

# QUARTERLY UPDATE

January - March 2022



The Quarterly Update is produced four times a year to share 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 from members of the public is welcomed. However, the public may also participate online via Zoom or by submitting comments in writing.
- » A referendum vote for a ten year loan of up to \$170,000 for the FVRD to purchase land and buildings was held in November 2021 and January 2022. The referendum was successful, and the property will serve as the new home for the Boston Bar Volunteer Fire Department in Electoral Area A.

## CORPORATE SERVICES

### Communications

- » In January, a survey for electoral area residents on the FVRD's 2021 atmospheric river flood communications was launched on the Have Your Say FVRD. The survey received 351 responses and staff have reviewed feedback to help make improvements to emergency communications before the freshet season.

### Human Resources

- » Human Resources spent a significant amount of time to support the launch of the first FVRD operated Animal Control team. This included recruitment, policy development, and orientation for new team members. Recruitment continues for a number of other positions throughout the regional district including nearly a dozen positions at the Hope & Area Recreation Centre. Additionally, the HR team implemented items that were included in the recently ratified Collective Agreement. Find current job postings at [fvrd.ca/careers](http://fvrd.ca/careers).



The Fraser Valley Express (FVX) route to Lougheed Town Centre SkyTrain Station launched in March. From left: Jeff Shields (Chilliwack Councillor), Jason Lum (FVRD Board Chair), Henry Braun (Abbotsford Mayor), and Rob Ringma (BC Transit).

### Information Technology

- » IT completed the installation of enhanced audio/video capabilities for the boardroom. The new system allows for board members and staff to join the meeting remotely or in-person.
- » IT successfully rolled out a new in-house Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) monitoring system. This secure system allows for live alerts of system performance for water and sewer utility systems. IT and utility technicians receive alerts via email and text, and can view real-time network performance and status. IT installed three monitoring stations in the IT and Engineering offices to enable faster responses to issues throughout the regional district. The IT team also reprogrammed SCADA's network equipment to make automatic checks to improve internet network stability.

### Fire Dispatch Management

- » The Chilliwack River Valley (CRV) Mobile Radio Telephone Interconnect (MRTI) project was completed and commissioned in the first quarter. The MRTI system provides a backup communication channel with fire dispatch for the CRV fire hall.

## Geographic Information Systems/Mapping (GIS)

- » The GIS team provided support to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) including creating maps for the after-action review. They also created a web map of the fire department response zones.

## FINANCE

- » The Finance team had three high-level priorities this quarter: processing atmospheric river response claims, preparing for the audit, and finalizing the FVRD and Fraser Valley Regional Hospital District (FVRHD) financial plans. Both financial plans were approved during the March board meeting and work plans for the next budget cycle are already underway.
- » The Finance team hosted a training session for staff on a new business process which provides a centralized place for the organization to communicate with Finance. This process ensures any gaps in staffing will not lead to information loss. Additionally, we have supported various procurements with departments to implement risk mitigation strategies.

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

### Electoral Area Planning

- » The Hemlock Valley Official Community Plan (OCP) in Electoral Area C was adopted on March 17, 2022. The OCP was completed in consultation with the area residents, Sts'ailes First Nation, Berezan Group, Mountain Resort Branch, Fraser Health, and other provincial agencies.
- » In Electoral Area C, a geohazard study of alluvial fans was done between Watkins Road to Brooks Road area. An alluvial fan is a triangle-shaped deposit of gravel, sand, and sediment, such as silt.
- » The Harrison Mills Neighbourhood Plan is ongoing. Technical reports are completed and we are moving towards land use planning consultation.
- » The Planning team initiated one zoning and OCP amendment and completed three subdivision referrals, one Temporary Use Permit, one Board of Variance, two Development Variance Permits, seven Development Permits, and six provincial referrals (e.g. ALC, Crown referrals).

### Bylaw Enforcement

- » The Bylaw team opened 24 new bylaw files and conducted 45 inspections this quarter. There are 403 open bylaw files and the team closed or cancelled 20 files.



*FVRD's Emergency Operations Centre for the atmospheric river events in December 2021.*

### Building Inspection

- » The Building team issued 43 building permits worth over \$6.3 million in construction value and conducted 570 inspections this quarter.

### Emergency Management

- » Alertable continues to expand our ability to push emergency notifications to electoral area residents and media with speed and efficiency. More than 16,000 people have signed up for the system so far. Sign up to receive notifications by email, text, phone or app at [fvrd.ca/alerts](http://fvrd.ca/alerts).
- » The EOC was activated in November 2021 and ran until February for the atmospheric river events. Nearly 30% of our staff were called upon to support first responders and incident site response coordination. In February, a consultant was hired to put in place a recovery program.
- » Staff participated in the following emergency management initiatives:
  - › Attended Union of BC Municipalities Flood Wildfire Advisory committee sessions aimed at influencing the modernization of the Emergency Program Act.
  - › Attended a Metro Vancouver Regional Emergency Planners sub-committee on emergency alerting.
  - › Provided a presentation on alerting experiences from the atmospheric river events.
  - › Reviewed the 2021 wildfire response partnership with Boothroyd Indian Band Council members.
  - › Participated in a panel on emergency preparedness for the film industry hosted by ActSafe BC.
  - › Met with Columbia Valley Fire Department regarding evacuation planning for the area.

- » The 2020 Community Emergency Preparedness Grant for the Emergency Support Services technology project was successfully completed.
- » Following the Incident Command System (ICS) Train the Trainer course held in Q3 2021, the FVRD now has a team of instructors approved by Emergency Management BC to teach ICS in house. We look forward to making this training for both I-100 and I-200 available within our region.



*Repairs being made to Osborne Road Dike in Electoral Area E.*

- » In February, a survey was sent to McConnell Creek and Hatzic Prairie area (Electoral Area F) residents to ask if they were interested in receiving dangerous and aggressive dog control services. Results will be shared after the survey closes at the end of March.

### **Environmental Services**

- » FoodMesh and the FVRD held a webinar in March 2022 to discuss food waste and to showcase many of the organizations that work with food producers, suppliers, processors, and restaurants to divert compostable material from going into the waste bin. The webinar was part of an ongoing strategy to engage with businesses about being [Waste Wise](#) and how to be compliant with the FVRD's Source Separation Bylaw.
- » Air quality staff recently met with faculty and students at the University of the Fraser Valley's (UFV) Agriculture Centre of Excellence to increase awareness about air quality. Staff made a presentation and set up an air quality sensor at the campus to measure particulate matter. We look forward to continuing to engage with them about air quality and to further identify opportunities for collaboration and awareness.
- » Biomass - the use of processed waste products of plant or animal origin as an alternative fuel source - is an emerging industry and could be particularly significant in our region. The air quality impacts from biomass need to be better understood however, particularly within our sensitive airshed. The FVRD has recently initiated a study to review the types of technology involved, the fuel sources, and the potential emissions within our region. Study results are expected this summer.

## **ENGINEERING & UTILITIES**

- » A number of emergency response works from the 2021 atmospheric river were completed this quarter. Electoral Area B works were completed at Othello Road and Lorenzetta Creek, and at Wilson Road Dike, Osborne Road Dike, and O' Byrne Road in Electoral Area E. Work continues at Frosst Creek in Electoral Area H.
- » Updates were made to a number of bylaws, including amendments to water and sewer bylaw fees to include 2022 rates and changes to the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw.
- » New contractors were hired at the Sylvester Road, Harrison Mills and Hemlock Valley Transfer Stations.
- » In wastewater management, an application was made to Metro Vancouver to temporarily dispose of sludge from FVRD waste water treatment plants. Quarterly wastewater station maintenance was completed and the annual reporting to the Province for both water and sewer systems was completed.
- » The Shared Cost Agreement for the Nicomen Island Improvement District Project was updated.
- » Quarterly maintenance works included flushing water mains and servicing fire hydrants, valves, stations, and treatment apparatus. Water service and metering installations took place at Cultus Lake (Electoral Area H) and Electoral Area D.
- » Staff oversaw land development files related to the construction of the second phase of the Minter Gardens subdivision in Electoral Area D.

## **REGIONAL SERVICES**

### **Animal Control**

- » At the beginning of the year, Animal Control began the transition from contracted frontline staff to hiring new FVRD staff to operate the CARE Centre. As of March, the majority of staff were in place and are being onboarded and trained in the animal control officer, administrative, and kennel functions.

## Fire Services

- » Volunteer fire departments attended 200 calls this quarter. Of these calls, 33 were for fires, 100 for medical emergency/assist other agency, 31 for motor vehicle incidents, 35 for alarms and one call for hazmat.
- » The FireSmart program launched this quarter to help electoral area residents learn effective ways to reduce the potential impacts of wildfire to their home and property. Assessments have taken place for neighbourhoods and critical infrastructure and work has started on individual home assessments. Request a free home ignition zone assessment from our FireSmart Representative at [firesmart@fvrd.ca](mailto:firesmart@fvrd.ca).
- » A number of Community Fire Awareness Days are planned throughout the region this spring - see the details at [fvrd.ca/firesmart](http://fvrd.ca/firesmart). There will be information displays, giveaways, and professionals on-site to answer your questions about what it's like to be a volunteer firefighter and how to prepare your home and property for wildfire season. Join us at these family-friendly events which includes food by donation and a raffle with great prizes.

## Hope & Area Recreation Centre

- » In January, fitness classes and personal training returned with 14 classes a week. Swimming lessons and the RiverMonsters Swim Club have resumed, and there was an increase in facility rentals. A new Manager of Recreation Services has been hired and plans are underway to increase services at the recreation centre when the PHO orders relax. This will include summer day camps, recreational programs, and plans for an in-person Canada Day celebration. Staff recruitment for other positions is ongoing (lifeguards, fitness staff, recreation assistants, customer service representatives, and maintenance staff) to allow the facility to operate at full capacity.
- » Several capital projects were completed including the replacement of pool gutter grates, arena isolation valves, and window tinting to reduce the glare in certain areas, including the fitness centre.
- » Johnson Controls was awarded the contract for the multi-year design build for the heat exchange project. In March, the team met onsite for a walk through of the facility and design efforts are now underway. The project is expected to be completed by 2025.

