

Westside Solutions Survey Response Report

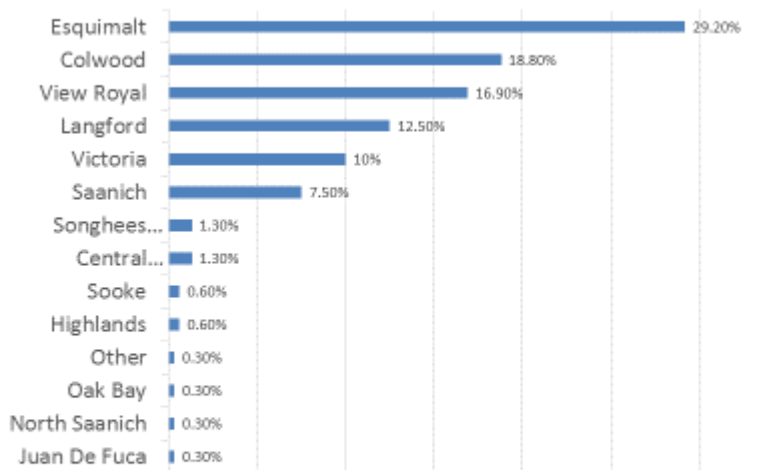
1. Overview

The Westside Select Committee on Wastewater Management and Resource Recovery conducted an online survey in conjunction with six (6) Open Houses in on the west shore. The survey was available on the Westside Solutions website from December 12, 2014 to February 01, 2015. The survey was conducted to begin to engage citizens in a dialogue around options in the new westside process and to get preliminary feedback from residents. While there were a range of opinions and suggestions submitted, the overall feedback confirmed that there was interest in finding a solution to for sewage treatment.

The information contained in this report has been organized where possible to fit under the six (6) topic areas that will constitute the next step in the public engagement process through a series of roundtables. This was done to try to help focus analysis on any trends or inconsistencies in the public responses, however – none of the responses have been edited from what was submitted and all responses received have been included in the report.

2. Participants

In total there were 345 responses primarily from residents of the communities on the west shore.



3. Raw data trends and observations

Of the raw un-weighted data there were some trends that emerged along with some apparent contradictions. The clear majority of respondents listed “meeting high environmental standards” as their first priority, with “keeping cost low” as the second highest rated option. It is also clear from the results that the second choice of most respondents “build potential for resource recovery”.

Possibly contrary to that trend when asked to pick the top five features that were important the top three clearly were odour control, hidden from sight and minimizing costs to taxpayers – with visually appealing, noise control and multi-use facility being the next highest priority.

Additional trends appear to be that the vast majority of respondents preferred not to discharge in to freshwater bodies but to reuse the water for irrigation or other low contact uses and that the preference is to treat the solids and the liquids on the same site and are opposed to shipping the solids to another location either by pipe or by truck, boat or rail.

4. Long answer trends and observations

An overall observation for the responses to the long answer – or open ended – questions is that there remains to be a different level of understanding across the region on the entire issue of wastewater treatment and resource recovery. While many throughout the Open Houses were appreciative of the information that was presented – it is clear that continuing to talk to citizens to have a common understanding of both the issues and solutions is needed.

Question 3b.) *What other consideration do you think are important in developing a Westside sewage treatment solution? (206 Responses)*

There is a deep breadth of answers to this question with a number of response categories emerging. A large number of responses were focused on siting criteria and how to integrate a wastewater treatment system into the community. Many were also concerned about controlling costs while others believed that any facility should be built with focus on the future saying that future growth should be considered and the treatment facility should be flexible enough to accommodate improving technologies.

Question 4b.) *Would you support any other methods of handling treated water? (93 Responses)*

While many respondents supported the recovery and reuse of treated water an equal number wanted to get more information on the level and process of treatment prior to making any sort of recommendation or request regarding how the water is used.

Question 5b.) *Would you support any other methods of handling treated solids? (98 Responses)*

While most respondents supported some form of resource recovery, many expressed concern about toxins that may be left behind after treatment, while others feel that resource recovery would increase costs. Gasification was supported as the preferred option in several responses, but a few respondents expressed opposition to this method. The majority of references to sites expressed that a facility should be separated from residential areas. There were also many respondents who felt they did not have enough technical information to answer this question.

Question 6.) *“The information boards at the open house (or on the website) include several examples of treatment plants that are currently in operation. These innovative sewage treatment and resource recovery facilities in other areas have demonstrated many community benefits. What benefits would you like to see if a facility was built in your community?” (225 Responses)*

Responses were relatively evenly distributed between recovery categories, siting and community integration and keeping costs low while finding benefits. It appears that many residents are interested in pursuing benefits whether through resource recovery, or incorporating into communities.

This question also has a few respondents who did not see the need for treatment, while others continue to urge moving forward with building a facility or facilities as quickly as possible.

Question 8.) *Do you have any additional comments or suggestions for developing plans for sewage treatment and water/energy recovery? (171 Responses)*

Many respondents in this category, the most open of all of the survey questions, focused on the engagement process, expressing both concerns and praise, while offering suggestions moving forward. Respondents were also concerned with timing, feeling that it is time to move beyond engagement and planning, and address the issue immediately, many feeling it has been an issue for far too long. Siting was also a significant concern amongst respondents, many not wanting a facility in their community or near any homes, and others concerned about wider implications, such as vulnerability to tsunamis and earthquakes and proximity to the coastline. Some concerns were also registered around costs, public versus private ownership, and the need for treatment beyond that which exists now.

5. Conclusion

We would like to thank all those who participated in the survey. The observations are simply that and we invite all who are interested to consider the raw data and draw their own conclusions.

As we proceed to the next steps in the endeavour to find a solution for wastewater treatment and resource recovery, your input will help inform the development of future public engagement and ultimately in developing options for wastewater treatment and resource recovery for westside communities.