

To: Electoral Area Services Committee
From: Katelyn Hipwell, Planner 1

Date: 2017-03-14
File No: 6410-20-038

Subject: Secondary Dwellings Study – Servicing Requirements and Analysis

INTENT

This report is intended to identify and provide an overview analysis of the on-site servicing requirements for various potential secondary dwellings scenarios on properties within the FVRD.

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Support Environmental Stewardship
Support Healthy & Sustainable Community
Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services

PRIORITIES

Priority #1 Waste Mangement
Priority #2 Air & Water Quality
Priority #3 Flood Protection & Management

BACKGROUND

In June 2015 the FVRD Board endorsed proceeding with a study regarding secondary dwellings policy review. The public consultation component of the secondary dwellings study, approved by the FVRD Board on June 14, 2016, has now concluded. The process included consultation with the general public as well as with key interest groups. A number of Open Houses were hosted throughout the Electoral Areas and additional feedback was solicited from in person meetings, phone surveys, and online written surveys.

Another key component of the study is the consideration of increased servicing requirements as a result of introducing secondary dwellings policies. This report provides an overview analysis of the on-site servicing requirements for various potential secondary dwellings scenarios on properties within the FVRD.

This report is for information and consideration by EASC and the FVRD Board. Staff will report back to EASC in April with a recommendation on the available options for Secondary Dwellings Policy development and implementation.

DISCUSSION

The secondary dwellings study has focused on a range of dwelling forms, including: attached suites, contained within the principle dwelling; detached, single storey suites constructed at grade; and

detached suites constructed on the second storey of an accessory building. Each of these housing forms present varying impacts to existing on-site and community services.

Throughout the Electoral Areas, the FVRD and various independent utility companies operate a number of community sewer and water systems. However, a majority of properties in the Electoral Areas rely on on-site water supply and sewage disposal systems.

Provincial and FVRD Regulations

The Fraser Valley Regional District relies in part on the regulatory authority of the Fraser Health Authority to authorize on-site servicing of individual properties and enforce compliance with the relevant provincial legislation concerning the provision of water and the on-site disposal of sewage.

On-Site Water Supply

Water supply to a property is a requirement of development and the FVRD requires proof of an adequate supply of potable water to each dwelling unit that is suitable for domestic purposes. A domestic purpose means that the water is used for human consumption, food preparation, sanitation, or other household purposes.

On-site water supply must conform to the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*, the *Drinking Water Protection Act*, and the *Drinking Water Protection Regulation*.

If more than one single family residence is connected to a single water supply, as would be the case if a secondary dwelling unit located on the property shared the source of the principle dwelling, it is considered a water supply system.

Water supply systems serving two or more residences are water supply systems as defined by the *Drinking Water Protection Act*. They require a Construction Permit issued by a Public Health Engineer of the Fraser Health Authority. They also require an Operating Permit issued by the Fraser Health Authority's Drinking Water Officer.

On-Site Sewage Disposal

All buildings with indoor plumbing need to have a sewage disposal system that is in compliance with the *Sewerage System Regulation*.

Construction and maintenance of a sewage disposal system with a sewage flow of less than 22,700 litres per day must meet the requirements of Sewerage System Regulation; this includes systems for the following:

- Single family dwellings or duplexes
- Sewerage systems which service different buildings on a single parcel of land

Homeowners are required to engage Authorized Persons (Registered Practitioner/Professional) in the construction and maintenance of a sewerage system. The Authorized Person is responsible for the

sewerage system design, construction, maintenance, and required submissions and document filings to Fraser Health Authority.

The FVRD requires proof of filing with the Fraser Health Authority.

FVRD Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 1319, 2015

The Fraser Valley Regional District Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 1319, 2015 (hereafter referred to as "Bylaw No. 1319") regulates and ensures the provision of adequate services for development.

The levels of service requirements throughout the Regional District are dependent upon the size, associated zoning, and use of the parcel. These requirements are consistent with Provincial Regulations and best practice.

Currently, the Bylaw No. 1319 does not consider servicing requirements for secondary dwellings. The servicing requirements for single family residential are based on a single dwelling unit per parcel.

Reliance on Professionals and Authorized Persons

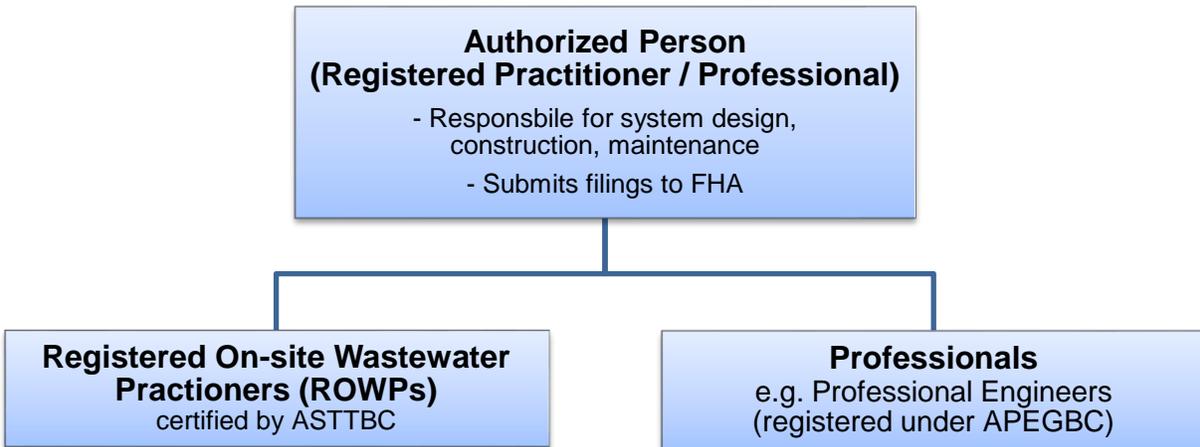
Currently, for the provision of on-site water supply and on-site sewage disposal for single family dwellings, the Fraser Health Authority and the Regional District rely on professionals and authorized persons to confirm and certify that the levels of service conform to all Provincial regulations and FVRD bylaws.

On-site Water Supply

Per Bylaw No. 1319, the FVRD requires confirmation from a Hydrogeologist, in the form of a report, certifying that a pump test has been performed and the quality and capacity of the well conforms to the more stringent of the Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality and the Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation without compromising the capacity or recharge rate of the aquifer.

On-Site Sewage Disposal

Per Bylaw No. 1319 and the standards of the Fraser Health Authority, where a Sanitary System is proposed, an *Authorized Person* must certify that the ground percolation rates are suitable for the subsoil absorption of septic waste from an on-site sanitary system.



In most cases, a ROWP is qualified to design, install and submit filing documents for new or upgraded septic systems. However, should Type II or Type III systems be required due to the specific site conditions, a Professional Engineer may be required. Final approval of on-site sanitary systems is granted by Fraser Health Authority in accordance with all relevant legislation.

Minimum Level of Service Based on Secondary Dwelling Type

Throughout the course of public consultation with members of the Electoral Area communities, it became clear that support for secondary dwellings was based on the following key principles:

- Restricting the use to larger parcels;
- Ensuring the property could adequately accommodate the necessary level of service; and
- Allowing various typologies of housing.

With the potential introduction of secondary dwellings units in the Electoral Areas and the increase of the number of dwelling units on a single parcel, the impacts on servicing infrastructure begin to grow. In order to mitigate these impacts, both to community and on-site systems, there are a number of restrictions and controls that local governments can implement, including but not limited to:

- Minimum Lot Sizes
- Maximum Dwelling Unit Sizes
- Minimum Levels of Service

Establishing a minimum lot size requirement for secondary dwelling units based on the level of service available on the property, is a necessary measure to protect the health of the environment and existing infrastructure.

The below table illustrates a potential minimum level of service based on lot size and dwelling unit typology. These minimums are consistent with the FVRD Subdivision and Servicing Bylaw and provincial legislation.

Attached Secondary Dwelling Unit

Parcel Size	Community Sewer	Community Water	On-Site Sewer	On-Site Water
1.0 ha +			X	X
0.5 ha – 0.99 ha		X	X	
Detached Secondary Dwelling Unit				
Parcel Size	Community Sewer	Community Water	On-Site Sewer	On-Site Water
1.0 ha +			X	X
0.5 ha – 0.99 ha		X	X	

Servicing Pathways and Public Education

Depending on their specific circumstances, property owners who are interested in establishing a secondary dwelling use on their property may face several different servicing scenarios. In order to clarify the minimum level of service requirements and provide awareness to the potential costs for required servicing upgrades, the FVRD can consider developing visual aids describing the various potential servicing pathways in conjunction with any bylaw amendments or policy development. This will help to streamline the process and clearly identify servicing expectations and commitments for property owners. In conjunction with the levels of service table, servicing pathways can provide more detailed guidance on the approvals required. See examples attached as **Appendix “A”** and **Appendix “B”**.

