



ELECTORAL AREA C BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICE

OVERVIEW

The CSR building inspection service is being expanded to include all of Electoral Area C. This *Overview* explains what the building inspection is, why it is being introduced in Area C, how it will be implemented, and what it will cost.

What is a Building Inspection Service?

Building inspection services are established by local governments to ensure that new construction complies with the requirements of the *BC Building Code*, and regulations set out in community planning documents, such as zoning bylaws and official community plans (OCPs).

Building inspection is most easily understood in the context of the broader land development

process. In British Columbia, governments at both the provincial and local levels have important roles to play in creating and enforcing the rules that govern this process. The provincial government is responsible for creating the *BC Building Code*, a technical document that contains various requirements and standards related to the construction, alteration, repair and demolition of all types of buildings.

Local governments — including regional districts — regulate development using both land use and building bylaws. On the land use side, municipalities and regional districts create zoning bylaws and OCPs that set out their communities' long-term goals, and that guide development in ways that support the goals. On the construction side, local governments adopt building regulation bylaws that apply and enforce the standards of

the *BC Building Code*, and that detail the building inspection approval process. Property owners who wish to construct buildings in a jurisdiction covered by a building regulation bylaw must apply for and obtain a building permit before construction can start. A building inspection service is the service through which applications for building permits are reviewed for compliance with the *BC Building Code*, zoning bylaws and OCPs.

Why is a Building Inspection Service needed?

The primary purpose of building inspection service is to protect public health and safety. As noted earlier, local governments provide building inspection to ensure that residential, commercial, industrial and public buildings meet the minimum construction standards set out in the *BC Building Code*.

Building inspection also serves as a tool to implement and promote a community's local planning goals. In Electoral Area C, residents have invested considerable time, energy and money in the preparation of the *Electoral Area C (South*

Shuswap) Official Community Plan and the *South Shuswap Zoning Bylaw* to promote local planning goals, including goals related to the protection of watercourse riparian areas, and the type and form of community development. Building inspection helps to ensure that new development respects and supports these goals.

Through the building inspection service, projects are reviewed for compliance with local land use regulations at a crucial stage in the development process — namely, before construction occurs. In the absence of building inspection, construction may proceed in ways that are not consistent with policies and regulations, and that do not properly take into account concerns related local hazards (e.g., slope issues, or the potential for flooding). Efforts to enforce compliance after construction has been completed are costly and acrimonious for the property owners, the local government, and local taxpayers.

Other reasons to support the expansion of building inspection include the following points:

- *Ensures Other Requirements are Completed* — A building inspection service allows local governments to ensure that property owners

HOW DO BUILDING INSPECTIONS PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY?

Buildings are complex, particularly when they include plumbing, electrical wiring, and connections to drinking water and septic systems. The *BC Building Code* establishes minimum requirements that are designed to keep occupants safe and healthy. When followed, the requirements help to ensure that buildings:

- > are structurally sound, with proper building frames and foundations
- > provide adequate fire protection
- > address issues surrounding radon gas
- > provide adequate exits in the event of emergencies
- > are equipped with proper plumbing for safe drinking water and liquid waste disposal
- > minimize hazards to prevent accidents

All buildings are required to be constructed to the *BC Building Code*. Only buildings in areas with building inspection, however, are subject to the consistent and high level of oversight required, at key points of the construction process, to ensure that the *Code* is met and safety standards are upheld.

have obtained all necessary permits and development approvals, including those required by other agencies such as Interior Health, the Ministry of Transportation, and BC Housing.

- *Promotes Equitable Taxation* — BC Assessment uses building permit records to ensure that the assessed value of each property represents that property's true market value. This information provides for an equitable distribution of the property tax burden across all property owners. Without the information, owners who have improved their properties may not be paying their fair share of local taxes.
- *Provides Important Planning Information* — Local governments collect current and historical building data to assist in making development forecasts, formulating planning policies, and preparing infrastructure plans. The information is also accessed and used by a variety of public agencies and individuals.

