



# Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw – Summary of Consultation

## Background to the Consultation Process

In 2016, a Bylaw Working Group of eight City staff, representing Utilities Division, Engineering, Planning & Development and Bylaw Services was established to lead a review of the current Sanitary Sewer Bylaw and to research, consult and draft an updated bylaw. It was acknowledged at the outset that drafting an updated bylaw for effective management of the City’s sanitary sewer system would require:

- Technical and scientific research and consultation;
- Internal consultation and review; and
- Public consultation.

## Technical and Scientific Research and Consultation

A comprehensive review of pertinent legislation, regulations, guidelines, policies and reports was conducted. Notable among these was the 2009 Model Sewer Use Bylaw produced by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) to support Canadian municipalities in updating their local bylaws. Sewer use bylaws of 17 British Columbia municipalities and 19 other Canadian municipalities were reviewed. The working group contracted the professional assistance of three consultants who brought additional wastewater source control, ICI regulatory and legal expertise to the bylaw drafting process.

## Internal Consultation and Review

During the review, planning and development stages of bylaw work, feedback and contributions were sought from key City staff in:

- Utilities Division
- Engineering
- Development Services
- Bylaw Services
- Risk & Procurement
- Legislative Services

The draft proposed Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw has also been reviewed by the City’s Senior City Leadership Team.

## Public Consultation

Identifying local stakeholders for public consultation was of critical importance. The list remains dynamic but includes representatives from operations considered for codes of practice and authorizations, current waste discharge permittees, related business associations, the Chamber of Commerce, First Nations organizations, engineering & environmental consultants and various government officials. A formal public consultation process to present bylaw update concepts to local stakeholders and solicit their input was conducted in January and February, 2019. This included:

1. **Telephone Interviews** - were conducted with a small number of stakeholders by the facilitator in the week prior to the Open House to gauge areas of interest and/or concern so that the presentation could address these.
2. **Public Open House** – hosted by City staff, the presentations and Q & A sessions were facilitated by a consultant:

Prince George Civic Centre - 808 Canada Games Way	
Wednesday January 30, 2019	Time
Open House – Drop By Anytime	9:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Presentations	12:15 PM & 6:30 PM
Question and Answer Sessions	12:30 PM & 6:45 PM

Advertising was provided through 1000+ letter invitations (mailed and emailed), media releases, social media posts (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram) and posting on the City website banner and event calendar. Sixty (60) individuals recorded their attendance (26 individuals, 21 businesses, 2 First Nations agency officials, 2 government officials and 9 consultants). Conceptual information on proposed changes to the Sanitary Sewer Bylaw was presented and discussed. Attendees had the opportunity to speak with City staff and to ask questions during the Q&A, which was compiled. Generally, there was good interest and support for a new bylaw with the proposed key updates. The type and tone of questions and comments was very similar to the results of the public survey, indicated below.

3. **Public Survey** – surveys were available online and in hardcopy from January 30<sup>th</sup> to February 15<sup>th</sup>. 261 responses were received. Following are responses and representative general comments received:
  - The majority of survey responses received was from the residential group (90%)
  - >50% of respondents think key changes proposed in the new bylaw are “very important”
  - Desire for environmental protection was voiced repeatedly in general comments
  - “Enhanced Source Controls” ranked highest (65%) in importance of the key changes being proposed
  - 58% of respondents agree with updating the prohibited and restricted substances lists
  - 80% of respondents thought the proposed stepped approach to enforcement would be effective
  - Several comments received on encouraging the City to take a “hardline” approach to enforcement and go immediately to fines
  - 80% of respondents prefer to obtain information from the City website
  - 34% of respondents want the City to hold education/information sessions
  - Desire for City to provide education for all groups: ICI, residential & school aged children
  - The greatest interest in sanitary sewer education topics was Fat, Oil & Grease (FOG) control at 74%
  - Education on spill prevention was least popular at 34%
  - General agreement that the onus should be on sewer user to control what they put in the sewer
  - Fairness and consistency is expressed as an important concept
  - Concern expressed over costs and how it will impact small business and taxpayers
  - Repeated expressions of interest to read the new draft
  - Desire expressed for follow up information to gauge impacts of a new bylaw
4. **Updated City Website Content** - posted prior to the Open House and remaining to date includes:
  - Sanitary Sewer Bylaw Review Background;
  - Frequently Asked Questions; and
  - Info Posters used at the Open House.
5. **Info Poster Display** - were created for the Open House and then displayed at City Hall from February 8<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>. They were further displayed at the Public Works Facility public hallway from February 16<sup>th</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup>.
6. **Interviews** - were given on CBC Radio and Vista Radio following the Open House.

### Going Forward

The draft proposed Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw will be posted on the City website June 5<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> for public viewing. The Bylaw Working Group remains receptive to review comments and suggestions.