

2023-2024 Annual Report

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

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Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

The Regional District of Nanaimo respectfully acknowledges the Coast Salish First Nations on whose traditional territory the Regional District of Nanaimo is located. We acknowledge with respect that for thousands of years the Coast Salish Nations have been deeply connected to the territories where we now have the honour to live and work.

Executive Summary

The 2023-2024 edition of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Annual Report evaluates the progress made in 2023 and 2024 toward advancing the 11 goals set out in the Regional Growth Strategy: Shaping our Future (RDN 2011). The RGS is the regional federation's shared vision to guide growth grounded in sustainability principles. Integrated through the RGS goals and policies, these principles create a framework for decision-making. Progress toward these goals is measured by both qualitative and quantitative data provided by the RDN, the member municipalities and multiple external agencies, with data from previous years providing the baseline for this report. Qualitative data on initiatives related to the RGS goals was provided by member municipalities (except the City of Parksville and the Town of Qualicum Beach) in 2024. Given the priority of meeting provincial housing legislation requirements for local governments with limited resources, qualitative data on initiatives for 2023 was not requested from member municipalities.

In 2023 and 2024, progress toward the RGS Goals varied with many indicators showing signs of improved progress toward the RGS Goals. Of the 22 indicators, 12 showed positive progress, five remained stable and five moved away from the regional targets. Notably, Indicators #1 to #3 of Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption (Goal 1) had not been reported on between 2012 and 2022 as data was unavailable from the Province of B.C. The RDN has since been able to gather data on these indicators and report on progress toward Goal 1 for 2023 and 2024. The 2023-2024 indicators moving towards the target include reductions in non-renewable energy and water use, increased protected lands, improved proximity to services, rising transit use, and concentrated growth and density within Growth Containment Boundaries (GCBs). Land use diversity, housing type variety, and parkland expansion also show positive trends. Indicators remaining stable include surface water quality, the number of parcels with Farm Status, Private Managed Forest Land, employment rates, and trail length per capita. These areas show consistency but require ongoing monitoring. Indicators moving away from the target include rising greenhouse gas emissions, increased total energy use, declining rental affordability, growing waste disposal rates, and rising water and sewer service costs. These trends highlight areas needing focused intervention to realign with RGS goals.

SUMMARY OF APPROACH

The RGS Annual Report and monitoring program reviews the progress the RDN and member municipalities have made toward achieving the RGS goals. Twenty-two indicators measure progress toward achieving the 11 RGS Goals. Analyzed yearly, quantitative and qualitative data determine progress and emerging trends. The analysis of the indicators provides valuable insight into opportunities for improvement, while recognizing areas of success.

MOVING TOWARDS TARGET

- Goal 1: Indicator #2 – Per capita non-renewable energy use. Per capita non-renewable energy use is 11 per cent lower in the RDN compared to the baseline year of 2007, but one per cent higher than in 2023. The decarbonization of the provincial electricity grid has driven large decreases since the 2007 baseline year.

- Goal 2: Indicator #4 – Total water consumption. In the RDN water service areas, total water consumption has decreased by 16 per cent since 2004, and per capita water consumption has declined by 36 per cent, exceeding the original target. Although there are year-to-year fluctuations—such as a 13 per cent increase in 2023 followed by a 17 per cent decrease in 2024—these variations are largely attributed to weather patterns and do not detract from the overall downward trend. In the City of Nanaimo, water use continued to decline in 2024, with both total and residential per capita consumption reaching their lowest levels since 2009, despite population growth.

- Goal 2: Indicator #6 – Amount of land in protected areas. Since 2019, the total amount of protected land in the region has grown by nearly 15 per cent, reflecting steady progress. In 2023, the region saw a significant increase of 282 hectares, largely due to mapping revisions in the City of Nanaimo and a small adjustment in Electoral Area A. In 2024, the trend continued with a modest increase of six hectares, including a five-hectare gain in Parksville and one hectare in Nanaimo. Although some areas, such as the Electoral Areas and Lantzville, remained stable during this period, the overall regional total rose to 7,248 hectares. These increases, even when modest, demonstrate ongoing efforts to expand protected areas and support the RGS goal of environmental protection.

- Goal 3: Indicator #7 – Number of households within a set distance (400 m) of employment lands, shopping, schools, transit and recreation facilities. Between 2022 and 2023, the region saw a 2.33 per cent increase in households within proximity to services, followed by a larger 3.65 per cent increase between 2023 and 2024, bringing the total to 4,968 households. Since 2019, this number has grown by 12.5 per cent, indicating steady progress. The City of Nanaimo has shown strong leadership in advancing this goal, with significant increases in proximity across all service categories. Parksville has also demonstrated consistent growth, while Lantzville's results are mixed, showing a slight decline in proximity to employment lands. The Electoral Areas have made modest gains.

- Goal 3: Indicator #8 – Per capita transit use. While ridership has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, it has shown consistent recovery since 2021. In 2023, the region recorded 3,131,670 total transit rides and 24.93 rides per capita. This upward trend continued into 2024, with 3,581,870 total rides and 27.76 rides per capita, marking a significant year-over-year increase. Overall, the region has demonstrated positive progress toward its target of increasing per capita transit use, with a cumulative increase of 7.43 rides per capita since the baseline year in 2025.

- Goal 4: Indicator #9 – Population inside and outside the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB). Between 2022 and 2024, the region made strong progress toward the RGS target of increasing the proportion of the population living within the GCBs. The population inside the GCBs rose from 143,880 in 2023 to 153,783 in 2024—an increase of 6,453 people—while the population outside the GCBs declined. This shift reflects a clear trend toward concentrating growth in designated urban areas, particularly in the City of Nanaimo, which accounted for the majority of the increase. The continued growth within GCBs supports the RGS vision of compact, complete communities and enables more efficient delivery of regional services.

- Goal 4: Indicator #10 – Density of dwelling units inside and outside the GCB. Between 2022 and 2024, residential density within GCBs increased across the region. The City of Nanaimo led this trend with an 8.55 per cent rise in dwellings per hectare, while Parksville and Lantzville saw gains of 11.4 per cent and 3.23 per cent, respectively. Density outside the GCBs remained low and stable, and the Electoral Areas experienced a slight increase of 0.03 units per hectare. These patterns indicate that most new developments are occurring within areas where

infrastructure and services can be delivered more efficiently, reflecting steady progress toward the RGS vision.

- Goal 4: Indicator #11 – Diversity of land use (ratio) inside the GCB. The ideal land use mix to support complete, compact communities, identified in the Rural Village Centre Study (2013), is 10 to 15 per cent public uses, 10 to 40 per cent commercial and employment uses and 50 to 80 per cent for residential uses. Most jurisdictions are maintaining or gradually improving land use diversity within GCBs, with Nanaimo showing a balanced increase in residential, recreational, and institutional land, and a rebound in mixed-use areas. Parksville has maintained a stable and well-balanced mix, while Lantzville's sharp rise in residential land to 92% suggests a need for more diverse land uses to support complete communities. The Electoral Areas continue to align with the recommended mix for Rural Village Centres. Overall, the region is trending toward more compact and complete communities, supporting proximity to services and the RGS objective.

- Goal 5: Indicator #12 – The number of new lots/units created through subdivision inside and outside the GCB. In 2024, 98 per cent of new residential lots and units were created within GCBs, continuing a strong trend of compact, contained growth. This marks a significant increase from 2019, when only 93 per cent of development occurred within GCBs. Despite a 47.5 per cent drop in total new development from 2023 to 2024, the consistent concentration of growth within designated urban areas reflects alignment with the region's long-term growth management goals.

- Goal 6: Indicator #16 – The portion of units in each housing type inside the GCB (diversity of housing types). The region has seen consistent growth in apartment and ground-oriented dwellings, particularly in the cities of Nanaimo and Parksville. Nanaimo added 631 apartment units in 2024 (a 13 per cent increase from 2023), along with significant gains in other dwelling types. Parksville also saw steady apartment growth, and the Electoral Areas increased apartment units from 52 to 91. Although Lantzville remained stable, the overall trend reflects a shift toward more compact, diverse housing forms within the GCBs, supporting the RGS goal of increasing non-single-detached dwellings inside the GCBs.

- Goal 9: Indicator #18 – Amount of publicly owned land designated for parks and community use (including land in protected areas, community use parks, and recreational facilities such as pools and ice rinks). Between 2019 and 2024, the region added 402 hectares of publicly owned park and community land, growing from 6,085 to 6,487 hectares. The most significant increase occurred in 2023, largely due to updated mapping in the City of Nanaimo, with continued growth in 2024 through modest additions in Parksville and the Electoral Areas. These consistent gains reflect steady progress toward the RGS goal of expanding access to green space and recreational opportunities.

- Goal 10: Indicator #22 – Per capita length of roads. Between 2019 and 2024, the overall regional average length of road declined from 11.81 metres per person to 10.97 metres per person, indicating a gradual improvement in land use efficiency. Although there were slight increases in 2023 and 2024, the general trend over the five-year period is downward. The City of Nanaimo maintained a consistently low and stable road length per capita, decreasing from 6.3 metres in 2019 to 5.8 metres in 2024. Parksville also showed improvement, dropping from 7.75 to 6.71 metres per person, despite a small rise in 2023. Lantzville's figures remained relatively stable, with a modest decrease from 16.89 to 16.43 metres per person, and the Electoral Areas demonstrated the most significant reduction, from 25.40 to 23.47 metres per person. These patterns suggest that, despite some year-to-year fluctuations, the region is steadily moving toward its goal of reducing road length per capita through more compact and efficient development.

MAINTAINING TARGET (STABLE)

- Goal 2: Indicator #5 – Surface water quality (community watershed monitoring). Between 2019 and 2024, the surface water quality remains relatively stable with signs of improvement in some parameters. While turbidity compliance declined slightly in 2024, temperature and dissolved oxygen indicators showed strong recovery, both surpassing earlier years. These improvements suggest that, despite variability due to weather and seasonal conditions, coordinated monitoring and stewardship efforts are contributing to better water quality outcomes in the region. In 2024, the Community Watershed Monitoring Network program expanded to include 73 sampling sites across 45 streams in 30 different watersheds.

- Goal 5: Indicator #13 — Number of parcels with Farm Status. The number of parcels with BC Assessment Farm Status is known to fluctuate annually due to the biennial application cycle. In 2023, the region saw a net increase of 15 parcels with farm status, with the most significant growth occurring in the Electoral Areas. The target to increase the proportion of lands being actively farmed is remaining relatively stable, as the number of parcels with Farm Status has shown only minor fluctuations and remains close to its previous peak, indicating consistent agricultural activity across the region. Overall, the total number of parcels with Farm Status peaked in 2023, rising from 680 in 2022 to 695 in 2023.

- Goal 5: Indicator #14 – The amount of land classified as Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL). Between 2019 and 2024, the amount of land classified as Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) in the region has experienced a slight overall decline, with a notable drop of 285 hectares in 2023, primarily within the Electoral Areas. Although the total PMFL area remained relatively stable in 2024 at 132,496 hectares—just one hectare more than the previous year—the continued minor reductions in the Electoral Areas suggest ongoing pressure to convert forested lands to other uses. Given this trend, the indicator is remaining relatively stable, but with signs that it could be moving away from the target if land conversion continues. Continued monitoring will be essential to ensure alignment with the RGS goal of preserving land for natural resource use.

- Goal 7: Indicator #17 – [Unemployment] employment rate and labour force participation. Based on the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey and the total Nanaimo Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), the target to maintain an unemployment rate between three and six per cent and increase labour force participation is remaining relatively stable. The unemployment rate has consistently stayed within the target range, improving from a pandemic high of six per cent in 2020 to 3.2 per cent in 2024. Labour force participation rose steadily from 62.3 per cent in 2021 to a peak of 68.4 per cent in 2023, before a slight decline to 67.7 per cent in 2024. While the employment rate dropped in 2024, the overall indicators suggest continued economic resilience with some fluctuations that warrant monitoring.

- Goal 9: Indicator #19 – Per capita length of maintained trails (including trails, paths and laneways). From 2019 to 2024, the per capita trail length declined slightly from 2.59 to 2.43 metres per person, primarily due to a net loss of trail length in the City of Nanaimo, which

adjusted its reporting methodology. While there was a dip in 2023, the modest increase in 2024—driven by new trail development in the Electoral Areas—suggests ongoing efforts to expand trail infrastructure. However, the overall trend does not yet show consistent improvement, indicating that while progress is being made in some areas, regional trail availability per capita has not significantly increased.

MOVING AWAY FROM TARGET

- Goal 1: Indicator #1 — Total community greenhouse gas emissions. Greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) generated within the RDN have increased by 18.6 per cent compared to the 2007 baseline year, moving away from the target of reducing GHGs to 33 per cent of 2007 levels by 2020 and 80 per cent by 2050. Approximately 40 per cent of this increase in emissions is caused by transportation.

- Goal 1: Indicator #3 — Total community energy use. Total community energy use in the RDN in 2023 increased 17 per cent since 2007 and two per cent higher than in 2023. This rate of change is lower than the pace of population growth during that time, which means that in the RDN, less energy is being used per person now than in 2007.

- Goal 6: Indicator #15 – The total number of rental units affordable to households with incomes below 50 per cent of the median for the region. In 2024, the number of renter households above or equal to the Affordable Rent Threshold (ART) rose to 6,233, an increase of 527 households (~9 per cent) from 2023 and 2,356 households (~60 per cent), since 2019, reflecting a continued decline in affordability. In 2024, 93.6 per cent of renter households were spending more than 30 per cent of their income on housing. Despite some growth in affordable rental apartments, the overall trend shows declining affordability, with housing costs continuing to outpace income growth—moving the region further from its goal of ensuring appropriate and affordable housing for low-income households.

- Goal 10: Indicator #20 – Per capita waste disposal. Since 2016, the region has consistently exceeded the target, and waste disposal has increased significantly in recent years. In 2023, per capita waste disposal peaked at 455 kg/person, and in 2024 it rose further to 494 kg/person—over 40 per cent higher than the target. Like many regions across BC and Canada, the RDN experienced rapid and sustained economic growth in the post-pandemic period, driven in part

by historically low interest rates. This growth led to a significant increase in waste volumes. This upward trend is driven by factors such as post-pandemic economic growth, increased housing activity, and rising consumer waste, particularly from packaging. Despite improvements in reporting and tracking, the region is currently not meeting its waste reduction goal.

- Goal 10: Indicator #21 – Per capita cost to provide water and sewer systems. Between 2019 and 2024, costs have generally increased across the region. In 2023, all areas saw notable rises, with the City of Nanaimo's water costs increasing by 41.5 per cent and the Electoral Areas experiencing increases of 11.7 per cent for water and 9.3 per cent for sewer. Although Nanaimo saw a slight decrease in both water (−3.17 per cent) and sewer (−1.71 per cent) costs in 2024, these remain significantly higher than previous years. Regional wastewater costs also rose steadily, reaching $153/person in 2024. Overall, inflation and rising operational expenses have driven costs upward, indicating a trend away from the RGS target.



