

Minutes of the meeting of the Sewer Extension South (SES) Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP) Addendum Joint Technical and Public Advisory Committee (TACPAC) held on March 14, 2024 in the CVRD Civic Room at 770 Harmston Avenue, Courtenay, and via Zoom commencing at 9:03 am

PRESENT:

A. Habkirk, Chair and Facilitator	Facilitator
M. Rutten, General Manager of Engineering Services	CVRD
D. Monteith, Manager of Liquid Waste Planning	CVRD
V. Van Tongeren, Environmental Analyst	CVRD
M. Briggs, Branch Assistant – Engineering Services	CVRD
I. Snyman	WSP
D. Silvester	Current Environmental
C. Davidson, City of Courtenay	TAC
M. Hall, Island Health	TAC
E. Derby, Island Health (Alternate)	TAC
D. Arbour, Electoral Area A Director	PAC
I. Munro, Electoral Area A Alternate Director	PAC
M. Hewson, Association for Denman Island Marine Stewards	PAC
N. Prins, BC Shellfish Growers Association	PAC
A. Gower, Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce	PAC
I. Heselgrave, Comox Valley Schools	PAC
N. Prince, Craigdarroch Resident Representative	PAC
R. Steinke, Craigdarroch Resident Representative	PAC
T. Donkers, Royston Resident Representative	PAC
K. Newman, Royston Resident Representative	PAC
J. Elliott, Union Bay Resident Representative	PAC

Item	Description	Owner
5.1 9:03 – 9:04	<p>Welcome and Territorial Acknowledgement</p> <p>The meeting was called to order at 9:03 am.</p> <p>The CVRD acknowledged that the committee is meeting on and the proposed Sewer Extension South Project will be constructed and operated on the traditional unceded territory of the K’ómoks First Nation.</p>	Facilitator

5.2 9:04 – 9:19	Meeting 4 MOTION: Adopt the agenda of the March 14, 2024 SES LWMP Addendum Joint TACPAC meeting, with an alteration to include a request for motion to advance the final draft report with any proposed amendments to the Steering Committee following the EIS presentation. – A. Gower SECONDED: I. Munro CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY MOTION: Adopt the minutes of the November 22, 2023 SES LWMP Addendum Joint TACPAC meeting. – A. Gower SECONDED: T. Donkers CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY D. Monteith provided an overview of public engagement for the project since 2021. Staff hosted open houses in January, with the goal to inform the community of feedback heard following the June open houses, to provide an update on project costs, collection system design and the septic deferral and maintenance programs, and to share the draft addendum report. Themes heard during public engagement included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• project costs/costs for residents;• one-time costs/specific property-related questions;• phasing/timing enquiries;• grinder pumps;• pump stations (aesthetics and environmental concerns); and• community impact. Questions were more focused on specific details like pump stations, pipe locations and individual property connections. Feedback compiled in What We Heard report, to be shared with community in coming weeks and in addendum report. 118 people attended the in-	Facilitator
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	<p>person open houses and 28 people attended the online webinar, with 36 feedback forms received.</p> <p>Q: Relative to other engagement, is that a high turnout?</p> <p>A: Yes</p> <p>Q: How does the total population engaged relate to the total population the project will serve? What percentage of people who will have to connect are being engaged?</p> <p>A: Roughly 900 properties in service area being engaged with directly, with high percentage attending open houses.</p> <p>Q: Looks about 50 per cent, which is good for public engagement. Important for people to understand that half of those in service area may have been receiving project information but staff haven't heard from them yet. Is the number of total attendees at the open houses unique visitors or total?</p> <p>A: Did not track unique visitors at open houses, but did hear from new people at more recent events.</p> <p>Comment: Might be worth tracking number of unique visitors. Don't want to start project and hear from someone who haven't spoken up yet.</p> <p>Response: Postcards that were sent to invite residents to open houses also included backgrounder on project.</p> <p>D. Monteith gave an overview of next steps for public engagement, with staff reaching out to the community again in 2025 following submittal of the draft addendum and start of Stage 3 LWMP process.</p> <p>Q: Had previously discussed six months for approval of addendum. Is the estimated 2026 approval date because the addendum will come back from the province, be submitted as part of the full sewer LWMP and be followed by another approval process?</p> <p>A: Yes. Anticipate to receive comments back on addendum before submittal of Stage 3 LWMP, which will be sent to province for final approval.</p>	
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	<p>Q: How does timeline affect shovels in ground? Understood Phase 1A would be completed in 2026. If we won't have approval until 2026, does that mean construction can't start until then? Darry: Yes. Construction expected for 2027-2028, depending on timeline of provincial approval process.</p> <p>Q: Do we have timeline for estimated date for partner funding? A: Expect to have that confirmation this fall and will share with community then.</p> <p>Q: Unsure if engaging Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners (ROWP) has been included in plan but is a critical step in the process. Property owners looking to build or renovate homes may need to hire ROWP to build or upgrade septic system, but then required to connect to sewer system soon after. Worthwhile to engage with ROWPs so they can strategize and advise their clients properly. Is there are a plan to engage with ROWPs? A: Yes, intend to engage with ROWP. Will coordinate with Island Health as the regulatory body.</p> <p>Q: Have been in discussions with neighbour on Kilmarnock Pump Station. How is that discussion included in public feedback? When is the appropriate time to discuss those questions? Question from resident mentioned decision not to have regional pump station across highway and that Kilmarnock will eventually become a regional pump station. A: Included in general terms in What We Heard report. Can discuss further during roundtable.</p> <p>Summarized consultation with K'ómoks First Nations and other First Nations with traditional territories overlapping with project area.</p>	
5.3 9:19 – 9:43	Communications Update & Roundtable D. Monteith opened the meeting to discuss feedback received by TACPAC members.	CVRD

