

REPORT TO MAGIC LAKE ESTATES WATER AND SEWER LOCAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2014

SUBJECT MAGIC LAKE ESTATES SEWER PROJECT – RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE MEETING

ISSUE

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of the Public Open House meeting and the feedback received to inform the Magic Lake Estates Water and Sewer Local Services Committee, as well as, the next steps in the sewer replacement project.

BACKGROUND

At a meeting on September 15, 2014, the Magic Lake Estates Water and Sewer Local Services Committee approved the following recommendation:

b) funding the Public Engagement Strategy in the amount of \$3,500 from the capital reserve.

The purpose of the Public Engagement Strategy was to:

- 1. To consult with Pender Island residents who are on the Magic Lake Estates sewer system about the proposed infrastructure upgrades.
- To inform residents and stakeholders who are on the Magic Lake Estates sewer system about the scope, implications and cost of the planned infrastructure upgrades. Education will cover basic background information on the upgrades, preparing the public for a referendum vote on whether to undertake the improvement project.

As a result, on Saturday November 22, 2014, the Capital Regional District (CRD) staff and the committee held a Public Open House meeting between 11am to 3pm at the St. Peter's Anglican Church, 4703 Canal Road, Pender Island for the Magic Lake Estates Sewer System Replacement project.

At the Public Open House meeting CRD staff presented, in a story board format, the various options (four) and the recommended option (1) by the CRD staff.

The Public Open House had approximately 60 attendees. CRD staff and various Committee members, including the Electoral Area Director of the Southern Gulf Islands were in attendance at the meeting to answer any questions. Feedback from residents of the service area regarding the Public Open House was received until December 7, 2014. The number of feedback forms received, both by mail, hand and electronically, totalled 57.

The summary of the Public Open House feedback is as follows:

Q1. Do you feel that you have received enough information and have a good understanding of the issues and challenges associated with the Magic Lake Estates wastewater system?

A1. Yes 43 No 10 Select Both 3

If you answered no, what additional information do you need?

This information is in the attached feedback forms - Appendix A

Q2. Which of the four options presented do you prefer and why?

A2. Option 1 (CRD recommendation) 31
Option 2 2
Option 3 7
Option 4 1
I need more information 10
Selected Two Options 4

Reasons:

This information is in the attached feedback forms – Appendix A

Q3. If you chose option 1 above, would you support the decision to borrow \$6,050,000 to proceed with option 1?

A3. Yes 34
No 5
I need more information 12

Q4. If you chose option 2 above, would you support the decision to borrow \$11,690,000 to proceed with option 2?

A4. Yes 6
No 8
I need more information 4

Q5. If you chose option 3 above, would you support the decision to borrow \$1,630,000 to proceed with option 3?

A5. Yes 9
No 2
I need more information 8

Q6. If options 1-3 are chosen, would you prefer a 15-year or 25-year (smaller annual payments) amortization period?

A6. 15-Year Amortization period 18 25-Year Amortization period 32

Q7. Rate the following from the most important (1) to the least important (5) factor that is influencing your answer in the previous question.

A7.	Cost to property owner	1
	Length of time before having to upgrade or replace infrastructure	3
	Environmental impacts of not completing the work	2
	Regulatory/Compliance	4
	Other	5

The rating for Q7 is not weighted and is ranked by the highest individual score.

Further comments regarding the proposed works and the Magic Lake Estates wastewater system have been summarized in the Appendix A.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

That the Magic Lake Estates Water and Sewer Local Services Committee:

- a. Receive the Public Open House results for information purposes; and
- b. Approve funding a Community Hall meeting to present the results of the open house meeting to the public in the amount of \$2,500 from capital reserves.

Alternative 2

That the Magic Lake Estates Water and Sewer Local Services Committee:

- Receive the Public Open House results for information purposes; and
- b. Not proceed with a Community Hall meeting and approve an option and funding in order to proceed with the Referendum process in the amount of \$10,000 from capital reserves.

<u>IMPLICATIONS</u>

Alternative 1 – With the receipt of the Public Open House feedback the Committee would share the results with the community and provide another opportunity for the public to ask additional questions and to provide information from staff regarding the various options presented as outlined in Appendix C. By hosting another public meeting this will hopefully allow the community to gain further understanding of the issues, options, implications and next steps.

This alternative will delay implementation of the recommended option and securing funding for the project.

Alternative 2 – By selecting a preferred option now, the committee would be able to advance to the referendum process. However, there is no guarantee of a successful referendum outcome. This alternative may further delay the project if support is not secured from the community, including increased project costs.

CONCLUSION

The Public Open House results indicate that the community has a good understanding of the project and based on the options presented at the open house meeting, prefer Option 1. In addition, the community also preferred a longer amortization period of 25 years as opposed to 15 years.

The most to least important factors influencing the community's decision is: cost, environmental impacts, length of time and regulatory/compliancy issues.

