

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 20, 2026 **FILE:** 0550-04 Board

TO: Chair and Directors,
Regional Board

FROM: Dave Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

RE: **BYLAW NO. 643 - STRATHCONA GARDENS RECREATION FACILITY SERVICE**

PURPOSE/PROBLEM

To consider the question to be asked of electors in respect of Bylaw No. 643 which proposes to include part of Electoral Area C (Quadra Island) as a participant for the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its April 29, 2026 meeting the Board considered the attached report and gave Bylaw No. 643 first 3 readings. The Board also passed the following resolution:

Smyth/Chapman: SRD 369/26

THAT approval of the electors for Bylaw No. 643 be sought through an assent voting process to be held concurrently with the 2026 local government elections, and

THAT the voting be conducted throughout the entire service area and proposed service area.

Bylaw No. 643 has now been approved by the Province and it would be in order for the Board to determine the ballot question to be asked of electors. Once that has been finalized ballots will be prepared for use by electors in conjunction with voting in the 2026 local government elections.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report from the Chief Administrative Officer be received.
2. THAT the question to be asked of electors when voting on Bylaw No. 643 be as follows:

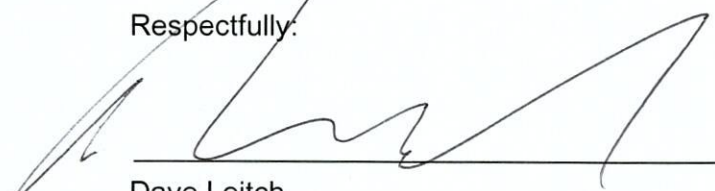
"Are you in favour of Bylaw No. 643 which would amend the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility service by adding that part of Electoral Area 'C' (Quadra Island) shown on Appendix 'A' to the bylaw as a participant for the service and specifying a cost sharing formula that uses a percentage of the converted hospital assessments of each participant as follows:

City of Campbell River – 100%

Electoral Area D (Oyster Bay-Buttle Lake) – 90%

That part of Electoral Area C shown on Appendix 'A' – 80%"

Respectfully:



Dave Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared by: T. Yates, Corporate Services Manager

Attachments: Bylaw No. 643
Copy of April 23, 2026 report to the Board



BYLAW NO. 643

A BYLAW TO AMEND THE STRATHCONA GARDENS RECREATION CENTRE SERVICE

WHEREAS the former Comox-Strathcona Regional District has, by Bylaw No. 1214, established a service to provide recreation facilities and programs at the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility;

AND WHEREAS the aforementioned service was transferred to the Strathcona Regional District by supplementary letters patent effective February 15, 2008;

AND WHEREAS the City of Campbell River and Electoral Area D are participants in the Strathcona gardens recreation facility service;

AND WHEREAS Regional Board wishes to amend the provisions of the said recreation facility service by including a portion of Electoral Area C into the service area;

AND WHEREAS the approval of the electors has been obtained pursuant to section 349 of the *Local Government Act*;

NOW THEREFORE the Board of Directors of the Strathcona Regional District, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

Amendments

1. 1) Section 1 of Bylaw No. 1214 is amended by deleting the words "for Electoral Area D and the District of Campbell River" so that the section reads as follows:

1. The area created under supplementary Letters Patent dated February 19, 1971 and March 9, 1977 is hereby established as a local service and shall be known as the "Strathcona Gardens Recreation Centre Service Area".

- 2) A new section 1C is added to Bylaw No. 1214 as follows:

Participating Areas

- 1C. The City of Campbell River, Electoral Area C and Electoral Area D are participants in the Strathcona Gardens recreation centre service.

- 3) A new section 1D is added to Bylaw No. 1214 as follows:

Service Area Boundaries

1D. The boundaries of the service area shall include the entirety of the City of Campbell River, Electoral Area D and that part of Electoral Area C shown outlined on Appendix 'A', attached to and forming part of this bylaw.

- 3) Section 3 is deleted in its entirety and a new section 3 is substituted therefor as follows:

Apportionment of Costs

3. The amount to be recovered by requisition shall be calculated on the basis of the converted values for hospital purposes in the participating areas as follows:

- a) City of Campbell River – 100% of property assessments,
- b) Electoral Area D – 90% of property assessments, and
- c) That part of Electoral Area C included as a participating area for the service – 80% of property assessments.

Citation

2. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as Bylaw No. 643, being Strathcona Gardens Recreation Centre Service Establishment Bylaw 1990, Amendment No. 3.

READ A FIRST TIME ON THE 29TH DAY OF APRIL, 2026

READ A SECOND TIME ON THE 29TH DAY OF APRIL, 2026

READ A THIRD TIME ON THE 29TH DAY OF APRIL, 2026

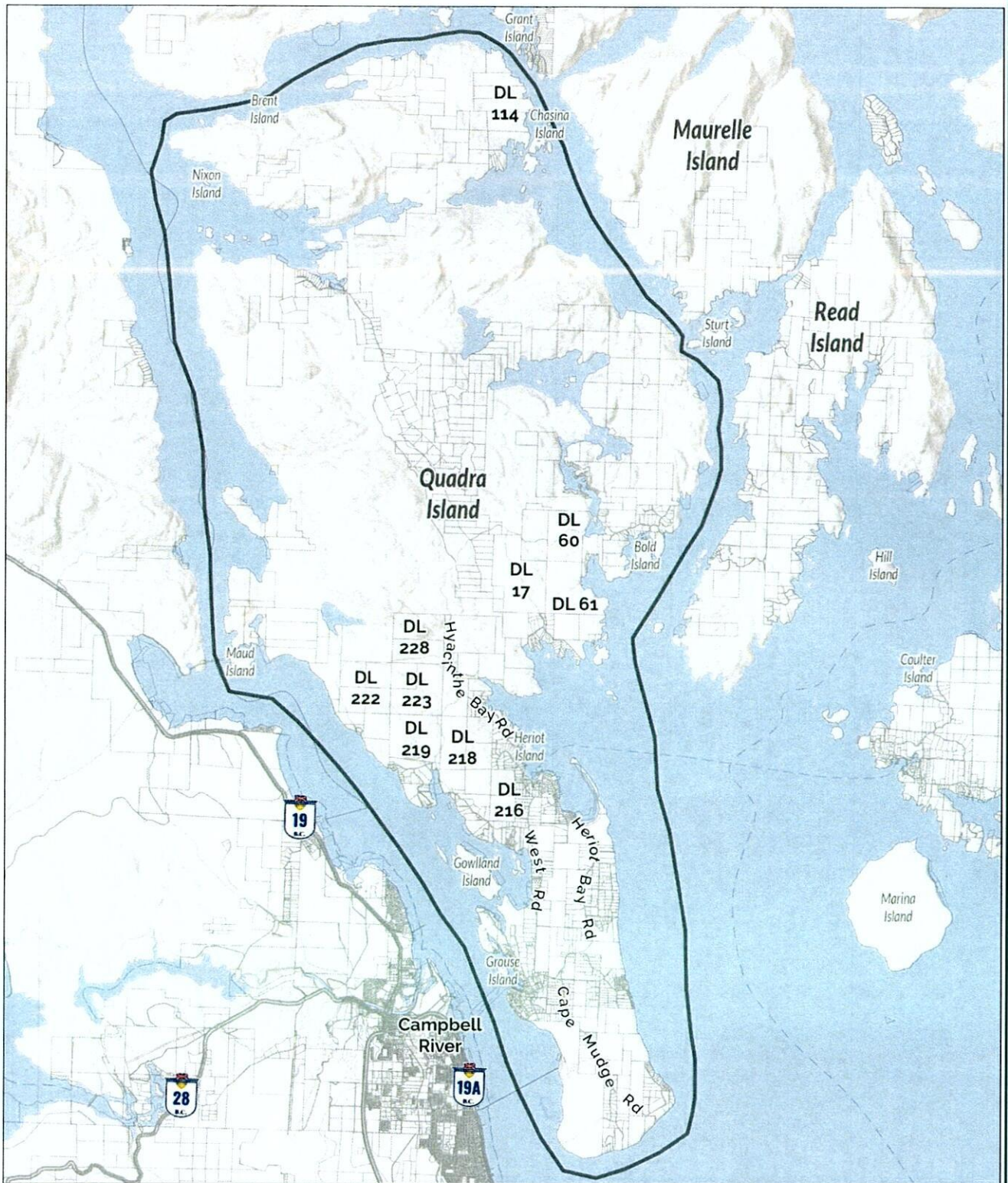
APPROVED BY THE INSPECTOR OF MUNICIPALITIES ON THE DAY OF , 2026

APPROVAL OF THE ELECTORS OBTAINED ON THE DAY OF , 2026

RECONSIDERED, FINALLY PASSED AND ADOPTED ON THE DAY OF , 2026

Chair

Corporate Officer





STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 23, 2026 **FILE:** 0550-04 Board

TO: Chair and Directors,
Regional Board

FROM: Dave Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

RE: **BYLAW NO. 643 - STRATHCONA GARDENS RECREATION SERVICE AMENDMENT**

PURPOSE/PROBLEM

To consider Bylaw No. 643 which proposes to add part of Electoral Area C (Quadra Island) as a participant for the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its March 25, 2026 meeting the Board considered the attached report and passed the following resolution:

Chapman/Rice: SRD 193/26

THAT an amendment bylaw be prepared for the Board's consideration that would add Quadra Island within Electoral Area C as an additional participant in the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility service.

Bylaw No. 1214 was enacted in 1971 to convert the Strathcona Gardens service which was originally established under supplementary letters patent for the Comox-Strathcona Regional District. The participants for the service have not been amended since its creation. In order to add the Quadra Island area as a participant for the Strathcona Gardens service it will be necessary to amend the establishing bylaw that sets out which areas are designated as service participants. Bylaw No. 643 is attached for that purpose.

Once Bylaw No. 643 has received third reading, the Board will need to decide whether approval of the electors will be sought by assent voting or alternative approval process (AAP). If assent voting is selected the Board may wish to consider having the vote conducted at the same time as the 2026 local government elections for reasons of economy and to maximize the turnout of electors to the polls. The recommendations which follow this report include several bylaw options intended to address variances in access and travel times that were raised and are based on assumptions regarding the manner in which the Board prefers to proceed with these matters.

Once the method of approval is confirmed by the Board, the bylaw would be sent to the Inspector of Municipalities for approval by the Province which must be obtained before the bylaw may be submitted for approval of the electors. If adopted as currently written, properties within the Quadra Island area would contribute funding for the Strathcona Gardens through an annual levy against the assessed value of the property in question. A draft calendar is attached to this report which will provide an understanding of key dates associated with seeking approval of the electors for Bylaw No. 643.

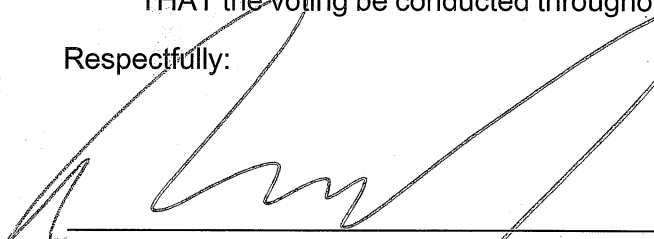
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report from the Chief Administrative Officer be received.

