

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT 2025 BUSINESS PLAN

Committee of the Whole

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Maintaining North Cowichan's infrastructure seven days per week, which includes:
 - **Roads/drainage** (road and sidewalk maintenance, drainage maintenance, and fleet management)
 - **Utilities** (water distribution, wastewater and storm-water collection, and treatment plants)
 - **Community services** (solid, organic, and recycling collections)
 - **Building** (facilities and building maintenance, electrical, scada, storekeeper/timekeeper)
 - **Harbours and water access** (management & oversight of wharves, and water access points)



CORE BUSINESS

The Operations Department is organized into five key areas:



Roads and drainage



Utilities



Curbside services



Harbours and water access



Facilities

STAFFING LEVELS

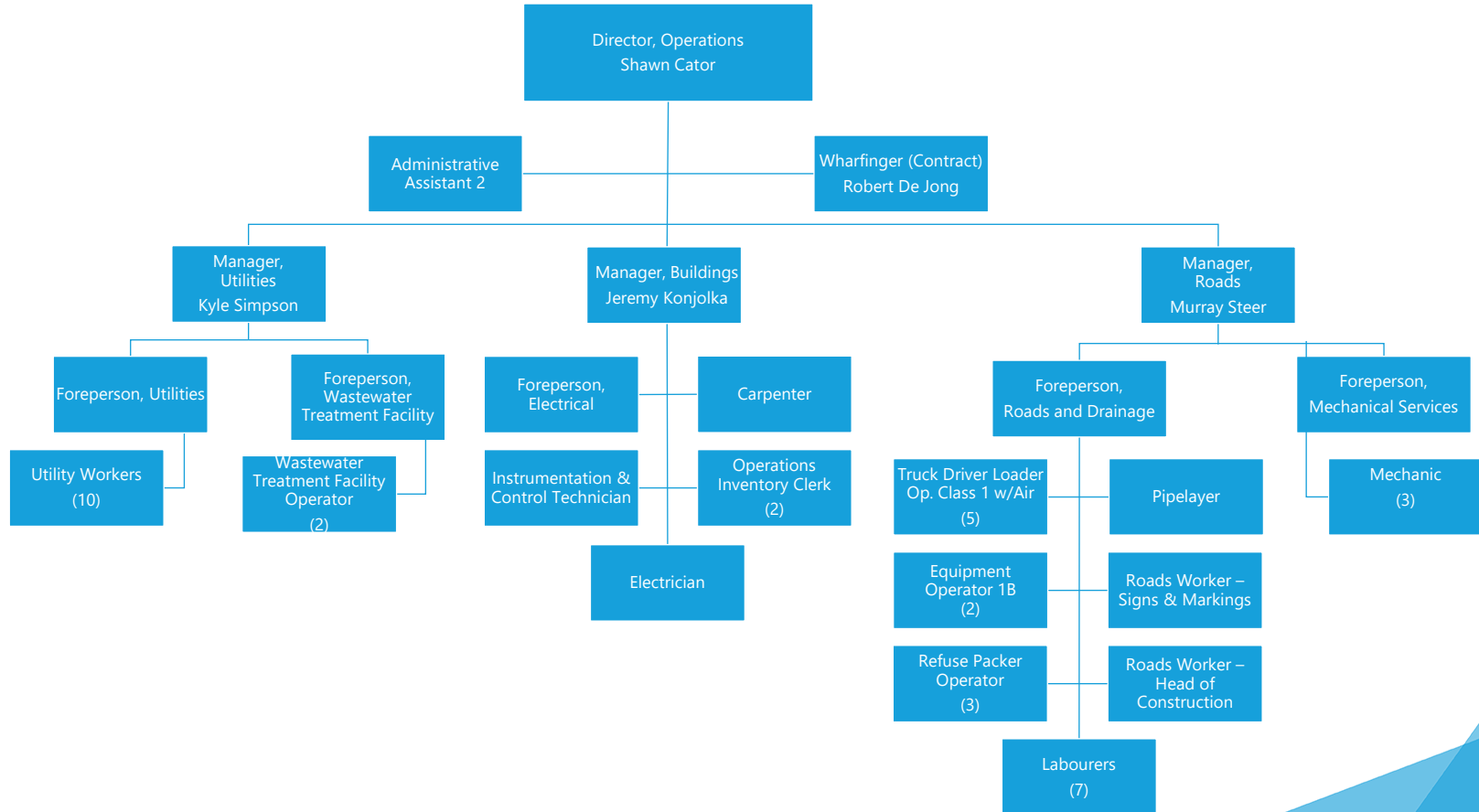
52

Total positions
as of
July 1, 2024

- 46 Full-Time, Permanent
- 2 Part-Time, Permanent (1 vacancy)
- 3 Full-Time Temporary
- 1 Contractor

