



ELECTORAL AREA F GOVERNANCE & SERVICES STUDY

DRAFT INTERIM REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The *Electoral Area F Governance & Services Study* is being undertaken to:

- Describe the governance of unincorporated communities within a regional district, as well as the governance and statutory powers of municipalities, as appropriate for clarity;
- Describe how decisions are made in each community by the local government jurisdiction responsible for each of the local services received;
- Identify and describe the different roles, responsibilities and jurisdictions of all local service providers, including the costs for services and how the services are paid for;
- Identify geographies of concurrent services (if any) and cohesive community identities; and
- Engage residents and property owners in the identification of common interests and concerns, and opinions on how alternative governance structures may meet the communities needs.

This *Interim Report* focuses on the current state of governance and service delivery. The report begins with an overview of British Columbia's system of regional districts. The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) and Electoral Area F are then profiled. The individual local government services provided to Electoral Area F by the RDN are outlined next, followed by the local government services provided by other service bodies. A sample 2022 Electoral Area F tax notice, developed based on the information in the report, is included as *Appendix I*.

The information in the report will form the basis of the community engagement materials that, once created, will be used by the Study Committee to identify and understand the community's interests and concerns related to the Electoral Area F current governance and service framework.

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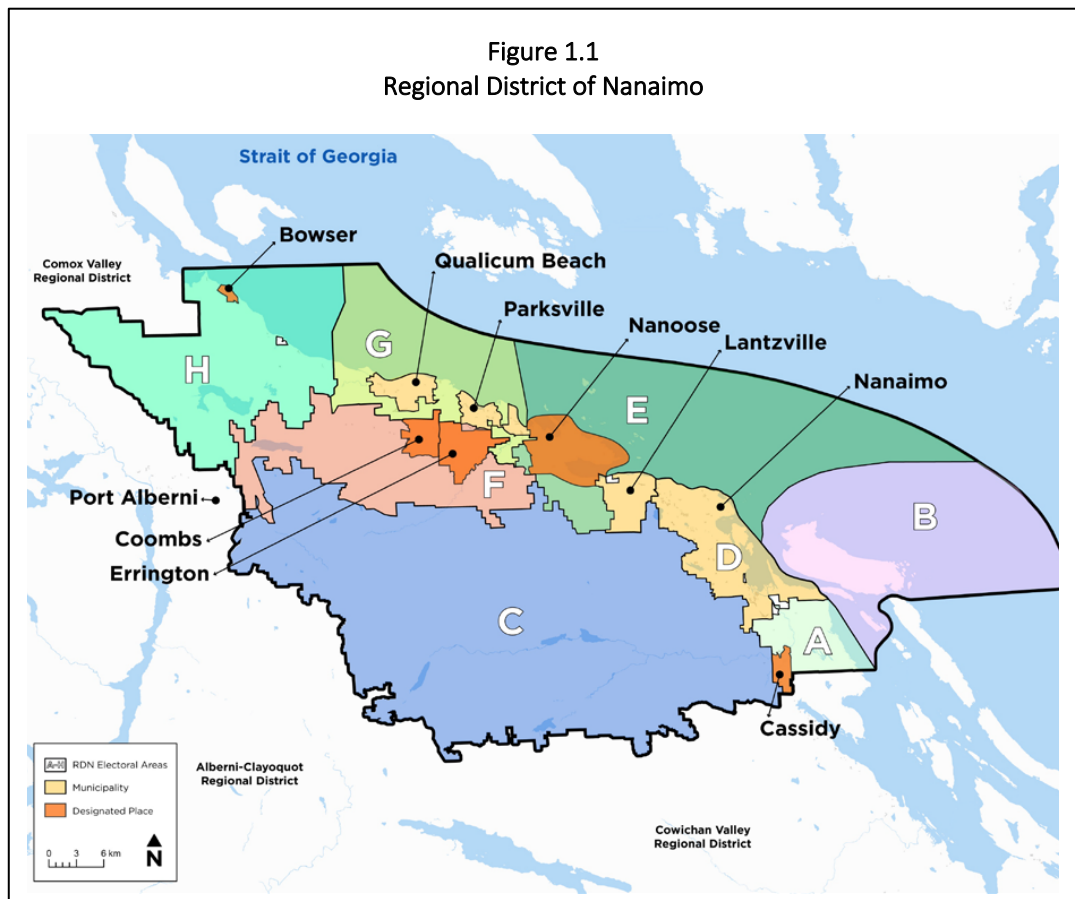
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CHAPTER 1 REGIONAL DISTRICTS OVERVIEW

Under Canada's *Constitution* (section 92), provincial governments are responsible for creating and implementing their own systems of local government. All systems across the country feature municipalities of one type or another, and some form of regional governance. British Columbia's system is unique from all others in its use of regional districts.

With the exception of the most northern parts of the province, British Columbia is divided into 27 regional districts, one of which is the Regional District of Nanaimo. Each regional district includes a combination of municipalities and unincorporated electoral areas.¹ The RDN has a total of four municipalities, including the City of Nanaimo, City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach and District of Lantzville. Outside of the municipalities are seven separate electoral areas — Areas A, B, C, E, F, G and H. RDN, which is situated on the unceded traditional territory of Coast Salish

Figure 1.1
Regional District of Nanaimo



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¹ The sole exception is the Central Coast Regional District, which is comprised entirely of electoral areas.



people, also encompasses reserve lands from three First Nations: Qualicum First Nation, Snuneymuxw First Nation and Snaw-naw-as First Nation.² With a total area of 2,036 km², RDN is one of the smaller regional districts in terms of geography. Its 2021 population 170,367, however, makes the RDN the fifth largest regional district in British Columbia in terms of population.

RDN, similar to all regional districts, exists to provide local government services in response to the needs and instructions of its members. In this role, the RDN and other regional districts:

- serve as the local government for electoral areas, providing them with basic local services such as community planning, plus a range of other services that areas choose to receive
- provide region-wide services to all electoral areas and municipalities
- provide a framework for different combinations of municipalities and electoral areas to participate in sub-regional services

REGIONAL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE

Governing Body

Every regional district is governed by a board of directors consisting of two types of directors:

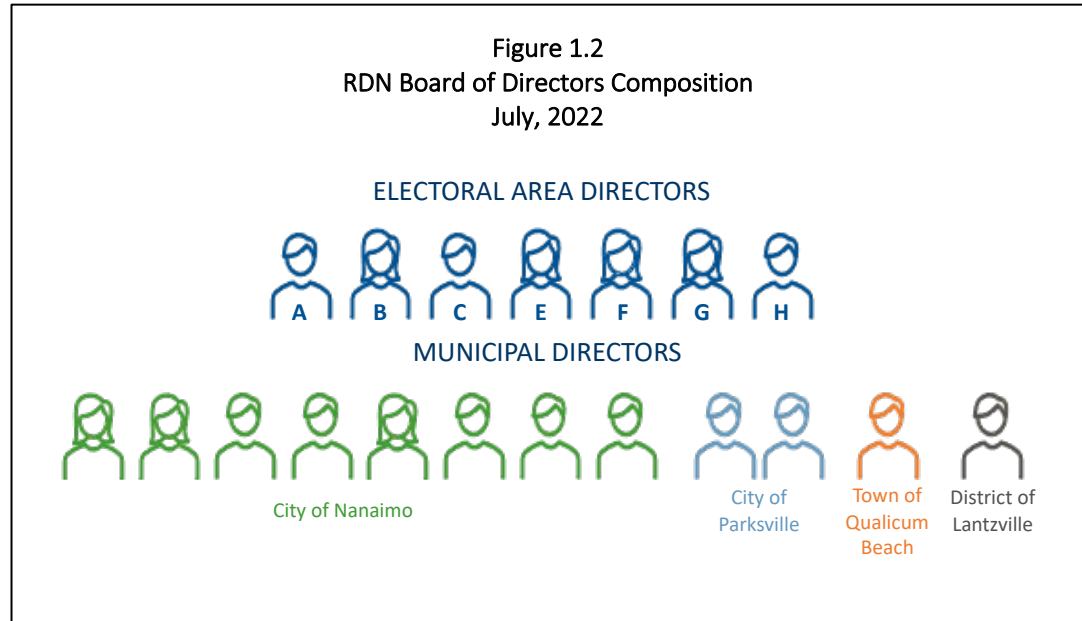
- electoral area directors, each of whom is elected directly for a four-year term by the voters in his or her electoral area
- municipal directors, each of whom is a member of a municipal council, appointed by his or her council to the regional board on an annual basis

The board selects its own chair, who has the authority to create standing committees of the board to study and give advice on specific services, general matters or other areas of business.

The voting strength of each municipality or electoral area in a regional district is a function of population size and voting unit. In the RDN, the voting unit today is set at 2,500 people, which means that each jurisdiction of the RDN receives one vote for every 2,500 residents, including residents who live on First Nations Reserves. For municipalities, the resulting voting strength is divided by five to determine the number of directors appointed to the board.

The RDN Board consists of 19 voting directors, including one from each of the seven electoral areas, one from the District of Lantzville, one from the Town of Qualicum Beach two from the City of Parksville, and eight from the City of Nanaimo. Figure 1.2 presents the RDN Board of Directors.

² The First Nations are not member jurisdictions of the RDN.



Voting Rules

Some decisions at the regional district board table are made by the entire board of directors; other decisions, specific to individual services, are made only by the directors from the local jurisdictions that participate in the services. Decisions that involve all directors are made using *corporate votes*, of which there are two types:

- *Corporate Unweighted Votes* — These votes are those in which every director votes, and every director receives one vote. They are used to establish new services, make bylaws to exercise a regulatory authority, set rules to govern the conduct of the board's businesses, and take certain other actions.
- *Corporate Weighted Votes* — All directors vote on these matters but receive different numbers of votes based on the populations of their respective jurisdictions, and the regional district's voting unit. Corporate weighted votes are used to acquire or dispose property, adopt annual budgets, authorize borrowing, and address all other financial matters.

Decisions in which only a portion of the board participates are made using *stakeholder votes*. Stakeholder votes are used to make, change or repeal bylaws that govern the administration or operation of a service. Directors from jurisdictions that participate in the services are entitled to vote; other directors are not. All stakeholder votes are weighted, with directors receiving different numbers of votes based on their jurisdictions' populations and the regional district's voting unit. If there is only one participating area in the subject service, the entire board of directors votes.

Figure 1.3 shows the voting strength for each of the RDN's electoral areas and municipalities. At present, the Director for Electoral Area F has one vote on

Figure 1.3
Voting Strength for RDN Jurisdictions
Before and After the 2022 Election

Jurisdiction	Today 2016 Census; Voting Unit 2,500			Post-2022 Election 2021 Census; Voting Unit 2,500		
	Pop	Directors	Strength	Pop	Directors	Strength
Electoral Area A	7,429	1	3	7,804	1	4
Electoral Area B	4,033	1	2	4,500	1	2
Electoral Area C	3,168	1	2	3,730	1	2
Electoral Area E	6,355	1	3	7,010	1	3
Electoral Area F	7,724	1	4	8,216	1	4
Electoral Area G	7,465	1	3	8,109	1	4
Electoral Area H	3,958	1	2	4,373	1	2
City of Nanaimo	90,504	8	37	99,863	8	40
City of Parksville	12,514	2	6	13,642	2	6
Town of Qualicum	8,943	1	4	9,303	1	4
District of Lantzville	3,605	1	2	3,817	1	2
Total	155,698	19	68	170,367	19	73

corporate unweighted matters, and four votes on decisions that are made using the corporate weighted and stakeholder votes. When adjustments are made for the updated 2021 Census numbers, the Electoral Area F Director will still have four votes in these decisions.

Given that Electoral Area F participates in 40 different services of the Regional District, and that stakeholder votes are to govern the "administration or operation" of services, it would seem that stakeholder votes should occur frequently, and that Electoral Area F's population would regularly translate into a greater voice relative to that of Qualicum Beach, Lantzville and each of the other electoral areas. A total of 11 of the services in which Area F participates, however, are provided only to Area F (either to all, or just a portion of the Electoral Area), and no other RDN jurisdiction. As noted earlier, where there is only one participant in a service, decisions must be made by the entire Board. In addition, the *Local Government Act* requires that bylaws for regulatory services — building inspection and dog control are examples — must be voted on by the full Board. Finally, as will be explained in more detail in Chapter 3, some services exist simply as vehicles to provide funding to another agency, such as the Search and Rescue (marine and land), Northern Community Justice, Emergency 911 and Vancouver Island Regional Library. For these services there is no opportunity to participate in decisions on administration and operation.

Figure 1.4 shows the number of local government services provided by RDN to the Electoral Area F and identifies who gets to participate in (weighted) stakeholder votes.

REGIONAL DISTRICT SERVICES

Regional districts provide a broad range of services to residents. With the exception of certain provincially-mandated services that regional districts are required to provide, the range of regional district services in any one region is determined by the board, in response to the wishes and instructions of individual jurisdictions.

The menu of services provided to jurisdictions varies by regional district, and can be different within each electoral area or community. Certain services may be provided to only a portion of an electoral area; others, referred to as sub-regional services, are provided to a combination of electoral areas and municipalities. Regional services are those that are provided to all member municipalities and electoral areas in the regional district.

Services are established to respond to needs identified by the board, electoral area directors, member municipalities, staff or residents. As part of the establishment process, proposed services must be assessed to determine their feasibility. Factors such as service scope, service cost and service delivery are considered. If deemed feasible, a service establishing bylaw must be developed and adopted by the full board of directors, including directors from jurisdictions that may not participate in the service. Ultimately, the bylaw must also be approved by the province’s Inspector of Municipalities, as well as by the electors who will receive and pay for the service.

Figure 1.4
Stakeholder Votes for RDN Services Provided to Electoral Area F

Type of RDN Service	Number	Who Votes in Stakeholder Votes <i>(administration & operation)</i>
Region-wide services, provided to all jurisdictions	7	Entire Board of Directors
Sub-regional services provide to subset of jurisdictions	23	Directors from participating jurisdictions only*
Local Services provided only to Electoral Area F	4	Entire Board of Directors
Local Services provided only to a portion of Area F	6	Entire Board of Directors
Total RDN Services	40	

* The exception is votes on bylaws that exercise a regulatory authority in relation to regulatory services. These votes involve the entire Board.

Elector approval may be obtained through a petition, an alternative approval process, or a referendum. In some cases, approval can be given on behalf of electors by the participating municipality's Council, or the participating electoral area's director.

Service reviews may be undertaken periodically to assess whether an existing service is still desired and effective. Some services have provisions for service reviews written into their establishing bylaws; others have "sunset clauses" that require the dissolution of the service at a particular time unless all participants agree to extend it. The *Local Government Act* has provisions that enable any individual participant to initiate a statutory service review. The *Act* allows participants to withdraw from most services if service reviews do not satisfactorily address concerns.

Required Services

Regional districts, as noted, establish and provide most of their services in response to the interests of and directions from their member jurisdictions. All regional districts, however, are required to provide certain mandated services, including:

- general administration for the region as a whole
- electoral area administration
- the processing of long-term capital financing for the regional district and member municipalities through the Municipal Finance Authority of British Columbia
- hospital capital financing through one or more regional hospital districts
- land use planning in electoral areas³
- solid waste management planning for the region as a whole
- emergency planning for electoral areas

Regional districts serve as the local governments for electoral areas. In this capacity, however, regional districts do not provide the same suite of local government services as that which is provided by municipalities to their residents. Certain key local services — namely, local policing and local roads — are provided to rural areas by the provincial government. Other services, such as water and sewer treatment, can be provided by regional districts, but are in some cases provided by improvement districts or by independent private utilities. Services provided by private utilities are also outside of the responsibility and control of regional districts.

REGIONAL DISTRICT FINANCE

Unlike municipalities, which are able to collect and allocate general revenues to their services, regional districts must account for each individual service separately. More specifically, the cost of providing each service must be recovered using revenue generated for that service, and only that service. In addition, all costs incurred in providing each service, including a portion of regional district administrative overhead, must be covered by the revenue raised for the service. The full cost of

³ The exception is in areas where the Islands Trust provides land use planning service, as on Gabriola, DeCourcy and Mudge Islands (Electoral Area B) in the RDN.

providing street lighting, for example, must be raised through the street lighting service; and, taxes and other revenues raised for street lighting may only be used to fund the delivery of that specific street lighting service.

