



## DIAGNOSTIC GOVERNANCE & SERVICE DELIVERY STUDY

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### *Appendix B: Regional Fact Sheets*



## CCRD Governance & Service Delivery Study

Fact Sheets  
September 2016

# ELECTORAL AREA BOUNDARIES

### ► How were the CCRD electoral area boundaries created?

The Central Coast Regional District was created in 1968 under the name of the Ocean Falls Regional District. Five electoral areas were created at that time. Population was one of the key considerations because of the impact on representation at the regional board. When the CCRD was created, the total population of the region was approximately 6,161<sup>1</sup>. The 5 electoral areas (which are different from the current boundaries) ranged in population.

To account for the variances in population of electoral areas within regional districts, the province implemented a weighted vote system for some regional district votes (financial, budget, borrowing, service operations) where each director has a number of votes based on the population in the area he or she represents. A “voting unit” was determined for each regional district at the time it was created. The number of weighted votes, or voting strength, for each electoral area and municipality is calculated by dividing the population by the voting unit. The voting unit for the CCRD was set at 1,500, and it has remained unchanged ever since. Although the population of Ocean Falls was greater than 1,500 at the time the regional district was created (which would result in Electoral Area A receiving 2 weighted votes), the town’s population fell rapidly shortly after that date, leaving each electoral area director with only one vote on all regional district decisions.

Initially the electoral areas were as follows:

- Area A – Ocean Falls
- Area B – Bella Bella
- Area C – Bella Coola Valley
- Area D – everything south of the 52<sup>nd</sup> latitude
- Area E – everything north of the 52<sup>nd</sup> latitude (excluding A, B and C)

<sup>1</sup> 1966 Census data

In 1972 the regional district office was transferred to Hagensborg, and in 1973 the electoral area configuration was redefined to reflect population and development patterns. Area E was eliminated, and there were only four electoral areas. However in 1975, the present boundary configuration was created and Electoral Area E was established.

In 1993 a restructure study identified the need for further assessment of the appropriateness of existing electoral area boundaries. At that time there were recommendations to consider adding the Klemtu area (part of the Kitimat Stikine Regional District), and the Charlotte Lake area, east of Tweedsmuir Park (part of the Cariboo Regional District). In addition, some changes to the Area E/Area A boundary were proposed, such as including all of the Hagensborg community within one electoral area (D rather than splitting it between area D and C), and the inclusion of all of the Saloompt Valley within Area C.

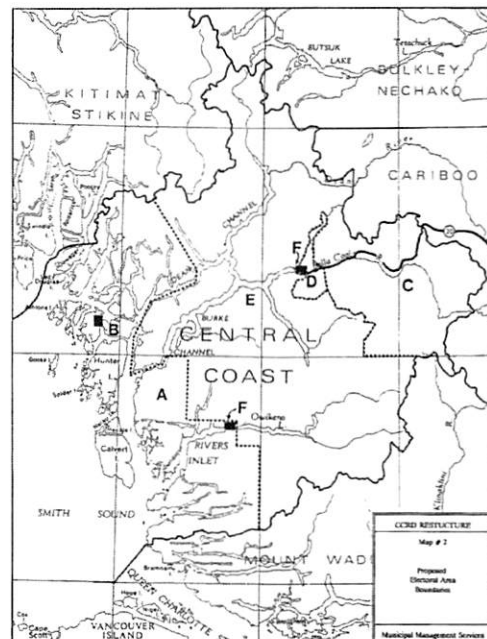


Figure 1: 1993 Proposed Boundary Changes

The 1993 Restructure report also recommended the creation of a new electoral area that combined the Nuxalk reserve lands as well as the Katit Reserve (Wuikinuxv First Nation or Oweekeno). While not representing any taxable jurisdictions, given the precedent that had already been set with the Heiltsuk First Nation reserve (Bella Bella) being contained within one electoral area, a new electoral area representing the Nuxalk and Wuikinuxv was recommended to facilitate First Nations representation on the Board. Figure 2 shows the proposed boundary changes at that time. None of



Figure 2: 1993 Proposed Regional Boundary Additions

these recommendations for boundary changes was implemented, and no further boundary assessments have been undertaken. The current boundaries are shown in Figure 3.

➤ **How are electoral area boundaries determined?**

Electoral areas ideally reflect criteria including:

