

**REPORT TO TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2023**

SUBJECT **Service Planning 2024 – Transportation Community Need Summary**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide strategic context and an overview of services, initiatives and performance data related to the Transportation Community Need.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board approved the 2023-2026 Board Priorities on March 8, 2023. Staff then developed the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan which was approved by the CRD Board on April 12, 2023.

The CRD Corporate Plan presents the work the organization needs to deliver over the four-year term, along with the critical regional, sub-regional and local services, to meet the region's most important needs (i.e., Community Needs) and advance the Board's Vision and Priorities. Board Priorities, Corporate Plan initiatives and core service delivery form the foundation of the five-year financial plan.

The 2024 planning cycle marks the first year of the implementation of the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan. The CRD's annual service plans, known as Community Need Summaries, provide an overview of the operational and strategic context, services levels, initiatives, and performance data for each Community Need. They also provide details of the initiatives, associated staffing, timing and service levels required to advance the work in future years.

The Transportation Community Need Summary is attached as Appendix A. The desired outcome is that residents have access to convenient, green and affordable multi-modal transportation systems that enhance livability.

The CRD reports on the progress of its initiatives and services on a regular basis. The Board receives updates about the Board Strategic Priorities through the Chief Administrative Officer Quarterly Progress Reports. The CRD Board also receives an overview of progress made on delivering the Corporate Plan twice a year at the strategic check-in and provisional budget meetings, which take place in the spring and fall respectively. The next strategic check-in will take place in spring 2025. During the year, standing committees and commissions also fulfill an oversight and advisory role in relation to the work.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That Appendix A, Community Need Summary – Transportation, be approved as presented and form the basis of the 2024-2028 Financial Plan.

Alternative 2

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board: That Appendix A, Community Need Summary – Transportation, be approved as amended and form the basis of the 2024-2028 Financial Plan.

IMPLICATIONS

Governance Implications

In 2024, staff have prioritized programs and initiatives that:

- Advance 2023-2026 Board Priorities or Corporate Plan initiatives;
- Operationalize capital investments; and/or
- Are necessary to maintain a core service level following a regulatory change or where there is a safety risk to customers, communities, or staff.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has reviewed and assessed all business cases and confirmed alignment with the criteria. ELT has determined that the consolidated package of work is appropriate and a proportional response to the CRD Board's and communities' expectations of the organization.

Financial Implications

To exercise constraint and cost containment, the CRD Board directed staff to keep the core inflationary adjustment to 3.5% through the 2024 Service and Financial Planning Guidelines.

Staff and management have taken the necessary steps to mitigate the financial impact of proposed initiatives as well as cost escalation and high inflation rate experienced in 2022 through to 2023.

Financial and staff impacts for initiatives will be summarized and included in the provisional budget which will be presented at the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for October 25, 2023. Starting this year, this will also include a five-year forecast of staffing level changes, which will be reviewed annually.

Service Delivery Implications

Appendix A includes information about existing service delivery, operational considerations and performance. Additional information has been provided below about the proposed changes for 2024.

Staff are proposing to advance four new initiatives for the Transportation Community Need that have financial implications for 2024, as shown in Table 1. The key drivers for the initiatives are:

1. advancing a Board or Corporate Plan Priority; and
2. adjustments to core service levels to maintain safety.

Table 1. Transportation Community Need Initiatives (2024)

Initiative	Implementation year(s)	Staff impacts (2024)	Incremental cost (2024)	Funding source
4a-1.1 Transportation service	2024–2025	0.5 New Term	\$422,000	Requisition
4b-1.1 Regional Trails Closure Policy Implementation Funding	2024-ongoing	-	\$35,000	Requisition
4b-2.1 Island Corridor Consultation	2024	-	\$600,000	Grant
4c-2.1 Regional Trails Project Engineer	2024–2028	1 New Term	\$117,000	Capital & requisition

The information in Table 1 reflects the business case costs which ELT reviewed as part of their annual assessment of initiatives. The financial impacts reflect full program costs, including cost of staffing.