This service-specific nature of regional district finances reflects two key points:

- not all jurisdictions in a regional district participate in every service provided by the regional district
- jurisdictions pay only towards the cost of the services in which they participate

The total tax requisition assigned to an electoral area or municipality by its regional district will depend on the types and number of regional district services in which the jurisdiction participates, as well as on the size of the jurisdiction's assessment base relative to that of others. Electoral Area F participates in a broad range of RDN services, as shown earlier. The tax requisition for services provided by the electoral area as a whole is \$3.22 million (2022).⁴ The requisition for local services provided only to portions of the electoral area totals an additional \$5.22 million.⁵

Property Taxes

Regional districts raise funds primarily through property taxation. There are two types of property taxes:

- parcel taxes, which are applied as set amounts per parcel, land area, or metre of frontage
- value taxes, which are based on the assessed value of the property, as determined by the value of the land, the improvements on the land, or both

Regional districts themselves do not set tax rates or collect taxes — those tasks are undertaken by the provincial government based on the total revenue requirements that are determined by regional districts. The province also determines the tax rate multiples for regional districts — that is, the ratio of taxes, compared to the residential rate, paid by business, industry and other non-residential property classes. The role of the province in taxation is a key difference between regional districts and municipalities. Municipalities collect their own property taxes and have the authority to set their own municipal tax rates for all classes of property.

Residents of electoral areas receive a tax bill each year from the provincial Surveyor of Taxes that itemizes the regional district services provided, the tax rate or parcel tax for each service, and the amount of taxes owing for each service. In municipalities, property taxes bills identify a general municipal rate and amount owing to pay for the collection of municipal services provided. Regional district services in which the municipality participates are set out separately on municipal property tax bills, based

⁴ Not including taxes for local services received by only a portion of the electoral area.

⁵ This total reflects the total requisition for the service areas, not just the Area F portion.

on service requisitions issued to the municipalities by their regional districts. The tax revenues collected by each municipality for its regional services are remitted to the regional district by August 1 of each year.

Other Revenues

In addition to property taxes, regional districts generate revenues from user fees and charges, such as land use application fees and building permits. A further source of revenue is grants from other levels of government. Grants from provincial and federal government are particularly important for small communities, and are becoming increasingly important for costly infrastructure renewal in communities of all sizes.

There are generally two types of grants from other levels of government: unconditional and conditional grants. Unconditional grants are direct transfers with few (if any) restrictions on their use. Local governments may use such funds at their own discretion. Conditional grants are competitive, application-based grants awarded for specific projects, or are provided to a regional district to assist with a specific service.

► Provincial Unconditional Grants

All regional districts in British Columbia receive the provincial Regional District Basic Grant every year. This grant is designed to assist regional districts with administration costs for services that are provided to meet local needs and priorities. As per the *Local Government Grants Act and Regulation*, the amount of the grant is calculated based on three factors, with an overall bias towards smaller and more rural regional districts:

- regional district total population
- regional district electoral area population
- the number of local community commissions, if any (neither Electoral Area F nor the RDN as a whole has any local community commissions today)

The amount transferred to the RDN under the Regional District Basic Grant is approximately \$100,000.

Municipalities receive a similar grant — the Small Community Grant — that is designed to assist in providing basic municipal services, including services that regional districts do not provide such as local roads. These grants generally apply to municipalities with populations up to 19,000. In addition, municipalities with a population greater than 5,000 receive a traffic fine revenue sharing grant to assist with policing costs. The traffic fine revenue sharing grant returns 100% of net revenues from traffic violations to municipalities that are directly responsible for paying for policing. Given that regional districts and unincorporated communities do not pay directly for policing costs, they are not eligible to receive this assistance.

➤ **Federal Unconditional Grants**

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

In BC, the program is administered by the UBCM. A portion of the program — the *Community Works Fund* — functions much like an unconditional grant program, and is delivered to all municipalities and regional districts (except those within the Metro Vancouver region) through a direct annual allocation. The grant is meant to support local projects that align with the program objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and creating cleaner air and water. Projects must fall into a defined list of eligible categories.

Community Works funding is delivered twice annually. Each local government receives a "floor amount" (\$50,000 in the first year of the agreement; \$50,000 plus an indexed amount in each subsequent year of the agreement) along with an amount calculated on the basis of population. The RDN received \$1,824,168 in Community Works Funding for 2022/23 and is scheduled to receive \$1,902,863 in 2023/2024. Local governments may accumulate the funds, and any interest earned, to support larger regional district projects. In BC, the gas tax program also includes an application-based conditional grant program, known as the *Strategic Priorities Fund*. As a result of the Board decision made in 2007, each RDN electoral area is allocated funds based on population. The Board decided to allocate \$50,000 of the funding annually for cross-area projects and the remaining balance to the electoral areas on a per capita basis. Allocations in 2022 are based on 2021 census data. In 2022, Area F received \$341,324.

➤ **Conditional Grants**

Conditional grants are typically competitive, application-based grants awarded to specific projects. For local governments, the federal and provincial governments are the principal providers of such grants; the majority of their conditional grant funding is earmarked for local government capital projects (e.g. sewer, water, roads). Some programs involve cost-sharing involving all three levels of government (an example is the *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program*), while others, such as the gas tax *Strategic Priorities Fund*, can be up to 100% federally funded. Application intakes are offered periodically; regional districts and municipalities submit project proposals based on local priorities and funding program objectives. In some cases, community non-profit organizations and private sector bodies may also be eligible to apply.

CHAPTER 2 COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of Electoral Area F and the communities that it encompasses.

OVERVIEW

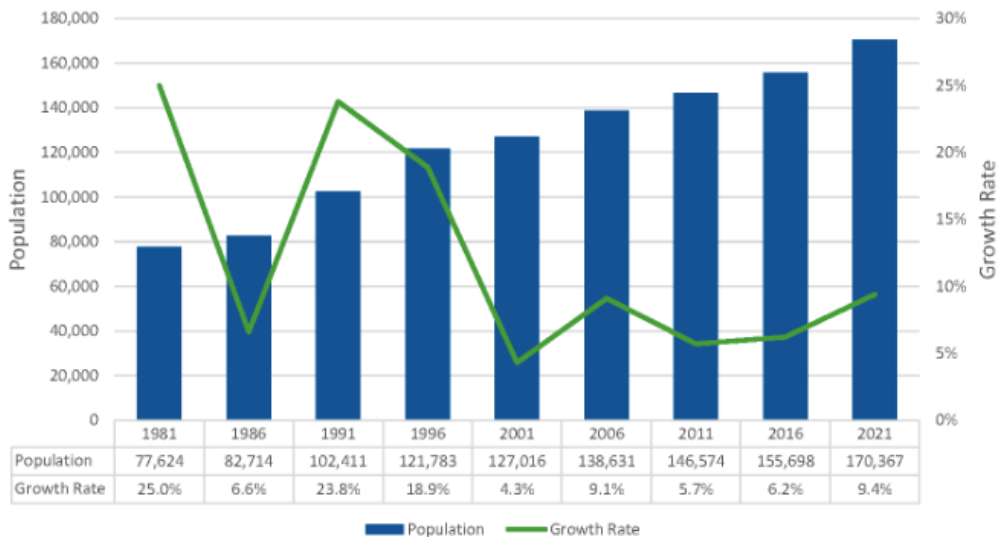
Electoral Area F is situated in the Oceanside or northern portion of the Regional District of Nanaimo, together with the City of Parksville, the Town of Qualicum Beach, the Qualicum First Nation and Electoral Areas E, G and H. Within Electoral Area F itself are several distinct neighbourhoods and communities, including Errington, Coombs, Hilliers, Whiskey Creek and Meadowood.

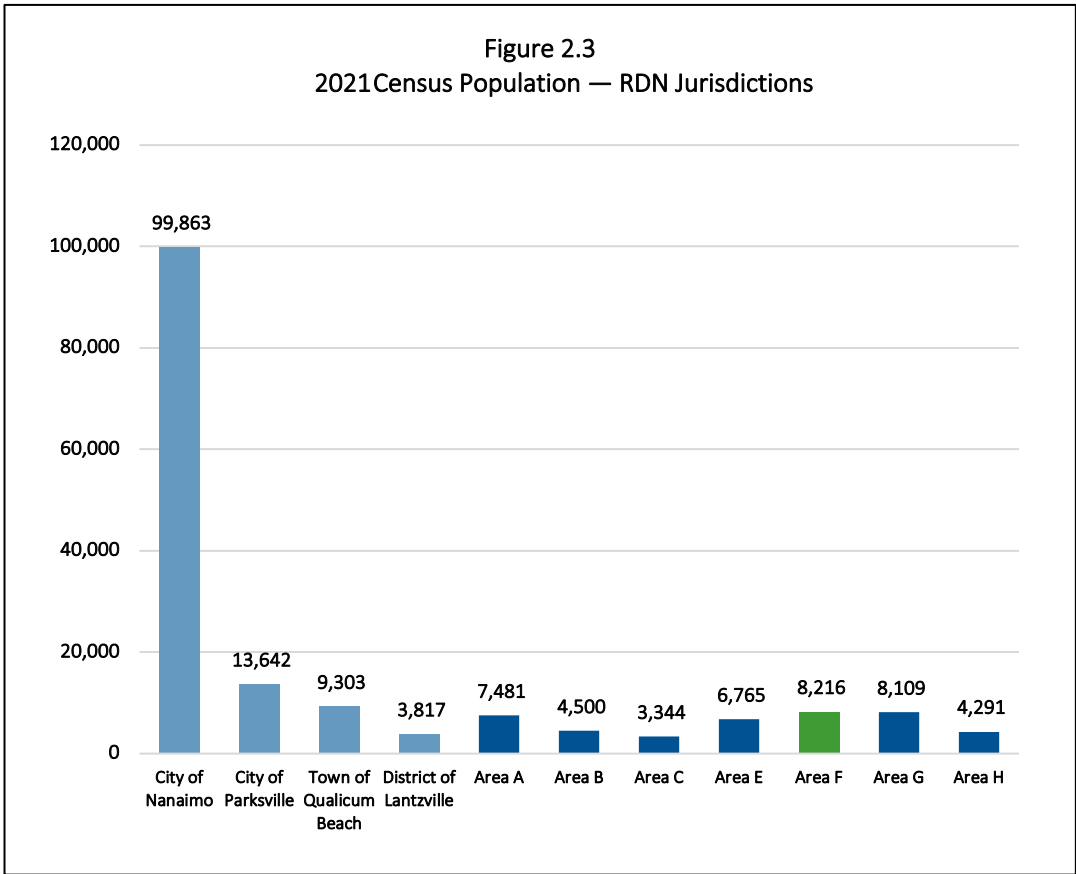
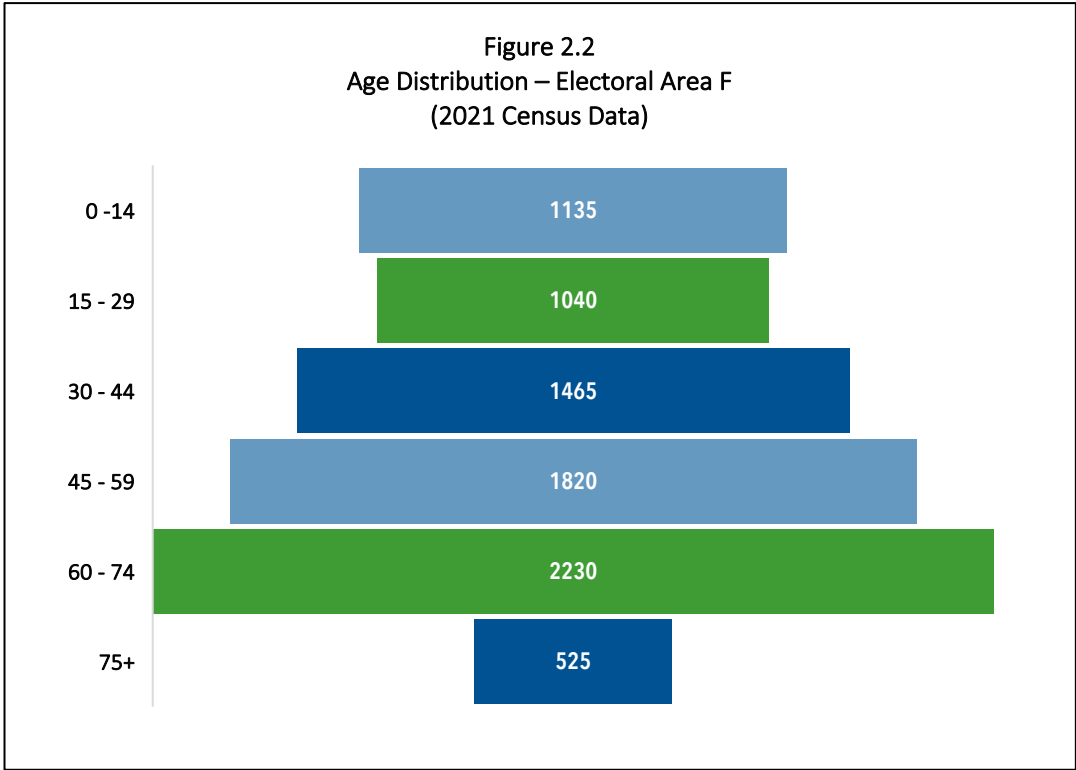
POPULATION

The 2021 Census showed that the RDN as a whole grew in population by 10% between 2016 and 2021. Figure 2.1 shows this growth, as well as the growth numbers and rate over the past 40 years. The 2021 Census reported Area F's population as 8,216. Between 2016 and 2021, the area grew by 6.4%.

Figure 2.2 presents the 2021 age breakdown for Area F. The figure shows that almost half of residents in the Electoral Area are between 45 and 74 years in age. Figure 2.3 shows the 2021 Census population for each of the RDN jurisdictions.

Figure 2.1
RDN Population Growth and Growth Rate, 1981 - 2021
(2021 Census Data)







LAND AREA

Electoral Area F has a total land area of 264.11 km² for a population density of 31.1 persons per km². This number represents a slight increase in population density from the 2016 figure of 29.2 persons per km².

HOUSING

The 2021 Census reported 3,877 private dwellings in Electoral Area F, including 3,673 of which are occupied by “usual residents” which means that 95% of the dwellings are the primary dwellings or the place where the household or occupant spends the majority of their time. This number is a significant percentage, particularly given that the Oceanside area also represents a tourist destination.

Single-detached houses comprise the vast majority of housing in the RDN, including throughout Electoral Area F. 2021 data note that Area F had 77.5% single family homes, with 16% movable dwellings, and 4.4% semi-detached, row houses or apartments in a duplex. Another 1.4% reflected apartments in buildings with fewer than 5 storeys. Household size for Electoral Area F is 2.2 persons; 70% of households in the area are either one- or two-person in size.

