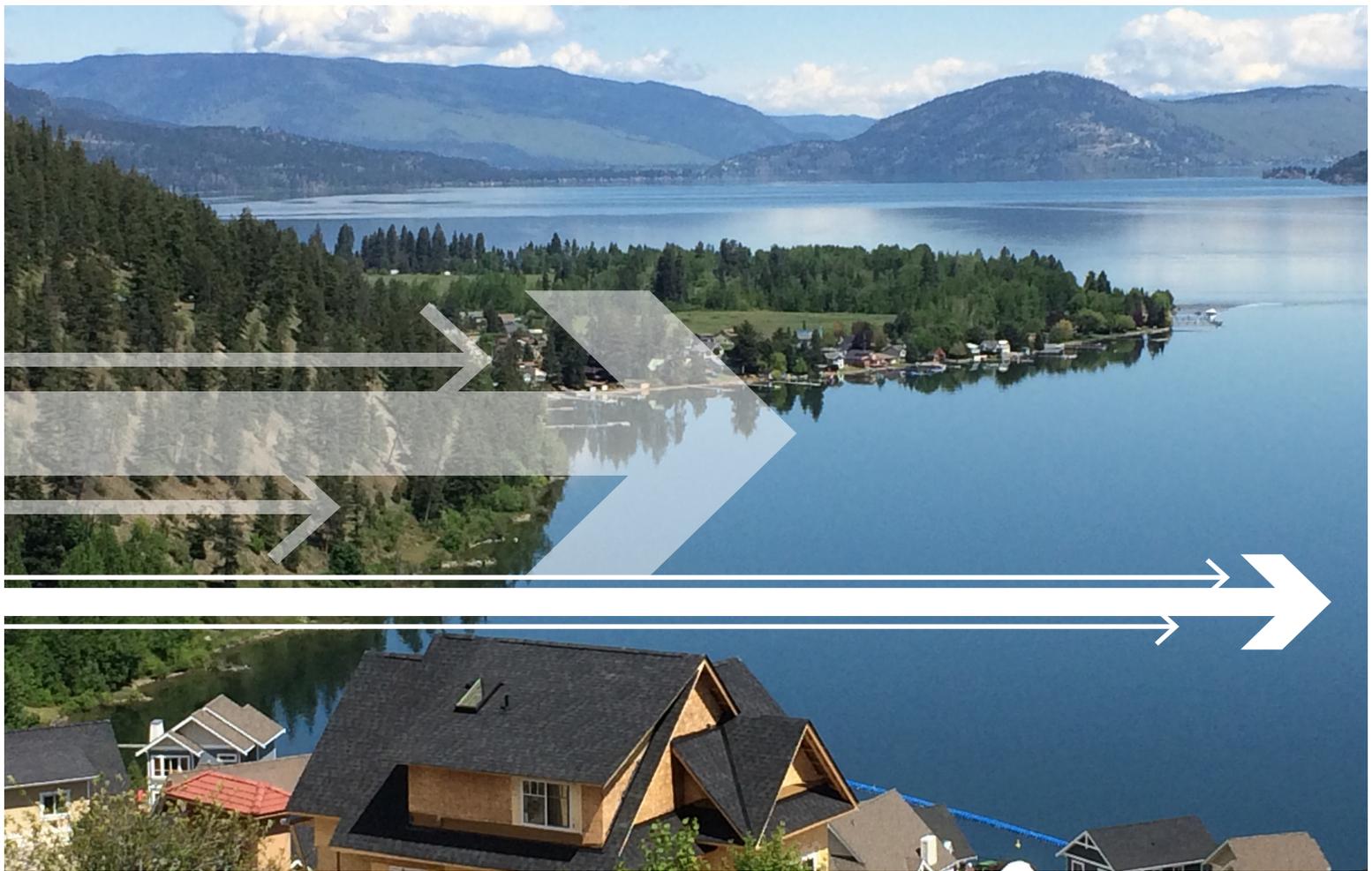


# NORTH WESTSIDE SERVICES AND ISSUES REVIEW



## Project Backgrounder

AUGUST 2017



**WHAT'S GOING ON?** An independent review of the services provided to communities in the North Westside Fire Protection Area is being conducted. Over the next couple of months, consultants will be conducting research and talking to community members and stakeholders to better understand:

- The types of services delivered by the Regional District of Central Okanagan to North Westside communities; and
- Community concerns and issues related to these services.

