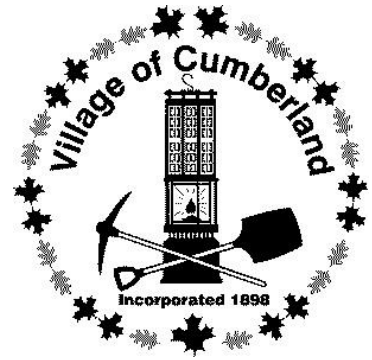


COUNCIL REPORT



REPORT DATE: December 8, 2015
MEETING DATE: December 14, 2015

TO: Mayor and Councillors
FROM: Sundance Topham, Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: Cumberland Liquid Waste Management Plan – Next Steps Report

RECOMMENDATION

- i. THAT Council receive the Cumberland Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) – Next steps report.
- ii. THAT Council approve the hiring of a Liquid Waste Management Planning Project Coordinator consultant to assist the Village in its Liquid Waste Management Planning Process.
- iii. AND THAT Council approve \$25,000 in funding for the Liquid Waste Management Planning Project Coordinator consultant from Community Works funds.

SUMMARY

Village of Cumberland Council adopted the following resolution at its November 9, 2015 Regular Council meeting:

THAT Council, as the steering committee for the Village's Liquid Waste Management Plan, direct that the Village not participate in the South Sewer Project, then restart the LWMP planning process, and re-examine sewage treatment options for the Village of Cumberland.

This direction from Council officially eliminated participation in the regional South Sewer Project as the preferred option for the Village's Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP), and provided direction to staff to restart the Liquid Waste Management Planning process.

Upon receiving the Council direction staff reached out to the various project partners, funders and regulatory agencies to inform them of the Village's decision.

This report summarizes those discussions and reviews next steps in the LWMP process.

BACKGROUND

After receiving direction from Council to not participate in the South Sewer Project staff notified the project partners from the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) and K'ómoks First Nation. Upon receiving notification of Cumberland's withdrawal from the project the CVRD announced

that they would still be moving forward with an amended version of the South Sewer Project without the Village. The Village did not receive any official response from K'ómoks First Nation.

The Village also contacted the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, the Minister of Environment, MLA Don McRae, MP Gord Johns and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities in relation to the \$15 million in funding that UBCM has earmarked to solve sewage issues in Cumberland and CVRD electoral Area A.

As Council is aware the Village of Cumberland and the CVRD had agreed to a grant allocation model for the \$15 million in UBCM grant funding as part of the now defunct South Sewer Project, with the Village receiving \$8.436 million and the CVRD receiving \$6.564 million.

Now that the project is no longer moving forward as originally planned, the Village is attempting to secure a portion of the \$15 million in UBCM funding for use by the Village of Cumberland in resolving our sewer compliance issues. At this point in time discussions with UBCM project staff in relation to this funding are ongoing.

Staff also met with the Section Head, Municipal Liquid Waste Authorizations – South, from the Ministry of Environment. The purpose of this meeting was to provide context in regards to the Village's withdrawal from the South Sewer Project, and to discuss next steps in our ongoing LWMP process.

The meeting was productive as the ministry contact reaffirmed the Village's ability to determine the community's unique context for any LWMP planning process. The ministry representative also noted that the authorizations section of the Ministry of Environment are separate from the compliance section, and that it was important for the Village to keep the Ministry up-to-date on any sewer/stormwater improvements undertaken by the municipality as we move forward.

In terms of next steps, the Village now needs to move forward with restarting our LWMP. There are three stages to the LWMP process, and the Ministry of Environment (MOE) must review and approve all LWMPs. Stage One involves an inventory of existing conditions and development projections (long list of options). Stage Two is a detailed evaluation (short list of options) and the selection of the preferred option. Stage Three involves the summary of the LWMP, financing and implementation schedule.

By restarting the LWMP process Council has chosen to return to Stage One of the process. Although a lot of work has already taken place over the years in regards to completing an inventory of existing conditions, the elimination of the regional system as an option, along with concerns voiced in the community in regards to the type of treatment proposed for Cumberland, should allow the Village to participate in a fulsome reexamination of community appropriate treatment options.