Based on the feedback information, the CRD recommends hosting a Community Hall meeting in January/February 2015 to inform the public of the results and then seek support for a referendum in the late Spring/early Summer of 2015.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Magic Lake Water and Sewer Local Services Committee:

Estates System Improvement Program

- a. Receive the Public Open House results for information purposes; and
- b. Approve funding a Community Hall meeting to present the results of the open house meeting to the public in the amount of \$2,500 from capital reserves.

Craig Gottfred, P.Eng.
Manager, Wastewater Engineering and Planning

Peter Sparanese, P.Eng.
Senior Manager, Infrastructure Engineering Operations
Concurrence

HD/CG/PS:ls:

Hailey Dale, MA
Communications Coordinator

Ted Robbins, B.Sc., C.Tech.
General Manager, Integrated Water Services
Concurrence

Appendix A – Public Feedback Summary Report – Wastewater Infrastructure Replacement Program Appendix B – Community-Hall Meeting in Support of Public Engagement Strategy for Magic Lake

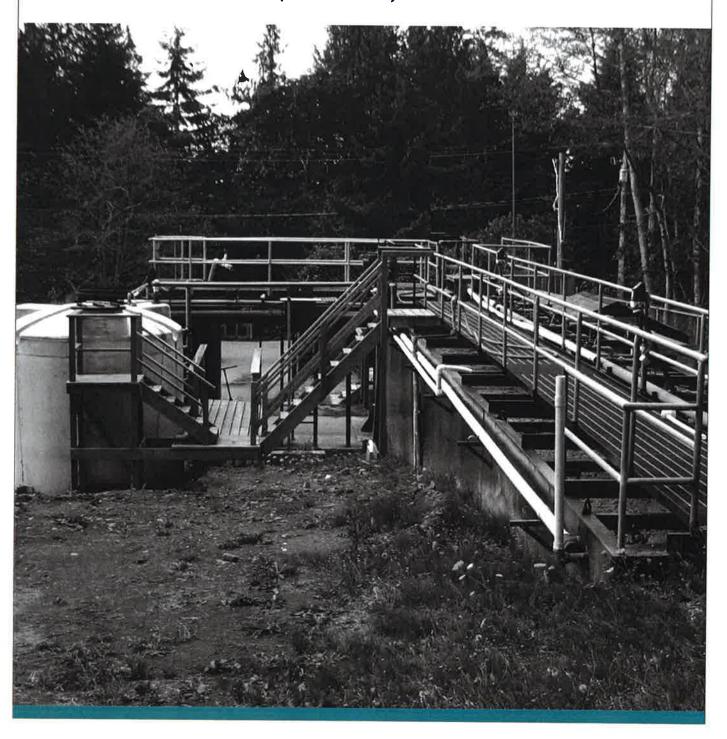
Attachments:

Magic Lake Estates Wastewater System

Making a difference...together

Public Feedback Summary Report

Wastewater Infrastructure Replacement Project





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Feedback Summary

Total responses for Magic Lake Estates Wastewater System Feedback submitted

Paper Feedback Form: 40 Online: 17

Percentages of total responses identifying a replacement project option

Option 1: 59% Option 2: 8% Option 3: 14%

Option 4: 2% Need More Information: 17%

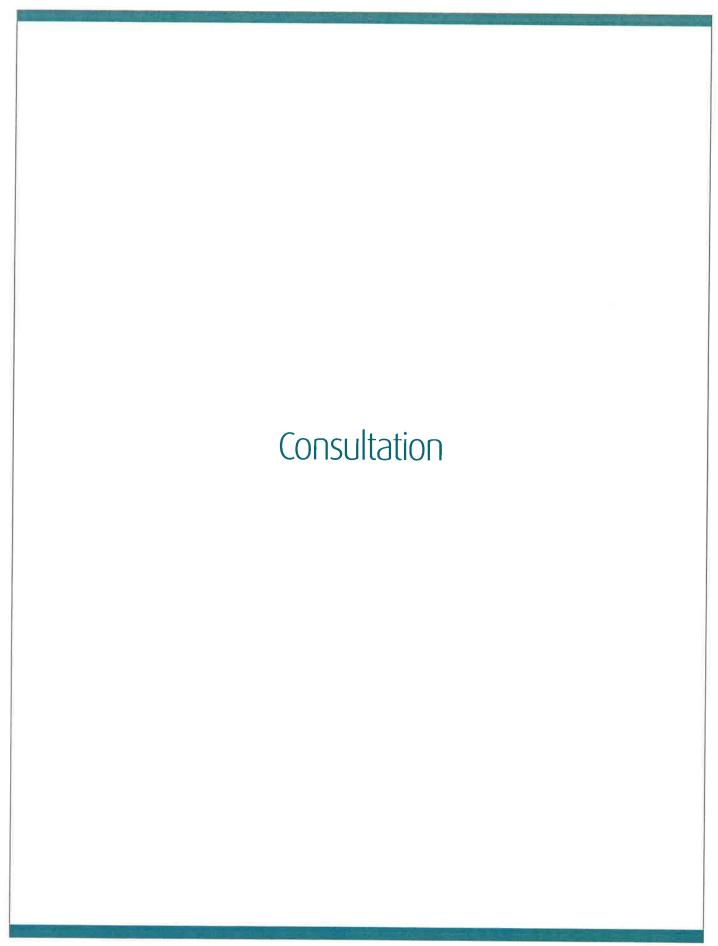
Percentages of total responses identifying a loan type option