**Community identity** – encompassing whole communities that share an identity

**Population** – where possible, effort should be made to balance representation on the Regional

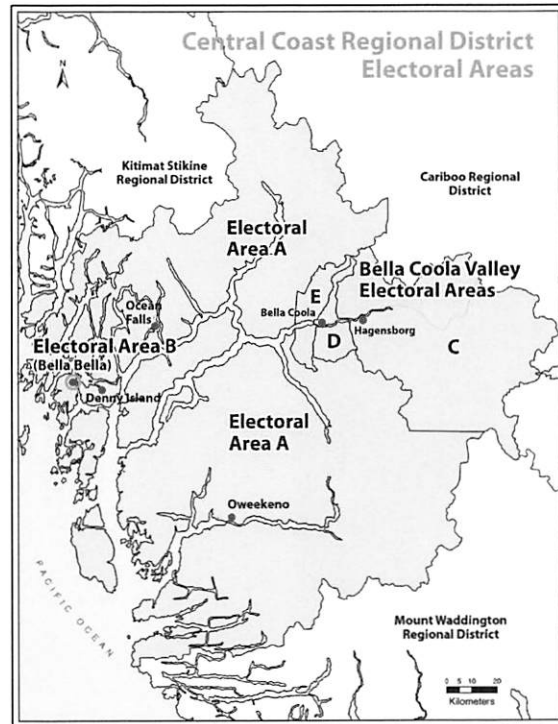


Figure 3: Current Electoral Area Boundaries

Board so that the directors represent a similar number of people, and no one area has a disproportionate amount of the population. Although the Census determines electoral area populations and First Nation reserve populations separately, these two are combined when determining voting strength and balancing representation in electoral areas. Even though First Nations members living on reserve receive some of their services from their Bands, and do not contribute property taxes directly to the regional district, they do benefit from many of the services, and in some instances contribute toward those services through agreements between the First Nations and regional district (e.g. Thorsen Creek Waste and Recycling Centre). In addition, members of all First Nations have the opportunity to vote for their electoral area director during local government elections. The on-reserve populations must therefore be taken into account when determining equitable electoral areas.

As of the 2011 Census, the electoral areas ranged in total population from 95 in Area E to 1,234 in Area D (see Figure 4 below).

**Assessment base** – the assessment base of the electoral areas should also be considered, given

Area	2011 Census Population	On-Reserve Population	Total
Area A	129	65	194
Area B		1,095	1,095
Area C	588		588
Area D	384	850	1,234
Area E	95		95
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,196</b>	<b>2,010</b>	<b>3,206</b>

**Figure 4: 2011 Census Population**

that some services are delivered within an electoral area and costs allocated to those in the electoral area on the basis of assessed values. Some changes to electoral boundaries will not impact the cost of services at all.

**Services** – ideally any service areas are contained within one electoral area – not only for the provision of regional district services, but also improvement districts or other service providers. This helps the cooperation and administration between jurisdictions and service providers (deal with one director, and makes any transitions in service providers easier).

**Land Area** – While land area, in and of itself, is not a major issue and there is not necessarily a need to ensure there is consistency in land area among the electoral areas, it can be an indicator of the relative remoteness of the population, the number of separate communities contained within each area. A large electoral area with a number of small dispersed communities can be difficult for one electoral director to represent, particularly if transportation between the communities is a challenge. At 19,826 km<sup>2</sup>, Electoral Area A is the CCRD's largest Electoral Area (the sixth largest electoral area in the province), particularly when compared to Electoral Areas D and E, which are both less than 360 km<sup>2</sup>.

**Transportation corridors** – while not as relevant given the geography and access issues within the Central Coast Regional District, transportation corridors and linkages are often considered when determining appropriate electoral area boundaries. Just because two communities are located close to each other, if the means of access are quite different, it can make for different servicing and community connections. For instance, the community of Klemtu identifies with the Bella

Bella community, and the Bella Bella community is also socially linked to the Vancouver Island community of Port Hardy, due in part to the ferry connection between the two, as well as the relationship between the First Nations.

### ➤ What are the options?

In 2008 to 2010, a Provincial Task Force on Regional Districts considered different approaches to issues faced by regional districts. One of those issues was the workload of electoral area directors. The Task Force considered whether it would be beneficial to have either a committee to identify local concerns and advise the director, or have multiple directors within one electoral area (depending on the population and voting strength of the electoral area). The Task Force recommended that the multiple director model be explored further.

Despite this recommendation, and although there have been some examples of multiple electoral area directors in the past (the last of which was the former Westside Electoral Area in Central Okanagan Regional District. Prior to the incorporation of West Kelowna in 2007, the electoral area had 3 directors), the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development advises that the *Local Government Act* does not provide the authority to have multiple directors for one electoral area. At this time multiple directors from one electoral area is therefore not an option.

The CCRD can request that an electoral area be split into more than one separate electoral area, or additional electoral areas be created. In 1973 the CCRD boundaries were changed from 5 electoral areas to 4, and in 1975 an additional electoral area was created to bring the total back to 5. Prior to amending or creating new electoral areas, the CCRD would need to consider what options make sense, taking into account the criteria and factors discussed previously in this *Fact Sheet*.

Electoral areas will always include multiple communities, and those communities will often have unique needs, services or land uses. However, adjusting boundaries to balance population, number of communities and common interests is one option to enable effective representation by the one director (plus an alternate) model of governance.

➤ **How would changes to the electoral areas impact representation?**

Changes to electoral area boundaries can alter:

- assessment base for which to pay for services (particularly sub-regional services delivered to only one or a few electoral areas)
- changes to representation (total population represented, and different communities). The greater the number of directors, the more potential for differing opinions on services to be expressed and represented. For instance if an electoral area is divided into two, then two (potentially different) viewpoints or votes could emerge from what was previously only represented by one person (and one vote) on the Board.
- potentially the influence on the regional board can be altered (percentage of the vote on board decisions)
- potential for weighted votes (although this has not been the case in the CCRD and is only an issue if any regional director represents sufficient population within the electoral area to result in a voting strength greater than 1)

➤ **How would changes to electoral areas impact costs?**

The cost impacts of electoral area changes are typically quite low. If electoral areas are added, there is the added cost of the honorarium paid to the additional electoral area director including attendance at Board meetings, as well as any other expenses incurred (conferences attended, travel expenses, etc.). The cost varies depending on the travel, but as a rough guide the director expenses for the 5 directors is budgeted in 2016 as \$80,100.