(Exempt 4; CUPE 47; 1 Contractor)

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



ROADS/DRAINAGE

23.0 FTE (Manager, Roads; Mechanical Services Foreperson; Mechanics; Truck Driver/Loader Operators (Class 1 w/Air); Pipelayer; Equipment Operator 1B; Road Worker; Labourers)

Road and sidewalk maintenance

- Roads and bridges
- Concrete infrastructure and sidewalks
- Drainage and flood control
- Sign & road markings
- Snow and ice and other severe weather response, including preventative measures
- Management of internal capital construction projects

STATS:

- 300 kms of roads
- 237 kms of sidewalks
- 150 kms of ditching
- 1,000 culverts to maintain (infrastructure deficit being addressed)
- 160 kms of storm pipes

ROADS/DRAINAGE – CONTINUED

Fleet maintenance (3 FTE)

- 3 mechanics maintain 140 units which include vehicles, heavy equipment, and small equipment
- Fleet maintained to meet service level requirements
- Investigating electrification of fleet
- Fleet management software implemented in 2021

ROADS/DRAINAGE – CONTINUED

Snowfall routes

- North Cowichan is divided into nine snowplow routes for major snowfall response
- All roadways are included in the nine snowplow routes and are all plowed as required; routes normally take 12-14 hours to complete
- Residents are required to clean sidewalks in front of their property
- A brine application system was constructed in 2006; brine provides improved road surface conditions and allows for safer travel
- A one-day snow event occupies 14 pieces of equipment and 200 person hours
- Between November–March, North Cowichan runs two-person crew night shifts seven days per week

BUILDING

7.0 FTE (Manager, Buildings; Electrical Foreperson; Instrumentation and Control Technician; Electrician; Carpenter; Operations Inventory Clerk)

Facilities and building maintenance:

- Maintenance of municipally-owned facilities and buildings (including 2 RCMP, 4 Fire Halls, Municipal Hall, and Operations building)
- Stores, warehouse, fuel purchases
- Radio communications, security, alarm, emergency plan
- Adaptation to green technology as part of corporate GHG management

BUILDING – CONTINUED

Electrical & Scada (3 FTE)

- Maintaining electrical systems in the municipal building
- Developing and maintaining alarms and data for buildings, sewer and water facilities
- Maintaining electrical pumps, generators, and systems for sewer and water
- Maintaining municipal-owned streetlights
- Reviewing electrical design drawings related to development

UTILITIES

15.0 FTE (Manager, Utilities; Utilities Foreperson; Utility Workers; Foreperson, Waste Water Treatment Plant; Treatment Plant Operators)

- Utility (sewer, drain & water) maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation programs to sustain life-cycle of the asset
- Planning towards a maintenance management program for preventative maintenance of all municipal infrastructure
- Emergency alarm & electronic monitoring system for pump stations and water system (SCADA)
- There are 7 independent, self-sustaining utilities:
 - South End, Crofton, and Chemainus water systems (+ new South End to Crofton system)
 - Maple Bay, Crofton, and Chemainus sewer systems + JUB

UTILITIES – CONTINUED

- All systems are in good condition, meeting provincial standards for drinking water and wastewater effluent
- Yearly rate review and projections undertaken
- Management of Holyoak Lake and Crofton Lake dams which provide fish flows for Chemainus River and Richards Creek

FACT: The potential for boil advisories in the Chemainus River water system has been vastly reduced due to the year-round trial use operation of the Chemainus Wells.

CURBSIDE SERVICES

3 FTE Refuse Packer Operators

Solid, organic, and recycling collections

- Provide residential solid waste collection, including a weekly collection of food waste, and bi-weekly garbage and recyclables
- Working with Recycle BC to reduce contamination of residential curbside recycling and promoting waste reduction
- Reducing GHG emissions through curbside organics program

CURBSIDE SERVICES – CONTINUED

- North Cowichan has an agreement with Recycle BC, where the municipality receives a fee per household for providing recycling services
- The revenue from Recycle BC was \$450,130 (2024)
- Garbage user fees in 2024 were \$153 per household, covering garbage collection and food waste collection
- Recycling collection completed by contractor

CURBSIDE SERVICES – CONTINUED

Key responsibilities:

- Provide service to over 10,160 homes
- Average of 1,348 tonnes of organics (402.1 tonnes GHG emissions reduction)
- Average of 1,653 tonnes of garbage
- The contract service for curbside recycling collection with Waste Connections in 2024 is \$297,668 per year
- Recollect tool and North Cowichan Curbside collection app