2. THAT Option ____ be selected as the preferred alternative for proceeding with Bylaw No. 643.
3. THAT Bylaw No. 643, being a bylaw to amend the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Centre Service, be now introduced and read a first time.
4. THAT the rules be suspended and Bylaw No. 643 be given second and third readings.
5. THAT approval of the electors for Bylaw No. 643 be sought through an assent voting process to be held concurrently with the 2026 local government elections, and

THAT the voting be conducted throughout the entire service area and proposed service area.

Respectfully:



Dave Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

The Strathcona Gardens recreation facility was originally established as a function of the Comox-Strathcona Regional District on February 19, 1971 by supplementary letters issued by the Province of BC. Originally, the facility was authorized to provide arena facilities for electoral Areas D, E and F and the District of Campbell River (as it was then known). On March 9, 1977 supplementary letters patent were issued by the Province to authorize construction and operation of aquatic facilities as part of the service offering. On October 10, 1990 the Strathcona Gardens function was converted to a local service by Bylaw No. 1214 and the maximum annual requisition was set at \$0.9170 per \$1,000 of property assessment. On June 1, 1991 Electoral Areas E and F were annexed to the District of Campbell River and were therefore deleted as separate entities for the Strathcona Gardens recreation facilities service. On April 4, 2005 the District of Campbell River was changed to the City of Campbell River and continued as a participant in the Strathcona Gardens recreation facilities service.

A study completed by RC Strategies in 2026 examined the services offered by the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility and concluded that the public subsidy that was earmarked for use by the facility was too narrow in scope and should be expanded to include Quadra Island which is part of Electoral Area C. This conclusion was based on the belief that the facility provided significant direct and indirect benefit to residents of Quadra Island based on proximity of access regardless of the degree to which the programs offered by the facility were actually being used by those residents. In reaching this conclusion, the consultant considered the current arrangement between, for example, Gabriola Island and destination recreation facilities located in Nanaimo. Other similar examples have been noted as precedent to such an arrangement.

ALTERNATIVES

The report by RC Strategies looked at a variety of factors that suggest the appropriate community of interest for the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility. Keeping in mind the similar logistical challenges are faced by many communities with respect to access and travel time, the report concluded that Quadra Island (but not the remainder of Electoral Area C) should be contributing an annual subsidy to the Strathcona Gardens. The report also suggested that residents of Quadra Island were among the highest users of the facility in the region among those areas that were not contributing funds through property taxes. Although other areas of the region also were shown to

make use of the facility, that use by comparison and the travel to the facility was challenging to the point that there was not a strong argument for formalized support from those areas.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As pointed out in the previous report to the Board, if the Quadra Island area was included as a participant in the Strathcona Gardens service, the cost to properties in that area would increase depending on the formula used to calculate those charges. Typically such a formula would be based on assessed property values as determined by the BC Assessment Authority whether at a 100%, 90% or some other percentage. The table below provides an approximation of the cost impact should the area be included as a participant in the service based on various scenarios using assessed valuation.

Percentage of Assessed Value	Tax Rate per \$100,000 of assessed value	Cost per Average Residence	Total Contribution (Quadra Island)
100%	\$78.43	\$557.86	\$943,114
90%	\$70.59	\$502.07	\$848,803
80%	\$62.75	\$446.29	\$754,491

It should be noted that the costs shown above are estimates only, based on the 2026 requisition amount for the Strathcona Gardens service and using current property assessment values.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The responsibility for determining the area that receives benefit for any service provided by the Regional District (and therefore contributes financial support) rests with the region's Board of Directors. If property taxation is deemed to be a component of that support, the Board will need to decide the form of that taxation and how it will be applied to the different areas that are to provide such support. Once that has been determined the specific form of property taxation will need to be formalized in a bylaw which is subject to approval by the Province of BC. As stated above, the most common form of property taxation is based on assessed valuation rather than a uniform method of taxation or other characteristics of a property such as size, frontage or depth.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL/REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Regional districts were established, in part, to ensure that properties that benefited from a service were not excluded from supporting that service on the basis that they lay beyond formalized municipal boundaries. Developing customized boundaries for funding a service is therefore one of the fundamental principles of service delivery by regional districts. If the Regional District chose to allow an area to benefit from a service without paying towards its upkeep it would signal to other areas that they were providing an unfair subsidy to the non-contributing area. In order to avoid the perception of 'playing favourites' it is important that all areas receiving benefit from a service pay towards its upkeep.

CITIZEN/PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPLICATIONS

As with any service offered by the Regional District, in order to ensure that residents of Quadra Island have a voice in determining the extent to which the facility serves their interests, if that area is included as a service participant, the elected director for that area will be entitled to vote at Regional Board meetings on all matters related to the facility and the programs that it offers. Similarly, it is anticipated that the director will also be appointed to sit on the Strathcona Gardens Commission which reviews the operational aspects of facility use.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

Within its organizational structure the Regional District has a number of departments that manage the administrative tasks associated with the Strathcona Gardens service. These include operations, administration, finance, corporate and human resources and others. It is not anticipated that significant changes to the level of involvement required to properly administer the service would result from the addition of Quadra Island as a service participant.

Proposed timetable for extending service area for Strathcona Gardens based on assent voting.

Schedule	Action
March 25, 2026	Regional Board reviews options and authorizes amendment to service establishing bylaw for Strathcona Gardens.
April 29, 2026	Bylaw No. 643, being Strathcona Gardens Service Establishment Bylaw 1990, Amendment No.3, given first 3 readings and authorized for assent voting in conjunction with 2026 General Local Election.
May 4, 2026	Bylaw No. 643 submitted to Inspector of Municipalities for approval.
July 30, 2026	Inspector of Municipalities approves Bylaw No. 643.
August 26, 2026	Board approves ballot question to be used for voting on Bylaw No. 643.
September 16, 2026	Selection of scrutineers completed for voting on Bylaw No. 643.
September 23, 2026	First publication of notice of voting for Bylaw No. 643.
September 30, 2026	Second publication of notice of voting for Bylaw No. 643.
October 17, 2026	General Voting Day for Bylaw No. 643.
October 28, 2027	If approved by electors, Board adopts Bylaw No. 643.
March 31, 2027	Last date for the Board to adopt budget for Strathcona Gardens recreation facility service.

Prepared by: T. Yates, Corporate Services Manager

Attachments: Bylaw No. 643
Copy of March 17, 2026 report to the Board



BYLAW NO. 643

A BYLAW TO AMEND THE STRATHCONA GARDENS RECREATION CENTRE SERVICE

WHEREAS the former Comox-Strathcona Regional District has, by Bylaw No. 1214, established a service to provide recreation facilities and programs at the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility;

AND WHEREAS the aforementioned service was transferred to the Strathcona Regional District by supplementary letters patent effective February 15, 2008;

AND WHEREAS the City of Campbell River and Electoral Area D are participants in the Strathcona gardens recreation facility service;

AND WHEREAS Regional Board wishes to amend the provisions of the said recreation facility service by including a portion of Electoral Area C into the service area;

AND WHEREAS the approval of the electors has been obtained pursuant to section 349 of the *Local Government Act*;

NOW THEREFORE the Board of Directors of the Strathcona Regional District, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

Amendments

1. 1) Section 1 of Bylaw No. 1214 is amended by deleting the words "for Electoral Area D and the District of Campbell River" so that the section reads as follows:
 1. The area created under supplementary Letters Patent dated February 19, 1971 and March 9, 1977 is hereby established as a local service and shall be known as the "Strathcona Gardens Recreation Centre Service Area".
- 2) A new section 1C is added to Bylaw No. 1214 as follows:

Participating Areas

- 1C. The City of Campbell River, Electoral Area C and Electoral Area D are participants in the Strathcona Gardens recreation centre service.
- 3) A new section 1D is added to Bylaw No. 1214 as follows:

Service Area Boundaries

1D. The boundaries of the service area shall include the entirety of the City of Campbell River, Electoral Area D and that part of Electoral Area C shown outlined on Appendix 'A', attached to and forming part of this bylaw.

3) Section 3 is deleted in its entirety and a new section 3 is substituted therefor as follows:

Apportionment of Costs

3. The amount to be recovered by requisition within each participating area shall be calculated on the basis of the converted values for hospital purposes in that participating areas as follows:

- a) City of Campbell River – 100% of property assessments,
- b) Electoral Area D – 100% of property assessments, and
- c) That part of Electoral Area C included as a participating area for the service – 100% of property assessments.

Citation

2. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as Bylaw No. 643, being Strathcona Gardens Recreation Centre Service Establishment Bylaw 1990, Amendment No. 3.

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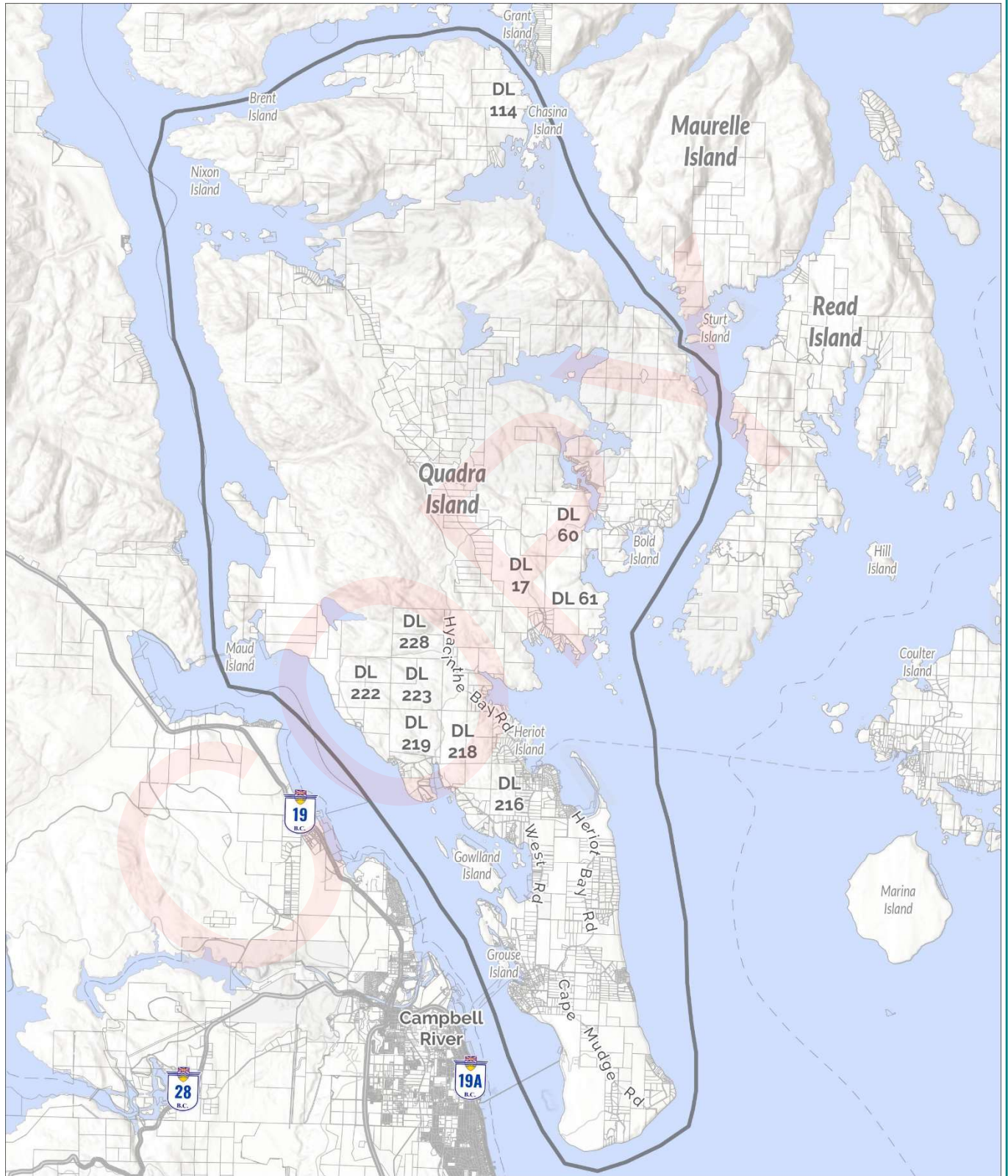
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Chair

