

**DATE:** January 7, 2022**FILE:** 5330-20/RUBSEP**TO:** Chair and Directors  
Electoral Areas Services Committee**FROM:** Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative OfficerSupported by Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer*R. Dyson***RE: Update on the Extension of Sewer Services South**

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**Purpose**

To provide an update on the Sewer Extension South Project and seek support for staff to submit a grant application under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.

**Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:**

THAT staff submit an application for grant funding for the Sewer Extension South Project through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – Environmental Quality Stream.

THAT this staff report regarding Extension of Sewer Services South and dated January xx, 2022 be referred to the Comox Valley Sewage Commission for their information.

**Executive Summary**

- An opportunity to connect the Royston/Union Bay communities to the Comox Valley Sewer Service presents a new path forward for regional wastewater management in the area; the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) is pursuing this option in partnership with K'ómoks First Nation (KFN).
- In the fall of 2021 community outreach was undertaken to collect initial feedback on the proposal. Overall, the dominant theme in the feedback collected was of support for a community sewer service and the proposed solution; however, cost continues to be of primary concern to area residents.
- A grant application under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program is being prepared for the project, with an application deadline of January 26, 2022.
- Total project costs, including wastewater collection infrastructure to service core areas of Royston, Union Bay and Kilmarnock, are high and above allowable funding limits.
- It is unlikely that all of the Electoral Area A collection system can be included in the grant application scope, therefore focus will remain on Union Bay as the area with the most urgent need as well as maximizing servicing to other areas based on balancing resident costs, grant amount limits and partner contribution limits.
- Project implementation will also rely on partner contributions and borrowing in order to deliver a cost-effective project that the community can support. Staff continue to collaborate with project partners to explore cost sharing opportunities.
- The delivery of Phase 1 will benefit all existing residents in Royston and Union Bay by providing a conveyance solution for all and reducing future servicing costs through the delivery of key Phase 1 infrastructure.
- Community assent will be required to borrow the funds needed to complete the project. A public engagement strategy is being developed to keep the community informed of project

progress and prepare them for an assent process in 2022; grant approval is contingent on a positive result.

- The CVRD will provide the community with as much information as possible about cost, project boundaries, timelines and design factors as information becomes available. Community feedback will be considered in project planning and design.
- Aging or unmaintained septic systems in Royston and Union Bay are creating environmental and health risks in Baynes Sound that need to be addressed.
- The status quo in the area is not an option. Should wastewater planning not proceed in a timely fashion, the CVRD will look to regulatory and land-use planning options to ensure compliance for on-site septic systems.

Prepared by:

Concurrence:

*D. Monteith*

*M. Rutten*

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Darry Monteith  
 Manager of Liquid Waste Planning

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Marc Rutten, P.Eng.  
 General Manager of Engineering Services

**Government Partners and Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)**

K’ómoks First Nation	✓
Comox Valley Sewage Commission	✓

**Background/Current Situation**

The CVRD in partnership with KFN and local development is working toward a plan for wastewater service in the Royston/Union Bay areas. After many years of assessment, review and two previous public assent processes, the CVRD has identified a new opportunity to connect into the Comox Valley Sewer Service (CVSS) that could offer a more cost-effective option for residents in the area and simplify permitting and authorizations required for project implementation.

In the fall of 2021, community outreach was undertaken to collect initial feedback on the proposal and identify questions and concerns. The outreach started in late November and ran until the middle of December, and included:

- **Online Informational Session:** 85 registrants attended a facilitated online information session on November 30, 2021 to hear the latest project updates. For those attendees who shared residency, 42 per cent came from Royston, 40 per cent from Union Bay and 6 per cent from other communities in Baynes Sound – Denman/Hornby Islands (Electoral Area A) or the CVRD.
- **Q&A Library:** Over 55 questions were responded to and answers were collated and posted to the website.
- **In-Person Open House:** About 75 people attended an open house held in Union Bay on December 2, 2021 to learn about the proposal and ask questions of the project team.
- **Direct Mail Out:** 951 letters were sent to homeowners in the area, providing a summary of the update, and inviting residents to attend the online or in-person info sessions.
- **Online Information:** The project webpage was re-activated as an information hub, with material from the open house and a link to the online info session shared.

Themes of the feedback were largely in support of the proposed project, some unequivocal and some dependent on additional information residents want before deciding. Cost continues to be a primary concern of area residents. A complete engagement summary report is attached as Appendix A.

As project costs are high, senior government funding is needed to increase project affordability for residents. In 2020 a grant application was submitted to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) for the project; however, in mid-July 2021, the CVRD was notified that due to high interest in the grant program, the project was not selected for funding.

