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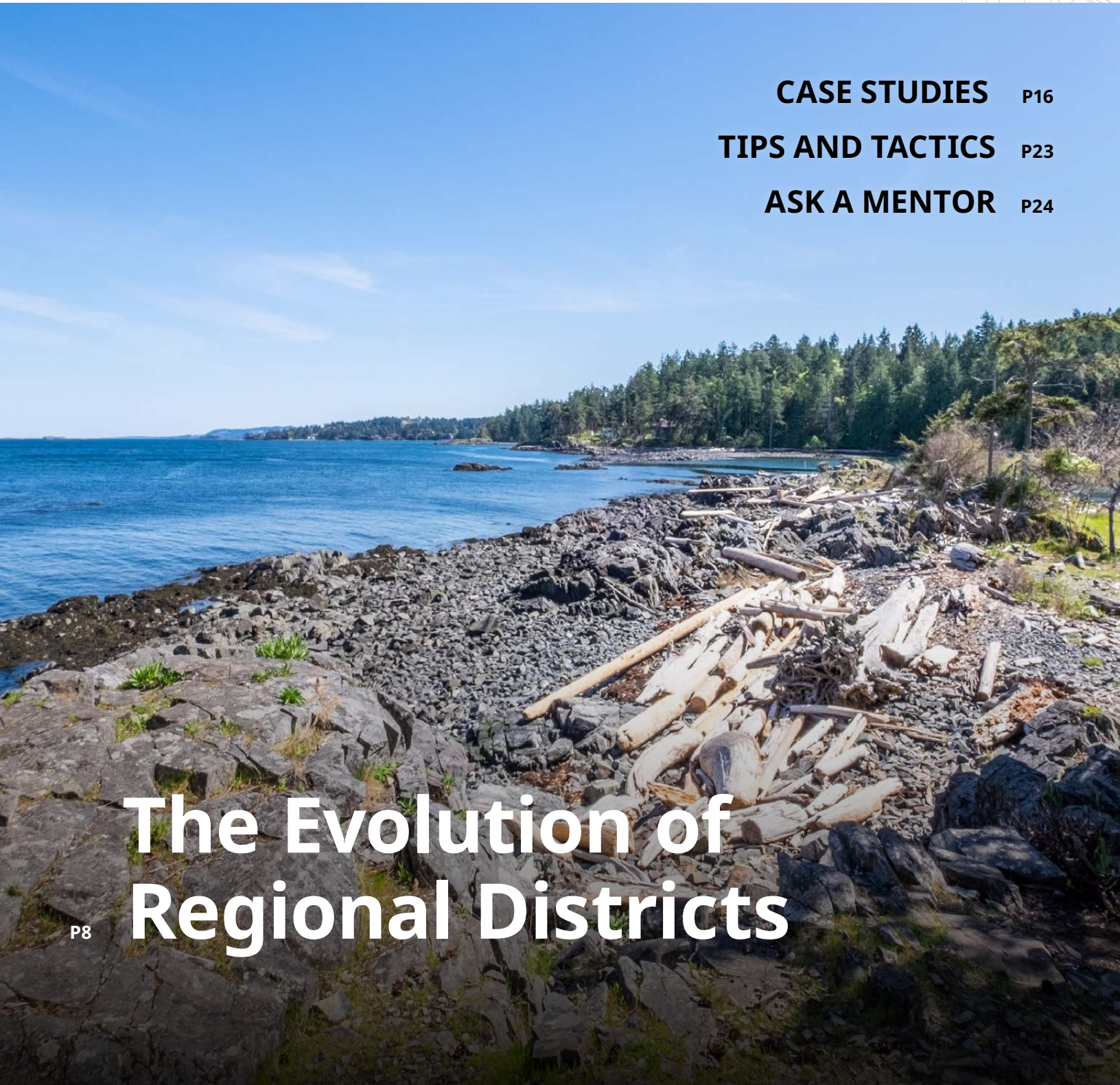
EXCHANGE is a quarterly magazine published by the Local Government Management Association (LGMA) of British Columbia. It's about sharing information, exchanging ideas on best practices, enhancing professional development and building networks. Reach us at *lgma.ca*.

Fall 2026

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The Evolution of Regional Districts

P8

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The LGMA office is located on the traditional territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən (Lekwungen) Peoples, also known as the Xʷsepsəm (Kosapsum) and Songhees Nations, whose relationships with the land continue to this day. We extend our gratitude to them and to the many Indigenous Nations on whose territories we work.

EXCHANGE

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Cover Image: Moorecroft Regional Park in the Regional District of Nanaimo, one of the local governments featured in this edition.

Photo courtesy of the Regional District of Nanaimo.

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The Cost of Taking on a Private Utility

Case of Interest discusses the challenges that can arise when private infrastructure requires a public solution to ensure service to the communities that rely upon them.





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Working Together for Regional Success

Get inspired by B.C. regional governments that are collaboratively tackling issues such as climate change, infrastructure funding and reconciliation.

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The Evolution of Regional Districts

Regional districts are distinct from other local governments, with their own challenges and opportunities. Learn about the drive to update legislation and gain other insights about what lies ahead.





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Darlene Morgan Recognized with IPAC Award

Join us in celebrating Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government CAO Darlene Morgan's national award, presented in Ottawa in October.

IN THIS ISSUE



How has the work of regional districts changed? Created by the Province of British Columbia in 1965, the role of regional districts has evolved since then to meet the needs of their respective areas.

Some of the challenges that regional districts face are experienced by all local governments: impacts of inflation, staff retention and recruitment, accessing funding and the pressure to do more with less. But they also face challenges unique to their operating structures, including delivering local, sub-regional and regional services.

As a relative outsider to the everyday operations of regional districts, what struck me was how much they do for communities large and small while managing the complexities that arise from existing legislation.

In our main feature story, Doug Holmes and Don Lidstone share why updating the *Local Government Act* is critical to meeting the contemporary work of regional districts, and Scott Hildebrand and Curtis Helgesen add to the conversation with their insights on the challenges and opportunities lying ahead.

Part of the drive to update existing legislation is to have a more inclusive regional government that includes Treaty and non-Treaty First Nations. In the Case Studies, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District share their journey to reconciliation and their ongoing work of learning to improve relationships with First Nations governments.

We also learn about how the Capital Regional District is prioritizing climate action with innovative projects that offer new revenue streams, while local governments in the Northwest have come together to successfully advocate for their share of resource development revenue from the provincial government.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue, including the interview participants who took the time to share their thoughts. If you have any questions, comments or story ideas, please email me at editor@lgma.ca.

Manjot Bains
Editor

I write on the traditional and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and am committed to solidarity with First Nations and pushing for change through my work and art.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT



Hello! I am honoured to write this column from the traditional territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən (Lekwungen) Peoples, also known as the Xʷsepsəm (Kosapsum) and Songhees Nations.

As I write this column from Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), local elections are just around the corner. By the time this edition is published, the election period will have concluded, and local governments across the province will be preparing to deliver Council and Board orientations. I would like to extend my appreciation to all the staff who supported the election process. Upholding democratic processes is a significant undertaking at the best of times, let alone amid the increasingly complex challenges facing local governments today.

