



MEMORANDUM

To: Chair and Members of the Electoral Area Services Committee
Chair and Members of the Fraser Valley Regional District Board

From: Lisa Grant, Planner 1
Dawn Smith, Planner 1

Date: April 1, 2010

Subject: Area 'E' Official Settlement Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District's Board of Directors endorse staff to undertake an update to the Official Settlement Plan for Electoral Area 'E'; and further that as an initial step planning staff engage the community through newsletters, open houses in the Chilliwack River Valley and Cultus Lake/Columbia Valley areas and invite interested community members to apply to the Advisory Planning Committees.

ISSUE

This memo intends to introduce the Electoral Area "E" Official Settlement Plan (OSP) update and early public consultation program. Identified as a 2010 priority project for planning, the OSP has not had a major review since 1993/1994. Staff is seeking support from EASC and the Regional Board to begin the OSP update process.

BACKGROUND

The Electoral Area "E" Official Settlement Plan (OSP) has served the community well over the years but requires an update in order to reflect the changing EA "E" communities. The OSP was adopted in 1983 and has received subsequent amendments as required over the years. The last major amendment took place in 1994 in conjunction with the Hayco report for the Chilliwack River Valley. Over the time issues have arisen, community values have shifted and new trends in development patterns have emerged that warrant review and subsequent policy updates.

The OSP recognizes the three distinct areas within Electoral Area "E"; the Chilliwack River Valley, Cultus Lake/Lindell Beach and the Columbia Valley. While there are common interests amongst these communities, each area has localized concerns which reflect the character of the area. For example, Cultus Lake has experienced shifts in resort development trends while the Chilliwack River Valley responds to the challenges of diverse interests including forestry and recreational users. Balancing both the broad community and localized concerns will be central to the OSP update.

While within Electoral Area "E", the Cultus Lake Park Board lands (CLPB) will be the focus of a separate planning project in the future and will not be included in the proposed OSP update. The CLPB lands are unique and bring a host of local issues which are best addressed through a separate process which is tailored to the community. The outcome of the CLPB planning process could be

incorporated into the updated OSP in the future. The Regional Board may wish to consider budgeting for the CLPB planning needs in future FVRD Planning Department work priorities.

DISCUSSION

A successful OSP update will require the participation and support of the Electoral Area “E” residents and stakeholders. To start the dialogue and identify community issues and values, a series of public consultation opportunities are needed to provide multiple options for interested individuals to participate. As an initial step to engage the community early in the planning process and to launch the project, staff is seeking Board endorsement for the following:

1. Notify and introduce the project with a newsletter addressed to local community members informing them the Regional District is undertaking an update to the OSP for Electoral Area ‘E’. To arrive by mail in mid to late April 2010, and accessible on the FVRD website.
2. Host open houses in early May 2010; one in the Chilliwack River Valley and the second in Columbia Valley for Cultus Lake and Columbia Valley residents. The open houses will start the dialogue with residents and stakeholders about their communities; and identify local values, concerns and interests.
3. As a final initial item, staff is proposing to form two APCs. One for the Chilliwack River Valley and a second for Cultus Lake/Lindell Beach and Columbia Valley. Residents will be invited to submit their names for consideration at the May 2010 Regional Board meeting.

A high level of interest in OSP update is anticipated given the relatively large electoral area population, past community engagement experiences in the area, and regional significance of the Cultus Lake and Chilliwack River Valley areas to the Fraser Valley. Early consultation will be important given the additional time needed for public participation. As such, staff would like to undertake community consultation for the OSP update in April and May in order to meet proposed timelines with a goal to complete a draft OCP by early 2011.

Next Steps

The public feedback from the May 2010 open house sessions will allow the public to identify their priorities and assist in identifying the OSP focus areas. Following the open house sessions, the EASC and Regional Board can anticipate comprehensive memos in May 2010 concerning;

- issues identification/scoping and limitation paper to outline the OSP update focus and timeline;
- consultation strategy as required pursuant to section 882 of the Local Government Act, and
- bylaw to establish the APC.

Completion of these items in May 2010, will allow the project to move into the next phase of the OSP update.

COSTS

Identified as a 2010 planning department priority project and incorporated into the Financial Plan.

COMMENTS

Chief Administrative Officer: Reviewed and supported.

Director of Planning: Reviewed and supported.

Director of Finance: Reviewed and supported.