Staff are working to prepare a revised application for the project under a new ICIP intake which is open until January 26, 2022. The program offers up to 73 per cent federal and provincial funding for eligible projects that meet program outcomes. Feedback provided by grant program staff following denial of the previous application highlighted opportunities for improvement to project scope and risk profile, including the importance of maximizing the number of residential connections included in the grant scope while ensuring a reasonable funding request is maintained.

Total project costs, including wastewater collection infrastructure to service core areas of Royston, Union Bay and Kilmarnock, is currently estimated at over \$65M. Given the high project costs, a funding request for 73 per cent of total project costs is above allowable funding limits and unlikely to be successful. Project implementation will therefore also rely on partner contributions and borrowing in order to deliver a cost-effective project that the community can support. Staff continue to collaborate with project partners to explore these cost sharing opportunities.

Over the coming weeks staff will continue to consult with Ministry staff and project partners to ensure a grant application with the highest likelihood of success is submitted. Ministry feedback will help inform which portions of the project are included in the grant scope and the maximum funding ask that can be supported. It is unlikely that all of the Area A collection system can be included in the grant application scope, therefore focus will remain on Union Bay as the area with the most urgent need with other areas to be included if opportunity allows. Some neighbourhoods may need to be serviced in a future phase of the project in order to ensure Phase 1 servicing costs remain reasonable. The delivery of Phase 1 will benefit all existing residents in Royston and Union Bay by reducing future servicing costs through the delivery of key Phase 1 infrastructure.

**Options**

A solution needs to be found that protects Baynes Sound and the natural environment and provides cost-effective wastewater treatment for the communities of Royston and Union Bay. Given the significant opportunity to increase project affordability through senior government funding, staff recommend proceeding with a funding application under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program – Environmental Quality Stream.

**Financial Factors**

Further project development work is required to support continued public engagement and progress project planning and design. This work will require technical, communications and administrative capacity. These resourcing requirements will be identified and addressed in the 2022-2026 financial plan.

**Strategic Considerations: Strategic Drivers and Regional Growth Strategy**

CVRD Board Strategic Drivers:							
Fiscal Responsibility	✓	Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection	✓	Community Partnerships	✓	Indigenous Relations	✓

A regional approach to wastewater management and environmental protection will benefit the entire Comox Valley and is in alignment with each of the CVRD Board’s strategic drivers. The Sewer

Extension South Project is being developed in cooperation with KFN as a key partner, supports environmental protection of Baynes Sound and sustainable development in Electoral Area A, and provides the most cost-effective solution for providing sewer service to the communities of Royston and Union Bay.

CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Goals:							
Housing		Ecosystems, Natural Areas and Parks	✓	Local economic development	✓	Transportation	
Infrastructure	✓	Food Systems		Public Health & Safety	✓	Climate Change	✓

Union Bay is one of the three settlement nodes identified by the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) to accommodate compact forms of development. MG Policy 1B-1 of the RGS states that growth in settlement nodes shall be accommodated through improvements to public infrastructure, including the provision of appropriate sewer services.

The three settlement nodes, settlement expansion areas (including Royston), and a portion of KFN lands are considered in the RGS as *Core Settlement Areas*.

Infrastructure Policy 5D-4 of the RGS states that the majority of growth should be focused in *Core Settlement Areas* where appropriate sewer servicing exists. Directing growth to these areas alleviates sprawl pressure within the surrounding rural settlement areas, and ensures that servicing costs will be spread over more users. Growth needs to be planned in accordance with the availability of public servicing and public servicing can be made financially viable by growth. With or without growth in the settlement expansion areas and settlement nodes, sewage servicing has to be addressed to resolve existing public and environmental health impacts from septic systems.

**Intergovernmental Factors**

The area that is proposed to be serviced falls entirely within the traditional territories of the KFN. The KFN continue to be strong project partners with significant land holdings in the area.

The CVSS is governed by the Comox Valley Sewage Commission, whose membership includes representatives from the Town of Comox, City of Courtenay and the Department of National Defence. On-going collaboration with the Sewage Commission will be required as the expansion of the CVSS service area to include portions of Electoral Area A is advanced.