Electoral Area C (South Shuswap)



Area: 601 km²
Population: 7,921

- *Protects Consumers* — Building permit records provide a level of assurance to homebuyers that construction work has been undertaken in accordance with the standards of the *BC Building Code*. Homeowners who are undertaking renovations can also take comfort in knowing that contractor plans have been reviewed and work inspected for compliance to important health and safety standards contained in the *Codes*.
- *Reduces Insurance and Financing Challenges* — Owners of homes that have received Final Occupancy Certificates (FOCs) typically face fewer challenges in obtaining home insurance. Without such certificates, owners may not be able to obtain home insurance at all; those that are successful in getting it often must pay higher premiums. Owners of homes without FOCs may also be unable to secure new mortgages, or re-finance existing ones. Not all financial institutions, it appears, will provide mortgage financing for buildings in areas without building inspection. Staff at the CSRD Building Department received 5-8 calls per week from existing and prospective homeowners who have experienced issues when dealing with banks.

As with any service, there are costs associated with implementing building inspection, as well as new requirements for property owners who undertake building, renovation and construction projects (see later). The benefits of the service, however, are widely recognized by local governments and the communities they govern. Every regional district that surrounds the CSRD — indeed, every regional district in southern British Columbia — has a building inspection service. Within the CSRD itself, building inspection is required in every member municipality. A CSRD building inspection service has existed in the key settlement areas of Electoral Area F since 2001. In March, 2018, the CSRD building inspection was expanded to include Electoral Areas B and E. The service will be expanded again, in the spring of 2019, to include all of Electoral Area C.

BUILDING INSPECTION AND THE CSRD

In the CSRD, building inspection exists — and has existed for some time — as an important local government service in every member municipality. In the Regional District's electoral areas, however, the situation is somewhat different.

Building inspection for the EAs has been a topic of discussion and some debate in the CSRD since the establishment of the Regional District in 1965. For a brief 18-month period, beginning in 1966, a full building inspection service existed across all Electoral Areas. In 1968, however, the service was repealed and replaced with a more limited version in portions of Electoral Area B and, subsequently, parts of Area E.

Amendments occurred after 1975 to change the number of inspections and cost recovery mechanisms. Other amendments after 1991 expanded the service area to include parts of Area F, then subsequently contracted the area to eliminate the original portions of Areas B and E. By 2001, building inspection in the non-municipal areas of the CSRD applied only to the key settlement areas in Area F that continue to be served today.

Earlier this year, in March 2018, the CSRD expanded its building inspection function to include Electoral Areas B and E. The service will be expanded again in the spring of 2019 to include all of Electoral Area C. The expansion initiative is a response, in part, to concerns about the consistency of construction quality, and adherence to *BC Building Code* regulations. The initiative also reflects a strong desire on the part of residents and the CSRD to promote local planning goals. Residents in Electoral Areas have invested heavily in the preparation of official community plans, zoning bylaws and other tools to set out and promote important goals, including those related to the natural environment and community character. Building inspection will help to ensure that new development respects and supports these goals.

The expansion of CSRD building inspection is limited to Area C at this time. It is anticipated, however, that other remaining electoral areas — perhaps all areas — may opt into the service in the future.

How will the Service work?

The expanded building inspection service will be provided throughout all of Electoral Area C. Property owners in the South Shuswap will be required to obtain a building permit before beginning construction of any type of building — single family, multi-family, institutional, industrial, commercial. Certain buildings will be exempt from this requirement, including:

- accessory buildings that under 10m²
- farm buildings
- a variety of other small projects

Building permits will be needed, however, in most cases, including those which involve the:

- construction of a house, townhouse, commercial and industrial building
- construction of accessory buildings, including any structure (e.g., garage) that is larger than 10 m², unless otherwise exempted
- demolition of a building
- significant alteration to or repair of an existing building (e.g., structural changes, moving of plumbing systems)
- changes to the use/occupancy of an existing building (e.g., from a garage to a dwelling, or

- from a residence to a commercial use)
- relocation of a building
- alterations that affect venting or sewerage
- installation of a factory-built or manufactured building

The Building Permit Process

The process to obtain a building permit will consist of three stages:

- *Application* — To start the process, the property owner will submit an application that details the type of building, alteration or repair, and the value of the proposed work. As part of the application, the owner will need to provide drawings and a site plan, and will be expected to pay the required building permit fee. Other documents may also be required, depending on the type and location of the proposed construction. Such documents may include easements or covenants registered on title, a contaminated site profile, and environmental and/or geotechnical reports.
- *Plan Checking* — The submitted application and plans will be reviewed by CSRD staff for compliance with the *BC Building Code*, the *CSRD Building Regulation Bylaw*, regulations in the *South Shuswap Zoning Bylaw* and *Lakes Zoning Bylaw*, and development permit guidelines in the *Electoral Area C (South Shuswap) OCP*. Compliance with other agency approval processes, such as the Interior Health process for on-site sewage disposal, will also be reviewed. Once all checks have been done, and all concerns have been addressed, a building permit (and, if necessary, a plumbing permit) will be issued.
- *Building Inspections* – CSRD building inspectors will conduct a total of six (6) on-site building inspections at key points of the construction process, including at the:
 - > footing construction stage (pre-concrete)