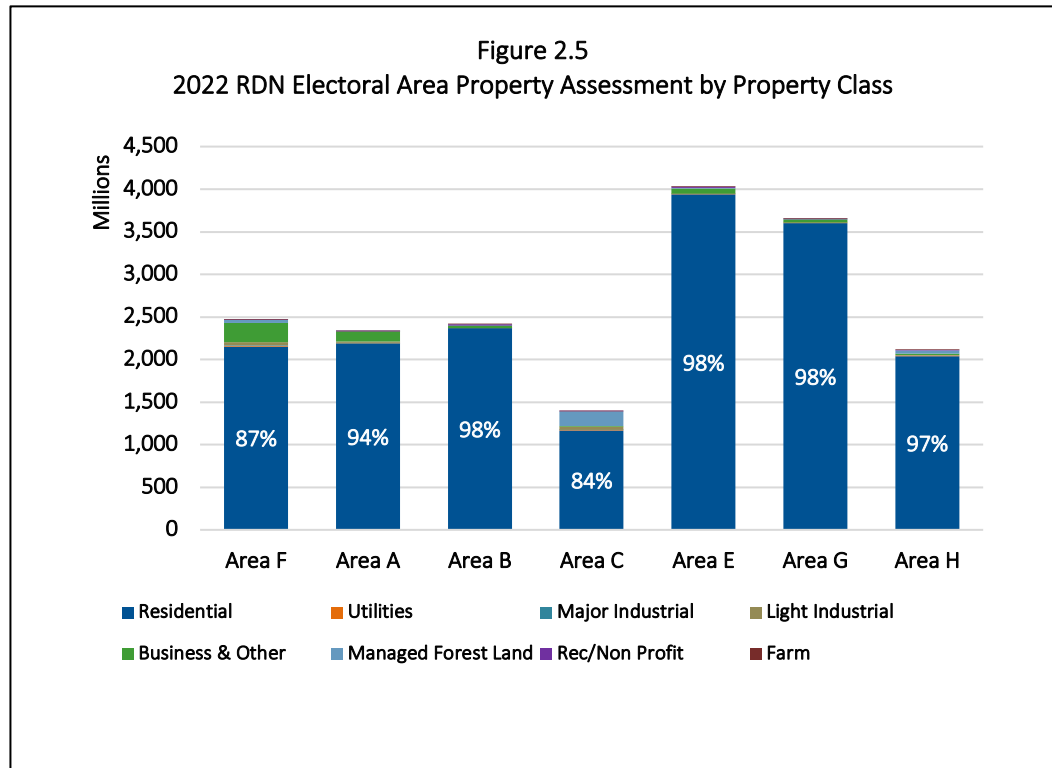
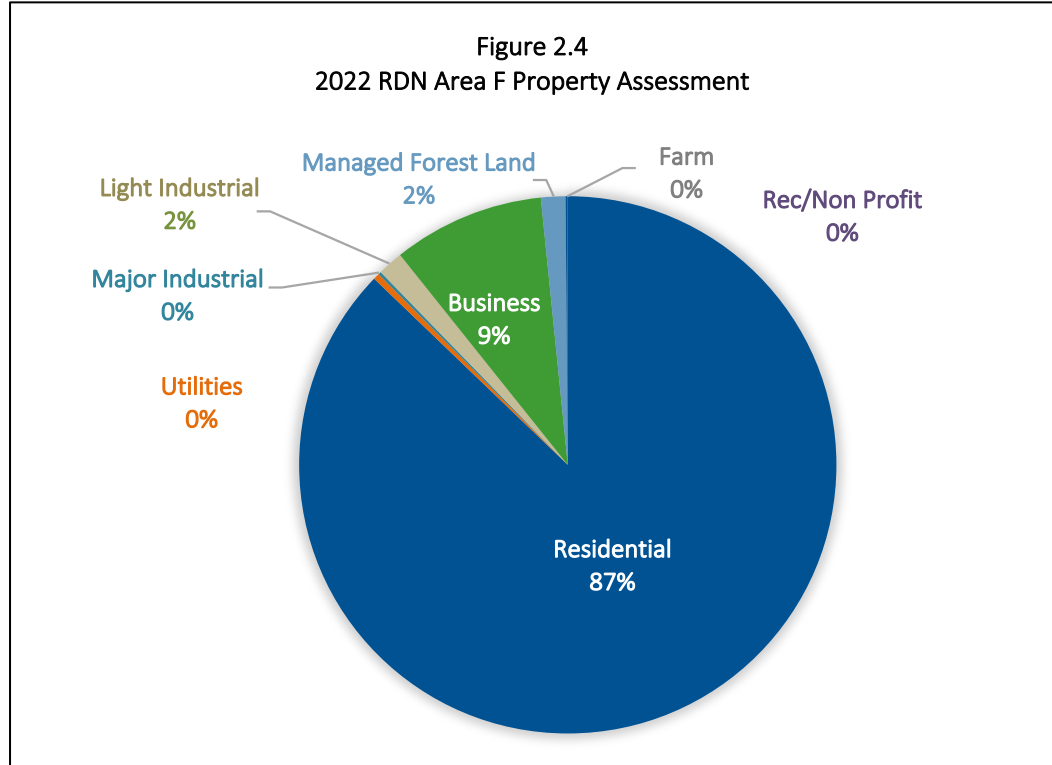
As reported in the *2020 Regional Housing Needs Report*, 27% of Area F households were renters — a significantly higher percentage than that in all other RDN electoral areas, which ranged between 10% and 19%.

The *RDN Housing Needs Report* noted that single person households earning median income and below median income cannot afford the average rental prices in their communities at 30% of their gross incomes. Affordability is a particular challenge in the communities of Coombs and Errington, where households with median or lower incomes are required to spend more than 50% of their respective incomes on rent.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

For 2022, BC Assessment data shows the total assessment within Electoral Area F as \$2.467 billion — an amount that translates into a converted assessment of \$299,063,803. The average assessed value of single-family dwellings in the Electoral Area F in 2022 is \$693,016.

Figure 2.4 provides details on assessment values for all property classes in Electoral Area F; Figure 2.5 provides the total assessment by property class for all the RDN Electoral Areas (beginning with Area F). The percentages in Figure 2.5 show the percentage of the total assessment for the Electoral Area that the residential property class represents. The charts illustrate that although Electoral Area F does not have the highest assessment of all electoral areas, it has a more varied assessment base relative to that of others.





ECONOMY

The main industries in the broader Oceanside area are tourism, retail, services, construction and light industry. Technology companies are successfully serving clients around the world from their home base. Tourism is the single largest contributor to the economy in the Parksville-Qualicum Beach region. The Oceanside Tourism Association estimates that direct tourism spending was over \$153 million in 2019. Visitors are attracted by long, beautiful sandy beaches that have been dubbed “Canada’s Riviera” and “Canada’s Carmel”. The area offers many outdoor, year-round recreational activities as well as urban amenities. The status of the area as a travel destination provides many opportunities for businesses to serve the hundreds of thousands of visitors who come to the region each year.

The reliance upon tourists provides some challenges for the Oceanside communities. Tourism businesses offer primarily seasonal employment and cater to a more transient population. Small owner/operator businesses have the ability to do well; however, without growth, there are limited opportunities for developing a young workforce and community. Retention of employees in the community is difficult when there are few career opportunities during the off-season. Although the housing market is stable, there is a lack of affordable housing for minimum and lower-wage earners, and public transit gaps in a geographically large area provide another layer of challenges. Many of the small, owner/operated businesses are ready to retire, posing both a threat, and an opportunity for the local economy.

The majority of commercial and industrial enterprises within Area F are located within the Village Centres and Rural Separation Boundaries (Hilliers, Qualicum River Estates, Coombs, Errington and the Bellevue/Church Road Rural Separation Area). Many home businesses exist throughout the electoral area that build and support the local economy.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Regional Context

The RDN has a *Regional Growth Strategy* (RGS) – a strategic plan that defines a regional vision for sustainable growth, and guides the region’s jurisdictions toward that vision. The strategy is regulated through the *Local Government Act*. Each RDN jurisdiction must make a commitment through Regional Context Statements and official community plans (OCPs) to implement the strategies shared social, economic and environmental goals.

Although the RGS is in the process of being updated, the current strategy’s goals for the region are highlighted below.

- *Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption* — Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption and promote adaptive measures to prepare for climate change impacts.

- *Protect the Environment* — Protect and enhance the environment and avoid ecological damage related to human activity.
- *Coordinate Land Use and Mobility* — Ensure land use patterns and mobility networks are mutually supportive and work together to reduce automobile dependency and provide for efficient goods movement.
- *Concentrate Housing and Jobs in Rural Village and Urban Growth Centres* — Establish distinctive activity centres and corridors within growth containment boundaries that provide ready access to places to live, work, play and learn.
- *Enhance Rural Integrity* — Protect and strengthen the region’s rural economy and lifestyle.
- *Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing* — Support and facilitate the provision of appropriate, adequate, attainable, affordable and adaptable housing.
- *Enhance Economic Resiliency* — Support strategic economic development and link commercial and industrial strategies to the land use and rural and environmental protection priorities of the region.
- *Enhance Food Security* — Protect and enhance the capacity of the region to produce and process food.
- *Celebrate Pride of Place* — Celebrate the unique natural beauty, culture, history, and arts of the region.
- *Provide Services Efficiently* — Provide efficient, cost-effective services and infrastructure.
- *Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions* — Facilitate an understanding of and commitment to the goals of growth management among all levels of government, the public, and key private and voluntary sector partners.

Within Area F, the RGS identifies five areas as Rural Village Centres, including:

- Hilliers Village Centre
- Qualicum River Estates Village Centre
- Coombs Village Centre
- Errington Village Centre
- Bellevue/Church Road Rural Separation Area

The rural village centres are delineated in the RGS with a “growth containment boundary” intended to define where growth is intended to be directed. The purpose of the boundary is to control urban sprawl and to encourage the development of compact, complete communities within municipalities or within a Rural Village Area

in electoral areas. Development within containment boundaries is intended to be diverse and provide places for people to live, work, learn, shop and play. Land situated outside containment boundaries is intended primarily for rural purposes that require only limited infrastructure and services in order to be viable.

The RGS recognizes the areas that were identified in the previous Regional Growth Strategy as Rural Village Centres. It also notes, however, the need for a region-wide study to identify which rural village centres have the greatest potential to evolve into complete, compact communities that warrant the investment required to serve them with community water and wastewater facilities and public transit. The RGS states that centres that are not as feasible as potential rural growth centres could be recognized as local service centres that provide a limited range of goods and services intended to meet the needs of the surrounding rural community.

RDN jurisdictions must ensure that individual OCPs are consistent with the RGS. Each OCP must contain a regional context statement that identifies how the OCP is or will be made consistent with the RGS over time.

Area F Local Context

The RDN is currently undertaking an update to the Area F OCP. The OCP is an overarching plan that guides future land use by describing a community's vision for the future and includes objectives and policies to help achieve that vision. An OCP is used by the public when planning future use of their land or advocating for the community vision, and by the RDN when planning related community or infrastructure projects or approving development.

Some of the key community values emerging from the most recent round of community engagement for the OCP update are noted as follows:

- While low levels of regulation are supported by Area F residents, enforcement and clear, simple guidelines and bylaws are important. Some residents felt that good neighbour practices are not enough.
- Strong support for increased efforts to protect the environment, including ecosystems, watersheds, and aquifers, and minimize deforestation.
- Additional housing density and growth that results in sprawl in Area F is not supported.
- Including efforts to prepare for climate change in the OCP is supported but there should be specific actions that are based on science.
- Commercial development should be considered in Area F as long as it is located in appropriate areas and does not negatively impact the environment, water supply, or neighbouring properties.



- Agricultural and food production is supported and sustainable farming approaches and consideration for impacts to the environment should be prioritized.
- The rural character of Area F needs to be preserved, which includes consideration for noise, dark skies, traffic, and low levels of regulation.

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CHAPTER 3

LOCAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY RDN

This chapter of the *Interim Report* provides an overview of each of the existing local government services provided to residents within Electoral Area F. The services are presented under the following service categories:⁶

- emergency and protective services
- planning and development
- parks and recreation
- water
- liquid and solid waste
- miscellaneous
- administration

The text under each category identifies and explains the services. For each individual service an introduction is provided, followed by an outline of service governance (i.e., how decisions are made), and service finance (i.e., how services are paid for, and by whom). Unless otherwise stated, financial information is taken from the RDN's *2022 – 2026 Amended Financial Plan (March 8, 2022)*.

EMERGENCY & PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Services Overview

The RDN provides a number of emergency and protective services to residents and properties in Electoral Area F, either directly or through RDN-funded organizations. The RDN's Emergency Services Department coordinates Fire Services and Emergency Program programs for the RDN, including several emergency services provided to residents and properties in Electoral Area F. Some of the services are provided by RDN directly; others are provided by organizations for which the RDN coordinates funding. The full list of services includes:

- Fire Protection
 - Fire Services Administration
 - Fire Protection, which includes six local departments — Errington Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), Coombs-Hilliers VFD, Nanoose Bay VFD, Dashwood VFD, Bow Horn Bay VFD and Qualicum Beach Fire Department (French Creek service area)
- Emergency 911 (D69)
- Search and Rescue (separate services for Marine SAR and Land SAR)
- Emergency Planning

⁶ These categories do not necessarily correspond to the RDN organizational divisions or departments that are in place today to deliver the services.

- Community Justice (D69)

The general Manager of Transportation and Emergency Services oversees a Manager of Emergency Planning at the RDN, as well as a Fire Rescue Services Coordinator, an Emergency Planning Coordinator and the Nanoose Bay Volunteer Fire Department Chief.

➤ **Fire Protection**

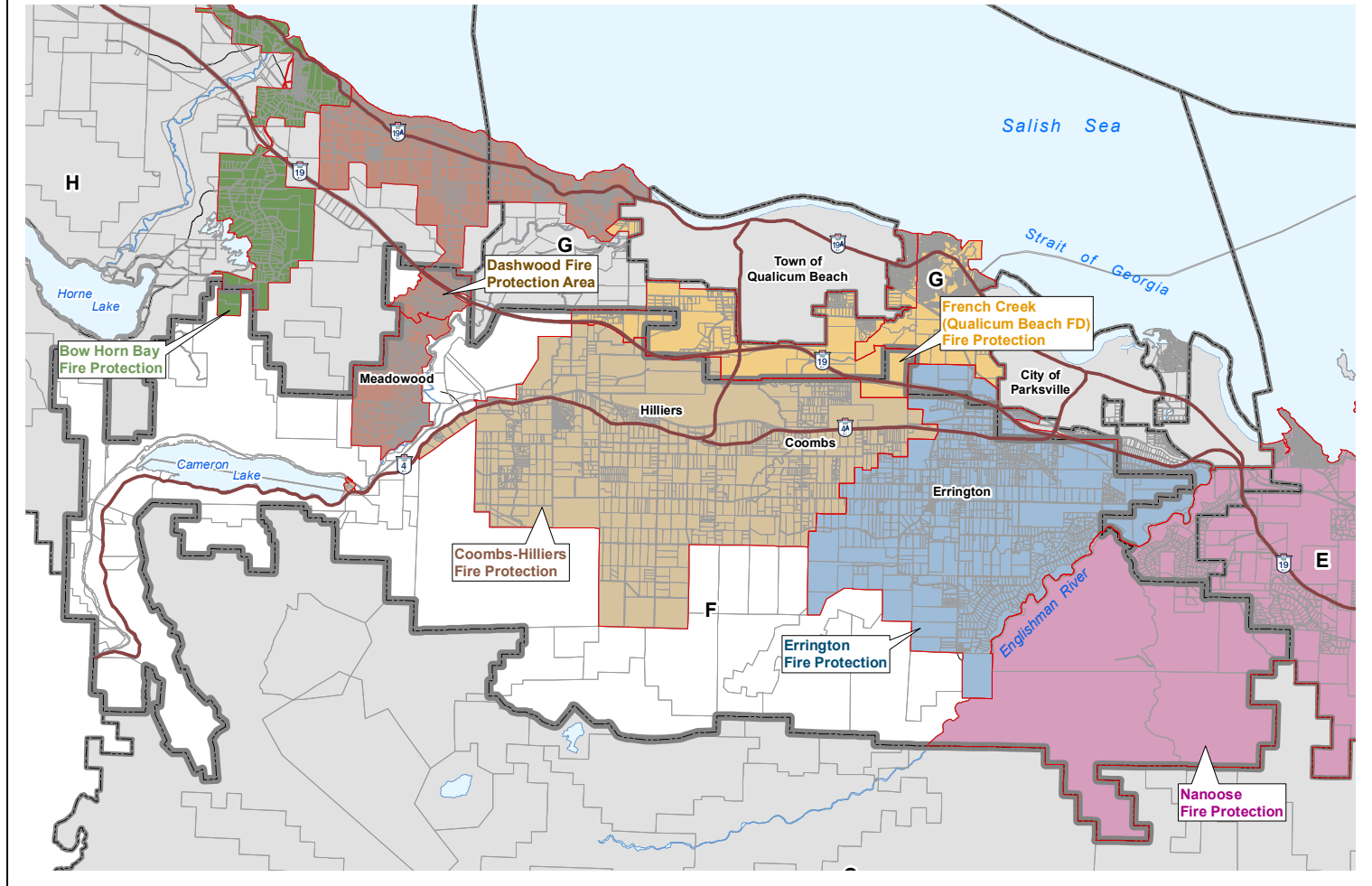
Fire protection service is provided to six specific service areas in Electoral Area F by different fire departments. Three of the departments — Dashwood VFD, Errington VFD and Bow Horn Bay VFD — operate as their own fire department societies. Two departments — Nanoose Bay VFD and Coombs- Hilliers VFD — are owned and operated by RDN. In one area, service is provided by the Qualicum Beach Municipal Fire Department under agreement with the RDN.

The VFDs provide fire protection and emergency response services. The RDN levies property taxes for these fire departments and provides financing for their operations and capital expenses. The VFD societies provide day-to-day management of their respective departments, as well as operational guidance to their volunteers. They also advise the RDN of their capital improvement requirements.

