

Title	A report into the possibilities for a Local Community Commission in Electoral Area F
To	Committee of the Whole – Columbia Shuswap Regional District
Date of Meeting	August 7, 2025
From	John M. MacLean, CAO
Date	August 1, 2025

### **Introduction**

The Board of Directors, at the June 19, 2025 Regular Meeting endorsed the following resolution:

*THAT: the Board direct staff to look into opportunities for a Local Community Commission in Area F with delegated powers to be discussed.*

#### **Discussion on the motion:**

*Directors asked staff to include a breakdown comparison of a Local Advisory Committee vs. a Local Community Commission with a list of the pros and cons for both.*

This report, presented at a Committee of the Whole meeting is in response to that direction.

### **Background**

Certain elements of the population in Electoral Area F have advocated for greater control and authority over the services provided by the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. According to Statistics Canada the population of Electoral Area F in 2021 was 3,200 and the size is 2,652.05 square kilometers.

In 2016, a grassroots committee known as the North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group commissioned a report (copy attached) “*to better understand opportunities for local governance, including considerations associated with incorporation*” (Scotch Creek Governance Review, TRUE Consulting, page 4).

The Scotch Creek Governance Review – Phase 1 Background Research report was not supported by the Columbia Shuswap Regional District nor the Province of British Columbia. The writers do state that they followed the current guidance (at that time) for

undertaking such a study. The Staff Report related to the receipt of the Report in January 2017 is attached.

The recommended next steps in the Scotch Creek Governance Review – Phase 1 Background Research were to forward the report to the CSRD and Province, make the report available to the community, meet with the Province to discuss the launching of a formal incorporation study and to continue the discussion.

Interest in incorporation was consistent as the Province dealt with other priorities and issues including elections, the Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation study and vote, and lastly the pandemic.

The Province has been consistent in not supporting incorporation for the North Shuswap (in whole or in part). In 2022 they provided a grant to the CSRD to undertake an “issues identification” report.

That report, titled the Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Report and undertaken by Neilson Strategies Inc., was designed to undertake the following:

*“The Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study was undertaken to:*

- document and explain the local governance system and local services in place in Electoral Area F of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD)*
- engage residents throughout Area F to understand their concerns with local governance or services, as well as their service and governance needs*
- identify, assess and recommend changes the CSRD could make to address the issues and needs brought forward.*

*The study was focused on changes that may be pursued within the existing CSRD system in which the North Shuswap exists as an electoral area of the Regional District. Municipal incorporation, which would result in a change to the existing system, was outside of the scope of the study” (Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Report, Neilson Strategies Inc., page 1).*

The study and report, completed in early 2024 (with an interruption due to the wildfires of 2023) recommends the following:

*The following recommendations are offered by the consultants for the Board's consideration:*

- THAT the CSRD Board of Directors consider establishing an Electoral Area F Local Advisory Committee, comprised of North Shuswap residents, as a select committee of the Board to assist the Electoral Area F Director in assessing the delivery of existing services, reviewing the need for new services, and advising on local concerns.*
- THAT the CSRD Board of Directors consider initiating a non-statutory service review of Bylaw Enforcement, Development Services (Planning) and Building Inspection services*

*to examine and address the concerns of North Shuswap communities, as well as the concerns of communities in other participating jurisdictions.*

We note that while the Scotch Creek Governance Review – Phase 1 Background Research did not specifically address the issue of Local Community Commissions, the Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Report did.

Neilson Strategies Inc. reported:

#### **LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION**

*A local community commission (LCC) is a unique type of citizen body with a degree of delegated decision-making authority over specified local services. LCCs are comprised of either four or six commissioners, directly elected from and by the community they represent. The local electoral area director is automatically appointed to an LCC. A North Shuswap LCC could be established by bylaw, pursuant to section 243 of the Local Government Act, to oversee and make certain decisions for CSRD services delivered to Area F. Local matters assigned to the LCC would receive a level of attention that would be greater than that which is possible in the present situation involving a single electoral area director at the CSRD Board. The bylaw to create a North Shuswap LCC would need to be approved by Area F electors through a referendum; the approval of the Inspector of Municipalities would also be required. Authority delegated to the LCC would enable the Commission to determine how the specified CSRD services were to be managed, within a policy framework created by the CSRD Board. The LCC could also be empowered to make decisions on the spending of funds allocated by the CSRD Board. CSRD staff would execute the decisions of the Commission (the Commission would not have its own staff).*

*Only six LCCs exist in the province today; and only four of these bodies remain active. The newest LCC is Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission established by the Capital Regional District (CRD). This LCC has been given administrative authority over parks and recreation, transportation and transit, economic development, liquid waste disposal, street lighting, and approval of grant-in-aid applications. The body also reviews and provides advice to the CRD Board on services that receive CRD funding, including the Arts service, Public Library and Search and Rescue.*

*Local community commissions are considered feasible in a community that:*

- is geographically separated from other communities and relatively easy to define*
- receives a range of local regional district services that are separate from other services provided*
- demonstrates a high level of interest in the delivery of local services, and would be able to consistently put forward individuals willing to stand for election and serve on the commission*
- shares some of the characteristics of a municipality, but is not ready for incorporation*

- *seeks greater involvement in the governance of local services than is possible through an advisory committee.*

*Some of these conditions exist in the North Shuswap. It is not clear, however, that all of the conditions are in place. An LCC for the North Shuswap, if pursued, would likely focus on and be defined by a specific community or set of contiguous communities in the Electoral Area (Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Report, Neilson Strategies Inc., page 34).*

## **Legislation and Provincial Guidance**

Local Community Commissions are enabled in the Local Government Act, Specifically Division 9 of the *Local Government Act*. Division 9 is as follows:

### ***Division 9 — Local Community Commissions***

#### ***Establishment of local community commissions***

**243** (1) *A board may, by bylaw, establish in an electoral area one or more local communities to be administered by local community commissions.*

(2) *A bylaw establishing a local community must do the following:*

(a) *name the local community;*

(b) *establish the boundaries of the local community;*

(c) *establish the time and manner of holding annual general meetings of the commission;*

(d) *establish either*

(i) *that elections for commissioners are to be held every 4 years at the time of the general local election, or*

(ii) *that elections for commissioners are to be held each year at a time specified in the bylaw.*

(3) *A bylaw establishing a local community may do one or more of the following:*

(a) *establish the manner of holding elections for commissioners, if this is to be different from that provided by the application of Part 3 [Electors and Elections];*

(b) *provide that the number of elected commissioners is to be 6;*

(c) *set terms, conditions and restrictions on activities of the commission.*

(4) *Except as provided by bylaw under subsection (3) (a), Part 3 applies to the election of commissioners.*

(5) *A bylaw under subsection (3) (a) must be adopted at least 8 weeks before the general voting day for the election to which it first applies.*

### ***Requirement for assent of electors and inspector approval***

**244** (1) A bylaw establishing a local community, or a bylaw amending or repealing such a bylaw, has no effect unless it receives the assent of the electors in the area of the local community and is approved by the inspector.

(2) As an exception to subsection (1), the minister may waive the requirement for assent of the electors to a bylaw that amends or repeals a bylaw establishing a local community.

(3) For the purposes of obtaining the assent of the electors as required by this section, Part 4 [Assent Voting] applies and the voting area is to be the proposed local community or the local community, as applicable.

### ***Commission membership***

**245** (1) The commission for a local community consists of

(a) as applicable,

(i) 4 elected commissioners unless a bylaw under section 243 (3) (b) [increase in number of commissioners] applies, or

(ii) 6 elected commissioners if such a bylaw does apply, and

(b) the director for the electoral area in which the local community is located.

(2) A commissioner must have the qualifications to hold office as a director.

(3) The term of office for elected commissioners is, as applicable,

(a) if the bylaw establishing the local community specifies that elections are to be held every 4 years, 4 years or until their successors are elected, whichever is later, or

(b) if the bylaw establishing the local community specifies that elections are to be held each year, one year or until their successors are elected, whichever is later.

(4) At each annual general meeting, the commissioners must elect a chair and a vice chair.

It should be noted that the legislation governing delegation of authority would also be applicable. Division 7 of the Local Government Act reads as follows:

### ***Division 7 — Delegation of Board Authority***

#### ***Delegation of board authority***

**229** (1) Subject to the specific limitations and conditions established under this or another Act, a board may delegate its powers, duties and functions, including those specifically established by an enactment, to

(a) a board member or board committee,

*(b)an officer or employee of the regional district, or*

*(c)another body established by the board.*

*(2)As exceptions, a board may not delegate the following:*

*(a)the making of a bylaw;*

*(b)a power or duty exercisable only by bylaw;*

*(c)a power or duty to appoint, suspend or terminate a regional district officer;*

*(d)a power or duty established by an enactment that the board hear an appeal or reconsider an action, decision or other matter;*

*(e)a power or duty established by this or any other Act that the board give its approval or consent to, recommendations on or acceptance of an action, decision or other matter;*

*(f)the power to impose a remedial action requirement under Division 12 [Remedial Action Requirements] of Part 3 of the [Community Charter](#).*

*(3)A board may not delegate under subsection (1) to a corporation.*

*(4)In exercising its powers under subsection (1), a board may establish any terms and conditions it considers appropriate.*

### ***Bylaw required for delegation***

**230** *(1)Subject to section 231, a board may delegate a power, duty or function only by bylaw adopted by an affirmative vote of at least 2/3 of the votes cast.*

*(2)A board may, by bylaw adopted by a majority of votes cast, amend or repeal a bylaw referred to in subsection (1) to reduce or revoke the delegation.*

### ***Delegation of hearings***

**231** *(1)This section applies to the delegation of*

*(a)board hearings that are required by law or authorized under an enactment, other than hearings referred to in section 229 (2) (d), and*

*(b)board proceedings in which a person is entitled under this Act to make representations to the board.*

*(2)The following rules apply in relation to a delegation referred to in subsection (1):*

*(a)the delegation may be made specifically, by class of hearings or proceedings, or generally;*

*(b)the delegation may be made only to one or more directors;*



*(c) if a board decision is to be made following a delegated hearing or proceeding, the authority to make the decision may be delegated only to the directors to whom the matter is delegated;*

*(d) if a board decision referred to in paragraph (c) is not delegated under that paragraph, the board must not make the decision until the applicable directors' report to the board the views expressed at the hearing or proceeding.*

*(3) As an exception to section 230 (1), a board may delegate the holding of a hearing by bylaw or resolution adopted by a majority of votes cast.*

*(4) For certainty, if a delegation has been made under this section, the board may exercise its authority under this section to revoke that delegation or change the delegation to a different delegation in relation to a specific hearing or proceeding.*

### **Reconsideration of delegate's decisions**

**232** *(1) This section applies if*

*(a) a board delegates a power to make a decision, and*

*(b) in relation to that delegation, an enactment establishes a right to have a delegated decision reconsidered by the board.*

*(2) The board must, by bylaw, establish procedures for such a reconsideration, including how a person may apply for the reconsideration.*

*(3) In undertaking a reconsideration referred to in subsection (2), a board has the same authority as that conferred on the delegate.*

*(4) If there is a right of reconsideration, the person making the decision must advise the person subject to the decision of this right.*

The following excerpt is from the province's website:

### **Local community commissions**

*A regional district may delegate decision-making powers for services to a community commission for greater potential for community involvement. Characteristics that may lead to the creation of a local community commission include:*

- The community is geographically independent and the boundary is fairly easy to define*
- Local services such as water, sewer and fire protection are being provided by a regional district*
- Community members have a high interest in the services being delivered*
- The community has some characteristics of a municipality but it is not ready for incorporation*

*Unlike other committees and commissions, a local community commission is composed of the electoral area director and up to six commissioners directly elected by the voters in the local community to be administered by the commission.*

*Local community commissions may deal with more operational issues than appointed commissions. Local community commissions hold annual general meetings and the method of election may be customized to suit the community needs (if not, the rules for electing electoral area directors apply). A regional district [receives funding](#) for each local community commission located within its boundaries.*

*A local community commission may only be established in an electoral area by bylaw which must first be supported by voters in the community through an assent vote and must be approved by the Inspector of Municipalities.*

*If the local community commission is to have responsibility for operating services, the board needs to specify which services the local community commission is responsible for and clearly articulate the level of decision-making that is delegated with respect to those services and the terms and conditions that apply.*

### **Environmental Scan**

There are currently 6 local community commissions in the Province of British Columbia. They are as follows:

- Bear Lake – Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (several local services)
- Charlie Lake – Peace River Regional District (no information)
- Coal Harbour – Regional District of Mount Waddington (advisory only)
- Fort Fraser – Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (water, sewer and streetlighting)
- Olalla – Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (water service only)
- Salt Spring Island – Capital Regional District (several local services)

We have been informed other than Salt Spring Island, the remainder are small, have difficulty getting candidates and are largely advisory. Bear Lake and Salt Spring Island (the most recent) are the two exercising the greatest delegated authority.

Salt Spring Island is an Electoral Area (Electoral Area G) within the Capital Regional District. It is 183.03 square km in size and has a population of 11,795 (2021 census). Most services are by definition local services.

The Bylaw establishing the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission is attached for your information. As the most recent application of this initiative, it seems to be the most relevant.

We spoke to the Capital Regional District Staff who informed us that this was a long-term project, and one in which certain procedures were formalized. The Capital



Regional District had operated services on Salt Spring Island through societies and commissions over the years. There have been three incorporation votes on Salt Spring Island, all of which have failed.

Please note that our best information is that no Local Community Commission has staff or the ability to supersede or utilize different policies (such as procurement policies) than those established by the Board. All relevant Provincial and Federal legislation and regulation would also apply.

Both Bear Lake and Salt Spring Island are easily defined areas that offer a suite of local services within that defined area.

### **Opportunity for a Local Community Commission in Electoral Area F**

As noted in the Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Report, completed by Neilson Strategies, Electoral Area F does have some of the defined elements that would lead to the consideration of a local community commission. One could look at a community such as Scotch Creek, with boundaries that could be defined and local services such as the water service, as a possible candidate for a Local Community Commission. Scotch Creek, of all the communities in Electoral Area F, is the most municipal in nature with an active commercial, industrial and residential sector in terms of use and designation (zoning). It should be noted that there are few local services in the Scotch Creek area. There are no other areas in Electoral Area F that have all the elements that would lead one to think incorporation is a future possibility.

In conversation with the Electoral Area Director the suggestion that the Local Community Commission represent all Electoral Area F. Further that the services the Local Community Commission have responsibility for Parks and Recreation and Economic Development. Other than Salt Spring Island (which we think we can recognize as somewhat distinct) there are no examples of an entire Electoral Area being established as a local community commission.

The legislation shared earlier is very broad. The Board has wide discretion in this area. Should the Board decide to pursue the creation of a Local Community Commission they should:

- Have a clear understanding of what is trying to be achieved
- Move through the steps and processes envisioned by the legislation and the Ministry
- Initiated a discussion with the Ministry as why this step is being undertaken, in light of the Neilson Strategies Report.
- Undertake consultation with a clear and concise set of expectation on the part of the public, the Electoral Area Director and the Board.

### **Local Community Commission vs. Local Advisory Committee**

The Board also asked that we compare and contrast a Local Community Commission (LCC) against and Local Advisory Committee (LAC).

The main, and most important, difference is in the provision of delegated responsibilities. The Board has the option through bylaw, and with the consent of electorate, to delegate authority to the Commission. The best, and most recent example, is the bylaw from Salt Spring Island. LAC's do not have delegated authority, and are what they are named, advisory in nature. It should be noted that of the six LCC's in the Province at this time, four appear to be advisory only.

It should also be noted that in none of the current examples has there been any delegation of:

- staffing
- contract administration
- policy approval, or
- purchasing

The other main, and very important difference is in the nature of being a member. LCC members are elected. LAC members are appointed. LCC's are more formal and should be recognized as such.

Lastly, in every case a LCC has represented additional costs and resources when compared to a LAC or traditional regional district service delivery. Capital Regional District increased the staff complement to support the LCC on Salt Spring Island. Those costs are borne by the service area.

Local Community Commissions		Local Advisory Committee	
PROS	CONS	PROS	CONS
Enhanced Community Involvement	Increased cost	Enhanced community involvement	Increased need for staff resources
Interim step for communities looking at incorporation	Increased bureaucracy/need for staff resources	Can be a step for communities looking at incorporation	Can be perceived as ad hoc or informal
Service delivery can be and is seen to be closer to the recipient	Expectation management	An avenue for message delivery and capacity building within the community	
An avenue for message delivery and capacity building within the community	More formal process in establishing (bylaws and referendums)	Can be setup with resolutions and terms of reference	
More formal and recognized as such		Limited financial impact	
A formal process where, technically, the Director is only one voice and vote.		Will be what the Director makes of it.	

## **Conclusion**

The legislation is clear in enabling a Board of Directors to delegate certain, specified authority over regional district service in a defined area. Guidance from the Province indicates that a LCC can be considered under the following conditions:

- *The community is geographically independent and the boundary is fairly easy to define*
- *Local services such as water, sewer and fire protection are being provided by a regional district*
- *Community members have a high interest in the services being delivered*
- *The community has some characteristics of a municipality but it is not ready for incorporation*

As stated in the Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Report some but not all of these conditions are present in parts of Electoral Area F. That same report addressed LCC's and does not recommend them as a solution to address the concerns raised by the participants in the community outreach in Electoral Area F.

Staff are not of the opinion that a Local Community Commission is a good policy choice at this time. While the legislation has been part of our guiding statutes for some time, there has been very little uptake. We simply do not see the population or service model in a defined part of Electoral Area F at this time. At this point, our best understanding is that the province is not supporting a further look at incorporation for all or part of the North Shore.

This is a decision of the Board, and Staff will act on that decision.

Attachments:

- Scotch Creek Governance Review – Phase 1 Background Research
  - CSRD Staff Report in response
- Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Report
- Capital Regional District Bylaw No. 4508

# Scotch Creek Governance Review – Phase 1 Background Research



ENGINEERING ■ PLANNING ■ URBAN DESIGN

September 2016

Project No: 1220-011

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# 1.0 Introduction

## Project Objective:

***To assemble background research that will support informed discussion on future governance options for Scotch Creek. Future dialogue should engage community members and regional and provincial governments.***

## 1.1 Context

The community of Scotch Creek is located on the shores of Shuswap Lake in Area “F” of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. Scotch Creek is a popular tourist destination. During the summer, the population swells to well over 2,500 persons. In the winter, Scotch Creek is home to a smaller, but growing, full time population of approximately 400 to 800 persons (CSRD, Electoral Area “F” (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw No. 830, 2013, p. 52). Many of the winter residents initially came to the area as tourists and later become full-time residents as they come to appreciate the qualities of the area.

The Electoral Area “F” (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw No. 830, (2013) contains policies for the Scotch Creek neighbourhood area shown in Figure 1.1. OCP policies recognize the unique challenges of a two-season community and strive to ensure a growing, viable, sustainable year-round economy. The Scotch Creek community is keen to implement the principles and policies of the OCP, including opportunities for managed growth. This report has evolved as a result of community interest in developing a better understanding of alternative governance structure options that support community planning objectives and could potentially move planning objectives forward.

**FIGURE 1.1 - SCOTCH CREEK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AREA AND STUDY AREA**



The research on governance contained in this report includes both an overview of existing conditions and a detailed comparison of Scotch Creek to similar sized BC municipalities. While incorporation is only one governance option, residents are interested in this structure because of perceived local benefits associated with incorporation. Topics of interest include:

- Local elected representation
- Service establishment and delivery
- Financial and capital planning
- Environmental management
- Economic development
- Affordable Housing
- Grant eligibility
- Liability risk

Typically, incorporation studies are initiated in collaboration with a Regional District and the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD). Table 1.1 presents a three phase framework for a typical incorporation study process. The Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) has had very preliminary discussions regarding incorporation options for a broad geographic area on the North Shuswap but at this time has not identified a geographic study area or launched any specific incorporation studies (e.g. Phase 1 research). Despite the lack of local government involvement, members of the Scotch Creek community have independently funded this project and began the process of collecting some of the Phase 1 background information. The objective is to assemble detailed research to support and stimulate informed discussion on future governance options with the Scotch Creek community and regional and provincial governments.

**TABLE 1.1 - TYPICAL INCORPORATION STUDY PROCESS**

Phase	Outcome	Research and Analysis
1	Preliminary Background Research Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Establish initial Incorporation Committee</li><li>▪ Community overview</li><li>▪ Current state of governance</li><li>▪ Level of servicing and asset management</li><li>▪ Community context and well-being</li><li>▪ Planning and growth</li><li>▪ Incorporation issue summary</li><li>▪ Next steps</li></ul>
2	Public Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Community review of Phase 1 document</li><li>▪ Confirm identified issues</li><li>▪ Identify support for full incorporation study (Phase 3), Community, CSRD, Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development</li><li>▪ Formalize Incorporation Committee structure and selection</li><li>▪ Establish Terms of Reference for Final Report</li></ul>
3	Final Governance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Synopsis of Phase 1 findings</li><li>▪ Summarize public consultation results</li><li>▪ Additional research addressing public interests</li><li>▪ Completion of Incorporation Study as per provincial requirements including detailed technical and financial information on the impact of municipal incorporation.</li><li>▪ Community consultation</li></ul>

## 1.2 Study Group

The Scotch Creek Governance Review report was conducted under the direction of The North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group (NSIFSG). NSIFSG is a grass roots committee assembled to research information necessary to better understand opportunities for local governance, including considerations associated with incorporation.

The NSIFSG is not formally endorsed by either the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) or the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD). The NSIFSG however, developed Operational Guidelines consistent with the guidelines set for municipal incorporation studies as set by MCSCD to ensure an open and transparent process. Operational Guidelines are included in Appendix A.

Membership in the NSIFSG is voluntary. CSRD staff and the Electoral Area F Director were invited to participate as ex-officio members. While the CSRD declined the opportunity to participate as ex-official members, the CSRD has been engaged in meeting with the consultants and providing background information.

NSIFSG members represent diverse community interests and bring comprehensive knowledge of the community. Members include:

- Jeff Tarry , Chair([Sold@JeffTarry.com](mailto:Sold@JeffTarry.com))
- Dean Acton ([Dean@CaptainsVillage.com](mailto:Dean@CaptainsVillage.com))
- Jay Simpson ([Jay@TheLake.ca](mailto:Jay@TheLake.ca))
- Dave Cunliffe ([DaveCunliffe@airspeedwireless.ca](mailto:DaveCunliffe@airspeedwireless.ca))
- Craig Spooner ([Craig@SpoonerElectric.com](mailto:Craig@SpoonerElectric.com))
- Sherry Taylor ([lakerapture@gmail.com](mailto:lakerapture@gmail.com))
- Don Tansem ([dontansem@shaw.ca](mailto:dontansem@shaw.ca))
- Bill Long ([iblong@shaw.ca](mailto:iblong@shaw.ca))

## 1.3 Project Process

Project research and engagement was conducted during the summer and fall of 2016 as shown in Figure 1.2.

**FIGURE 1.2 – PROJECT PROCESS**





## 2.0 Scotch Creek Profile

### 2.1 Overview

This section provides basic information about population, housing, property assessment, economy and labour force, agriculture, environmental protection and green space, publicly owned assets, sense of community, relationship to other settlement areas and existing planning policy. This information provides useful context for governance discussions, and it is presented for background only. While some comparisons are drawn to other communities, there has been no attempt to correlate any growth or economic trends to the current governance system or to suggest that a change in governance structure would affect any identified trends.

### 2.2 Population and Housing

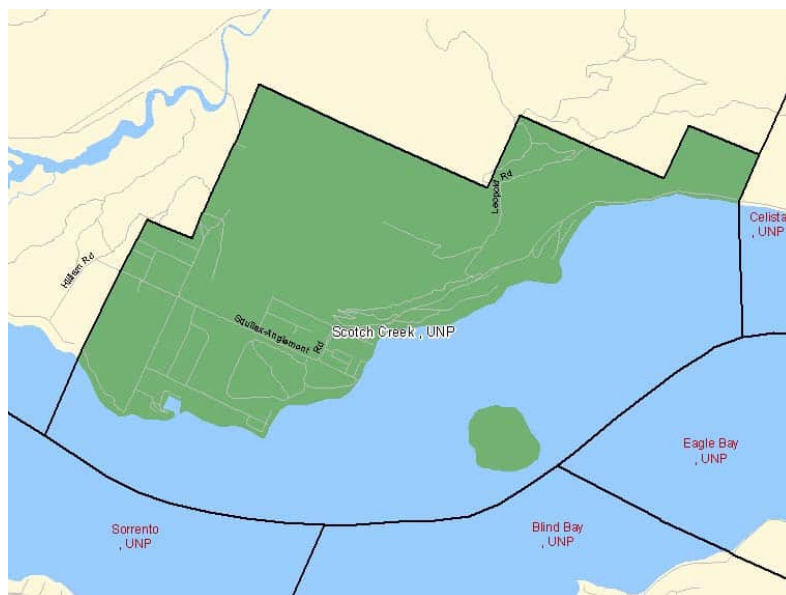
#### 2.2.1 Population

Scotch Creek (Designated Place) as shown in Figure 2.1 has a permanent population of 669 persons (2011 Census). These residents occupy 325 private dwellings which represent 31% of the 1040 total private dwellings reported in the census. In the summer, when all dwellings are occupied, the area's population swells to over 2500 persons.

In addition, the seasonal population will also include a large population of visitors, particularly campers at the Scotch Creek Provincial Campground (274 campsites) and other seasonally available accommodation.



**FIGURE 2.1 - SCOTCH CREEK DESIGNATED PLACE, CENSUS, 2011**



There are 161 municipalities in British Columbia and 27 have populations under 1000 persons. These communities include Silverton with the smallest population of 185 persons and Queen Charlotte with the largest population of 948 persons as shown in Figure 2.2.