1. Background

1.1 Overview

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)[1] is a long-term strategic plan adopted by the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board to promote a more sustainable approach to population growth and development over a 20-year period. The RGS focuses on directing most new development within designated Growth Containment Boundaries (GCBs). This approach helps to maintain compact urban areas, preserve the integrity of rural and resource lands, protect the environment, enhance service efficiency and ensure regional mobility.

The RGS reflects a shared commitment by the RDN and its member municipalities to take actionable steps toward improving the quality of life for current and future residents. This commitment includes accountability to residents, ensuring transparency in how the RGS is implemented and tracking progress toward its goals.

1.2 Role & Purpose

The purpose of the RGS is to:

> *"promote human settlement that is socially, economically and environmentally healthy and that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, land and other resources".*

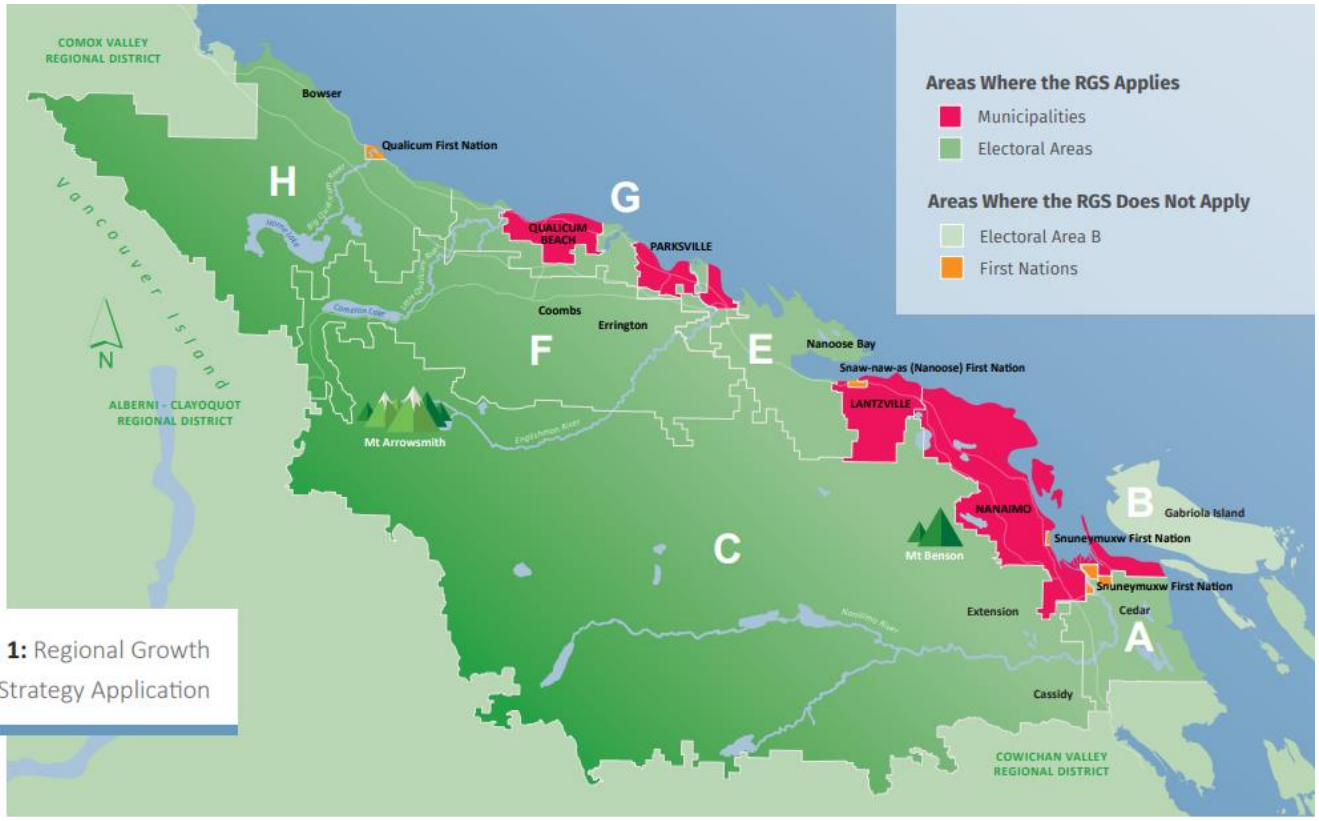
The RGS is a coordinated plan to manage growth in the region in a sustainable manner.

Adopted in 1997, the first RGS was a response to residents' concerns about the impacts of rapid population growth and development in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Given the impacts of growth across jurisdictional boundaries, it was recognized that a

[1] On November 22, 2011, the RDN Board adopted "Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1615". This bylaw replaced the 2003 Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and represents the second time the RGS has been fully reviewed and updated since it was first adopted in 1997.

coordinated approach to community planning was necessary to effectively address growth management issues.

The RGS provides a framework for member municipalities and the RDN to address growth management issues that cross local government boundaries. The RGS also provides a mechanism to connect with provincial ministries and agencies with jurisdiction in areas that impact land use and community planning, and whose resources are needed to implement projects and programs. Inter-jurisdictional coordination is essential to protecting our environment and achieving a high quality of life for present and future residents in the region.

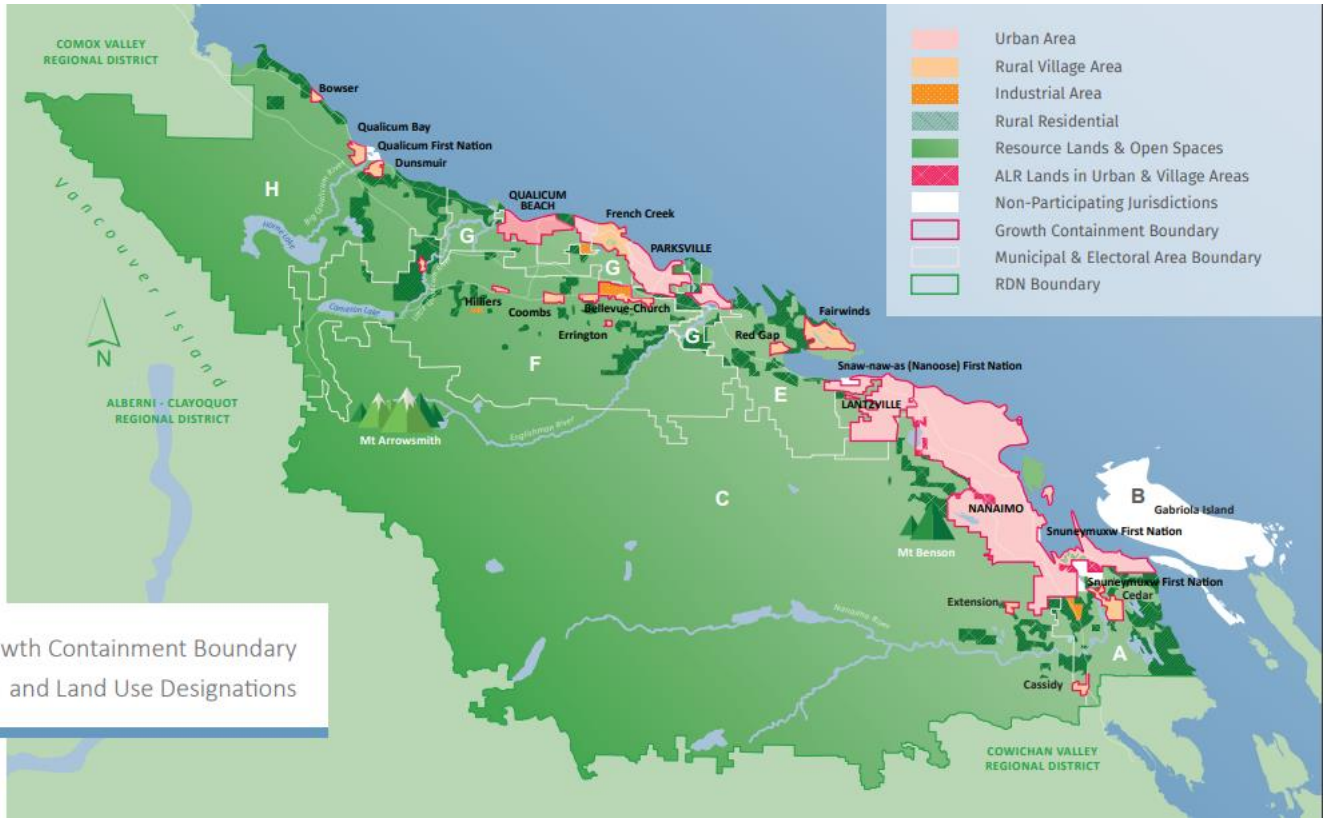


Map 1: Regional Growth Strategy Application

The RGS applies to six electoral areas and four municipalities within the region, as illustrated in Map 1. However, it does not apply to Gabriola, De Courcy, and Mudge Islands (Electoral Area B), which fall under the jurisdiction of the Islands Trust. Additionally, the RGS does not apply to lands under the jurisdiction of First Nations, including the Qualicum First Nation, Snaw-Naw-As, and Snuneymuxw.

The RGS delineates a Growth Containment Boundary (GCB), seen on Map 2, to distinguish areas designated for future growth from those prioritized for environmental protection and resource conservation. Urban Areas within municipalities are intended to accommodate most of the region's future growth. In RDN Electoral Areas, Rural Village Areas are designated for lower levels of growth to align with their rural character.

Development within the GCBs, including Urban and Rural Village Areas, aims to provide diverse spaces for living, working, learning, shopping, and recreation. These areas may also include conserved lands to support ecosystem functions or green space needs. In contrast, land outside the GCB is intended to sustain ecosystem functions and rural activities that require minimal infrastructure and services.



Map 2: Growth Containment Boundary and Land Use Designations

1.3 Vision

The region will be recognized for an outstanding quality of urban and rural life grounded in a strong commitment to protecting the natural environment and minimizing harm to

life-sustaining ecological systems. Working in partnership with interested organizations, the RDN and its member municipalities are committed to achieving:

- High standards of environmental protection that preserve habitat, enhance ecological diversity, and maintain air and water quality;
- Enhanced food security in the region;
- Urban development that is contained and distinct in form and character from rural development;
- Complete, compact communities designed to provide housing that meets the needs of all households and that provides excellent access to nearby workplaces, goods and services, learning institutions, recreation opportunities and natural areas;
- Expansion and enhancement of mobility options that reduce automobile dependency;
- A strong and resilient economy based on agriculture, natural resource assets, tourism and information industries and services such as health and education; and
- Efficient, state-of-the-art servicing, infrastructure, and resource utilization.

1.4 Principles

Intended to guide decisions regarding the future life of the region, the goals and policies of the RGS are grounded in the following sustainability principles:

- Decisions and actions have regard for local and global consequences.
- The interconnectedness and interdependence of natural and human systems are recognized and respected.
- The healthy functioning of ecological systems is nurtured.
- The qualities of place that create pride and a sense of community are nurtured.
- Efficiency, including the concept of zero-waste, is optimized.
- Equity amongst all citizens and across generations, including future generations, is ensured.
- Decision-making processes are based on participation, collaboration and cooperation with citizens, other authorities, and organizations.
- We are accountable for our decisions and actions.

1.5 Goals, Indicators & Targets

The RGS is guided by 11 goals designed to advance the collective vision of regional sustainability. These goals are supported by policies that outline specific actions to achieve them. In January 2015, the RDN Board finalized a list of 22 indicators and associated targets to measure progress. Indicators and targets are closely connected: indicators provide insight into whether the outcomes of actions align with achieving the target, while targets define specific measurable results to be achieved over time within social, cultural, economic or environmental systems.

Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change and Reduce Energy Consumption

Indicator	Target
#1 Total community greenhouse gas emissions	- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions 33% below 2007 levels by 2020 and 80% by 2050
#2 Per capita non-renewable energy use	- Reduce per capita energy use
#3 Total community energy use	- Reduce total energy use

Goal 2: Protect the Environment

Indicator	Target
#4 Total water consumption	- Reduce water consumption- decrease the average residential and commercial water use by 33% between 2004 and 2018.
#5 Surface water quality	- Improve surface water quality
#6 Amount of land in protected areas	- Increase amount of land in protected areas

Goal 3: Coordinate Land Use and Mobility

Indicator	Target
#7 Number of households within a set distance of employment lands, shopping, schools, transit and recreation facilities	- Increase the number of households living within close proximity to places to work, play, learn and shop
#8 Per capita transit use	- Increase per capita transit use

Goal 4: Concentrate Housing and Jobs in Rural Village and Urban Growth Centres

Indicator	Target
#9 Population inside and outside the GCB	- Increase the proportion of the population living within the GCB
#10 Density of dwelling units inside and outside the GCB	- Increase the density of dwelling units within the GCB
#11 Diversity of land use (ratio) inside the GCB	- Increase the land use diversity inside the GCB

Goal 5: Enhance Rural Integrity

Indicator	Target
#12 The number of new lots/units created through subdivision inside and outside the GCB	- Increase the proportion of development inside the GCB
#13 Number of parcels with Farm Status	- Increase the number of parcels with Farm Status
#14 The amount of land classified as Private Managed Forest Land	- Increase the amount of land available for natural resource uses

Goal 6: Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing

Indicator	Target
#15 The total number of rental units affordable to households with income below 50% of the median income for the region	- Increase the proportion of households living in housing that meets their needs
#16 The portion of units in each housing type inside the GCB	- Increase the portion of non-single-family dwellings inside the GCB

Goal 7: Enhance Economic Resiliency

Indicator	Target
#17 [Unemployment] Employment rate and labour participation rate	- Maintain an unemployment rate between 3 – 6% and increase the labour force participation rate

Goal 8: Enhance Food Security

Indicator	Target
Number of parcels with Farm Status	- Increase the number of parcels with Farm Status

Goal 9: Pride of Place

Indicator	Target
#18 The amount of publicly owned land designated for parks and community use	- Increase the amount of land for parks and recreational facilities
#19 Per capita length of maintained public trails	- Increase the per capita length of maintained trails

Goal 10: Efficient Services

Indicator	Target
#20 Per capita waste disposal	- Decrease the per capita amount of waste going to the landfill below 350 kg/person
#21 Per capita cost to provide water and sewer systems	- Decrease per capita cost of providing water and sewer systems
#22 Per capita length of roads	- Decrease the per capita length of roads

Goal 11: Enhance Cooperation Among Jurisdictions

There are no targets or indicators for Goal 11

1.6 Implementation

Implementation is an important part of being accountable to RDN residents about what is being done to achieve the goals they identified as important.

Regional Growth Strategy Monitoring Program

To ensure consistent monitoring, evaluation, and public reporting on progress toward the RGS goals, the RDN established the RGS Monitoring Program in 2015. The program includes the preparation of an annual report to be presented to the Board of the Regional District and made publicly available on the RDN's public website.

Regional Growth Strategy Annual Report – 2023 - 2024

This report combines annual data collected for 2023 and 2024 and builds upon the improvements made across consecutive years of quantitative data collection. Where data is unavailable this report provides supplemental information on provincial and regional projects/initiatives.

