



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee **Date:** September 11, 2017
From: John Irving, P.Eng. MPA **File:** 10-6160-00/Vol 01
Director, Engineering
Re: Riparian Response Strategy Compliance Update

Staff Recommendation

That the report titled "Riparian Response Strategy Compliance Update" from the Director, Engineering, dated September 11, 2017 be received for information.

John Irving, P.Eng. MPA
Director, Engineering
(604-276-4140)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO	

Staff Report

Origin

At the July 25, 2016 Council meeting, Council endorsed the staff recommendation:

That the stakeholder consultation program outlined in the report titled Riparian Response Strategy Review from the Director, Engineering, dated June 27, 2016, be endorsed.

The purpose of this report is to summarize outcomes of the stakeholder consultation program and inform Council of an upcoming public consultation program.

This report supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #3 A Well-Planned Community:

3.1 Growth and development that reflects the OCP and related policies and bylaws.

This report also supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #6 Quality Infrastructure Networks:

6.1. Safe and sustainable infrastructure.

Background

Council adopted the Riparian Response Strategy in 2006 to address local requirements to protect and enhance watercourses designated under BC's Riparian Areas Protection Act. The Strategy established Riparian Management Area (RMA) setbacks from applicable watercourses and currently controls activity in these areas that are triggered by residential, commercial and industrial development applications. Under the current approach the review and approval process is cumbersome and lengthy if the applicant is not familiar with typical development requirements. Furthermore there have been frequent encroachments into RMAs during construction that have been raised as a concern by the Province. The City is now proposing to update the current process by introducing a regulatory approach that will provide a clear, concise and streamlined riparian protection process for developers and landowners early in the development application process.

Analysis

The Riparian Response Strategy Review report reviewed by Council in July 2016 highlighted that inclusion of riparian protection measures in the Zoning Bylaw No. 8500, and designation of a riparian development permit area under the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 9000 were the most appropriate tools to achieve compliance with the Riparian Area Protection Act. Zoning provisions can establish setbacks and development permit area would include site specific protection measures.

Staff's approach is to translate the current approach into the regulatory tools outlined above. This change can be viewed as a 'housekeeping' matter as minimal new requirements will be implemented as a result of the change, with the exception of the cost of a development permit fee (under review). Under the current approach, riparian protection measures are established with

each development activity (e.g. demolition, building, watercourse crossings, etc.). Under the proposed amendments, protection measures will be assessed at the site level under a single permit, effectively streamlining the approval process with clearly defined measures that support the form and function of Richmond's major and minor watercourses.

Stakeholder Consultation Summary

Staff engaged stakeholders on the proposed Zoning Bylaw (No. 8500) and Official Community Plan Bylaw (No. 9000) amendments. Presentations and discussions with the Agricultural Advisory Committee, Advisory Committee on the Environment, Urban Development Institute, Small Builders Group, and Ministry of Forest Lands Natural Resource Operations took place in 2016. Through stakeholder consultation, both the Agricultural Advisory Committee and Advisory Committee on the Environment supported the updates in principle. Members of the Urban Development Institute welcomed the development of guidelines to clearly define the RMA development approval process; all stakeholders understood the need for the update to achieve compliance with provincial requirements.

Public Consultation

With stakeholder engagement now complete, staff have tentatively scheduled two public open houses on October 17th and October 19th, 2017. In addition, staff intend to notify 1,614 affected property owners with letters per the City's OCP amendment Policy (No. 5403) inviting them to the open houses. Following public consultation, staff will bring the proposed bylaw amendments to Council for consideration. Should the amendments receive a first reading from Council and be referred to a Public Hearing, affected property owners will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed amendments.

As is the case now, land owners are only affected by the RMA designations for specific development triggers. Under the proposed approach, landowners with designated RMAs on their property who propose residential, industrial or commercial development will require a development permit, or development permit exemption based on a review of proposed activity. The letters aim to educate and explicitly outline the terms and conditions with which they will be impacted, or not. Staff believe this approach to public consultation will proactively address any concerns that property owners might have with the new regulation changes.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Staff have engaged critical stakeholders for input on how the revised regulatory tools could be used to address the City's need to comply with the Riparian Area Protection Act. Staff intend to carry out public consultation in October 2017 and will report back to Council with an updated Riparian Response Strategy later in the fall.



Chad Paulin
Manager, Environment
(604-247-4672)



Kimberly Armour
Environmental Coordinator
(604-276-4230)

Riparian Management Map