- > installation of perimeter drainage pipe and drain rock (prior to backfilling)
- > installation of building drain, sanitary or storm sewer and plumbing system (prior to backfilling)
- > framing construction stage (pre-drywall)
- > insulation, vapour and air barrier stage
- > final inspection

Industry best practices suggest that six (6) inspections is the minimum number needed to ensure adherence to the *BC Building Code*. In most places, including in the municipalities in the CSRD, more than six (6) inspections are required.

At any time in the permit process, building inspectors will be authorized to:

- enter onto properties to ensure compliance with regulations
- require owners to uncover or correct an item
- request further testing to ensure compliance
- issue stop work notices
- revoke permits

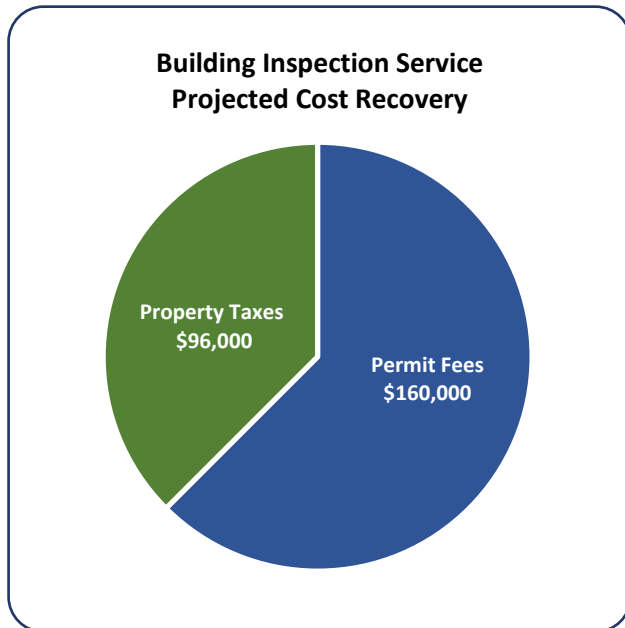
Once a building permit is issued construction will need to begin within six (6) months from the date of issuance. Construction cannot be suspended for a period of more than six (6) months, and must be completed within a period of three (3) years. If these conditions are not met, the permit will expire.

For a project on which construction has been ongoing, the property owner may renew a permit, prior to expiry, for an extended period of up to 12 months. Only one renewal is permitted. The completion of additional forms and fees may be required.

What will it cost and who will pay?

The portion of the total building inspection cost attributable to Area C is projected at about \$260,000 for the service's first full year of

operation. A good portion of this amount — \$160,000 — is expected to be raised from Area C building permit fees. The remainder of the funds required will be recovered through property taxes levied on all properties.



Cost estimates for Area C are related almost entirely to staffing. The funds will allow for the hiring of a new full-time building inspector, plus the use of existing inspectors and other service staff.

What will the building permit fees be?

The permit fees to be charged under the expanded service are set out in the *CSRD Building Regulation Bylaw* are the same as those that are in place today in Areas B, E and F. Three types of fees will be payable for each application:

- application fee
- permit fee (based on construction value)
- special permit fees for specific items such as demolitions, moving a building, a change of occupancy and other cases

The *application fee* will be \$72 for a single-family dwelling, and \$288 for multi-family, commercial,

institutional or industrial buildings. The *permit fee* will be calculated as follows:

- \$72 for first \$1,000 of construction value
- \$7.20 for each additional \$1,000 of value, up to \$100,000
- \$6.00 for each additional \$1,000 of value over \$100,000

How will the new Service affect taxes?

What would the permit fees be for a single family home?

Based on an example of a single family home with a construction value of \$300,000:

- > Application fee - \$72
- > building permit fee - \$1,985

TOTAL: \$2,057

This fee allows for the six required inspections; the additional inspection for a fireplace (if required) would be an extra \$72.