The independent review kicked off in July and a final report is expected by late October 2017.

### What are you being asked to do?

As part of this project, the consultant team want to hear from residents, seasonal residents and other community stakeholders. Here's how you can have your say:

- Read this short Project Backgrounder to learn more about the regional district services your community receives.
- Take a five-minute survey between now and September 8<sup>th</sup>. You can complete the survey online by following a link at [www.regionaldistrict.com/nwreview](http://www.regionaldistrict.com/nwreview) or [nwcaonline.ca](http://nwcaonline.ca) which will redirect you to the survey hosted on an independent site operated by the consultant. Paper versions of the survey sent to area homes can be completed and returned in several ways (see survey for instructions). Note that all responses will be kept anonymous and confidential by the project consultant.
- Come to a project open house at Killiney Beach Community Hall from 6pm to 8pm on September 6<sup>th</sup>.

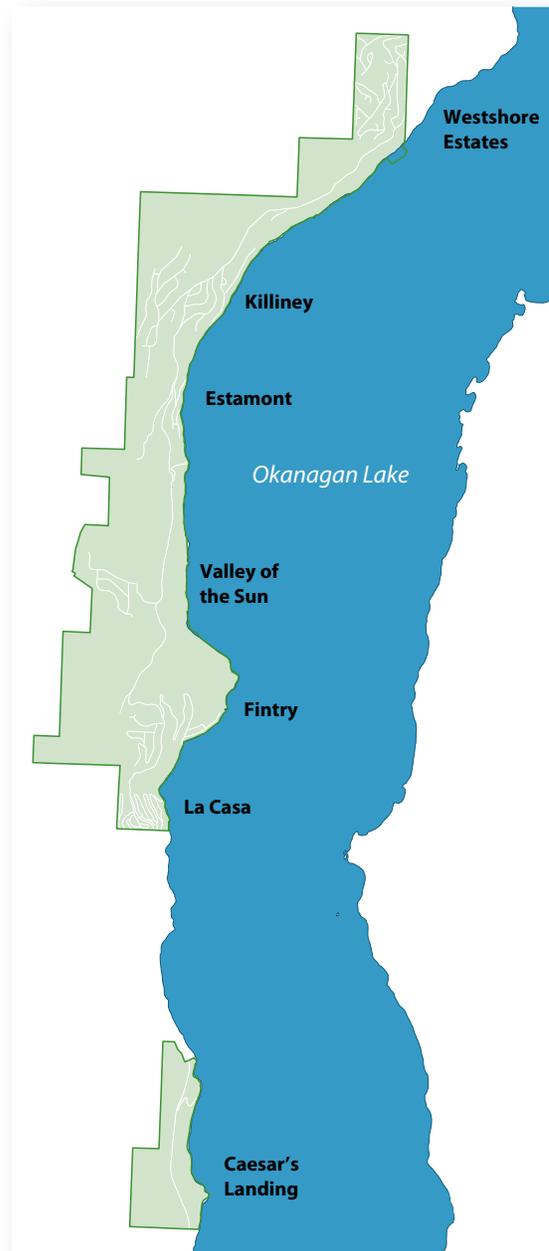
### About this Project Backgrounder

This Project Backgrounder provides a snap-shot for residents to better understand **what** services are provided by the RDCO and **how** those services are provided and decided upon. It includes information on:

- The role and function of B.C. regional districts;
- The services provided to the North Westside by RDCO;
- How these services are paid for; and
- How decisions are made.

### Who's working on this project?

With a grant from the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, EcoPlan, a Vancouver-based planning firm, has been hired by the RDCO to conduct an independent review.



### Want to know more?

Visit the project webpage at [www.regionaldistrict.com/nwreview](http://www.regionaldistrict.com/nwreview) to learn about the study and the services provided in your area or see the sources listed at the end of this document.