	<p>Comment: Received feedback from resident living near site of proposed Kilmarnock Pump Station. Raised concerns around decision to turn PS#3 (Kilmarnock) into de-facto regional pump station. Referenced details on Royston Pump Station where decisions were made to reduce impact on neighbours. Why wasn't Kilmarnock given same consideration with a regional pump station sited across highway? What considerations have been given or what considerations can we give?</p> <p>Response: When looking at planning work for project, regional pump station concept was added after Phase 1B as necessity to add increased system capacity. After looking at Royston Pump Station location, realized that mitigation options would need to be considered because it's in coastal flood zone. Looked at advancing regional pump station at earlier phase as one option to mitigate coastal flood impacts. Other options have also been considered and will be brought forward into Stage 3 planning work.</p> <p>Response: PS#3 is still several years away, so design is preliminary. Still requires geotechnical, archaeological and environmental surveys before developing detailed design. Final positions of pump stations have not been set yet. PS#3 will have higher flows but not until 2070 based on phased approach, and is not intended to be regional pump station. Do we need to look at something similar to PS#1 like having a smaller pump station that pumps across highway to regional pump station? Can consider as option, but will increase costs. PS#1 received more consideration at this time as it is in Phase 1A, has gone through value engineering process, has limited space for building and is in coastal flood zone. Final decision on PS#1 has not been made yet. As for PS#3, looking at moving pump station further into park, likely near the middle, and position has not been finalized and may be moved again. Information referenced was from earlier stage of project. Regarding odour control, initially will pump approximately 60L/s with one duty and one standby</p>	
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	<p>pump. Phased approach would see additional duty pump and wet well. Wet well volume is kept reduced to maintain minimum flows. Carbon filters will be installed to recirculate air.</p> <p>Comment: Can direct information to resident. Not looking to change design, but recognize that design and location is not locked in.</p> <p>Response: Current Environmental will provide more details later in meeting on environmental considerations in Montrose Park.</p> <p>Comment: Residents are skeptical about partner funding, so the sooner that can be nailed down, the better. People fear it will fall through and that the project won't happen. Also noted that pump stations don't make much noise.</p> <p>Comment: Odour depends on type of system. Smaller pump stations move effluent more regularly and in smaller volumes, so are less likely to have odour, while a regional pump station receives larger volumes that have been in the system longer and is more likely to have odour. Feedback from clients included people looking at new systems before sewer is put in, and how the septic deferral program will work and what that investment and pay-off looks like.</p> <p>Comment: Process has been good at engaging residents, but is there segment of population that remains ignorant of project and is hard to engage with? Is there any way we can find out what percentage of residents remain unaware of project?</p> <p>Q: Any statistics on unique hits on project site?</p> <p>A: Don't have specific numbers on hand, but included in What We Heard report.</p> <p>Comment: Heard questions at open houses on septic regulatory bylaw and how that will impact people in different phases, as well as on decommissioning septic</p>	
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	<p>tanks, such as if they can repurpose their tank for rainwater irrigation purposes.</p> <p>Comment: Undertone of discussions at open houses was that people want it to happen but it costs a lot. Is there more that can be done? More sources of funding? Cost is biggest issue for residents. Will greatly impact low-income households. Also need to consider how to keep cost equity in place for future phases.</p> <p>Q: As a result of the community engagement, were there changes to the addendum report? Were those changes due to engagement or other sources?</p> <p>A: Will go over report later in meeting, but generally feedback following June 2023 meetings was incorporated into report. Didn't hear any new significant feedback in January 2024, so no major changes, although comments were incorporated into report. No significant technical changes to report.</p> <p>Comment: CVRD has done a good job of trying to engage residents. Will be subset of population that doesn't actively engage. Believe we have done enough to engage public.</p> <p>The agenda was varied to bring forward agenda item 5.5.</p>	
<p>5.5 9:43 – 9:53</p>	<p>Overview of Final Draft Addendum Report</p> <p>D. Monteith gave an overview of the final draft addendum report. Detailed goals and process for LWMP. Project will be further advanced as part of Stage 3 LWMP. Summarized the sections of the LWMP and what information they contain. Changes since previous draft includes updated Environmental Impact Study (EIS) with changes related to inclusion of Phase 1B, revised collection system maps used at January open houses and engagement updates.</p> <p>Q: Is the purpose of the septic regulatory bylaw to determine if a system is operating within existing standards or to have people upgrade their systems to</p>	<p>CVRD/WSP</p>

