

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 8, 2025

RE: Staff's Response Regarding the Efficiency Review

Purpose

This report is a reply to the Organizational Efficiency Review which was approved by the Board in 2024.

Background:

In mid-2024, Neilson Strategies Inc. (NSI) was commissioned by the RDOS to undertake an independent Organizational Efficiency Review for the RDOS Administration. The review was structured as an exercise to examine and make recommendations to improve the overall efficiency of the organization in its use of resources to provide local and regional services. In broad terms, the review set out to examine and address issues at a high level.

The following is a summary of the staff response by topic:

Topic 1 Organizational Structure:

Consultant Recommendation (No further action required.)

Staff response:

The reporting structure has been successfully streamlined with the reduction of departments now reporting to the CAO. This change was aimed at enhancing internal communication and improving overall efficiency within the Regional District. In addition, due to the importance of Human Resources, Protective Services, and Communications, these departments now report to the CAO. Reporting structures for Financial Services and Utilities have also been streamlined.

The reduction in our organizational reporting structure has improved efficiency and internal communication within the organization.

Topic 2 Centralized Functions

Consultant Recommendation (That the CAO revisit the potential need for additional staffing resources in Communications and Engagement in 2026).

Staff response:

Since the restructuring of the Communications division reporting to the CAO, the Communications Department recognizes that additional staff are no longer required. Drawing on support from administrative staff and project coordinators in other departments will provide the additional capacity required. Staffing needs will be reviewed in 2026.

Topic 3 Organizational Culture

Consultant Recommendation (Previously presented recommendations have effectively been addressed. No additional recommendations are presented).

Staff response:

As stated by the consultant, changes include improving internal communication among staff and the creation of the Interdepartmental Charter (code of conduct ethics charter). Also, listening to staff feedback and making the CAO accessible, has improved the culture of the organization.

Topic 4 Workload Management

Consultant Recommendation (The recommendation made in November 2024 remains in effect, as follows.)

- 1: That the RDOS consider, as part of a review of the Board's committee structure assigned to an Electoral Area Services Committee, the responsibility to vet and prioritize requests for projects, initiatives, or tasks brought forward by RDOS Electoral Area Directors.

Staff response:

Currently, there is no Electoral Area Services Committee, however, it is in the 2025 work plan, which will make a recommendation to the Board whether one should be established. Currently, the Board as a whole makes the decisions whether a project is to be added or deleted.

Topic 5 Bylaw Enforcement

Consultant Recommendation (Some previously presented recommendations have been addressed). Two recommendations remain in effect –

1: The RDOS consider setting and updating regularly the Board's bylaw enforcement priorities in the service policy based on recommendations from a new Electoral Area Services Committee.

2: That the Bylaw Enforcement Coordinator work to ensure that Bylaw Enforcement Officers spend a minimum of 80% of their time in the field, rather in the office.

Staff response –

The current enforcement model is complaint-based and largely administrative in nature due to the landuse files our officers work on. We only use field time to verify complaints, collect evidence and speak to the property owners regarding compliance. Unlike municipalities with concentrated urban areas, we operate within a regional framework encompassing a much larger land base and lower population densities. As such, random patrols are neither practical nor consistent with our established policy. Resources are prioritized based on complaints received and the efficient resolution of enforcement matters.

Additionally, yearly priorities can be set in strategic planning.

1: Currently there is no Electoral Area Services Committee, however, the Board of Directors as a whole can consider updating the bylaws. The 2025 work plan is to bring back a recommendation to the Board to determine if an Electoral Area Committee should be set up. Regarding bylaw enforcement, enforcement is presently complaint-driven, a model that has proven manageable given existing staffing levels. Transitioning to proactive enforcement or significantly expanding service levels would require material increases in staffing and associated budget impacts. Until such resources are in place, maintaining a complaint-based approach remains the most effective and sustainable option

2: While the recommendation to establish an 80% field work target is noted, staff should clarify that the approved position is intended to be a Bylaw Coordinator. The primary focus of this role will be on the administration, processing, and enforcement of the Short-Term Rental and Business Licensing Bylaws, rather than broad-based bylaw patrols.

Our enforcement model remains primarily complaint-driven, with much of the work completed within the office through investigations, correspondence, application processing, and file management. We operate within a large regional land base where random patrols are not a practical or efficient use of resources.

Accordingly, staff recommend maintaining the current complaint-based model, with the Bylaw Coordinator focusing on Business Licensing compliance, administrative processes, and supporting consistent application of the new regulatory framework.

Topic 6 Risk Management

Consultant Recommendation (The recommendations presented in November 2024 remain in effect).

1: That the RDOS consider developing a policy and process to guide division and departments in their efforts to identify risks, determine mitigation, tools to apply. And identify residual risks.

2: That the CAO assign responsibility for risk management, including the development and updating a risk register for the RDOS, be assigned to the CFO, and supported by the new Manager of Financial Operations.

Staff response:

1: This recommendation will be added to the 2026 work plan.

2: The Regional District's new Corporate Officer has a certificate in risk management. The Corporate Officer is qualified to lead the risk management duties and will be made responsible for risk management with the support as required from the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

Topic 7 Software Platforms

Consultant Recommendation (The recommendations presented in November 2024 remain in effect).

1: That the RDOS consider developing a five-year plan to identify and address the software and broader information system needs of the organization.

2: That the development and implementation of the five-year plan be contingent on the RDOS taking responsibility for the collection of local property taxes in electoral areas.

Staff response:

1: The current financial software meets the needs of the RDOS, however, a review of what the software is capable of performing and what the need will be in the future is required. RDOS Communications will work with Information Systems to explore options to manage interaction. Staff will develop a plan and bring it to the Board with a recommendation.

2: Staff are currently in discussions with the province with the request of allowing the RDOS to become a taxing authority. For the 2025 taxation year, the administration cost charged by the province to RDOS taxpayers is \$1,009,000. The software currently used by the RDOS can

issue tax notices. Staff are estimating it would cost the RDOS \$450,000 per year to issue taxes. There would be a net saving of \$559,000 per year.

Topic 8 Senior Leadership Team

Consultant Recommendation (The recommendation presented in November 2024 remains in effect).

1: That the Chief Administrative Officer develop a formal Terms of Reference to clearly define the purpose and responsibilities of the senior leadership team.

Staff response:

A formal terms of reference document will be completed by the third quarter of 2025.

Topic 9 Governance

Consultant Recommendation (The recommendations previously presented have been addressed).

Staff response:

This recommendation is in the 2025 work plan.

Respectfully submitted:

Jim Zaffino

J. Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer