



MEDIA RELEASE

January 12, 2017

Regional District plans to acquire office space in Campbell River

Campbell River, BC – The Strathcona Regional District is hoping to make its Cedar Street location a permanent home in 2017. The regional district has been leasing portions of the building at 990 Cedar Street in Campbell River since 2008 but with insufficient office space, the organization has been considering alternatives that would provide long-term stability for the organization. Purchasing the building is seen as the most cost-effective solution.

To finance the acquisition, the regional district is planning to borrow approximately \$2 million to cover the cost of purchase, renovations, legal and other associated costs. Based on current projections of interest rates, operating expenditures and leasehold revenues from other building tenants, the annual costs related to ownership of the asset are expected to be less than the Regional District's current leasehold arrangement.

"The plan to purchase the building is effectively cost-neutral, which means there will be no impact on taxpayers," says Board Chair John MacDonald. "We have explored other options, and buying the building makes the most fiscal sense; in fact, being an owner instead of a tenant will save the regional district money while building equity in a desirable asset. It is fiscally responsible and makes good business sense." As part of the borrowing process, the Board has recommended that elector approval be sought through an alternative approval process. Voters will be asked to support the plan over the next few months.

Chief Administrative Officer, Dave Leitch, is pleased with the Board's direction. "Our corporate office is split between two floors; we have senior staff sharing offices, others sitting in hallways or hot-desking, and a boardroom that does not sufficiently allow for public participation. Our limited space creates challenges for staff, which impacts our ability to best serve the public. We have considered numerous possibilities and this solution is the most cost-effective, least disruptive and practical solution that will meet our corporate needs."

The Board gave three readings to the loan authorization bylaw at its January 11, 2017 meeting and once provincial approval is received, the public approval process will take place, likely by mid-March.

The Strathcona Regional District is a partnership of four electoral areas and five municipalities providing approximately 43,000 residents with 55 services including parks, liquid and solid waste systems, fire protection, emergency preparedness programs and a full-service sports facility.

-30-

Media contact:

John MacDonald, Chair, Board of Directors

Strathcona Regional District

250.287.0332

boardchair@strathconard.ca