	<p>current standards? If a system is working fine but is not to current standards, will that be acceptable? When building bylaws have been updated, people aren't asked to update building to current standards. If a system is working, don't believe there is a need to intervene.</p> <p>A: Proposed bylaw has two tiers. Most properties would just have mandatory pump-outs. For high risk areas with smaller lots, would require inspection by ROWP. If system is operating as intended, it will get a pass.</p> <p>Q: As long as system has not failed, system will be considered fine under bylaw?</p> <p>A: Yes, if system is operating as intended. Inspection may identify and provide recommendations for remediation and maintenance.</p> <p>N. Prins joined the meeting at 9:52 am.</p> <p>A motion will be requested following the presentation on the EIS to forward the draft report to the Steering Committee for consideration, with any additions and changes recommended by the committee.</p>	
<p>5.4 9:53 – 10:13</p>	<p>Break</p> <p>The committee broke for recess at 9:53 am and reconvened at 10:13 am.</p> <p>D. Silvester joined the meeting at 10:12 am.</p>	
<p>5.6 10:13 – 11:51</p>	<p>Final Environmental Impact Study (EIS)</p> <p>D. Silvester summarized the updates to the EIS and the objectives of the study. Added Kilmarnock and PS#3. In December 2022, looked at contaminated sites and environmentally sensitive areas.</p> <p>For PS#1 (Royston), nearby road and private lot had fuel spill, with remedial excavation conducted in 2000 and 2012. Delineation of site contamination was never completed, so recommend further investigation (Phase 2 ESA). Private lot was excavated to bedrock to remove contaminants.</p>	Current Environmental