At UBCM, discussions focused on responsible conduct, DRIPA, capital projects, economic uncertainty, and more. These conversations are a reminder of the evolving landscape local governments must navigate and the important role local government professionals play in supporting informed decision-making and effective governance.

As you work alongside your Councils and Boards, LGMA is here to support you. Attend one of our upcoming programs, participate in a complimentary town hall or Connect Lunch, or reach out for informal support.

Be sure to connect with your local LGMA Chapter. Our six regional chapters, led by dedicated volunteers, provide valuable opportunities for networking, peer learning and engagement. Their efforts help strengthen professional connections and foster a supportive community throughout the province.

It is also important to recognize the many local governments that marked the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Sept. 30. Efforts to advance truth and reconciliation continue to evolve, and I commend the leaders who are actively engaged in this important work.

As we move into the final months of the year, I hope you take a moment to recognize the dedication and commitment you bring to public service every day. Please know that your friends at LGMA are cheering you on and are here to support you every step of the way.

Candace Witkowskyj
Executive Director

BOARD UPDATE

Greetings. I am sending this message from the traditional territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples, represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples, represented by the Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tsawout, Tseycum and Malahat Nations. I am grateful to live and work on these lands and acknowledge the enduring relationships these Nations have with their territories.

My colleagues around the province have been busy with local elections, in addition to the many responsibilities that come with serving our communities. I would like to extend my gratitude to the local government professionals who served as stewards of their organizations and communities throughout this important transition. While elected officials may change, the responsibility of local government professionals to serve their communities remains constant.

The election process once again highlighted the vital role we play in ensuring continuity of service, supporting good governance, and maintaining organizational stability. As newly elected Councils and Boards begin their mandates, local government professionals will continue to provide the expertise, guidance and leadership needed to help communities move forward successfully.

Throughout this period of change, LGMA has remained committed to supporting members every step of the way. Through our professional development programs, chapters, peer networks, conferences and leadership resources, we continue to provide opportunities for learning, connection and growth.



These efforts reflect the priorities outlined in our Strategic Plan, including supporting professional growth, fostering meaningful connections, and strengthening the resilience of our profession.

Whether you have taken advantage of our Elections On-Demand Course, referenced the LGMA Elections Manual, connected with peers, accessed executive coaching, or simply reached out to a colleague in the LGMA network for advice, you are part of a community that understands both the opportunities and challenges of local government leadership. We remain committed to providing the resources, relationships and support you need to navigate change with confidence and continue serving your communities with excellence.

Angila Bains
President

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By Casey Neis
Fulton & Company

CASE of INTEREST

The Cost of Taking on a Private Utility

When private utility infrastructure becomes unsustainable, regional districts may face intense pressure to acquire and operate it as a public service. Sage Mesa Water System is a privately owned water system that requires millions of dollars in upgrades. Private operation is no longer viable, yet residents need safe, reliable drinking water and look to their regional district for a solution.

The proposed acquisition of the Sage Mesa Water System by the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) illustrates the challenges that can arise when private infrastructure calls for a public solution. The RDOS operates the system under contract with the Province, but it does not own the infrastructure. A transfer therefore required the RDOS to consider both the assets it might acquire, and the legal and financial framework necessary to transform the private utility into a public service.

Establishing a service

Municipalities can generally establish services by council resolution, but regional districts must do so by bylaw. The bylaw defines the service, identifies participating electoral areas, and specifies how costs will be recovered. Approval from participating areas is often required, and borrowing may require further approval.

For Sage Mesa, the RDOS proposed a new water service requiring approximately $33 million in borrowing for capital upgrades. Electors rejected the proposal in April 2026, but the underlying infrastructure challenges remained.

A proposed class action concerning the Sage Mesa Water System seeks damages for inadequate drinking water. Although the RDOS is not a defendant, the claim illustrates how private infrastructure failure can create public and political pressure even where a regional district is not legally responsible for its condition.

Important considerations

The Sage Mesa experience highlights considerations for any regional district asked to acquire a private utility:

1. **The service area design determines who pays**: Defining the service area is one of the most important decisions. Service boundaries determine who receives and governs the service and who bears its costs—a critical issue where a private system has substantial deferred maintenance or regulatory obligations.
2. **The purchase price may be only a fraction of the cost**: In some cases, it may be a nominal one dollar. Capital upgrades, operations, debt servicing, regulatory compliance, and future asset replacement all affect long-term affordability.
3. **Buying the system often means buying its challenges**: Infrastructure condition is only one part of due diligence. The regional district must also confirm that it will acquire everything needed to operate the service, including land, wells, reservoirs, treatment and distribution infrastructure, water licenses and sufficient access rights.

Older systems can also present legal gaps: infrastructure may cross private land without adequate tenure, rights of way may not match infrastructure in the field, and regulatory approvals may require transfers or replacements.

Historical liabilities can materially increase acquisition costs. Environmental issues, regulatory non-compliance, operational deficiencies, and pre-closing claims must be addressed so they do not become public liabilities after closing. An acquisition agreement can allocate some risk, but contractual protection is only as reliable as the party providing it—particularly if the owner is financially distressed or exiting because of mounting infrastructure obligations.

Two transactions in one

A private utility acquisition is really two interconnected projects: acquiring the assets and establishing the public service that will own and operate them. Neither should be treated as secondary to the other.

Regional districts considering private utility infrastructure must consider whether a lawful, affordable and operable public service can be built around them. Answering that question early may determine whether the acquisition secures essential infrastructure for the community or transfers an unsustainable burden to the public.

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By Manjot Bains

The Evolution of Regional Districts



PHOTO BY M PUTNAM COURTESY THOMPSON-NICOLA REGIONAL DISTRICT
Deadman Vidette Road in the Thompson-Nicola Regional District.

How are regional districts preparing for future challenges?

From early iterations as improvement districts and regional planning boards, to complex organizations offering a multitude of services and programs, the role of regional districts has adapted in response to the changing needs of residents.

"Regional districts, at their core, are about collaboration," shares Doug Holmes, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN). "We're really good at bringing different jurisdictions together and figuring out what they have in common, and looking at options for governance, financing and service delivery."

Holmes has served as CAO of RDN, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District and Sunshine Coast Regional District during his long career as a local government professional. He notes that the work of regional districts has changed over time, but the governing legislation does not reflect that evolution.

"Every once in a while, the ministry has been pretty good about making changes to reflect modern times, but that is very different from taking a fresh look at how regional districts function today, what types of challenges we have and how all of that fits together."

WHERE THEY BEGAN

Regional districts were created by the B.C. government in 1965 through an amendment to the *Municipal Act*, which was later replaced by the *Local Government Act* and Community Charter. The Regional District of Comox-Strathcona (now Comox Valley and Strathcona Regional Districts) was the first regional district to incorporate, and by the end of 1965, a total of six districts were incorporated. By 1969, there were 28 regional districts.

"Regional districts, at their core, are about collaboration. We're really good at bringing different jurisdictions together."



Doug Holmes

Today, 27 regional districts span the province and are governed by a board of directors, with members elected from electoral areas and directors appointed from municipal councils and Treaty Nations. Regional districts are unique to British Columbia, and provide services at the regional, sub-regional or inter-municipal and local levels.

Importantly, regional districts provide for a joint-and-several-liability for local government borrowing in British Columbia, through a regional district security issuing bylaw that provides added assurance against defaulting and reduces risk.

They also support rural areas with local services like water treatment and delivery, fire protection, sewage and waste management, in addition to regional parks and emergency operations. Each district is different and their services reflect the needs of the specific region and population.

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WHAT DO REGIONAL DISTRICTS DO?

According to Scott Hildebrand, the CAO of Thompson-Nicola Regional District (TNRD), the differences between municipalities and regional districts are often misunderstood by the public and different levels of government.



Scott Hildebrand

"A municipality usually serves one incorporated community that has a defined boundary, and the services are often more direct like roads, parks, utilities, recreation and development," notes Hildebrand. "But with a regional district, we consider it a partnership table. So at the TNRD table, we have one of the largest boards in the province with 27 directors, and we span 45,000 square kilometres—the size of Switzerland. The sheer geography makes a big difference and a lot of people don't realize that."

TNRD includes 11 municipalities, 10 electoral areas and 25 First Nations within its boundaries, and a total population of 150,000 people. Hildebrand has been CAO at TNRD for seven years, and also worked in CAO and City Manager roles with the City of Merritt and City of Brandon, Manitoba.

"Regional districts bring together municipalities and electoral areas to deliver service requirements and service needs regionally or sub-regionally," he adds. "When you think of a municipality, you have a water system that supplies the whole community, but with our regional district, there are 11 water and sewer systems that supply and provide service for very unique areas all over our geography, and those people pay for that service."

This pay-for-service model is similar across all regional districts, allowing flexibility to residents in rural areas seeking services often accessible in urban areas.

Despite the differences, Hildebrand notes that municipalities and regional districts also have a lot in common: purpose.

"Both exist to serve residents and strengthen communities. Whether I'm working with a municipality and a mayor and council, or with one of the board directors, the core principles are the same: good governance, responsible use of public funds, clear communication and practical service delivery. So we're doing the same things, but in a much different way, in trying to balance the needs of the community."

THE CHANGING WORK OF REGIONAL DISTRICTS

"One of the biggest challenges is climate change," Curtis Helgesen, CAO of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) shares. "The number of emergency events that impact the landscape is increasing. I have been working here for seven years and there have been three to four significant wildfire seasons that impacted operations because all hands are on deck dealing with the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)."

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Helgesen has worked in local government for 23 years including several years at the District of Elkford before transitioning to RDBN.

EOCs serve all rural electoral areas within the regional district, but RDBN also works closely with member municipalities.



Curtis Helgesen

"If there's a wildfire coming, it's going to be in the rural area or the municipality or both, and everyone is impacted. Something we do well is working collaboratively with our member municipalities and First Nations communities on emergency management. We always look to do evacuation orders jointly with the member municipality and First Nations community that's impacted, and we've been very successful—even before EDMA (*Emergency and Disaster Management Act*) came in, we were working jointly with everyone," he says.

As with other local governments, when an EOC is opened, staff are pulled from their regular duties to work, but only overtime can be claimed through the provincial program.

"So when you should have been working on other services delivering to your constituents, you're utilizing those resources in the EOC," Helgesen explains.

"More and more regional districts are reaching out to get support from others, and that's critical because you don't want staff burnout and all the mental health issues that go with that, but at the same time, you're taking away from the delivery of your core services to handle an emergency event."

Hildebrand adds, "Wildfire, flooding, drought and extreme weather are always top of mind; they affect people, properties, roads, communications, staff capacity and community confidence. This summer has been especially hard dealing with the impacts of significant wildfires."

Helgesen notes that the current models need to be looked at jointly with the province, regional districts, member municipalities and First Nation partners impacted by these events.

Regional districts are also asked to do more across very large and diverse geographies.

"One community may be focused on growth and housing, while another may be focused on fire protection, solid waste, recycling or basic infrastructure," says Hildebrand.

"The challenge is finding solutions that are financially responsible, especially with growing cost pressures, and still be respectful of local differences. That complexity can be frustrating at times, but it is also what makes regional districts important. They are designed to adapt, and in today's environment, adaptability is essential."

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Helgesen adds: “I think we can be very nimble and respond to needs within the region. Not every solution works for every part of the region, so we can be very flexible in the delivery of services. Sometimes, we may deliver the same service a bit differently in each area based on the makeup of that region, who the constituents are and who the taxpayers are.”

Board structure and elections add another layer of complexity for regional districts.

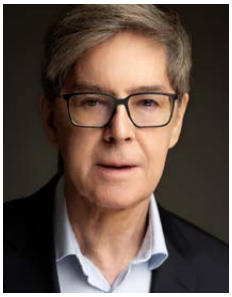
“We have elections in our 10 electoral areas, and those electoral area directors get voted on to our Board, much like a Councillor,” says Hilderbrand. “But then there’s representation that comes from our municipalities based on population. Kamloops has seven members on our board. And then yearly, the board votes for a chair, so you could have four different chairs in a four-year term.”

The system can be confusing for the general public and even for operations.



Between 2003 and 2022, UBCM endorsed 161 resolutions that mentioned amending the *Local Government Act* and sections governing regional districts.

A FRESH APPROACH



Don Lidstone

Don Lidstone, a lawyer specializing in local government, worked on the Community Charter in the late 1990s until 2001 and wrote the discussion paper, *Regional District Legislation Roadmap* in 2025 after the B.C. government and UBCM asked regional districts and local government area associations to demonstrate the interest in legislative reform.

He notes that the role of regional districts has changed dramatically since they were first created. “Initially, they provided services to address issues that were not being addressed by the province at a local level. The repository of federal and provincial responsibilities through downloading has changed the nature and function of regional districts substantially since 1965. Now, regional districts deal with airports, emergency planning and emergency organization, in addition to planning and land use in the rural areas, which used to be a provincial function.”

Lidstone notes three key areas where legislative reform is necessary:

1. Inadequate legislative powers to provide services expected by the citizens residing in regional districts.
2. Providing a forum for First Nations to participate in regional governance in a constructive, collegial way.
3. Modernizing local government revenue. “The regional district regime is still based on a property tax system that was innovated in the 1800s, and other local governments in the rest of the world have grown organically in that area. Substantially, we’re still stuck in legislation and the forms of revenue from the 1800s.”

INCLUSIVE REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

The five area associations submitted the discussion paper to UBCM in 2025, which in turn submitted it to the province.

“Currently, the province has been working it through their legislative review processes,” Lidstone shares. “The Ministry has to have a very close look at the details, and the Attorney General department has legislative counsel who look at how all of this can fit into other relationships, such as with municipal borrowing, provincial highways, education, and all the things that are interlaced in British Columbia.”

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> "Our voting on the board is extremely complex. With some regularity, we are checking with lawyers to ask, 'How do we vote on this particular matter? Who votes and is it a weighted vote or a simple vote?'"

What are the key things they want changed? For Holmes, the top priority is inclusive regional governance and providing non-treaty First Nations a full participating role at the regional district board table, in alignment with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA).

