

QUARTERLY UPDATE

July 1 - September 30, 2023



The Quarterly Update is released four times yearly to communicate progress on active projects and initiatives in the Fraser Valley Regional District.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Finance

In the third quarter, the Finance Team focused on wrapping up major projects or system changes before preparing for year-end and budget presentations.

- » Presenting the treasury dashboard
- » Modernizing payroll processes
- » Revising grant management processes
- » Asset management program progress

In 2023, the FVRD is required to implement a new accounting standard, Asset Retirement Obligations (ARO). Finance continues to work towards meeting the new ARO standard and finalizing the consolidated asset register.

The first phase of the Budget is complete:

- » Presentation of Operational Support budget
- » Service Area budgets underway
- » Working with the Communications Team on public engagement

The Finance Team supported the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) by developing process improvements to ensure claims are submitted and paid out with limited delay.

Human Resources

Recruitment and retention efforts are ongoing. The Human Resources Team has:

- » Posted 42 positions for the organization (as of September 29, 2023)
- » Held Manager training sessions
- » Finalized the Collective Agreement for Hope Recreation Services
- » Rolled out a four-day compressed work week pilot program
- » Developed new Firefighter onboarding processes

Communications

The Communications Team completed various communication and public engagement works including:

- » Internal communications: Tip Tuesday and Fast Fact Friday information posts for the staff intranet
- » Published the Hope & Area Recreation Guide
- » Have Your Say project page creation, information support, and project page updates
- » Budget 2024 public engagement support
- » Graphic design for FVRD publications and Have Your Say platform projects
- » Social media monitoring, responding, and post creation
- » Website updates, page creation, background maintenance
- » Created posters and handouts for public engagement events
- » Updated Thacker Regional Park interpretive signage
- » Provided the Emergency Operations Centre support with the Staff assignment of the Public Information Officer position and communications support

Have Your Say FVRD Statistics*

- » Current Projects: 8
- » Total visits: 2.2k
- » New registrants: 10
- » Engaged visitors: 12
- » Informed visitors: 580
- » Aware visitors: 1.4k

Social Media Statistics*

- » FVRD: 121
- » Care Centre: 112
- » Hope Recreation: 30
- » Vedder River Campground: 6

Website Statistics*

- » Users: 4,529
- » New visitors: 77.7%
- » Returning visitors: 22.3%
- » Page Views: 7,880

Media Relations*

- » News Stories: 26

*data collection period July 1 – September 30, 2023



A Facebook post about Blueberry, a female Catahoula Leopard puppy at the CARE Centre, looking for her forever home was the top-performing social media post during Q3 with 2,785 engaged users.

Fire Dispatch Management

Staff relocated the radio antenna on the CBC tower at Lookout Mountain. This location is the primary channel for eight fire departments in the region.

Preventative maintenance checks were undertaken at all 20 radio sites.

Geographic Information Mapping (GIS)

GIS staff supported the Emergency Operations Centre with mapping requirements for Evacuation Alerts and Orders.

Staff also supported the Cultus Lake Zoning Bylaw by updating the public-facing webmap to better understand the changes brought about by the Zoning Bylaw Amendment.

Information Technology (IT)

The IT Team worked on improving the quality of video broadcast during meetings held in the FVRD Boardroom. This technological improvement will lead to an enhanced viewer experience for all meetings.

The IT Team supported the Emergency Operations Centre through various roles for the recent Kookipi Creek Wildfire.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Electoral Area Planning

The EA Planning Team brought forward:

- » Two Development Variance Permits, one Floodplain site-specific exemption, two Agriculture Land Reserve applications, two Crown referrals, one Zoning amendment, two Subdivision applications, and two Development Permits
- » Second and third readings of the Accessory Dwelling Unit zoning amendment
- » Second and third readings for the Zoning housekeeping amendment

Staff continued work on the Area C OCP and the Harrison Mills Neighbourhood Plan. A contract was awarded for the Harrison Rise capacity funding, and a second public information meeting was held.

The Zoning Bylaw Amendment for Cultus Lake Park was officially adopted in June. This significant development marks a new chapter in community growth.

Bylaw Enforcement

The Bylaw Team:

- » Opened 31 new files
- » Conducted 64 inspections
- » Conducted 43 file reviews
- » Mailed 16 letters to aid in closing 22 files

The Bylaw Team is currently managing 442 active bylaw files.

