

QUARTERLY UPDATE

October 1 - December 31, 2023



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

ADMINISTRATION

The FVRD Board has adopted the Terms of Reference for the FVRD's Accessibility Advisory Committee. This Committee will meet quarterly and assist the FVRD with developing a draft Accessibility Plan, and a process for receiving public comments and Plan feedback.

An update was provided on Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by the FVRD, noting that the projected volume of requests has increased by 11% in 2023. Of the requests received so far this year, the category most often requested is building permits and information regarding bylaw enforcement. For information on how you can make an FOI request, visit fvr.ca/foi.

A review of the FVRD's Code of Responsible Conduct Policy was completed, and an updated policy has been adopted by the Board. This policy promotes responsible and ethical conduct by local government officials, acknowledging that FVRD Board members are committed to conducting themselves in a responsible and ethical manner. The updated policy now includes a formal process for addressing complaints regarding conduct by FVRD Board members.

The 2024 schedule for the FVRD Board and Committees has been adopted by the Board. Visit fvr.ca/meetings for details on how to attend an FVRD meeting in person or online.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Finance

The Finance Team began preparations for year-end financial closing activities through the fourth quarter. Auditors have been scheduled, and pre-work has been completed.

The finance cash counter and online services have been engaged in dog license payments. Year-end invoices are being processed for the major projects. At the same time, the finance team is working through budget presentations for the FVRD and Hospital District.

The Hospital District provisional budget has been passed by the Fraser Valley Regional Hospital District Board.

The Electoral Area Services budgets were presented, approved, and moved into our public consultation phase.

Human Resources

Recruitment and retention efforts for the FVRD are ongoing. As of December 1st, the Human Resources Team has:

- » Posted 47 positions for the organization, including an HR Advisor, HR Administrator, and positions in Animal Control, Recreation Services, Parks, Electoral Area Planning and Environmental Services
- » Onboarded new Firefighters and improved orientation process
- » Finalized Respect in the Workplace Training
- » Finalized the Code of Conduct and the associated training
- » Conducted a Violence in the Workplace Risk Assessment
- » Worked with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee to improve processes

Communications

The Communications Team completed various communication and public engagement works throughout the fourth quarter of 2023:

- » Internal communications: Fast Fact Friday information posts for the staff intranet system
- » Published the Winter Hope & Area Recreation Guide
- » Have Your Say FVRD project page creation, information support, and project page updates
- » Social media monitoring, responding, and post creation
- » Website updates, page creation, and maintenance

Have Your Say FVRD Statistics*

- » Current Projects: 9
- » Total visits: 2,400
- » New registrants: 22

Social Media Statistics*

The total number of social media posts in Q4:

- » FVRD: 168
- » Care Centre: 112
- » Hope Recreation: 26
- » Vedder River Campground: 2

Website Statistics*

- » Users: 53,000
- » New visitors: 96.2%
- » Returning visitors: 12.8%
- » Page Views: 111,825

Media Relations*

- » News Stories: 2

**data collection period October 1 – December 11, 2023*



This Facebook post about Nana, who has since been adopted into her forever home, was the top-performing post during Q4 with 998 engaged users.

Fire Dispatch Management

Fire Dispatch Management staff completed the backup radio (MRTI) testing for Boston Bar Fire Department and Chilliwack River Valley Fire Department.

Information Technology (IT)

The fourth quarter included several achievements:

- » Assisted with the Vedder River Campground Wi-Fi RFP
- » Completed the Hope server upgrades
- » Supported Government Frameworks FARMER project
- » Upgraded 80% of the Chilliwack servers

Geographic Information Mapping (GIS)

This quarter, GIS staff supported the Area C OCP Bylaw.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Electoral Area Planning

The EA Planning Team brought forward the following applications:

- » Five subdivision review letters
- » One ALR referral
- » Five Crown referrals
- » Two Development Variance Permits
- » Six Development Permits
- » One commercial gravel operation permit at Sunshine Valley
- » One public hearing for a zoning amendment

Staff continued work on policy projects:

- » The Cannabis Bylaw received its first reading and Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure preliminary approval
- » Zoning housekeeping amendments adopted
- » Accessory Dwelling Unit bylaw adopted
- » Public Hearing policy
- » Area C OCP
- » Harrison Mills Neighbourhood Plan
- » Harrison Rise OCP amendment

Staff continues to engage with Sts'ailes, Sqewlets, and Leq'a:mel First Nations to forward the discussion on Area C projects.

