CVRD Board approved a borrowing bylaw and was able to move forward with the detailed design and obtain an updated cost estimate. On April 24, 2018 the CVRD Board approved the tendering

process to receive actual construction costs on the detailed design. The detailed design incorporates feedback from residents within the community that was provided during the design engagement sessions in 2017. Changes include a more west coast feel, change in the building colour and incorporating green building and energy efficiency principles.

An Invitation to Tender was released on May 26, 2018. On July 4, 2018, at the close of the process, the CVRD received five tenders and negotiations with the lowest bidder, Knappett Projects Inc., began. The CVRD design team worked with Knappett to identify cost savings of \$340,486. This allowed the Regional District to proceed with a contract price of \$10,352,514. The borrowing requirement of \$8.2 million from the adopted financial strategy remains unchanged. The remainder of the project will be funded by reserves and grants.

Construction of the new office building started in August 2018 with completion expected late 2019.



For more information on the new regional office building, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/regionaloffice





Comox Valley Water Treatment Project Celebrates Significant Milestones

The Comox Valley Water System provides drinking water to 45,000 residents including the City of Courtenay, the Town of Comox and the K'ómoks First Nation. The current system does not comply with provincial guidelines, as it relies solely on chlorination and does not effectively protect against parasites. In addition, elevated turbidity levels can interfere with the chlorination of the water and increase the risk of bacteria and viruses, triggering the need for boil water notices.

In 2017, the Comox Valley Water Committee provided direction to pursue a new water treatment system including new intake infrastructure, pumping stations and pipelines, force mains, transmission mains and a



At the end of November 2018, after much anticipation, the Government of Canada and Province of BC committed \$62.8 million in federal-provincial funding of a new drinking water treatment system in the CVRD."

filtration facility. Once complete, the new system will eliminate turbidity related boil water notices and provide clean safe drinking water to residents connected to the system.

In the interim, the Water Committee asked CVRD staff to install temporary UV filtration at the current treatment plant. The equipment is expected to reduce boil water notices by 80 per cent and can be moved to the new water treatment facility once it is constructed. This installation was completed in January 2018 at a cost of one million dollars. As a result, Island Health increased the permitted turbidity threshold resulting in just

one boil water notice in 2018. This is an important accomplishment for the community, including the businesses who were financially strained by boil water notices, as well as residents whose daily lives were impacted.

In March 2018, the CVRD received electoral assent from residents to borrow the \$29 million in project costs that are not expected to be covered by reserves or grant funding. Only those connected to the system will be responsible for paying back the loan, at an average cost estimated at \$86 per household per year.

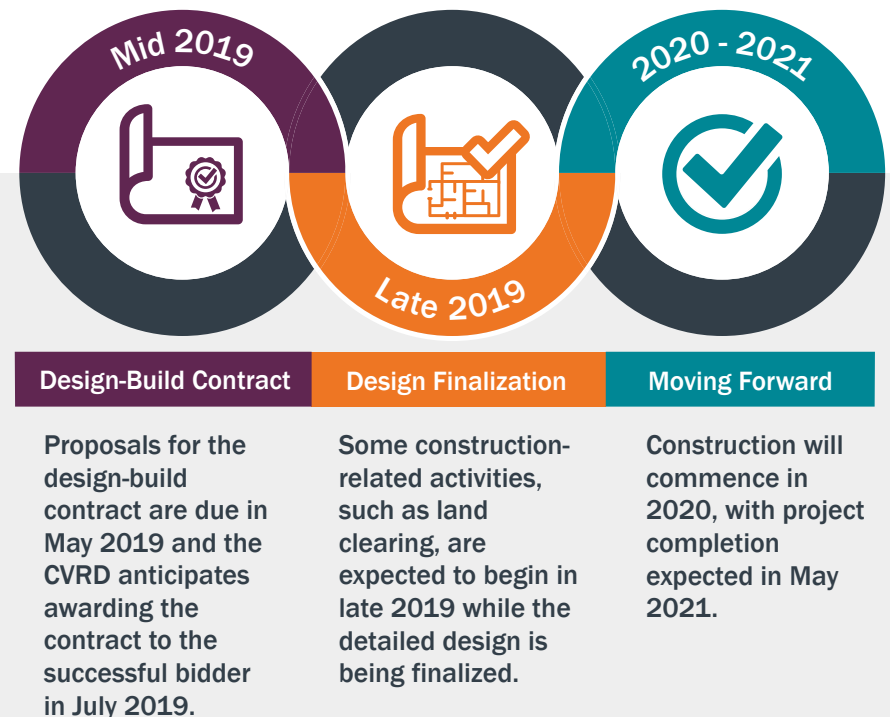
The project team worked throughout 2018 on obtaining the necessary permits and approvals to ensure the project would be shovel ready. Key to moving the project forward was a Mutual Benefit Agreement with K'ómoks First Nation, confirming cooperation and collaboration in the management of water resources in the region.