Figure 3.1 shows the six different service areas and the departments that service them. Each separate fire protection service is described as follows:

- *Coombs-Hilliers Volunteer Fire Department* — The Coombs-Hilliers VFD serves a population of approximately 3,500 using a contingent of 29 volunteers (2021). The society provides fire suppression as well as first response, road rescue and medical services. The department was previously run by a society, with services contracted to the RDN, but on March 30, 2022 the society board resigned, and announced that the department would transition to being managed and governed by the RDN. The department becomes the second society-run volunteer department to transition to an RDN department (see Nanoose Bay VFD below). The transition occurs over a 90-day period, and takes effect in July 2022. In 2022, the Coombs-Hilliers service area received \$50,000 in Community Works funding towards building upgrades.
- *Dashwood Volunteer Fire Department* — The Dashwood VFD services the Meadowood and Dashwood neighbourhoods. The department has two fire halls, one of which is located within Area F (Meadowood). At the end of 2021 the department had 37 volunteers who provided first response, medical services, low slope rescue and water rescue awareness, in addition to fire suppression. There are two separate services associated with the Dashwood fire service area, including one for the Meadowood

Figure 3.1
Electoral Area F Fire Service Areas



neighbourhood to pay for the Meadowood fire hall, and one for the remainder of the fire service area to fund improvements to the Dashwood fire hall. These two services are referenced separately later.

- *Errington Volunteer Fire Department* — The Errington VFD services a population of 3,100, most of whom reside within Area F.⁷ The department had 30 volunteer members at the end of 2021 to provide first response and medical services in addition to fire suppression. The department had 30 volunteer members at the end of 2021 to provide first response and medical services in addition to fire suppression.
- *Nanoose Bay Volunteer Fire Department* — Nanoose Bay VFD services the eastern portion of Electoral Area F. The department had 30 members at the end of 2021 to provide fire suppression, first response and medical services. In 2021, the department became the first to be operated directly by the RDN. The transition from the Nanoose Fire Protection Society (NFPS) was prompted by concerns over the liabilities and risks associated with the operation of fire departments by society boards. The fire and emergency response services provided to residents living in Electoral Area E, in the Englishman River subdivision in Electoral Area F and in the River’s Edge subdivision in Area G did not change as a result of the transition.
- *Bow Horn Bay Volunteer Fire Department* — Bow Horn Bay VFD provides service to two parcels in Area F near Horne Lake. At the end of 2021 the department had 18 members to provide first response, road rescue and medical services, in addition to fire suppression. The department has a FireSmart coordinator and a full-time deputy chief.
- *French Creek Fire Service Area* — The French Creek fire service area extends primarily through Area G, but also services properties within Area F, including one parcel of Crown Land that is within Area F and straddles Highway 19, as well as 22 parcels located north of Highway 19 in the area of Ponderosa Way and Grandon Road. Fire protection within the French Creek fire service area is provided under contract with the Town of Qualicum Beach fire department.

The portions of Electoral Area F that are situated outside the fire service areas neither pay for nor receive any fire service.

➤ **Fire Administration**

The RDN also has an umbrella fire administration service that funds a fire services coordinator who provides support to the various fire departments and service areas. The service assists with training development, administration, budgeting,

⁷ A small number of properties are situated in Area G.

capital project coordination and compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. The coordinator position is the key RDN contact. All the region's fire services contribute to the service, as does the Emergency 911 service (see below).

➤ **Dashwood Fire Hall**

As noted above, the Dashwood Fire Hall service was established to fund the long-term debt associated with replacing the original Dashwood VFD Fire Hall. The loan authorization and establishing bylaw amendment were approved through an alternative approval process in the spring of 2022.

➤ **Meadowood Fire Hall**

A service exists to pay the capital costs associated with the Meadowood neighbourhood and Fire Hall, located at 1800 Galvin Place. Although both the Dashwood and Meadowood communities are part of the Dashwood Fire service, the area that contributes to the Meadowood Fire Hall does not pay toward the replacement of the Dashwood Fire Hall (see the Dashwood Fire Hall service above). Similarly, the Dashwood community does not contribute towards the Meadowood Fire Hall.

➤ **Emergency 911**

The North Island 911 Corporation provides fire, police and ambulance response for Area F and the northern communities in RDN (Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and Electoral Areas E, F, G & H). The NI911 Corporation has agreements in place with both the City of Campbell River to provide fire dispatch, and E-Comm to provide the "public safety answering points" (PSAP), or dedicated 24/7 call centers responsible for answering 911 emergency calls, dispatching the appropriate emergency services, and transferring calls to other specialized agencies.

The Campbell River Fire & Rescue Dispatch Centre services a total of 50 fire departments throughout a 60,000 km² service area on northern Vancouver Island and in the Powell River area. The dispatch centre provides a centralized regional 911 radio fire dispatch facility for the express purpose of dispatching and providing support to the appropriate fire department. There are currently two communications operators on duty 24 hours a day. The facility receives 911 calls and dispatches the appropriate response in a matter of minutes.

E-Comm is an emergency services call centre that operates primarily out of Vancouver. E-Comm is the largest 911 call centre in BC, handling calls for Metro Vancouver and 24 other regional districts and communities. Police dispatch services are routed through Courtenay RCMP. Ambulance services are routed through Victoria.

In addition to providing the contracts for dispatch services, North Island 911 also provides the infrastructure and communications technology, radio towers and dispatch equipment, as well as IT support to ensure effective service delivery.



➤ **Emergency Planning**

The RDN Emergency Program provides Emergency Management through planning and activities related to response, recovery, mitigation and preparedness. Community disaster resilience is enhanced by maintaining operational readiness, cooperative agreements and partnerships and through public education. The RDN is responsible for providing an Emergency Management Plan for the electoral areas, but also provides direct Emergency Management planning services for the District of Lantzville through a service agreement.

RDN staff work with partners and stakeholders including the Province of BC, other local governments, local first nations, local first responders, and many other community organizations to develop preparedness programs and train members of the community. The RDN has an *Emergency Plan* to organize and coordinate efforts. The *Plan* was originally prepared and adopted in 1998, then updated in 2000, 2007 and 2013. The RDN *Emergency Plan* is intended to be the basis from which to maintain and build an effective, coordinated response to emergencies or disasters.

As part of the RDN emergency program, *Community Wildfire Resiliency Plans* were recently completed for each electoral area in 2021/22 with the help of a \$384,960 Community Resiliency Investment FireSmart grant from the province (administered through UBCM). Wildfires were identified as one of the top two hazards in the region through the *Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Assessment* completed in 2019.

➤ **Search and Rescue**

The northern RDN communities support search and rescue organizations through financial contributions. Services are established to collect and disburse funds, but do not involve any oversight or delivery functions. Area F residents contribute to societies that provide marine search and rescue services within the service area (delivered by Lighthouse Country Marine Rescue Society), as well as Arrowsmith SAR that provides land-based search and rescue operations. The marine search and rescue is a sub-regional service provided to Electoral Areas F, G, and H, as well as the Town of Qualicum Beach and the City of Parksville. The land search and rescue involves the same participants, with the addition of Electoral Area E.

➤ **Community Justice (D69)**

The RDN funds a community justice program that, among other activities, supports the RCMP's crime prevention efforts and safety related programs. The RDN has a contribution service agreement with Oceanside Community Safety Volunteers for crime prevention programs, Sources Community Resource Society for victim services programs, and Arrowsmith Community Justice Society for restorative justice programs.

Service Governance

Governance is all about decision-making — specifically, who makes decisions and how they are made. The governance system in place for each of the emergency and protective services is outlined in this section.

► Fire Protection

Decisions for the service are made by the RDN Board, through votes that include all RDN directors. Service matters, however, are brought to the Electoral Area Services Committee for consideration and discussion. The EASC is a standing Committee created by the Board to consider services of, and matters of interest to, the electoral areas, including fire protection. Recommendations from the EASC are forwarded to the Board.

The RDN has a Fire Services Advisory Committee formed to report to the EASC on matters related to fire dispatch, emergency and fire response, protection, and prevention. The Committee provides opportunities for participation and input from the RDN funded fire departments for information sharing and coordination. The FSAC receives updates from the fire departments, makes recommendations where applicable, provides a forum to share information and examine approaches to capital, administrative and operational aspects of the fire services, and ensures ongoing dialogue and collaboration with all emergency service providers operating in the RDN. The Committee is comprised of the RDN Electoral Area Directors, Fire Chiefs from RDN funded fire departments, and the Board Chairs and Treasurers of the associated Fire Societies.

► Emergency 911

Electoral Area F participates in the Emergency 911 Call Service with other northern RDN jurisdictions. The boundary served through North Island 911 includes those jurisdictions within School District 69 (Qualicum Beach, Parksville, Lantzville, and Electoral Areas E, F, G and H. Decisions required to address administrative and operational matters are made only by participating directors as stakeholder votes.

North Island 911 is the corporation that delivers the service. The corporation has its own Board of Directors, with representatives from each of the regional districts, including one from RDN. Decisions are made using a weighted vote system based on the number of shares. The RDN has 5 of the total 21 shares on the Board.

► Emergency Planning

Emergency planning services are provided by the RDN for all the electoral areas. The RDN cooperates with the region's municipalities and three area First Nations through an Emergency Management Agreement. Service matters are brought to the EA Services Committee for discussion.



➤ **Search and Rescue Services**

As noted previously, the RDN does not deliver this service; as such, the Regional District does not make decisions regarding delivery. Budget and finance-related decisions are voted on by the full Board.

➤ **Community Justice**

The Oceanside Services Committee, which includes Board representatives from Electoral Areas E, F, G and H, as well as municipal directors from Parksville and Qualicum Beach, acts as a liaison between the RDN Board and the RCMP regarding volunteer programs providing crime prevention, community justice and community safety services to the communities within Oceanside. The Committee also receives and evaluates requests for Community Safety Grants.

Service Finance

Service cost and service funding are the two key points to understand under the sub-title "service finance". Each service creates costs which are paid for using revenues from different sources. Some services costs are funded by tax requisitions; others have additional sources such as grants, or fees for permits and licences, to help cover costs.

➤ **Fire Protection**

As noted previously, fire protection in Electoral Area F is provided through six different services and six different departments, with two separate services established to pay for the Meadowood Fire Hall and proposed upgrades to the Dashwood Fire Hall. The local fire protection services provided by the paid-on-call volunteer fire departments are funded through property taxes levied on assessed property values (land and improvements) and are paid by residents within each local service area. Each department has reserves for equipment and other capital requirements. The cost of the Fire Administration service is not recovered through property taxes, but is instead recovered through internal payments made from each volunteer fire department to the service.

➤ **Dashwood Fire Hall Service**

This service was established to increase the maximum requisition amount and borrowing required to replace the original Dashwood fire hall (Hobbs Road). The amended establishing bylaw and loan authorization bylaw were approved in the spring of 2022. The project budget (\$6,462,662) and cost of the alternative approval process (\$10,000) were included in the 2022 Dashwood budget. Based on an estimated interest rate of 3.5%, the annual debt payment cost will be \$407,311 per year, including interest and principal. Borrowing will be amortized over 25 years at an approximate annual cost of \$49.93 per \$100,000 of property assessment based on the 2022 completed roll assessments. Given that the service was just approved, the full tax impact will take effect in 2023.

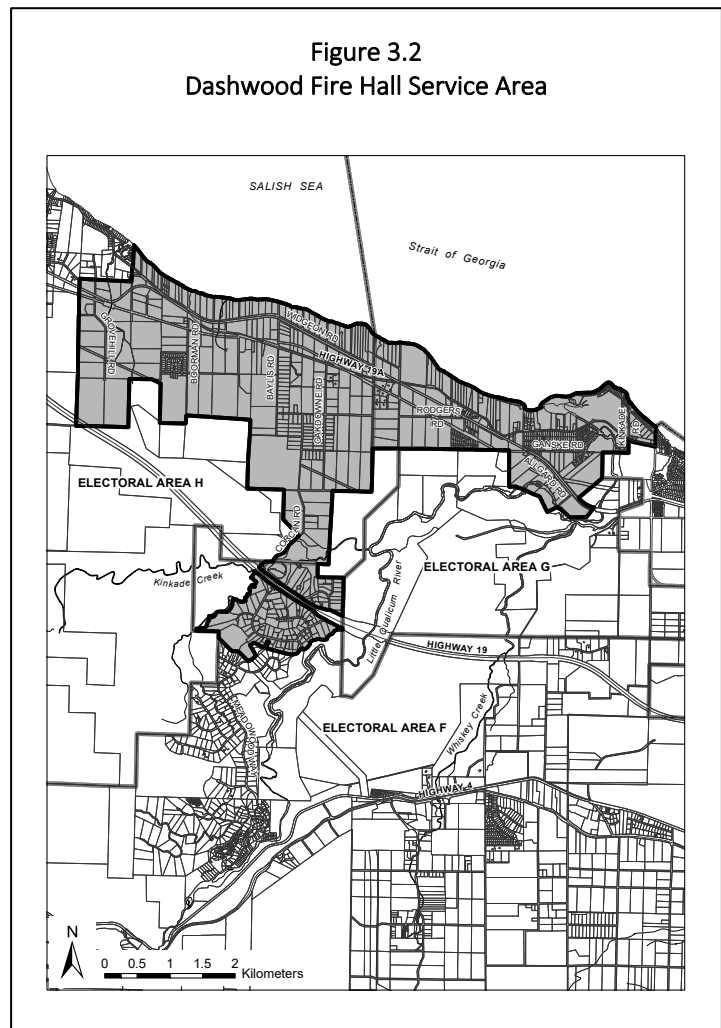
The average residential property value in the Dashwood Fire Hall service area, which only includes a portion of Area F, is estimated at \$903,830; the additional

tax cost for the new fire hall would total approximately \$451.28 per year beginning in 2023 for the average residential property within this service area.

Figure 3.2 shows the Dashwood Fire Hall service area, which encompasses a small portion of Area F, together with portions of Areas G and H. The remaining area that is serviced by the Meadowood fire hall is not within the service area.

- **Meadowood Fire Hall**
The Meadowood Fire Hall service was created to fund the capital requirements for the hall. The service, which is to fund the debt, is recovered through a parcel tax levied on the 480 properties within the Dashwood Fire Service that contribute to the Meadowood Fire Hall (as opposed to the Dashwood Fire Hall). The parcel tax in 2022 is \$185.74.

Figure 3.2
Dashwood Fire Hall Service Area



- **Search and Rescue Service**
In 2022 the Arrowsmith Search and Rescue received a one-time \$100,000 grant from the RDN; this amount is captured in the Community Grant service later in this report. As noted previously, the marine and land search and rescue services are established to provide a financial contribution to the SAR associations that provide the service. Contributions to both SAR services (marine and land) are recovered through property taxes levied on assessed values, but the amounts allocated to each participating jurisdiction are based on converted assessment for the marine SAR service, while the allocations for the land (Arrowsmith SAR) service are based upon population with each participation area.

- **911 Service**
The RDN portion of 911 service costs are allocated to each participating RDN jurisdiction based on property assessment for land and improvements, and is recovered from residents through property value tax.
- **Emergency Planning**
The cost of providing the emergency planning service is recovered from property value taxes levied on the electoral area properties, as well as through the service agreement with the District of Lantzville.
- **Community Justice**
The cost of providing the community justice service is recovered from parcel taxes levied on the participating jurisdictions. The parcel tax in 2022 was \$4.63.

