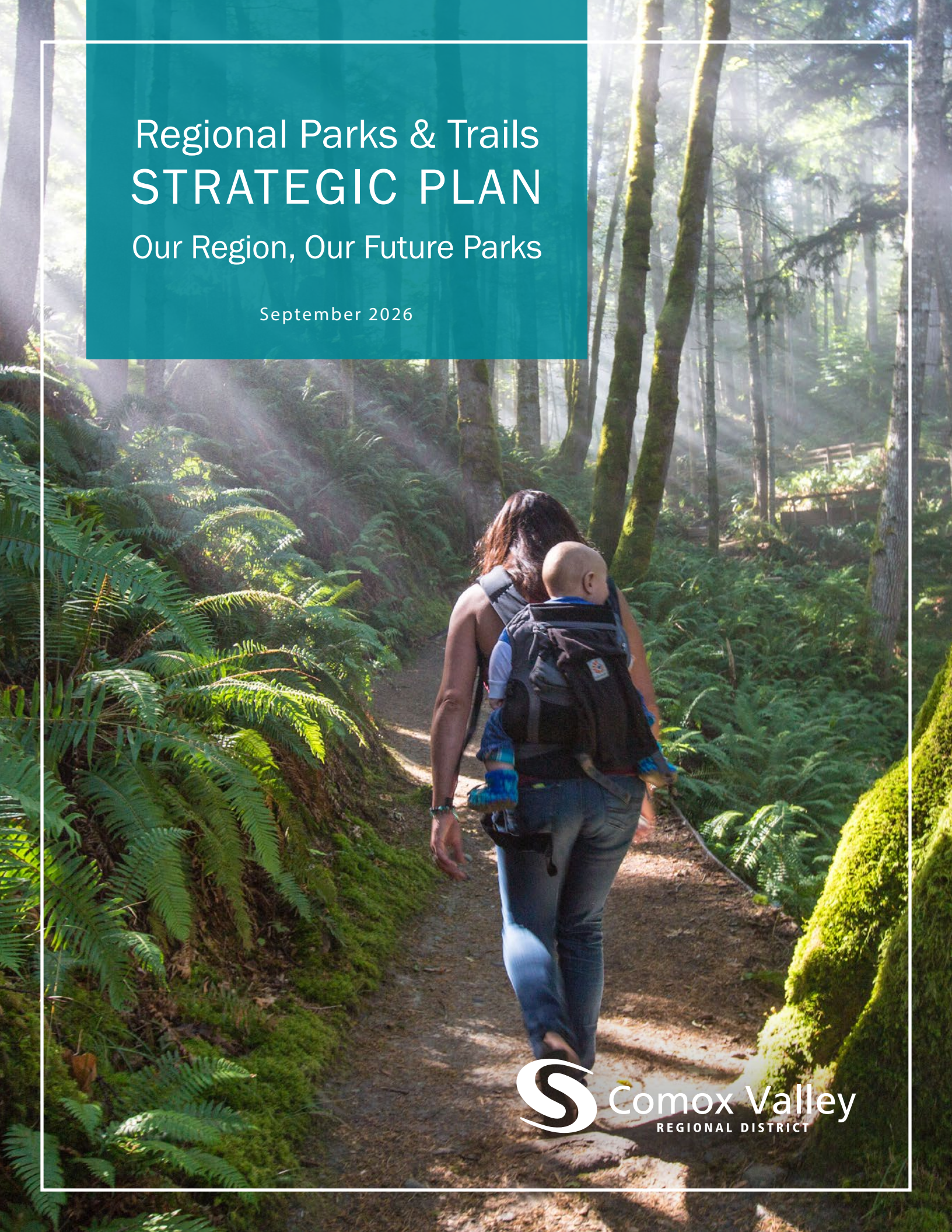
Regional Parks & Trails
STRATEGIC PLAN

Our Region, Our Future Parks

September 2026



Comox Valley
REGIONAL DISTRICT

Comox Valley
REGIONAL DISTRICT

REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS STRATEGIC PLAN

Prepared by
LANARC



VERSION CONTROL

1. ***NOVEMBER 2024*** – Strategic Plan Adoption
2. ***SEPTEMBER 2026*** – Update for Planning Tools P1 and P2 (p.35-52) to reflect the content adopted with the Land Securement Strategy.



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K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION
RIGHTS AND INTERESTS

The rights and interests of K'ómoks First Nation (K'ómoks) are of critical importance for the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Service (the Service). Based on initial engagements, we understand the interests of K'ómoks in the Service include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring that K'ómoks rights and title to its traditional territory and its interest in acquiring land are respected;
- When it is in the best interest of both parties to do so, working collaboratively with the CVRD to acquire and/or manage lands together;
- Acknowledging, protecting, and avoiding impacts to cultural heritage sites;
- Maintaining the Nation's rights to harvest;
- Maintaining wildlife corridors and greenspace;
- Considering opportunities that support economic development for K'ómoks; and
- Determining how K'ómoks wishes to participate in the governance of the Service.

We respect the authority, jurisdiction, governance, and management of K'ómoks First Nation over its lands and resources and we acknowledge its stewardship as the traditional keepers of this land. We will obtain consent from K'ómoks, as a rights holder, and pursue opportunities for collaboration as a respected partner. We will maintain open communications with K'ómoks throughout ongoing planning, implementation, and management of the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Comox Valley Regional District respectfully acknowledges that the land on which it operates is on the Unceded Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) extends appreciation to all who contributed to the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan through meetings, community open houses, online sessions, the community survey, ideas map, online questions, letters, emails, and conversations. To the many members of the public, interest groups, committees, and staff who gave their time, insights, and ideas — thank you. With your contributions, this plan reflects the interests of our diverse region.

Regional Parks and Trails Committee

Chair - Director Brown (Village of Cumberland)
Vice-Chair - Director Hardy (Area B - Lazo North)
Director Arbour (Area A - Baynes-Denman/Hornby Islands)
Director Grieve (Area C - Puntledge-Black Creek)
Director Grant (Town of Comox)
Councillor Meilleur (Town of Comox)
Director Cole-Hamilton (City of Courtenay)
Director McCollum (City of Courtenay)
Director Morin (City of Courtenay)

Working Group [Advisory Committee]

Mark Harrison, Manager of Parks, CVRD
Doug DeMarzo, General Manager of Community Services, CVRD
Kevin McPhedran, Manager of Parks and Recreation, Village of Cumberland
Robbie Nall, Parks Manager, Town of Comox
Susie Saunders, Director of Recreation, Culture, and Community Services, City of Courtenay

Consultant

LANARC Consultants



PART 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLAN PURPOSE

The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (the Strategic Plan) — formed through analysis, research, and engagement — provides overall direction and guidance for planning and managing the Comox Valley Regional District's new Regional Parks and Trails Service over the next 20 years.

The Comox Valley is home to beautiful and diverse natural landscapes. The Regional Parks and Trails Service was established in 2022 to protect regionally-significant natural areas and to provide regional trails for the future. Regional Parks and Trails are an opportunity to complement the existing community and provincial parks networks. As the CVRD continues to grow, it is important for the region to work together to represent and protect regionally-significant areas, conserve natural areas, and provide opportunities for people to connect to nature through nature-based recreation.

Key Functions:

- Outline how the Regional Parks and Trails Service will fit within the current parks and trails landscape (and spectrum of other existing parks services);
- Develop a vision and goals to provide a long-term strategic framework;
- Outline a process and evaluation criteria and rating framework to guide the forthcoming Land Securement Strategy and ongoing securement of lands for future Regional Parks and Trails; and
- Provide objectives, actions, and an implementation plan to guide the CVRD in development and management of its envisioned Regional Parks and Trails Service.

USING THIS DOCUMENT

This Plan is a strategic, system-wide document. It does not undertake detailed planning for individual Regional Parks and Trails; rather, it provides recommendations for developing the overall Regional Parks and Trails system. The Strategic Plan assists the CVRD in prioritizing realistic short-, medium- and long-term actions.

This Strategic Plan is a living document that should evolve alongside the region and the development of the Regional Parks and Trails system. The Strategic Plan actions should be reviewed on an annual basis with consideration for new opportunities and prioritization of actions to best fit the needs of the community. All actions identified in the Strategic Plan will be considered within broader planning for the region and are subject to consideration and approval by the CVRD Regional Board.

1.2 PLANNING AREA SCOPE

The Strategic Plan considers the full geographic extents of the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), focused on the future Regional Parks and Trails system.

The Strategic Plan recognizes that other parks systems, including Community Parks (Electoral Area Parks and Municipal Parks) and Provincial Parks, are integral to the complete picture of parks in the region and considers these related systems for context. However, these systems are managed by other parks services and plans, and are therefore not included in the directions, objectives, and actions of this Strategic Plan.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Comox Valley Regional District is one of 27 Regional Districts in British Columbia. It is located on the central east coast of Vancouver Island with a population of over 72,000 (2021 Census), and is comprised of three member municipalities and three electoral areas. The region lies within the unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation and includes K'ómoks First Nation Reserve Lands.

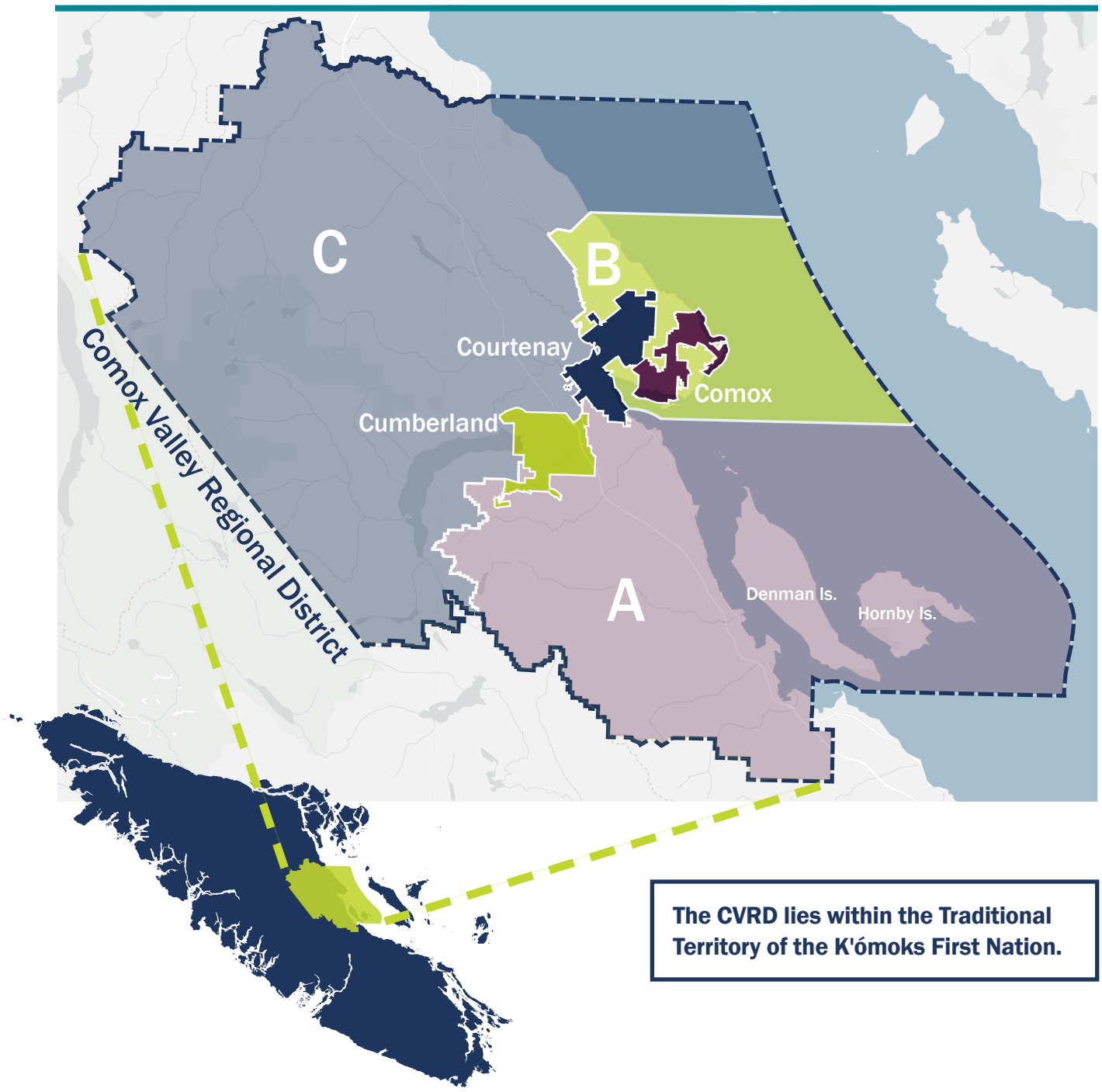
Three member municipalities:

- City of Courtenay
- Town of Comox
- Village of Cumberland

Three electoral areas:

- Area A - Baynes Sound, Denman, and Hornby Islands
- Area B - Lazo North
- Area C - Puntledge Black Creek

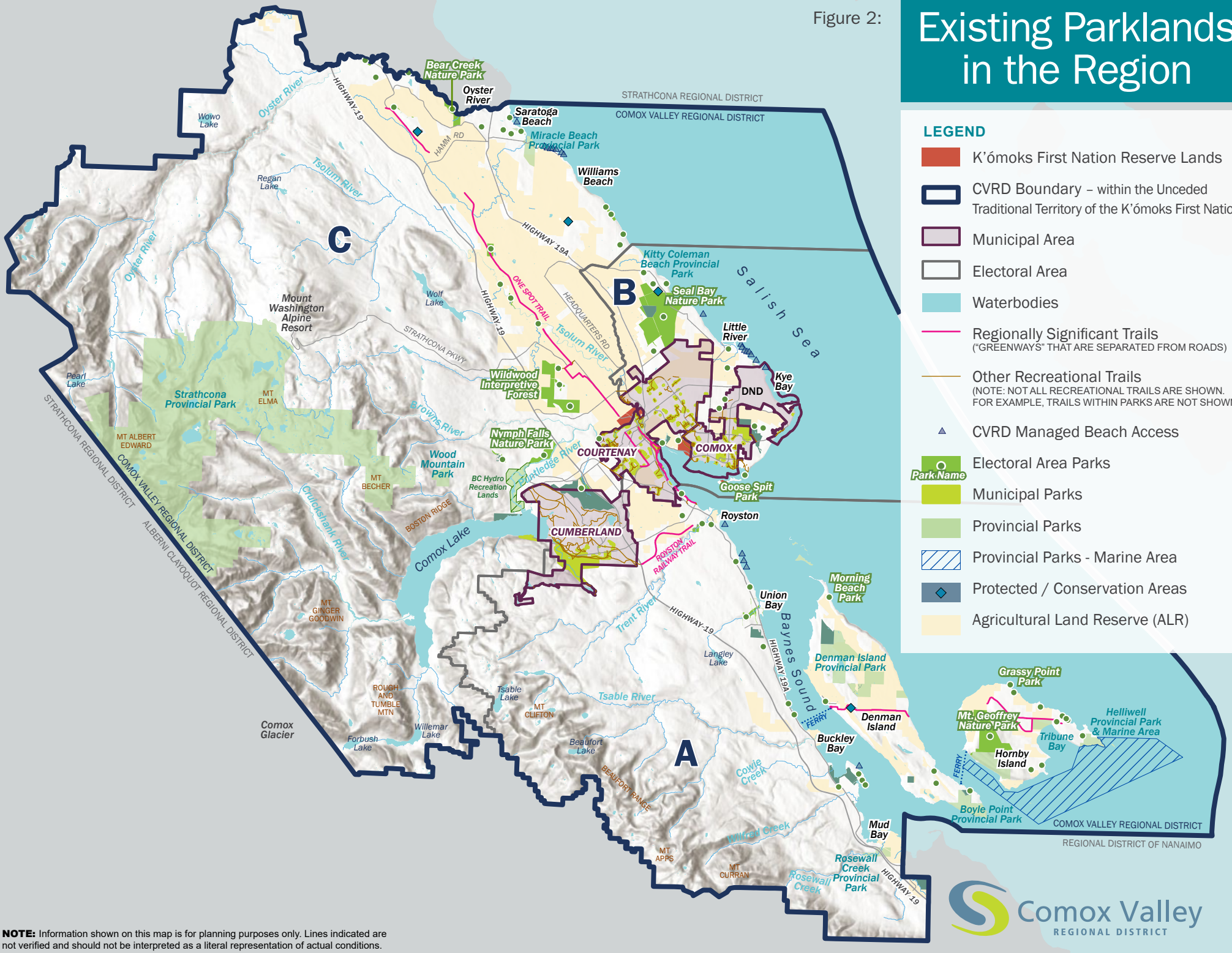
Figure 1: Comox Valley Regional District Context



The CVRD lies within the Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks First Nation.

Figure 2:

Existing Parklands in the Region



LEGEND

- K'ómoks First Nation Reserve Lands
- CVRD Boundary – within the Unceded Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks First Nation
- Municipal Area
- Electoral Area
- Waterbodies
- Regionally Significant Trails ("GREENWAYS" THAT ARE SEPARATED FROM ROADS)
- Other Recreational Trails (NOTE: NOT ALL RECREATIONAL TRAILS ARE SHOWN. FOR EXAMPLE, TRAILS WITHIN PARKS ARE NOT SHOWN)
- CVRD Managed Beach Access
- Electoral Area Parks (Park Name)
- Municipal Parks
- Provincial Parks
- Provincial Parks - Marine Area
- Protected / Conservation Areas
- Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

NOTE: Information shown on this map is for planning purposes only. Lines indicated are not verified and should not be interpreted as a literal representation of actual conditions.

Comox Valley REGIONAL DISTRICT



PRIVATE LAND OWNERSHIP CONTEXT

In the CVRD, compared to neighbouring regions and other regional districts throughout the province, there is a large proportion of privately owned working resource lands, and a relatively small proportion of crown lands. Resource lands, through use agreements, play an important role in nature-based recreation in the CVRD today. This Plan acknowledges that resource lands are woven into many of the areas of interest for Regional Parks and Trails and that collaboration with resource land owners will be essential in realizing opportunities for future Regional Parks and Trails in the CVRD.

1.3 KEY GAPS IN THE SYSTEM

The following are select gaps in the existing parks and trails network in the region that have been highlighted through engagement feedback and technical analysis. These "gaps" inform the goals, objectives, and actions of the Strategic Plan.

- **Large-scale Parkland / Conservation Sites**
  Outside of Strathcona Provincial Park, the parks and protected sites in the region are not large-scale. There is need to protect large areas that are beyond the scale of existing Electoral Area Parks, Municipal Parks, and conservation areas.

- **Protect More of the Region**
  Currently, 8.7% of the region's land base is protected parks / conservation areas. Of this, only 0.7% is parkland area managed by the CVRD. There is significant work to be done in the region to come closer to the Canada-wide target of protecting 30% of lands for conservation / green space.

- **Public Lakefront Access**
  There are very few lakes in the region, and those that exist are primarily surrounded by privately owned land.

- **River Access**
  There are plentiful river corridors throughout the region, but there are limited protected areas along these corridors or opportunities for access to support nature-based recreation. Accessing riverfront areas often requires routes through private land.

- **Family-Friendly Ocean Swimming**
  There is ample coastline in the CVRD. However, there is limited regional-scale oceanfront access for family-friendly swimming and nature-based water recreation.

- **Wildlife and Ecosystem Corridors**
  The Sensitive Ecosystem Inventories (SEIs) and Nature Without Borders (2013, update in progress 2024) documents illustrate that there is significant fragmentation of the natural landscape in the region and a need to enhance connections.

- **Continuous Greenways**
  There are several greenways in the region, but they are discontinuous segments. Connecting existing segments and creating continuous Regional Trails will offer many recreational benefits.

- **Effective Partnerships for Parks**
  In 2024, collaboration between parks jurisdictions and partners is variable with limited formal structure. The Regional Parks and Trails Service is a collective interest that can strengthen communications and collaboration.

- **Regional Parks Operations**
  The CVRD's existing Parks staff are responsible for Electoral Area Parks. The addition of the Regional Parks and Trails Service requires proactive review for sustainable operations. Changes will be needed to increase existing staff capacity and funding to carry forward the actions and implementation of the Strategic Plan.





PART 2

THE WAY FORWARD

2.1 VISION

The vision for CVRD Regional Parks and Trails will provide an overarching guide for decision making, development, and management of the system for the next 20 years and beyond. The vision builds on existing community values, is aspirational, and describes a long-term future for Regional Parks and Trails in the Comox Valley.

The draft vision is a synthesis of values and ideas gathered through the formation of the service, trends analysis, and feedback from K'ómoks First Nation, the Regional Parks and Trails Committee, the Working Group, staff, interest groups, and the community.





Vision

For thousands of years the lands and waters of the Comox Valley have supported the Coast Salish, Kwakwaka'wakw, and Pentlatch peoples.

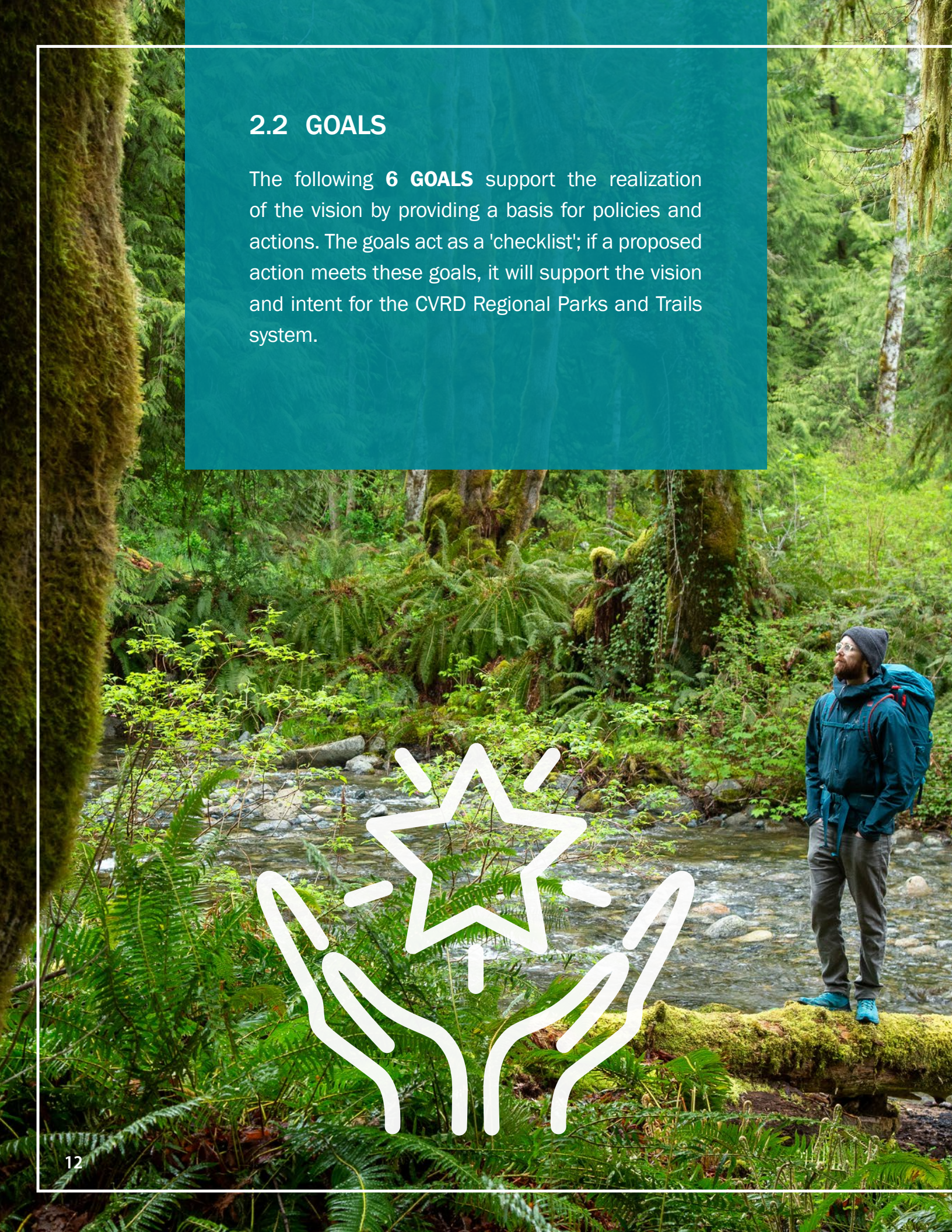
Our **Regional Parks** are the special natural landscapes of the Comox Valley that warrant ongoing conservation or protection.

Our **Regional Trails** are the greenway connections between our communities that provide trails through natural surroundings and strengthen ecological and wildlife corridors.

These places connect us with nature, with ourselves, and with each other. Here, we are in harmony with the natural world and our relationship to land and waters is strengthened. Here, Indigenous rights and culture are honoured.

2.2 GOALS

The following **6 GOALS** support the realization of the vision by providing a basis for policies and actions. The goals act as a 'checklist'; if a proposed action meets these goals, it will support the vision and intent for the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails system.





6 GOALS

- Work Together with K'ómoks First Nation to Plan and Manage
- Protect Regionally Significant Natural Areas
- Increase Environmental and Community Connectivity
- Provide Opportunities for Nature-based Recreation
- Strengthen Stewardship and Community Partnerships
- Manage in a Proactive and Sustainable Manner

EXPLORING THE GOALS

WORK TOGETHER WITH K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION TO PLAN AND MANAGE

In the future, CVRD Regional Parks and Trails will:

- Continue to recognize the traditional territory of K'ómoks First Nation and respect their authority, jurisdiction, governance, and management over its lands and resources.
- Be identified, evaluated, acquired, and managed in collaboration with K'ómoks First Nation.
- Support the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.
- Where appropriate, celebrate the history, traditions, and cultural groups that make up the K'ómoks First Nation.

PROTECT REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS

In the future, CVRD Regional Parks and Trails will:

- Secure, in perpetuity, a collection of natural landscapes that reflect the unique diversity of the Comox Valley.
- Support the conservation, protection, and restoration of significant ecosystems, biodiversity, wildlife habitats, and wilderness areas within appropriate Regional Parks and Trails management zones so they continue to be a part of the region for generations to come.
- Protect the most highly sensitive areas for nature only, restricting human access and potential for disturbance.
- Where appropriate, provide areas where people can experience the physical, spiritual, and emotional benefits of being in nature.

INCREASE ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY

In the future, CVRD Regional Parks and Trails will:

- Provide opportunities for people to move seamlessly by non-motorized means between core communities while being immersed in nature.
- Connect into and extend existing greenway trails making it possible to travel for many kilometres through a connected network.
- Create linkages that support healthy flora and fauna and contribute to healthy ecosystems.

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR NATURE-BASED RECREATION

In the future, CVRD Regional Parks and Trails will:

- Provide opportunities for a range of human-powered, nature-based recreation experiences, while respecting the lands on which these experiences occur.
- Create opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to connect with nature.
- Encourage users to be thoughtful and respectful of one another and the natural environment, recognizing that a variety of interests will co-exist in Regional Parks and Trails.
- Integrate opportunities to learn about the spectacular landscapes, culture, history, and character of the CVRD.

STRENGTHEN STEWARDSHIP AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In the future, CVRD Regional Parks and Trails will:

- Include the CVRD embracing a stewardship view to support a more holistic relationship with nature and demonstrating this by how we care for parklands.
- Identify and align opportunities to share resources and work together with others in order to maximize Regional Parks and Trails services.
- Recognize the collaborative contributions of partners and supporters who help create and maintain them.

MANAGE IN A PROACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE MANNER

In the future, CVRD Regional Parks and Trails will:

- Manage a sustainable, safe, and resilient regional system that is capable of adapting to the changing world around us, evolving so it continues to provide access to destinations for future generations.
- Align operational resources and community expectations so that service delivery is proactive, efficient, and sustainable.

2.3 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

The following section outlines **12 objectives** that summarize the next steps identified through this process. Each objective includes actions that will support its realization and overall progress towards the vision and goals of the Strategic Plan. The relevant planning tools and supporting information are referenced at the end of each objective. For summary tables of the objectives and actions, see ***Part 4 Implementation Plan (p.63)***.





12 OBJECTIVES

PLANNING

1 Work Together with K'ómoks First Nation (p.19)

2 Secure Land for Regional Parks and Trails (p.20)

3 Balance Conservation and Recreation Interests (p.21)

4 Enhance Regional Connectivity (p.22)

5 Support the Region's Resilience and Ecosystem Services (p.23)

6 Provide High Value Visitor Experience (p.24)

MANAGING

7 Develop a Sustainable Funding Model (p.25)

8 Manage Staffing, Operations, and Assets Proactively (p.26)

9 Foster and Strengthen Partnerships (p.27)

10 Develop Policy and Procedure Documents (p.28)

11 Build Communications and Awareness (p.29)

12 Monitor and Update the Plan (p.30)

OBJECTIVES | FORMAT OVERVIEW

- **OBJECTIVE NUMBER**: to identify the objective (numbers 1 to 12).
- **OBJECTIVE DESCRIPTION:** a brief statement describing the objective.
- **KEY GOALS SUPPORTED**: a reference of the most relevant Strategic Plan goals that are supported by each objective. Goals symbols are as follows:

K'ómoks First Nation

Protect Natural Areas

Connectivity

Nature-based Recreation

Partnerships

Proactive Management

ACTIONS | FORMAT OVERVIEW

- **ACTION REFERENCE NUMBER:** to identify the individual action, and correlate it to the corresponding objective (the first digit is the objective number, the second digit is the action number).
- **ACTION DESCRIPTION:** suggested step for moving the objective forward.
- **REFERENCES:** the applicable Planning Tools (Section 3.3, p.34) and Supporting Information (Appendix C, p.122) for carrying out actions.

Inspiration: Partners from K'ómoks First Nation, CVRD, Morrison Creek Streamkeepers, and Comox Valley Land Trust worked together to purchase qax mot Conservation Area in 2019.



1 WORK TOGETHER WITH K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION

The rights and interests of K'ómoks First Nation (K'ómoks) are of critical importance for the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Service.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED



ACTIONS

1.1 **Governance** - Work with K'ómoks First Nation to determine how they wish to participate in the governance of the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

1.2 **Land Securement** - Ensure that K'ómoks rights and title to its traditional territory and its interests in acquiring land are respected. Work collaboratively with K'ómoks First Nation, as appropriate, to identify, evaluate, acquire, and manage lands for the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

1.3 **Visibility** - Work together with K'ómoks First Nation where appropriate to create and integrate signage, art, naming, programming, and other initiatives in future Regional Parks and Trails spaces to:

- Enhance the visibility and interpretation of K'ómoks' rich cultural practices.
- Include language (Kwak'wala, Ayajusem, and Pentlach).
- Promote understanding of stories, world views, and cultural practices that are rooted in thousands of years of history and continue within practices today.
- Provide cultural safety and opportunities for Indigenous peoples in Regional Parks and Trails.