**FIGURE 2.2 - POPULATION OF COMPARISON COMMUNITIES (<1000 PERSONS)**

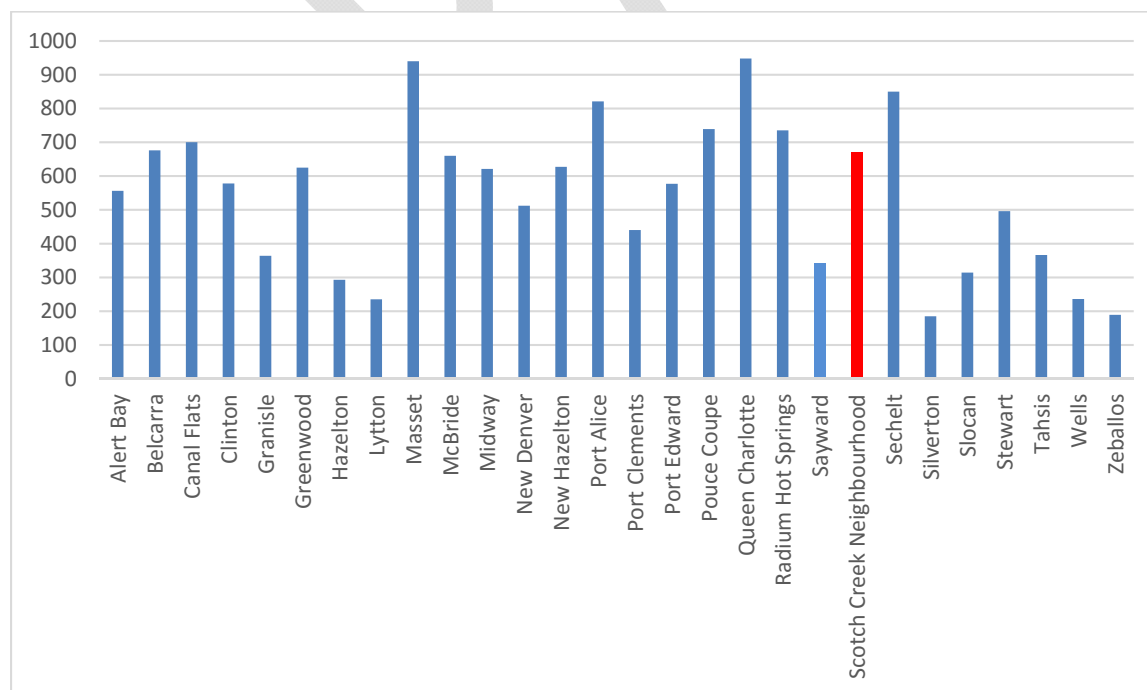
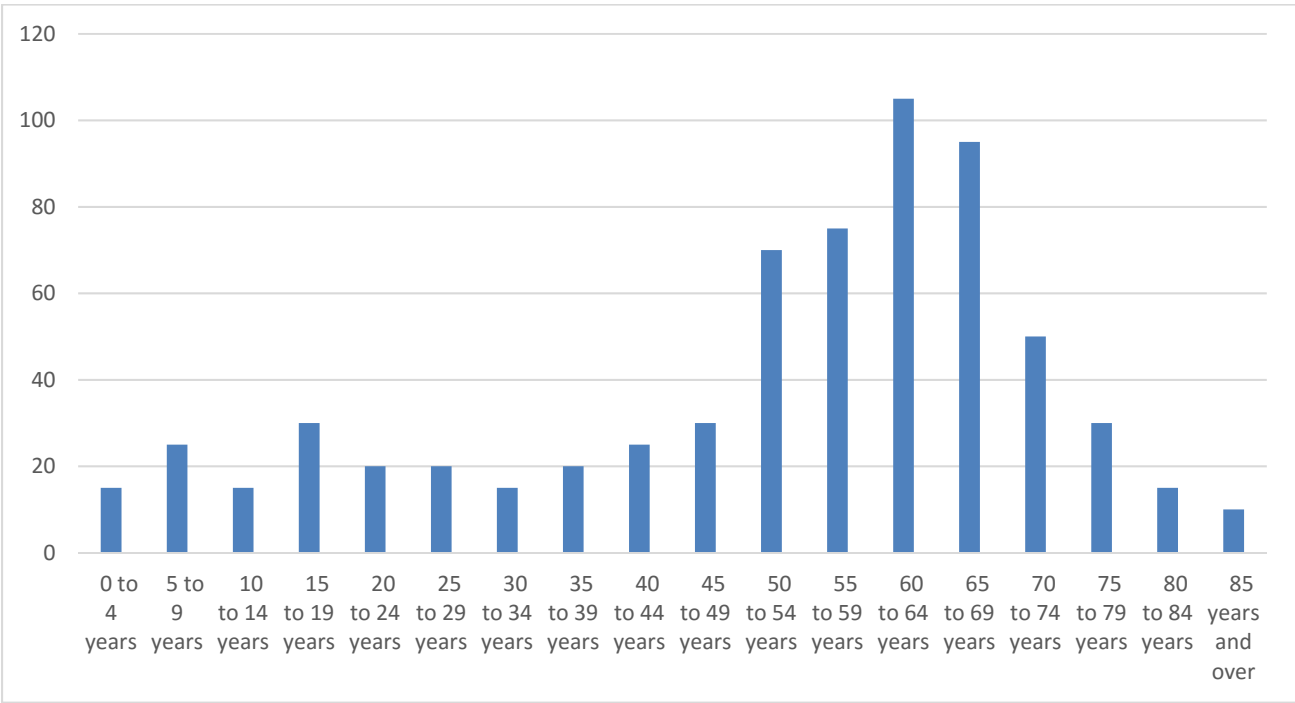


Figure 2.3 shows the population of Scotch Creek by age group. With a median age of 58.7 years the population of Scotch Creek is older than in British Columbia as a whole - 41.9 years (Census, 2011) and generally defines Scotch Creek as a retirement area.

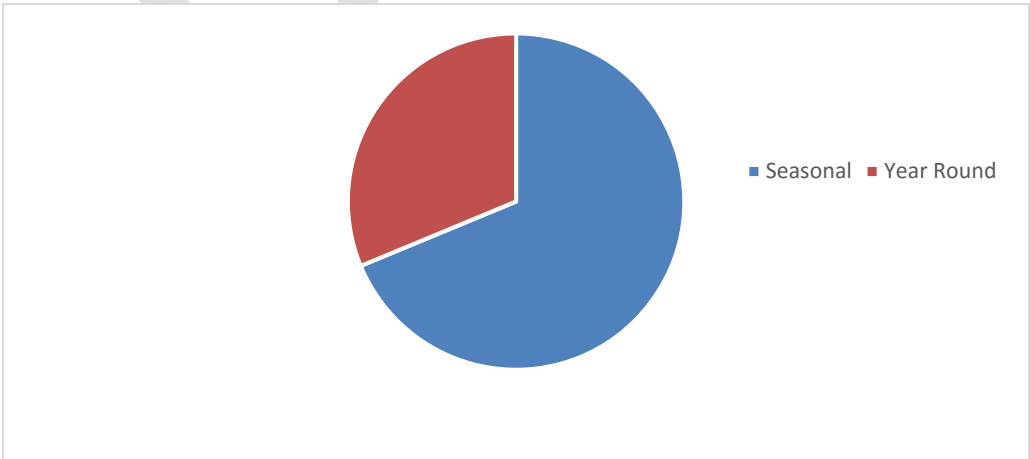
**FIGURE 2.3 - SCOTCH CREEK POPULATION BY AGE GROUP CENSUS 2011**



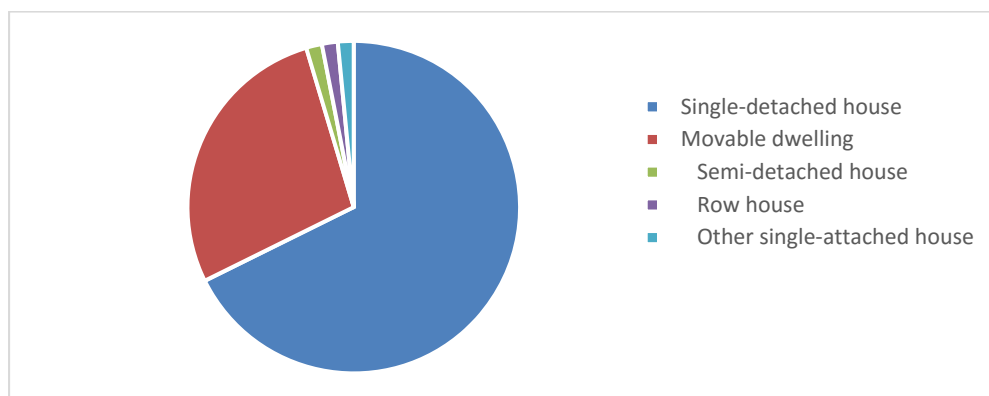
2.2.2 [Housing](#)

Figure 2.4 supports the observation that this is a seasonal area and Figure 2.5 shows that the residents are predominantly living in single family structures and movable dwellings. Other seasonal accommodation may include: suites, travel trailers and ancillary cottage structures.

**FIGURE 2.4 - SEASONAL VS YEAR-ROUND OCCUPATION OF DWELLINGS, CENSUS, 2011**



**FIGURE 2.5 - DWELLING TYPE - PERMANENT RESIDENTS, CENSUS, 2011**



### 2.2.3 Population and Housing Growth

The Electoral Area “F” (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan (OCP) (2013, p. 9) uses a projected annual growth rate of 4%, however, the Scotch Creek Census data from 2006 to 2011 reports a 12.2% population decline. It is difficult to access data to analyze this change, however, possibly explanations include a shift to smaller household sizes and an aging population that is reducing their pattern of year-round occupancy.

Field research for this study (June 2016) indicated limited new construction activity and we were advised that the number of properties for sale was consistent with other years.

## 2.3 Assessment Base

The BC Assessment Authority (BCAA) places property in one or more of nine classes, typically based on the property's type or use. Municipal zoning does not determine property class, though it may be a factor in some cases. Properties may have more than one classification (e.g. residential and business) however for the purposes of this summary (Table 2.1) we have used only the primary classification. Table 2.1 shows the residential nature of the area with 591 properties listed with a primary residential classification and no properties classified as industrial.

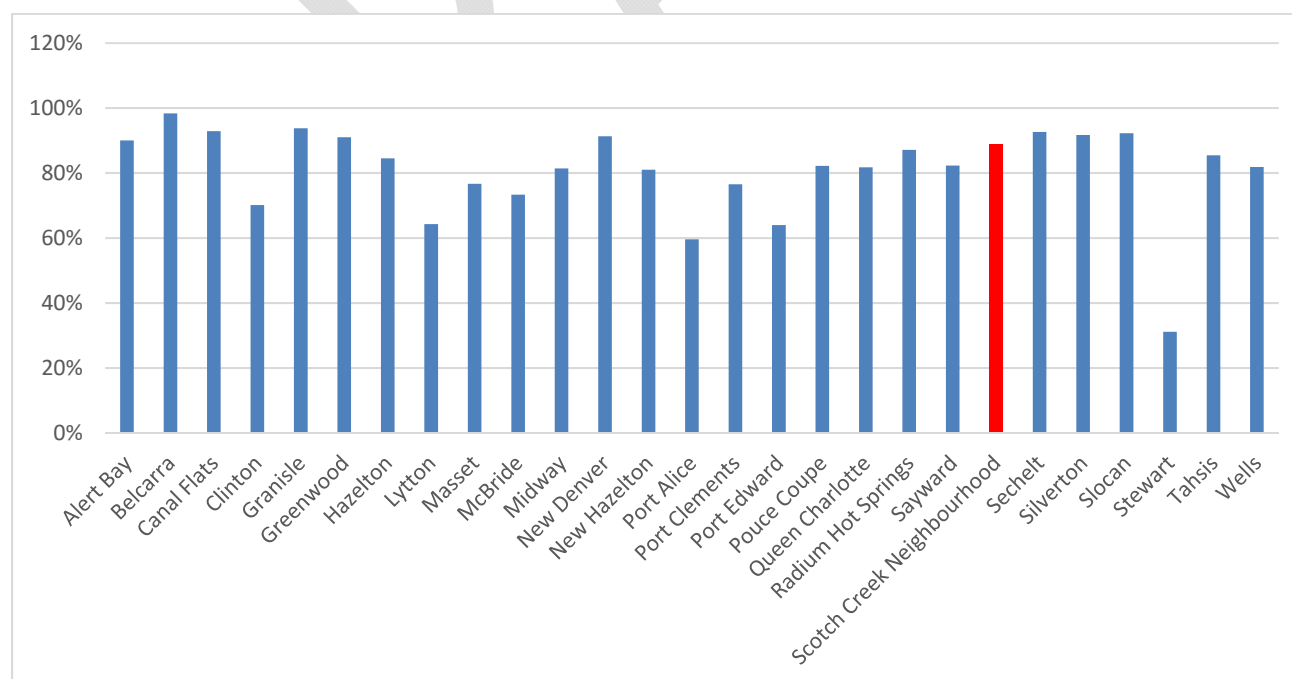
Figure 2.6 compares residential assessment values as a percentage of overall assessment in municipalities with populations under 1000 persons. In Scotch Creek, 89% of the reported assessment values are attributed to properties with a primary residential classification. In comparison, the average rate of assessment value from residential classifications is 81% in the BC municipalities with populations under 1000 persons. While Scotch Creek is above the average in terms of assessments from residential classifications, it is significant that 9 of 27 municipalities have more than 90% of their assessment classified as residential.

**TABLE 2.1 - SCOTCH CREEK ASSESSMENT VALUES FOR PRIMARY PROPERTY CLASSIFICATIONS**

BCAA Property Class	Occurrences	Total Assessment	Avg. Assessment
<b>Residential (01)</b>	591	\$275,038,978	\$465,379
<b>Utilities (02)</b>			
<b>Supportive Housing (03)</b>			
<b>Major Industry (04)</b>			
<b>Light Industry (05)</b>			
<b>Business Other (06)</b>	82	\$23,928,700	\$291,813
<b>Managed Forest Land (07)</b>			
<b>Rec/Non Profit (08)</b>	4	\$10,271,400	\$2,567,850
<b>Farm (09)</b>	1	\$15,353	\$15,353
<b>Total</b>	678	\$309,254,431	

In reviewing the assessment base of Scotch Creek it is also significant that 3.3% of the overall assessment is classified as recreation/non-profit (Class 8) which is exempt from municipal taxation. Although these properties do not generate property taxes, local governments can benefit indirectly from Class 8 lands through amenity values and economic spinoffs.

**FIGURE 2.6 - RESIDENTIAL ASSESSMENT AS % OF TOTAL ASSESSMENT FOR BC MUNICIPALITIES UNDER 1000 POPULATION, 2016**



## 2.4 Economy and Labour Force

The primary industry driving the economy of Scotch Creek is tourism. Tourism supports businesses in retail, accommodation, food, construction and general services. Many businesses gear up for a strong summer season but there are also services that are active throughout the year to support the small permanent resident population.

Within the study area there is only limited agricultural activity and no industrial activity. While logging and other forestry activities have diminished in recent years, they are still active at a smaller scale in the broader region.

Construction trades are well represented in the area and support an active seasonal home building and maintenance industry.

OCP objectives for Scotch Creek support developing a year-round destination with a focus on eco-tourism as well as supporting opportunities for residents to work from their homes.

## 2.5 Agriculture

There are several properties in the study area that are located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). ALR lands are subject to the Agricultural Land Commission Act which protects agricultural activity by encouraging farming and controlling non-agricultural uses. Only one of the agricultural property folios is classified as a farm (Class 9), thereby indicating that it is supporting farm business activity as recognized by BCAA.

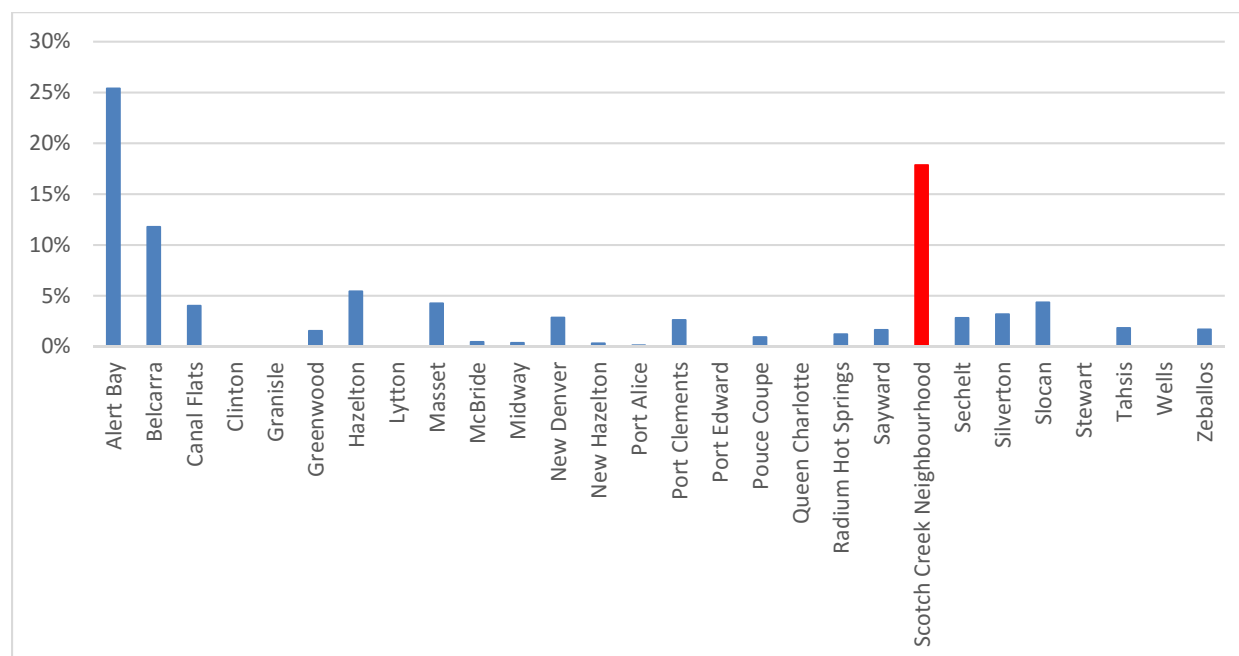
## 2.6 Environmental Protection and Green Space

The Electoral Area “F” (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan (OCP) (2013) contains many policies and objectives that recognize the environment as a treasured asset with sensitive ecosystems in need of protection. In the Scotch Creek area this translates into a particular focus on water quality (lake and aquifer) and the management of development in foreshore areas.

As shown in Figure 2.7, there is more parkland Scotch Creek neighbourhood than in most small municipalities. As well, the presence of land protected under the Agricultural Land Reserve designation contributes to an abundance of green space in the community.



**FIGURE 2.7 - PARKLAND AS A % OF TOTAL AREA FOR BC MUNICIPALITIES UNDER 1000 POPULATION, 2016**



## 2.7 Publicly-Owned Assets

### 2.7.1 Columbia Shuswap Regional District

**Rose Clifford Park** is a recreational heart of Scotch Creek and the North Shuswap. The 1.8 ha park contains a children's playground, baseball diamond and ball field, all court (tennis, basketball, ball hockey), swings, picnic area and flush toilet and is located at 4170 Butters Rd, Scotch Creek, BC.



**The Fire Hall** facility accommodates both fire protection services and an additional assembly/meeting area to serve the community.



**Wharf Park** provides a highly valued public access to the Shuswap Lake waterfront.



In addition to these lands and facilities, the CSRD also has financial reserves associated with various services and facilities in the Scotch Creek area. Regulations govern the application and use of these funds.

The CSRD also owns and operates the Saratoga Waterworks. Further discussion of this system is included in Section 5.

**TABLE 2.2 - CSRD FINANCIAL RESERVES**

Reserve Fund	Scotch Creek	Area F	Total
Saratoga Waterworks	\$136,259		
Scotch Creek/Lee Creek Fire Protection	\$74,342		
Area F sub-regional Fire Reserve		\$69,800	
Rose Clifford Park	\$44,820		
Area F Community Parks		\$104,360	
DCC in Lieu of Parkland	\$80,975		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$336,396</b>	<b>\$174,160</b>	<b>\$510,556</b>

### 2.7.2 Provincial Government

The provincial government Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) maintains all roads within the study area.

Scotch Creek Provincial Park is also a provincially owned asset, including the associated gravel pit lands.

### 2.7.3 Other

A private society also operates the IMAI Ball Park that is located next to Rose Clifford Park on crownland.

## 2.8 Sense of Community and Relationship to Other Settlement Areas

The Electoral Area “F” (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 830, recognizes Scotch Creek as the primary centre of the North Shuswap, with smaller centres in Lee Creek, Celista, Magna Bay, Anglemont, St. Ives, and Seymour Arm.

As the primary centre, planning goals encourage community services (health, emergency, affordable housing, seniors housing) and facilities to locate in Scotch Creek.

The Little Shuswap Indian Band is also an important adjacent landowner with long-standing stakeholder interests in the area. Planning and development in the area should include on-going dialogue with the Little Shuswap Indian Band.

## 2.9 Existing Planning Policy

The Electoral Area “F” (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 830, first adopted in 2010, contains policies for Scotch Creek that recognize the unique challenges of a two-season community and strive to ensure a viable, sustainable year-round economy. The following are key planning principles from the OCP that reflect the community vision.

*Principle 1* - Encourage the development of a livable community that provides a high quality of life within its unique environmental setting.

*Principle 2* - Strive for an economically and socially sustainable community.

*Principle 3* - Identify community needs and develop strategies to provide a complete range of buildings, services, amenities and infrastructure.

*Principle 4* - Respect the history and culture of the Scotch Creek area.

*Principle 5* - Ensure that the community develops within the limits of its resources and maintains its rural lakeshore character.

*Principle 6* - Develop infrastructure that is sustainable, environmentally responsible and appropriate to the needs of the community.

*Principle 7* - Develop an open space system of trails, paths and parks.

*Principle 8* - Preserve and enhance the environmental and visual quality of the area

*Principle 9* - Continue to communicate with and involve the First Nations and BC Parks when considering development in Scotch Creek

The Scotch Creek OCP policies recognize the following land use types.

- Village Centre (VC)
- Tourist Commercial (TC)
- Waterfront Commercial (WC)
- Industrial (ID)
- Neighbourhood Residential (NR)
- Low Density Residential (LD)
- Medium Density (MD)
- Residential Resort (RT)
- Servicing policy highlights from the OCP are:

*Water Policy 3* - Any new development within the Scotch Creek Primary Settlement Area or within the Secondary Settlement Areas, must connect to a community water system. For the purposes of this Plan, a community water system means a waterworks system serving 50 or more connections, parcels, dwelling units, or recreational vehicles. Facilities may include water



treatment plants and ancillary, works, reservoirs, impoundments (dams), groundwater development (wells), and pumping stations for the collection, treatment, storage, and distribution of domestic potable water. (Source: Electoral Area 'F' (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 830, p. 35)

*Liquid Waste Planning Policy 1:* Discharges of treated effluent to Shuswap Lake from private sources should be prohibited. Discharge of treated effluent from public facilities to Shuswap Lake will be considered only after all other disposal options have been exhausted and assent is gained through a referendum. (Source: Electoral Area 'F' (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 830, p. 35)

*Liquid Waste Planning Policy 2:* Any new development within the Scotch Creek Primary Settlement Area, or within the Secondary Settlement Areas, must connect to a community sewage system. For the purposes of this Plan, a community sewage system means a sewage collection, treatment and disposal system serving 50 or more connections, parcels, dwelling units, or recreational vehicles. Facilities may include wastewater treatment (disposal) plants and ancillary works, sanitary sewers and lift stations for the collection and treatment of wastewater, and the discharge and/or re-use of treated effluent wastewater and biosolids. (Source: Electoral Area 'F' (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 830, p. 35)

*Liquid Waste Planning Policy 3:* Scotch Creek is the Primary Settlement Area. The Regional District will encourage residential, commercial, and light industrial growth in Scotch Creek that is consistent with the policies of this plan. All new development must be connected to community water and sewer systems. (Source: Electoral Area 'F' (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 830, p. 38)

## 2.10 Community Organization and Associations

Scotch Creek has a well-established and organized social and cultural fabric. A variety of groups demonstrate leadership and help to define community identity. Existing community organizations and associations include:

- North Shuswap Christian Fellowship
- Scotch Creek Health Clinic and the North Shuswap Health Centre Society
- North Shuswap First Responders and the North Shuswap First Responders Society
- Scotch Creek Ratepayers Association
- IMAI Ball Park Foundation
- Historical Society
- North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce
- Others?

## 3.0 Overview of the Current Rural Governance System

In British Columbia, communities that are outside of municipal boundaries have what is generally referred to as rural governance. Under this system, a regional district (rather than a municipality), is the main provider of services. The regional district is not regulated to provide all of the services that a municipality is typically regulated to undertake (e.g. tax collection). As well, various other agencies (e.g. water utilities) may emerge to provide some of the needed services. This section is provided to illustrate the interplay between governments and agencies involved in the Scotch Creek area. Table 3.1 is provided to summarize discussion.

### 3.1 Federal Government

In Scotch Creek the government of Canada provides various federal services (e.g. RCMP, postal services). The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will also have some jurisdiction over the navigation of adjoining waterways. The costs for the delivery of these services is collected through taxes and fees but not through property taxation.

### 3.2 Province of British Columbia

The provincial government delivers many services that are funded through the collection of taxes and fees. The provincial government manages the rural property tax system, collecting taxes for the Regional District and for other services such as policing, hospitals and schools. Tax notices for Scotch Creek properties itemize the rates for each of these services. The provincial rural tax, is primarily applied to the cost of maintaining roads.

The province also collects application fees for such services as subdivision application processing.

### 3.3 Columbia Shuswap Regional District

Scotch Creek is located in the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) within Electoral Area F. Electoral Area F is represented by one Area Director on the CSRD Board of Directors. The Area Director also sits on numerous CSRD committees at both the regional and the local level.



### 3.3.1 Area-wide Services

The CSRD delivers many area-wide services, the cost of which are divided up between all of the Electoral areas. Examples of these services include: general government and administration; electoral area administration; GIS mapping; Development Services; Emergency preparedness; and Economic Development.

### 3.3.2 Electoral Area and Local Services

The CSRD also provides services specific to Area F as well as services for local areas within Area F. Examples of unique services for Area F include the Area F Fireworks/Firecrackers service. Examples of CSRD taxes that are collected for specified areas with Area F are: North Shuswap First Responders; Dangerous Dog control; Fire Protection; Building Inspection; Mosquito control; and Rose Clifford Park.

The CSRD also collects taxes through specific parcel taxes, where a dollar value for servicing is assigned to each parcel. Examples of services that are funded through parcel taxes include: street lighting (St Ives); Saratoga Waterworks; and the North Shuswap Liquid Waste Management Plan.

To fund its services, the CSRD requisitions funds from the Province and charges user fees where applicable. Requisitions are used because Regional Districts do not have jurisdiction for collecting taxes.

## 3.4 Improvement Districts

Improvement districts provide specific services to a defined area of users. There are no improvement districts in Scotch Creek and the province no longer allows the establishment of new improvement districts.

## 3.5 Private Utility Operators

Scotch Creek contains a number of private properties with multiple owners (strata or divided interest) with on-site water and sewer systems. The CSRD has also recently approved plans for a new development that could make their excess servicing capacity available to neighbouring properties (off-site).

**TABLE 3.1 - SUMMARY OF CURRENT SERVICE DELIVERY AND DECISION-MAKING**

	Main Services	Local Representation
Federal Government	Canada Post RCMP Fisheries and Oceans	One Federal MP
Province of BC	Policing Schools, Health and hospitals Subdivision Approval Septic requirements & water quality regulations Roads Provincial parks Wildlife issues Property tax collection	One Member of the Legislation Assembly
CSRD Area F Services	General government & administration Electoral area administration Feasibility studies 911 emergency communications Solid waste -recycling By-law enforcement GIS Mapping House numbering Development services Planning Special Projects Electoral Area Grants in Aid Shuswap SPCA Shuswap search and Rescue Emergency preparedness Fireworks/Firecrackers Milfoil control Program Weed control and Enforcement Tourism Shuswap Economic Development Film Commission Area F Community Parks	One Electoral Area Director (CSRD Board has 11 Directors in Total)
Specified Areas within Area F	North Shuswap First responders Dangerous Dog Control Fire Protection Building Inspection Mosquito control Rose Clifford Park	
Parcel Taxes within Area F	Street Lighting St. Ives Saratoga Waterworks Anglemont Waterworks Shuswap Watershed council North Shuswap LWMP Seymour Arm LWMP	

## 4.0 Overview of Municipal Governance Structure

### Why a municipality?

#### 4.1 Municipal Incorporation

The Local Government Department of the MCSCD has a multifaceted role in any incorporation process as outlined on their website <http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/pathfinder-restructure.htm>. MCSCD recognizes that communities change as a result of local circumstances such as population growth and urban development, demands for new or improved services and resident desires for more effective political representation. As communities change the citizens may feel that one type of local government may be better suited than another type to meet the needs of the community. Municipal incorporation and restructure are ways for citizens to get the local government that they want. Table 4.1 outlines the restructure process and summarizes MCSCD involvement in this process. This report fits into the context of Phase 1 of this process with members of the Scotch Creek community initiating this study to support an informed discussion with the CSRD and MCSCD on the topic.

MCSCD recognizes municipalities are the cornerstone of the local government system in British Columbia with the most autonomy to provide local services to citizens. MCSCD deals with communities in many areas of the province where people have settled into communities and want services that will make the community more attractive to live in such as a water distribution system, fire protection, recreation facilities and control over land use development. While incorporation is not the only option for addressing these issues, it does offer the highest level of local control with a corporate public body authorized to represent the community and make decisions through an elected mayor and council.

A community is incorporated by the province as a municipality when Cabinet approves a legal document called Letters Patent. The Letters Patent establish the municipality's name and boundary, provide for the first election of the mayor and council, and contain a number of transitional issues.

If a community incorporates, the municipality becomes a member of the regional district and is represented on the regional board by one or more members appointed by and from that municipality's council.

Municipalities are divided into four classifications: village; town; district; and city. The distinction is based upon population and area but regardless of the classification, every municipality generally has the same powers and responsibilities.

**TABLE 4.1 - THE RESTRUCTURE PROCESS**

Phase	Process	Ministry Role
<b>1. Preliminary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial contact from community to Ministry</li> <li>general information provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation of the local context for Minister</li> <li>Explanation of process for public - potential public meeting attendance</li> </ul>
<b>2. Restructure Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of broadly representative local restructure committee</li> <li>Committee's main task is to oversee preparation of restructure study, and manage public consultation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minister sanctions study process - 'approval in principle'</li> <li>staff provide advice on the formation of committee and design of local discussion process</li> </ul>
<b>3. Restructure Study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms of reference, proposal call, selection of consultant</li> <li>Purpose of study is to obtain objective information on fiscal impact of restructure, implications for local services and political representation, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minister approves restructure planning grant</li> <li>Staff act as resource as necessary</li> </ul>
<b>4. Decision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>study findings presented to community</li> <li>committee makes recommendation to Minister whether or not hold a vote</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minister provides offer of restructuring assistance</li> <li>Minister Orders a restructure vote</li> </ul>
<b>5. Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vote held</li> <li>If vote passes, implementation process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff prepare Letters Patent</li> <li>Minister takes Letters Patent to Cabinet</li> <li>staff coordinate Ministry post implementation assistance</li> </ul>

Source: [www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov\\_structure/boundary\\_restructure/restructure\\_process.htm](http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov_structure/boundary_restructure/restructure_process.htm)

## 4.2 Local Interest in Incorporation

The NSIFSG hosted several study group meetings that were open to the public as part of this process. Approximately #? persons attended these meetings and contributed to the discussion on incorporation. While this process engaged only a small sector of the population, it is significant that the topics of interest are consistent with topics recognized by MCSCD as common reasons for seeking incorporation.

### Local control and decision making

- Local municipal government is viewed as a more effective way to ensure local issues are addressed as a priority.
- Mayor and Council may have opportunities to increase local area representation (e.g. UBCM, other agency engagement and representation)
- Local council meetings improve public accessibility to decision making process.
- Incorporation is seen as an opportunity for more effective engagement with neighbouring communities, particularly First Nations.

### A strong local economy

- The local area has a strong economy in the tourism sector and there is interest in furthering these developments and developing a more diversified economy based on local amenities and resources.

### Land use planning.

- The OCP identifies planning directions to enhance “village developments”. There is interest in more direct local management of new development, design controls, growth and amenities.

### Advancement of Servicing Infrastructure

- Future development in Scotch Creek is dependant on the construction of community water and sewer infrastructure. Municipal governance could see systems constructed sooner with potential for:
  - more “financing” flexibility such as direct access to more grant opportunities
  - local government could revisit phasing options or site area requirements
  - ownership of local roads could accelerate approval process and increase design options
  - direct discussion with neighbours and potential system partners

### Reasons for Restructuring Local Governments, include...

*an urban community which has the full range of local services provided by the regional district and where the combination of the relatively high population and residents' demands for new services is difficult to manage through the regional district form of local government. In such a case, restructuring would focus on the potential incorporation of the community as a municipality, to achieve the consolidation of service delivery and level of local political representation required to manage a complex urban area.*

Source: Local Structure Branch (2000) *"Managing Changes to Local Government Structure in British Columbia: A Review and Program Guide"*. P.3.

## 4.3 Voting Eligibility

Since Scotch Creek is a seasonal community, with a smaller number of winter than summer residents, it is important to understand who would be eligible to vote if an incorporation study proceeded to referendum. As shown in Table 4.1, the potential for a referendum occurs after the conclusion of an Incorporation Study. If a referendum occurs, an independent chief election officer would conduct the incorporation vote. To be eligible to vote in an incorporation referendum, one must be:

- 18 of years of age or older;
- Canadian citizen;
- Resident of British Columbia for at least six months before registering to vote;
- Lived or are the registered owner of property within the incorporation area for at least 30 days before registering to vote; and,
- Not disqualified under the *Local Government Act*, or any other enactment, or by law from voting in a local election.

The above conditions provide for both renters and owners to vote in the incorporation process. It is difficult to estimate the number of renters in the study area however the BCAA data provides postal code data for registered owners. As shown in Table 4.2, BCAA data recognizes 1022 registered owners in the study area. This includes properties such as Caravan's West with multiple owners. Of these owners, 760 (74%) are residents of British Columbia and are likely to be eligible to vote. This data also indicates that 24% of the registered property owners have a Scotch Creek postal code and are likely to be permanent or semi-permanent residents.

**TABLE 4.2 - POSTAL CODE LOCATION OF REGISTERED OWNERS**

Postal Code Location	Registered Owners	%
British Columbia	760	74%
- Scotch Creek (V0E3L0, V0E1M5)	(250)	
Other Canadian Province	245	24%
Other Country	17	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1022</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: BCAA Data, CSRD, 2016.



## 5.0 Water and Sewer Service Delivery

### 5.1 Introduction

One of the key motivators for municipalities seeking incorporation is the desire to assume local management of utility services. This is particularly evident in municipalities where future growth requires updated or expanded servicing. As noted in Section 2.9, the existing OCP places a heavy emphasis on servicing requirements therefore, servicing is explored in detail in this section.

### 5.2 Water Services

Section to be added

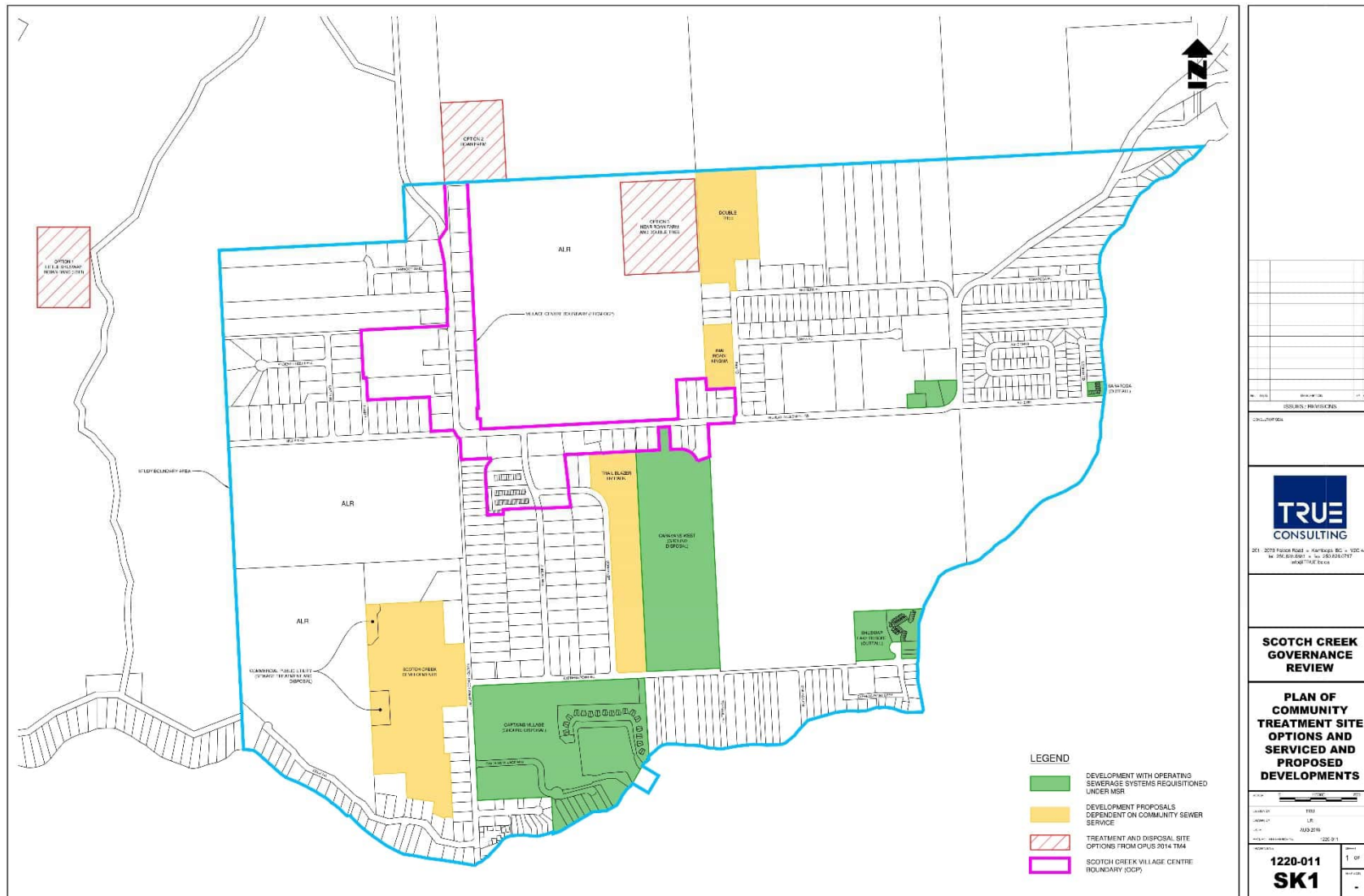
### 5.3 Sewer Services

#### 5.3.1 Context

The CSRD completed a Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) in 2009. At that time the LWMP concluded that a community sewer system was needed in the Scotch Creek area to:

- reduce the impact of poorly performing septic tank systems on Shuswap Lakeshore area and the local aquifer
- permit additional development
- permit densification for commercial and social benefit

The LWMP concluded with the identification of two options: treatment and ground disposal on a site owned by the Little Shuswap Indian Band and treatment and disposal on the Roan Farm site. Both sites are shown on Figure 5.1.



Sewer servicing options were examined again by the CSRD in 2013 and 2014 when the primary objective was to investigate a more affordable Phase 1 system for the CSRD to implement. The Phase 1 area was defined as the Scotch Creek Neighbourhood Planning Area as outlined in the OCP (Figure 1). Reports assessed three options for treatment and disposal:

- the Little Shuswap Indian Band site
- the Roan Farm site, and
- a site in the vicinity of Roan Farm and Doubletree

The LWMP reports provided costs for all three options and discussed advantages and disadvantages but there was no firm recommendation on a preferred option. In the end, the Phase 1 costs were concluded to be prohibitive with an estimate of \$1807 - \$2207/unit.

In 2015 Scotch Creek Developments presented development plans to the CSRD that included a proposal to build a private utility sewer system in Scotch Creek. The rezoning was approved in January 2016, conditional on the construction of a private sewer utility. The sewer utility would have capacity at 400m<sup>3</sup>/day and would be able to service 280 units. Scotch Creek Developments planned for 165 units, leaving a reserve servicing capacity of approximately 150 units which could be “for sale” to other developments. At the time of the writing of this report this project had not advanced beyond the rezoning stage.

### 5.3.2 Comparable Communities

TRUE Consulting has been involved with many sewer systems in small communities. The following points summarize some of the conditions in these areas that raise topics for Scotch Creek to consider.

Community	System Description
District of Barriere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ near completion, 2016</li> <li>▪ solar aquatics, RI basins and irrigation</li> <li>▪ treatment plant is on fire hall site</li> <li>▪ driver: essential infrastructure for community development</li> <li>▪ 100% senior government funded</li> </ul>
Village of Kaslo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ constructed 1996</li> <li>▪ mechanical plant and lake outfall</li> <li>▪ drivers: service downtown core; new lakeshore development; and community services (school, RCMP, etc.)</li> </ul>
District of Clearwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ last upgraded 2010</li> <li>▪ aerated lagoons and RI basins</li> <li>▪ total site area – 6 ha</li> <li>▪ drivers: essential service for commercial core development; shopping centre; Tim Hortons; tourist commercial; schools; hospital; etc.</li> </ul>

Community	System Description
Senkulmen Business Park (Oliver) – Osoyoos Indian Band	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mechanical system – RI basins</li> <li>total site area – 4 ha</li> <li>driver: Band-owned utility to service: Vincor Winery; new prison; RDOS Gallagher Lake neighbourhood; and business park subdivision.</li> </ul>

### 5.3.3 Potential Considerations for New Municipality

Discussion to be added on:

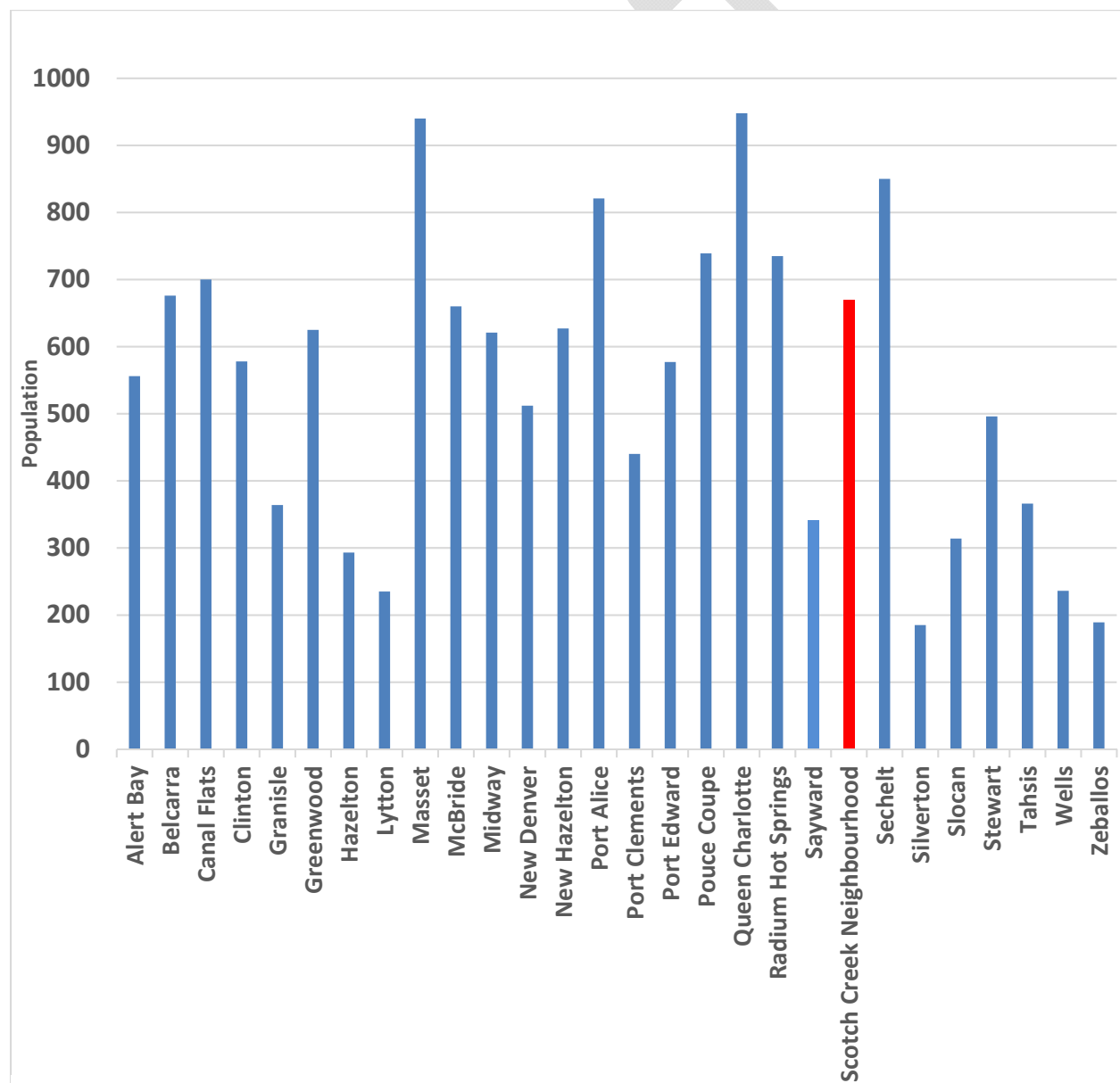
- Municipal governance might offer more “financing” flexibility
- Municipal governance could include local roads and thereby provide greater flexibility for system design
- Revisit Site Area requirements
- Revisit Concept – separate treatment and disposal sites?
- As per Opus, key is to get Phase 1 built

## 6.0 Municipal Comparisons

To better understand the potential viability of Scotch Creek as an independent municipality we have compared Scotch Creek to other similar sized municipalities (population under 1000). This data is collected from the relevant municipalities and published by CivicInfo BC (<http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca>).

The communities included in this analysis are identified in Figure 6.1. This section reviews: general municipal characteristics; service delivery and financing.

**FIGURE 6.1 - BC MUNICIPALITIES WITH <1000 PERSONS**



Note: Data includes the Sechelt Indian Government District

## 6.1 Timing of Incorporation

There are 161 municipalities in British Columbia and 27 of these communities have populations under 1000 persons. Table 6.1 shows that many of these municipalities have a long history, but there are also examples of newly incorporated communities. In addition, the province has also recently incorporated larger nearby communities such as Barriere, Clearwater and Sun Peaks that can provide some relevant experience for the Scotch Creek area.

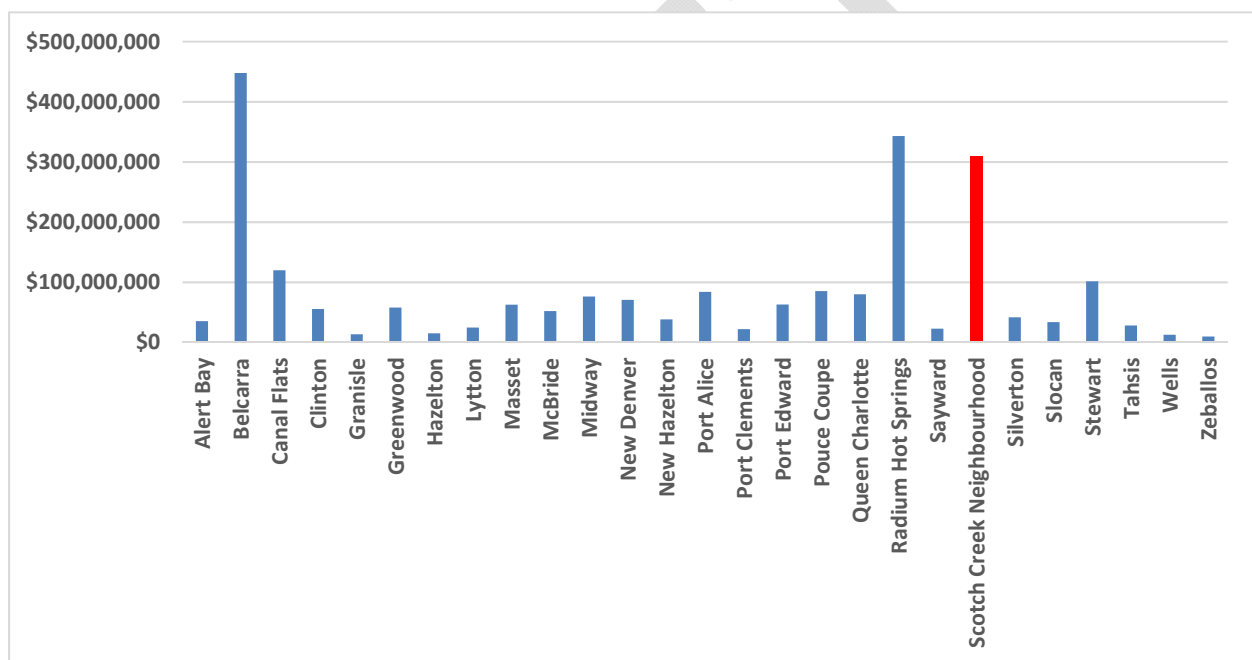
**TABLE 6.1 - INCORPORATION DATE FOR BC MUNICIPALITIES WITH <1000 PERSONS**

Name	Date of Incorporation	Population
Greenwood	1897	625
Slocan	1901	314
New Denver	1929	512
Silverton	1930	185
Stewart	1930	496
McBride	1932	660
Pouce Coupe	1932	739
Lytton	1945	235
Alert Bay	1946	556
Zeballos	1952	189
Hazelton	1956	293
Sechelt	1956	850
Masset	1961	940
Clinton	1963	578
Port Alice	1965	821
Port Edward	1966	577
Midway	1967	621
Sayward	1968	341
Tahsis	1970	366
Granisle	1971	364
Port Clements	1975	440
Belcarra	1979	676
New Hazelton	1980	627
Sechelt	1986	850
Radium Hot Springs	1990	735
Wells	1998	236
Canal Flats	2004	700
Queen Charlotte	2005	948

## 6.2 Assessment

Figure 6.2 illustrates total assessment values for BC municipalities with Population <1000. Scotch Creek has higher assessed values than the majority of these municipalities. Of the 27 existing municipalities, only Sechelt Indian Government District, Belcarra and Radium Hot Springs have higher assessed values than Scotch Creek. In 26 municipalities (excluding Sechelt Indian Government District), the average total assessment value is under \$80M while in Scotch Creek it is over \$300M. As noted in Section 2.3, Assessment Base, 89% of the assessed values are from residential assessments. While this is higher than the average for comparable BC municipalities, it is not the highest.

