



Notice of Meeting and Meeting Agenda Regional Parks Committee

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

9:00 AM

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

C. McNeil-Smith (Chair), J. Brownoff (Vice Chair), C. Coleman, S. Goodmanson, G. Holman,
L. Szpak, M. Tait, S. Tobias, K. Williams, R. Windsor, 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. Adoption of Minutes

3.1. [24-300](#) Minutes of the January 24, 2024 Regional Parks Meeting

Recommendation: That the minutes of the Regional Parks Committee meeting of January 24, 2024 be adopted as circulated.

Attachments: [Minutes - January 24, 2024](#)

4. Chair's Remarks

5. 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 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.

6. Committee Business

6.1. [24-299](#) Regional Parks and Trails Planning Process Update

Recommendation: The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That the updated planning process be adopted and implemented to develop future CRD regional park and trail plans.

Attachments: [Staff Report: Regional Parks & Trails Planning Process Update](#)
 [Appendix A: The Pathway for Regional Parks & Trails Mgmt Planning, 2006](#)
 [Appendix B: Regional Parks & Trails Planning Process, March 2024](#)

6.2. [24-320](#) Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan

Recommendation: The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That CRD staff begin First Nations engagement for the development of a Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan.

Attachments: [Staff Report: Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan](#)
 [Appendix A: Project Steps and Tentative Timeline](#)

7. Notice(s) of Motion**8. New Business****9. Adjournment**

The next meeting is April 24, 2024 at **9:30 am.**

To ensure quorum, please advise Tamara Pillipow (tpillipow@crd.bc.ca) if you or your alternate cannot attend.

Meeting Minutes

Regional Parks Committee

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

9:00 AM

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

PRESENT

Directors: C. McNeil-Smith (Chair), J. Brownoff (Vice Chair), J. Bateman (for M. Tait) (EP), C. Coleman, S. Goodmanson (EP), C. Harder (for L. Szpak), G. Holman (9:29 am) (EP), S. Tobias, K. Williams

Staff: T. Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer; L. Hutcheson, General Manager, Parks and Environmental Services; M. MacIntyre, Acting Senior Manager, Regional Parks; T. Moss, Manager, Visitor Experience and Stewardship; M. Lagoa, Deputy Corporate Officer; T. Pillipow, Committee Clerk (Recorder)

EP - Electronic Participation

Regrets: Directors C. Plant, L. Szpak, M. Tait, R. Windsor

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 am.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Director Brownoff provided a Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED by Director Brownoff, **SECONDED** by Director Coleman,
That the agenda for the January 24, 2024 Regional Parks Committee meeting be approved.
CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1. [24-007](#) Minutes of the November 22, 2023 Regional Parks Committee Meeting

MOVED by Director Brownoff, **SECONDED** by Director Tobias,
That the minutes of the Regional Parks Committee meeting of November 22, 2023 be adopted as circulated.
CARRIED

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair McNeil-Smith thanked staff for their work on the Regional Parks & Trails Residents Survey now underway. The Chair strongly encouraged invited residents to participate in this survey.

5. Presentations/Delegations

There were no presentations or delegations.

6. Committee Business

6.1. [24-022](#) 2024 Regional Parks Committee Terms of Reference

L. Hutcheson presented Item 6.1. for information.

6.2. [24-062](#) Island View Beach Regional Park Campground - Operating Season Extension Pilot

M. MacIntyre spoke to Item 6.2.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- consideration of extending the season further should this be successful
- the growth potential from extending the operating season
- opportunities for other revenue streams at the campground

**MOVED by Director Coleman, SECONDED by Director Williams,
The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:**

That the operating season for the Island View Beach Regional Park campground be extended to the end of the Thanksgiving weekend each year.

CARRIED

6.3. [24-085](#) Regional Parks Internal Inclusion and Accessibility Audit

L. Hutcheson introduced T. Moss who presented Item 6.3. for information.

Director Holman joined the meeting electronically at 9:29 am.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- the process in place to maintain the balance between accessibility and environmental stewardship
- partnering with people with lived experience during the planning stages of accessibility and programs within the parks
- staff reporting back to the committee on feedback from park users
- consideration of accessibility in regional back country parks
- engagement with other parks systems and local governments to provide consistency and share successes

7. Notice(s) of Motion

There were no notices of motion.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

9. Adjournment

MOVED by Director Coleman, **SECONDED** by Director Brownoff,
That the January 24, 2024 Regional Parks Committee meeting be adjourned at
9:47 am.

CARRIED

CHAIR

RECORDER

**REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024**

SUBJECT Regional Parks and Trails Planning Process Update

ISSUE SUMMARY

To seek approval for an updated planning process to guide the development of future regional park and trail plans.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board established a management planning process in 2006 called *The Pathway for Regional Parks and Trails Management Planning* (The Pathway) (Appendix A). The Pathway outlines eight steps for the development of regional park and trail management plans, including at what steps engagement and governance decisions are needed. It further establishes Regional Parks Management Zone Guidelines, which are applied to regional parks through a management planning process and used to provide more precise management direction for areas within individual parks, as well as provides a guide and template for writing management plans.