15-Year: **32%** 25-Year: **56%** No Response: **12%**

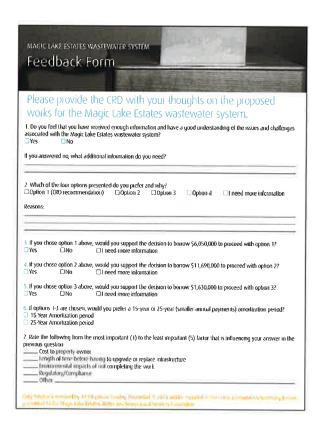
Top Ranking Criteria Influencing Preferences

Cost to property owner
Environmental Impacts
Length of time before more replacements are required

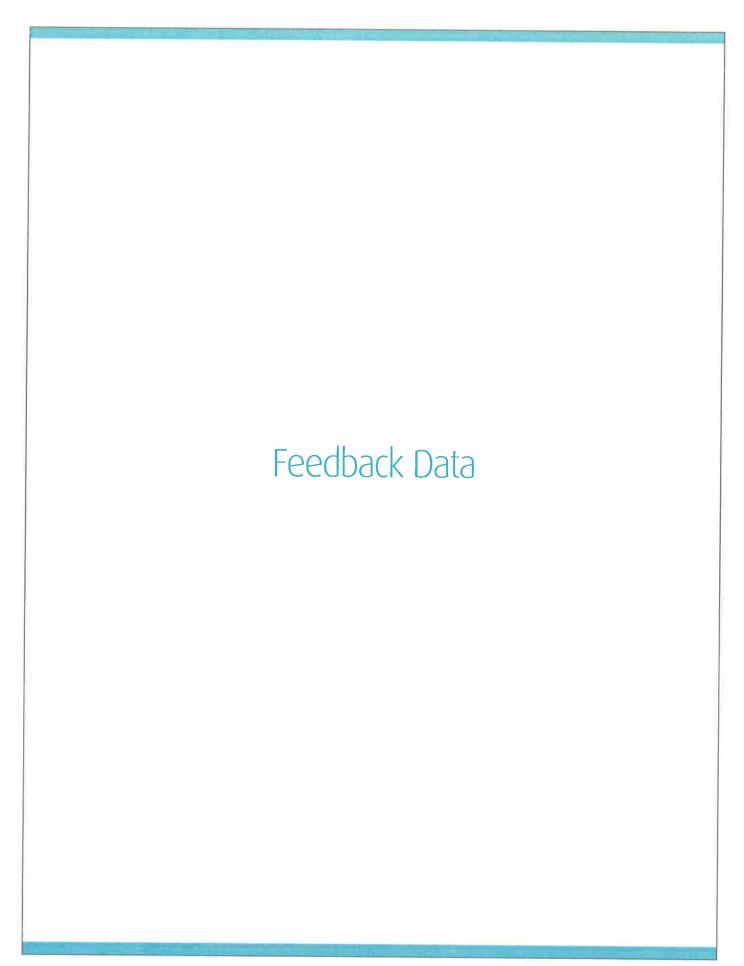
^{*}Feedback numbers do not necessarily represent one response per person. Response was not required for all questions. Numbers are rounded up.



Feedback Form

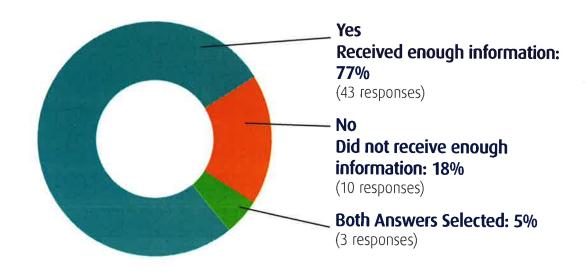


slewater system	er comments you have on the proposed works and the Magic Lake Estates



Question 1: Do you feel that you have received enough information and have a good understanding of the issues and challenges associated with the Magic Lake Estates wastewater system?