**FIGURE 6.2 - TOTAL ASSESSMENT FOR BC MUNICIPALITIES WITH <1000 PERSONS**

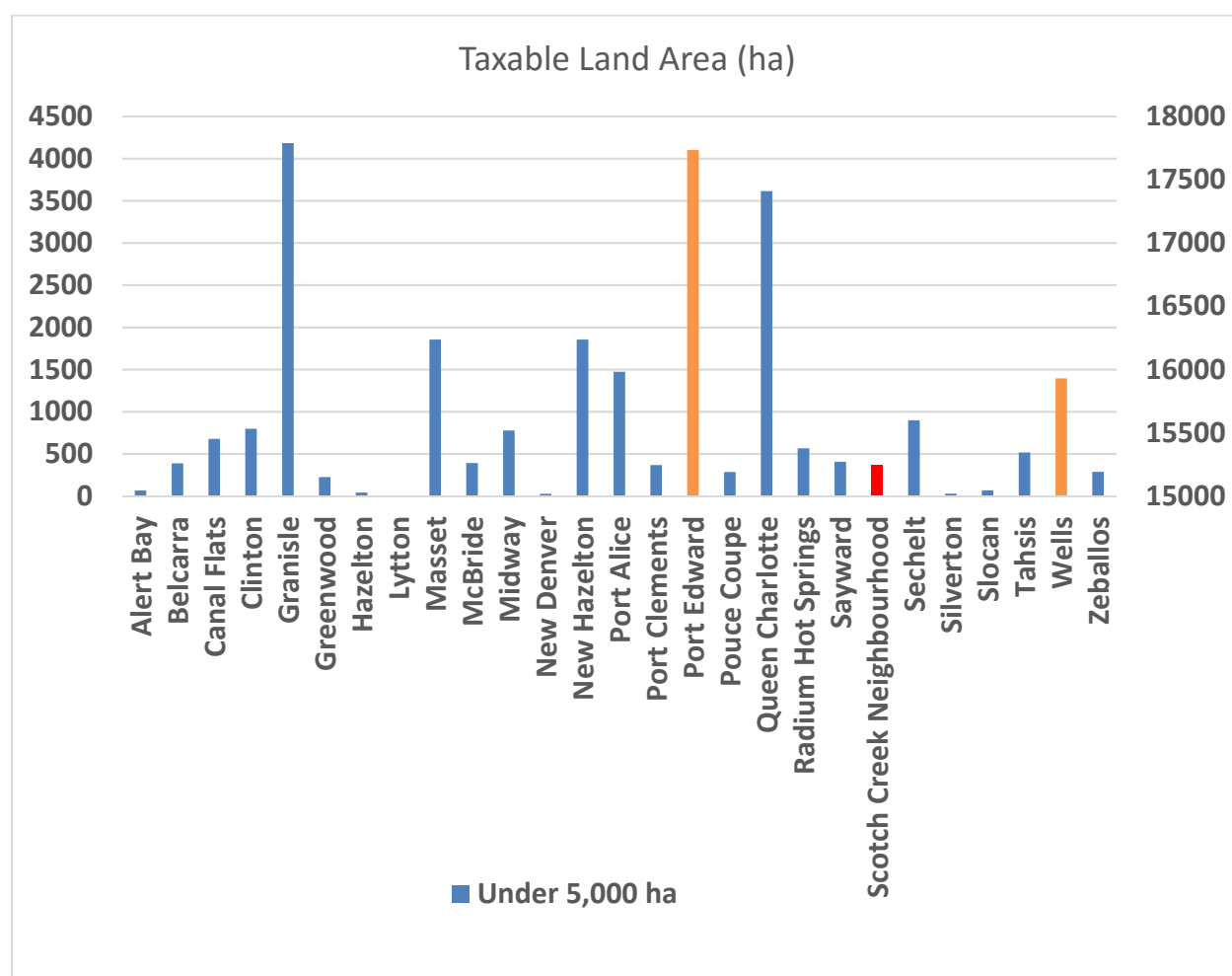


## 6.3 Size

Figure 6.3 compares the taxable land area for all municipalities with populations of less than 1000 persons. An analysis of this data indicates that there is a large variation in the size of these municipalities. While the physical size of municipality can have a significant impact on municipal budgets, particularly if large geographic areas require an extensive road network and water and sewer infrastructure, all of these municipalities are financing their services.



**FIGURE 6.3 - TAXABLE LAND AREA FOR MUNICIPALITIES WITH <1000 PERSONS**



## 6.4 Utilities

Table 6.2 compares utility infrastructure in the 27 municipalities with population <1000. It is significant that most small municipalities are operating utility systems that service relatively small geographic areas. Scotch Creek is consistent with this pattern with only 15 km of paved road to maintain and one water system.

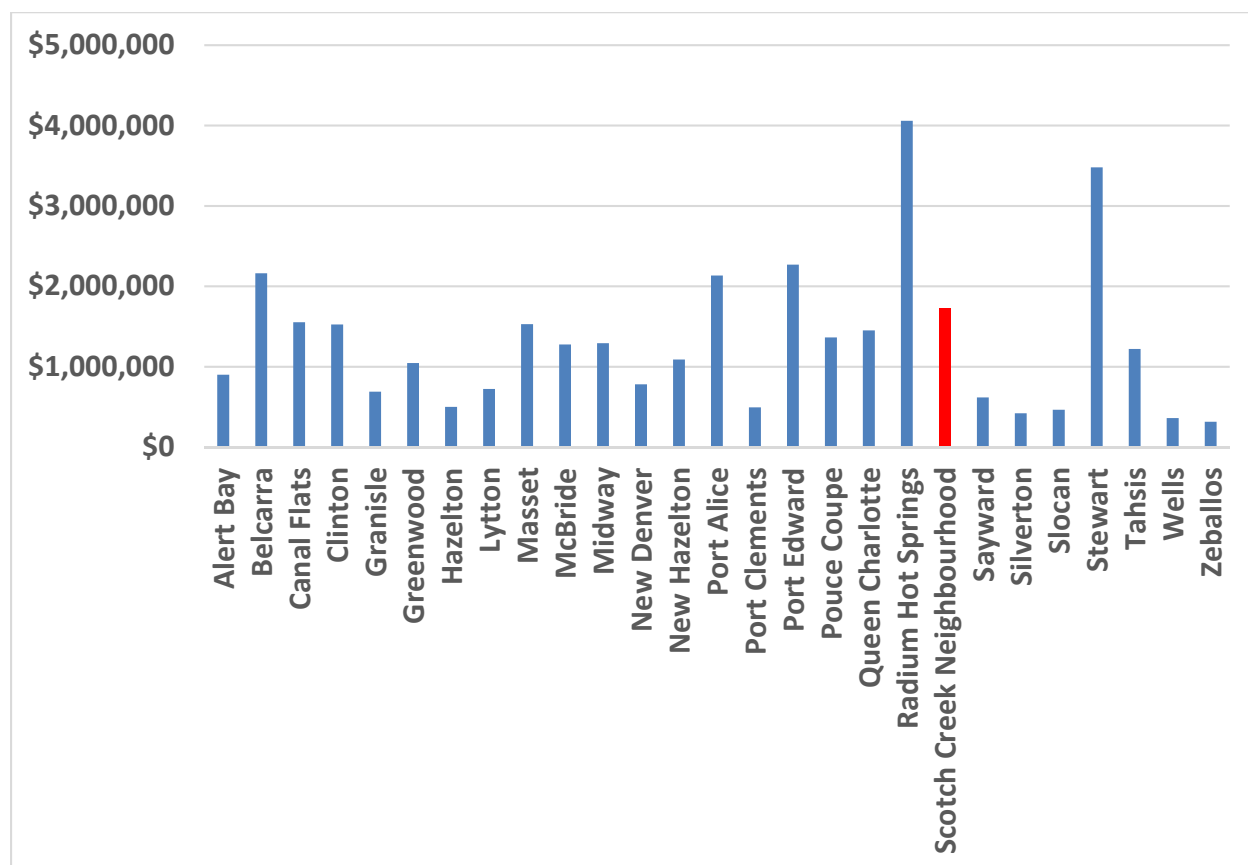
**TABLE 6.2 - UTILITY SYSTEMS OPERATED BY MUNICIPALITIES WITH <1000 PERSONS**

	Average Length	Scotch Creek
All 27 municipalities manage paved roads	12 km	15 km
24 municipalities manage water systems	13 km	Saratoga
20 municipalities manage sewer systems	11 km	0
14 municipalities manage storm water systems	3.5 km	0

## 6.5 Property Taxation

Figure 6.4 illustrates the total taxes and charges collected by municipalities with populations <1000. The data for Scotch Creek is directly comparable to this municipal information because these totals include all taxes, (combining provincial and local area taxes). While there are a few anomalies (Sechelt Indian Government District, Radium Hot Springs and Stewart), most of the municipalities are collecting close to the average of \$1.3 million.

**FIGURE 6.4 - TOTAL PROPERTY TAXES AND CHARGES COLLECTED FOR MUNICIPALITIES WITH <1000 PERSONS**



Note: Does not include Sechelt Indian Government District

Table 6.3 illustrates that the 27 small municipalities operate on funding that comes from a variety of sources. Trends that are evident in Table 6.3 include:

- On average, <32% of revenue is from property taxation
- Municipalities can have significant grant benefits from other levels of government (e.g. Clinton \$1.5M for water system upgrade)
- Ongoing senior government transfers often contribute significantly to annual municipal budgets (e.g. policing tax credit, gas tax credits)
- Municipalities are successfully generating income from the sale of services

**TABLE 6.3 - MUNICIPAL REVENUE SOURCES FOR MUNICIPALITIES WITH POPULATIONS  
<1000 PERSONS**

Name	Total Own Purpose Taxation and Grants in Lieu	Sale of Services	Transfers from Federal Governments	Transfers from Provincial Governments	Transfers from Regional and Other Governments	Investment Income	Income from Government Business Enterprise	Developer Contributions	Disposition of Assets	Other Revenue	Total Revenue
Alert Bay	25%	53%	4%	14%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Belcarra	56%	23%	0%	11%	9%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Canal Flats	44%	15%	0%	15%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Clinton	18%	9%	44%	18%	12%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Granisle	31%	29%	8%	28%	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%	0%	100%
Greenwood	29%	20%	0%	24%	26%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Hazelton	31%	27%	0%	37%	4%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Lytton	34%	29%	0%	29%	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Masset	16%	66%	0%	10%	7%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
McBride	19%	22%	0%	47%	4%	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Midway	38%	26%	0%	12%	22%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
New Denver	19%	33%	0%	19%	30%	1%	0%	0%	-3%	0%	100%
New Hazelton	36%	38%	0%	17%	7%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	100%
Port Alice	49%	16%	2%	8%	15%	2%	7%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Port Clements	27%	20%	0%	30%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	100%
Port Edward	12%	18%	0%	4%	22%	2%	0%	0%	42%	0%	100%
Pouce Coupe	15%	20%	0%	40%	9%	2%	0%	0%	14%	0%	100%
Queen Charlotte	30%	23%	0%	17%	11%	3%	0%	0%	0%	15%	100%
Radium Hot Springs	51%	19%	3%	5%	11%	3%	0%	10%	-1%	0%	100%
Sayward	25%	16%	2%	49%	3%	1%	0%	4%	0%	0%	100%
Sechelt	47%	7%	0%	12%	15%	1%	0%	9%	0%	8%	100%
Silverton	23%	25%	0%	48%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	100%
Slocan	21%	22%	0%	29%	26%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Stewart	52%	25%	4%	9%	6%	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	100%
Tahsis	42%	19%	1%	16%	19%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Wells	28%	12%	0%	51%	8%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Zeballos	24%	22%	0%	38%	17%	2%	-1%	0%	-2%	1%	100%

Research on property taxation also included an assessment of the size of “total own purpose property taxation” that could be potentially available to a future Scotch Creek municipality. Typically, this information is researched as part of a detailed Incorporation Study process where government agencies and the community make collective designs around the future of service delivery. Accordingly, our calculations should be treated with caution and only considered a rough snapshot of “total own purpose property taxation.” Assumptions used to generate the budget estimate developed in Table 6.4 include:

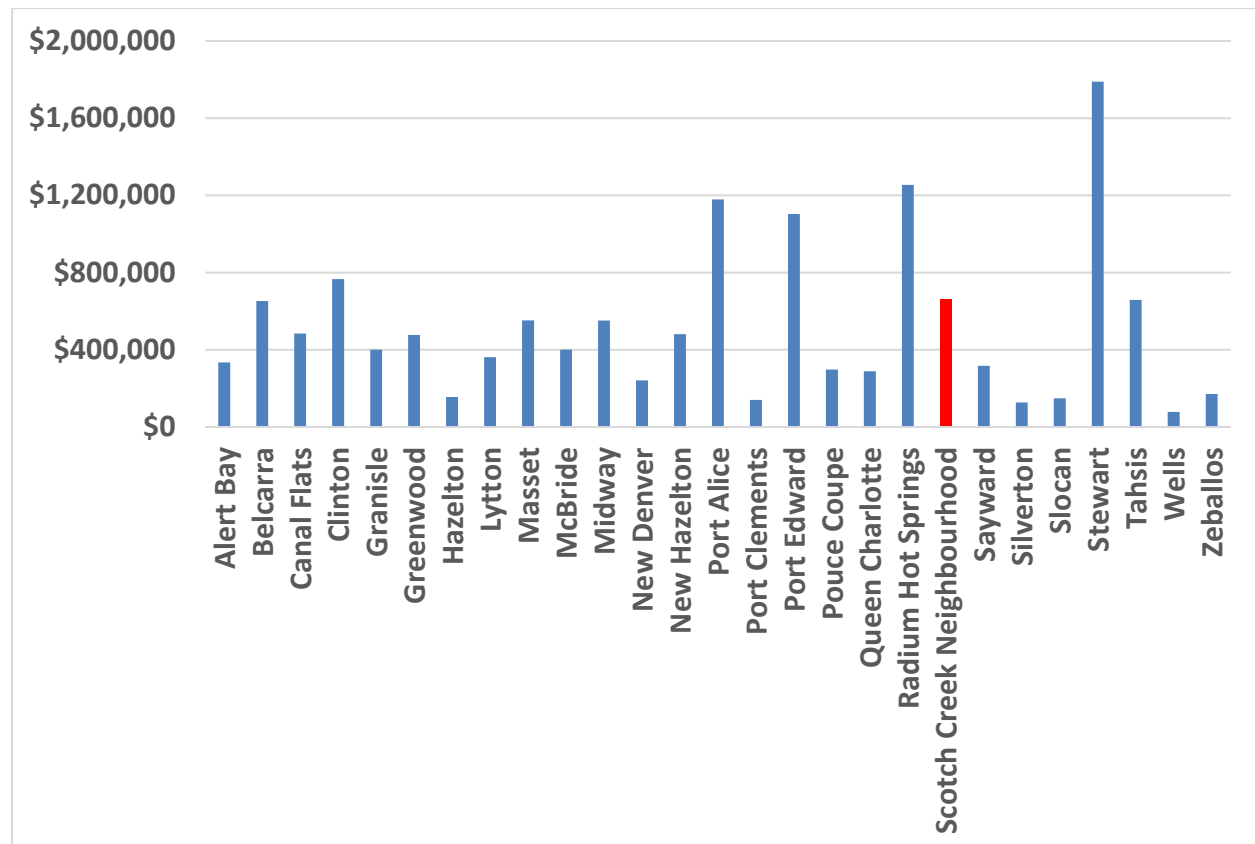
- Based on 2016 assessed values and tax rates
- Use existing tax revenues – no tax increase
- Some services would stay with the CSRD – other services could shift to a new municipality
- The Provincial Rural tax could shift to a new municipality

**TABLE 6.4 - EXISTING PROPERTY TAX REVENUES POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE FOR A SCOTCH CREEK MUNICIPAL BUDGET**

CSRD Area F 2016		Rate/\$1000 Assessed Value	
Local Service Taxes	Ongoing CSRD Service	Potential New Municipality Service	
General government and administration			0.1662
Electoral Area administration			0.1303
Feasibility studies			0.0027
911 Emergency communications	0.0213		
Solid waste Recycling	0.0806		
Bylaw enforcement	0.06		
GIS Mapping	0.0618		
House numbering			0.0036
Development Services			0.1789
Planning Special Projects			0.0128
Electoral Area Grants in Aid			0.1005
Shuswap SPCA	0.002		
Shuswap Search and Rescue			0.0128
Emergency preparedness			0.0328
Fireworks			0.0009
Milfoil Control Program	0.0311		
Weed control and Enforcement	0.0111		
Tourism Shuswap	0.0209		
Economic Development	0.0655		
Film Commission	0.0034		
Area F Community Parks	0.13675		0.13675
<b>Total Cost /\$1000 Assessed Value</b>	<b>0.49445</b>		<b>0.77825</b>
<u>Specified Areas within Area F</u>			
North Shuswap First Responders			0.0249
Dangerous Dog Control			0.0149
Fire Protection			0.6944
Building Inspection			0.0582
Mosquito Control			0.0699
Rose Clifford Park			0.0333
<b>Total Specified Areas /\$1000 Assessed Value</b>			<b>0.8956</b>
Total Potential Tax Shift from CSRD			1.67385
Total Rural Tax Shift from Province			0.57
			<b>Total 2.24385</b>
Total Taxable Assessment in Scotch Creek			\$295,049,215
Potentially Available -"Own Purpose /(Property) Taxation"			\$662,046

Figure 6.5 compares the potential “own purpose (property) taxation” budget of \$662,046 for Scotch Creek with the similar budget component in 26 municipalities with <1000 persons. The potential own purpose budget is higher than the average budget of \$520,000 found in the comparable small municipalities.

**FIGURE 6.5 - TOTAL OWN PURPOSE BUDGET COMPARISON FOR MUNICIPALITIES WITH <1000 PERSONS**





## 7.0 Incorporation Topic Areas

As part of the research conducted for this project we have examined the key issues raised in other communities as part of their local governance review process to better understand how local governance change addresses key topic areas. The Salt Spring Island Incorporation Study, Preliminary Report completed by Urban Systems, in 2015 provided some of the background for this discussion.

### 7.1 Elected Representation

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Area F has one CSRD director who represents Area F on the CSRD board which has 11 Directors and meets regularly in Salmon Arm</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A Mayor and Council would be elected to be responsible for decision-making in relation to all Provincial, CSRD and services transferred to a municipal jurisdiction.</li><li>The Mayor and Council would meet regularly in Scotch Creek</li><li>A member of the municipal council would be appointed to the CSRD Board</li></ul>

### 7.2 Service Establishment

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Most services are provided in response to a specific local need to a defined service area by bylaw.</li><li>For new services the CSRD Board would typically adopt a service area bylaw for the benefiting area with the full cost of the service recovered from that area.</li><li>The CSRD would have a variety of mechanisms to obtain approval from the benefiting area.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Municipalities can choose to provide a variety of services.</li><li>Service establishment area bylaws are not required.</li><li>Municipalities must have a Council resolution to provide staff direction.</li><li>Some long-term borrowing situations trigger public approval processes.</li></ul>

### 7.3 Coordination of Services

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are many different layers of service providers that need to be co-ordinated to achieve community objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of local service providers would be reduced with the municipality providing most local services.</li> <li>The municipality could have full responsibility for many of the services that currently require coordination (water management, economic development, land use approvals – subdivision, rezoning, Official Community Plans)</li> </ul>

## 7.4 Strategic, Financial and Capital Planning

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CSRD undertakes strategic, financial and capital planning for the services it provides.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipality could complete strategic, financial, and capital planning for the entire scope of services they provide.</li> <li>A Scotch Creek municipality would continue to work with the regional district on many initiatives of a regional nature.</li> </ul>

## 7.5 Land Use Planning

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CSRD is responsible for local land use planning and regulation of development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new municipality would become responsible for local land use planning. All current CSRD bylaws would become bylaws of the new Municipality.</li> <li>Land use decisions would be made by the municipal council, comprised of a mayor and six councillors.</li> <li>The new municipality would have the option of developing its own bylaws relating to land use and development.</li> </ul>

## 7.6 Coordination of Water Protection and Use

to be added

## 7.7 Environmental Protection

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On a regional-wide basis the CSRD can address environmental protection through its climate change programs.</li> <li>The Riparian Areas Regulation, Environmental Management Act and other Provincial laws rely on the CSRD and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for monitoring and enforcement of protection measures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The municipality would take the lead role in many aspects of environmental protection (e.g. land use planning and regulation, coordination of initiatives related to sustainability planning) and it would continue to work with other bodies involved in environmental protection.</li> <li>Under the <i>Community Charter</i>, a municipality has fundamental powers to protect the natural environment, in that a municipality can, by bylaw, regulate, prohibit, and impose requirements in relation to the protection of the natural environment. The CSRD does not have this broad fundamental authority.</li> <li>A municipality would take the lead role in monitoring and enforcing protection measures outlined in Provincial laws and regulations such as the Riparian Areas Regulation and Environmental Management Act.</li> </ul>

## 7.8 Economic Development

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CSRD provides an economic development program and promotes economic development and implements initiatives in collaboration with other public, private and not-for-profit organization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A municipality has broad powers to coordinate economic development initiatives (such as implementation of the economic strategy and action plan).</li> <li>A municipality could alternatively contract services through the CSRD.</li> </ul>

## 7.9 Affordable Housing

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The CSRD has limited application of Affordable Housing policies in its OCP.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A municipality has broad powers to undertake a range of activities related to the provision of affordable housing. It could enact various policies and regulations to encourage the development of affordable housing, and undertake housing studies.</li><li>▪ A municipality could maintain an affordable housing committee or collaborate with community groups.</li><li>▪ A municipality could administer housing agreements.</li></ul>

## 7.10 Volunteering

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ In the current governance structure, many people participate in community groups.</li><li>▪ There are numerous volunteers in the not-for-profit sector, including community service agencies, advocacy groups, and charity groups.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A municipality can create advisory committees and commissions for public participation in decision making.</li><li>▪ The not-for-profit sector would have a direct point of contact with an elected municipal council.</li></ul>

## 7.11 Grant Eligibility

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Scotch Creek is eligible for senior government infrastructure grants primarily in relation to services that are provided by the CSRD.</li><li>▪ In contrast to regional districts and municipalities, improvement districts generally do not have access to senior government grants.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A municipality would be eligible for senior government grants.</li></ul>

## 7.12 Liability Risk

Rural Area/Unincorporated	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Each organization involved in governance and service delivery in Scotch Creek holds the liability risk related to their roles and responsibilities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Liability risk would shift from the current applicable organizations to the municipality upon the transfer of service delivery responsibilities. The timing of service delivery transfers (which can follow the incorporation date) will be articulated by the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development in the Letters Patent for Scotch Creek, should the community incorporate as a municipality.</li><li>Any existing legal claims in relation to local services would transfer to a municipality upon the transfer of service delivery responsibilities.</li></ul>

## 8.0 Summary and Next Steps

### 8.1 Summary

The information contained in this report includes a detailed overview of the Scotch Creek neighbourhood planning area. The profile is of a vibrant community with significant capital assets in a lakefront destination resort area. The Official Community Plan vision and policies for the Scotch Creek Neighbourhood Planning Area direct continued growth and development in Scotch Creek, however, the community overview shows that recently there has been limited new development in the area.

OCP policies, while supportive of future development, require connections to community servicing infrastructure (specifically community water and sewer systems). The CSRD has studied options and costs for constructing new community systems and has concluded that the community is not supportive of financing expensive projects through property taxation. Alternatively, the CSRD has supported planning initiatives that would provide limited access to new privately constructed and operated servicing systems. The private projects, while supported by the CSRD, have not advanced and new development continues to be constrained by a number of factors, including limited access to servicing infrastructure. Access to new servicing options is one of the topics of interest to group interested in further study of local governance. In addition, the discussion on incorporation has also evolved because the community is interested in the following topics:

- Elected representation
- Coordination of services
- Strategic, financial and capital planning
- Land use planning
- Environmental protection
- Economic development
- Affordable housing
- Volunteering
- Grant eligibility
- Liability risk

This report has collected data for the Scotch Creek study area and compared this information to the municipal data for similar sized municipalities (populations <1000 persons). This comparison is provided to better understand the potential viability of a future Scotch Creek municipality. Findings of these comparisons include:

- While some of the comparable municipalities have been incorporated for many years, there are also examples of recently incorporated municipalities of comparable size.



- The average total assessment values for comparable communities is less than \$80 M. The average total assessment value in Scotch Creek is almost 4 times this amount at over \$300M.
- Scotch Creek has a high rate of assessment generated by residential properties but there are other small municipalities with an even higher rate of residential assessment.
- A Scotch Creek municipality would cover a comparatively small geographic area, thereby improving the potential operational efficiencies of servicing infrastructure (roads, sewer, water).
- The property taxes currently collected in Scotch Creek are higher than the average collected in comparable municipalities.
- Comparable municipalities have access to a variety of revenue sources in addition to property taxation. On average less than 32% of revenue is from property taxation.
- The potential budget available to Scotch Creek from property taxation, using existing 2016 tax rates, is \$662,046. This amount is higher than the average amount of revenue from own purpose property taxation (\$520,000) in comparable sized municipalities.
- The Scotch Creek area has a strong economic, social and cultural fabric, with citizens who are engaged and interested in the future of their community.

## 8.2 Next Steps

On the basis of these findings it is recommended that the next steps for this project are to:

- Provide the Background Report to the CSRD and MCSCD.
- Provide community access to the Background Report.
- Meet with the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to discuss the potential of launching a formal incorporation study, and
- Continue to engage in informed discussions on incorporation in the North Shuswap.

## APPENDIX A

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### **Operational Guidelines for the North Shuwsap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group**

# Appendix A

## Scotch Creek Governance Review Study – Phase 1 Background Research

### Operational Guidelines for The North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group

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#### 1. Introduction:

The North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group (NSIFSG) is a grass roots committee assembled to research the feasibility of local government incorporation. The NSIFSG is not formally endorsed by either the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) or the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD), however, their work will follow the guidelines set out by MCSCD. The NSIFSG operational guidelines set out in this document have been adapted from incorporation study committee guidelines prepared by MCSCD.