1.4 **Co-Management** - Explore mutual interests and opportunity for co-management or Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) in the Comox Valley as part of the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

1.5 **Harvesting and Gathering** - Respect and maintain Indigenous harvesting and gathering rights.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION



E Partnerships (p.132)
J Management Plans (p.141)

2 SECURE LAND FOR REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS

Land securement is the next step to realizing the Regional Parks and Trails system. Creating a Land Securement Strategy (LSS) will advance work on evaluating and prioritizing securement recommendations for Regional Parks and Trails. Completing the LSS will require working together with K'ómoks First Nation and other partners in the region.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED



ACTIONS

2.1 **Land Securement Strategy** - Following the finalization of the Strategic Plan, develop a Land Securement Strategy through collaboration of the Regional Parks and Trails Committee and K'ómoks First Nation that includes input of other partners in the region.

2.2 **Process and Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework** - Through the Land Securement Strategy (LSS), test and refine the Land Securement Process (see Planning Tool **P1**, p.35) to achieve a consistent, transparent, and standardized process for identifying, assessing, and prioritizing areas of interest for consideration as Regional Park or Regional Trail. As part of the overall process, test and refine the Draft Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework (see Planning Tool **P2**, p.41) to create a final framework for use in the LSS, and for ongoing use.

2.3 **Securement Priority Recommendations** - Through the Land Securement Strategy (LSS) process, prepare two ranked shortlists of securement recommendations: one list for Regional Parks, and a separate list for Regional Trails.

2.4 **Secure Land** - Following the finalization and approval of priority securement recommendations, negotiate and secure priority lands for Regional Parks and Regional Trails.

2.5 **Existing Areas** - As part of the overall process to secure land, consider areas that have existing designation as parkland or conservation area but that do not have adequate protection and may be better managed under the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

PLANNING TOOLS



P1 Land Securement Process (p.35)

P2 Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework (p.41)

SUPPORTING INFORMATION



A Areas of Interest (p.124)

3 BALANCE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTERESTS

A key theme from this process is the importance of balancing conservation and recreation interests in the future Regional Parks and Trails network. However, it is recognized that there is no single balance point (e.g., 50/50), rather each park or trail may have more focus on conservation or recreation depending on the site's unique conditions. Within the overall network, there will be a mix of areas dedicated to conservation interests (with no public access), areas that fulfill nature-based recreation interests, and areas that fall somewhere between.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED


Protect Natural Areas


Nature-based Recreation


Proactive Management

ACTIONS

3.1 **Classifications** - Identify Classifications for all future Regional Parks and Trails.

3.2 **Management Zones** - Adopt Management Zones as the system for identifying appropriate uses, amenities, and level of maintenance to balance conservation and recreation interests. Assign Management Zones according to an area's environmental and/or cultural features and the relative sensitivity of those features to public recreational use.

3.3 **Conservation and Recreation** - When forming securement priority recommendations, review the candidate site lists to ensure that there are a mix of areas that fulfill both a conservation-focus (environmental and cultural) as well as recreation-focus. Make adjustments where needed so there is representation of both interests in priorities for securement over time.

PLANNING TOOLS



P3 Classifications (p.53)
P4 Management Zones (p.55)

4 ENHANCE REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

Connectivity was one of the most prominent themes reflected through the Strategic Plan process. Due to the importance of this theme, it is reflected throughout all levels of the Strategic Plan from: the vision, to goals, to objectives, to evaluation criteria, and through to actions.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED



ACTIONS

4.1 **Environmental Connectivity** - Secure areas that form *environmental connectivity* (e.g., for an ecosystem, for biodiversity, for a habitat, or for a wildlife corridor).

4.2 **Community Connectivity** - Secure Regional Trails that strengthen the connection of our core communities and the continuity of the Regional Trail network.

4.3 **Balance Regional Parks and Regional Trails** - Maintain a list for identifying, evaluating, recommending, and acquiring Regional Trails that is separate from a list for Regional Parks. Bring forward items from both lists when establishing securement priority recommendations. Secure areas for both Regional Parks and Regional Trails to support the growth of both components of the network over time.

PLANNING TOOLS



P1 Land Securement Process (p.35)
P2 Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework (p.41)

SUPPORTING INFORMATION



C Regional Trails (p.130)
D Recreational Trail vs. Active Transportation (p.131)

5 SUPPORT THE REGION'S RESILIENCE AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

The Regional Parks and Trails Service should contribute to CVRD region-wide planning initiatives such as the Regional Growth Strategy, Regional Climate Action Strategy, Watershed Protection, and more. Regional Parks and Trails have potential to provide ecosystem service benefits such as water quality, water storage, erosion reduction, carbon capture, etc. This network also has potential to support regional resilience to climate change impacts such as sea level rise, flooding, and wildfire.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED

- Protect Natural Areas
- Proactive Management

ACTIONS

5.1 **Inventory, Assessment, and Actions** - As part of individual Regional Park or Trail Management Plan development (see **10.7**), include site-level inventory, assessment, and recommended actions for ecosystem services (e.g.,, water quality, water storage, erosion reduction, carbon capture, etc.) and climate change resiliency (e.g., sea level rise, flooding, wildfire risk, etc). Review Management Plans to confirm alignment to region-wide planning directions on these topics.

5.2 **Consider in Broad-Scale Planning** - Include Regional Parks and Trails as part of region-wide planning. This includes the Regional Climate Action Strategy, Regional Growth Strategy, Watershed Protection Plan, Wildfire Management, and other related planning and policy documents.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

E Partnerships (p.132)
J Management Plans (p.141)

6 PROVIDE HIGH VALUE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Providing opportunities for people to connect with nature in diverse ways contributes to all around wellbeing and quality of life. Where recreation is appropriate in Regional Parks and Trail areas, the recreation priorities identified by participants included: well maintained opportunities for diverse trail networks, waterfront access, interpretative learning, education, and access for all ages and abilities. These are not evaluation criteria to guide securement priorities, but rather considerations to provide in *select* locations within the overall network.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED


Nature-based Recreation


Partnerships


Proactive Management

ACTIONS

6.1 **Well Maintained** - Through use of maintenance levels and Maintenance Guidelines (see 10.4), deliver a well-maintained system that aligns with public use levels.

6.2 **Diverse Trails Networks** - Provide a diversity of quality recreational and experiential trails within Regional Parks, including wilderness trails, nature trails, mixed-use trails, and trail networks optimized for specific uses (e.g., equestrian, mountain biking, etc).

6.3 **Water Access** - Improve 'blue access' to freshwater (lakes and rivers) and oceanfront that provides opportunities for nature-based water recreation (e.g., swimming, paddlesports, non-motorized boat launching).

6.4 **Interpretive Features** - Collaborate with partners to provide interpretive signage and features in select Regional Parks and Trails locations for self-guided learning and appreciation.

6.5 **Educational Opportunities** - Collaborate with partners to provide programming and active learning opportunities in select Regional Parks and Trails to deepen visitor experience and connection with nature.

6.6 **All Ages and Abilities** - Provide opportunities for all ages and abilities to enjoy Regional Parks and Trails, while respecting the limitations of topography and environmental sensitivity.

6.7 **Programming Staff Resourcing** - Where programming and learning opportunities are identified to be delivered by the CVRD, provide adequate staffing resources.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION



B Visitor Experience (p.126)
E Partnerships (p.132)

7 DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL

Generating funding is essential for the development of this new service. Acquisitions will be the primary cost for establishing an initial network of Regional Parks and Trails. Following acquisitions, both capital and operational funds will be needed to develop and maintain the network.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED

Partnerships

Proactive Management

ACTIONS

7.1 **Annual Tax** - Increase annual contributions through tax requisition for the Regional Parks and Trails Service, maintaining the method of how funds are to be collected relative to size and makeup of each jurisdiction as outlined in the Regional Parks and Trails Service bylaw.

7.2 **Tax Review** - Annually review and update taxation rates for Regional Parks and Trails. Consider larger increases over the first 5-10 years to advance initial securement and development of the system, with more modest increases after an early network of sites is established.

7.3 **Reserve Fund** - Maintain the *Regional Parks and Trails Capital Works Reserve Fund* to accumulate funds specifically for acquiring or developing Regional Parks and Trails.

7.4 **Borrowing** - If a priority Regional Park or Trail acquisition opportunity arises that is time-sensitive and beyond funds available, consider the feasibility and public support for accelerated funding approaches including borrowing.

7.5 **Funding Partnerships** - Annually review and evaluate grant and partner funding opportunities against the priorities and goals of the Strategic Plan and allocate staff time to pursue opportunities where alignments are identified.

7.6 **Donation and Fundraising** - Develop a land donation and fundraising program, such as a Regional Parks and Trails "Foundation", that clearly defines and coordinates opportunities for interested parties to contribute to land securement or development.

7.7 **Development Levies** - Explore development cost charges for the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

PLANNING TOOLS

P5 Funding Strategies (p.58)

8 MANAGE STAFFING, OPERATIONS, AND ASSETS PROACTIVELY

Planning, developing, and managing a Regional Parks and Trails system takes dedicated staff time and effort. Initially, the effort is primarily focused on Parks Planning to set the stage for land securement. As parks and trails areas are secured, there will be increased demands for Parks Operations. In order to achieve the intended level of service, Parks Planning and Operations capacity and funding need to align with the evolving demands of the Regional Parks and Trails network.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED



Proactive Management

ACTIONS

8.1 **Planning Staffing** - Increase Parks Planning capacity (e.g., staffing) to carry out the actions of the Strategic Plan and support the successful and timely development of a Regional Parks and Trails network.

8.2 **Operations Funding and Staffing** - As part of all securements, capital additions / enhancements, and service level increases, determine related operating staffing and funding that will be required and add capacity / funding to sustainably manage, maintain, and operate the growing Regional Parks and Trails network at defined service levels.

8.3 **Asset Management** - Coordinate an Asset Management System for Regional Parks and Trails to inventory assets as they become part of the network and to inform budget planning for park asset maintenance and renewal. Integrate this work with asset management for Electoral Area Parks and overall at the CVRD.

PLANNING TOOLS



P5 Funding Strategies (p.58)

9 FOSTER AND STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS

The Regional Parks and Trails network cannot be implemented by the CVRD alone. Parkland securement and management will depend on strong partnerships, coordination, and support from other governments, agencies, organizations, and residents. This service was formed based on collaboration which provides a foundation for continued relationship building and region-wide benefits.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED

K'ómoks First Nation | Partnerships | Proactive Management

ACTIONS

9.1 **Partnerships -** Review existing partnerships and seek new opportunities with K'ómoks First Nation, other governments, community organizations, and public-private partnerships which would benefit the Regional Parks and Trails system and community.

9.2 **Land Use & Access Agreements -** Establish and manage land use and access agreements with private and public agencies for recreational and conservation purposes (e.g., working with private forest landowners cooperatively to maintain public recreational access for trails).

9.3 **Volunteer Program** - Update the Comox Valley parks volunteer program (from the existing Electoral Areas Parks and Greenways) and CVRD Community Grants program to include, coordinate, and support volunteer-led stewardship projects in Regional Parks and Trails.

9.4 **Staff Resourcing** - Where volunteer programs and partnerships for Regional Parks and Trails are identified, provide staffing resources to support appropriate management.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

E Partnerships (p.132)
F Volunteer Programs (p.136)

10 DEVELOP POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS

Developing bylaw policies and individual Management Direction Statements or Management Plans will support effective ongoing planning and management of the system. Developing Design Standards and Maintenance Guidelines supports a parks network that is consistent, coherent, and appropriate to the character of the CVRD. Developing these documents early in the life of the service will increase efficiency in implementing and managing the system as it grows. Collectively, these documents will be long-term resources to support District staff, planners, consultants, contractors, park users, and bylaw enforcement.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED


Protect Natural Areas


Nature-based Recreation


Proactive Management

ACTIONS

10.1 **Bylaw Update** - Create a new bylaw, or update the CVRD "Electoral Areas Parks Regulations Bylaw No. 103", to include Regional Parks and Trails and proactively address policy gaps for managing the modern regulatory needs of the Regional Parks and Trails network.

10.2 **Bylaw Enforcement** - Review bylaw enforcement capacity and update as needed to sustainably serve the community as the Regional Parks and Trails network grows.

10.3 **Design Standards** - Develop Design Standards to provide clear direction for planning, designing, and constructing key elements that will be located in CVRD Regional Parks and Trails, including: arrival and access amenities, park furniture, washrooms and structures, signage and wayfinding, trails, and planting. Use universal design principles for all ages and abilities and integrate standards for CVRD Electoral Area Community Parks and Trails within a single document.

10.4 **Maintenance Guidelines** - Develop Maintenance Guidelines for Regional Parks and Trails to provide clear direction for a well-maintained system that meets public use levels.

10.5 **Management Direction Statements** - Where a Management Plan is not deemed necessary, or is not yet complete, create a Management Direction Statement (MDS) that outlines the values of the area, site use, management issues and concerns, and immediate management strategies.

10.6 **Management Plan Process** - Review and update the existing CVRD process and framework for developing park management plans for Electoral Area Community Parks to include Regional Parks and Trails.

10.7 **Management Plan Development** - For complex sites where deemed appropriate, develop a Management Plan to guide the area's development, use, and ongoing management as part of the overall network. Individual Management Plans are to incorporate the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Classifications, Management Zones, Bylaws, Design and Maintenance Guidelines.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION



G Policies and Bylaw (p.137)
H Design Guidelines and Standards (p.138)
I Maintenance Guidelines (p.140)
J Management Plans (p.141)

11 BUILD COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS

As Regional Parks and Trails are a new service in the CVRD, there is limited understanding in the community about the scope of the service and how it differs from other types of parks. Information and communications can help build understanding; garner community support; generate funding opportunities; and support tourism, recreation, and volunteer opportunities.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED


Partnerships


Proactive Management

ACTIONS

11.1 **Communications Strategy** - Develop a communications strategy for Regional Parks and Trails to support information sharing and build awareness about the system as it grows. Prior to a more detailed strategy being developed, carry out key communications actions 11.2-11.6 (website, social media, other CVRD outreach methods, partner communications, and third party sites).

11.2 **Website** - Use the CVRD website as the primary source for information about Regional Parks and Trails. Review information annually to develop and improve communications as the network for Regional Parks and Trails grows.

11.3 **Social Media** - Develop a Regional Parks-focused social media strategy to increase awareness about new areas as the network develops and share information on related initiatives (e.g., operations activities, volunteer opportunities, stewardship opportunities, etc).

11.4 **Other CVRD Outreach Methods** - Create, share, and provide information about Regional Parks and Trails through various CVRD outreach methods beyond the website and social media, including Engage Comox Valley, e-notification system, newsletters, etc.

11.5 **Partner Communications** - Coordinate opportunities for partners in the region to share information about Regional Parks and Trails. Key partners include K'ómoks First Nation, City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, and Village of Cumberland.

11.6 **Third Party Sites** - As Regional Parks or Trails are added to the network, update the parks inventory and incorporate information on key third party online mapping resources and apps. Leverage other platforms that help visitors learn about the geographic area, future locations and amenities, suitable uses, and responsible nature-based recreation.

12 MONITOR AND UPDATE THE PLAN

Planning for the future Regional Parks and Trails system is an ongoing and adaptive process, not a single event. Routine re-evaluation of opportunities, policies, and actions is necessary as both the system and the region grow and change.

KEY GOALS SUPPORTED



Proactive Management

ACTIONS

12.1 **Annual Progress** - Undertake annual reviews of Regional Parks and Trails accomplishments and measure progress against the Strategic Plan.

12.2 **Interim 5-year Review** - Complete an interim 5-year update of the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan in 2030. Involve key partners in the process to review and update actions.

12.3 **Milestone 15-year Update** - Complete a milestone 15-year review and update of the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan in 2040. Include a two-phase engagement process that includes interest groups and the general public.

12.4 **Securement Opportunities Review** - Each year, using the final process established through the Land Securement Strategy (see action 2.1), continue to identify, review, update, and prioritize areas for land securement for Regional Parks/Conservations Areas and Regional Trails.

12.5 **Classifications and Management Zones Review** - Once the Classifications and Management Zones (**P3** & **P4**) have been applied to several areas, review and update these planning tools as needed to reflect the needs and conditions of the developing system.

12.6 **Asset Management Review** - Undertake regular reviews of the Regional Parks and Trails Asset Management System (e.g., every 2-5 years) to complete updates and incorporate new assets.

12.7 **Amenities Review -** As a future consideration, assess public interest and explore the business case for campgrounds within Regional Parks.

12.8 **Community Parks** - Coordinate regularly (e.g., minimum annually) with each of the Community Parks services in the CVRD to refer opportunities better suited to the local community scale and vice versa.

12.9 **Active Transportation** - Coordinate regularly (e.g., minimum annually) with transportation planning for the region to review the implementation of regional and local active transportation networks and determine a coordinated approach for Regional Trails.

12.10 **Volunteer Program Review** - Annually review program needs and make adjustments to improve, maintain, or discontinue the existing program.

12.11 **Recreation Use Requests** - Develop a protocol for how recreational use or user group requests for Regional Parks and Trails are logged and addressed.

12.12 **Visitor Data Collection & Review** - Implement data collection methods to better understand visitor demand and patterns within the Regional Parks and Trails network. Collection methods could include intercept surveys, trail or gate counters, analysis of Big Data (e.g., mobile phones), or other methods. Integrate visitor data and feedback into annual capital planning and maintenance and operations planning.

Reviews and Updates

- While it is anticipated that the objectives and actions identified in this process will continue to be important, it is also expected that new priorities and opportunities will emerge (e.g., land securement opportunities, partnership opportunities, etc).
- The CVRD should be prepared to take advantage of opportunities that arise and align with the vision, goals, and objectives of this Strategic Plan.
- Annual, interim, and milestone reviews of accomplishments and re-evaluation of priorities will allow adaptation of the Strategic Plan to continue meeting the needs of residents and the Regional Parks and Trails system in the future.

Commitment of staff time is needed to keep implementation of the Strategic Plan on track and to capitalize on emerging opportunities.





PART 3

PLANNING TOOLS

3.1 PLANNING TOOLS

This section presents the five key **planning tools** that have been developed for the Strategic Plan. These tools will be used to support and carry out the objectives and actions of the Strategic Plan, supporting efficient and consistent implementation of the network described in the vision and goals.



PLANNING TOOLS

- **P1** Land Securement Process
- **P2** Evaluation Criteria & Rating Framework
- **P3** Classifications
- **P4** Management Zones
- **P5** Funding Strategies

PLANNING TOOLS



Look for this icon in the objectives section of the document to link back to specific planning tools

P1 LAND SECUREMENT PROCESS

The following pages summarize the process for identifying, focusing, evaluating, and pursuing land securement opportunities specific to the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

The CVRD recognizes that land securement is a priority for K'ómoks First Nation. K'ómoks has an inherent right to secure lands independently to meet their interests. Using the following process, the CVRD intends to work in partnership with K'ómoks on land securement for the Regional Parks and Trails Service for lands which K'ómoks has not identified a specific independent securement interest.

INTRODUCTION

The Land Securement Process was drafted in the Strategic Plan (2024) and was updated through the Land Securement Strategy, adopted September 2026.

The CVRD has an overall Property Acquisition Policy (P106) that provides a procedural framework for property acquisitions. This policy applies to all Regional Park and Trail securement considerations other than those undertaken as part of the subdivision process which follow a prescribed legislative process.

USE OF THIS PROCESS

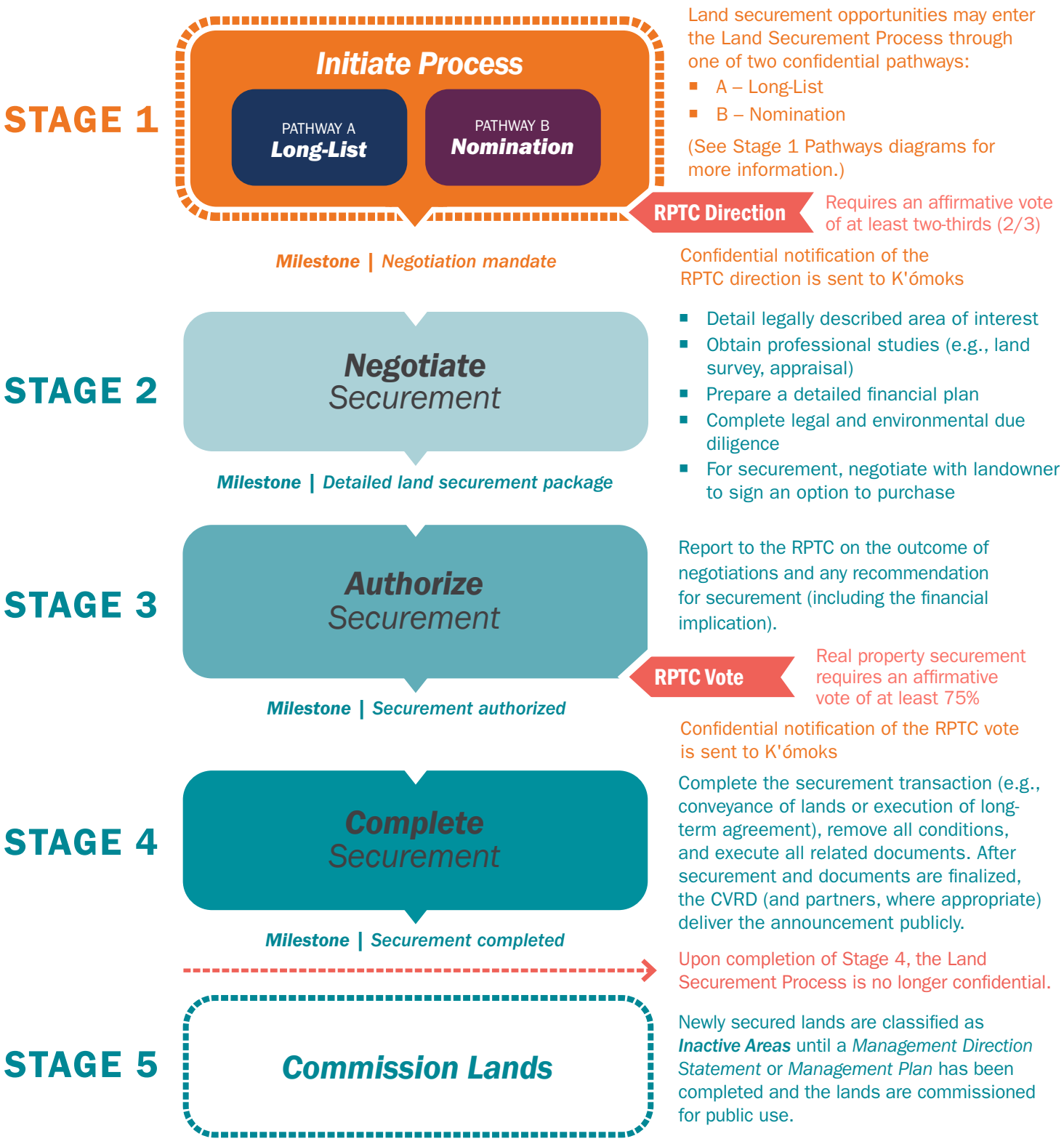
- To be effective, the Regional Parks and Trails Land Securement Process needs to account for *opportunistic* securement of important lands that arise outside of the regular review process.
- Land securement priorities should be reviewed and amended as needed when new information or opportunities arise.
- Identified land securement priorities are not required to be carried out in sequence.
- The actual timing and sequence of land securement will be affected by several factors including funding partnership opportunities and willingness of an owner to sell.

It is important that the CVRD work collaboratively with K'ómoks First Nation throughout the land securement process, while recognizing K'ómoks' interests in independently securing lands for its own purposes.

THE "LONG-LIST"

- The Long-List referenced by the following process diagrams is part of the Land Securement Strategy, and summarizes the key areas across the region that have been identified as having elevated potential to contribute to the vision and goals of the Regional Parks and Trails System.
- The Long-List is an aspirational, long-term planning tool and does not imply that all identified lands will—or should—be secured.
- The Long-List was developed through an iterative process from 2023–2026 involving input and review from the general public, interest groups, Working Group, CVRD staff, RPTC, and K'ómoks First Nation.
- Refer to the separate **Land Securement Strategy** document for the Long-List areas and map.

Figure 3: **LAND SECUREMENT PROCESS**
SUMMARY DIAGRAM



PATHWAYS TO THE LAND SECUREMENT PROCESS

There are two confidential pathways for land securement opportunities to be brought before the RPTC for direction through Stage 1 of the Land Securement Process:

- **Pathway A – Long-List**
- **Pathway B – Nomination**

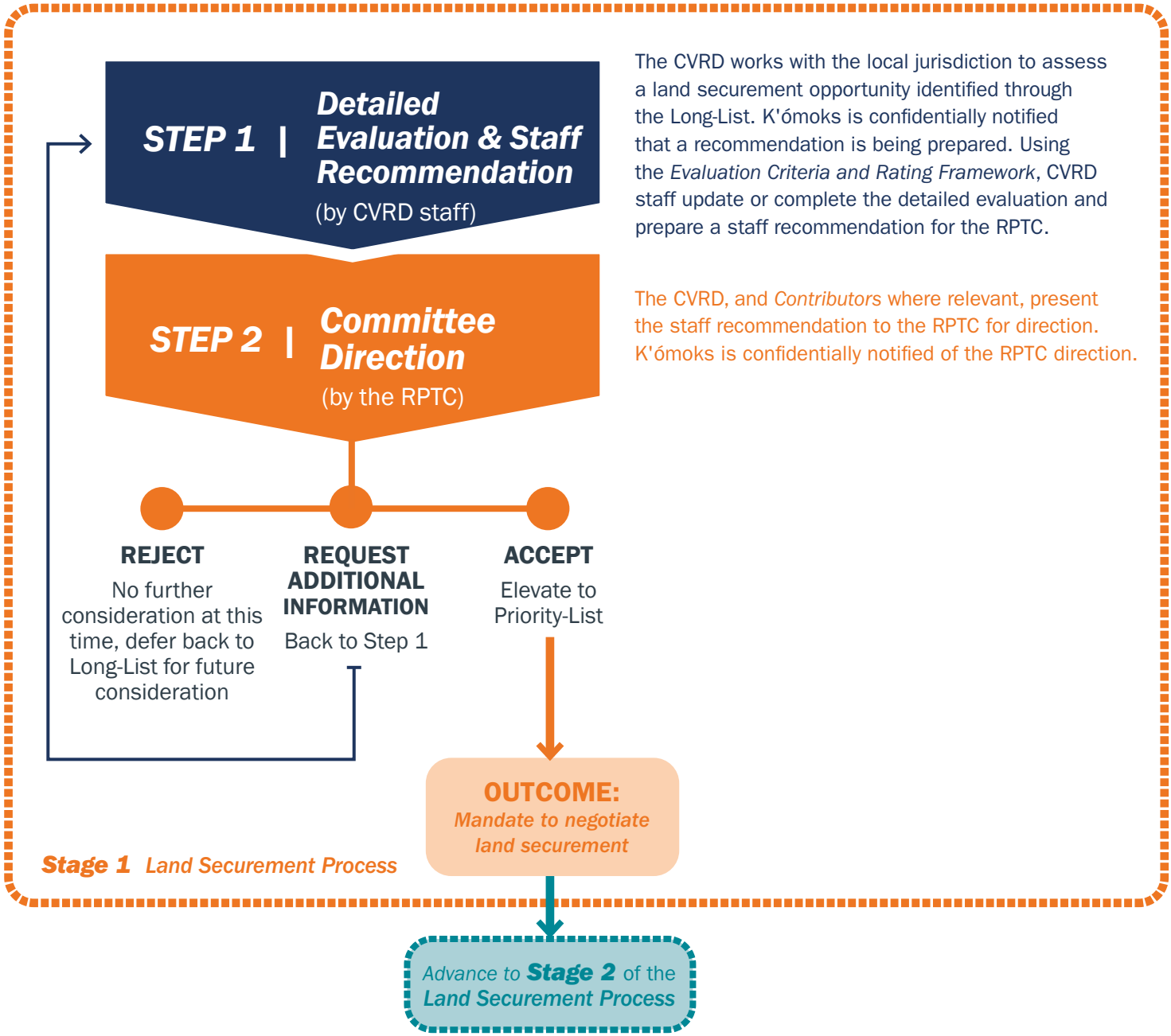
See the ***Land Securement Strategy*** (separate document) for more information on the role and importance of confidentiality with this work.

See the diagrams on the following pages for further information on each pathway process.

Figure 4:

STAGE 1 | *PATHWAY A*
LONG-LIST

PURPOSE: This pathway provides a process for bringing land securement opportunities already identified on the Long-List forward to the RPTC for direction.