Financial information for the emergency and protective services is summarized in Figure 3.3. Reserve fund and account information is provided in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.3
Emergency and Protective Services
Service Finances

Service	Participants	Total Cost	Recovered by Tax	Recovered in Area F	Average Home Tax*
Fire Administration	All EA fire depts	328,622	-	-	-
Errington Fire	Portions of Area F, G	961,925	864,484	864,484	420.00
Coombs-Hilliers Fire	Portion of Area F	821,088	745,761	745,761	481.60
Nanoose Bay Fire	Portions of Area E, F, G	1,029,793	979,675	979,675	154.70
Dashwood Fire	Portions of Area F, G, H	951,309	918,442	918,442	556.50
Dashwood Hall (debt)	Portions of Area F, G, H	133,464	43,743	43,743	37.10
Meadowood Hall (debt)	Portion of Area F	89,158	89,157	89,157	193.00
French Creek Fire	Portions of Area F, G	762,073	736,978	736,978	221.90
Bow Horn Bay Fire	Portions of Area F, H	692,836	645,304	645,304	459.20
D69 Emergency 911	Areas E, F, G, H, Parksville, Qualicum	672,065	671,565	85,573	19.60
Emergency Planning	All EAs	1,065,028	405,385	60,700	14.00
Marine Search & Rescue	Areas F, G, H, Parksville, Qualicum	17,700	17,700	2,740	0.70
Land Search & Rescue	Areas E, F, G, H, Parksville, Qualicum	17,272	17,272	2,820	0.70
Community Justice	Areas E, F, G, H, Parksville, Qualicum	165,464	55,330	14,058	4.63

* The average home value is set at \$700,000

Figure 3.4
Emergency and Protective Services
Reserve Fund and Account Balances (end of 2021)

Service	Type	Purpose	Balance (2021)
Errington Fire	Fund	Vehicles & Equipment	220,380
	Fund	Buildings	142,613
	Account	Insurance Deductible	15,741
Coombs-Hilliers Fire	Fund	Buildings & Equipment	884,212
	Account	Insurance Deductible	15,640
Nanoose Bay Fire	Fund	Vehicle & Equipment	801,207
	Fund	Buildings	30,291
	Account	Insurance Deductible	15,357
Dashwood Fire	Fund	Vehicle & Equipment	977,126
	Fund	Buildings	219,348
	Fund	Buildings (Meadowood)	6,769
	Account	Insurance Deductible	15,303
	Account		9,375
Bow Horn Bay Fire	Fund	Vehicles & Equipment	390,064
	Fund	Buildings	261,427
	Account	Insurance Deductible	15,302
Emergency Planning	Fund		271,192
	Account	Vehicle Replacement	27,802

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Service Overview

The RDN provides several services with respect to land use planning and development, including:

- Regional Growth Strategy
- Electoral Area Community Planning
- Building Inspection
- Bylaw Enforcement
- House Numbering
- Northern Community Economic Development

Planning and development services are delivered by the RDN. Staffing for the Community Planning and Development services are overseen by a general manager, with one manager for each of the three departments of Current Planning, Long Range

Planning and Energy and Sustainability, and Building and Bylaw Services. The managers of the two planning departments oversee six and five positions respectively, while the Building and Bylaw Services encompasses four bylaw enforcement staff, and 11 building inspection staff, including one building inspection superintendent, seven inspectors, two clerks and one administrative assistant.

➤ **Regional Growth Management**

One of the key roles of the Regional Growth Management service is the preparation of the RDN's *Regional Growth Strategy* (RGS). The most recent strategy – *Shaping Our Future* – was adopted in 2011; the RDN has been working since 2018 on an update. The update is being undertaken to consider new drivers of change, such as resiliency planning, and to integrate new information from the *Regional Housing Needs Assessment* (2020), *Regional Social Needs Assessment* (2021) and the RDN's *Transit Survey* (2021) to improve these policy areas. The updated RGS will be referred to as *Shaping Our Future 2040*.

Some early consultation for the updated strategy occurred in 2018 and 2019 to help define the scope of the review and integrate new information, such as the *Regional Housing Needs Assessment*. In response, the scope of the review was adjusted to include policies related to housing affordability, and later expanded to include climate action and mobility. Some additional policy and performance measures are underway to help complete the project, which now has an anticipated date of adoption in the spring of 2023.

➤ **Electoral Area Planning**

The Planning Services Department helps to develop land use policies for the electoral areas to provide guidance to elected officials, developers, residents and others. The department is responsible for developing and implementing land use plans, along with regulations and initiatives. The department also assists the public in understanding the policies and development application processes. Staff evaluate such applications and provide recommendations to the Electoral Area Services Committee.

Area F has an official community plan (OCP) that was originally adopted in 1999. Since that time the area's population has grown by more than 50%. An update was initiated in 2019, but paused as a result of COVID-19. In early 2022, community engagement was re-started. The next phase of the project will include the drafting of the OCP which will be provided to the community for additional feedback.

In addition to the OCP, Area F has a *Subdivision and Zoning Bylaw* (No. 1285) that was adopted in 2002. Subdivisions within the RDN's electoral areas are processed and approved by the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), as they are in all unincorporated parts of the province. The RDN does, however, review and comment on the land use and zoning

implications of subdivision applications as part of the Ministry’s approval process. MOTI has a Central Island office located in Nanaimo.

The Current Planning and Long Range and Energy and Sustainability staff at RDN deliver electoral area planning services, depending on the particular project (e.g., planning applications vs OCP update).

➤ **Building Inspection**

Through its *Building Regulations Bylaw No. 1250*, the RDN enforces and administers its own regulations on the building process, in addition to the provisions and standards of the *BC Building Code*. RDN Building Officials are responsible for reviewing building permit applications and inspecting properties to ensure the *Bylaw* and *Building Code* are upheld within all the electoral areas of the RDN. As noted earlier, the Building Inspection department includes seven inspectors, three clerks and one administrative assistant that report to the Manager of Building and Bylaw Services.

➤ **Bylaw Enforcement**

Related to both the Community Planning and the Building Inspection services, the RDN has bylaw enforcement officers to help ensure bylaw compliance within the electoral areas. This service is not a separate function, but rather a function of several service areas, with costs recovered from the individual service areas that assign a role to the bylaw enforcement officers. Bylaw enforcement within Area F consists primarily of the enforcement of land use or building issues. RDN has a policy regarding bylaw enforcement complaints that establishes procedures for accepting, processing and investigating bylaw complaints. The policy is intended to define roles and responsibilities, and provide guidance to staff, elected officials and the public to ensure administrative fairness in the enforcement of RDN regulations.

Compliance and enforcement action are undertaken in general conformance with the policy, but remain discretionary and based on community impact, available resources, urgency, and public safety.

The Bylaw Enforcement function has three bylaw enforcement officers and the support of an administrative assistant that report directly to the Manager of Building and Bylaw Services.

➤ **House Numbering**

The RDN assigns and maintains records and mapping of addresses or “house numbers” through the GIS department. The Regional District’s address and road records are used by the province to maintain the Digital Road Atlas, and by Telus to verify the accuracy of their address records. Both of these records are used for the 911 emergency dispatch systems.



➤ **Northern Community Economic Development**

The Northern RDN communities, including Electoral Areas E, F, G, and H, as well as the City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach, participate in the Northern Community Economic Development Service, which was established in 2011. The service previously operated as a grant program through which the RDN Board contributed funding to eligible economic development initiatives that advance the Board's vision for a strong, thriving and creative local economy. In 2020, as a result of the pandemic, the RDN Board passed a resolution to discontinue the grants program, and instead to direct applicants to the community grants program.

In 2019 and 2020, the RDN commissioned studies to consider options for regional economic development in the RDN, including regional and sub-regional options. Some of the options identified will be shaped, in part, by the City of Nanaimo's new economic development corporation — the Nanaimo Prosperity Corporation (NPC) — which, at the time of writing, is beginning operations. The NPC is owned by the City of Nanaimo, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Nanaimo Port Authority, Nanaimo Airport, Chamber of Commerce and Vancouver Island University.

Given that the role of the RDN in economic development in this area has not been fully determined, there is no budget allocated to this service in the 2022 – 2026 financial plan.

Although the service is not currently being funded, *Oceanside Initiatives* compiled a 5-year regional economic development strategy during the pandemic. The plan drew upon past studies and plans prepared for the area to identify the following priorities:

- Economic Infrastructure Development
- Labour Force Development
- Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction
- Consistent Local Intelligence
- Specific, Targeted Marketing Campaigns

Service Governance

Decisions regarding the Regional Growth Strategy service are voted on by all members of the Regional Board. Adoption and amendments to the strategy itself are guided by specific provisions within the *Local Government Act*.

Decisions on electoral planning-related services and applications are made by only electoral area directors — that is, by the representatives of the jurisdictions that participate in the service. Current planning applications, long range planning, bylaw enforcement and building inspection issues, as well as comments from advisory committees (see Agricultural Advisory Committee below) are brought forward to the EA Services Committee, in addition to matters from other departments, such as community parks, emergency preparedness, water service areas and fire protection.



Decisions, such as the approval of the service budget, that have financial impacts are decided by the full Board of Directors.

The RDN has an Agriculture Advisory Committee that advises the Regional Board on agricultural issues and the potential impact of planning decisions on agriculture in the electoral areas. The role of the AAC is to increase awareness of agricultural issues in the RDN, assist in the implementation of the RDN AAP and other agricultural related initiatives, and provide local perspective and expertise to advise the Regional Board on a range of agricultural issues on an ongoing and as needed basis as directed by the Board. In addition to providing input into broader plans such as OCP, RGS, master plans and management plans, the committee provides comments and recommendations on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) applications under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, including those that concern exclusion from the ALR, and subdivision or non-farm uses within the ALR. The advice from the Agricultural Advisory Committee is brought forward to the Electoral Area Services Committee.

The AAC consists of a maximum of 10 members appointed by the Regional Board to represent a diverse range of interests including elected officials, commodity groups/producers, and established regional farming and aquaculture organizations. Members are appointed for two-year terms.

There is also Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee (CATAC), established in 2020, to provide advice and recommendations to the RDN board on emerging climate issues and to update the RDN's strategy for community climate mitigation and adaptation. CATAC is comprised of local experts in engineering, renewable energy, hydrology, resource management and land use planning, among other fields, working collaboratively with elected officials. In November 2021, the RDN Board approved the CATAC's final report which specifies top priority actions for improving community climate adaptation and mitigation within the RDN. The responsibility for climate action and climate change related policy lies with the Manager of Long Range Planning and Energy and Sustainability.

Unlike other regional districts, the RDN does not currently have any advisory planning commissions (APCs). There were previously APCs in place until the year 2000 for Electoral Areas A, C, D, E, G and H (Electoral Area F has never had an APC). As an alternative to APCs, additional community engagement was added to the zoning/OCP amendment process. The APCs were also replaced, in part, by the Parks and Open Space Advisory Committees (see Parks and Recreation Services).

Building inspection and bylaw enforcement services involve regulatory bylaws. All regulatory bylaws and related matters are voted on by the entire Board. Questions for consideration, however, are first brought forward to the Electoral Area Services Committee for discussion.



Service Finance

The allocation of the net Regional Planning costs to jurisdictions is based on a combination of population and assessment (50% population, 50% assessment). The cost assigned to each individual jurisdiction are then recovered using property taxes levied on assessed values (land and improvement).

The Electoral Area Community Planning costs are recovered in part from planning applications, but primarily from property taxes levied on assessed values in the electoral areas (except Area B). Building Inspection service costs are recovered primarily through permit fees and charges.

Bylaw enforcement services are recovered through the individual service areas that relate to the bylaws that are being enforced. Thus, if bylaw enforcement officers are spending time enforcing a particular electoral area zoning bylaw, the cost of that time is recovered from the Community Planning service. RDN bylaws to regulate noise and property maintenance (nuisance and unsightly premises) matters do not apply to Area F. Residents in Area F do not, as a result, contribute to bylaw enforcement costs to the same extent that residents in other electoral areas.

The minimal cost associated with maintaining the house numbering database is recovered from all electoral areas through property value taxes. The District of Lantzville also receives house numbering through the RDN through a service agreement.

The cost of the Northern Economic Development service was previously recovered through a parcel tax which, in 2021, was \$2.08. As noted earlier, there is no budget for the service moving forward.

All financial information for the services grouped under Planning and Community Services is summarized in Figure 3.5.

PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

Service Overview

Parks, Recreation and Library services provided by the RDN to Area F residents include:

- Regional Parks
- Area F Community Parks
- Northern Community Recreation
- Oceanside Place
- Ravensong Aquatic Centre

Parks and recreation services are delivered by RDN staff. The department is overseen by a General Manager of Recreation and Parks Services. A Manager of Parks Services oversees 14 staff that deliver parks planning, as well as parks operations services. A Manager of Recreation oversees 41 positions, including arena, aquatic and recreation

Figure 3.5
Planning and Community Services
Service Finances

Service	Participants	Total Cost	Recovered by Tax	Recovered in Area F	Average Home Tax*
Regional Growth Mgmt	All Jurisdictions	1,511,711	738,398	35,305	8.40
EA Community Planning	All EAs	3,629,033	2,443,765	420,960	98.00
Building Inspection	All EAs	2,257,597	-	-	-
Bylaw Enforcement	All EAs	753,067	-	-	-
House Numbering	All EAs, Lantzville	22,258	20,395	3,054	0.70
Northern Ec Dev	Electoral Areas E, F, G, H, Parksville, Qualicum	-	-	-	-

* The average home value is set at \$700,000

programming, including maintenance workers, lifeguard instructors and all recreation programming positions.

Library services provided by the Vancouver Island Regional Library are also funded through the RDN.

► Regional Parks

The Regional District's Regional Parks Service was established in 1989. Through strategic acquisitions, the service has expanded to include 12 regional parks (including conservation areas) and nine trails. Area F has two regional parks — Englishman River Regional Park and Little Qualicum River Regional Park — within its boundaries. The Electoral Area also has two regional trails — Coombs to Parksville Rail Trail, and a portion of the Arrowsmith CPR Regional Trail.

A new Regional Parks and Trails strategy is underway for completion in the coming months (fall of 2022).

► Area F Community Parks

Community park land is typically acquired through development in the subdivision and/or rezoning process. Park development and maintenance are funded through local taxes within each electoral area, or as an amenity contribution through a rezoning. A *Community Parks and Trails Strategic Plan* (CPTS) was prepared in 2014 for Electoral Areas E, F, G and H to ensure that community parks and trails continued to meet the needs of each community. At the time, based on the CPTS classifications, Area F had three neighbourhood parks, seven natural parks, four linear parks and three surplus.⁸

⁸ Surplus parks are defined in the CPTS as lands acquired in past without environmental protection or active park value or potential.

Area F today has a total of 15 community parks totalling approximately 35 ha, and five community trails that are funded by the community parks service. The parks include:

- Allsbrook Community Park
- Old Alberni Highway Community Park
- French Creek School Community Park
- Kerr Road Community Park
- Coombs Station Community Park
- Romain Road Community Park
- Errington Community Park
- Meadowood Community Park
- Dolly Varden Way Community Park
- Little Qualicum Falls Community Park
- Harris Crescent Community Park
- Brooklin Lane Community Park
- Malcolm Community Park
- Melon Road Community Park
- Wild Road Community Park

Of these parks, Malcolm and Meadowood community parks are the largest in terms of area. The community trails that are part of the service include:

- Price Road Community trail
- Cranswick Matterson Community trail
- Errington School Community Trail
- Braddock Lefler Community Trail
- Brooklin Hillier Community Trail

➤ **Northern Recreation Services**

Northern Recreation Services refers to the recreation programming and planning initiatives for Areas E, F, G and H, along with the City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach. The RDN provides a variety of direct recreation program services and initiatives, including an *Oceanside Recreation Services Master Plan* that was completed and adopted by the RDN Board in 2018. As follow up to the plan, the RDN has been working on expansion plans for Ravensong Aquatic Centre (see below). Construction of a new recreation/community centre is also underway in Meadowood, funded through Electoral Area F Community Works Funding.

➤ **Ravensong Aquatic Centre**

Ravensong Aquatic Centre, located in the Town of Qualicum Beach, includes a 25-metre indoor pool, leisure pool, whirlpool, sauna, Finnish steam room and change rooms. The 2018 *Recreation Master Plan* for the Oceanside area (District 69) identified the potential expansion of services/spaces at the Aquatic Centre. The Board subsequently passed a resolution directing staff to prepare a concept

plan to advance the addition of a second 25m tank and expanded change rooms. The service's capital budget shows significant anticipated expenditures in 2023 and 2024.

➤ **Oceanside Place Arena**

Oceanside Place is an indoor arena with two NHL-size ice sheets, a multipurpose over-ice floor available for shows and events, a 1,204 ft² multi-purpose room, Oceanside Pond, leisure ice and dry floor space, meeting room and a skate sharpening and rental shop and a concession area. The arena is located within the City of Parksville.

➤ **Library Service**

Library Service is provided to Area F and the RDN as a whole by the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL). VIRL covers a vast geographic area from Sooke and Sidney in the south to Port Hardy, Haida Gwaii and the Central Coast in the north. VIRL's coverage area is the fifth largest in BC, totalling more than 42,000 km², encompassing a mix of urban, rural, and remote communities. Each member jurisdiction contributes to a pooled budgeting system, as mandated by the *Library Act*. This funding model enables VIRL to leverage economies of scale, access discounted prices on library materials, and acquire a robust eLibrary with ebooks, audiobooks, streaming and downloadable music, movies and TV, in addition to online learning opportunities.