Bylaw Enforcement

During Q4, the Bylaw Team:

- » Opened 29 new files
- » Conducted 67 inspections
- » Conducted 66 file reviews
- » Mailed 26 letters to aid in closing 25 files

The Bylaw Team is currently managing 448 active bylaw files.

Building Inspection

25 building permits were issued worth \$3.5 million in construction value and 330 inspections were conducted.

Emergency Management

Throughout Q4, the Emergency Management Team:

- » Updated the Emergency Site Use profile for the Chilliwack River Fish and Game Club
- » Hosted three training and workshop sessions:
 - › Centre for Crisis and Risk Communications - Crisis Communications Training
 - › Emil Anderson winter maintenance workshop
 - › BC Hydro Whaleach Dam plan update
- » Adapted to the new legislation that regulates emergency management
- » Received the completed Hazard Report
- » Continued work on the Emergency Management Plan (EMP)
- » Worked with EMP consultant regarding the future Community Resiliency program to ensure linkage to the EMP
- » Continued integrating FireSmart into the Emergency Management Service
- » Slesse Park in Electoral Area E was recognized as a FireSmart Neighbourhood. A presentation to the community will be scheduled
- » Three individual FireSmart Assessments and five homeowner rebates were processed
- » Two emergency response incidents co-occurred as a result of the early December atmospheric river in Area C – Leq'a:mel, and in Area D between Cheam and Popkum First Nations

ENGINEERING & UTILITIES

Engineering

- » Construction of the North Cultus Wastewater Treatment Plant is in progress. For more information on this project, visit haveyoursay.fvrd.ca/wwtp
- » Issued and awarded an RFP for the refurbishment of

the Yale Reservoir. Work to be completed in early 2024

- » Reviewed technical reports and responded to requests for information for the Harrison Rise development
- » Completed the detailed design of the upgrades to the Nicomen Island Improvement District's five pump stations. Work to be completed in 2024
- » Completed hydraulic model update of Area D water system
- » Commenced work on the refurbishment of the Morris Valley wastewater treatment plant disposal fields in Area C
- » Initiated work on electoral area Flood GAP assessment

Utilities

- » Morris Valley field repairs are complete
- » Water service connections and repair works completed
- » Sewer sludge removal from various wastewater treatment plants
- » Sewer system membrane filler cleaned
- » Valve maintenance program was completed
- » Pressure-reducing valve maintenance completed
- » Fire hydrant replacement completed
- » Storm drainage system maintenance completed



Overview of North Cultus Wastewater Treatment Plant digester, sequencing batch reactor and equalization tanks

REGIONAL SERVICES

Animal Control

During the fourth quarter, Animal Control impounded 121 dogs from member municipalities. Eighteen dogs found new homes through the CARE Centre's adoption program.*

Animal Control Officers impounded five goats, one ram, two pigeons, and one Japanese quail. Only one pigeon from this group remains at CARE.

Animal Control seized a dog that caused serious injury to a person in November. An application has been made to the Court to seek a destruction order. The dog will be held pending the outcome of the hearing.

**data collection period October 1 – December 12, 2023*

Environmental Services

The FVRD is currently surveying multi-family building stratas in the region to better identify challenges and barriers with source separation of municipal solid waste. A webinar is planned for strata managers in early 2024 to profile champions and discuss further waste diversion opportunities.

The Environmental Services Team distributed 500 radon test kits to residents in the region. Results from the test kits, which will be collected by health authorities to better understand radon levels within the Fraser Valley, are expected in the Spring of 2024.

The Invasive Weed Control Program concluded for the season. Control methods continued along public roadways for priority weeds (knotweed, giant hogweed, wild chervil, and tansy ragwort). Of the 760 known or reported infestation sites surveyed in 2023, no new plant growth was observed on 358 of these sites. This suggests that previous treatments have been effective. However, continued monitoring of all sites is needed because seeds can survive in the soil for several years. In addition to the treatments on public land, the FVRD continued with the second year of a cost-sharing program to treat knotweed on private property.