When the South Sewer Project was identified as the preferred option for the Village in 2011 the Village had reached the end of Stage Two of the LWMP process, and the up-front engineering work, short list of options and the selection of a preferred option (conditional) had taken place.

In a typical LWMP process the local government has a project lead (either staff or a consultant) who is supported by engineering consultants who undertake the work required to complete the LWMP. Because the Village identified participation in a regional system as the preferred option, the municipality switched from having our engineering consultants from McElhanney lead the project work, to a model in which the project engineering and the majority of the project coordination work took place through the Comox Valley Regional District and their project team.

With the Village no longer participating in a regional system, these outside resources are no longer available, and Cumberland will now need to reengage our own project team and consultants in order to move forward our liquid waste planning process.

Although internal resources with intermittent outside engineering help was adequate to move forward the LWMP process in conjunction with the CVRD project team, restarting the process will require the engagement of a consulting project coordinator along with new engineering consultants.

As envisioned the LWMP Project Coordinator will be a consultant position that will report to the Chief Administrative Officer and will be the Village lead in the LWMP process. The position will not necessarily need to be an engineer by training, as the project consultants will be an engineering firm; however, at a minimum the project coordinator will need to be a skilled project coordinator, ideally with either an engineering or environmental planning background, along with familiarity working in a local government context.

The position will be responsible for the following:

- A review of the history of LWMP planning in the Village and, in conjunction with staff, Council and the Ministry of Environment, the creation of a set of parameters for the new LWMP planning process;
- Liaising with the Ministry of Environment to ensure compliance with the necessary LWMP regulations;
- Leading the Request for Proposals process for engaging engineering consultant services for the LWMP, based on the Village of Cumberland LWMP planning context;
- Acting as the project lead for the Village LWMP process, including:
 - Working with the consulting engineers on the scope of work for each LWMP stage;
 - Working with the consulting engineers to develop and establish advisory committee structures for recommendation to Council;
 - Ensuring ongoing community consultation and engagement takes place;
 - Providing regular project updates to Council, staff and the community; and,
 - Other related LWMP duties as necessary.

The nature of the LWMP process dictates that the length of time required for the project coordinator position is unknown at this point in time; however, the idea is to have Council pre-approve a set budget amount for the position, and to review this on a quarterly basis.

It is difficult to estimate the number of hours that would be required on a weekly basis. It is expected that two days per week would be reasonable to plan for; however, there may be busy periods, especially at the beginning of the project, followed by periods of relative inactivity.

In terms of a timeframe for moving forward, based on Council support for the Liquid Waste Management Planning Project Coordinator consultant, the goal is to have the project coordinator in place early in the new year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is currently \$131,060 in the 2015 budget set aside for the Liquid Waste Management Planning process; however \$37, 903 is already earmarked for the PPP Canada Business Case and \$36,385 is set aside for the Environmental Impact Study, leaving \$56,772 .

As Council chose not to participate in the South Region Project the majority of the money for the PPP Canada Business Case will be returned (An accounting of the costs that the Village is responsible for has been requested from the CVRD).

If Council agrees to hire a Liquid Waste Management Planning Project Coordinator consultant a request for an expression of interest will be issued. Based on the costs contained therein staff will have a better idea of the long term cost. For budgeting sake it would be appropriate to allocate \$25,000 to this position to start.

The LWMP funding is currently coming from Gas Tax funds, of which the Village has \$111,000 in unallocated funds remaining. Approximately \$195,000 is allocated to the Village annually in Gas Tax Funds.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

The South Sewer Project relates directly to Council's 2015 strategic objective of *Developing an environmentally sustainable method of treating the liquid waste that is produced by the Village.*

ATTACHMENTS

None

CONCURRENCE


Michelle Mason, Financial Officer

Rob Crisfield, Manager of Operations

OPTIONS

1. Receive this report.
2. Provide feedback in relation to next steps in the LWMP Planning process.
3. Any other action deemed appropriate by Council.

Respectfully submitted,



Sundance Topham
Chief Administrative Officer
Village of Cumberland