

Providing Safe Water: Planning for a New Water Treatment Plant

Project Backgrounder #2



The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) is planning to construct a new water treatment system to deliver Comox Valley residents the modern system they deserve. The new system will eliminate the need for turbidity-related boil water notices, remove the risk of viruses and bacteria in our drinking water, and provide a secure supply of reliable, high quality drinking water for decades to come.

Plans for a new system and plant

The new treatment plant will use filtration, ultra-violet treatment and chlorination to remove bacteria and viruses from the water and eliminate the need for turbidity-related boil water notices.

The new water treatment system will consist of a new lake intake, a new pumping station, new water treatment plant and new treated water pipeline.

Public consultation

Between November 2015 and fall 2016, three public workshops were held with community stakeholders to review options to provide improved water intake, compliant treatment and delivery of treated drinking water. Feedback received during the workshops has been incorporated into the current project parameters.

The CVRD also held public information sessions in January and February 2018, to update the community about the project prior to the public assent process.

Alternative Approval Process

In early 2018, the CVRD launched an Alternative Approval Process to ask residents for permission to borrow up to \$29 million to pay for project costs not covered by reserves or grant funding. Residents in opposition to the borrowing were able to complete an electoral response form. From February 1 to March 16, the CVRD received 31 opposing responses. As this was fewer than 10% of the electorate, the CVRD may proceed with borrowing the necessary funds.

Project cost and how to pay for it

The project is currently estimated to cost \$110 million.

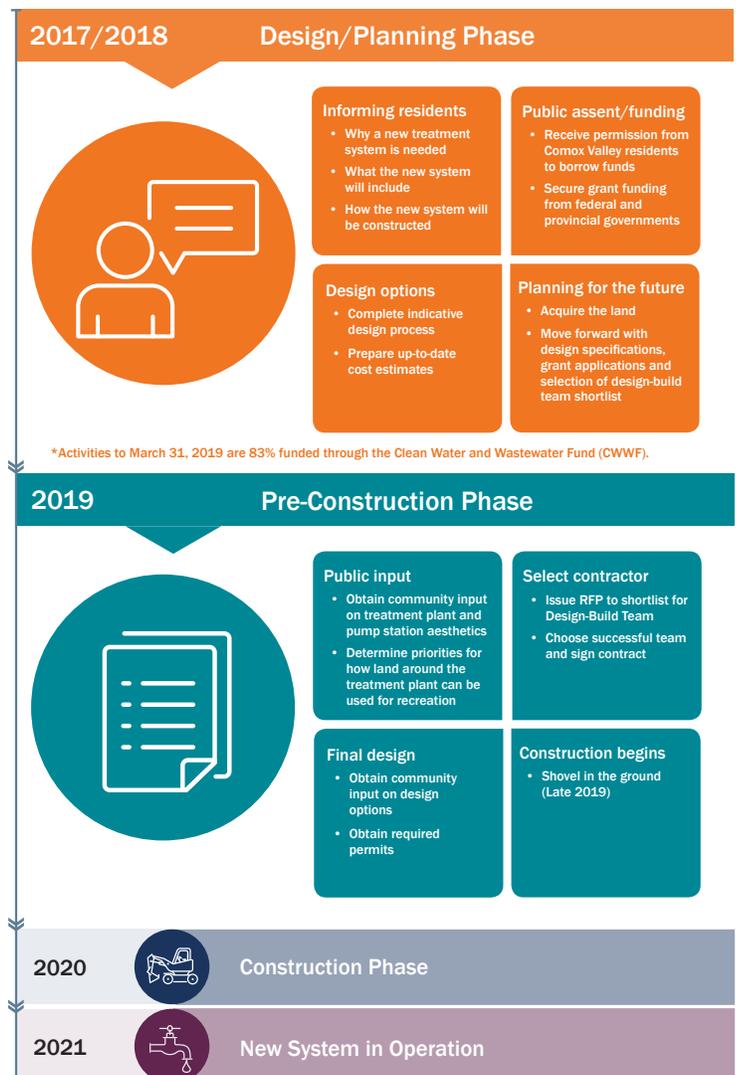
While the CVRD is anticipating it will receive a minimum of 50% of the total project costs in the form of infrastructure grants from the federal and provincial governments, there will still be costs to the CVRD. The Comox Valley Water System currently holds reserves of \$26 million and the CVRD plans to borrow up to \$29 million over a maximum of 25 years to finance its share of the construction costs for the new system.

The cost of borrowing this money will mean water system users will pay an average of just \$86 per household on their annual tax bill.



Moving forward: Project timeline

- **2015-2016 – Water Treatment Options Study Phase:** Included public consultation and detailed analysis of different treatment technologies, infrastructure locations and conveyance options, culminated in delivery of Project Definition Report (PDR)
- **2017-2018 – Design/Planning Phase:** Included hiring of owner’s engineer, further analysis to identify options to reduce capital costs, confirmation of design-build (DB) approach and project parameters/scope, culminated in completion of Indicative Design Report delivered in September 2017 and public assent to borrow, as well as securing significant infrastructure grants
- **2018-2019 – Pre-Construction Phase:** To include development of technical specifications for all equipment and infrastructure, draft project agreements for design-build contract, obtaining required permits, undertaking RFQ/RFP processes to select preferred design-build team, as well as obtaining community input on design options
- **Late 2019 – Construction Phase Begins**
- **2021 – New System in Operation**



To learn more about the project

Visit the project website at:

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