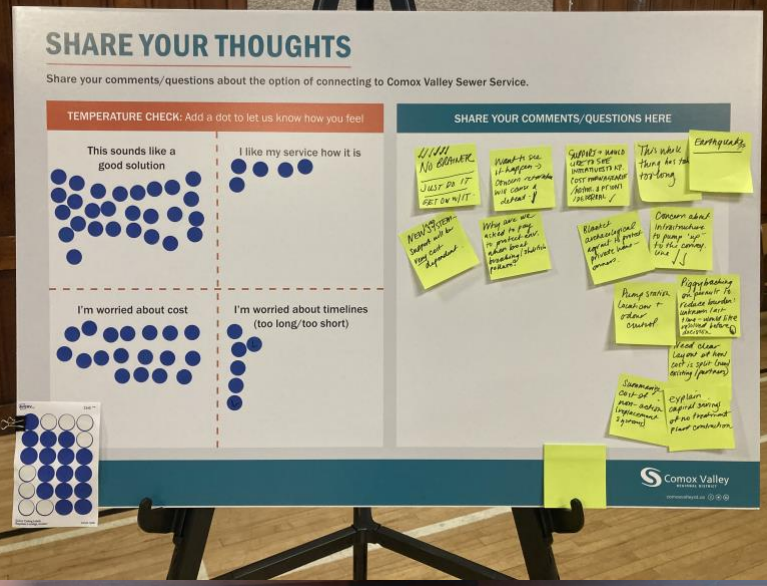
**Citizen/Public Relations**

Community outreach was undertaken in November and December of 2021 to collect initial feedback on the project and identify questions and concerns. With the pre-consultation process complete, the CVRD now has a preliminary sense of the community’s feedback on the proposed approach. Next steps for public engagement include:

- **Develop Public Engagement Strategy:** Create a strategy that works to inform the community and collect/consider their comments and feedback in the development of a project plan.
- **Consider comments and questions in planning/design steps:** While the project is in preliminary design stages, considering the feedback of the community in prioritizing information, early budget planning or future outreach will continue to build support in the community.

- **Keep the community informed about project progress:** Planning to provide updates regularly as more information is available will be key to keeping the community's interest and prepare them for an assent process in 2022.

Attachments: Appendix A – Project Update – Engagement Summary Report



# Sewer Extension South Project Update

## Project Update – Engagement Summary Report November-December 2021

January 6, 2022

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

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The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) is working toward a plan for wastewater service in the Royston/Union Bay areas. After many years of assessment, review and two previous public assent processes, the CVRD has identified a new opportunity to connect into the Comox Valley Sewer Service that could offer a more cost-effective option for residents in the area. In the fall of 2021, it was determined that it was time to provide an update to the community about the proposed option, collect initial feedback on the proposal and identify questions/concerns the community has at this early stage in the project.

The outreach, which started in late November and ran till the middle of December, included:

- **Online Informational Session:** 85 registrants attended a facilitated online information session on Nov. 30, 2021 to hear the latest project updates. For those attendees who shared residency, 42% came from Royston, 40% from Union Bay and 6% from other communities in Area A or the CVRD.
- **Q&A Library:** Over 55 questions were responded to and answers were collated and posted to the website.
- **In-Person Open House:** About 75 people attended an open house held in Union Bay on Dec. 2, 2020 to learn about the proposal and asking questions of the project team.
- **Direct Mail Out:** 951 letters were sent to homeowners in the area, providing a summary of the update, and inviting residents to attend the online or in-person info sessions.
- **Online Information:** The project webpage was re-activated as an information hub, with material from the open house and a link to the online info session shared.

Themes of the feedback were largely in support of the proposed project and outlined approach – some of it unequivocal, and some dependent on additional information residents want before deciding – in particular cost and further planning details.

There is high interest in participating members of the community on this topic and future updates are eagerly anticipated by those who were involved in this update.

## 2.0 Introduction

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### 2.1 PROJECT BRIEF

Wastewater management has long been a topic of interest in Royston and Union Bay – with an over-25-year history of engineering assessment and engagement with the public about possible options for servicing. A community wastewater system is important in this area because of high density housing, poor soil conditions and a high rate of aging/failing septic systems which pose a risk to human health and Baynes Sound.



In 2016, a referendum on the South Sewer Project was unsuccessful, with a key concern about cost raised by residents. Since then, the project team has been working on identifying alternative options for service in the area, and in 2018, were given permission by the Comox Valley Sewage Commission to assess the impacts and feasibility of connecting into the Comox Valley Sewer Service. The information received in that review, led the commission to approve the acceptance of untreated wastewater from Electoral Area A into the existing system – removing the need for a new treatment plant and outfall.

A grant application was made in spring 2020 based on the new proposal, but was unsuccessful. Responding to feedback from the Province, the CVRD has decided to submit a revised grant application in early 2022. Feedback gathered from the webinar and in-person sessions will be shared with provincial staff to demonstrate community interest and support in moving this revised grant application forward.

## 2.2 CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

While there has been extensive consultation on wastewater management in the area in the past, it had been about 18 months since the last outreach was completed with the community. This project ‘re-introduction’ delivered in November-December 2021 serves as a first step in what is anticipated to be a multi-stage process. It also offered opportunity for pre-consultation – collecting insight on what information will be further communicated in subsequent phases.

A wider public engagement strategy will be drafted as part of the next steps on the project – identifying plans for consulting with the community about the proposal through 2022, particularly around a proposed assent process.

