

2024 Financial Plan

Public Engagement Report

This report provides a summary of public engagement activities conducted following provisional approval of the 2024 Financial Plan.

Under the *Local Government Act*, regional districts must annually adopt, by bylaw, a five-year financial plan by March 31. Section 374 stipulates that a board must undertake a process of public consultation regarding the proposed financial plan before it is adopted. 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. This input is augmented by a public feedback period from October 2023 – February 2024, focused on the following objectives:

- Inform residents about the financial planning process and outcomes through digital channels (website, social media) and media coverage.
- Collect public feedback about the provisional financial plan to be shared with the board as part of the final budget review and approval process.
- Correct misconceptions about the service and financial planning process or details of the financial plan.

Engagement Methods

“Get Involved” Website

The CRD uses its digital engagement site [GetInvolved.crd.bc.ca](https://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca) to share details of the provisional plan, invite feedback, and answer questions. Comments were collected using an online form then forwarded to the Board via the correspondence portal upon receipt. Provisional plan information remains available online at: [2024 Financial Plan | Get Involved CRD](#)

During the feedback period, 1,074 visits resulted in three levels of participation:

- Aware (visited at least one page): 769 participants.
- Informed (downloaded documents, visited multiple pages): 368 participants.
- Engaged (shared comments or asked questions): 13 participants.

The most popular documents viewed were the Provisional Budget Presentation, Consolidated Budget Overview and Capital Projects List.

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Public Information Session

On January 17, 2024, residents were invited to an online public information session to learn how the regional district develops budgets, makes decisions, and delivers services with consideration of community needs and impact on taxpayers. The presentation also included an overview of the 2024 taxes, rates, and consolidated budget figures, as well as key capital projects planned.

- [View the recorded 2024 Provisional Financial Plan Information Session](#)
- [Information Session Presentation](#) [PDF]

Residents were encouraged to participate, ask questions, and be actively involved in the financial planning process. For those unable to attend, the information session was recorded and published to the CRD's engagement website.

Media & Stakeholder Information

An information bulletin was sent to media following provisional plan approval October 30, 2023. The bulletin highlighted the preliminary financial plan, next steps and how to share feedback. A second information bulletin was distributed on January 3, 2024 inviting members of the public to learn more about the 2024 provisional financial plan at an online information session.

Agenda items from the Committee of the Whole meeting and links for more information were included in the Board Highlights e-newsletter sent to subscribers in November. The Chair also highlighted the preliminary financial plan and next steps in his monthly CFA update in November.

- Information Bulletin: [CRD and CRHD look for public feedback on the 2024 provisional financial plans](#) October 30, 2023
- [CRD Board Highlights: November 2023](#)
- [CFA Interview](#) November 8, 2023
- Information Bulletin: [The CRD invites members of the public to learn more about the 2024 Provisional Financial Plan](#) January 3, 2024

Social Media

Staff scheduled a series of post on social media that provided a snapshot of budget initiatives using rich media (a combination of animated gifs and video). Each post included a call to action to learn more on the Get Involved website to drive further audience engagement. A summary of posts is provided below.

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- Facebook posts reached approximately 15,000 people with a 5.6% engagement rate (percentage of people who clicked, liked, shared or commented).
- X posts resulted in approximately 4,933 (number of times people saw a tweet) with a 4.7% engagement rate.
- LinkedIn posts resulted in approximately 5,200 impressions with a 3.75% engagement rate.

A summary of posts is included as an appendix to this report.

Responses

The following comments were received by the CRD via an online comment form and are provided to the Board as part of the annual final budget review and approval process.

Date received	Please provide your feedback on the CRD's provisional financial plan.
2023-11-10 14:45:54 - 0800	the budget should not exceed that of last year. ideally it should be reduced by 3.5% inkeeping with the fiscal responsibility the CRD has to keep taxes on all properties affordable. I'm sure that the CRD can cut waste to achieve this
2024-01-06 16:18:29 - 0800	The recent announcement of the CRD board wishing to borrow money towards affordable housing and adding this to our already burdened tax bill is not acceptable. As pensioners our townhouse complex, the assessed valued has gone up over 60% in the past 2 years (nothing like the publicized 5%) and we who are not planning on selling or moving elsewhere are finding this increased level is becoming unmanageable. We are born and bred Victorians, have worked hard our entire lives and have scrounged to acquire housing ownership. The thought of spending our money on housing for those who really can't afford to live in Victoria proper is very unfair. There are affordable options outside of inner Greater Victoria and these should be the focus of building advocates.