At the end of November 2018, after much anticipation, the Government of Canada and Province of BC committed \$62.8 million in federal-provincial funding for a new drinking water treatment system in the CVRD. This includes \$54.9 million for the Comox Valley Water Treatment Project, which is considered shovel ready and on-schedule with the announcement of the grant.

On the heels of the grant announcement, the CVRD issued a Request for Proposals for a design-build contractor to deliver the new water system. Three pre-qualified proponents will spend the first half of 2019 preparing proposals based on detailed project specifications.

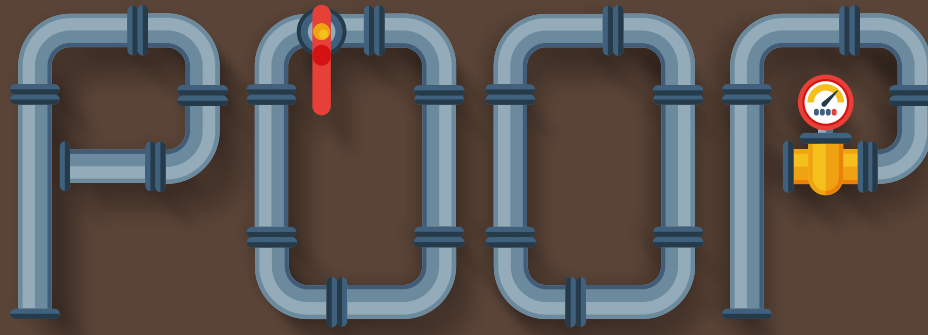
Soon after, the CVRD and the Courtenay and District Fish & Game Protective Association reached an agreement that will see the CVRD acquire a key piece of land and statutory rights-of-way needed for the construction of key infrastructure for the new Comox Valley Water Treatment Project. In exchange, the CVRD will provide the raw water needed for the Fish & Game Association's proposed hatchery project. The association plans to produce 100,000 Coho annually once the hatchery is operational.

What's Next?



For more information on the Comox Valley Water Treatment Project, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/watertreatment

LET'S TALK



Let's Talk Poop – Planning for the Future of Wastewater in Comox and Courtenay

In the summer of 2018, the CVRD initiated the development of a Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) to create a comprehensive plan for the future of wastewater in Courtenay and Comox. This includes the conveyance (pipes and pump stations), treatment and resource recovery for liquid waste in these communities.

The LWMP is a provincially mandated process, with public consultation forming a key requirement for any solutions identified in the plan. A thorough strategy was developed and endorsed by the Sewage Commission and includes opportunities for both face-to-face and online engagement with the community at each key decision point throughout the process. As a first step, residents were provided the opportunity to communicate their key values for the future of the sewer system. Advisory Committees play an important role in developing the



The LWMP is a provincially mandated process, with public consultation forming a key requirement for any solutions identified in the plan."

options that are taken to the public for input and will provide the final recommendations to the Sewage Commission on a preferred option. In September 2018, eight residents were appointed to the Public Advisory Committee to represent their communities. These representatives from Comox, Courtenay and Area B will be essential in ensuring community goals and public opinion and feedback are carefully considered throughout the planning process.

The Committees' first assignment was to draft a set of goals and objectives that would be used to evaluate the options under consideration. These draft objectives were taken to the public in late November 2018 for feedback and then further refined by the committees. The final recommendation will be presented to the Sewage Commission in early 2019.



For more information on the Liquid Waste Management Plan, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/lwmp





Watershed Protection: A Key Focus for the CVRD

The Comox Lake watershed is a multi-use area with multiple owners. Along with providing critical fish and wildlife habitat, hydroelectric power generation and drinking water to approximately 45,000 people, the watershed is also a popular recreational destination and active logging area.

In 2016, the CVRD's Water Committee accepted the Comox Lake Watershed Protection Plan (WPP), which includes 54 recommendations and specific goals to implement these recommendations. The WPP recognizes that high quality drinking water is produced by a healthy ecosystem and requires a "source-to-tap" approach that includes understanding the water supply area and its ecology, identifying hazards and assessing any risks to water quality.

Key to the success of the strategy is the Watershed Advisory Group, comprised of land-owners, regulators and technical advisors. The Advisory Group provided important context to the WPP by identifying the risks to the watershed and will continue to play a key role in its implementation.

Last year, the CVRD began to roll out the outreach and education components of the plan through the launch of its Connected by Water program, which builds capacity, connection and community in support of watershed protection and water conservation.