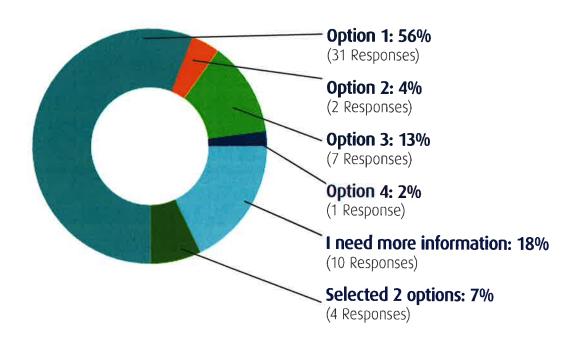
In-Person and Online Feedback (56*)



^{*}Feedback numbers do not necessarily represent one response per person. Response was not required for all questions. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

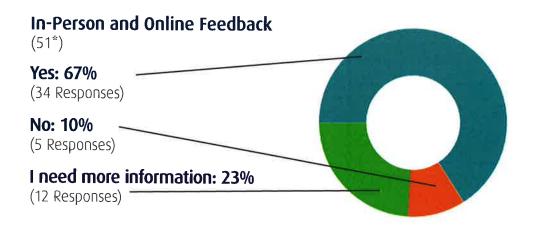
Question 2: Which of the four options presented do you prefer and why?

In-Person and Online Feedback (55*)



^{*}Feedback numbers do not necessarily represent one response per person. Response was not required for all questions. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Numbers have been rounded up.

Question 3: If you chose option 1 above, would you support the decision to borrow \$6,050,000 to proceed with option 1?



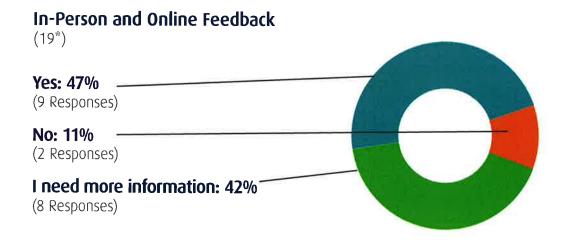
Question 4: If you chose option 2 above, would you support the decision to borrow \$11,690,000 to proceed with option 2?

Yes: 33% (6 Responses) No: 45% (8 Responses) I need more information: 22% (4 Responses)

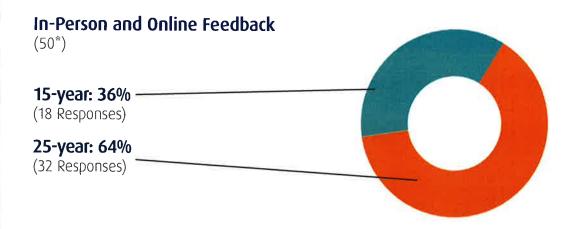
In-Person and Online Feedback

^{*}Feedback numbers do not necessarily represent one response per person. Response was not required for all questions. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Numbers have been rounded up.

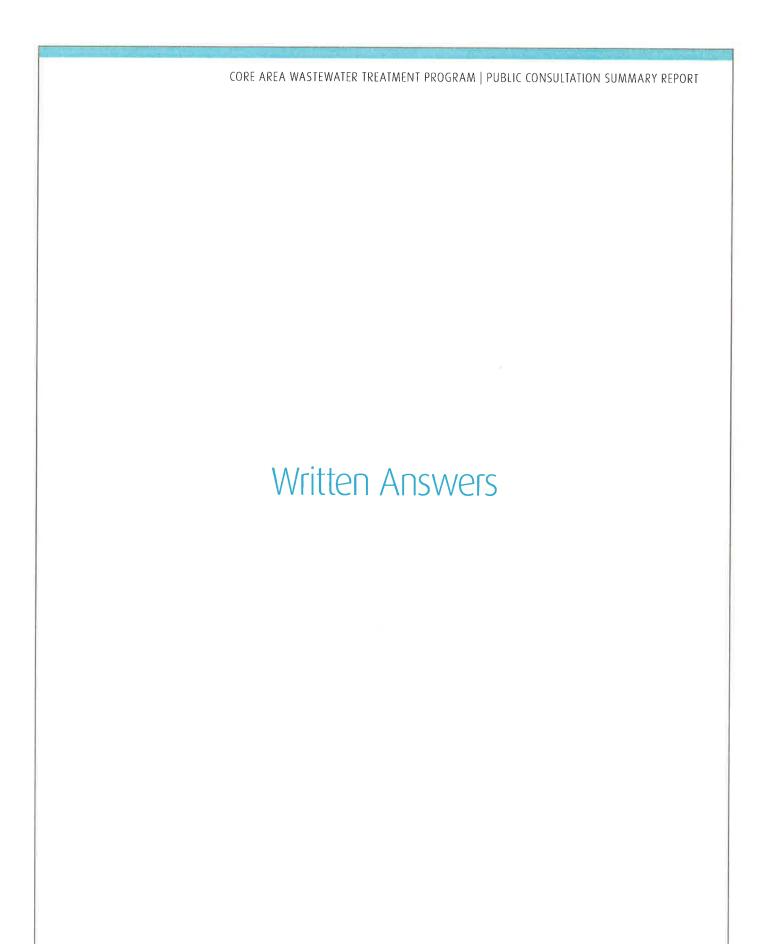
Question 5: If you chose option 3 above, would you support the decision to borrow \$1,630,000 to proceed with option 3?