### Questions?

For more information:

✉ [nwreview@cord.bc.ca](mailto:nwreview@cord.bc.ca)

☎ 250-469-6339

## B.C. REGIONAL DISTRICTS

### Purpose: Service provision through partnership

Regional districts are B.C.'s way of ensuring that all residents have access to commonly needed services, no matter where they live. Unique in Canada, B.C.'s 27 regional districts are a federation of the municipalities, electoral areas, and increasingly First Nations governments within their boundaries that provide the administrative and political framework for three basic roles:

1. Acting as the local government for unincorporated electoral areas;
2. Collaboration of member municipalities and electoral areas on shared service arrangements; and
3. Providing region-wide services.

The federative model is a partnership-based approach. For regional districts in B.C. to work effectively requires a commitment to cooperation and collaboration among member jurisdictions, and the elected officials that represent them on the Board of Directors.

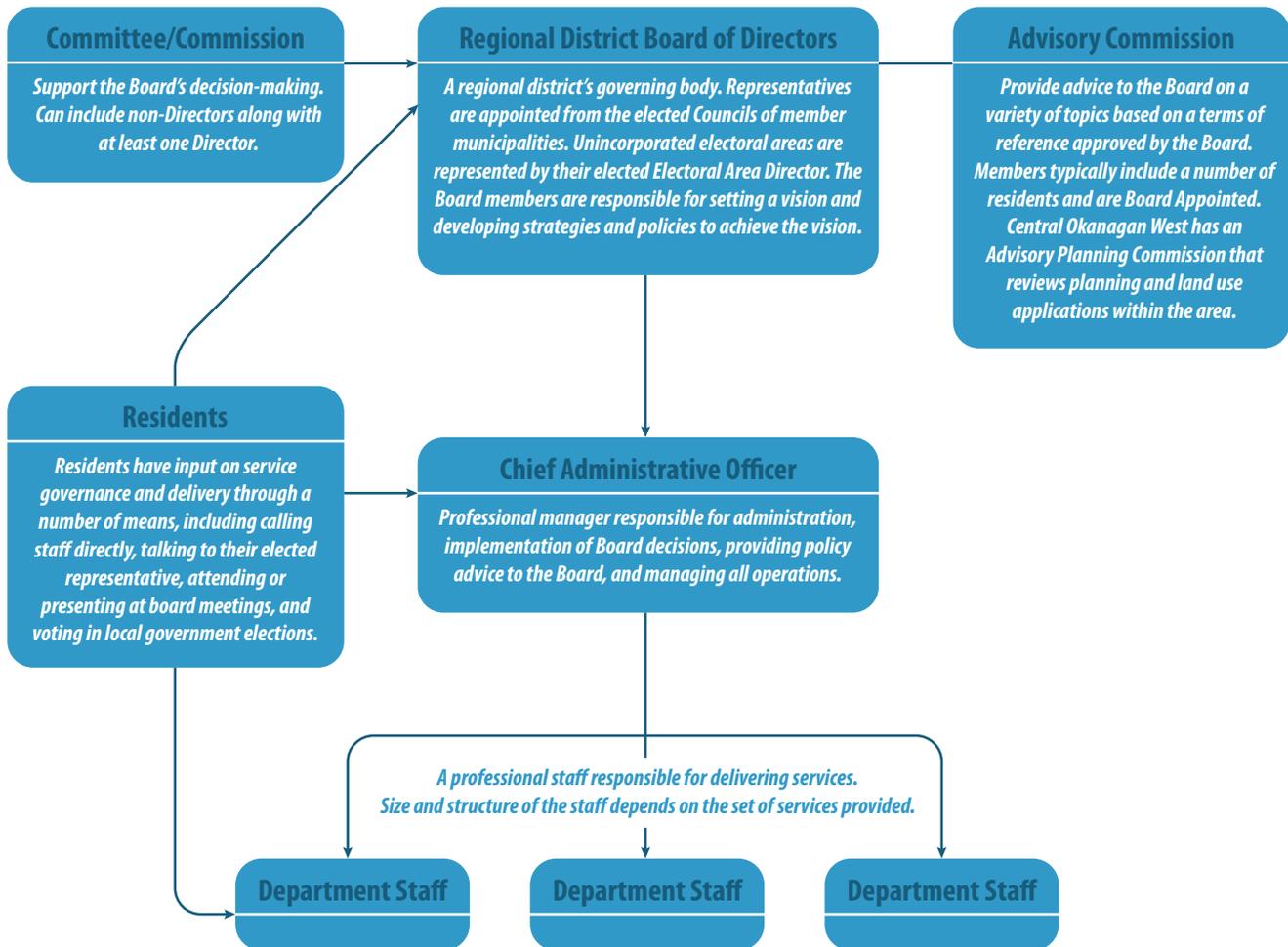
### Service delivery: Voluntary and “user-pays”

