



REGIONAL
DISTRICT
OF NANAIMO

Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee Status Report - 2022/2023

1.0 Reporting Scope

This report summarises progress to date (January 2022 through August 2023) on the top three climate action priorities and strategic supports identified in the RDN’s Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee (CATAC) Final Report (December 2021). This status report excludes climate action outside of that recommended by CATAC as it’s focus is specifically on implementation of CATAC work. Work planned for the third year of CATAC implementation (2024) is provided in a separate document. A full summary of climate action across RDN services will be available in February of 2024. This report supports the CATAC-recommended Strategic Support: “Regular reporting, accountability, and adaptive approaches.”

2.0 Reporting, accountability, adaptive approaches

Reporting and accountability supports all CATAC work. A reporting framework was approved by the RDN Board in May of 2022. Reporting outline and status of reporting are provided in the table below.

Category Reported	Frequency	Method	Status
Community Emissions	Annual	Carbon Disclosure Project RDN Website	Complete
Action on top CATAC priorities	Annual	Climate Action Report Card <i>and</i> Concise Report	Complete (this report)
RDN Organisation-wide climate action	Every 3 years	Comprehensive status card RDN Website	Scheduled for 2024
Revised CATAC recommendations	Every 3 years	CATAC Report to Board RDN Website	Report to Board fall 2024

3.0 Priority One

Ensure ongoing water supply resiliency, supported by Natural Asset Management

3.1 Priority Description

Ensuring water services in which the RDN is involved (both current and any proposed for the future), and areas within the RDN not served by community water systems, have water supply resilience, including emergency back-up under expected future climate scenarios (an approximate 40-50 year time horizon). Renewable energy generation should be included where feasible. The RDN should also encourage all water purveyors within the RDN to adopt high quality, public-facing climate-informed water supply planning (if not already in place).

3.2 Key Context

The RDN does not have authority over other water providers operating in the Regional District (e.g. City of Nanaimo, Town of Qualicum Beach, small service providers), nor over the allocation of water in unserved (well-based areas) or serviced areas, as allocation is a provincial responsibility. The RDN can effectively bring together water suppliers to support uptake of best practices and communicate with the province around information needs and other concerns for our region. The RDN is also able to implement planning tools (for new development only) in areas with concerns around groundwater supply (e.g. Development Permit Areas for aquifer protection).

3.3 Water and Natural Assets Priority - Implementation Status January 2021 - August 2023

Year	Task	Activities	Status	Context
2022	Document state of supply planning across water purveyors and un-serviced areas in RDN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices for climate informed water supply planning developed • Survey of current water supply practices complete 	In progress, delayed	Dependency on French Creek Water Budget. ETA Fall 2023.
2023	DWWP to continue work on water budgets (existing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French Creek Water Budget 	In progress, delayed	French Creek water budget (eta Fall 2023)
2023	Publish RDN water supply planning info in public-friendly format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop public friendly description of how water supply planning works in RDN (web and print) 	In progress, on time	Regional Climate projections underway in 2023 to support
2023	Develop preliminary natural asset management approach and supporting policies, inventory work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022- Preliminary natural asset management inventory completed (pending approval) • 2023 - Development of natural asset implementation approach in progress 	In progress, on time	In collaboration with Asset Management and DWWP

3.4 Water Priority - Strategic Supports



Equity-centered design and delivery

- Care taken to consult all sizes of water providers
- Equity will be priority within design of public outreach materials during 2023



Effective outreach

- Public outreach materials will be developed with design professionals to ensure effective messaging and outreach



Active advocacy

- Advocacy through ongoing communications with area water suppliers and the Province
- RDN submitted 2023 AVICC* resolution to improve provincial support for regional water supply planning



Collaboration and regional participation

- Work included all RDN municipalities and most area water service providers
- Participation in Peer Networks for Natural Asset Management
- Collaboration with Capital Regional District and regional stakeholders on climate projections



Interdepartmental approaches

- Partnership between Energy and Sustainability and Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program
- Multiple departments involved in the delivery of Natural Asset work



