

September 26, 2012

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**City proposes boundary adjustment as solution for Area D sewer**

Campbell River City Council is proposing an adjustment to its southern boundary that would deliver a solution to sewage problems facing Area D residents.

On Monday at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities convention in Victoria, Council members met with the Honourable Bill Bennett, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, to discuss providing sewer service in the proposed boundary adjustment area as a solution to the public health and environmental concerns created by failing septic fields in parts of Area D.

The City will launch an informational campaign later this fall to provide City and Area D residents with details of the proposal and an opportunity to voice their concerns or support. Council will discuss this proposal with the Strathcona Regional District and the area director.

The area being considered includes about 1,000 properties from the City boundary near Jubilee Parkway south to Henry Road (including all properties fronting on Henry Road). This would affect approximately 2,400 residents out of the total Area D population of 4,300. The Province had previously committed funding of \$3.4 million towards implementation of the first phase of sewers within Area D, which was available until 2014. During the meeting with the Minister, the City requested that this grant remain available for a future sewer system, if a boundary adjustment were to proceed.

*“A boundary adjustment would only go ahead if both City and Area D residents in the proposed area support the idea,”* says Councillor Andy Adams. *“Development in the proposed adjustment area is very similar to residential neighbourhoods inside City boundaries, and the lack of community sewer in this area poses the most risk to public health and the environment.”*

After considerable efforts over the past few years to negotiate a full cost-recovery service contract for Area D sewer were unsuccessful, this summer Council affirmed future sewer services would only be provided within City boundaries. Based on a preliminary assessment, City Council concluded that a boundary adjustment has the potential to provide a cost-effective and practical solution to both City and Area D residents.

*“Council agreed that involving the public in the discussion at this time was the right thing to do,”* adds Councillor Mary Storry. *“Whether this idea proceeds or not is really up to the broader community as we recognize and respect the fact that the residents will need to decide whether a boundary adjustment makes sense for them.”*

The City intends to provide a comprehensive information package for Campbell River and Area D residents in the proposed adjustment area with details about the cost to hook up to City sewer, a proposed schedule for sewer installation, other City services that would become available (i.e. curb-side garbage, recycling and yard waste collection), how existing services currently provided by the regional district would shift to the City, anticipated effects on property tax rates in the adjustment area and the process for deciding on a boundary adjustment.

*“The City’s past liquid waste planning and capital improvements have anticipated managing sewage from this area as the most effective way to protect the environment and public health within the Campbell River region. Many of the sewer upgrades needed to service Area D are already in place or are in the planning stages,”* says City Manager Andy Laidlaw. *“Apart from sewer, we also recognize that there may be other infrastructure in the area that would require upgrades, and if the residents support the proposal to be included in City limits, we would seek funding from various provincial Ministries to assist with improvements,”* Laidlaw adds.

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