"At the Sunshine Coast Regional District, there is special provincial and federal legislation that has the shíshálh Nation (previously known as Sechelt Nation) participating in a municipal form on the regional district board," says Holmes. "So that's with full voting powers. They conduct themselves at the board table like any other municipality."

The special legislations were passed federally in 1986, and provincially in 1987, with updates in 2022 to modernize legislation and use the correct name for the Nation.

"When I first started at the Sunshine Coast Regional District, Garry Feschuk was the director from Sechelt Nation, and he was a very interesting guy," Holmes remembers.

"A quiet but influential leader. At that time, there was a lot of concern about taking new recreation facilities to referendum and losing. And Gary said, 'Look, we are all sitting here because we believe we need this, and we're all worried about the people who say no. What about the people who say yes?' And you know, that type of leadership is quite inspirational and needs to be at the regional table, in order for all communities to be properly represented, and get better and more durable decisions, in my view."

At Alberni Clayoquot Regional District, four Treaty Nations have seats on the board, and the chair of the regional district board is the elected chief councillor from the Huu-ay-aht First Nations, John Jack.

"When I worked there, I saw what that perspective from an Indigenous government brought to regional decision making, it was super important," Holmes stresses. "That is one of the current failings of the *Local Government Act*, because it provides for Treaty Nations to potentially join regional districts, but not non-treaty Nations. And there are more First Nations governments in British Columbia than there are local governments in British Columbia."

He adds that not every First Nation will want to join a regional district, but the opportunity should be there.

CHALLENGES WITH GOVERNANCE

Another issue Holmes highlights is the voting system that is unique to regional district boards with two types of voting: weighted, where directors from higher populated areas have more votes than others, and unweighted, where each director has one vote.

"Our voting on the board is extremely complex," Holmes notes. "Despite having a professional as our corporate officer, with some regularity, we are checking and collaborating with lawyers to ask, 'How do we vote on this particular matter? Who votes and is it a weighted vote or a simple vote?'"

Each month, the RDN typically holds two board meetings where these issues arise.

"For every one of those agendas, we have to work out what each vote is because some of them will be weighted, some of them will be one person, one vote. Sometimes it's the whole board voting. Sometimes it's just participants in a service. It's quite a legislative adventure. Is this really the modern way to do things? Can this voting be streamlined?"

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Holmes adds that despite having a capital and operating budget close to $440 million and offering 115 different services, the smallest municipality in British Columbia, Zeballos, has more flexibility, autonomy and legislative authority than most regional districts.

"I'm not saying that small municipalities shouldn't have that power, what I'm suggesting is that we need to open ourselves up to the modern reality that the issues facing us have evolved over the years since the 60s, and despite some good changes by the Ministry over the decades, it is time to give it a rethink."

Specific issues include being able to borrow in the same way that municipalities can, without a public process for certain fundamental endeavors. Holmes notes that in terms of the recommendations for legislative change, each issue may not be important to each region.

"There is such diversity around the province, and one thing that our legislation does well is it is enabling legislation, so we can define services broadly, but the challenge is that everything we need to do takes a bit of a process to get the authority to do it, and that's what we want to change."

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Relationship-building and management are integral to the work of regional districts. At the TNRD, the CAOs of the 11 municipalities within the regional district meet twice or three times a year to share best practices, build relationships and see how the organizations can do things differently.

"Some of the topics of late include how some of the small communities can't manage cybersecurity and the issues around IT," says Hildebrand.

"Kamloops or other bigger areas have some expertise that we share. We have a great department within the TNRD that does all our GIS mapping and our civic addressing, and a lot of these small communities don't have the staff, so it would make much more sense for us to hire a staff member and work out a contract where everyone pays their share for the work, and we do it together. And there have been a lot of opportunities where we are working on a shared service model."

Two key strategic priorities identified by the TNRD board is to enhance advocacy with the province and cultivate relationships with First Nations.

"Over the last few years, we've been actively building relationships with First Nations and have signed three or four MOUs about how we will work better together," Hildebrand says.

"A lot of times when you have an initiative that you want to take to higher levels of government, having a stronger, united, collaborative voice gets better results."

"We're very respectful, but we've got a long way to go in developing our relationships with First Nations. During emergencies, we work very, very closely with our First Nations partners, and we even have service partnerships for day-to-day operations."

The regional district created a new position after identifying a need to have a dedicated resource to start building relationships with the 25 Nations in the region.

"There are so many things that we could be doing better together, so having this staff position has been great. It's nice to work with those folks and that level of government to better understand their perspectives on things, which is better for everything we do."

IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY

Amplifying a collective voice and working together has helped communities better advocate to the provincial and federal governments.

"A lot of times when you have an initiative that you want to take to higher levels of government, having a stronger, united, collaborative voice gets better results. When you're thinking of a regional district, you have multiple member municipalities, rural area directors and First Nations representatives together advocating to the province or the federal government on issues that are of importance to that part of the region."

Helgesen notes that regional districts will play a very important role towards reconciliation because of the collaborative governance model.

"How do we all advocate together for what's best for our region and all the constituents that live here? We have a First Nations liaison position that we started to make sure that we could build the capacity to participate in the conversations and build our relationships. We've had that position for three or four years now. And, you know, we have successes, we have steps forward, we have steps back."

Continued on page 15

Helgesen adds: “And sometimes that’s just to do with capacity that First Nation communities have available, and the demands on them to participate in major projects and best represent their communities. So we’re working on how to all work together as one voice for what’s best for the region.”

One area where the RDBN and other local governments have collaborated and successfully advocated to the provincial government is through the Northwest B.C. Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA).

“This was 10-plus years of regional advocacy by 21 local governments, from Vanderhoof all the way to Haida Gwaii,” shares Helgesen. “The theory was that LNG was coming and the Crown royalties from the logging industry went to Victoria, benefiting the whole province. But the demands on all local governments in this region from current and future major projects were crippling on our infrastructure, leading to a huge infrastructure deficit, back in the day.”

Inspired by the Fair Share Agreement, now the Peace River Agreement, between Peace River local governments and the province, 21 local governments collaborated to create RBA to successfully advocate on their behalf. Read all about the RBA in the Case Studies starting on page 16.

“Working together for that collective voice on what’s important to the region, whether it’s economic development or providing services to constituents, that’s important, and it’s what regional districts do well,” Helgesen adds.

For more insights and information, see the Case Studies starting on page 16 and Tips & Tactics *on page 23.*





PHOTO COURTESY OF CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

The Hartland renewable natural gas (RNG) facility in the Capital Regional District transforms landfill gas into pipeline-quality RNG.

Working Together for Regional Success

In these case studies, local governments share how they are innovating and working together to better serve their regions.

On Vancouver Island, the Capital Regional District is leading the charge with climate adaptation strategies that are reducing greenhouse gas emissions and generating revenue.

In Northwest B.C., regional districts and municipalities are working together to secure funding from major provincial resource projects, while Squamish-Lillooet Regional District has taken their learnings and created a valuable living document to guide relationships with First Nations partners.

The future of climate action

By Manjot Bains

On Vancouver Island, the Capital Regional District (CRD) takes a multi-pronged approach to climate action, with a range of projects that include learning opportunities, community resources and resource recovery, with the added economic benefit of new revenue streams.