Question 6: If options 1-3 are chosen, would you prefer a 15-year or 25-year (smaller annual payments) amortization period?



^{*}Feedback numbers do not necessarily represent one response per person. Response was not required for all questions, Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Numbers have been rounded up.



Written Feedback Summary

Question 1: Do you feel that you have received enough information and have a good understanding of the issues and challenges associated with the Magic Lake Estates wastewater system?

How many users on Chart Drive system and why don't they have their own septic system.

I would like to know if there are options where we can pay the full amount rather than borrowing similar to the fire hall levy.

I'd like to know the total cost of borrowing.

Actual cost of water upgrade as predictor of projected sewer upgrade costs; track record for water is poor.

Possibility of tertiary treatment or alternative no discharge approaches.

Need a Magic Lake community meeting on Pender Island, with CRD, in December 2014 so neighbours can discuss options together.

Can a loan be paid in a lump sum?

But we will continue to confer with neighbors regarding a proper consensus.

The only reason we heard about this, after the

meeting is because of a Facebook forum - how were people notified? We received no mail outs or emails or any kind of notification.

I would like to see more information about the Chart drive property and the possibility of adding more lines to spread the cost over more users.

Not sure re Chart Drive info-why can that location not be serviced by individual septic fields? Even if that is included in the CRD costs, would certainly be less than they are presently quoting.

I have received nothing about it in my mail. I have seen nothing in the Island Tides newspaper. I do not believe the "public open house" was widely publicized at all. For example I didn't see any notice of this event posted on any of the community bulletin

Staff needs to realize that many owners are not full time residents. One open house is not enough and not near early enough. Receiving one notice of one meeting about a topic with huge financial implications is irresponsible. Use Pender Post, solicit and use owner addresses using from BCAA, solicit e-mails, THINK about communication.

Why are we paying \$1000.00 a week to service 6 households, 12 of the Chart Drive lots are unoccupied.

Question 2: Which of the four options presented do you prefer and why?

(Option 1) My questions have been answered by makes good sense. I work with Dave Howe on occasion and get good info.

(Option 1) Manageable sewer bill.

(Option 1) Solves most issues at most reasonable cost. Are any provincial grants available to help offset costs? It does impact environment.

(Option 1) This is urgent, but some of the expense must be shared by future residents.

(Option 1 and Option 3) #1 First choice, if enough time is given, one to two years for people with fixed income to avoid borrowing from the bank and then paying CRD and interest to the bank. #3, if option #1 is not possible, than option #3 would be more affordable to everyone involved.

(Option 1) Good balance between engineering needs, cost and time.

(Option 1) System needs upgrading.

(Option 1 and Option 2) I want the sewage system upgraded – Option #2 seems to be the best but option #1 may be the most people will go for.

(Option 1) Covers immediate concerns and leave open the other concerns to be added as required.

(Option 1) Covers immediate concerns and leave open the other concerns to be added as required.

(Option 1) Although I feel option #1 is incomplete

and misses some parts of option #2.

(Option 1) Option #1 looks practical, and is a necessary improvement. However, as a taxpayer with a young family, I'd like to see these upgrades amortized over as long a period as possible.

(Option 1) Deals with current issues and allows time to prepare financially for additional upgrades.

(Option 1) Addresses issues in a timely fashion, but expensive.

(Option 1) Less expensive in future, new modern technologies adopted, etc. So may not cost as much to improve again.

(Option 1 and Option 2) It appears reasonable, but do not want 10 years from now to need to upgrade more stuff. Do the job correctly 1 time. In future, try to budget for anticipated infrastructure changes.

(Option 1 and Option 2) If infrastructure needs to be replaced or upgraded it is better to be proactive and take care of it now rather than later. Just communicate the actual cost to public so they can plan ahead and budget for the increased taxes and cost.

(Option 1) It's necessary and reasonable.

(Option 2) Not postponing inevitable.

(Option 3) Cost and effect.

(Option 3) The other seems exorbitant. If the costs are shared or the BC government kicks-in, then the others appear possible.

(I need more information) See previous comment.

(None Selected) Can't say until we have a community meeting.

(Option 1) As a senior, I am pleased to go along with option #1, however as I hope to end my days here, I would go along with extras measures – what is best for Magic Lake and the long run!

(Option 1) Only with the opinions of CRD reps. However, we are seniors on pensions and really don't know how much longer we can live here. Certainly not 15 years.

Please provide any further comments you have on the proposed works and the Magic Lake Estates wastewater system.

