

# 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN





# OUR REGION. OUR FUTURE.

The Kitimat-Stikine, located in Northwestern BC, is a geographically vast region with an abundance of natural resources that support a robust economy and provide a spectacular setting for those who reside here and for those who come to visit. The rich First Nations history and the pioneering spirit of those who settled in this region continues to influence the independence, perseverance, and diversity of our communities.

As we look to the future, we envision a diverse and stable economy that supports a high quality of life for our citizens and a resource benefits agreement that will ensure our communities are financially and environmentally sustainable.

Other primary goals include ensuring health and social services are readily accessible, housing is affordable, communities are connected by telecommunications and transportation infrastructure and our residents have access to the municipal services they require. Families and workers are staying and thriving in their communities and seniors have the supports necessary to age comfortably where they reside.

# Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine

- Locality
- Designated Place
- Highway
- - - Ferry
- Reserve
- Municipality
- Electoral Area



Prepared by GeoBC  
Date: February 8, 2021

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# OVERVIEW

## Our Role

The Regional District of Kitimat Stikine (RDKS) provides a range of municipal services to 37,000 residents over an area of 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> in northwestern British Columbia. As the second largest regional district in British Columbia, member jurisdictions include 6 electoral areas and the municipalities of Kitimat, Terrace, Stewart, Hazelton, and New Hazelton. The RDKS lies within the traditional territories of the Nisga'a, Gitksan, Wet'suwet'en, Haisla, Tsimshian, Heiltsuk and Tahltan Nations.

The Regional District administers over 52 separate functions such as rural land use planning, community water and wastewater systems, fire protection, libraries, emergency preparedness, solid waste services, dog control, recreation facilities and parks.

As a regional government, our strength lies in working together for the benefit of the entire region, speaking with a united voice, and advocating for the needs of our residents and communities. We respect and appreciate our relationships with our First Nations neighbours, and we strive for a more inclusive governance structure that embodies the values and interests of treaty and non-treaty First Nations in the region.

## Our Commitments

As we fulfill our roles and responsibilities as a regional government, we will:

- Represent our constituents in a professional manner
- Collaborate with First Nations, our partners and other levels of government
- Consider all points of view in our decision-making
- Be fiscally responsible with taxpayer's money
- Provide opportunities for residents to stay informed
- Support and respect our staff and colleagues
- Provide a positive and supportive work environment for our staff

## Purpose of Plan

The purpose of this strategic plan is to foster a common understanding of the issues facing the region and establish a strategic approach to addressing our most important opportunities and challenges. The strategic plan will guide the allocation of financial and human resources, provide clear direction to staff and align decisions and policies of the Board with our vision for the future. It will also enable us to track and measure our progress and success over time and report to our citizens and stakeholders.



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Back row: L-R Bruce Bidgood (Area C), Dave Brocklebank, (Area D), Ted Ramsey (Area E), Sean Bujtas (Terrace), Tina Etzerza (Area F), Eric Nyce (Area A), Chair Phil Germuth (Kitimat)  
Front row: L-R Gail Lowry (New Hazelton), Julie Maitland (Hazelton), James Cordeiro (Terrace) Angela Brand Danuser (Stewart), Cyra Yunkws (Area B)

On behalf of the Board of the RDKS, I am pleased to present our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. This document outlines the Board's shared perspectives on the direction for our region's future. This plan will help guide the RDKS and provide the basis for informed and directed decision making. The plan ensures collaboration with staff and the community to accomplish shared goals.

Over the next 4 years the Board will be working towards:

- Ensuring the RDKS is open and transparent and operates to the highest standards in accordance with applicable regulations, requirements, and best practices.
- Delivering all regional district services and infrastructure in a sustainable, cost-effective manner.
- Advancing our commitments to reconciliation through First Nations participation in regional governance, partnerships, and collaboration.

- Advancing a collective voice that represents the interest of the region to the Provincial and Federal Governments and other governmental agencies responsible for providing services in our region.

In the plan you will see that the Board has identified 4 key objectives to guide the organization in a focused direction. We are committed to the values of financial stability, community engagement, transparency and accountability in our processes and decision-making to be successful.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis and revised as needed. We want flexibility to address the growing needs that our region will face in the future. Our commitment is towards sustainability to pass on a healthy and vibrant region for future generations to enjoy.

-Phil Germuth, Board Chair



# STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

**1 Organizational  
Effectiveness**



**2 Sustainable  
Service Delivery**



**3 Governance and  
Partnerships with First  
Nations**



**4 Advocacy**





## Strategic Focus Area 1

# Organizational Effectiveness

**Goal** To ensure that the Regional District is open and transparent and operates to the highest standards, in accordance with applicable regulations, requirements and best practices.