Reporting, adaptive approaches

- Program monitors and adapts to water supplier needs
- We will monitor uptake of education materials by area water suppliers, and adjust approach as needed

4.0 Priority Two

Identification of barriers to climate action within RDN bylaws and policies

4.1 Priority Description

A climate-focused, triple bottom line (environment, economy and social impacts) review of the RDN's policies, plans and regulations to identify barriers preventing climate appropriate development/operations and driving loss of natural areas needed for sustainable service delivery should be completed. Policies, plans, fees and regulations influence land use decisions and have long lasting impacts that can be costly to reverse or change. These policies have long term impacts on resident ability to take action for climate adaptation and mitigation. Changes can have long term impacts on regional emission reductions and climate adaptation while protecting rural character. The scope of work includes review of internal corporate policies that guide development and operations.

4.2 Key Context

The RDN does not have jurisdiction over transportation planning, nor does it have jurisdiction over land use planning practices in municipal areas (City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville, Town of Qualicum Beach, City of Parksville). The RDN is responsible for the creation and review of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), a strategic plan adopted by the RDN Board to direct long-term planning for sustainable growth in the region. It is a commitment made by member municipalities and electoral areas to collaborate and ensure sustainable growth management by taking into account shared services, our unique natural environment and available resources, and provides high level policy intent.

4.3 Policy barriers to climate action - Implementation Status (Jan 2022-Aug 2023)

Year	Task	Activities	Status	Context
2022	Work Plan Development and identification of Priority Policies	<p>ID of corporate policies e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable procurement • Development permit areas (Official Community Plan work) • Fleet management and acquisition • Green building standard • Need for overarching Board climate policy 	In progress, (ongoing 2022-2024)	Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) review and Bylaw 500 processes underway, Area F Official Community Plan (OCP) update in progress Overlap with Natural Assets work and integration into land use planning
2023	Summary of best practices, key recommendations for zoning/bylaw updates and implications (triple bottom line)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RGS review complete • Development permit area (DPA) scoping (Area F OCP) • Regional Net Zero Buildings Strategy development (Energy Efficiency and Zero Carbon Code) • Corporate Green Building standard revision (into 2024) • Community Amenity Contribution Policy review 	In progress, on time	Shifted to internal approach for efficiency; integrated with work underway to avoid parallel or repeated work

4.4 Policy Priority - Strategic Supports



Equity-centered design and delivery

- Equity considered during all policy reviews - varied approaches
- Equity/social benefit now included in sustainable procurement policies
- Equity-focused consultation during Net Zero Building strategy development



Effective outreach and education

- RGS, Area F OCP supported by professional facilitation and outreach
- all bylaw updates supported by outreach and consultation



Active advocacy

- Advocated to province for Regional Transportation planning as part of provincial consultation on low carbon transportation
- Advocacy to province for long term funding for climate action, including via UBCM resolution and participation in provincial workshops/consultations



Collaboration and regional participation

- All municipalities reviewed Regional Growth Strategy and are engaged on policy updates that affect their communities
- Collaborative delivery on Regional Strategy for Net Zero Buildings and Localized Energy Generation



Interdepartmental approaches

- All policy work has included input from a cross-section of RDN departments through formal and informal processes



Reporting, adaptive approaches

- Revised approach to use internal resources for maximum efficiency
- Prioritized existing review/updated processes to avoid missing key opportunities
- Community emissions inventory update to allow improved reporting

5.0 Priority Three

Increased support for climate adaptive home retrofits

5.1 Priority Description

Energy retrofits to existing buildings reduce energy costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and better protect occupants against broader temperature swings expected under climate change. The RDN's green building program is not adequately resourced for effective outreach to drive the rate of retrofits required. There is currently strong federal and provincial financial support for retrofits, so the RDN can undertake a targeted, strategic outreach role to help residents take advantage of those programs at relatively low cost. Supporting alternative financing mechanisms, including property-assessed approaches, will ensure RDN residents can choose financing approaches that work best for their individual situation. Further, as local government legislation is expected to be amended to enable green building retrofit financing, the RDN will be positioned to successfully apply for funding grants and programs.