Reconfiguration of electoral areas can also affect how the costs of services provided to electoral areas are allocated (particularly sub-regional services that are paid for by some areas and not others).

➤ **What is the process for changing boundaries? Do different boundary alignments make sense?**

Changing electoral area boundaries is a local government structure change and requires a Cabinet order to alter the regional district's Letters Patent.

If changes were desired, the CCRD would develop a proposal for a boundary change, including the rationale for where the boundaries should go, impacts on services, finances, and representation, and the advantages of the proposal. A public consultation process would be required, and could range from a few public meetings to a broader petition or assent process to gauge support for the proposal. The CCRD would need to adopt a resolution to request the boundary change, together with a submission including information on the public feedback and the impact analysis.

The Minister would review the request and determine whether to recommend the boundary change to Cabinet. Cabinet would decide whether to alter the boundary.



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## REGIONAL COOPERATION

This *Fact Sheet* gives an overview of the number of different governments involved in local service provision on the Central Coast, what services they provide and how they partner and cooperate on service delivery. Although the federal and provincial government deliver several services to Central Coast residents, and cooperate in others, the focus of this study is on local governments, and local government services.

➤ **What governments deliver services on the Central Coast?**

The Central Coast Region is home to a variety of governments, authorities and agencies that look after services for the region’s residents. Some governments look after multiple services in a specific area or community, while others are responsible for providing one or two services. Some provide different services to the same community. However, many provide the same services as other governments, but to different communities or residents. For instance, the CCRD, three improvement districts, and three first nations and several private water companies all provide water services to different residents or communities. Due to the number of different service providers, there are many opportunities to cooperate on service provision.

Each of these governments, agencies and service providers plays a role in providing services to

residents of the Central Coast. This *Fact Sheet* is intended to provide an overview of how the different agencies and governing bodies involved in service delivery on the Central Coast cooperate in service delivery.

➤ **Who does what?**

Figure 1 below provides an overview of which local government authorities look after which local government services. The list references many of the services that are commonly provided by local governments, but is not exhaustive. The table illustrates the fact that many of the local governments provide the same services, albeit in different parts of the region, creating a foundation and opportunity for cooperation. Highlights of the services provided by the primary local governments on the Central Coast are reiterated below.

***First Nations Governments***

The three First Nations within the region – Nuxalk, Wuikinuxv and Heiltsuk – each deliver a range of services to their communities, located primarily on reserve lands. Services are governed by Band Councils elected by each Band membership. The Council is generally responsible for the day to day management of the Band, and administers services funded primarily through the federal government, including public and capital works, housing, health and wellness, social services as well as fisheries, forestry and land and marine use planning. In

Figure 1: Local Services Provided to Central Coast Residents by Local Governments

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	WATER	SEWER	AIRPORTS	FIRE PROTECTION	LAND USE PLANNING	SOLID WASTE	ECON. D'VLPMT	PARKS & REC.
Central Coast Regional District	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nuxalk First Nation	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Heiltsuk First Nation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wuikinuxv First Nation	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ocean Falls Improvement District	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
Hagensborg Waterworks District	✓			✓				
Noosatsum Waterworks District	✓			✓				

addition to the elected Band Councils, the Bands also have a traditional government of hereditary chiefs that is relied upon for guidance and leadership.

The Heiltsuk Tribal Council has 1 Chief and 11 Councillors, the Nuxalk Nation Band has 1 Chief and 12 Councillors, and the Wuikinuxv Nation Council has a Chief and 2 Councillors.

### ***Central Coast Regional District***

The CCRD provides a variety of services throughout the region, including land use planning, library and emergency services, then provides others such as recreation, water, solid waste, and fire protection to specific areas in the region. The Regional District is governed by a Board of Directors, which includes one director elected from each of the 5 electoral areas.

### ***Improvement Districts***

There are 3 improvement districts on the Central Coast. The Hagensborg Waterworks and Noosatsum Waterworks districts both provide water and fire protection to specific areas in the Bella Coola Valley. The Ocean Falls Improvement District (OFID) is unique in that it has been delegated authority for a wide variety of services, due in part to the remote location of the community, and amount of infrastructure. The OFID provides a range of services, including water, sewer, storm sewer, recreation, street lighting, fire protection, garbage collection and disposal, and building maintenance services within the Ocean Falls community. Each improvement district has a board of trustees that is elected by those who own property within the boundaries of the improvement district.

### **➤ What service cooperation exists?**

Although each jurisdiction has its own niche and services that it is responsible for, given that several jurisdictions are responsible for the same service (but in different communities or areas) there are some areas where service providers cooperate in order to share resources, improve efficiency, or achieve economies of scale.

The Bella Coola Valley is an area where cooperation is most prevalent, because there are multiple communities and jurisdictions clustered within the same geographic area.

### **Fire Services**

There are four fire departments within the Valley – the Bella Coola Fire Department (CCRD), the Nuxalk First Nation Fire Department (Nuxalk), as well as the Noosatsum and Hagensborg fire departments, which are delivered by the improvement districts. Each of these four fire departments has signed a mutual aid agreement that ensures that when there is a fire that exceeds the resources from any one department, the others will assist. The agreement allows them to share not only manpower, but also the equipment. Fire equipment is often expensive and it can be difficult for any one department to afford. Sharing of some major equipment is one aspect of mutual aid. For instance the Nuxalk First Nation fire department has the Valley's snuffer truck with the jaws of life. While it is used wherever and whenever needed, it was funded through, and remains on the Nuxalk reserve lands. There have also been informal initiatives to coordinate training for volunteer firefighters, but no formal agreements.

