

In-camera

DATE: October 30, 2014

FILE: 5340-02

TO: Chair and Directors
Comox Valley Sewage Commission

FROM: Debra Oakman, CMA
Chief Administrative Officer

RE: Communication Plan – land acquisition – future siting of Comox No. 2 wastewater pump station

Purpose

To present the land acquisition communication plan for the future Comox No. 2 wastewater pump station.

Policy analysis

This report is presented in-camera as per section 90(1)(E) of the *Community Charter* which authorizes a local government to discuss matters relating to property acquisition at a meeting that is closed to the public.

At the September 3, 2014 in-camera meeting the board approved the following recommendation:

THAT the property legally described as Lot A, District Lot 110, Comox District, Plan VIP82713 be purchased for \$279,000 plus applicable taxes and survey and legal costs;

AND FURTHER THAT the above property purchase include a non-refundable deposit of up to \$20,000 for completion of a 90 day full and satisfactory due diligence inspection;

AND FINALLY THAT the conditions and terms of the offer be kept in confidence by the CVRD and the vendor.

Executive summary

On September 3, 2014 the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) entered into a contract of purchase and sale for a parcel of land located on Beech Street in Electoral Area 'B' near the east boundary of the Town of Comox. The land is to be used for future siting of the Comox No. 2 wastewater pump station. The land purchase is subject to a 90 day full and satisfactory due diligence inspection. The completion date in the contract of purchase is December 9, 2014.

To assist in the completion of the due diligence inspection work the regional district has retained the services of Heuristic Consulting. Heuristic's work will focus on right of way issues, land encumbrances, technical servicing issues and land use issues. The regional district has also retained AECOM engineers to complete a preliminary contaminated site assessment as well as a preliminary geotechnical assessment. In addition AECOM may assist with an initial archeological assessment. The above due diligence work is expected to be complete by late November and is being conducted in a confidential manner by the above consultants.

In combination with the due diligence inspection, the regional district's communications department is working closely with Heuristic Consulting to develop communication materials for this land

purchase. The construction of a wastewater pump station in a rural residential area will be a concern to several of the neighbouring property owners. It is imperative that the regional district be prepared to communicate proactively with neighbours in a timely fashion prior to the release of property purchase information to the public. The communication material will focus on the sound site selection methodology utilized, the significant environmental risks addressed (by removing the wastewater line from Willemar Bluff) and the modern design and construction practices which mitigate historical pump station nuisance issues such as noise and odour. Attached as Appendix A is the CVRDs draft communications plan titled “Comox No. 2 waste water pump station”. Also attached as Appendix B are draft frequently asked questions (FAQ) anticipating community concerns. Attached as Appendix C is a map of the subject area. The above material will be further developed over the next several weeks and then utilized to engage the neighbourhood prior to the release of property purchase information.

The purchase of property for the Comox No. 2 pump station is currently in-camera as per section 90(1)(E) of the *Community Charter*. With the number of separate individuals currently involved in completing the due diligence inspection work the risk of the purchase becoming public prior to the completion date is elevated. In the event that the purchase becomes public prior to the completion date the regional district would be required to maintain in-camera confidentiality. In this situation the communications department would receive the queries and advise that the CVRD is not able to comment or respond to the specific question. The response would identify that if or when answers to the specific questions become available, the CVRD would further discuss these matters with the public at that time.

Recommendation from the chief administrative officer:

THAT the Comox Valley Regional District rise and report regarding the purchase of property of the Comox No. 2 pump station subject to the completion of the contract to purchase for the property legally described as Lot A, District Lot 110, Comox District, Plan VIP82713 and ensuring communications with the property owners in the area occurs as a first priority.

Respectfully:

D. Oakman

Debra Oakman, CMA
Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared by:

M. Rutten

Marc Rutten, P.Eng.
General Manager of Engineering
Services

Attachment: Appendix A – “DRAFT Communication Plan – Comox No. 2 wastewater pump station”
Appendix B - “DRAFT FAQs: Land Acquisition – siting of wastewater pump station”
Appendix C - “map of the subject area”

Subject: Comox No.2 wastewater pump station	File:
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Purpose

The purpose of this communication plan is to develop proactive information platforms for the public and neighbouring properties around the purchase, construction and design of the property legally described as Lot A, District Lot 110, Comox District, Plan VIP82713 and located in Electoral Area 'B', east of the Town of Comox, as the future site of a new regional district wastewater pump station.