Data Limitations

This report refers to various sources of information, including information produced by member municipalities, various RDN departments, Statistics Canada, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and BC Assessment. Every reasonable effort has been made to use comparable data each year with consistent geographies and methodology. Where data limitations exist, they are noted within the applicable document content, chart or table. Given the limited staff resources and the provincial housing legislation updates, qualitative data on initiatives was not requested from member municipalities for 2023. Data for the Town of Qualicum Beach is not provided for 2019-2024.

Regional Growth Strategy Monitoring Website

Information about the RGS is accessible through the RDN website. The report and information on the website will be updated on an annual basis, or as new information becomes available. RGS Monitoring website: www.rdn.bc.ca/regional-growth-strategy.

2. Progress Towards Achieving the Regional Growth Strategy

Goal 1: Prepare for Climate Change & Reduce Energy Consumption		
	#1 Total Community greenhouse gas emissions	Moving Away
	#2 Per Capita non-renewable energy use	Moving Toward
	#3 Total community energy use	Moving Away
Goal 2: Protect the Environment		
	#4 Total water Consumption	Moving Toward
	#5 Surface water quality (community watershed monitoring)	Stable
	#6 Amount of land in protected areas	Moving Toward
Goal 3: Coordinate Land Use & Mobility		
	#7 Number of households within a set distance (400m) of employment lands, shopping, schools, transit and recreation facilities	Moving Toward
	#8 Per capita transit use	Moving Toward
Goal 4: Concentrate Housing & Jobs in Rural Village & Urban Growth Centres		
	#9 Population inside and outside the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB)	Moving Toward
	#10 Density of dwelling units inside and outside the GCB	Moving Toward
	#11 Diversity of land use (ratio) inside the GCB	Moving Toward
Goal 5: Enhance Rural Integrity		
	#12 The number of new lots/units created through subdivision inside and outside the GCB	Moving Toward
	#13 Number of parcels with Farm Status	Stable
	#14 The amount of land classified as Private Managed Forest Land	Stable

Goal 6: Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing		
	#15 The total number of rental units affordable to households with income below 50% of the median income for the region	Moving Away
	#16 The portion of units in each housing type inside the GCB (diversity of housing types in the GCB)	Moving Toward
Goal 7: Enhance Economic Resiliency		
	# 17 [Unemployment] Employment rate and labour force participation rate	Stable
Goal 8: Enhance Food Security		
	Number of parcels with Farm Status	Stable
Goal 9: Celebrate Pride of Place		
	#18 The amount of publicly owned land designated for parks and community use (including land in protected areas, community use parks, and recreation facilities such as pools, ice rinks etc.)	Moving Toward
	#19 Per capita length of maintained trails (including trails, paths, and laneways)	Stable
Goal 10: Efficient Services		
	#20 Per capita waste disposal	Moving Away
	#21 Per capita cost to provide water and sewer	Moving Away
	#22 Per capita length of roads (length of paved roads per person)	Moving Towards
Goal 11: Cooperation Among Jurisdictions		
	Cooperation Among Jurisdictions	**Moving Toward**

The following summarizes the annual qualitative data for all indicators provided by the RDN and member municipalities to track progress toward the RGS goals. Where data is not available, initiatives and actions taken to achieve the RGS goals have been included to show additional progress.

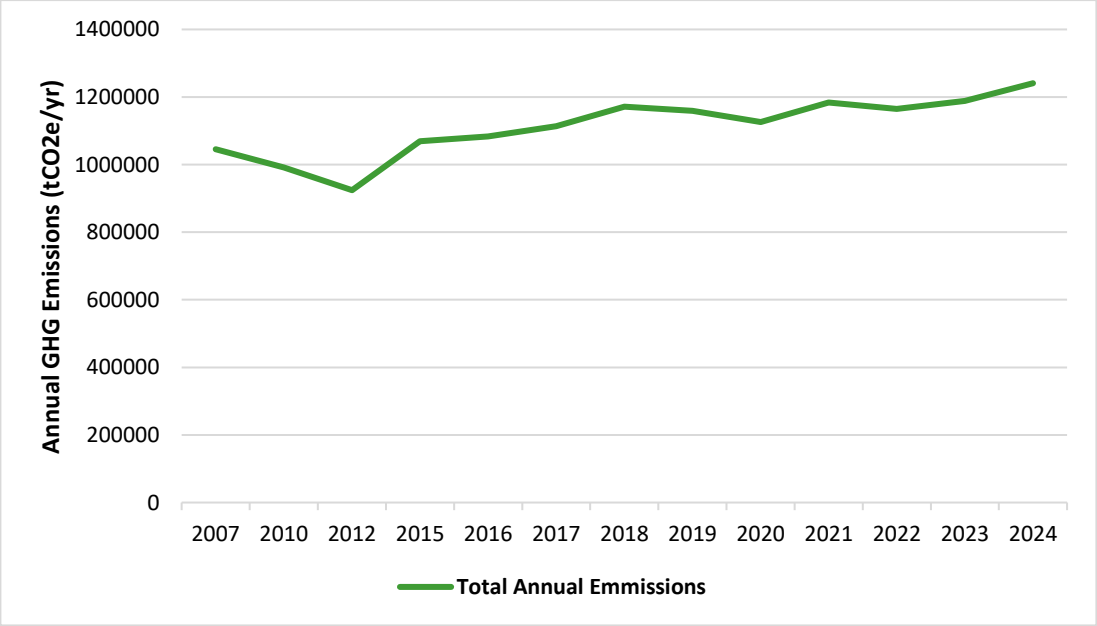
2.1 GOAL 1 – PREPARE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION

There are three indicators which monitor progress towards Goal 1:

A. Total Community greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs)

Greenhouse gas emissions generated within the RDN have increased by 18.6 per cent compared to the 2007 baseline year. Increased transportation emissions are responsible for about 40 per cent of the total increase in emissions between 2007 and 2024.[2]

Chart 1: RDN Broad Scope Community Emissions



B. Per capita non-renewable energy use

Per capita non-renewable energy use is eleven per cent lower in the RDN compared to the baseline year of 2007, but one per cent higher than in 2023. The decarbonization of the provincial electricity grid has driven large decreases since the 2007 baseline year.

[2] Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory is published on the RDN website and available at: https://www.rdn.bc.ca/corporate-energy-and-climate-change-plan.

C. Total community energy use

Total community energy use in 2024 increased 17 per cent from 2007 and was two per cent higher than in 2023. This rate of change is lower than the pace of population growth during that time, which means that in the RDN, less energy is being used per person now than in 2007.

The RDN and member municipalities champion many local, and often collaborative, initiatives to help prepare the region for climate change and reduce energy consumption. Many of these initiatives are highlighted below:

REGIONAL ACTIONS

Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee (CATAC)

- This committee finished overseeing implementation of the top three priorities and strategic reports from the 2021 CATAC Final Report and developed a new 2025-2029 Climate Action Plan that was approved by the RDN in the fall of 2024. The new plan builds on the three priority areas below but includes a new priority area for building Wildfire Resilience, expands the buildings priority to include both existing and new buildings, and includes Natural Asset Management as its own priority.

  Priority 1: Water security supported by the Natural Asset Management - Energy and Sustainability and the Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Programs: The RDN worked with area water providers to develop outreach materials that help water providers understand best practices for water security in the context of climate change, and how to communicate those actions to their clients. The RDN also continued a multi-year initiative to improve how we understand and manage the natural areas important to the well-being of the region. A high-level assessment was completed of how natural assets contribute to RDN's service delivery objectives, as well as an assessment and prioritization of risks to natural assets and related services, including climate risks. These assessments will be used to inform appropriate next steps on a natural asset management plan. This initiative included an inventory and high-level risk assessment of natural assets that will assist in formalizing how we value and plan for sustainable management of these important natural areas.

Priority 2: Removing barriers to climate action within RDN policy: The RDN drafted development permit areas (DPAs) to protect the natural assets and processes needed for local resilience and consideration in Official Community Plans. Climate action and barriers were also assessed as part of the RGS review and contained in the adopted new RGS.

Priority 3: Advancing climate adaptive home retrofits:

Over the course of 2023 and 2024, the RDN advanced its commitment to supporting climate adaptive home retrofits through the development and delivery of regionally coordinated programs. In 2023, the RDN launched the Retrofit Concierge program called the Home Energy Navigator Program. The program continued in 2024, providing a one-stop-shop for RDN residents, prioritizing assistance to residents—particularly seniors, busy families, and others who may need a bit more help to improve the resilience of their home. The RDN also finalized a feasibility assessment, which began in 2023, for delivering a regional resident financing program for home energy efficiency and worked with the Cirt of Nanaimo to identify barriers to climate adaptive home retrofits in Manufactured Home Parks. The RDN and member municipalities regularly collaborate on community outreach and to build awareness around climate adaptive home retrofits and options for RDN residents.

Throughout both years, the RDN continued to monitor and track progress on climate action, integrate equitable design and delivery into programming and continued offering community volunteer programs (Acting for Climate Together, Youth Ambassadors) to build resilient capacity for climate action, often in collaboration with the City of Nanaimo.

Advancing Adaptation

In addition to CATAC priorities, the RDN launched the new Our Changing Coast initiative, which combines technical work, engagement, and partnership building to improve our regional understanding of how climate change may impact our coastlines and identify how we can best prepare and respond. This initiative will draw on diverse regional expertise and will run from 2024 through 2027.

Green Building Incentives

- The RDN and its member municipalities provided green building incentives to residents who enhanced their homes' performance. RDN programs distributed green building incentives and rebates to homeowners totaling $56,964 in 2023 and just over $57,000 in 2024. The Green Building Incentive Program offered individual rebates for the following:

Table 1: Green Building Incentives & Rebates

Green Building Incentives & Rebates	2023	2024
Woodstove Exchanges	65	62
Renewable Energy Systems	11	10
Home Energy Assessments	109	85
Oil-to-Heat Pump Conversions	10	7
Electric Vehicle Chargers	19	27

Additionally, as part of the Green Building Series, the RDN has partnered with several organizations to offer information and education on green building initiatives, including the Canadian Home Builder's Association to deliver Net Zero Renovation training for over 80 builder/renovators in 2024, and to continue to work with the City of Nanaimo and Town of Qualicum Beach on the delivery of the popular Home Energy Navigator program for the Region.

Transit Initiatives

- The RDN is continuing to work with BC Transit through the planning process for Battery Electric Bus (BEB) and facility upgrade implementation. The planning process will determine what infrastructure upgrades are needed at the current site to accept BEBs and charging stations and future growth of the transit system.

Flood Management Program

- In 2023, the RDN completed river flood hazard analysis and mapping for the Nanaimo River (in Electoral Area A, Snuneymuxw First Nation, and part of the City of Nanaimo). With new river floodplain mapping for the three major rivers in the RDN (Nanaimo, Little Qualicum, and

English man) and the coastal floodplain mapping completed, the RDN adopted new Regional District of Nanaimo Flood Hazard Mitigation Bylaw No. 1872, 2023 to replace the RDN Floodplain Management Bylaw No. 1469, 2006. Bylaw No. 1872 includes the new regulatory floodplain maps and regulations for the construction of new buildings and structures within floodplains.[3]

Wastewater

- In 2023 and 2024, the RDN Wastewater Services Department continued managing biosolids in the Biosolids Forest Fertilization Program. This initiative helps enrich the forest floor with nutrients and carbon, accelerating carbon capture in the aboveground forest stand. These productive forest areas are the region's largest active carbon sinks.

- In 2024, the program managed 5,727 tonnes of Greater Nanaimo Pollution Control Centre (GNPCC) biosolids, resulting in a net reduction of 1,390 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent (CO_2e) emissions. Transportation of the biosolids accounted for 58 tonnes of CO_2e emissions.

  This carbon estimate includes emissions and removals from biosolids transport, storage, land application, soil carbon sequestration, and nitrous oxide emissions from the soil. Carbon captured through tree growth is tracked separately by Mosaic Forest Management. Emissions from project-related vehicle use (such as pickup trucks) are reported independently by the contractor.

- In 2024, the RDN completed the Bay Avenue Pump Station Replacement project which, along with replacing critical infrastructure in increasing capacity, relocated the pump station to a higher elevation to mitigate the potential impacts of sea level rise.

Solid Waste

- In 2023, the RDN Solid Waste Department installed four horizontal landfill gas extraction trenches to capture landfill gas.

- In 2024, the RDN Solid Waste Department installed six horizontal landfill gas extraction trenches to capture landfill gas.

[3] Flood Management Program information and mapping are available at: https://www.rdn.bc.ca/flood-management-program.

- Completed an upgrade to the Landfill Gas (LFG) Flare Station. Flare stations manage solid waste decomposition by converting methane into carbon dioxide (Co_2), which is a less potent greenhouse gas, by burning it before releasing Co_2 into the atmosphere.

- Placed additional cover on approximately 15,000m^2 of side slopes to limit fugitive emissions.

- Purchased a Surface Emissions Monitoring device to begin conducting methane emissions surveys across the site.

- Two bio windows were installed at locations where fugitive emissions were known to be escaping. A bio window serves as a targeted, biologically active filter to prevent the release of potent greenhouse gas emissions and noxious odours from the landfill.

District of Lantzville

- Parks and Trails Committee worked on updating the Parks, Trails and Recreation Plan (2008) and the Trails and Journeyways Strategy (2010).

- Rezoned Future Old Growth (FOG) zones in the Foothills neighbourhood.

City of Nanaimo

- Required EL-4 (the top level) of the Zero Carbon Step Code for all applicable Part 3 and Part 9 buildings as of July 1, 2024.

- Secured Federation of Canadian Municipalities funding to support a zero-interest property tied loan for home energy retrofits.

- Secured funding for additional Nanaimo Residents to participate in the Home Energy Navigator program (started in the RDN in 2023).

- Issued 220 EnerGuide pre and post assessment rebates in 2024, for a total of $24,760.

- Launched EV charger rebate program in 2023. In 2024, the City of Nanaimo issued 34 rebates for electric vehicle chargers in low density residential homes for a total of $5,100.

- Submitted two separate grant applications to support a sea level rise management plan.
- Awarded a BC Hydro grant to support the Manufactured Home Park Energy Conservation and Emission Reduction Strategy in cooperation with the RDN.
- Completed a consumption-based emissions inventory[4] and launched a Nanaimo specific carbon calculator in 2024.
- Power outage impacts on all electric homes completed.

GOAL 1 - KEY FINDINGS

Goal 1 focuses on climate change preparedness and reducing energy use in the RDN. Between 2007 and 2024, total community greenhouse gas emissions increased by 18.6 per cent, with transportation responsible for about 40 per cent of that rise. While per capita non-renewable energy use dropped 11 per cent since 2007, it rose slightly—by one per cent—compared to 2023. Total community energy use increased 17 per cent since 2007, but this growth was slower than the population growth, indicating improved energy efficiency per person. Regional actions included advancing water security through natural asset management, removing policy barriers to climate action, and launching the Home Energy Navigator retrofit concierge program. The RDN provided $57,000 in green building initiatives in 2024, completed flood hazard mapping, and adopted a new floodplain bylaw in 2023. Wastewater and solid waste management improvements included biosolids forest fertilization, which reduced 1,390 tonnes of CO_2e emissions, and expanded landfill gas capture infrastructure. The District of Lantzville worked on updating the Recreation Plan and Trails and Journeyways Strategy and rezoned Future Old Growth Zones in the Foothills. The City of Nanaimo supported these efforts with EV charger rebates, zero-interest retrofit loans, and new building requirements under the Zero Carbon Step Code.