#### 2. Membership:

Membership is voluntary. Members represent diverse community interests and bring comprehensive knowledge of the community. Members include:

- Jeff Tarry , Chair([Sold@JeffTarry.com](mailto:Sold@JeffTarry.com))
- Dean Acton ([Dean@CaptainsVillage.com](mailto:Dean@CaptainsVillage.com))
- Jay Simpson ([Jay@TheLake.ca](mailto:Jay@TheLake.ca))
- Dave Cunliffe ([DaveCunliffe@airspeedwireless.ca](mailto:DaveCunliffe@airspeedwireless.ca))
- Craig Spooner ([Craig@SpoonerElectric.com](mailto:Craig@SpoonerElectric.com))
- Sherry Taylor ([lakerapture@gmail.com](mailto:lakerapture@gmail.com))
- Don Tansem ([dontansem@shaw.ca](mailto:dontansem@shaw.ca))
- Bill Long ([iblong@shaw.ca](mailto:iblong@shaw.ca))

Ex-Officio Members:

- |   |   |                        |
|---|---|------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CSRD staff</li><li>• Electoral Area F Director (or alternate)</li></ul> | } | Participation declined |
|---|---|------------------------|

#### 3. Purpose and Scope of the NSIFSG:

The NSIFSG is responsible for *guiding* and *managing* the feasibility research. The NSIFSG is an objective fact-finding body; individual members of the NSIFSG should ensure that any expression of their personal opinions do not detract from the ability of the NSIFSG to function as a neutral and credible conduit for the collection and presentation of information.

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This includes the following tasks:

- Oversight of the preparation of the Phase 1 Background Research Report as outlined in the proposal for professional services prepared by TRUE Consulting.
- Maintenance of objectivity and a perspective that is unbiased with respect to a preferred outcome while overseeing the Phase 1 research process.
- Liaison with the CSRD and MCSCD to communicate research outcomes.
- Communication of research outcomes to the community as information is available and in a format acceptable to the NSIFSG.

#### **4. NSIFSG Structure:**

As a general principle, meetings should be open to the public, to ensure a high level of transparency and to encourage public input. Decision making (e.g. selection of consultants, election of chair, appointment of members to particular roles) will be by NSIFSG members only.

##### **4.1 Chair**

Election of a NSIFSG Chair by the full NSIFSG membership is recommended as the first step in the development of an open and transparent NSIFSG and study process. The Chair's role is to ensure that order is maintained throughout NSIFSG meetings, that all items on a meeting agenda are addressed, and that the study process as a whole transpires in a timely and orderly manner. A vice-chair may also be elected to act in the absence of the chair.

##### **4.2 Secretary**

The NSIFSG should consider electing a secretary. The availability of NSIFSG meeting minutes for examination by interested members of the public increases the transparency of the study process. The NSIFSG should decide if/how it will make minutes available.

##### **4.3 Treasurer**

The NSIFSG has raised funds for the hiring of a consultant. The NSIFSG may require a treasurer to handle these funds.

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#### **4.4 Spokesperson**

The NSIFSG may want to designate a primary contact and spokesperson. This person can prepare and sign correspondence on behalf of the NSIFSG and be the primary media contact, or these two functions could be delegated to separate NSIFSG members. The chair or the secretary could hold this position. Despite this designation, all members of the NSIFSG should be able to address questions from the public about the process and the purpose of the NSIFSG.

#### **4.5 Subcommittees**

Subcommittees may be created to handle additional research tasks. The NSIFSG as a whole should appoint members to a subcommittee. However, decisions must be made by the NSIFSG as a whole; subcommittees should perform an advisory function only. Furthermore, everyone on the NSIFSG as a whole should have a clear understanding of the role and functions of the subcommittees. Because subcommittees have a purely advisory role, the NSIFSG should consider carefully whether a need for such subcommittee structures exist and should be wary of forming subcommittees to research specific areas of the study (roads, police, etc.), as both the consultant and the entire NSIFSG should be aware of specific information.

#### **4.6 Decision-making**

The NSIFSG is primarily a fact finding and research group and as such plans to operate using a consensus decision making process. If the NSIFSG is unable to reach a consensus on a major issue, decision-making will be by a simple majority (50%+1). A quorum is 4 persons..

#### **4.7 Ex-Officio members**

Ex-officio members can provide an important link between the NSIFSG and agencies or government that may be affected should incorporation be considered as a future option. Ex-officio members participate at “arms-length” from the study process (to avoid actual or perceived bias) and participate in an advisory capacity rather than in a decision-making capacity. Ex-officio members are stewards of the process, ensuring that it is carried out in an open and transparent manner. The NSIFSG will invited CSRD staff and the Electoral Area F director to participate as ex-officio members, however they declined the opportunity.

### **5. NSIFSG Structure**

#### **5.1 All meetings should be open to the public**

Open meetings contribute to an inclusive study process. An open process ensures that the community can focus on the results of the study rather than on the study process. This will enable the community to make informed decisions about based on sound and factual

---

information. The NSIFSG should announce the date and place of the next meeting at the end of each meeting. Developing a regular meeting schedule at specific days and times can also facilitate public involvement in the process.

### **5.2 Opportunity for public involvement and questions**

The NSIFSG may wish to consider routinely providing an opportunity at the end of each meeting for questions/comments from the members of the public who are in attendance.

### **5.3 Build an Agenda**

An agenda should be prepared by the secretary and distributed along with relevant documentation to each NSIFSG member prior to each meeting. The agenda should be posted at the entrances to the meeting room or on a board in clear sight for members of the community who are in attendance. The NSIFSG must also ensure that it is able to address committee business and not get side-tracked by seemingly endless debate. The Chair can play a positive role by maintaining order and ensuring that the NSIFSG is able to complete its tasks, but at the same time being sensitive to the need for public participation. The Chair should introduce the agenda at the beginning of each meeting and communicate clearly to the members of the community who are in attendance the time at which there will be opportunities for questions and feedback.

### **5.4 Develop “Basic Rules”**

The NSIFSG will follow basic meeting rules of order for its meetings. These rules include: following the agenda; letting each member speak fully and finish their statements; respecting all members of the NSIFSG and the members of the public who are in attendance; and understanding that the NSIFSG is not the forum for taking positions about the outcome of the study process.

## **6. Open and Inclusive Communications**

The NSIFSG should decide early in the process how it will keep the members of the community informed about the study.

## **7. Committee Tasks**

The following is a rough guideline of the sequence at which tasks should be completed:

1. Accept consultant proposal for Phase 1 research.
2. Refer proposal to CSRD and MCSCD.
3. Receive comments from the CSRD and the MCSCD.
4. Meet with consultant for launch of Phase 1 project. The meeting will include review and acceptance of NSIFSG operational guideline package to set the NSIFSG structure. Set the agenda for the next meeting.

- 
5. Monitor operational budget for NSIFSG including costs for meetings and consultant fees.
  6. Meet regularly with consultant to review findings and discuss progress.
  7. Provide additional local context information as required.
  8. Approve research findings (final Phase 1 report document) and develop an effective communication strategy for report distribution.
  9. Refer final report to CSRD and MCSCD and consider whether the referral should include recommendations for next steps.
  10. Facilitate next steps as required.



## APPENDIX B

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### **Incorporation Committee Structure**



## BOARD REPORT

**TO:** Chair and Directors

**FROM:** Charles Hamilton,  
Chief Administrative Officer

**File No:** 0112-05

**Date:** Jan. 19, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Letter from Jeff Tarry, Chair, North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group (NSIFSG) and Scotch Creek Governance Review – Phase I Background Review Report prepared by TRUE Consulting, November 2016

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

**#1.**

THAT the Board acknowledge receipt of the letter from Jeff Terry, Chair, Scotch Creek Governance Review Committee, along with the *Scotch Creek Governance Review – Phase I Background Research Report* (the Study Report) prepared by TRUE Consulting, dated November 2016.

**# 2**

THAT the Board deny the request for the CSRD to advance the discussion on local governance in Scotch Creek by requesting the Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development to approve a formal Governance Study for the North Shuswap for the following reasons:

- The *Study Report* fails to make a prima facie case that incorporation of Scotch Creek is a feasible or realistic governance option given the current characteristics of the community;
- The *Study Report* provides no evidence that the economic development objectives and aspirations of the Scotch Creek community cannot be achieved through the existing CSRD model;
- The *Study Report* fails to adequately explain why a change in local governance is needed or should be considered; and, finally
- In light of other Governance Study initiatives that the CSRD is currently undertaking, the CSRD does not have the resources or capacity to embark on another Governance Review at this time.

**#3**

THAT the Electoral Area Director and staff be directed to meet with the NSIFS Group representatives, with the aim of further exploring what appear to be the main underlying concerns motivating the incorporation

effort, including the lack of development in the community and the cost of water and sewer infrastructure.

### SHORT SUMMARY:

In May 2016, the Board considered a letter from a group of North Shuswap residents referred to as the North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group (NSIFS). The purpose of the letter was to seek the support of the CSRD Board to conduct a Phase I Background Research Report, with the aim of researching information to better understand opportunities for local governance, including the feasibility of incorporation. A consulting proposal prepared by TRUE Consulting was also considered by the Board. The Board did not formally endorse the Phase I study, but it did indicate that it would make staff resources available to assist the consulting team with its information gathering.

Despite the fact that the CSRD Board did not endorse the Phase I study initiative, the NSIFS Group retained TRUE Consulting and proceeded with and paid for the study on its own. The consulting team finalized its report in November 2016, a copy of which is attached to this report for the Board's reference. Also attached is a letter from the Chair of the NSIFS Group, Jeff Tarry, which was received at the CSRD office on December 22, 2016. In the letter, the CSRD Board is asked to advance the discussion on local governance by urging the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development to approve a formal Governance Study for the North Shuswap.

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**VOTING:**

Unweighted ☒  
Corporate

Weighted ☐  
Corporate

Stakeholder ☐  
(Weighted)

---

### BACKGROUND:

The following background information is submitted for the Board's reference:

1. At the Regular Meeting on May 19, 2016, the Board considered a letter from a group of North Shuswap residents referred to as the North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group (NSIFSG). The purpose of the letter was to seek the support of the CSRD Board to conduct a Phase I Background Research Report, with the aim of researching information to better understand opportunities for local governance, including the feasibility of incorporation. A consulting proposal prepared by TRUE Consulting was attached to the letter and considered by the Board.
2. The salient points raised in the NSIFSs letter included the following:
  - A number of interested North Shuswap residents want more information on the possibility of incorporation.
  - The boundaries of incorporation had not been determined nor had it been determined whether incorporation is even feasible.

- Instead, the NSIFS Group indicated that it wanted to investigate the facts needed to determine the viability of some or all of the North Shuswap being offered the chance to incorporate.
  - An initial committee has been formed, comprised of residents of the North Shuswap from various different areas.
  - A Phase I Background Research proposal has been prepared by TRUE Consulting.
  - The NSIFS Group indicates that its conversations with local residents and organizations show widespread public support for the study.
  - Finally, in addition to asking for the Board to support the study, the NSIFS Group also asked that CSRD staff assist the consulting group with gathering the necessary information to complete the report.
3. The Board's action was to acknowledge receipt of the letter and corresponding proposal dated April 2016 from the North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group (NSIFS) and directed staff to send a letter to the NSISG that incorporated the following points:
- *Given that the NSIFS is willing to fund on its own the Phase I work-plan prepared by TRUE Consulting, CSRD Board approval is not required for the NSIFS to undertake the proposed Phase I Background Research Study;*
  - *The CSRD Board is unwilling to "formally endorse" the Phase I study proposed by the NSIFS because it does not believe that incorporation is a feasible or realistic option at this time. However, the CSRD has no objection if the NSIFS wishes to proceed with the Phase I study, and the CSRD is willing to make some staff resources available to provide assistance to NSIFS and its consultants;*
  - *In our view, NSIFS Group's proposal is focused on baseline data collection that is consistent with the approach taken in other areas of the Province as a starting point for governance analysis, although more typically the work is led by local government(s) from the outset, not local citizens or community organizations;*
  - *It is our expectation that the results of the baseline inventory will demonstrate that incorporation is clearly not feasible, and this could benefit the community in the long term as this request could be put to rest, and the focus could shift to addressing valid community issues identified during the data collection process through more realistic means;*
  - *Finally, in reviewing the proposal, we have noted a few areas of caution that the Study Group may wish to consider:*

- *The proposal presupposes incorporation as the only final outcome that may be desirable. A range of solutions may be possible to address valid community issues and concerns. Results of the diagnostic study may determine that this is not a preferred outcome (e.g. tax impact from cost of road maintenance is too great) and that other solutions could be pursued, such as new servicing arrangements or local committee structures;*
- *The proposal currently describes three phases of the study. Any next steps following completion of the baseline inventory report (i.e., Phase I) would need to be determined jointly by the CSRD and the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Community Development (Ministry), not by local citizens or community organizations. The Ministry would also expect that any steps taken beyond baseline data collection would need to be led by the CSRD (i.e., public consultation, committee establishment, completion of additional governance studies, etc.);*
- *The proposal articulates the committee as an Incorporation Committee, which is problematic. If the process were to proceed to public consultation and an analysis of governance options, the Ministry and CSRD would then jointly determine appropriate committee structure, functions, and selection process. This could potentially be addressed by clearly separating the function of the local citizens 'workgroup' from the potential functions of a future local governance committee, which may or may not include these particular individuals.*
- *Section 3 – Task 3 identifies an 'email survey/consultation' with potential groups. This is the first and only reference to this being part of the process in your document – any need for public/stakeholder consultation on study results would need to be determined jointly by CSRD and Ministry following completion of the Phase 1 report;*
- *Section 3 - Task 4 – should not predetermine if Phase II is required – this would be determined by the CSRD and Ministry following Phase I.*

## **CURRENT STATUS:**

The following activities have taken place since the Board last considered this matter at its regular meeting on May 19, 2016:

1. The NSIFS Group engaged TRUE Consulting to carry out the Phase I Incorporation work program as detailed in its April 2016 proposal.
2. Although CSRD staff and the Electoral Area 'F' Director declined the invitation to participate as ex-officio members on the Study Group Committee, staff did meet with the consulting team and provided a range of mapping and financial data to assist with their research efforts.
3. The TRUE consulting team finalized the report in November 2016, and a letter from the Chair of the NSIFS Group, Jeff Tarry, was received at the CSRD office on December 22, 2016. In the

letter, the CSRD Board is urged to encourage the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development to approve a Governance Study for the North Shuswap.

## **POLICY**

There is no directly applicable Board policy with respect to incorporation, boundary annexation or governance issues generally. Instead, matters relating to governance studies, boundary restructure, and incorporation are governed by policies, procedures, and legislation set out by the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development.

## **KEY FINDINGS – PHASE I INCORPORATION RESEARCH REPORT**

It is beyond the scope of this report to provide a detailed overview of the findings contained in the Phase I Incorporation Background Report. Instead, I am electing to simply re-state the observational highlights itemized on pages 49-50 Summary of the Report. The observational highlights include:

- While a substantial number of the comparable municipalities have been incorporated for many years, there are also examples of newly incorporated small municipalities.
- The average total assessment value for comparable communities is less than \$80 M. The average total assessment value in Scotch Creek is almost 4 times this amount at over \$300M.
- Scotch Creek has a high percentage of residential assessments and a limited number of properties in other classifications. While a diverse land base may be a preferred structure, there are existing small municipalities operating with less diversity and higher rates of residential assessment.
- A Scotch Creek municipality would cover a comparatively small geographic area, thereby offering potential operational efficiencies for servicing infrastructure (roads, sewer, and water).
- Comparable municipalities have access to a variety of revenue sources in addition to property taxation. On average less than 32% of revenue is from property taxation.
- An estimated potential budget available to Scotch Creek from property taxation only, using existing 2016 tax rates, is \$662,046. This amount is higher than the average amount of revenue from own purpose property taxation (\$520,000) in comparably sized municipalities.
- The Scotch Creek area has a strong economic, social and cultural fabric, with citizens who are engaged and interested in the future of their community.
- There are many comparably sized municipalities that are successfully operating community water and sewer systems. A Scotch Creek municipality could consolidate several private water systems, thereby simplifying administration by IHA.



- Consistent with the Liquid Waste Management Plan, a Scotch Creek municipality could develop a phased sanitary sewer servicing plan and would qualify for capital cost assistance grants from senior governments.
- Scotch Creek has assets and revenue generating opportunities that are comparable (or better) than other similar sized, existing municipalities.
- The community is interested in further dialogue on the subject of incorporation.
- There were no “red flags” or obstacles to incorporation (e.g. limited tax base, high road maintenance costs).
- There is evidence of incorporated municipalities creatively and successfully addressing some of the issues that have historically been challenging for Scotch Creek (for example, water and sewer servicing, planning).

Based on the Report’s finding and observations, the Consulting team goes on to recommend at p. 51 of the Report the following next steps to advance the discussion on local governance:

- Provide the Background Report to the CSRD and MCSCD.
- Provide community access to the Background Report.
- Meet with the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to discuss the potential of launching a formal incorporation study, and
- Continue to engage in informed discussions on incorporation in the North Shuswap.

## KEY ISSUES/ANALYSIS

### Incorporation

The report focuses on, and attempts to make the case for, incorporation as the preferred model of local governance for the Scotch Creek portion of Area F. The report fails to explain why a change in local governance is needed or should be considered. A change in local governance from electoral area to municipality is a significant undertaking that involves substantial study and consultation. Before initiating any serious study, the Ministry will ask two key questions:

- What are the needs driving a change in governance?
- Is the existing, electoral area governance option unable to address the needs?

The report suggests that the main needs relate to servicing -- in particular, to water and sewer infrastructure systems that are needed in order to accommodate greater development. To the extent that these needs are valid, the report does not explain why they cannot be addressed through the CSRD. The report points to the fact that a new municipality would have access to senior government grant



programs which could be tapped to help offset the prohibitive cost of such services. But the report does not mention that the community, as part of Area F, is already able to access all of the same infrastructure grant programs available to the regional district.

#### **Scotch Creek Characteristics**

The report notes that Scotch Creek is a small community, with a very small permanent population and limited development. The report anticipates that these characteristics will be problematic for any incorporation movement, and attempts to neutralize them by drawing repeated comparisons to municipalities with fewer than 1000 population. These comparisons, however, are not terribly meaningful. The other municipalities mentioned are, with few exceptions, under-resourced, remote places that were incorporated several decades ago. It is quite likely that several of these municipalities would elect not to incorporate if they had that option today.

Interestingly, the report includes on page 23 a quotation from a Ministry document that cites high population, demand for new services, and the needs of a complex urban area as precursors for incorporation. This passage would seem to argue against Scotch Creek becoming a municipality.

#### **Municipal Budget**

The report presents tax rates to show the budget for a new municipality. These rates tell us nothing about levels of service or staffing. They are not meaningful (the report actually cautions against using the budget). There is little mention, too, about local road costs that would be incurred. These costs tend to be the deal-killers.

#### **Economic Development**

Reading between the lines, it would appear that the initiative is an economic development effort, intended to set the stage for the development of the community. The initiators may believe that the current local governance structure (EA) is to blame for the community's lack of development; however, no evidence is presented to suggest that governance is the difficulty. In my view, everything that the report suggests is needed by the community could be delivered through the CSRD model.

#### **Governance**

Finally, in many studies governance -- that is, who gets to make the decisions -- is the driving force. This report, however, pays very little attention to the governance issue.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

As noted above, a change in local governance from electoral area to municipality is a significant undertaking that involves substantial study and consultation. Even if a prima facie case could be made in support of incorporation, which I do not believe is the case in this instance, I submit that the regional district has to be mindful of its capacity to undertake another governance study initiative. The CSRD is currently carrying out a Governance Review exercise in Electoral Area 'C', and a second Governance Study initiative is planned this year relative to boundary annexation issues in and around the City of Revelstoke and Electoral Area 'B'.

The Ministry of Community, Sport & Cultural Development (MCSCD) is aware of the Scotch Creek governance review process and Ministry staff have reviewed the final report. MCSCD shares the view

that the communities concerns could be largely addressed through the existing governance system and has encouraged further dialogue between the community, CSRD staff, and locally elected officials to explore matters raised in the report.

**DESIRED OUTCOME:**

The Board endorses staff's recommendation.

**COMMUNICATION:**

If the Board approves the recommendation contained in this report, the CSRD will notify the NSIFS Group of the Board's decision.

**LIST NAME OF REPORT(S) / DOCUMENT(S):**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>Scotch Creek Governance – Phase I Background Research Report</i>, prepared by TRUE Consulting, Kamloops, BC, November 2016.</li><li>2. Undated Letter from Jeff Tarry, Chair, NSIFS Group, received December 22, 2016.</li></ol>	Attached to Agenda: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Available from Staff: <input type="checkbox"/>
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# ELECTORAL AREA F ISSUES IDENTIFICATION STUDY REPORT

This *Report* has been prepared by Neilson Strategies Inc. for the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. The document is presented for discussion with, and for the sole use of, the Regional District. No representations of any kind are made by the consultants to any party with whom the consultants do not have a contract.



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April 2024



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AREA F ISSUES  
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AREA F ISSUES  
IDENTIFICATION  
STUDY

REPORT

**NEILSON**  
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# INTRODUCTION

The *Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study* was undertaken to:

- document and explain the local governance system and local services in place in Electoral Area F of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSR)
- engage residents throughout Area F to understand their concerns with local governance or services, as well as their service and governance needs
- identify, assess and recommend changes the CSR could make to address the issues and needs brought forward

The study was focused on changes that may be pursued within the existing CSR system in which the North Shuswap exists as an electoral area of the Regional District. Municipal incorporation, which would result in a change to the existing system, was outside of the scope of the study.

The study was undertaken by Neilson Strategies Inc. in collaboration with Leftside Partners Inc. The majority of funding for the study was provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in the form of a restructure planning grant. The study began in May 2023 and was originally intended to be completed in October of the same year. In August 2023, however, the Bush Creek East Wildfire struck the North Shuswap, causing widespread evacuation from, and significant property damage to, Electoral Area F and the Skwłax te Secwepemculecw First Nation. The Wildfire and its impact on the community resulted in a five-month hiatus in the study. Community engagement opportunities, originally scheduled for August and September 2023, did not occur until January and February 2024.

This document constitutes the *Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Report*. The report begins with an overview of British Columbia's system of regional district governance. The North Shuswap is then profiled. Individual local government services provided to Area F by the CSR are outlined next, followed by local services provided by other service bodies. The report then reviews in detail the community engagement process and its findings. Options for the CSR to consider to address the issues identified through community engagement are outlined, followed by recommendations to the CSR Board of Directors.

Materials produced during the community engagement process are attached as appendices.

AREA F ISSUES  
IDENTIFICATION  
STUDY

REPORT

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## CHAPTER 1

### REGIONAL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE

There are 27 regional districts in British Columbia, including the CSRD. As a general rule, regional districts cover vast geographies — the CSRD, with an area measuring 28,929 km<sup>2</sup>, is no exception to this rule (see Figure 1.1). Regional districts include municipalities and unincorporated electoral areas.<sup>1</sup> The CSRD has a total of four municipalities — Salmon Arm, Sicamous, Golden and Revelstoke — and seven electoral areas, including Electoral Area F (North Shuswap).

Regional districts exist, fundamentally, to provide local government services in response to the needs and instructions of their members. In their role as service providers, regional districts:

- serve as the local government for electoral areas, providing them with basic local services such as community planning, plus a range of other services that areas choose to receive

**Figure 1.1**  
Columbia Shuswap Regional District



<sup>1</sup> The sole exception is the Central Coast Regional District, which has only electoral areas.



- provide region-wide services to all member electoral areas and municipalities
- provide a framework for different combinations of municipalities and electoral areas to participate in sub-regional services

Each regional district is governed by a board of directors, which consists of:

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

The board selects its own chair. The chair has the authority to create standing committees to study and give advice on specific subject matters or areas of business. In the CSRD the chair has established two such committees: an Administration and Finance Committee, and an Electoral Area Directors Committee.

The voting strength of each municipality or electoral area in a regional district is a function of the jurisdiction's population size and the regional district's voting unit. In the CSRD the voting unit is 2,500, which means that each jurisdiction receives one vote for every 2,500 residents. Municipalities receive one municipal director place for every five votes or portion thereof. Electoral areas can have only one director, irrespective of size or voting strength. The CSRD Board consists of 12 directors – one from each of the seven electoral areas, and one from each of Sicamous, Revelstoke and Golden. The City of Salmon Arm, with a population that exceeds 12,500, appoints two directors (see Figure 1.2). Electoral Area F, similar to every electoral area, has one director on the Board.

Some decisions at the regional district board table are made by the entire board of directors; other decisions, specific to individual services, are made only by the directors from the local jurisdictions that participate in the services.

Consider the following points:

- *Corporate Votes* — This type of vote involves all directors of the board. In some cases the votes are unweighted, which means

**Figure 1.2**  
**CSRD Board of Directors**

**ELECTORAL AREA DIRECTORS**



**MUNICIPAL DIRECTORS**



that each director at the table votes, and each director receives one vote. Unweighted corporate votes are used to establish new services, pass regulatory bylaws and decide a variety of other matters. Weighted corporate votes are used for money matters, such as the financial plan, borrowing or buying property. On these matters, the number of votes allotted to directors varies based on the jurisdictions' voting strengths.

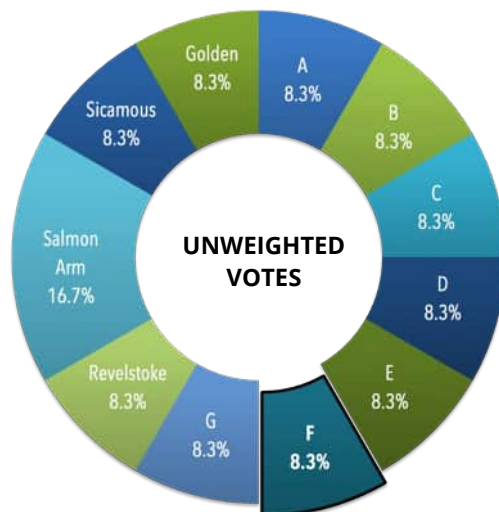
- *Stakeholder Votes* — In stakeholder votes, only directors from jurisdictions that participate in a given service are entitled to vote. Stakeholder votes, all of which are weighted, are used for matters that relate to the operations and administration of existing services. If there is only one participating area, the entire board votes.

