

To: Electoral Area Services Committee

Date: 2018-04-10

From: Sterling Chan, Manager of Engineering and Infrastructure,
David Bennett, Planner II

Subject: Community Sanitary Sewer Servicing in Popkum

RECOMMENDATION

THAT in accordance with the FVRD Development Procedures Bylaw No. 1377, 2016 the Fraser Valley Regional District Board defer consideration of new bylaw amendments within the West Popkum neighbourhood of Electoral Area "D" until a policy guiding sanitary sewer servicing in Popkum is adopted.

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Support Environmental Stewardship

Foster a Strong & Diverse Economy

Support Healthy & Sustainable Community

Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services

PRIORITIES

Priority #1 Waste Management

BACKGROUND

New Official Community Plan – Popkum, Electoral Area "D"

The Fraser Valley Regional District is undertaking the development of a new Official Community Plan (OCP) for Popkum and Electoral Area "D". The new OCP will identify the vision for development in Popkum and Bridal Falls and how we will respond to growth and change over the next 20 years. The new OCP will include policies and objectives to support the long-term vision for Popkum.

Growth and housing inventory under the current Official Community Plan, Electoral Area “D”

The current OCP policies and objectives have designated West Popkum for infill residential development with a minimum parcel size of 750m² where lots are connected to both community water and community sewer systems. Under these policies, a new suburban residential zone was developed (SBR-3) to allow for subdivisions with a minimum parcel size of 800m² when the lots are connected to both community water and sanitary services. . There is an existing private sewer utility in Popkum, West Popkum Utilities, which services homes in the Woodland heights subdivision, and a new FVRD sewer system is under construction near the former Minter Gardens site off of Llanberis Way. Under the existing OCP policies and zoning, there are approximately 80 new single family residential building lots available in Popkum in both new and soon to be completed residential subdivisions. Of these 80 lots, the FVRD has received approximately 20 building permit applications for new single family homes.

The proposed residential development of the former Minter Garden site will add approximately 130 more single family homes, the Minter proposal is currently at third reading.

Between the recently approved subdivisions and the Minter’s project, residential building inventory is available for approximately 210 new homes. This represents a ten year housing supply based on Stats Canada data which shows that there is an average increase of 20 new homes per year in Popkum. FVRD building permit stats also show a history of modest annual demand for new residential units in Popkum each year. It is recognized that the FVRD is currently experiencing a market cycle of strong demand and an above average number of housing starts in Popkum.

Sewage Disposal Policies in the new Official Community Plan

While a wide range of services are available in Popkum, historically wastewater treatment has been from individual on-site septic systems. Market changes and increased demand for smaller lots requires a transition from onsite septic to centralized communal sewage systems. Current policy requires that all newly created lots 0.225 ha and smaller be connected to a Class A community sewer system owned and operated by the FVRD. However, additional, policy is required to guide in the siting of new sewage systems and to define areas to be serviced. This strategy is necessary to avoid ad-hoc sewage service areas which when compared to well-planned out service areas, create operational inefficiencies and in turn financial challenges. This additional policy will support the existing FVRD Sustainable Sanitary Sewer Servicing Provision, West Popkum Local Sanitary Servicing Plan and will be included in the new Official Community Plan.

DISCUSSION

Instream developments in Popkum can accommodate up to ten years of housing supply, based on historical growth demands. A new Official Community Plan is under development. The new Official Community Plan will provide a robust and up-to-date policy framework to guide new development in a way that archives community benefits, protects the suburban character of Popkum. Also included will

be policy guiding the siting of new FVRD sewage infrastructure and the areas to be serviced. Overall development potential in West Popkum and portions of East Popkum could provide a range of 270 to 500 additional new lots for single family residential development on Suburban Residential designated lands. The range reflects lot yield uncertainties from road dedication, servicing levels and the need for land assembly and redevelopment of some larger lot parcels. This uncertainty is why it is critical to plan out servicing strategies in advance rather than react to applications as they are received. Staff have begun drafting a policy guiding sanitary sewer servicing in Popkum. This policy could be completed and be ready for implementation over the coming months, well in advance of the new Official Community Plan.

In accordance with the Fraser Valley Regional District Development Procedures Bylaw, upon the receipt of a rezoning application the Board may:

- a) give readings to or adopt the bylaw;
- b) give readings to or adopt the bylaw as amended by the Board in its resolution;
- c) refer the application for bylaw amendment to the Electoral Area Services Committee for further consideration;
- d) defer consideration of the amendment to a future meeting of the Board;
- e) refuse the application for an amendment.

Staff are recommending that until this new sanitary servicing policy is in place that the Fraser Valley Regional District Board consider applications for new developments, beyond those projects already in progress, as pre-mature and defer consideration until the sanitary sewer policy is adopted.

The consequences of advancing new developments prior to the implementation of sanitary sewer servicing policies may result in the following:

- Reduced infrastructure efficiency
- Inconsistent or one-off servicing decisions
- Reduced effectiveness of the Official Community Plan
- Less consistent standards or approaches between developments
- Reduced public confidence in a well planned community
- Missed opportunities to implement up-to-date Official Community Plan policies
- Loss of development potential

COST

There are no costs associated with this information report.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with section 4.2 of the Fraser Valley Regional District Development Procedures Bylaw No. 1377, 2016, it is recommended that new applications for rezoning in West Popkum in Electoral Area "D"

be deferred until the new Electoral Area "D" until a policy guiding sanitary sewer servicing in Popkum is adopted.

COMMENT BY:

Graham Daneluz, Deputy Director of Planning & Development Reviewed and supported.

Margaret Thornton, Director of Planning & Development Reviewed and supported.

Tareq Islam, Director of Engineering & Community Services Reviewed and supported.

Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services No further financial comments.

Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer Reviewed and supported