Target audience(s):

- CVRD board of directors
- Internal staff
- Municipal staff
- Area residents
- Media
- General public
- Neighbouring properties

Project background:

- Wastewater from the City of Courtenay and the Town of Comox is transmitted to the Comox Valley water pollution control centre (CVWPCC) through large diameter forcemain that follows the shoreline from the Courtenay River estuary to Goose Spit, past Willemar Bluff and then on to the CVWPCC.
- In 2002 the CVRD discovered that beach erosion along Willemar Bluff had exposed significant portions of the forcemain and in 2005 the CVRD completed study work recommending that a new pump station be constructed near the intersection of Croteau Road and Docliddle Road and that a new inland forcemain alignment be constructed from the new pump station to the CVWPCC thereby by-passing Willemar Bluff.
- In February 2014 the CVRD completed additional study work to compare the suitability of two locations (one adjacent to the existing Jane Place pump station and the other near the originally recommended location). The study recommended that the new Comox No. 2 pump station continue to be located near the intersection of Croteau and Docliddle Roads.
- Utilizing a methodology which considers a combination of technical, environmental, neighbourhood and financial factors, an evaluation was completed to determine the most favourable parcel for the siting of the Comox No.2 pump station.

Key speaking points:

- The Comox Valley sewage management plan (SMP) indicates the need for the construction of the Comox No.2 pump station in order to resolve the long standing environmental risks at Willemar Bluff.
- As part of the recent evaluation process, the highest ranked priority was Lot A, District Lot 110, Comox District, Plan VIP82713 (zoned CR-1) and located in Electoral Area 'B', east of the Town of Comox for the siting of a new regional district wastewater pump station. The parcel is unencumbered, with access to electrical utilities and excellent road alignments to future forcemains. The parcel is large in size with good buffering to neighbouring properties and does not contain any sensitive ecosystems.

- The public information meetings will only focus on the rationale and methodology used to select the property. Future meetings will happen during the design process to inform residents about the technologies and architecture used to mitigate concerns.

Communications strategy/tactics:

Tactics	Timing	Responsibility	Cost
Issue internal briefing note that has key messages and background information.	Just prior to 90 day close	communication with support from engineering services.	Staff time
Meeting with area residents (see map)	After the 90 day close	CAO/GM of engineering services and communications.	Staff time
Update the sewer service webpage with the background, FAQs, property details and area resident meeting information.	After the 90 day close	communications with support from the engineering services branch.	Staff time
Direct-mail out to area residents about the site of Comox pump station #2 including the information on upcoming public meetings.	After the 90 day close and before news release is issued.	communications with support from engineering services.	TBD
News release about the property, the background and public information meetings.	After the 90 day close	communications with support from the engineering services branch.	Staff time
Promotion and advertisement of neighbourhood and public outreach meetings.	Early 2015	communications with support from the engineering services branch.	TBD
Development and circulation of updated FAQs/newsletter coming from public information meetings.	During the public information process	communications with support from the engineering services branch.	TBD

Approval History

Created by:	Koreen Gurak October 2014
Amended:	

DRAFT FAQs: LAND ACQUISITION – SITING OF WASTEWATER PUMP STATION

Q. Why do we need a second sewer pump station ?

A. It has been well studied and documented that there are environmental risks associated the sewage pipeline that is associated with the section along the Willemar Bluffs (refer to map out in 2005 report). Over the last ten years, temporary measures have been put into place including the installation of Gabion Baskets to protect the exposure of the pipeline. The CVRD has included the second sewer as a priority in the regional growth strategy and the sewer master plan. The project has also been indentified and included in the CVRD strategic priorities and Comox Valley sewerage financial plan.

Q. What is the background with respect to a second sewer pump station?

A. Wastewater from the City of Courtenay and the Town of Comox is transmitted to the Comox Valley water pollution control centre (CVWPCC) through a large diameter forcemain that follows the shoreline from the Courtenay River estuary to Goose Spit, past Willemar Bluff and then on to the CVWPCC. In 2002 the CVRD discovered that beach erosion along Willemar Bluff had exposed significant portions of the forcemain. In 2005 the CVRD completed study work recommending that a new pump station be constructed near the intersection of Croteau Road and Docliddle Road and that a new inland forcemain alignment be constructed from the new pump station to the CVWPCC, thereby by-passing Willemar Bluff.