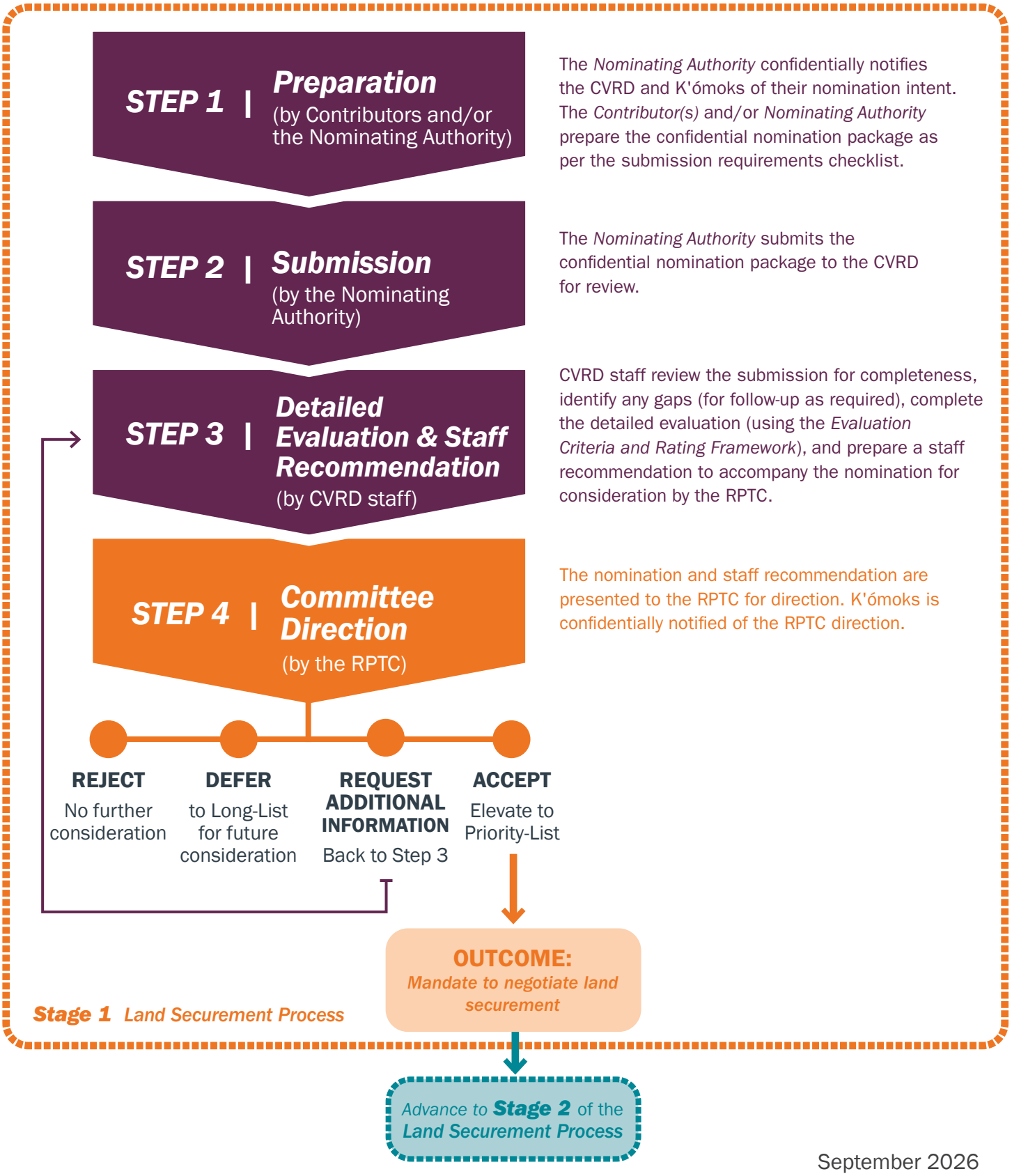
The CVRD works with the local jurisdiction to assess a land securement opportunity identified through the Long-List. K'ómoks is confidentially notified that a recommendation is being prepared. Using the *Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework*, CVRD staff update or complete the detailed evaluation and prepare a staff recommendation for the RPTC.

The CVRD, and *Contributors* where relevant, present the staff recommendation to the RPTC for direction. K'ómoks is confidentially notified of the RPTC direction.

Figure 5:

STAGE 1 | *PATHWAY B*
NOMINATION

PURPOSE: The nomination pathway provides a process for bringing land securement opportunities not identified on the Long-List forward to the RPTC. This pathway establishes the roles for nomination as well as the submission requirements to ensure nominations are sufficiently developed to support informed decision-making by the RPTC.





Enjoying a ride on Clemmie's Trail, an extension to the One Spot Trail, that officially opened in 2015.

P2 EVALUATION CRITERIA AND RATING FRAMEWORK

There is a wide and complex range of potential criteria that could be used to evaluate areas for suitability as Regional Parks or Trails in the CVRD. Not all potential criteria are relevant – some do not relate to the vision and goals set out by this Strategic Plan. Not all potential criteria are equal – some are critical to decision-making, while others are lesser considerations.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOOL

The Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework was initially developed through the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (2024) and was further reviewed, tested, and refined through the Land Securement Strategy process (2025–2026). The following information is updated to reflect the content from the Land Securement Strategy, adopted in September 2026.

FUNCTIONS OF THE TOOL

- Support a transparent and consistent evaluation of Regional Parks and Trails opportunities using established criteria that reflect the vision and goals of the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan.
- Provide a key step in the Land Securement Process to support decision-making.
- Support the identification of priorities and inform recommendations for land securement (alongside other information).

USE OF THE TOOL

The rating framework is designed to foster reflection and discussion amongst evaluators about the extent to which a site meets each of the key criterion listed. By evaluating each criterion and category, a cumulative score can be created for the following for each area:

- Part 1: Strategic Alignment
- Part 2: Feasibility & Management

This tool supports a quantitative assessment that compliments qualitative knowledge and is relative to the other areas for securement consideration.

LIMITATIONS OF THE TOOL

While ratings should be based on the best available information at the time of review, applying the criteria will require informed professional judgment. Evaluation results are expressed as quantitative scores but are not intended to be interpreted as automatic ranking. For example, a lower-scoring area of interest may still represent an important opportunity due to factors such as urgency, ecological connectivity, ownership circumstances, or partnership opportunities.

The *Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework* is intended to support decision-making and prioritization; it is only one component of the Land Securement Process (see **P1**) and does not replace professional expertise and judgment, due diligence, financial analysis, community engagement, or consideration of timing and partnership opportunities.

Part I - Strategic Alignment

The strategic alignment criteria evaluate how well a prospective park or trail opportunity aligns with the vision and goals of the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan. The criteria consider the potential contribution of a land securement opportunity to the Regional Parks and Trails system and are organized under three headings. There **19 criteria** for parks, and **12 criteria** for trails, as follows (more detailed information for each criteria are on the following pages).

PARKS Evaluation Criteria

CATEGORY 1: Environmental Values

1. Landscape Value / Representation
2. Conservation Priority
3. Environmental Connectivity
4. Sensitive Ecosystem Protection
5. Endangered / Threatened Species Conservation
6. Unique Natural Features

Category 2: Recreational & Cultural Values

7. Recreation Features
8. Appropriate Recreation Potential
9. Community Connectivity
10. Multiple User Benefits
11. Cultural Value
12. Ease of Access
13. Unique Educational Opportunity

Category 3: Community & Social Values

14. Future Focused
15. Community Interest
16. Level of Threat
17. Ecosystem Services
18. Climate Change Resiliency
19. Scenic Value

TRAILS Evaluation Criteria

CATEGORY 1: Environmental Values

1. Landscape Condition
2. Environmental Connectivity

Category 2: Recreational & Cultural Values

3. Nature Access
4. Community Connectivity
5. Multiple User Benefits
6. Cultural Value
7. Ease of Access
8. Unique Educational Opportunity

Category 3: Community & Social Values

9. Community Interest
10. Level of Threat
11. Climate Change Resiliency
12. Scenic & Experiential Value

Part II - Feasibility

The following **6 criteria** are identified to support evaluation of the relative feasibility of securing a prospective area for Regional Park or Regional Trail. While the Strategic Alignment criteria are specific to Parks or Trails interests, the Part II feasibility and management criteria are the same for both.

Feasibility & Management
A. Owner Support
B. Partnership and Stewardship
C. Securement Cost (Affordability)
D. Development Cost
E. Management Cost
F. Free of Encumbrances (risk/liability)

5-POINT RATING SYSTEM

Each prospective area is rated against each criterion using a 5-point scale ranging from 0 to 5, where:

Level to which the area meets a criterion:					
No Value	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
0	1	2	3	4	5

WEIGHTING BY CATEGORY

The evaluation framework includes weighting by category to reflect the relative importance of each category to the Service and ensure that categories with fewer criteria continue to have an appropriate influence on the overall evaluation outcome. The weighting of categories are as follows:

Category 1 Environmental Values	40%
Category 2 Recreational & Cultural Values	40%
Category 3 Community & Social Values	20%
Total	100%

REVIEWING RATING OUTCOMES

The ratings provide an indication of *relative* suitability and priority. For example, the highest rating score may not be recommended for active securement efforts if feasibility is low due to an unwilling owner.

Figure 6 illustrates the structure for CVRD staff to review the rating outcomes from the Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework. Ratings for Part 1 Strategic Alignment and Part 2 Feasibility are reviewed separately (not combined). Opportunities most viable for land securement will generally have high assessment ratings for both strategic alignment and feasibility.

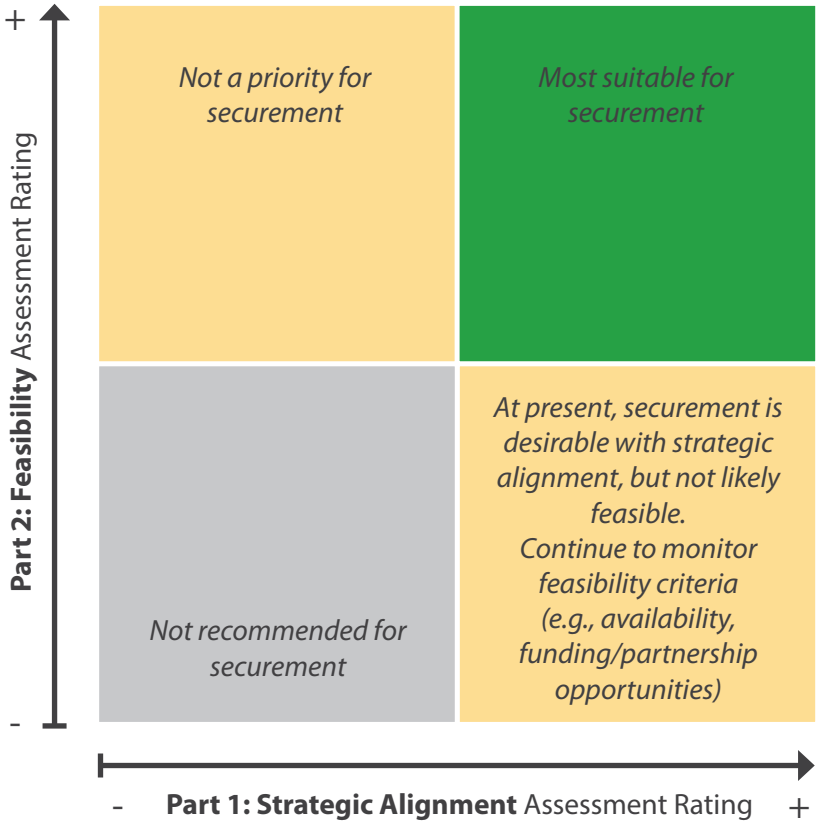


Figure 6: Reviewing Rating Outcomes

Parks PART I : Strategic Alignment Criteria Table

CATEGORY 1: Environmental Values		**Point Rating (0-5)**
1. Landscape / Value Representation	To what extent does this area represent a landscape type or natural setting that is unique or underrepresented within the Regional Parks System? Consider whether the area includes more than one of the following: oceanfront, lakefront, rivers/ streams, mountain/alpine, forest (especially older forest or forest with old-forest attributes), wetlands/estuary.	
2. Conservation Priority	Has the area been identified as an environmental or conservation priority through existing plans, studies, or the work of other organizations? Examples may include the CVLT confidential list of conservation interests, the 2011 Rural Comox Valley Park and Greenways Strategic Plan, Project Watershed, Nature Trust of BC, or Expert Nominated Sites.	
3. Environmental Connectivity	To what extent could the area maintain, buffer, restore, or improve ecological connectivity, including connectivity between ecosystems, habitats, wildlife corridors, or adjacent environmentally protected areas?	
4. Sensitive Ecosystem Protection	To what extent would securing the area protect sensitive ecosystems identified through available mapping or expert opinion (e.g., CVLT)? Examples may include coastal bluffs, terrestrial herbaceous ecosystems, older forest, woodlands, cliffs, dunes, spits, and wetlands. *Refer to Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) mapping, where applicable.*	
5. Endangered / Threatened Species Conservation	Are blue- or red-listed species known to occur within or near the area, or is the area likely to provide habitat for endangered or threatened species based on the best available information at time of evaluation? *Refer to the BC Species & Ecosystems Explorer online database tool, where applicable.*	
6. Unique Natural Features	To what extent does the area contain unique or regionally significant natural features such as significant trees, rock formations, or water features?	
	Points Subtotal =	
	Category Weighting 40%	
	Category 1 TOTAL =	

Parks PART I : Strategic Alignment Evaluation Table *(continued)*

CATEGORY 2: Recreational & Cultural Values		Point Rating (0-5)
7. Recreational Features	To what extent does the area contain existing recreational features or opportunities that are regionally significant, desirable, and compatible with the Service (e.g., a popular swimming hole, rock-climbing area, hiking trail, etc.)?	
8. Appropriate Recreation Potential	To what extent can the area support appropriate nature-based, low-impact recreation (e.g., non-motorized) while maintaining the natural and cultural values of the site? Consider the area's capacity to accommodate recreational use without unacceptable impacts and within a sustainable carrying capacity.	
9. Community Connectivity	To what extent does the area strengthen connections between core communities, existing parklands, or protected areas? Does it connect, or have strong potential to connect, to an existing or planned Regional Trail?	
10. Multiple User Benefits	To what extent could the area serve nature-based recreation users with a range of skills, ages, abilities, and interests? Consider whether it can support multiple compatible recreation activities (e.g., hiking, rock-climbing, swimming, or fishing).	
11. Cultural Value	Is the area located within a recorded K'ómoks Cultural Heritage Permit (CHP) Area or Archaeological Site, or is it known to contain Indigenous cultural values or features? Does the area contain significant historical or heritage features? *Review available mapping, statements of significance, heritage registers, or other information.*	
12. Ease of Access	How accessible is the area for maintenance, management, and recreational use? Consider factors such as existing road, trail, or other practical access.	
13. Unique Educational Opportunity	To what extent does the area provide distinctive opportunities for interpretation, education, or sharing information about the natural or cultural context of the region?	
	Points Subtotal =	
	Category Weighting 40%	
	Category 2 TOTAL =	

Parks PART I : Strategic Alignment Evaluation Table *(continued)*

CATEGORY 3: Community & Social Values		Point Rating (0-5)
14. Future Focused	To what extent would securing the area expand the amount of protected land in the region or strengthen the long-term protection of an existing area that is not adequately protected?	
15. Community Interest	What level of community interest or support exists for the area based on previous engagement, other planning processes, demonstrated public use, or other available information?	
16. Level of Threat	What is the extent and immediacy of risk that the area's values could be irreversibly affected if it is not protected (e.g., land may be developed, sold, subject to land-use change, or damaged through misuse)?	
17. Ecosystem Services	To what extent could the area protect or provide important ecosystem services such as drinking water protection, water quality improvement, water storage, erosion reduction, flood attenuation, or carbon sequestration? *Refer to the CVRD Climate Action Carbon Sequestration Plan, where applicable.*	
18. Climate Change Resiliency	To what extent could securing the area improve regional resilience to climate change impacts, such as sea level rise, flooding, drought, or wildfire?	
19. Scenic Value	To what extent does the area provide significant scenic value through views, vistas, viewpoints, or its role as a landscape backdrop visible from surrounding areas?	
	Points Subtotal =	
	Category Weighting 20%	
	Category 3 TOTAL =	

Parks PART II: Feasibility Evaluation Criteria Table

Feasibility & Management		**Point Rating (0-5)**
A. Owner Support	To what extent is the landowner supportive of land securement, including willingness to sell, donate, or enter into a long-term agreement?	
B. Partnerships and Stewardship	To what extent does the opportunity support partnerships or collaborative stewardship, including potential involvement by partner organizations, community groups, or volunteers in funding, stewardship, or management? (e.g., CVLT, streamkeeper groups, trail groups, etc.)	
C. Securement Cost (Affordability)	How affordable is the anticipated securement cost, considering the estimated purchase price, potential unusual or additional costs, available partner funding, cost-sharing opportunities, and potential land donations? *(Higher price and/or low potential for cost sharing = lower rating).*	
D. Development Cost	How affordable is the anticipated investment required to prepare the area for its intended Regional Park function (e.g., providing or restricting access, constructing or decommissioning trails, installing signage or gates, or addressing other site requirements)? *(Higher anticipated cost = lower rating; lower anticipated cost = higher rating).*	
E. Management Cost	How manageable are the anticipated ongoing staffing and financial requirements relative to planned budgets, service levels, and the facilities anticipated for the Regional Park? *(Higher relative cost = lower rating; lower relative cost = higher rating).*	
F. Free of Encumbrances (risk/liability)	To what extent is the area free of legal encumbrances, environmental liabilities (e.g., contamination), incompatible adjacent land uses, safety hazards, or other constraints that could limit its securement, management, or use as Regional Park or Trail?	
	Part II Feasibility TOTAL=	

Trails PART I : Strategic Alignment Criteria Table

CATEGORY 1: Environmental Values		**Point Rating (0-5)**
1. Landscape Condition	To what extent is the area's natural vegetation intact and the landscape relatively undisturbed? Where disturbance has occurred, what is the potential for natural regeneration or for restoration (e.g., intact soils, or adjacency to natural areas)?	
2. Environmental Connectivity	To what extent could the trail corridor width provide ecological connectivity beyond the trail surface, including habitat, ecosystem or wildlife corridor functions? Consider corridor widths using the following thresholds: **Corridor Width Thresholds** <10 m = 1 point (very low) 10–29 m = 2 points (low) 30–59 m = 3 points (moderate) 60–100 m = 4 points (high) >100 m = 5 points (very high)	
	Points Subtotal =	
	Category Weighting 40%	
	Category 1 TOTAL =	

Trails PART I : Strategic Alignment Evaluation Table *(continued)*

CATEGORY 2: Recreational & Cultural Values		**Point Rating (0-5)**
3. Nature Access	To what extent would the area improve access to natural areas, green spaces, or waterfronts?	
4. Community Connectivity	To what extent does the area strengthen connections between core communities, improve access to regional destinations or facilities, close a gap in the Regional Trails network, or improve opportunities for future trail extensions and connections?	
5. Multiple User Benefits	To what extent could the area serve nature-based recreation users with a range of skills, ages, abilities, and interests? Consider whether it can support multiple compatible recreation activities (e.g., hiking, biking, running).	
6. Cultural Value	*Is the area located within a recorded K'ómoks Cultural Heritage Permit (CHP) Area or Archaeological Site, or is it known to contain Indigenous cultural values or features? Does the area contain significant historical or heritage features? Review available mapping, statements of significance, heritage registers, or other information.*	
7. Ease of Access	How accessible is the area for maintenance, management, and recreational use? Consider factors such as existing road, trail, or other practical access.	
8. Unique Educational Opportunity	To what extent does the area provide distinctive opportunities for interpretation, education, or sharing information about the natural or cultural context of the region?	
	Points Subtotal =	
	Category Weighting 40%	
	Category 2 TOTAL =	

Trails PART I : Strategic Alignment Evaluation Table *(continued)*

CATEGORY 3: Community & Social Values		Point Rating (0-5)
9. Community Interest	What level of community interest or support exists for the area based on previous engagement, other planning processes, demonstrated public use, or other available information?	
10. Level of Threat	What is the extent and immediacy of risk that the area's values could be irreversibly affected if it is not protected (e.g., land may be developed, sold, subject to land-use change, or damaged through misuse)?	
11. Climate Change Resiliency	To what extent could securing the area improve regional resilience to climate change impacts, such as sea level rise, flooding, drought, or wildfire?	
12. Scenic & Experiential Value	To what extent does the area provide significant scenic value through views, vistas, viewpoints, or landscape setting? To what extent do the natural surroundings contribute to a high-quality trail experience?	
	Points Subtotal =	
	Category Weighting 20%	
	Category 3 TOTAL =	

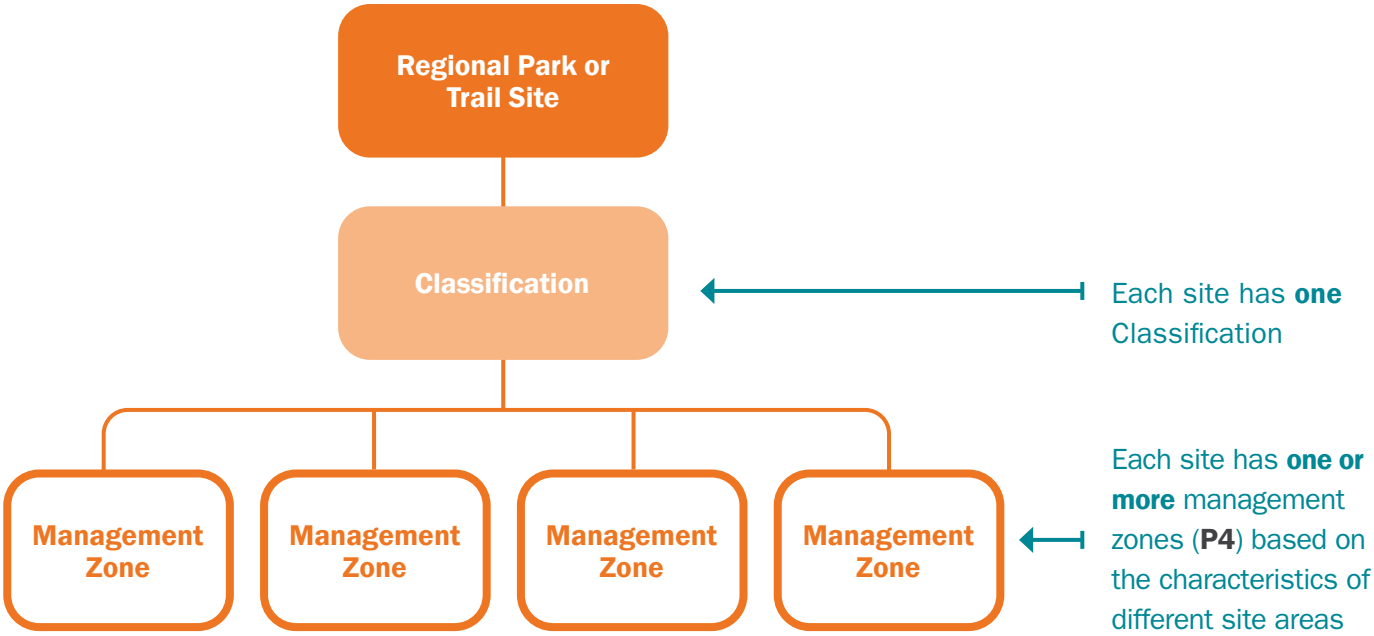
Trails PART II: Feasibility Evaluation Criteria

Feasibility & Management		**Point Rating (0-5)**
A. Owner Support	To what extent is the landowner supportive of land securement, including willingness to sell, donate, or enter into a long-term agreement?	
B. Partnerships and Stewardship	To what extent does the opportunity support partnerships or collaborative stewardship, including potential involvement by partner organizations, community groups, or volunteers in funding, stewardship, or management? (e.g., CVLT, streamkeeper groups, trail groups, etc.)	
C. Securement Cost (Affordability)	How affordable is the anticipated securement cost, considering the estimated purchase price, potential unusual or additional costs, available partner funding, cost-sharing opportunities, and potential land donations? *(Higher price and/or low potential for cost sharing = lower rating).*	
D. Development Cost	How affordable is the anticipated investment required to prepare the area for its intended Regional Park function (e.g., providing or restricting access, constructing or decommissioning trails, installing signage or gates, or addressing other site requirements)? *(Higher anticipated cost = lower rating; lower anticipated cost = higher rating).*	
E. Management Cost	How manageable are the anticipated ongoing staffing and financial requirements relative to planned budgets, service levels, and the facilities anticipated for the Regional Park? *(Higher relative cost = lower rating; lower relative cost = higher rating).*	
F. Free of Encumbrances (risk/liability)	To what extent is the area free of legal encumbrances, environmental liabilities (e.g., contamination), incompatible adjacent land uses, safety hazards, or other constraints that could limit its securement, management, or use as Regional Park or Trail?	
	Part II Feasibility TOTAL/30 =	
	TOTAL/100 (X3.33) =	

P3 CLASSIFICATIONS

A classification system provides an organizing framework to group similar individual parks within an overall parks system.

Each regional park site will have a classification and management zone(s). These systems are used together as illustrated in the diagram below:



Classification is useful for parks systems that have:

- Numerous parks
- Diverse park uses and characteristics

Local Community Parks systems commonly employ more numerous parks classifications to respond to the needs of large systems (e.g., 10-50+ parks) that offer a diverse range of uses and amenities (e.g., playgrounds, sports fields, natural areas, performance spaces).

The CVRD Regional Parks and Trails system will have a relatively narrower range of uses and amenities than the Community Parks systems, focused on conservation and nature-based recreation.

PROPOSED CLASSIFICATIONS:

The CVRD Regional Parks and Trails system is newly formed and does not have any existing designated areas. The proposed classifications are streamlined to the four outlined in the table below. As the Regional Parks and Trails system develops and grows, the CVRD will revisit this classifications system to determine if new or revised classifications are warranted.

Classification	Function	Form
Regional Park	■ Protect regionally-significant natural and cultural areas and provide opportunities to connect with nature through nature-based recreation.	■ Variable form and size, defined by the extents of the natural, cultural, or recreation assets being conserved
Regional Trail	■ Connect core communities by providing greenways in nature for recreational and experiential use that also strengthen environmental corridors in the region.	■ A linear natural area focused around a trail route
Regional Conservation Area	■ Protect natural or cultural assets, limiting public access (access is not encouraged).	■ Variable form and size, defined by the extents of the natural or cultural assets being conserved
Inactive Area	■ Hold land that is acquired for Regional Park or Trail but is not yet in a position to be developed or maintained.	■ Variable (could be small or inaccessible parcel that is part of a larger securement plan)

PLANNING TOOLS

P4 MANAGEMENT ZONES

Management zones assist with administration, organization, and operation of Regional Parks and Trails.

Management zones[1] are proposed as the system for organizing uses, amenities, and level of service within individual CVRD Regional Parks and Trails. Each park may include one, some, or all management zones, depending on the individual characteristics of the area.

Delineating different park management zones helps to balance the interests of protecting the natural environment alongside the interests of outdoor recreation and access to nature by:

- Defining areas according to their environmental and/or cultural features and the relative sensitivity of these areas for protection and ecological integrity
- Reflecting the capacity of areas to accommodate different intensities of use
- Reducing conflicts between areas of protection and public use

The use of management zones is supported by the Rural Comox Valley Parks and Greenways Strategic Plan (2011-2030) and is the system in use in Seal Bay Nature Park. Similar systems are also utilized by BC Parks and by other regional parks systems. **Figure 7** on the following page is an illustrative diagram of how management zones could be arranged for a site.

1 *Park land zoning is a management tool and not established via bylaw. It is different from land use zones in the CVRD's land use zoning bylaw.*

Regional Parks and Trails Management Zones



Conservation Zone:

This zone protects the park's biodiversity, cultural assets, visual qualities, ecosystems, and ecosystem processes. It includes sensitive ecosystems and areas with high conservation value (e.g., areas with endangered species or archaeological importance). In these areas, conservation of ecological and cultural assets takes precedence. These areas are not suitable for public access, use, or recreation.



Natural Environment Zone:

This zone protects natural values while providing limited public access for nature-based recreation opportunities. These areas maintain a largely natural environment where low-impact use (e.g., hiking) and amenities that involve limited development or disturbance of the natural area (e.g., nature trails or boardwalks) are permitted.



Nature Recreation Zone:

This zone accommodates more intensive outdoor recreation in select areas where this kind of use is suitable (e.g., avoids sensitive ecosystems). The uses permitted in this zone may include purpose-built networks of trails or amenities for activities like mountain biking or horseback trail riding. These areas are focal points for public use and management.



Facility Zone:

This zone provides a concentrated area for the infrastructure that supports park access and learning opportunities (e.g., parking areas and trailhead amenities). Ongoing management in this zone limits the disturbance of natural features wherever possible.

Figure 7: Site Management Zones Example Diagram

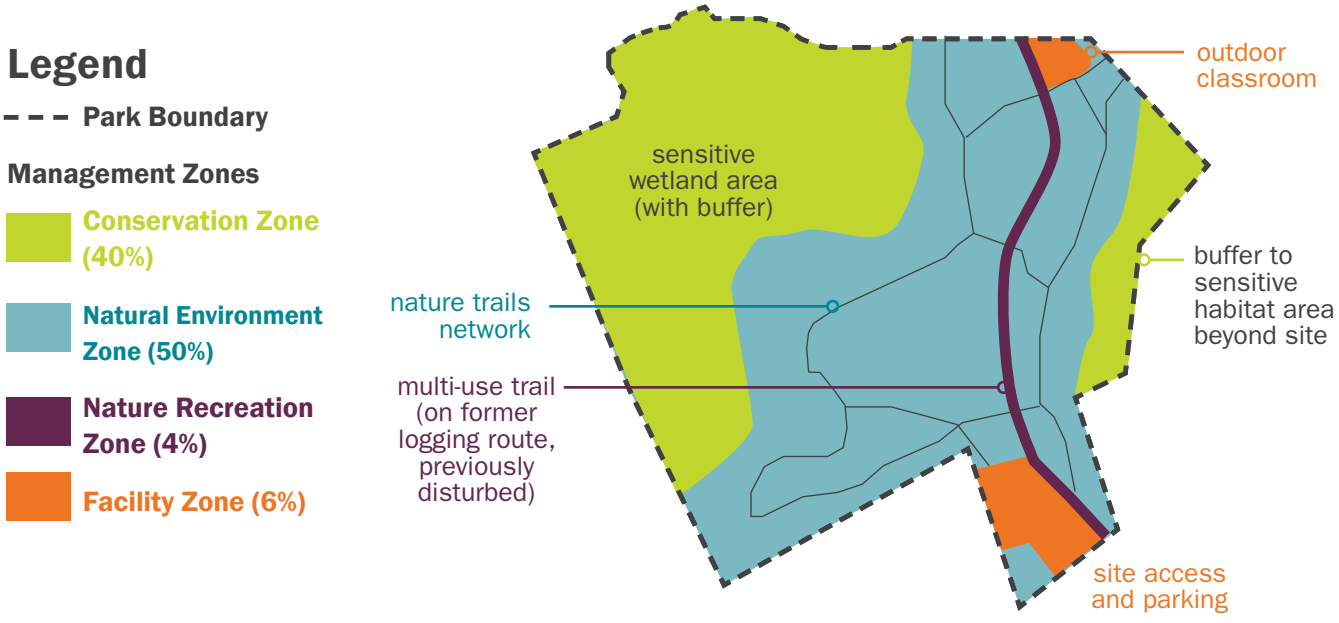


TABLE 1: MANAGEMENT ZONES OVERVIEW

Description and Focus	Relative Degree of Public Use / Access	Relative Management Effort	Potential Uses	Typical Facilities
CONSERVATION ZONE				
■ Areas with high conservation value (e.g., sensitive ecosystems, areas of archaeological importance) ■ Focus on protection and conservation ■ Public access is not supported	None	Low	■ Maintenance access ■ Active stewardship ■ Permission-granted nature-based research	■ Gates ■ Fencing ■ Signage
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ZONE				
■ Areas where protection of natural values can be balanced with low-impact, nature-based recreation ■ Public use has a very limited footprint (e.g., nature trails)	Moderate	Moderate	■ Walking ■ Hiking ■ Dogs on-leash	■ Gates ■ Fencing ■ Signage ■ Nature trails
NATURE RECREATION ZONE				
■ Areas that may be suitable for more intensive outdoor recreation relative to any of the other management zones ■ Focal points for moderate-impact, nature-based recreation such as purpose-built networks of trails or amenities	High	High	■ Mountain biking ■ Horseback riding ■ Dogs under control ■ Accessible trails for wheels ■ Climbing	■ Trail networks ■ Signage
FACILITY ZONE				
■ Concentrated areas for infrastructure that support park use and access such as parking areas and trailheads ■ Focal points for information and education	High	High	■ Vehicle and parking access ■ Small gatherings ■ Nature or interpretive programming	■ Parking ■ Storage / support buildings ■ Washrooms ■ Trailheads ■ Information kiosks ■ Benches ■ Picnic tables

PLANNING TOOLS

P5 FUNDING STRATEGIES

A combination of funding strategies will be required to develop the Regional Parks and Trails system.

After establishment of the Service in 2022, an initial modest annual taxation rate was set; however annual taxation, even if increased, will need to be supplemented by other funding strategies in order to carry out land securement, development, and operations of the envisioned Regional Parks and Trails system.

In the community survey, respondents were asked about spending priorities for the future Regional Parks and Trails system. The **top 3 spending priorities** indicated were: 1. Acquiring regional parklands; 2. Protecting environment and biodiversity; and 3. Developing amenities (e.g., trails).

9 Funding Strategies are outlined on the following pages for consideration to generate capital for Regional Parks and Trails. Different strategies may suit different circumstances and budget considerations and it is expected that the CVRD will select a combination of Funding Strategies to develop the Regional Parks and Trails system over time.

9 FUNDING STRATEGIES

1. Annual Tax Revenues
2. Parks Reserve Fund
3. Parcel Tax (Levy)
4. Senior Government Funding
5. Partnerships
6. Donations & Fundraising
7. Borrowing
8. Coordination with Infrastructure Upgrades
9. User / Private Enterprise Fee Programs

F1 ANNUAL TAX REVENUES

- Property tax from electoral areas and member municipalities is the CVRD's principle source of revenue for the Regional Parks and Trails Service.
- For 2024:
  - The tax requisition for the Regional Parks and Trails Service is estimated at $0.014 per $1,000 of assessed value.
  - At this 2024 rate, a property valued at $800,000 would pay **$11.20/year** for this service.
  - The total estimated annual requisition across the region for this rate is $438,000.
- The current tax requisition rate for the service is modest and will not provide sufficient funds for significant land acquisition.
- In the community survey, there was strong support from respondents for increasing their annual tax contribution (for more detail on the demographics of respondents, refer to the separate document **Phase 2 Engagement Summary Report**).
- The tax requisition rate for the Regional Park Service should be reviewed and updated annually as part of the CVRD financial planning process.

F2 PARKS RESERVE FUND

- There are two existing reserve funds for the Regional Parks and Trails Service: a Future Expenditures Reserve and a Capital Works Reserve (which can be used for acquisitions).
- Reserve funds mitigate current and future risks, support stable tax rates, and demonstrate financial commitment to long range infrastructure and management plans.
- Reserve funds can be a place to invest residual capital funding where projects are delayed or completed under budget.
- Reserve funds can be used to leverage grants from senior levels of government.

F3 PARCEL TAX (LEVY)

- A parcel tax levies a specific charge per selected properties within a community. This tax allows funds for a specific purpose to be raised, without increasing general property taxes.
- The use of a parcel tax can help alleviate public concerns that funds raised through general property tax may not be directed to a specific project and provides a fixed time frame for the levy.
- A parcel tax may be appropriate for capital improvement projects or major land acquisition because it spreads the tax load evenly among properties. Parcel taxes are closely aligned with the "all citizens benefit equally and pay equally" nature of parks and recreation.
- Parcel taxes are most frequently used for projects that are beneficial to a broad spectrum of the community (e.g., acquisitions to support regional trail connectivity).
- Parcel tax may be an effective tool for generating funding for the CVRD portion of matched funding opportunities.
- Parcel taxes need to be considered in conjunction with general parks taxation rates to determine which method is most appropriate to support parks investments. Clear communications about taxation methods and purposes with taxpayers will be important.
- An alternative approval process or public referendum is required to determine electorate support for implementation of a specific Parcel Tax.

F4 SENIOR GOVERNMENT FUNDING

- The Province of BC, Government of Canada, and other government and non-government organizations (e.g., Rick Hansen Foundation, Ducks Unlimited) often offer grants for land protection, infrastructure and trails, and conservation.
- Regional Parks projects, or related projects from partner non-governmental organizations (e.g., Comox Valley Land Trust) can secure funds related to the environment, sustainability initiatives, trails, and park improvements.
- Grant opportunities can provide a significant source of funds, but often require proportionate fund contributions (which could be funded through reserves or parcel tax) and advanced planning which requires staff capacity.
- Grants are not a guaranteed source of funds and should not be relied upon for projects.

F5 PARTNERSHIPS

- Partnerships can provide opportunities to share funding with other landowners, not-for-profit organizations, neighbouring jurisdictions, or others.
- Partnerships can provide opportunity for capital investment, lands, or joint efforts for ongoing maintenance/operations.
- See **Objective 9 Foster and Strengthen Partnerships (p.27)**.

F6 DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

- Corporations, organizations, and individuals are often willing to contribute to Regional Parks and Trails.
- The CVRD needs to be opportunistic and ready for donations by developing a program that removes barriers and provides a clear and convenient avenue for those interested in contributing to parks and trails.

- A **Parks and Trails "Foundation"** could be the way to communicate with the public about opportunity for monetary or land donations. Engage partners (that have established programs) and the CVRD finance department to determine the best way to structure and manage this.
- Examples of giving opportunities include:
  - **Fundraising programs and monetary donations:** Money for major projects like trails or land securement can be raised through major fundraising programs that encourage and recognize corporate and individual donations. Providing a register of projects requiring fundraising allows the public to contribute financially to projects that are meaningful to them.
  - **In-Kind donation:** Opportunities exist for organizations and individuals to donate time, materials, and services to projects.
  - **Land donation:** Providing a structure for how land can be gifted for protection as part of the Regional Parks and Trails system can facilitate opportunities for land owners to help build the system.
- Successful donation and fundraising programs require commitment of staff time. For large fundraising campaigns, it may be desirable to consider external support to organize and implement a successful strategy.

F7 BORROWING

- Local government can enter into long- or short-term capital borrowing to finance the purchase or construction of capital assets or a portion thereof, including land acquisition.
- For Regional Parks and Trails, typically borrowing is focused on major acquisition that would be difficult to fund using other mechanisms.
- Borrowing requires careful consideration of the CVRD's overall financial status and borrowing capacity.

F8 COORDINATION WITH INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

- Major programs such as road or utility upgrades, or stormwater projects can sometimes overlap with trails projects – all linear in nature and related to access and connectivity.
- Opportunities may exist to develop Regional Trails when other capital projects are undertaken.
- Often external funding (e.g., grants) are directed towards projects that demonstrate combined investment that results in high community value (e.g., utility upgrades and regional trail development).

F9 USER/PRIVATE ENTERPRISE FEE PROGRAMS

- Regional Parks typically have limited fee-based amenities and programs and as public amenities little to no fees for use are typically charged.
- However, user fees can offset some costs related to operating and maintaining Regional Parks and Trails, especially where assets benefit a specific subset of the community.
- User fee opportunities that may warrant consideration in future Regional Parks and Trails include:
  - Motorized boat launching fees
  - Rental of park spaces for events
  - Camping fees
- Some parks use honour systems to request a small amount for use of a park space.
- User fee programs take staff time and effort to administer, so careful consideration of viability is required.





PART 4

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 OVERVIEW

The **Implementation Summary Tables** in this section provide a categorized summary of recommended actions for the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails network. This summary is based on directions outlined in **Section 2.3 Objectives and Actions (p.16)**.

The Implementation Summary Tables are organized by timeframe:

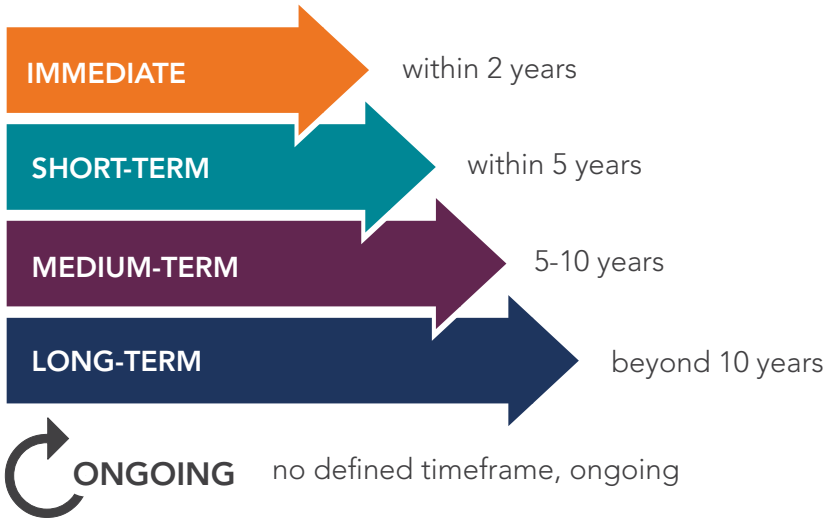


TABLE COMPONENTS

- **REF#:** Each recommendation in the tables is referenced with a corresponding number. This reference guides the reader to the corresponding objective and action (e.g., 3.2 correlates to Objective 3, Action #2).
- **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** A brief description of the action. The reference number can be used to cross-reference the corresponding objective and action.
- **STAFF RESOURCING**: Indicating whether the action is likely to be completed within existing “Staff Time” capacity, or likely to require a "Staff Increase". Symbols are as follows:
  - » = Staff Time (existing capacity)
  - » = Staff Increase
- **KEY PARTIES:** Potential departments, agencies, or organizations that may be involved in implementation of an action. Short form legend as follows:
  - » K'ómoks = K'ómoks First Nation
  - » RPTC = Regional Parks and Trails Committee
  - » Parks = CVRD Parks
  - » Bylaw = CVRD Bylaw Enforcement
  - » Comms = CVRD Communications
  - » Corp. Services = CVRD Corporate Services
  - » Engineering = CVRD Engineering
  - » Finance = CVRD Financial Services
  - » Planning = CVRD Planning Services
  - » Community = General Public (residents and property owners)
  - » Interest Groups = Conservation/Recreation/ Community Organizations, School District
  - » Landowners = Public or Private Landowners
  - » Municipalities = CVRD Member Municipalities
  - » NPOs = Not-for-profit Organizations
  - » Volunteers = Volunteer Groups or Individuals

4.2 IMMEDIATE ACTIONS (BY 2026)

- Immediate actions are anticipated to occur over the next two years, and include those that are key next steps in implementing the Regional Parks and Trails Service.
- These actions are anticipated to occur as the CVRD prepares to secure parkland.

TABLE 2: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS (BY 2026)

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 1 - WORK TOGETHER WITH K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION (P.19)				
1.1	**Governance** - Work with K'ómoks First Nation to determine how they wish to participate in the governance of the Regional Parks and Trails Service.	IMMEDIATE	Staff Time	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks, Corp. Services
1.2	**Land Securement -** Ensure that K'ómoks rights and title to its traditional territory and its interests in acquiring land are respected. Work collaboratively with K'ómoks First Nation, as appropriate, to identify, evaluate, acquire, and manage lands for the Regional Parks and Trails Service.	IMMEDIATE and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks
OBJECTIVE 2 - SECURE LAND FOR REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS (P.20)				
2.1	**Land Securement Strategy -** Following the finalization of the Strategic Plan, develop a Land Securement Strategy through collaboration of the Regional Parks and Trails Committee and K'ómoks First Nation that includes input of other partners in the region.	IMMEDIATE	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks, Finance
2.2	**Process and Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework** - Through the Land Securement Strategy (LSS), test and refine the Land Securement Process (see Planning Tool P1, p.35) to achieve a consistent, transparent, and standardized process for identifying, assessing, and prioritizing areas of interest for consideration as Regional Park or Regional Trail. As part of the overall process, test and refine the Draft Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework (see Planning Tool P2, p.41) to create a final framework for use in the LSS, and for ongoing use.	IMMEDIATE	Staff Time	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks
2.3	**Securement Priority Recommendations -** Through the Land Securement Strategy (LSS) process, prepare two ranked shortlists of securement recommendations: one list for Regional Parks, and a separate list for Regional Trails.	IMMEDIATE	Staff Time	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks, Finance

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 3 - BALANCE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTERESTS (P.21)				
3.3	**Conservation and Recreation -** When forming securement priority recommendations, review the candidate site lists to ensure that there are a mix of areas that fulfill both a conservation-focus (environmental and cultural) as well as recreation-focus. Make adjustments where needed so there is representation of both interests in priorities for securement over time.	IMMEDIATE	Staff Time	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks
OBJECTIVE 4 - ENHANCE REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY (P.22)				
4.1	**Environmental Connectivity -** Secure areas that form environmental connectivity (e.g., for an ecosystem, for biodiversity, for a habitat, or for a wildlife corridor).	IMMEDIATE and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks
4.2	**Community Connectivity -** Secure Regional Trails that strengthen the connection of our core communities and the continuity of the Regional Trail network.	IMMEDIATE and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks
4.3	**Balance Regional Parks and Regional Trails -** Maintain a list for identifying, evaluating, recommending, and acquiring Regional Trails that is separate from a list for Regional Parks. Bring forward items from both lists when establishing securement priority recommendations. Secure areas for both Regional Parks and Regional Trails to support the growth of both components of the network over time.	IMMEDIATE and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks
OBJECTIVE 7 - DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL (P.25)				
7.1	**Annual Tax** - Increase annual contributions through tax requisition for the Regional Parks and Trails Service, maintaining the method of how funds are to be collected relative to size and makeup of each jurisdiction as outlined in the Regional Parks and Trails Service bylaw.	IMMEDIATE and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	RPTC, Parks, Finance
7.2	**Tax Review -** Annually review and update taxation rates for Regional Parks and Trails. Consider larger increases over the first 5-10 years to advance initial securement and development of the system, with more modest increases after an early network of sites is established.	IMMEDIATE and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	RPTC, Parks, Finance

4.3 SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (BY 2029)

- Short-term actions are anticipated to occur within the next five years as Regional Parks and Trails are added to the network.
- These actions will prepare the CVRD to effectively continue to acquire, develop, and manage a growing network.

TABLE 3: SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (BY 2029)

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 1 - WORK TOGETHER WITH K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION (P.19)				
1.3	**Visibility -** Work together with K'ómoks First Nation where appropriate to create and integrate signage, art, naming, programming, and other initiatives in future Regional Parks and Trails spaces to: » Enhance the visibility and interpretation of K'ómoks' rich cultural practices » Include language (Kwak'wala, Ayajusem, and Pentlach) » Promote understanding of stories, world views, and cultural practices that are rooted in thousands of years of history and continue within practices today. » Provide cultural safety and opportunities for Indigenous peoples in Regional Parks and Trails.	△ SHORT and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, Parks
OBJECTIVE 2 - SECURE LAND FOR REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS (P.20)				
2.4	**Secure Land -** Following the finalization and approval of priority securement recommendations, negotiate and secure priority lands for Regional Parks and Regional Trails.	△ SHORT and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks, Finance
2.5	**Existing Areas -** As part of the overall process to secure land, consider areas that have existing designation as parkland or conservation area but that do not have adequate protection and may be better managed under the Regional Parks and Trails Service.	△ SHORT and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	Parks, Municipalities, Interest Groups, NPOs
OBJECTIVE 7 - DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL (P.25)				
7.6	**Donation and Fundraising -** Develop a land donation and fundraising program, such as a Regional Parks and Trails "Foundation", that clearly defines and coordinates opportunities for interested parties to contribute to land securement or development.	△ SHORT and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	RPTC, Parks, Finance
7.7	**Development Levies** - Explore development cost charges for the Regional Parks and Trails Service.	△ SHORT	Staff Time	Parks, Finance

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 8 - MANAGE STAFFING, OPERATIONS, AND ASSETS PROACTIVELY (P.26)				
8.3	**Asset Management -** Coordinate an Asset Management System for Regional Parks and Trails to inventory assets as they become part of the network and to inform budget planning for park asset maintenance and renewal. Integrate this work with asset management for Electoral Area Parks and overall at the CVRD.	△ SHORT	Staff Increase	Parks, Finance
OBJECTIVE 10 - DEVELOP POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS (P.28)				
10.1	**Bylaw Update** - Create a new bylaw, or update the CVRD "Electoral Areas Parks Regulations Bylaw No. 103", to include Regional Parks and Trails and proactively address policy gaps for managing the modern regulatory needs of the Regional Parks and Trails network.	△ SHORT	Staff Time	Parks, Planning, Bylaw, Corp. Services
10.2	**Bylaw Enforcement** - Review bylaw enforcement capacity and update as needed to sustainably serve the community as the Regional Parks and Trails network grows.	△ SHORT and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	Parks, Bylaw
10.3	**Design Standards -** Develop Design Standards to provide clear direction for planning, designing, and constructing key elements that will be located in CVRD Regional Parks and Trails, including: arrival and access amenities, park furniture, washrooms and structures, signage and wayfinding, trails, and planting. Use universal design principles for all ages and abilities and integrate standards for CVRD Electoral Area Community Parks and Trails within a single document.	△ SHORT	Staff Time	Parks
10.5	**Management Direction Statements** - Where a Management Plan is not deemed necessary, or is not yet complete, create a Management Direction Statement (MDS) that outlines the values of the area, site use, management issues and concerns, and immediate management strategies.	△ SHORT and ↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	Parks, Interest Groups
10.6	**Management Plan Process -** Review and update the existing CVRD process and framework for developing park management plans for Electoral Area Community Parks to include Regional Parks and Trails.	△ SHORT	Staff Time	Parks

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 11 - BUILD COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS (P.29)				
11.2	**Website** - Use the CVRD website as the primary source for information about Regional Parks and Trails. Review information annually to develop and improve communications as the network for Regional Parks and Trails grows.	△ **SHORT** **and** ↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Time	Parks, Comms
OBJECTIVE 12 - MONITOR AND UPDATE THE PLAN (P.30)				
12.5	**Classifications and Management Zones Review -** Once the Classifications and Management Zones (P3 & P4) have been applied to several areas, review and update these planning tools as needed to reflect the needs and conditions of the developing system.	△ **SHORT**	Staff Time	Parks
12.6	**Asset Management Review** - Undertake regular reviews of the Regional Parks and Trails Asset Management System (e.g., every 2-5 years) to complete updates and incorporate new assets.	△ **SHORT** **and** ↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Time	Parks, Finance

4.4 MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS (2029-2034)

- Medium-term actions are projected to occur within a five to ten year period after the highest priority actions are complete.
- Many of these actions focus on building the tools and resources that will be used to manage the Regional Parks and Trails network over time.
- Medium-term actions may warrant consideration for earlier completion if opportunity or funding permits.

TABLE 4: MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS (2029-2034)

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 9 - FOSTER AND STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS (P.27)				
9.3	**Volunteer Program -** Update the Comox Valley parks volunteer program (from the existing Electoral Areas Parks and Greenways) and CVRD Community Grants program to include, coordinate, and support volunteer-led stewardship projects in Regional Parks and Trails.	▷ MEDIUM	Staff Increase	Parks, NPOs, Volunteers
OBJECTIVE 10 - DEVELOP POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS (P.28)				
10.4	**Maintenance Guidelines** - Develop Maintenance Guidelines for Regional Parks and Trails to provide clear direction for a well-maintained system that meets public use levels.	▷ MEDIUM	Staff Time	Parks
OBJECTIVE 11 - BUILD COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS (P.29)				
11.1	**Communications Strategy -** Develop a communications strategy for Regional Parks and Trails to support information sharing and build awareness about the system as it grows. Prior to a more detailed strategy being developed, carry out key communications actions 11.2-11.6 (website, social media, other CVRD outreach methods, partner communications, and third party sites).	▷ MEDIUM	Staff Time	Parks, Comms
OBJECTIVE 12 - MONITOR AND UPDATE THE PLAN (P.30)				
12.2	**Interim 5-year Review** - Complete an interim 5-year update of the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan in 2030. Involve key partners in the process to review and update actions.	▷ MEDIUM	Staff Time	K'ómoks, Parks, RPTC, Interest Groups
12.7	**Amenities Review -** As a future consideration, assess public interest and explore the business case for campgrounds within Regional Parks.	▷ MEDIUM and ▽ LONG	Staff Time	Parks, RPTC, Finance, Community

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
12.11	**Recreation Use Requests** - Develop a protocol for how recreational use or user group requests for Regional Parks and Trails are logged and addressed.	▷ MEDIUM	Staff Time	Parks
12.12	**Visitor Data Collection & Review -** Implement data collection methods to better understand visitor demand and patterns within the Regional Parks and Trails network. Collection methods could include intercept surveys, trail or gate counters, analysis of Big Data (e.g., mobile phones), or other methods. Integrate visitor data and feedback into annual capital planning and maintenance and operations planning.	▷ MEDIUM	Staff Increase	Parks, RPTC

4.5 LONG-TERM ACTIONS (BEYOND 2035)

- Long-term actions are projected to occur beyond a ten year period.
- It is anticipated that the Strategic Plan will be updated in the medium-term and through this work, long-term actions will be advanced or refined to meet evolving network needs (see Objective 12 **Monitor and Update the Plan (p.30)**).
- If funding, opportunity, or need emerges in the lifespan of this Strategic Plan, these actions could be considered for earlier completion.

TABLE 5: LONG-TERM ACTIONS (BEYOND 2035)

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 11 - BUILD COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS (P.29)				
11.3	**Social Media -** Develop a Regional Parks-focused social media strategy to increase awareness about new areas as the network develops and share information on related initiatives (e.g., operations activities, volunteer opportunities, stewardship opportunities, etc).	∇ LONG	Staff Increase	Parks, Comms
11.6	**Third Party Sites -** As Regional Parks or Trails are added to the network, update the parks inventory and incorporate information on key third party online mapping resources and apps. Leverage other platforms that help visitors learn about the geographic area, future locations and amenities, suitable uses, and responsible nature-based recreation.	∇ LONG	Staff Time	Parks, Comms
OBJECTIVE 12 - MONITOR AND UPDATE THE PLAN (P.30)				
12.3	**Milestone 15-year Update** - Complete a milestone 15-year review and update of the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan in 2040. Include a two-phase engagement process that includes interest groups and the general public.	∇ LONG	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, Parks, RPTC, Interest Groups, Community

4.6 ONGOING ACTIONS

- Ongoing actions include planning and management work that will need to be done regularly, including annual reviews and coordination, and considerations that will inform network development.

TABLE 6: ONGOING ACTIONS

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 1 - WORK TOGETHER WITH K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION (P.19)				
1.4	**Co-Management -** Explore mutual interests and opportunity for co-management or Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) in the Comox Valley as part of the Regional Parks and Trails Service.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, Parks
1.5	**Harvesting and Gathering -** Respect and maintain Indigenous harvesting and gathering rights.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	K'ómoks, Parks
OBJECTIVE 3 - BALANCE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTERESTS (P.21)				
3.1	**Classifications** - Identify Classifications for all future Regional Parks and Trails.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	Parks
3.2	**Management Zones** - Adopt Management Zones as the system for identifying appropriate uses, amenities, and level of maintenance to balance conservation and recreation interests. Assign Management Zones according to an area's environmental and/or cultural features and the relative sensitivity of those features to public recreational use.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	Parks
OBJECTIVE 5 - SUPPORT THE REGION'S RESILIENCE AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (P.23)				
5.1	**Inventory, Assessment, and Actions -** As part of individual Regional Park or Trail Management Plan development (see 10.7), include site-level inventory, assessment, and recommended actions for ecosystem services (e.g.,, water quality, water storage, erosion reduction, carbon capture, etc.) and climate change resiliency (e.g., sea level rise, flooding, wildfire risk, etc). Review Management Plans to confirm alignment to region-wide planning directions on these topics.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	Parks, Planning, Engineering, Interest Groups, NPOs
5.2	**Consider in Broad-Scale Planning -** Include Regional Parks and Trails as part of region-wide planning. This includes the Regional Climate Action Strategy, Regional Growth Strategy, Watershed Protection Plan, Wildfire Management, and other related planning and policy documents.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	Parks, Planning, Engineering

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 6 - PROVIDE HIGH VALUE VISITOR EXPERIENCE (P.24)				
6.1	**Well Maintained -** Through use of maintenance levels and Maintenance Guidelines (see 10.4), deliver a well-maintained system that aligns with public use levels.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	Parks, NPOs, Volunteers
6.2	**Diverse Trails Networks -** Provide a diversity of quality recreational and experiential trails within Regional Parks, including wilderness trails, nature trails, mixed-use trails, and trail networks optimized for specific uses (e.g., equestrian, mountain biking, etc).	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	Parks
6.3	**Water Access -** Improve 'blue access' to freshwater (lakes and rivers) and oceanfront that provides opportunities for nature-based water recreation (e.g., swimming, paddlesports, non-motorized boat launching).	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	RPTC, Parks
6.4	**Interpretive Features** - Collaborate with partners to provide interpretive signage and features in select Regional Parks and Trails locations for self-guided learning and appreciation.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, Parks, Interest Groups
6.5	**Educational Opportunities -** Collaborate with partners to provide programming and active learning opportunities in select Regional Parks and Trails to deepen visitor experience and connection with nature.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, Parks, Interest Groups, NPOs
6.6	**All Ages and Abilities -** Provide opportunities for all ages and abilities to enjoy Regional Parks and Trails, while respecting the limitations of topography and environmental sensitivity.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	Parks
6.7	**Programming Staff Resourcing -** Where programming and learning opportunities are identified to be delivered by the CVRD, provide adequate staffing resources.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	Parks, Finance
OBJECTIVE 7 - DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL (P.25)				
7.3	**Reserve Fund -** Maintain the Regional Parks and Trails Capital Works Reserve Fund to accumulate funds specifically for acquiring or developing Regional Parks and Trails.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	RPTC, Parks, Finance
7.4	**Borrowing** - If a priority Regional Park or Trail acquisition opportunity arises that is time-sensitive and beyond funds available, consider the feasibility and public support for accelerated funding approaches including borrowing.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Time	RPTC, Parks, Finance

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
7.5	**Funding Partnerships -** Annually review and evaluate grant and partner funding opportunities against the priorities and goals of the Strategic Plan and allocate staff time to pursue opportunities where alignments are identified.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	RPTC, Parks, Finance
OBJECTIVE 8 - MANAGE STAFFING, OPERATIONS, AND ASSETS PROACTIVELY (P.26)				
8.1	**Planning Staffing -** Increase Parks Planning capacity (e.g., staffing) to carry out the actions of the Strategic Plan and support the successful and timely development of a Regional Parks and Trails network.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	RPTC, Parks, Finance
8.2	**Operations Funding and Staffing** - As part of all securements, capital additions / enhancements, and service level increases, determine related operating staffing and funding that will be required and add capacity / funding to sustainably manage, maintain, and operate the growing Regional Parks and Trails network at defined service levels.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	RPTC, Parks, Finance
OBJECTIVE 9 - FOSTER AND STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS (P.27)				
9.1	**Partnerships** - Review existing partnerships and seek new opportunities with K'ómoks First Nation, other governments, community organizations, and public-private partnerships which would benefit the Regional Parks and Trails system and community.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks, Interest Groups, NPOs
9.2	**Land Use & Access Agreements -** Establish and manage land use and access agreements with private and public agencies for recreational and conservation purposes (e.g., working with private forest landowners cooperatively to maintain public recreational access for trails).	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	RPTC, Parks, Landowners
9.4	**Staff Resourcing** - Where volunteer programs and partnerships for Regional Parks and Trails are identified, provide staffing resources to support appropriate management.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	Parks, NPOs
OBJECTIVE 10 - DEVELOP POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS (P.28)				
10.7	**Management Plan Development -** For complex sites where deemed appropriate, develop a Management Plan to guide the area's development, use, and ongoing management as part of the overall network. Individual Management Plans are to incorporate the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Classifications, Management Zones, Bylaws, Design and Maintenance Guidelines.	↻ ONGOING	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, Parks, RPTC, Interest Groups, Community

REF #	ACTION	TIMEFRAME	STAFF RESOURCING	KEY PARTIES
OBJECTIVE 11 - BUILD COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARENESS (P.29)				
11.4	**Other CVRD Outreach Methods** - Create, share, and provide information about Regional Parks and Trails through various CVRD outreach methods beyond the website and social media, including Engage Comox Valley, e-notification system, newsletters, etc.	↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Time	Parks, Comms
11.5	**Partner Communications -** Coordinate opportunities for partners in the region to share information about Regional Parks and Trails. Key partners include K'ómoks First Nation, City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, and Village of Cumberland.	↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Time	Parks, Comms
OBJECTIVE 12 - MONITOR AND UPDATE THE PLAN (P.30)				
12.1	**Annual Progress** - Undertake annual reviews of Regional Parks and Trails accomplishments and measure progress against the Strategic Plan.	↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Increase	RPTC, Parks
12.4	**Securement Opportunities Review -** Each year, using the final process established through the Land Securement Strategy (see action 2.1), continue to identify, review, update, and prioritize areas for land securement for Regional Parks/Conservations Areas and Regional Trails.	↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Increase	K'ómoks, RPTC, Parks
12.8	**Community Parks -** Coordinate regularly (e.g., minimum annually) with each of the Community Parks services in the CVRD to refer opportunities better suited to the local community scale and vice versa.	↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Time	Parks, RPTC, Municipalities
12.9	**Active Transportation -** Coordinate regularly (e.g., minimum annually) with transportation planning for the region to review the implementation of regional and local active transportation networks and determine a coordinated approach for Regional Trails.	↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Time	Parks, Engineering, Planning, Municipalities
12.10	**Volunteer Program Review -** Annually review program needs and make adjustments to improve, maintain, or discontinue the existing program.	↻ **ONGOING**	Staff Time	Parks

4.7 MONITORING AND REPORTING

Annual monitoring will be completed to review progress on the actions of the Parks and Trails Strategic Plan and how work is supporting advancement towards the 6 Strategic Plan Goals.

Annual reporting will be developed to reflect at-a-glance progress on two key components:

- **Strategic Plan Actions**, indicating whether each action is complete, substantially complete, in-progress, or not initiated. Some actions will have distinct, measurable outcomes that signal their completion, while others will be ongoing, taking place over many years.
- **Strategic Plan Goals**, utilizing key indicators to measure how each goal is being advanced. **Table 7** outlines a list of initial key performance indicators identified for measuring progress towards the Strategic Plan Goals. Key indicators are those that can be tracked regularly and consistently using readily-available data sources.