[4] A consumption-based emissions inventory is a greenhouse gas emissions inventory that includes emissions released to produce goods and services consumed within a region, regardless of where they were originally produced. That is, it estimates global emissions resulting from local consumption habits. Source: Nanaimo 2021 Consumption-Based Ecological and Carbon Footprint Assessment.

2.2 GOAL 2 – PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

REGIONAL ACTIONS

The RDN continued to achieve Goal 2 by pursuing watershed and environmental protection, including the following activities:

Watershed Protection

- Completed phase 2 of developing Watershed Performance Targets for Rainwater Management in the French Creek Water Region in 2023, which outlines implementation, monitoring, and adaptive management approaches for targets intended to replicate the natural water balance and control flood peaks.

- Completed Phase 3 of the Water Budget Model for the French Creek Water Region in 2023, which included updated aquifer mapping to assess aquifer stress and predict groundwater level change through water demand, climate, and land use change scenarios.

- Supported five community-led watercourse restoration and monitoring projects Each year in 2023 and 2024 via stewardship seed funding: Little Qualicum Estuary restoration and research (2023 and 2024), Gabriola Creeks, Shelly Creek (2023), Tire Wear Toxin monitoring (at multiple sites) (2023), Grandon Creek hydrometric equipment support in the French Creek estuary lands (2024), and Community-based Flow Monitoring (at multiple sites)(2023 and 2024).

- Provided over 190 rebates in 2023 and over 100 in 2024 to residents including rainwater harvesting, wellhead upgrades, well water testing, irrigations, and soil improvements.

- Offered residential irrigation check-ups to high water users across the region, providing 14 in-person visits in 2023 and 18 in 2024 and distributing education materials to additional residents who observed high water use on their properties.

- Beginning in 2023 and continuing into 2024, the RDN Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program co-initiated a Youth Ambassador Program in partnership with RDN Energy and Sustainability Department for high school students and eco clubs with a focus on water and climate action.

- Completed a lake monitoring equipment upgrade for Holden and Quennell Lakes in 2023 to support data collection and future water budget studies in the Cedar-Yellow Point region.

- Completed the tenth and eleventh years of groundwater monitoring via the RDN Volunteer Observation Well Network over 2023 and 2024 and added one new monitoring site in an RDN Community Park for a total of 32 sites in 14 aquifers

- Completed the installation of the RDN Administration Building *Demonstration Raingarden* project in 2024 to support innovative rainwater management education and infrastructure and to build capacity to offer support for other raingarden projects across the region.

- Initiated the creation of a regional *Groundwater Connections* publication in 2024 along with an associated groundwater-focused Get Involved Page for mail-out.

Wastewater

- In 2023, the RDN Wastewater Services Department continued to meet regulatory requirements for wastewater treatment and provided $44,000 in SepticSmart rebates to support homeowners in maintaining their septic systems. In 2024, the program continued with an additional $40,000 in rebates, helping residents care for their onsite wastewater systems.

- In 2024, over 15 billion litres of wastewater were treated by the RDN Wastewater Department.

Solid Waste

- Over 2023 and 2024, the Solid Waste Department continued to provide curbside service to residents.

- Received an Order in Council in 2023 for the authority to require Mandatory Waste Source Separation.

- Continued working with the province to advance Waste Hauler Licensing throughout 2023 and 2024.

- Provided $300,000 in funding for non-profit businesses that support the circular economy in 2023 and 2024.

- Created a Construction and Demolition guide in 2023 to encourage deconstruction and waste diversion.

- Created a hydrogeological review of the regional landfill in 2023 to ensure the continued protection of groundwater and surface water.

- In 2024, the Solid Waste Department installed approximately 10,000m^2 of tarps to prevent rainwater from entering the landfill and becoming leachate.

- Completed and submitted a Tree Management Plan in 2024 to protect trees surrounding a planned landfill development

Parks

- Continued collaboration with BC Parks Foundation and local conservation groups to develop a management plan for the French Creek Estuary Nature Preserve and completed the plan in October 2024.

- In 2023, The Parks Department continued developing a management plan for 99.1 hectares of land acquired for an expansion to Mt. Benson Regional Park. In 2024, Mount Benson continues with the review of background information, environmental field reviews, a trail assessment, an archaeological overview assessment and the development of a public engagement plan.

- Signed an agreement in 2023 with the Nanaimo Mountain Bike Club to manage and maintain bike trails in the newly acquired parcels.

- RDN Parks staff worked with consultants in 2024 to develop relevant methodology and required deliverables for the RDN Parks Biodiversity Plan.

- In 2024, approval to proceed with weir decommissioning while retaining the beaver dam has been granted by the RDN Board, the Nature Trust of BC and Environment and Climate Change Canada. Staff worked with the consulting project team on a dam decommissioning application. This work will include design, permitting, and public engagement. In Q1 of 2024 the consulting team began an additional study of the lower weir pool to provide an environmental assessment of removing the weir and recommendations on mitigating habitat loss. The results of the

assessment will inform a more detailed restoration plan to be included in the final decommissioning plan.

- **District of Lantzville**

  Updating of zoning for District parkland in the Foothills neighbourhood, including designation of Future Old Growth (FOG) zones. Increased bylaw enforcement actions for streamside protection and coastal management.

City of Nanaimo

- Ten Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant applications were received during 2024, seven received full or partial funding.

2.2.1 RGS Indicator #4: Total water consumption

Target is to decrease the average residential and commercial water use by 33 per cent between 2004 and 2018

This indicator tracks water conservation by showing whether water consumption is rising or falling. Freshwater is a limited and essential resource crucial for the well-being of ecosystems and communities in the region. Although water may seem plentiful, more frequent and prolonged periods of hot and dry weather are affecting local water systems. Despite population growth, the trends indicate that total water consumption continues to decrease.

RDN WATER SERVICE AREAS

As of 2023, annual water consumption in RDN water service areas has decreased by 16 per cent since 2004, despite year-to-year fluctuations driven largely by weather patterns. For example, consumption rose by 13 per cent in 2023 compared to 2022, then dropped by 17 per cent in 2024. These shifts are typical, with lower consumption in one year often followed by an increase the next relative to weather trends. Overall, per capita water consumption has declined by 36 per cent since 2004, with an average annual reduction of 2.29 per cent across all RDN water service areas.

CITY OF NANAIMO

Table 2: City of Nanaimo 2023-2024 Total Water Consumption

	Total Water Production (Litres/person/day)	Residential Water Use (Litres/person/day)	Population Estimate
2023	344	190	~106,990
2024	325	179	110,707

Water use in Nanaimo continued to decline in 2024, with both total and residential per capita consumption reaching their lowest levels since 2009. Despite population growth, total water production decreased, aligning with the City of Nanaimo's Water Supply Strategy goal of a five per cent per capita reduction per decade.

CITY OF PARKSVILLE

Between 2022 and 2024, the number of water connections in the City of Parksville increased by one per cent.

2.2.2 RGS Indicator #5: Surface water quality (community watershed monitoring)

Target is to improve surface water quality

The RDN Community Watershed Monitoring Network (CWMN) partners with local stewardship volunteers, the B.C. Ministry of Environment, and private forestry to measure and track changes in the health of local watersheds. Water quality sampling was conducted at 66 sites across 40 streams in 27 different watersheds in 2023. In 2024, the program expanded to include 73 sampling sites across 45 streams in 30 different watersheds. This indicator reflects the total number of sites that met the B.C. Water Quality Guidelines for turbidity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen (Table 3).



Table 3: RDN Monitored Streams Analysis

	Monitored Streams that Meet the BC Water Quality Guidelines		
	Number of Sites that Met Turbidity Guidelines	**Number of Sites that Met Temperature Guidelines**	**Number of Sites that Met Dissolved Oxygen Guidelines**
2019	36 out of 65 (55%)	47 out of 65 (72%)	41 out of 65 (63%)
2020	16 out of 67 (23%)	43 out of 67 (64%)	48 out of 67 (71%)
2021	33 out of 66 (50%)	26 out of 64 (40%)	44 out of 64 (69%)
2022	36 out of 67 (54%)	28 out of 67 (41%)	43 out of 67 (64%)
2023	27 out of 66 (41%)	22 out of 66 (33%)	34 out of 66 (51%)
2024	25 out of 73 (34%)	48 out of 73 (66%)	49 out of 73 (67%)

Between 2023 and 2024, the Community Watershed Monitoring Network (CWMN) continued to provide valuable insight into regional surface water quality and environmental conditions. From 2022 to 2023, the proportion of monitoring sites meeting turbidity and dissolved oxygen guidelines declined by 13 per cent, while those meeting temperature guidelines dropped by 8 per cent. These results were likely influenced by weather conditions, including minimal precipitation during the summer monitoring period, which may have led to lower stream flows, and higher precipitation in the fall, which may have contributed to increased turbidity.

In 2024, turbidity compliance decreased by an additional 7 per cent. However, temperature compliance saw a significant improvement, rising by 50 per cent, and dissolved oxygen compliance increased by 6 per cent compared to 2022. Based on the data from 2019-2014, surface water quality appears to be remaining relatively stable with signs of improvement in some parameters.

The results of the CWMN provide insight on environmental water conditions and regional surface water quality, tracking changes over time. The information collected by trained community stewards through the CWMN supports the identification and prioritization of regional streams for enhancement, restoration, targeted outreach, policy changes and/or additional monitoring. Many

of these actions are supported and initiated by the RDN's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection (DWWP) program and DWWP program collaborators. Utilizing the CWMN data in 2025, statistical and spatial analysis will be completed to better understand the land use and water quality connection and prioritize meaningful action to support watershed health.

Resilient watersheds are crucial for maintaining good water quality and the health of the communities and residents in the region and beyond. This is being addressed by continuing to increase our understanding of watershed dynamics through research and monitoring protecting watersheds through policy development and advocacy, and increasing watershed literacy through community outreach, community events, and regional publications.

2.2.3 RGS Indicator #6: Amount of land in protected areas

RGS target is to increase the amount of land in protected areas

Natural areas provide crucial habitat for wildlife and plants; help store and filter surface water; recharge groundwater; absorb carbon from the atmosphere; and reduce the impacts of flooding from erosion and inundation. The RGS aims to protect and enhance the environment while minimizing ecological damage from growth and development. This indicator measures the extent of land within protected areas designated by federal, provincial, or local authorities.

In 2023, the total area of protected land increased by 282 hectares. In the RDN Electoral Areas, protected land within Hemer Provincial Park in Electoral Area A increased by one hectare due to a mapping adjustment to improve accuracy. The City of Nanaimo saw an increase of 281 hectares in protected land from 2022 resulting from mapping revisions relating to Nanaimo's City Plan which was adopted in 2022. The City of Parksville's protected land remained unchanged at 169 hectares during the same period.

In 2024, the region continued to show a positive trend in protected areas. The City of Nanaimo saw a modest increase of one hectare, bringing its total to 2,073 hectares. The City of Parksville's protected land increased by five hectares to 174 hectares. The RDN Electoral Areas and District of Lantzville remained stable at 5,001 hectares. These changes brought the total amount of protected land in the region to 7,248 hectares—an increase of six hectares from the previous

year. Since 2019, the total amount of protected land in the region has grown by nearly 15 per cent, reflecting steady progress toward the RGS goal to protect the environment.

Table 4: Amount of Land in Protected Areas (Hectares)

	Nanaimo	Parksville	Electoral Areas and Lantzville	Total
2019	1,785	163	4,358	6.306
2020	1,760	169	4,358	6,287
2021	1,791	169	4,360	6,320
2022	1,791	169	5,000	6,960
2023	2,072	169	5,001	7,242
2024	2,073	174	5,001	7,248

GOAL 2 – KEY FINDINGS

In 2023 and 2024, the RDN advanced watershed protection, parks planning, and community stewardship. Key achievements included completing Phase 3 of the French Creek Water Budget Model, expanding groundwater monitoring, and supporting restoration projects and conservation rebates. Parks initiatives included management plans for French Creek Estuary and Mount Benson, a trail agreement with the Nanaimo Mountain Bike Club, and the development of a Biodiversity Plan. A weir decommissioning project was approved with restoration planning underway. Water conservation trends remained positive, and 288 hectares of land were protected since 2022.



2.3 GOAL 3 – COORDINATE LAND USE AND MOBILITY

REGIONAL ACTIONS

Regional Transit

- Although the RDN did not receive additional annual service hours for 2023, the Transit department continues to work with community partners in the region to plan for new infrastructure that supports the Transit Redevelopment Strategy. The RDN received and added 500 additional annual service

hours for 2024. These hours were applied to the 99 Deep Bay route to introduce service on Sunday and Monday's for service seven days per week.

- The RDN Transit department continues to work with municipalities and electoral areas on referrals that will develop better active transportation and integration with land use and development for the region.

- RDN Transit initiated work with the City of Nanaimo and other interested parties to deliver an assessment of the Woodgrove Area Plan through a successful grant application to the Complete Communities Fund. This initiative continued in 2024.

- The 2,000 Custom (handyDART) hours requested were denied for 2024.

- The Transit department continues to work with community partners in the region to plan for new infrastructure that supports the Transit Redevelopment Strategy (TRS).

Solid Waste

- In 2023, to help coordinate land use and mobility, the RDN Solid Waste department completed the Design, Operation, Closure Plan (DOCP) to optimize the airspace available at the Regional Landfill.

District of Lantzville

- Applied for and received a grant for a new Active Transportation Network Plan.

City of Nanaimo

- Completed the E-mobility strategy landscape and technical options report was completed in 2024.

- Council has dedicated $75,000 over three years, for a total of $150,000 to build secure end-of-trip cycling facilities, including bike parking at priority locations in Nanaimo.

- Working with Evolve bikeshare to support the company's expansion within Nanaimo to include further e-bike-share stations, and the addition of e-scooters.

- Continuing build-out of Albert Street Complete Street project to connect Milton to the Victoria Crescent City-wide parking management strategy.

- Chase River Elementary and Cinnabar Valley Elementary schools are currently participating in the After School Travel program.

2.3.1 RGS Indicator #7: Number of households within a set distance (400 m) of employment lands, shopping, schools, transit and recreational facilities

RGS Target is to increase the number of households living within close proximity of places to work, play, learn and shop.

The RGS encourages the RDN and member municipalities to direct new development into mixed-use centres where households are closer to employment and day-to-day services. Proximity to services and amenities supports positive social and economic outcomes, promotes active transportation, and reduces infrastructure costs. This indicator measures how compact, completed, and connected communities are.

Between 2022 and 2023, the total number of households within 400 metres of services across the region increased 2.33 per cent for a total of 3,083 households. Between 2023 and 2024, the total households within proximity to services in the region increased by 3.65 per cent to a total of 4,968 households. The City of Nanaimo, the region's Urban Centre, saw the most notable increase during that period with 1,970 additional households gaining proximity to services in 2023 and 4,097 in 2024, highlighting its continued leadership in advancing the RGS target. Since 2019, the number of households living within proximity to services has increased by 12.5 per cent. This overall increase indicates positive progress toward the RGS target, especially in Nanaimo and Parksville, where proximity to services has grown significantly. Lantzville shows mixed results, with a decline in proximity to employment lands, while the Electoral Areas show modest gains.