In February 2014 the CVRD completed additional study work to compare the suitability of two locations (one adjacent to the existing Jane Place pump station and the other near the originally recommended location). The study reinforced the recommendation that the new Comox No. 2 pump station be located near the intersection of Croteau and Docliddle Roads.

Q. Why has the CVRD chosen Lot A, District Lot 110, Comox District, Plan V1P82713 (Beech St) as the specific site for the Comox No. 2 Pump Station?

A. In order to determine properties in the recommended area most suitable for the siting of the future Comox No. 2 pump station, the CVRD retained Heuristic Consulting Associates to further evaluate properties within the recommended area. The consultants utilized industry accepted practices and methodology consisting of technical, environmental, neighbourhood and financial factors to identify, analyze and rank the most favourable parcels.

The parcel, legally described as Lot A, District Lot 110, Comox District, Plan VIP82713 (Beech St), was the highest ranked parcel in the evaluation. The parcel is currently an unencumbered vacant lot with access to electrical utilities and excellent road alignments to future forcemains. The parcel is large with good buffering of neighbouring properties and does not contain any sensitive ecosystems.

As with all properties in the area, the parcel is not currently provided with access to municipal water. The parcel was already listed for sale.

Q. Why is the acquisition of the land for a wastewater pump station a priority now?

A. Over the past two years, the CVRD has identified the second pump station as a priority to address the environmental risks associated with the section along the Willemar Bluffs. The parcel defined above was an unimproved vacant lot which had been for sale since 2011. Acquiring this parcel of land at this time was viable and financially prudent.

Q. Why not one of the nearby park properties?

A. The surrounding parks (Brooklyn Creek, Mack Laing Park and MacDonald Wood) would have to be rezoned as they are currently zoned P1.1 – Park and Open Space. The rezoning process provides no certainty and could take as long as 16 months. This project cannot afford time loss, and recognizes the environmental sensitivity of developing in these parks and the limited space for this project.

Q. How much is this project going to cost and how it is funded?

A. The budget for this project has been allocated over three years, with land purchasing and primarily engineering design in 2014 at a budget value of \$749,035, in 2015 detailed engineering costs of \$1,070,050 and in 2016 project construction of \$8,881,415. The funding for the Comox Valley sewerage function is supported by requisition from the City of Courtenay and the Town Comox. These two municipalities calculate their own costs which would include the cost of the Comox No. 2 pump station.

Q. What might the new Comox No. 2 pump station look like?

A. The new pump station will be architecturally designed to fit into the neighbourhood. A recent example of a pump station design is highlighted below:

<http://www.viewroyal.ca/EN/main/town/projects/Craigflowerpumpstation.html>

Craigflower Pump Station



*Example of a local modern pump station for the Capital Regional District (CRD)

Q. How is the CVRD going to address odour, noise and traffic concerns that may come from residents in the neighbourhood?

A. The new pump station use new technology to reduce potential odours from emanating from the pump station. The design will ensure noise from the pump station is contained within the site and that the facility is environmentally sustainable and efficient. The development of the property will utilize landscaping and building treatments to add value to the overall appearance and design. Through the public consultation process, property and building design will be shared with the nearby homeowners to ensure the overall plan incorporates, where possible, the views of the local residents.

During construction of the new pump station the CVRD will provided detailed information to the community regarding the exact project timeframes and further details on how we will any construction impacts such as safty, traffic, noise, dust/mud, security and vandalism.

Q. How is the CVRD going to engage the nearby residents?

A. The CVRD will work closely with adjacent and nearby residents by first communicating with them in the form of a letter after the 90 day due diligence on the sale of the property is complete. The letter will introduce the project and encourage resident involvement in providing direct input into the site layout and preliminary designs. Throughout the project, the CVRD is committed to working with the neighbourhood residents to ultimately deliver a project that best meets the objectives of everyone involved.

The CVRD will provide details on community public meetings on the website at www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/comox2pumpstation.

Q. What are the key timings for the Comox No. 2 pump station?

- Start community engagement : January 2015
- Completion of detailed design: December 2015
- Construction completion: December 2016

As more information becomes available it will be posted on the CVRD website:
www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/comox2pumpstation.

We are interested in your feedback. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, call 250-334-6000 or email engineeringservices@comoxvalleyrd.ca .