Corporate Officer





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NOW THEREFORE the Board of Directors of the Strathcona Regional District, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

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- 3) A new section 1D is added to Bylaw No. 1214 as follows:

Service Area Boundaries

1D. The boundaries of the service area shall include the entirety of the City of Campbell River, Electoral Area D and that part of Electoral Area C shown outlined on Appendix 'A', attached to and forming part of this bylaw.

3) Section 3 is deleted in its entirety and a new section 3 is substituted therefor as follows:

Apportionment of Costs

3. The amount to be recovered by requisition shall be calculated on the basis of the converted values for hospital purposes in the participating areas as follows:

- a) City of Campbell River – 100% of property assessments,
- b) Electoral Area D – 90% of property assessments, and
- c) That part of Electoral Area C included as a participating area for the service – 90% of property assessments.

Citation

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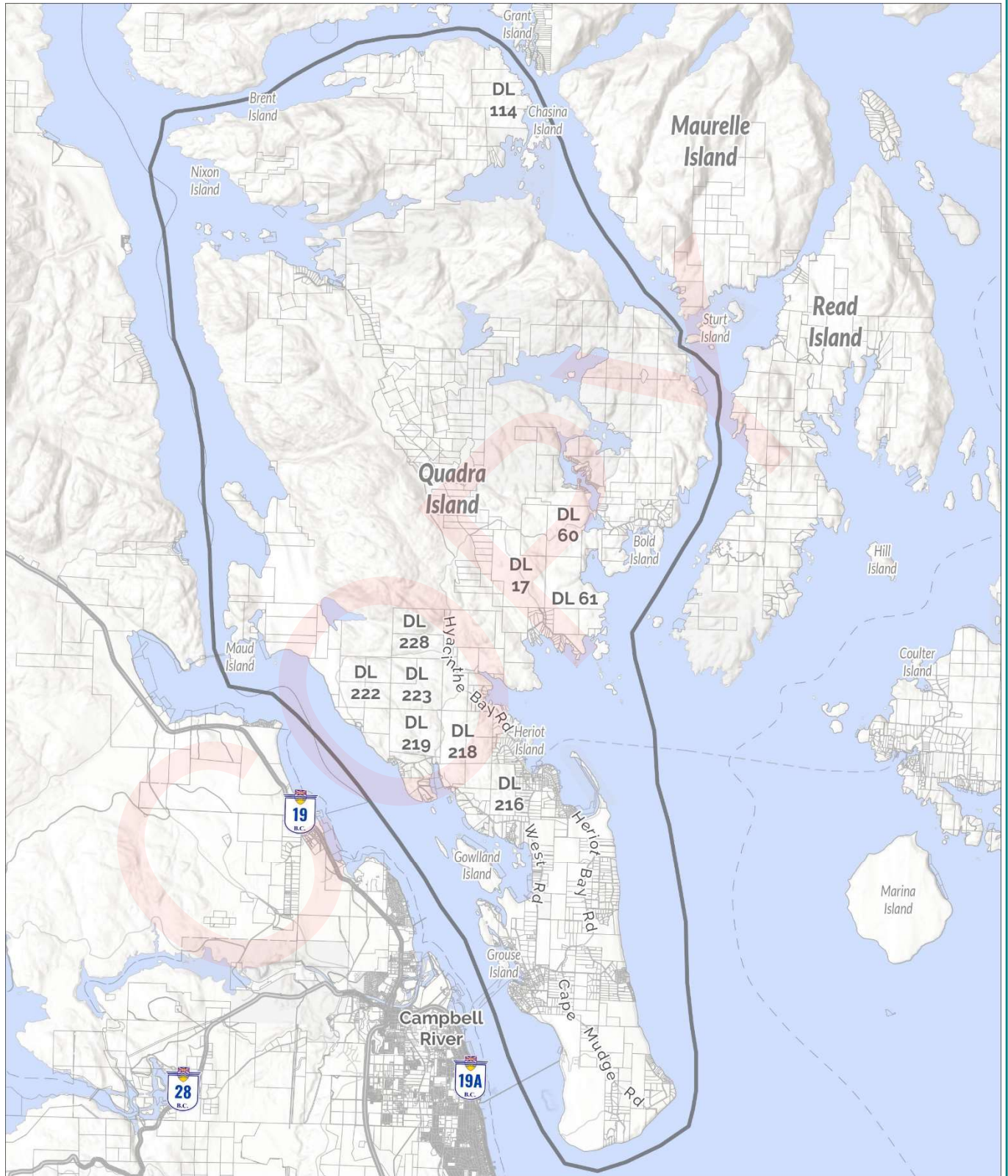
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AND WHEREAS the aforementioned service was transferred to the Strathcona Regional District by supplementary letters patent effective February 15, 2008;

AND WHEREAS the City of Campbell River and Electoral Area D are participants in the Strathcona gardens recreation facility service;

AND WHEREAS Regional Board wishes to amend the provisions of the said recreation facility service by including a portion of Electoral Area C into the service area;

AND WHEREAS the approval of the electors has been obtained pursuant to section 349 of the *Local Government Act*;

NOW THEREFORE the Board of Directors of the Strathcona Regional District, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

Amendments

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- 3) A new section 1D is added to Bylaw No. 1214 as follows:

Service Area Boundaries

1D. The boundaries of the service area shall include the entirety of the City of Campbell River, Electoral Area D and that part of Electoral Area C shown outlined on Appendix 'A', attached to and forming part of this bylaw.

3) Section 3 is deleted in its entirety and a new section 3 is substituted therefor as follows:

Apportionment of Costs

3. The amount to be recovered by requisition shall be calculated on the basis of the converted values for hospital purposes in the participating areas as follows:

- a) City of Campbell River – 100% of property assessments,
- b) Electoral Area D – 90% of property assessments, and
- c) That part of Electoral Area C included as a participating area for the service – 80% of property assessments.

Citation

2. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as Bylaw No. 643, being Strathcona Gardens Recreation Centre Service Establishment Bylaw 1990, Amendment No. 3.

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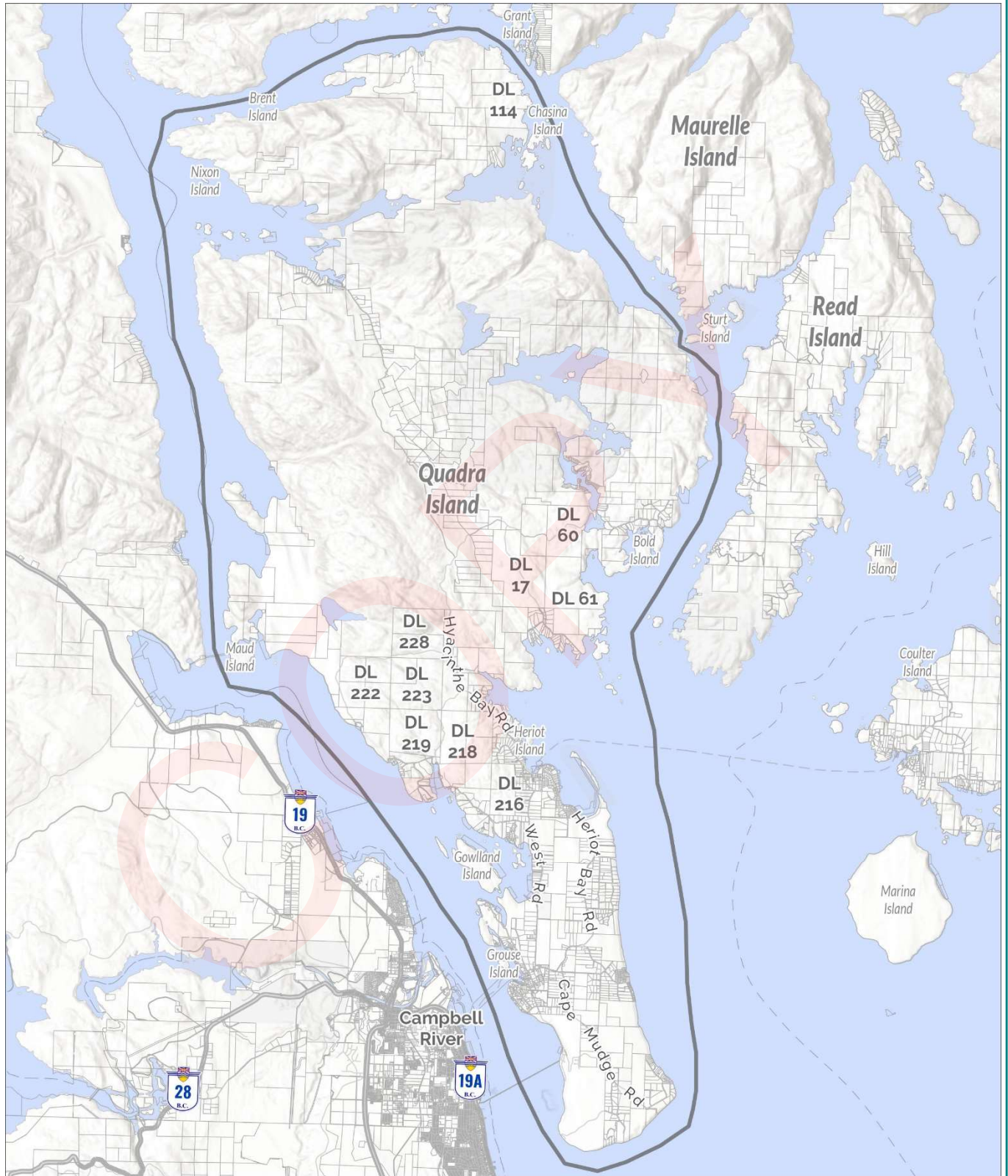
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Corporate Officer





**STRATHCONA GARDENS RECREATION CENTRE
LOCAL SERVICE AREA ESTABLISHMENT BY-LAW, 1990
(CONSOLIDATED)**

The following is a consolidated version of Bylaw No. 1214, which was adopted October 29, 1990 and includes the following amendment bylaws:

BYLAW No.	BYLAW NAME	ADOPTED	PURPOSE
CSRD 1653	Greater Campbell River Pool/Arena Local Service Area Establishment By-Law, 1990, Amendment By-Law No. 1	May 30, 1994	To amend the service area description and the maximum annual requisition.
SRD 542	Greater Campbell River Pool/Arena Local Service Area Establishment By-Law 1990, Amendment No. 2	September 25, 2024	To amend service name, maximum annual requisition amount, and add language pertaining to description of service and cost recovery.