Note that the CSRD has the ability to credit the application fee to the total building permit fee. In such cases, the total fee for the \$300,000 single family house would be \$1,985.

As noted, over half of the total cost of the expanded service is expected to be recovered through building permit revenues; the remainder will be raised through local property taxes. All property owners across Electoral Area C and the broader service area will pay towards the cost of the function through their property taxes. The anticipated tax charges related to the expanded service for different property types and values (land and improvements) are shown in the

accompanying table, based on the projected number of building permits, project service level, and the 2018 assessment totals.

- and express opinions
- detail the process for developing and implementing the service

Anticipated Tax Impact

Property Type	Assessed Value	Tax Rate	Tax Payment
Residential	\$200,000	0.046	\$9.24
	\$300,000	0.046	\$13.87
	\$400,000	0.046	\$18.49
Commercial	\$500,000	0.113	\$56.60
	\$1,000,000	0.113	\$113.20
Industrial	\$1,000,000	0.162	\$162.00

The engagement process will feature three Open Houses, each of which will include a presentation, a review of poster boards, and various written materials on the service. All materials are also online at www.csr.bc.ca/services/building-regulationinspection. The engagement process will culminate in a brief report to the CSRD Board of Directors.

Following the report to the Board, staff will prepare an amendment to the service establishing bylaw to include Electoral Area C in the service. The Electoral Area Director for Area C will be asked to give consent to the bylaw on behalf of Area C electors; Directors for the other Electoral Areas in the service will be asked to give consent on behalf of their electors to the expansion of the service area to cover Area C. A referendum on the expansion is not required because building inspection is a regulatory service with broad health, safety, environmental and economic benefits that promote the public interest.

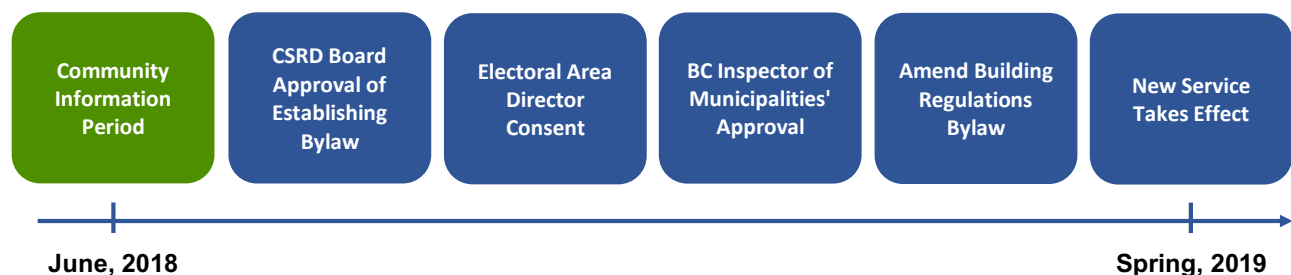
How and when will the Service be implemented?

The expanded the building inspection service will take effect in Electoral Area C in the spring of 2019. To help property owners prepare for this change, the CSRD is undertaking a community information process in June, 2018, to:

- explain the service
- outline the cost of the service for permit applicants and for taxpayers as a whole
- provide opportunities for stakeholders and the community to ask questions, get answers

Following Director assent, the Province's Inspector of Municipalities will be asked to give formal approval. The CSRD Board will then amend the existing *Building Regulation Bylaw No. 660* to include Area C.

Implementation Process



TO LEARN MORE

This *Overview* is an information resource to help residents learn about the CSRD Building Inspection Service that will take effect throughout Electoral Area C in the spring of 2019.

For additional information, go online to www.csr.bc.ca/services/building-regulationinspection and review frequently-asked-questions (FAQ) on the service, as well as two *Building Scenarios* sheets that explain how the service's requirements will apply to different types of construction projects. A *Building Inspection Glossary* is available, as are copies of the poster-board materials for the Open Houses. A *Survey* that residents can complete to provide comments is posted, along with a downloadable copy of *CSRD Building Regulation Bylaw, No. 660*.

The CSRD will be hosting three Open Houses in the South Shuswap to provide information and receive comments about the service.


