

# Communications Summary

## 2020 Financial Plan

**CRD** | Corporate Communications

### Purpose

This report serves as a summary of communication activities conducted following provisional approval of the 2020 financial plan to build awareness of the financial plan and collect feedback from residents.

### Background

The CRD Financial Plan consists of individual service and sub-service agreements and budgets; some of which are recommended directly through standing committees to the Board, and others which are recommended by advisory committees and commissions with various degrees of delegated authority.

Under the *Local Government Act*, regional districts must annually adopt, by bylaw, a five-year financial plan by March 31. Regional district financial plans are based on individual services and show the proposed expenditures, funding sources, and transfers between funds for each service.

Section 816 of the *Local Government Act* stipulates the following process requirements for a financial plan:

- 1) A board must undertake a process of public consultation regarding the proposed financial plan before it is adopted.
- 2) The designated regional district officer must send a copy of the financial plan to each municipality in the regional district and to the inspector.

The *Act* does not specify or provide any information on the scope or type of public consultation that must be carried out. The CRD reviews financial plan information in open meetings for which notifications are given in local newspapers. The financial information is also made available on the CRD website. In addition, various CRD commissions and committees receive input leading up to the preparation of budgets in the form of user statistics, surveys, advisory body reports, annual operational reports and from a wide variety of public engagement activities. Local and sub-regional commissions may also include rate payer representatives.

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### Communications Activities

In addition to the above mentioned engagement activities, the CRD augments the process with web, media and social media materials aimed at increasing understanding of the CRD's financial position, with the following objectives:

- Inform residents about the preliminary financial plan through website, media, and social media communications.
- Illustrate the CRD's commitment to fiscal responsibility and provide opportunity for feedback to the CRD Board through an online form.
- Correct any misconceptions or misunderstandings about the financial plan or process.

Activities to support these objectives are summarized below.

#### Web pages and feedback form:

The [Budget in Brief page](#) was updated to include a feedback form that meets privacy and consent requirements, infographics explaining the process and the proposed financial plan, and links to key documents.

During the feedback period, the web page received 306 unique page views. 4 comments were submitted via the feedback form that were forwarded to the Board correspondence portal to be reviewed alongside related correspondence.

#### Media materials:

Bulletins were sent to media to help build understanding of the preliminary financial plan, how plans are prepared and approved and how to provide feedback. In addition, the Board Chair wrote an op-ed that was distributed to and printed by two local print outlets.

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- [Media Info Bulletin](#): “CRD Board Approves Amended 2020 Provisional Financial Plan” issued October 31, 2019.
- [CRD Board Chair Colin Plant’s Editorial](#) posted in Media Room November 12, 2019.
- [Media Info Bulletin](#): “Public Feedback Encouraged on the 2020 CRD Provisional Financial Plan” issued December 20, 2019.

**Social Media:** Staff scheduled social media posts using graphics and key messages from the website and media materials, inviting residents to visit the website to review details and provide feedback. Twitter and Facebook posts scheduled during the feedback period are summarized below. In total, Facebook posts resulted in 4,396 impressions (number of times they appeared on newsfeeds) and Twitter activity resulted in 14,871 impressions.