

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

The following is an overview of what we heard from the community regarding the qathet Regional District's communications and engagement practices. The full Engagement Summary and Regional Demographic Analysis (used to inform engagement efforts), are attached to this report as Appendix A.



7

Interviews with key actors



30

Participants in five virtual workshops
across the Region and City



255

Surveys completed

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- 1. The Regional District is good at reaching the “usual suspects”** but struggles to reach a diverse population in the region. For example, on this project, few people under 35 years old participated. The qathet Regional District (qRD) needs to adopt new methods of communication and engagement to reach different populations in the region, especially youth, young adults, and families. The qRD could be more consistent engaging with neighbouring First Nations communities.
- 2. Use social media and local networks:** Social media, especially Facebook, is where most residents get their information. However, the qRD is effectively invisible on social media. Participants encouraged the qRD to use local email lists and communications networks (e.g., local newsletters), as well as having a social media presence to share information and promote engagement.
- 3. People want to feel heard and require diverse methods for communication and engagement:** Different ways of sharing information and engaging with residents across the region are needed. Online surveys and in-person events are preferred. There is a social aspect to in-person events that people enjoy, as well as getting to hear other people's perspectives. People prefer to participate on weekday evenings, weekend afternoons, and weekday afternoons, with winter and fall being the best times of year. There are some exceptions (e.g., summer is best for many Savary Island residents).
- 4. Understand local differences:** To be effective, the qRD needs to understand community constraints, including timing and availability (e.g., ferry schedules) and connectivity (e.g., internet and cell phone coverage). Regular engagement and communication on issues important to each local community is vital. More details on specific differences by community is provided in the full Engagement Summary, and summarized in this report.
- 5. Capacity building is needed during communication and engagement:** There is a lack of understanding about what the qRD does, the services it provides, and how decisions are made. People are looking for more clarity about what is on and off the table, and the boundaries of the Regional District's jurisdiction and service provisions, in order to understand engagement expectations.
- 6. Information should be succinct, accessible, and relevant:** Participants want communication and background information that is brief but comprehensive, does not use jargon, and focuses on how the project or decision impacts them.
- 7. Have open and transparent processes:** People's experiences of the qRD's processes are that they can be bureaucratic. People are looking for lower-barrier engagement, transparency in engagement conversations and how their feedback impacts decisions.