Building Inspection

The Building Inspection Team issued 39 Building Permits worth over \$20.7 million in construction value.

Emergency Management

The Emergency Management Team grew by two staff welcoming the FireSmart program coordinator and hiring an Emergency Management Specialist.

A grant was received to develop the Electoral Area E Evacuation Guide. Progress continues for the Hazard Report and Emergency Management Plan.

Response efforts for the Kookipi Creek Wildfire began this quarter with the opening of the Emergency Operations Centre.

ENGINEERING & UTILITIES

The Engineering and Utilities Team worked on several projects. The team:

- » Broke ground on the North Cultus Wastewater Treatment Plant
- » Amended the Water bylaw to include provisions for secondary suites and accessory dwelling units permitted by the Zoning bylaw amendment that was brought forward by Planning
- » Applied for grant funding for flood protection works on Nicomen Island under the Investing in Agriculture Fund – Fraser Valley Flood Protection Program
- » Continued with the detailed design work to upgrade the Nicomen Island Improvement District's five pump stations
- » Reviewed technical reports and responded to requests for information on the Harrison Mills Neighbourhood Plan and Harrison Rise Development
- » Completed the lighting upgrade at Canyon Lanes
- » Worked with consultants to update the hydraulic model of our Area D water system
- » Downloaded data from volunteer observation wells and completed annual hydrometric gauging station maintenance in support of the Miracle Valley Aquifer monitoring program

- » Received an amendment to the Chaumox Landfill Operational Certificate that allows for the acceptance of fire debris

REGIONAL SERVICES

Animal Control

Animal Control impounded 128 dogs. Twenty dogs have found new homes, some of whom have been at the shelter for some time. One dog, Susie, who had been in care for over two years, moved into a trial adoption.

Animal Control Officers conducted hundreds of parks patrols within our member municipalities, with the added availability of a new Park Patroller solely devoted to this task.

Boston Bar Airstrip

The Emergency Landing strip near Boston Bar was in active use by the BC Wildfire Service for most of the quarter for their response to fires in the area.

Environmental Services

Last fall the FVRD assisted in distributing radon test kits within the region. Radon is a colourless and odourless gas released naturally from the ground. It can become a health hazard when it seeps into homes, particularly during the winter when our windows and doors are closed. While results from the test kits varied, radon levels of at least some risk were measured in all communities tested. Consequently, the FVRD will purchase more radon test kits for distribution this November as part of Radon Action Month. Visit takeactiononradon.ca for more information.



Image courtesy of BC Lung Association

Fire Protective Services

Fire departments attended 379 calls:

- » Fires: 166 calls
- » Medical emergencies: 121 calls
- » Assist public or other agencies: 22 calls
- » Motor vehicle incidents: 40 calls
- » Alarms: 27 calls
- » Mutual aid: 3 calls

Popkum, Chilliwack River Valley, Boston Bar, and Yale were deployed 12 times in support of the BC Wildfire Service. Out of the 12 deployments, Chilliwack River Valley was deployed seven times. Chilliwack River Valley, Boston Bar, and Yale assisted at the Kookipi Creek Fire.

Fraser Valley Regional Airpark

- » New lease of 17 acres of agricultural land improvement with a grass crop planned for fall 2023
- » Emergency lane access, dedicated parking and signage updates were all completed

Integrated Planning and Engagement

Integrated Planning & Engagement and Emergency Management staff attended Indigenous Cultural Safety & Humility Training hosted by and at Sqwá First Nation on September 19 & 27. Conversations revolved around First Nations' History, connection to the land, and reconciliation.

Staff attended the Experience Indigenous Culture and Knowledge with Elders hosted at The'í:tselíya - S.A.Y. Health & Community Centre. There were several presentations on First Nations and Métis history and culture, followed by interactive activities such as cedar weaving, discussing the justice system, and learning about traditional medicines, where Elders taught participants directly.

Through a procurement process, staff retained Urban Systems to begin the Active Transportation Network Plan that will seek to connect communities in the electoral areas, provide safe options for active modes of transportation, and identify priority areas for developing active transportation.

Recreation Services

Summer Day Camps were a tremendous success, with all planned activities and programs fully booked. Children and families enjoyed a season filled with fun, learning, and adventure. From themed weeks like "Little Picasso", to exciting trips to the zoo, and the Vancouver Aquarium, campers had an unforgettable summer. We want to thank our dedicated staff and enthusiastic campers for making it such a memorable season.