4a-1.1 Transportation Service

Discrete transportation management approaches and municipal priorities can be at cross-purposes when it comes to establishing a consistent multi-modal approach to transportation, region wide. If done effectively, regional transportation authorities ease the transportation management and delivery burden on local governments, allowing them to focus on other priorities that are important to their residents. The CRD Board has prioritized the need to explore and advance an increased regional role in how transportation is managed and delivered. A new transportation service is needed as the first step toward advancing such governance changes.

As a first step, all municipalities, electoral areas and key partners in the region are being engaged between July and September 2023 to gather information about aspirations and regional consensus on a new transportation service. This information will be used to scope service level options within the Regional District’s statutory authorities to support the CRD Board’s goals to ease traffic congestion, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation and support higher rates of walking, cycling and transit use.

Initiative 4a-1.1 seeks a one-time budget adjustment to undertake this scoping work, namely a service feasibility study to identify, define and cost the new service levels, and a supporting facilitation or public engagement process. The initiative also seeks to create a part-time (0.5 FTE) two-year term position in the Financial Services Division to support this milestone project.

4b-1.1 Regional Trails Closure Policy Implementation Funding

The CRD operates and maintains a 100-kilometre multi-use regional trail network comprised of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, the Lochside Regional Trail and the E&N Rail Trail – Humpback Connector that connects key destinations throughout the region. Temporary closures are sometimes required on the regional trails to address operational issues, conduct regular maintenance or to complete infrastructure improvements and repairs. Such closures, either planned as part of the core service delivery or unplanned because of an emergency, can impede the use of the regional trails as transportation corridors if safe detour routes are not provided.

A new CRD Regional Trails Closure Policy was approved by the General Manager of Parks & Environmental Services in 2023, in accordance with the CRD's Policy Management Framework. The policy enhances the level of service provided to trail users by designing and implementing a transportation engineered detour route that meets All Ages and Abilities facility standards when a regional trail is temporarily closed.

Initiative 4b-1.1 seeks an ongoing increase to the Regional Parks core budget to support the implementation of the Regional Trail Closure Policy. Staff will retain the services of a transportation engineer to design detour routes around closures and for any necessary materials to implement the detour. The funding has been estimated to support up to seven trail closures per year.

4b-2.1 Island Corridor Consultation

The island rail corridor is a 295 kilometre protected rail corridor that connects the CRD to Courtenay. The Provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has given the CRD \$600,000 in conditional grant funding to support the development of a shared vision for the future of this corridor. The funding, which was approved by Board resolution on April 12, 2023, must be used to consult and plan collaboratively with regional districts, First Nations, and other levels of government to secure this joint vision.

This initiative is retroactive as the funding has already been accepted by resolution and staff expect to start work on some of the deliverables in 2023. It has been submitted to track the work and secure the necessary internal resources. There are no additional resources (financial or staffing) required to progress the work.

4c-2.1 Regional Trail Project Engineer

The Galloping Goose and Lochside Regional Trails see two million and one million visits per year, respectively. The urban sections of these trails consist of a paved pathway for cyclists and pedestrians in a dual-direction flow. A study has been completed to evaluate options to widen and separate portions of the regional trails and to consider the installation of lighting along the corridors. The CRD Board approved accelerated implementation of the regional trails widening and lighting project in the summer.

Initiative 4c-2.1 seeks to create a new regular ongoing position in the Facilities Management & Engineering Services Division to support the delivery of the multiple phases of the widening and lighting project.

CONCLUSION

CRD staff are progressing initiatives identified in the 2023-2026 CRD Corporate Plan, including the Board Priorities. The CRD Board and commissions with delegated authorities determine resourcing through the annual review and approval of the provisional financial plan. To support decision-making, staff provide recommendations on funding, timing and service levels through the service and financial planning processes.

RECOMMENDATION

The Transportation Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:
That Appendix A, Community Need Summary – Transportation, be approved as presented and form the basis of the 2024-2028 Financial Plan.