### **Water Service**

The CCRD and Nuxalk have an agreement to share water. The Nuxalk had established wells and a water system to service its community and reserve lands, including the Bella Coola village and the Four Mile Village. When the Bella Coola Waterworks system, which the CCRD inherited in 1992, was in need of a new water source to address water quality issues, the Nuxalk agreed to supply the Bella Coola Waterworks system, and the CCRD and Nuxalk have an agreement regarding the water supply.

The water authorities also share maintenance resources. Both the Nuxalk and the CCRD use the same maintenance contractor, and the Noosatsum and Hagensborg Waterworks at times use the same maintenance contractor.

### **Solid Waste**

The Nuxalk and CCRD also cooperate on solid waste services, through an agreement signed in 2014. The contribution is approximately \$1,000 per residential unit, and equates to a similar contribution as that provided by the local residents who live in the Bella Coola Valley that are not on reserve lands. Like with the water agreement, the solid waste agreement recognizes that there is no need for two different jurisdictions to duplicate services (i.e. two landfills or recycling centres), and that for some services it is more efficient to cooperate to avoid unnecessary costs or duplication.

The Heiltsuk community in Bella Bella signed an agreement in 2015 with the Mount Waddington Regional District regarding the use of the 7 Mile Landfill and Recycling Centre located between Port McNeill and Port Hardy on Vancouver Island.

**Recreation**

The CCRD has a joint use agreement with the School District 49 to share facilities. In particular, Sir Alexander MacKenzie Secondary School (SAMSS) is used for a variety of recreation programs and activities for the community. CCRD Centennial Pool also has programming specifically for local school groups.

**Economic Development**

There are several different agencies involved in economic development in the region, including the CCRD, as well as economic development corporations for the Nuxalk, Heiltsuk and Wuikinuxv First Nations, in addition to local organizations that are focussed on specific sectors such as forestry, fisheries, agriculture or tourism. While there are no formal agreements, there is some cooperation on initiatives, sharing of ideas and communication between the various parties, including participation in an Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) that provides recommendations and advice to the CCRD Board regarding economic development matters. That committee has a voting membership of 10 people, including 1 CCRD Board director, 1 representative from each of the Heiltsuk and Nuxalk First Nations, 1 representative from each community of Ocean Falls and Denny Island, a member of the Bella Coola Harbour Authority and 4 members at large.

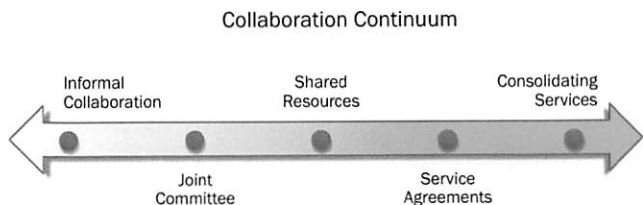
➤ **What are the opportunities to cooperate?**

There are often opportunities to cooperate either when the same service is offered by multiple providers (thereby offering opportunities to share ideas, expertise, equipment, purchasing), or when the same service is required in multiple areas, or when it makes better sense for just one provider to supply multiple communities. For instance, using water systems as an example, even though the systems themselves are separate, there are many common tasks, concerns and objectives, including:

- maintaining records of infrastructure and improvements to assist in assessments and planning;
- reliance upon expertise to assess the system, and recommend upgrades or changes;
- meeting Vancouver Coastal or First Nations Health authority water quality objectives;
- water sampling and testing;
- preparing an emergency response plan;
- financial planning for capital replacement and major upgrades;
- educating users about water conservation and restrictions, for long term water management;
- training of water operators; and,
- accessing funding or grants.

Given the similar concerns and tasks, and shared responsibilities for delivery of the same services, it may be possible for some to seek partnerships and take advantage of economies of scale, not only in the example of water systems, but for a variety of tasks.

Collaboration between independent authorities can and currently does consist of everything from informal meetings to discuss topics of shared interest, to consolidation of services under one local government authority. The level of collaboration can be viewed as a continuum or spectrum, including some of the options detailed below.



**Informal Collaboration**

Informal collaboration happens between many agencies, and in particular between agencies that deliver the same or complementary services. For instance, one fire department may consult with another to see how they are addressing new training requirements, or recruitment strategies, or water purveyors may seek advice on where to order different supplies or hire expertise. Contact is often initiated by, and between staff. These types of relationships are particularly useful for service providers located in remote locations that have minimal opportunities to participate on joint committees or undertake service agreements or shared servicing options.



### ***Joint Committee***

A committee can be a more formalized way of achieving collaboration between multiple authorities with similar issues. For instance, a committee could be created with representatives from each water system to discuss topics of mutual interest, undertake joint public information campaigns (water conservation) or enable operators to understand the issues, common concerns, and identify opportunities for shared resources. An example of a committee formed to increase collaboration on a single service is the CCRD initiated Economic Development Advisory Committee. That committee has united various organizations including First Nations, the non-profit Harbour Authority, the CCRD, as well as others to share information and build partnerships to advance economic development in the region.