Hopefully there are grants available from provincial and federal bodies (that we pay taxes to) to cover some of the costs.

To the CRD! About Magic Lake Estates Wastewater Systems – I would appreciate if I could get some information about the cost per month or year of the two options that I pointed out on the front (Q. 2). Thank you very much

Q. 3 – But would like to see grants applied and proceed when grants come in. Q. 4 – Hope with ISCU our local institution. I would like to see the costs of the system if we added more people to the systems. Since many septic systems are failing there may be many more users. I would like to see a poll of people not on sewer that would want to be, it may be a cheaper personal option over the full \$12K cost of replacing their own system. With a grant it might be my affordable. Chances of getting a grant may be higher if more people are impacted.

Q. 3 – Is there any other provincial/federal aid available? This is obviously a necessary agenda and we will need to address this to protect the long term values of these properties on sewer. However, I will likely be selling my property as the taxes are already higher than I was paying in Victoria, and we have a young family to support! Option #1 over a 25 year term is adding \$660/ year to my taxes so about \$15,000 in total, ironically this is the cost of installing a type 2 septic treatment system!

I would hope that there would be no increase in noise or smell from the Schooner WWTP. Has a one-time lump sum payment option been considered to avoid interest charges to parcel holders? Able to do so?

Q. 6 – Retire debt as more upgrades will be needed. Don't want multiple special levies. Indicate when \$415 debt to be retired. Be clearer about "annual" cost to property owner.

Q. 6 – I would prefer the option to pay my amount as a lump sum as well. Minus the interest. Maybe half the cost of the project is interest.

Maybe have an option for those who wish to pay their portion as a lump sum payment.

Q. 6 – After paying for water upgrade.

Q. 6 – I will leave that to greater minds than mine. There should be a 1/3 / 2/3 payment from Magic Lake residents or 1/2 /1/2 as everyone living in Magic Lake has the use of freshwater from the lakes. The sewage system was installed to protect clean sanitary water for all Magic Lake. As people who are on the sewage system cannot opt out. There should be a partial sharing of the burden of cost. The percentages can be debated, but as everyone benefits from a working sewage system

to protect the water everyone should participate in the sharing of cost the governments must also participate in the cost to protect precious drinking water.

I would be happy to discuss this further.

Please see previous answers to Q. 1 & 2.

First – should this go to referendum? Only home owners on sewer system should be allowed to vote since we are paying the bill. This is a total of 714 taxable folios. Referendums are expensive, why was this proposal not put on the last election which was held November 15th? One solution now is to send a vote via mail to each home owner which would certainly reduce cost of referendum (714 votes). Option #2 states 6 lift stations need upgrading, are all six in poor condition? Option #3 - does not mention lift station. Option #1 - no.7, provide one clarifier and aeration tank etc. cost \$ 2,056,000. Option #2 -New Schooner WWTP, cost over 6 million. Option #3 - This area is not mentioned. Are option #1 and #2 necessary at this site? In review, the only necessary work is replacing Chart Drive septic system. An answer to these questions would be #1, what is the expected lifetime remaining for the upgraded Schooner WWTP? Will a larger payment be required later compared to going with option #2 now? Paying our share up front is preferred, to avoid interest charges over 15 or 25 years. This should be an available option. These questions are submitted by

Thank you for your information and I look forward to further input

Q. 3 – Some grant money should be available somewhere? Q. 5 – Only as a 2nd choice option. I would like to see how the estimated costs over

the 15 and 25 year amortization periods were calculated.

Should we be looking at a feasibility study to get homes off the community sewer system in areas that individual septic systems can be installed? I live at and would consider installing a new septic system myself instead of paying this levy! Feel free to email me at discuss.

We need a bit more time to study this and discuss it with relevant experts. December 7 is almost here with many residents absent. Don't rush into any decision that will make seniors living and paying taxes on Pender Island impossible.

The Chart Drive shared septic is only a few properties. I have a call into get the exact number. But I think they should contemplate them having their own Septic, even if they give each of them one for free and then they are on their own. 6 x \$20k (generous figure) is \$120k which really beats \$750k and no future responsibility. Even if they have to be above ground treatments plants. This is urgent and could be done immediately. I would also like to see them figure out if we added more people on sewer how would the costs change since we could spread it out over more users. Many properties in Magic Lake were built in the 70s and many have septic systems that are reaching the end of their life. Some are only hobbling along. As a home owner I may welcome the higher tax rate over time versus having to shell out \$12k-\$20k up front for a personal system. I think they could get an evaluation or even a commitment from those interested in joining the sewer system (even taking a deposit). am concerned that in Option 2 there are things that have to be addressed that are not in option 1 (CRD recommended option). Is it better to do option 2 and apply for grant money all at once.

would it be more difficult to get funding if we do Option 1 then need to look after the leftovers of Option 2 which is almost double the cost of option 1. Could they consider doing Option 2 in phases with a very generous time limit attached to it so that they can keep applying for grants until something works. If this system failed it would have a greater impact than the users on the system. It would have an impact on every residence since it is OUR environment. Our community has been in discussion on the Pender Island Forum on Facebook. I think someone should keep an eye open for it

We are now paying for the recently completed fresh water system upgrade. I know it needs to be done but there is a limit to how much a retired person can afford especially considering the increased costs associated with BC Ferries fares - there seems to be no end.

