

**DATE:** July 9, 2020**FILE:** 5330-20/CVSS LWMP**TO:** Chair and Members  
Comox Valley Sewage Commission**FROM:** Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative OfficerSupported by Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer*R. Dyson***RE: Comox Valley Sewerage System Liquid Waste Management Plan –  
Consultation Update**

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**Purpose**

To provide an updated Comox Valley Sewerage System Liquid Waste Management Planning (LWMP) consultation plan.

**Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:**

THAT the Comox Valley Sewage Commission approve the Comox Valley Sewerage System Liquid Waste Management Planning public consultation plan as attached to this July XX, 2020 staff report.

**Executive Summary**

In March 2020, the Comox Valley Sewage Commission approved the shortlist of conveyance options as recommended by the Technical and Public Advisory Committees (TACPAC). With that approval, Comox Valley Regional District staff initiated the next phase of public consultation, focusing on the shortlisted conveyance options.

This public consultation was intended to include engagement through open houses and an online survey through April and May. The input from the public would then have been brought back to the TACPAC for review and consideration in their decision and recommendation of the preferred conveyance option, and treatment level at the Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Center by June 2020.

Although virtual formats are available to host meetings and complete consultation, a strong consultation process is essential to the success of the LWMP, and in April 2020 the Comox Valley Sewage Commission approved a delay until the fall due to the large amount of distraction and uncertainty surrounding COVID-19.

Appendix A is a revised public consultation plan describing the planned consultation activities over the late summer and fall of 2020. Completion of the shortlist phase of the LWMP public consultation process is now planned mid-August to the end of September with the final two TACPAC meetings occurring in September and October. A recommendation for the preferred conveyance, treatment and resource recovery solutions will be brought forward to the November 16, 2020 Comox Valley Sewage Commission meeting.

Prepared by:

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Concurrence:

***M. Rutten***

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

K'ómoks First Nations	✓
LWMP Technical and Public Advisory Committee Members	✓

**Attachments:**

Appendix A – “CVSS LWMP – updated public consultation plan”

## **Comox Valley Sewer Service - Liquid Waste Management Plan Public Engagement Plan: 2020 Update**

### **OVERVIEW**

To plan for the long-term sustainability of the Comox Valley Sewer System, which currently services the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox and K'ómoks First Nation (KFN), a Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) process was started by the Comox Valley Regional District in 2018. The planning process moved forward in 2018 and 2019 with technical assessment, consultation with KFN and public engagement. A longlist of options for treatment, resource recovery and conveyance were taken to the public in January 2019 and following consultation with the K'ómoks First Nation, a shortlist of conveyance options (pipes and pump stations) was produced.

The shortlisted conveyance options went to public consultation in mid-March 2020. However, that process was closed following the public health emergency created by COVID-19. In April, the consultation was officially postponed to fall 2020.

The urgency regarding the realignment of the Willemar Bluffs portion of the forcemain remains, and there is a need for public consultation to resume in August/September 2020. This engagement plan will restart the consultation on conveyance and present the preferred treatment and resource recovery option to the public. Feedback will be provided to the Technical and Public Advisory Committee (TACPAC) in October 2020 and the Comox Valley Sewage Commission (sewage commission) in November 2020, in order to help determine next steps.