	<p>For PS#6 (Union Bay), there is a known history of contamination in general area from coal slags. Boundaries of contamination currently unknown, so further investigation recommended.</p> <p>Provided a general overview of environmentally sensitive areas. Majority of work done along highway, so minimal interactions with watercourses. 15 streams/ditches within project area, with mitigation determined on case-by-case basis.</p> <p>For PS#3 (Kilmarnock), two Argyle Creek tributaries run along northeast and southeast boundary of Montrose Park. Identified nearby wetlands on eastern and northern corners of park, and recommend access be halfway along Montrose Dr. Will need to investigate trees that may serve as animal habitats. No known contamination for site.</p> <p>Summarized regulatory requirements, including bird nesting window, in-stream reduced risk window, DFO Request for Review (specific to Montrose Park that would require new crossing), Phase 2 assessments per the <i>Contaminated Sites Regulation</i> and archaeological permits (provincial and KFN).</p> <p>Anticipated impacts and risks to environment are low, as most work is within road rights of way. Careful planning and proper permitting required to avoid impact to Montrose Park wetland, stream crossings and bird nesting habitats.</p> <p>Q: What is the likelihood of success for <i>Water Sustainability Act</i> approvals for modifying water courses? Even water courses heavily modified by humans can fall under act, and have had instances of receiving hard no as response. How big of a risk is that bureaucratic hurdle to the project?</p> <p>A: There is a risk, and depends on who you speak to. If can come up with reasonable rationale for why there is no other option for avoidance, or can present an</p>	
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	<p>approach that provides a net improvement to habitat quality, more likely to receive approval. May need to offset impacts through environmental improvements elsewhere.</p> <p>Comment: Will need to be considered in capital planning. Definite risk with cost implications.</p> <p>Q: What is the impact of removing septic field flow from the groundwater regime? May account for up to 1 million L/day. During drought conditions, may be only source of groundwater flows in area. May need assessment on impact of reduced groundwater flow. Could impact vegetation, and in denser and more populated areas, may see reduced flows in water courses. Spoke to arborist and first thought was that cedar trees will die off.</p> <p>A: When considering the modification of a human-made situation (septic fields), first need to look at what existed before. Would be taking away natural and modified flow regime without replacing anything. Base flows will be reduced and will see impact to vegetation. Cedars are at risk everywhere, and are not recommended when planting unless site is wet. Most water courses in areas are small and rely on groundwater input in dry seasons, so may dry up earlier and stay dry longer. Salmon spawn in several of the water courses, and in some instances, there is barely enough flows to support them, so might not have enough water. Not something that can be mitigated.</p> <p>Comment: Important to include in reporting. Can't be avoided but should include in report as it will cause a permanent impact and will be noticeable enough to upset people.</p> <p>Q: There has been some discussion of collecting rainwater in septic tank. Would that provide some mitigation?</p> <p>A: Definitely ways to provide mitigation. Rainwater systems have limited volume. Greywater systems</p>	
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	<p>would be more efficient, but little regulatory support. Would be voluntary systems, so hard to mitigate risk.</p> <p>Q: Was Current Environmental involved in EIS for Union Bay Estates land before trees were cleared? A lot of bird habitats were in the area and curious what was done to mitigate impact or provide alternative habitats.</p> <p>A: Not retained on project.</p> <p>Q: What is adaptation strategy for loss of septic water? Change in strategy of vegetation planted? What is the typical approach?</p> <p>A: Short-term impact in a forest's lifespan. Will see existing vegetation die off and there will be a need to manage danger tree removal. Will naturally see development of drier forest type over course of decades/centuries. Residents can start planting vegetation better suited for drier climate or watering more often.</p> <p>Comment: Worth including impact of reduced septic flows into report. Reasonable to alert people to possibility for when planning landscaping.</p> <p>Q: Comfortable adding section on loss of septic flow to report?</p> <p>A: Mostly conjecture, but would need to rely on other professionals or create separate report as outside scope of assessment. Could keep high level without any specific numbers or calculations.</p> <p>Comment: As bare minimum should include section alerting residents to possibility of reduced groundwater flows. Should retain a hydrogeologist, hydrologist and ROWP, as you'll need someone who understands onsite wastewater flows and groundwater flows, as well as an arborist and QAP. Due to overlapping areas of practice involved, not fair to ask Current Environmental to include as it would be</p>	
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	<p>conjecture. Should be easy to put together at a relatively low cost.</p> <p>Comment: Many Denman and Hornby residents have separation of septic and greywater. Could this be encouraged to help water vegetation? What would be the impact to the sewer system if residents moved to separate greywater system? Would that lead to significant reduction in flows?</p> <p>Q: How would you assess the probability of siting a pump station in Montrose Park?</p> <p>A: Difficulty is with permitting rather than the suitability of the site itself. Lots of area to work with, but will need to consider placement as may require additional driveway area. Crossing access into site should be easy to achieve if avoiding wetland. Trees appeared weighted towards one side of park, so could determine siting based on operational requirements of pump station. Consider location only moderate risk.</p> <p>A. Habkirk asked the committee if they would be comfortable with an addition included in the report addressing the loss of septic water on a high level or in more detail.</p> <p>D. Monteith advised the committee that additions and recommendations to the report can be brought forward to the Steering Committee for consideration, and then if supported, staff will undertake the work and share the results with the committee before providing to the Steering Committee for final approval.</p> <p>Comment: Recommend contacting the committee members by email to finalize the additions rather than hold a separate meeting.</p> <p>MOTION: That the addendum report be forwarded to the Steering Committee, with additional reporting on the impacts to groundwater flow and the impacts on</p>	
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	<p>terrestrial and aquatic habitat from the loss of septic water take place before finalization. – A. Gower</p> <p>SECONDED: I. Munro</p> <p>CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</p>	
<p>5.7</p> <p>10:51 –</p> <p>10:58</p>	<p>Briefing Note #1</p> <p>V. Van Tongeren gave an overview of the process leading into the Stage 3 LWMP. Lots of overlap in membership between SES and Comox Valley Sewerage Service (CVSS) LWMP TACPAC, with those organizations on this committee not originally represented on the CVSS TACPAC to be invited to participate in Stage 3. Looking to have one member from each area serve on Stage 3 TACPAC with one alternative each. Current PAC members can serve as a primary or alternate, or not continue on with Stage 3.</p> <p>Q: Is it two or three members from Area A?</p> <p>A: Three members and three alternates for Area A, but two for each neighbourhood (Royston, Union Bay, Kilmarnock).</p> <p>Q: What is included in the scope of the Stage 3 TACPAC? Will discuss upgrade of entire sewer system?</p> <p>A: First meeting in fall 2024 and another in spring 2025. Yes, will discuss full system, with representatives here bringing Area A lens to process.</p> <p>N. Prince put himself forward as the representative for Craigdarroch, with R. Steinke serving as alternate.</p> <p>J. Elliott put himself forward as the representative for Union Bay. Staff will reach out to R. Lymburner to determine level of interest in serving as an alternate.</p> <p>T. Donkers put herself forward as the representative for Royston, with K. Newman serving as alternate.</p> <p>MOTION: That Norm Prince, Jim Elliott and Tabitha Donkers be appointed as the primary representatives for Electoral Area A for the Stage 3 LWMP, and that Rosanne Steinke and Ken Newman be appointed as</p>	<p>CVRD</p>