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2024-01-11 12:06:35 - 0800	It's my opinion that the CRD budget should be fiscally conservative. Now is not the time to add unnecessary debt to the taxpayer's already onerous load.
2024-01-11 15:47:16 - 0800	NO on authorizing ANY borrowing for housing. This issue is not within the CRD's purview. Stay out of that lane. It belongs to the province and the federal government.
2024-01-14 16:48:14 - 0800	I am not in favor of spending 74 million on housing Where can I vote against it?
2024-01-24 22:39:22 - 0800	<p>Thank you to staff for your hard work.</p> <p>Please invest more in mountain biking trails. Thetis Lake Trail system needs a climbing trail and trails with interesting features like berms, log rides, small jumps and other fun features that make kids want to ride it. The current trail is too steep for hikers and riders.</p> <p>Please put in a multi-use climbing trail to the top of Mount Work.</p> <p>Please invest in a new campground. Extending Island View Beach operating season by 1 month per year isn't enough.</p> <p>Please advertise the Campground a little more. It would see much high occupancy if you only allowed people to check the campground sites before having to log in.</p> <p>The drinking water at Island View Beach is right beside the outhouse. Apparently this is in contravention of waste water regulations.</p> <p>Please budget for running water and flush toilets at Island View Beach. Take care of the fruit trees. They are wonderful and the CRD is not taking care of them.</p> <p>Please put up signage at Mount Work addressing the dog waste problems. More beginner and intermediate mountain biking trails are needed. The CRD</p>

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	hasn't done enough for mountain biking yet. Thanks for considering these comments.
2024-01-25 17:13:12 - 0800	I approve no new funds for CRD. Until such time as the Crd looks into approving land, use that already exist to provide infrastructure for a another road in and out of Sooke. I support zero funding going forward.
2024-01-31 09:26:43 - 0800	I DO NOT agree with the CRD borrowing 85 million to purchase land for housing. This is strictly a Provincial Government responsibility for not only Vancouver Island but all of BC. Too many areas are trying to get involved with housing when this does not fall under their jurisdiction. I am a resident of Colwood.
2024-02-07 12:54:15 - 0800	Please stop borrowing money and reduce expenditures to balance budget. You are making it more expensive to live here
2024-02-11 10:14:58 - 0800	Board Priority Housing Residents have access to affordable housing that enhances livability. 2a Increase supply of affordable, inclusive and adequate housing in the region Suggest: The CRD has neglected existing housing, leading to diminished landfill capacity and a surplus of abandoned properties while unaffordable short-lived pre-fabs are erected. In James Bay, rental homes suffer from inadequate heat, lack of insulation, missing eavestroughs and long-standing roof and structural issues, fostering a habitat for raccoons and rats. This neglect disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, including the poor, elderly, and disabled, who endure substandard living conditions and face complex complaint procedures and the real fear the owner will sell if they request heat or repairs. To address the alarming prevalence of slum lording in James Bay, downtown motels and beyond, proactive measures are needed: 1. Establish a task force comprising staff that are already work in designated areas: building and utility inspectors, garbage collectors, and police departments. Train them to identify and report bylaw violations threatening

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	<p>occupants' health and housing integrity, utilizing tools like Google Street View as well. Follow through with enforcement and report existing housing stock livability to the CRD.</p> <p>2. Introduce financial instruments like CRD-sponsored reverse mortgages, low-interest loans, or buy-outs for property owners unable or unwilling to maintain habitable properties.</p> <p>3. Restrict the sale of decrepit housing with tenants inside, offering first right of refusal to tenant groups or existing occupants to prevent slumlords from profiting at the community's expense.</p> <p>4. Collaborate with organizations like Habitat for Humanity to rehabilitate homes with financially constrained owners. Proceeds from property sales should re-fund NGOs or trade training groups, before going to owners or heirs who failed to maintain the properties.</p> <p>5. For every new housing proposal of 7 units or more a surcharge towards funding loans, trade school sourced repairs, NGOs and reverse mortgages for existing stock should be established instead of empty unenforced promises of market rate housing.</p>
2024-02-25 04:16:54 - 0800	<p>You should not create a plan or budget that would increase the homeowners' property taxes. We have already experienced a 60% increase in our mortgage payments over the last two years. Stop penalizing homeowners for everything happening in the community. Perhaps you should consider taxing renters as they are also members of the community.</p>

Questions

The project team added the following FAQs related to tax impacts and the housing borrowing bylaw:

What does the CRD do to reduce tax impacts on residents?

The Board reviews and approves Service and Financial Planning Guidelines each year that shape how we manage resources required while reducing the impact on the upcoming budget. This work includes:

- Changing the timing of initiatives to reduce overall impact on budget. An example of this work for 2024 includes deferring the creation and hiring of 11 full-time staff positions.
- Evaluating how to deliver services more cost-effectively.
- Mitigating impacts on taxes by finding areas where reserve funding can be used responsibly.