While The Pathway outlines a standardized planning process, it is time and resource intensive, lacks adaptability, offers little guidance on how to functionally integrate multiple priorities in the planning process, and does not allow for meaningful collaboration with First Nations, negatively impacting service delivery.

The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (Strategic Plan) provides direction to update the existing planning process to improve plan development and delivery. The proposed process will guide the development of park and trail management plans, as well as other high-level Regional Parks plans (Appendix B). It has been designed to build on the planning values and principles established within The Pathway, and to be effective, adaptable and evidence based.

Regional park management zones still remain a valuable management tool. CRD staff will continue to use the zoning described within The Pathway until such time that zoning can be updated through the Stewardship Plan.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That the updated planning process be adopted and implemented to develop future CRD regional park and trail plans.

Alternative 2

That the updated planning process be referred back to staff with direction for revision.

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

The Strategic Plan identifies the following Climate Action & Resiliency priority actions:

- 4.4a *Implement a Park Management Planning Process that is efficient, adaptable, evidence-based and addresses service level needs, financial implications and climate mitigation measures.*
- 4.4b *Engage and involve First Nations governments, stakeholders and the public in the preparation and implementation of park management plans to ensure transparency, knowledge sharing and adaptability.*

The following indicator is to be tracked over the 10-year term of the Strategic Plan:

- 4-4 *Increase the percentage of parks with management plans less than 15 years old.*

The updated planning process addresses Strategic Plan directions and will be monitored, evaluated and revised, as necessary, to meet the annual reporting indicator.

Environmental & Climate Action

A goal of revising the planning process is to be able to complete more plans for the CRD's regional parks and trails. Updating existing, or creating new plans, provides opportunities to advance Strategic Plan priority actions for Conservation and Climate Action and Resiliency.

First Nations Reconciliation

Providing meaningful opportunities for First Nations to participate early and often throughout plan development is a key deliverable of this new planning process. This will ensure that interested Nations can remain informed about planning initiatives at all stages, share their values, concerns, and priorities at the onset of these initiatives, and collaborate with CRD staff to incorporate them into plan development.

The process envisions First Nations collaboration in plan development through participation in working groups. If supported, working groups will be comprised of representatives from First Nations governments with traditional territory within the region, CRD staff, and third-party facilitators, as needed. The working group format provides an opportunity for the CRD and First Nations to build trust, reciprocally share information, and collaborate so that First Nations worldviews and knowledge can inform plan direction. Some Nations may wish to participate in other ways, and these requests will continue to be accommodated to support First Nations rights on the path towards reconciliation.

Social Implications

The proposed process centres evidence-based decision making through public engagement and plan development and yields an improved and refined final product. Using an iterative planning

process, public engagement is better timed to gather information and build knowledge to inform plan development. This ensures the resulting plan utilizes reliable information, is consistent with other evidence-based plans, and remains unbiased.

The more focused, iterative approach to planning creates process effectiveness and reduces the number of touchpoints with the public from three to two. The updated process also reduces governance approvals from the current four, described in the Pathways process, to two, decreasing impacts on staff and Committee/Board time on approvals for a single plan, and increasing the overall efficacy.

A staff report outlining opportunities for engagement will continue to be presented to the Board as part of planning process initiation, providing transparency and ensuring the public is aware of when and how they can participate. Additionally, the public will be able to stay informed at all subsequent project steps through regular updates posted online by staff.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Public engagement methods, such as open houses, focus groups and online surveys will continue to be a part of the process. These methods help reach a broad range of park users and community groups, employ culturally sensitive communication, and create accessible platforms to ensure that diverse perspectives are not only heard but also valued.

Financial Implications

Providing additional opportunities for meaningful collaboration with First Nations is anticipated to increase the cost of plan development. The increased costs will be accounted for through the CRD's regular annual budgeting process.

Service Delivery Implications

Having a more effective planning process should increase the number of parks with approved management plans and reduce the number of parks with management plans more than 15 years old. With a more integrated approach to collect and evaluate relevant archaeological, cultural heritage, ecological, visitor use, visitor feedback and park infrastructure information, plans will be evidence based and better positioned to implement the five strategic priority areas set out in the Strategic Plan.

CONCLUSION

CRD staff are seeking approval to implement an updated planning process to guide plan development across the CRD's regional parks and trails system. The updated planning process fulfills a key implementation action from the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032. The proposed process provides new and meaningful ways to collaborate with First Nations, aims to increase the rate at which plans are developed, is adaptable and meets Strategic Plan direction. It is expected that this revised process will result in a greater number of plans being developed and implemented.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That the updated planning process be adopted and implemented to develop future CRD regional park and trail plans.

Submitted by:	Mike MacIntyre, Acting Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., Acting General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: The Pathway for Regional Parks and Trails Management Planning, 2006
Appendix B: Regional Parks & Trails Planning Process, March 2024

1	CRD Regional Parks Management Planning	2	Regional Parks Management Planning Model	3	Regional Parks Management Planning Process	4	Writing the Plan
	Context of Regional Parks Management Planning				Regional Parks Management Zone Guidelines		Regional Parks Management Plan Template

the pathway

MARCH 2006

FOR REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS
MANAGEMENT PLANNING

“Guidance for regional park management requires formal plans that clearly state goals, objectives, and standards and prescribe specific actions necessary for meeting those objectives and standards.”

