



## Notice of Meeting and Meeting Agenda First Nations Relations Committee

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Wednesday, September 7, 2022

9:30 AM

6th Floor Boardroom  
625 Fisgard St.  
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

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### Special Meeting

M. Tait (Chair), B. Desjardins (Vice Chair), P. Brent, F. Haynes, B. Isitt, K. Murdoch, G. Orr, J. Ranns, L. Seaton, K. Williams, C. Plant (Board Chair, ex-officio)

The Capital Regional District strives to be a place where inclusion is paramount and all people are treated with dignity. We pledge to make our meetings a place where all feel welcome and respected.

#### 1. Territorial Acknowledgement

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

#### 3. Presentations/Delegations

*The public are welcome to attend CRD Board meetings in-person.*

*Delegations will have the option to participate electronically. Please complete the online application at [www.crd.bc.ca/address](http://www.crd.bc.ca/address) no later than 4:30 pm two days before the meeting and staff will respond with details. Alternatively, you may email your comments on an agenda item to the CRD Board at [crdboard@crd.bc.ca](mailto:crdboard@crd.bc.ca).*

#### 4. Special Meeting Matters

##### 4.1. [22-519](#) Indigenous Intercultural Skills Training for Board Directors

**Recommendation:** The First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:  
That staff be directed to offer Directors a series of Indigenous intercultural training, learning and coaching opportunities in 2023.

**Attachments:** [Staff Report: Indigenous Intercultural Skills Training for Board Directors](#)

##### 4.2. [22-521](#) First Nations Relations Operational Update

**Recommendation:** There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

**Attachments:** [Staff Report: First Nations Relations Operational Update](#)

#### 5. Adjournment

Next Meeting: This is the last regularly scheduled meeting for 2022



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## REPORT TO FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 07, 2022

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**SUBJECT** Indigenous Intercultural Skills Training for Board Directors

### **ISSUE SUMMARY**

To support CRD Directors in building positive, respectful and reciprocal government-to-government relationships with First Nations through skills training.

### **BACKGROUND**

First Nations are increasingly requesting direct government-to-government meetings with CRD decision-makers, the development of partnership agreements, and to have a say in all decisions that impact their traditional territories.

In order to move forward it will be necessary to have a common level of understanding regarding Indigenous-settler relations and responsibilities amongst CRD Directors. This is in keeping with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to Actions which directs municipal governments to provide education "on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism."

The CRD's Statement of Reconciliation recognizes that commitment to reconciliation alone is not enough and that action is needed to demonstrate how the CRD is taking measurable steps toward a better relationship with Indigenous peoples.

To this end, in 2022 many Board Directors participated in an intercultural skills training online session. Building respectful relationships with First Nations in the spirit of reconciliation requires an ongoing process of learning and unlearning. Offering ongoing intercultural skills training for the CRD Board is one component of supporting and operationalizing the Board's Statement of Reconciliation and commitment to inclusive governance.

Implementation of the provincial Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan is anticipated to impact the delivery of regional, sub-regional and local services by the CRD, with details still to be determined. Building understanding of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples will support CRD Directors as the province moves to implement the Declaration Act.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

#### *Alternative 1*

The First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That staff be directed to offer Directors a series of Indigenous intercultural training, learning and coaching opportunities in 2023.

#### *Alternative 2*

That this report be referred back to staff for additional information.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### *Intergovernmental Implications*

Intercultural skills competency of CRD Board Directors will support implementation of inclusive governance commitments, and will support the development of respectful government-to-government working relationships. Building understanding of Indigenous perspectives will help support respectful and inclusive interactions with First Nations and will help mitigate risks.

The CRD Board faces heightened scrutiny on how the organization is translating reconciliation commitments into meaningful action, in the context of societal shifts towards reconciliation as well as increasing diversity, equity and inclusion. Providing opportunities for intercultural skills training for the incoming Board helps demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning and transformation.

### *Intercultural Training Series*

In recognition that Board Directors have varying degrees of experience working directly with First Nations, a range of intercultural training sessions are proposed as follows.