A key part of this outreach involved consultation with the public and stakeholders to identify where the knowledge gaps exist for the community. In 2019, campaigns and community initiatives will be implemented to address these gaps and refute the myths that exists about the watershed. The program includes the development of a curriculum for K-3 and grade 4-6 students that will be piloted to students in School District 71 next year.



For more information on Watershed Protection, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/watershed

Comox Valley Regional District

2018 Year in Review





3L Developments Inc. Application to Amend the Regional Growth Strategy

In the spring of 2018, the CVRD received a request from 3L Developments Inc. to proceed with their 2013 application to amend the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). On July 24, 2018, the CVRD Board voted to initiate a standard amendment to the RGS and to consider a development proposal by 3L Developments Inc. to establish a new settlement node in Electoral Area C.

On August 14, 2018, the CVRD Board approved the consultation plan for a standard amendment process. The consultation plan included an opportunity for 3L Developments Inc. to present information to the Technical Advisory Committee (which includes

planners from the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and the CVRD) and the Steering Committee (which is comprised of local government Chief Administrative Officers from the Comox Valley).



Throughout the Board review process, many residents attended CVRD meetings to speak as delegations, listen to the discussions and gather information regarding the “Riverwood Proposal”.

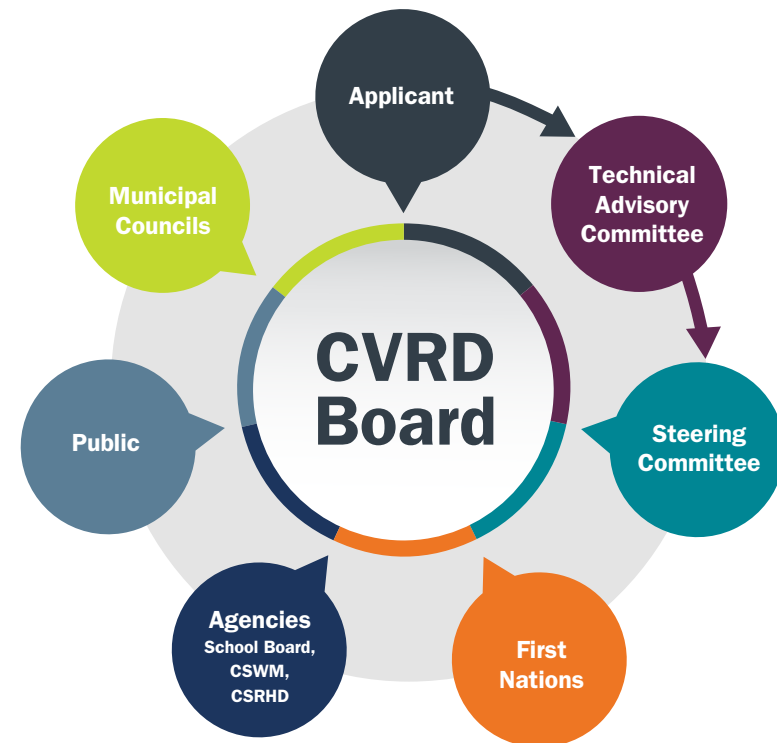
As part of the consultation plan, on September 6, 2018, the CVRD and 3L Developments Inc. held an open house, providing residents with an

opportunity to learn more about the RGS, 3L Development Inc.’s application and the CVRD’s process for moving forward. Approximately 240 residents attended the open house to ask

questions and listen to presentations by CVRD staff and 3L Developments Inc. regarding the proposed “Riverwood” development. 3L Developments Inc.’s proposed amendment for the “Riverwood” development requested the re-designation of rural settlement lands and settlement expansion lands to a settlement node in order to develop a new 1,000 lot subdivision with private water and sewer services. Following the open house, CVRD staff received three petitions, and numerous emails and letters from residents expressing their views about the development. All of this feedback was provided to the CVRD Board for consideration. Throughout the Board review process, many residents attended CVRD meetings to speak as delegations, listen to the discussions and gather information regarding the Riverwood proposal.

At its October 2, 2018 meeting, following careful consideration of the Steering Committee’s report, citizen delegations and additional information from 3L Developments Inc., the CVRD Board made the decision to deny the 3L Developments Inc. application for a new settlement node. This decision aligned with the Steering Committee’s report recommendation that the application be denied based on the foundational principle that a new settlement node is not needed at this time relative to housing unit supply, population projections and demographic trends in the Comox Valley. On October 18, 2018, 3L Developments Inc. served the CVRD with a petition to the Supreme Court of BC requesting, among other things, that the Board’s decision be set aside. On December 18, 2018 the CVRD Board voted in favour of responding to the petition. A court date was set for mid-March 2019. Throughout the process, the CVRD Board remained committed to a fair and transparent process for the application.