CRD Regional Parks Management Planning

INTRODUCTION

The CRD Parks Master Plan (Master Plan) sets out broad strategic goals for regional parks. It is system-wide in scope and provides the vision and purpose of CRD Parks. The Plan establishes a framework for managing regional parks and trails through the creation of park management plans.

Park management plans describe goals, objectives, and actions for protecting the natural environment and cultural features in a regional park or regional trail. The plan also identifies the types of permitted outdoor recreation uses and where they will be allowed, the types and locations of park facilities, and types of services. Lack of a plan leaves parks without management direction. This can negatively affect the protection of natural and cultural features, visitor services, facilities management, and budgeting.

Until now, CRD Parks has not had a defined process for preparing park management plans. Although the general process and goals for park management planning is presented in the Master Plan, the specific process for preparing individual park management plans has been defined in the terms of reference for each planning project. Although this provided guidance for individual planning processes, there was no over riding specific policy about park management planning. At its June 1, 2005 meeting, the Parks Committee approved a Terms of Reference (TOR) for conducting a review of the park management planning process including:

- reviewing how other agencies conduct their planning processes
- consulting with municipal, provincial, and federal parks and planning staff
- consulting with the Parks Committee to ensure that the plans meet the committee’s needs and
- consulting with the staff of CRD Parks

The Parks Committee also directed staff to report back with the results of the review and provide recommendations for a new planning process that would:

- be within the staff and financial resources of CRD Parks
- meet professional planning values
- reach for excellence in planning, and
- be efficient, effective and inclusive

The park management planning process review is now complete. CRD Parks has developed a planning process that meets the required criteria and incorporates the results of the consultation process and other agency best practices. This document highlights the key features of the recommended CRD Parks management planning process. It gives an overview of the context for and logic of park management planning and describes the planning process model, park management zones, and the framework for the planning document.

Context of Regional Parks Management Planning

NEED FOR PARK PLANNING

Guidance for regional park and trail management requires formal plans that clearly state goals, objectives, and standards and that prescribe specific actions necessary for meeting those objectives and standards. The park management plan translates the more general direction of the CRD Parks Master Plan into direction that guides management of individual parks and trails.

Through planning, managers can reconcile differences in management philosophy and ideas before taking actions that have long-range effects on the park resource. Good plans have a stabilizing influence on management. Consistent outcomes in park management depend on plans that establish clear, attainable, measurable, and acceptable objectives and standards for a park and the actions involved in pursuing such objectives. In the coming decades, successful park management will depend a great deal on the quality of plans that guide management actions.

LINKS WITH OTHER PLANS

Park management plans comprise only one part of an agency’s strategy for managing park systems. They roll out of strategic plans that define the overall agency mandate, purpose, vision, and focus. They

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

also spur the development of implementation or action plans. Implementation plans describe methods for achieving objectives in the park management plan, whereas park management plans describe the basic management philosophy for the entire park unit and provide strategies for addressing issues and achieving management objectives for a ten-year period.

PLANNING VALUES

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) has adopted a set of values that provides a useful foundation for CRD Parks planning. The values of the CIP are based on the assumption that planners work for the public good; that planning includes a concern for equity, efficiency, and a respect for the land as a community resource; and that planning contributes to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, promotes healthy communities, and improves the quality of life for all people. In order to achieve excellence in planning, CRD Parks has embedded its management planning process within these core values.

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

In addition to the above set of core values, CRD Parks will adhere to the following set of planning principles:

- Procedural fairness
- Consultation before action
- Access to information
- Systematic procedure
- Plans address issues
- Plans are science-based
- Defined decision-making authority
- Responsive to changing conditions