### ***Shared Resources***

Where more than one organization delivers the same service, there is the potential to share resources, particularly for aspects of the service that all operators must undertake, such as billings, record keeping, maintenance or sharing administrators or certified operators. As an example, the Nuxalk and CCRD both use the same person to maintain their water system. Likewise, the Noosatsum and Hagensborg Waterworks use the same maintenance contractor for their two systems. Another local example is the use of the snuffer truck and jaws of life rescue equipment, which is owned by the Nuxalk First Nation, but has been made available by the Nuxalk when needed. Sharing resources helps to build relationships and can create cost efficiencies.

### ***Service Agreements***

Service agreements are a way of formalizing a sharing arrangement. For instance, the Nuxalk First Nation has agreements with the CCRD for the provision of water to the Bella Coola town site water system, as well as an agreement regarding the shared cost of the solid waste landfill and recycling centre.

While agreements are not always necessary, they are helpful in acknowledging the terms of a deal, particularly where costs are apportioned between two or more parties. The agreement can spell out the understanding between the parties, and set out terms for renewing as well as terminating, allowing both organizations to plan ahead.

### ***Consolidating Services***

Consolidating a service under one authority is one way of collaborating on service delivery. For

instance, even though they currently serve different areas, the four fire departments in the Bella Coola Valley could be consolidated, leaving one fire department to provide services to the Valley. The Nuxalk First Nation fire department, for example, could be contracted to provide fire services to the CCRD and improvement districts (or alternately, another fire department could be contracted by the Nuxalk and improvement districts) to provide fire service. The consolidation of the departments does not necessarily mean the governing authority would not remain; rather the service would be provided by one, rather than four different departments, through a contract. Another option is to have only one authority responsible for providing the service to multiple communities.

The approach of having one service provider deliver services on contract to other jurisdictions is used in several other regions and communities. One example is the City of Penticton fire department provides fire services to the City, the neighbouring Penticton Indian Band, as well as to unincorporated areas through a contract and service agreement with the regional district.

### **➤ What are the benefits of cooperation?**

Collaboration and cooperation can provide a variety of benefits, including everything from sharing solutions and best practices, to achieving operational efficiencies, and saving money. Each local government or jurisdiction has different borrowing authority and access to grant opportunities. Strategic investments in infrastructure or equipment may therefore be best explored through collaboration, to take advantage of the available funding opportunities.



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## REGIONAL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE

### ➤ What is a regional district?

The Central Coast Regional District (CCRD) is one of 28 regional districts in BC. The boundaries of regional districts are vast – the CCRD spans 24,560 km<sup>2</sup> along the coast of BC, north of Mount Waddington and Vancouver Island, and inland east to the Cariboo Region, encompassing communities of Ocean Falls, Denny Island, Bella Bella and Bella Coola, as well as the Nuxalk, Heiltsuk and Wuikinuxv First Nations. Most regional district boundaries encompass municipalities as well as unincorporated lands, which are divided into smaller areas called electoral areas. Regional districts were modeled as a federation of municipalities and electoral areas, each of which has representation on the regional board. However, the CCRD is the only regional district in the province that has no municipalities within its boundaries. The CCRD encompasses 5 electoral areas.

#### Regional districts:

- Are the local government for rural (electoral) areas, providing them with basic local services such as community planning, but also providing area specific services such as water, solid waste, or recreation services.
- Provide region-wide services to all electoral areas within a region, such as emergency management.
- Provide a framework for sub-regional services, either to multiple electoral areas (such as solid waste to Areas C, D and E), or partnering with other forms of government, such as First Nations or Improvement Districts to provide services.

### ➤ Who makes decisions?

While most regional districts share a combination of municipal directors and electoral area directors, the CCRD is governed by a board consisting only of electoral area directors. The CCRD's 5 directors (one from each of the 5 electoral areas) are elected directly by voters, and serve 4-year terms. Where there are no candidates within an electoral area, the local government must appoint a person to the vacant position.

The Board selects its own chairperson, who has the authority to create committees to deal with issues such as planning, environmental management, and regional growth. Given the small size of the CCRD Board, there are no committees, and the entire Board deals with all topics and issues.

Each electoral area in a regional district has a voting strength on the board based on population. The voting strength is intended to address differences between electoral areas with respect to population. In the CCRD, each jurisdiction has one vote for every 1,500 residents. In the CCRD the voting unit of 1,500 persons means that each director has one vote, and therefore there are no "weighted votes." However, if the population of any one electoral area (which includes populations of people living on any First Nations reserve lands) exceeds 1,500, then they will receive a weighted vote of 2. The populations will be updated subsequent to the 2016 Census.

Some decisions are made by the entire Board of Directors, and others are made only by the directors from the areas participating in the service. There are two types of votes at the board:

- **Corporate votes**, in which all directors vote.
- **Stakeholder votes**, in which only those directors participating in a service are entitled to vote. These votes are for the operations of existing

services. If there is only one participating area, the entire board will vote on the service.

➤ **What services does a regional district provide?**

Regional districts can provide a broad range of services. With the exception of a few provincially mandated services, the services are determined by the regional board, with the support of residents. Because the board only provides services that their members, or residents, agree the regional district should provide, the menu of services varies by regional district, and can be different within each electoral area or community.

Some services, such as street lighting, may be provided to a portion of an electoral area, or to a combination of electoral areas (such as the operation of the Thorsen Creek Waste and Recycling Centre). Regional services are those that are provided to all electoral areas, such as emergency management.

