

**REPORT TO SEATERRA PROGRAM COMMISSION
MEETING OF FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2013**

SUBJECT SEATERRA PROGRAM COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

ISSUE

To report to the Seaterra Program Commission on the development of the Strategic Communications Plan.

BACKGROUND

In May 2013, Acumen Communications Group was hired to develop a Strategic Communications Plan (the Plan) for the Seaterra Program (formerly the Core Area Wastewater Treatment Program). The Plan will detail the communication efforts for the Seaterra Program (the Program) as it moves into construction and operations through 2018.

Communications

The Plan (attached) was developed in consultation with the Seaterra Program Commission members and Program staff. The Plan outlines activities and required resources to notify and inform residents, businesses and stakeholders of construction through completion of the Program in 2018.

The Plan provides a framework for communications and engagement for the Program during the procurement and construction process for all components. Activities are also outlined that will ensure proactive and clear Program communications and raise community awareness of the overall wastewater treatment program and resource recovery opportunities.

Key audiences include:

Internal

- Capital Regional District (CRD) Board of Directors
- Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee
- Seaterra Program Commission
- Seaterra Program staff
- CRD staff

External

- Residents of the CRD
- Residents nearby the Program components
- Mayors and Councillors
- First Nations
- Community Associations
- CUPE

- Industry Associations
- MLAs
- MPs
- Chambers of Commerce
- Interest Groups (Environmental, Community)
- Schools and Universities
- Media
- General Public

Specific project messaging will be developed for each Program component, but overall Program messaging highlights the responsibility of the CRD to manage its wastewater, especially as the region grows and the need for thinking about how wastewater can be put to beneficial use and options for resource recovery.

There is an urgent need to update and enhance public information activities about the Program through an information campaign that outlines Program components, upcoming construction and the approach to wastewater treatment in the core area. Activities will include the development of an overall wordmark/brand to replace the very cumbersome CAWTP ‘moniker’, updating information materials, issuance of a quarterly newsletter, fact sheets, FAQs and web content to ensure all information is current and addresses community and stakeholder concerns and questions. The Core Area Wastewater Treatment Program was rebranded as the Seaterra Program in early October.

In addition, the Program will engage with communities and stakeholders impacted by project construction as the facilities move into design and implementation. This second phase of communications will focus on regular updates to impacted communities and ongoing communications with key stakeholders to ensure residents are aware of and understand Program timelines. This engagement and outreach will continue through to the completion of all Program components.

A Communications Coordinator has been hired to assist the Communications Manager to deliver the communications services for the Program and support Program staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Communications and engagement for the Seaterra Program will be funded through the approved Program Budget. The recommendations in the Plan are within the planned funding allowance for the Seaterra Program budget.

CONCLUSION

The Plan was developed with input from the Seaterra Program Commission and Program staff. It focuses on ensuring Program communications are clear and proactive and raise broader awareness of the progress of the Program and wastewater treatment in the core area. The Plan is fully integrated with the communications program of the CRD. It will be used throughout the procurement and construction phases of the Program into 2018.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Seatterra Program Commission approve the attached Seatterra Program Strategic Communications Plan.

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Seatterra Program

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Program Director
Seatterra Program

KVB:hr

Attachment: 1

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN SEATERRA PROGRAM

ISSUE:

A communication plan for the Seaterra Program (the Program) that will provide information to the public as the project moves into construction and operations through 2018.

BACKGROUND:

The Capital Regional District (CRD) does not currently provide secondary wastewater treatment in the Core Area municipalities of Victoria, Esquimalt, Saanich, Oak Bay, Colwood, Langford and View Royal. Greater Victoria's Core Area is the only major population centre on the west coast of North America without any secondary wastewater treatment. Currently wastewater is screened before it is discharged into the Strait of Juan de Fuca via 1.6 kilometre marine outfalls. Greater Victoria dumps an average of 82 million litres of raw sewage into the Strait of Juan de Fuca every day.

