



Comox Valley Sewer Service LWMP

Phase 3 Outreach – Summary Report Long List of Options

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1.0 Executive Summary

With the education and goals and objectives phase of public consultation complete, the third phase of public engagement – conducted in a tight timeline through January 2019 – introduced a long list of options for the conveyance and treatment of liquid waste and resource recovery options resulting from those operations.

The public participation focus in this phase was largely to INFORM the public about the ideas on the long list. Residents were also asked about any options that may have been missed. This feedback is important to ensure that technical consultants are assessing all possible options to help the advisory committees form a short list.

Two key tools were used to complete this stage of work:

- *Information Sessions:* Two events were held (one at K'omoks Community Hall and the other at Rotary Hall – lower Filberg Centre in Courtenay). These included a series of informational displays providing overviews of the options, an informational handout with more technical details and representation from technical experts to provide information and answer questions.
- *Online Consultation:* To supplement the information sessions, a survey was created on ConnectCVRD to mimic the feedback process at the in-person events. An online ad campaign was implemented to draw audiences to the online engagement tool.

The results of this outreach included interaction with roughly 160 people through both the online and in-person components. About 75 of those were actively engaged – attending an event or submitting a survey online.

Themes of feedback included a focus on protecting the foreshore, interest in high treatment standards, and continued concern with the any option that includes a Comox No. 2 pump station.

The Long List was also presented to K'omoks First Nation Chief and Council. The project team will return to Chief and Council and to the broader KFN community to CONSULT on the shortlist of options under consideration in the spring.

Following consultation with KFN, the project team will hold additional public events to seek more specific feedback from the community on the options. The consistency of this engagement has allowed for the establishment of a relationship with those members of the public interested in participating, and this approach will continue.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 PROJECT BRIEF & CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

The Comox Valley Regional District launched the public consultation process for the Comox Valley Sewer System LWMP in June 2018. While work in 2018 was focused on establishing the process (ie: forming public and technical advisory committees, retaining technical consultants, confirming goals and objectives), 2019's workplan will include three very concrete steps required to achieve a draft plan. In January 2019, the first of those steps was completed with the identification of a long-list of options that were presented to the community.

This report summarizes the findings from Phase 3 of the public engagement plan for this LWMP. The chart below provides an outline of the five-phase consultation process.

PHASE	OBJECTIVES	TOOLS
<p>PHASE 1: Educate/Kick-Off (May-Aug. 2018) COMPLETE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INFORM: provide info about the sewer system and LWMP start • INVOLVE: connect with public to collect feedback on goals/values in sewer planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Webpage: create dedicated pages on regional district + ConnectCVRD websites • Advertisements: Promote online tool and sessions • Public Sessions #1 • Online Consultation Survey
<p>PHASE 2: Kick off & Goals/Objectives (Sept.-Dec. 2018) COMPLETE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INFORM: introduce LWMP process • COLLABORATE: work with the public advisory committee • CONSULT: collect feedback on goals and objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open House #1: including promotional and info materials • Public Sessions #2 • Online Consultation Survey
<p>PHASE 3: Longlisted Options (Jan-Mar. 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COLLABORATE: PAC/TAC meetings, long list established • CONSULT: KFN Chief and Council, host information sessions for public to review long list options, support with online consultation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Sessions #3 • Online Consultation Survey • Meet with KFN Chief and Council
<p>PHASE 4: Shortlisted Options (Mar-June. 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COLLABORATE: PAC/TAC meetings, short list established • CONSULT: KFN Chief and Council, host facilitated workshops for KFN community and public to review and rank short list options, support with online consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Sessions #4 • Online Consultation Survey • Meetings with KFN Chief and Council and community
<p>PHASE 5: Preferred Option (Summer-Fall. 2019)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COLLABORATE: PAC/TAC meetings, consensus on preferred solution • CONSULT: KFN Chief and Council • INFORM: Sewage Commission signs off on preferred solution • INFORM: Present preferred solution to KFN community and public, report on feedback obtained in consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open House #2: including promotional and info materials • Meetings with KFN Chief and Council and community

The goals set to guide this engagement are:

1. Provide information about the LWMP process.
2. Offer opportunities for active public involvement.
3. Clearly explain how feedback will be received and considered.
4. Create a record of engagement at the end of the process.
5. Demonstrate how engagement was considered and how input influenced final decisions.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS PHASES

Phase 1 of consultation centered on collecting feedback to establish the values of the community as they pertain to decision making in the sewer planning process, along with promoting the new online consultation tool and advertising for public advisory committee nominees.

Phase 2 of engagement asked for the community's input in establishing the goals and objectives for the planning process.

Both phases have included hosting two public sessions (one in each impacted community) as well as online consultation opportunities to collect feedback on priorities and values for sewer planning.

3.0 Phase 3 Consultation Results

The primary objective of this phase of consultation was to bring forward the long list of options identified by the technical consultants and the public and technical advisory committees for review by the community. Engaged residents were asked to identify any options that have been missed to date, or to highlight any considerations they felt should be looked at as a short list is determined.

3.1 BY THE NUMBERS

497	Visitors to the project page
56	People who attended the information sessions
111	Residents who reviewed the long list online
19	Submissions providing feedback on the long list

3.2 THEMES OF FEEDBACK

- *Concern over protection of the foreshore:* The most consistent comments were centered around interest in protecting the foreshore of Comox estuary in the long term, with interest particularly in options that would see all new conveyance piping kept out of the estuary.
- *Interest in new ideas:* Both the highest degree of treatment standards and the idea of tunneling for conveyance stood out to those who participated in the online and in-person consultation. At in-person events, the issue of higher costs associated with those options was raised by technical consultants, but there was still general interest from the public in learning more about the options and about their associated costs before removing from the table.
- *Continued opposition to Comox No. 2 Pump Station:* Many of those attending the open houses remained generally opposed to any option that included the Comox No. 2 Pump Station, regardless of impacts of alternatives to cost and other areas.

A full breakdown of the feedback is included in appendices to this report.

3.3 CONSULTATION WITH K'OMOKS FIRST NATION

Phase 3 involved the presentation of the Long List to K'ómoks First Nation Chief and Council. KFN is in support of the objective of the LWMP but is opposed to any options involving a forcemain to be installed along the foreshore, or within the inter-tidal zone, due to the high cultural value of the area. Chief and Council also indicated a preference for UV disinfection of treated effluent to minimize the potential for contamination to Baynes Sound.

4.0 Conclusion

The community is responding well to the options for participation in the LWMP process and interested residents continue to provide input when provided with the opportunity to do so. There is interest in the coming steps as more tangible solutions are presented and opportunities for direct feedback increase.

There is now an established core group of public participants who are following and providing feedback, and watching for subsequent steps.

5.0 Next Steps

- *Maintain online information hubs and ensure content is up to date.* Ensuring that informational materials are available online and accessible during this interim period will be important to maintaining interest in the project.
- *Prepare for next step of engagement.* With an established structure now for outreach to the community, the project team can prepare ahead for the next phase of consultation.

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