Services are established to respond to needs identified by the board, electoral area directors, staff or residents. A proposed service must go through a process to determine its feasibility, including scope, cost, and delivery options. If deemed feasible, a service establishing bylaw must receive support from the regional board. The bylaw must also be approved by the province's Inspector of Municipalities, and supported by the residents that will participate in and pay for the service. Support can be demonstrated through a petition, alternative-approval process, referendum, or approval by an electoral area director on behalf of residents of that jurisdiction.

➤ **What services does a regional district NOT provide?**

The provincial government provides some services to rural areas, including roads and policing. These services are not the responsibility of the regional district and regional districts do not have control over how these services are provided.

Just because a regional district *can* provide a service, does not mean that it *does*. There are many organizations that provide services. Some services are provided by Improvement Districts, which are another form of government, designed to provide specific services such as water and fire protection, and often act as a service provider in remote communities. In the CCRD there are 3 improvement districts providing water and fire protection service,

including Hagensborg Waterworks District, Noosatsum Waterworks, and Ocean Falls Improvement District. The Ocean Falls Improvement District also provides sewer, storm sewer, recreation, street lighting, garbage collection and disposal, and cemetery services. The area's First Nations communities also provide services to their members, and in some cases also service non-native residents.

➤ **How do regional districts pay for services?**

Unlike a municipality, which has the flexibility to allocate "general revenues" to its services, each service provided by the regional district is budgeted for separately. Costs are recovered by billing those who benefit from the service. The expense of providing a service must be covered by revenue generated for that same service; one service cannot subsidize another. For instance taxes raised for a recreation service must fund the recreation facility and operations, and no unrelated activity.

Regional districts raise funds primarily through property taxation – parcel taxes (a set amount per parcel, land area, or metre of frontage), or property taxes that are based on the assessed value of the property (land, improvements, or land and improvements combined). Regional districts also generate revenues from user fees and charges, such as garbage tipping fees, recreation user fees, as well as provincial or federal government grants.

In electoral areas, the Province collects property taxes. The Province then transfer funds to the regional districts to cover the cost of the local, sub-regional and regional services that the regional district provides.



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## REGIONAL DISTRICT GRANTS

Property tax is the largest source of revenue for local governments. Other sources of revenue include user fees, reserves or savings, grants and borrowing. The ability of British Columbia municipalities and regional districts to establish new sources of revenue is relatively limited under the establishing provincial legislation. Grants from provincial and federal government are particularly important for small communities, and are becoming increasingly important for costly infrastructure renewal in communities of all sizes.

The CCRD is no exception - according to the 2015 Financial Statements, grants accounted for nearly \$450,000 or 26% of the total annual revenue, second only to property taxation at \$693,738 or 43%.

There are generally two types of senior government grants that local governments may be eligible to receive – unconditional and conditional grants. The CCRD is unique as the only regional district in BC with no municipalities within its boundaries. Therefore CCRD communities only have access to those grants available to regional districts (and not those provided to municipalities).

### ► What Are Unconditional Grants?

Unconditional grants are direct transfers from the senior government that usually have little or no restrictions on their use and are not typically related to any specific project. Local governments may generally use such funds at their own discretion.

### Provincial Unconditional Grants

All regional districts in BC receive the provincial Regional District Basic Grant on an annual basis. The purpose of this grant is to assist regional districts with administration costs for service delivery based on local needs and priorities.

As per the *Local Government Grants Act Regulations*, the amount of the grant is calculated based on three factors with an emphasis on smaller and rural regional districts:

1. regional district total population
2. regional district electoral area population
3. the number of local community commissions, if any (*note - the CCRD does not presently have any local community commissions*)

Population is determined by the Minister, who considers information from BC Stats (based on the most recent federal Census), as well as any changes to the boundaries of the jurisdiction and/or any other information deemed relevant. The amount transferred to the CCRD in 2016 under the Regional District Basic Grant was \$197,645.

Municipalities have a similar grant, called the Small Community Grant. In addition, municipalities with a population greater than 5,000 receive a traffic fine revenue sharing grant to assist with policing costs. Given that regional districts and unincorporated communities do not pay for policing costs, they are not eligible to receive this assistance.

### Federal Unconditional Grants

In September 2005, the federal and provincial governments along with the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) signed *The Agreement on the Transfer of Federal Gas Tax Revenue Under the New Deal for Cities and Communities (2005-2015)*. The agreement was subsequently renewed in 2014 for a further 10 years, representing a transfer to be shared by all provinces and territories of an estimated \$21.8 billion in funding for local government infrastructure aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing for cleaner air and water.

In BC, the program is administered by the UBCM. A portion of the program – the Community Works Fund – functions much like an unconditional grant

program, and is delivered to all municipalities and regional districts (except those within the Metro Vancouver region) through a direct annual allocation. The grant is meant to support local projects that align with reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, cleaner air and water, and fall into one of the following project categories:

- Local roads, bridges
- Highways
- Short-sea shipping
- Short-line rail
- Regional and local airports
- Broadband connectivity
- Public transit
- Drinking water
- Wastewater
- Solid waste
- Community energy systems
- Brownfield redevelopment
- Sport infrastructure
- Recreational infrastructure
- Cultural infrastructure
- Tourism infrastructure
- Disaster mitigation
- Capacity building

Community Works funding is delivered twice annually. Each local government receives a “floor amount” (\$50,000 in the first year of the agreement, and \$50,000 plus an indexed amount in each subsequent year of the agreement) plus an amount calculated on the basis of population using Census data.

