

# Directors Report March 2026

## Strathcona Gardens Service Participants Review

At the March 25<sup>th</sup> Regional Board Meeting the Regional Directors reviewed the “Strathcona Gardens Funding Review” report.

The report contained what I have always suspected. Other regional districts on Vancouver island do have electoral area’s as participants in recreation services, and our regional district is well behind what the norm is on Vancouver Island. Table 1 seen below illustrates very well that in all other regional districts, recreation faculties are well supported by the entire regional district except our regional district.

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

| Indoor Facilities within the Service   | Major Indoor Amenities   | Funding Jurisdictions   | Total Population Included in the Funding Area |
|--|--|---|---|
| Oceanside Place / Ravensong Aquatics Centre (operated by the Regional District of Nanaimo)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 arenas</li> <li>• Indoor pool</li> <li>• Program rooms</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Parksville</li> <li>• Town of Qualicum Beach</li> <li>• Electoral Areas E, F, G and H</li> </ul>   | 50,326  |
| Comox Valley Sports Centre / Comox Valley Aquatics Centre (operated by the Comox Valley Regional District) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 indoor pools</li> <li>• 2 arenas</li> <li>• 1.5 fitness centres</li> <li>• Program rooms</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Courtenay</li> <li>• Town of Comox</li> <li>• Village of Cumberland</li> <li>• Electoral Areas B and C (a defined portion of EA A contributes to the complexes)</li> </ul> | 72,445<br>*Includes EA A                      |
| Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre / Q Centre (operated by Westshore Parks and Recreation)                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 arenas (including a performance arena with 2,300 seats)</li> <li>• Indoor pool</li> <li>• Fitness</li> <li>• Indoor turf (converted curling rink)</li> <li>• Program rooms</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Langford</li> <li>• City of Colwood</li> <li>• District of Highlands</li> <li>• District of Metchosin</li> <li>• Town of View Royal</li> </ul>                             | 84,669  |
| Panorama Recreation Centre (operated by the Capital Regional District )                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 arenas</li> <li>• Indoor pool</li> <li>• Fitness centre</li> <li>• Program spaces</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town of Sidney</li> <li>• District of North</li> <li>• District of Central Saanich</li> </ul>  | 42,789  |
| All facilities classified as 'regionally significant' in the Cowichan Valley Regional District (9 total)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 arenas</li> <li>• 2 aquatics facilities</li> <li>• 1 performing arts centre</li> <li>• Variety of program spaces</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All municipalities and electoral areas are contributing based on use</li> </ul>  | 89,013  |
| Strathcona Gardens (operated by the SRD)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 arenas</li> <li>• Indoor pool</li> <li>• Program spaces</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Campbell River</li> <li>• Electoral Area D</li> </ul>  | 42,261  |

Looking to the Comox Valley Regional District they use the same method as our Regional District uses, and that is a dollar amount based on property assessment.

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Comox Valley Recreation Complexes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Comox Valley Sports Centre and Comox Valley Aquatics Centre are funded by taxpayers in City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and Electoral Areas B and C (a defined portion of EA A contributes to the complexes).</li> <li>• Assessment is the primary method used to calculate funding contributions for each jurisdiction.</li> </ul> |
|-----------------------------------|---|

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

Another significant piece of information contained in this report was this information below.

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

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

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

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

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

The full Strathcona Gardens Funding Review report can be found at

<https://agenda.strathconard.ca/SRDAttachments/SRDBoard/Open/BRD/25-Mar-26/20260317-SG-Recreation-Study.pdf>

**The Board did support having a portion of Area C being Quadra Island join the gardens service in a close vote.**

**But there are still one more hurdle and that will come at the next Regional Board Meeting.**

**This was a question that should have been answered when this Regional District was formed back in 2007. But here we are in 2026 and we are still talking about what every other Regional District has resolved years ago and that is who pays what?**

One thing that this report did not highlight very well is the fact that the only reason the Gardens Commission has approved all the construction is because the building is failing in many area's such as the pools, and the main arena. There was real urgency in moving forward and the Gardens Commission realized that.

The report did try to address indirect benefits, but again in my mind it did not go far enough. I believe that the entire Regional District regardless of where you live receives a benefit. How would our Regional District look without a vibrant Recreational Facility? What would be the attraction for new professionals across how many different job sectors such as medical, dental, lawyers, police and the list goes on.

Area D residents have done there part in helping fund this **Regional Asset** for how many decades along with the **City of Campbell River**. It is time for other **Electoral Areas** that clearly use this facility to equally step up and match the contributions that Area D and the City of Campbell River makes every year.

I will be creating a simple online survey to insure residents have an opportunity well before the next Regional Board meeting to have their voices heard. I would hope that Area D residents will find their voice and speak up by completing the survey.

I will post the link to that survey very soon.