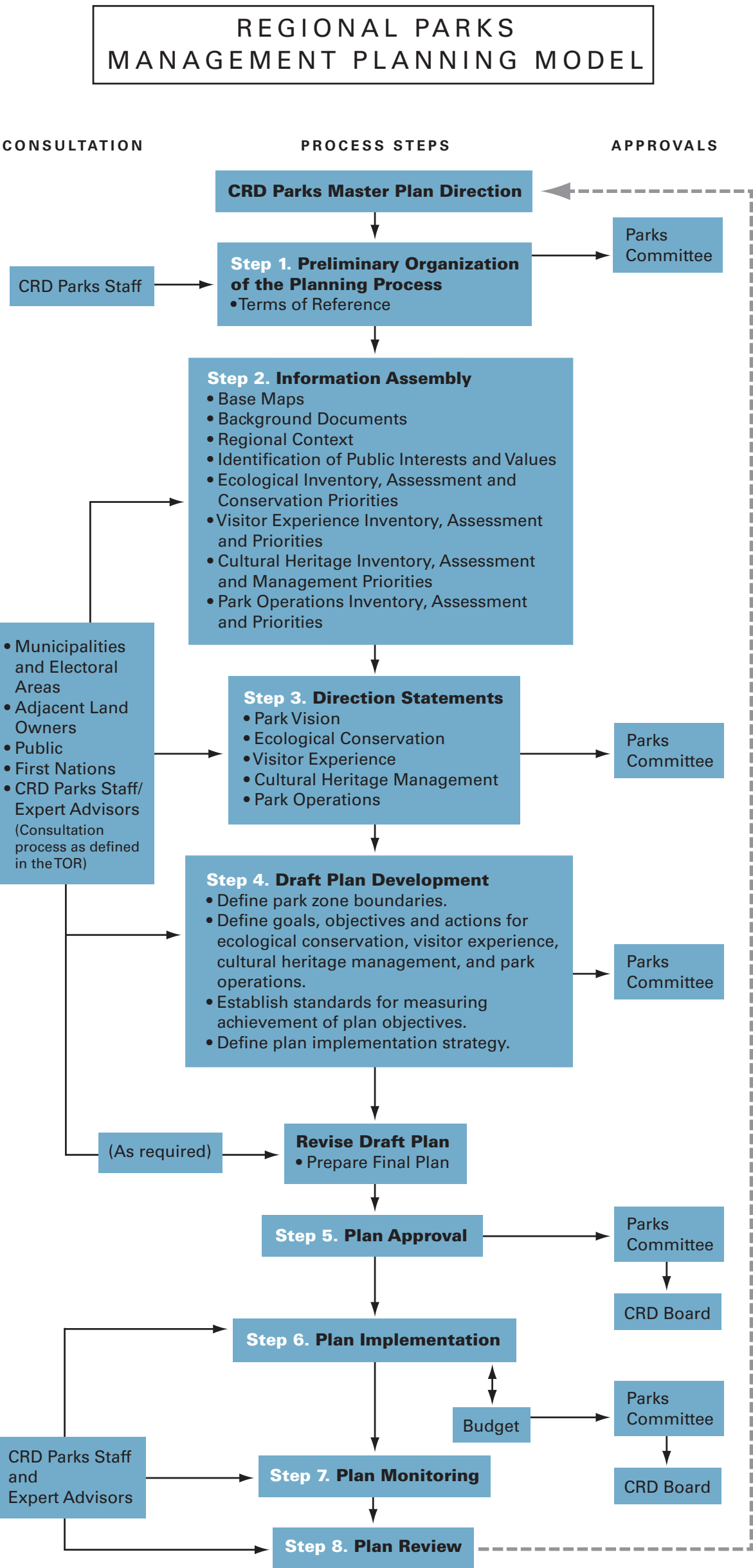
These planning principles provide the foundation for the development of consistent and useful park management plans that are in line with the overall purposes of the regional park system.

CONSULTATION

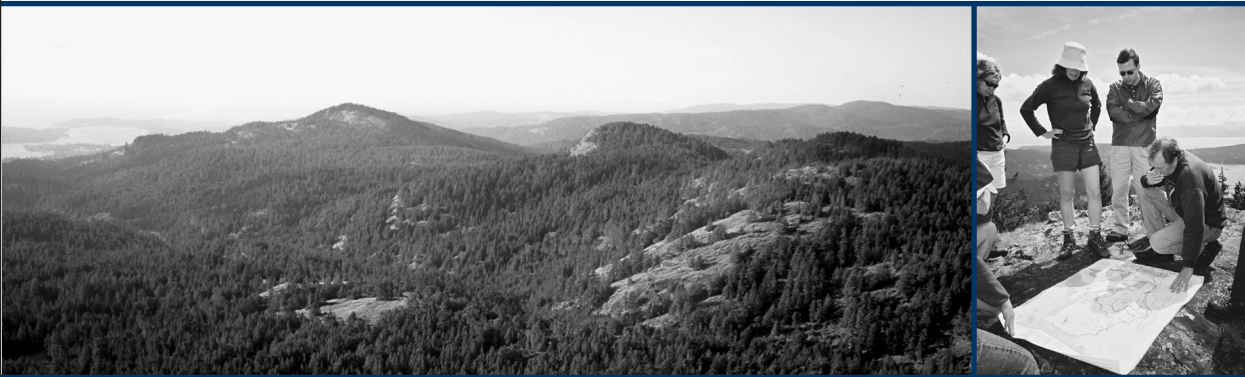
Consultation is especially important for the management of regional parks and trails. If park management plans are to have credibility and acceptance, the public must have an opportunity to help formulate these documents. Involving the public is an integral part of the CRD's park management plan decision-making process.

FIRST NATION PARTICIPATION

CRD Parks encourages First Nations participation in its management planning processes to ensure that decisions are sensitive to aboriginal interests. It is important for CRD Parks to participate in meaningful consultation and address First Nations interests in its regional parks and trails when CRD Parks planning processes affect these interests. One of the best ways to accomplish this goal is to build solid, lasting, respectful, and mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations.



Photographs (L to R):
Sooke Hills; On top of
Mt. Manuel Quimper



Regional Parks Management Planning Process

CRD Parks is adopting a park management planning process based on three main activity streams: (1) consultation; (2) process steps; and (3) approvals. The CRD Parks Management Planning Model on page 2 highlights these activity streams. The Planning Model illustrates how the CRD will conduct the process of park management planning and incorporates the principle of flexibility as fundamental in designing a planning process. The principle of flexibility exists to adjust planning and public involvement procedures to suit specific situations and the requirements of various planning participants.