Findings from annual monitoring could lead to prioritization of new or existing actions or completion of other work needed to accelerate progress. Through this work, minor amendments to the Strategic Plan may be identified and implemented.

The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan provides a guide for beginning the process of acquiring, developing, and managing the new Service. The Strategic Plan also recognizes that amendments may be required as work is completed over time and new needs, conditions, circumstances, issues, or opportunities arise. Major amendments to the Strategic Plan should be considered at key milestone reviews (e.g., Interim 5-year Review, Milestone 15-year update), and will involve the RPTC and K'ómoks First Nation and will consider engagement with interest groups and the public. These reviews will provide an opportunity to consider adjustments to the Strategic Plan to reflect shifts in the CVRD, demographic trends, development activity, emerging technology, or other aspects that influence Regional Parks and Trails. Major amendments will be considered by the RPTC for approval.

Key Performance Indicators

The indicators outlined below represent a starting point for measuring progress towards the Strategic Plan Goals. It is anticipated that these will be refined as monitoring reporting is implemented.

TABLE 7: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Work Together with K'ómoks First Nation to Plan and Manage

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in area of parkland with co-management agreements
- Increase in number of parks protecting K'ómoks cultural features
- Increase in number of parks or features named by K'ómoks First Nation

Protect Regionally Significant Natural Areas

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in area of regional parkland/conservation area secured
- Increase in area of regionally sensitive ecosystems and/or at-risk species protected

Increase Environmental and Community Connectivity

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in length of Regional Trail developed
- Increase in number of Regional Parks and Trails within 500m of other parks, trails, or protected areas

(TABLE CONTINUED)

Provide Opportunities for Nature-based Recreation

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase in metres of trail developed (both recreation trails in Regional Parks and Regional Trails)
- Increase in area of parkland supporting recreation access and use (all Management Zones except Conservation Zone)

Strengthen Stewardship and Community Partnerships

Key Performance Indicators

- Maintain or increase the number of groups actively engaged in Regional Parks and Trails

Manage in a Proactive and Sustainable Manner

Key Performance Indicators

- Management Plans completed within 5 years of an area becoming part of the Regional Parks and Trails system
- Increase in the number of land use and access agreements with private and public agencies



Regional Parks & Trails STRATEGIC PLAN

Our Region, Our Future Parks

UPDATED | September 2026

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Comox Valley REGIONAL DISTRICT

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APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND

A.1 WHAT ARE REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS?

Our future Regional Parks and Trails will be focused on protecting and conserving regionally significant natural areas and connecting our core communities.

The sentence above is the high-level mandate outlined by the CVRD Service establishment for Regional Parks and Trails. While many Regional Districts in BC include a Regional Parks and Trails system, the definition of Regional Parks vary from region to region. The following pages explore the role, characteristics, and definition of Regional Parks and Trails specific to the Comox Valley.

THE REGIONAL PARKS ROLE

Regional Parks and Trails are meant to be complementary, yet distinct from Community Parks and Provincial Parks (the two other parks systems in the CVRD):

- **Community Parks** are provided by the CVRD to the electoral areas and by the member municipalities (Town of Comox, City of Courtenay, Village of Cumberland) to each respective community. These are focused on meeting local recreational needs of residents and tend to be smaller in size. Some protect natural areas; others provide active or passive recreation opportunities. They serve neighbourhoods and whole communities. Each service is funded independently by its local taxpayers.
- **Regional Parks** are intended to complement the other levels of parks in the region, addressing gaps, and focusing on regionally-significant landscapes and recreational opportunities. They tend to be larger than local community parks yet smaller than provincial parks, and are destinations for residents of the entire region, while sometimes drawing visitors from beyond. They offer opportunities to be active, but include limited facilities. Regional Parks and Trails are funded by all taxpayers within the CVRD.
- **Provincial Parks** are provided by the Province of BC. They typically focus on protection and conservation, include large areas, and are destinations that attract visitors from afar. They often include campgrounds, other buildings or facilities, and interpretation services or programs. The service is funded through provincial taxation.

PARKLAND SPECTRUM IN THE COMOX VALLEY

To provide a more complete understanding of our future Regional Parks and Trails, it is important to consider them relative to other parks services within the existing parkland spectrum in the Comox Valley. The context of the overall spectrum provides comparison, similarities, differences, and nuances.

WHERE DO REGIONAL PARKS FIT?

- Regional Parks and Trails will play a central role in the middle of the parkland spectrum in the Comox Valley, between Provincial Parks and Community Parks.
- There are areas of overlap and connection between the three parks systems in the Comox Valley that work together to form the overall and complete spectrum.

Figure 8: **PARKLAND SPECTRUM** IN THE COMOX VALLEY

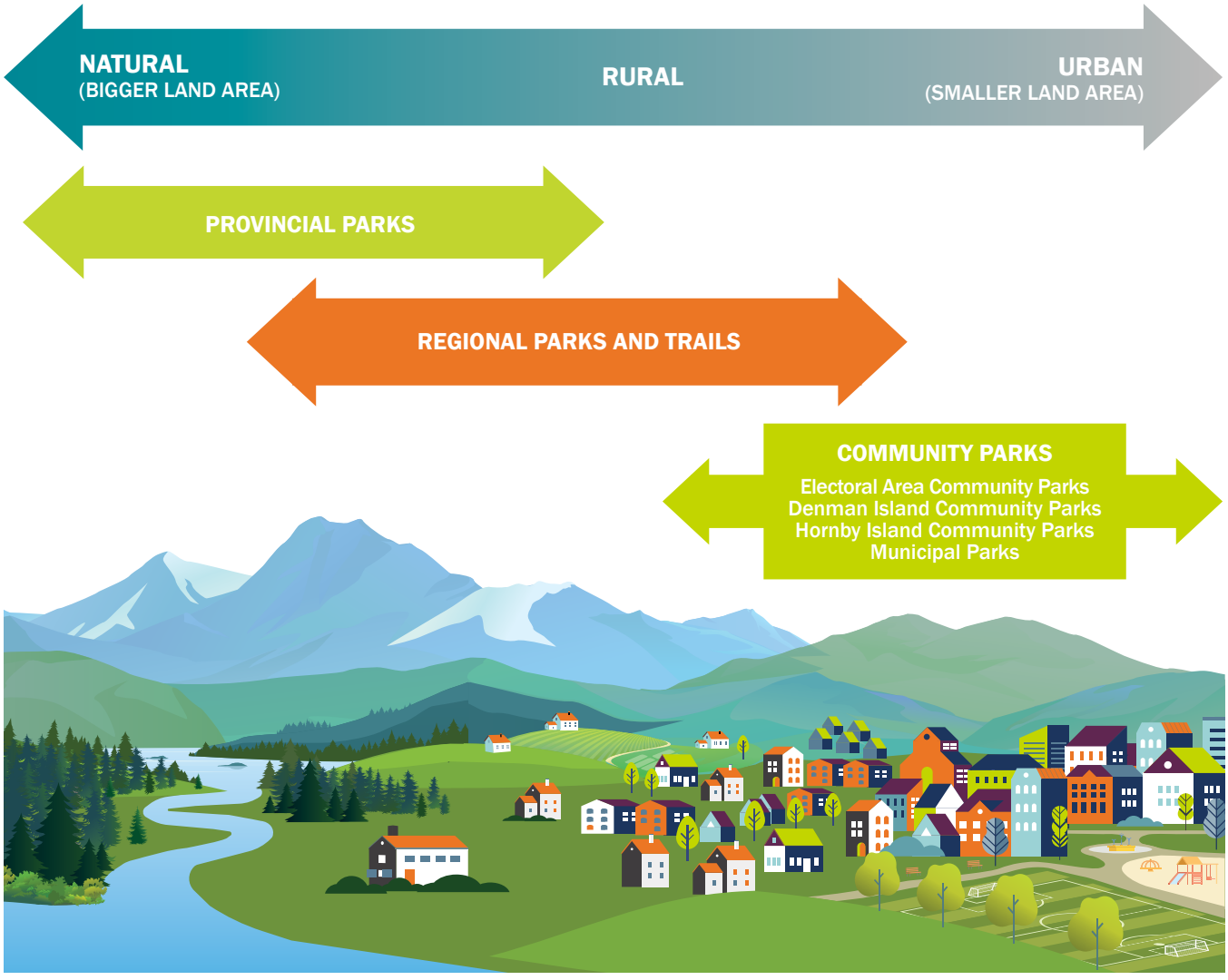


TABLE 8: PARKS SYSTEMS CHARACTERISTICS

The table below summarizes the three parkland systems that operate within the Comox Valley: Community Parks, Regional Parks, and Provincial Parks. Comparing the characteristics of each parkland system helps clarify what Regional Parks are, as well as what they are not.

CHARACTERISTIC	Community Parks	CVRD Regional Parks	Provincial Parks
Regional Significance & Conservation Function	**Moderate** Protect locally important recreation opportunities, ecosystems, or cultural areas / features	**High** Protect regionally unique ecological, cultural, or heritage areas / features	**High** Protect provincially unique ecological, cultural, or heritage areas / features
Typical Visitation & Beneficiaries	**Local** area residents	**Region-wide** visitors, sometimes drawing visitors from beyond	Residents from **afar**
Recreation Experience	**Diverse** uses focused on meeting the recreational needs of local residents. Uses include both structured and unstructured recreation for leisure and sport	Focused on **nature-based** outdoor recreation. Typical uses are spontaneous and unstructured, focused on passive recreation with some limited interpretative opportunities	Focused on **nature-based** recreation and providing opportunity for immersion (e.g., full-day or overnight) along with interpretive opportunities
Typical Amenities	**Diverse** e.g., playgrounds, sport fields, sport courts, spray parks, trails, washrooms, picnic areas, covered shelters, lighting, specialty facilities	**Limited** e.g., trailhead, trails, wayfinding signage, benches, picnic tables, parking, limited washroom facilities	**Moderate** e.g., welcome centre, parking, signage, benches, picnic shelters, picnic tables, potable water access, washroom facilities, campground facilities, concession
Typical Relative Size	**Small to Medium**	**Medium to Large**	**Large**
Funding	**Local Taxation** Individual Electoral Area or Municipality	**Region-wide Taxation** All Electoral Areas and Municipalities within the CVRD	**Provincial Taxation** All residents in the Province of BC
Examples	Area A: Joe Walker Park Area B: Little River Nature Park Area C: Pinecrest Bike Park Courtenay: Lewis Park Cumberland: Village Park Comox: Marina Park	To be developed through future planning processes (2025 and onward)	Miracle Beach Provincial Park Strathcona Provincial Park Denman Island Provincial Park Helliwell Provincial Park & Marine Area

DEFINING REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS

After building an initial understanding of Regional Parks and Trails in the overall spectrum of parks services in the region, it is then possible to outline the defining points of CVRD Regional Parks and Trails. The roles and characteristics envisioned for CVRD Regional Parks and Trails are outlined in the table below.

TABLE 9: OVERVIEW ROLES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF REGIONAL PARKS AND REGIONAL TRAILS

REGIONAL PARKS	REGIONAL TRAILS
Role: Regional Parks are regionally significant natural areas focused on conservation of ecological, cultural, or heritage features across the CVRD. These areas also connect people with nature, providing opportunities for nature-based recreation.	**Role:** Regional Trails connect our core communities providing greenways in nature that also strengthen environmental corridors in our region.
Key Characteristics: ■ A regionally unique or significant area ■ Focused on conservation (of environmental, cultural, or heritage values) ■ May support nature-based recreation ■ Limited to basic amenities like trails, parking, or picnic areas ■ Provide a destination for residents of the entire region, while sometimes drawing visitors from beyond ■ Typically medium to large in size (relative to parks within the overall parkland spectrum)	**Key Characteristics:** ■ A linear area, focused around a trail route ■ Support access and active trail uses such as walking, running, and cycling ■ Provide a natural greenway setting, buffered from roads or development ■ Provide environmental corridors and connectivity for ecosystems and wildlife ■ Link with regional trails (existing and planned) in adjacent Regional Districts (Strathcona, Alberni-Clayoquot, Nanaimo) ■ Not on-road active transportation routes

A.2 THE PLAN PROCESS

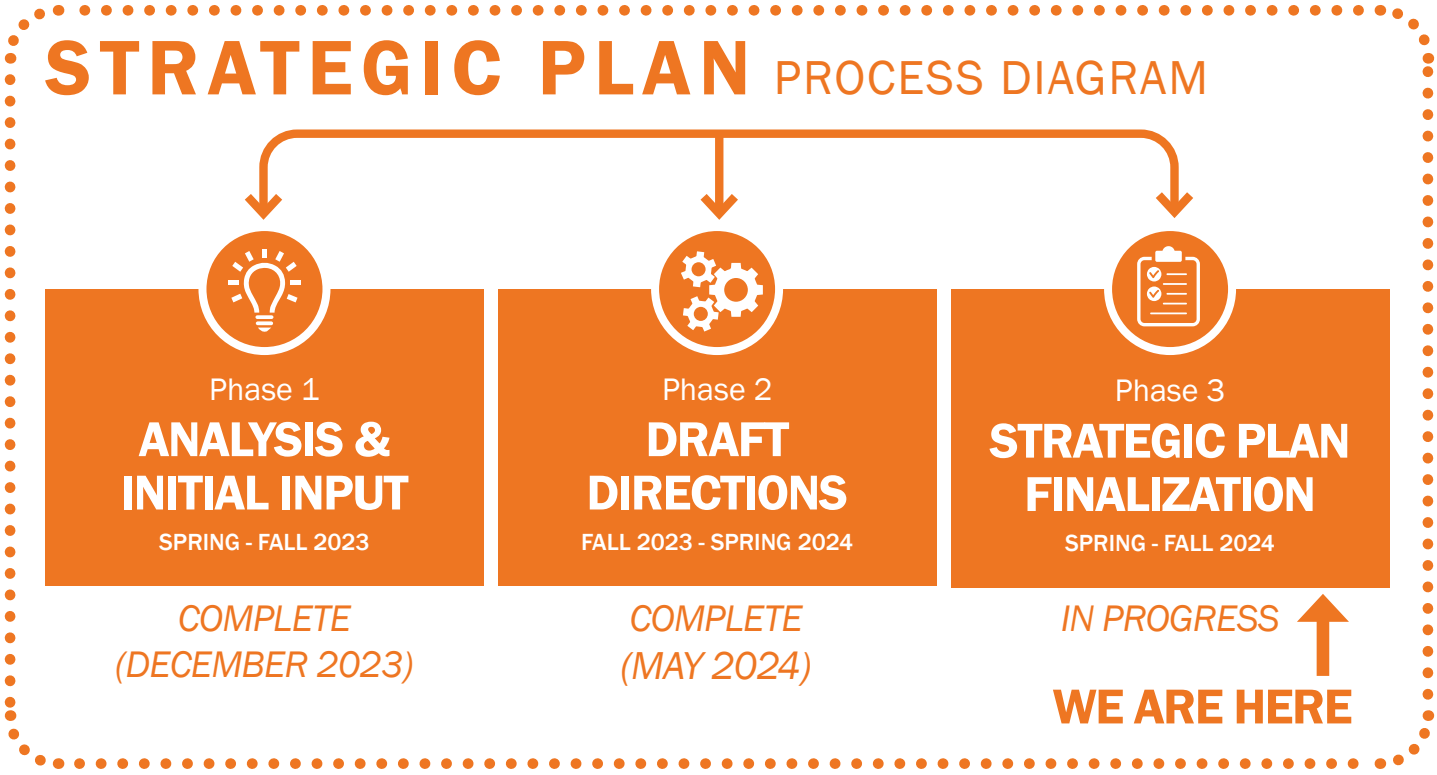
The Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan is a step within a larger process to initiate a Regional Parks and Trails Service within the CVRD.

Figure 9 and **Figure 10** below illustrate the big picture process for the Service establishment, along with the steps specific to developing the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan.

Figure 9: Overall Process Context Diagram



Figure 10: Strategic Plan Process Diagram



A.3 ENGAGEMENT

Engagement was an integral part of the process, with participants providing insights about desired uses, opportunities, challenges, priorities, vision, and goals.

Engagement was undertaken during each of the three phase of the Strategic Plan process. The focus for each phase of engagement is illustrated in **Figure 11** below and highlights from each round are summarized on the following pages.

Figure 11: Engagement Process

PHASE 1: ANALYSIS & INITIAL INPUT

Phase 1 focused on gathering and analyzing information about the region today; gaining input from K'ómoks First Nation, local government, and key interest groups; and identifying the emerging framework for future Regional Parks and Trails.

PHASE 2: EMERGING DIRECTIONS

Phase 2 shared the emerging directions and gathered feedback from across the region to confirm the draft vision, goals, and key directions to be incorporated into the draft Strategic Plan.

PHASE 3: STRATEGIC PLAN FINALIZATION

Phase 3 developed the full draft plan document and then shared it broadly with all interested participants to review and identify refinements for consideration in finalizing the Strategic Plan.

PLAN COMPLETION

ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

- Engage with diverse internal and external audiences including K'ómoks First Nation, CVRD and municipal staff, elected officials, interest groups, and community members.
- Generate awareness about the new Regional Parks and Trails Service in the CVRD, how the service differs from and complements the existing Electoral Area community parks and municipal park services, and opportunities for the community to be involved in developing the Strategic Plan.
- Engage participation that reflects the demographics of the CVRD.
- Demonstrate how issues and opportunities identified through engagement inform the Strategic Plan vision, goals, objectives, and actions.

PHASE 1
Analysis & Initial Input

HIGHLIGHTS

Below is a snapshot of input collected through the FIRST PHASE of engagement. For more information, see *Phase 1 Engagement Summary Report* (separate document).

~50
Participants Engaged

KEY ACTIVITIES

1. **Interest Group Meetings**
2. **Interest Group Survey (online)**
3. **K'ómoks First Nation Meetings**

VISION & GOALS INPUT

Themes that participants talked about related to vision and goals for Regional Parks and Trails:

- **Environmental Protection**
- **Truth & Reconciliation**
- **Connectivity**
- **Outdoor Recreation & Recreational Trails**
- **Inclusivity and Equity**
- **Access and Accessibility**
- **Culture and Heritage**
- **Climate Resilience & Ecosystem Services**
- **Partnerships & Connections**
- **Planning & Management**
- **Funding Strategies**

FOCUS TOPICS

Key topics explored during Phase 1 engagement:

- Key areas of interest
- Evaluation criteria
- How to balance different interests
- How to organize and manage future Regional Parks and Trails

AREAS OF INTEREST THEMES

Types of places identified as priorities for future Regional Parks & Trails:

REPRESENTATIVE LANDSCAPES:

- Oceanfront
- Lakefront
- Rivers / Streams
- Mountain / Alpine
- Forest
- Wetlands / Estuary

SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS:

- Coastal Bluffs
- Terrestrial Herbaceous
- Older Forest
- Woodlands
- Cliff / Dune / Spit
- Wetlands

UNIQUE CULTURAL OR HERITAGE FEATURES

CORRIDORS:

- Connecting our Core Communities
- Vancouver Island Trail ("Spine Trail")
- Waterfront Trails

UNIQUE NATURAL FEATURES:

- Significant trees
- Rock formations
- Waterfalls
- Panoramic views

NATURAL RECREATION FEATURES:

- Swimming areas
- Rock climbing areas
- Skiing areas
- Fishing areas

PHASE 2 Emerging Directions HIGHLIGHTS

Below is a snapshot of input collected through the SECOND PHASE of engagement. For more information, see *Phase 2 Engagement Summary Report* (separate document).

362 *Completed Surveys*

~190 *Open House Participants*

KEY ACTIVITIES

1. **Community Open Houses (5)**
2. **Virtual Session (1)**
3. **Community Map Activity**
4. **Community Survey**

VISION

OVERALL SUPPORT FOR DRAFT VISION, WITH SUGGESTED REFINEMENTS

GOALS

STRONG SUPPORT FOR ALL 6 DRAFT GOALS

TOP 3 LANDSCAPE TYPES OF INTEREST FOR REGIONAL PARKS

1. **Rivers / Streams**
2. **Forests**
3. **Wetlands / Estuaries**

TOP 4 ACTIVITY INTERESTS

1. **Hiking / Walking on trails**
2. **Nature appreciation (e.g. bird watching, photography)**
3. **Dog Walking**
4. **Swimming**

TOP 5 GUIDING KEY WORDS / PHRASES

That participants feel best describe their future desire for CVRD Regional Parks and Trails.

1. **Conservation / Protection**
2. **Recreation (outdoor, nature-based)**
3. **Connectivity**
4. **Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience**
5. **Well-Managed**

STRONG **SUPPORT** FOR INCREASING ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD CONTRIBUTION FOR REGIONAL PARKS

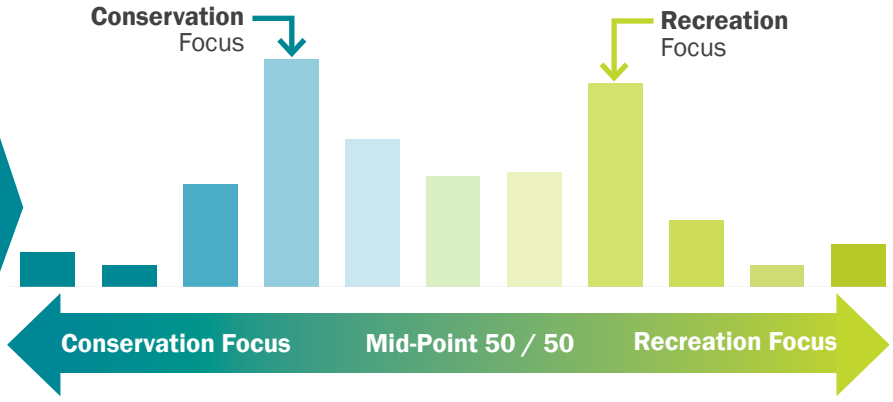
SPENDING PRIORITIES

1. **Acquiring Regional Parkland**
2. **Protecting Environment and Biodiversity**
3. **Developing Regional Park Amenities (e.g. trails)**

TOP 5 CONCERNS

1. **Environmental impact**
2. **Overuse**
3. **User conflict**
4. **Maintenance and trail conditions**
5. **Dog management**

Provide balance between CONSERVATION and RECREATION interests in Regional Parks



PHASE 3
Finalizing the Plan

HIGHLIGHTS

Below is a snapshot of input collected through the THIRD PHASE of engagement.
For more information, see ***Phase 3 Engagement Summary Report*** (separate document).

OUTREACH

- Media Release
- CVRD Update Newsletter
- Social Media
- Interest Groups E-notification
- **Public Referral**

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Presentation to RPTC

Online Comment Form

33
Participants for the Plan Review Form



OVERALL SUPPORT FOR THE PLAN

COMMENT **THEMES**

- Need to be **opportunitstic**
- **Interest groups and partners** collaboration
- **Biodiversity** and **restoration**
- **Stewardship** focus
- **Holistic** vs. human-centred
- **Conservation** priority
- Support for **funding** / taxes
- Connections beyond jurisdiction **boundaries**
- Consideration of **existing parks**
- Nature-based **learning** and interpretation
- Protection of **large areas** (minimize fragmentation)
- Barriers with **private land ownership**
- **Climate change** impacts
- E&N corridor
- Waterfront "Blue" **access**
- Public **safety**

KEY CHANGES TO THE PLAN*

1. CLARIFYING OPPORTUNITIES AND ROLES FOR INTEREST GROUPS AND PARTNERS
2. CLARIFYING THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT DIRECTION STATEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS
3. STRENGTHENING REFERENCE TO BIODIVERSITY, RESTORATION, AND STEWARDSHIP

*For full details on changes to the Plan, see the ***Phase 3 Revisions Table*** (separate document).

A.4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

To look ahead with clarity, it is useful to understand key points from the recent past that have made the way for the newly formed CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Service (2022).

FORMER REGIONAL PARKS SERVICE

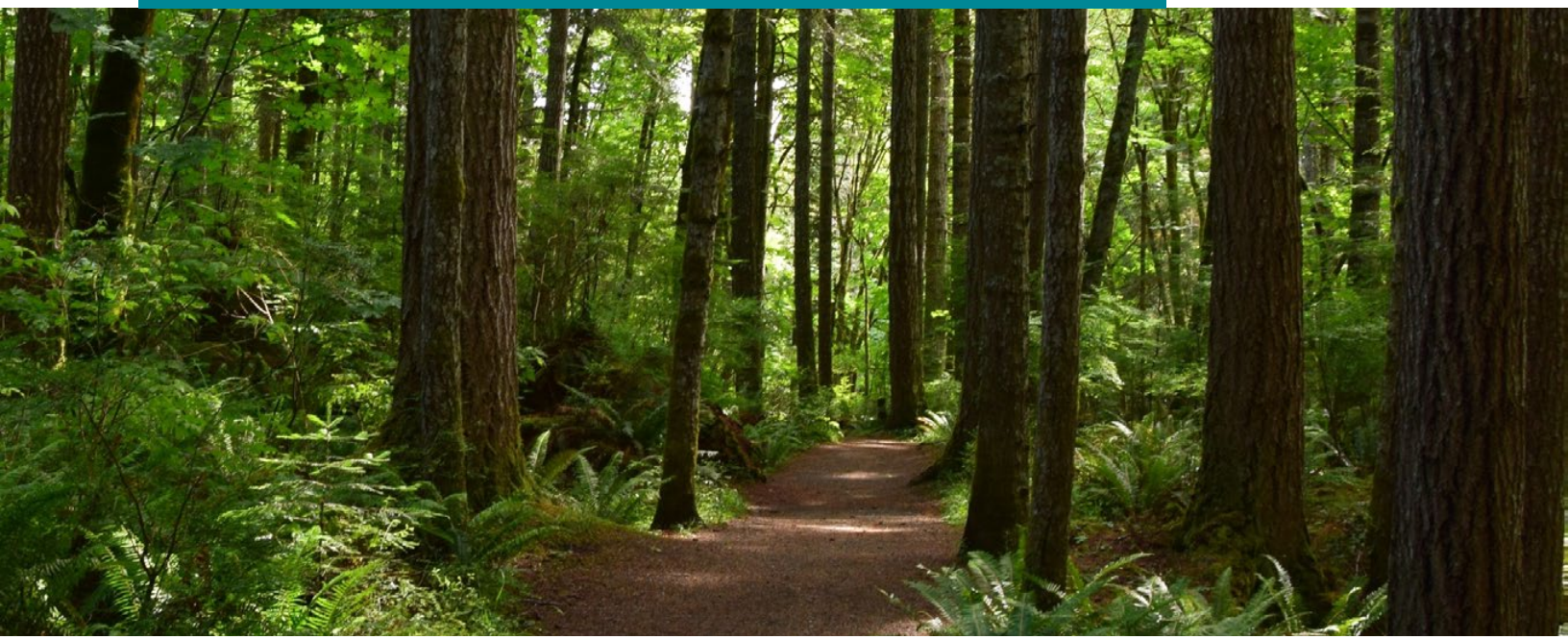
1971 | The Comox Strathcona Regional District (CSRD) establishes a Regional Parks Service intended to raise funds, acquire lands, and develop park management plans.

1992 | The process and planning source book "Establishing a Vision for Parks within the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona" is published.

Late 1990s | The CSRD Regional Parks Service is made dormant after a number of attempts to expand and bolster the function of the service. The Comox Valley has been without any regional parks function since 1998.

February 2008 | Following a strategic reorganization process, the CSRD is dissolved and replaced by the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) and the Strathcona Regional District (SRD).

Key Electoral Area Parks, such as Seal Bay Nature Park, are important legacies of the former Regional Parks Service.



BACKGROUND STUDY AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

December 2020 | The CVRD Board directs staff to carry out a *Regional Parks Background Study* to explore the potential establishment of a Comox Valley Regional Parks Service.

2021 | A regional parks Working Group comprised of staff from the Regional District and each of the member municipalities and electoral areas is formed to promote a collaborative environment and to guide the *Background Study* process. Neilson Strategies is hired to deliver the *Background Study*.

Early 2022 | The *Regional Parks Background Study* is completed. The study provides information about what regional parks are, why regional parks services get established, service model considerations, and what a regional parks service in the Comox Valley could look like if a service were to be established. The study is presented to the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland, and CVRD Board.

Spring 2022 | After reviewing the *Background Study* and hearing from the regional parks Working Group to inform their decisions, each of the region's Municipal Councils and the CVRD Board pass motions in support of establishment of a Comox Valley Regional Parks and Trails Service.

Fall 2022 | The Comox Valley Regional District formally establishes a Regional Parks and Trails Service in September 2022. The Regional Parks and Trails Service Bylaw (No. 719) defines the governance model, funding and operational structures, and regulatory requirements for the service.

Spring 2023 | The CVRD initiates a process to develop a Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan (this process) to provide clear direction for the new service. The process is planned to carry out from spring 2023 through fall 2024 (see **Figure 11 (p.91)** for more information).

NEW REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS SERVICE (2022)

The *Background Study* (2022) explored the details, options, and core considerations for the governance and formation of the Regional Parks and Trails Service. The Service's Bylaw (No. 719) was established based on the following:

Service Focus

- The protection and preservation of regionally significant natural areas while providing opportunities for public access and enjoyment; and
- The development of a network of regional trails or "greenways".

Participating Areas

- Full participation by all members within the CVRD. "Full participation" means that all existing CVRD electoral areas and member municipalities participate, with no exemptions.

Service Area

- The service area boundaries are the boundaries of the CVRD.

Funding

- The *Background Study* (2022) indicates that property value taxation is the most common method for funding parks services and that it is the most equitable form of taxation. The bylaw outlines that funding of the Service shall be covered by one or more of the following funding strategies:
  - Property value taxes
  - Parcel taxes
  - Fees and charges
  - Revenues raised by other means authorized by the *Local Government Act*
  - Revenues received by way of agreement, enterprise, gift, grant, or otherwise

The Strategic Plan explores funding strategies further as Planning Tool **P5**, see **p.58**.

GOVERNANCE OF REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS

A key part of establishing the Regional Parks and Trails Service was creating the governance structure, which is centred around the Regional Parks and Trails Committee (RPTC).

K'ómoks First Nation is integral to this service and the CVRD and K'ómoks are working together to confirm how K'ómoks wishes to be involved in the governance of the service. This is reflected as Objective 1, Action 1 of the Strategic Plan (see **p.19** for more information).

The adjacent figure summarizes the current governance structure for the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

Regional Parks and Trails Committee (RPTC)

The RPTC is a standing committee of the Regional Board that is responsible for the administration and operation of the Regional Parks and Trails Service. The RPTC consists of members who are elected officials from each member municipality and electoral area.