1. Primer in First Nations Relations: The orientation for all incoming Board Directors will include an overview of local First Nations, the CRD's Statement of Reconciliation, resources available, ongoing First Nations relations work, and emerging priorities.
2. Cultural Perspectives: This 2 hour online training will provide participants with an overview of colonization history in Canada from first contact to the social impact of residential schools on the lives of Indigenous peoples. Through understanding our shared history, participants learn the importance of reflecting on unearned advantage and building cultural intelligence to become effective allies. The learning objectives include:
  - a. History of residential schools and their current impact on Indigenous communities
  - b. The legacy of colonization and current day examples
  - c. The role and responsibility of allies
  - d. Unearned advantage and cultural intelligence
  - e. Basics to build on for showing respect, following protocols, and working with Indigenous communities

This training is open to all Directors and is essential for those who didn't attend the 2022 Intercultural Skills Training, so that there is a common understanding of the history and ongoing legacy of Indigenous-Crown relations.

In addition for 2023, staff are recommending some new and more advanced training opportunities to continue the cultural education and skill development of Directors.

3. Building Local Relationships: 3-hour in person training which will be optional but recommended for Directors. The course will provide participants with strategies to strengthen their relationships with Indigenous individuals, organizations, and communities. This workshop is strongly experiential, utilizing the knowledge of invited speakers and by participating in sharing circles, following local protocols. Learning objectives include:

- a. Identifying examples where decision-making can be affected by assumptions and bias;
- b. Identifying examples of how known and assumed unearned advantage can impact relationships and communication with Indigenous families;
- c. Defining cultural safety, identify what culturally safe practices look like, and how they can be introduced.

This training will be open to all Directors who have taken the 2022 or 2023 Cultural Perspectives Training.

4. Indigenous Relations Coaching: Optional, one-on-one coaching for Directors who would like support navigating difficult conversations or other aspects of First Nations relations. For 2023, 1- 2 hours with an expert in Indigenous intercultural government relations.

This coaching will only be available for those Directors who have taken the 2023 Building Local Relationships training.

In addition to the training opportunities identified above, staff will also seek opportunities to enhance the Board's understanding of Indigenous rights and law, particularly regarding the legal and regulatory implications for local governments of BC's Declaration Act on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This could be offered either in a lunch-and-learn format or as a topic for the Forum of all Councils in 2023.

#### *Financial Implications*

It is estimated that intercultural skills training for Board Directors will cost up to \$15,000 - \$20,000 in 2023. Funding is available through the First Nations Relations 2023 budget as well as carry-forward from the 2022 budget that is available as a result of postponing the Forum of All Councils.

#### *Alignment with Board Priorities & Statement of Reconciliation*

This training series supports the CRD's Statement of Reconciliation, specifically the acknowledgement of the fundamental right of self-determination to Indigenous peoples and the recognition that beyond commitments, action is needed to show that the CRD is taking measurable steps towards a better relationship with Indigenous peoples. This training also supports Board Priority 3a-1 regarding looking to First Nations for leadership in understanding how to create new regional planning and decision-making systems. Increased skill in intercultural awareness will facilitate and enhance how we are able to work together.

This training is also in line with the CRD Board's diversity and inclusion statement, which reads: "The Capital Regional District strives to be a place where inclusion is paramount and all people are treated with dignity. We pledge to make our meetings a place where all feel welcome and respected."

**CONCLUSION**

A series of Indigenous intercultural skills training will support CRD Directors in building positive, respectful and reciprocal working relationships with First Nations participating in CRD Board committees and commissions as well as in direct government-to-government meetings. This training will help operationalize the Board’s Statement of Reconciliation, commitment to inclusive governance with First Nations, and Diversity and Inclusion statement. Deepening understanding of cultural perspectives, approaches to building local relationships, Indigenous law and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, along with support for Directors in learning how to navigate difficult conversations, will help foster respectful dialogue and engagement with First Nations.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That staff be directed to offer Directors a series of Indigenous intercultural training, learning and coaching opportunities in 2023.