Fire Protective Services

Fire departments attended 204 calls*:

- » Fires: 35 calls
- » Medical emergencies: 86 calls
- » Assist public or other agencies: 24 calls
- » Motor vehicle incidents: 31 calls
- » Alarms: 25 calls
- » Mutual aid: 3 calls

**data collection period October 1 – December 11, 2023*

Integrated Planning and Engagement

The Xyólhmet ye Syéwíqwélh (Taking Care of Our Children) commemoration ceremonies hosted by Stó:lō Nation at Fraser Valley Heritage Park related to the findings of the unmarked graves and missing children related to three of the former residential school sites within S'ólh Temexw: St. Mary's (Mission), Coqualeetza (Chilliwack), and All Hallows (Yale) institutions was attended by staff. Residential school survivors, their families and communities, community partners, neighbours, and allies were invited to witness a weaving of funeral and memorial ceremonies for these missing children and the unmarked graves and burials of the children who attended these residential schools.



A canoe at the Xyólhmet ye Syéwíqwélh (Taking Care of Our Children) commemoration ceremonies

Staff participated in the second annual Chowiyes-Xwithet (Rise Up-Wake Up!) gathering hosted by the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) in partnership with Éy St'elmexw St'elt'ílém (Good Medicine Songs) at UFV in honour of children who never made it home from residential school, those who survived, and their families and communities.

Staff attended the cultural celebration at Sq'ewá:lxw First Nation (Skawahlook) for the unveiling of a 20-foot tall totem pole.

Two grant applications were submitted to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities for improved relations with Indigenous communities and community emergency preparedness for Indigenous cultural safety and cultural humility.

The first round of community engagement was completed for the Active Transportation Network Plan, which included an online survey and interactive map on [Have Your Say FVRD](#) and four community engagement events.

Recreation Services

With the cooler weather, we've experienced an increase in usage, especially during the day, by seniors and families with small children. The evening timeslots are also experiencing an increase in use, with lane swimmers enjoying additional lane swimming times. Pool parties are making a comeback, with roughly 20+ kids attending each party. Swimming lessons are at capacity with waitlists in place for some levels.

The ice season is progressing well, with increased attendance at public skate sessions. Planning is underway to host minor hockey tournaments.

Our TRX classes have experienced tremendous success. Aquafit is on hold due to an instructor injury, and we hope to have it back in early 2024. We have introduced Seated Zumba Gold classes and offer Forever Fit classes three times a week, two great options for seniors and those with limited mobility. Additionally, we've invested in new group fitness equipment.

The Almer Carlson Pool exterior FireSmart siding replacement in North Bend is nearing completion.

Throughout December, a 10% discount was offered on facility passes. A food drive for the Hope Food Bank occurred on the first two Wednesdays of the month of December. A non-perishable food item donation resulted in free admission to the Rec Centre.

Regional and Community Parks

October was the final month of operations for the boat launches at Island 22, Harrison Hot Springs, and Dewdney.

The dog park at Island 22 underwent improvements during the fourth quarter.

The boardwalks on Sumas Mountain around Chadsey Lake were completed.

The Caryks Road sidewalk connection in Popkum is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2023.

Regional Strategic Planning & Initiatives

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) received a second reading at the Board's December meeting. Following the

formal adoption process, the Board will consider final approval of the Fraser Valley Future 2050 RGS in early 2024. After adoption, member municipalities will have two years to amend their respective Official Community Plans to incorporate Regional Context Statements that reflect the updated Plan.

The final 2023 FVRD Homeless Point-in-Time (PiT) Count and Survey Report was presented at the Board's December meeting. The report includes the analysis of the enumeration and surveying of individuals experiencing homelessness in the region over a 24-hour period on March 7-8, 2023. The PiT counts and surveys have been undertaken every three years since 2004 and have played an important role in providing service providers and all levels of government with the data necessary to support actions needed to address the challenge of homelessness in our communities.

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 new Umo electronic fare system. More information will be coming soon about this exciting initiative, which will launch in early 2024.

Vedder River Campground

In October, the Province notified that the FVRD successfully obtained the Destination Marketing and Development Funding for the Vedder River Campground awarded by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport in the amount of \$483,500. The funds are matched by the FVRD.

During the fourth quarter, staff worked on the plans for implementation of the funding over the next two years. Onsite work will include:

- » A minimum of 58 larger, landscaped campsites. Each will include water, sewer, and electrical improvements.
- » Wayfinding signage, outdoor lighting, and public Wi-Fi
- » Play spaces, including a swing set and volleyball court
- » Fully accessible washroom and shower facilities
- » Workshop for storage and servicing campers