All local governments must report annually on spending and outcomes. The CCRD is scheduled to receive \$178,803 in Community Works Funding for 2015/2016 and in 2016/2017 the amount will increase to \$187,744. Local governments may accumulate the funds, and any interest earned, to support larger regional district projects. The CCRD accumulated funds over several years to fund the recent design and construction of the Thorsen Creek Waste & Recycling Centre under the Solid Waste project category. Refer to the *General Operations Fact Sheet* for more information about Community Works Fund expenditures.

In BC, the Gas Tax program also includes an application-based conditional grant program, known as the Strategic Priorities Fund, which is discussed further in the next section.

## ➤ What Are Conditional Grants?

Conditional grants are typically competitive, application-based grants awarded to specific projects. Within the local government sector, the federal and provincial governments are principal providers of such grants, and the majority of their conditional grant funding is primarily meant for local government (in this case municipal, regional district and First Nations) capital projects (e.g. sewer, water, roads, etc.). Some programs involve cost sharing between all three levels of government, while others, such as the Gas Tax Strategic Priorities Fund, can be up to 100% federally funded. Application intakes are offered periodically, and local governments submit project proposals based on local priorities and funding program objectives. In some cases, community non-profit organizations and private sector bodies may also be eligible to apply.

### Infrastructure Grants

Upcoming conditional infrastructure grant opportunities in BC will include new and re-opened programs that are part of the New Building Canada Fund, which involves a three-way cost share between federal, provincial and local governments (or other applicant, as applicable). Another intake of the Gas Tax Strategic Priorities Fund is also expected before the end of the 2018/2019 fiscal year end. More information about these programs can be found online:

New Building Canada Fund:

<http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/sc-cp-eng.html>

Strategic Priorities Fund:

<http://www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/renewed-gas-tax-agreement.html>

The last sizeable conditional infrastructure grant approval for the CCRD was in 2012, when the region was approved under the Building Canada Fund for \$2.3 million in federal/provincial funding towards the Bella Coola Airport Dike Upgrade project. The project would have involved a local (CCRD) contribution of approximately \$1.2 million, but the proposal was rejected by local voters in a May 2013 referendum (refer to the *Transportation Fact Sheet* for more information).

In addition to large-scale infrastructure funding programs, the province also offers conditional grants to support municipalities and regional districts with planning related to long-term service and

infrastructure requirements. Grants are available for the purpose of developing long-term plans related to infrastructure, capital assets, liquid waste management, drinking water management and community energy plans. The CCRD received a grant through the BC Asset Management Planning program in 2016 which will be used, along with a portion of the CCRD's Community Works Fund, to undertake condition assessments related to the water system, the Bella Coola Airport, Denny Island air strip and the Centennial Pool.

### Other Conditional Grants

Not all conditional grant programs are infrastructure focused. There are numerous conditional grant programs available to local governments and community organizations throughout BC and Canada. Some are offered through senior government, which support a very broad range of projects – from economic diversification and job creation to local arts, culture and heritage projects; community celebrations and milestone anniversaries (including national anniversaries such as the current Canada 150 Fund); food security; environmental restoration initiatives and more.

Other conditional grant programs offered by the provincial government include:

- Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP), which is available to local governments that signed the 2012 *Climate Action Charter*, and is intended to assist with addressing greenhouse gas emissions; and,
- Miscellaneous grants that are unrelated to any specific conditional grant program and are designed to assist local governments with special situations, including restructure and governance studies. For example, the CCRD received a grant for Phase I of the Governance & Service Delivery Study.

The CCRD is a signatory local government to the BC Climate Action Charter, and as such, is eligible to receive a grant equal to one hundred percent of the carbon tax paid by the regional district as a direct expenditure. The amount transferred to the CCRD under the CARIP program in 2016 was \$774, which will be used to reduce fuel expenses for the airport, swimming pool, fire hall and administration building.

In 2005/2006, the provincial government established three independent regional trusts to create new and sustained regional economic growth opportunities

through conditional grants for projects that demonstrated long-term economic benefits. The CCRD is within the jurisdiction of the Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT), and has been the recipient of several NDIT grants, including funding for airport terminal improvements in 2012, hiring of a temporary local government management intern in 2014 and 2015, ongoing support for the “*Love Central Coast*” campaign and local grant writing workshops, as well as \$30,000 in 2016 for the construction of the Walker Island Park concession.



Figure 1 - Walker Island Park Concession

Corporate, community and charitable foundations are another source of conditional grants, many of which accept applications from local governments. Local priorities, the amount of funding available and the scope of work involved with the proposals and projects are considered when determining which opportunities to pursue.

### ► How Do Local Governments Find Out About Conditional Grants?

Local governments in BC are generally notified directly about conditional grant opportunities for major infrastructure, and search tools are available on senior government websites for other conditional funding programs. In addition, CivicInfo BC (a non-profit information sharing website serving BC local governments), maintains a local government grants database on its website at [www.civicinfo.bc.ca](http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca).



**CCRD Governance & Service Delivery Study  
Fact Sheets  
September 2016**

# GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES OF SERVICES PROVIDED TO CENTRAL COAST RESIDENTS

This *Fact Sheet* gives an overview of the number of different governments involved in local service provision on the Central Coast and how they are structured. While the focus is on local governments, the federal and provincial governments are included due to the number of services they deliver to central coast residents.