We proudly hosted another successful Canada Day celebration. The day began with a Show and Shine event in the morning, showcasing classic cars and exceptional vehicles. The festivities continued into the evening with live music and thrilling axe-throwing competitions. It was a day filled with patriotic spirit and community bonding, and we thank everyone who joined us in celebrating our nation's special day.

The arena was a hub of activity throughout the summer, hosting captivating circuses, thrilling performances, and a wide range of drop-in sports on the dry floor. The community's enthusiastic participation created a vibrant and energetic atmosphere. As the summer came to a close, the ice was put back in the arena, marking the beginning of another exciting ice season filled with hockey, figure skating, and public skating sessions.

The Dan Sharrers Aquatic Centre underwent its annual shutdown in August, during which our diligent team worked tirelessly to perform essential maintenance tasks. The result is a pristine aquatic centre ready for the upcoming fall season.

Regional and Community Parks

Parks, trails and the Vedder River Campground have been busy with people enjoying the beautiful summer weather.

Construction of a new linear trail section in Area D began in mid-September to address safety concerns and ensure that walking paths are continuous.



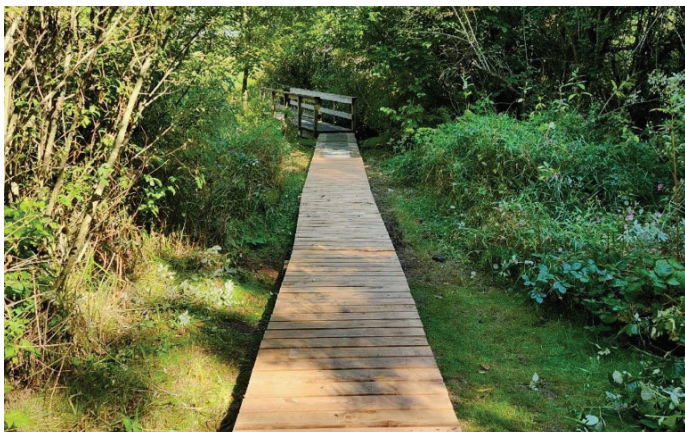
The stairs were replaced on the upper section of the Popkum Community Trail leading to Cheam Lake.

Four new sets of stairs were added below the first lookout on the Elk Mountain Regional Trail to address trail braiding and erosion, and various areas were reinforced and repaired to address erosion and sloughing on the trail.

At Cheam Lake Wetlands Regional Park, work was completed with Ducks Unlimited to replace the log boom structure, preventing debris from plugging up the water control structure.

The Sumas Mountain Regional Park upper parking lot was refreshed and expanded to include additional parking and a new kiosk. The Chadsey Lake trail also was improved through updated signage and we worked with the Fraser Valley Mountain Bikers Association to install six new boardwalks along the trail.

All of the boat launches (Dewdney, Island 22, and Harrison Hot Springs) have been exceptionally busy despite historic water lows. The opening of a Recreational Fishery for Pinks on the Fraser River Anglers has been well received by anglers.



A new 36-foot section of boardwalk was installed at Neilson Regional Park to address wet areas and improve the trail in the lower section of the park.

Regional Strategic Planning & Initiatives

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) received First Reading at the Board's July meeting. Following the formal adoption process, the Board will consider final approval of the Fraser Valley Future 2050 RGS in early 2024. After adoption, our member municipalities will have two years to amend their respective Official Community Plans to incorporate Regional Context Statements that reflect the updated Plan.

Transit service resumed after a four-and-a-half month work stoppage due to a labour dispute. BC Transit and its local government partners in the Fraser Valley were pleased to welcome back customers throughout the region and provided riders with free transit from August

6 to August 31. In September, two additional afternoon Fraser Valley Express trips between Abbotsford and Lougheed Town Centre were added to address capacity issues on that segment of the route.

Work continues with BC Transit to finalize the FVRD components of the Chilliwack and FVRD Transit Future Action Plan (TFAP). The TFAP focuses on ridership recovery and continued improvement of the Chilliwack, Agassiz-Harrison, Hope, and Fraser Valley Express (FVX) transit systems over the next five years. Work has started on introducing BC Transit's UMO electronic fare system. More information will come over the next few months about this exciting initiative, which will launch in early 2024.