

Maliview Wastewater System Infrastructure Upgrade

Frequently Asked Questions

Capital Regional District | 2021

Is my property located in the Sewer Service Area?

The sewer service area is defined in Bylaw 1938, as amended by Bylaw 4373, and is a prescribed area. A map showing the current Maliview Sewer Service Area is available at www.crd.bc.ca/maliview. All properties located within the defined boundary area are in the Sewer Service Area.

If I'm not in the Sewer Service Area, do I have to pay for the system Renewal?

No, only the properties within the Sewer Service Area will pay for the system renewal.

If I'm in the Sewer Service Area, but I am not connected to the sewer system yet, do I still have to pay for the system Renewal?

Yes, properties within the Sewer Service Area do pay Parcel Taxes towards capital costs of upgrading the system, but properties that are not yet connected to the system do not have to pay User Fees towards the operational cost of the system.

How do I connect to the Sewer?

If your property is already in the sewer service area, a resident can call 250.474.9611 to request an application to connect. If the property is not in the sewer service area, the owner will have to make a request for inclusion into the service area and submit it to the Maliview Sewer Local Services Committee for their review.

Why is the sewer system in such a bad condition?

The system was built in the late 1970's by a developer with the CRD taking over operations in 1979. The only significant upgrade was the replacement of the treatment plant in 2005 to a rotating biological contactor (RBC) and a further upgrade in 2006 to add a primary screening due to higher than anticipated flows through the RBC treatment plant. Much of the system has reached the end of its service life.

How much will it cost to renew the sewer system?

The total estimated cost to renew the system back to a safe, reliable state that meets regulatory requirements is approximately \$2,210,000 million (in 2020 dollars). The CRD has submitted a federal/provincial grant for up to 90% funding. If the CRD is successful, the grant will reduce the amount required for borrowing to only \$210,000.

When will the CRD know if they are successful in obtaining a grant?

A grant announcement is expected in the third or fourth quarter of 2021.

Why do we have to borrow funds to do the sewer upgrades?

There is approximately \$23,223 saved in the Maliview Sewer Capital Reserve Fund which is not enough to complete the upgrades, so funds will need to be borrowed to complete the work.

How much am I currently paying for the sewer service?

The 2021 annual User Fee rates Parcel Tax rates are \$1,807.53 and a \$52.29, respectively.

How much will my cost increase as a result of the system upgrade?

Cost increases will be dependent on the loan amortization period. The borrowing costs options are shown on slide 23 of the Virtual Open House Presentation available online at www.crd.bc.ca/maliview.

Can I defer the cost (tax) increase?

If the property owner is at least 55-years old, the Provincial government may allow parcel taxes to be deferred. However, please note that User Fees cannot be deferred. Visit the Province of BC website for more information, and to see if you qualify.

Can I pay the entire cost up front rather than over a long amortization period?

Yes. Subject to CRD Board approval of a specific financial bylaw, property owners could choose to pay a one-time lump sum cost for their share of the capital cost for the sewer upgrades rather than paying debt servicing costs over the whole amortization period.

What happens if the sewer system is not upgraded?

If not upgraded, the sewer system will continue to deteriorate, service disruptions will increase, and operational and emergency response costs will increase and it will remain out-of-compliance with Provincial and Federal regulations which could result in legal orders and fines to the Service.

When would the sewer renewal work commence and how long will it take to complete?

The renewal work can only commence after the elector's support borrowing funds to complete the work through an electoral assent process is completed. If an electoral assent process is held later this year, work could commence in 2021/2022. The length of time to complete the work will be approximately 12 to 18 months.

Will my service be disrupted during the sewer renewal work?

Generally, your service should not be disrupted during the renewal work. However, there could be brief periods of time where some residents could be asked to minimize wastewater discharges. There should be no interruptions to your water service.

When will a recommendation be made on which borrowing option to proceed with?

After feedback has been received from the community by April 6, 2021, the Commission will make a recommendation to the CRD Board to proceed with an electoral assent process.

Which electoral assent process will be used to obtain approval for borrowing?

Based on the feedback, a recommendation will be made to the Commission. The Commission will form a recommendation to the CRD Board.

What is the difference between the two electoral assent processes options for obtaining approval for borrowing?

Alternative Approval Process (AAP) is most commonly used in relation to long-term borrowing bylaws as it is a less expensive option than using a referendum. Unless 10% of the affected electors sign a counter-petition opposing the bylaw, the bylaw to borrow will obtain approval to proceed. An AAP would take approximately six (6) months, and would cost approximately \$20,000.

Referendum Process is typically used to seek approval by assent of the electors, where a majority of the valid votes are counted in favour of the bylaw to fund a project. Typically, a referendum question is developed and then reviewed by the Inspector of Municipalities at the province, requesting the electors to approve the borrowing of a specified amount of funds for the project. A referendum would take approximately seven (7) months, and would cost approximately \$60,000. Under current COVID conditions, referendum cost have escalated.

An advance poll is typically held in the week prior to the referendum voting date. Absentee (mail in) ballots are permitted under the Local Government Act, but the Maliview Sewer and CRD Board would determine this for the referendum.

Either costs associated with obtaining electoral assent will be borne by the Maliview Sewer service area.

When is the electoral assent process planned to borrow funds for the sewer renewal work, and how will I be informed?

The assent process will take place after Ministry approval has been granted, likely in July 2021. Property owners and eligible electors of the sewer service can stay informed through the CRD website at www.crd.bc.ca/maliview. Salt Spring Island Administration will also coordinate mail-outs and statutory advertisements in addition to sharing updates via community outlets (Salt Spring Exchange, Driftwood, etc.).

Who is eligible to vote?

People who live in the Maliview Sewer service area and qualify as a resident elector, or who own property in the service area but live elsewhere in British Columbia and qualify as non-resident property elector, are eligible to vote.

Where will the referendum polling station be located?

If a referendum is the preferred method a polling station will be located on Salt Spring Island. When the exact location is determined, it will be advertised and posted on the CRD website in advance of the voting date.

For more information, please email us at: saltspring@crd.bc.ca