Decision Making

The RPTC has a customized voting structure that is summarized by the following points:

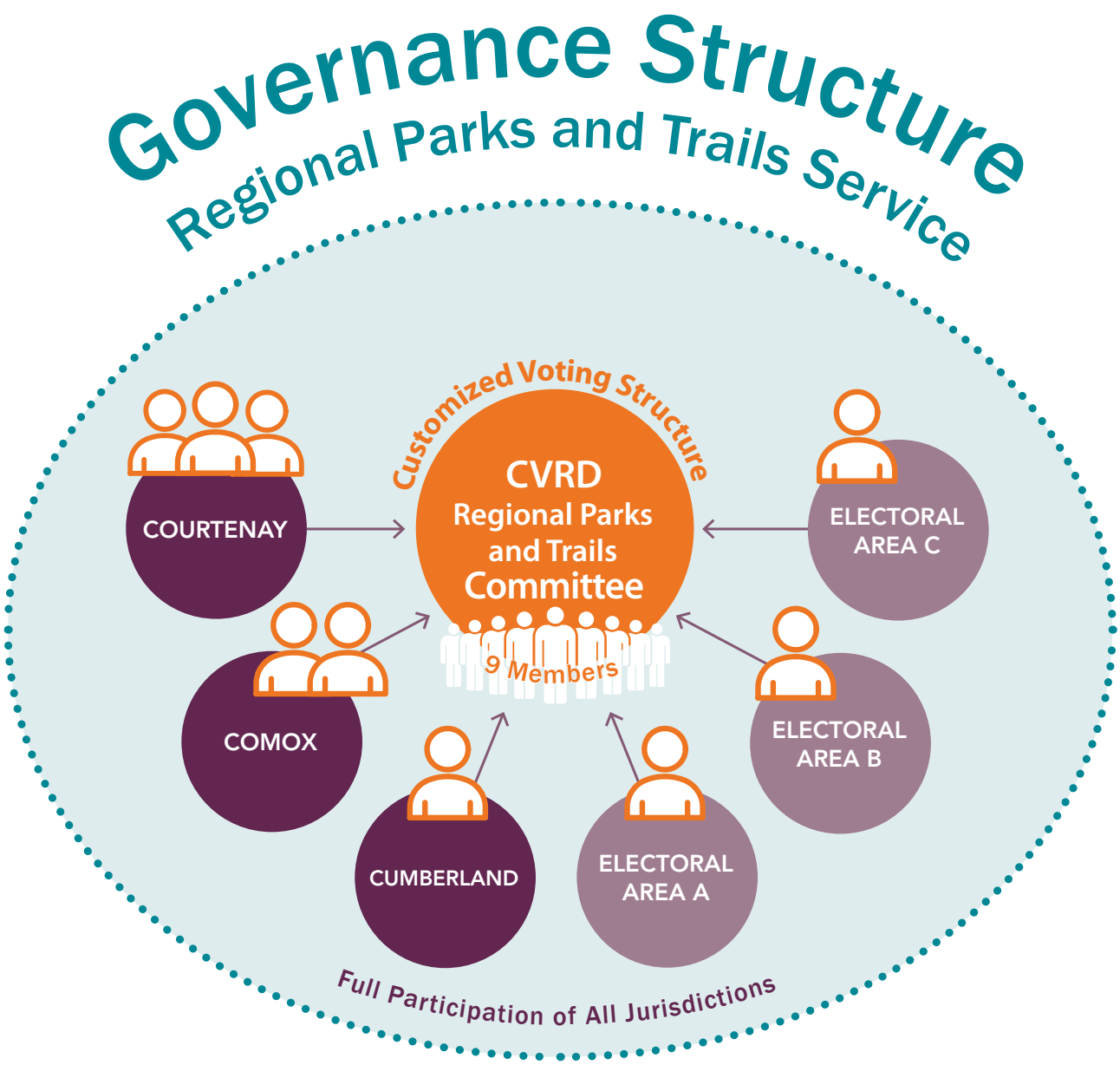
- Each participating area (municipality or electoral area) receives one vote for every 10,000 population with one member appointed for each vote – e.g., Courtenay has a 2021 census population of +25,000, and therefore receives 3 votes, or Electoral Area A has a 2021 census population of ~8,000, and therefore receives 1 vote.
- Voting for the securement of real property requires at least 75% affirmative vote – e.g., based on 2024 members, this would require affirmative votes from 7 of 9 Committee members.
- Voting for all other decisions and recommendations requires an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) – e.g., based on 2024 members, this would require affirmative votes from 6 of 9.

In the final decision making process the CVRD Board uses the voting rules of the *Local Government Act (RSBC, 2025, C.1):*

- Voting and Board of Directors composition is proportional to member population
- Electoral areas are provided one vote per every 1,500 population

Figure 12: Current Governance Structure for the Regional Parks and Trails Service

Note: the diagram illustrates the governance structure at the time of Strategic Plan writing (2024). The structure may evolve or be updated in the future.



A.5 BENEFITS OF REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS

"Leisure activities, parks, and greenspace are essential to our physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual well being, to our overall quality of life, to the environment, and our economic sustainability."

(CPRA, and The National Benefits Hub)

The far-reaching benefits of parks and trails are becoming increasingly well known, and because of these broad benefits, communities are recognizing these spaces as an essential public service. In recent years there has been a focus on evidence-based research by national, provincial, and local government organizations to help quantify and further understand the benefits of parks and trails. The summary message of this work is that these spaces are critical to the ongoing resilience of our environment and to the health and well-being of nearby communities.

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and affiliated consortium, the Benefits Hub, identify a four-category framework of organization for the benefits of parks and recreation: personal, social, economic, and environmental. This framework (illustrated in **Figure 13**), includes the same pillars that many organizations use for sustainability frameworks.

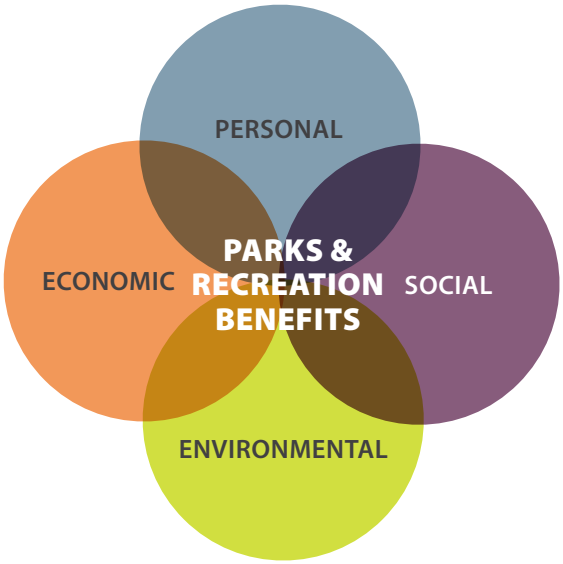


Figure 13: Benefits of Parks and Recreation

The wealth of information gathered by the CRPA and National Benefits Hub is summarized by the following 8 outcome summary statements for the benefits of Parks and Recreation.

PARKS AND RECREATION...

- Are essential to personal health as active living is a key determinant of health status
- Are key to balanced human development
- Are essential to the quality of life and place
- Reduce self-destructive and anti-social behaviours
- Build strong families and healthy communities
- Reduce health care, social service, and police/justice costs
- Are significant economic generators for a community
- Parks, open spaces, and natural areas are 'greenspace' essential to well being and our environmental psychological survival

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- **Protected biodiversity,** supporting a diverse range of plant and animal species, as well as entire ecological communities.
- **Enhanced environmental connectivity,** supporting linkages that reduce fragmentation and support resilient ecosystems.
- **Preserved representative landscapes,** illustrating the unique natural character of the CVRD.
- **Ecosystem services,** like water filtration, pollination, carbon sequestration, flood management, climate mitigation, and more.
- **Recognition of and support for Indigenous traditional practices** including rights to harvest and caring for natural systems.

SOCIAL BENEFITS

- **Social connection opportunities,** through provision of engaging, outdoor, nature-based opportunities that welcome people of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic classes.
- **Celebration of unique local culture,** by protecting, honouring, and recognizing aspects of K'ómoks First Nation and CVRD communities.
- **Preservation of sense of place,** through protection of valued landscapes and provision of opportunities to view and experience them.
- **Opportunities for education** about the region's natural and cultural heritage.
- **Support to the Regional Growth Strategy**, setting aside protected natural spaces that help buffer and focus growth.

PERSONAL BENEFITS

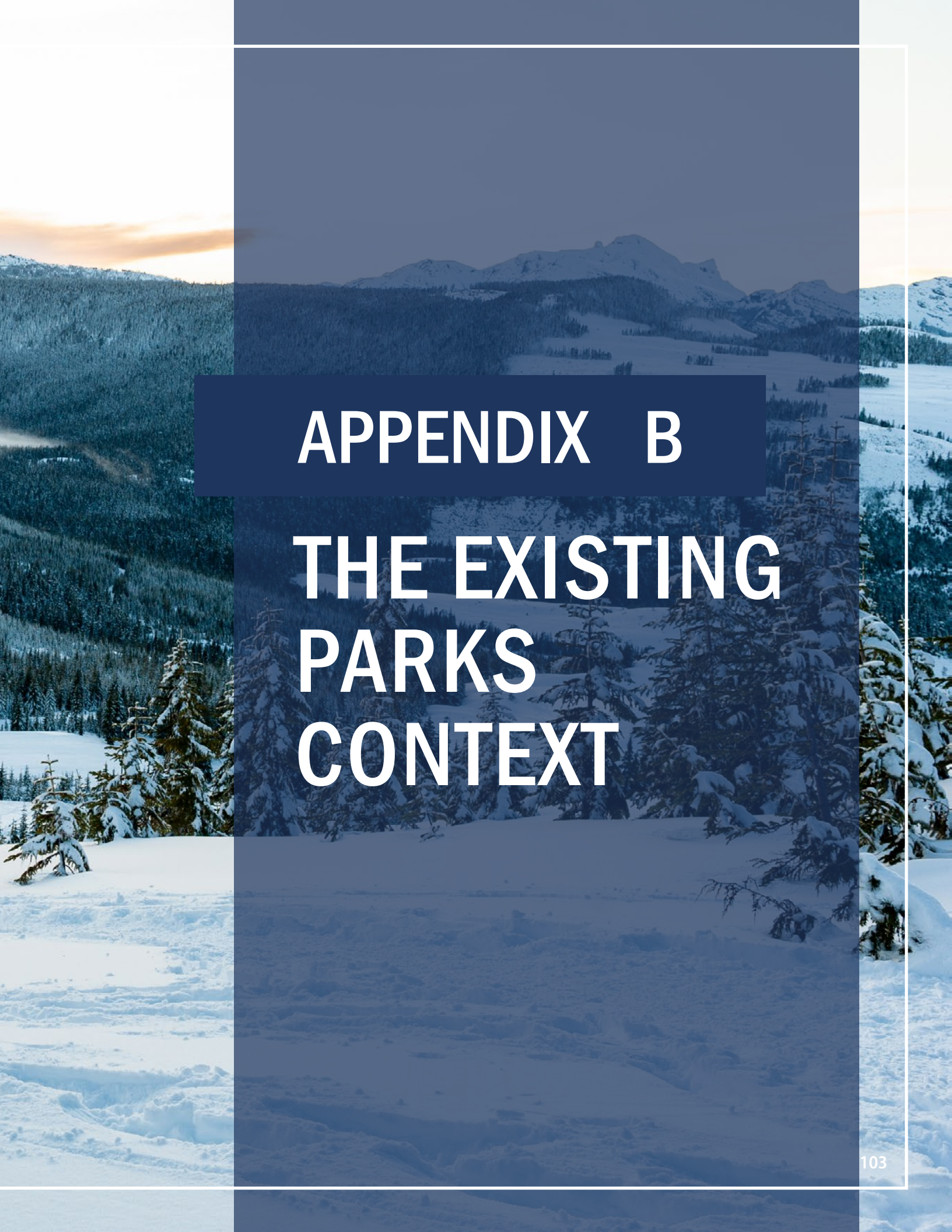
- **Improved physical health,** by providing opportunities for outdoor, nature-based activity which is known to reduce risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, youth obesity, adult obesity, chronic conditions, and more.
- **Improved mental well-being**, by providing opportunities for connecting with nature which is known to reduce stress and increase psychological health.
- **Reinforcement of positive behaviours,** helping to support individuals to reach their potential and reduce self-destructive behaviours.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- **Enhanced regional attraction,** helping to retain existing residents and attract new residents and visitors.
- **Support for regional tourism,** expanding opportunities to experience the area.
- **Employment creation and support,** including direct and indirect jobs as well as attraction of skilled labour and businesses to the region.
- **Increased individual productivity,** due to the positive physical and mental health benefits for individuals, helping to reduce chronic health conditions and negative social behaviours.
- **Potential to reduce costs** from natural disaster and emergency response needs, through support for climate change adaptation and ecosystem services.

For more information on benefits see the ***Regional Parks and Trails Service Background Study (2022).***





APPENDIX B

THE EXISTING PARKS CONTEXT

THIS SECTION EXPLORES further details of existing parks and trails in the Comox Valley, key points of context relevant to planning and regulating Regional Parks and Trails, and culminates with an analysis summary of key trends, challenges, gaps, and opportunities for this Service.

B.1 PARKS AND TRAILS IN THE REGION TODAY

Across jurisdictions, there is a mosaic of parks, trails, and conservation lands in the CVRD that make-up the protected parkland areas of the region today. Ranging from alpine snow to seaside surf, these protected areas hold significant cultural, natural, and recreational importance.

It is a shared undertaking to protect the region's biodiversity and sensitive ecosystems while also providing quality nature-based recreation opportunities. Each party that manages parkland or protected area in the CVRD plays a critical role in meeting the overall conservation and recreation needs of the region. The scope of this broader network – the parkland spectrum – is introduced in **Section A.1 (p.86).**

Numbers at a Glance

Key figures for parks and trails in the region today

~252,000 ha	total CVRD land area
261	parks or protected area sites
+22,000 ha	dedicated as park or protected area
8.7%	of the region's land area is designated as park or protected area
<2%	of the region's land area is protected by regional or municipal parklands
+91%	of the region is not formally protected through a park or protected area designation

Building on the introduction in Section 1, there are a range of parks systems and other protected areas within the region:

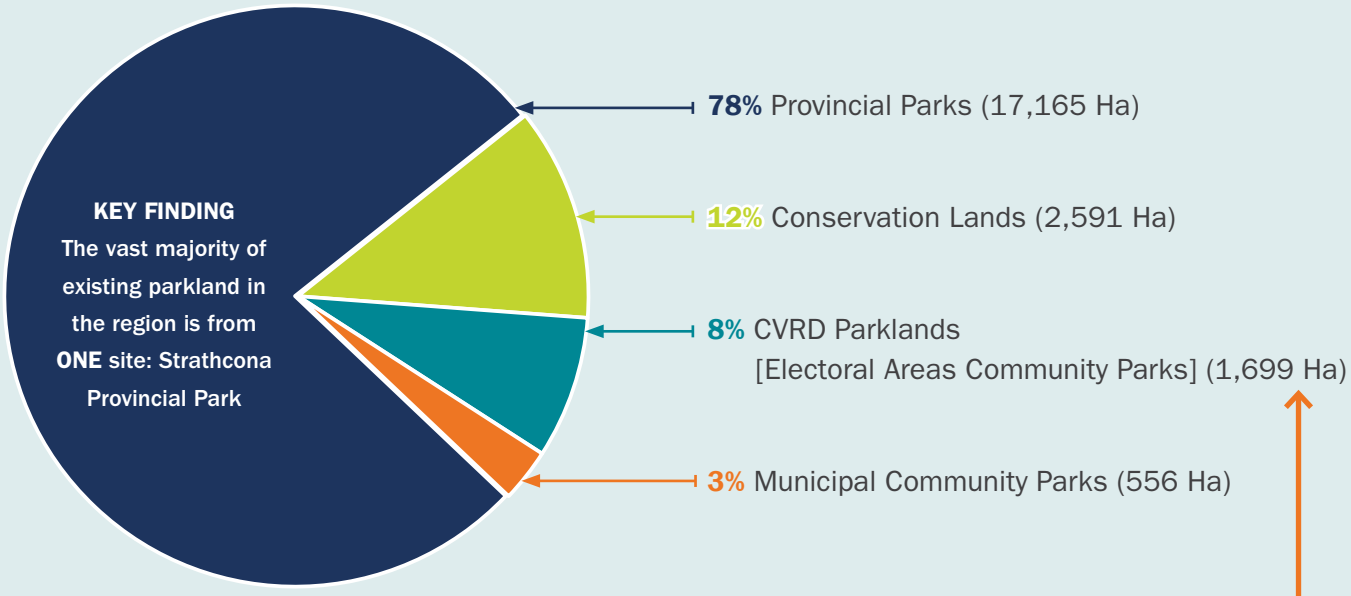
- The three categories of parks within the Regional District are Regional Parks, Community Parks, and Provincial Parks.
- There are also conservation areas and other protected areas (ecological reserves and wildlife management areas). These areas are managed by a combination of government and non-government organizations as per the following table.
- There are no Federal or National Parks within the boundaries of the CVRD.

TABLE 10: MANAGEMENT JURISDICTIONS FOR PARKLANDS AND PROTECTED AREAS IN THE CVRD

CATEGORIES	MANAGEMENT JURISDICTIONS
REGIONAL PARKS	■ Comox Valley Regional District
COMMUNITY PARKS	■ Comox Valley Regional District (Electoral Areas) ■ City of Courtenay ■ Town of Comox ■ Village of Cumberland
PROVINCIAL PARKS	■ BC Parks (Province of BC)
ECOLOGICAL RESERVES	■ BC Parks (Province of BC)
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS	■ Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (Province of BC), and The Nature Trust of BC
CONSERVATION LANDS	■ The Nature Trust of BC and various non-governmental organizations (e.g., Comox Valley Land Trust, Ducks Unlimited, Islands Trust Conservancy, Denman Conservancy Association)

PARKLAND SUPPLY IN THE REGION

Data Source CVRD GIS, 2023

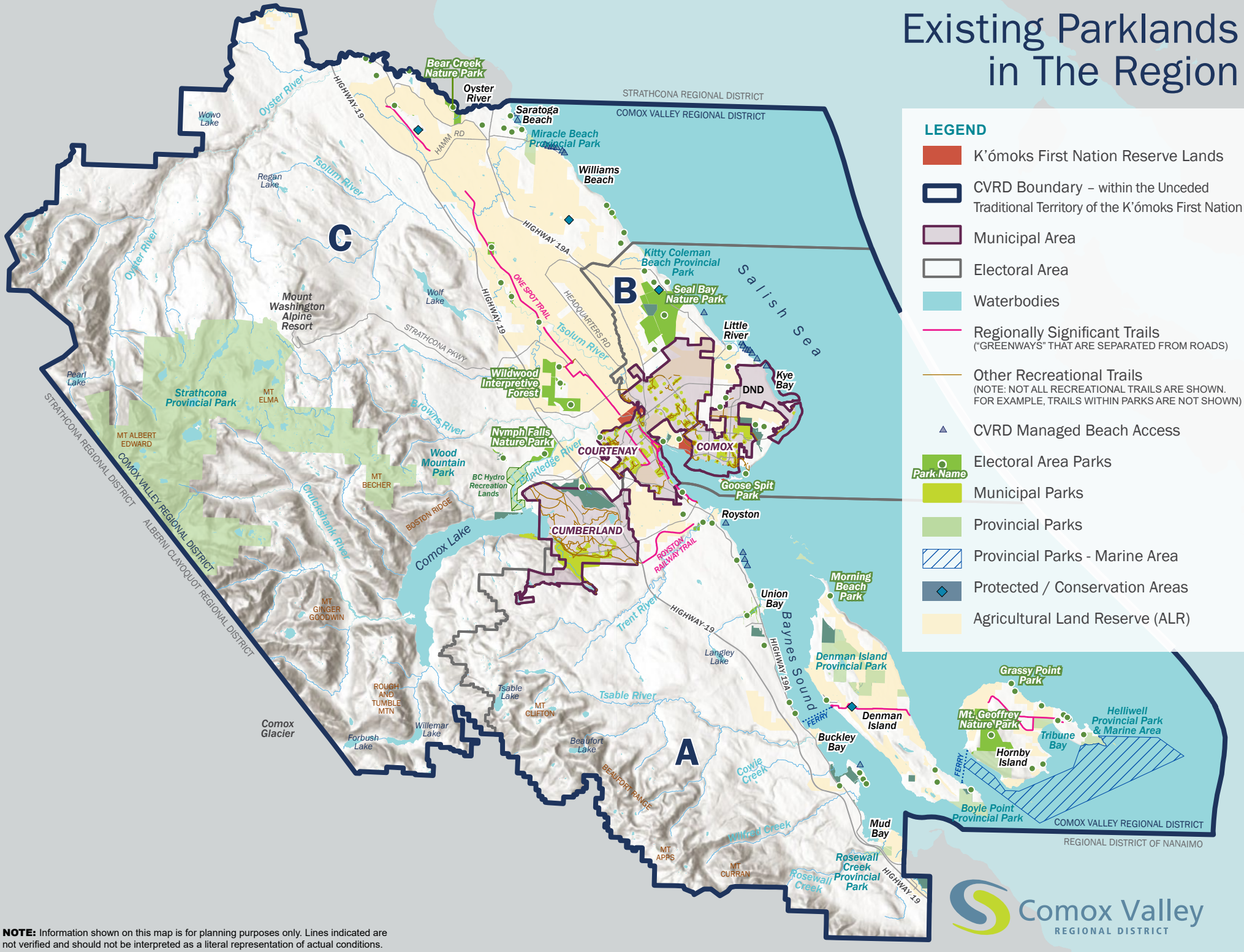


KEY FINDING – CVRD Parklands are >8% of the parklands in the region and >1% of the CVRD Land Area

TABLE 11: PARKLAND SUPPLY IN THE REGION (2023)

JURISDICTION	NUMBER OF PARK SITES	Total Area of Park Sites (ha)	Percent of Total Parkland in the CVRD	Percent of CVRD Total Land Area
Regional Parks and Trails	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Electoral Areas Community Parks	**77**	**1699**	**8%**	**0.7%**
Electoral Area A	32	456	2%	0.2%
Electoral Area B	17	677	3%	0.3%
Electoral Area C	28	566	3%	0.3%
Municipal Community Parks	**137**	**556**	**3%**	**0.2%**
City of Courtenay	85	183	1%	0.1%
Town of Comox	35	126	1%	0.1%
Village of Cumberland	17	247	1%	0.1%
Provincial Parks	**13**	**17165**	**78%**	**6.8%**
Conservation Lands and Other Protected Sites	**34**	**2591**	**12%**	**1.0%**
TOTAL	**261**	**22,011**	**100%**	**8.7%**

Existing Parklands in The Region



NOTE: Information shown on this map is for planning purposes only. Lines indicated are not verified and should not be interpreted as a literal representation of actual conditions.



CVRD Parks staff manage a wide array of Electoral Area Parks and Greenways, such as Pinecrest Skills Park in Area C.

B.2 CVRD PARKS TODAY

It is important to acknowledge the existing Electoral Areas Parks Services that are operated by the CVRD. These services are distinct from the Regional Parks and Trails Service.

In 2024, there are three Electoral Area Parks Services:

- Baynes Sound, Areas B and C Parks and Greenway Service, Function 621
- Hornby Island Parks and Greenways Service, Function 620
- Denman Island Parks and Greenways Service, Function 619

The CVRD Parks department is currently structured and resourced to plan, manage, and operate the Electoral Area Parks services, which include the following:

- 74 parks and greenways encompassing 1,389 ha
- 24 marked beach accesses
- 33 km of greenways
- 77 km of trails

Electoral Area Parks and Greenways are managed by the region (the CVRD), but are not Regional Parks and Trails. The following section explores the differences between the existing parks systems in the region and how Regional Parks and Trails will fit within this broader context.



It is important to step back and look at the big picture in order to understand how Regional Parks and Trails can best contribute to the region.

B.3 PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

Parks and trails are an essential community service that is influenced by a number of local, regional, provincial, and national plans. Looking at all scales of relevant policies and plans provides an important foundation for aligning the CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan within this broader context.

TABLE 12: POLICY AND PLAN CONTEXT

National

- Truth & Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action
- Canada's National Active Transportation Strategy (2021)
- A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy (2020)
- One with Nature: A Renewed Approach to Land and Freshwater Conservation in Canada (2020)
- Let's Get Moving: A Common Vision for Increasing Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada (2018)
- Parks for All: An Action Plan (2017)
- A Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015)
- Connecting Canadians with Nature: An Investment in the Wellbeing of Our Citizens (2014)

Regional

- Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) (2008)
- CVRD Regional Parks Background Study (2022)
- Regional Climate Action Strategy (in progress 2024)
- Comox Lake Watershed Protection Plan (2022)
- Active Transportation Network Plan (2021)
- Nature Without Borders (2013)

Provincial

- BC Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework (Draft 2023)
- BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2019)
- Move, Commute, Connect: BC's Active Transportation Strategy (2019)
- Protecting Our Legacy Together: BC Parks Future Strategy (2016)
- Active People Active Places: BC Physical Activity Strategy (2015)
- BC Provincial Trails Strategy (2013)

Local

- Rural Comox Valley Official Community Plan (2014)
- Rural Comox Valley Parks and Greenways Strategic Plan (2011)
- Denman Island Parks and Greenways Master Plan (2010)
- Courtenay Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2019)
- City of Courtenay Official Community Plan (2022)
- Connecting Courtenay: Transportation Master Plan and Cycling Network Plan (2019)
- Town of Comox Official Community Plan (2011)
- Village of Cumberland Official Community Plan (2014)
- Village of Cumberland Parks and Greenways Master Plan (2014)

Key Findings

A summary of the key findings from planning and policy applicable for Regional Parks and Trails is summarized in **Section B.7 Trends and Opportunities (p.120)**

CVRD PLANNING CONTEXT

The CVRD is a complex and interconnected region. Planning helps the region get organized and stay focused so that progress is sustained and important projects get done. **Figure 14** provides a summary of how the region's plans work together.

Key Alignment

Goal 2 of the RGS: Ecosystems, Natural Areas, and Parks

"Protect, steward, and enhance the natural environment and ecological connections and systems."

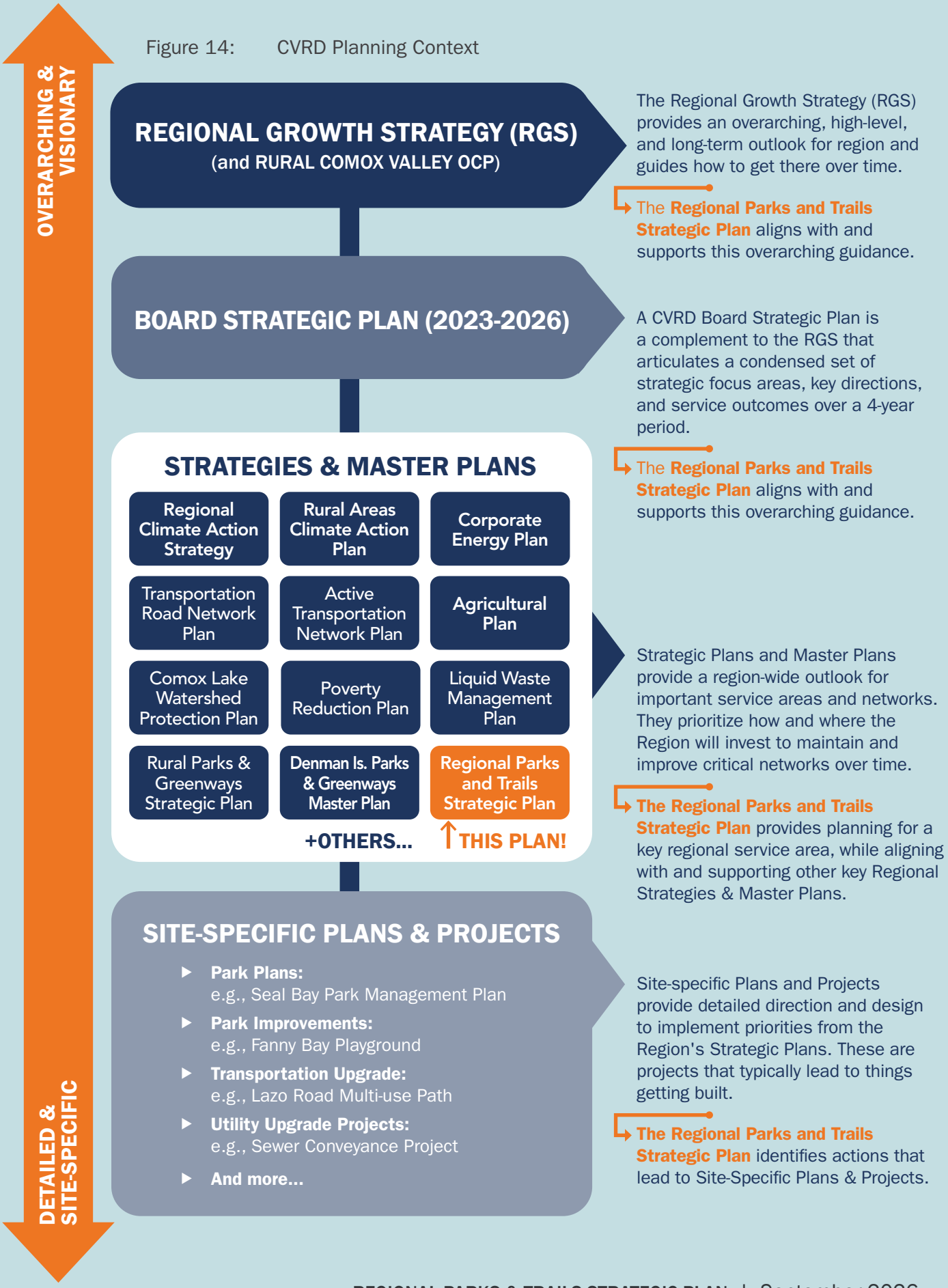
Alignment of the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan with the Region's guiding documents will help advance common goals, support efficient use of resources, and increase potential to secure external funding from senior levels of government. While there are numerous plans to consider for context, the key plans for Strategic Plan alignment include.

- **Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) (2008)**
- **Regional Climate Action Strategy (in progress 2024)**
- **Active Transportation Network Plan (2021)**

Other key documents that inform the Strategic Plan are:

- **CVRD Regional Parks Background Study (2022):** The study process and the resulting document provided guidance to the CVRD elected officials in their decision to establish the Regional Parks and Trails Service. The *Background Study* content informs ongoing work for moving the service forward after establishment, including informing this Strategic Plan, the pending Land Securement Strategy, and future works.
- **CVRD Regional Parks and Trails Service Bylaw No. 719 (established 2022):** This bylaw brings forward key directions explored in the *Background Study* to form the service scope, funding strategies, and governance model for the RPTC.
- **Nature Without Borders (2013):** This document is currently being updated. Although the 2013 document is more than a decade old, it offers a wealth of knowledge about the landscapes and ecosystems of the Comox Valley, and key considerations for conservation and protection of natural areas in the region.

Figure 14: CVRD Planning Context



LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The CVRD uses a range of land use planning and regulatory tools to achieve responsible land use and environmental protection on public lands. Parkland dedication is only one land-use tool to help protect environmentally and culturally significant sites.

The table below summarizes key federal, provincial, and local legislation and regulations that are relevant for Regional Parks and Trails planning. The sections of legislation referenced below all support the protection of environmentally and culturally significant areas.

TABLE 13: KEY LEGISLATION AND BYLAWS

FEDERAL	■ Fisheries Act ■ Migratory Birds Convention Act ■ Species at Risk ■ Wildlife Act
PROVINCIAL	■ Agricultural Land Commission Act ■ Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act ■ Forest and Range Practices Act ■ Heritage Conservation Act ■ Riparian Area Regulations (RAR) and Protection Act ■ Water Sustainability Act
REGIONAL / LOCAL	■ Building Permits ■ OCP Development Permit Areas (DPAs) ■ Zoning Bylaws ■ Covenants

PARKS SERVICE BYLAWS

Bylaws are used to regulate local parks services. There are six (6) existing local parks services, and the Regional Parks and Trails Service (Bylaw No. 719, 2022) is the seventh in the region. See the figure below for a visual summary of the parks and trails services in operation in the region today.

Figure 15: Parks Service Bylaws in the Region



B.4 REGIONAL GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Gaining an understanding of the CVRD's current and forecasted population and demographics helps to understand demand for parks and trails in the region.

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY (RGS)

The RGS identifies the following 10 "major trends", which are still applicable:

1. The Comox Valley is a growing region
2. The population is rapidly aging
3. Affordability is a growing issue
4. Working with the environment is vital
5. Job creation is a challenge
6. A concerted effort is required to increase transportation choices
7. A strong local food system is becoming critical
8. A response to climate change is required
9. Improve and plan for long-term public health and safety
10. Support economic development opportunities for the K'ómoks First Nation

POPULATION GROWTH

The CVRD is growing well above the provincial average, with projections to exceed 100,000 residents before 2040:

- As of 2021, the CVRD is home to an estimated **72,445 residents.**[1]
- Between 2016 and 2021, the Region saw a **growth rate of 8.9%** over 5 years[1] (average annual growth rate 1.8%/year), well above BC's growth rate of 7.6% for the same period.[1]
- The BC Stats population projections are for significant growth for the CVRD in the 2021-2026 period, and then continued growth, but at a decreasing rate from 2026-2041.[2] The projections are as follows:
  - **89,960** residents by 2031
  - **103,668** residents by 2041

POPULATION AGE

The Comox Valley has one of BC's oldest age demographics:

- The last BC census, completed in 2021, identified a median age for the CVRD of **50.8 years** (holding the same as from 2016). This is significantly above BC's median age of 42.8 years.[1]
- As of 2021, the CVRD's largest age group is **60-64 years**, with the next three highest age groups being 65-69 years, 55-59 years, and 70-74 years, respectively.[1]
- Though the Comox Valley has experienced a **4.1%** rise in its working age population (15-64 years) since 2016, the number of people aged 65 and over has increased by **19.7%** during the same period.[1] This means that the CVRD's working age population is getting proportionally smaller.
- As of 2021, 28% of the CVRD population was over the age of 65, and an additional 16% were aged 55-64 (for a total of **44%** over the age of 55).[1] It is projected that by 2040, the portion of the population over 55 years will be slightly reduced (to ~41%).[2]

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1 *Statistics Canada, Census Profiles: CVRD 2016, CVRD 2021, BC 2016, BC 2021*

2 *BC Stats Population Estimates & Projections for British Columbia: Comox Valley Regional District, years 2026, 2031, 2040, 2041*

B.5 CULTURAL CONTEXT

The landscapes of the Comox Valley are shaped by cultural practices and tell the story of the region. The region today represents a variety of cultures.

Since time immemorial, K'ómoks First Nation have been the traditional keepers of this land. K'ómoks follows Indigenous laws and assert Indigenous Rights protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act*. In 2019, the Province of BC enacted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* that includes a five-year action plan to advance reconciliation in tangible and measurable ways between 2022-2027.

Key articles that are relevant for Regional Park and Trails are:

- **Article 11** that acknowledges Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural transitions and customs
- **Article 31** that recognizes that Indigenous people have the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

The CVRD can support reconciliation in many ways. This Strategic Plan identifies actions highlighted in **Objective 1 Work Together with K'ómoks First Nation** (p.19).

Modern history in the region was focused on resource-based industries such as mining, logging, and fishing. In recent generations, these industries have shifted, and are less central to the daily lives of many. This shift presents opportunities to connect people to place through interpretation and information about the past as well as opportunities to restore or rethink how places could be if protected as Regional Park or Regional Trail in the future.

B.6 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Vancouver Island's eastern coastal lowland (where the CVRD is centrally located) and adjacent Gulf Islands comprise a unique ecological region in Canada due to the mild climate, long growing season, and variety of ecosystem types. This ecosection supports many rare species of plants and animals as well as a variety of productive ecosystems that are not found anywhere else in the country.

CVRD 6 REPRESENTATIVE LANDSCAPE TYPOLOGIES

The Comox Valley Regional District includes diverse physical landscapes that are summarized by the following list of typologies:

- Oceanfront
- Lakefront
- Rivers/streams
- Mountain/Alpine
- Forest
- Wetlands/Estuary

The region includes a full range of natural features from coastal mountain upland, to low lying foothill and valley lands, to a complex network of freshwater, to the K'ómoks Estuary, and finally to the coastal areas of the Salish Sea. The K'ómoks Estuary is a noteworthy feature in the Comox Valley as one of only eight Class 1 estuaries in British Columbia.[1] There are 4 Biogeoclimatic Zones identified in the Comox Valley: Coastal Western Hemlock, Coastal Douglas Fir, Mountain Hemlock, and Coastal Mountain Alpine.[2] The varied landscapes of the region provide important habitat for many species of flora and fauna.

SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS

In the early 1990s, senior levels of government and conservation partners commissioned a Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI) for Eastern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. The objective was "to identify areas of greatest ecological concern…to promote a proactive approach to land use decisions." The project included the low elevation portion of the Comox Valley, and indicated that less than 8% of the SEI project area was occupied by intact sensitive ecosystems (1992).[3] Intact areas are defined as undisturbed by human activities including land clearing, logging, urban and rural development, roads, and mechanized recreation. Further SEI reviews have been carried out for data years 2002 and 2012 to track changes. The SEI work has identified 9 sensitive ecosystems in the region (see **Table 14** on the following page).

1 *Project Watershed - Keeping it Living Comox Valley (www. projectwatershed.ca)*

2 *Nature Without Borders Second Edition (2013)*

3 *Comox Valley Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory Disturbance Assessment (2014)*

Figure 16: Comox Valley Sensitive Ecosystem Status[4]

The 2014 SEI was completed by the Comox Valley Land Trust (CVLT) in partnership with the CVRD. It revealed that less than 5% of the previously extensive and connected ecosystems remain intact (note that this SEI work reviewed data up to 2012, but reporting and mapping work dates from 2014-2018).

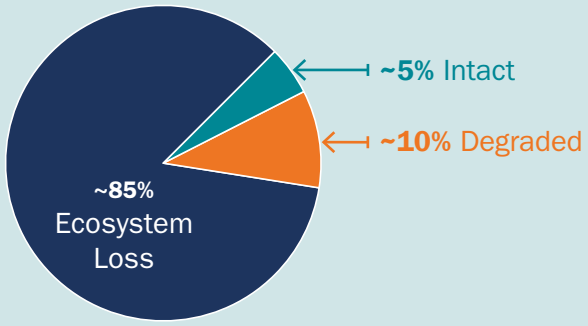


TABLE 14: THE NINE SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS[5]

SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEM TYPE	DESCRIPTION
COASTAL BLUFF	■ Vegetated rocky islets, shorelines and coastal cliffs (Note: the 2014 SEI noted this ecosystem type as the most impacted, with 100% modified by disturbance between 1992 and 2012, leaving 0% intact).
SPARSELY VEGETATED	■ Dunes, spits, and inland cliffs
TERRESTRIAL HERBACEOUS	■ Mosaics of coastal grassland meadows and moss-covered rock outcrops
WETLAND	■ Marshes, fen, bogs, swamps, shallow water, and wet meadows
RIPARIAN	■ Vegetated floodplains, stream and lake shores, and gullies
WOODLAND	■ Open forests dominated by deciduous trees with canopy cover less than 50% (e.g., Garry Oak woodland)
OLDER FOREST	■ Forests older than 100 years, dominated by conifers
OLDER SECOND GROWTH FORESTS	■ Large stand of conifers 60-100 years old (Note: the 2014 SEI noted this ecosystem type as the second-most impacted, with 98.4% modified by disturbance, leaving 1.6% intact)
SEASONALLY FLOODED AGRICULTURAL FIELDS	■ Surrogate habitat for wetland species when natural wetland habitat is lost

4 *Ecosystem Status Map, prepared for the Comox Valley Land Trust (2018)*

5 *Nature Without Borders Second Edition (2013)*

B.7 TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Trends – local, regional, provincial, and national – affect parks and trails in every community. They influence the tendencies and preferences of society, as well as highlight key challenges to focus actions for improvement. Based on current information, several trends warrant consideration within the specific context of the Comox Valley Regional District. These trends inform the Strategic Plan along with ongoing planning, development, and management of the network as it grows.

12 KEY TRENDS relevant to CVRD Regional Parks and Trails planning:

Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

The path to truth and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is ongoing and complex. Reconciliation requires efforts from all levels of government, businesses, and individuals. Regional Parks and Trails are an opportunity to move forward together, with a focus on the land and its features that have been stewarded by First Nations since time immemorial.

Adapting to Climate Change

As the local climate changes, the CVRD will not only experience hotter summers and wetter winters, but also a greater frequency of natural disasters such as wildfires and floods. Parks and trails planning will need to be done with a climate change adaptation and mitigation lens, with consideration for how to reduce risks, maximize benefits, and anticipate how people will use parks spaces during increasingly extreme conditions (e.g., extreme heat events increasing demand for water access points). Regional Parks and Trails will have an important role in mitigating climate change risks including flood, drought, wildfire, and sea level rise.

Protecting Sensitive Ecosystems

The unique climate and geography of the CVRD make it home to a large number of threatened, endangered, and rare species and ecosystems. Freshwater and saltwater shorelines, forests, coastal bluffs, wetlands, alpine hillsides, meadows, and more are among the complex and sensitive landscapes that characterize the region and are recognized for their inherent value. Regional Parks and Trails planning will contribute to the ongoing protection of these important natural spaces.

Increasing Demand for Parks and Trails

Parks and trails are becoming increasingly important to balance modern lifestyles. The COVID-19 pandemic saw increased use in outdoor park areas. This shift is having a lasting impression in habits and use of parkland. At the same time, outdoor recreation activities and preferences are evolving. Parks and trails on Vancouver Island are seeing an wider range of use as technology advances allow for safer backcountry access, and the community comes up with creative ways to stay active.

Increasing Competition for Land

Vancouver Island and the Comox Valley are in a state of growth, welcoming many new residents each year. As demands for lands to support industry and development increase, competition and costs for available lands will also increase. This emphasizes the importance of identifying and acting upon high priority land securement interests.

Shifting Technology

Advances in technology change the way we connect to our environment, the way we participate in recreational pursuits, and how we share information. Technology will increasingly shape parks and trails planning, programming, and interaction within these spaces. For example, outdoor recreation technology such as e-bikes is opening up recreation sectors to increasingly diverse participants and better online information is enhancing awareness about opportunities available.

Connecting the Region

With affordability of the automobile decreasing and concerns about climate change increasing, residents continue to seek alternative ways to move around the region. Recreational greenway routes, outside the roadway network, can provide sustainable, attractive opportunities for movement while creating corridors that link ecosystems and wildlife routes.

Providing Inclusive Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Parks have a unique role to play in public services, setting a precedent and providing places that are welcoming to all ages, abilities, and interests. Considerations to improve equitable access to parks are key at all levels of services in the region.

Activating Health and Well-being

The lifestyle of many Canadians, including in the Comox Valley, are affected by technology advances and economic changes including increased workforce participation and more sedentary lifestyles. Flexible, convenient, diverse recreation opportunities, like those provided in Regional Parks and Trails, can help busy people get active and outdoors.

Responding to Growth & Shifting Demographics

The Comox Valley region's rapidly growing population means there will be more demand placed on parks, trails, and associated amenities. At the same time, the region's median age has been rising steadily. As the population of those no longer in their working years grows proportionally larger, more older adults may be accessing Regional Parks and Trails.

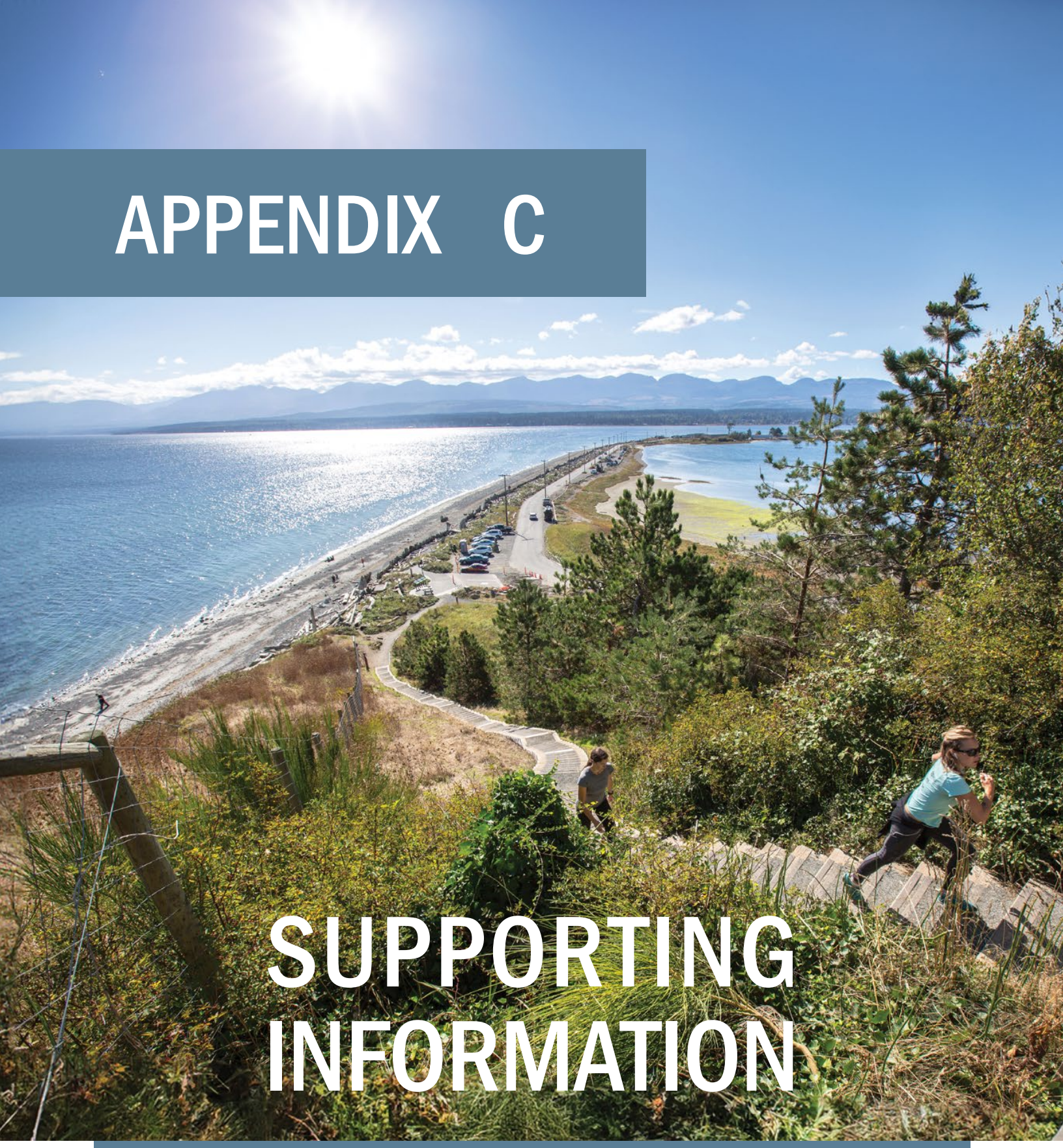
Supporting Social Challenges

The big picture challenges of Canadian society today include housing affordability, homelessness, addiction, and mental health. Social challenges can disproportionately affect parks and trails, affecting operational demands, and requiring collaborative and compassionate responses.

Planning for Sustainable Service Delivery

The CVRD is in a period of "catch-up" with the establishment of the Regional Parks and Trails Service. There will be pressure to acquire and add new parkland and complete capital improvements, but it will be equally important to balance network with effective management and operations so that quality is maintained. Effective partnerships and volunteer programs may support a growing and diversifying network.

APPENDIX C

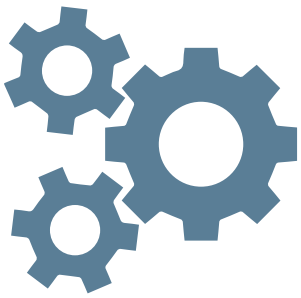


SUPPORTING INFORMATION

It is important to provide support at each step of the way to achieve the actions and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

This section of the Strategic Plan is a reference for relevant supporting information to carry out individual actions of the Strategic Plan.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION



- **A** Areas of Interest
- **B** Visitor Experience
- **C** Regional Trails
- **D** Recreational Trail vs. Active Transportation
- **E** Partnerships
- **F** Volunteer Program
- **G** Policies & Bylaw
- **H** Design Guidelines and Standards
- **I** Maintenance Guidelines
- **J** Management Plans

SUPPORTING INFORMATION



Look for this icon in the objectives section of the document to link back to specific planning tools

A AREAS OF INTEREST

The Strategic Plan process gathered significant collective knowledge and input for areas of interest for future Regional Parks and Trails.

Through workshops, interest group meetings, surveys, open houses, online sessions, and online mapping, hundreds of ideas for areas of interest were captured.

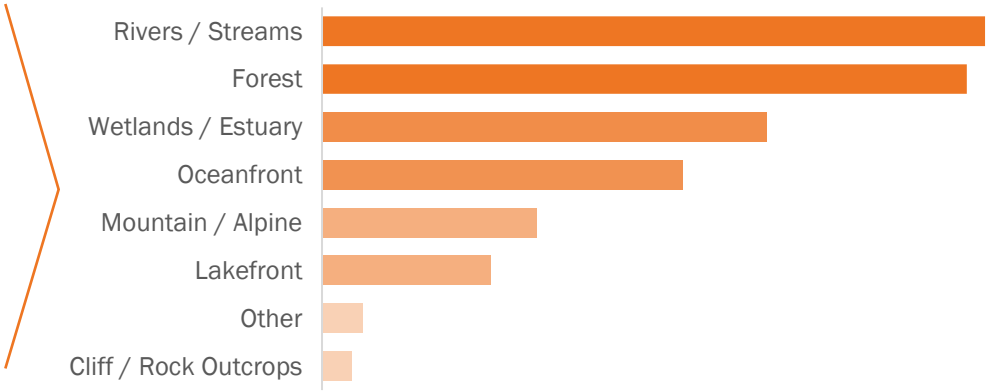
Because areas of interest can be under varying ownership and can have a range of securement, development, or use interests, the details received are kept confidential to protect potentially sensitive information. Therefore, the areas of interest input is summarized in the Strategic Plan by themes (see the following page), rather than by specific locations. The detailed information captured informs this Strategic Plan, and will be used as the service develops its detailed Land Securement Strategy (LSS).

What We Heard

Priorities for Landscape Types to Represent in Future Regional Parks

Q: At a high level, which landscape types do you think are MOST IMPORTANT to represent in our Future Regional Parks?

This input helps inform priorities for future land securement



Areas of Interest Contributions



Areas of Interest Themes

The following types of areas have been identified for future Regional Park and Trail consideration:

Representative Landscapes:

- Oceanfront
- Lakefront
- Rivers / Streams
- Mountain / Alpine
- Forest
- Wetlands / Estuary

Sensitive Ecosystems:

- Coastal Bluffs
- Terrestrial Herbaceous
- Older Forest
- Woodlands
- Cliff / Dune / Spit
- Wetlands

Corridors:

- Connections to core communities
- Vancouver Island Trail ("Spine Trail")
- Waterfront Trails

Unique Natural Features:

- Significant trees
- Rock formations
- Waterfalls
- Panoramic views
- Mud flats

Natural Recreation Features:

- Freshwater Paddle Sport Areas
- Swimming Holes
- Backcountry Access
- Beach Access
- Biking Areas
- Fishing Areas
- Horseback Riding Areas
- Rock Climbing Areas
- Skiing / Snowshoeing Areas

Unique Cultural or Heritage Features

B VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The following are highlights of what we heard to provide high quality visitor experience in Regional Parks and Trails. These are not evaluation criteria, but rather considerations to provide in select locations within the overall network.

Diverse Trail Networks

Outdoor recreation is evolving and there are gaps in meeting the diverse outdoor recreational trail interests of residents and visitors in the CVRD. To support diverse recreational trail networks and uses in Regional Parks and Trails, the CVRD will:

- Identify areas where recreation use is appropriate using the Nature Recreation Zone and Natural Environment Zone (Management Zones)
- Partner with user groups to build out trail networks
- Minimize user conflicts by providing activity-optimized networks in select locations (e.g., mountain biking or equestrian trail riding)

Waterfront or 'Blue' Access

There are gaps in providing waterfront access for nature-based recreation in the CVRD. Waterfront access, sometimes referred to broadly as 'Blue Access', is broken down into freshwater access (lakes and rivers) and ocean access. Comox Lake is the primary location for freshwater recreation. However, Comox Lake is also the region's water supply and has limited access. There are limited other lakes in the region suitable for nature-based recreation like swimming and paddlesports. There are many rivers and streams, but these have limited public park accesses. With summer heat waves intensifying, the demand for recreational water access is also intensifying. The CVRD will:

- Work with partners to identify and secure waterfront access suitable for nature-based recreation

Interpretive Opportunities

To support interpretive opportunities in parks for self-guided learning and appreciation, the CVRD will:

- Plan for interpretive signage and features as part of Management Plans and site development
- Coordinate with partners to create interpretive content

What We Heard

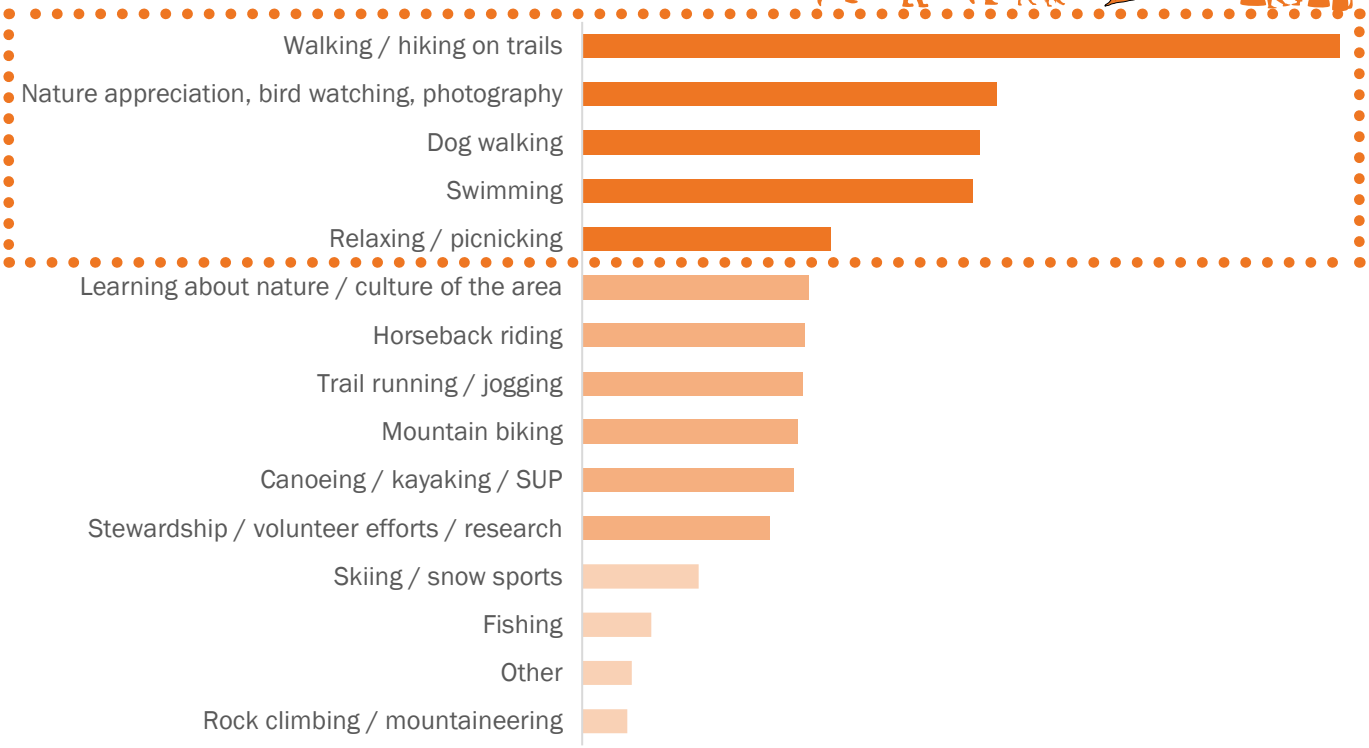
Diverse interested to connect with nature

TOP NATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES

Q: What are the TOP NATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES that you will seek in future CVRD Regional Parks?

Top 5 Nature-Based Activities







Key Findings:

- The strong majority of participants indicated walking/hiking on trails is the primary activity interest for future Regional Parks and Trails.
- All of the top activities require minimal equipment or amenities.

- The TOP 5 most sought after activities are:
  1. Walking / hiking on trails
  2. Nature appreciation, birdwatching, photography
  3. Dog walking
  4. Swimming
  5. Relaxing / Picnicking

Education and Learning Opportunities

Regional Parks and Trails have great potential to deepen visitor experience and connection to nature through learning. Learning opportunities build understanding about the natural and cultural features the region, and support ongoing stewardship and connection to Regional Parks and Trails. To support educational opportunities within parks, the CVRD will:

- Identify locations most suited to providing education programs
- Coordinate with partners (e.g., School District, post-secondary institutions, and community groups) to establish outdoor learning environments using Regional Parks and Trails through park use permits
- Through Management Plans, support education programs with consideration for amenities such as:
  - Area for bus parking / pull-off
  - Drinking water access
  - Washroom (vault toilet, composting toilet, or plumbed washroom)
  - Nature-based gathering area
  - Shelter (e.g., seasonal tarp, stretch-tent, yurt, or overhead structure)

Inspiration from the Cumberland Lake Park Society where there is a season stretch tent that supports education programs



All Ages and Abilities

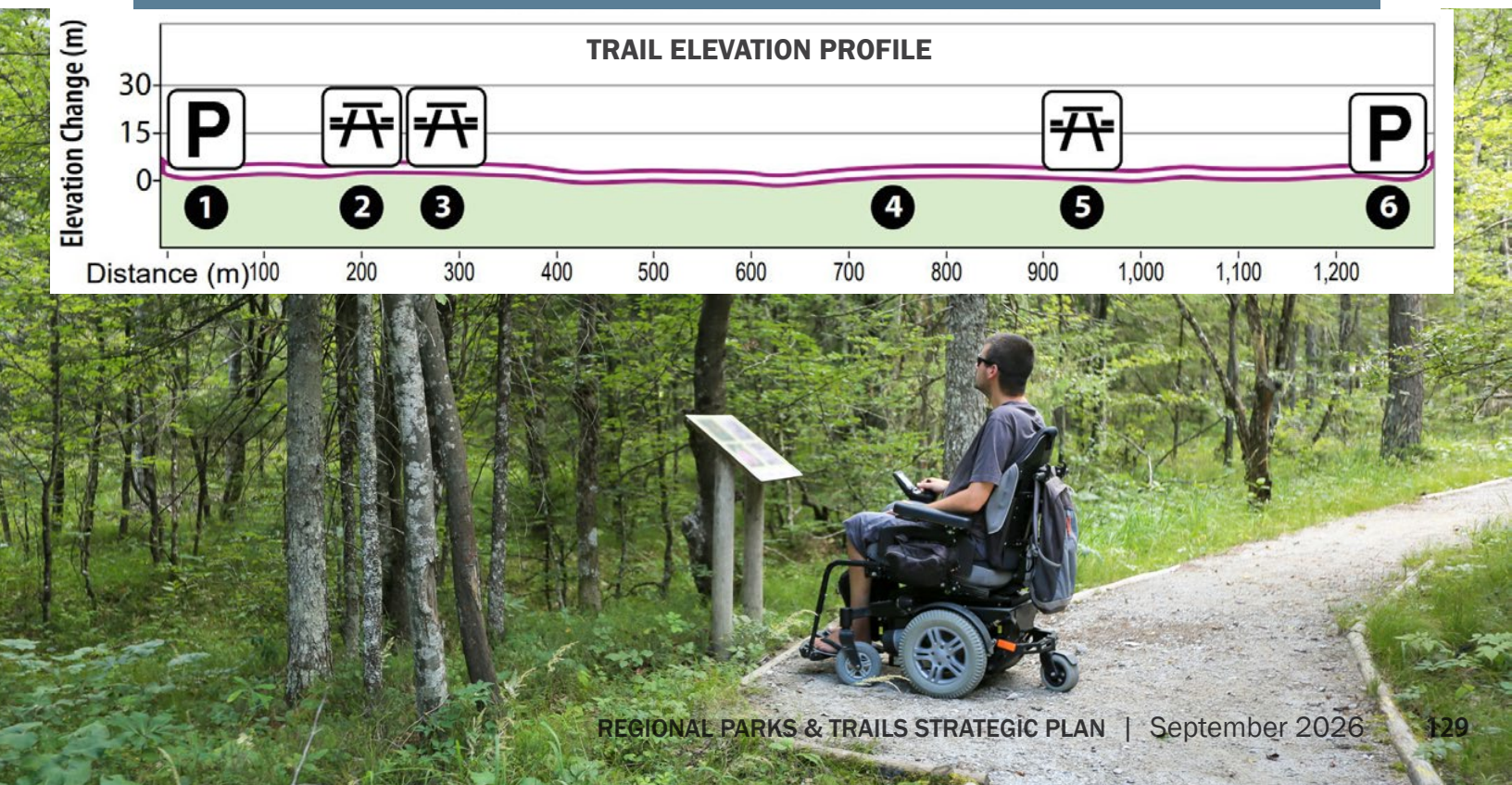
Communities across Canada are becoming increasingly diverse, with people of all ages, needs, abilities, and interests seeking recreational opportunity. It is important to consider how there can be inclusive and accessible experiences.