Unless certified on the last page, this bylaw should not be relied upon for legal purposes. There may be pending updates or revisions to this bylaw. Please contact the Corporate Services Department for the Strathcona Regional District for the most current version.

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF COMOX-STRATHCONA

BY-LAW NO. 1214

A by-law to convert a function for an ice arena and
a swimming pool to a Local Service

WHEREAS under Section 767(4) of the Municipal Act, a regional district exercising a power to provide a service other than a general service, shall adopt a by-law respecting that service which:

- a) Meets the requirements of Section 794 for an establishing by-law; and
- b) Is adopted in accordance with the requirements of Section 802 as if it were a by-law amending an establishing by-law.

AND WHEREAS the Regional Board of the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona was granted by supplementary Letters Patent dated February 19, 1971, the function of Recreation Complex Campbell River and District;

AND WHEREAS, the Regional Board of the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona was granted by supplementary Letters Patent dated March 9, 1977, the function of Swimming Pool Campbell River and District;

AND WHEREAS, the area boundaries of both the foregoing functions are analogous;

AND WHEREAS, the Regional Board of the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona wishes to convert the foresaid service areas to a single Local Service area;

NOW THEREFORE, the Regional Board of the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. The area created under supplementary Letters Patent dated February 19, 1971 and March 9, 1977 is hereby established as a local service area for Electoral Area 'D' and the District of Campbell River and shall be known as the "Strathcona Gardens Recreation Centre Service Area".

SRD
542

Description of Service

- 1A. The service hereby authorized includes the construction, reconstruction, equipping, operation and maintenance of a recreation centre including aquatic, arena and other recreation facilities and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the provision of recreational, cultural and educational programs in connection therewith.

SRD
542

Cost Recovery

- 1B. The annual costs of the service may be recovered by one or more of the following methods:

SRD
542

- (a) Property value taxes imposed in accordance with Division 3 of the *Local Government Act*;
- (b) Fees and charges imposed under s.397 of the *Local Government Act*;
- (c) Revenues received by way of agreement, enterprise, gift, grant or otherwise; and
- (d) Revenues raised by other means authorized by the *Local Government Act* or another Act.

CSRD
1653

- 2. The annual requisition for the service shall not exceed the equivalent of \$1.588 per \$1,000 of the net taxable value of land and improvements for regional hospital district purposes within the service area.
- 3. The amount to be recovered by requisition shall be apportioned amongst the member municipalities participating in this service on the basis of taxable value of land and improvements for general municipal purposes in the municipalities and the taxable value of land improvements for regional hospital district purposes in the electoral areas.
- 4. This by-law may be cited as the **“GREATER CAMPBELL RIVER POOL/ARENA LOCAL SERVICE AREA ESTABLISHMENT BY-LAW, 1990”**.



STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 17, 2026

FILE: BOARD

TO: Chair and Directors,
Board of Directors

FROM: David Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

RE: STRATHCONA GARDENS – SUB REGIONAL RECREATION STUDY

PURPOSE/PROBLEM

To consider the results of the Strathcona Gardens sub-regional recreation study including options for participation by Electoral Areas A, B and C in the service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its June 28, 2023 meeting, the Board considered the attached report and passed the following resolution:

Rice/Sinnott: SRD 572/23

THAT a report be prepared that explores options for additional participation in the Strathcona Gardens recreation service by Electoral Areas A, B and C and the Village of Sayward.

In 2024, the Strathcona Regional District (SRD) conducted a study which determined that recreation services within the SRD are best structured at a sub-regional level, with service boundaries that align with functional access and community benefit rather than region-wide geographical proximity.

The study identified Strathcona Gardens as a facility warranting further consideration to determine whether it is reasonable for communities outside of Campbell River and Electoral Area D to support the facility's operations. Further analysis was undertaken to evaluate whether an expansion of the service area is appropriate based on patterns of usage, direct and indirect community benefit, functional access, travel considerations, and regional precedent for sub-regional recreation service models

The analysis concluded that Strathcona Gardens provides many direct and indirect benefits beyond its current service area and that misalignment exists between the benefitting areas and the communities supporting the service. The analysis concluded that there is a clear rationale to consider modification of the Strathcona Gardens service area boundaries to include Quadra Island, (a boundary that mirrors the Quadra Community Hall service) within Electoral Area C, as this is an area demonstrating routine functional access to Campbell River, measurable participation and proportional benefit to Strathcona Gardens, its programs and services.

While the analysis supports inclusion of Quadra Island based on demonstrated access and benefit, it is important to recognize that this represents only a portion of Electoral Area C. The remaining communities within Area C, including the Outer Discovery Islands and mainland inlet areas, do not exhibit the same level of functional access or participation in the services offered at the facility. Cortes Island (Electoral Area B) was also evaluated and similarly does not

demonstrate comparable access or utilization. A separate report examining participation by Electoral Area A has been provided for the Board's consideration, as evaluating the merits of participation by the Sayward Valley in the Kelsey Centre was deemed more functional. As a result, the proposed service area boundary under Option A would apply only to Quadra Island, whereas Option B would extend participation to the entirety of Electoral Area C, irrespective of demonstrated use, and is included mainly to illustrate the per household cost impacts.

If the Board chooses to proceed with an expansion of the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Facility service area, an amendment to the current service bylaw would be required. Under the *Local Government Act*, approval of the affected electors (or approval on their behalf) must be obtained prior to expanding participation in a service. The proposed inclusion of Quadra Island or any portion thereof would trigger this requirement. Several legislative mechanisms are available to obtain elector approval, each with different requirements and limitations that may influence the Board's approach.

Should the Board decide to proceed on this basis, those options are provided in the following section of this report.

ALTERNATIVES

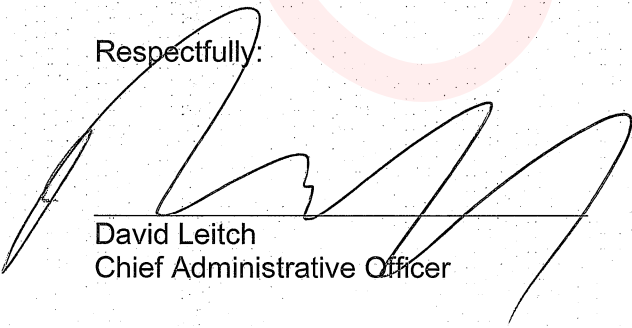
The following alternatives are offered for the Board's consideration based on the results of the study by RC Strategies:

- Option A –** THAT an amendment bylaw be prepared for the Board's consideration that would add Quadra Island within Electoral Area C as an additional participant in the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility service.
- Option B –** THAT an amendment bylaw be prepared for the Board's consideration that would add all of Electoral Area C as an additional participant in the Strathcona Gardens recreation facility service.
- Option C –** THAT the Board take no further action at this time with respect to adding other participants for the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Facility service, thereby maintaining the existing service area and funding structure.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report from the Chief Administrative Officer be received.

Respectfully:



David Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

The 2024 Regional Recreation Services feasibility study that was completed by RC Strategies concluded that no single recreation facility within the Regional District warrants full region-wide

multi-purpose community use space. The current funding base is approximately 42,000 residents which is materially smaller than comparator hub facilities elsewhere on Vancouver Island, which typically draw from populations between approximately 50,000 and 90,000 residents.

The review evaluated potential service modification using several criteria including:

- documented patterns of utilization
- functional travel time and access
- direct program participation
- indirect regional benefit
- precedent for sub-regional recreation funding models

The analysis demonstrated that residents of Quadra Island within Electoral Area C maintain routine and functional access to Campbell River through regular ferry connectivity. Utilization data confirmed measurable participation by Quadra residents across multiple program areas including aquatics, fitness and arena use. The analysis also identified direct service delivery impacts including youth participation, swim lessons, school district use, organized sports teams, and recreation programming supported by transportation arrangements.

In addition to direct use, the analysis concluded that Quadra Island derives benefits from the broader indirect impacts of having a major recreation hub in Campbell River including workforce attraction, regional service capacity, rehabilitation access, event hosting, and economic spin-off effects. While the Quadra Island community has benefited from these services, it is not currently included within the service area that provides funding support to the Strathcona Gardens facility.

The analysis determined that inclusion of Cortes Island (Electoral Area B), the Outer Discovery Islands, and mainland inlet communities is not recommended due to limited functional accessibility, travel constraints and participation data. A separate report examining participation by Electoral Area A has been provided for the Board's consideration, as evaluating the merits of participation by the Sayward Valley in the Kelsey Centre was deemed more functional. Similarly, the concept of including communities on the West Coast of Vancouver Island (Tahsis, Zeballos, Gold River and adjacent areas) was not seen as presenting similar benefits to those areas. Accordingly, Quadra Island was identified as an appropriate and valid area for service boundary expansion. This distinction reflects a functionally defined service boundary rather than one based strictly on geography.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Expansion of the service area would have direct implications for how costs are apportioned among participating jurisdictions. Preliminary modelling illustrates how alteration of the service area would impact requisition distribution and average residential contributions. The modelling presented is intended to provide comparative information on the current service structure and expanded participation using current assessment data.

Modification of the current service boundary would redistribute the Strathcona Gardens requisition across a larger property assessment base. While the total requisition would remain unchanged, the allocation of costs would result in a shift to reflect the broader participating model.

Table 1. Current Service Area – (Campbell River and Electoral Area D)

Jurisdiction	Requisition	Residential Ratio	Number of Homes	Average Cost Per Home
Electoral Area D	\$1,604,107	74.0%	1,930	\$614.75
Campbell River	10,612,028	77.6%	14,366	579.22
Total	\$12,216,135			\$596.99

Table 2. Service Area (Option A – Campbell River, Quadra Island, Electoral Area D)

Jurisdiction	Requisition	Residential Ratio	Number of Homes	Average Cost Per Home
Electoral Area C*	\$943,114	90.8%	1,535	\$557.86
Electoral Area D	\$1,533,047	74.0%	1,930	\$587.52
Campbell River	\$9,739,974	77.6%	14,366	\$525.87
Total	\$12,216,135			\$557.08

*Quadra Island area only

The financial modelling presented in Table 2 illustrates the impact of expanding the service area to include only Quadra Island within Electoral Area C, consistent with the findings of the study. This scenario reflects a service boundary, (Quadra Community Hall service) based on demonstrated access, utilization, and proportional benefit.