Submitted by:	Fran Lopez, M. Sc., Manager, Strategic Planning
Submitted by:	Jeff Leahy, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Emily Sinclair, MCIP, RPP, Acting General Manager, Planning & Protective Services
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P. Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Community Need Summary – Transportation

4 Transportation



Residents have access to convenient, green and affordable multi-modal transportation systems that enhance livability

01 Strategy

STRATEGIES & PLANS

- › [Regional Transportation Plan](#)
- › [Regional Growth Strategy](#)
- › [Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan](#)
- › [Regional Trails Management Plan](#)
- › [Climate Action Strategy](#)

CORPORATE PLAN GOALS

- 4a Present options for changes in governance for transportation in the region, including the electoral areas
- 4b Improve regional connectivity & safety across transportation modes
- 4c Support investments, expansion & equitable access to active and low carbon transportation
- 4d Education, encouragement & information

02 Contacts

Emily Sinclair, Regional & Strategic Planning

@ [email](#)

T. 250.360.3244

Jeff Leahy, Senior Manager, Regional Parks

@ [email](#)

T. 250.360.3340

03 Operating Context

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

1. Initiated pre-planning for the Transportation Governance initiative including research and first round of engagement with municipalities, electoral areas and other partners (see initiative 4a-1.1).
2. CRD Board approved a regional definition for All Ages & Abilities (AAA) cycling facilities, developed with the Transportation Working Group.
3. Developed a regional trails closure policy to minimize disruptions to trail users and provide a consistent approach to regional trail closures.
4. CRD Board approved accelerated implementation of the Regional Trails Widening and Lighting Project in Q3 2023. This project will widen and light the most used sections of the Galloping Goose and Lochside trails.
5. Initiated the Critical Repairs to Selkirk Trestle project (phase 0).
6. Completed the Lochside Trail Paving Project. The project extends from Swartz Bay to Beacon Avenue.
7. Completed the Bilston Creek Bridge Replacement Project.
8. Completed the Regional Trails Asset Renewal Plan.
9. Completed the Salt Spring Island Active Transportation Plan.
10. Administered the Origin Destination Household Travel Survey in 2022 and presented results in Q3 2023.
11. Completed the 2022-23 cohort for the Ready Step Roll initiative (two elementary schools and two municipalities).
12. Launched the Sustainable Commute Planning pilot with CFB Esquimalt and Seaspan, bringing learnings from the Ready Step Roll initiative to employers and workplaces.
13. Conducted annual bicycle and vehicle counts.
14. Received a grant from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) to support participation in consultation on the Island Rail Corridor, to be undertaken in partnership with the federal and provincial governments, island regional districts, First Nations and the Island Corridor Foundation.

FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT OUR OPERATIONS IN 2024 AND BEYOND

- **Regional Transportation Governance:** A service feasibility study will be undertaken pending results from the transportation governance initiative engagement. Study findings could result in new or adjusted program and service delivery activities in both Regional and Strategic Planning and Regional Parks.
- **Mode Shift and Population Growth:** The volume of transportation work around the region remains high to accommodate population growth and to meet shared objectives to reduce congestion, support higher rates of walking, cycling and transit use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Transportation planning and infrastructure delivery is a shared responsibility among local governments, the province and service delivery partners such as BC Transit. There is a sustained need for data collection, research, analysis and regional coordination to ensure that project planning and delivery achieves a consistent, connected and sustainable transportation system.

- **Changing User Needs and Expectations:** Regional trail user needs and expectations are changing with increased rates of cycling and walking, as well as increased use of eBikes and other mobility devices. This has the potential to impact service levels. In addition, Board direction to accelerate implementation of regional trail widening and lighting to support increased rates of walking and cycling will require a dedicated project delivery team, resourced as the project moves forward.
- **Sustainable Service Delivery:** Major infrastructure in regional trails is nearing the end of its lifespan and needs improvements to support demands they were not built for. In recent years, the increased cost of materials and the complexity of projects has led to high costs for these major capital projects. Anticipate increased costs associated with the need for improved and safer active transportation infrastructure.
- **Pandemic Recovery:** The active school travel planning initiative, Ready Step Roll, has been in place for almost five years. We are starting to see the capacity of our school and community partners increase following a low in the COVID-19 pandemic, with four schools participating in 2023-2024. A continuous improvement approach is being used to refine delivery of this initiative and to consider expansion to employers and workplaces.