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- Reviewing reserve funds every year.

For more about our planning process, visit: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/about/financial-accountability/budget-planning-process>

Is the \$85 million proposed borrowing for housing included in this process?

No. The focus of the financial plan for 2024 is to outline resources required for the next five years based on approved initiatives and service levels. The borrowing bylaw proposed is subject to electoral approval and you can participate in that process on our website at www.crd.bc.ca/landbanking-aap. Should the borrowing bylaw be adopted, debt will not be incurred, and therefore requisition will not increase, until funding is approved for a specific project or through an annual planning approval process.

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APPENDIX: SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS BY CHANNEL

FACEBOOK



We're excited to share the CRD's 2024 preliminary Financial plan, and we want your input. Your feedback shapes our community's future....

Like Comment Share



Capital Regional District

November 21, 2023 · 🌐

The Regional Trestles Renewal, Trails Widening, and Lighting Project is part of the 2024 preliminary financial plan. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oytgKX1e-Xs>
Want to know more about the diverse scope of services the CRD provides? You can learn more and provide feedback at <https://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/2024-financial-plan>



YOUTUBE.COM

Regional Trails Widening and Lighting


The Capital Regional District (CRD) is considering widening and lighting certain sections of the...


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 **Capital Regional District**
December 11, 2023 · 🌐



Ensuring safe and healthy water systems is a top priority for us at CRD! Our commitment is reflected in the 2024 budget, which includes the replacement of the regional water supply Ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system which helps keep our water clean of parasites and harmful bacteria. https://youtu.be/wA7ZgnCCjIE?si=B43zvISHbMw10xl_
Find out more about the CRD's 2024 budget <https://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/2024-financial-plan>





YOUTUBE.COM 


Greater Victoria Water Supply System: An Overview
The Greater Victoria Water Supply Area spans over 200 square kilometres of forested land and...

CRD's 2024 Preliminary Financial Plan



From housing to hospitals the CRD is investing in the well-being of our communities.

004 / 025  

From housing to hospitals, the scope of CRD services is diverse. Want to learn more? Then check out our 2024 preliminary financial plan... 

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X

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CRD and CRHD look for public feedback on the 2024 provisional financial plans [#crdNews](#)

NEWS

crd.bc.ca
CRD and CRHD look for public feedback on the 2024 provisi
The Capital Regional District (CRD) and Capital Regional
Hospital District (CRHD) Boards are asking for feedback o...

11:15 AM · Oct 30, 2023 · 403 Views

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getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/2024-financial...



CRD's 2024 Preliminary Financial Plan

The CRD delivers a variety of services for the people of the capital region

0:03 / 0:31

2:10 PM · Nov 2, 2023 · 377 Views

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CRD @crd_bc

Want to know how the CRD supplies services to the people of the capital region? Our 2024 preliminary financial plan is ready for your review at getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/2024-financial...



9:00 AM · Nov 9, 2023 · 287 Views

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Want to know more about the diverse scope of services the CRD provides? Go to



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11:00 AM · Dec 1, 2023 · 426 Views

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Ensuring safe and healthy water is a top priority for us! Our commitment is reflected in the 2024 budget, which includes replacing the regional water supply Ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system. youtu.be/wA7ZgnCCjIE?si...
Find out more about the CRD's budget



getinvolved.crd.bc.ca
2024 Financial Plan
The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board reviewed and approved the provisional Financial Plan for 2024 at a ...

10:10 AM · Dec 11, 2023 · 304 Views

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The CRD invites members of the public to learn more about the 2024 Provisional Financial Plan [#crdNews](#)

NEWS

crd.bc.ca
The CRD invites members of the public to learn more about The Capital Regional District (CRD) is pleased to invite members of the public to an online information session ...

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10:05 AM · Jan 9, 2024 · 491 Views

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WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

The CRD's 2024 Provisional Budget consultation is open until February 26

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CRD's 2024 Preliminary Financial Plan

The CRD delivers a variety of services for the people of the capital region

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Regional Trails Widening and Lighting
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WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

2024 CONSOLIDATED BUDGET

CRD + CRHD + CRHC

\$724M


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Ensuring safe and healthy water systems is a top priority for us at CRD! Our commitment is reflected in the 2024 budget, which includes the replacement of the regional water supply Ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system which helps keep our water clean of parasites and harmful bacteria. <https://lnkd.in/gFhPpC5T>
Find out more about the CRD's 2024 budget <https://lnkd.in/gGe4itb3>



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From housing to hospitals the CRD is investing in the well-being of our communities.

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