Each project’s Terms of Reference (TOR) defines the scope of consultation. Consultation can range from simply informing the public about the planning process to full collaboration with the public in the decision-making process. Consultation may include the creation of an advisory committee. The project’s TOR defines the advisory committee’s selection process and decision-making authority and requires the approval of the Parks Committee. Municipalities and Electoral Areas in which the

park or trail is located will be directly involved throughout the consultation process.

First Nations consultation is important to the management planning process. The planning project’s TOR will define how CRD Parks and First Nations will work together on the park management plan.

Planning projects involve CRD staff and may involve outside consultants. The project’s TOR defines the nature and scope of this participation. For each project, CRD Parks will put together a core project management team and a technical team. These teams provide supervision and advice throughout the planning process and during the implementation of the plan. CRD Parks may also hire expert advisors to provide professional advice and services as required.

Consideration and approval by the Parks Committee and CRD Board is an integral component of the planning process. There are key stages in each planning process that require Committee or Board approval. The Parks Committee must approve the project’s TOR, direction statements, draft plan, final plan, and

budget. The CRD Board approves the final plan and budget when recommended by the Parks Committee.

Although the steps in the planning process follow a logical sequence, the planning group may undertake a number of activities concurrently depending upon the nature of the project.

WHAT’S KEY?

CRD Parks’ planning process is distinctive in at least four fundamental ways:

- More time is spent up-front collecting information and establishing park management priorities based on science
- The public consultation process is customized to fit each planning situation in the recognition that every planning situation is unique
- Once background information and priorities have been established through consultation, the planner sets to the task of preparing the plan
- Plan implementation is built into the planning process to ensure that plan implementation is timely and efficient

Regional Parks Management Zone Guidelines

The CRD Parks Master Plan sets out the general management direction for each regional park through park classifications. Providing more precise land management for particular areas within a park requires more detailed reviews of different areas that take into account specific environmental needs and unique features. A specific park management unit, or park management “zone,” may include regional parks with natural areas that have common ecological factors. Zones define which activities the park or trail can accommodate and what type of visitor experience the management of the zone aims to provide.

Management Zones	Objectives	Environmental Values	Visitor Experience and Activities	Typical Infrastructure
Environmental Protection Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To protect ecologically significant areas within regional parks through long term science-based land stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Areas with rare or endangered species and ecosystems needing the highest degree of ecological protection• In some areas, visitor access may be restricted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nature study• Environmental interpretation• Visitor experience is centered around appreciation of natural features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low-impact nature trails and other infrastructure that enhance appreciation of the natural feature(s)
Cultural Heritage Protection Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To protect culturally significant areas and features through a long term cultural resource management strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ecological features associated with culturally significant sites may be protected as part of the culturally significant features of the park or trail (e.g. heritage orchards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural appreciation and interpretation• Historical appreciation• Visitor experience is one of appreciating and understanding the cultural context of the feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low-impact nature trails and other infrastructure that enhance appreciation of the cultural feature(s)
Regional Wilderness Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To keep large natural systems functioning and provide a regional wilderness experience for park visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contiguous land areas large enough to protect the natural values• Areas with outstanding natural features that create a memorable visitor experience• Ecosystems are functioning in a sustainable fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities dispersed over a wide area• Some backcountry areas could be available for hiking, cycling, and horseback riding• Visitor experience is one of being in a wilderness setting• Backcountry camping may be permitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long distance hiking, equestrian and cycling trails• Trails to viewpoints
Natural Environment Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide easily-accessible natural areas within the parks• To provide areas within the parks that can be used for more active recreational pursuits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Areas where outdoor activities take place in conjunction with protection of natural features• Less remote than wilderness• Can act as a buffer between wilderness and recreation zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities less dispersed than in a wilderness zone, and more accessible to visitors• Horseback riding, cycling and hiking, shoreline activities• Visitor experience is one of participating in outdoor activities in a natural setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hiking, walking, equestrian and cycling trails• Viewpoints• Pathways• Picnic areas• Open fields
Outdoor Recreation Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide areas within a regional park that can accommodate concentrated recreation use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outstanding recreation features• Natural values may be compromised to allow higher level of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities more concentrated-e.g., beach activities, swimming, boating, fishing, picnicking, multi-use trails, group picnic areas• Visitor experience includes active participation in outdoor recreation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change rooms• Concessions,• Boat launch sites• Beaches• Group picnic shelters• Nature houses
Park Services Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide areas within a park needed to support park services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Natural values secondary to park service needs• Considerable landscape modification allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor-oriented and park operation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parking lots• Storage areas• Washroom buildings• Park operations buildings

Writing the Plan

GOAL-ACHIEVEMENT FRAMEWORK

CRD Parks has adopted a goal-achievement framework for park management. This framework emphasizes planning as a process for making decisions that will enable management to achieve clearly stated goals and objectives. Goals and objectives serve two purposes within a plan: (1) they are criteria for determining what management policies and actions are necessary, and (2) they are the targets against which to measure the effectiveness of park management.

The goal-achievement framework that CRD Parks has adopted for organizing and writing park management plans is a framework that supports a management-by-objectives approach. It features clear statements of goals and objectives followed by the management actions needed to achieve them.

PLANNING LOGIC AND TERMINOLOGY

Regional parks and trails management planning incorporates basic planning concepts. These concepts provide a terminology for discussing the direction of management, from goals and objectives to specific actions. The relationship among the components of the framework—the planning logic—is important; for example, planned actions are the means of pursuing goals and objectives. The planning concepts are as follows:

Goals are general portraits of ideal ends or effects. They limit the range of potential objectives by providing direction and purpose. Goals are often lofty statements of intent.

Objectives are attainable in the short-term and are more specific than goals. The goals shape the objectives. Clearly stated objectives are the key to effective park management plans.

Actions are specific management policies and practices used to achieve objectives within the constraints of agency policy and regulations.

Policies are explicit expressions of intent that describe what management will do to attain objectives. Sometimes a policy describes what management will not do or otherwise prescribes constraints on management activity.

Standards are measurable statements—based on the objectives—that define minimally acceptable conditions. They serve as reference points that can trigger corrective management actions if conditions are not acceptable.

Most of the substantive content of CRD Regional Parks management plans will consist of goals and objectives and associated actions to achieve these objectives.

Regional Parks Management Plan Template

CRD Parks has developed a template for writing park management plans. The intent of the template is to serve as a basis for preparing park management plans while retaining enough flexibility to adapt to the needs of a particular planning project.

As much as possible, planners will follow the template in order to make CRD Parks management plans comparable and ensure that each plan includes core information necessary to provide management direction.

MANAGEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE

Introduction

- 1. Introduction – provides a brief description of the plan area, the purpose for undertaking the plan, and the organization of the plan.

Background

- 2. Relationship to the Regional Parks and Trails System – states how the park or trail fits into the overall system.
 - 2.1. Role of the Park or Trail – describes the role of the park within the regional system.
 - 2.2. Park Classification – defines the park classification according to criteria set out in the CRD Parks Master Plan.
- 3. Background Information – provides necessary background information on the history of the park, ecological values, visitor use, cultural resources, regional context, demographics, and other information that may affect the park.
- 4. Consultation – describes the consultation process.
- 5. First Nations Consultation – describes the process for consultation with First Nations and any agreements or Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with First Nations.
- 6. Links to Other Plans – states how this park management plan links to other CRD Parks plans, including the Master Plan, conservation plan, infrastructure plan, communications plan, universal access plan, interpretive plan, and volunteer services plan. It may also link this plan to outside management plans prepared by other agencies.

The Plan

- 7. Park Direction Statements – defines the management direction for ecological conservation, visitor experience, cultural heritage management, and park operations.
- 8. Park Vision – defines the vision for the park.

- 9. Planning Principles – lists the principles used to guide the planning process.
- 10. Park Zoning – provides a description and map of park zones.
- 11. Management Goals, Objectives, Actions, Policies, and Standards – the bulk of the planning document. Defines management goals, objectives, actions, policies, and standards for the following major areas.
 - 11.1. Ecological Conservation
 - 11.2. Cultural Heritage Management
 - 11.3. Visitor Experience
 - 11.3.1. Visitor Experiences and Activities
 - 11.3.2. Visitor Services
 - 11.3.3. Communications
 - 11.4. Park Operations
 - 11.4.1. Park Infrastructure
 - 11.4.2. Park Maintenance and Development
 - 11.4.3. Other Operational Issues