HARBOURS AND WATER ACCESS

Chemainus Wharf | Crofton Wharf | Maple Bay Wharf | Water Access Points

Focus

- Management & oversight of wharves
 - Day-to-day operation
 - Public access management
 - Contract operation
 - Lifecycle maintenance
- Water access points
 - Sustain/increase lake, river, and ocean access
 - Wayfinding

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Accomplishments	Strategic Alignment
Completion of Sportsplex fieldhouse building	Community
Drought Emergency Response Plan	Service
Contract for the curbside collection of recycling	Environment
Completion of Crofton Fire Hall building	Service
Beaumont Avenue water main replacement	Community



CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES

Operations



PRIORITY 1:

Implement yard waste curbside collection and electric garbage truck purchase



PRIORITY 2:

Continue Electric Fleet Strategy implementation as part of the 2024 equipment replacement capital budget



PRIORITY 3:

Investigate water consumption rates for residents and businesses and determine a strategy to improve water conservation

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2025 BUSINESS PLAN

2025 KEY DELIVERABLES

Actions/Projects	Strategic Alignment
<p>Maple Bay Wharf – Continue the detailed design for phase one including the wharf, gangway, dock, pile replacement, and accessibility improvements. The project will be tendered for construction in late 2024 with construction planned for 2025. Total budget for design and construction is \$1,350,000.</p>	Asset Management
<p>Automated Curbside Collection – New automated trucks and garbage and organics carts purchased and arriving in spring 2025. New program launch scheduled for June 2025 which includes a fulsome implementation and communication plans.</p>	Council Strategic Plan – Service

2025 KEY DELIVERABLES

Actions/Projects	Strategic Alignment
<p>Electric Vehicle Strategy – Continue with the implementation of the 2023-2025 council endorsed strategy to purchase 12 electric vehicles and install charging stations at municipal facilities. 8 electric vehicles will be ordered by the end of 2024 including 4 trucks, 2 vans and 2 cars. The installation of the charging station will commence in late 2024.</p>	Council Strategic Plan – Environment
<p>Public Works Yard building – Continue with preliminary design. The original buildings were constructed in 1953 and have seismic and building code issues. A preliminary design for the building will be created and phasing options and estimates will be completed. Budget carry forward the amount of \$100,000.</p>	Asset Management

2025 KEY DELIVERABLES

Actions/Projects	Strategic Alignment
<p>Snow and Ice Removal Policy – This Council policy identifies level of service for clearing snow and ice on municipal roads, sidewalks and pathways. Priority and secondary routes will be updated as required and will take into consideration the updated Master Transportation Plan. The policy was last updated in 2015.</p>	Council Strategic Plan – Service
<p>Backup Generator Replacement Schedule – There are 40 generator units in North Cowichan that supply back-up power to water and sewer pumping stations and buildings. The review will analyze the condition, capacity and age of the units and determine a replacement schedule.</p>	Asset Management

2025 KEY DELIVERABLES

Actions/Projects	Strategic Alignment
<p>Waste Collection Bylaw Update – The new automated curbside collection program will require updates to the existing bylaw. These items include cart set out criteria, accepted items for yard waste, cart repair and ownership and exchange criteria.</p>	Council Strategic Plan – Service
<p>Roof Replacement Schedule – North Cowichan owns and maintains over 40 buildings. A roof replacement schedule will review age and condition of the roofing system to determine a replacement schedule for future capital improvements.</p>	Asset Management

2025 KEY DELIVERABLES

Actions/Projects	Strategic Alignment
Fees and Charges Bylaw Update – Increase the cost for installation of sewer and water services as part of development to reflect increases in the cost for construction.	Council Strategic Plan – Economy

CAPITAL BUDGET – ENHANCED SERVICE REQUESTS

Actions/Projects	Budget	Rationale
Maple Bay Rowing Club roof	\$430,000	The existing torch-on roof is approximately 20 years old. As per the lease agreement the municipality is responsible for the replacement. Scope of work included full insulation replacement and structural improvements. A consultant has reviewed the roof condition and estimated the replacement cost.
Municipal Hall and public washroom accessibility upgrades	\$20,000	An accessibility study was completed for several municipal facilities. Upgrades to the buildings will be completed as per the resulting Accessibility Action Plan.