The regional district system is designed to be adapted to the needs of the local context and interest of its members through the inclusion of four important characteristics:

- **Services are voluntary.** Beyond a few provincial requirements (such as general administration, electoral area government, and solid waste management), regional districts are free to choose the services they provide. As a “federation” of its members, this means the regional district provides the services its members have agreed to support, and each member area only participates in the services it chooses. As such, service areas can range in size from the entire regional district and all its members, a collection of a few members, a single member municipality or electoral area, or even a portion of one (i.e., a neighbourhood).
- **Service bylaws are a collaborative creation.** Most services are established through a bylaw that stipulates how participating members deliver and pay for the service, service goals, and cost-recovery methods. The contents of the bylaw are established collectively by the member areas that choose to participate in that service, and can be revised when necessary (e.g. when conditions have significantly changes since bylaw establishment).
- **Those who benefit, pay.** Unlike municipalities, regional districts are required to match the benefits and costs of its services to the people who benefit from the services. Costs are recovered by billing those who benefit from the services - in other words, residents pay for what they get. Benefits are not always obvious or direct – for example, air quality monitoring or economic development may appear to occur in one place, but result in broader geographical benefits. Similarly, residents may benefit from a service they enjoy in a neighbouring area, but don't have to pay for (this is known as the “free-rider” issue). How benefits (and their costs) are shared results from a negotiation between service participants at the establishment of a bylaw.
- **Each service must recover its own costs.** Each service has its own capital and operating budgets. The cost of a service must be recovered from the member areas in the benefitting area through taxes or fees tied to that service. Costs are split among participating jurisdictions in the “benefitting area”, based on population size, usage, land area, or other agreed to methods. Taxes or fees collected from one service cannot be used to fund another service.



## Governance and Administration: the Board-CAO Model



As illustrated, all regional districts have the same basic corporate structure, with elected officials on the Board of Directors guiding the work of professional staff in the administration.

The key feature of this Board-CAO model is the separation of governance (vision, strategy and policy development) and administration (implementation and operations).

### **Representation is a function of population and service use**

Each member municipality and electoral area holds at least one seat on the Board of Directors, but member jurisdictions with larger populations can hold multiple seats. The number of seats are allocated based on population.

Depending on the topic, board votes can be unweighted (i.e., one vote per Director) or weighted (one or more votes based on the population represented by each Director). In the RDCO, a Director gets one vote per 4,000 residents they represent. Board votes come in two general forms:

- **Stakeholder votes**, in which only certain directors vote on the operation of services they are involved in. One exception is where a service is delivered to one jurisdiction and represented by only one director. In this case, as required by provincial legislation<sup>1</sup>, the entire regional board votes. Stakeholder votes are always weighted.
- **Corporate votes**, in which all directors vote. These involve issues such as policy development, and can be weighted or unweighted.

<sup>1</sup> Local Government Act, Part 6, Division 3, 207, 5a

## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR REGIONAL SERVICES IN THE NORTH WESTSIDE

Every jurisdiction in the RDCO receives a different mix of services. The North Westside participates in approximately 39 services administered through the RDCO. Some services are shared with all RDCO member areas, others with only a few, and other services are only provided within one-member area. Sharing services mean sharing costs and decision-making authority.