	<p>alternates, with the third alternate to be determined at a later date. – I. Munro</p> <p>SECONDED: A. Gower</p> <p>CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY</p>	
<p>5.8</p> <p>10:58 –</p> <p>11:05</p>	<p>CVRD Updates</p> <p>V. Van Tongeren advised the committee that a staff report was put forward to the Electoral Areas Services Committee requesting that Capital Improvement Cost Charges (CICC) be maintained at current rates for the south region in the event of any rate increases. The Sewage Commission will consider the request in the next month or two.</p> <p>The septic deferral program as presented at TACPAC meeting #4 was approved by the Steering Committee, with the recommendation that the program be written into the future sewer use bylaws for the south region.</p> <p>Staff are making progress on the septic regulatory program. Open house to be held in April in support of the Order in Council request, to then be submitted to the province in summer, with further engagement in spring 2025. Service startup is anticipated for 2026.</p> <p>Q: What is the service area for the septic regulatory bylaw?</p> <p>A: Entire CVRD electoral areas. If sewer provided to south region, would not be included in bylaw.</p> <p>Q: How would the service be funded and what would it look like?</p> <p>A: For any work required for property owners to do on their own property, would be arranged and paid by the property owners. Administration and any enforcement would be paid by property tax.</p> <p>Q: Property tax would be electoral area-wide then?</p> <p>A: Yes.</p> <p>Comment: Project should be considered in-process for CICC, although future phases may be different story. Hopefully Sewage Commission agrees as numbers</p>	CVRD

	<p>have been communicated to public and change would not be taken well.</p> <p>Response: Strong case for Sewage Commission to support keeping CICC rate as is for south region.</p> <p>The agenda was varied agenda to bring forward agenda item 5.10.</p>	
<p>5.10</p> <p>11:05 – 11:15</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>D. Monteith summarized upcoming dates for next steps, noting that they will likely change to accommodate additional work requested by the committee. The LWMP addendum will go to SES and CVSS LWMP steering committees in early April and CVRD Board in late April. May be brought back if further changes required. Submittal to province expected in May, and Stage 3 TACPAC expected to meet in fall 2024.</p> <p>Project team will continue with development of detailed design, including environmental, geotechnical and archaeological studies, as well as additional surveys, to be included in Stage 3 LWMP. Staff will also be developing service area and sewer use bylaws.</p> <p>Q: Will detailed design go out with RFP so local firms can bid? A: Yes.</p> <p>D. Monteith asked if the committee supports issuing revised work requested by the committee via email instead of holding an additional meeting. The committee supported the suggestion.</p> <p>The project team thanked the committee for their time and contribution. The committee thanked the project team for ensuring the public is involved and properly consulted, and the consultants for all the work they've contributed.</p>	Facilitator
<p>5.11</p> <p>11:15</p>	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>The committee adjourned at 11:15 am.</p>	Facilitator

GENERAL:

Per the Sewer Extension South LWMP Addendum TACPAC's Terms of Reference, the committee is to be dissolved at the conclusion of the addendum process and combined with the Comox Valley Sewerage Service (CVSS) LWMP TACPAC. The first meeting of the Stage 3 CVSS LWMP TACPAC is anticipated to be scheduled for fall 2024.

TERMINATION:

The meeting terminated at 11:15 am.

DRAFT