Plan Implementation, Monitoring, and Review

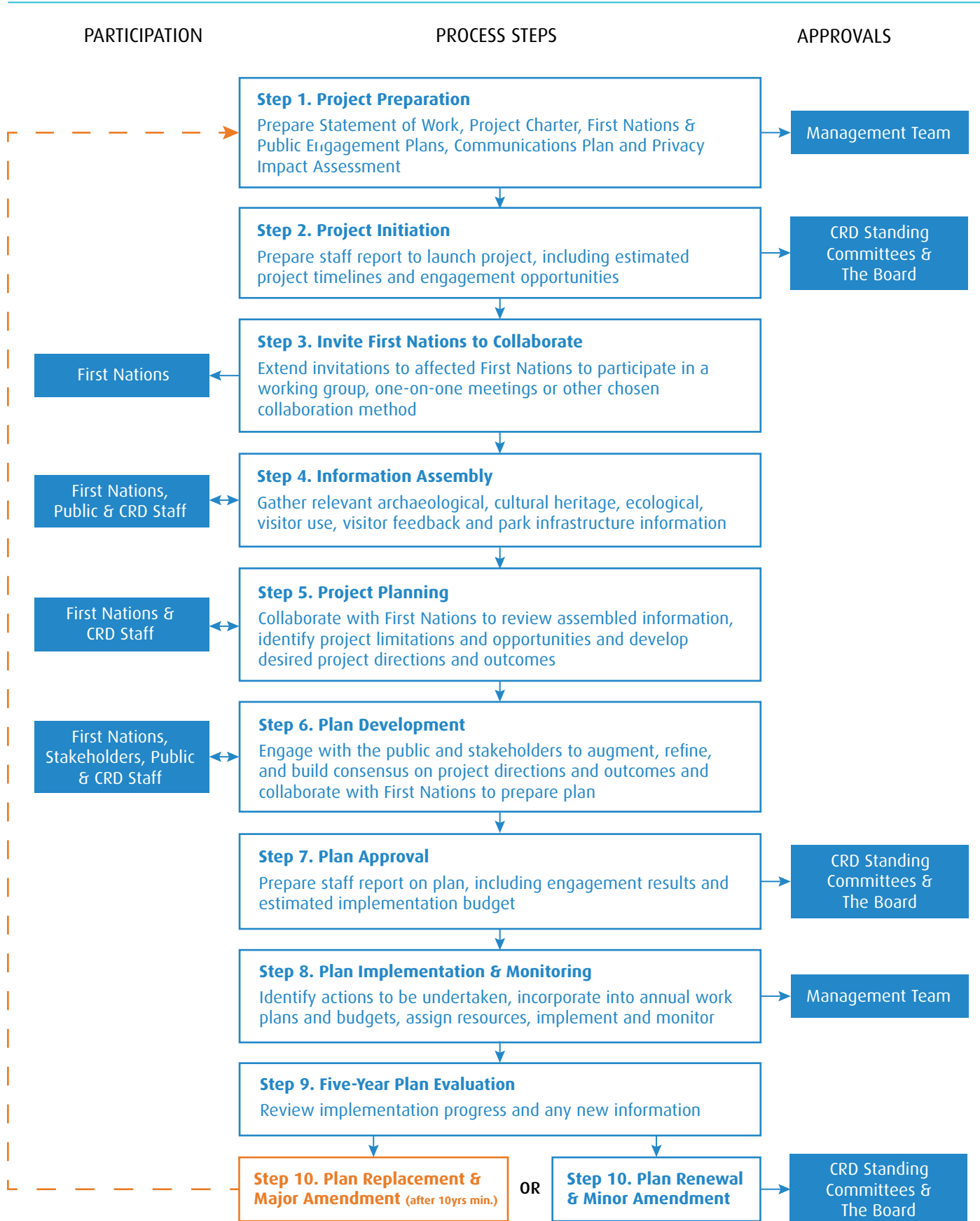
- 12. Plan Implementation – describes the plan’s implementation strategy.
- 13. Plan Monitoring and Evaluation – describes the plan’s monitoring and evaluation strategy.
- 14. Plan Review – describes the method and time frame for reviewing the plan.

Summary

The vision of Regional Parks is to protect our natural environment while giving us the means to remain in close touch with nature. Regional Parks will continue to serve as a leading advocate for the protection of the region’s green and blue spaces, fostering in all of us a better understanding of nature, our place in the natural environment, and a healthy lifestyle through outdoor experiences and activities.

Regional Parks & Trails PLANNING PROCESS

March 2024



**REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024**

SUBJECT Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide information on the Capital Regional District's (CRD) Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan (Stewardship Plan) and seek approval to begin engagement.

BACKGROUND

CRD staff are in the process of preparing a *State of Natural Features Report*, which will complete a priority action listed within the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (Strategic Plan). The report will provide a review of existing ecological knowledge, restoration activities, and research, as well as identify gaps in data and priorities for future conservation monitoring and reporting within the regional parks and trails system. A companion *State of Outdoor Recreation Report* is also being prepared, which will provide a review of existing recreation opportunities and trends, as well as identify gaps in data and priorities for future recreation monitoring and reporting within the regional parks and trails system. CRD staff intend to use the information from these reports to foster knowledge sharing with interested First Nations, with the aim of gaining additional information to provide a more complete picture of the state of regional parks and trails. The information from the two reports and collaboration with First Nations will then be used to inform the development of the Stewardship Plan.

The Stewardship Plan will provide a holistic, evidence-based approach to the management of the CRD's regional parks and trails. The plan will provide conservation and outdoor recreation management strategies in a balanced and complementary manner, to inform the development, implementation, monitoring, and review of management actions for the regional parks and trails system. The plan will be informed by continued collaboration with First Nations and input from the public and stakeholders, including the results of the 2023 Resident Survey. The updated Regional Parks & Trails Planning Process will be used to guide the development of the Stewardship Plan, and an outline of the proposed process, including a summary of engagement opportunities, is attached to this report (Appendix A).

Completion of the Stewardship Plan will achieve two priority actions listed within the Strategic Plan, completion of a Natural Areas Conservation Plan and an Outdoor Recreation Plan. Integrating system-wide direction for conservation and recreation into one plan acknowledges that exceptional ecosystems can provide good recreation value, and responsible, well-managed recreation can support the maintenance of healthy ecosystems. The plan will have a targeted planning horizon of 10 years and will be updated, as needed, to incorporate new information and evolving strategic direction and to provide an adaptive management approach.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That CRD staff begin First Nations engagement for the development of a Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan.

Alternative 2

That the engagement approach for the development of a Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan be referred back to staff with direction for revision.

IMPLICATIONS

Alignment with Existing Plans & Strategies

The Strategic Plan includes direction for staff to prepare and implement a Natural Areas Conservation Plan and an Outdoor Recreation Plan. These plans are needed to support research prioritization, data collection and development of monitoring and reporting procedures to better inform how the CRD's regional parks and trails are managed. Staff received prior direction from the Regional Parks Committee to ensure that the preparation of the plans be undertaken together, so that these two aspects of parks and trails management are equally supported. Staff propose to undertake the development of these plans together, through the preparation of the Stewardship Plan, to provide a balanced and holistic approach to conservation and recreation management.