Figures 1.3 and 1.4 show the voting strength for each CSRD electoral area and municipality on corporate unweighted and weighted votes. At present, the Director for Area F has one vote on corporate matters, which represents 8.3% of the Board's voting (assuming all Board members are present), and two votes (6.9%) on matters that are decided using the weighted vote approach.

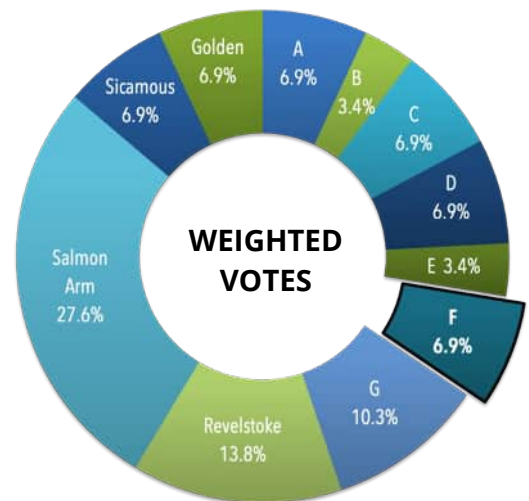
The type of voting, and the relative “say” that Area F has in the administration of each service, is also impacted by the number and nature of the other participants. In general, the greatest opportunity to influence services is provided through sub-regional services — that is through services that are provided to Area F plus a few other jurisdictions, but not to the entire region. Consider the following:

- Fifteen (15) of the 36 services, or 42%, in which Area F participates, are local

**Figure 1.3**  
Voting Strength – Unweighted Vote



**Figure 1.4**  
Voting Strength – Weighted Vote



services delivered only to Area F, or to a part of Area F. As noted previously, where there is only one participant in a service, decisions must be made by the entire Board.<sup>2</sup>

- Four (4) of the 36 services, or 11%, are regional services that are provided to the entire region. Decisions on these services are made by the entire Board.
- Seventeen (17) of the 36 services (47%) are sub-regional services; however several of these services — land use planning, bylaw enforcement, and animal control are examples — are constrained by other voting rules including the legislative requirement for regulatory services to be voted on by the full Board. Further, for some Area F services the service itself is just a vehicle to provide funding to another agency. Examples of these services include Shuswap Volunteer Search and Rescue, the SPCA or the Okanagan Regional Library. There are no real administration or service operation decisions on these services; as such, there are rarely any stakeholder votes.

The result is that in practice the weighted stakeholder votes on service operations are infrequent. When they do occur, Salmon Arm is also a participant in several of the same sub-regional services. Salmon Arm’s population and its eight weighted votes impacts, as does the involvement of other electoral areas, the amount of direct influence Area F’s

Electoral Area  
Director has over  
service decisions.  
The voting for all  
jurisdictions is shown  
in table format in  
Figure 1.5.

**Advisory  
Committees &  
Citizen Involvement**  
Many regional  
districts make use of  
advisory committees  
to examine issues or  
services, seek a  
broader range of  
community  
perspectives and  
share ideas and

**Figure 1.5  
Voting Strength (all jurisdictions)**

Jurisdiction	Pop	Directors	Strength
Electoral Area A	3,325	1	2
Electoral Area B	663	1	1
Electoral Area C	3,245	1	2
Electoral Area D	4,491	1	2
Electoral Area E	1,388	1	1
<b>Electoral Area F</b>	<b>3,611</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Electoral Area G	5,719	1	3
District of Sicamous	2,613	1	2
Town of Golden	3,986	1	2
City of Revelstoke	8,275	1	4
City of Salmon Arm	19,705	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,021</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>29</b>

<sup>2</sup> Prior to February 3, 2024, there were 37 services; a referendum on an establishing bylaw that would have continue the Shuswap Watershed Council was turned down in February, effectively eliminating one of the sub-regional services in which Area F participated.

recommendations to the Board. Advisory committees, as the name suggests, provide advice to the Board; they do not make decisions on the services. The advice of advisory committees is often heeded given that it reflects local perspectives held by the community.

The CSRD has had several committees in the past to involve residents of Area F. Several of these initiatives, however, were placed on hold with the COVID 19 pandemic that curtailed in-person meetings. The CSRD may re-start some of these Committees, including the Area F Parks Advisory Committee and the Area F Advisory Planning Commission to provide more residents with opportunities to share input and guide the services they receive.



#### Area F Advisory Planning Commission

- APCs have between 5 and 9 members, ideally representing geographically, demographically, and professionally diverse mix of residents
- Discuss development applications, and make recommendations to CSRD Board
- Advise on matters of land use, community planning, proposed bylaws and permits
- 4-year terms (2023 – 2027)



#### Area F Community Parks Advisory Committee

- Maximum of 5 residents
- Provides input and advice on financial plans, policies, new services and procurement for maintenance and equipment
- Assists in communications between the CSRD and the public, and shares parks issues raised by the public
- 3-year term

*Coming  
Soon!*

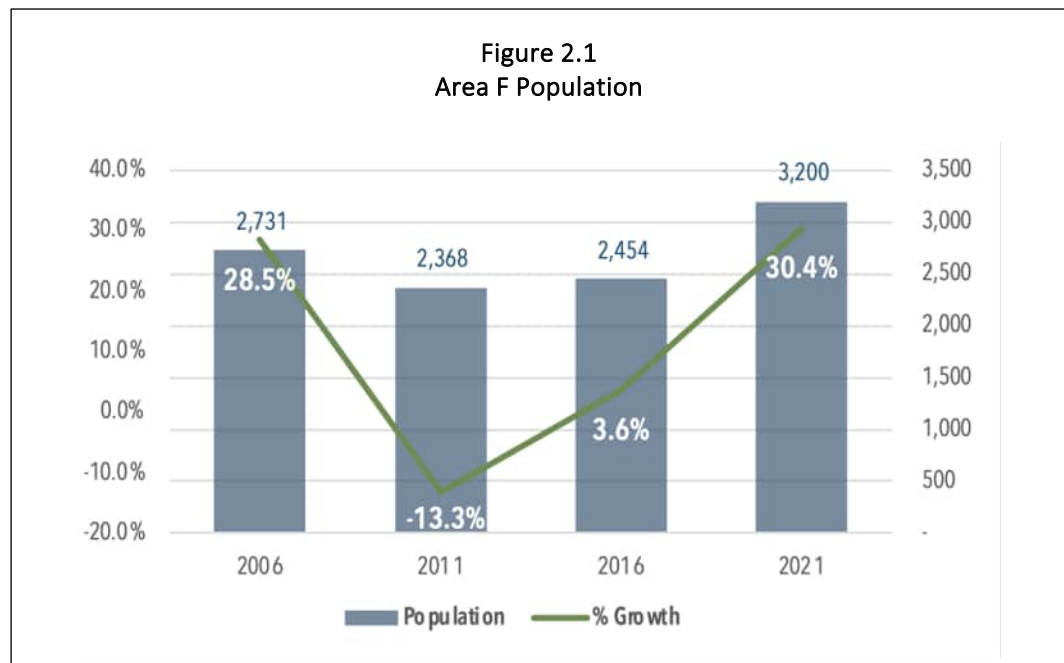
## CHAPTER 2

### COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Electoral Area F is a collection of unincorporated communities located along the north shore of Shuswap Lake on the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc People. The list of communities begins with Lee Creek at the far west end of Area F. To the east are Scotch Creek, Celista, Magna Bay, Anglemont, St. Ives and Seymour Arm. The local government for the entire Electoral Area is the CSRD.

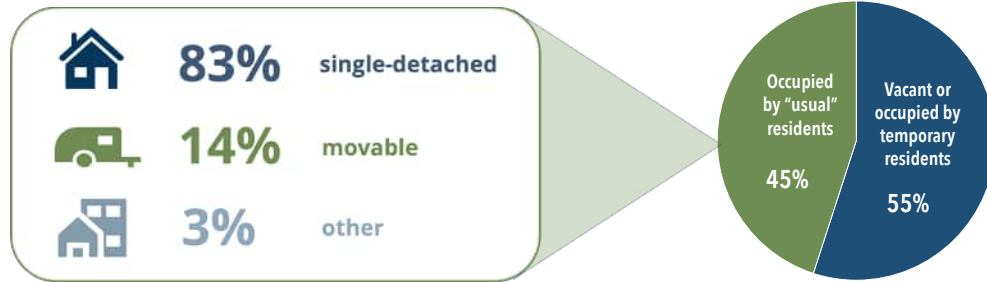
#### POPULATION

The 2021 Census reported the population for the whole Electoral Area F as 3,200. Between the 2016 and 2021 census years, Area F grew by 30.4%. (See Figure 2.1). When First Nations reserves are included, the population of Area F increases to 3,611.



#### HOUSING

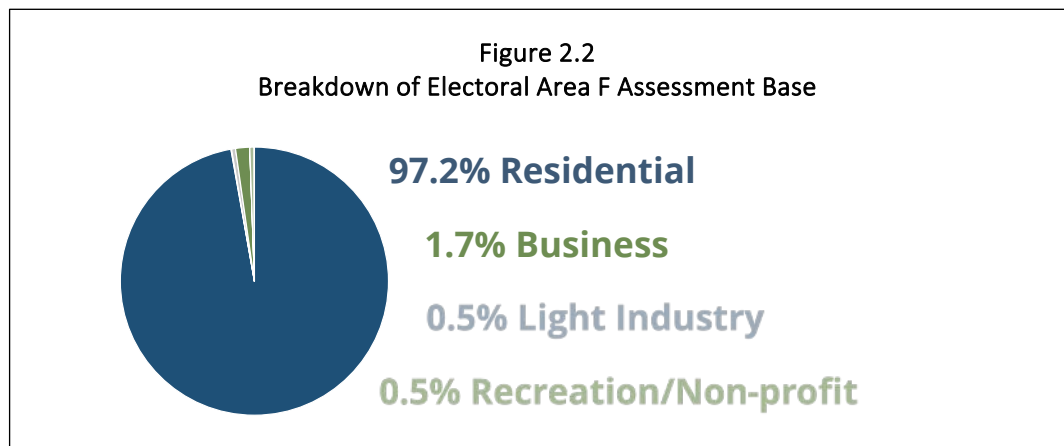
The 2021 Census reported 3,456 private dwellings in Area F. More than half of these units are either vacant or occupied by temporary residents; 45% are occupied by “usual” residents. Single-detached houses comprise the vast majority of housing in the CSRD, including throughout Area F. A higher proportion of movable dwellings, such as mobile homes, is reflective of a desire for more affordable housing choices and the relatively high number of vacation properties.



## PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

For 2023, BC Assessment data show 4,637 folios in Area F as a whole, valued at \$2.46 billion, with a converted assessment value of \$255,522,255. The residential assessment for Area F in 2023 was \$2,390,692,539, which represents 97.2 % of the total assessment for the electoral area. The average residential property is valued at approximately \$515,569, an increase of approximately 14% from the 2022 average.

Figure 2.2 provides details on the percentage of assessed values represented by each of the property classes.



## 2023 WILDFIRE

In the summer of 2023 parts of Area F were devastated by the Bush Creek East Wildfire that burned more than 45,000 hectares. The community lost 176 structures, including the Scotch Creek Fire Hall; another 50 buildings were damaged. The Skwłax te Secwepemculecw First Nation had at least 85 five structures destroyed.

The Wildfire had a deep impact on the community and its residents; the focus is now on supporting the community in its rebuilding efforts. The CSRD remains focused on assisting with recovery through various initiatives, including in streamlining the building permits process, exploring partnerships on recovery efforts with Skwłax te Secwepemcu'ł?ecw (Skwłax), participating in working groups focused on specific aspects of recovery, and engaging with the community through "community conversations" to identify lessons learned that can be used to improve emergency



management responses in the future. The CSRD recently received a grant to extend its FireSmart program for another two years.

## PLANNING & RECOVERY

The *Electoral Area F (North Shuswap) Official Community Plan* (Bylaw No. 830), adopted in 2009, outlines land use, development and community objectives over a 20-year timeframe. The *Plan* serves as the guiding land use policy for the area. A 2024 update is planned; however, the CSRD's more urgent priority is its focus on rebuilding efforts underway in parts of the community impacted by the Wildfire. Some of the rebuilding priorities for 2024 are as follows:

- In anticipation of an increase in development and building permit applications connecting to post-Wildfire rebuilding efforts, the CSRD has made approaches to the province for funding to hire additional staffing and to fund overtime.
- The CSRD is reviewing options for the redevelopment of the Scotch Creek Fire Hall.
- Development Services staff participate in several Recovery Working Groups, and continue to liaise with provincial staff and legal counsel on land use and building issues related to Wildfire recovery.
- One Planner and one Building Official have been assigned as the primary contacts for community members on rebuilding matters, including permit applications. Additional staff will be assigned as required to manage the rebuilding workload.
- The CSRD has developed information on health and site safety concerns for returning residents, along with demolition permit requirements and exemptions, step-by-step application process guides, rebuilding FAQs, and other guidance documents.
- Staff continue to undertake outreach and consultation with organizations — the Shuswap Construction Industry Professionals is an example of one group — and qualified professionals practicing in the North Shuswap, including surveyors, architects, structural and geotechnical engineers, designers, and contractors.
- A review of the existing commercial zoning in the Scotch Creek Village Centre is planned to assist in the rebuilding process.





## CHAPTER 3

### ELECTORAL AREA F SERVICES

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#### REGIONAL DISTRICT SERVICES

Regional districts provide a broad range of services to residents. With the exception of certain provincially-mandated services that regional districts are required to provide, the range of regional district services is determined by the board in response to the wishes and instructions of individual jurisdictions. This feature of regional district service provision results in a different set of services in each regional district, and in each electoral area within a regional district.

As noted in Chapter 1, all regional districts including the CSRD provides three types of services. Local services are those which are provided to electoral areas, or to portions of electoral areas, in response to local needs and interests. Sub-regional services are provided to combinations of jurisdictions — electoral areas and municipalities — that choose to participate in the services. Regional services are those that are provided to all member municipalities and electoral areas throughout the region.

Potential services that are identified by the board, electoral area directors, member municipalities, staff or residents must be studied prior to establishment to determine their feasibility. Factors such as service scope, cost and service delivery are assessed. If deemed feasible, a service establishing bylaw must be developed and adopted by the board. Ultimately, the bylaw must also be approved by the province's Inspector of Municipalities, as well as by the electors who will receive and pay for the service. Elector approval can be demonstrated through a petition, an alternative approval process, or a referendum. In some cases, approval can be given on behalf of electors by the participating municipality's Council, or the participating electoral area's director.

Periodic service reviews can be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of a service, as well as elements of a service's structure such as the method of cost allocation among participating jurisdictions, the service governance model, the scope (or definition) of the service, and the method of service delivery. Some services have provisions for reviews written into their establishing bylaws; others have "sunset" clauses that trigger dissolution of the service unless all participants agree to an extension. The *Local Government Act* has provisions to allow for, and to govern, formal statutory reviews. These provisions address the need for third-party involvement to resolve disputes, and provide the ability for jurisdictions to seek withdrawal from services in cases where reviews do not adequately address concerns raised.<sup>3</sup>

AREA F ISSUES  
IDENTIFICATION  
STUDY

REPORT

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STRATEGIES

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<sup>3</sup> Service withdrawal is possible, under the *Local Government Act*, for most services. The process of withdrawal, however, is onerous on jurisdictions that seek withdrawal.

## ELECTORAL AREA F SERVICES

### Columbia Shuswap Regional District

The CSRD, in its capacity as local government for Electoral Area F, provides 36 services to residents in the North Shuswap. These services are identified in Figure 3.1 on the following page, under seven categories. Each category is profiled here, as follows:

#### ➤ Administration

This area of services supports the CSRD Board in its work, as well as the overall management of the CSRD organization. The main services include general government, which supports all areas, and electoral area administration, which focuses specifically on the needs and services of the electoral areas. Together, these services encompass all administration functions, including property management, the purchasing of office supplies and equipment, records management, financial services such as budgeting and accounting, legal services, communications, computers and software purchasing and management, administrative support for the Board, elections, and several others. Also included in this category are services that fund regional and electoral area feasibility studies to investigate the feasibility of new services desired by electoral areas or the broader region.



#### ➤ Development Services

The CSRD provides land use planning, development regulation and building inspection services to the electoral areas through its Development Services department. In Area F, building inspection is provided to only a portion of the electoral area, while planning, GIS mapping and house numbering are provided throughout the entire area. A separate service is created to support “special projects” which include initiatives that are outside the scope of the typical day-to-day activities under development services. Larger projects, such as updates to zoning bylaws and OCPs, are included under special projects, but so, too, are studies that are not strictly planning related, such as parks master plans, and governance studies.

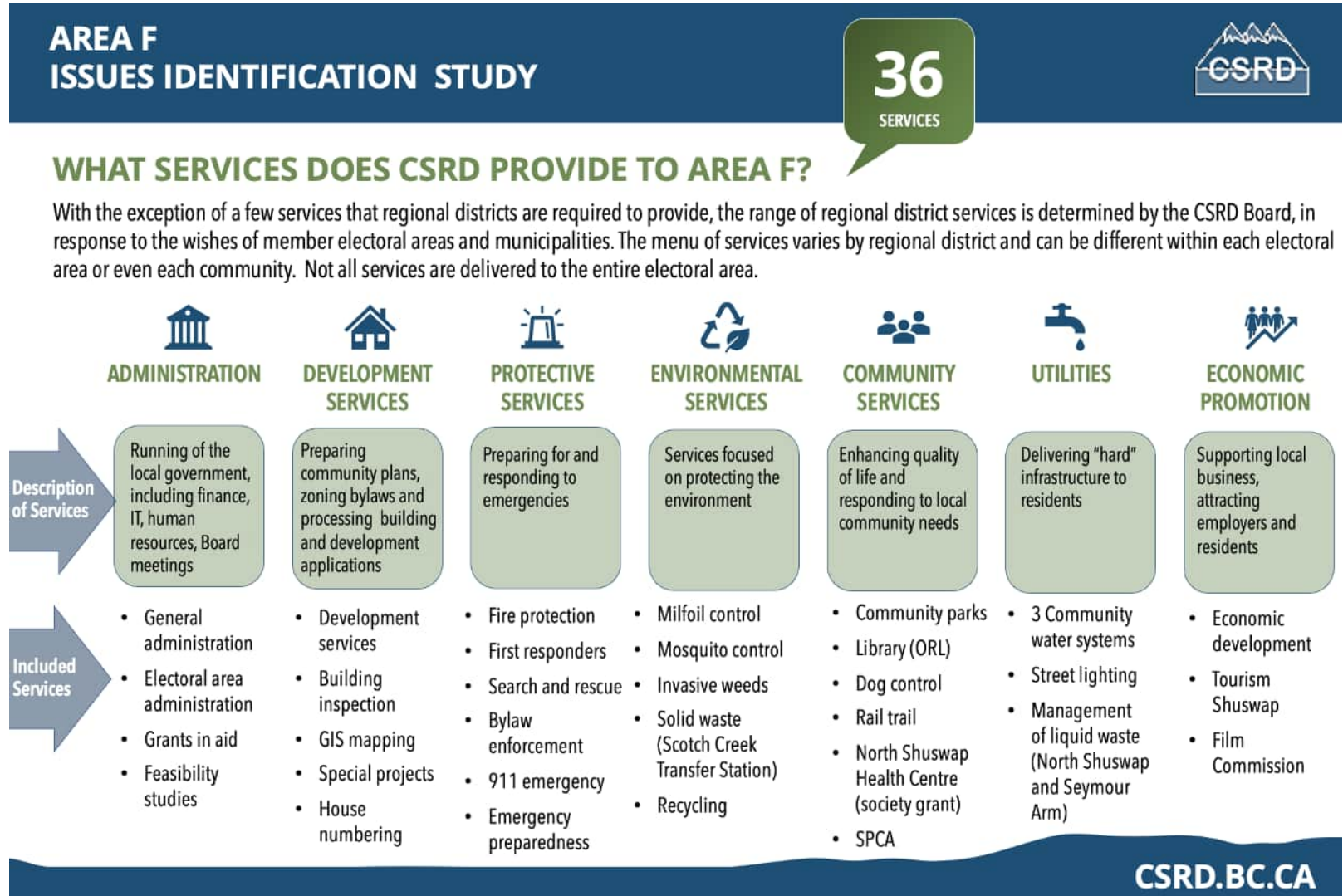


#### ➤ Protective Services

The CSRD provides a number of emergency and protective services to residents and properties in Area F, either directly or through CSRD-funded organizations. Services include fire protection delivered to a portion of Area F by the Scotch Creek/Lee Creek, Celistia and Anglemont Volunteer Fire Departments. First responder service is provided to a portion of the electoral area; emergency planning and response, 911 call service, and Shuswap Search and Rescue are provided throughout the whole of Area F. The CSRD delivers bylaw enforcement services to Area F (and all electoral areas) to achieve



Figure 3.1  
Electoral Area F Services Provided by the CSRD



compliance with the region's regulatory bylaws, including zoning and other land use bylaws.

➤ **Environmental Services**

Environmental Services include milfoil removal services for Shuswap Lake, removal of invasive species provided through the Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society, and mosquito control in Scotch Creek and Lee Creek. The Regional District's solid waste and recycling programs are also included in this category. The CSR receives and handles garbage and recycling throughout the entire region through a system of CSR transfer stations, recycling depots and landfills. Electoral Area F has one waste transfer station in Scotch Creek. The CSR also undertakes solid waste management planning function for the region. Solid waste management planning is a statutory requirement for regional districts in BC. The CSR is currently in the midst of an update to its *Solid Waste Management Plan*.



➤ **Community Services**

This group of services includes the community parks in Area F, as well as the Rail Trail initiative, library services, animal control and SPCA. Some of these services, such as Rail Trail and library are provided to a broader range of electoral areas; the community parks service is specific to Area F. Electoral Area F's parks service includes the acquisition of park land, as well as the development, maintenance and operation of the Area's eight community parks, its boat launches and its trails. The Area has a *Parks Master Plan* that is scheduled to be updated; the previous update was postponed during the pandemic to allow for broader consultation. The Rail Trail is a service that was established to support the establishment of a rail trail from Sicamous to Armstrong. It involves the Regional District of North Okanagan as well as the CSR's Areas C, D, E, and F, Salmon Arm and Sicamous. Library services are provided through the Okanagan Regional Library at the North Shuswap branch.<sup>4</sup> Also included in this grouping is the support for a North Shuswap Health Centre. Area F voted to establish a service, created in 2022, to contribute grants to support the community-owned and -operated primary care centre in Scotch Creek. The centre provides access to doctors, public health staff and bi-weekly lab services.



➤ **Utilities**

This group of services includes management of the utilities owned and operated by the CSR. The CSR operates three water systems in Area F — Saratoga, Anglemont Estates and



<sup>4</sup> The North Shuswap branch was destroyed during the 2023 Wildfire, and has yet to be rebuilt.

Cottonwood waterworks. Anglemont Estates is the largest of the three systems, with 499 connections, followed by Saratoga with 145. The Cottonwood system serves 80 properties in the Cottonwood Cove RV Park. The CSR is working on the Scotch Creek water system, which will become another water service area once complete. The Scotch Creek project includes building a water treatment plant, installing a trunk watermain and constructing a new water intake to increase treatment capacity and improve water services, funded in part through federal and provincial grant contributions. The first phase will serve 84 properties. The CSR operates a street lighting service in St. Ives. The hydro pole-mounted street lights are owned and maintained by BC Hydro, but are leased to the CSR. The CSR taxes beneficiaries to operate the lights, and reports equipment issues to BC Hydro on behalf of the public. The individual water systems and street lighting service are only delivered to and paid for by properties that are connected to, and that benefit directly from, the services.

The other service in this grouping involves development of liquid waste management plans (LWMP) for both the North Shuswap and the Seymour Arm areas. Updates to the LWMPs are exploring the potential of combining the two into one plan.

#### ➤ Economic Promotion

This group of services includes economic development, tourism promotion and support for the film commission. The Shuswap Economic Development and Tourism Shuswap are both services that involve the broader Shuswap area, including electoral areas C, D, E, F and G as well as Salmon Arm. Sicamous is also part of the Tourism Shuswap service, and contributions are also made from jurisdictions outside CSR, including Chase, Armstrong and Enderby. Economic development services are provided through a separate society, the Shuswap Economic Development Society, created in 2020. The Society focuses on programs that building support community and economic development goals, attract and retain businesses. The Society is also a partner in the Shuswap Economic Recovery Taskforce created to support businesses, sole proprietors and non-profits impacted by the Bush Creek East Wildfire.



Tourism is delivered through Tourism Shuswap. Shuswap tourism is focused on the marketing and promotion of the Shuswap region, including through the production of videos, regional signage, the website, social media, trail guide, experience guide and support for many of the region's events and activities. The Columbia Shuswap Film Commission promotes film and television production activity. Area F also has a specific service created to support the North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce.

Figure 3.2 on the following page identifies for each of the CSRD's services provided to Area F the full set of participating jurisdictions, along with the agency that delivers the service.

## SERVICES PROVIDED BY OTHERS

Not all local services provided to residents in Electoral Area F are provided by the CSRD — private utilities and the provincial government also provide certain services. This section reviews the services of these other providers.

### Private Utilities

In addition to the water systems owned and operated by the Regional District, there are three large private water systems that are neither owned nor operated by the CSRD, and more than 50 small water systems owned and operated privately through strata councils in Area F.