The CRD provides more than 200 services locally and regionally to 13 municipalities and three electoral areas across Greater Victoria, and serves a population of 460,000. The region includes traditional territories of many First Nations, and the CRD also provides services to some of these Nations.



Ted Robbins

Beginning in 2009, the regional district identified climate action as an ongoing strategic priority and established the regional Climate Action and Adaptation Service.

"Similar to other regions around the province, climate hazards like extreme heat and extreme rainfall are impacting our region more frequently," explains Ted Robbins, CAO at the CRD. "Canada is warming twice as fast as the global average, so we are feeling those impacts in Canada and particularly in B.C. The CRD Board agreed that climate action will make our region more resilient to these climate hazards, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions that are contributing to the problem."

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> "As a regional district, we are positioned to support climate action across the region, and the board's view is that through a more coordinated approach, we can achieve better outcomes together."

"As a regional district, we are positioned to coordinate and support climate action by municipalities and individual residents across the region, and the Board's view is that through a more coordinated approach, we can achieve better outcomes together," adds Robbins, who has served as CAO for four years and prior to this role, was General Manager of Integrated Water Services at the CRD.

The CRD has several projects that support a regional approach to climate adaptation. For example, through the regional Climate Action and Adaptation Service, they provide programs on home energy retrofits to support lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and a building benchmarking program to support businesses in understanding and reducing their energy usage.

Launching soon, the Climate Adaptation Capacity Building Initiative supports municipal staff and elected officials from across the region with workshops, training and a regional cohort to build understanding and technical proficiency in climate adaptation. They also recently launched the greenhouse gas (GHG) Inventory Dashboard to make GHG emission data more accessible to the public and help them understand where those emissions come from.

Robbins shares that the CRD has been successful at attracting grant funding to develop a public charging infrastructure program for electric vehicles (EVs). "To date, we've installed about 164 public EV chargers across the region in collaboration with municipalities."

The regional district has also focused on electrifying their fleet. As vehicles reach the end of life, they are replaced with EVs, with the exception of some heavy-duty vehicles or equipment.

"We are projected to save over a million dollars in fuel costs alone by 2030 through ongoing electrification of the CRD fleet," he notes.

TURNING GARBAGE INTO RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS

In addition to climate action initiatives, since 2004, the CRD successfully used landfill gas to generate electricity at Hartland Landfill. As the equipment approached its end of life, the CRD looked at other options to replace the infrastructure while still capturing and using landfill gas.

"Through an evaluation and options analyses process, it was determined that renewable natural gas (RNG) offered the best benefit in terms of greenhouse gas reductions," Robbins shares. "The Hartland RNG facility is a $32-million facility that captures landfill gas, which is generated as waste decomposes at the landfill. The project upgrades the gas into pipeline quality, renewable natural gas, which is injected into the FortisBC natural gas distribution system adjacent to the site."

The project is the first of its kind on Vancouver Island.

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> "This is a great partnership that brings together local government, a utility provider and a technology provider."

Hartland Landfill, owned and operated by the CRD, generates approximately 10 per cent of the greenhouse gas emissions in the region. RNG production began in 2025 with technology provided by WAGA Energy and the gas connection infrastructure constructed by FortisBC.

"Reducing those emissions through this project represents a significant improvement for the CRD," Robbins notes. It's expected that over the course of 25 years, greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by up to 475,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide, which is equal to the emissions from 105,000 homes.

At full capacity, the facility is designed to produce up to 360,000 gigajoules of RNG each year, the equivalent of over 34 million 5-minute hot showers (based on the FortisBC calculation that one gigajoule of natural gas can heat 95 five-minute hot showers).

"This is a great partnership that brings together local government, a utility provider and a technology provider," Robbins adds. "There's also a strong resource recovery benefit. We're taking a byproduct of waste disposal at the landfill that would otherwise need to be managed and turning that into a locally produced, low-carbon energy resource, which we consider to be a good example of the circular economy approach."

The economic benefits of the project are also significant. The project creates a long-term revenue stream through the sale of RNG, which is purchased by FortisBC. This helps offset the landfill operating costs.

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CONVERTING BIOWASTE TO BIOCHAR

The next generation of greenhouse gas reduction looks like charcoal.

"We're really excited about the biochar project, which is our next step in the treatment of wastewater and the processing of biosolids," explains Robbins.

"The biochar project will utilize an innovative carbonization technology, an addition to the Residuals Treatment Facility at the Hartland Landfill. This technology will transform biosolids, which are the leftover solids from the wastewater treatment process, into a product called biochar, which is a charcoal-like product that will cut the residual volumes in half."

The process destroys contaminants including PFAS and microplastics while locking in carbon that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere. The resulting carbon-rich biochar can be used across several industries including construction and agriculture.

"Once operationalized, it's estimated that 2,500 tonnes of carbon will be sequestered annually, which is equivalent to the emissions saved by removing approximately 600 gas-powered vehicles from the road," Robbins states.

The push for cleaner technology and reducing greenhouse gas emissions is driven by the CRD Board, who several years ago provided direction to explore different ways to manage biosolids.

"After a series of options analyses and procurements, the Board directed staff to pursue the introduction of carbonization technology with a company called PyroCal, which is based in Australia."

The project is in the planning stages and recently received a $7 million boost from the federal government's Build Canada Strong Fund. Robbins adds that the goal is to have the facility operating by 2030, but the timeline is dependent on permitting requirements from the province.

"Because this is new technology for the province, we will be working with regulatory staff to establish new permitting and legislative requirements around the end use of biochar," Robbins adds.

It's expected that this project will be the first of its kind in Canada, and along with the Hartland Landfill RNG facility, will position the regional district as a leader in carbon reduction and resource recovery.

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Collaboration is funding Northwest B.C.'s future

By Cynthia Lockrey



Ron Poole

In 2014, the Northwest B.C. Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA) was created with a common purpose—to secure a funding agreement with the Province of British Columbia to ensure more of the revenue generated by industry in the region stays in the region.

"With 21 local governments involved, including three regional districts (North Coast, Bulkley-Nechako, Kitimat-Stikine), it was important we had a clear and shared focus from the start," explains RBA executive director, Ron Poole. "By focusing on the needs of the region as a whole, versus individual communities, we've seen the completion of more than 250 infrastructure projects since signing the revenue-sharing agreement."

"Since our formation, we've worked closely with the B.C. government to address the unique challenges facing Northwestern B.C. These include securing the revenue needed to build essential community infrastructure that supports responsible resource development, as well as the social infrastructure that makes the northwest a region where industries, businesses, workers and their families can truly thrive."

Poole explains that while there was significant resource development in the northwest, there wasn't the population base to fund the infrastructure needed. This meant the area's small service centres were being burdened with the pressure of paying for infrastructure projects, like roads and community centres, that were being utilized by industry working on projects outside of the tax base.

REGION-WIDE APPROACH

Large industrial assessments outside of affected communities have led to an inequity in taxation. Recognizing the huge burden on communities struggling to handle the growth and impact on infrastructure and services, the RBA takes a big picture approach to the distribution of funds.