VIRL uses a floating collection which allows residents throughout the system to request materials for delivery. This model ensures equity of access for all VIRL cardholders and allows all residents to take advantage of the entirety of the collection. The VIRL has 39 branch libraries, including locations in Parksville and Qualicum Beach. There is no branch in Area F.

Service Governance

The governance systems in place for the Parks and Recreation services are outlined in this section.

➤ **Regional Parks and Area F Community Parks**

All jurisdictions participate in the Regional Parks service — thus, the full Board makes decision for the service. The entire Board also makes decisions for the Area F Parks service, since decisions on services with only one participant — Area F in this case — are made by all Directors. The Community Parks issues, however, are addressed at the Electoral Area Services Committee prior to proceeding to the Board.

The Regional Parks service is supported by a Regional Parks & Trails Select Committee made up of 14 Board representatives, including the Area F Director, to advise the Regional Board on a wide range of regional parks and trail issues. There is also a Regional Parks & Trails Strategic Plan Advisory Sub-Committee

comprised of four directors that is more specifically focussed on the strategic plan.

The Community Park service is supported by a Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC) for Area F. The Committee is comprised of seven members, including the Electoral Area Director, and is supported by an RDN parks planner. POSAC provides advice on issues such as the acquisition or tenure of community park sites, subdivision park land dedications, the development and maintenance of community park sites; and priorities for the expenditure of community park operating and reserve funds, and trail and park planning. It provides a focal point for co-operation between community interests and the RDN on parks and open space issues within Area F. Community parks issues, as well as the advice provided by the POSAC, are brought forward to the Electoral Area Services Committee for review, discussion, and recommendations to the Board.

Recreation issues and decisions that influence long-term strategic direction such as fees and charges, approval of annual recreation grant applications, recreation facility infrastructure development within the northern communities are first shared and discussed by the Oceanside Services Committee (OSC). The OSC focuses on common services provided to the electoral areas of E, F, G and H as well as Parksville and Qualicum Beach. The Committee is comprised of seven Directors from the participating areas, including two from the City of Parksville, one from the Town of Qualicum Beach, and one from each of Electoral Areas E, F, G and H.

➤ **Library Service**

Decisions for the Library Service are made by the VIRL's Board of Trustees, which is comprised of representatives of the system's member jurisdictions. As per the *Library Act*, each of the 28 participating municipalities appoints a council member to the Board. Each of the 10 participating regional districts appoints one electoral area director from the region's participating electoral areas. In all, the VIRL Board consists of 38 trustees. Currently the Electoral Area B Director represents the RDN on this Board.

Most decisions are made using a corporate unweighted voting model in which each Board member receives one vote. Decisions requiring weighted votes are made using a system that awards votes to members in proportion to the amount of the tax contributions from their respective jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction receives one weighted vote plus one additional vote for each ¼ percent of total VIRL tax contributions after the first ¼ percent. Votes on matters involving the expenditure of funds are made based on a weighted voting formula that awards votes to members in proportion to the population of the municipality represented by the member or of the electoral participating areas of the regional district represented by the member.

The Board is supported in its decision-making by staff, as well as an executive



committee comprised of the Board Chair, Vice-chair and 9 trustees. The Executive Committee makes recommendations to the full Board, but is also authorized to provide direction to the VIRL Executive Director.

It is important to understand that the boards of participating regional districts and the councils of participating municipalities have no formal involvement in VIRL governance other than through their appointed representatives on the VIRL Board. VIRL is an independent corporation, separate from the municipalities and regional districts that participate in the system.

Service Finance

Regional Parks was previously funded through two separate requisitions — one for operating and the other for parkland acquisition and capital. The latter was raised through a parcel tax; however, as a result of a 2017 review of the service, it was determined that a property value tax would be a more equitable approach to funding the combination of operations, development and acquisition. Effective early 2022, the functions were combined with the budget for both operating and capital expenditures raised through a property value tax. Requisitions are determined based on the basis of 50% assessment, and 50% population.

The Area F Community Parks service raises its funds through a property value tax levied on assessed values for land and buildings for all Area F properties. As noted earlier, certain community park projects in Area F received Community Works Fund grants in 2022, including \$558,221 towards playground equipment at Errington Community Park, and \$40,000 toward the Malcolm Road Community Park parking lot.

Northern Community Recreation raises funds through property taxes and user fees. The recreation services, Ravensong and Oceanside Place, collect funds through user fees and facility rentals; however, the majority of revenues is raised through property taxes levied on assessed values. As noted previously, Community Works Funds were allocated in 2022 to the Meadowood Recreation Centre construction. The total amount allocated to the project from the Community Works grant funding in 2022 was \$340,628.

All financial information for the services grouped under Parks and Recreation Services is outlined in Figure 3.4. Figure 3.5 shows the reserve funds and accounts for the parks and recreation services.

WATER SERVICES

Service Overview

This section profiles the water systems in Electoral Area F, as well as the regional drinking water/watershed protection service. It should be noted that the systems included in this review are those that are owned and operated by the RDN; many other private systems exist, including strata-owned systems. An Island Health map of

**Figure 3.4
Parks and Recreation Services
Service Finances**

Service	Participants	Total Cost	Recovered by Tax	Recovered in Area F	Average Home Tax*
Regional Parks Operations		2,706,938	2,389,382		
Regional Parks Capital		1,669,077	1,408,980		
Regional Parks Total	All Jurisdictions	4,376,015	3,798,362	178,669	41.30
Community Parks Area F	Area F	307,952	274,151	274,151	63.70
Northern Recreation	Areas E, F, G, H, Parksville, Qualicum	2,891,787	1,853,142	297,637	69.30
Oceanside Place	Areas E, F, G, H, Parksville, Qualicum	2,885,452	2,088,159	249,978	58.10
Ravensong Aquatic Centre	Areas F, G, H, Parksville, Qualicum	4,542,117	3,085,082	530,353	123.90
VIRL	All EAs	3,342,227	2,524,008	431,755	100.80

* The average home value is set at \$700,000

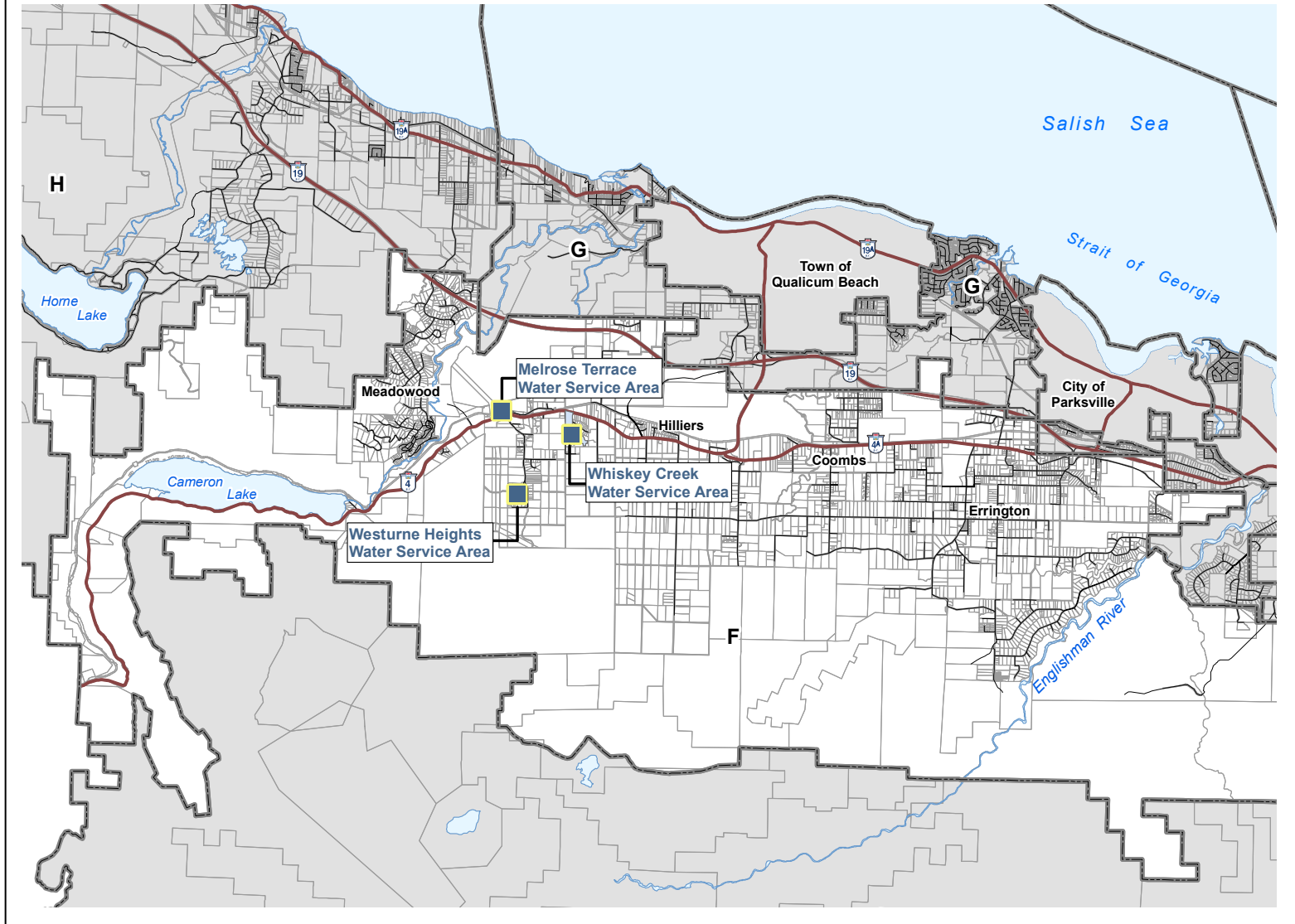
**Figure 3.5
Park Reserve Funds and Accounts**

Service	Type	Purpose	Balance (2021)
Regional Parks	Fund	Park Acquisition	1,219,730
	Fund	Park Development	1,242,459
Community Parks Area F	Fund	Park Acquisition	124,447
	Fund		235,494
Northern Community Recreation	Fund		201,639
	Account		586,167
Oceanside Place	Fund		498,210
Ravensong Aquatic Centre	Fund		3,800,064

water systems in the Central Island shows a cluster of private systems in Area F, many of which are located along the Highway 4A corridor.

As shown in Figure 3.8, Electoral Area F has three water systems run by the RDN: Whiskey Creek Water System, Melrose Water System and Weturne Water System.

Figure 3.8
RDN Water Systems in Electoral Area F





RDN has eight other water systems in other electoral areas, and provides bulk water service to two systems. Water Services is one of the departments overseen by the Director of Water and Wastewater Services, who operates under the General Manager of Regional and Community Utilities. The Water Services Manager oversees:

- project engineer
- chief operator
- engineering technician
- engineering technologist
- utilities technicians (7)

The Drinking Water/Watershed Protection service has a coordinator, as well as monitoring network coordinator, outreach coordinator and stewardship coordinator.

➤ **Whiskey Creek Water Service**

The Whiskey Creek water system was constructed in the 1970s to supply the Westerlea Estates subdivision, southwest of Qualicum Beach. The system was initially operated by the subdivision developer — Westerlea Estates Ltd. — but was acquired by the RDN in 2011. The system gets its water supply from a groundwater well that was drilled in 2020 to replace the previous supply from Crocker Creek. Supply is chlorinated, treated with ultra-violet (UV) light and stored in one reservoir. The system includes approximately 3.2 km of watermains, nine fire hydrants and four flush-outs. There are 130 residential lots connected to the water system.

The 2019 *Asset Management Review and Implementation Report* indicated that in the Whiskey Creek system 81% of all assets are in the new or medium age category, resulting in a condition rating of very good or good; however, 85% of the value of all the assets are in the aging or end of life category, which means that a number of costly assets are at or nearing the time for replacement or renewal. Accordingly, plans to upgrade the system’s water supply are underway.

The RDN has received \$931,000 in grant funding for phase two of the Whiskey Creek water supply upgrade project. The RDN will install a transmission main from the existing well to the reservoir to replace the temporary overland main, modernize the distribution pumping and control system and install backup power. The first phase of the upgrade project was completed in December 2021, and includes a new well, temporary, overland transmission main and ultra-violet treatment to provide drinking water to the service area. A \$290,532 grant through the New Building Canada Fund - Small Communities Fund in 2015, along with \$450,000 of Electoral Area F Community Works Funds in 2014 helped fund phase one.

➤ **Melrose Terrace Water Service**

The Melrose Terrace Water Service Area was established in April 2005 when the

RDN acquired the existing Melrose Terrace Strata water system. The water source for the system comes from one groundwater well located nearby. The supply is chlorinated and stored in a single reservoir, then filtered through sand and charcoal filters before distribution. The distribution system is comprised of 0.3 km of 150 mm PVC watermains that service 28 residential properties. There is a portable generator available in the event of a power outage. There are no fire hydrants associated with the system.

The 2019 *Asset Review and Implementation Plan* indicated that for the Melrose Terrace water system, 84% of all assets are in the new or medium age category, resulting in a condition rating of very good or good. Seventy-two percent of the value of all the assets are in the new or medium category — a finding which shows that a majority of assets in the MTWSA are early in their lifecycle. Renewals or replacements need to be planned, however, for approximately 25% of assets in the foreseeable future.

A reservoir replacement is planned for the system in 2022 at a budgeted cost of \$97,485, funded through a combination of reserves, grants and new borrowing.

➤ **Westerne Heights Water Service**

The Westerne Heights Water Service Area was established in 2016 when the RDN acquired the existing Westerne Heights Water Utility (established in 1995). Water is supplied to properties along Westerne Heights Road. The water source for the service comes from one groundwater well located nearby. Water supply is chlorinated and stored in two underground reservoirs. The system includes a chlorination/pumphouse building with a back-up generator, and 0.21 km of 75mm diameter PVC watermains that serve 17 properties. There are no fire hydrants located within the system.

The Westerne Heights water system did not have asset management information shared as part of the 2019 *Asset Review and Implementation Plan*. A capital budget of approximately \$45,000 was budgeted for 2022, funded through existing reserves. No significant capital expenditures were anticipated in the capital program for the next five years.

➤ **Drinking Water/Watershed Protection Service**

The Drinking Water and Watershed Protection (DWWP) program is a regional service focused on the protection of the region's water resources. The service aims to discover and share information about water in the region (Water Information & Science), use that information to make better land use decisions (Water-centric Planning and Policy Support), and help communities protect the environment (Water Awareness & Stewardship).

The RDN's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection program goals are to facilitate and/or support regional initiatives that:

- protect, manage and restore ecosystems and the overall health and functioning of the watersheds and aquifers
- safeguard and manage source waters to secure a sustainable drinking water supply
- increase water-use efficiency and optimize infrastructure investments for water and wastewater systems
- foster the enjoyment and protection of social, cultural, and recreational values and amenities in watersheds to maintain well-being and quality of life
- mitigate and better prepare for climate change impacts on the region's water resource

The program is guided by an *Action Plan*, developed originally in 2007 with the help of a steering committee representing a variety of region-wide interests. The plan was updated in 2019/2020.

While not prepared as part of the service, it is worth noting that as part of the 2020 OCP update a water quality and quantity risk assessment for groundwater and surface water resources within Electoral Area F was prepared. One of the report's 13 recommendations included working with water purveyors to monitor the effects of using aquifers for water supply in Area F, and developing modeling tools to forecast the long-term effects of extracting groundwater from the aquifers.

Service Governance

Operational and financial decisions regarding the water services are made by the full Board because these services are provided to local service areas only (services that are provided to only a portion of one electoral area are voted on by the entire Board). Water system matters, however, are first discussed at the Electoral Area Services Committee (EASC) in accordance with a standing Board motion. Recommendations from the EASC are forwarded to the Board.

Decisions on the Drinking Water/Watershed Protection program are also made by the full Board, since the service is regional in nature with full participation. The Drinking Water/Watershed Protection Technical Advisory Committee provides insight, information and input to the Board to assist in its decisions.

The RDN also has a Water Purveyor Working Group (WPWG) with representatives from small water systems. This group exists to assist small water purveyors with networking and educational opportunities.

Service Finance

The costs of RDN water systems are recovered primarily through a combination of user fees based on consumption, and parcel taxes. User rates charged by RDN, which are uniform across all systems, are billed semi-annually in May and September with rates based on the average daily consumption. Based on the billing information

collected in September 2021 and May 2022, the average usage for the Area F systems was as follows:

- Melrose Terrace – 0.38 m³/day
- Westurne Heights – 0.33 m³/day
- Whiskey Creek – 0.52 m³/day

In addition to the parcel tax and utility funding, the Whiskey Creek and Melrose Terrace water systems each received Community Works grant funding in 2022 towards capital projects. Whiskey Creek received \$52,100 towards the water system upgrades, and Melrose Terrace received \$50,000 towards the reservoir replacement project.