Table 3. Service Area (Option B – Campbell River, Electoral Area C, Electoral Area D)

Jurisdiction	Requisition	Residential Ratio	Number of Homes	Average Cost Per Home
Electoral Area C	\$1,250,173	82.1%	2,128	\$482.56
Electoral Area D	\$1,491,290	74.0%	1,930	\$571.52
Campbell River	\$9,474,673	77.6%	14,366	\$511.55
Total	\$12,216,135			\$521.88

For comparative purposes, Table 3 illustrates the financial implications of expanding the service area to include the entirety of Electoral Area C. This scenario applies an administrative boundary approach and includes areas that do not demonstrate the same level of functional access or participation in Strathcona Gardens offerings.

As illustrated above, modification of the service area would:

- reduce the average residential contribution within the current service area;
- establish a defined contribution from an expanded service area that would be consistent with either demonstrated access and benefit (Quadra Island scenario) or broader geographic inclusion (full Electoral Area C scenario); and
- recognize and acknowledge the indirect benefits that accrue to residents beyond the current service boundaries.

The residential ratio represents the proportion of the total requisition that is allocated to residential properties within each area. The remaining portion of the requisition is distributed among other property classifications—such as commercial, industrial, and institutional properties—that also fall within the service area. While these non-residential property classes would contribute to the total requisition, they are not reflected in the “average cost per home” calculations shown in the table, which are intended only to illustrate the approximate impact on residential properties.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

In the event Board directs staff to proceed with Option A, a bylaw will be prepared for further consideration that proposes the boundaries for the Strathcona Gardens service be amended to include Quadra Island and not the remainder of Electoral Area C. The Board will need to determine whether assent of the electors will be sought through voting or an alternative assent process (AAP). If Option B is supported by the Board, the revised boundaries for the Strathcona Gardens service could be approved by the Board on the basis of participating area consent, by a vote of the electors or by an alternative approval process (AAP). Under the *Local Government Act*, determining the method by which approval of the electors will be sought must be done after the amendment bylaw has received third reading.

To summarize, elector approval for the addition of another area into the service may be obtained through the following methods depending on the extent of the area to be added:

- assent voting (referendum)
- 2/3 consent of the participants (not permitted for only a portion of an Electoral Area)
- alternative approval process (AAP)

Expansion of a service boundary requires compliance with the applicable approval mechanisms and procedures under the *Local Government Act*.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL/REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Expansion of the Strathcona Gardens service area would involve Electoral Area D, the City of Campbell River, and all or part of Electoral Area C. The governance structure of the service would change somewhat with the elected representative for Electoral Area C voting as a participant in the service and joining the Strathcona Gardens Commission. As current participants, the City of Campbell River has 5 votes on unweighted decisions and 25 votes on weighted decisions, while Electoral Area D has 1 vote on unweighted decisions and 3 votes on weighted decisions. If the service was to expand and include Electoral Area C or a portion thereof, the director for that area would receive 1 vote on unweighted decisions and 2 votes on weighted decisions. The facility would continue to be owned and operated by the SRD.

CITIZEN/PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPLICATIONS

The prospect of service area expansion may generate public discussion regarding benefit, participation and legislative process. If the Board moves forward with an expansion of the service area, the approval process will involve the public or their representatives and will offer additional opportunity to answer questions and respond to public inquiries. The study undertaken by RC Strategies attempts to answer a number of these questions and will be of value when responding to constituent inquiries by SRD staff.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

Financial Services prepared the taxation modelling associated with the impact to a service expansion that included all or part of Electoral Area C. Corporate Services would be responsible for preparing service bylaw amendments and coordinating the legislative process required to obtain approval in the event the Board decided to pursue a service expansion.

Prepared by: Sheena Fisher - Manager, Strategic Initiatives

Attachments: Strathcona Garden Report (RC Strategies)
20230620-Participation-in-SG-Rec-Centre-Service.PDF

Strathcona Gardens RECREATION COMPLEX

Strathcona Regional District

Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex Funding Models Review

March 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Recreation Service Delivery Context

The Strathcona Regional District (SRD) owns and operates the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex in Campbell River which encompasses indoor aquatics, arenas, fitness, and multi-purpose spaces. The facility is currently funded by residents within the City of Campbell River and Electoral Area D.

At the outset, it is important to distinguish between communities with practical and routine access to Strathcona Gardens and those without. The SRD encompasses a geographically vast area that includes Campbell River and surrounding areas (EA D runs from the Jubilee Parkway to Oyster River and east into Strathcona Regional Park), Cortes Island and the surrounding Archipelago Island (Electoral Area B), the Discovery Islands and Mainland Inlets (Electoral Area C), and the Kyuquot/Nootka-Sayward areas that encompass the Villages of Gold River, Tahsis, Zeballos, and Sayward (Electoral Area A). Many of these communities face significant travel time, cost, and logistical barriers to regularly accessing Campbell River-based amenities and services. Accordingly, this Review focuses only on communities with functional proximity and routine transportation access to Campbell River. Remote communities are not considered candidates for inclusion in an expanded Strathcona Gardens service area and are therefore not analyzed further until the concluding findings of this report.

To support recreation service delivery and respond to evolving and growing needs among the population with functional access to the facility, Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex is currently undergoing a significant multi-phase renewal and expansion. This investment reinforces the Gardens' role as a major indoor recreation hub, supporting enhanced aquatics, arena, fitness, rehabilitation and multi-purpose programming capacity for residents across the region. The City of Campbell River also contributes to the local recreation network through funding and operations of the Campbell River Sportsplex. Together, these facilities provide an important foundation for indoor recreation opportunities within the community and surrounding region.

The costs to provide publicly supported recreation services are increasing for most providers, driven largely by three key factors:

- **Capital cost escalation.** Overall construction costs in British Columbia are escalating at a rapid pace, estimated at 4% year over year in late 2025 (British Columbia Construction Association). Practically, these costs are significantly higher for recreation projects given the specialized nature of materials, labour, and lesser scale compared to other forms of construction. As such, cost escalation continues to be a challenge for most major recreation facility builds, expansions, and retrofits.
- **Limited operational revenue sources.** A focus on affordability and sustaining equitable access to quality-of-life services like recreation has resulted in a hesitancy to increase user fees and taxation requisitions. At the same time the costs associated with providing these services (e.g. staffing, utilities, insurance, etc.) are increasing.
- **Limited external project funding sources.** Large capital grant programs from senior levels of government are periodically made available, often as part of broader infrastructure initiatives aimed at fostering economic activity. Examples over the past decade include the “Investing in Canada - Community, Culture and Recreation Infrastructure Program”, “Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program”, and “Canada Community Building Fund”. Other smaller grant programs also exist to support energy efficiency and climate related initiatives and physical accessibility upgrades. However, predicting when grant programs will become available and the probability of a successful application is challenging as competition for these funding resources is high. As such, the responsibility for developing, upgrading, and renewing recreation infrastructure continues to fall primarily on local and regional levels of government.

When discussing the context under which recreation services are provided in a community, it is important to note that there is not a standardized approach in British Columbia for defining funding areas, service levels, or defining what “recreation services” does or doesn’t encompass. As such, regional governments work with their local partners to establish service delivery models and funding responsibilities – resulting in a variety of approaches used across the province.

Within this context, Strathcona Gardens functions as the region’s primary major indoor recreation hub. This Review therefore evaluates whether the current funding structure appropriately reflects the distribution of benefits accrued by communities with functional and routine access to the facility.

1.2. Key Findings from Previous Recreation Studies

In 2024 the SRD finalized a Regional Recreation Services Feasibility Study that explored the current state of recreation in the region and provided initial guidance on potential models and considerations for future regional collaboration.

The study emphasizes that, given the geographically vast and unique context of the SRD, there are no fully regional recreation facilities that should be considered across the entire region. Instead, sub-regional funding models should be limited to jurisdictions that demonstrate practical access and benefit from major hub facilities. The study was clear that these benefits are beyond direct use by residents and should be considered to include non-direct user benefits accrued from the existence of the services.

Additional findings, conclusions and considerations from the study are summarized below:

- The Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex is the primary hub facility in the region and provides a sub-regional benefit that likely extends beyond its current service area.
- Expanding the service area for the Gardens to include areas of Electoral Area C with reasonable access to Campbell River and areas of the Sayward Valley (Electoral Area A) that can reasonably access the Kelsey Centre was identified as warranting further consideration.
- The SRD is an outlier on Vancouver Island with regards to the limited use of regional and sub-regional funding models for recreation and related services (e.g. parks). Other longer tenured mid Island regional districts (including the Comox Valley Regional District, Regional District of Nanaimo, and Cowichan Valley Regional District) have established recreation and parks services that draw on funding from multiple municipalities and electoral areas.
- Precedents exist for electoral areas adjacent to larger centres funding those recreation services (similar to the current situation in which Electoral Area D is part of the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex funding).
- A wide array of funding approaches are used in jurisdictions that have comprehensive regional funding models for recreation services. Some models heavily integrate use while others are based on broader benefits rationale.

Importantly, the study also reinforced that remote communities with limited functional access — including Cortes Island, the Outer Discovery Islands, mainland inlets, and portions of Area A — should not automatically be presumed to benefit at the same level as communities with routine and practical access to a hub facility.

Engagement Insights on the Value and Importance of Recreation Services

The SRD's 2024 Regional Recreation Services Feasibility Study and the City of Campbell River's Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan (ongoing) provide valuable insights into the value residents place on these services and future demands.



91% of respondents to the Resident Survey fielded for the SRD's Regional Recreation Services Feasibility Study believe it's important to sustain existing facilities, with 79% also indicating that it's important develop new types of facilities to meet emerging needs and trends.



Approximately half of respondents to the Resident Survey fielded for the SRD's Regional Recreation Services Feasibility Study indicated that the majority of their recreational activities take place in Campbell River.



Regional residents participate in recreation for a variety of reasons. The top five motivators amongst respondents to the Resident Survey fielded for the SRD's Regional Recreation Services Feasibility Study were physical health and exercise, to be with friends and family, pleasure/entertainment, mental health and wellness, and to enjoy nature.



88% of respondents to the Resident Survey fielded for the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan agreed that residents can benefit (from parks, recreation and culture facilities and programs) even if they do not directly use them.

1.3. Purpose of this Review

As previously noted, the 2024 Regional Recreation Services Feasibility Study identified the need to further study expanding the service area for the Strathcona Gardens. This document, the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex Regional Funding Models Review, builds on the previous study to advance Board resolutions SRD 572/23 (June 28, 2023) and SRD 1000/24 (November 27, 2024).