Environmental & Climate Action

Implementing a Stewardship Plan that emphasizes conservation efforts alongside recreational activities fosters a sense of environmental responsibility among users of parks and trails. In turn, this promotes a deeper appreciation for the natural world and connection to local ecosystems.

The Stewardship Plan will identify how to protect and restore natural systems within parks and trails. With a focus on the important role of habitat in improving ecological health and integrity, the plan will guide management and operational decisions to support ecosystem resilience and the ability of natural areas to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Social Implications

As the population within the region continues to expand, there is increased pressure on regional parks and trails to meet recreation demand, as well as increased threats to the natural environments they encapsulate from additional use. The Stewardship Plan will identify how to provide high-quality and compatible outdoor recreation opportunities that promote social cohesion, physical and mental health, environmental education and volunteerism. Providing quality outdoor recreation opportunities can have positive impacts on increasing environmental and cultural awareness, enhancing stewardship values, and promoting user etiquette. By taking a stewardship-based approach, it acknowledges the co-benefits of preserving and restoring healthy ecosystems and providing quality recreation value.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

The Stewardship Plan will provide direction for the delivery of compatible visitor experiences in regional parks and trails, ensuring equitable access to park amenities and recreation opportunities for a diverse range of users. By making the regional parks and trails system more inclusive, a greater number of community members can receive the physical and psychological benefits gained from interacting with nature.

First Nations Reconciliation

The Stewardship Plan has region-wide parks and trails management implications and, as such, staff will seek to collaborate with First Nations with traditional territory in the CRD to inform the

development of the plan. Staff will seek opportunities for First Nations to collaborate with the CRD at multiple project stages, and through a means that best suits each Nation's individual capacities. Given the large number of Nations that may be interested in this project, staff will explore the formation of a multi-Nation working group to inform the development of the plan. If there is sufficient interest, the working group would be comprised of First Nations representatives, CRD staff, and a meeting facilitator, as needed. Some Nations may wish to participate in other ways, and these requests will continue to be accommodated to support First Nations rights and sovereignty on the path towards reconciliation.

Financial Implications

The Stewardship Plan will be developed using core budget funding.

Service Delivery Implications

By outlining strategies for both conservation efforts and recreational activities, the Stewardship Plan provides a balanced approach that benefits both the natural environment and park visitors. This holistic approach enhances the overall quality of service delivery by improving the caliber of outdoor recreation experiences, as well as the health and integrity of the ecosystems in which they occur.

CONCLUSION

CRD staff are seeking approval to begin engagement for the development of a Stewardship Plan. The plan will provide conservation and outdoor recreation management direction that will inform the development, implementation, and monitoring of management actions across the regional parks and trails system. The project meets Strategic Plan direction, will be developed in collaboration with First Nations, and will provide a basis for evidence-based management decisions.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Parks Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That CRD staff begin First Nations engagement for the development of a Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan.

Submitted by:	Mike MacIntyre, Acting Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P. Eng., Acting General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Project Steps and Tentative Timeline – CRD Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan, March 2024

PROJECT STEPS AND TENTATIVE TIMELINE
CRD Regional Parks and Trails Stewardship Plan
March 2024

PROJECT STEPS	TENTATIVE TIMELINE
Step 1: Project Preparation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare Statement of Work, Project Charter, First Nations & Public Engagement Plans, Communications Plan, and Privacy Impact Assessment 	3 rd Quarter - 4 th Quarter 2023
Step 2: Project Initiation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare staff report to launch project, including estimated project timelines and engagement opportunities 	1 st Quarter 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post project information on the CRD's webpage, update regularly 	2 nd Quarter 2024 +
Step 3: Invite First Nations to Collaborate	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend invitations to participate in a working group, one-on-one meetings, or other chosen collaboration method 	2 nd Quarter 2024
Step 4: Information Assembly	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble relevant ecological, recreation, and visitor use information from the State of Natural Values and State of Outdoor Recreation reports, and public feedback from the 2023 Resident Survey Initiate collaboration with interested First Nations to inform the development of the plan 	2 nd Quarter – 4 th Quarter 2024
Step 5: Project Planning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review assembled information with collaborating First Nations to identify project limitations and opportunities, as well as desired project directions and outcomes 	4 th Quarter 2024 - 1 st Quarter 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify relevant stakeholders 	4 th Quarter 2024
Step 6: Plan Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the public via an online survey and open houses Conduct stakeholder focus group meetings Continue collaboration with interested First Nations 	1 st Quarter 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare Stewardship Plan 	1 st Quarter – 2 nd Quarter 2025
Step 7: Plan Approval	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare staff report on plan, including a summary of engagement results 	2 nd Quarter 2025
Step 8: Plan Implementation & Monitoring	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate Stewardship Plan direction into future park and trail management planning and activities 	3 rd Quarter 2025 +
Step 9: Plan Evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review implementation progress and any new information 	3 rd Quarter 2025 +
Step 10: Plan Replacement & Major Amendment OR Plan Renewal & Minor Amendment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renew Stewardship Plan as needed, consider replacement of Stewardship Plan after 10 years minimum 	3 rd Quarter 2025 +