The drinking water/watershed protection service is apportioned based on the number of taxable parcels in each of the jurisdictions multiplied by the rate identified in the bylaw. In 2022 the rate was \$14. The funds are then levied and recovered from the municipalities as a property value tax, and are recovered from the electoral areas as a parcel tax. In 2022 the bylaw was amended to reflect a bylaw rate of \$14 per parcel — an increase from the \$12 approved in 2021.

The three RDN average water system user fees and parcel taxes are noted in Figure 3.9. Figure 3.10 shows the reserves for each of the three systems.

Figure 3.9
Water Services
Service Finances

Service	Participants	Total Cost	Recovered by Tax	Recovered in Area F	Average Home Tax*
Whiskey Creek Water	Portion of F	150,881	122,434	122,434	971.70
Average User Fee					218.10
Melrose Terrace Water	Portion of F	52,531	36,238	36,238	1,294.21
Average User Fee					179.93
Westurne Heights Water	Portion of F	34,743	27,833	27,833	1,637.24
Average User Fee					146.59
Drinking wtr/wtrshd prot.	All	1,233,786	993,006	42,476	14.00

* The average home value is set at \$700,000

**Figure 3.10
Water Services
Reserve Fund and Account Balances (end of 2021)**

Service	Type	Purpose	Balance (2021)
Whiskey Creek Water	Fund		126,419
Melrose Terrace Water	Fund		29,634
Westurne Heights Water	Fund		32,189
Drinking water/watershed protection	Fund		68,503
Utilities (general)	Account	Vehicle Replacement	67,112

LIQUID & SOLID WASTE SERVICES

Service Overview

Solid waste management at the RDN includes the management and operation of the region's solid waste facilities (landfill and transfer station), as well as a solid waste planning function and the preparation and updating of a solid waste management plan for the region. The curbside collection of garbage, recycling and organics is provided as a separate service to all RDN jurisdictions, with the exception of the City of Nanaimo. Together the solid waste services are delivered by RDN staff, under the General Manager of Regional and Community Utilities. A Manager of Solid Waste Services oversees a team of 39 positions, the majority of which are scale clerks and attendants, landfill attendants and equipment operators. The solid waste department also has a solid waste planner, zero waste coordinator, special projects coordinator and assistant.

The RDN oversees liquid waste planning, as well as wastewater treatment plants and sewer facilities. Sewage treatment plants are paid for by those who are connected to and participate in the service. Area F is outside the sewer service areas, but does participate in the liquid waste management planning service, together with the entire region. One lot located in Area F also pays into a community storm water management service that extends into Area G in the Rivers Edge/Peterson Road subdivision in the Englishman River area. RDN staff deliver the wastewater services.

➤ Solid Waste Management

The RDN owns and operates two solid waste management facilities: the Regional Landfill and Church Road Transfer Station. The Regional Landfill is located near the southern border of the City of Nanaimo and is the only landfill site in the region. The facility receives more than 58,000 tonnes of waste per year.



The Church Road Transfer Station is located just outside the southwestern border of the City of Parksville. This facility receives about 19,000 tonnes of waste per year which is transferred to the Regional Landfill for disposal. In addition to receiving garbage from commercial customers and the general public, both facilities provide areas for the collection of recyclable materials (including garden waste and scrap metal), construction/demolition waste, and disposal of controlled waste. Both facilities divert over 11,000 tonnes of recyclable materials, comprised mainly of yard waste.

The Province of BC's *Environmental Management Act* mandates that regional districts prepare and regularly update solid waste management plans. A Solid waste management plan reflects a long-term vision for how each regional district manages its solid waste, including diversion and disposal. The RDN's *Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP)* outlines commitments to solid waste diversion and management to 2029. The plan was most recently amended in 2018; a new solid waste management plan is required by 2029. The RDN is required to submit annual progress reports on waste received as well as diversion.

➤ **Curbside Garbage and Recycling**

The RDN provides curbside garbage, recycling and organics collection to single-family residential dwellings throughout the region, with the exception of the City of Nanaimo. The service therefore is also provided to the Snaw-Naw-As First Nation. The RDN's collection service is mandatory for all single-family dwellings, secondary suites, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and manufactured homes within the service area. Garbage and recycling are collected every two weeks; organics are collected weekly.

The RDN transitioned from manual collection to automated collection in 2020. The private firm, Waste Connections, delivers the service under the terms of a 10-year renewable contract. The automated curbside collection service uses specially-designed wheeled carts and automated collection trucks with mechanical arms. Truck drivers will operate the arms from within the cab of the truck to grab, lift and empty the materials in the carts.

The RDN also provides recycling and waste reduction education and awareness services through the Solid Waste department. A portion of education activities are funded through the curbside collection service (and therefore the garbage utility rates) as well as through a partnership agreement with Recycle BC.

➤ **Liquid Waste Management**

The RDN provides a liquid waste management planning service for the entire region. The *Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP)* is the RDN's long-range plan to manage wastewater in the region. Approved by the Minister of Environment in October 2014, the plan authorizes the RDN to find community-driven and cost-effective solutions to protect public health and the environment and achieve a standard level of wastewater treatment over a

reasonable timeframe. The LWMP organizes specific commitments into ten programs, including both public wastewater systems as well as private onsite systems. The plan also addresses issues with stormwater, rainwater management, drinking water protection and issues that extend beyond those connected to community sewer systems. As part of the service, annual reports are submitted to the province and an independent audit of plan implementation is performed every 5 years. The last audit was prepared in 2019.

Jurisdictions that receive wastewater treatment pay separately towards those services. The overall management planning service, however, is provided to the entire region. Within the region, about 25,000 people and businesses are outside sewered areas and use privately-owned onsite (septic) systems for wastewater treatment.

The RDN is currently working on an update and amendment to the LWMP to revise the capital project list and cost estimates to enable borrowing for capital projects, modify the timeline for secondary treatment upgrade at the Nanoose Bay Pollution Control Centre, and streamline future action items to recognize the progress made toward the LWMP program commitments.

➤ **Englishman River Community Storm Water Management**

The RDN provides a storm water management system for the River's Edge and surrounding subdivision in Area G, as well as an adjacent parcel on Peterson Road in Area F. The system, including the storm water detention basin, was constructed as part of the subdivision in 2003 by the developer. The storm water detention basin is now owned and operated by the RDN.

Service Governance

Decisions regarding the solid waste landfill service, including the approval of the solid waste management plan, are made by the full RDN Board.

The RDN established a nine-member select committee — the Solid Waste Management Select Committee (SWMSC) — to deal with solid waste services. The Committee addresses issues related to both the landfill service as well as the collection and recycling service.

Changes to the Region's SWMP are reviewed by the Solid Waste Management Plan Monitoring Advisory Committee (PMAC). This Committee provides input on the implementation of the SWMP (Plan), and advice to the Regional Board through the SWMSC. The PMAC includes a combination of voting members and non-voting technical staff members, as well as representatives from municipalities, First Nations, provincial and federal government agencies. The PMAC will remain in existence for the duration of the current Plan.

For the curbside collection service, decisions other than financial ones are made by the directors that are participants within the service — that is, by all jurisdictions



except the City of Nanaimo. The full regional Board of Directors makes decisions regarding the liquid waste management planning service, which is provided on a region-wide basis to all electoral areas and municipalities. Like the solid waste service, review and updating of the liquid waste plan is supported by a the Liquid Waste Management Plan Monitoring Committee. The Committee includes representatives from local governments, First Nations, Island Health, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the general public. Even though the plan was approved in 2020, the advisory committee is still active and meets every few months.

Operational and administrative decisions regarding the Englishman River Community Storm Water service are made together by the Electoral Area Directors from Areas F and G. Financial decisions are made by the entire RDN Board.

Service Finance

The costs of the Solid Waste Management (landfill) service are recovered primarily through tipping fees, but also partly through property taxes. Half of the costs are questioned to participating jurisdictions on the bases of net taxable values; the remaining half are requisitioned on the basis of population. For Area F, the resulting solid waste tax rate in 2022 is 0.022 on every \$1,000 of assessment.

The garbage and recycling collection service is funded through utility fees as well as a rebate provided through Recycle BC. The RDN renewed its partnership agreement with Recycle BC to collect residential recyclables on behalf of Recycle BC on November 30, 2018. The current partnership agreement expires December 31, 2023. This partnership allows the RDN to benefit from a rebate totaling more than \$1.1 million to lower fees as well as to fund education and to administer the program. Resulting fees paid by households are dependent upon the size of the garbage cart, but range from \$170 to \$260 per year. Fees do not appear on residents' tax notices, but are instead invoiced through utility bills.

The costs of the liquid waste management plan service are allocated in the same way as solid waste — with 50% of the requisition amount is allocated to each jurisdiction based on assessed land and improvements, and 50% is allocated based on population.

The stormwater management service is paid by the properties in the service area through a property value tax on assessed values of land and improvements.

Details of the finances for Liquid Waste services are shown in Figures 3.11 and reserves are shown in 3.12.

Figure 3.11
Liquid and Solid Waste Services
Service Finances

Service	Participants	Total Cost	Recovered by Tax	Recovered in Area F	Average Home Tax*
Liquid Waste Mgt Planning	All	418,583	197,024	9,268	2.10
Englishman Rvr Stormwater	Portion of F & G	6,701	3,701	3,701	10.50
Solid Waste Management	All	19,786,200	1,379,123	64,872	15.40
Collection & Recycling	All but Nanaimo	6,864,369			

* The average home value is set at \$700,000

Figure 3.12
Liquid and Solid Waste Services
Reserve Fund and Account Balances (end of 2021)

Service	Type	Purpose	Balance (2021)
Liquid Waste Management Planning	Fund	Operating	142,786
Englishman River Stormwater	Fund		43,477
Solid Waste Management	Fund	Operating	2,339,664
	Fund		8,618,279
	Account	Landfill Closure	2,788,554
Collection & Recycling	Fund		590,469

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

Service Overview

The RDN provides some services to Area F that do not easily fit into other categories referenced in the report, including:

- Area F Animal (Dog) Control
- Highway #4 Streetlighting

➤ Area F Dog Control

All jurisdictions within the RDN participate in some level of Animal Control service. Area F has its own animal (dog) control bylaw that specifically references

regulations and responsibilities for those who have dogs, including dangerous dogs. The bylaw sets out impound fees, as well as fines for violating various regulations. Area F does not require dog licences, and the service does not address barking dogs. The RDN contracts animal control services to Coastal Animal Control Services of BC.

➤ **Highway #4 Streetlighting Service**

Currently within the RDN there are seven different streetlighting local service areas. Streetlighting along Highway #4 represents one of those services. The different service areas are non-contiguous, self-contained areas that are financially supported by the properties that encompass each individual service area. The Highway #4 streetlighting service is supported by all properties within Electoral Area F.

Highway #4 is improved with the common cobra-head streetlights that are attached to hydro poles. BC Hydro looks after the repair and maintenance of the streetlights.

Service Governance

Bylaws that are made or amended to exercise regulatory authority through a regulatory service are voted on by all Directors of the RDN Board. Decisions on Dog Control are also made by the entire Board, since the service is both regulatory in nature and because the service is specifically provided to Area F (decisions for services that provide service to only one electoral area are made by the entire Board). Decisions regarding streetlighting are similarly made by the entire board since the service is only provided to Electoral Area F.

Service Finance

Revenues for both the Area F Dog Control and streetlight services are recovered from property taxes levied on assessed values throughout the electoral area (land and improvements). Figure 3.13 summarizes the finances.

Figure 3.13
Miscellaneous Service Finances

Service	Participants	Total Cost	Recovered by Tax	Recovered in Area F	Average Home Tax*
Highway #4 Streetlight	Electoral Area	5,731	4,822	4,822	1.40
Animal Control Area F	Electoral Area	36,436	28,595	28,595	7.00

* The average home value is set at \$700,000

ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

Service Overview

General Administration services consist of a variety of functions that support the elected officials of the RDN and their work, as well as the overall management of the RDN organization. Since the functions support several different services, the majority of the costs are accounted for and recovered as overhead. Costs that are not easily assigned to individual services are recovered directly from all of the region's residents as a separate administration property tax.

Some of the services referenced in this section include:

- Administration
- Electoral Areas Administration
- Community Grants
- Feasibility Studies

Together, these services encompass all administration functions, including reception, property management, the purchasing of office supplies and equipment, records management, financial services such as budgeting and accounting, legal services, communications, computers and software purchasing and management, recruitment and employee support services, administrative support for the board, elections, and several others.

General government and administration services are delivered primarily by RDN staff under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), who is responsible for overall service delivery and management of the organization. The CAO is supported by an executive assistant and a senior leadership team comprised of 5 general managers referenced in the relevant departments this report.

The General Manager of Corporate Services oversees the majority of the administrative staff including:

- Manager of Legislative Services (oversees 6 staff positions)
- Manager of Human Resources (oversees 5 staff positions),
- Manager of Information Technology, Innovation and Development (oversees 15 staff positions)
- Director of Finance (oversees 16 staff positions)
- Communications Coordinator
- Engagement Coordinator

The RDN also has a Manager of Strategy and Intergovernmental Relations, as well as a Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Asset Management that are not referenced elsewhere in the report. These positions are part of the administration costs that are allocated to all Regional District services.

➤ **Administration**

Administration covers a range of support services to ensure the Board is able to operate. The service includes everything from meeting costs, support services, website, software, elections, payroll, citizen’s surveys, communications with board members, advertising, legal, travel, training, website, and insurance.

Legislative Services provides services and support to the Regional Board, policy and bylaw development, legal and legislative changes including Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy requests, and records management.

Financial Services provides financial and administrative services to the Regional District and Regional Hospital District. It works with the Board, public, and all of the departments on financial budgeting, tax requisitioning, reporting, cash management, payroll, planning, and monitoring. Finally, Financial Services is responsible for the purchasing and procurement and contracting of goods and services by the Regional District.

Human Resources is responsible for the administration of all full-time, part-time and seasonal employees. The department handles labour relations, recruitment, training and career planning, employee health and safety and Workers Compensation regulations.

Information Technology, Innovation and Development oversee all the RDN’s information technology needs, including cybersecurity, GIS, and database systems. The communications staff members are responsible for all internal and external communications, advertising, news releases and other public engagement tools.

➤ **Electoral Areas Administration**

The Electoral Areas service provides corporate support to the combined electoral areas, including elections. The administrative costs that support the electoral areas is combined and shared amongst the electoral areas, rather than having a separate cost and rate for each electoral area.

➤ **Feasibility Study Funds**

There are services set up to support feasibility studies in each electoral area, as well as one for any regional feasibility studies. Typically a minimal level of tax requisition supports the service (i.e. \$10,000 per year), but when the electoral area moves forward with a specific study, a combination of higher tax requisitions, existing reserves and grants are used to support the project.

➤ **Community Grants**

Community Grants are funded regionally, with grants determined through an application process, where recipients are determined by the RDN’s Grants Committee. The Regional District of Nanaimo provides community grant funding in order to assist registered non-profit organizations to provide social programs



and services that serve a local community or provide a regional benefit. The organization must provide a social enrichment service and demonstrate that the service fills a need in the community, and demonstrate the need for financial assistance. Examples of community grants awarded to Area F organizations in 2021 include Corcan Meadowood Residents Association for folding chairs and a racking system (\$4,200), and the Errington Preschool Parents' Society (\$2,000).

The Community Grants program is separate from the grant funding provided by RDN through other services, such as recreation grants (Northern Community Recreation) and Oceanside Community Safety Grants (Community Justice service).

Service Governance

Decisions on administration and operation services are made by a combination of staff and the RDN Board of Directors. Operational decisions for services that include the electoral areas and member municipalities are made by the full Board. Operational decisions for services that include electoral areas only are made by the Electoral Area Directors. Budget or financial matters for all of the services are made by the full Board.

The Board has created an Executive Committee as a standing committee of the Board, to consider matters related to employment contracts, Board procedures or other matters as determined by Board resolution. The Executive Committee includes eight Board member, including the Chair, Vice Chair and the Chair of the Electoral Area Services Committee. As per the RDN *Board Procedures Bylaw*, the Executive Committee annually reviews the list of Advisory Committees, Commissions and external organizations to which Board members are appointed, and recommends changes as necessary.