OPERATING BUDGET – ENHANCED SERVICE REQUESTS

NET NEW STAFFING REQUEST

Position	Rationale	Implications of Deferment	Projects Deferred	Budget Impact
Supervisor Solid Waste Permanent Full-Time	The Supervisor of Roads and Drainage currently has 15 staff that report to the position. Adding an additional 3 positions for the new position Custodian – Public Spaces will increase the number of reports to an unreasonable level. This will result in difficulty assigning tasks and effectively supervising staff. As well the new automated curbside collection program for organics and garbage and a new contract for recycling collection will increase workload in solid waste.	The level of service for the new curbside collection program and the clean up of public spaces in the downtown core could be reduced. Programs such as cart exchanges, walk up service, and cart repairs could be delayed. As well public complaints about required clean up in the core could take more time to action.	Cart exchanges, walk up service, and cart repairs.	\$111,476 Inclusive of benefits

OPERATING BUDGET – ENHANCED SERVICE REQUESTS

NET NEW STAFFING REQUEST

Position	Rationale	Implications of Deferment	Projects Deferred	Budget Impact
Carpenter Permanent Full-Time	<p>With only 1 current carpenter the amount of contracting out of small building related projects is increasing resulting in higher costs and more staff time for contractor coordination. Many projects that were being done in house are contracted such plumbing, painting, flooring, concrete and framing. Over the past year the cost for these contractors is approximately \$100,000. As well Building Maintenance has taken on additional services over the past couple years including the new RCMP building and several Parks and Utility buildings which is increasing workload.</p>	<p>Ongoing challenges persist due to rising costs and limited contractor availability. Finding contractors for minor tasks remains a struggle, often resulting in higher expenses. Additionally, routine maintenance tasks like roof cleaning and painting face delays due to insufficient resources. The Manager's significant time investment in securing contractors for smaller jobs further exacerbates the delay in building capital work.</p>	Building capital work and routine maintenance tasks.	\$104,317 Inclusive of benefits

OPERATIONAL BUDGET – ENHANCED SERVICE REQUESTS

Actions/Projects	Budget	Rationale
Mary Street culvert cleaning	\$100,000	The 900 mm steel culvert is 50% filled with granular material from the creek resulting in flooding of the road during large storm events.
Janitorial for Municipal Hall and Operations building	\$15,000	The contract for janitorial services for the two buildings expires in 2025. Recent costs for this service in other buildings has increased significantly. Staff determined that the in-house cost for this work would be higher.

OPERATIONAL BUDGET – ENHANCED SERVICE REQUESTS

Actions/Projects	Budget	Rationale
Road marking – centerline and crosswalks	\$30,000	Cost for labour and materials have increased in the last few years. As well staff are planning to introduce thermoplastic crosswalk markings. This product is more extensive than paint but lasts 3 or 4 times longer.

CAPITAL BUDGET – 2023 PROJECTS

CHILDCARE

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	2023 COST	FUNDING
South End	Parkside childcare facility – all ages	\$18 million	Grant funding approved
Crofton	Crofton childcare facility – targeted for infant/toddler primary	\$ 2.7 million	Grant funding approved
TOTALS		\$20.7 million	

OPERATING BUDGET – PUBLIC WORKS

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	2024 Budget	2025 Budget	\$ Change	% Change	2024 YTD	Supplemental	\$ Change
REVENUE							
Garbage and recycling	\$ 1,998,774	\$ 2,184,716	\$ 186,242	9%	\$ 1,386,402		
Sales of service	343,789	469,069	125,280	36%	445,007		
Wharves	216,938	221,274	4,336	2%	200,204		
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 2,559,201	\$ 2,875,059	\$ 315,858	12%	\$ 2,031,613		
EXPENSES							
Administration	\$ 794,804	\$ 682,254	\$ (112,550)	(14)%	\$ 720,047	\$ 15,000	\$ (97,550)
Garbage and recycling	2,929,555	3,333,402	403,847	14%	1,493,024	50,000	169,017
Roads and drainage	3,992,742	4,485,730	333,321	8%	3,507,555	130,000	463,321
Wharves	186,385	188,447	2,062	1%	143,873		
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 8,063,153	\$ 8,689,833	\$ 626,680	8%	\$ 5,864,499	\$ 195,000	\$ 1,975,375

KEY STATISTICS

Customer Satisfaction

	2019	2022
Customer satisfaction with drinking water	89%	94%
Customer satisfaction with curbside collection	88%	91%
Customer satisfaction with snow clearing	83%	92%
Customer satisfaction with road maintenance	79%	79%

KEY STATISTICS

Annual tracking

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 (YTD)
Curbside collection issues	107	268	267	97	75	47	77
Potholes complaints	17	54	34	44	56	50	55
Snow and ice complaints	3	46	12	24	82	5	11
Water quality	23	36	42	45	20	45	31
Building maintenance issues	60	56	38	210	260	256	186
Total # of calls for service	2,486	3,246	2,722	3,834	3,590	1,958	2167

**As of November 12, 2024*