OPERATIONAL STATISTICS (IF APPLICABLE)

- 2022 Regional Trail peak user volume: 3,750 (July 2022, CRD Regional and Strategic Planning)

04 Services

The services listed below rely on the support of several corporate and support divisions to operate effectively on a daily basis. More information about these services is available in the Corporate Services and Government Relations Community Need Summaries.

SERVICE BUDGET REFERENCES¹

- › 1.324 Regional Planning
- › 1.280 Regional Parks*

1. REGIONAL PLANNING – TRANSPORTATION

Description

Responsible for data collection, research and modelling related to regional multi-modal travel. The service supports the development and implementation of regional district services and informs local, agency and provincial government transportation and land use planning processes.

What you can expect from us

- ▶ Every five years, prepare the Origin Destination Household Travel Survey to gather mode shift data and other information about regional travel patterns.
- ▶ Collect and monitor multi-modal transportation data on an ongoing basis. Liaise and disseminate findings to municipalities, electoral areas, the provincial government, partner agencies, academic institutions and other partners, on demand.
- ▶ Deliver active school travel planning services with up to five schools per year.
- ▶ Analyze the impacts of actual and projected changes to the transportation system and provide transportation planning advice and expertise to regional, sub-regional and local planning and transportation projects and initiatives, on demand.
- ▶ Implement and monitor the Regional Transportation Plan, including research, analysis and advice to achieve the multi-modal Regional Transportation Network and support CRD departments advance active transportation infrastructure and programming.
- ▶ **Deliver on CRD Board direction to scope and develop governance options, including consideration of a new transportation authority.**

Staffing Complement²

Regional & Strategic Planning: **3.5 FTE + Senior Manager and 1 Administrative Support**

¹ Service budget(s) listed may fund other services

² Excluding exempt and administrative support staff

2. REGIONAL TRAILS

Description

Manage Regional Trails system to protect and operate three regional trails that provide a transportation and recreation function and that provide non-motorized trails for active transportation and recreation to connect municipalities, electoral areas and the region with adjacent jurisdictions.

What you can expect from us (through Regional Parks Operations)

- ▶ Operate, manage and maintain 95 km of multi-use regional trails.
- ▶ Implement the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan and Regional Trails Management Plan to achieve regional transportation objectives.
- ▶ Conduct 250 km of boom flail vegetation removal annually.
- ▶ Procure engineer assessments of critical built assets (dams, trestles, bridges) up to a value of \$225,000 annually. Prepare a 10-year critical asset assessment schedule.

Staffing Complement

Regional Parks: [See the Regional Parks Community Need Summary](#). Regional Trail FTEs are built into the [Regional Parks Staffing complement](#).

05 Initiatives

Below are the initiatives listed in the [Capital Regional District 2023-2026 Corporate Plan](#) and the related initiative business cases (IBCs), including financial and staffing impacts, proposed for 2024. The financial impacts reflect full program costs, including cost of staffing.

Initiative	Implementation year(s)	Impacts in 2024	
<p>4a-1 Scope and develop governance options, including consideration of a new transportation authority</p> <p>▶ NEW IBC 4a-1.1 Transportation service</p>	<p>2024-ongoing</p> <p>2024-2025</p>	<p>\$422K requisition</p>	<p>0.5 New Term</p>
4a-2 Work collaboratively with elected and staff leaders in electoral areas, local governments, partner agencies and the province on transportation governance options development	Planned for 2025	-	-
4a-3 Chart a pathway to approval, based on a preferred transportation governance option	Planned for 2026	-	-
<p>4b-1 Work with the Transportation Working Group to implement the regional multi-modal transportation network</p> <p>▶ NEW IBC 4b-1.1 Regional Trails Closure Policy Implementation Funding</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2024-ongoing</p>	<p>\$35K requisition</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>4b-2 Prepare policy positions to support advocacy for infrastructure investments and service improvements to achieve regional transportation priority items related to mass transit, general transit improvements, active transportation and multi-modal and safe highways</p> <p>▶ NEW IBC 4b-2.1 Island Corridor Consultation</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2024</p>	<p>\$600K grant</p>	<p>-</p>
4b-3 Support local governments to implement consistent approaches to transportation demand management, active transportation and safety policy	Ongoing	-	-
4c-1 Update the Regional Trails Management Plan	Planned for 2025	-	-