The administration of community grants is overseen by a Community Grants Committee (select committee of the Board), comprised of three RDN directors who meet one time per year, in the spring, to evaluate applications and provide recommendations to the RDN Board.

Service Finance

Corporate administration costs are recovered primarily through administrative overhead (internal recoveries) that are allocated to each individual service based on the level of effort and time involved to administer each service. The RDN has a policy, approved by the Board of Directors, that provides the framework for the allocation of administrative costs to the various RDN services. The policy addresses the allocation of the costs associated with Legislated Services, General Administration, Board, CAO office, IT, HR, Finance, Strategic Initiatives, Asset Management, Records Management, and approvals and Intergovernmental Liaison.

The two main factors for allocating administrative costs are the number of staff involved in the service and the level of business activity. A greater number of staff

requires more support in the areas of payroll, HR, IT support, and can be measured through FTE, and a higher level of business activity requires more support in the areas of governance, payments, equipment and utilities, and can be approximated by the service operating budget. A base allocation is made that relates to the type of service (debt servicing, transfer to other organizations, or service delivered by RDN), and then increases based on other factors such as FTE, whether the service has capital projects, and if the staff occupy areas of the RDN administration building.

Administration costs not attributed to individual services are funded through property taxes. Regional districts also receive a grant from the provincial government each year to assist in general and electoral area administration costs. The amount received is based on population (total population in the regional district as well as the electoral area population). In 2022, RDN received approximately \$100,000 as a Basic Grant.

Electoral Area Administration activities are budgeted separately, and recovered only from the electoral areas.

Community grants are also recovered through property value taxes. Feasibility study costs are recovered, where necessary, through property tax on individual electoral areas.

All financial information for the services grouped under Administration is outlined in Figure 3.14. Reserves are shown in Figure 3.15.

Figure 3.14
Administration Services Finances

Service	Participants	Total Cost	Recovered by Tax	Recovered in Area F	Average Home Tax*
Administration	All Jurisdiction:	14,808,709	3,439,475	156,691	36.40
EA Administration	All EAs	1,511,071	905,428	135,572	31.50
Community Grants (Area F)	All EAs	257,479	256,487	35,934	8.40
Area F Feasibility Studies	Electoral Area	268,867	158,867	158,867	37.10

* The average home value is set at \$700,000

Figure 3.15
Administration Services
Reserve Funds and Accounts

Service	Type	Purpose	Balance (2021)
Administration	Fund	Building	3,150,341
	Fund	Computers	2,025,669
	Fund	Local Government Elections	284,705
	Account	Pacific Blue Cross Renewal	230,701
	Account	Vehicle Replacement	482,023
	Account	Info Services Capital	360,347
	Account	Municipal Insurance Assoc.	163,739
Electoral Area Administration			284,705
Feasibility Studies	Account	Regional	150,762
	Account	Area F	55,377

CHAPTER 4

LOCAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY OTHERS

Not all local services provided to residents in Electoral Area F are provided by the RDN. This section reviews the services of other providers.

PRIVATE UTILITIES

In addition to the water systems owned and operated by the Regional District, there are several community systems owned and operated through private utilities and strata councils.

A private water utility is a business that owns or operates equipment or facilities for the delivery of domestic water service to five or more persons. Private water utilities are usually created by developers to service development in rural areas where community water service is required for subdivision approval, but where no other water purveyor is present. Private utilities are regulated by the province through the Comptroller of Water Rights, under the *Water Utility Act* and the *Utilities Commission Act*. The province's Utility Regulation Section ensures that water systems are properly designed and constructed prior to the sale of lots, and that utilities provide safe and adequate water service at rates that are fair, reasonable and sufficient to operate their water systems sustainably.

Private utilities must also meet the requirements of the *Drinking Water Protection Act* as enforced by the Island Health Authority. Island Health requires three different permits to provide drinking water: Drinking Water Source Assessment, Construction Permits and Operating Permits.

Several private water utilities operate small water systems within Electoral Area F (as noted previously). One of the region's larger private utilities, EPCOR, provides water to residents in French Creek (Area G), but has wells located within Area F. There is no obligation for a local government to purchase or assume control over a private utility.

Utilities that serve Area F residents include electricity, gas, phone, cable and internet companies. These companies are either private corporations or Crown corporations (e.g., BC Hydro).

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

The Province of BC provides a number of services to Electoral Area F, including:

- Roads and Subdivision
- Parks
- Police
- Schools

- Health
- Ambulance

➤ **Roads and Subdivision**

Within RDN, as in all other unincorporated areas of the province, the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) is responsible for providing and maintaining roads, highways and bridges, and approving subdivisions.

Area F includes some provincial highways – close to 25 km of Highway 4, portions of Highway 19 (approximately 7.5 km worth), and 9.7 km of Highway 4a. In addition, the area has approximately 175 km of local constructed roads. All provincial road maintenance work is performed by private contractors. The contractor for Service Area 2, Central Vancouver Island, is Mainroad Mid-Island Contracting LP. The service area extends from south of Nanaimo to Area H, and stretches across the Island, including both the east and west coast. MOTI contractors sign a Highway Maintenance Agreement which includes specifications related to maintenance of road surfaces, control of roadside vegetation, drainage, winter clearing, traffic signs and other items. The standard maintenance specifications describe what services are to be provided, and set out minimum acceptable standards for completed work as well as performance timelines. The contract for Service Area 2 was signed in September 2018 and extends to August 31, 2028. The annual value of the initial year of the contract was \$14,750,057, but this amount is adjusted annually based on inflation and any changes to the infrastructure.

The cost of the services is recovered from property owners, in part, through the provincial rural tax. The rural tax rate in 2022 was 0.36 per \$1,000 of assessed value, which represents about \$252 on a residential home in Area F (valued at \$700,000). Together, RDN Electoral Area F properties contributed approximately \$1,076,630 in provincial rural taxes in 2022. If one assumes that all rural tax money collected from the community is used to directly fund these (and only these) roads, the amount collected in the Area F (rural tax collected divided by road length in the community) would represent approximately \$6,152 per km. While it is difficult to compare to other road maintenance costs due to varying widths, standards, and conditions of each jurisdiction, an analysis undertaken of the provincial cost for maintaining rural roads in another rural jurisdiction was shown to be approximately \$5,000 per km. This figure is considered quite low by most engineering standards (particularly for areas receiving significant snowfall), but can be used to ballpark the minimum costs for maintaining Area F roads.

➤ **Parks**

The Province provides provincial parks and recreational areas, both of which supplement the community and regional parks provided by the RDN. The Province has three provincial parks within Area F: Englishman River Falls Provincial Park, Little Qualicum River Falls and MacMillan Park.

MacMillan Park is 301 ha and accessed off Highway 4. The park encompasses Cathedral Grove old growth forest area, featuring ancient Douglas firs and Western red cedar. The park is contiguous with Little Qualicum River Falls provincial park, which extends for 440 ha along Highway 4 past Cameron Lake, north to the waterfalls and camping area. Little Qualicum River Falls features waterfalls that cascade down a rocky gorge bordered by steep mountain peaks, riverside trails, picnic facilities and 96 camping sites. Cameron Lake is quiet spot for swimming, fishing, and sail boarding. The Cameron Lake and Beaufort day-use areas are located 10 minutes west of the campground on Highway 4.

Englishman River Falls provincial park is a 97 ha park accessed off Errington Road. The park is located along the Englishman River north of Nanaimo, and features two waterfalls that plunge into a deep canyon. The park has a large day-use area and campground and contains several hiking trails through the forest and along the river. The lower falls end in a deep pool often used as a swimming hole in the summer when river levels are low. In addition to the trails and day use areas, the park also provides 103 campsites.

► Policing

Under the *Police Act*, responsibility for policing rural and unincorporated areas of British Columbia rests with the provincial government. The province contracts delivery to the RCMP. Services include uniformed patrols, response-to-call duties, investigative services, community-based policing, traffic enforcement and administrative support to provincial detachments.

Electoral Area F is served by the Oceanside RCMP detachment located in Parksville. In 2020, the provincial portion of the Oceanside detachment had an authorized strength of 12 officers servicing a rural (electoral area) population of 28,128. The municipal officers for Parksville (17) and Qualicum Beach (8) are also based in the Oceanside detachment.

The province pays 70% of the total RCMP cost for Electoral Area F; the federal government pays the remaining 30%. The provincial government recovers up to 50% of its portion through the police tax, which all unincorporated areas, including Electoral Area F, began to pay in 2007. The tax is collected as a property value tax (land and improvements). The 2022 police tax rate in RDN Electoral Area F is 0.0556 per \$1,000 assessed value, or a total of \$38.92 on an average (2022) residential home in Electoral Area F (\$700,000).

The total amount collected from Electoral Area F from the police tax in 2022 was \$166,280. Expressed differently, the amount recovered for policing represents \$20.24 per capita (based on 2021 Census numbers). There are no other direct costs for policing services levied to these areas.

► Schools

The province is responsible for education services, which are delivered by the

School District #69. The Board of Trustees that governs the School District is comprised of seven trustees. The Board was elected in October 2018 by acclamation for a four-year term. The Board's duties and responsibilities include public oversight of education, finance, facility management, human resources, and policy, as well as public meetings and community consultation. Errington Elementary School is the only public school within Electoral Area F. French Creek school was previously operated from 1912 but closed in 2014. Other elementary independent school options exist but are not part of the public School District.

Funding for schools is recovered through school taxes levied on all properties. The school tax rate for Electoral Area F was 1.177 in 2022, or \$823.90 on a residential home (valued at \$700,000). The school tax raised a total of \$3.52 million from all the properties in Electoral Area F in 2022.

➤ **Health**

Island Health is the authority mandated (and funded) by the province to deliver health care programs and services to residents of RDN including Electoral Area F. Island Health delivers a wide range of services, including:

- implementation of drinking water quality regulations
- monitoring of the environmental health of the lake
- prevention and health promotion
- mental health and substance abuse treatment
- public health
- residential care

Almost all areas of the province are located within regional hospital districts that share the same boundaries and local government jurisdictions as regional districts. A hospital district property (value) tax is levied in every regional hospital district to help pay for healthcare facilities in the district. In Electoral Area F the taxes that are directed to local healthcare facilities show up on the property tax bills as the Nanaimo Regional Hospital District (NRHD) tax. The Nanaimo Regional Hospital District (NRHD) has five major areas of focus for capital planning and advocacy, including the patient tower replacement, new cancer centre, cardiac catheterization lab and a new high acuity unit, all to be located at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH), and a long-term care facility in the region.

The tax rate for the NRHD in 2022 is 0.31259, or \$218.81 on a home with an assessed value of \$700,000. The total funds raised from the electoral area toward hospital facilities in 2022 was approximately \$934,844.

➤ **Ambulance Service**

The BC Ambulance Service is a provincially-funded and delivered service provided by BC Emergency Health Services. The BC Ambulance Service provides emergency pre-hospital treatment and transportation by ambulance, and is the largest provider of emergency health care in Canada.



BC Emergency Health Services operates three dispatch operations centres in Vancouver, Victoria and Kamloops that manage the receipt of all 911 calls and coordinate responses to those calls. The centres operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are the first point of contact for people requiring emergency pre-hospital care. The Victoria Centre provides service to the RDN, and all communities on Vancouver Island. In 2019, new technology was implemented that enables the emergency medical call-takers to answer and process 911 requests for service for any of the three dispatch centres, and the communities they serve.

BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) dispatch operations centres are staffed by emergency medical dispatchers (EMDs) and call takers (EMCTs). When a call for help is received, they use a medical priority dispatch system to assess the severity of the patient's condition and respond with the appropriate help. The BC Ambulance Service prioritizes how ambulances are dispatched based on the caller's description of the nature and extent of the medical condition or injury, which allows for the most critical patients to be attended to first. An updated system for assigning paramedics, ambulances and other resources to 9-1-1 calls was introduced in 2018. The new Clinical Response Model (CRM) is aimed at more accurately matching resources to the needs of the patient.

Dispatch Operations coordinates the movement of paramedic crews (including helicopters and bike squads) to provide optimum coverage of resources and sharing of information to ensure the fastest and best possible response to patients. Dispatchers work closely with partner agencies such as police, fire, search and rescue and coast guard to ensure that British Columbians have access to timely and effective care.

The ambulance service is not taxed separately, so there is no specific tax rate related directly to BC Ambulance Services.



APPENDIX I

SAMPLE PROPERTY TAX NOTICE AREA F (2022)

ELECTORAL AREA F
GOVERNANCE &
SERVICES STUDY

DRAFT
INTERIM REPORT

NEILSON
STRATEGIES

left.side partners inc.

1. Electoral Area F Services (Area Wide)

Emergency Services	Property Tax per \$700,000 residence	Total Recovered from Area F
D69 Emergency 911	\$19.60	\$85,573
Emergency Planning	\$14.00	\$60,700
Marine Search & Rescue	\$0.70	\$2,740
Land Search & Rescue	\$0.70	\$2,820
Community Justice	\$4.63	\$14,058
Planning & Development		
Regional Growth Management	\$8.40	\$35,305
Electoral Area Planning	\$98.00	\$420,960
Building Inspection	\$0.00	\$0
Bylaw Enforcement	\$0.00	\$0
House Numbering	\$0.70	\$3,054
Northern Community Econ. Devlpmt	\$0.00	\$0
Parks & Recreation		
Regional Parks Total	\$41.30	\$178,669
Community Parks Area F	\$63.70	\$274,151
Northern Community Recreation	\$69.30	\$297,637
Oceanside Place	\$58.10	\$249,978
Ravensong Aquatic Centre	\$123.90	\$530,353
Vancouver Island Regional Library	\$100.80	\$431,755
Water		
Drinking water/watershed protection	\$14.00	\$42,476
Liquid & Solid Waste		
Liquid Waste Management Planning	\$2.10	\$9,268
Solid Waste Management	\$15.40	\$64,872
Collection & Recycling ¹	\$170.00	\$595,850
Miscellaneous		
Highway #4 Streetlight	\$1.40	\$4,822
Animal Control Area F	\$7.00	\$28,595
Administration		
Administration	\$36.40	\$156,691
Electoral Area Administration	\$31.50	\$135,572
Community Grants	\$8.40	\$35,934
Area F Feasibility Studies	\$37.10	\$158,867
Surveyor of Taxes	\$39.75	n/a
Subtotal for area-wide taxes		
	\$966.88	\$3,820,700

¹ Utility fee would not normally be included on a property tax bill, but is shown here. Collection fee presumes an 80 L garbage cart. Area F total assumes one garbage user fee per taxable parcel.

2. Local service areas

	Property Tax per \$700,000 residence	Total Recovered from Area F
Whiskey Creek Water	\$971.70	\$122,434
Melrose Terrace Water	\$1,294.21	\$36,238
Westurne Heights Water	\$1,637.24	\$27,833
Whiskey Creek Water (avg. user fee) ¹	\$218.10	\$27,480
Melrose Terrace Water (avg. user fee) ¹	\$179.93	\$5,038
Westurne Heights Water (avg. user fee) ¹	\$146.59	\$2,492
Englishman River Stormwater ²	\$273.00	\$3,701
Fire Administration	\$0.00	\$0
Errington Fire ²	\$420.00	\$864,484
Coombs-Hilliars Fire	\$481.60	\$745,761
Nanoose Bay Fire ²	\$154.70	\$979,675
Dashwood Fire ²	\$556.50	\$918,442
Dashwood Fire Hall (debt) ²	\$37.10	\$43,743
Meadowood Fire Hall (debt)	\$185.74	\$89,157
French Creek Fire ²	\$221.90	\$736,978
Bow Horn Bay Fire ²	\$459.20	\$645,304
Subtotal for area-specific charges		N/A

¹ Utility fee would not normally be included on a property tax bill, but is shown here. Average water user fees are based on total user fees divided by number of parcels.

² Totals for these Services reflects the total for the entire Service Area, not just the Area F portion

3. Provincial services

Police Tax	\$38.92	\$166,279
Rural Tax (roads, subdivision)	\$252.00	\$1,076,630
School Tax	\$823.90	\$3,519,981
Subtotal for provincial services		\$4,762,890

4. Other agencies

Nanaimo Regional Hospital District	\$218.81	\$934,844
Municipal Finance Authority	\$0.14	\$598
BC Assessment Authority	\$24.43	\$104,373
Subtotal for agency taxes		\$243.38
	\$243.38	\$1,039,815