The Open House details are as follows:


- Sunnybrae Community Hall
3595 Sunnybrae Canoe Point Road
Monday, June 11, 2018
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
(presentation at 7:00 pm)
- Blind Bay Memorial Hall
2510 Blind Bay Road
Tuesday, June 12, 2018
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
(presentation at 7:00 pm)
- Sorrento Memorial Hall
1150 Passchendaele Road
Tuesday, June 19, 2018
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
(presentation at 7:00 pm)





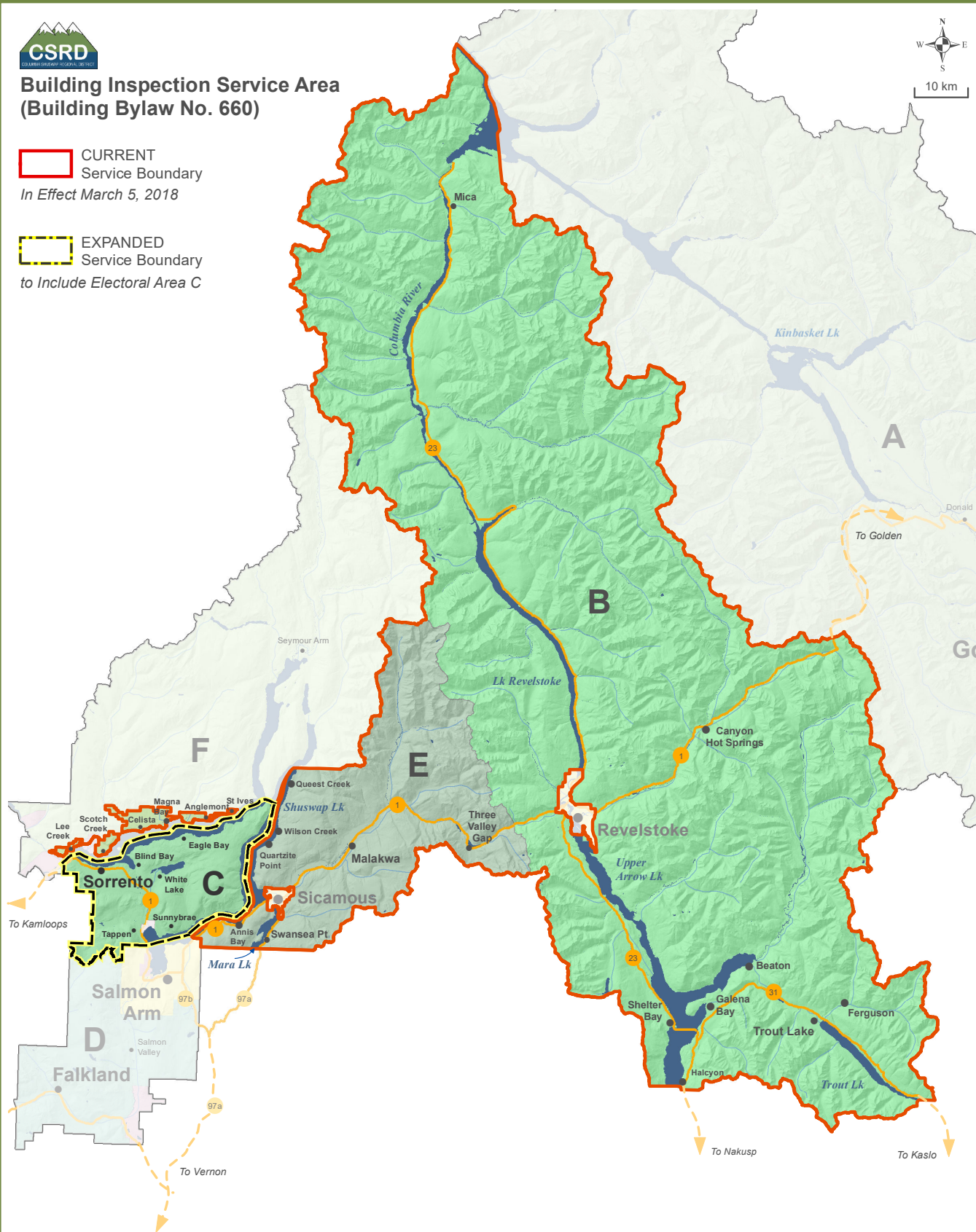
Building Inspection Service Area (Building Bylaw No. 660)

 CURRENT
Service Boundary
In Effect March 5, 2018

 EXPANDED
Service Boundary
to Include Electoral Area C



10 km



Columbia Shuswap Regional District

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