

# Electoral Areas Community Update

May 2023  
Issue 9

## An update for you, from your Area Directors

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2023! We're pleased to share this update with you. These newsletters have been created to keep you informed about current initiatives and projects affecting your communities. Different this year, we are combining the updates and delivering them directly to your mailbox.

Enjoy and if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact us.

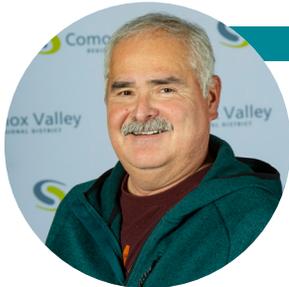
### Meet Your Directors

A local government election was held in October 2022. Here are your current directors for the 2022-2026 term:



**Electoral Area A Director Daniel Arbour**

**Baynes Sound – Denman/Hornby Islands** stretches from the southern boundary of the City of Courtenay south to Cook Creek. This area includes Minto, Royston, Union Bay, Fanny Bay and Denman and Hornby islands.



**Electoral Area B Director Richard Hardy**

**Lazo North** - includes the Comox Peninsula, Little River, Balmoral Beach Area, Point Holmes, Bates Beach, Huband Road and the Tsolum regions.



**Electoral Area C Director Edwin Grieve**

**Puntledge - Black Creek** includes Merville, Black Creek, Dove Creek, Saratoga Beach, Arden (west of Cumberland Road), Powerhouse, Lake Trail, Marsden and Plateau Road as well as Mount Washington. The northern boundary of Electoral Area C is the Oyster River



### Budget for 2023-2027 Adopted

In late March – after months of review, consideration, and adjustments, the CVRD board approved the 2023-2027 budget, with \$91.9 million allocated for operating costs, and \$81.9 million for capital projects.

The CVRD delivers 102 different services within the region ranging from water services to search and rescue, planning and development to fire services and recreation facilities and programs. Residents only pay into the services provided to their area, which means the taxes will vary depending on where taxpayers live within the regional district.

The financial planning process is an important annual exercise that includes review of current expenses, development of plans identifying priorities, collection of public input, adjustments and then final consideration/approval for all 102 services.

The public's feedback is welcome and encouraged during this process – and this year, an online information session was held to explain the process and basics of budgeting. Check out the approved budget and the information session at [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/currentbudget](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/currentbudget)

## Tax and Services Update for Electoral Area Residents

The Comox Valley Regional District provides 102 services in total – but each area participates in its own unique selection of those services. There are even differences within the electoral areas (for example: not all Electoral Area A residents are subscribed to 69 services – some are specific to Denman or Hornby Island for example, and are not paid for by residents outside of those areas).

**Did you Know?**

Rural property tax notices are issued by the provincial Surveyor of Taxes as the Province collects taxes for schools, roads, policing and regional district services.

For more information on rural property taxes and how to pay them visit: [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/propertytaxes](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/propertytaxes)