The three major components of the Program are:

- Wastewater Treatment Plant at McLoughlin Point, Harbour Crossing and Marine Outfall
- Resource Recovery Centre and residual solids conveyance pipes and pump stations
- Conveyance Infrastructure including upgrades to existing facilities
 - Clover Point Pump Station and conveyance pipes
 - Macaulay Point Pump Station and conveyance pipes
 - Craigflower Pump Station
 - Arbutus Road Attenuation Tank
 - Currie Road Pump Station upgrade and conveyance pipes
 - Trent Syphon/East Coast Interceptor extension

The project is currently being implemented with construction of the Craigflower Pump Station currently underway. The RFP has been issued to the three shortlisted proponents for the Wastewater Treatment Plan at McLoughlin Point. A decision is expected in spring of 2014 with construction set to begin shortly thereafter. An RFQ for the Resource Recovery Centre at Hartland landfill is expected to be issued in late 2013.

Engagement with affected communities is currently underway.

AUDIENCE:

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the Program's stakeholders:

Internal

- CRD Board of Directors
- Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee
- Seaterra Program Commission
- Seaterra Program staff
- CRD Staff

External

- Residents of the CRD
- Residents nearby the Program components
- Mayors and Councilors
- First Nations
- Community Associations
- CUPE
- Industry Associations
- MLAs
- MPs
- Chambers of Commerce
- Interest Groups
- Schools and universities
- Media
- General Public

Governments

- Federal Government
 - Infrastructure Canada
 - Department of National Defence
 - Department of Fisheries and Oceans
 - Environment Canada
- Provincial Government
 - Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
 - Ministry of Environment
 - Chief Medical Health Office
 - Partnerships BC

Communication Goals

1. Provide an official and consistent voice for the Program – one that is current, proactive and factual.
2. Develop a communication plan that supports delivery of a community-supported wastewater treatment program.
3. Generate community pride for resources recovered from wastewater.

KEY MESSAGES:

Aspirational messaging:

- We are the stewards of our natural environment for generations to come.
- It is our responsibility to manage our wastewater now and in the future, especially as our region grows.
- It's time for us to start thinking about how we can put wastewater to use and options for resource recovery.

Overarching context:

- Currently, Greater Victoria dumps an average of 82 million litres of raw sewage into the Strait of Juan de Fuca every day.
- Greater Victoria's Core Area is the only major population centre on the west coast of North America without any secondary wastewater treatment.
- By 2018, Greater Victoria will have secondary treatment and will no longer dump raw sewage into the ocean.

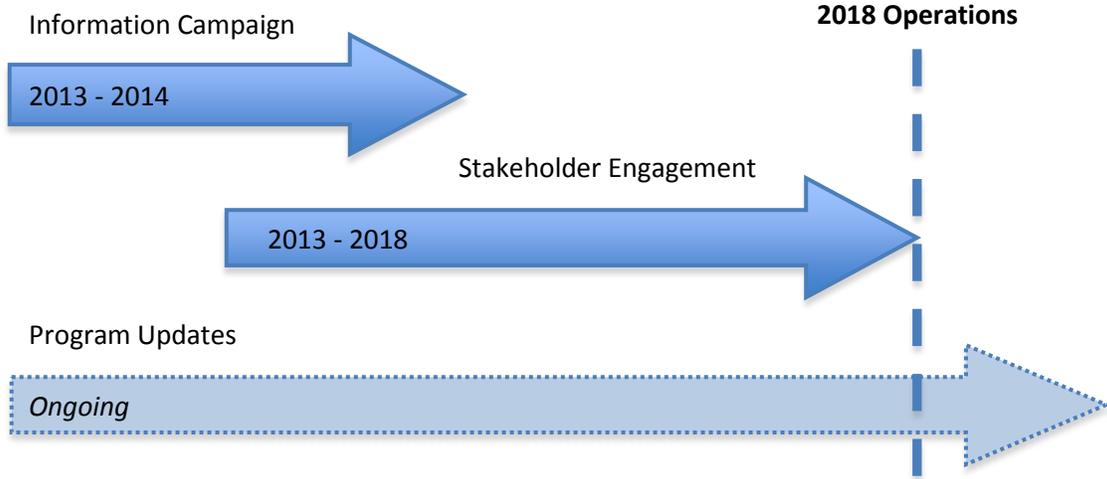
Primary:

- The Seaterra Program (Program) lays the foundation for wastewater treatment in the region for the next century. It consists of three main elements:
 - Wastewater Treatment Plant, Harbour Crossing and Marine Outfall,
 - Resource Recovery Centre,
 - Conveyance System Infrastructure
- It is important to have the central treatment plant situated in the core area where the bulk of the population resides.
- Centralizing and increasing the capacity for secondary treatment at McLoughlin Point has resulted in a \$185 million capital cost savings.
- These facilities will integrate with the CRD's existing core area wastewater treatment points, Clover Point and Macaulay Point.
- As the region grows, the Program will be able to grow with it. Plants will be able to be built on the Westshore, or other areas, to accommodate future growth. The plan doesn't preclude additional "Dockside Green" type developments in future if there is a need.

- The treatment plant site is the right size for the main treatment plant – even with more land, the same sized plant would be built.
- The Program will provide preliminary, primary and secondary wastewater treatment in order to bring the core area in compliance with provincial and federal government environmental regulations.
- The plan includes resource recovery such as biogas and phosphorous, plant heat, with future opportunities for additional heat recovery from sewage.
- Wastewater in the core area currently receives only preliminary treatment (screening) prior to being discharged at outfalls at Clover Point and McLoughlin Point. Greater Victoria is the only major population centre on the west coast of North America without any secondary wastewater treatment.
- The Commission manages the procurement process and administration of the Program and will provide ongoing updates and information to the public.

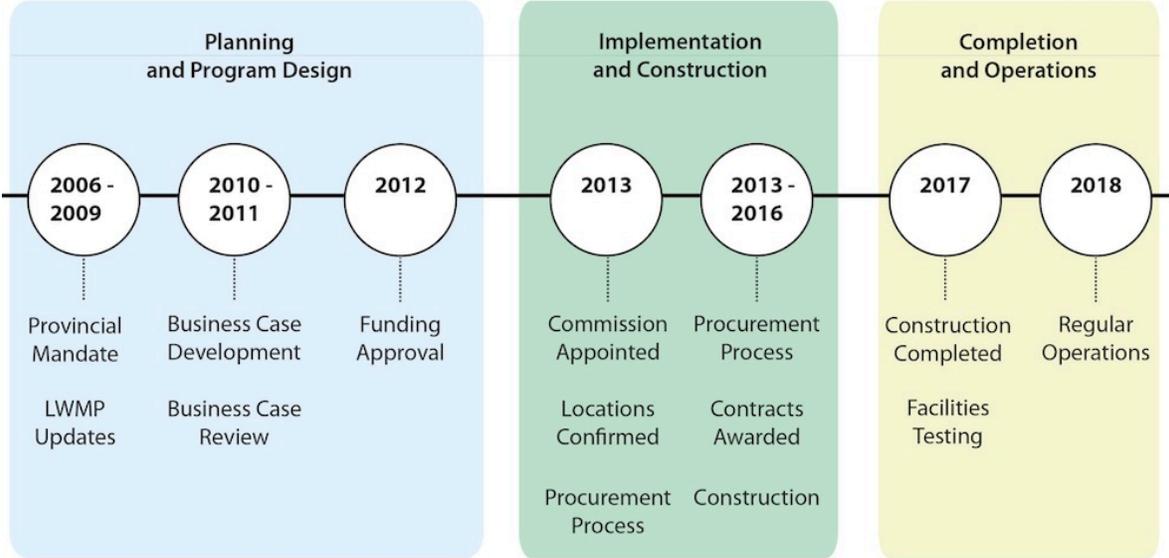
COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES:

Phased Communications



Program Timeline

Core Area Wastewater Treatment Program



Strategies and Activities

Phase 1: Information Campaign

Brand Development/Graphic Identity –

A distinct Program within the overall communications plan will address appropriate branding, marketing and advertising that will be able to create an identity and support materials that will serve the program over the next five years.