### Shared services and voting

	Number of services the North Westside receives through membership in the RDCO	Who votes on them (following provincial legislation)
Shared with all RDCO member areas	20	Entire Board
Shared with other RDCO member areas (but not all)	11	Participating members
Shared with other Central Okanagan West communities	3	Entire Board
Received by North Westside only	5	Entire Board only

Note that the *Local Government Act* dictates how voting is conducted. When the entire Board votes on services provided to only one jurisdiction, this is a legal requirement. This is part of how the province maintains checks and balances, ensuring all decisions related to services include opportunity for deliberation, and so no individual Electoral Director has too much influence on community service provision.

### User-pays case study: North Westside Water Utilities

The North Westside has three water utilities administered through the RDCO: Killiney Beach, Westshore, and Upper Fintry/Shalal/Valley of the Sun Water Systems. Each system is paid for by fees collected from the property owners who receive the service (or a mix of fees and parcel taxes). Neither revenue nor costs can be moved between systems or other area services (though costs are sometime split for the sake of efficiency, such as the salary of a single staff member whose time is split between the three systems).

The revenue collected for each respective system can only be used for the operations and infrastructure costs related to that system. Each year, a budget is prepared based on an estimate of revenue. At the end of the year, any variation (extra money, or shortfalls) are carried over to the following year.

For illustration, here is what that looked like for the operation costs of the Killiney Beach Water System in 2013 (a deficit year) and 2014 (a surplus year):

	2013	2014
Estimated revenue	\$349,914	\$341,373
Estimated expenses	\$349,914	\$341,373
Actual revenue	\$353,504	\$345,861
Actual expenses	\$355,130	\$334,324
Amount carried over to next year	-\$1,627	\$11,537

This information comes from the RDCO Program Budget, a document that is published annually as part of the presentation to the Board for budget adoption. It is publicly online at [www.regionaldistrict.com](http://www.regionaldistrict.com) as part of relevant regional board agendas.



## North Westside Services - List

The table below lists the services that the North Westside participates in, and with what other areas the service is shared. The Electoral Area West Director votes on matters related to these services.

Shared with all member areas	Shared with one or multiple member areas	Shared amongst Central Okanagan West communities	North Westside communities only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Board</li> <li>Regional Planning</li> <li>Regional Grants in Aid</li> <li>Regional Rescue Services</li> <li>Crimestoppers</li> <li>9-1-1- Emergency Call Centre</li> <li>RCMP Victim Services</li> <li>Dog Control</li> <li>Effluent Disposal</li> <li>Okanagan Water Basin Water Board</li> <li>Air Quality Service</li> <li>Regional Parks</li> <li>Electoral Planning</li> <li>Sterile Insect Release</li> <li>Economic Development Commission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electoral Areas – Gen. Government</li> <li>Electoral Area Fire Prevention</li> <li>Crime Prevention</li> <li>Business Licenses</li> <li>Building Inspections</li> <li>Prohibited Animal Control</li> <li>Transportation Demand Management</li> <li>Enforcement of Noise Bylaws</li> <li>Enforcement of Unsightly/Untidy Premises Bylaw</li> <li>Insect Control</li> <li>Okanagan Regional Library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central Okanagan West Electoral Area Program Plan</li> <li>Grants – Area Westside</li> <li>Westside Community Parks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Westside Volunteer Fire/Rescue Department</li> <li>Killiney Community Hall</li> <li>Killiney Beach Water System</li> <li>Westshore Water System</li> <li>Fintry/ Shalal Water System</li> </ul>
<b>Administration Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering Services</li> <li>Regional Administration</li> <li>Finance</li> <li>Human Resources</li> <li>Information Systems</li> </ul>			

## Resources

All the information about regional districts administration and governance in this Backgrounder has been drawn from the following publicly available resources.

### Comprehensive Overview:

- *Regional District Toolkit*, Union of B.C. Municipalities and Ministry of Community Services (2005).

### Summary Overviews:

- *A Primer on Regional Districts in British Columbia*, Ministry of Community Services (2006).
- *A Path Forward: A resource guide to support Treaty First Nation, regional district and local government collaboration and planning*, Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (2012).
- Homepage of the Local Government Department of the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development: [www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd](http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd)

### Service Reviews:

- *Reaching Agreement on Regional Service Review and Withdrawal Disputes*, Ministry of Community Services (2006).
- *Regional Service Reviews: An introduction*, Ministry of Community Services (2006).