If option 1 is selected, then amortizing it over 15 years instead of 25 years increases the annual cost by \$232 for a total over 15 years of \$3480, but saves 10 years of additional payments on the debt totalling \$13,470, which works out to savings on the debt, for each parcel, of \$9,990. Alternatively, selecting option 2 for 25 years (instead of option 1 for 15 years) then becomes a reasonably acceptable, annual cost difference per parcel, of \$383 per year. The advantage to accepting option 2 over 25 years means the entire wastewater system is brought up to standard, thereby avoiding the almost certain need to deal with additional problems at a higher cost, in the not too distant future.

water cost too much. sewer will be worst.

We need to think in different terms. Sewage is not waste. It can be a resource which may be used to help grow any number of things. You may shrug off such thinking, which may be an idea still ahead of its time. I would happily safely compost my own sewage as is being done by grand of grand, who were recently elected to council in the Highlands District. Perhaps the CRD could consult with them about alternate solutions to our aging sewage infrastructure. If the CRD concludes that the only options it will consider are the four outlined herein, then I would like the CRD to consider that some of the 714 taxable lots may have the option to opt out of the "solution" that may be adopted by the majority of others in Magic Lake. And then if at some point in the future, such folks who have opted out wish to connect to the new sewer line, they may do so at the appropriate cost. Also, such folks would have to find an alternate safe and acceptable solution to any sewage they generate, the primary one being composting and reusing of this resource. Some of us would like to live a more sustainable and closed loop type of existence. We should not have to be forced to participating in an overly expensive and arguably unsustainable sewage "solution". Thanks.

The CRD is playing loose with the grants issue by denying grants for this project in favor of other projects. Non-starter. Charge 100% of the retroactive cost of sewer connection people that have benefited from a shared septic system. They are free riders; the rest of us do not want to pay for the benefits they received earlier. PAY-UP.

I get the feeling the committee chair is not doing his job effectively, I understand he goes away for 6 month of every year - the Director does not answer my questions just sends them to staff - on this and other issues

It's bad enough that so little of my mortgage goes to paying principal, but to spend an additional many millions to amortize this plan over 25 years is not something I want to support.

Post-It Comments and Feedback

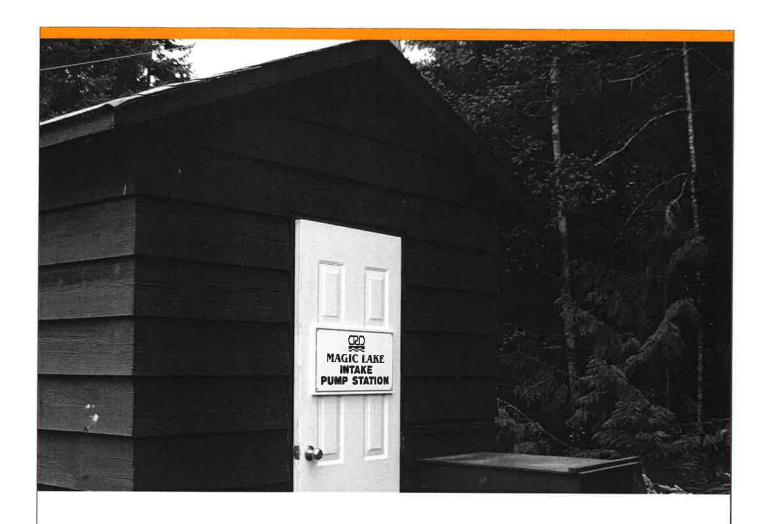
Did you know? Schooner Pump Station often smells – we notice it on our walks.

Make sure there is a Magic Lake community meeting in December 2014 to discuss options! Otherwise the community has to go off island to CRD meeting Dec. 16th @ 479 Island Hwy.

Would like to see costs if we added more years since many septic systems are coming to end of life in ML. This would be more affordable than \$12K+ of individual replacement.

Option 1 seems reasonable "proactive".

