



**REPORT TO CORE AREA LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 12 MAY 2010**

SUBJECT **PUBLIC CONSULTATION UPDATE ON SITE SELECTION FOR A WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY – CORE AREA WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROGRAM**

ISSUE

The public has indicated a level of uncertainty and confusion around the Capital Regional District's (CRD) intentions for public consultation for any alternate site selection process in the overall system.

BACKGROUND

With the recent Board adoption of the CRD Public Participation Framework (10 March 2010) and linked to the Core Area Wastewater Treatment Program (CAWTP) Community Engagement Framework (08 April 2009), best practices in public participation continue to be applied and practiced.

The current system, as approved, indicates sites at Saanich East, McLoughlin Point, Hartland landfill and a site near Colwood City Hall. As the CRD continues its evaluation of alternate sites which may enhance the overall system and are deemed suitable in terms of the required technology and environmental conditions, the commitment to public consultation as outlined in Phase 4, Step 1 of the Community Engagement Framework for the CAWTP remains clear and steadfast.

There is a need to balance the expectations for meaningful public consultation with the recognition of the impacts to ongoing discussions with potential sellers/landowners. Past experiences show that these types of critical negotiations are carried out under confidentiality clauses, often demanded by the seller/landowner. Prematurely engaging in open dialogue regarding specific sites will put the CRD at a disadvantage in subsequent negotiations for acquisition of those sites.

A variety of public participation techniques and formats will continue to be utilized, along with unbiased facilitation and unfiltered report backs. Staff is committed to ensuring those residents, who are directly impacted by hosting a facility in their neighbourhood, have every opportunity to engage in the process and allow their voices to inform and influence decisions.

In addition to public consultation, there is also a strong need to continue with more public education and outreach on the whole issue of wastewater treatment systems and technologies to inform the public and address legitimate concerns. There is also a need for the Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee (CALWMC) to consider policies for mitigation and community benefits that residents of a hosting neighbourhood will expect.

It is the intention of the CRD to undertake public consultation and report back to the CALWMC prior to a final decision regarding the siting of wastewater treatment facilities.

OPTIONS

1. That the CALWMC adopt a policy statement of engaging the public on alternate site considerations, after there is confidence of a viable location with a willing seller, and prior to any final commitments for acquisition. This policy statement would be linked to the CAWTP Community Engagement Framework.

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2. That the CALWMC continue to follow the approved CAWTP Community Engagement Framework (08 April 2009) as deemed appropriate on a site-by-site basis.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee adopt a policy statement of engaging the public on alternate site considerations, after there is confidence of a viable location with a willing seller, and prior to any final commitments for acquisition. This policy statement would be linked to the Core Area Wastewater Treatment Program Community Engagement Framework (08 April 2009).

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