A private water utility is a business that owns and/or operates equipment and facilities for the delivery of domestic water service to five or more persons, in exchange for compensation. Private water utilities are usually created by developers to service development in rural areas where community water service is required for subdivision approval, but where no other water purveyor is present. Private utilities are regulated by the province through the Comptroller of Water Rights.

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

### Provincial Government

The Province of British Columbia provides a number of services to Electoral Area F, including Roads and Subdivision, Provincial Parks, Police, Schools and Health.








#### ► Roads and Subdivision

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

All work is performed by private contractors. The contractor for Service Area 13, which includes Area F, is Aim Roads Inc. All MOTI contractors sign a *Highway Maintenance Agreement* which includes specifications related to maintenance of road surfaces, control of roadside vegetation, drainage, winter clearing, traffic signs and other items. The standard maintenance specifications describe what services are to be provided, and set out minimum acceptable standards for completed work as well as performance timelines.



Figure 3.2  
Service Participants and Service Delivery

SERVICE (By Category)	PARTICIPANTS (CSRD JURISDICTIONS)	DELIVERY (2023)
 <b>Protective Services</b>		
Shuswap Emergency Preparedness	Sub-regional (Areas C, D, E, F, G, Salmon Arm, Sicamous)	CSRD
Shuswap Search & Rescue (grant)	Sub-regional (Areas C, D, E, F, G, Salmon Arm, Sicamous)	Shuswap Volunteer Search & Rescue
Area F First Responders (grant)	Area F	Area F First Responders
Area F Sub-regional Fire Protection	Part of Area F	CSRD Fire Depts
Bylaw Enforcement	All Electoral Areas	CSRD
911 Emergency	Region-wide	E-Comm
 <b>Development Services</b>		
Development Services	All Electoral Areas	CSRD
Special Projects	All Electoral Areas	CSRD
Area F Building Inspection	Part of Area F	CSRD
House Numbering	All Electoral Areas	CSRD
GIS/Mapping	All Electoral Areas	CSRD
 <b>Economic Promotion</b>		
Shuswap Economic Development	Sub-regional (Areas C, D, E, F, G, Salmon Arm)	Shuswap Economic Development Society
Shuswap Tourism	Sub-regional (Areas C, D, E, F, G, Salmon Arm, Sicamous)	Tourism Shuswap
Film Commission	Sub-regional (All areas except Area A & Golden)	CSRD
Area F Tourism Promotion	Area F	North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce
 <b>Environmental Services</b>		
Solid Waste - Recycling & Waste	Region-wide	CSRD
Milfoil Control Program	Sub-Regional (Areas C, D, E, F, G, Salmon Arm, Sicamous)	CSRD
Weed Control & Enforcement	All Electoral Areas	Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society
Shuswap Watershed Council	Sub-Regional (Areas C, D, E, F, G)	Fraser Basin Council
Mosquito Control (Scotch/Lee Creek)	Part of Area F	CSRD
North Shuswap LWMP	Part of Area F	CSRD
Seymour Arm LWMP	Part of Area F	CSRD
 <b>Community Services</b>		
Electoral Area F Community Parks	Area F	CSRD
Shuswap North Okanagan Rail Trail	Sub-Regional (Areas C, D, E, F, G, Salmon Arm, Sicamous)	Splatin te Secwépemc, CSRD, RDNO
Health Centre (Grant-in-aid)	Area F	North Shuswap Health Society
Shuswap SPCA (Grant-in-aid)	Sub-Regional (Areas C, D, E, F, G, Sicamous)	Shuswap SPCA
Dangerous Dog Control	Area F	BC Commissionaires
EA Grants-in-Aid	All Electoral Areas	CSRD
Okanagan Regional Library	Sub-Regional (All electoral areas except Area A)	Okanagan Regional Library
 <b>Administration</b>		
General Government	Region-wide	CSRD
Electoral Area Administration	All Electoral Areas	CSRD
Feasibility Studies (Regional)	Region-wide	CSRD
Feasibility Studies (Electoral Areas)	All Electoral Areas	CSRD
 <b>Utilities</b>		
St. Ives Street Lighting	Part of Area F	CSRD
Anglemont Waterworks	Part of Area F	CSRD & Interior Utility Management Ltd.
Cottonwood Waterworks	Part of Area F	CSRD & Interior Utility Management Ltd.
Saratoga Waterworks	Part of Area F	CSRD & Interior Utility Management Ltd.



The services are funded by the province; costs are recovered from property owners, in part, through the provincial rural tax. In 2023 the Provincial Rural tax rate was \$0.34 per \$1,000.00 of assessed value, or approximately \$175.00 on a residential property assessed at \$515,000.00.

➤ **Provincial Parks**

The Province provides provincial parks and recreational areas, which supplement the local and community parks provided by the CSRD. There are eight provincial parks within Area F, including Tsútswecw Provincial Park, Shuswap Lake Provincial Park, Shuswap Lake Marine Provincial Park (with several landing sites), Silver Beach Provincial Park, Pukeashun Provincial Park, Anstey Hunakwa Provincial Park, a portion of Cinnemousun Narrows Provincial Park, and Upper Seymour River Park.

➤ **Policing**

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

Electoral Area F is served by the Chase RCMP detachment, which services North Shuswap as well as the Village of Chase, and communities of Sorrento, Chase Creek, Monte Creek, Pritchard, Seymour Arm, Turtle Valley and the Little Shuswap Lake and Neskonlith First Nations. In 2022 the provincial portion of the Chase detachment had an authorized strength of nine officers servicing a population of 9,164 (including Area F). The nine officers carry an average case load (number of criminal code offences per authorized officer) of 79. The case load has increased since 2017, when it was 54 for the same detachment.

The province pays 70% of the total RCMP cost for Area F; the federal government pays the remaining 30%. The provincial government recovers approximately 50% of its portion through the Police Tax, which all unincorporated areas, including Area F, began to pay in 2007. The tax is collected as a property value tax (land and improvements). In 2023 the police tax rate in Area F was \$0.0576 per \$1,000.00 assessed value, or a total of \$29.66 on a residential home assessed at \$515,000.00 in Area F. The total amount collected from Area F from the police tax was \$146,849.00. Expressed differently, the amount recovered for policing represents \$46.00 per capita (based on 2021 Census numbers).

➤ **Schools**

The province is responsible for education services, which are delivered by the North Okanagan Shuswap School District #83. The Board of Trustees that governs the School District is comprised of five trustees. The Board was elected in October 2018 for a four-year term. Board duties and responsibilities include public oversight of education, finance, facility management, human resources,

and policy, as well as conducting public meetings and community consultation. There is one school located in Area F — North Shuswap Elementary, located in Celista, with 129 students. Funding for schools is recovered through school taxes levied on all properties. The school tax rate for Area F was \$1.4669 per \$1,000.00 in assessed value in 2023, or \$755.45 on a residential home valued at \$515,000.00. The school tax raised a total of \$3.74 million from all the properties in Area F in 2023.

### ➤ Health

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

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

Almost all areas of the province are located within regional hospital districts (the exception is the Stikine Region in northern BC). A hospital district property (value) tax is levied in every regional hospital district to help pay for healthcare facilities in the district. Hospital district boundaries often share the same boundaries as regional districts. In the CSRD, however, the regional district boundaries and hospital district boundaries do not align. Area F is within the Thompson Nicola Regional Hospital District (TNRHD), which means that the hospital taxes levied in the North Shuswap are directed to local healthcare facilities in that region. Area F is the only electoral area within CSRD that is part of a different hospital district; the majority of the CSRD is located Okanagan Columbia Shuswap Regional Hospital District (NOC SRHD). The tax rate for the TNRHD in 2023 was \$0.4127, or \$213.00 on a home with an assessed value of \$515,000.00 in Area F. The total funds raised from Area F toward hospital facilities in 2023 was \$1,052,160.00.

### Federal Government

The federal government has a limited service role in Area F. One matter on which the federal government is active concerns navigation on Lake Shuswap. Transport Canada regulates the placement and condition of mooring buoys. The CSRD has been working with Transport Canada to address the proliferation of illegal buoys since 2018. Between 2018 and 2023, 969 non-compliant buoys were tagged; 166 were removed.

## CHAPTER 4

### REGIONAL DISTRICT FINANCE

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#### REGIONAL DISTRICT FINANCE

Regional district services must be accounted in individual, separate accounts. All costs attributable to each service must be identified and contained in that service's account. Similarly, revenues (including taxes) must be raised for each service and contained in the service account. Costs incurred by, and revenues generated for, individual services cannot be applied to other services. Revenues raised for a fire protection service, for example, can only be used to fund the delivery of the fire service. No other service can be funded using these resources. The use of separate accounts for each service is a feature of regional district finance. It sets regional districts apart from municipalities, which are able to levy general property taxes and allocate general tax revenues across a range of services.

The use of separate service accounts by regional districts reflects two key points:

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

The total tax requisition assigned to an electoral area (or municipality) by its regional district will depend on the types and number of regional district services in which the jurisdiction participates, as well as on the size of the jurisdiction's assessment base relative to that of others. Electoral Area F participates in a broad range of CSRD services and has a relatively large tax base (see Chapter 2).

#### PROPERTY TAXES

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

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

Regional districts determine how to recover the costs of each service, as well as the portion of overall cost recovery to raise through property taxes. Regional districts are not, however, taxing jurisdictions. The province sets property tax rates, levies the taxes and collects the tax revenues on behalf of regional districts, based on the regional district's tax requisition instructions. The province also determines the tax rate multiples for regional districts — specifically, the tax rates paid by the various non-residential classes of property, expressed as ratios to the residential property tax

rate. The involvement of the province in setting tax rate ratios is a key difference between regional districts and municipalities. Municipalities have the flexibility to set municipal tax rates and to adjust the tax ratios among property classes as determined in an annual property taxation bylaw. Determining and changing tax rate ratios allows municipal councils to decide how to best allocate the local property tax burden across property classes.

Electorate residents receive property tax bills that itemize the services received and, for each service, the associated parcel tax or tax rate. The provincial Surveyor of Taxes collects property taxes from individual property owners, based on the regional district requisitions. A fee of 5.25% on top of the regional district tax rate is included in the tax bills to cover the Surveyor's fee. In municipalities, property taxes for regional district services are included in municipal property tax bills, based on service requisitions provided to the municipalities by their regional districts. The taxes are then collected by the municipalities and remitted to the regional districts by August 1 of each year. Because municipalities collect their own taxes, they are not subject to the 5.25% surcharge that applies to electoral area tax requisitions. They do, however, need to have the software systems and staffing necessary to run their tax collection functions.

## OTHER REVENUES

In addition to property taxes, regional districts generate revenues from user fees and charges, such as dog licenses, application fees, and recreation admissions. Regional districts also receive revenue in the form of grants from other levels of government — grants that are particularly important for small communities, and are becoming increasingly important sources of funding for costly infrastructure renewal projects in communities of all sizes.

In general, there are two types of grants from other levels of government: unconditional grants and conditional grants. Unconditional grants are direct transfers of money with few (if any) restrictions on their use. Local governments are free to set their own priorities for the use of these funds. Conditional grants are competitive, application-based grants awarded for specific projects, or are provided to a local government to assist with a specific service.

### Provincial Unconditional Grants

All regional districts in BC receive the provincial Regional District Basic Grant on an annual basis. The purpose of this grant is to assist regional districts with administration costs for service delivery based on local needs and priorities. As per the *Local Government Grants Act and Regulation*, the amount of the grant is calculated based on three factors with a bias towards smaller and more regional districts:

- regional district total population
- regional district electoral area population



- the number of local community commissions, if any (the CSRD does not have any local community commissions)

The amount transferred to the CSRD for all electoral areas in 2023 under the Regional District Basic Grant was \$160,000.00.

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

### Federal Unconditional Grants

In September 2005, the federal and provincial governments, joined by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) signed The Agreement on the *Transfer of Federal Gas Tax Revenue Under the New Deal for Cities and Communities (2005-2015)*. The agreement was subsequently renewed in 2014 (*Renewed Gas Tax Agreement*) for a further 10 years, representing a transfer of an estimated \$21.8 billion in funding across Canada for local government infrastructure.

The Community Works Fund is a funding agreement through which the UBCM provides Gas Tax funding to all municipalities and regional districts (except those within the Metro Vancouver region) through a direct annual allocation. The grant is meant to support local projects that align with the program objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and creating cleaner air and water. Community Works funding is delivered twice annually. Each local government receives a “floor amount” plus an amount calculated on the basis of population using Census data.

The CSRD received \$977,738.00 in Community Works Funding in 2023; Electoral Area F received \$139,826.00 of this total. Combined with reserve amounts, it was estimated that Area F would have \$557,483.00 (uncommitted) by the end of 2023. Local governments may accumulate the funds, along with any interest earned, to support larger regional district projects.<sup>5</sup>

### Conditional Grants

Conditional grants are competitive, application-based grants awarded to local governments under federal and provincial programs to help fund specific projects. The bulk of conditional grant funding is earmarked for local government capital

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<sup>5</sup> In BC, the Gas Tax program also includes an application-based conditional grant program, known as the Strategic Priorities Fund.



projects (e.g., sewer, water, roads). Some programs involve cost sharing among all three levels of government (an example is the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program), while others, such as the Gas Tax Strategic Priorities Fund, can provide up to 100% of federal government funding. Local governments submit project proposals based on local priorities and funding program objectives.

### Area F Requisition

In Area F, the regional district services are paid through user fees, parcel taxes and property (value) taxes. User fees and parcel taxes are used together to recover the cost of the three water services (Saratoga, Anglemont Estates and Cotttonwood). Parcel taxes are also used for the Liquid Waste Management Plan services (both the North Shuswap and Seymour Arm LWMPs) and the St. Ives Street Lighting service. The Shuswap Watershed Council service was recovered through a parcel tax in 2023; in a February 2024 approval process residents chose to discontinue this service.

The remaining service costs are recovered through property value taxes that are based upon the assessed value of the property (land and improvements). Figure 4.1 presents a sample Area F tax bill for a residential property valued at \$515,000.00. The bill uses the tax rates for each of the services provided to Area F in 2023 by the CSRD, the provincial government, and other agencies (e.g., Okanagan Regional Library).



Figure 4.1  
2023 Sample Tax Bill  
Electoral Area F Residential Property Assessed at \$515,000.00

Denotes Region-wide Service

Denotes Parcel Tax

## 1. Electoral Area F Services (Area Wide)

	Property Tax per \$515,000 residence	Total Recovered from Area F
<b>Emergency Services</b>		
Emergency 911 Telephone	\$4.27	\$21,093
Shuswap Emergency Preparedness	\$11.23	\$55,564
Shuswap Search and Rescue (Grant-in-aid)	\$3.86	\$19,155
<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>		
Development Services	\$55.88	\$276,677
Special Projects	\$1.49	\$7,442
Bylaw Enforcement	\$21.01	\$104,065
House Numbering	\$1.44	\$7,181
GIS/Mapping	\$14.94	\$73,945
<b>Economic Development</b>		
Shuswap Economic Development	\$15.30	\$75,629
Shuswap Tourism	\$11.43	\$56,592
Film Commission	\$0.72	\$3,524
Area F Tourism Promotion (NS Chamber)	\$5.15	\$25,500
<b>Parks and Trails</b>		
Electoral Area F Community Parks	\$89.92	\$445,091
Rail Trail Corridor	\$2.52	\$12,483
<b>Environmental Services</b>		
Solid Waste - Recycling	\$25.54	\$126,327
Milfoil Control Program	\$9.01	\$44,681
Weed Control & Enforcement	\$3.35	\$16,639
Shuswap Watershed Council	\$9.02	\$40,788
<b>Community Services</b>		
North Shuswap Health Centre (Grant-in-aid)	\$20.75	\$102,852
Shuswap SPCA (Grant-in-aid)	\$0.57	\$2,901
EA Grants-in-aid	\$13.85	\$68,500
Okanagan Regional Library	\$49.59	\$245,390
<b>Administration</b>		
General Government Administration	\$43.93	\$217,393
Electoral Area Administration	\$25.90	\$128,185
Feasibility Studies (Regional)	\$0.62	\$2,996
Feasibility Studies (Electoral Areas)	\$2.01	\$8,740
<b>Subtotal for area-wide taxes</b>	<b>\$443.32</b>	<b>\$2,189,333</b>

## 2. Local Service Areas

	Property Tax per \$515,000 residence	Total Recovered from Area F
Area F First Responders (Grant-in-Aid)	\$6.23	\$27,540
Area F Sub-regional Fire Protection	\$192.82	\$853,032
Area F Building Inspection	\$27.71	\$107,189
Mosquito Control (Scotch/Lee Creek)	\$23.54	\$44,060
North Shuswap LWMP	\$6.93	\$28,000
Seymour Arm LWMP	\$7.65	\$3,700
Dangerous Dog Control *	\$1.00	\$4,178
St. Ives Street Lighting	\$29.25	\$4,280 *
Anglemont Waterworks	\$547.77	\$605,800
Cottonwood Waterworks	\$319.50	\$53,124
Saratoga Waterworks	\$246.46	\$24,822

\* Dangerous Dog Control service taxes are applied to improvements only (assumed to be 50% of assessed value)

## 3. CSRD Water System User Fees

Anglemont Waterworks	\$700.00	\$408,750
Cottonwood Waterworks	\$204.00	\$35,648
Saratoga Waterworks	\$663.00	\$94,764

\* User fees would not normally be included on a property tax bill, but are shown here

## 4. Provincial Services

Police Tax	\$29.66	\$146,849
Rural Tax	\$175.10	\$866,815
School Tax	\$755.45	\$3,739,797
Surveyor of Taxes *	\$23.27	\$102,057
<b>Subtotal for provincial service taxes</b>	<b>\$983.49</b>	<b>\$4,855,518</b>

\* Plus 5.25% of local service area taxes

## 5. Other Agencies

Regional Hospital District	\$155.64	\$770,471
Municipal Finance Authority	\$0.10	\$510
BC Assessment Authority	\$17.30	\$85,662
<b>Subtotal for agency taxes</b>	<b>\$173.05</b>	<b>\$856,643</b>

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## CHAPTER 5

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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This chapter provides an overview of the public engagement process undertaken by the consultants, as well as an account of the findings from the process.

#### ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

##### Pre-Hiatus

As noted in the introduction to this report, the *Area F Issues Identification Study* experienced a five-month hiatus, beginning late August 2023, as a result of the Bush Creek East Wildfire that caused widespread evacuation from, and significant property damage to, the North Shuswap and the Skwllax te Secwepemculecw First Nation. In the weeks leading up to the evacuation, the consultants published online an *Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study Overview*, and advertised through print, online and social media the list of community engagement opportunities. The full list of opportunities included:

- two (2) Information Booths in late August — one at the Seymour Arm Outdoor Market, the other at the Scotch Creek Farm and Craft Market — staffed by the consultants to engage with residents one-on-one, distribute copies of the *Overview*, and answer questions
- three (3) community open houses in the month of September — Celista, Scotch Creek and Anglemont — introduced by the Electoral Area Director and hosted by the consultants, with a series of information poster boards, a presentation on the study, a Q&A session to discuss issues and interests, and a *CSRD Area F Report Card* with space for additional input to be noted
- an online survey to collect residents' views on governance and services
- an *Area F Issues Identification Website* that served as a one-stop online shop for residents to find copies of all materials produced for the study, and for residents to register for notifications on the study

As noted, an eight-page *Overview* of the study was published in the weeks leading up to the North Shuswap evacuation. The *Overview* provided information on the current local services and governance in Area F, as well as costs to taxpayers. A QR link to the online survey was included in the *Overview*, as were details on all of the community engagement opportunities. At the time of the evacuation, printed copies of the *Overview* were with the CSRD awaiting delivery to each Area F household by Canada Post. Delivery was cancelled in the days leading up the evacuation order.

Twenty (20) "Community Champions" were identified in consultation with the North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce. The Champions were all individuals with strong

connections in one or more of the North Shuswap communities who could help to draw attention to the study and raise the profile of the community's information sessions. In early August, three weeks' before the planned Information Booths, the consultants reached out to all twenty Champions with a request to help distribute information on the engagement events, and the study in general, through their community networks. A proposed email to send to contacts was provided.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, in July 2023 the consultants reached out to representatives, identified by the CSRD, of the Adams Lake Indian Band, Skwłax te Secwepemculecw First Nation, and Neskonalith Indian Band. The consultants offered to meet with representatives of each First Nation to review the study, seek input on CSRD services and governance, and discuss any other issues of importance to the First Nation. The consultants stated that the study was not an incorporation study, and would not result in any changes to boundaries or to the underlying local governance structure in place. Finally, the consultants noted that the study was not focused on any local services provided by the First Nations in the area referred to as the North Shuswap. A digital copy of the *Overview* was included in the correspondence.<sup>7</sup>

The choice of the community engagement opportunities reflected a desire to provide a variety of ways for the community to learn about and provide input on Area F's services and governance. The timing reflected a desire to connect with as many Area F residents as possible, including summer seasonal residents who constitute a large demographic group in the North Shuswap.

### Post-Hiatus

In the late fall of 2023 the CSRD determined that the study should re-start and proceed with the community engagement process. It was acknowledged that the timing of the re-start was not ideal given the absence of the many if not most of the Area's part-time, seasonal residents. Ongoing recovery efforts in parts of the Electoral Area also made the timing of the re-start less than perfect. Unfortunately, however, the option of postponing community engagement to the summer of 2024 was not deemed possible, in part because of the CSRD's obligations to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs under the restructure planning grant.

The post-hiatus process featured the following opportunities:

- two (2) community open houses in the second half of January 2024 — Celista and Anglemont — hosted by the consultants, with a series of information poster boards (*Appendix I*), a presentation on the study (*Appendix II*), a Q&A session to discuss issues and interests, and an *Area F Report Card* (*Appendix III*) with space for additional input to be noted
- one (1) online, virtual open house in the second half of February 2024

<sup>6</sup> Two (2) of the individuals contact as Community Champions responded to the outreach.

<sup>7</sup> No responses to the outreach to First Nations were received by the consultants.

- the online survey (*Appendix IV*), advertised in early January to residents, and made available through the end of February
- the *Area F Issues Identification Website* ([csrd.civilspace.io](https://csrd.civilspace.io)), which remained available throughout the hiatus as a one-stop online shop for residents to find copies of all materials produced for the study

The eight-page *Overview* (*Appendix V*) was distributed by Canada Post to all addresses in Area F in the first half of January, complete with an insert to list the new open house and survey dates.

Further outreach to the Community Champions was not undertaken post-hiatus; nor was further outreach to the Adams Lake Indian Band, Skwax te Secwepemculecw First Nation, or Neskonlith Indian Band.

### Website Resources and Advertising

As noted, the study website served as a one-stop online shop for residents to see updates on the study, learn about community engagement events and download supporting documents. Residents could also register for notifications through the website, and access the online virtual open house and the *Electoral Area F Issues Identification Survey*.

Key supporting documents on the site included:

- the Electoral Area F Information Poster Boards
- the full *Overview – Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study*
- the January 2024, open house presentation

All community engagement events, both pre-hiatus and post-hiatus, were advertised on the website, as well as through CSRD social media channels and in successive editions of the *North Shuswap Kicker*. All events were also listed in the *Overview* booklet which was delivered by Canada Post to each address in Area F.

### OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK

Each of the two in-person open houses, and the one virtual online open house, was presented as an opportunity for members of the community to ask questions of the consultants. Residents were prompted to engage on governance and service issues by a set of questions posed at the beginning of each presentation, then again at the beginning of the Q&A portion of the open houses. Similar questions were posed at the back of the *Overview*. Included in the questions were the following examples:

- Do you receive all of the local services you need?
- Do you feel that you receive good value for the property taxes you pay?
- Are current service levels appropriate?
- Do you have concerns with any specific service(s)?

- Do you think that North Shuswap residents have enough input into service decisions?
- What could the CSRD do to help address your service and governance concerns?

The questions were posed simply to prompt discussion. They were neither intended nor used to limit the range of topics on which the community could provide input.

Close to 40 residents attended a January 20, 2024, morning open house at the Lakeview Centre in Anglemont; approximately 55 participated in an afternoon workshop on the same day at the North Shuswap Hall in Celista. Residents at both events were interested in the poster boards, engaged in the presentation and thoughtful in their comments. Not surprisingly, comments related to the recent Bush Creek East Wildfire and ongoing recovery efforts were raised by a number of participants. Participants were advised that the CSRD would be undertaking a separate community conversation in March on the Wildfire response.<sup>8</sup>

Other service- and governance-related topics raised by residents at the Anglemont open house included:

- bylaw enforcement — particularly in Anglemont — to support building and zoning bylaws, and to address illegal dumping, the placement of trailers on properties, the presence of unregistered vehicles, onsite sewage concerns, unsightly premises and other matters
- the desire for a new fire hall in Anglemont, along with additional assistance from the CSRD to facilitate response to motor vehicle incidents
- CSRD administration costs, perceived by some to be high
- the management of funds by the CSRD in providing services
- the concern that taxes paid towards services (CSRD and provincial) are not adequately benefitting the area
- concerns about the responsiveness of the CSRD to service and community needs
- concerns over increased water bills, which residents had believed were to be going down
- a desire for greater input into land use and planning decisions
- the use of temporary use permits
- building permits and the time required to obtain them<sup>9</sup>
- a lack of trust in the CSRD as the local government and service provider, and frustration over a perceived lack of respect for the North Shuswap and a lack of accountability

<sup>8</sup> The process, referred to as the *Community Conversation – Bush Creek East Wildfire*, included four in-person information sessions and two online events. A *What We Heard* report, produced by Monogram Communications, was released in early April 2024.

<sup>9</sup> One participant felt that the building permit process was very good and user-friendly, with good turnaround times. A number of others reported a different experience.