Table 5: Total Number of Households within 400 m of Services

		Bus Stops	Schools	Employment Lands	Shopping Centre
Nanaimo	2019	39,483	21,694	16,392	16,441
	2020	39,928	21,899	16,643	16,622
	2021	41,168	22,616	16,719	17,152
	2022	42,002	22,544	16,851	17,557
	2023	43,326	22,544	17,497	17,557
	2024	44,451	23,533	17,852	19,185
Parksville*	2019	6,606	1,024	4,454	2,607
	2020	6,198	1,125	4,801	2,641
	2021	6,060*	978*	5,175	4,276
	2022	6,211	1,107	5,326	4,427
	2023	6,484	1,194	5,593	4,699
	2024	6,692	1,323	5,803	4,902
Lantzville	2019	1,033	191	1,231	-
	2020	1,010	191	1,028	-
	2021	1,023	192	1,035	-
	2022	1,033	192	1,047	-
	2023	1,055	194	1,073	-
	2024	1,062	195	1,073	-
Electoral Areas	2019	3,726	1,029	8,902	602
	2020	4,022	1,035	8,837	608
	2021	4,053	1,037	8,933	620
	2022	4,063	1,049	8,988	621
	2023	4,175	1,077	9,012	621
	2024	4,196	1,080	9,101	621

**City of Parksville established a new GIS system in 2021 – the discrepancy seen in the 2021 Parksville data was a result of the system transfer.*

***Information not available for Town of Qualicum Beach since 2019*

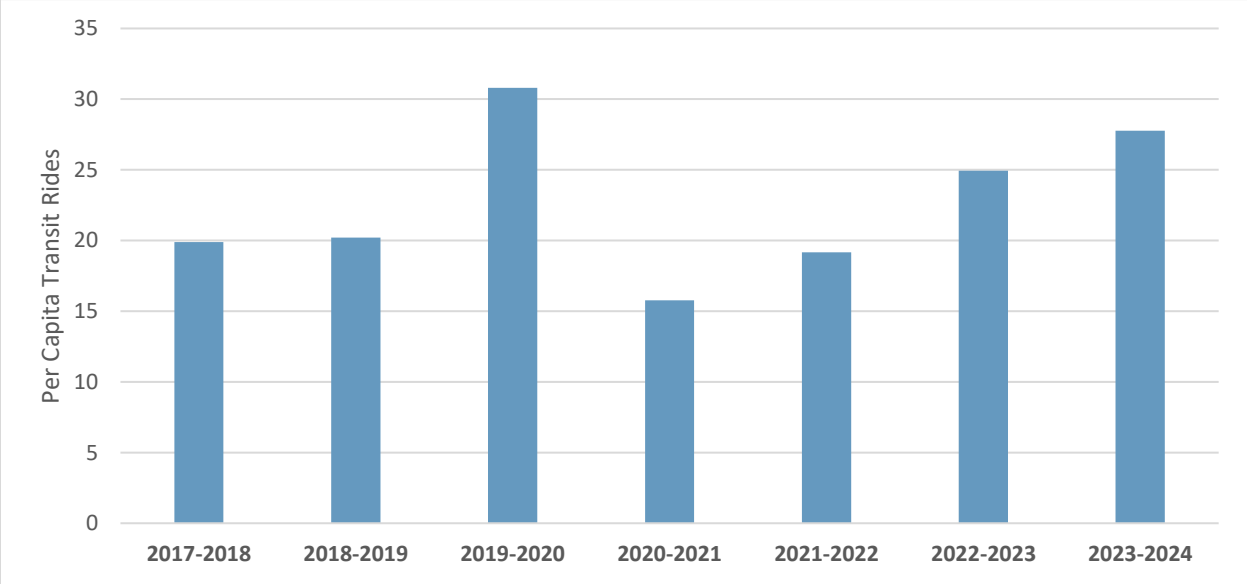

TRANSIT
SERVICES
BCTransit
CAUTION

2.3.2 RGS Indicator #8: Per capita transit use

RGS Target is to increase per capita transit use

Between 2015 and 2020, transit ridership saw steady growth in both total rides and per capita usage. However, between 2019 and 2021, ridership declined sharply—dropping to approximately half the previous year's total—due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. While ridership has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, it has shown consistent recovery since 2021. In 2023, the region recorded 3,131,670 total transit rides and 24.93 rides per capita. This upward trend continued into 2024, with 3,581,870 total rides and 27.76 rides per capita, marking a significant year-over-year increase. Overall, the region has demonstrated positive progress toward its target of increasing per capita transit use, with a cumulative increase of 7.43 rides per capita since the baseline year in 2025.

Chart 2: Per Capita Transit Rides



GOAL 3 - KEY FINDINGS

Between 2023 and 2024, the RDN advanced its goal to coordinate land use and mobility through transit service enhancements, infrastructure planning, and active transportation initiatives. Notably, 500 new annual service hours were implemented in 2024 to expand the 99 Deep Bay route to seven-day service, while collaboration with municipalities continued to improve transit integration with land use. Although a request for additional handyDART hours was denied, planning efforts progressed through partnerships and grant-funded assessments like the Woodgrove Area Plan. Solid Waste supported land use coordination by optimizing landfill airspace through a new Design, Operation, Closure Plan. In the District of Lantzville, work began on an updated Active Transportation Network Plan, and the City of Nanaimo advanced e-mobility through strategic investments in bike infrastructure, e-scooter expansion, and school travel programs. Transit ridership rebounded strongly post-pandemic, with a 14 per cent increase in total rides and a rise in per capita use from 24.93 in 2023 to 27.76 in 2024, signaling positive momentum toward regional mobility targets.



4.4 GOAL 4 – CONCENTRATE HOUSING & JOBS IN RURAL VILLAGES, URBAN GROWTH CENTRES

REGIONAL ACTIONS

District of Lantzville

- Updated Residential Zoning in line with Bill 44 to permit Small Scale Multi-Unit Housing on lots with water and sewer, which are within our regional growth containment boundary.

City of Nanaimo

- In 2024, a project commenced to create an Area Plan for the Woodgrove Secondary Urban Centre to concentrate jobs and housing in growth centers.

2.4.1 RGS Indicator #9: Population inside and outside the Growth Containment Boundary

RGS Target is to increase the proportion of the population living within the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB)

The RGS aims to increase the proportion of the population living within the GCBs, which are designed to support compact, complete communities and efficient service delivery. This indicator tracks the number of dwelling units both inside and outside GCBs in Urban Areas and Rural Village Centres. Population estimates are derived by multiplying the number of dwelling units by the average household size, based on Canadian census data.

In 2023, 143,880 people were living inside the GCBs, and 31,770 people living outside of the GCBs. An estimated 3,450 more people were living inside the GCBs than in 2022. Notably, the rural population outside the GCBs declined by approximately 2,799. In 2024, the region continued to show a strong trend toward concentrating growth within the GCBs. An estimated 153,783 people were living inside the GCBs, an increase of 6,453 people compared to 2023. This growth was most notable in the City of Nanaimo, which saw its population within the GCB rise by 5,885 people, reaching 121,421. Parksville and Lantzville also experienced modest increases, with populations inside the GCB reaching 15,674 and 4,022, respectively. The Electoral Areas contributed to 12,666 people living within the GCBs in 2024.

Overall, most of the region's population growth remains centered within the GCBs. This concentration of population within the GCBs supports the RGS vision of creating compact, complete communities, allowing the RDN to deliver services such as transit, water, wastewater, and solid waste management more efficiently.



Table 6: Estimated Population inside and outside the GCBs

	Nanaimo		Parksville		Lantzville		Electoral Areas		Total	
	Inside	Outside	Inside	Outside	Inside	Outside	Inside	Outside	Inside	Outside
2019	105,848	9	13,714	46	3,643	85	11,891	27,029	135,802*	27,169
2020	107,909	9	15,042	46	3,574	82	13,097	29,392	139,622*	29,529
2021	109,906	9	15,042	46	3,783	85	12,414	34,209	141,145*	34,349
2022	112,198	9	15,042	46	3,938	85	12,702	34,429	143,880*	34,569
2023	115,536	13	15,300	46	3,970	85	12,524	31,626	147,330*	31,770
2024	121,421	16	15,674	44	4,022	85	12,666	28,470	153,783	28,615

**Information not available from Town of Qualicum Beach in 2019-2024.*

Source: Estimates based on address point data and 2016 Census data for average household size in 2018-2020 and 2021 Census data for average household size for 2021-2024.

2.4.2 RGS Indicator #10: Density of dwelling units inside and outside of the Growth Containment Boundary

RGS Target is to increase the density of dwelling units within the Growth Containment Boundary (GCBs)

The RGS aims to increase residential density within GCBs to support walkable, service-efficient, and compact communities. This indicator tracks the number of dwelling units per hectare inside and outside the GCBs, helping to indicate whether growth is being concentrated in Urban Centres.

The City of Nanaimo led the region in increased density, showing an overall increase of 8.55 per cent in the number of dwellings per hectare inside the GCBs since 2022. The District of Lantzville and the City of Parksville also saw modest gains, with Lantzville increasing the number of dwellings per Hecate inside the GCBs by 3.23 per cent and Parksville by 11.4 per cent. Density levels outside the GCB remained low and largely stable. The electoral areas saw an increase in density inside the GCBs of 0.03 units per hectare (1.26 per cent) between 2022 and 2024. These patterns reflect steady progress toward the RGS vision, with most new development occurring in areas where infrastructure and services can be delivered more efficiently.

Table 7: Density of Units Per Hectare Inside/Outside GCBs

	Nanaimo (Units/Ha)		Parksville (Units/Ha)		Lantzville (Units/Ha)		Electoral Areas (Units/Ha)	
	Inside	Out	Inside	Out	Inside	Out	Inside	Out
2019	5.21	0.01	6.56	0.06	0.87	0.03	2.33	0.08
2020	5.3	0.01	6.83	0.07	0.89	0.03	2.35	0.08
2021	5.4	0.01	6.49	0.07	0.90	0.03	2.37	0.08
2022	5.5	0.01	6.49	0.07	0.93	0.03	2.38	0.08
2023	5.68	0.04	6.97	0.06	0.94	0.03	2.38	0.08
2024	5.97	0.04	7.23	0.06	0.96	0.03	2.41	0.08

Information not available for the Town of Qualicum Beach in 2019- 2024.

2.4.3 RGS Indicator #11: Diversity of Land Use (ratio inside the Growth Containment Boundary)

RGS Target is to increase the land use diversity inside the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB)

The RGS aims to increase land use diversity within GCBs to support compact, complete communities. This indicator tracks the mix of residential, commercial, industrial, mixed-use, institutional, and recreational land in Urban Areas and Rural Village Centres, expressed as a ratio.

In 2023, Nanaimo saw a shift toward residential and recreational uses, with residential land increasing to 49 per cent and recreational to 16 per cent, while mixed-use dropped to three per cent. In 2024, residential rose again to 50 per cent, mixed-use rebounded to four per cent, and institutional increased to three per cent, indicating a gradual diversification of land use. Parksville maintained a stable mix across both years, with residential at 43 per cent, commercial at nine per cent, and recreational at 20.7 per cent. Institutional land rose slightly from 7.1 to 7.5 per cent, supporting balanced community services. Lantzville experienced a significant increase in residential land—from 82 per cent in 2023 to 92 per cent

in 2024—while institutional land dropped from 15 to three per cent. Mixed-use and industrial land saw small increases, suggesting a shift toward housing-focused development. Electoral Areas remained consistent, with land use proportions unchanged between 2023 and 2024, continuing to align with the recommended mix for Rural Village Centres. Overall, most jurisdictions are maintaining or improving alignment with RGS targets. Nanaimo and Lantzville showed the most change, reflecting evolving development priorities and the need for ongoing monitoring to ensure balanced growth.

Table 8: Diversity of Land Uses in Urban & Rural Village Centres in the RDN

		Residential (%)	Commercial (%)	Industrial (%)	Mixed Use (%)	Institutional (%)	Recreational (%)
Nanaimo	**2019**	48	2	10	5	2	16
	2020	48	3	10	5	2	15
	2021	48	3	10	5	2	15
	2022	48	3	10	5	2	15
	2023	49	3	10	3	2	16
	2024	50	3	10	4	3	16
Parksville*	**2019**	51	11	4	6	7.5*	20.5
	2020	51	9	4	6	7.5*	20
	2021	44	9	4	10	7.5*	18
	2022	43	9	4	7.5	7.5*	20.5
	2023	43	9	4	7.5	7.1*	20.7
	2024	43	9	4	7.5	7.5	20.7
Lantzville	2019	62	0.4	0.6	0.5	2	34.5
	2020	82	0.5	1	0.5	15	1
	2021	82	0.5	1	0.5	15	1
	2022	82	0.5	1	0.5	15	1
	2023	82	0.5	1	0.5	15	1
	2024	92	0.5	1.5	2	3	1
Electoral Areas	**2019**	61	6	11	6	6	10
	2020	61	6	11	6	6	10
	2021	61	7	11	6	6	9
	2022	60	7	11	6	6	10
	2023	60	7	11	6	6	10
	2024	*60*	*7*	*11*	*6*	*6*	*10*

**Parksville - "Institutional" is interpreted as Public Institutional (P1) zoning that includes shore land.*

***Information not available for the Town of Qualicum Beach in 2019-2024.*

GOAL 4 - KEY FINDINGS

In 2024, the region continued to focus growth within GCBs, supporting the development of compact, complete communities. The District of Lantzville, Town of Qualicum Beach, and the Cities of Nanaimo and Parksville updated residential zoning to permit small-scale multi-unit housing on serviced lots within the GCBs as required under Provincial Bill 44. Additionally, the City of Nanaimo launched an Area Plan for the Woodgrove Secondary Urban Centre to concentrate housing and jobs. Between 2022 and 2024, dwelling unit density inside the GCB increased across all jurisdictions, with Nanaimo rising by 8.55 per cent, Parksville by 11.4 per cent, Lantzville by 3.23 per cent, and the Electoral Areas by 1.26 per cent. Land use diversity also improved, particularly in Nanaimo and Lantzville, reflecting a shift toward residential and public uses. These trends demonstrate continued alignment with RGS targets and reinforce the region's commitment to sustainable growth and efficient service delivery.



2.5 GOAL 5 – ENHANCE RURAL INTEGRITY

REGIONAL ACTIONS

In 2023 and 2024, progress was made in protecting the region's rural economy and lifestyle through:

Regional Transit

- Successfully completed a post-implementation review in 2023 of Route 70 Nanaimo-Cowichan Express (NCX).

- Successful implementation of 500 annual expansion service hours in 2024 on the Route 70 Nanaimo-Cowichan Express (NCX). This expansion introduced evening service on the NCX and a connection point in Deep Bay for interregional service with Comox Valley Regional District's transit system.

District of Lantzville

- Restricted additional housing options to locations where there is both municipal water and sewer while updating zoning and OCP bylaws.