Decision Making Process



For more information
visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/3I



CVRD Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw Review Underway

In 2016, the CVRD initiated a review of Comox Valley Zoning Bylaw No. 2781. First adopted in 2005, Bylaw No. 2781 applies only to Electoral Area A, Electoral Area B and Electoral Area C. The purpose of the review is to update the CVRD's zoning regulations to align with the policies and goals set out in the Official Community Plan, adopted in 2014, and the Regional Growth Strategy, adopted in 2011.

The key policy themes underlying the review include:

- ▶ Modernization for clarity, interpretation and administration;
- ▶ Support for agriculture and aquaculture;
- ▶ Support for rural living;
- ▶ Support for aging in place;
- ▶ Enabling implementation of sustainability principles through solar panel and wind energy devices; and
- ▶ Support for rural economic development.

In September 2018, a public hearing was held, based on the approved consultation plan providing residents with an opportunity to ask questions of CVRD staff and provide feedback on the draft bylaw. Approximately 54 residents attended this hearing.

Based on the feedback received from the public hearing, CVRD staff were directed to report back to a future electoral area services meeting with a revised bylaw and consultation plan. Further work and consultation for the bylaw review process will be undertaken in 2019.



For more information on the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw Review, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/zoningreview



Merville Fire Protection Service: A Phased Approach

The Merville Fire Protection Service project is undergoing a phased approach for the development of an auxiliary fire hall within the Merville community.

A public engagement session was held in August 2018, providing residents with an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the proposed fire protection service, including the estimated timeline and project costs. During the session, residents also received information on how they can become involved as a volunteer firefighter for the Merville area, partnering with Oyster River Fire Rescue.

In the fall of 2018, a full complement of volunteers was recruited for the Merville Fire Protection Service, which is essential to provide fire protection in the area. These volunteers will ensure quick response times and will provide an enhanced medical first responder service to the community.

Next steps in this project include acquiring land suitable for an auxiliary fire hall in the community and continued volunteer training.

The budget for the Merville Fire Protection Service project includes funds for the auxiliary hall site, building, equipment and training for volunteers. The CVRD is committed to ensuring the project is cost-efficient and that property owners pay an equitable amount towards project and service operations. Upon completion, it is anticipated that the new protection service could result in more favourable insurance rates for property owners in the area.



**For more information on the
Merville Fire Protection Services project,
visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/mervillefire**

Mt. Washington Fire Services Project Moves Forward

Since December 2017, Oyster River Fire Rescue (ORFR) has provided fire protection services to residents and property owners of Mt. Washington. In 2018, the resort community continued to benefit from access to a dedicated and well trained group of volunteers responding to fire incidents.

Throughout the past year, the ORFR held several training exercises on the mountain to familiarize its firefighters with the area during its various seasons and conditions. As part of winter-readiness, hydrant snorkels were installed on key fire hydrants, extending the fire hose connection to above the snow level for quicker access by the fire department.



To ensure readiness during the warm summer months, a dedicated Mt. Washington fire truck was stationed on the mountain throughout the summer. This truck will be stored on the mountain permanently following completion of the new Mt. Washington Fire Services building.

Construction of this new building is anticipated in 2021.



For more information on the Mt. Washington Fire Services Project, visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/mtwashingtonfireproject



New Fire Hall Opens On Hornby Island

In February 2018, Hornby Island Fire Rescue officially opened its new fire hall with a grand-opening celebration under sunny skies. The festivities began with a parade from the old fire hall to the new building, led by past and present fire fighters. Many Hornby Island residents, CVRD staff and elected officials joined the celebration. Once at the new hall, a traditional “wetting down” ceremony took place to welcome the new tanker truck to the fleet.

Construction of the new fire hall began in the spring of 2016. Designed to accommodate 25 volunteer firefighters, the hall meets seismic and post-disaster criteria and follows construction guidelines and principles for sustainability and practical innovation. Building features include drive-through fire truck apparatus bays, as well as a training area and meeting space.



Designed to accommodate 25 volunteer firefighters, the hall meets seismic and post-disaster criteria and follows construction guidelines and principles for sustainability and practical innovation.”



For more information on the project, visit www.comoxvalleyvrd.ca/hornbyislandfirehall



Denman Cross-Island Trail Next Steps

As the Denman Cross Island Trail continues towards full build out, 2018 saw further consultation on the project.