Develop support materials –

- Fact sheets**
- FAQ document**
- Mail-drop rack card**

Communication Protocols & Tools – Develop a Communications Policy and Procedures Manual that speaks to all communications activities such as stakeholder relations, media relations, issues management, event coordination, program communications, internal communications and government relations.

Hire Communications Coordinator – A Communications Coordinator/Public Information Office who will be located at the PMO office.

Program Web site – A capital projects micro website will be established and will be linked from the CRD website. The site will house all of the support materials for the Program implementation and be the source of all community engagement/outreach, public notices and construction updates, etc.

Report out to Commission/CALWMC – A communications calendar will be established and will be reviewed at the Commission meetings.

Connect with Funding Partners – A regular conference call with the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development and Infrastructure Canada to keep them apprised of Program communication activities is currently ongoing.

Establish a Photo Library – Establish a list of photos to build a library for use in various communications materials (ie; Quarterly Newsletter, website, general backgrounders, fact sheets, website, mailers etc...).

Video(s) – Utilize the popularity of YouTube and video communications and create short, creative snapshots of the overall Program, how treating wastewater works, etc.

Correspondence/FOI - Review correspondence and FOI procedures to ensure adequate timelines and proper management of correspondence and FOI issues.

Conduct Survey – Conduct an initial survey of the general public on its understanding and acceptance of a wastewater treatment program. Conduct a follow up survey to determine the effectiveness of the communications plan.

Editorial Boards/Technical Briefings – One-on-one editorial boards with the Program Director/Commission Chair and the Times Colonist, Black Press, CTV, CHEK-TV and

CFOX radio.

Issues Management/Media Relations – Earned media strategy that is rolled out on a consistent basis.

Use Existing CRD Environmental programs - Incorporate Wastewater education and messaging into existing CRD programs and branding, such as Green365, Sustain U (ie Indoor Living Tips to be launched in fall), Tap by Tap, myRecyclopedia, Zero Waste and RE-cycle.

Advertising Campaign – Develop an education and awareness advertising campaign to educate the public about the necessity of wastewater treatment, what it means, how it works and why it's important.

Phase 2: Stakeholder Engagement

Meetings w/ key business leaders. Arrange for meetings with the following people/groups in order to brief/update them on the Program.

Information sessions/Meetings with resident associations, business groups and other stakeholders - Program staff will be scheduling regular meetings with affected residents associations and business groups for specific projects as they begin to roll-out.

Establish a public presence - Set up a ground floor space at CRD offices or suitable downtown location or host permanent display panels on the main floor area of the CRD office.

Develop Quarterly Newsletter to go to key stakeholders – A quarterly newsletter will offer news on what's happening at the Commission and will provide a Program update such as milestones, status, new technology, best practices in other jurisdictions and key points or issues of concern.

Stakeholder Communications and Engagement plan(s) – Engagement plans that incorporate best practices and standards for outreach to communities, residents and other stakeholders will be prepared.

Discussion of wastewater technology and resource recovery – Sponsor and implement a symposium that brings together representatives from various scientific backgrounds for a day of presentations focused on wastewater technology, biosolids research, best practices, innovation, etc.

Phase 3: Program Updates

Provide ongoing, proactive communications about upcoming Program construction and timelines using communication channels established in Phase 2.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS:

Fact sheets
FAQs
Schedules
Web content
Stakeholder list
Mail-drop rack card
Newsletter
Presentation Boards/Video
Advertising
Correspondence
Event Plans
News Releases/Info Bulletins

PERSONNEL:

Spokesperson

- Go-to spokesperson to provide Program updates and news. Available for media interviews, editorial board briefings, community meetings.

Media relations

- Media relations support, liaison with reporters and CRD Communications.

Communications Materials and Events

- Update Program information materials and communications pieces. Develop and implement communications calendar and milestone events.

Correspondence

- Dedicated correspondence personnel to draft responses to community enquiries and ensure consistent public messaging.

Community Liaison/Public Information Officer

- Designated community liaison role to engage directly with community members, address concerns and attend community meetings. The go-to source of information for community stakeholders.

Program Team

- Provide detailed technical information for communication materials and review for accuracy.