The latest five-year funding agreement was signed in 2024, with $50 million per year distributed to 21 local governments using an agreed upon formula. The local governments are also actively working on asset management plans that reflect their individual costs and needs as they relate to the growth from large industrial projects.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RBA

The Northwest B.C. Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA) supports 21 local governments, including three regional districts, by securing infrastructure funding agreements with the provincial government. More than 250 projects have been completed since 2014.

This is a key piece for local governments to be able to keep pace with the scale of development in Northwest B.C., including the creation of a third port to open up the Asian market. In order to support five of Canada's major projects that are deemed to be of national interest, the infrastructure needs couldn't be met without provincial funding.

"By having a clear focus of direction and keeping money generated by industry in our region, I'm able to assist our board in staying united on our collective needs," says Poole.

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ALLIANCE VS. ENTITY

The RBA is not a table that makes decisions on or funds individual projects. Rather, the alliance pulls regional districts and local governments together to secure funding. From there, the province enters into agreements with each local government. They are then responsible for meeting the needs of their individual funding requirements.

"Our table looks at the bigger picture while the local governments focus on the details as they relate to their specific needs," Poole explains.

The RBA board is made up of the elected directors who sit on the three regional district's boards, plus mayors who don't sit on the board.

"To keep the process streamlined, each of the regional districts appoints a member to sit on the RBA steering committee," says Poole. "These three elected individuals guide the direction set by the RBA Committee. The three regional district CAOs sit as advisory to the committee. We've found when meeting with provincial counterparts, having a smaller group is more productive."

Poole also meets with all 21 CAOs on a regular basis. This provides an opportunity to discuss and strategize on direction for the RBA Committee. The process also helps in providing informal discussion to RBA councils and boards prior to a full discussion of the RBA Committee.

"By dealing with it at the CAO level, we're better prepared when presenting to the board," Poole stresses.

COMMUNICATIONS IS KEY

When asked what the key ingredients are to RBA's success, Poole says it all comes down to clear, consistent and transparent communications.

"We have prioritized our website (nwresourcebenefits.ca) as our main communications tool," Poole explains. "This provides one place for the province, industry partners and local governments to view transparent information on the use of RBA funds."

"We're almost halfway through our $250 million funding agreement but have already allocated 80 per cent of the funding. We've also been able to leverage other funding, resulting in $575 million of projects in the works. The website showcases the work underway and is updated regularly."

Letters of support from industry, as well as a breakdown of how the funding is being used, can also be found on the website. This ensures transparency on the use of funds as well as support from industry to grow sustainable northwest communities.

LESSONS LEARNED

In terms of what advice Poole would give other local governments exploring any type of collaboration, he encourages leaders to keep their goals simple. Don't mix it up or overcomplicate it.

"Our goal was a revenue-sharing agreement with the province—full stop," Poole says. "Do what you do best."

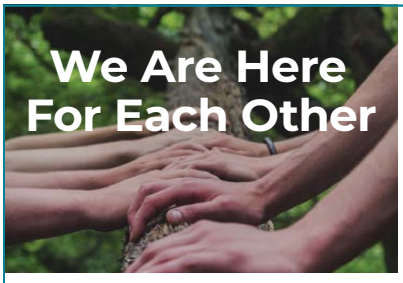
"I often get approached by groups who see information on our website and think we represent the region on other issues. We don't speak on behalf of any regional district or local government."

Due to the geography of the northwest, in-person meetings can be challenging and expensive. But this doesn't discount the value of face-to-face. Instead, gathering more than 150 elected officials together is reserved for major decisions required of the committee.

"I make an effort to orientate new councils and boards on the RBA, explaining who we are and what we are not," Poole stresses. "I need to ensure they focus on the bigger picture so we can continue to be successful."

By staying true to their purpose, the RBA continues to advocate for a strong Northwest B.C.

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> "Reconciliation isn't simply a declaration. It is meant to be practiced, nurtured and revisited continually."

Journey Toward Reconciliation

By Cynthia Lockrey

When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada issued its 94 Calls to Action in 2015, the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) saw the importance of embarking on a journey of building meaningful, respectful and enduring relationships with Indigenous Peoples and First Nations.

This journey began in 2016 with the SLRD becoming a Regional District of Reconciliation—a commitment that recognizes that reconciliation is a long-term process of building trust and strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities.

"This commitment in 2016 was the start, not the end point," explains Heather Paul, CAO of Squamish-Lillooet Regional District. "Reconciliation isn't simply a declaration. It is meant to be practiced, nurtured and revisited continually. With the Board's declaration, the organization knew what their values and goals were. What we needed as a local government was a guide to tell us what that journey looked like and why."

The early concept of this commitment was to build protocol with all the Nations on whose land the regional district sits. However, Paul admits the reality facing them was that the regional district's relationships with many Nations varied from somewhat strong to non-existent.

"The SLRD operates on the territories of several Nations," Paul says. "The relationships changed as leadership changed, which meant we didn't have a consistency of knowledge on a staff or community level. Moving Truth and Reconciliation forward required investments in staff capacity, training and a shared vision for the future."

LISTENING TO LEARN

As the SLRD began to engage more consistently with the Nations, the organization learned that many community groups, local governments and provincial ministries were asking First Nations how they could work together.

They heard that 'we might be interested in working together but we need to get to know each other first', and 'why do we, as a small Nation, have to teach you?'



Heather Paul

"This was powerful learning and aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Actions," says Paul. "There's a lot of work we can do as a local government to educate ourselves without putting the burden on the First Nations."

In developing the SLRD's *Truth & Reconciliation: In Practice* guide, time was spent interviewing representatives from the Nations and having honest discussions to understand the regional district's relationship with each Nation. They learned the hard truth—for the most part, they didn't have great relationships. Decisions were being made that impacted the Nations without due consultation or consideration.

"Through the early feedback we learned that how we framed our engagement and by even calling it a framework, we were boxing ourselves into a square set of declarations," explains Paul. "The definition of reconciliation is different from person to person, community to community and Nation to Nation. This framework became a guide, and it is perpetually evergreen because we recognize that it will need to change as relationships deepen and we learn more."

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RECONCILIATION GUIDE

Recognizing that the regional district was in the early stages of its reconciliation journey, and drawing upon these conversations, the SLRD began working on what would become *Truth and Reconciliation: In Practice—A Guide for Working in a Good Way*.

As the guide was being developed, community-to-community (C2C) gatherings were held that provided additional learnings.

"This was an immersive experience of insight and perspective for both the staff and Board," Paul explains. "It became a circle of conversation sharing hard truths of colonization, residential schools and the *Indian Act*. Indigenous leaders honoured us with their perspectives and the lived experiences of their community."

"The Nations shared that the regional district's first hierarchy shouldn't start with the budget, but rather the responsibility to be in service to the land, people, animals, trees and air. This helped shape our perspective and decision-making."

Paul explained that the SLRD covers over 16,000 square kilometres. While the organization doesn't have the capacity to frequently drive over 16,000 kilometres looking for infractions, it can prioritize how it works with the Nations and make decisions based on shared values.

She believes the guide wouldn't have existed without the honest conversations that happened through the C2C gatherings, funded by UBCM.