Submitted by:	Caitlyn Vernon, MES, Manager, First Nations Relations
Concurrence:	Kristen Morley, J.D., General Manager, Corporate Services & Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Acting Chief Administrative Officer



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## REPORT TO FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 07, 2022

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**SUBJECT** First Nations Relations Operational Update

### **ISSUE SUMMARY**

To provide, for information, an update on some of the recent initiatives underway in support of the Board priority of advancing strong relationships with First Nations.

### **BACKGROUND**

The CRD's Statement of Reconciliation acknowledges the fundamental right of self-determination to Indigenous peoples, and commits to working with First Nations through the governance systems they choose. Recent initiatives of the First Nations Relations Division to support this goal include:

- Building relationships with First Nation Leadership and Land Managers in the region regarding archaeological and Indigenous cultural heritage management and conservation. To date we have met with and established communication channels with the Songhees Nation, Esquimalt Nation, T'Sou-ke Nation, Pacheedaht First Nation, and the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council on behalf of Tsawout, Tsartlip and Tseycum First Nations. Regular meeting series have been established with the Songhees Nation and W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council to allow for continued relationship development and information sharing with the goal of collaborative heritage management.
- Assisting Legislative Services to communicate opportunities for First Nations to vote in upcoming municipal elections.

The CRD's Statement of Reconciliation recognizes the gap in wealth between First Nations and settler governments, and commits to working towards a prosperous economic future for all. Recent initiatives of the First Nations Relations Division include:

- Supporting Environmental Resource Management to negotiate a partnership agreement with the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council that may include employment and economic opportunities, as part of implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan.
- Establishing standing offer contractual agreements to enable cultural monitors to participate in project work, where required (e.g., areas of cultural or archaeological significance).
- Offering timber for firewood and ceremonial purposes and gravel to several First Nations in the region.
- Assisting Integrated Water Services to respond to First Nation requests and ongoing discussions related to water and wastewater servicing capacity and rates.

- Engaging a consultant to scope out how to increase Indigenous employment within the CRD in a way that is culturally safe and supportive of communities' employment goals. Between May to September 2022, the consultant is speaking with First Nations and urban Indigenous communities regarding their employment goals, capacity and interest for engaging with CRD employment initiatives, and what makes a culturally safe workplace. The consultant is also speaking with CRD divisions and unions about opportunities for Indigenous employment initiatives at the CRD, and is researching wise practices for supporting Indigenous employment. The consultant's recommendations are expected to address how to collaborate with Indigenous communities regarding employment initiatives, wise practices on workplace cultural safety and Indigenous employment, how to support and enhance internal CRD preparedness for Indigenous employment initiatives, and proposed next steps to co-develop employment programming with Indigenous communities. Staff will bring forward recommendations and a budget request to the Board on receipt of the consultant's recommendations on program design and the delivery model.

The CRD's Statement of Reconciliation recognizes the integral relationship First Nations have with the land and water, and commits to working together to take care of the land while providing space for cultural and ceremonial use, food and medicine harvesting, traditional management practices and reclaiming Indigenous place names. Recent initiatives of the First Nations Relations Division include:

- Exploring opportunities with Environmental Resource Management and the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council for collaboration in relation to solid waste management opportunities.
- Developing content and providing input into the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan. Supporting Regional Parks with First Nations engagement related to the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan.
- Working with Regional Parks to include Indigenous cultural heritage and archaeological site conservation planning for the management plans of Roche Cove, Matheson Lake & East Sooke Regional Parks. This includes collaboration with the T'Sou-ke Nation and Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) First Nation to develop respectful and culturally appropriate approaches aimed at managing and protecting archaeological sites and areas of cultural importance in the Parks.
- Advising on and supporting First Nations engagement regarding requests from Regional Parks and Electoral Area community parks for Indigenous cultural input into signage and naming.
- Providing archaeology training to CRD staff, contractors/consultants, and volunteer organizations.
- Providing archaeological project support to IWS, Facilities Management and Engineering Services, and Regional Parks (e.g., Regional Trail Widening and Lighting, Mill Hill wastewater infrastructure upgrades, Bowker Creek Sewer Rehabilitation Program E&N Phase 4, Veitch Creek Trestle).