City of Nanaimo

- To enhance rural integrity, the City of Nanaimo has made no changes to the Urban Containment Boundary in 2024.

2.5.1 RGS Indicator #12: The number of new lots/units created through subdivision inside and outside the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB)

RGS Target is to increase the proportion of development inside the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB)

The RGS promotes concentrating most new development within the GCBs, ensuring residents have convenient access to essential daily services while preserving areas outside the GCB for rural, resource, and open space uses. This indicator tracks the distribution of new residential lots and units created through subdivision inside versus outside of the GCBs. In 2024, 842 new residential lots and units were created across the region, with 98 per cent located inside the Growth Containment Boundaries (GCBs), continuing the trend of focusing development within designated urban areas. This represents a 47.54 per cent decrease in total new development compared to 2023 (1,584 new lots/units), though the high proportion of growth within the GCBs remains consistent with RGS's long term- growth management goals. Over the five-year period from 2019 to 2024, the total number of new lots and units declined by 54.19 per cent, while the share of development within the GCBs rose to 98 per cent, underscoring the region's commitment to compact, contained growth despite reduced overall development activity.



Table 9: Number of Residential Lots/Units Created by Subdivision Inside/Outside of GCB

	Nanaimo		Parksville		Lantzville		Electoral Areas	
	Inside	Out	Inside	Out	Inside	Out	Inside	Out
2019	1,719	0	36	0	6	1	20	56
2020	1,295	0	51	0	4	0	38	34
2021	904	0	30	0	10	0	74	44
2022	1,664	0	176	0	33	0	11	23
2023	1,380	0	150	0	31	0	23	21
2024	586	0	189*	0	27	0	23	17

**Of the 189 lots/units in Parksville, 59 are new lots/strata units and 130 are new rental units*

2.5.2 RGS Indicator #13: Number of Parcels with Farm Status

RGS Target is to increase the number of parcels with Farm Status

This indicator tracks the number of parcels of land inside and outside the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) that hold and maintain Farm Status, as determined by BC Assessment from parcels generating income from qualifying agricultural activities, with applications submitted every two years. In 2024, the total number of parcels with Farm Status slightly declined from 695 to 694, following a net increase of 15 parcels in 2023. The Electoral Areas continue to hold the majority, with 640 parcels in 2024, down by one from the previous year. The City of Parksville maintained two parcels, while Lantzville and Nanaimo held steady at 14 and 38 parcels, respectively. These fluctuations are typical due to the biannual reporting cycle. Overall, the region remains close to its previous peak, indicating stable agricultural activity and continued alignment with RGS objectives.

As shown in Table 11, between 2019 and 2024, the total area of agricultural land in the RDN Electoral Areas and District of Lantzville saw a slight decline from 21,829 hectares to 21,652 hectares, largely due to minor mapping adjustments related to ALR boundary changes. From 2022 to 2024, the data shows a modest decrease in agriculturally zoned

land inside the ALR (from 15,900 to 15,896 hectares), while farm class land inside the ALR rose slightly (from 5,775 to 5,856 hectares), and farm status land outside the ALR increased more notably (from 1,112 to 1,171 hectares). These shifts suggest a subtle reclassification and redistribution of agricultural land rather than significant land loss, reflecting ongoing refinements in land use mapping and designation. The number of parcels with Farm Status has remained nearly unchanged between 2023 and 2024, indicating continued alignment with the RGS target to increase the proportion of lands being actively farmed.

Table 10: Number of Parcels with Farm Status

	City of Nanaimo	City of Parksville	District of Lantzville	Electoral Areas	Total
2019	42	2	11	627	682
2020	36	2	13	606	657
2021	37	2	13	625	677
2022	37	0	13	630	680
2023	38	2	14	641	695
2024	38	2	14	640	694

**Information not available for the Town of Qualicum Beach in 2019-2024.*

Table 11: Hectares of Agricultural Land with the RDN Electoral Areas and District of Lantzville

	Hectares of Farm Class Inside ALR	Hectares of Farm Class Outside ALR	Hectares of Agriculturally Zoned Land Inside ALR	Hectares of Agriculturally Zoned Land Outside ALR
2019	5,729	1,112	16,063	5,766
2020	5,652	1,062	16,056	5,764
2021	5,616	1,102	15,963	5,722
2022	5,775	1,112	15,900	5,758
2023	5,925	1,064	15,900	5,752
2024	5,856	1,171	15,896	5,755

2.5.3 RGS Indicator #14: The Amount of Land Classified as Private Managed Forest Land

RGS Target is to increase the amount of land available for natural resource use (farming, forestry, outdoor recreation)

The RGS aims to preserve land for natural resource use, including farming, forestry, and outdoor recreation. Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) is primarily located outside Growth Containment Boundaries and is managed for long-term forest production under the Private Managed Forest Land Program and BC Assessment property classification.

In 2023, the region reported a total of 132,495 hectares of PMFL (excluding the Town of Qualicum Beach). Electoral Areas experienced a loss of 285 hectares (0.22 per cent) of PMFL compared to 2022. Notably, of this total a 157-hectare area for Jump Lake previously classified as PMFL was reclassified in 2023. The remaining 128 hectares of land removed from PMFL were distributed across Electoral Areas A, E, G, and H. The overall reduction in lands classified as PMFL may indicate a shift away from actively managed forest lands to rural residential or other permitted uses. In 2024, the total area of PMFL in the region remained relatively stable at 132,496 hectares, a slight increase of one hectare from 2023. The Electoral Areas continue to hold the majority of PMFL, with 131,557 hectares, down slightly from the previous year. The City of Nanaimo and District of Lantzville maintained their PMFL areas at 197 and 722 hectares, respectively. While the overall change was minimal, the slight reduction in the Electoral Areas may reflect ongoing pressure to convert forested lands to other uses, underscoring the importance of continued monitoring to support RGS objectives.



Table 12: The amount of Private Managed Forest Land (Hectares)

	City of Nanaimo	District of Lantzville	Electoral Areas	Total
2019	217	723	132,045	132,985
2020	217	723	132,017	132,957
2021	197	722	131,866	132,780
2022	197	722	131,861	132,780
2023	197	722	131,576	132,495
2024	197	722	131,557	132,496

GOAL 5 - KEY FINDINGS

In 2023 and 2024, the region made measurable progress toward enhancing rural integrity by concentrating development within Growth Containment Boundaries (GCBs), supporting agricultural activity, and maintaining forest lands. In 2024, 98 per cent of new residential lots and units were created inside GCBs, reinforcing compact growth despite a 47.5 per cent drop in total development from 2023. Farm Status parcels remained stable, with only a one-parcel decrease region-wide, and agricultural land saw minor shifts due to mapping adjustments, not land loss. Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) declined slightly in 2023 but stabilized in 2024, with a net increase of one hectare. Transit improvements included expanded service hours and interregional connectivity on Route 70, while Lantzville restricted housing expansion to areas with full municipal services, and Nanaimo preserved its Urban Containment Boundary. These actions collectively support the RGS goal of protecting rural integrity while enabling efficient service delivery and sustainable land use.



2.6 GOAL 6 – FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

REGIONAL ACTIONS

District of Lantzville

- Allowing a diversity of built forms including houses, duplexes, townhouses, rowhouses, and small apartments where there is municipal water and sewer service.

City of Nanaimo

- In 2024, under the HEART & HEARTH Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BC Housing, the City of Nanaimo will receive 238 temporary housing spaces between four sites for people who have been staying in shelters long-term, which will in turn free up shelter space for people experiencing homelessness. The City of Nanaimo is providing land and funding under this MOU.

- In 2024, $75,000 of the City's Online Accommodation Platform revenue were allocated for the Nanaimo Region Rent Bank as well as $150,000 for the rent supplement program to prevent evictions and create affordable housing in existing market rentals.

- Invested in infrastructure to support housing with $45 million in capital works for 2024.

- Small scale multi-unit housing and transit-oriented areas. In 2024, the City amended its zoning bylaw to allow four housing units per lot on more than 22,000 residential lots in the City, as well as a Transit-Oriented Area Designation Bylaw which identifies three bus exchange areas in Nanaimo as transit-oriented areas (Woodgrove, Country Club, and Vancouver Island University).

- Pre-zoning of parcels in the "Corridor" designation (lands adjacent to urban arterials or major collector roads) – the City's zoning bylaw was amended to allow more than 1000 single family zoned parcels in areas designated "Corridor" that were pre-zoned to allow higher residential densities.

- Completed a short term rental review including amendments to the zoning bylaw to help increase compliance such that the supply of residential units continues to be available for long-term rental.

- Completed an interim housing needs report outlining the City's 5-10-20 year housing needs.

- Provided recommendations to expedite the City's processing of development applications through a Development Approval Process Review.

- A building permit function review supported housing development by ensuring code-compliant building permit applications resulting in faster processing times and standardized compliance demonstrations.

- Certified professional program – this supports housing development by streamlining the permitting process and offering a more efficient and reliable method for ensuring building safety and compliance.

- Property management strategy – this provides a framework for managing, acquiring, and disposing of the City's land assets with a goal to align the City of Nanaimo's land resources with the City Plan and includes a list of potential dispositions and acquisitions for affordable and non-market housing developments in collaboration with community partners and BC Housing.

- As part of its Warming Centre response for the unsheltered – the City provided $474,094 to fund three warming centers with approximately 138 spaces for unsheltered individuals over the 2023/2024 winter season.

- 2024 Permissive tax exemption policy – outlines eligibility criteria for non-profit organizations that provide non-market housing.

2.6.1 RGS Indicator #15: The total number of rental units affordable to households with incomes below 50 per cent of the median for the region

RGS Target is to increase the portion of households living in housing that meets their needs (appropriate, adequate, adaptable, sustainable, affordable and attainable)

The RGS aims to increase the portion of households living in appropriate and affordable housing. This indicator tracks renter households spending 30 per cent or more of their income on housing, based on the affordable rent threshold (ART) for those earning below 50 per cent of the regional median income.

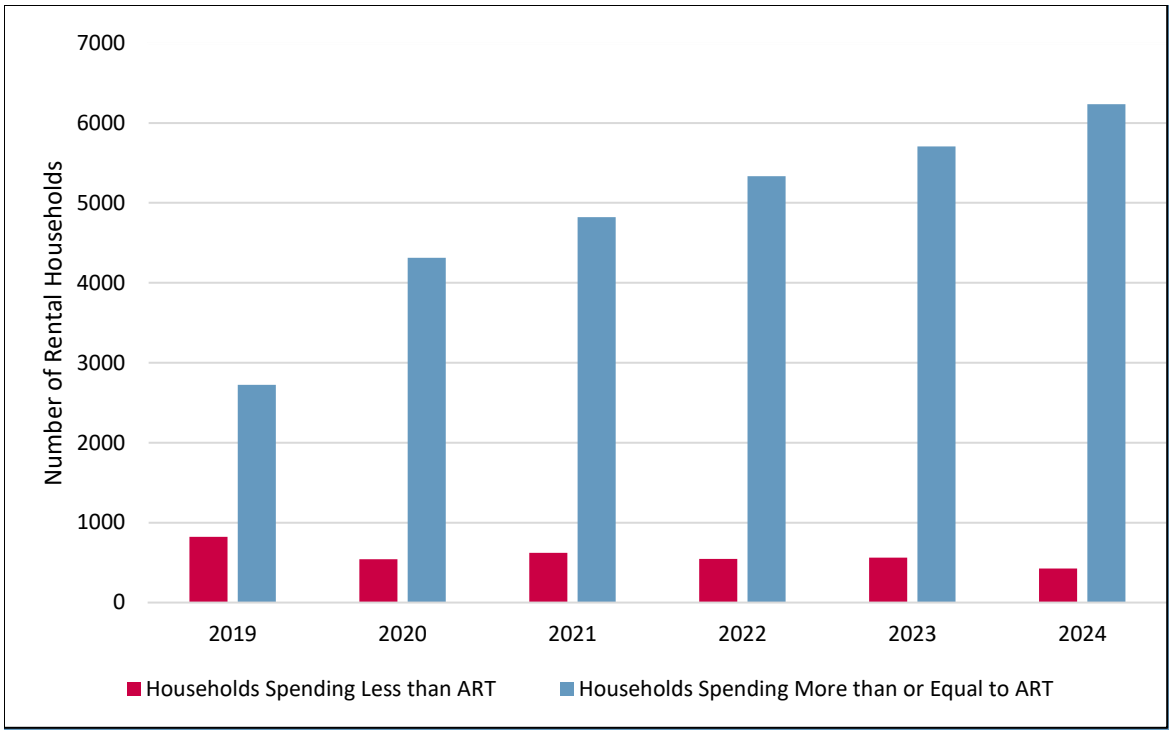
In 2024, the number of renter households above or equal to the ART rose to 6,233, an increase of 527 households (9 per cent) from 2023 and 2,356 households (60 per cent) since 2019, reflecting a continued decline in affordability (Table 13 and Chart 3). As of 2024, 93.6 per cent of renter households were spending more than 30 per cent of their income on housing. While affordable rental apartments have increased, affordable row housing has declined, reinforcing a seven-year trend of rising housing costs outpacing income growth and moving the region further from its affordability goals.

Table 13: Total number of renter households above or equal to the affordable household threshold

Year	Renter Households above or Equal to ART	Amount of Change Between Years (renter households)
2019	3,877	+426
2020	4,315	+438
2021	4,823	+508
2022	5,333	+510
2023	5,706	+373
2024	6,233	+527

2016 Census data used for 2017- 2021 and 2021 Census income data used for 2022 - 2024.





Note: ART used for 2017-2021, $786; increased in 2022 and 2023 to $950 based on a higher median household income reported in the 2021 Census. The proportion of housing that is unaffordable to households making less than 50% of the regional median income continues to significantly increase while the proportion of affordable rental units declines, exacerbating the lack of affordable housing.

2.6.2 RGS Indicator #16: The portion of units in each housing type inside the Growth Containment Boundary (diversity of housing types in the GCB)

RGS Target is to increase the portion of non-single detached dwelling units inside the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB)

Compact, diverse housing within GCBs supports varied housing needs, improves access to daily services, and helps protect natural areas. This indicator tracks the number of dwelling units by type—single-detached, other ground-oriented (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, manufactured homes), and apartments—within GCBs to monitor development trends and housing diversity.

Between 2019 and 2024, the RDN saw a steady increase in the diversity of housing types within the Growth Containment Boundary (GCB), aligning with the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) goal to increase the proportion of non-single-detached dwellings. The most notable growth occurred in apartment dwellings, particularly in Nanaimo and

Parksville. Nanaimo added 631 apartment units in 2024, a 13 per cent increase from 2023, and saw a substantial rise in single-detached dwellings (+2,431 units) and other ground-oriented dwellings (+588 units). Parksville continued its upward trend with 169 new apartment units in 2024, following a 368-unit increase in 2023. The Electoral Areas also saw a notable jump in apartment dwellings from 52 to 91 units in 2024, while Lantzville remained stable across all housing types.

From 2022 to 2023, apartment dwellings increased significantly in Parksville (+368 units) and moderately in Nanaimo (+171 units), while other ground-oriented dwellings declined slightly in Nanaimo (–96 units). Between 2023 and 2024, all jurisdictions except Lantzville experienced growth in apartment and ground-oriented dwellings, reinforcing the trend toward more compact, diverse housing forms. Overall, the data reflects a positive shift toward higher-density housing within growth centres, supporting efficient land use, improved access to services, and environmental protection goals.



