

The motion recorded in **SRD 681/24**, moved by **Director Colborne** and seconded by **Director Michael Lott**, represents the formal Board-level receipt of the **Regional Recreation Facilities Feasibility Study** findings presented by **Stephen Slawuta** of **RC Strategies** 678, 681/24. This study served as the technical foundation for the most contentious fiscal debate of the 2023–2026 term: the expansion of the **Strathcona Gardens** funding model.

1. Core Findings: Functional Catchment Areas

The study utilized a **"45-minute drive radius"** baseline to identify which communities functionally benefit from regional recreation hubs .

- **The Catchment Proof:** The report explicitly identified **Strathcona Gardens** as a facility warranting sub-regional funding discussions 3. It proved that residents of **Quadra Island (Area C)** are heavy users of the facility for youth sports and medical rehabilitation, noting that the Quathiaski Cove ferry route supports nearly **934,000 annual passengers**, placing the island firmly within the facility's functional "catchment area" .
- **Non-Contributing Users:** Crucially, the data revealed that Quadra Island residents accounted for **66% of all non-contributing regional accounts** at Strathcona Gardens .

2. The "Regional Outlier" Argument

Slawuta's presentation highlighted that the Strathcona Regional District (SRD) was a complete outlier on Vancouver Island regarding its recreation funding structure.

- **The Problem:** The SRD was forcing a small population in Campbell River and Area D to carry **100% of the costs** for a \$122M–\$131M facility that serves a much broader region .
- **Comparative Models:** The study compared the SRD to the **Regional District of Nanaimo (Oceanside/Ravensong)**, **Comox Valley**, and **Cowichan Valley**, all of which utilize larger, pooled tax bases across multiple municipalities and rural areas to support their recreation hubs.

3. Legislative and Political Fallout

The presentation of this report at meeting **SRD 681/24** was the catalyst for the subsequent introduction of **Bylaw No. 643**, which proposed a cost-sharing formula of **100% for Campbell River, 90% for Area D, and 80% for Quadra Island**.

- **The Rural Block Resistance:** The findings were met with "vehement opposition" from rural directors, led by **Director Robyn Mawhinney**, who argued that a pooled referendum would dilute the voices of islanders 20-to-1 against urban voters.
- **Governance Crisis:** This report eventually led to the **"hot mic" scandal**, where directors were recorded plotting to break quorum to stop a vote on the resulting funding model, and the subsequent removal of the Board Vice-Chair.

4. Strategic Application for 2026

- **The Message:** You can point to this report as proof that you are moving the region **forward** by "correcting a 50-year misalignment".
- **The Contrast:** Frame the findings as independent, professional proof that the current

funding model is unfair to Area D families, whereas the resistance is a move to go **backward** into "hostage-taking" politics that ignore technical data.

In summary, carrying motion **SRD 681/24** officially placed the **RC Strategies** findings on the record, confirming that Strathcona Gardens is a **regional asset** that requires a modernized, equitable funding base to support its **\$122 million expansion**.