PHASE	OBJECTIVES	TOOLS
PRE-CONSULTATION Re-Introduction (Nov – Dec 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- INFORM: provide preliminary update about current proposal for wastewater management</li> <li>- CONSULT: collect feedback on preliminary proposal as well as early questions/comments to inform communications moving forward.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project Webpage: Existing page updated to add new information and serve as hub for updates</li> <li>- Social Media: Promote information sessions.</li> <li>- Online Info Session</li> <li>- In-Person Open House</li> </ul>

The goals for this preliminary engagement stage were:

1. Provide an update on current status of the Sewer Extension South Project
2. Collect preliminary input on the proposed approach for delivery
3. Learn what questions/concerns the community has and would like to see addressed in future consultation stages.

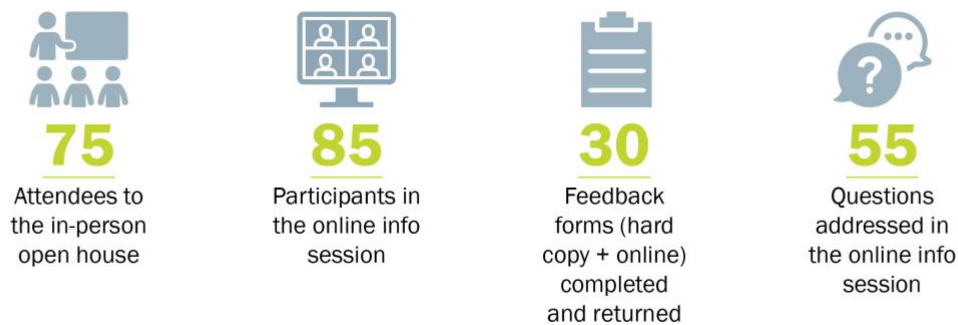
## 3.0 Consultation Results

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The primary objective for this preliminary stage of consultation was to bring the community up-to-speed on the current project plan and take the temperature of residents on the proposed approach moving forward. Given current public health conditions, both online and in-person engagement opportunities were offered, inviting people to participate in the way they were most comfortable.

- **Online Information Session:** The one-hour lunch-time webinar was split in half, starting with an introduction by Electoral Area A Director, Daniel Arbour and overview/summary presentation by CAO Russell Dyson. This was followed by a Q&A session supported by the project team, when the community could submit questions using a webinar tool. Callers were also invited to ask questions verbally.
- **In-Person Open House:** The afternoon/evening drop-in open house allowed people to review 10 information boards, hosted by five CVRD staff to respond to individual conversations and engage in discussion about the proposal. Director Arbour was also available to discuss with constituents and a representative from Island Health shared information about current septic conditions and associated risks.

### 3.1 BY THE NUMBERS



### 3.2 SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Overall, the dominant theme in the feedback collected – through online questions, in-person discussions and submitted feedback forms - was of **support for a community sewer service** and the proposed solution.

The feedback also showed that there are a number of questions the community has – both those in support of, and opposed to, a new service. Themes of these comments, by collection method, is included in the table below.

THEME	EXAMPLES
IN-PERSON	
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support depends on cost</li> <li>- Last option (South Sewer Project) was too expensive</li> <li>- Need to know details about cost, payment options before determining support</li> <li>- Questions about the supplementary costs associated with service (ie: decommissioning septic systems, connections on larger properties and additional surveys/permits required for work on private property)</li> <li>- Concerns about homes with new systems installed – these individuals are supportive of the project but are looking to the CVRD to find ways to lessen the impacts for homeowners who have already invested in upgrades.</li> </ul>
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concern that a referendum will allow this to be defeated.</li> <li>- Concern that the process will be too slow</li> <li>- Frustration about the lack of progress/movement on this file</li> <li>- Questions about how this would impact Union Bay Estates</li> </ul>
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Questions about pipe route</li> <li>- Concerns about locations/design of pump stations</li> <li>- Decommissioning of existing septic systems</li> </ul>
ONLINE	
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for information about cost, options for financing or possible grant options</li> <li>- Interest in the funding available to the CVRD for this work</li> <li>- Opportunity for credit/deferral on recent septic upgrades</li> </ul>
Planning Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Questions about specific neighbourhoods and areas to be included</li> <li>- How waterfront properties will be connected</li> <li>- Schedule/next steps</li> </ul>
Public Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interest in the approval process that will be used (AAP/Referendum)</li> <li>- Concern about what happens if it is unsuccessful</li> <li>- Importance of sharing information using a range of tools to reach all residents</li> </ul>

FEEDBACK FORMS	
Support/Importance of Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importance of moving forward, soon</li> <li>- The need for community sewer service is clear/no-brainer</li> <li>- Concern about small group of opposition preventing project</li> </ul>
Additional Information Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Costs of operations as well as capital costs</li> <li>- Details about waterfront property collection</li> <li>- Permit requirements</li> <li>- Pump station locations and impacts (odor/noise/visual)</li> <li>- Schedule/timeline ahead</li> <li>- Financial comparison of septic vs. sewer</li> </ul>

The comments and themes provide a good overview of the information the community would like as they consider a community sewer service. While the majority of questions were posed on a foundation of support, providing ongoing, accurate and timely updates will be important so the community feels they fully understand and can commit to a plan moving forward.