		Single-Detached Dwelling	Other Ground Oriented Dwellings	Apartment Dwellings
Electoral Areas	**2019**	3,722	1,456	51
	2020	3,730	1,472	51
	2021	3,748	1,470	52
	2022	3,742	1,489	52
	2023	3,735	1,498	52
	2024	3,744	1,508	91
Lantzville	**2019**	1,322	89	0
	2020	1,326	105	0
	2021	1,321	105	0
	2022	1,326	107	0
	2023	1,320	104	0
	2024	1,321	104	0
Parksville	**2019**	3,931	1,465	1,461
	2020	3,995	1,481	1,578
	2021	4,027	1,481	1,624
	2022	4,085	1,506	1,758
	2023	4,133	1,554	2,126
	2024	4165	1578	2295
Nanaimo	**2019**	23,778	4,191	4,152
	2020	24,203	4,291	4,342
	2021	25,601	5,870	4,808
	2022	25,675	6,090	4,808
	2023	25,682	5,994	4,979
	2024	28,113	6,582	5,610

GOAL 6 – KEY FINDINGS

Between 2023 and 2024, the RDN advanced housing diversity and affordability in line with RGS targets but below the increased need for affordable housing. Nanaimo led with zoning changes allowing up to four units per lot on 22,000 properties and added 631 apartment units—a 13 per cent increase—alongside growth in single-detached and ground-oriented homes. Parksville added 169 apartments, and the Electoral Areas saw apartment growth from 52 to 91 units. Lantzville maintained stable housing but supported diverse forms where services exist. Nanaimo also invested over $45 million in housing infrastructure and affordability programs. These efforts reflect a coordinated regional shift toward compact, inclusive housing.



2.7 GOAL 7 – ENHANCE ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

REGIONAL ACTIONS

District of Lantzville

- Supporting development of new mixed use building in the village core, and development of vacant industrial lands in the Industrial Park.

City of Nanaimo

- Reviewed and updated the Downtown Revitalization Tax Exemption program (DRTE) and the Hotel and Motel tax exemption program (HMRTE).
- City of Nanaimo conducted a Not-for-profit Sector Study to understand economic, social and environmental impact and sector components.
- The Circular Economy Accelerator program Phase two began in 2024. Nine City of Nanaimo businesses will go through the program to improve energy and waste footprint.
- Completed the Donut Economics workshop and roadmap.
- State of the Nanaimo Economy report undergone to enable informed investment and relocation decisions.

2.7.1 RGS Indicator #17 [Unemployment] Employment rate and labour participation

RGS Target is to maintain an unemployment rate between 3 and 6 per cent and increase the labour force participation rate

Changes in the labour force are linked to changes in population, demographics, and economic activity making this an important indicator of economic resiliency. Based on the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, between 2019 and 2024, the Nanaimo Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) experienced fluctuations in employment and labour force participation, reflecting broader demographic and economic shifts. The unemployment

rate remained within the RGS target range of three to six per cent for a healthy economy, decreasing from a pandemic high of six per cent in 2020 to 3.2 per cent in 2024. Labour force participation rose steadily from 62.3 per cent in 2021 to a peak of 68.4 per cent in 2023, before slightly declining to 67.7 per cent in 2024. The employment rate also peaked at 65.2 per cent in 2023 but dropped to 58.5 per cent in 2024, indicating a potential softening in job availability or economic activity. Year-over-year, the

unemployment rate improved slightly from 3.3 per cent in 2023 to 3.2 per cent in 2024, while labour force participation dipped by 0.7 per cent.

These trends suggest ongoing economic resilience, though the decline in employment rate in 2024 may warrant closer monitoring. The undercoverage calculations are no longer available, and the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey's data for the total NCA does not account for undercoverage. This has led to the statistics Shown in Table 13 being slightly different from those reported prior to 2017.

Table 15: Employment Rate, Unemployment Rate and Labour Force Participation

	Employment Rate (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)	Labour Force Participation (%)
2019	62.3	3.4	64.6
2020	57.5	6.0	63.5
2021	57.4	3.9	62.3
2022	61.0	2.6	66.2
2023	61.0	3.3	68.4
2024	58.5	3.2	67.7



Between 2023 and 2024, the RDN supported regional economic development through planning, investment, and targeted programs. The District of Lantzville advanced mixed-use and industrial development, while the City of Nanaimo updated tax exemption programs, and began Phase Two of the Circular Economy Accelerator with nine local businesses. Additional initiatives included a Donut Economics roadmap and a State of the Economy report to guide investment decisions. Labour market indicators showed resilience, with unemployment remaining within the RGS target range, dropping from six per cent in 2020 to 3.2 per cent in 2024. Labour force participation peaked at 68.4 per cent in 2023 before a slight decline to 67.7 per cent in 2024, while the employment rate fell from 65.2 per cent to 58.5 per cent, suggesting a potential softening in job availability despite strong participation.



2.8 GOAL 8 – FOOD SECURITY

REGIONAL ACTIONS

RDN Planning

- In 2024, the RDN initiated a review and update of the Agricultural Area Plan (AAP) Implementation Action Plan (AAP Implementation Action Plan). To support the 2025-2027 AAP Implementation Action Plan update, the Board passed several resolutions between 2023 and 2024 to provide funding for an update to the AAP Implementation Action Plan to endorse the project. Following endorsement, staff worked closely with the Agricultural Advisory Committee and agricultural consultants and updated the plan to include a revised an updated list of high priority actions within the RDN's purview.

District of Lantzville

- Protected ALR designated lands from additional development. Engaged with Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) staff to better support local farmers.

City of Nanaimo

- Beaufort Food Forest: Youth 20/20 Can Project added a native food garden to this area in March of 2024.
- Bing Kee Trail: Neighborhood residents planted four fig trees in early 2024.

GOAL 8 – KEY FINDINGS

Between 2023 and 2024, the region advanced food security through planning, protection, and community engagement. The RDN initiated an update to its Agricultural Area Plan Implementation Plan, working with the Agricultural Advisory Committee and consultants to identify high-priority actions. Lantzville supported local farming by protecting ALR lands and collaborating with the Agricultural Land Commission. In Nanaimo, community-led initiatives enhanced urban food access, including the addition of a native food garden at the Beaufort Food Forest and fig trees along Bing Kee Trail. These efforts reflect a coordinated approach to strengthening local agriculture and food resilience.



2.9 GOAL 9 – PRIDE OF PLACE



REGIONAL ACTIONS

Parks

- The 2022 weir replacement evaluation study completed for Coats Marsh Regional Park will inform the development of the dam decommissioning plan.

- The trail assessment at Englishman River Regional Park was completed in 2023. Trail improvements continue to be implemented in the park. Implementation of the Riparian Trail Assessment four-year work plan is underway. Restoration activities along the C.W Young Side Channel in Englishman River Regional Park took place in collaboration with Mid Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society (MVIHES) with new interpretive riparian signage installed. New box steps were installed in 2024 to direct visitors onto sanctioned trails when entering the park from Chattell Road. Signage and split-rail fencing will be installed to direct visitors to established river access points and away from unsafe areas of eroded riverbank.

- Completed construction of a new playground at Meadow Drive Community Park was in 2023.

- A Management Plan for French Creek Estuary Nature Preserve was being developed in 2023 and was completed in 2024.

- Throughout 2023, new administration building at Descanso Bay Regional Park was designed and subsequently completed in 2024.

- A new concession and washroom building at Errington Community Park was designed throughout 2023. The pre-fabricated washroom and concession building at Errington Community Park was delivered to the site in 2024. Completion is anticipated for spring 2025.

- In 2024, following public engagement, a draft concept plan for Maple Lane Community Park was presented to the Electoral Area G Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee.

- Improvements to Benson View Regional Park Trail continued throughout 2023 and 2024 expected completion in 2025. The project is in collaboration with Recreation Sites and Trails BC to make the trail safer and more accessible.

- The Top Bridge Regional Trail reroute through the City of Parksville right-of-way and railway corridor was completed in 2024. Parking lot improvements at the end of Allsbrook Road began.

- In 2023, trailhead improvements at Moorecroft Regional Park were completed and include an entry kiosk, planting, picnic tables, and fencing.

- Improvements to Jack Bagley Community Park continued in 2023 and was completed in 2024, including the design and construction of a new washroom building. Planning for fencing and field improvements is underway.

- Construction of a new playground washroom and bike park at Lions Community Park took place throughout 2023 and was completed in 2024.

- Ball diamond and storage improvements at Lions Community Park occurred throughout 2024.

- Design and construction of a boardwalk and bridge in Anders and Dorrit's Community Park took place throughout 2023 and was completed in 2024 with the construction of two bridges across a watercourse. Park users can now complete a walking loop through the wooded area and safely cross the watercourse. Audio narration was added to the interpretive signage at the park to make the educational information accessible to a more diverse range of visitors.

- The development of a parks and recreation master plan for Gabriola (Electoral Area B) continued throughout 2023. Progress on the plan continued in 2024 building on insights from the initial consultation phase and addressing issues and gaps identified in the research report.

- Design of a new tennis building at Huxley Community Park took place in 2024.

- A new gravel field was completed at Rollo McClay Community Park in 2024.
- In 2024 RDN Parks staff issued a Request for Proposals for consulting firms to prepare a feasibility study for an accessible beach access ramp in the day use area of Descanso Bay Regional Park.
- Seventy-eight acres (31.5 hectares) of undeveloped forested property, known locally as 'Wilkinson Woods' on Gabriola Island, was purchased as a new addition to 707 Community Park.
- Trail improvements at Nanaimo River Canyon Community Park were completed in 2024.
- A Concept plan was developed for the Extension School Lands to incorporate the long-term community vision for recreational use of the lands.
- Construction of the Nile Creek pedestrian bridge and trails to connect the north and south sections of the Lighthouse Country Regional Trail were underway in 2024 and expected to be complete in early 2025.
- In 2024, the RDN issued a Request for Proposals for a new playground at Boultbee Community Park. Following a community vote, the top design was selected, and installation was completed between October and December.
- Land (0.41 acres) on Hallberg Road was purchased in Electoral Area A for the creation of Cassidy's first community park. Site remediation occurred throughout 2024 in preparation for the development of a new park. Public engagement in 2025 will take place to seek feedback from residents on the vision for the park.
- A consultant was retained to complete preliminary design for the Nanaimo River and Thatcher Creek Bridges in 2024. Preliminary survey, geotechnical and hydrotechnical investigation work has begun at Morden Colliery Regional Trail and will be used to complete a bridge type analysis and high-level costing for each bridge type.

District of Lantzville

- Completed landscaping of Phase 2 Village Core streetscaping improvements, including approval of a design for Legion Plaza.

City of Nanaimo

- The City of Nanaimo's Neighbourhood Association Grant Program was created in 2023 and is designed to assist recognized neighbourhood associations with costs for operational needs and community events, with the intent to strengthen the organizational capacity of the associations and increase the frequency of community events in their neighbourhoods.

  In 2024, 11 grants totaling $10,755 were approved by Council to support the associations' organizational needs and community initiatives ranging from meeting space rental, organizational and event liability insurance fees, postage, society registration, website and Zoom hosting, notice/newsletter printing costs, community surveys, and logo design, to community BBQs, AGM refreshment supplies, event entertainment, neighbourhood cleanup/beautification, and tree planting.

- Beginning in 2024, Council increased the City of Nanaimo's Downtown Event Revitalization Fund (grant funding) from $150,000 to $250,000.

2.9.1 RGS Indicator #18: Amount of publicly owned land designated for parks and community use (including land in protected areas, community use parks, and recreational facilities such as pools and ice rinks)

RGS Target is to increase the amount of publicly owned land for parks and recreational facilities

This indicator tracks the total area, in hectares, of publicly owned recreational facilities and parklands. These lands and facilities, owned by provincial or municipal governments, school districts, or regional districts, serve various purposes, including recreation, sports, public gatherings, and environmental conservation.

Between 2019 and 2024, the total amount of publicly owned land designated for parks and community use in the RDN increased by 402 hectares, rising from 6,085 hectares in 2019

to 6,487 hectares in 2024. The most significant growth occurred in 2023, with a 254-hectare increase largely due to updated GIS mapping in the City of Nanaimo following the adoption of its City Plan. Minor changes occurred elsewhere, amounting to less than one hectare, including the addition of Peterson Rascal Community Park in Electoral Area G; a parcel realignment for a closed school in Electoral Area F; and the redesignation of South Wellington School lands as a community park and community hall in Electoral Area A. In 2024, the region added another 44 hectares, with modest gains in Parksville (+6 ha) and the Electoral Areas (+36 ha), while the District of Lantzville remained unchanged. These increases reflect steady progress toward the RGS target of expanding publicly owned recreational and community lands, supporting access to green space, recreation, and environmental protection across the region.

Table 16: Hectares of Publicly Owned Lands Designated for Parks and Community Use

	City of Nanaimo (Ha)	City of Parksville (Ha)	District of Lantzville (Ha)	Electoral Areas (Ha)	Total (Ha)
2019	2,354	280	9	3,442	6,085
2020	2,355	285	9	3,436	6,085
2021	2,362	286	9	3,454	6,111
2022	2,362	277	9	3,541	6,189
2023	2,616	277	9	3,541	6,443
2024	2,618	283	9	3,577	6,487

**Information not available for Town of Qualicum Beach 2019 -2024.*

2.9.2 RGS Indicator #19: Per capita length of maintained trails (including trails, paths and laneways)

RGS Target is to increase the per capita length of maintained trails

This indicator tracks the length of mapped trails, including paths, laneways, and trails maintained by the RDN and its member municipalities. It also measures the metres of

trail per capita, reflecting the availability of publicly accessible, mapped, or inventoried trails for community use. Unmapped trails are excluded from this data.

In 2023, the length of maintained trails per capita decreased from 2.44 metres per person in 2022 to 2.40 metres per person. The City of Nanaimo recorded a reduction of 7,920 metres in trail length, while the Electoral Areas experienced a gain of 1,589 metres. This resulted in a net regional decrease of 6,331 metres. The increase in the electoral areas was driven by new trail developments in Wildwood Community Park and Meadow Drive Community Park, as well as additional mapping of trails in Descanso Bay Regional Park and Moorcroft Regional Park.

Between 2019 and 2024, the total length of mapped and maintained trails in the RDN decreased from 404,727 metres to 389,615 metres, resulting in a slight decline in trail availability per capita from 2.59 to 2.43 metres per person. This overall reduction was primarily due to a net loss of 22,917 metres in the City of Nanaimo, which stemmed from changes in reporting methodology between 2017 and 2020 to more accurately calculate trail length. In contrast, the Electoral Areas consistently added new trails, gaining 12,496 metres over the same period, including 4,743 metres between 2023 and 2024 through developments in parks such as Wildwood and Moorcroft. The modest increase in per capita trail length in 2024 reflects ongoing efforts to expand and improve trail infrastructure, particularly outside urban centres.