An online survey was issued in the fall of 2018, to seek community feedback on trail and park priorities, as well as potential trail alignments. CVRD Parks staff also set up an information booth at the Denman Island Farmer's market, providing an opportunity to hear from residents on their preferred route options for the unconstructed segments of the trail.

To date, approximately five kilometres of the Denman Cross Island Trail has been constructed, consisting of a mix of forested and open trail. The long term goal is to have a continuous trail from the Denman West ferry terminal to the Gravelly Bay ferry terminal.

The most recently completed section of the trail runs from Swan Road to Corrigan Road, adjacent to Denman Road and East Road;

creating a safe, fully separated, multi-use path away from the East Road corner and vehicle traffic. With this new section, the trail is now complete from the Village centre to Corrigan Road, aside from the steep Denman Road hill section. This newest section of trail uses a finer surfacing material which creates a smoother surface for cyclists, pedestrians and horses.

Following the feedback gathered from the 2018 public engagement opportunities, plans and priorities will be put in place for the next steps of the project.



For more information please visit
www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/crossislandtrail



Transit Service Expands in the Comox Valley

In August 2018, Comox Valley Transit was expanded to include increased service levels, improved connections and revised routes to high density areas; helping connect residents to key destinations throughout the region.

This restructuring was made possible thanks to the addition of 4,000 new service hours to the Comox Valley Transit System, and involved establishing a frequent transit network between Courtenay and Comox; a near-term priority identified in the Transit Future Plan. Transit riders are now offered a 20 minute frequency in each direction during weekday peak periods when travelling between Walmart and Comox Mall via downtown Courtenay and North Island College. In addition, Friday and Saturday service is extended until approximately 11:30 pm on two major routes serving Cumberland, Courtenay and Comox.

Changes to rider fares were also introduced. These include: a single one-way cash fare of \$2 for all customers; new fares for youth, post-secondary students, seniors and families; and simplified monthly pass fares to make ridership more affordable for post-secondary students and seniors.

In addition, transit riders now have access to NextRide online, which allows users to plan their trip and find out where the next bus is in real-time.



For more information about transit in the Comox Valley visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/transit



Arenas Meet New Ammonia Plant Regulations

CVRD recreation staff worked diligently to meet new ammonia plant regulations at the Comox Valley Sports Centre arenas in 2018.

Following a fatal ammonia plant accident at a Fernie ice arena in the fall of 2017, Technical Safety BC rolled out new province-wide rules and regulations for arenas that saw the Sports Centre arenas undergo a retrofit for their ammonia ice plants.

Recreation staff worked diligently and took part in regular inspections over the course of the year to have the Sports Centre's two ice plants certified and compliant to fully meet the new safety regulations.

Upgrades included updated procedures and emergency protocols, enhanced visual and audio alarms to ensure consistency for

colour and sound, and a new ice plant vestibule. In addition, staff worked with the City of Courtenay Fire Department and the Comox Valley Emergency Program to review an evacuation plan. These enhancements ensure that the arenas meet new WorkSafe BC standards and promote the continued safety of staff and patrons at the Comox Valley Sports Centre.



Upgrades included updated procedures and emergency protocols, enhanced visual and audio alarms to ensure consistency for colour and sound, and a new ice plant vestibule."



Connecting Sandwich to the Comox Valley Water System

The CVRD has been operating and managing the Sandwich Water Local Service Area since January 1, 2017. In 2018, construction began on a new watermain to connect the Sandwich water system to an existing watermain on the Island Highway. Final completion is anticipated in spring 2019, when residents of Sandwich will be permanently connected to the Comox Valley Water System.

Water meters were installed in Sandwich in 2018, which will allow customers to only pay for the water they actually use. As a result, residents can directly benefit from any efficient water use measures they choose to implement. The CVRD began a mock billing period that will run until April 2019, before Sandwich residents receive their first metered water bills. During this period, customers will be

able to see how their water bill changes through the seasons and better understand how their water use will affect their water bill.



Final completion is anticipated in Spring 2019, when residents of Sandwich will be permanently connected to the Comox Valley Water System.”



For more information on the Sandwich Water Local Service Area, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/sandwich

Planning for the Future of the Tsolum River Watershed

Agricultural activity has a long history in the Tsolum River watershed and plays an important role in the economy. In addition to providing drinking water for homes, businesses, a school and community centres, the watershed and its aquifers provide water that is critical to the local agricultural community, fish habitat and the health of the river.

The Comox Valley has one of the most favourable growing climates in the country and with an increasing awareness of the benefits of eating locally, it is expected that investment in agriculture will grow. However, with increasingly warmer winter temperatures less snowpack accumulates, which results in less reliable and lower summer flows at the time that agricultural producers, fish and residents need water the most.