## Integrated Planning & Engagement

- » The Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest, a community forest organization comprised of a partnership between the District of Hope, Yale First



*A FireSmart ad shows woodchipping on a property in an effort to reduce wood fuel that could be a fire danger.*

- Nation and the FVRD, closed out the 2021 calendar year by issuing disbursements of \$150,000 to each partner.
- » In January, the FVRD joined the Board of Directors for Tourism Chilliwack and Tourism Harrison and each organization held their first meeting of the year. As well, the Chilliwack River Stewardship Committee and Columbia Valley Stewardship Committee met for their inaugural meetings which included Electoral Area Directors and FVRD staff.
- » FVRD staff and Director Stobbart, who was re-appointed as the elected representative to the tables for 2022, continued to represent at, and report from, the Katzie and Stó:lō Xwexwilmexw Treaty Association Treaty Tables as the local government observers for the region. Director Stobbart was also reappointed, along with staff, to represent the FVRD at the Metro Vancouver Indigenous Relations Committee, and staff continue to participate in the Metro Vancouver Technical Advisory Committee on Indigenous Relations.
- » Staff provided an Archaeological Chance Find Procedure training session for the Actively Creating an Exceptional Society (ACES) group in Deroche. This year, ACES is undertaking a community garden project at the FVRD Deroche Office, and the training was provided to ensure that group members have basic artifact identifications skills and understand the procedures required if archaeological materials are encountered.
- » Major work is underway at the Boston Bar Station House with building deconstruction and hazardous materials abatement now complete. A request for proposals to conduct the design/build phase of the project is targeted to be issued in spring 2022.

- » Staff supported the Strategic Planning department in the current phase of Indigenous engagement on the Regional Growth Strategy, as well as assisted staff in other departments with project-related inquiries. Indigenous Relations has also developed a number of new potential policy and protocol initiatives, to come in later 2022.

### Regional and Community Parks

- » Preparations are underway for a busy spring and summer and many service contracts have been renewed. A number of parks staff supported the FVRD EOC and then transitioned their efforts to addressing the damage from the atmospheric river storms in our parks. COVID-19 has doubled the usage of trails and parks and this is keeping staff busy as they prepare for high rates of usage to continue.
- » The 2021 atmospheric river damaged areas in many of our parks. Repairs were completed at Kettle Valley Railway Trail, Cascade Falls Regional Park, Neilson Regional Park, Eagle Point Community Park, and Dewdney Regional Park. Ongoing repairs are taking place at Island 22 Regional Park, Lakeside Trail, Sumas Mountain Regional Park, and Thacker Regional Park.
- » The Harrison Hot Springs Boat Launch Office opened in March and will operate Friday - Sunday.
- » A short section of the Lakeside Trail at Sunnyside Campground (Electoral Area H) was completed in February and is already being used by the local community.
- » At East Sector Lands in Harrison Hot Springs, the Cultus Lake Wildfire crew conducted a practical tree falling seminar and worked with Parks staff to remove nine dangerous trees.

### FVRD Regional Airpark - Hope

- » The 2021 atmospheric river storm created an unprecedented time at the airpark when Hope and the surrounding area were cut off from the rest of the province. Over the course of five days, more than 500 flights arrived which is more than is seen in a typical year. The flights included supply drops, passenger transportation, and emergency services. Once the community was reconnected by highways, flight traffic remained busy to service the surrounding areas which needed repairs.
- » We are preparing for a new season which includes lifecycle equipment purchases, security fencing, and facility repairs from heavy use at the airpark.



*A short section of the Lakeside Trail at Sunnyside Campground near Cultus Lake (Electoral Area H) was completed in February.*

### Regional Strategic Planning & Initiatives

- » During Phase 2 of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) update, public engagement was held between August 3 and October 8, 2021. Nearly 1,500 members of the public visited the project page to learn about and contribute to the RGS update. The final engagement results can be found at [haveyoursay.fvrd.ca/rgs](https://haveyoursay.fvrd.ca/rgs). 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 2023.
- » The long anticipated Fraser Valley Express (FVX) expansion to Lougheed Town Centre in Burnaby began service on March 27, 2022. The limited stop express route now offers residents convenient connections to Burnaby and beyond into Metro Vancouver. Lougheed Town Centre offers two TransLink SkyTrain lines – Millennium and Expo – and one of the best-served and busiest RapidBus exchanges in the region.
- » The FVRD is monitoring Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) 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 various planning initiatives and Metro Vancouver's Metro 2050 Regional Growth Strategy update, as growth in the Lower Mainland as a whole will impact this region.