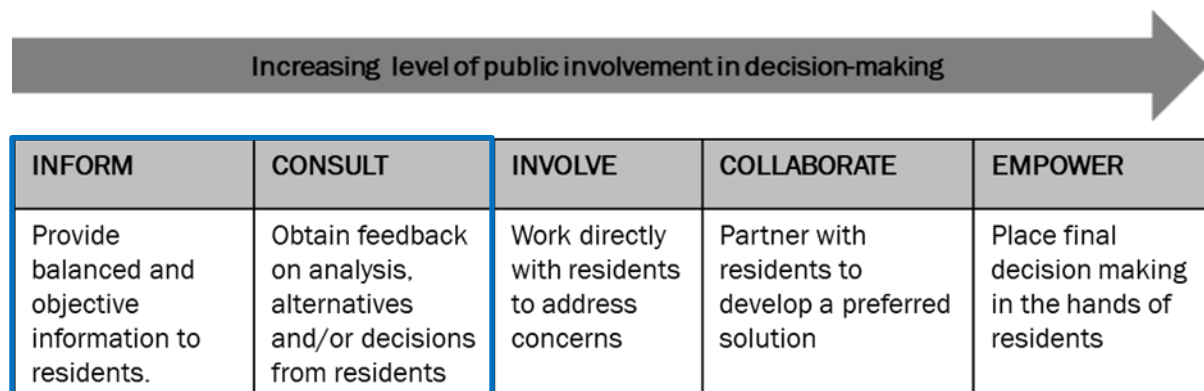
### **AUDIENCES**

Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratepayers within the Comox Valley Sewage Commission</li> <li>• Homeowners/residents in Lazo Road area (Electoral Area B)</li> <li>• Business and home owners along future construction route</li> <li>• K'ómoks First Nation</li> </ul>
Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Media</li> </ul>
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical and Public Advisory Committees (TACPAC)</li> <li>• Sewage Commission</li> <li>• Electoral Area B Director</li> </ul>

### **ENGAGEMENT GOALS**

The Comox Valley Sewer System LWMP is critical to the long-term operational health of the sewer system and protection of the environment. The decisions made as part of the LWMP process will impact residents in Courtenay and Comox through increases to sewer fees and construction disruption. This impact requires continuous and dedicated engagement to allow community input about the options under consideration.

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of public participation was used to define engagement goals of “**inform**” and “**consult**” for this project. These goals are about providing information, listening and acknowledging concerns, and showing a commitment to work with the public to exchange information, ideas and concerns.



**Goal #1: [Inform](#) primary audiences about LWMP process, need for a solution and potential impacts**

- Provide factual and clear information using a variety of tools, to explain the need for a long-term plan, potential options (with benefits and challenges of each) and the opportunity to engage and provide input.

**Goal #2: [Consult](#) homeowners within service area about shortlist conveyance options**

- Using both digital and hard-copy tools, collect feedback on conveyance options through a survey. Create feedback opportunity that allows for both value-based input and specific concerns.
- Report back to residents on outcomes of consultation.

**Goal #3: [Inform](#) homeowners in Lazo Area about geotechnical and hydrogeological testing and [Consult](#) on proposed conveyance routes**

- Outreach directly to Lazo Area homeowners about technical work occurring over the summer.
- Encourage participation in the consultation and address area-specific concerns, including geotechnical, groundwater and right of ways.

**Goal #4: [Inform](#) general public about traffic disruptions due to geotechnical and hydrogeological testing around Comox Hill.**

- Launch a general awareness campaign including social media, print and radio PSAs to inform the public about potential traffic disruptions due to drilling

**Goal #5: [Consult](#) directly impacted business about proposed conveyance routes**

- Provide opportunity specifically for area businesses to engage on shortlist options as they relate to their operations.

**Goal #6: [Inform](#) primary audiences about the preferred option for wastewater treatment and resource recovery**

- Use the same communication channels (online portal and information session) to present the preferred option for wastewater treatment, including how community input was used.

## OPERATIONAL MILESTONES

The consultation scheduled for August/September of 2020 will provide the sewage commission with input necessary to consider which conveyance shortlist option will move forward as the preferred option. The milestone chart summarizes the upcoming public engagement steps required for construction to begin in 2021.

Milestone	Aug-Sept 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020
<b>Public + Business – Inform and Consult</b> Inform: Geotechnical/hydrological testing - Lazo Road/ Comox Hill Inform: Preferred treatment and resource recovery option. Consult: Conveyance shortlist routes under consideration.				
<b>Reporting</b> Engagement results analyzed and report developed.				
<b>TACPAC - Collaboration</b> Reviews engagement report and comes to a consensus on preferred conveyance option.				
<b>Sewage Commission - Decision</b> Staff presents preferred conveyance option for final decision by sewage commission.				
<b>Reporting and Next Steps</b> Report back to community on chosen conveyance option and the next steps to finalize LWMP.				