The Review fundamentally looks to explore two key questions:

1. Is there sufficient rationale to consider a more equitable funding model for Strathcona Gardens?
2. If yes, what should that funding model be?

Answering the two above questions requires an evaluation of whether the existing funding model appropriately aligns contributions with the distribution of benefits associated with recreation services.

The 2024 study included initial, high-level catchment area analysis for several recreation infrastructure sites within the SRD, including a drive-time assessment which shows that many Electoral Area C residents are located within approximately 45 minutes of the Gardens. However, travel time alone does not fully capture real-world access, particularly in a geographically complex area that includes ferry-dependent communities. As a result, further analysis was required to better understand practical and routine access patterns.

Electoral Area C encompasses communities with distinct patterns of access and connectivity, where frequency of travel, ferry connectivity, cost, and dependency on Campbell River are more meaningful indicators than simple travel time. For example, Quadra Island demonstrates not only proximity within a 45-minute travel radius, but also regular and routine connectivity to Campbell River through frequent ferry service, which was expanded in 2023, further improving reliability and access. Many Quadra residents travel to Campbell River on a regular basis for employment, shopping, medical appointments, education, and other essential services, and there is notable two-way commuting between Quadra Island and Campbell River. This pattern of routine inter-community movement is a key component of assessing practical access and regional integration.

Quadra Island is home to the Quadra Island Community Centre, which provides important local programming, gathering space, and recreation opportunities. However, it does not provide the full range of major indoor amenities available at Strathcona Gardens (e.g., arenas, aquatics and related services such rehabilitation).

While the Quadra Island Community Centre plays an important local role, similar local-serving facilities, including the Campbell River Community Centre, exist within Campbell River. These facilities provide neighbourhood-based programming and gathering space but do not function as destination amenities, clinical rehabilitation facilities, or regional recreation hubs. As a result, Quadra residents rely on Campbell River-based major indoor amenities to meet broader recreation and active living needs. This established service relationship is a key consideration in evaluating equitable approaches to sub-regional recreation funding and service delivery. These community centres are not comparable in scale or function to Strathcona Gardens and are not considered appropriate candidates for inclusion within a regional recreation hub funding model.

It is important to recognize that functional access to Campbell River-based hub facilities is not consistent across the SRD. Quadra Island has regular ferry connectivity that enables routine travel for recreation and essential services, while more geographically distant communities — including the Outer Discovery Islands and mainland inlets within Electoral Area C, Cortes Island (Electoral Area B), and much of Electoral Area A —face substantially greater travel time, cost, access limitations, including reliance on other local facilities such as the Kelsey Centre, and logistical barriers. Accordingly, any expanded funding model should be scoped to communities with practical and routine access to the City of Campbell River and Strathcona Gardens, rather than applied broadly across all electoral areas. Given these differences, any expanded funding model may need to consider the degree of practical and routine access to the City of Campbell River and Strathcona Gardens when determining how participation in the service is structured. Communities with more limited functional access may require different considerations or approaches to ensure the model reflects the varied geographic realities across the SRD.

It is also important to note that the SRD Board is separately considering sub-regional service options in other parts of the region where functional access patterns differ. For example, a portion of Electoral Area A (the Sayward Valley) should be evaluated for participation in a sub-regional recreation service arrangement associated with the Kelsey Centre, which is owned and operated by the Village of Sayward. This further reinforces the principle that sub-regional recreation funding models should be tailored to the specific facility, geography, and benefiting population, rather than applied uniformly across the SRD.

2. The Benefits of Recreation Services

2.1. The Benefits Context

Public providers of recreation services, including the SRD and its partners, must continually attempt to define and delineate “need” from “demand”. While there is not one, universal way to do this, a commonly used approach is to focus in on the degree of community benefits provided by services. This concept attempts to create a distinction between:

- **Direct Benefits:** Accrued primarily by the program participant / facility user.
- **Indirect Benefits:** Accrued by all residents in a community regardless of whether they are direct participants.

While participation in recreation provides numerous direct benefits (e.g. improved health and wellbeing of the participant), the indirect benefits of recreation services provide the most significant return on investment and broadly significant outcomes, including:

- Community connectedness and pride
- Improved quality of life
- Enhanced ability to attract and retain residents (including key skill sets such as health care, commerce and education)
- Potential for savings (or stabilization) in health care and other forms of social spending (e.g. justice system, policing, etc.)
- Improved safety
- A vibrant volunteer sector
- Economic generation (through non-local visitation and associated spending)
- Increased property values and home equity.

The following two sub-sections expand on the key insights summarized above with data from several available research sources.

The Benefits of Parks and Recreational Catalogue (1992) is a foundational source for the recreation sector which has helped shape conversation around the societal benefit of recreation. The Catalogue coalesced available research to support eight overarching and wide-ranging benefits provided by public parks and recreation services:

- Recreation is essential to personal health;
- Recreation is key to balanced human development;
- Recreation is essential to quality of life;
- Recreation reduces self-destructive and anti-social behaviour;
- Recreation builds strong families and healthy communities;
- Recreation reduces health care, social service, and police / justice costs;
- Recreation and parks are significant economic generators in the community; and
- Parks, open space and natural areas are essential to ecological survival.

2.2. Insights from Research and National Policy

The benefits of recreation beyond individual wellbeing are highly recognized, with 98% of Canadians agreeing that parks and recreation benefit community and are an essential service.¹ The connection between quality recreation provision and social wellbeing, mental and physical health, societal productivity, and community vibrancy are becoming better understood and supported by research. The price of physical inactivity in Canada is estimated at \$3.9 billion (2022) with the total cost of providing health care in Canada accounting for 12.2% of the total GDP.² Even incremental improvements in societal well-being provide an opportunity to reduce burden on the health system. A recent study concluded that a 15% relative increase in physical activity amongst adults in Canada could reduce the economic burdens of treating and managing non-communicable diseases, depression and absenteeism; accruing a cost savings of almost \$1 billion.³

While the benefits of recreation are well established, many Canadians are not active enough to accrue these benefits. Half of Canadian adults (51%) and a staggering 72% of children not being active enough to meet recommended physical activity guidelines.

Another excellent source to gauge national health and wellness insights on an ongoing basis is the annual ParticipACTION Report Cards on Physical Activity. The Report Cards source data from several government and academic sources to assess activity levels and provide recommendations on how to improve the current situation. Provided below are key highlights from the most recent children and youth (2024) and adult (2025) report cards.

1 Harper, 2009, as cited in A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015: Pathways to Wellbeing.

2 The Price of Inactivity: Measuring Impact (2022). Retrieved from: https://measuring-impact.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/CFLRI-CPRA_Price-Inactivity-Full-Report-EN-FINAL.pdf

3 2024 Physical Activity and Sport Survey, CFLRI. Custom analysis.

ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity – Children and Youth (2024)

- 39% of children and youth (five to 17 years of age) in Canada met the recommendation of 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity per day.⁴
- 22% of children and youth five to 17 years of age accumulated more than two hours per day of total time engaged in indoor and outdoor unstructured play.⁵
- 68% of children and youth five to 17 years of age participated in organized sport in the past year. However, reiterating the importance of affordable activity provision, significant discrepancies exist based on socio-economics. Children from high-income households were 31% more likely to participate in organized sport compared to children from low-income households.⁶
- Just over half (55%) of parents reported facilitating physical activity and sport opportunities for their children and youth often or very often. As with other findings, socio-economics were a significant indicator of parent facilitated activity.⁷

ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity – Adult (2025)

- 46% of adults met the recommendation of doing at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week, with 32% taking 7,500 steps per day (minimal physical activity lifestyle category).⁸
- Age and gender remain significant factors that influence participation. In general, women across most age cohorts have lower activity levels than men with activity also decreasing as individuals age.
- 27% of adults reported that they participated in sport within the past 12 months.⁹

4 Data sources:

- 2021 Canadian Community Health Survey, Statistics Canada. Custom Analysis.
 - Colley RC, Saunders TJ. The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on physical activity and screen time among Canadian youth. *Health Reports*. 2023 Oct 18;34(10):3-12.
 - 2018-19 Canadian Health Measures Survey Cycle 6, Statistics Canada. Custom Analysis.
 - 2022-2023 Cohort Study for Obesity, Marijuana Use, Physical Activity, Alcohol Use, Smoking and Sedentary Behaviour [COMPASS], University of Waterloo. Custom Analysis.
 - 2021 ParticipACTION COVID-19 Survey [Wave 3]. Custom Analysis.
- 5 2022 Parent Survey on Physical Activity and Sport (PSPAS), Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI). Custom Analysis.
- 6 2022 Parent Survey on Physical Activity and Sport (PSPAS), Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI). Custom Analysis.
- 7 2022 Parent Survey on Physical Activity and Sport (PSPAS), Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI). Custom Analysis.
- 8 2022-24 Canadian Health Measures Survey Cycle 7, Statistics Canada Custom analysis.
- 9 2024 Physical Activity and Sport Survey, CFLRI. Custom analysis.

2.3. Social Impacts of Recreation and Active Living

UK Research Into the Annual Societal Value of Sport and Physical Activity

International research provides useful context on the broader societal value of recreation and physical activity infrastructure. Summarized as follows is recent research undertaken in the United Kingdom by State of Life, Sheffield Hallam University, and Manchester Metropolitan University and Sport England around the societal return on investment accrued through sport. Key findings included:

- The total annual value of sport and physical activity in England was £107.2 billion in 2022/23 (equivalent to ~\$196 billion CAD).
- The social cost of inequity in adult physical activity levels is £15.6 billion (equivalent to ~\$28.5 billion CAD).

A related study in the UK also found that for every dollar invested in sport and physical activity, the Social Return on Investment was as high as 3.5 times the return for every unit of currency investment.¹⁰

Social Determinants of Health Fact Sheet – Quadra Island

The Strathcona Community Health Network periodically publishes reports on social indicators and determinants of community health for geographic areas within the region. Summarized below are key indicators from the [Social Determinants of Health Fact Sheet for Quadra Island](#).

- 77.6% of residents report a somewhat strong or strong sense of community belonging, compared to 71.6% of BC residents.
- In School District 72, which includes Area C, 28% of Kindergarten children are deemed vulnerable, meaning that without additional support, these children may experience future challenges in school and society. This figure is slightly lower than the provincial average of 32%.

Recreation and Social Isolation

Recreation additionally provides a mechanism to reduce social isolation and its associated negative impacts. The 2017 Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario¹¹ reported that individuals who experience social isolation have nearly a 50% risk of dying early. The Report also identified several key population cohorts as being particularly at-risk of experiencing social isolation, including:

- Older adults, especially those living alone;
- Youth (increasingly as a result of screen time); and
- Immigrants and refugees (often as a result of language and cultural barriers).