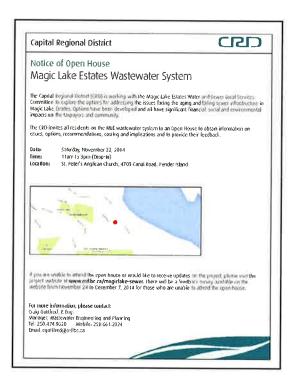
APPENDICES **Appendices**

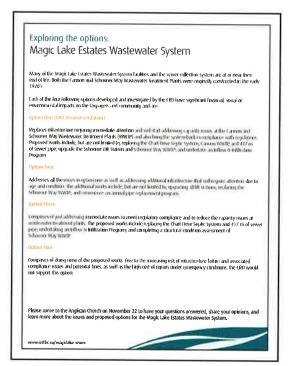


Appendices

- A | Public Open Houses Direct Mail Out
- B | Public Open House Handout Frequently Asked Questions
- C | Public Open Houses Display Boards

Appendix A Public Open Houses - Direct Mail-Out





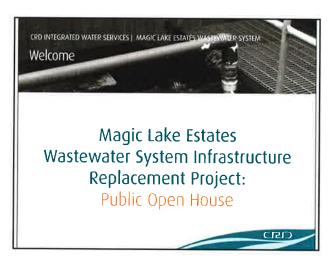
Appendix B Frequently Asked Questions

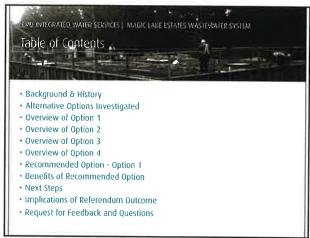




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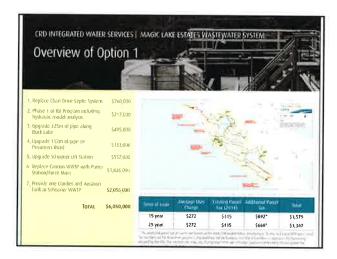
Appendix C Public Open House - Displays

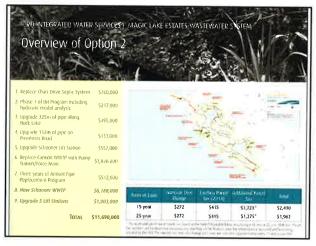


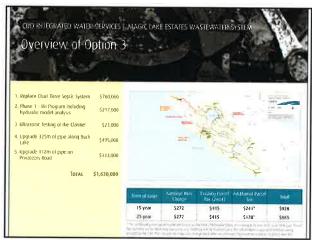


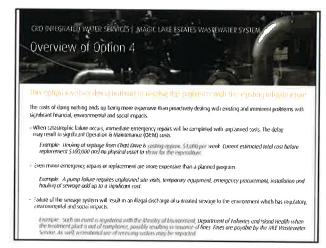




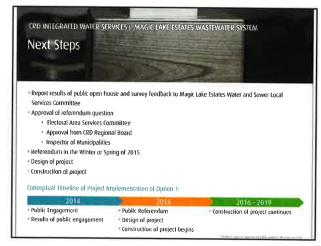




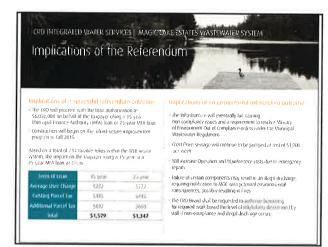


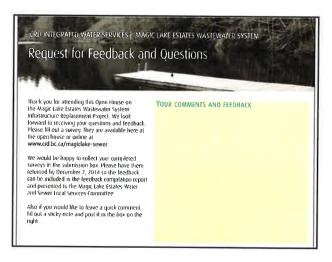






APPENDIX C | OPEN HOUSE DISPLAYS





ATTACHMENT: Community Hall Meeting in Support of Public Engagement Strategy for Magic Lake Estates System Improvement Program

Purpose

- 1. To present feedback results from Open House and Online feedback forms with Pender Island residents who are on the Magic Lake Estates system.
- 2. To provide a chance for residents to ask questions of CRD staff and Magic Lake Estates Water and Sewer Committee members.

Proposed Strategy

The strategy includes hosting a follow-up," townhall" style meeting on Pender Island for residents who are on the Magic Lake Estates wastewater system. At the meeting, there will be a PowerPoint presentation on updates to the project and results of the feedback and a question-and-answer period for residents to ask questions of CRD staff and Magic Lake Estates Water and Sewer Committee members. Experts will attend the session to answer any questions and hear any concerns that attendees express with the goal to have meaningful conversations about the project. The Community Hall Meeting will be promoted using the project website, direct mail-out invitation to customers of the MLE wastewater system and possibly through local Facebook groups.

Budget – Magic Lake Estates Community-Hall Meeting	
Materials (Printing, Signage, Copies of Report Summary)	\$250
Open House (Rental, 5 hours)	\$150
Travel (Vehicle Rental, Ferry)	\$200
Refreshments	\$750
Promotion (Mail-Out, Website)	\$1000

(\$150 to put in to make round number)

Detailed Public Engagement Plan

To be created once Commission decides on most appropriate improvement program and approves funding for public engagement activities.