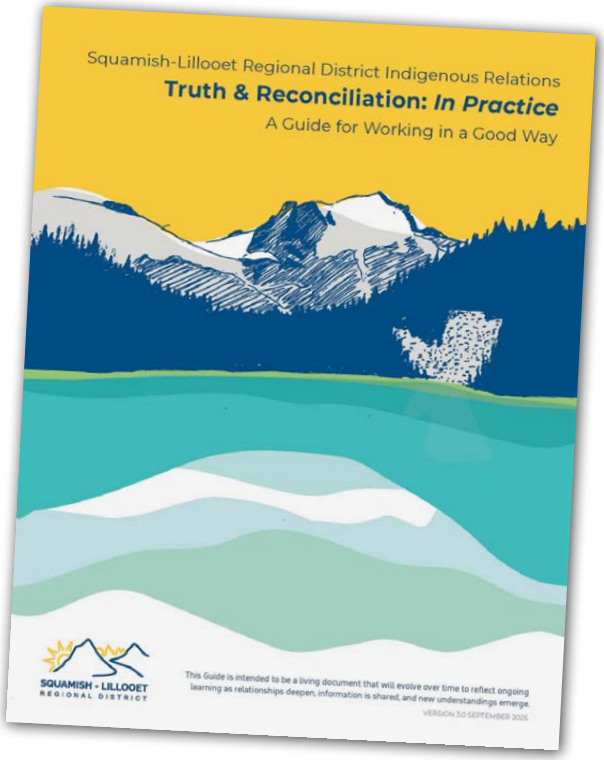
ONGOING COMMITMENT

With the endorsement of the guide by the Board in October 2025, staff and leaders now feel empowered to create strong relationships with the Nations.

"We have made mistakes," Paul admits. "We will keep making mistakes. And we know the only mistake you can truly make is not talking about your mistakes."

Paul stresses that it's a guide, not a policy. It outlines commitments for staff on how they're going to show up.

When the guide was presented to one Nation, the feedback was: "This is great, but how are you going to do this?" Paul adds that the Nation said they would support the district by watching how the guide would help evolve the recommendations and decisions of staff and Board. Paul is grateful that the Board took this feedback seriously and has committed to increasing staffing with a new staff position to lead the work.



Honest discussions and community-to-community gatherings were integral to the development of Squamish-Lillooet Regional District's Truth & Reconciliation guide.

Another positive outcome of the conversations was the creation of a leadership table with several of the First Nations as well as action tables that are working on specific shared priorities.

One example of a shift in process is how the regional district handles referrals to Nations for input. Traditionally, the SLRD provided 30 days for Nations to give its input on a referral. The guide indicates that more effort is needed by staff to get that input.

"We're charging developer fees so we can process their applications, yet we're turning around and asking the Nations to do this for free," Paul says. "It took the guide for us to look at our short-term impacts as well as our long-term vision in an honest light."

Internally, the SLRD continues to undertake extensive staff and Board training and has established a community of practice with representation from each department coming together regularly to share resources, learnings, challenges and ideas.

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AUTHENTIC ADVICE

Paul adds that it's important to find the balance between not engaging with Nations and over-engaging with Nations. There's also a balance between doing the work of understanding reconciliation and not putting the burden on Nations to teach you. Take the time to figure out what your organization needs to learn and its values.

For local governments that want to develop their own guide it's important to continually talk to First Nations through the plan development and implementation.

"Between a declaration to protocol agreement, the guide is a very useful step to outline how we will show up and the lens for how we do this," Paul says. "

Staff's role is to provide fearless advice, and then a loyal execution based on what the Board chooses. The guide has become a critical tool in supporting our advice and recommendations."

"This is how we build trust with our Board and the communities in which we operate. Good relationships can be developed when we prioritize inclusive decision-making, shared governance, and make our best effort to show up authentically and with humility."

❖

tips & tactics

Regional District Resources and Further Reading

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE

- Province of B.C. regional district backgrounder: *bit.ly/3VoiSOK*.

HISTORY AND ANALYSIS

- Bish, Robert L. and Clemens, Eric G. (2008). Local Government in British Columbia, Fourth Edition. *bit.ly/4j45R6G*
- Collier, Robert W. (1972). "The Evolution of Regional Districts in British Columbia," BC Studies, 13(4), 29-39.
- Local Government Knowledge Partnership (2009). *40 Years: A Regional District Retrospective Summary of Proceedings*.

LEGISLATION REFORM

- Regional District Legislation Roadmap, prepared by Don Lidstone. February 28, 2025: *bit.ly/4yV05tj*.

FURTHER READING FROM CASE STUDIES

- Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Indigenous Relations. *Truth & Reconciliation: In Practice, A Guide for Working in a Good Way. bit.ly/4ASmdpl.*
- Capital Regional District. Climate Action Strategy: Renewing climate action for a more affordable and resilient region 2026-2030. *crd.ca/media/file/climate-action-strategy*.
- Northwest B.C. Resource Benefits Alliance: *nwresourcebenefits.ca*.

ASK A MENTOR

By Adrian Paradis



In this regular feature, your questions are answered by local government leaders who share their insights and wisdom. If you have a topic or question you would like a mentor to discuss, please email us at editor@lgma.ca.

GUEST MENTOR GERRY PARKER

Gerry Parker is the Senior Manager of Human Resources at the Sunshine Coast Regional District and an LGMA HR Advisory Committee member. An experienced leader dedicated to employee engagement and supportive organizational cultures, Gerry is also an author and consultant specializing in providing respectful workplace training, conducting investigations, leadership development and collective bargaining.

I have a coworker I constantly disagree with. What's the best way to deal with a coworker you don't get along with?

Focus on two key areas. First, seek to understand their perspective and show that you get it. That takes the wind right out of their sails. Once you can tell their story as well as (or better than) they can, they can stop defending their point. Only then might they become open to listening to yours.

Second, get really clear on what bothered you and why. Usually, one of your core values, such as respect, fairness, or kindness, was missing. If they said something disrespectful, you get to practice your skills. Name it directly (e.g., "In the staff meeting, you called me stupid"). Outline that you felt upset and express your need for respectful communication moving forward. Describe the collaborative working relationship you would like to have and how disrespectful communication gets in the way of that. Keep your request future-focused and be sincere.

Monitor communication in real time, insist upon improved behaviour, and choose what you will and won't accept. Maintain professional boundaries and remember: you get the behaviour that you tolerate.

There is low morale in my workplace and I'm not in a senior management position. How can I begin to change the culture here for the better?

There is a world of difference between control and influence. You might not be in control, but most people underestimate their power to influence those around them. Be the embodiment of respect in the workplace. Practice appreciative inquiry. Believe that positive change can occur and be a vocal champion about it. Spend time with people and get to know them—everybody wants to work in a healthy and positive environment. Highlight the benefits of what you are recommending or encouraging.

Most importantly, remember that leadership is an action, not a position. Put your discretionary energy into what is possible and then nurture it. Roots form and growth happens. That is how it is in nature and what I believe is in our human nature.

What's one piece of advice you wish more employees would take to heart?

You cannot change what happened last year, last month, or yesterday. You can only change what you are doing right now and what you do from this moment forward. That applies to me, to you, and to everyone else.