10 Davies, L. E., Taylor, P., Ramchandani, G., & Christy, E. (2020). Measuring the Social Return on Investment of community sport and leisure facilities. *Managing Sport and Leisure*, 26(1–2), 93–115. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23750472.2020.1794938>

11 2017 Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario. (2017). Ontario Ministry of Health. Retrieved from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2017-annual-report-chief-medical-officer-health-ontario>

SPAR Measuring Impact Calculator

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI) and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) have collaborated to [create a tool](#) that can help measure the economic and health impacts on population that are accrued from new infrastructure projects. **Using this tool and a series of baseline assumptions¹² for the REC-REATE project, the following annual incremental impacts are estimated for the amenity projects being undertaken at Strathcona Gardens:**

Positive Annual Health Impacts

- Approximate \$13.2 M economic burden alleviated due to a reduction in non-communicable diseases.
- Approximate \$1 M economic burden alleviated due to a reduction in depression.

Economic Impacts

- Approximate one-time GDP impact of \$91 M during construction.
- 837 short term jobs created during construction.
- Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) impact of approximately \$1.315 M as a result of ongoing operations.
- 23 annual jobs created as a result on ongoing operations.
- Annual value of tourism generated by the facility of approximately \$1.4 M.

It is important to note that the above estimates only reflect the newly developed major amenities that are part of REC-REATE Phases 1 and 2 and do not capture existing spaces.

¹² Based on a total construction cost of \$130 M (Phases 1 and 2); \$1.5 M annual operating cost; 50,000 unique facility visitors; 5,000 volunteer hours; and 12 provincial / national level events with 500 participants each.

3. Regional Funding Precedents & Approaches

3.1. Comparing Recreation Infrastructure Provision

This section of the report looks at how other major recreation hubs (and services in general) are funded across Vancouver Island. As previously noted in the report, there is not a standard or legislated approach for funding recreation services. Rather, most regional funding models are formed out of a combination of necessity (e.g. major facilities would not be viable without a broader funding area) as well as a recognition of the benefits provided by recreation services.

As reflected by Table 1 on the following page, the current funding area for the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex is relatively limited in terms of population when compared to other similar levels of recreation infrastructure provision. While other factors come into play (e.g. proportion of residential vs industrial tax base, how funding responsibility is assigned, etc.), the table clearly reflects that the SRD is currently supporting a level of recreation infrastructure funded by a population that is much less than other Vancouver Island comparators.

Table 1. Examples of Funding Areas by Population for Major Indoor Facility Hubs

Indoor Facilities within the Service	Major Indoor Amenities	Funding Jurisdictions	Total Population Included in the Funding Area
Oceanside Place / Ravensong Aquatics Centre (operated by the Regional District of Nanaimo)	• 2 arenas • Indoor pool • Program rooms	• City of Parksville • Town of Qualicum Beach • Electoral Areas E, F, G and H	50,326
Comox Valley Sports Centre / Comox Valley Aquatics Centre (operated by the Comox Valley Regional District)	• 2 indoor pools • 2 arenas • 1.5 fitness centres • Program rooms	• City of Courtenay • Town of Comox • Village of Cumberland • Electoral Areas B and C (a defined portion of EA A contributes to the complexes)	72,445 *Includes EA A
Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre / Q Centre (operated by Westshore Parks and Recreation)	• 2 arenas (including a performance arena with 2,300 seats) • Indoor pool • Fitness • Indoor turf (converted curling rink) • Program rooms	• City of Langford • City of Colwood • District of Highlands • District of Metchosin • Town of View Royal	84,669
Panorama Recreation Centre (operated by the Capital Regional District)	• 2 arenas • Indoor pool • Fitness centre • Program spaces	• Town of Sidney • District of North • District of Central Saanich	42,789
All facilities classified as 'regionally significant' in the Cowichan Valley Regional District (9 total)	• 4 arenas • 2 aquatics facilities • 1 performing arts centre • Variety of program spaces	• All municipalities and electoral areas are contributing based on use	89,013
Strathcona Gardens (operated by the SRD)	• 2 arenas • Indoor pool • Program spaces	• City of Campbell River • Electoral Area D	42,261

3.2. Funding Approaches

A variety of funding approaches are used to support the capital and operating requirements of major recreation infrastructure on Vancouver Island. Table 2 provides an overview of the models used across the comparator facilities reflected in Table 1.

Table 2. Examples of Regional Funding Approaches

Service Area	Funding Model
District 69 Recreation Services	- Facility operations of Oceanside Place and Ravensong Aquatics Centre are funded by taxpayers from the City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach, and Regional District of Nanaimo Electoral Areas E, F, G and H. - Oceanside Place and the Ravensong Aquatics Centre are funded based on actual utilization by residents in each jurisdiction.
Westshore Parks and Recreation	- Westshore Parks and Recreation (Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre, the Q Centre, and outdoor amenities) are funded by the City of Langford, City of Colwood, District of Highlands, and District of Metchosin. - Each jurisdiction is a co-owner of the entity and has financial responsibilities for capital based on a complex formula that integrates ownership share, location, and other factors. - Assessment (unit cost and converted assessed value) is generally used to apportion operational costs.
Comox Valley Recreation Complexes	- The Comox Valley Sports Centre and Comox Valley Aquatics Centre are funded by taxpayers in City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and Electoral Areas B and C (a defined portion of EA A contributes to the complexes). - Assessment is the primary method used to calculate funding contributions for each jurisdiction.
Peninsula Recreation (Panorama Recreation)	- The Panorama Recreation Centre and Greenglade Community Centre are funded by the Town of Sidney, District of North, and District of Central Saanich. - Funding of services is based on 50% population and 50% net taxable value (assessment).
Cowichan Valley Regional District – Regionally Significant Recreation Facilities	The 9 facilities classified as “regionally significant” are funded based on use by residents in each jurisdiction (municipality and electoral area). This funding approach was changed in 2023 – the previous formula was based on 1/3 use and 2/3 historical funding approaches.

3.3. Islands and Remote Communities Context

Table 3 provides an overview of recreation funding approaches in Island communities along the south coast. Of the three examples provided, only residents in RDN Electoral Area B fund some off-island recreation amenities.

Within the SRD context, Electoral Area C includes communities with markedly different degrees of functional accessibility. Quadra Island residents have comparatively viable and frequent access to Campbell River, whereas Cortes Island and more remote island and inlet communities do not have the same practical ability to access Strathcona Gardens on a routine basis. This distinction is important when evaluating precedents and determining whether sub-regional recreation funding models are appropriate or equitable across different parts of Area C.

Table 3. Examples of Recreation Service Funding Approaches on Gulf Islands and Other Remote Communities

Community / Jurisdiction	Population	Funding Approach
Regional District of Nanaimo Electoral Area B (Gabriola, Mudge and DeCourcy Islands)	4,500	• Gabriola Island residents fund Gabriola Recreation Services to provide on-island programming. • Electoral Area B is included within the RDN's Southern Community Recreation Services Area that encompasses the City of Nanaimo, the District of Lantzville and Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Electoral Areas A, B and C. Sports fields, arenas, and pools are included within the Southern Community Recreation Services Areas.
Salt Spring Island (Capital Regional District)	11,635	• Residents fund their own service (Salt Spring Island Parks, Arts, Recreation & Culture) that includes a community centre and pool. Operations of the service managed by the Capital Regional District through a services agreement. • Do not fund recreation services in other jurisdictions but are part of a broader CRD regional parks system.
Pender Island	2,467	• Residents fund limited recreation services and grants through the Parks and Recreation Commission (overseen by the Capital Regional District). • Do not fund any recreation services in other jurisdictions but are part of a broader CRD regional parks system.

4. Utilization and Visitation Analysis

4.1. Current Facility Utilization Indicators

Strathcona Gardens receives high levels of use by both residents within the current service area (Campbell River and EA D) and outside of the funding area. Table 4 summarizes use for several major amenity and activity types within the facility.

Table 4. Summary of Amenity Use by Residents With and External to the Current Funding Area *Based on available data.

Amenity Type	% of Use by Campbell River and Electoral Area D Residents	% of Individuals Residing Outside of Campbell River and Electoral Area D
Arenas	64%	36%
Pool (Overall)	71%	29%
Pool (Swim Lessons)	54%	46%
Fitness (Overall)	79%	21%
Fitness (Registered Programming)	60%	40%
Fitness (Drop-in)	75%	25%

In addition to recorded facility utilization, Strathcona Gardens supports regional access through a range of programming and service delivery approaches that extend beyond the current funding area. This includes participation by organized ice sport teams based outside the current funding area, transportation-enabled access for youth programming, and outreach-based delivery of aquatic safety instruction in surrounding communities.

The facility also provides access to aquatics and fitness environments that support rehabilitation and recovery needs for residents in areas where comparable services are limited or unavailable. The REC-REATE project will further expand rehabilitation opportunities by providing a wider range of aquatics setting for use by residents (e.g. greater mix of shallow and deeper water, warm and colder tanks, deck space, improved accessibility / entry / exist to the pool, etc.).

Examples of Quadra Island Opportunities Supported by SRD Operated Recreation Services

- Quadra Old Growth Hockey Team use of the Gardens
- Camp program that provides transportation to youth living on Quadra Island to the Gardens
- Gardens supported water safety event on Quadra Island

Additional analysis of recreation account holders by SRD residents outside of the Strathcona Gardens current funding reflects the following key indicators for unique user accounts created between 2018 and 2025:¹³

- SRD Electoral Area A residents comprise 15.6% of accounts held by non-contributing SRD residents.
- SRD Electoral Area B residents comprise 7.4% of accounts held by non-contributing SRD residents.
- SRD Electoral Area C residents comprise 66% of accounts held by non-contributing SRD residents.

Analysis of outside of area accounts, per family, created between 2018 and 2025 show limited use by individuals in Area B. Postal Codes in Area A and Area C align with the communities nearest Campbell River including Quathiaski Cove, Heriot Bay, Sayward and Race Point (in order of usage statistics)

Table 5. Gardens' Client Summary by Non-Contributing Electoral Area

Count of Client Area			
Electoral Area	Families	Organizations	Grand Total
Area A Kyuqot/Nootka-Sayward	221	2	223
Area B Cortes Island	103	3	106
Area C Discovery Islands - Mainland Inlets	935	9	944
Grand Total	1,509	14	1,523

13 2026 update conducted by SRD staff

4.2. Movement Data Sampling

Movement data was procured from a third party provider, Propulso, to help provide additional insights into utilization and visitation patterns for Strathcona Gardens. This data helps further capture the regional significance of the facility as a 'hub' location for recreational and related activity.

Summarized as follows are key findings from the movement data analysis.

Overall Visitation Metrics & Characteristics

- In 2024 there were 13,726 unique adult (19 and over) visitors to the Gardens. On average, these unique adult individuals visited the facility 4.48 times for an estimated 62,613 total adult visitations.
- 12.1% of unique adult visitors could be considered high intensity users (10 or more annual visits).
- Visitation to the Gardens is relatively consistent throughout the year ranging from 4,416 to 6,137 adult visitations per month. Friday is the busiest day for adult visitations at the Gardens (20% of the weekly average) with Sunday and Monday being the least busy days (10-11% of the weekly average).
- The average duration of an adult visit to the Gardens is 47 minutes, however notably 25% of adult visitations last between 60 – 119 minutes.