- Creation of Project Summary templates and data submission checklists to facilitate and streamline communications between Project Managers and First Nations – aimed at Projects with an archaeological or Indigenous cultural heritage component. Template has been reviewed and informed via discussions with W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council and Songhees Nation.
- Working with Juan de Fuca Local Area Services and Protective Services to respond to First Nation requests related to land use planning, archaeological site management and Indigenous cultural heritage conservation.
- Collaborating with Southern Gulf Islands volunteer park commissioners and contractors to manage and protect archaeological sites.

One of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was to provide education “on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.” The First Nations Relations Division has offered the following education initiatives in 2022:

- In February, the CRD Board was offered a 3-hour online Introduction to Cultural Perspectives Training, delivered by Indigenous Perspectives Society. 26 Directors and Alternate Directors participated.
- So far, 535 CRD staff have participated in online Cultural Competency Seminar, with 90 minutes offered by Indigenous Perspectives Society and 30 minutes by First Nations Relations staff. An additional five seminars will be offered in the fall of 2022, for staff as well as for CRD Southern Gulf Island Community Parks Commissioners.
- CRD Executive Leadership Team, plus those managers and staff who work directly with members from the local First Nations, have been offered a 3-hour in-person Building Local Relationships Workshop, delivered by Indigenous Perspectives Society. Eight workshops were offered between March to June 2022, reaching 134 staff from six divisions. Two additional workshops are being scheduled for fall of 2022, with one for Salt Spring Island staff and Commissioners, and one for Southern Gulf Island Commissioners.
- First Nations Relations and Corporate Communications continue to proactively identify opportunities for education, such as was done with informative posts for all staff related to National Indigenous History Month, National Indigenous Peoples Day, the First Nations Relations Communication Framework, and inclusive language in the workplace.

Upcoming initiatives and identified needs for the First Nations Relations Division include:

- Scope, develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan, across all CRD Divisions;
- Develop a Strategic Engagement Framework that clarifies roles and responsibilities amongst CRD divisions pertaining to First Nations engagement, with associated mechanisms to support First Nations capacity to liaise with CRD works;
- Collaborate with Nations to host events for Directors and volunteer commissioners to attend;

- Work with SGI staff and commissioners to consider Indigenous naming and signage for SGI community parks;
- Develop a mechanism for more regular First Nations Relations updates across all CRD divisions;
- Address archaeology in the context of development, building permits, and Official Community Plans for the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area;
- Develop and implement a mechanism to track metrics related to internal and external requests for First Nations Relations advice and support with First Nations engagement; and
- Evaluate & propose efficiencies and reconfigurations for First Nations Relations staff capacity, given increasing demands.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

#### *Intergovernmental Implications*

By uplifting self-determination, promoting opportunities for economic prosperity and for taking care of land and water, and raising awareness amongst CRD staff and Board, these initiatives contribute toward efforts to build trusting, reciprocal government-to-government relationships with First Nations. By exploring ways to support First Nations economic opportunities, such as through wastewater and water servicing, the CRD is taking steps to support the economic goals of First Nations.

#### *Alignment with Board Priorities, Existing Plans & Strategies*

The work of the First Nations Relations Division aligns with the Board priorities of taking measurable steps toward developing respectful government-to-government relationships and partnerships with First Nations to foster shared prosperity for all, while working together to take care of the land and water. The work of the Division supports the ability of the CRD across all divisions to engage with First Nations on all relevant plans and strategies and to implement the CRD's Statement of Reconciliation.

### **CONCLUSION**

The First Nations Relations Division's governance, shared prosperity, land stewardship, training and operational support initiatives further the Board priority of advancing strong relationships with First Nations.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

Submitted by:	Caitlyn Vernon, MES, Manager, First Nations Relations
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Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Acting Chief Administrative Officer