## 4.0 Conclusion

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In November/December 2021, the CVRD provided an update to Electoral Area A residents about the proposed approach for a community sewer service project in the Union Bay/Royston areas. It had been nearly 18 months since the last update on this topic, which is always of interest for many in the community.

Based on level of participation, we can see that Union Bay and Royston residents were ready for an update on the Sewer Extension South Project and the effort made by the CVRD to bring the latest information generated good participation.

The early stage of planning meant that not all questions from residents could be answered, but the preliminary tone of feedback was positive, with eagerness to see something move forward on this file.

### **Themes of the feedback included:**

- General support for a community sewer service
- Concern about cost
- Questions about design and planning details
- Interest in the process for approval, risk of failure and potential consequences

The CVRD can use the comments/questions raised during this pre-consultation stage to inform their grant proposal and in analysis and planning in advance of a referendum, and later as part of the detailed design if the project proceeds. This information will help to prepare materials and answer questions in preparation for the public assent process in October 2022. Expectations will need to be

clear and recognize that some details cannot be determined until after the detailed design process, which is contingent on both electoral approval and grant funding.

As a next step, a public engagement plan can be developed based on some key values, including:

- Sharing as much information as possible, as it's available
- Being clear about what is known and what isn't yet known
- Providing timelines about when new information will be available.
- Explaining honestly what will not be known before an assent process, with information about why it will not be known, or any possible options/considerations that can be shared in the interim.

## 5.0 Next Steps

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With the pre-consultation process complete, the CVRD now has a preliminary sense of the community's feedback on the proposed approach. Next steps for public engagement include:

- **Develop Public Engagement Strategy:** Create a strategy that works to inform the community and collect/consider their comments and feedback in the development of a project plan.
- **Consider comments and questions in planning/design steps:** While the project is in preliminary design stages, considering the feedback of the community in prioritizing information, early budget planning or future outreach will continue to build support in the community.
- **Keep the community informed about project progress:** Planning to provide updates regularly as more information is available will be key to keeping the community's interest and prepare them for an assent process in 2022.

APPENDIX 1 – OPEN HOUSE: INFO BOARDS

# WHY DO WE NEED A REGIONAL SEWER SERVICE?

Wastewater management has been a regular topic for Royston and Union Bay over the years. Bringing a sewer service to the communities is a priority because of key overlapping factors in the area.

## POOR CONDITIONS FOR SEPTIC SYSTEMS

The ground conditions and high density of housing in the area create a greater risk for on-site treatment systems to fail.

## RISK TO BAYNES SOUND

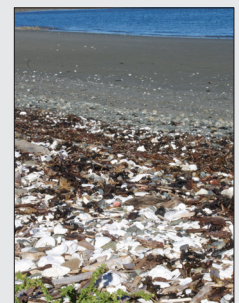
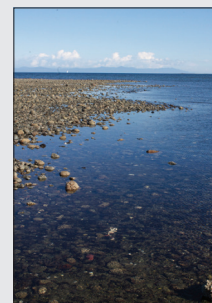
Poorly functioning systems pose an environmental health and public safety risk due to the proximity of the ocean and key shellfish farming activities.

## AGING AND FAILING SYSTEMS

The communities' long history has resulted in septic systems that are past their useful life and require maintenance and/or replacement.