Initiative	Implementation year(s)	Impacts in 2024
<p>4c-2 Prepare a funding strategy to support implementation of priority regional trail enhancement and expansion projects</p> <p>▶ NEW IBC 4c-2.1 Regional Trails Project Engineer</p>	<p>2023</p> <p>2024-2028</p>	<p>1 New Term</p> <p>\$117K capital + requisition</p>
<p>4d-1 Shift travel behaviour through education, encouragement, and information</p>	<p>Planned for 2025</p>	<p>-</p> <p>-</p>



06 Performance

GOAL 4A: PRESENT OPTIONS FOR CHANGES IN GOVERNANCE FOR TRANSPORTATION IN THE REGION, INCLUDING THE ELECTORAL AREAS

Targets & Benchmarks

- **Rate of stakeholder participation** will measure the level of stakeholder engagement in the transportation governance initiative. High levels of participation indicate that stakeholders are interested, informed and committed to the initiative. Low levels of participation indicate possible indifference or resistance.
- **Progress reporting** on workplan deliverables will measure the number of decision milestones reached on time. Progress is on track if the timing of decisions continues to align with the timing required to execute governance change within the Board’s term.

Measuring Progress

Ref	Performance Measure(s)	Type	2022 Actual	2023 Forecast	2024 Target	Desired trend
1	Percentage of stakeholders participating in the transportation governance initiative ¹	Quantity	N/A	100%	100%	→
2	Number of decision milestones reached on time ²	Quantity	N/A	2/2	3/3	→

¹ Participation, expressed as a percentage, of the 22 stakeholders invited to participate in the transportation governance initiative.

² Number of decision milestones, based on the project plan, that need to be reached in-year to deliver transportation governance change within the 2023-2026 Board term.

Discussion

- **Measure 1:** 22 stakeholders are participating in the transportation governance initiative (13 municipalities, three electoral areas and six agency partners.) Participation will be measured yearly and evaluated based on whether the stakeholder provided input into the engagement process. The target is for 100% participation as governance changes will impact all stakeholders. Note that First Nations have been informed of the project and invited to participate on an opt-in basis. Their participation will be tracked separately.
- **Measure 2:** The project timelines for the transportation governance initiative were presented to the CRD Board on June 14, 2023. The timelines aim to deliver governance options for CRD Board consideration in 2024 to allow for new service creation in 2025, pending Board direction. Project timing is constrained by fixed deadlines (i.e., Board term, statutory requirements for service creation) and decision milestones are dependent on completing deliverables and securing consensus from multiple stakeholders. When decisions are not made on time, progress toward achieving transportation governance change will slow. This measure will indicate friction-points in the process and allow for the consideration of adjustments where needed (e.g., change to engagement approach or re-scoping). Note that decision milestones are not cumulative from year to year.

GOAL 4B: IMPROVE REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY & SAFETY ACROSS TRANSPORTATION MODES

Targets & Benchmarks

- **Mode share** is a good indicator of residents’ willingness and ability to make sustainable transport choices for at least some of their trips. The regional mode share target is 45% for active transportation and transit combined for the region by 2038, based on 15% walking, 15% cycling and 15% transit. Note this is a 3% increase from the mode share target in the Regional Growth Strategy as the Victoria Regional Transit Commission increased the transit mode share target to 15% in 2020.

