

THIRD QUARTER UPDATE



The Quarterly Update is produced four times a year to communicate progress on active FVRD projects and initiatives.

ADMINISTRATION

Throughout the third quarter of 2020, FVRD staff have continued to work toward COVID recovery, implementing many safety plans for FVRD work sites. The FVRD is committed to reducing the risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19 as we continue to deliver services to our citizens. The FVRD's corporate offices are open to the public on a by-appointment and limited walk-in basis.

- » COVID-19 safety plans are in place for the corporate office in Chilliwack, CARE Centre, FVRD Volunteer Fire Departments, transfer stations and the Chaumox Landfill, Almer Carlson Pool, Regional Parks, Vedder River Campground, and the Yale Community Centre. At the Hope and District Recreation Centre, safety plans are in place for the arena, Club Child, fitness rooms, and the Dan Sharers Lobby.
- » In September, the FVRD Board enabled partial in-person attendance at its Committee and Board meetings. Previously, all meetings were being held by videoconference, with members of the public being able to call in or submit questions via email. Thanks to an investment in new technology for the FVRD Boardroom, a portion of the Board may attend in-person while still meeting safe occupancy limits within COVID-19 guidelines. Members of the public may also attend in person or continue to make use of the electronic tools available to participate in FVRD meetings fully.
- » Members of the Electoral Area Services Committee participated in a priority-setting workshop on September 17 as part of the FVRD's strategic plan update. The Board will participate in a full workshop and refresh of the *2014-2018 Strategic Plan* in mid-November. The *2018-2022 Strategic Plan* had been delayed in 2019 due to changes in senior staff and again in 2020 due to the global pandemic.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES & STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

- » Staff are working with the Boston Bar North Bend Enhancement Society to restore the community's historic 1914 Station House. The FVRD is working with the society following the July announcement of a \$1.9 million grant from Infrastructure Canada to develop a rest stop and museum, showcasing railroad, First Nation, Chinese and local history in the community.

CORPORATE AFFAIRS

- » Human Resources - Several recruitments were completed in the 3rd quarter, including positions at the Hope and District Recreation Centre to reopen facilities closed during the pandemic. The FVRD also filled the Fire Dispatch Management Coordinator role and welcomed a new Manager of Building Inspection.
- » Information Technology (IT) & GIS - Network equipment and critical ROIP (E911 equipment) located at the Hope and District Recreation Centre can now depend on stable electrical power from a recently-installed generator. IT has also installed new hardware to store offline data backup and email archiving to assist with retention, compliance, and E-discovery. In the GIS division, a new cadastral update process has been completed. This was a major process that changed the source of cadastral information (property lines) to use Parcel Map BC (PMBC). PMBC is managed by the Land Title and Survey Authority and is quickly becoming the preferred source of cadastral information for the Province and other local governments.

FINANCE

- » Staff have begun preparing for the 2021 Budget process. Meetings with Electoral Area Directors are planned for October, and staff will review proposed budgets for electoral area service areas. Regional, sub-regional and electoral area-wide budgets will be presented to Committee of the Whole in December.

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

- » Following a comprehensive review, the FVRD has been given the ability to retroactively hold and validate a parcel tax review panel for the years 2017, 2018 and 2020 through legislation recently passed in the *Municipalities Enabling and Validation Act*. Staff will issue notices to service area participants in Electoral Areas C, D and H relevant to six bylaws: Cultus Lake Integrated Water Supply and Distribution, South Cultus Lake Sewage Treatment, Lake Errock Water System Capital Construction, and the Popkum Sewer Service. The Parcel Tax Review Panel will be held at the FVRD's Boardroom on November 12 at 10 a.m.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Some Planning and Development staff continue to work remotely to reduce risks associated with COVID-19. Projects and applications are moving forward and customer service levels are being maintained. Highlights from the Planning and Development department include:

- » Zoning Consolidation - A revised draft bylaw has been submitted to legal counsel for final legal review.
- » Electoral Area D Official Community Plan (OCP) - Staff have been working on final edits to the draft OCP to incorporate feedback received since it received 2nd reading from the Board in February 2020. The engagement strategy has been reviewed and revised to acknowledge COVID-19 delays and limitations. A public hearing for the Electoral Area D OCP is tentatively planned for December 2020.
- » Hemlock OCP - The Avalanche Hazard Report for the Edelweiss area has been completed. Staff are now drafting revised Development Permit Areas to implement this new snow avalanche information.
- » Housing Needs Report - This project has been awarded to CitySpaces Consulting. Work is now underway to engage with communities through focus groups and key informant interviews.
- » Digital Public Hearings - Planning & Development staff prepared a report to the Board regarding the holding of public hearing by electronic means. This will allow for projects to move forward and clears three zoning applications and two OCP amendments to move to public hearings. Digital participation can be via telephone or videoconference (Zoom). Written comments are strongly encouraged.

- » Bylaw Enforcement - Staff prepared a mailout to the Lindell Beach community in Electoral Area H to proactively address short-term vacation rentals and the use of RVs for accommodation purposes. Staff also focused on enforcement efforts to address bylaw compliance issues.

ENGINEERING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

Throughout the summer months, Engineering and Community Services has continued to work on a number of initiatives:

Engineering & Utilities

- » Cleanout of the Frosst Creek Middle Sediment Basin and the Elbow Creek Sediment Basin. Approximately 2,000m³ and 1,650 m³ sediment was removed from each basin.
- » Deroche Water / Lakahamen 11 feasibility study - FVRD has applied for further grants to complete detailed design and construction.
- » FVRD completed a sewer feasibility study for the Lake Errock community in Electoral Area C. Further analysis and study is being conducted in conjunction with Sq'ewlets First Nation and FVRD.
- » Construction of the Hemlock Valley Transfer Station is almost complete.
- » The Nicomen Island Improvement District Flood Protection Project continues to progress. Work in the third quarter was focussed on the Shoreline Protection Project and the Pump Station Upgrades Pre-Design. FVRD is working with various Federal and Provincial agencies, including Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Transport Canada.
- » Detailed design and archaeological impact assessment for the Cultus Sewer Main Beach Bypass Project has been completed.
- » Emergency Services - The Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) program was announced by the provincial government in 2018 and is intended to reduce the risk of wildfires and mitigate their impacts on BC communities. Under this program, the FVRD initiated the 2019 Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and presented the completed plan to the Board on July 28, 2020. Staff have now applied for an additional \$550,000 from CRI to address the recommendations in the CWPP.

REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Strategic Planning and Initiatives

- » Regional Growth Strategy - The 2020 Draft Regional Growth Strategy is an update to the FVRD's *Choices for our Future* plan, adopted in 2004. The 2020 draft RGS includes three new policy areas: Collaboration, Living Well, and Energy & Climate Change. Next steps to update the RGS will consist of meetings with staff from member municipalities to receive input and updates, engagement with Indigenous communities, reinstatement of the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, public engagement, and legal review. It is hoped that the Board will adopt the *Fraser Valley Future 2050* RGS in 2021.
- » Rural Internet Connectivity - This project was initiated to address long-standing concerns about internet and cell phone coverage in the region's electoral areas. The Rural Internet Connectivity project is determining what services are located where and how any identified gaps may be addressed by pursuing federal and provincial funding opportunities as they become available. COVID-19 has added another dimension as the ability to access high-speed internet is essential for residents to work from home, take advantage of online schooling or provide reliable internet access for businesses. Technical analysis and survey work has been completed, with over 600 survey responses, and a final report with recommendations is being prepared.
- » 2020 Social Housing Inventory - FVRD is updating its Social Housing Inventories, allowing us to track change in social housing supply over time (the first inventory was in 2009 with updates in 2014 and 2017). Completion is expected in the next two months. This information in combination with the homelessness report, will provide a broader picture on which to discuss broader housing challenges in the region.
- » Fraser Valley Transportation and Land Use Plan - FVRD will participate in the Province's recently announced Fraser Valley Transportation and Land Use Plan. The FVRD is in contact with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to determine the project's status and terms of reference.