**Why** The delivery of regional district services is multi-faceted and complex. It is important that our citizens understand and have confidence in what we do and that our administrative functions are effective, compliant and responsive.

Strategies	Actions	Target
1.1 Bylaws and Policies	Review and update policies and bylaws to ensure they reflect current standards and best practice and are effective in achieving their objectives. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Departments to identify and prioritize policy gaps</li> <li>ii. Develop strategy and implement process for updating policies/bylaws</li> </ol>	
1.2 Records Management	Take measures to address recommendations of records management review. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Advance the implementation of LGMA records framework</li> <li>ii. Investigate/acquire appropriate electronic records management system</li> </ol>	
1.3 Public Engagement Policy	Develop a comprehensive policy to guide engagement and communications activities of the RDKS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Research and develop policies to guide the use of social media</li> <li>ii. Research and implement a public engagement policy and framework</li> </ol>	





## Strategic Focus Area 2

# Sustainable Service Delivery

**Goal** To deliver all regional district services and infrastructure in a sustainable, cost-effective manner.

**Why** The costs to deliver regional district services and infrastructure are directly borne by the citizens and property owners who benefit from the services. As such, we have a duty to plan for, and manage our services and infrastructure in a manner that ensures long term viability, reliability and affordability for our citizens and communities.

Strategies	Actions	Target
2.1 Asset Management	<p>Advance the development of a corporate asset management program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Research and develop a corporate asset management policy</li> <li>ii. Prepare financial models and strategies for major assets to support budget decisions</li> </ul>	
2.2 Sustainable Funding	<p>Develop financial planning tools/approaches to ensure sufficient and predictable funding for services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Develop and implement an operating reserve policy to guide the establishment of appropriate reserves, relative to future risks</li> <li>ii. Develop and implement a capital reserve policy to establish appropriate capital reserves in order to achieve asset management objectives</li> </ul>	
2.3 Climate Adaptation	<p>Enhance climate change knowledge and understanding to inform and guide future adaptation strategies and measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Research, apply for funding or partner with others to undertake down-scale climate change projections for region</li> <li>ii. Research and apply for funding or partner with others to undertake climate change vulnerability/risk assessment</li> </ul>	
2.4 Establishing and Acquiring New Services	<p>Develop a process for reviewing the potential to offer a new service or acquire existing utilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Develop a policy to guide and establish standards for the RDKS acquisition of water and wastewater systems</li> </ul>	





## Strategic Focus Area 3

## Governance and Partnerships with First Nations

**Goal** To advance our commitments to reconciliation through First Nations participation in regional governance, partnerships and collaboration.

**Why** We are stronger as a region when we work together. Collaborating and partnering with First Nations governments will serve to strengthen our understandings and relationships, enhance the effectiveness of our services and programs and set examples for others to follow.

Strategies	Actions	Target
3.1 First Nations Governance	Advance First Nations governance and participation opportunities with RDKS Board and committee. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Fully implement Treaty First Nation Membership Framework and Associate Member provision of the Procedures Bylaw</li> </ol>	
3.2 Truth and Reconciliation Commission, UNDRIP and BCDRIPA	Understand and fulfill local government responsibilities and opportunities to advance reconciliation with First Nations. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Undertake orientation and training for staff and Board with respect to TRCC and UNDRIP and BCDRIPA</li> <li>ii. Develop long-term action plan to address TRCC, UNDRIP and BCDRIPA recommendations and obligations</li> </ol>	





## Strategic Focus Area 4

# Advocacy

**Goal** To advance a collective voice that represents the interests of the region to the Provincial and Federal governments and other governmental agencies responsible for providing services in our region.

**Why** It is important that the region's interests are clearly stated and that we take every opportunity to influence the policies and practices of senior government that impact our residents and our communities.

Topic	Message	Audience
4.1 Resource Benefit Alliance	Importance of completing the resource benefits agreement for the region.	Province, RBA
4.2 Broadband and Cellular Connectivity	Importance of ensuring broadband and cellular connectivity for economic development and public safety	NCLGA/UBCM, Province, Universal Broadband Fund, ISPs/Telecom Companies
4.3 Mental Health and Addictions	Impacts of mental health and addictions of communities; support, funding and strategies for collaborative approaches	NCLGA/UBCM, Province
4.4 Advocacy for First Nations	Need for consistency in achieving Reconciliation and Collaborative Governance; safe water supplies for FN communities; housing needs	NCLGA/UBCM, Province, Indigenous Services Canada
4.5 Upper Skeena Recreation Centre Funding	Need for sustainable funding model for much needed community infrastructure	Province, Federal Government, Industry



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Regional District of  
**Kitimat-Stikine**



