



REGIONAL DISTRICT of Fraser-Fort George

COMMUNITY PROJECT UPDATE #3

October 2008

WILLOW RIVER SEWER & WATER PROJECT



BACKGROUND

As discussed in previous correspondence and community meetings, Phase 1 of eventually providing Willow River with sewer and water would be the development of engineered design options for the systems, as it would be very difficult to predict accurate cost estimates for a project of this magnitude otherwise.

Willow River property owners voted in a referendum held on March 1, 2008 to allow a one-time \$250 property parcel tax to assist in funding the engineered design study. The results of the referendum were 49 in favour and 3 against the \$250 parcel tax, demonstrating a strong commitment to pursuing the possibility of bringing sewer and water services to the area.

The cost of a complete engineered design study could range from \$100,000 to \$300,000 depending on the level of detail. The contribution from Willow River residents through a one-time property tax will provide up to \$57,500. Regional District staff have been actively investigating grant programs that could help with the additional costs not recovered from the local taxpayers.

Multiple Lot Owners

At this time, the only other secured funding that has been obtained, is an Infrastructure Planning Grant of \$10,000 from the Province of BC. An application process has been initiated to the Green Municipal Fund (a federal program that can cover up to 50% of eligible costs). The application procedure for this program could be upwards of a year before a definitive answer on the funding would be available.

As many of the funding opportunities have extensive time lines or are not accessible unless the project is headed for construction, the Steering Committee and the Regional District would like to proceed with a pre-feasibility study that can be used to trigger other funding possibilities. Otherwise, there could be an overly long wait before the project could move ahead. **Therefore, it is anticipated that the \$250 per parcel initiative will be levied in the 2009 tax year.**

Some taxpayers who own multiple properties have shown interest in possibly consolidating lots that are adjacent to each other. The Regional District has been advised that the deadline for having these lots consolidated for 2009 property taxation purposes is **November 30, 2008.**

For those property owners who are interested in consolidating their lots, a process that should take approximately two weeks, please contact the Land Titles Office in New Westminster at 1-800-663-7867 or any of the local title registry services in Prince George. If you intend to consolidate your properties, the Regional District's Planning Services would be pleased to discuss what your future options may include.

WILLOW RIVER WATER & SEWER STEERING COMMITTEE

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