Environmental Services

- » Air Quality - Towards the end of the summer, the FVRD experienced reduced visibility and poor air quality caused by heavy wildfire smoke coming from the United States. As a result of the high concentrations of fine particulate matter, the FVRD issued an Air Quality Advisory for the region on September 8, 2020, which was not lifted until September 19, when air quality finally improved. During this period, the FVRD worked continuously with regional airshed partners in delivering timely public messaging about air pollution and providing tips for reducing personal health risk. In September, the FVRD released a Discussion Paper outlining the draft content of a new Air Quality Management Plan, which will serve as a guiding document to inform, prioritize, and target air quality actions within the FVRD for the next decade. Staff is currently seeking input on the draft report and anticipate report completion in early 2021.
- » Floodplain Mosquito Control - Due to continuing snowfall and wet conditions throughout much of the province earlier this year, the Fraser River maintained unusually high flow volumes, as well as multiple peaks in river levels. This created ideal conditions for mosquito larvae that required substantial and frequent re-treatments of larvicide well into July. The late hatch resulted in a mosquito season lasting until mid-August this year, approximately one month longer than historical averages.
- » Invasive Weed Control - Invasive weed control technicians were active throughout the summer months removing tansy ragwort, wild chervil, giant hogweed, and knotweed from roadsides in participating areas. As a pilot project to supplement the usual curbside collection program offered, weed control crews with the Fraser Valley Invasive Species Society hosted a tansy ragwort community drop off event on September 12 in Electoral Area H to raise awareness, encourage control, and assist in the safe disposal of invasive weeds. Additional drop-off events will be held in other communities next year.

Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Overall usage in FVRD parks is up over 30 percent, as visitors are looking to use outdoor spaces as a way to recreate in the pandemic. Other highlights include:

- » Island 22 Bike Park - To help better serve the mountain biking community and maximize safety, boardwalks, ramps, skinnies, and drops at the bike park were removed and replaced, and an additional beginner and expert level drop was added to the drop zone.
- » Mt. Cheam - Staff have installed a new urine diversion toilet at the Mt. Cheam trailhead. This new system manages waste more effectively than traditional pit toilets and has been successful at other backcountry locations such as Elk Mountain.

Hope and Area Recreation

Visitors to our recreation facilities in Hope will notice some improvements that took place during the time we were closed due to the pandemic. Many projects have been completed to enhance the customer experience, including new fitness equipment and a new arena score clock.

- » The Almer Carlson Pool opened to the public in August on a reduced schedule. Patrons were able to book swim times under enhanced COVID guidelines.
- » In September, the weight and cardio rooms at the Hope and District Recreation Centre reopened to the public. Patrons can sign up for timeslots online or by contacting the Recreation Centre directly at 604-869-2304.
- » The Hope Arena opened in September for group bookings. Established groups or teams have submitted their own COVID-19 safety plans.
- » The Dan Sharrers Aquatic Centre opened to the swim club at the end of September. Staff are gearing up to welcome the community back to the pool later this fall.

Vedder River Campground

- » While COVID-19 brought some challenges to the campground in 2020, demand in the third quarter continued to be high, with some increases in revenues. Campers were generally quite satisfied with the COVID-19 safety procedures and additional spacing between sites. Additional alcove sites were created to offer further camping opportunities to guests looking for a family-friendly camping experience.

Animal Control

- » The CARE Centre has impounded an average of 40 dogs per month in the 3rd quarter, up from an average of 30 dogs per month in the first half of the year. Of these dogs, we are seeing a reduction of dogs claimed by their owners in the last half of the third quarter, bringing our in-care dogs up from previous months. Many of these unclaimed dogs are currently undergoing behaviour modification programs and medical rehabilitation. We expect to see more dogs available for adoption in the 4th quarter.