Measuring progress

Ref	Performance Measure(s)	Type	2022 Actual	2023 Forecast	2024 Target	Desired trend
3	Percentage of all trips made annually in the capital region by walking, cycling and public transit ³	Quantity	29%	29%	29%	↗

³ data from CRD Origin Destination survey 2022

Discussion

- The mode share target is measured through the CRD OD Survey, administered every five years. There is no year-on-year reporting of the target.
- The CRD has been tracking mode share since 2001. Starting in 2006, there has been a steady increase in the combined walking, cycling and public transit mode share over time:
 - 2001: 21.2%
 - 2006: 20.5%
 - 2011: 22.4%
 - 2017: 26.6%
 - 2022: 29%

GOAL 4C: SUPPORT INVESTMENTS, EXPANSION & EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ACTIVE AND LOW CARBON TRANSPORTATION

Targets & Benchmarks

- **Value of capital spending** in CRD active and low-carbon infrastructure indicates the level of organizational commitment to deliver this goal.
- **Value of grant funding** from federal, provincial and other funding bodies for CRD active and low-carbon infrastructure projects indicates the amount of external support available to deliver this goal.

Measuring Progress

Ref	Performance Measure(s)	Type	2022 Actual	2023 Forecast	2024 Target	Desired trend
4	Total estimated CRD capital investments in active and low-carbon infrastructure projects ⁴	Quantity	\$1.4M	\$1.9M	\$1.7M	↗
5	Total value of grant funding for CRD active and low-carbon infrastructure projects from external sources ^{5,6}	Quantity	\$1.4M	\$3.1M	\$6.9M	↗

⁴ Estimated totals from CRD operating and capital plans

⁵ Total value of grants received by the CRD.

⁶ Total value of unsecured funds based on outstanding federal grant program applications (2024)

Discussion

- **Measure 4:** The desired trend is to increase the amount invested in CRD active and low-carbon transportation infrastructure to keep pace with user needs. Targets are set for each fiscal year through the service and financial planning processes. The reported dollar figures include capital investments for regional trail expansion, enhancement, maintenance and operations in the fiscal year. Regional trails, both existing and proposed, are defined on Map 6 of the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan and include the Galloping Goose, Lochside, E&N Rail-Trail Humpback Connector and the proposed network on Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands. The figures also include investments in low-carbon infrastructure charging. Note the 2024 target does not include any debt servicing associated with borrowing related to acceleration of the Regional Trails Widening and Lighting project.
- **Measure 5:** The desired trend is to attract greater amounts of external funding for active and low-carbon transportation infrastructure. CRD priorities for active and low-carbon transportation are closely aligned to federal and provincial goals. The assumption is that the CRD is in a strong position to attract funding. If the measure trends down, this could indicate that grants are over-subscribed or there is a need to consider new grant application strategies. Note that the forecast and target values are for unsecured funds.

GOAL 4D: EDUCATION, ENCOURAGEMENT & INFORMATION

Targets & Benchmarks

- Measuring the number of schools participating in the Ready Step Roll initiative tracks the number of schools that have received hands-on support to educate younger residents on matters of traffic safety and sustainable mode choice.

Measuring Progress

Ref	Performance Measure(s)	Type	2022 Actual	2023 Forecast	2024 Target	Desired trend
6	Active School Travel Planning: schools' participation in the regional Ready Step Roll initiative ⁶	Quantity	45	47	51	↗

⁶ Total number of schools that have participated in the regional Ready Step Roll initiative since 2015; data from CRD Regional Planning

Discussion

- The active school travel planning initiative is delivered as a partnership among schools (administration and parent advisory committees), municipalities and the CRD. The initiative cannot succeed without the active participation of all three partners. Due to pressures facing school administrators and parents from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, only two schools participated in the initiative for the 2022/23 cohort (or school year). Four schools and municipalities have committed to participating in the initiative for the 2023/24 cohort.

07 Business Model

PARTICIPANTS	All municipalities, Tsawout Nation and Songhees Nations
FUNDING SOURCES	Requisitions, grants and reserves
GOVERNANCE	<u>Transportation Committee</u> <u>Traffic Safety Commission</u> <u>Regional Parks Committee</u>