In terms of the servicing upgrades that may be required by property owners, the costs can vary widely and are often dependant on site specific factors such as soils, proximity to watercourses and other environmentally sensitive features. Costs may be reduced for property owners where site conditions allow for shared servicing between the principle dwelling unit and the secondary dwelling unit. In some cases, upgrades to existing infrastructure may be sufficient to address the increased capacity required for an additional dwelling unit in lieu of new or additional systems.

The below table provides estimates on costs that may be involved:

	Drilled Well	Water System Connection	Existing Septic System Assessment	Replacement / New Septic Installation
Estimated Cost	\$100-150/ft	\$1,500-5,000	\$250	\$10,000-30,000

COST

The Secondary Dwellings Study and associated public consultation program is a priority project identified in the Electoral Area Planning work plan. Sufficient funds have been budgeted within the 2017 Electoral Area Planning budget.

Costs associated with site-specific servicing upgrades that may be required as part of establishing a secondary dwelling use would be borne by the property owner.

CONCLUSION

The Fraser Valley Regional District has explored various forms of secondary dwellings, each with varying levels of impact and repercussions from a servicing perspective. Thorough consideration of introducing secondary dwellings as a permitted use in the Electoral Areas requires an analysis of the associated servicing requirements and potential upgrades faced by individual property owners.

Establishment of a minimum levels of service table, consistent with the existing Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 1319, 2015, provides clear and consistent expectations to property owners looking to establish a secondary dwelling use on their property.

Staff will report back to EASC in April with a recommendation on the available options for Secondary Dwellings Policy development and implementation.

COMMENT BY:

Tareq Islam, Director of Engineering & Community Services: Reviewed and supported.

COMMENT BY:

Graham Daneluz, Deputy Director of Planning & Development: Not available for comment.

COMMENT BY:

Margaret Thornton, Director of Planning & Development: Reviewed and supported.

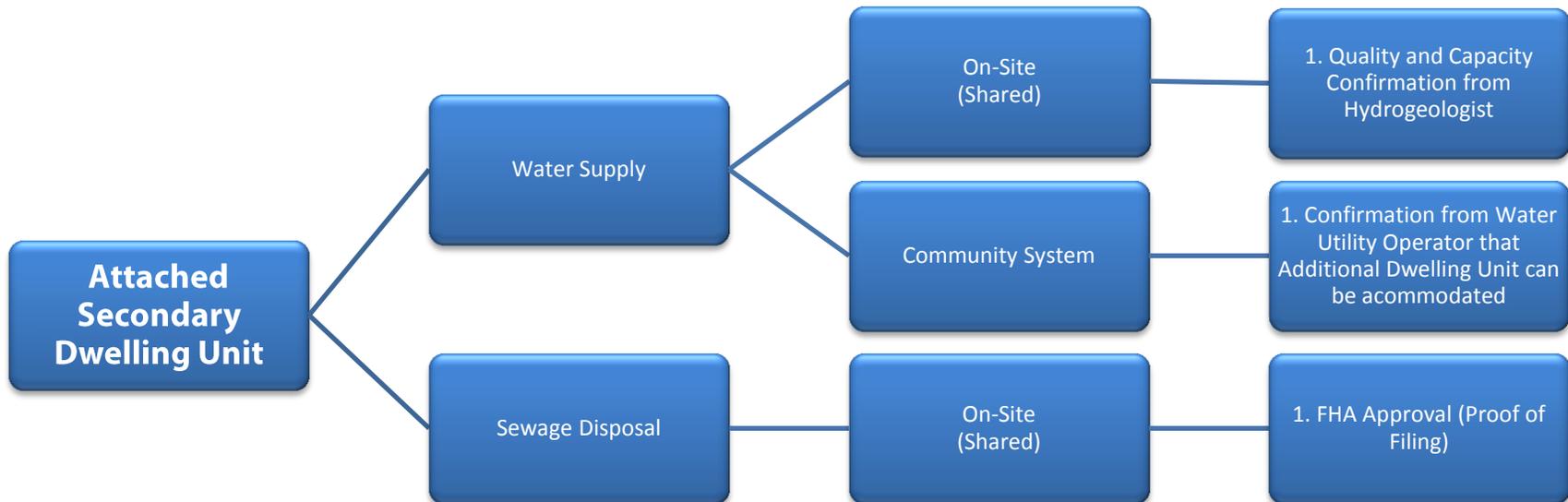
COMMENT BY:

Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services: Reviewed and supported.

COMMENT BY:

Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer: Reviewed and supported

Appendix "A"
Potential Servicing Pathway for Attached Secondary Dwelling Unit



Appendix "B"
Potential Servicing Pathway for Detached Secondary Dwelling Unit