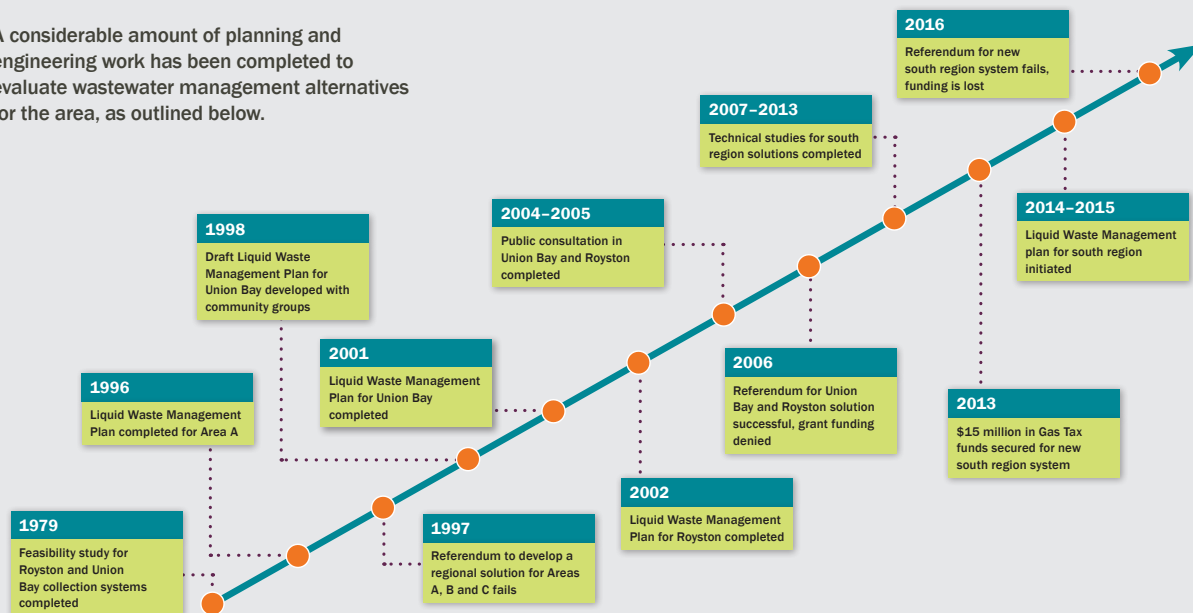
## EXISTING POPULATION HUB

The area has an existing population that would benefit from servicing – and once serviced, can expect growth. This is why it was designated a core settlement area in the CVRD's Regional Growth Strategy.



# HISTORY OF SEWER PLANNING

A considerable amount of planning and engineering work has been completed to evaluate wastewater management alternatives for the area, as outlined below.



# WHAT'S CHANGED SINCE 2016?

After the 2016 referendum, the CVRD committed to continuing review of possible options for servicing in the future. This work has led to some significant updates since the South Sewer Project proposal.



## REVIEW (2018)

In 2018 the Comox Valley Sewage Commission, which services Courtenay, Comox and K'ómoks First Nation, supported a request put forward by Electoral Area A to analyze the technical, regulatory and financial impacts of extending sewer services south to Royston and Union Bay.



## DECISION (2020)

Following this assessment, the sewage commission has now agreed to receive untreated wastewater from Royston, Union Bay and K'ómoks First Nation south lands.



## GRANTS (2020)

With the new option of connecting to the Comox Valley Sewer Service, the CVRD partnered with K'ómoks First Nation to submit an application for grant funding, with support of Union Bay Estates. Funding was not granted and the CVRD will submit a revised proposal in January 2022.



# THE COMOX VALLEY SEWER SERVICE

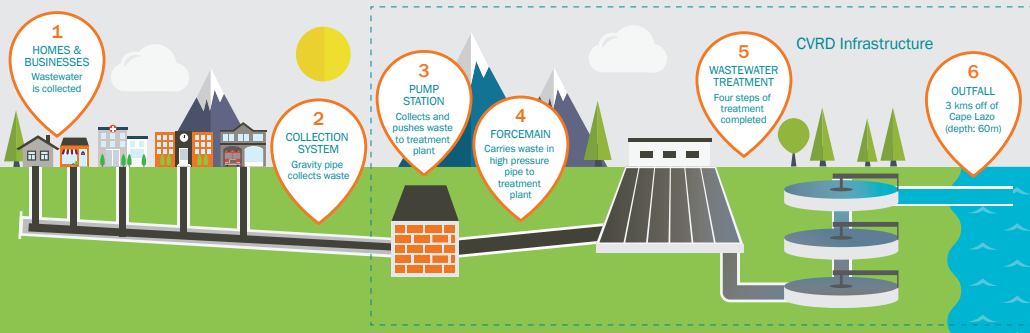
The Sewage Commission's decision to receive wastewater from Area A is unprecedented: connection to municipal services has, until now, only been available to those within municipal boundaries.

## ABOUT THE EXISTING SERVICE:

- The Comox Valley Sewer Service currently serves over 40,000 people in Courtenay and Comox.
- The service collects untreated wastewater and moves it to the Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Centre for treatment and discharge.
- High quality, treated wastewater is released via an outfall beyond Cape Lazo.

## BENEFITS TO CONNECTING TO THE COMOX VALLEY SEWER SERVICE

- 1. REDUCED COST:** Residents will not have to pay for the construction and operation of a new treatment plant. Operations costs are distributed over a larger population.
- 2. REDUCED REGULATORY HURDLES:** Access to a fully permitted wastewater treatment plant and discharge, removing the need to explore, select, assess and seek approval for new facilities.
- 3. PROTECT BAYNES SOUND:** Using the Lazo discharge removes the need for a discharge into Baynes Sound.
- 4. HIGH QUALITY TREATMENT:** The treatment plant offers high quality treatment with dedicated professionals in place. Recent sewer planning for the service also includes plans to implement UV disinfection.