Become clear on what you truly want in every area of your life and be honest with yourself. Discover and follow your passion and surround yourself with people you enjoy. Move forward with purpose and enthusiasm, share ideas for improvement, celebrate accomplishments, recognize the achievements of others, and praise them publicly. Under-promise and over-deliver, respond sooner than expected, empower others, and trust them.

Right now, you are living the ending to your story; it might as well be amazing!

Ask a Mentor is made possible with the generous support of the Municipal Finance Authority of BC as part of the Sustaining Education Alliance (SEA). SEA recognizes the longstanding relationship between the LGMA and the MFA in advancing the sustainability of British Columbia local governments through the provision of education and professional development opportunities for local government professionals.

MFABC

Volunteer Spotlight

Each issue, we profile an LGMA volunteer who is making an impact in our local government communities.

By Adrian Paradis



VOLUNTEER RON MATTIUSSI

Ron Mattiussi, MCIP, RPP, is a professional planner and former City Manager of the City of Kelowna. With more than four decades of local government experience, he now works with municipalities and regional districts across British Columbia on governance, organizational effectiveness, emergency management and Council–staff relations.

What roles have you filled in local government?

I started my career as a planner for a regional planning commission in Alberta, working with small towns around Edmonton. Over time I became Executive Director of the Commission—covering 19 municipalities and 27 commission members—the equivalent of a CAO role. At 35, some thought I was too naive and inexperienced for how difficult that job would be. Unfortunately, Ralph Klein decided regional planning commissions were no longer needed in Alberta. I wound down the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission, convinced the municipalities to form a new, non-province-funded organization to continue their regional dialogue, then moved to Kelowna as Director of Planning. In 2006 I was appointed City Manager and retired in 2018.

How have you contributed as an LGMA volunteer?

Over the years I've taught many sessions for MATI® Foundations, most recently on Emergency Management. I helped create the MATI® Community Planning and MATI® Successful CAO courses, and I still mentor when needed, along with speaking at LGMA conferences on a variety of topics.

What motivated you to get involved with LGMA as a volunteer?

I truly love my career in local government. Volunteering with LGMA is my way of giving back—sharing my experiences, good and bad, to help people still working in the field.

Can you share a story or highlight from your experience volunteering with LGMA?

There are so many great stories, it's hard to pick just one. One of my best nights was at a UBCM conference, seated with five or six young CAOs, all of whom I had taught.

What is the most fulfilling part of volunteering with LGMA?

The connections you make over the years. I'm still in touch with many of the people I've worked with or taught, even now that I'm retired.

What advice would you give to someone starting their career in local government?

You need a highly honed ability to listen and observe, a great deal of humility, and the ability not to take yourself too seriously. Crises come and go, and over time you realize they're simply part of the environment.

What are your hobbies outside of work?

Ha, CAOs don't have hobbies, we're too busy! Seriously, I never developed many because I was always too busy, which was probably a mistake. Today I enjoy traveling around the province for work, and traveling for fun. I also do genealogical research and I'm currently trying to solve what may be a 1915 murder mystery in Sicily, on behalf of a friend from Turin, Italy.

What famous person from history would you love to have dinner with?

Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann, the French official who supervised the radical renewal of Paris: new boulevards, parks, public works and a rebuilt sewer system. He was appointed by Napoleon III, who later fired him over out-of-control spending and Parisians' fatigue with his years-long projects. Yet we still flock to see the beautiful city he created. I'd love to swap stories with him over a cognac.

MEMBERS PAGE

MEMBER MOVEMENT

James Chandler, CAO, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary. Formerly General Manager, Deputy CAO, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary.

Kevin Dicken, CAO, District of Hope. Formerly Director of Operations, Deputy CAO, District of Hope.

Tyler Madsen, CAO, District of Lillooet. Formerly Director of Operational Services, Town of Osoyoos.

Joe McCulloch, CAO, Town of Oliver. Formerly CAO, District of Lillooet.

Lavinia McElwee, Policy & Systems Specialist, Tobacco Plains Indian Band. Formerly Corporate Officer, City of Fernie.

Spring Quin, Manager of Asset Management, City of Courtenay. Formerly Engineering Technician III, City of Campbell River.

Heather Rohrlack, Assistant Manager, Communications & Engagement, City of Port Moody. Formerly Marketing Services Manager, City of Burnaby.

Tyson Schofield, CAO, District of Port Edward. Formerly Manager of External Relations, City of Delta.

Dean Trumbley, CAO, District of Houston. Formerly CAO, City of Greenwood.

RETIREMENTS

Mark Andison, CAO, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary.

2026 & 2027 LGMA EVENTS & PROGRAMS

2026 Connect Lunch Series (Online)

October 29
Communications Connect

November 13
CAO Connect

2026 Events & Programs

November 4-6
Admin Professionals Conference
Delta Victoria Ocean Pointe Resort, Victoria

November 25-27
Corporate Officer Forum
Westin Wall Centre, Richmond

On-Demand Courses (Online) – Ongoing

Elections Training on Demand

Freedom of Information Fundamentals

Records and Information Management Fundamentals

Protection and Privacy Fundamentals

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility

Ethics in Local Government

2027 Connect Lunch Series (Online)

February 3, April 20, September 15
Corporate Officer Connect Lunch Series

February 8, November 8
HR Connect Lunch Series

April 1, October 28
Communications Connect Lunch Series

April 9, November 5
CAO Connect Lunch Series

2027 Events & Programs

January 26- March 9
Corporate Officer Fundamentals
Online

January 27, Feb 3, 10
Bylaw Drafting
Online

February 16-18
CAO Forum
Delta Victoria Ocean Pointe Resort, Victoria

2027 PARTNER EVENTS

January 13-February 5
LGLA Elected Officials Series
Various dates / places in B.C.

Additional 2027 program dates will be announced in late 2026. Learn more about these and other opportunities at *lgma.ca/programs-training*.

Darlene Morgan recognized with national IPAC Award

By Ron Poole

In early October, Darlene Morgan, CAO for Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government, received the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) Award for Established Leaders.

This award recognizes leaders in public administration throughout the country who have made substantive achievements in their role over many years, and whose work has made a significant impact to the public interest.

These individuals also reflect the ideals of public administration, possessing confidence and trust in their respective field.

Darlene is a well-known leader and mentor who has been instrumental in the promotion of excellence in local government management in B.C. She has been a catalyst to build relationships with local First Nations. Her influence has been felt throughout this province.

A residential school survivor, Darlene's moral principles are vested in the care she has for her people, her staff and in helping those around her. As she enters her 55th year in First Nations governance, Darlene shows no sign of slowing down.

Because of her dedication, IPAC recognizes her achievements by honouring her with this award.



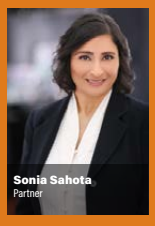
Darlene Morgan (third from left) and staff at the Ottawa IPAC symposium.

Darlene was joined at the Ottawa Symposium by family, staff and friends privileged to be in attendance.

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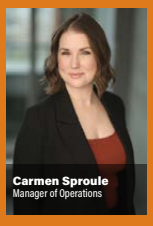


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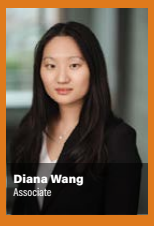

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