5.2 Key Context

The RDN runs a green building outreach and rebate program to support update of climate-adaptive home retrofits. Work under this priority builds on that existing program. While the RDN does not have direct control over resident choices to pursue climate adaptive home retrofits, it can increase resident awareness through outreach, help identify and decrease some barriers to participation, and fill gaps in programs offered by other levels of government. This work depends on partnership-building and effective outreach with residents, the local building industry and other regional stakeholders.

5.3 Climate adaptive home retrofits - Implementation Status (Jan 2022 - Aug 2023)

Year	Task	Activities	Status	Context
2022	Green building and Retrofit Outreach Plan and Materials Redesign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research to inform program design • Retrofit webinar development and delivery for residents, expanded website resources and renovation pathways, increase in rebates available 	In progress, on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional program redesign in 2023/2024
2023	Initial outreach/ support program design, pilot delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program identification complete (concierge service -procurement in progress) • Pilot program scheduled for fall 2023 	In progress, on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Retrofit concierge” service addresses non-financial barriers
2022-2023	Home efficiency financing mechanism identification and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding application completed in 2022, funding received in 2023 • Community Efficiency Financing feasibility analysis with recommendations underway 2023, eta Dec 2023 	In progress, on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with City of Nanaimo
2022-2023	Supporting work from initial scoping in 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA) on Net Zero Renovation Pilot Projects • Initial project discussions with Vancouver Island University to support additional training of young builders 	New, on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting ‘retrofit ecosystem’ –industry collaboration and potential academic collaborations

5.4 Climate-adapted home retrofits - Strategic Supports



Equity-centered design and delivery

- equity requirements included as part of retrofit concierge procurement and program design
- equity requirements core component of Community Efficiency Financing feasibility assessment



Effective outreach

- Professional material design and marketing through concierge program
- Acting for Climate Together (ACT) Volunteer program engages RDN residents in action on home energy retrofits
- Youth outreach planned to increase awareness around homes and climate
- Industry collaborations in progress



Active advocacy

- Active participation in provincial consultations on supports needed to increase uptake of retrofits, including property assessed clean energy (PACE)



Collaboration and regional participation

- City of Nanaimo partnership on financing feasibility assessment
- concierge program serves region
- outreach collaboration with neighboring Regional Districts
- collaborations with local stakeholders to support 'retrofit ecosystem'



Interdepartmental approaches

- Cross-promotion with DWWP, Emergency Services on climate adaptive homes for residents
- Strong collaboration on outreach between departments, including sharing of resources and program development



Reporting, adaptive approaches

- Outreach program completes annual internal reporting and adjustment
- Program monitoring and reporting metrics being built in to retrofit concierge service

6.0 Comments from CATAC Membership

Feedback on implementation of CATAC recommendations was provided by CATAC members at the June 2023 CATAC meeting. This feedback and has been considered in the refinement of 2024 work plans. Key feedback included:

- to explore options for further collaboration with area school boards on delivery of outreach and education.
2024 Work plan additions:
 - additional piloting of in-class workshops about home energy efficiency, in collaboration with the BC Sustainable Energy Association, this also complements the Net Zero Homes and Localised Energy Generation strategy
 - prioritization of a 'youth ambassadors' program to improve youth engagement in local sustainability, in collaboration with the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program and local teachers
- to ensure consideration of financial barriers and cost in the delivery of home retrofit programs - these are key barriers that is becoming increasingly important as interest rates and cost of living increase
2024 Work plan additions:
 - additional funding proposed for RDN rebates as a one-time offering in 2024

At the September 14, 2023 meeting, the CATAC membership recommended:

- exploring stable sources of funding for climate action
 - this will be considered by CATAC as part of 2025-2027 recommendations development
- supporting advocacy work for regional water supply planning and improved provincial resources for water management
 - this has been included in the 2024 CATAC work plan and will be coordinated with Drinking Water and Watershed Protection