The CVRD will Identify opportunities to provide access for all ages and abilities within Regional Parks and Trails, while acknowledging many areas with have access limitations to support conservation, low-impact amenities, and natural topography.

Select considerations for accessibility in Regional Parks and Trails:

- **Trail loops and surfacing** - provide trail loops or areas within a park's trail network that are accessible to a range of ages and abilities (e.g., gentle grade, no physical barriers such as stairs or steps).
- **Trail information** - provide trail information that allows park users to make their own assessment of a trail's accessibility. This means providing a detailed site map, elevation profile information (see image example below), trail route distances, level of difficulty, trail material, width, and description of surfacing / likely features (e.g., gently rolling, compacted gravel, free of roots, large rocks, or stairs).
- **Waterfront access** - provide universally accessible water access opportunities through infrastructure such as beach mats and wheel rails on ramps and docks.
- **Washrooms** - where washrooms are provided, design or select facilities that meet American Disabilities Association (ADA) accessibility guidelines.

Inspiration for creating opportunities for all ages and abilities in Regional Parks and Trails



C REGIONAL TRAILS

Balancing Regional Parks and Regional Trails

As per the title, the Regional Parks and Trails Service was established not only to create Regional Parks, but also to create Regional Trails. Regional Parks and Regional Trails have different characteristics and purposes within the network.

Due to the inherent difference in characteristics, it is recommended that the evaluation of Regional Trails using the Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework (see Planning Tool **P2** for more information) are tracked on a separate list from the evaluation of Regional Parks. This will produce two separate lists of securement recommendations:

- Regional Park Securement Recommendations List
- Regional Trail Securement Recommendations List

These lists can then be considered concurrently for balanced implementation of Regional Parks and Regional Trails.

The anticipated risk of evaluating opportunities for Regional Parks and Trails together in the same list is that ratings may exclude or prioritize one over the other (e.g., the 10 top rated opportunities are Regional Parks, with no Regional Trails). The intent is to develop a network that includes both Regional Parks and Trails. Therefore, priorities for securement should reflect both Regional Parks and Regional Trails.

D RECREATIONAL TRAIL VS. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Recreational trails and active transportation are handled differently in different regions. In the CVRD, the focus of the active transportation network is for on-street components, where recreational trails focus on off-road connections. The figure below summarizes the relationship and differences of these systems.

Of course, there are areas of overlap between the systems. Regional Trails are recreational trails, but they will link with active transportation routes. The opportunity for overlap emphasizes the importance of ongoing collaboration between Regional Trails planning and active transportation planning to prioritize and plan projects that maximize regional benefit.

Figure 17: Recreational Trails vs. Active Transportation Routes

	RECREATIONAL TRAIL Routes that provide fun outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences	ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ROUTE Routes that provide safe, reliable transportation between community destinations
PRIMARY PURPOSE		
PLANNING & MANAGEMENT	**PARKS DEPARTMENT** Planned as part of the parks and trails network and guided by this Strategic Plan and the Rural Comox Valley Parks and Greenways Strategic Plan	**ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT** Planned as part of the transportation network and guided by Transportation Master Plans
SCOPE	Trails network including nature trails, narrow multi-use trails, and major multi-use pathways	Transportation network including roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, mobility hubs for transit connections, and multi-use pathways
TYPICAL LOCATION	Off-street locations, primarily in parks and open spaces	Within road rights-of-way, typically parallel to the street network or between properties
TYPICAL FACILITIES & MATERIALS	Longer routes, primarily nature trails or narrow multi-use trail types, and typically soft surface materials	Varied lengths, from long routes to pedestrian access points in neighbourhoods, primarily sidewalks, bike lanes, and major multi-use trails, and typically hard surface materials
TYPICAL ACTIVITIES	Walking, hiking, mountain biking, jogging, dog-walking, nature viewing, relaxing, and other recreational pursuits	Cycling and pedestrian routes that help people choose active transportation for day-to-day travel
	THESE NETWORKS ARE COMPLEMENTARY. Of course, there is always some overlap. Some active transportation routes offer both active transportation and recreational trail benefits.	

E PARTNERSHIPS

The following organizations are anticipated to be partners in the delivery of the Regional Parks and Trails network. Key considerations for each group are outlined on the following pages.

- K'ómoks First Nation
- Provincial Government
- Member Municipalities
- Neighbouring Regional Districts
- Conservation Organizations
- Community Organizations and User Groups
- Private Forest Landowners
- Other Landowners

K'ómoks First Nation

Working together with K'ómoks First Nation is **Objective 1** of the Strategic Plan (see p.19).

The CVRD recognizes lands within the Regional District are subject to First Nation title interests. Some of these lands are the subject of land claims and may be acquired by First Nations through treaty negotiations with the federal and provincial governments.

Provincial Government

Crown Lands

The Regional District will work proactively with the Province to communicate the details of the Regional Parks and Trails Strategic Plan and the pending Land Securement Strategy. For parkland securement, there may be opportunities for Crown land transfers or joint management agreements.

The CVRD will work with the Province to:

- Understand the inventory of Crown lands within the Regional District that have potential to support the Regional Parks and Trails network.
- Determine the best methods for achieving tenure of specific Crown lands desired for Regional Park and Trail purposes, such as long-term tenure, free Crown Grant, access agreements, securement through future development, or purchase.
- Ensure there is no conflict with Treaty negotiations or existing Provincial Land Use Plans on lands being considered.

Provincial Parks and Protected Areas

In the region there are 15 Provincial Parks, 2 ecological reserves, 1 wildlife management area, and several conservation areas and lands with conservation covenants. The CVRD will work with the province to:

- Collaborate on a shared focus for protection and conservation with consideration for nature-based recreation.
- Identify opportunities where Regional Parks and Trails work together with Provincial Parks and Protected Areas to improve an interconnected network across region.
- Look for opportunities to connect with Strathcona Regional Park, the largest protected area in the region.



Partners from the Morrison Creek Streamkeepers, Comox Valley Land Trust, K'ómoks First Nation, CVRD Electoral Area C Director, and CVRD Board walk together at qax mot Conservation Area (purchased in partnership in 2019).

Provincial Road Rights of Way

Provincial road rights of way (ROW), managed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), could play a role in future Regional Parks and Trails. MOTI policy supports local and regional government development of trails within ROWS as a managed use. The CVRD will work with MOTI to:

- Coordinate access to future Regional Parks and Trails through MOTI rights of way.
- Plan future Regional Trail routes. Since Regional Trails are primarily intended to be off-road corridors (not on-road active transportation routes), undeveloped road rights of way will be of particular interest within Regional Trails planning.
- Establish permits for park or trail construction in road ROWs where they align with network planning. While a permit allows the permit holder to develop and maintain facilities within the ROW, the Province can reclaim the permit should it need the ROW to serve future transportation needs. Permits are issued on the basis that the permit holder takes on the responsibility for trail management and maintenance, liability, and responsibility for liaising with ROW neighbours.

Neighbouring Regional Districts

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) to the south, the Strathcona Regional District (SRD) to the north, and the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District to the west border the CVRD. The CVRD will work with neighbouring Regional Districts to:

- Conserve and protect natural and cultural features. Ecosystems, watersheds, and natural areas do not conform to jurisdictional boundaries.
- Collaborate to pursue opportunities for conservation, and to add Regional Parks and Trails that cross boundaries.
- Plan and manage linkages between trails networks. Connecting trails across Regional Districts can bring significant community mobility, environmental, and economic benefits.

Member Municipalities

Collaboration with the three member municipalities (Courtenay, Comox, and Cumberland) was essential to establish the Regional Parks and Trails Service, and will continue to be central to the governance and establishment of the network.

The CVRD will work with member municipalities to provide linkages from future Regional Trails to municipal/electoral area trail networks to promote and enhance connectivity of communities across the region.

Conservation Organizations

Conservation organizations play a key role in protecting and stewarding sensitive lands in the region. The CVRD will continue to collaborate with provincial and regional conservation organizations to:

- Identify mutual interests for conservation and protection.
- Seek collaborative securement opportunities.
- Manage and steward Regional Parks and Trails.
- Support efforts to continue inventorying and mapping of conversation values.
- Collaborate and share monitoring and reporting data.

Community Organizations and User Groups

Many park and trail development projects, along with ongoing maintenance and stewardship, are made possible through the efforts of community organizations and user interest groups. The CVRD will:

- Continue to collaborate with enthusiastic organizations such as hiking and mountaineering clubs, equestrian groups, and mountain biking clubs to integrate their participation in Regional Parks and Trails.
- Continue to work with existing community and user group partners in the planning and management of Regional Parks and Trails.
- Collaborate with organizations and interest groups to share data and reports relevant to Regional Parks and Trails and to carry-out ongoing stewardship, data collection, and monitoring.
- Endeavour to expand partnerships to a wider range of organizations to meet the objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Island Corridor Foundation (ICF)

The Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) is a non-profit society and federally registered charity established for the purposes of owning and managing the rail corridor on Vancouver Island. The foundation has a shared interest in providing an economic, social, and cultural link for communities and regions on Vancouver Island.



The Cumberland Community Forest has access agreements and an extensive network of trails that are a destination for mountain biking in the region and beyond.

Private Landowners

The CVRD, when compared to neighbouring regions and other regional districts throughout the province, has a large proportion of privately owned resource lands (focused on forestry lands), and a relatively small proportion of Crown lands.

Private forestry lands, through use agreements, play an important role in nature-based recreation in the region today. The Strategic Plan acknowledges that forestry lands are woven into many of the areas of interest for Regional Parks and Trails and that collaboration with private forest landowners will be essential in realizing opportunities for future Regional Parks and Trails in the CVRD.

The scope of work to establish a Regional Parks and Trails network will require partnerships of all scales – including with individual property landowners.

The CVRD will work with private landowners:

- To explore potential for achieving long-term tenure and protection of areas identified as high value and interest for Regional Park or Trail.
- Where long-term protection is not possible, work to establish access agreements where the CVRD assumes responsibility for conservation, trail development, maintenance, and public use liabilities.
- To educate the public that areas with access agreements for trails are still managed by the private landowner, and trail routes or the surrounding landscape may change over time.

F VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

The Comox Valley has active and willing community members to participate in the stewardship and improvement of parks and trails. Volunteer programs can support CVRD resources, create solid community partnerships, provide energy for initiatives, encourage public involvement, and build civic pride. Volunteers can be involved in the development of the Regional Parks and Trails network, and then play an increasing role for ongoing stewardship and enhancement of commissioned areas. To be successful, volunteer programs require staff time to coordinate.

Considerations for Regional Parks and Trails volunteer programs include:

- **Park or Trail Ambassadors:** Assist with maintaining and monitoring a specific park or trail area and supporting user education.
- **Environmental Stewardship and Monitoring Programs:** Provide opportunities for people to help protect natural areas such as streams, waterfront areas, or terrestrial environments.
- **Program Volunteers:** Provide program services to the community at no or low costs to encourage participation in outdoor recreation.
- **Project Volunteers:** Contribute to the development of a particular project that utilizes their specific skills or has meaning to them. e.g., park clean-up or planting days that allow people to engage in a specific, short-term project.

Refer to the ***Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement*** for information on auditing a volunteer program or other useful resources.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

A successful volunteer program typically requires:

- Identification of viable volunteer opportunities, the potential benefits from them, and the CVRD resources required to manage them.
- Identification of potential volunteer audiences, such as school groups, service organizations, clubs, and/or individuals.
- A clear process for volunteer participation including sign-up, training and supervision, participation requirements, reporting, and recognition.
- A communications program to share information with the community about volunteer opportunities.
- Consideration for safety, supervising, risk management, and insurance requirements.
- An approach on how the benefits and outcomes of programs will be documented, measured, and reported.
- Developing volunteer recognition programs.

G POLICIES AND BYLAW

With the establishment of the Regional Parks and Trails Service (Bylaw No.719), a new bylaw or bylaw update is needed to fill policy gaps for Regional Parks and Trails. The overall intent of policies for Regional Parks and Trails is to permit reasonable use for nature-based outdoor recreation and enjoyment while at the same time preserving and protecting natural park features and public safety.

The Comox Valley Regional District existing Bylaw No. 103 "Electoral Areas Parks Regulations Bylaw" provides rules and regulations governing use, management, improvement, operations, and control of regional district parks.

As part of filling policy gaps, there is an opportunity to include "modern" policy topics. Over recent years, there have been a few notable changes in policy from senior levels of government and in park use that warrant consideration to be included in bylaws for CVRD Electoral Area Parks and Regional Parks and Trails.

"Modern" bylaw topic considerations for parks and trails in the CVRD include the following (many jurisdictions around the province have updated bylaws to regulate these uses). Bylaws regulate the conditions of where and when the following uses can take place, and gives the CVRD legal right to enforce the bylaw regulations:

- **Smoking / Vaping in parks -** Vaping use has increased drastically over the last 10 years.
- **Cannabis consumption** - Cannabis became legalized in 2018.
- **Electric bikes (Ebikes)** - Ebike ownership and use has expanded significantly in the province and region over the last 10 years.
- **Homeless camping** - the BC Supreme Court ruled to grant homeless individuals the right to sleep and erect shelters in public spaces and parks.

There are several "standard" policy considerations along with the "modern" considerations. The overall policy topics for consideration for Regional Parks and Trails are captured in the table below:

Table 15: Policy Considerations for Regional Parks and Trails

Policy Considerations	
■ Uses in Regional Parks and Trails ■ Leave No Trace ■ Hours of Use ■ Dog Management ■ Motorized Vehicles ■ Horseback Riding (Equestrian) ■ Cycling ■ Electric Bikes (Ebikes) ■ Fire	■ Park Use Permit (Commercial Use, Special Events Use) ■ Alcohol and Controlled Substance Consumption (Smoking, Vaping, Cannibis) ■ Homeless Camping ■ Fees and Regulations ■ Enforcement

BYLAW ENFORCEMENT

In order for bylaws to be effective, they need to be enforced. The CVRD will:

- Work with bylaw officers to review new policies and regulations
- Identify issues and locations of recurring non-compliance (e.g, off-leash dogs, illegal dumping)
- Undertake targeted compliance patrols in priority areas to help address and correct known problems

H DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Design Guidelines and Standards provide clear direction for the planning, design, and construction of Regional Parks and Trails. Having standards provides efficiency in carrying out improvements and maintaining them over the long-term.

To develop design guidelines and standards for Regional Parks and Trails, use recognized standards (e.g., BC Parks and Parks Canada Design Standards) and any existing guidelines in place from CVRD Electoral Area Parks as a starting point, with customization to reflect the unique character and context of Regional Parks and Trails in the Comox Valley. The *Parks and Trails Design Guidelines and Standards* document should address both CVRD *Regional Parks and Trails* and *Electoral Area Parks and Trails*.

The topics to address for CVRD Regional Parks and Trails are as follows:

- Arrival and access amenities
- Park furniture
- Washrooms and structures
- Signage and wayfinding
- Trails
- Planting
- Maintenance

See the table on the following page for considerations and more information on these topics.

LOW-IMPACT APPROACH

The construction and maintenance of outdoor facilities can have impacts on the natural environment, and it is important to minimize impacts in Regional Parks and Trails. In recent years, a variety of new tools, techniques, and equipment have been developed to improve past practices, reducing the overall impact of new facilities and limiting life cycle costs.

The CVRD will design Regional Parks and Trails to reduce the requirement for ongoing maintenance through a variety of means, including:

- Providing trails that respond to both user desire lines and landscape form;
- Developing facilities that are robust and vandal-resistant;
- Developing vegetation management plans that align with the surrounding natural areas and use native plant material;
- Coordinating park planning and design with stormwater management plans and objectives;
- Designing, building, and managing facilities in high use areas such as park entrances and picnic areas to maintain them in a high-quality state;
- Constructing facilities in areas outside high use zones to a more rustic level; and
- Always recognizing that some maintenance will be required.

DESIGN GUIDELINES TOPICS

A preliminary list of topics that may warrant consideration in design and maintenance guidelines for Regional Parks and Trails are outlined below. It is anticipated that a comprehensive list will be created through the guideline development process:

TABLE 16: DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES TOPICS

Candidate Topic	Considerations	
Arrival and Access	■ General ■ Vehicle access ■ Parking ■ Drop-off zones ■ Pedestrian crossings ■ Park entries, fencing & gates	■ Transit access ■ Emergency access ■ Accessibility ■ Safety and CPTED considerations
Park Furnishings	■ General ■ Picnic Tables ■ Benches ■ Waste / Recycling Receptacles	■ Potable Water ■ Bicycle Racks ■ Bollards
Washrooms and Structures	■ Vault Toilets (or composting) ■ Washrooms ■ Picnic Shelters ■ Viewing Areas	■ Docks / Piers ■ Boat ramps and launching facilities ■ Storage / Amenity Buildings
Signage and Wayfinding	■ General ■ Materials and standards ■ Location signs ■ Welcome / trailhead signs	■ Regulatory signs ■ Directional signs ■ Trailmarkers ■ Interpretive signs
Trails	■ General siting and design ■ Widths ■ Surfacing materials ■ Grading and drainage - bench cuts, switchbacks	■ Stairs ■ Railings, fences or barriers ■ Boardwalks
Planting	■ Materials selection ■ Design - spacing, sightlines, locations ■ Species	■ Soil management ■ Planting preparation and techniques
Maintenance	■ Maintenance Levels ■ Maintenance Frequency Tables (daily, weekly, monthly, seasonally, long-term, ongoing, etc.)	■ Sustainable Lens ■ Climate Action and Emissions

MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

Formalizing maintenance guidelines supports proactive management and planning for operations. It is anticipated that the CVRD will coordinate guidelines for both Regional Parks and Trails and Electoral Area Community Parks and Trails.

Key considerations for outlining guidelines for maintenance include:

- **General framework** - Create the guiding framework for the system with considerations for low-impact maintenance, nature-friendly practices, and climate action through greenhouse gas emissions reduction, etc.
- **Maintenance levels** - Establish a system of maintenance levels using existing standards like the BC Landscape Standard or Canadian Landscape Standard (CLS) as a starting point.
- **Maintenance frequencies** - Establish tables for frequencies of maintenance activities (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, seasonal, bi-annually, annually, long-term, ongoing) according to maintenance levels.

J MANAGEMENT PLANS

A park or trail management plan is a document that guides the development, use, and ongoing management of an individual site with specific considerations to the site's natural resources, environmental values, and designated purposes, along with aspirations of the community and the available resources of the CVRD.

Once a new Regional Park or Trail is acquired, before it is commissioned for public use, direction needs to be established through creation of either:

- **Management Direction Statement:** Where deemed appropriate (e.g., less complex site, intent to maintain site status quo, interim measure for a more complex site), prepare a Management Direction Statement (MDS) that outlines the values of the area, the site's classification, permitted uses, management concerns and issues, and immediate management objectives and strategies. Reach out to key interest groups for input in creating the MDS. This process provides a simpler and less resource intensive option than completing a Management Plan. A MDS, along with the Strategic Plan, guides the management of a site where a Management Plan is not required or is not yet complete.
- **Management Plan:** For more complex sites (e.g., multiple interest groups, interest to change the site status quo, high level of public interest), a more comprehensive process, engagement scope, and detailed plan for future improvements is required. A Management Plan often requires 1-2 years to complete, and is reviewed by the RPTC.

A Regional Park or Trail Management Plan should, at a minimum, cover the following topics:

- Purpose of the plan
- Engagement process and input
- Inventory – biophysical, archaeological, historical, cultural, and recreational (focused on input from interest groups and existing data)
- Environmental and cultural protection measures
- Public safety
- Suitability assessment – types of outdoor nature-based recreational uses that are compatible and where they are permitted
- Classification and Management Zones
- Legislative framework and strategic document review – including for wildfire management, climate action, transportation, stormwater, sensitive ecosystems, and ecosystem services
- Site plan – including boundaries, Management Zones, location of facilities, etc.
- Key actions to be taken over the next 10 years (e.g., invasive species management, new trailhead, trail development)
- Implementation strategy – prioritizing actions with a schedule and budget

Regional Park and Trail Management Plans will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis (e.g., every 10 years) to accommodate new information, opportunities, and changes in direction.

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Each individual management plan shall carry out engagement specific to the plan. The level of engagement process (two or three phases) and engagement audiences (interest groups, general public, etc.) should be tailored to the needs of an individual process through the preparation of an engagement plan.



APPENDIX D

P1 DRAFT LAND SECUREMENT PROCESS

The following is the content from the P1 within the Strategic Plan adopted in 2024 (P1 in the document body was updated following the Land Securement Strategy adoption, September 2026)

P1 DRAFT LAND SECUREMENT PROCESS*

* For the updated P1, see the updated Strategic Plan document p.35 or the Land Securement Strategy (2026)

STAGE 1: COMPILE & CATEGORIZE CANDIDATES

The Regional Parks and Trails program will continue for decades, with new assets added over time. While initial planning will focus on highest priorities, a list of all candidates will be maintained as an ongoing resource.

1A Prepare Candidate List

Compile a full list of candidate site ideas for which K'ómoks First Nation has not identified an independent interest. Development of the list will include input from the Regional Parks and Trails Committee (RPTC), Working Group, partners, and interest groups. This step will involve working with K'ómoks to identify any land for which there may be interest in co-securement, co-management, or an Indigenous led management model (such as Indigenous Protected Conservation Areas).

For candidate site ideas that are geographically broad and not location specific (e.g. access to a river or lake), complete an initial GIS-informed analysis to identify candidate Regional Park or Trail sites. Include high-level descriptive information about the location and key characteristics of each candidate site.

1B Categorize Candidate List

Sort the compiled list by the following two categories to produce two lists: one for sites with **Regional Park** potential (Regional Conservation Area potential is included in this category, see **P3 Classifications** for more information) and one for sites with **Regional Trail** potential. This separation recognizes that the evaluation of linear trails will differ from parks/conservation areas due to their different characteristics.

STAGE 1 OUTCOME: Two Long-Lists

STAGE 2: FOCUS TO KEY CANDIDATES

It is important to efficiently filter the two long-lists of candidate sites to a reduced number of items that are manageable for more detailed evaluation, while continuing to monitor the long-lists. To be efficient with resources and time, initial filtering will use key considerations and collaborative review to focus the lists.

2A Complete Initial Filtering for Regional Significance

Complete initial filtering of the two lists to identify the candidate sites that appear to have the highest regional significance. Questions to support filtering include:

- **Is it nature-focused?** Move sites with low natural values or an active transportation focus to the bottom.
- **Is it of a regional scale?** Move sites that are too small or too common to attract interest beyond a single community to the bottom (refer for consideration under community parks services).
- **Is it currently adequately protected?** Move sites that have strong or adequate protection and management to the bottom.
- **Is it unique?** Where the list contains sites that have very similar characteristics, move those with lesser qualities below sites that more definitively reflect the Regional Parks and Trails goals.

2B Review & Finalize Filtered List Together with K'ómoks

Work together with K'ómoks First Nation to review initial filter outcomes and make adjustments to each Key Candidate List (one for Regional Parks/ Conservation Areas and one for Regional Trails) that reflect Indigenous rights and interests and are balanced to reflect the vision and goals of the Strategic Plan.

STAGE 2 OUTCOME: Key Candidates Lists

STAGE 3: EVALUATE & PRIORITIZE KEY CANDIDATES

Once filtered key candidate lists are created, those with the highest merit for potential future Regional Parks and Trails can be taken through a more detailed review to identify a prioritized list. Outcomes of evaluation will help set annual workplans.

3A Undertake a Detailed Evaluation Process

Use the **Regional Parks and Trails Evaluation Criteria and Rating Framework** finalized through the LAS (see Planning Tool **P2** for a DRAFT initiated in this plan) to complete a detailed evaluation of the key candidate sites.

3B Review & Finalize the Prioritized Securement Lists with K'ómoks

Work together with K'ómoks First Nation to review outcomes.

Key considerations for review may include:

- Balance between Regional Parks/Conservation Areas and Regional Trails priorities
- Balance between sites with conservation and recreation interests
- Opportunities for partnerships such as Indigenous Protected Conservation Areas
- Representation of varied landscapes and character

STAGE 3 OUTCOME: Prioritized Candidate Lists

STAGE 4: SECUREMENT PRIORITIES

Once priorities are identified and confirmed, the next step is developing the initial securement details by identifying the specific land parcels and estimating costs to secure sites.

4A Prepare Initial Details for Proposed Securements

For each of the highest securement priorities for Regional Park/Conservation Area and for Regional Trail, prepare a report that identifies: the legally described land parcels that are proposed to be acquired, the estimated value, and the funding strategies that are to be explored.

4B Seek Mandate from RPTC

Submit the proposed securement(s) report to the RPTC to confirm a mandate to pursue negotiations.

STAGE 4 OUTCOME: Mandate to Negotiate Securement(s)

See next page.

STAGE 5: SECUREMENT

Once the RPTC provides a mandate, staff will proceed with detailed negotiations to confirm if a site can be secured, including the preparation of a detailed funding model.

5A	**Undertake Detailed Negotiations and Develop Funding Model**	For approved sites, the tasks to clarify potential for securement and to prepare a detailed funding model include (but are not limited to): » Confirmation of extents of lands to be purchased and retained for Regional Park or Trail » A financial appraisal of included properties » Identification of potential funding partners and interests » Negotiation with the current land owner to confirm purchase price and sign an option to purchase » Due diligence including land title information and environmental documents
5B	**Obtain Securement Approval**	Report to the RPTC on the outcome of negotiations, the recommendations for securement, and the financial implications of acquiring lands and seek Board approval for funding.
5C	**Acquire**	If approved, begin the process to convey the lands, dedicate the land, and begin planning for its future.

STAGE 5 OUTCOME: Acquired Regional Parks and Trails

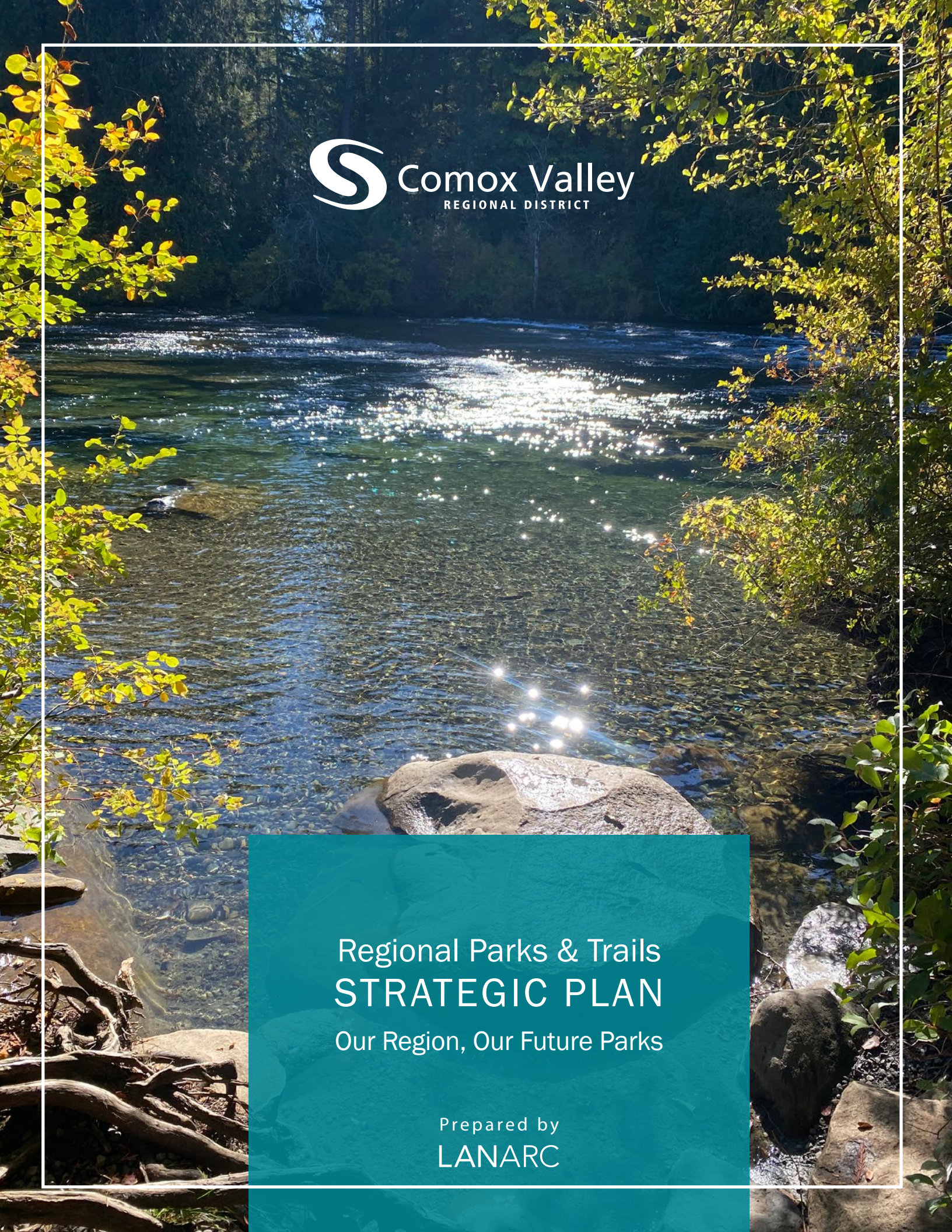
ONGOING

Land securement planning is an ongoing process. This process needs to take advantage of unplanned opportunities when they arise.

6	**Undertake Regular Reviews (minimum annually)**	Continue to review the Key Candidate Lists annually, or more frequently as needed, to respond to new opportunities that arise (e.g., land donation offer). Continue dialogue with K'ómoks First Nation about land securement as part of ongoing reviews that allow for existing list items to be re-evaluated due to change, and for new/additional ideas outside of the traditional park model to be incorporated in securement recommendations.



STAGE 6 OUTCOME: Ongoing Management



Comox Valley
REGIONAL DISTRICT

Regional Parks & Trails
STRATEGIC PLAN

Our Region, Our Future Parks

Prepared by
LANARC