➤ **What is the governance structure on the Central Coast?**

The Central Coast region is home to a variety of authorities and agencies that look after different services for the region's residents. Some authorities look after multiple services in a specific area or community, while others are responsible for providing one or two services. Some have overlapping jurisdictions, but provide different services to the same community. The list of governments includes the following:

- Central Coast Regional District
- Nuxalk First Nation
- Heiltsuk First Nation
- Wuikinuxv First Nation
- Ocean Falls Improvement District
- Hagensborg Waterworks District
- Noosatsum Waterworks District
- Provincial Government
- Federal Government

Each of these governments, agencies and service

providers plays a role in providing services to residents of the Central Coast.

➤ **What services do the governments provide?**

Figure 1 below provides an overview of which authorities look after which services. As part of this study, *Fact Sheets* have been prepared on the services provided by the CCRD and include details of how each of those services are delivered, paid for and how decisions are made.

**Federal Government**

The federal government does not provide many direct services to the Central Coast, but it does regulate the Bella Coola airport, which is a Transport Canada certified airport, and provides services such as Coast Guard and fisheries (hatcheries and fisheries officers) for the Pacific Ocean, which is an area of federal responsibility. The Bella Coola harbour is also within federal jurisdiction but is managed by a local elected authority (the Bella Coola Harbour Authority). Through the department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the federal government provides funding for, and oversees services to First Nation reserves, including the Nuxalk First Nation, Wuikinuxv First Nation and Heiltsuk First Nation. The Central Coast region is part of a broader federal riding of Skeena-Bulkley Valley that extends north to the boundary of BC and Yukon. The representative elected from the Skeena-Bulkley Valley riding is one

Figure 1: Services Provided to Central Coast Residents

GOVERNMENTS	WATER	SEWER	ROADS	AIRPORTS	FERRIES	FIRE PROTECTION	LAND USE PLANNING	POLICING	HEALTH	EDUCATION	SOLID WASTE	FISHERIES & OCEANS	ECON. D'VLPMT	PARKS & REC.
Central Coast Regional District	✓			✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	✓
Nuxalk First Nation	✓					✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Heiltsuk First Nation	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wuikinuxv First Nation	✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ocean Falls Improvement District	✓	✓				✓	✓				✓			✓
Hagensborg Waterworks District	✓					✓	✓							
Noosatsum Waterworks District	✓					✓	✓							
Provincial Government			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓				✓
Federal Government				✓								✓		

of 338 members of parliament in Canada's House of Commons.

### ***Provincial Government***

The provincial government (through the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure) is responsible for the provision of roads and highways, as well as approval of subdivisions in unincorporated areas of the province (land not within municipalities). The Province also oversees ferry services through BC Ferries, provides policing services to unincorporated areas (delivered through the RCMP), and delivers health services through Vancouver Coastal Health. The Province is also responsible for education services, which are delivered by School District #49. The School District has its own board of education comprised of 5 trustees that provide public oversight of education, finance, facility management, human resources, and policy. Other than the Board of Trustees, provincial services are not governed by locally elected bodies, but rather are overseen by the Provincial government. The Central Coast region is part of the North Coast electoral district that elects one member to the provincial legislative assembly. The representative from the North Coast is one of 85 members of the legislative assembly.

### ***First Nations Governments***

The three First Nations within the region – Nuxalk, Wuikinuxv and Heiltsuk – each deliver a range of services to their communities, located primarily on reserve lands. Services are governed by Band Councils elected by each Band membership. The Council is generally responsible for the day to day management of the Band, and administers services funded primarily through the federal government, including public and capital works, housing, health and wellness, social services as well as fisheries, forestry and land and marine use planning. In addition to the elected Band Councils, the Bands also have a traditional government of hereditary chiefs that is relied upon for guidance and leadership.

The Heiltsuk Tribal Council has 1 Chief and 11 Councillors, the Nuxalk Nation Band has 1 Chief and 12 Councillors, and the Wuikinuxv Nation Council has a Chief and 2 Councillors.

### ***Central Coast Regional District (CCRD)***

The CCRD provides a variety of services throughout the region, including land use planning, library and emergency services, then provides others such as parks and recreation, water, solid waste, and fire protection to specific areas within the region. The

Regional District is governed by a 5-person Board of Directors. Each director is elected from one of the 5 electoral areas during local government elections every 4 years. The Regional District receives its authority through provincial legislation, including the *Local Government Act* and *Community Charter*, as well as Letters Patent that provide the authority for specific services.

### ***Improvement Districts***

Improvement districts are a form of local government that typically look after a small number of services (most commonly water) for communities that are not located within a municipality. Often these bodies were established prior to the creation of regional districts, which then became responsible for service delivery for areas outside municipalities.

Now that regional districts are in place, the Province no longer creates new improvement districts. In 2006 the Province developed the *Policy Statement on Improvement District Governance*. The provincial policy supports the continued gradual elimination of improvement districts, with municipalities and regional districts assuming the responsibilities of improvement districts over time.

Improvement districts are required to follow the *Local Government Act*, and are governed by a Board of Trustees elected by the residents of the properties within the improvement district boundaries.

There are 3 improvement districts on the Central Coast. The Hagensborg Waterworks and Noosatsum Waterworks districts both provide water and fire protection to specific areas in the Bella Coola Valley. The Ocean Falls Improvement District is unique in that it has been delegated authority for a wide variety of services, due in part to the remote location of the community, and amount of infrastructure. The OFID provides a wide range of services including water, sewer, recreation, street lighting, garbage collection and disposal, fire service, building maintenance and cemetery services within the Ocean Falls community.