Movement Data Methodology Overview and Limitations

- Propulso estimates the actual number of visits based on a sample of detected mobile devices associated with adults ages 19 and over and then extrapolates to the population.
- Mobility devices associated with individuals <19 years of age are not included in the figures shown.
- Polygons (boundaries) are created for each site.
- The analysis used data for 2024 – the last complete year for which data was available at the time of analysis.

Visitation by Residency Metrics and Characteristics

- The average distance from place of residence to the Gardens for adults visitors is 34.93 km. Breaking this down further, 60.9% come from less than 5 km, 15.2% come from 5 – 19 km, 2.5% come from 20 – 39 km, 4.2% come from 40 – 59 km, 1.1% come from 60-99 km, and 16.1% come from over 100 km away.
- 74% of adult visitors and 80% of adult visits are derived from the Strathcona region. Approximately 13% of visits and 12% of visitors come from the Comox Valley / Nanaimo region.

4.3. Other Data Points on Resident Mobility, Movement and Migration for Services

Beyond simply use and visitation to Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex, another key consideration is broader regional resident movement throughout the area. As previously discussed in Section 2, recreation services and opportunities support strong communities in several ways which include:

- Attracting and retaining key skill sets and service providers.
- Generating primary and secondary employment opportunities.
- Economic generation through regional and visitor spending.

Several data points support a high degree of mobility within the broader Campbell River area by regional residents.

- The Campbell River – Quadra Island (Quathiaski Cove) ferry made 6,948 round trips in 2023, the last available year of data. Through the first 9 months of 2024 (Q1-Q3) the route accommodated 748,675 passengers and 411,609 vehicles.¹⁴ Of the 22 “Minors” sailing routes operated by BC Ferries, only one route (Horseshoe Bay – Snug Cove) serviced more travellers. Notably, the Campbell River – Quadra Island (Quathiaski Cove) served approximately 50,000 more passengers during Q1-Q3 of 2024 than the Nanaimo Harbour to Gabriola Island route despite Nanaimo having a larger population than Campbell River and Gabriola Island having a larger population compared to Quadra Island.
- 62.8% of Electoral Area C residents drive to their place of work.¹⁵
- The 2024 State of Campbell River Report identifies the continued shift towards a service based economy (primarily healthcare, education and public administration sectors) with a gradual decline in resource extraction. The Report further notes that the healthcare sector in Campbell River is expected to continue to grow along with overall population levels and will play an important role in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce.

14 BC Ferries Sailing Statistics and Operational Reports

15 Statistics Canada, Census 2016 – Strathcona C, Regional District Electoral Area (Census Subdivision)

5. Conclusions

5.1. Summary of Key Findings

Summarized as follows are key findings and highlights arising from research, analysis, and data contained in this report.

- The direct and indirect benefits of recreation services to a community and region are well documented and indisputable. These benefits include healthier and more vibrant communities, increased home equity, and meaningful economic generation. High-quality recreation amenities also play a critical role in attracting and retaining residents, including key professionals in health care, engineering, education, and other essential sectors, who increasingly seek communities that support work-life balance, wellness, and a high quality of life.
- Community facilities provide broad public benefit through their availability and readiness to serve, even when individual residents may not directly or frequently use them. As such, intensity of direct facility utilization is not a singularly representative indicator of the benefits accrued through the provision of recreation services and a broader regional benefits lens is appropriate to apply.
- Building on the previous two findings, Quadra Island has functional proximity and transportation access (via BC Ferries) to Campbell River which appear to support the conclusion that it benefits from quality-of-life services provided in Campbell River (including recreation).
- While ensuring locally based and accessible recreational opportunities is important, providing major recreation infrastructure through a hub facility model enhances efficiency, allowing one facility to provide benefits across multiple communities and optimize resource use, effectively reducing costs for all participants.
- Collectively, the utilization analysis, movement data, and comparator analysis indicates that Strathcona Gardens functions as a regional-serving recreation facility, despite being funded by a limited portion of the population it serves.
- The funding population for Strathcona Gardens is smaller when compared to similar major indoor recreation facility complexes on Vancouver Island. The Gardens is currently funded by approximately 42,000 residents, whereas comparator facilities are typically supported by populations ranging from approximately 50,000 to 90,000 residents.
- Minimal precedent examples of an Island community supporting recreation services in an adjacent centre exist along the south coast of BC. However, numerous examples exist across Vancouver Island of remote and rural electoral areas participating in various services, including recreation and parks, through a variety of regional and sub-regional funding models.

5.2. Recommendations

The Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex provides destination amenities (pool and arena) that are regionally significant with data to support that it provides a wide array of benefits beyond its current funding area.

Sustaining and aligning the facility with trends and best practices in the provision of major recreation 'hubs' is likely to require an expanded service area. This recommendation is informed by the utilization analysis, mobility data, comparator review, and community context described in Sections 2 through 4 of this report.

As an overarching recommendation, it is suggested that utilization not be the sole or primary reference point for determining which jurisdictions should be included in financial contributing to the facility. As discussed throughout this report, the benefits of recreation services (and more specifically a major hub facility) are much broader and benefit residents even if they are not directly using the service. **Functional proximity, access to essential services (e.g. health, education, etc.), and employment opportunities provided in a regional centre should be key considerations when establishing a funding area for recreation and related quality of life services.** This recommendation is based on the fundamental rationale that major recreation facilities and the programming provided in them underpin the ability of a region to attract in-demand or specialized skill sets, businesses, and residents across a wide array of demographics.

Electoral Area C encompasses several geographically distinct communities with significantly different levels of access, travel time, and functional connection to Campbell River. **Based on the analysis contained in this Review, Quadra Island should be considered for inclusion within an expanded sub-regional funding area for the Strathcona Gardens Recreation Complex.** Quadra residents have reasonable and routine functional access to Campbell River and accrue clear regional benefits from Strathcona Gardens through recreation opportunities, employment connections, and access to broader community services.

In contrast, other portions of Electoral Area C, the Outer Discovery Islands, and mainland inlets, and Area B (Cortes Island) do not have the same practical or functional accessibility to Campbell River-based recreation infrastructure even though they do receive the benefits that sustain a healthy and vibrant Campbell River. **These communities should not be included within an expanded Strathcona Gardens funding area, as residents do not accrue comparable levels of benefit due to the limitations of routine travel and access.**

Should the SRD pursue this course of action, the following additional considerations and parameters are recommended:

- The expanded funding area should be limited to communities with reasonable functional proximity to Campbell River, including travel time, frequency of access, and overall viability. In this context, the Quadra Island Community Hall service area provides an appropriate and administratively established boundary for inclusion, encompassing Quadra Island only.
- Residents living in less functionally accessible portions of the SRD, — including the Outer Discovery Islands and mainland inlets within Electoral Area C, Cortes Island (Electoral Area B), and much of Electoral Area A — should not be included in an expanded Strathcona Gardens funding area, as these communities do not accrue comparable levels of benefit due to the practical limitations of routine access.
- If Quadra Island is included as a participating jurisdiction to Strathcona Gardens, the SRD should not include either the Quadra Island Community Centre or the Campbell River Community Centre within the sub-regional recreation service framework. While Quadra's facility plays an important local role, many comparable indoor recreation opportunities are available in Campbell River, and the Community Centre does not serve the same destination or regional hub function as Strathcona Gardens. Both community centres provide local-serving, neighbourhood-scale programming space. Neither facility functions as a destination recreation hub generating regional draw. Accordingly, they are not appropriate candidates for inclusion within an expanded Strathcona Gardens sub-regional service.

5.3. Implementation Considerations and Impacts

The following tables reflect preliminary modelling undertaken by the SRD to reflect the potential impacts of expanding the Garden's funding area. This modelling is based around the requirement to generate a \$12,216,135 requisition amount for 2026 to support operations of the Gardens. It is important to note that this modelling uses the current assessment approach (Gross Assessment Value) to prorate the costs between areas. Should the funding model for the Gardens be expanded, the new bylaw may be prudent to explore methods that can create more consistent mill rates across the contributing jurisdictions.

Table 6. Current Funding Area (Campbell River and EA D)

Jurisdiction	Requisition	Residential Ratio	# Homes	Average Contribution Per Home
EA D	\$1,604,107	74.0%	1,930	\$614.75
City of Campbell River	\$ 10,612,028	77.6%	14,366	\$579.22
Total	\$12,216,135			\$596.99

Table 7. Potential Funding Area (Campbell River, EA D, and defined area of EA C)

Jurisdiction	Requisition	Residential Ratio	# Homes	Average Contribution Per Home
EA C	\$943,114	90.8%	1,535	\$557.86
EA D	\$1,533,047	74.0%	1,930	\$587.52
City of Campbell River	\$9,739,974	77.6%	14,366	\$525.87
Total	\$12,216,135			\$557.08





STAFF REPORT

DATE: June 20, 2023 **FILE:** 0550-04 Board

TO: Chair and Directors,
Regional Board

FROM: Dave Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

RE: PARTICIPATION IN STRATHCONA GARDENS RECREATION CENTRE SERVICE

PURPOSE

To consider a recommendation from the Strathcona Gardens Commission that the Regional District investigate options for additional participation by electoral areas in the Strathcona Gardens recreations centre service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the June 14, 2023 meeting of the Strathcona Gardens Commission the following resolution was passed:

Rice/Dahl: SCG 63/23

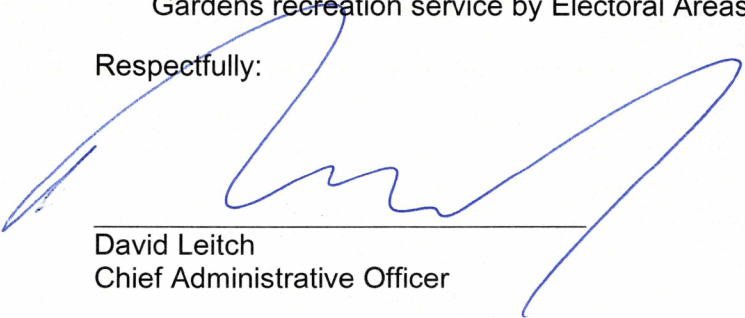
THAT staff prepare a report that explores options for additional participation in the Strathcona Gardens recreation service by Electoral Areas A, B, and C.

The Strathcona Gardens recreation facility is currently supported by ratepayers in the City of Campbell River and Electoral Area D. If the Commission's recommendation is supported by the Board, a report would be prepared to address the options for participation by some or all of the other electoral areas (or portions thereof) in the services offered by the Strathcona Gardens.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the report from the Chief Administrative Officer be received.
2. THAT a report be prepared that explores options for additional participation in the Strathcona Gardens recreation service by Electoral Areas A, B and C.

Respectfully:



David Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared by: T. Yates, Corporate Services Manager