3. OCP Amendments Provide Foundation for Watershed-Based Community Planning

In 2002, Metro Vancouver and local governments had generally embraced the concept of watershed-based community planning, but none had yet developed a solid mechanism for rolling out watershed-based approaches and processes.

City-wide Strategy

A report to Council highlighted the need for the City to identify watershed boundaries, to prioritize watersheds for study, and to determine a method for preparing and incorporating plans into municipal processes.

Council directed staff to develop a city-wide watershed management planning strategy and accompanying action plan.

In May 2003, Council amended the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) as detailed in Exhibit 2 (on page 6).

OCP amendments provided support and direction for turning ideas into action

- City-wide watershed management strategy
- Action plan with schedule and budget
- Support for rainwater management strategies

Turning Ideas into Action

The OCP amendments in May 2003 addressed the needs concerning city-wide watershed planning and integration with neighbourhood planning processes. The new policies required that Neighbourhood Plans be completed after applicable watershed studies and that land use plans take into account watershed conditions and needs.

Integrated Watershed Management Plans: This OCP direction allowed for IWMP objectives to be realized through Neighbourhood Plan policies.

"A decade ago, the new language and direction in the OCP provided City staff with the mandate to turn ideas into action," says Dana Soong, Utility Programs Manager.

"First and foremost, we were able to include the development of Integrated Watershed Management Plans (IWMPs) in the City's Financial Plan. This funding assurance meant we could complete all IWMPs by 2014 as per the legislative direction."

"Secondly, linking the IWMP and neighbourhood planning processes gave our Planning and Development Department and other departments a vested interest in the outcome of watershed plans and a reason to become active participants in the process."

"Thirdly, the OCP supported new approaches to rainwater management in order to mitigate the impacts of land development. This laid the foundation for source controls in the Hyde Creek IMWP and later on for the city-wide *Rainwater Management Design Requirements and Guidelines* we use today."

Part B – Implementing a Watershed-Based to Community Planning in Coquitlam

Exhibit 2 – 2003 OCP Amendments

From Section 3: A Healthy Environment, Policy Objective 3 (amended May 5, 2003 – Bylaw 3530)

OBJECTIVE 3

To provide for effective and prudent management of Coquitlam's watercourses through sustainable land use and development and other comprehensive watershed and stormwater management approaches.

POLICIES

a) ***Create a strategy for integrated stormwater management planning.***

Build this strategy incrementally through watershed studies, and aim to eventually cover the whole of the City. Such studies should:

- *Follow a consistent standard, with variation as appropriate to local conditions;*
- *Enable the City to meet its commitments under the Regional Liquid Waste Management Plan; and*
- *Consider inputs from those affected.*

b) ***Reflect watershed conditions and needs in the neighbourhood planning process,*** *by:*

- *Ensuring that new neighbourhood plans are completed after applicable watershed studies;*
- *Responding to watershed study results with appropriate land use and Development Permit Area designations in neighbourhood plans, as critical for environmental or hazard protection reasons, or as potentially required for communal stormwater management purposes; and*
- *Requiring that each new neighbourhood plan include a stormwater management component.*

c) ***Adopt and implement the City's Stormwater Policy and Design Manual, including appropriate consideration in capital planning for infrastructure.*** *Implementation should also entail:*

- *Updating of application submission requirements and reviewing related procedures, security provisions and agreements, fee structures and construction specifications, in order to operationalize the stormwater management manual; and*
- *Servicing standards for streets and lanes in the Subdivision and Servicing Bylaw which promote infiltration opportunities and additional pervious cover including appropriate vegetation, together with criteria for the Approving Officer to deal with environmental concerns and the modified application of the new standards within areas of existing development.*

d) ***Ensure appropriate interim approaches to watercourse management.*** *Investigate and apply site-specific, best management measures for mitigating the impacts of stormwater runoff through the development process (e.g. oil-water separators, sediment control and other technologies). Maximize the environmental benefit of new technologies by recommending appropriate performance criteria.*

e) ***Continue to work in partnership with senior government agencies in providing for appropriate approaches to streamside habitat protection for new developments.*** *This includes continued partnership with FREMP in monitoring and regulating shoreline development along the Fraser River.*