In 2017, the CVRD and the Ministry of Agriculture used an Agricultural Water Demand Model to estimate current and future agricultural water needs in the Tsolum River watershed. The model showed that agricultural water needs could increase as much as 463 per cent on average and up to 500 per cent in a worst case scenario. These projections make it clear that planning for the future management of water in the Tsolum River watershed is of utmost importance.

The CVRD partnered with the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia to develop a plan to address ongoing and future concerns about water availability in the Tsolum River watershed. As part of phase one of the Tsolum River Agricultural Watershed Plan, a public meeting was held in October 2018, providing community members with an informal opportunity to learn more about the plan and to connect directly with project representatives. Community members were also invited to provide input through an online survey.

Analysis of the information gathered on water and agriculture in the Tsolum River watershed was conducted in December 2018, and a final phase one report, including recommendations for further plan development, will be complete in early 2019.



For more information on the Tsolum River Watershed Project, please visit
www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/tsolumwatershed



Biosolids Composting Facility Expansion

Construction for an expansion to the CVRD's biosolids composting facility began in the summer of 2018. The current facility opened in 2003 and uses aerated bunker technology to cure solids removed from the wastewater system, which are mixed with wood chips to create the soil amendment SkyRocket.

The facility expansion will include retrofits to the current infrastructure, the addition of a new mixer and primary screening system, development of a new curing building and turner, and improved leachate collection. It will also incorporate new heat exchanges to reduce composting time in the winter and provide additional storage room for the finished product. The project is expected to be complete by the spring of 2019.

The biosolids composting facility serves as an innovative way to reduce waste. The expansion will increase the facility's capacity



by 35 per cent to accommodate growth in the region over the next 15 years. The planned upgrades will not only increase operational efficiency, but will also improve safety for the facility operators. Additionally, a more controlled curing process will provide greater confidence in meeting the highest class of compost requirements.



For more information the
Biosolids Composting Facility, please visit
www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/biosolids



Construction Completed on the Greenwood Trunk Regional Sewer Line

In December 2018, construction was completed on the Greenwood Trunk Sanitary Sewer Collection Line, diverting wastewater away from East Courtenay. The new line bypasses the Courtenay pump station to move wastewater from East Courtenay and CFB Comox directly to the sewage treatment plant on Brent Road. Construction on the Greenwood Trunk Sanitary Sewer Collection Line began in June 2018 and, with the community's support, this project was finished on-time and on-budget.

Diverting wastewater away from the Courtenay pump station will increase capacity in the region's sewer service to help accommodate future growth in the community. These updates to the system represent one of the ways the CVRD is preparing for ongoing residential growth in the region.

Numbers at a Glance

2,750m	Total length of pipe line
\$3.5M	Project construction value
23	Number of weeks to substantial completion
29 + 2	Regular concrete + fiberglass flow metering manholes



For more information on the Greenwood Trunk Regional Sewer Line, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/greenwoodtrunk



Odour Control Upgrades to Brent Road Facility

The CVRD completed upgrades to the Comox Valley Wastewater Pollution Control Centre, including the installation of new odour control technology to significantly minimize odours both within the plant and the surrounding community.



Odour control upgrades completed in 2018 include the installation of permanent covers for the primary clarifiers and a dual bed activated carbon polisher to further treat air and reduce odours.”

Over many years, the CVRD has undergone significant study work to better understand the source of odours and to develop a strategy to improve odour control at the Comox Valley Wastewater Pollution Control Centre. As a result of that work, the CVRD proposed a strategy to improve odour control at the facility and the Comox Valley Sewage Commission approved several important upgrades.

Odour control upgrades completed in 2018 include the installation of permanent covers for the primary clarifiers and a dual bed activated carbon polisher to further treat air and reduce odours. These upgrades to the sewage treatment process will greatly reduce the impact of odour for residents living near the Brent Road facility.



For more information on this project, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/odourcontrol



Back row, left to right: Maureen Swift, Bob Wells, David Frisch, Doug Hillian, Jesse Ketler, Ken Grant and Wendy Morin
Front row, left to right: Daniel Arbour, Arzeena Hamir, Edwin Grieve

Citizens Elect New Board

Mayors, councillors and electoral area directors play an integral role in local government service provision and governance; representing taxpayers and citizens and determining what services are provided to meet their community's needs. These positions are elected to office by local citizens every four years as part of general local elections held across BC.

In 2018, the general voting day was October 20th, which saw CVRD staff working diligently to administer the election process and engage in outreach to encourage voter participation leading up to this important date. With a number of different local governance bodies participating in the elections, the CVRD in partnership with the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox and Village of Cumberland, engaged in a cooperative outreach program to ensure the public was informed about the election process. Between August and October 2018, residents were informed of the general voting day, opportunities to cast their ballots and the importance of voting through a series of promotions delivered on the transit system and through social media, newspaper and radio.