**Area C**  
Puntledge - Black Creek

Per \$100,000 residential assessed value  
2022 – \$95.39

**2023**  
**\$94.73**

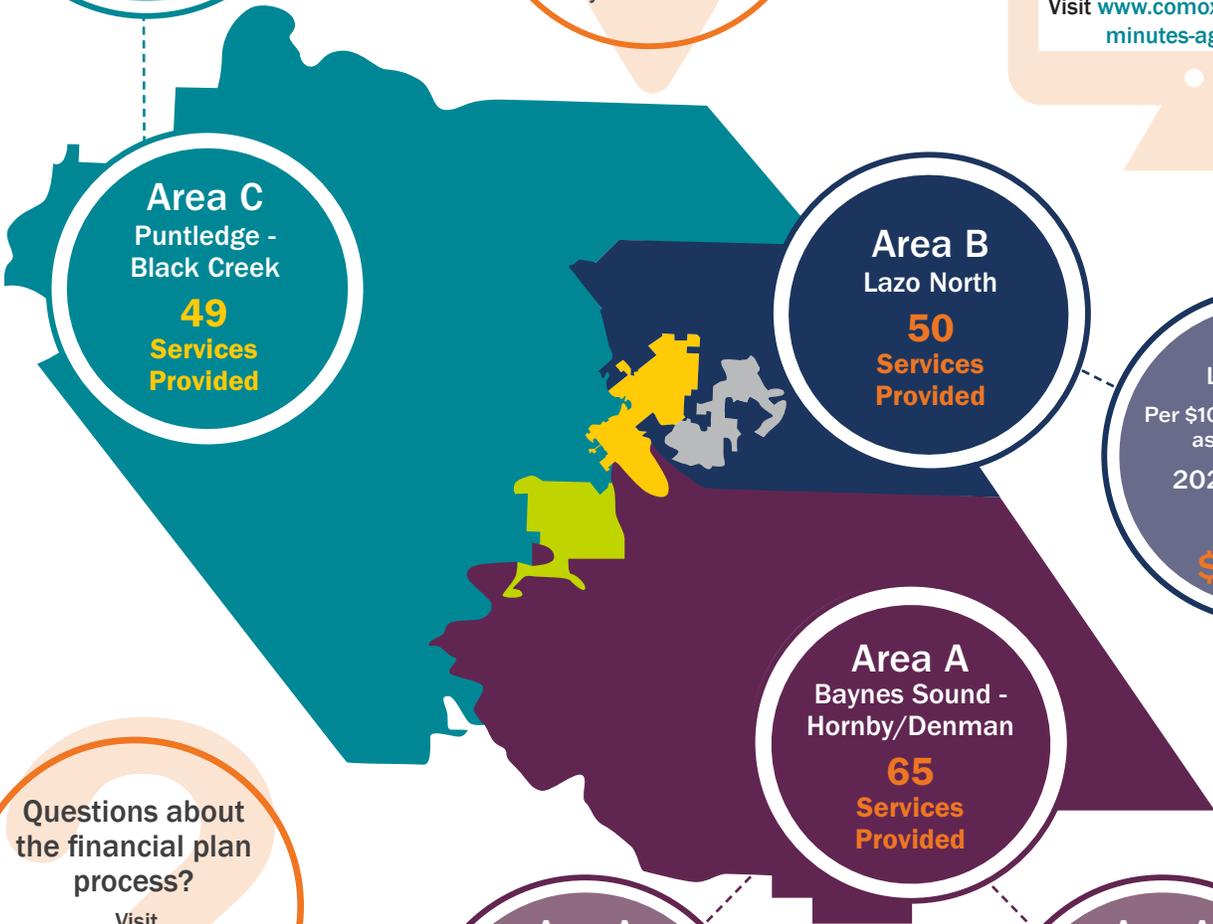
For a full list of what services are provided to each area, visit [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/taxinserts](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/taxinserts)

You'll also receive a full breakdown in your tax bill!

**Join us Online**

You can watch meetings online and review agendas/minutes.

Visit [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/minutes-agendas](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/minutes-agendas)



**Area C**  
Puntledge - Black Creek

**49**  
**Services Provided**

**Area B**  
Lazo North

**50**  
**Services Provided**

**Area B**  
Lazo North

Per \$100,000 residential assessed value  
2022 – \$104.65

**2023**  
**\$104.77**

**Area A**  
Baynes Sound - Hornby/Denman

**65**  
**Services Provided**

**Area A**  
Baynes Sound

Per \$100,000 residential assessed value  
2022 – \$104.04

**2023**  
**\$103.89**

**Area A**  
Denman/Hornby

Per \$100,000 residential assessed value  
2022 – \$33.94

**2023**  
**\$33.85**

Questions about the financial plan process?

Visit [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/currentbudget](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/currentbudget), or phone 250-334-6000



What's On The Go  
Electoral Area A



**Funding for Sewer Announced**

On April 14, the Province of B.C. announced \$30-million in grant funding to support a sewer service extension to Royston, Union Bay and K'ómoks First Nation lands. It's an exciting development that will help address environmental risk to Baynes Sound. Open houses will be held in Royston and Union Bay in June – details about dates and times will be sent by mail, and are posted to the project website at

[www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/sewerextension](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/sewerextension)



**Support for local housing projects**

To help with affordable housing issues on Denman and Hornby Islands, \$100,000 contributions from the CVRD were provided to both the communities' housing societies. This will help with capital costs of new units for low-income residents in the region.

It's another example of how community partnerships are helping deliver great amenities to Baynes Sound communities. The CVRD is also working towards the construction of a new playground in Union Bay, and alongside Union Bay Estates is preparing to complete a trail network. On Denman, a new section of the cross-island trail is being completed with support from BC Ferries. Watch for more in the year to come!



What's On The Go  
Electoral Area B



**Lazo Trail plan moves forward**

CVRD, the Town of Comox and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) are continuing planning for the Lazo Greenway Multi-Use Trail Project. The trail will help residents connect to Goose Spit, Lazo Marsh and Point Holmes by foot or bike. Design work on the trail is nearing completion and the project has received Federal grant funding for up to 60 per cent (max \$1.35 million) for construction. Work will begin on the path in 2023. Watch for more updates available at

[www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/lazotrail](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/lazotrail)



**Updated schedule for sewer construction project**

The complex Sewer Conveyance Project continues to move forward and is currently in the procurement process to collect, consider and award contracts. The CVRD is currently aiming to start construction work in winter 2023/2024, and will hold public information meetings before to update the community and residents on the work. The project team is committed to keeping the community informed about construction schedule and plans. Learn more about the project at

[www.engagecomoxvalley.ca/conveyanceproject](http://www.engagecomoxvalley.ca/conveyanceproject)