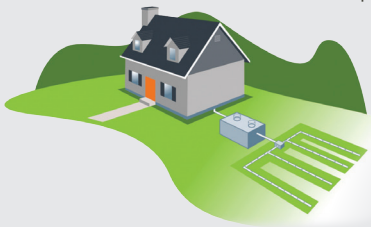


# SEPTIC VS. SEWER

Connecting to the Comox Valley Sewer Service would reduce the environmental and health risks posed by aging septic systems. The existing treatment plant ensures that properly treated water is discharged to the ocean.

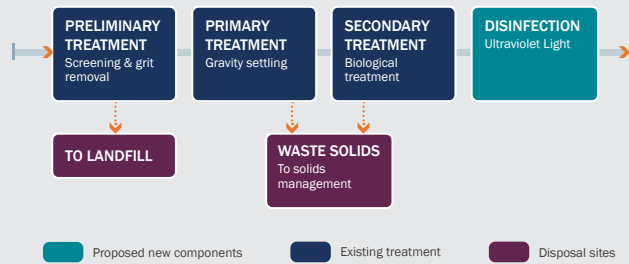
## SEPTIC SYSTEMS

- Septic systems require regular maintenance to ensure they continue to function properly. Homeowners are legally responsible for ensuring their system is being properly maintained.
- A failing system can pollute streams, shorelines and groundwater and pose a health risk to the community.
- If a health hazard exists or is likely to arise then Island Health has the authority to hold liable those responsible.
- Replacement of systems are expensive ranging from \$15,000 to over \$50,000.
- Action is required in the area, and doing nothing is no longer an option. To address ongoing issues, increased regulation may be required to ensure proper maintenance of septic systems.

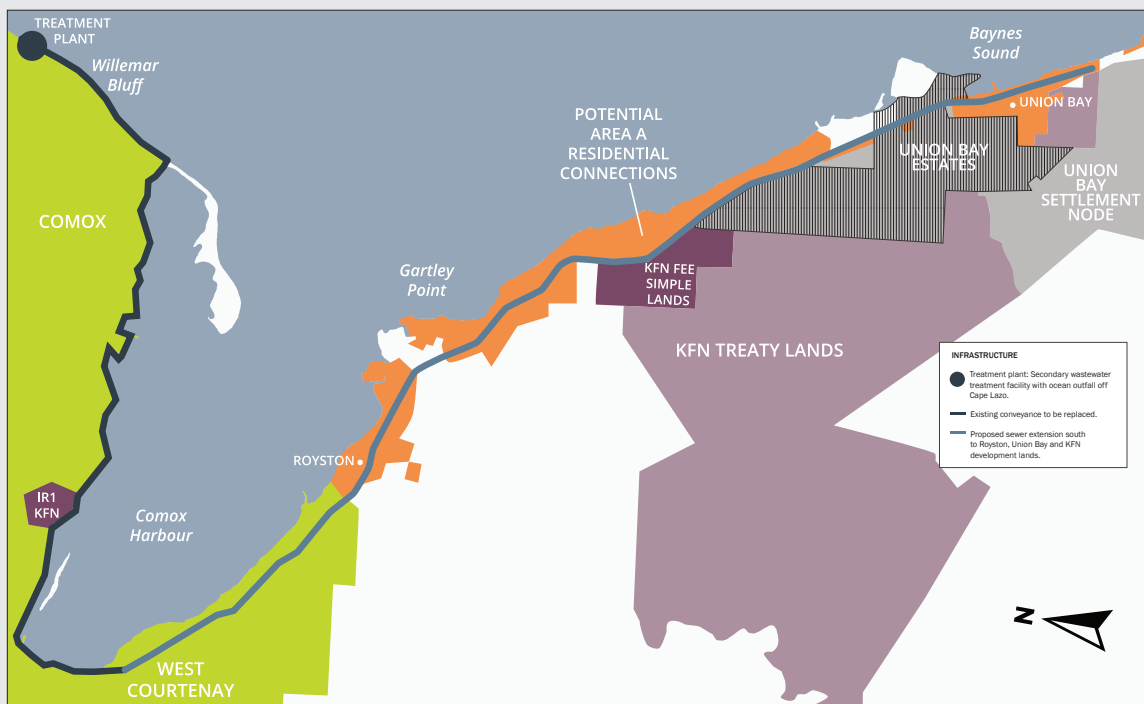


## TREATMENT PLANT

- Offers an existing municipal system that exceeds regulatory requirements for discharge to open marine waters.
- All wastewater entering the plant passes through secondary (biological) treatment.
- Planned upgrades to the treatment processes at the facility include ultraviolet disinfection to further protect shellfish resources, keeping our ocean life, waters and beaches safe.
- The treatment plant is a 24/7 operation monitored by CVRD's qualified professional wastewater operators.