In addition, the CVRD and local municipalities joined forces to host

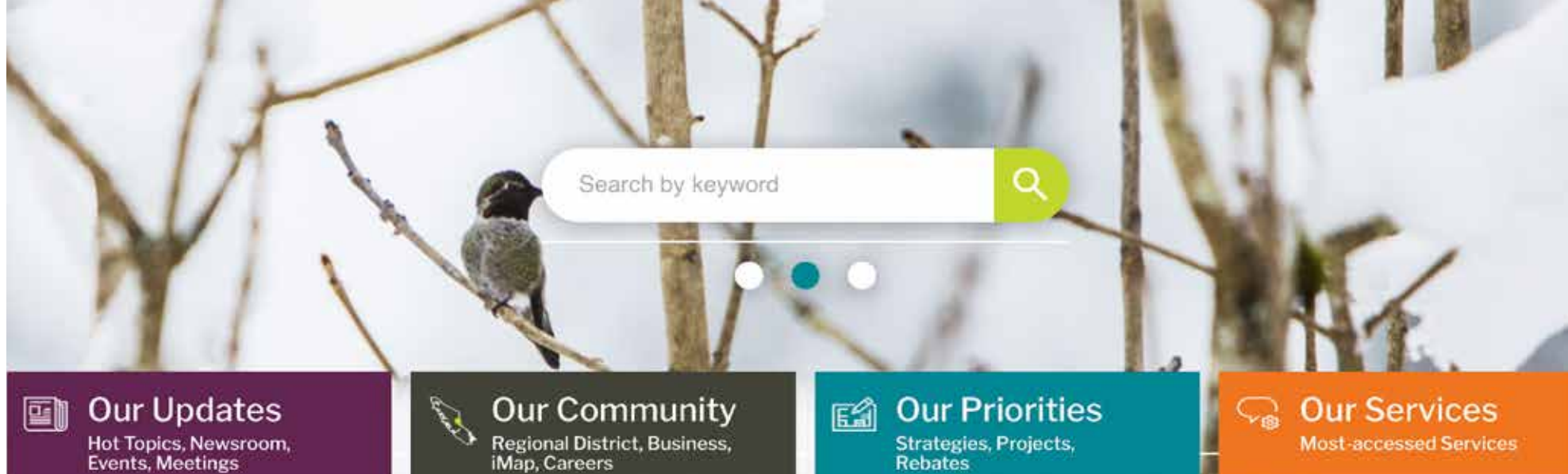
an information session for individuals considering running for elected office. The session addressed a range of subjects including decision making in local government, roles and responsibilities, responsible conduct and other relevant topics.

The campaign supported a continuing trend of increasing voter participation over the last 10 years within the Comox Valley. In 2018, nearly every jurisdiction saw increased voter turnout from the previous election in 2014, with the average turnout increasing from 36.67 per cent to 38.62 per cent.

These results reinforce the value of the CVRD and other jurisdictions delivering outreach programs to encourage citizens to directly engage in determining their local governance bodies, as their vote, opinions, values and concerns matter.



For more information on the 2018 elections, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/2018elections



CVRD Launches New Website, Winning Prestigious Marcom Award



The CVRD launched a new website in March 2018, providing users with easy access to improved information and resources on its over 100 services.

Being the first overhaul of the website in five years, the refresh provided ample areas for improvement, as well as the opportunity to introduce new technology and features. Feedback to move forward with the \$47,000 redesign was received by staff, residents and the CVRD Board throughout the entire project.

Some of the enhancements include mobile capability, improved navigation, advanced search functionality and improved visuals. Additionally, all of the website content was reorganized and rewritten to improve user accessibility and comprehension. With over 46 per cent of residents visiting the website through cell phones and tablets, it is critical that the site was mobile friendly.

In October 2018, the CVRD learned that it received a Gold MarCom Award for its new website, developed by Upanup Studios.

The MarCom Awards are an international creative competition recognizing outstanding achievements by marketing and communication professionals. In 2018, MarCom received over 6,000 entries and winners range from Fortune 500 companies, to government organizations, non-profits and private sector companies. Receiving the award is a tremendous honour and demonstrates the value of the CVRD's revised tool and how well it reflects the region.



To see the new website visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca



Have Your Say on Connect CVRD

In May 2018, the CVRD launched Connect CVRD, a new online engagement tool that will be used year-round to consult with residents on CVRD projects and initiatives. From “Let’s Talk Poop” to “Connected by Water”, residents have opportunities to ask questions, provide feedback and help shape the future of projects that matter to them.