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION:

The success of activities listed above will be measured against the objectives for the Program and will also be evaluated through the results of the follow up survey.

Appendix A:

Historical Background

Wastewater treatment has long been a contentious issue for CRD residents. Many residents and respected scientific reports – including the CRD's own 2010 SEATAC report - state that secondary treatment is not necessary at this time and marine ecosystems are not adversely impacted from the discharge of wastewater. Public opinion is generally divided on the need for wastewater treatment for the core area.

In 2006, an environmental report commissioned by the Ministry of Environment noted the contamination of seabed sites near the outfalls. As a result, in 2006, the CRD was mandated by the BC Ministry of Environment to plan and initiate secondary treatment for the region.

The Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee (CALWMC) was established by the CRD Board in 2006 and is responsible for the development of the Liquid Waste Management Plan, which must then be approved by the CRD Board and the Ministry of Environment. The CRD began planning for the new Seaterra Program (formerly the Core Area Wastewater Treatment Program) in 2006 and made amendments to the region's Liquid Waste Management Program through 2010. The CRD conducted community consultations throughout 2009 to develop a Community Engagement Framework and Triple Bottom Line (Economic, Environmental and Social) Principles that would guide CALWMC's decision making. The Core Area Wastewater Treatment Program was rebranded as the Seaterra Program in October 2013.

As part of exploring various options, the CRD looked at a decentralized system, where smaller wastewater treatment plants would connect to the existing sewerage infrastructure and provide more localized wastewater management with potential water reuse and energy recovery opportunities. In September 2009, the CALWMC approved a decentralized system configuration that included a large secondary wastewater treatment facility at McLoughlin Point, a wet weather facility at Clover Point, two smaller tertiary wastewater treatment facilities in Saanich East and Colwood, and a biosolids facility at Hartland Landfill. A business plan application for funding this plan was submitted to the Governments of British Columbia and Canada in spring 2010.

In summer 2010, due to the significant cost pressures from the high capital and operations and maintenance costs of the decentralized system, the CRD opted instead for a centralized approach at a significant cost savings to the overall Program. A site at McLoughlin Point was identified as the location for a central, liquids only secondary treatment facility that would form the foundation for the core area's treatment program and support any distributed plants in the future. This decision followed extensive analysis of wastewater flow and population and water use projections. Water reuse was eliminated because of supply capacity and water use trends (there were no users or customers for recycled water as there is no shortage of water in the region). This enabled the CRD to reduce the initial treatment capacity and amend the proposed system configuration to eliminate tertiary treatment, the Saanich East facility, the Clover Point Wet Weather Treatment Plant and defer the Westshore Treatment facilities, thus reducing the Program overall budget by \$185 million.

The Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) Amendment No. 8 was submitted to the Ministry of Environment in June 2010 and approved by the Minister in August 2010. The business plan was updated with a new, centralized system approach with only three components and the final plan totaling \$783 million was approved for funding by the Province in February 2012. Provincial and federal government funding for the Program was announced in summer 2012. The funding agreements note that the system must be in operation by March 2018.

As part of the funding negotiations with British Columbia, the CRD was required to establish an independent non-political governance body to manage, implement and commission the Program. The CRD established a Commission under Bylaw No. 3851. The CALWMC would remain responsible for siting of the Program components and the CRD Regional Board is ultimately responsible for the LWMP and Program budget and funding agreements. In fall 2012, the CRD received applications for membership in the independent Commission to govern the Program, as per the provincial funding agreement. The Commission was appointed in March 2013. In summer 2013, a new Program Director was appointed to lead the Program and reports directly to the Commission.

The site at McLoughlin Point was rezoned by Esquimalt council in July 2013. The inclusion of some clauses in the rezoning would not permit the construction of a 107.8 ML/day treatment plant on the site and would therefore negate the LWMP Amendment No. 8. Negotiations with Esquimalt are ongoing to resolve this issue.

The CRD has confirmed the location of the Resource Recovery Centre at Hartland landfill. Siting for other infrastructure components, such as the Saanich East attenuation tanks near Haro Woods has now been completed.