



REGIONAL DISTRICT of Fraser-Fort George

COMMUNITY PROJECT UPDATE

December 2007

WILLOW RIVER WATER & SEWER PROJECT

UPDATE

A public meeting was held on May 7, 2007 at Giscome Elementary School to discuss the results of a newsletter and survey that had been sent to residents in the Willow River area. The survey was to gauge the community's support for a sewer and water system. Phase 1 of providing the community with sewer and water would be the development of an engineered design for the system as it would be very difficult to predict accurate cost estimates for a project of this magnitude without one. The survey also asked residents if they would support funding a feasibility study to develop an engineered design via a one-time payment recovered from property taxes; 85% of the returned surveys indicated that respondents were in favour of paying this property tax.

At the November 2007 Regional District Board meeting, the Willow River Community Sewer and Water System Design Service Establishment Bylaw was taken to three readings and election officers were appointed for a referendum that will occur early in 2008. This means that Willow River residents will soon have the opportunity to formally vote on supporting a design study by paying a tax of up to \$250 per property.

It is important to recognize that the Regional District has been advised from an engineering firm that 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 the one-time tax would total

approximately \$57,500. Regional District staff are investigating grant programs that could help with the additional costs not recovered by local taxpayers. As a referendum will not be held until March of 2008 at the earliest, it is anticipated that the design study's property taxation would not be levied until 2009.

TENTATIVE TIMELINES

December 2007

Regional Board consideration of the voting ballot question.

January 2007

An information summary will be brought to Board that, if approved, will be sent to all residents in the proposed service area summarizing the project details and setting a public meeting date.

February 2008

Scrutineers will be appointed for the upcoming referendum and a public information meeting will be held in the Willow River area.

March 2008

Referendum Voting Day.

Meeting and referendum dates are tentative at this time and will be finalized by February 2008.



OTHER INFORMATION

The proposed design study is only Phase 1 in Willow River's quest for a water and sewer system. A successful referendum and the approval of grant funding is necessary to cover the costs of a detailed design study. Once a study is completed, the results would be brought back to the residents and they would once again decide whether there is an appetite to move forward to Phase 2, through a second referendum to vote on the establishment of a water and sewer service in Willow River and proceeding to the construction stage of this project.

If you did not receive the previous mail out this spring and would like a copy of the newsletter, please contact the Regional District for a copy or see the Regional District website at www.rdffg.bc.ca. Reports relating to Willow River Sewer and Water that have gone to the monthly Board meetings are also available on the website. The most recent reports can be found on the October and November 2007 meeting agendas.

WILLOW RIVER WATER & SEWER STEERING COMMITTEE

Ben Stewart, Steering Committee
Chairperson
Shelley Zenzen, Director, Elec. Area "F"
Jesse Brandner
Gwen Douglas
Ryan Manning
April Manning
Sharon Piett

REGIONAL DISTRICT STAFF CONTACT

Meredith Burmaster (250) 960-4441
mburmaster@rdffg.bc.ca



Head Office: 155 George Street
Prince George, BC V2L 1P8
Telephone: (250) 960-4400

Long Distance from within the Regional District 1-800-667-1959