## TOOLS

<b>Project Webpage</b>	Provide accurate and timely resources for all audiences to learn more about the topic and review background information
<b>Online Consultation Portal (Connect CVRD)</b>	A community hub for discussion and input.
<b>Online and In-person Consultation Survey</b>	Revive value-based survey developed for LWMP's already-established ConnectCVRD page and to be available in hard-copy at information session, and for pick up at CVRD offices.
<b>Social Media – Ad Campaign</b>	Revive digital advertising campaign highlighting the need to get involved.
<b>Paid Print, Radio and Online Advertising</b>	Paid advertising will assist in raising awareness about consultation opportunities
<b>Media</b>	Local print, radio media can help to promote engagement opportunity

<b>Information Session</b>	<p>Limited in-person opportunity for those unable/unwilling to participate in digital consultation tools. Specific planning can be undertaken to meet public health guidelines (to be further assessed based on most current status). Including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited number of attendees with pre-registration considered</li> <li>- Larger venue and larger materials allowing for bigger distances between attendees</li> <li>- Marked/designated spaces indicating safe distance from others and staff.</li> <li>- One-way traffic flow with separate entrance and exits</li> <li>- Hosted sign-in (no pen sharing)</li> <li>- Hand sanitizer available</li> <li>- No catering</li> <li>- Reduced CVRD staff contingent</li> </ul>
<b>Video Conference</b>	Offer online ‘webinar’ with staff overview of options and opportunity for questions to be asked of presenter. Opportunity for both wider primary audience as well as more specific groups such as business organizations.
<b>Comox BIA Stakeholder Meeting</b>	Offer meeting with Comox business community – online or in person, depending on current public health requirements – to provide overview of options and potential impacts. Invite to consultation.
<b>Stakeholder Letter</b>	Direct mail to specific audience/neighbourhood advising of engagement opportunity.
<b>Briefing Notes</b>	Consistent messaging ensures effective project communications
<b>Backgrounder</b>	A backgrounder document summarizing options can be used in multiple venues, including for events and online engagements.
<b>Q&amp;A</b>	To be utilized by staff to answer questions from the public.
<b>Information Boards</b>	Display boards will assist in conveying information at public events

## TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES

Due to the technical nature of each option, the engagement opportunity will focus on value-based questions for the community, while also collecting residents’ knowledge about important areas or localized information that can assist in the selection of a preferred option moving forward.

### May 2020

- Draft Public Engagement Plan
- Review existing materials and identify need for updates/revisions
- Summarize March 2020 results collected, for inclusion in future report.
- Advise K’ómoks First Nation of updated engagement timeline

### June 2020

- Distribute information letters to Cape Lazo Area B residents to explain geotechnical and hydrology work for tunneling option will be occurring. Inform that more information about public consultation opportunities is forthcoming.

## **July 2020**

- Present engagement plan to sewage commission and notify TACPAC
- Develop tools outlined in engagement plan
- Develop contact list for community-specific audiences

## **Mid-August 2020**

- Distribute press release launching public consultation
- Distribute letters to Cape Lazo Area B and business communities inviting participation in consultation
- Launch ~6-week online consultation, with digital and traditional advertising campaigns

## **Late-August 2020**

- Launch information campaign (social media, print ad and 15-sec radio ads) to advise public about potential traffic disruptions due to drilling in Comox Hill area
- Continue to drive residents to webpage and project portal for more information about LWMP

## **September 2020**

- Continue online consultation with active monitoring and response
- Host in-person information session (with applicable health and safety protocols in place)
- Host online video conference (general and/or business community)
- Close engagement period and update online information to reflect completion

## **October 2020**

- Collate and summarize results
- Present results to TACPAC to inform recommendation on preferred conveyance option
- Draft summary report

## **November – December 2020**

- Present summary report to sewage commission for consideration and decision
- Report back to participations on the results of the consultation
- Issue media release on identified solution for conveyance, treatment and resource recovery
- Report on next steps to finalize LWMP

## **EVALUATION**

The summary report for this engagement will include an overview of the tools that were used and the feedback collected. This will include a highlight of themes from the responses and metrics of results.

Measures to be included in this summary to describe the process and its outcomes include:

- Respondents to survey – print and online
- Attendance numbers for in-person information sessions
- Attendance numbers for online video conferencing
- Number of discussions and posts including questions/comments
- Social media engagement