- a desire for greater access to CSRD decision-makers (Board and senior management), including through town halls and meetings in the North Shuswap

Residents who attended the Celista open house provided comments on some of the same topics, but also raised new points. The full scope of comments included:

- a lack of trust in the CSRD
- challenges in receiving building permits
- bylaw enforcement, and the view that bylaws should be enforced proactively and not only in response to complaints
- sewer and water constraints on development
- a perceived inactivity in liquid waste management services
- a desire to have the library rebuilt as quickly as possible
- the alternative approval process mechanism
- a perceived lack of value for funds spent on emergency preparedness
- a lack of affordable housing in the area, and the implications of this lack for businesses that are trying to hire staff
- the view that residents do not receive value for property taxes paid
- concerns over the maintenance of local parks and beaches
- the need for a local advisory committee, or even a local community commission, to give residents a greater voice in local decision-making
- concerns with the level of service received by the North Shuswap through Shuswap Economic Development

A small number of residents provided written input to the consultants following the open houses. One resident raised concerns with the CSRD's bylaw enforcement service, and a lack of response to several complaints submitted through the CSRD's online complaint submission process. The resident stated that bylaw complaints submitted two years ago about an RV Park in Area F went unanswered, as did complaints submitted by neighbours. Another resident raised a series of concerns related to:

- a mistrust of the CSRD
- an inadequate level of influence for individual electoral area directors at the CSRD Board table, particularly on decisions that impact the electoral area
- the perceived need for a local advisory committee to provide input to the Area F Director
- a desire for the CSRD to focus on basic services
- perceived inherent inequities in the local government tax system which equates assessed values with an ability to pay
- the lack of voice in local decision-making for seasonal residents
- reliance on the alternative approval process
- difficulty in navigating the CSRD website, and related concerns about transparency

### ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey posed a number of service-related questions to residents, including whether residents receive sufficient services, whether there is a need for different types of services or levels of service, and whether residents feel they receive good value for services. Residents were asked to identify any services they currently do not receive, but would be interested in receiving. Input on residents' satisfaction with individual services, including those provided by the CSRD and those provided by the province, was also sought.

Governance-related questions were included in the survey. Residents were asked, for example, if they felt comfortable with their ability to provide input to decision-making, if they felt well-represented in the current system, and if new opportunities for input should be considered.

In total, 582 respondents partially completed the online survey; 383 respondents completed the survey in full. Most respondents accessed the survey between January 1, 2024, and February 29, 2024; a relatively small number completed the survey in the pre-hiatus period in August 2024. The detailed account and assessment of responses to all questions is presented in *Appendix IV*. Key observations from the responses are summarized in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1  
Key Observations from the Online Survey

Observation	Explanation
Respondents	<p>The highest number of survey respondents came from Scotch Creek (24.8%), followed by respondents who selected "other" for their home community (21.7%). Based on comments submitted, it can be assumed that most residents who identified "other" are from Anglemont.</p> <p>The largest demographic group among respondents was the 60-79 age group (56.5%), followed by the 40-59 age demographic (34.3%). Only 6.0% of respondents identified as being younger than 40 years old.</p>
High-Satisfaction Services	<p>With 81.3% in favour, Area F First Responders recorded the highest percentage of "very satisfied" respondents (48.6%) and "satisfied" respondents (32.7%). Community Parks recorded an overall satisfaction rate of 74.0%.</p> <p>Garbage and Recycling also rated highly, with 62.4% expressing some level of satisfaction. This figure, however, has to be balanced against comments later in the survey about a lack of garbage and recycling services.</p>



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Observation	Explanation
Low-Satisfaction Services	<p>The highest level of dissatisfaction (62.5%) was assigned to Shuswap Emergency Preparedness by respondents — a grade that almost certainly is related to the response to the Bush Creek East Wildfire.</p> <p>Development Services (Planning) recorded a dissatisfaction of 52.4% — the second least popular service. Administration (48.4%) and Bylaw Enforcement (46.7%) also received significant responses. Importantly, Bylaw Enforcement also received a low satisfaction rating (16.2%) — a lower percentage than that assigned to other less-popular services.</p>
Contact with CSRD	<p>Contact with the CSRD initiated by respondents concerned Development Services (27.0%) followed by Bylaw Enforcement (19.2%). Building Inspection has also been a key target of inquiries (19.0%). Respondents with a location identified as "other" (believed to be Anglemont) were the ones most likely to have contacted the CSRD for these services.</p>
Service Levels	<p>The North Shuswap Health Centre stands out as the service with the highest percentage of respondents (71.4%) seeking increased service levels. Increased service levels for Shuswap Emergency Preparedness and Fire Protection received high support as well — 68.7% and 66.4% respectively.</p> <p>For all services together, respondents were almost evenly split in their preferences among "Higher Service Level" (31.4%), "Maintain Current Service Level" (33.7%), and "No Opinion" (30.6%). Only 4.3% of respondents felt that overall service levels should be reduced.</p>
Perceived Value for Taxes Paid	<p>In all, 67.0% of respondents disagreed with the notion that they receive good value for the taxes paid for CSRD services.</p>
Trade-offs	<p>Respondents were asked for their views on trade-offs between service levels and cost. If faced with trade-offs to make, 40.6% of respondents would choose to maintain current service levels and minimize future tax and/or user fee increases. Approximately 21.2% would prefer to pay reduced taxes, and are comfortable receiving lower levels of service. A total of 27.8% of respondents would favour service level and/or service scope increases, and would be willing to pay higher taxes and/or user fees.</p>
New Services	<p>Respondents identified Crime Prevention (58.8%), Seniors' Housing (39.8%) Community Sewer and Sewage Treatment (38.5%) and Broadband Internet (37.6%) as new desired services.</p>



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Observation	Explanation
Services to Improve	Respondents identified Fire Protection (42.1%), the North Shuswap Health Society (31.5%) and 911 Emergency (28.6%) as the top three services to improve. An usually high concentration from "other" neighbourhoods (believed primarily to be Anglemont) identified Bylaw Enforcement as a service in need to improvement. For respondents as a whole, the need to improve Bylaw Enforcement did not make the top three services, but was identified by a sizable percentage (18.5%).
Provincial Services	<p>The two provincial services that recorded the highest level of dissatisfaction were Healthcare (74.1%) and the Maintenance and Standards of Local Roads (67.6%).</p> <p>Provincial Parks received the highest level of satisfaction (69.3%).</p>
Community Engagement	Several respondents (65.3%) reported that they have participated in a CSRD survey in the past two years. Several others (61.2%) have been on the CSRD website; 57.7% of respondents voted in the 2022 local election.
Representation	<p>A majority of respondents (59.5%) reported being satisfied with having only one representative on the CSRD Board of Directors. Several respondents (52.3%), however, reported that the Area F Director does not have sufficient input into decisions that affect Area F. Several (53.4%) reported disliking the feature of regional districts that involves representatives from other jurisdictions in making decisions that affect Area F.</p> <p>Respondents identified a strong desire (80.1%) for more opportunities to provide advice and recommendations on local services. A total of 83.7% of respondents identified a preference to have decisions on local services to be made by representatives from the local Area F communities.</p>

A total of 204 respondents provided written input on services and governance in Area F. Input put forward by these respondents can be categorized under the following themes:

- *Enforcement of Bylaws* — Many respondents are concerned that existing bylaws are not being adequately enforced. Concerns related to property uses, business operations, unsightly premises, and onsite storage of trailers and industrial equipment were noted.
- *Infrastructure Maintenance* — There appears to be a strong desire for improved maintenance of roads (a provincial government responsibility),



water, sewer systems and parks. Respondents from Seymour Arm noted a strong need for improved electricity.

- *Building Permit Process* — Respondents desire a streamlined building permit process to facilitate development, and to expedite Wildfire recovery and reconstruction.
- *Community Engagement and Governance* — Respondents desire greater involvement in decision-making processes, including through public meetings.
- *Emergency Services* — Concerns were raised about the adequacy and responsiveness of emergency services such as policing, ambulance and fire rescue, particularly during high-demand periods of the summer season.
- *Tourism and Economic Development* — Some respondents expressed a desire for increased tourism promotion, support for local businesses, and new efforts to attract economic investment to the North Shuswap.
- *Healthcare and Seniors' Services* — Improved access to healthcare services, family doctors, emergency care and support for seniors was noted by some respondents.
- *Environment* — Wildfire preparedness, invasive species control and waste management were raised as areas in need of attention.
- *Representation and Taxation* — Some seasonal residents raised concerns about the inability to vote in local elections, despite paying local property taxes.
- *Communication and Accessibility* — Respondents expressed frustration with existing CSRD communication channels, including the CSRD's website.

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CSRD AREA F REPORT CARD

A report card (*Appendix III*) was produced as a tool to seek written input from residents who attended one of the in-person open houses. In all, 16 cards were completed. Two major takeaways from the input can be highlighted. The first concerns Bylaw Enforcement. This service was graded with an "F" (fail), and was identified as one that in need of improvement, more than any other CSRD service. The second takeaway concerns opportunities for input. Eleven of the 16 cards identified a desire for more opportunities for input from Area F residents in local decision-making.

## CHAPTER 6

### OPTIONS TO CONSIDER

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This chapter introduces potential options to address the issues and concerns that emerged over the course of the study, in particular during the community engagement process. In keeping with the purpose of the study, all options outlined in this chapter speak to changes that may be pursued within the existing regional district system which features Electoral Area F as an electoral area of the CSRD. Options, such as municipal incorporation, that would result in a change to the existing system are not presented for consideration.

#### CITIZEN ADVISORY BODIES

A desire for greater community input into local decision-making for the North Shuswap emerged during the community engagement process. To meet this need, the CSRD could re-establish the two citizen advisory bodies that were in place prior to the COVID-19 pandemic — namely, the Area F Advisory Planning Commission, and the Area F Parks Advisory Committee. The Advisory Planning Commission would be established by the CSRD Board of Directors, by bylaw, under section 461(2) of the *Local Government Act*. The Commission would provide the Board of Director advice on matters of land use, community planning, proposed bylaws and permits. The Parks Advisory Committee would be established by the Board under the *CSRD Community Parks and Recreation Committee Bylaw No. 5706*. The Committee would provide advice to the CSRD Operations Manager on a broad range of parks and recreation policies for Area F.

Alternatively, the CSRD Board could establish a broader Electoral Area F Local Advisory Committee to assist the Area F Director in assessing the delivery of existing services, reviewing the need for new services, and advising on local concerns. The Committee would be responsible for bringing forward to the Director issues, concerns, ideas and views raised by Area F residents. The Committee would also be responsible for assisting the Director in assessing the items brought forward. The Committee would be established as a select committee of the CSRD Board of Directors, pursuant to section 218(1) of the *Local Government Act*. The CSRD currently has an Electoral Area A (Rural Golden) Local Advisory Committee in place.

An Electoral Area F Local Advisory Committee would, as its name suggests, provide advice and recommendations only. All decisions would be made by the CSRD Board unless the Board chose to delegate authority for certain types of decisions to the Committee. Delegation would require the Board to pass a special delegation bylaw.

#### LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION

A local community commission (LCC) is a unique type of citizen body with a degree of delegated decision-making authority over specified local services. LCCs are comprised of either four or six commissioners, directly elected from and by the

community they represent. The local electoral area director is automatically appointed to an LCC.

A North Shuswap LCC could be established by bylaw, pursuant to section 243 of the *Local Government Act*, to oversee and make certain decisions for CSRD services delivered to Area F. Local matters assigned to the LCC would receive a level of attention that would be greater than that which is possible in the present situation involving a single electoral area director at the CSRD Board. The bylaw to create a North Shuswap LCC would need to be approved by Area F electors through a referendum; the approval of the Inspector of Municipalities would also be required. Authority delegated to the LCC would enable the Commission to determine how the specified CSRD services were to be managed, within a policy framework created by the CSRD Board. The LCC could also be empowered to make decisions on the spending of funds allocated by the CSRD Board. CSRD staff would execute the decisions of the Commission (the Commission would not have its own staff).

Only six LCCs exist in the province today; and only four of these bodies remain active. The newest LCC is Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission established by the Capital Regional District (CRD). This LCC has been given administrative authority over parks and recreation, transportation and transit, economic development, liquid waste disposal, street lighting, and approval of grant-in-aid applications. The body also reviews and provides advice to the CRD Board on services that receive CRD funding, including the Arts service, Public Library and Search and Rescue.

Local community commissions are considered feasible in a community that:

- is geographically separated from other communities and relatively easy to define
- receives a range of local regional district services that are separate from other services provided
- demonstrates a high level of interest in the delivery of local services, and would be able to consistently put forward individuals willing to stand for election and serve on the commission
- shares some of the characteristics of a municipality, but is not ready for incorporation
- seeks greater involvement in the governance of local services than is possible through an advisory committee

Some of these conditions exist in the North Shuswap. It is not clear, however, that all of the conditions are in place. An LCC for the North Shuswap, if pursued, would likely focus on and be defined by a specific community or set of contiguous communities in the Electoral Area.

### SERVICE REVIEWS

Bylaw Enforcement, Shuswap Emergency Preparedness, Development Services (Planning) and Building Inspection were identified through the community

engagement process as four CSRD services in need of change. To address this need and the community sentiment behind it, the CSRD could initiate one or more service review.

In plain terms, a service review is an exercise through the elements of one or more local, sub-regional or regional services are assessed, concerns and interests are identified, and changes are proposed. All jurisdictions that participate in services take part in service reviews on the services.

There are two types of service reviews:

- *Non-Statutory Reviews* — Non-statutory service reviews are assessments of services that may be undertaken in response to an issue (or issues) that arises, or in accordance with a pre-determined service review schedule. They may examine all service elements, including service definition (i.e., scope of service), service governance, service cost and tax burden, and service delivery. Alternatively, they may focus on a specific concern raised by one or more participant, by local government staff, or by the public that receives the service.

Non-statutory reviews are overseen by the regional district board. They may be conducted by regional district staff or by an outside, independent consultant. Recommendations for changes to the service(s), designed to address issues raised, are provided to the board for consideration.

- *Statutory Reviews* — Statutory reviews, as their name implies, are authorized and guided by statute — specifically, the *Local Government Act*. Pursuant to section 357 of the *Act*, any jurisdiction that participates in a service has the right to initiate a statutory review of the terms of participation in the service (or services), including service definition and scope of activities, cost and cost-sharing method, governance model, service delivery, and other factors. The goal of a statutory review is to resolve inter-jurisdictional concerns and create a new service arrangement that will set the stage for success and cooperation moving forward.

Statutory service reviews involve representatives from all participating jurisdictions, are overseen by the Minister of Municipal, and are typically facilitated by an independent consultant. The reviews can be cumbersome and expensive; however, they can also help to address key inter-jurisdictional concerns related to the exercise of decision-making power, the allocation of costs and the setting of priorities.

Both non-statutory reviews can help to reset and/or reform regional district services. Non-statutory reviews are, in general, less formal, less contentious and less costly exercises than non-statutory reserves. For these reasons, the North Shuswap and the CSRD Board may wish to consider starting with the non-statutory option to examine

and address the community's concerns related to Bylaw Enforcement, Shuswap Emergency Preparedness, Development Services (Planning) and Building Inspection.

## OTHER OPTIONS

There are other changes that Electoral Area F and the CSRD could consider making, within the existing CSRD framework, in an effort to address the key issues that emerged over the course of the study. A list of other possible changes includes as follows:

- *Communication and Advocacy* — This option would involve the CSRD engaging other local service providers in new ways, and perhaps on a more frequent basis, to communicate Area F's service needs and concerns, and to advocate for improvements. The two key service providers would be the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure on local road matters, and the RCMP on local policing.

Issues with local roads and policing in Area F were raised during the community engagement process. These issues, however, did not emerge as major concerns for the North Shuswap.

- *Changes to Stakeholder Votes* — Greater local control over Area F service decisions was highlighted as an issue by the community. One change to increase local influence would involve maximizing the opportunity for stakeholder voting.

As explained earlier in the report (and in the various engagement materials), stakeholder votes involve and are determined by directors from participating jurisdictions only. The votes are used for administrative and operational decisions, such as setting fees, contracting services, and creating, changing or repealing bylaws that govern the administration or operation of a service. Some of the CSRD services in which Electoral Area F participates are provided only to Electoral Area F, or to portions of the Electoral Area. In these instances, all directors, including those from the municipalities, are required to vote in stakeholder votes in accordance with the regional district voting rules outlined in the *Local Government Act*.

Efforts could be made to restructure services that are currently provided to (or within) Electoral Area F only to limit the number of outside directors involved in stakeholder votes. Specifically, efforts could be made to combine services such as Area F Parks and the three Area F CSRD water systems with similar services in other electoral areas. This change would not place decision-making solely under the Area F Director — such an outcome would not be possible under the *Local Government Act*. The change could, however, limit the number of directors from other jurisdictions from voting in stakeholder votes on Area F services.



The effort required to restructure services to limit the number of outside directors in stakeholder votes would be considerable, and may not result in much change for Area F. Service restructuring would only affect stakeholder votes on administrative and operational matters. Certain key decisions, including those dealing with money matters, would continue to involve the entire Board. It is also worth noting that other electoral area directors, whose involvement in restructuring would be necessary, may not support the need for such restructuring. Finally, efforts to restructure services could limit the number of outside directors from participating in decisions for Area F, but could not exclude all outside directors. The involvement of others in all votes, including stakeholder votes, is a feature of regional district governance for electoral areas.

**AREA F ISSUES  
IDENTIFICATION  
STUDY**

**REPORT**

**NEILSON**  
STRATEGIES

leftside partners inc.



## CHAPTER 7

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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The *Electoral Area F Issues Identification Study* was undertaken to:

- document and explain the local governance system and local services in place in Electoral Area F of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD)
- engage residents throughout Area F to understand their concerns with local governance or services, as well as their service and governance needs
- identify, assess and recommend changes the CSRD could make to address the issues and needs brought forward

Several issues emerged over the course of the study — in particular through the community engagement opportunities, including the online survey. Two issues that emerged most strongly were the desire among residents for greater community input into decisions that affect Electoral Area F, and concerns with key CSRD services provided to the North Shuswap, including Bylaw Enforcement, Development Services (Planning), Building Inspection and Shuswap Emergency Preparedness. Changes for the Board to consider making within the existing Regional District system to address these issues were outlined.

The following recommendations are offered by the consultants for the Board's consideration:

- THAT the CSRD Board of Directors consider establishing an Electoral Area F Local Advisory Committee, comprised of North Shuswap residents, as a select committee of the Board to assist the Electoral Area F Director in assessing the delivery of existing services, reviewing the need for new services, and advising on local concerns.
- THAT the CSRD Board of Directors consider initiating a non-statutory service review of Bylaw Enforcement, Development Services (Planning) and Building Inspection services to examine and address the concerns of North Shuswap communities, as well as the concerns of communities in other participating jurisdictions.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Shuswap Emergency Preparedness, it is understood, is already being examined by the CSRD to address concerns raised during the recent Wildfire.

**CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT  
BYLAW NO. 4508**

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**A BYLAW TO DELEGATE POWERS TO THE  
SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION**

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**WHEREAS:**

- A. Salt Spring Island Electoral Area has a number of local, sub-regional, and island-wide services;
- B. Under the *Local Government Act*, RSBC 2015 c 1, a regional district may establish, by bylaw, one or more local communities to be administered by local community commission, provided the electors in the area of the local community assent to the creation of the commission and has done so under Bylaw No. 4507, "Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 2022";
- C. On October 15, 2022, a majority of Salt Spring Island electors assented to the creation of a Local Community Commission, to be delegated responsibility for a variety of Salt Spring Island local services, in accordance with Bylaw No. 4507;
- D. The Capital Regional District Board wishes to delegate, by bylaw adopted by at least two-thirds of the votes cast pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, certain of its powers, duties and functions to the local community commission, with the scope of authority as set out in this bylaw and such other bylaws as adopted from time to time;

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Capital Regional District Board in open meeting assembled hereby enacts as follows:

**DELEGATION TO LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION**

- 1. This bylaw describes the delegation of powers, duties and functions in relation to services within the scope of authority of the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission, as established by Bylaw No. 4507, "Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 2022" (the "Commission").
- 2. For clarity, subject to the *Local Government Act*, RSBC 2015 c 1, unless a power, duty or function of the Capital Regional District Board has been expressly delegated by this bylaw or another CRD bylaw, all the powers, duties and functions of the CRD Board remain with the CRD Board, and the Commission may not further delegate powers, duties, or functions to another individual or body. Individual Commissioners have no delegated authority outside the body of the Commission in open meeting assembled, acting as a whole.

**ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY**

- 3. The Regional Board hereby delegates to the Commission the powers of the Regional Board with respect to the development, maintenance and operation of the services listed as administrative in Schedule "A". Administrative authority includes the following:
  - (a) Authorize entering into agreements respecting the undertaking, provision and operation of the District's works and services;
  - (b) Identification and creation of strategic plans and priorities, and service-specific operational policies;

- (c) Recommending to the Regional Board user fees and charges to be established by bylaw;
- (d) Direction on maintenance of property or interests in property managed by the service;
- (e) Authorize acquisition and disposition of property or an interest in property subject to approved financial plans and in accordance with sections 8 and 9 of this Bylaw;
- (f) Review and provide direction on annual budgets each year by no later than September 15, or such other date as set by the District's Chief Financial Officer, for Regional Board consideration and approval; and
- (g) Consideration of matters referred to the Commission by the Regional Board.

#### **ADVISORY AUTHORITY**

- 4. The Regional Board hereby delegates to the Commission advisory authority, including recommending annual budget and scope of services, if applicable, for those services listed as advisory in Schedule "A".
- 5. The Commission may be referred other matters by the Regional Board.

#### **LIMITS ON DELEGATION**

- 6. The delegation of authority under this bylaw is subject to the following requirements:
  - (a) Agreements must comply with purchasing policies and procedures of the Regional Board;
  - (b) Revenues and expenditures must be included in the approved annual financial plan for the service;
  - (c) Delegation to the Commission does not derogate from the delegations of authority to officers and employees contained in Bylaw No. 3343, "Officers', General Managers' and Management Staff's Bylaw No. 1, 2006", Bylaw No. 4186, "Capital Regional District Delegation Bylaw No. 1, 2017", and other delegation instruments.
- 7. The delegation of authority set out in the bylaw does not include:
  - (a) The ability to commence, settle, compromise, or initiate litigation, court, arbitration, mediation, or other proceedings;
  - (b) The ability to amend, disregard, set, or alter the Board or administrative policies and procedures of the Regional Board as they relate to procurement, purchasing, financial planning, or otherwise; or
  - (c) Those matters unable to be delegated per s. 229(2) of the *Local Government Act*, including the ability to pass bylaws, regulations, or fetter the discretion of the Regional Board as it relates to items it is unable to delegate under the *Local Government Act*.

#### **ACQUISITION & DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY**

- 8. Any facilities or equipment acquired by the Commission for services must be acquired in the name of the Regional District and shall be the property of the Regional District.

9. Where a service may accept revenues from other sources, such as gift and enterprise, such revenues shall be managed, solicited, and accepted by the service in accordance with Regional District practice, policies, and bylaws, as applicable.

**CITATION**

10. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as "Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission Delegation Bylaw No. 1, 2022".

READ A FIRST TIME THIS	13 <sup>th</sup>	day of	July,	2022
READ A SECOND TIME THIS	13 <sup>th</sup>	day of	July,	2022
READ A THIRD TIME THIS	13 <sup>th</sup>	day of	July,	2022
RETURNED TO SECOND READING AND AMENDED THIS	12 <sup>th</sup>	day of	April,	2023
READ AGAIN A THIRD TIME THIS	12 <sup>th</sup>	day of	April,	2023
ADOPTED THIS	14 <sup>th</sup>	day of	June,	2023

  
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CHAIR

  
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CORPORATE OFFICER

## **SCHEDULE “A”**

### **Administrative Authority**

- (a) Economic development as set out in Bylaw No. 1824, “Economic Development Commission Establishing Bylaw No. 1, 1990”, as it relates to Salt Spring Island;
- (b) Wastewater disposal as set out in Bylaw No. 2118, “Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Disposal Additional Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1993”;
- (c) Community parks service continued under Bylaw No. 4149, “Salt Spring Island Community Parks Services Conversion Bylaw No. 1, 2017”;
- (d) Community recreation service continued under Bylaw No. 4151, “Salt Spring Island Community Recreation Services Conversion Bylaw No. 1, 2017”;
- (e) Indoor swimming pool service in Bylaw No. 3206, “Salt Spring Indoor Swimming Pool Facility Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 2004”;
- (f) Community parks and recreation facilities in Bylaw No. 2422, “Salt Spring Island Parks and Recreation Facilities Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1996”;
- (g) The Salt Spring Island Small Craft Harbour Facilities local service set out in Bylaw No. 2730, “Small Craft Harbour Facilities (Salt Spring Island) Local Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1999”;
- (h) Transportation service established under Bylaw No. 3438, “Salt Spring Island Community Transit and Transportation Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 2007”;
- (i) Street lighting under Bylaw No. 3746, “Salt Spring Island Street Lighting Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 2011”;
- (j) The issuance of grants-in-aid for Salt Spring Island initiatives under Supplementary Letters Patent Division XIX, OIC 1013/1977, subject always to the restriction on assistance to business under the *Local Government Act*;
- (k) Determination of compensation for livestock injury by dogs under Bylaw No. 4418, “Livestock Injury Compensation Service (Salt Spring Island) Bylaw No. 1, 2021”;

### **Advisory Authority**

- (a) The arts contribution service set out in Bylaw No. 3116, “Salt Spring Island Arts Contribution Service Establishing Bylaw No. 1, 2003”;
- (b) The Salt Spring Island Public Library local service set out in Bylaw No. 2725, “Salt Spring Island Public Library Local Service Area Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1999”; and
- (c) Salt Spring Island Search and Rescue contribution as set out in Bylaw No. 3494, “Salt Spring Island Search and Rescue Service Establishment Bylaw, 2007”.