# POTENTIAL SERVICE AREA MAP





## WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW/NEXT

With the option to connect to the Comox Valley Sewer Service on the table, the CVRD project team continues to work on identifying the project area and funding options.



### GRANT APPLICATION (JANUARY 2022)

An application made in 2020 was not successful, but a new intake for projects has been opened up for Jan. 2022. The CVRD will be submitting an application, amended to reflect feedback from the province on the first submission.



### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT (SPRING/SUMMER 2022)

The CVRD will continue to engage the community throughout 2022 as more details become available, including costs and project timing.



### ELECTOR APPROVAL (2022)

This project will require public approval before it can proceed. An assent process will be required to gauge community support.



## FAQS



### HOW MUCH WILL THIS COST?

We don't know what the estimated cost to residents will be, as it will depend significantly on grant funding support, timing, and approvals. A clear cost will be presented to residents for consideration before elector approval is sought.



### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR UNION BAY ESTATES AND THEIR PLANS?

The Master Development Agreement for Union Bay Estates requires a sewer solution for the proposed development that has expansion capability. Should a connection to the Comox Valley Sewer Service proceed, it could remove the requirement for the developer to construct a standalone treatment plant. Union Bay Estates could instead make a comparable contribution to fund the sewer pipe connecting to the regional system.



### WILL THERE BE OPTIONS FOR OPTING OUT IF A SEWER SERVICE GOES AHEAD?

Homeowners will be required to connect to the service. In order to ensure cost efficiency, and to meet the environmental/safety goals of the project, opting out will not be an option though there may be options available for payment arrangements. Those details have not been confirmed.



### WHAT HAPPENS IF THIS DOESN'T PROCEED?

Action is needed on wastewater management, given conditions in the area. Should sewer planning not proceed in a timely fashion, the CVRD will be looking to land use planning tools and new regulation to ensure environmental and health risks aren't made worse. This could include work with the Province and Island Health on enhanced septic regulatory measures, changes to zoning or implementation of other land use management tools.

## APPENDIX 2 – INVITATION LETTER

**Office of the Chief Administrative Officer**

770 Harmston Avenue, Courtenay, BC V9N 0G8  
 Tel: 250-334-6000 Fax: 250-334-4358  
 Toll free: 1-800-331-6007  
 www.comoxvalleyrd.ca



File: 5330-20/RUBSEP

November 10, 2021

«Owner\_1»  
 «Owner\_2»  
 «Address\_1» «Address\_2»  
 «Address\_3»

Dear Royston/Union Bay Resident:

**Re: Community Sewer for Royston and Union Bay**

The Comox Valley Regional District is holding an in-person and virtual open house to share its progress on sewer planning for the Royston and Union Bay area. Much work has occurred since our last community update in May 2020. Since then, we have been working to pursue a regional concept for sewer that would see wastewater from our growing communities in the south be treated at the sewage treatment plant located on Brent Road in Lazo North (Electoral Area B) and discharged to the environment by the existing marine outfall at Cape Lazo.

We look forward to discussing our partnership with the Comox Valley Sewage Commission, as well as our next steps to pursue a grant opportunity that could fund the first phase of a sewage collection and conveyance system for the area. This proposal to allow connection to the regional sewer system provides cost efficiencies by leveraging partnerships and ensuring that environmental and public health issues are addressed both now and well into the future.

**Join Us****Virtually: Tuesday November 30, 2021**

Attend a webinar at 12 pm

Email [communications@comoxvalleyrd.ca](mailto:communications@comoxvalleyrd.ca) to request a registration link

\*Login information will be sent upon registering

**In-person: Thursday December 2, 2021**

Drop-in between 3:30 pm and 5:30 pm

Union Bay Community Hall

Please note that in order to follow COVID health and safety protocols for the in-person open house, proof of vaccination will be required and masks will be mandatory.

We understand that this is an important topic for many in the community and wish to assure you that there will be no decisions made about moving forward without further consultation with residents and property owners. These open houses will provide residents with the opportunity to ask questions about our work, timelines for seeking community assent and planned next steps to pursue grant funding.

Sincerely,

*R. Dyson*

Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

cc: Daniel Arbour, Director, Electoral Area A  
Doug Hillian, Chair, Comox Valley Sewage Commission  
Marc Rutten, General Manager of Engineering Services  
Darry Monteith, Manager of Liquid Waste Planning