The new tool allows residents to be part of the conversation at a time and place that is convenient for them. All feedback collected will be part of the decision making process for the CVRD Board to consider. To be part of the discussions, residents are encouraged to register following the simple process below:

- Step 1** Visit: www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/connectcvrld
- Step 2** Register through the “[Register Now](#)” link provided
- Step 3** Get involved and be part of the conversation on Connect CVRD



For more information and to register, please visit www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/connectcvrld

Comox Strathcona Waste Management

Board of Directors



Back row, left to right Larry Jangula (City of Courtenay), Charlie Cornfield (City of Campbell River), Noba Anderson (SRD Area B), Julie Colborne (Village of Zeballos), Brad Unger (Village of Gold River), John MacDonald (Village of Sayward), Rod Nichol (CVRD Area B), Bruce Jolliffe (CVRD Area A), Bob Wells (City of Courtenay), Ron Kerr (City of Campbell River), Erik Eriksson (City of Courtenay) **Front row, left to right** Maureen Swift (Town of Comox alternate for Ken Grant), Dan Mackenzie (SRD Area C alternate for Jim Abram), late Jude Schooner (Village of Tahsis), Brenda Leigh (SRD Area D), Gwyneth Sproule (Village of Cumberland), Marlene Wright (City of Campbell River alternate for Michele Babchuk), Marg Grant (Town of Comox alternate for Barbara Price), Edwin Grieve (CVRD Area C), Gerald Whalley (SRD Area A), Larry Samson (City of Campbell River), Colleen Evans (City of Campbell River alternate for Andrew Adams), Manno Theos (City of Courtenay) Missing from photo Roger Kishi (Village of Cumberland alternate for Gwyneth Sproule)



Illegal Dumping Campaign Expands

Illegal dumping is a growing problem. In 2017, the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) Board approved a new public education strategy and introduced an illegal dumping bylaw, aimed at reducing the amount of illegally dumped items throughout the region. During the first year, efforts were focused on rolling out a public education campaign, coordinated in collaboration with local partners, and increasing the proactive response to identifying offenders and reducing illegal dumping. As a result, 120 illegal dump sites were reported and dozens of dumpers identified.

The illegal dumping prevention program continued to grow in 2018. New signage was installed at the waste management centres, as well as at known problem dump sites. Adding signage demonstrated to the community that the CSWM Board is taking the matter seriously and is actively looking to identify illegal dumpers. Pamphlets and online resources were made available to RCMP, Crime Stoppers, CSWM waste educators and staff throughout the service area.

The program worked successfully with many partners including timber companies, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, BC Hydro, First Nations and other large landowners. This collaboration has been instrumental in the ongoing success of the program including providing our enforcement staff with access to private land in order to monitor dump sites and promote clean-up efforts in remote locations.

Volunteer groups continue to support and promote the program through online sources and speaking with the public. Building on the success of the program launch, implementation of the second phase of the campaign will focus on Campbell River and the surrounding area.



For more information on illegal dumping visit
www.cswm.ca/illegaldumping



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Connecting with Students

In addition to managing over 100,000 tonnes of waste and recycled materials each year, Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) service provides a wide range of educational programs that encourage region-wide waste reduction efforts and responsible waste disposal. Education will play a key role in meeting the Solid Waste Management Plan goal of diverting 70 per cent of waste from landfills by 2022.

2018 saw the CVRD reach several important milestones to evolve these educational programs and increase their reach throughout the Comox Valley and Strathcona Regional Districts.

The CSWM education program includes a variety of classroom workshops that are designed to engage different learning styles and stay current with emerging issues. In the spring and fall of 2018, over 135 school workshops were run throughout School District 71, School District 72 and School District 84 by CSWM contract educators. An additional 55 school field trips were held at the Comox Strathcona Garden Education Centre, an increase from 27 trips in 2017.

School District 71 and CSWM worked collaboratively to create solid waste management resources for students and educators; completing two inquiry units together, one for primary grades and one for intermediate. These units offer a selection of activities, videos, books and websites to help educators initiate inquiries in their classroom.

All the curriculum resources and classroom workshops are offered free of charge to schools throughout the CSWM service area and will support teachers in their efforts to promote sustainable practices in the classroom, while tying the content directly to the BC Curriculum. Providing resources for classrooms to access at their own pace enables them to be incorporated throughout the school year, expanding the reach of CSWM educational programs beyond a single classroom educator visit. Changing behaviours over the long term takes time. Investing in the people and programs that reach the community's school-aged children represents one of the ways CSWM is working to promote responsible waste disposal and influence the choices students, parents and teachers alike make in the future.



comoxvalleyrd.ca   

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