

QUARTERLY UPDATE

July - September 2021



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

ADMINISTRATION

- » Workplace safety is a top priority as we continue to comply with provincial health orders, WorkSafeBC and other public health directives.
- » We are currently conducting hybrid board and committee meetings in-person and online via Zoom. In person attendance is limited to seven members of the public, accommodated on a first come, first served basis. Members of the public or media wishing to attend online may participate via Zoom or submit written comments.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Communications

- » The new online engagement site, haveyoursay.fvrd.ca, launched on August 3, 2021. So far, 2,000 people have visited the site and more than 400 people have registered to provide feedback on the Regional Growth Strategy and other projects.

Human Resources

- » Fall recruitment is in full swing and like many employers in the region, we have a number of openings to fill. Recently, staff have left the FVRD for a number of reasons including making major life decisions, starting families, relocating, or returning to school. This has created many opportunities for individuals to join our team. Find current job postings at fvrd.ca/careers.

Information Technology

- » The IT team successfully completed a major upgrade of phone system hardware and network programming at the main office and CARE Centre. The new system enables staff to receive calls to their office lines even when out of the office through a mobile or desktop app.



Signage in Deroche advertises the new online engagement site.

- » Staff are preparing to launch the updated MyFVRD online system in November. The streamlined system will make it easier for the public to purchase and renew dog licenses, schedule building inspections, pay utility bills and access other online services.

Fire Dispatch Management

- » Chilliwack ROIP coverage tests were completed and commissioning of this channel is slated for the second week of October. Dual VPN ROIP connectivity has been completed and deployed at Hope & Area Recreation Centre (on Thacker Mountain). This allows for network redundancy and connectivity with dispatch.
- » Chilliwack River Valley Mobile Radio Telephone Interconnect back-up channel project has started with planned completion by early December. The team has successfully completed 95% of annual preventive radio maintenance work scheduled for this year.

FINANCE

- » The Finance team hosted staff training with the aim of creating more efficient financial operations across the organization. Additionally, a large focus of the quarter was on budget preparations for the 2022 Financial Plan. Meetings with Electoral Area Directors are planned for October and regional, sub-regional and electoral area-wide budgets will be presented to the Committee of the Whole in December.

- » On August 31, the Regional Grant-In-Aid (GIA) 2022 application period closed. The Regional GIA provides financial assistance to non-profit organizations or community groups who provide services or benefit to the Regional District, whether those services span the entire Regional District or the majority of the Regional District. This is an annual GIA application period which closes every August 31 for funding in the following year.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Electoral Area Planning

- » In response to development applications, the planning team initiated four zoning amendments, one Official Community Plan (OCP) amendment, one Temporary Use permit application, completed eight Development Variance Permits, issued five Development Permits, processed eight referrals, and issued six subdivision referral responses
- » The planning team initiated the first Hemlock OCP public consultation process since the first reading of the OCP. In September, staff made a presentation at the Hemlock Valley Homeowners' Association AGM.
- » Urban Systems was awarded the contract to develop the Harrison Mills Neighbourhood Plan. The consultant has initiated the project and is undertaking technical studies (e.g. geotechnical, environmental, archaeological). An online community survey is available at haveyoursay.fvrd.ca/harrison-mills.
- » In July, staff made a presentation to the Board on the Consolidated Zoning Bylaw Update. Staff are preparing to bring it in front of Electoral Area Services Committee and Board for first reading in the coming months.

Bylaw Enforcement

- » The Bylaw team opened 35 new bylaw files and conducted 76 inspections this quarter.

Building Inspection

- » The Building team issued 82 building permits worth over \$12.4 million in construction value and conducted 523 inspections this quarter.

Emergency Management

- » The Alertable system provides emergency alerts and notices to electoral area residents. More than 6,000 people have signed up for the system so far. Sign up to receive notifications by email, text, phone or app at fvrd.ca/alerts.

- » An emergency operation centre was activated this quarter to:
 - » Support Lytton First Nation and wildfire evacuees;
 - » Respond to an interface fire on Long Island (Harrison Lake, Area C), declared a State of Local Emergency (SOLE), and issue an evacuation order and alert. The fire resulted in the loss of two structures;
 - » Respond to the Mowhukum Creek interface fire by issuing a SOLE, evacuation orders and evacuation alerts in partnership with the Boothroyd Indian Band
- » Staff participated in community-led emergency preparedness sessions at:
 - » Columbia Valley community preparedness meeting
 - » Hemlock Valley Homeowners Association AGM
 - » Sunshine Valley AGM
 - » Spuzzum First Nation
 - » Yale & District Ratepayers community preparedness meeting
- » In September, staff hosted the first Incident Command Centre Canada I-200 Train the Trainer training session held in BC.

ENGINEERING & UTILITIES

- » A new Municipal Type Service Agreement (MTSA) to supply bulk water to the Cheam First Nation was signed recently. The community has been connected to Popkum Water System since 2015 and the new agreement includes rates to accommodate present and future growth of the community.
- » Engineering works included clean-up of the Baker Trails Tank Creek Debris Basin and clean-up of the debris flow on Briar and Wash Creek.
- » Data loggers were set to record aquifer water levels on volunteer wells as part of the Miracle Valley Aquifer Assessment Project in Electoral Area F.
- » In Electoral Area A, intake cleaning of surface water system was completed in Boston Bar and North Bend.
- » The annual maintenance program of hydrant, pressure reducing valves, and station maintenance program continues.

- » The Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) analytics project was completed over the summer. All our utilities systems (water, sewer, etc.) are now centrally monitored. Essential data includes water flow and quantity, reservoir level, and instrumentation reports. It also provides critical alarms for our system to trigger operations and maintenance.
- » Staff conducted inspections of water, sewer, storm drainage, and streetlight infrastructures during construction of the second phase of the Minter Gardens subdivision in Electoral Area D.
- » An upgrade to the sewer pipe installation at Sunnyside Plaza and the Parks Office in Cultus Lake Park was completed. The sewer lift station pumps were repaired at the sewer systems in Popkum and Cultus Lake.

- » FVRD staff and the City of Chilliwack made a joint presentation at a virtual workshop hosted by Metro Vancouver this summer on the issue of illegal dumping. Staff shared their knowledge of the prevalence of illegal dumping within the Fraser Valley and discussed lessons learned and the value of collaboration. FVRD, Chilliwack, and numerous community groups are working together to raise awareness about illegal dumping as part of the Fraser Valley Illegal Dumping Alliance.

REGIONAL SERVICES

Animal Control

- » 121 dogs were impounded between July 1 and September 30. Of these, 29% were licenced when impounded and qualified for a free ride home.
- » Animal Control Officers attended 830 calls for service this quarter and conducted an additional 148 park patrols, providing education to dog owners regarding leashing and licencing requirements.
- » There were no new dangerous dogs impounded in the third quarter. The hearing for a dangerous dog impounded in January has been postponed to January 2022, when the case for a destruction order will be heard. Animal Control received judgement for the Dangerous Dog case that was heard in December 2020, where the judge issued an order for destruction and the dog was subsequently euthanized.

Environmental Services

- » The new [Air Quality Management Plan](#) was released on September 23. The plan reflects the latest air quality trends, data, and research. It also identifies numerous actions that will benefit our airshed and achieve the Plan's vision of "healthy air and clear vistas that support a vibrant region".
- » Wood smoke from home heating contributes about 27% of the PM2.5 emissions in BC. To encourage residents to upgrade to cleaner-burning appliances, the FVRD offers rebates as part of its Wood Stove Exchange Program. Rebates through the program were recently increased and heat pump exchanges are now included. For details on how to apply, residents can email environment@fvrd.ca or call 604-702-5496.

Fire Services

- » Volunteer fire departments attended 360 calls this quarter. 136 of these calls were for fires, 144 for medical/assist other agency, 59 motor vehicle incident, 13 alarm, 2 hazmat, and 6 mutual aid.
- » We are actively recruiting volunteer firefighters across the Regional District. Learn more about becoming a [volunteer firefighter](#).

Integrated Planning & Engagement

- » Director Stobbart, along with FVRD staff, continued to represent at, and report from, the Katzie and Stó:lō Xwexwilmexw Treaty Association Treaty Tables as members of the provincial negotiating team.
- » Staff made a presentation to the Comox Valley Regional District, member Chief Administrative Officers, and planning staff on archaeology policy and law for local governments working with First Nations to implement their own cultural heritage policies.
- » The FVRD Board of Directors provided comments on the BC Draft Action Plan for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' Act to the Province.
- » We supported a trail-building initiative for Sq'ewlets First Nation as a part of their Active Transportation Infrastructure Plan grant application.
- » In Boston Bar, we reached a major milestone in the Station House project when we awarded the contract for hazardous materials removal and abatement. A request for proposal will be issued by the end of 2021 for the design-build component of this project and construction is targeted to begin in spring 2022.

Parks & Outdoor Recreation Planning

- » The unusually hot summer led to an extremely busy season for the parks team as they worked diligently to water hundreds of trees and shrubs and manage the increased water usage in both of our regional and community parks and trails.



A portion of the new trail at Neilson Regional Park.

- » Three regional parks (Cascade Falls, East Sector Lands, and Sumas Mountain) were closed in July and most of August due to the extreme fire hazard.
- » A new 175 metre gravel trail was built at Neilson Regional Park to connect the parking lot to the lower picnic area. Prior to the trail being built, park users had to walk up/down the hill which was a steep incline. The trail has made the park more accessible for all users.
- » In key areas along the Kettle Valley Railway Trail, work was done to reduce the amount of water impacting areas of the trail prone to erosion and damage. This was achieved with the use of improved ditching, swales, and culverts.

Almer Carlson

- » The pool was open during July and August and the schedule included community swimming lessons.

Hope & Area Recreation Centre

- » Ice was installed in August making way for the return of group rental and drop-in programs. In September, fitness classes, personal training, and swimming lessons resumed. The River Monsters Swim Club have also returned to the pool for their fall season. The Club Child afterschool program is operating and staff are working hard to expand programs and services at the centre.
- » Several projects are currently underway including an update to arena lights to improve energy efficiency. The annual pool shut down took place in August and works included a rebuild of the sauna and structural beam maintenance.
- » We continue to adapt our operations to the requirements of the Provincial Health Officer including enforcing mask wearing and proof of vaccination.

FVRD Regional Airpark - Hope Emergency Landing Strip – Boston Bar

- » Summer is always a busy time at the airpark in Hope, and this summer was no exception as we hosted many crews which were fighting the wildfires through the months of July and August. The emergency landing strip in Boston Bar was also heavily used in the efforts to fight the fires.

Regional Strategic Planning & Initiatives

- » On August 2, public engagement on the updated draft Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) was launched on the haveyoursay.fvrd.ca engagement site. Residents were invited to share their stories about living in the region, join discussions about various policy sections of the plan, fill out a survey, and ask questions or provide direct comments by email or traditional mail. Next steps include expanding engagement with Indigenous communities and agencies, reinstatement of the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, and legal review. It is hoped that the Board will begin the adoption process for the Fraser Valley Future 2050 RGS in early 2022.
- » The long anticipated Fraser Valley Express expansion to Burnaby received provincial funding and will now proceed. The original FVX expansion to the Lougheed Town Centre was scheduled for January 2021. With COVID-19, BC Transit delayed expansion plans for one year but with provincial budget support for the expansion, work is underway to implement the service in early 2022.
- » The FVRD is participating in the Province's Fraser Valley Transportation and Land Use Plan. We are in contact with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) and Ministry of Municipal Affairs to determine the project's status and terms of reference. MOTI is also undertaking planning work on the latest Highway 1 expansion project that will widen Highway 1 from 232 Street in the Township of Langley to the Whatcom interchange in Abbotsford. The FVRD's interest lies in maintaining and expanding connections to the interregional Fraser Valley Express service.
- » The FVRD continues to participate in and monitor TransLink's [Transport 2050 plan](#) and Metro Vancouver's [Metro 2050 Regional Growth Strategy](#) update, as growth in the Lower Mainland as a whole will impact this region.