2019	186,597 m	40,420 m	8,600 m	169,110 m	404,727 m	2.59 m/person
2020	173,790 m	40,716 m	8,600 m	168,491 m	391,597 m	2.52 m/person
2021	174,270 m	40,000 m	4,062 m	178,441 m	396,773 m	2.47 m/person
2022	171,200 m	40,716 m	4,062 m	175,274 m	391,252 m	2.44 m/person
2023	163,280 m	40,716 m	4,062 m	176,863 m	384,921 m	2.40 m/person
2024	163,680 m	40,716 m	4,062 m	181,606	389,615	2.43 m/person

**City of Nanaimo reporting for 2017-2020 changed to reflect a more accurate methodology..*
***Information not available for Town of Qualicum Beach 2019-2024. Town of Qualicum Beach not included in per capita calculation.*

GOAL 9 – KEY FINDINGS

In 2023 and 2024, the RDN made notable progress in enhancing regional parks and recreational facilities, increasing publicly owned parkland by 402 hectares to a total of 6,487 hectares. Key projects included new trails in Wildwood and Meadow Drive Community Parks, upgrades to Benson View and Moorecroft Regional Parks, and infrastructure improvements across multiple sites, such as playgrounds, washrooms, and bridges. Despite these advancements, the per capita length of maintained trails declined slightly in 2023 due to improved mapping methods, though gains in 2024 helped offset the decrease. Ongoing management planning for French Creek Estuary and Gabriola Island reflects the region's commitment to sustainable parkland growth.

2.10 GOAL 10 – EFFICIENT SERVICES

REGIONAL ACTIONS

- RDN Transit Services completed the Smart Bus 2.0 project in 2023, which implemented updates to the Automatic Vehicle Location equipment in the buses, and a new trip-planning app was introduced to riders.

- RDN Transit Services installed electronic fare technology "Umo" on all buses, giving riders another option to pay.

- RDN Transit Services continued to use real-time data analysis for route run time adjustments and improving efficiency of the transit system overall.

- The RDN started the Fare Review project in 2023 and continued through 2024. This project will assess our current fare product pricing and provide recommendations, along with data collected from a public survey to the RDN Board to assist in their decision-making process.

City of Nanaimo

- The Integrated Action Plan was endorsed by the City of Nanaimo Council in 2023, and in November of 2024, a Progress Report was presented to Council showing the progress toward the 2023 Priority Actions.

2.10.1 RGS Indicator #20: Per capita waste disposal

RGS Target is to decrease the per capita amount of waste going to landfill below 350 kilograms/person

The volume of solid waste produced in the region serves as a key indicator of how well resources are managed—from consumption through to disposal. This metric tracks waste diversion efforts, including recycling and composting, and their influence on landfill capacity.

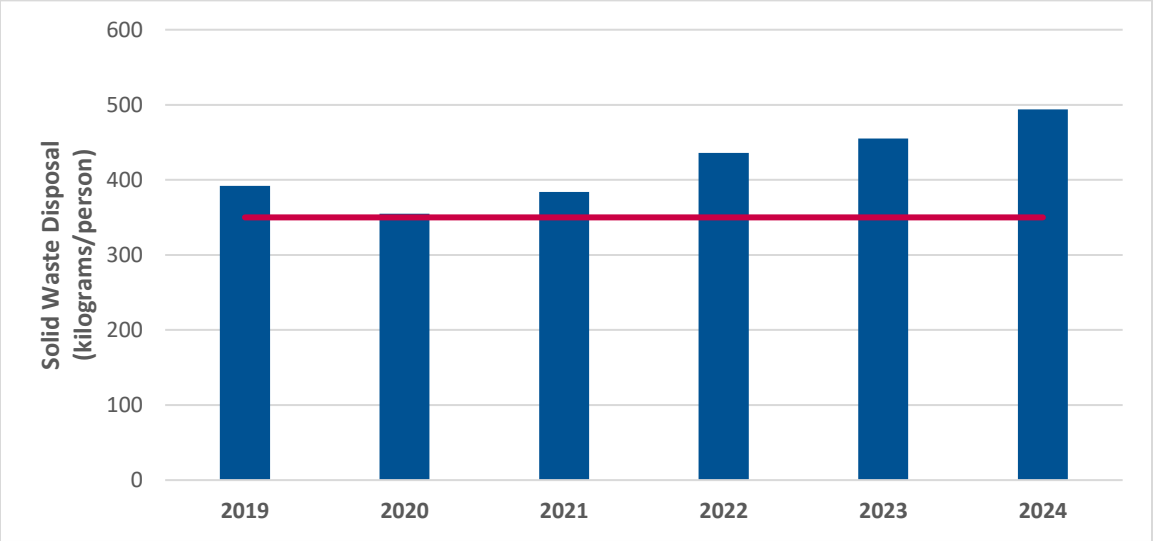
Since 2016, the region has consistently exceeded its target of 350 kg of waste disposed per person annually. Although disposal rates have varied year to year, they have remained above the goal, reaching a peak of 455 kg/person in 2023. Contributing factors include strong economic and population growth, a surge in housing starts and renovations following the COVID-19 pandemic, and sustained consumer demand.

Between 2019 and 2023, total waste sent to landfill increased from approximately 60,000 tonnes to 82,000 tonnes. This rise also reflects improvements in internal

reporting and material tracking, aligned with provincial and federal regulations and designed to support accurate landfill lifecycle assessments.

Like many regions across BC and Canada, the RDN experienced rapid and sustained economic growth in the post-pandemic period, driven in part by historically low interest rates. This growth led to a significant increase in waste volumes. Additionally, the continued popularity of online shopping has contributed to higher levels of packaging and consumer waste. Overall, these factors resulted in a more than 40 per cent increase in waste generation in the RDN between 2020 and 2024. In 2024, the per capita waste generation reached 494 kg/person, based on the 2021 Census population of 170,367 and a total waste volume of 84,237 tonnes.

Chart 3: Per Capita Waste Disposal



2.10.2 RGS Indicator #21: Per capita cost to provide water and sewer systems

RGS Target is to decrease the per capita costs of water and sewer

This indicator evaluates the per capita efficiency of community water, sewer, and wastewater systems, reflecting the compactness and density of development across the region. It includes the operational costs of delivering these services within the RDN and its member municipalities.

In 2023, service costs increased across the region. The Electoral Areas saw water costs rise by 11.7 per cent and sewer costs by 9.3 per cent. In the City of Nanaimo, water costs surged by 41.5 per cent, while sewer costs rose by 3.5 per cent. Additionally, Regional Wastewater Services experienced a 7.6 per cent increase in delivery costs. These increases were largely driven by inflation and rising operational expenses.

In 2024, the average total cost of water delivered through RDN Water Service Areas remained stable due to a one-time adjustment in budget objectives across all service areas. However, actual costs continued to rise due to inflationary pressures on wages, supplies, and equipment. A return to increasing average costs is expected in 2025.

Sewer collection costs also climbed, primarily due to increased revenue requirements for asset replacement in Northern Wastewater Services. Although budget adjustments were made, their impact was overshadowed by broader cost increases and inflation across all expenditure categories.

In 2024, the City of Nanaimo saw a decrease in the per capita cost of water and sewer services with the cost of water services decreasing from 2023 by 3.17 per cent and the cost of sewer service decreasing by 1.71 per cent. While water costs slightly decreased from the 2023 peak, they remain significantly higher than previous years, reflecting ongoing inflationary pressures and operational demands.



Table 18: Per Capita Costs to Provide Water, Sewer and Wastewater

	Nanaimo		Electoral Areas		All
	Water	Sewer	Water	Sewer	Regional Wastewater*
2019	$322/person	$156/person	$489/person	$320/person	$117/person
2020	$291/person	$126/person	$476/person	$337/person	$120/person
2021	$230/person	$121/person	$554/person	$363/person	$122/person
2022	$357/person	$113/person	$573/person	$396/person	$132/person
2023	$505/person	$117/person	$641/person	$433/person	$142/person
2024	$489/person	$115/person	$640/person	$490/person	$153/person

**Wastewater costs reflect regional wastewater treatment and trunk sewer collection only in all wastewater service areas and per capita refers to the service population, not the census population. The additional cost to residents for wastewater collection services by municipalities or RDN wastewater collection utilities (i.e. French Creek) is not reflected in these figures.*

2.10.3 RGS Indicator #22: Per capita length of roads

RGS Target is to decrease the per capita length of roads

Between 2019 and 2024, the per capita length of roads in the RDN decreased overall, reflecting gradual improvements in land use efficiency. The regional average dropped from 11.81 metres per person in 2019 to 10.97 metres in 2024, despite slight annual increases in 2023 (10.24 m) and 2024 (10.97 m). The City of Nanaimo consistently maintained a low and stable road length per capita at 5.8 metres in both 2023 and 2024, down from 6.3 metres in 2019. Parksville saw a decrease from 7.75 metres in 2019 to 6.71 metres in 2024, despite a small rise in 2023. Lantzville's road length per capita remained relatively stable, decreasing slightly from 16.89 metres in 2019 to 16.43 metres in 2024, with the Foothills development contributing to the 2023 increase. The Electoral Areas showed the most significant reduction, from 25.40 metres in 2019 to 23.47 metres in 2024. These trends suggest that while some fluctuations occurred, the

region is making steady progress toward the RGS target of reducing road length per capita through more compact and efficient development in the region.

Table 19: Per Capita Length of Road

	City of Nanaimo	City of Parksville	District of Lantzville	Electoral Areas	Total
2019	6.3 m/person	7.75 m/ person	16.89 m/person	25.40 m/person	11.81 m/person
2020	6.3 m/person	6.43m/ person	17.06m/person	25.46m/person	11.84m/person
2021	5.74m/person	7.33m/ person	16.14m/person	23.34m/person	10.18m/person
2022	5.74m/person	7.33m/ person	16.14m/person	23.35m/person	10.18m/person
2023	5.8m/person	6.84m/ person	16.43m/ person	23.48m/person	10.24m/person
2024	5.8m/person	6.71m/person	16.43m/person	23.47m/person	10.97m/person

**Information not available for the Town of Qualicum Beach 2019-2024.*

Note: The 2017-2020 per capita calculation is based on the 2016 census population of 155,698, and the 2021-2023 per capita calculations are based on the 2021 Census population of 170,367.

GOAL 10 – KEY FINDINGS

Between 2023 and 2024, the RDN improved service efficiency through transit upgrades, infrastructure planning, and cost management. Transit Services completed the Smart Bus 2.0 project, introduced the Umo electronic fare system, and launched a Fare Review to assess pricing and rider feedback. The City of Nanaimo endorsed its Integrated Action Plan and reported progress on 203 priority actions. While water and sewer service costs rose across most areas due to inflation, The City of Nanaimo saw slight decreases in 2024. Road length per capita declined regionally from 11.81 metres in 2019 to 10.97 metres in 2024, supporting more compact development. Waste disposal and utility cost indicators continue to guide efforts toward meeting RGS targets for efficient service delivery.

2.11 GOAL 11 – COOPERATION AMONG JURISDICTIONS

REGIONAL ACTIONS

Watershed Protection

- Initiated a review in 2023 of the Regional Watering Restrictions Framework in partnership with drinking water purveyors across the region which was completed in 2024. Bylaw updates were then implemented to reflect coordinated changes to the framework.

- Hosted the second annual Water Stewardship Recognition Event in 2023 to facilitate networking among water stewardship organizations to build capacity and promote better coordination of watershed protection activities.

- Shared water monitoring data with the province in 2023 and 2024 via the Environmental Monitoring System database and Aquarius Real-Time data portal.

- Continued to train volunteer stewards on surface water quality sampling procedures as a part of the RDN's Community Watershed Monitoring Network.

- Convened monthly check-in meetings with regional water purveyors between April and October 2023 and 2024 to discuss watering restrictions and streamline and coordinate drought response efforts across the region.

- Continued to participate on the Nanaimo River Watershed Roundtable in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ministry of Environment, Snuneymuxw First Nation, City of Nanaimo and other stakeholders.

- Completed the first and second years of a collaborative Ecological Accounting Process Partnership, bringing together various regional partners into the process of embedding the Ecological Accounting Process within Vancouver Island University and the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute (MABRRI).

- Developed communications material on *Climate-Informed Water Supply and Best Practices* in the region in partnership with the RDN's Energy and Sustainability department and regional water purveyors.

Wastewater Services

- In both 2023 and 2024, the RDN held two Wastewater and Water Collaborative (W3C) meetings each year. These meetings were designed to enhance cooperation between the RDN and member municipalities and support the implementation of the Liquid Waste Management Plan.

- Held two Liquid Waste Management Plan Monitoring Committee meetings each year in 2023 and 2024 to enhance communication and cooperation between the Regional District and our communities and member municipalities; and support the implementation of the Liquid Waste Management Plan.

Solid Waste Services

- Throughout 2023 and 2024, the Solid Waste Department maintained a contingency agreement with Cowichan Valley Regional District in the event their waste transfer/export services are unavailable, in addition to ongoing acceptance of asbestos, dead animals and invasive plant species.

- Maintained the agreement with the Qathet Regional District to accept municipal solid waste from Lasqueti Island.

Transit Services

- RDN staff continued to work with BC Transit to evaluate the viability of local transit initiatives and work towards planning transit and associated infrastructure for now and the future.

- RDN staff continued to discuss interregional service with BC Transit and Comox Valley Regional District.

- RDN staff continued to discuss interregional service with BC Transit and Cowichan Valley Regional District.

- RDN, City of Nanaimo, and BC Transit staff received provincial funding to redesign the Downtown Nanaimo Exchange.

- In 2023, RDN Transit worked with Gabriola's Environmentally Responsible Trans Island Express (GERTIE) to recommend service changes to route and scheduling configurations; to ensure consistent service quality; and enable reliable service for Gabriola residents.

District of Lantzville

- Council and staff attended regional coordination meetings for library board, finance, planning, and regional projects. Additional staff have received Emergency Operations Centre training to support regional emergency management.

City of Nanaimo

- One year funding was provided in partnership with Provincial and Federal governments, for a Drop-In Hub that provides access to basic needs for individuals living unsheltered.
- The City worked with Snuneymuxw First Nation to deliver programs to youth at risk to prevent gun and gang violence under the Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy.
- The City of Nanaimo's Community Safety Officers continued to work closely with Snuneymuxw's Homeless Outreach team to support Indigenous individuals living in homelessness.
- 2019 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Nanaimo and BC Housing.

GOAL 11 – KEY FINDINGS

Between 2023 and 2024, the RDN strengthened regional cooperation through joint initiatives in watershed protection, wastewater, solid waste, and transit services. Key actions included updating the Regional Watering Restrictions Framework, hosting stewardship events, sharing water data, and coordinating drought response with water purveyors. Wastewater collaboration was supported through regular W3C and monitoring committee meetings. Solid waste agreements with neighbouring districts ensured service continuity. Transit planning advanced through partnerships with BC Transit and local governments, including redesigning the Downtown Nanaimo Exchange and improving Gabriola's GERTIE service. The City of Nanaimo worked with Snuneymuxw First Nation on youth resilience and homelessness support, while Lantzville participated in regional coordination and emergency training.



REGIONAL
DISTRICT
OF NANAIMO