



For Immediate Release
November 26, 2024

CRD water meeting fails to fully hear, address concerns about \$2 billion plan

Victoria – The Regional Water Supply Commission of the Capital Regional District failed to address the concerns and recommendations shared at the Nov. 20 Commission meeting by taxpayer groups and businesses concerned about the impact of the Capital Regional District's \$2 billion Water Supply Master Plan.

“It was disappointing that the most expensive infrastructure project in the history of the CRD continues to advance towards approval without vital public scrutiny of the plan. Despite having been invited to speak to the Commission by former CRD board chair Colin Plant, our advance request to be allotted more than three minutes was denied,” said Ben Mycroft, Capital Region Chair of the Urban Development Institute. “In fact, instead of allowing our delegation more time to make our case, many of the elected officials on the Commission spent more than 10 minutes debating the request before denying the delegation any extra time.”

It was reassuring to see voices of common sense on the Commission, with some commissioners pushing staff to address gaps in public engagement, noting that relying on unscientific online surveys to inform their Strategic Plan is not statistically valid.

Commission members did not respond to the five clear recommendations made in the presentation and shared in advance to address the flawed water plan that will triple water rates for homeowners and renters, and make housing more expensive, with scant public consultation on the plan or its impacts.

The five concerns the group raised in the presentation and asked the Commission to address were:

- Incorrect technical assumptions about increasing water needs for the future
- Making new housing more expensive by making them pay too large a share of project costs
- No study of the impacts that higher costs will have on much needed housing supply
- No technical justification for spending more than \$800 million on a filtration plant

- A complete lack of meaningful consultations with the public and First Nations on the largest capital expenditure program in the history of the Capital Region

“This project will cost local taxpayers at least \$2 billion and possibly much more due to a lack of diligence and questionable technical assumptions, added Casey Edge, Executive Director, Victoria Residential Builders Association. “Public consultation has been virtually non-existent despite the very real risk of tripling water bills and massive cost overruns. The CRD’s adoption of new development cost charges related to the water plan will make higher housing costs a certainty across Greater Victoria.”

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