What's On The Go  
Electoral Area C



**Mount Washington fire hall update**

The CVRD Board has made solid progress on the Mount Washington Fire Hall Project to date, with a design in place and \$900,000 in grant funding secured. And while construction had been planned to start this spring, the project has now been delayed due to geotechnical challenges. Currently, staff are evaluating all options before taking next steps with construction

and will report back later this year with options for a plan forward. Once complete, a new fire hall in the area will improve emergency response services and better protect the community, properties and infrastructure, as well as provide a training location for volunteer firefighters. Stay tuned for progress updates at

[www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/mountwashintonfire](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/mountwashintonfire)



**Generous donation creates new park in Electoral Area C**

The CVRD has received a donation of 40 acres (16 hectares) of oceanfront property in Merville through the federal government's Ecological Gifts Program. The program provides a way for owners of ecologically sensitive land to protect nature and leave a legacy for future generations. The CVRD is now looking at the program requirements and considering potential park opportunities for the property. **Until access plans are created, the public is asked to respect the sensitivity of the land and stay off the property.**



## Planning for the Future of Recreation

Over the past couple years, the CVRD has undertaken efforts to consider options for the future of the CVRD's aquatic, ice and sports field facilities. This work includes:

- The Comox Valley Aquatic Strategy, which presents proposed options for long-term plans for the aging Sports Centre Pool.
- An Ice Arena Strategy, which presents the proposed addition of a new full-size ice arena, as well as recommendations to change/add some public programs.
- A Sports Field Study, which includes proposed recommendations for the locations of a second artificial turf field.

These studies helped develop a good understanding of recreational needs in the community, current facilities status and recommendations for capital improvements.

### Learn about the Plan Ahead

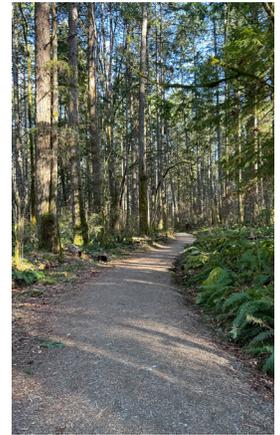
Through early 2023, the CVRD took this one step further, completing strategic planning for the whole of recreation services in the Comox Valley. This involved looking at the full scope of recreational needs in the region, determining priorities and setting a roadmap for the future.

In June 2023, the CVRD will host open house events both in person and online to share more information about the short, medium and long-term plans for the recreation facilities in the community.

Keep up to date on this project by visiting:  
[www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/recstratplan](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/recstratplan)

## Building a Naturally Connected Region

Did you know? In September 2022, the CVRD formally established a Regional Parks and Trails Service. Participants in the service include all the local governments in the region (the CVRD, Town of Comox, City of Courtenay and Village of Cumberland). The Regional Parks and Trails Service is a distinct and separate service that will complement rather than replace the existing electoral area community parks service and the municipal community parks services.



### Key Benefits

The Regional Parks and Trails Service seeks to establish a network of regionally-significant parks and trails that will benefit the region as-a-whole and will help the Comox Valley meet the following goals:

- Conservation and enjoyment of significant natural areas
- Greenway and trail connections between our core communities

The general health and well-being benefits of regional parks are well-known, ranging from improved physical and mental health to increased social connection. And while these benefits exist in all regional park systems, they are particularly evident in systems that serve larger urban areas, as well as in systems that exist in fast-growing regions – much like the Comox Valley.

### What's Next?

In 2023, CVRD staff will begin a strategic planning process to establish a vision for the service, the types of regional parks and trails to establish, and setting long-term goals and actions for the new service. This plan will provide the framework for future service decisions and will form the basis for a land acquisition strategy. The plan is intended to provide clarity on the intent of the service.

To learn more about the regional park service, visit:  
[www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/regionalparks](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/regionalparks)

52  
WEEKS



52  
ACTIONS

## #52Weeks52Actions

To celebrate the 15th anniversary of the formation of the Comox Valley Regional District, the CVRD has been highlighting successful work in the areas of climate action and community wellbeing – two key pillars of our Strategic Priorities.

Interested in learning more? Follow along on Facebook and Twitter, where we post weekly updates, sharing the actions we're taking to make the Comox Valley a sustainable and welcoming place to live. You'll learn interesting takeaways like:

- how we're saving funds for future projects, to reduce our carbon footprint
- the number of acres added to our parks and trails network in 2021-2022
- details of the corporate energy plan

To read more about the year-long initiative, visit: [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/52weeks52actions](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/52weeks52actions)

## Join us online at Engage Comox Valley

The CVRD's online engagement home is moving. To follow along with projects and learn more about services in the Electoral Areas, visit [www.engagecomoxvalley.ca](http://www.engagecomoxvalley.ca)

Here you can find project pages for a number of CVRD initiatives. Visit the Electoral Area Community Updates page and follow to receive newsletters and updates throughout the year.