



BOARD REPORT

TO: Chair and Directors

File No: 3760 06 D

SUBJECT: Electoral Area D: Building Regulation Public Engagement Summary

DESCRIPTION: Report from Marty Herbert, Team Leader Building and Bylaw Services, dated July 29, 2019. A summary of the public engagement and open houses held in Electoral Area D with regard to the implementation of building regulation in Area D.

RECOMMENDATION #1 THAT: the Board receive the report Electoral Area D: Building Regulation Public Engagement Summary dated July 29, 2019 from the Team Leader, Building and Bylaw Services, for information;

AND THAT: the Board receive the report Electoral Area D Building Inspection – Public Open Houses from Nielson Strategies Inc., for information;

this 15th day of August 2019.

RECOMMENDATION #2 THAT: the Board provide direction to staff with regard to the proposed building regulation service for Electoral Area D.

SHORT SUMMARY:

As part of the 2019 budget process, the Board approved to have staff undertake a public engagement initiative project to educate residents on the proposed implementation of a building inspection service in Electoral Area D in 2020. Staff prepared a communication engagement plan for the proposed building regulation service that was similar to that already undertaken in Electoral Areas B, C and E in 2017 and 2018, including the holding of three open houses facilitated by Allan Nielson of Nielson Strategies Inc.

This report, and that of Nielson Strategies Inc., provides an overview of the outreach that was conducted and summarizes the results of these public meetings with residents of Electoral Area D.

VOTING: Unweighted Corporate LGA Part 14 (Unweighted) Weighted Corporate Stakeholder (Weighted)

BACKGROUND:

The Electoral Area D building inspection public engagement was very similar to previous information sessions conducted in Electoral Areas B, C, and E during the summers of 2017 and 2018. Since information about building regulation and a building inspection service was previously prepared for the 2017 and 2018 public engagement projects, this information was utilized once again and made available to the public via hardcopy, social media, CSR website, and at the public meetings held in Electoral Area D.

The information created for this outreach included:

- Nielsen-Welch Consulting Inc. *Building Inspection Service Electoral Areas D Business Case*;

- Comprehensive overview document of the proposed building inspection service, i.e. what is the proposed service, how did we get to this point, costs of the service, process, building scenarios;
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet and glossary of terms;
- Building Inspection 101 brochure, i.e. what is building inspection, why is it important;
- Benefits and Costs of CSRD Building Inspection;
- Building Permit Primer, i.e. what are building permits, information required; and,
- Service Implementation Chart, i.e. steps being followed to implement the service.

Poster boards were also created based on this material and displayed at the open houses. There was also an opportunity for the public to provide their comments with regard to the proposed service via an online form or at the open houses as written comment.

The open houses were advertised via CSRD social media and website as well as in three editions of local newspapers circulating in Electoral Area D; *Falkland News*, *Shuswap Market News* and the *Vernon Morning Star*. The advertisements included information as to where and when the upcoming open houses would be held, as well as where to find additional information and who to contact about the proposed service.

Open houses were held in Falkland, Rancho and Silver Creek in July. Of the three, the Silver Creek open house had the highest attendance but all open houses were well attended. Staff were on hand to answer questions of the attendees, a presentation about building inspection and the proposed service was provided by Allan Nielson, followed by a facilitated question and answer period. The number of attendees and comments submitted to CSRD staff as of July 29, 2019 are noted below:

Electoral Area D	Attendees	Comment Sheets	Online Submissions
Falkland Community Hall July 8, 2019	70	1	4
Rancho Elementary School July 9, 2019	34	0	0
Silver Creek Community Hall July 16, 2019	80	12	28

As expected, initial opinions and questions varied greatly with regard to the proposed service but clearly the feedback received at the open houses and in the submissions indicated that there was very limited support for the proposed service.

At the first meeting in Falkland, there was a large turnout with 70 attendees but surprisingly only one written comment. There were many verbal comments that did express concerns; no referendum being held, cost of the service through taxation, as well as questions about Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) regulations. Although there were a significant number of individuals who expressed their displeasure and resentment with the CSRD bringing in this service there were several others who voiced their support both during the meeting and privately afterwards with staff.

The Rancho Elementary School open house had approximately 34 attendees. These attendees experienced a first ever CSRD "tailgate" open house that was held outside in the school parking lot due to the school gymnasium not being accessible. Again, many of the concerns expressed by attendees

were similar to that of the Falkland open house: why no referendum, cost of the service through taxation, residents do not wish to be regulated where no regulations currently exist and costs that would need to be incurred for exams through BC Housing to build your own house. Attendees were reminded that regardless of a building inspection service that all new homes are required to be constructed to BC Building Code standards and that owner-builders must still pass the BC Housing exam.

The Silver Creek Community hall open house had a large crowd of over 80 people. There was significant, loud and emotionally-charged opposition to the proposed service that was voiced by most attendees. Similar to the previous open houses, resident concerns centred around: why no referendum, costs of the building permit, permit timelines, this is merely a tax grab, ALC issues and that home inspectors can tell someone whether a home has been built to BC Building Code or not.

As of the writing of this report, 45 comments in total have been received from the public as a result of this public engagement, with 41 submissions noting their opposition to the proposed service.

POLICY:

Staff have now completed the community engagement as requested by the Board with regard to the proposed building inspection service. In 2018, Building Bylaw No. 660 was amended to add Electoral Area C to the existing service areas of Electoral Area B, E and F. If the Board were to support the expansion of the building inspection service to Electoral Area D for 2020, taxation to support this service expansion requires Building Inspection Service Establishment Bylaw No. 5795 to be given three readings at the September Board meeting and then adopted by the Board at the October 2019 Board meeting; a subsequent amendment adding Electoral Area D to the Building Bylaw No. 660 service area will then be needed prior to beginning the service in 2020.

FINANCIAL:

The Board approved \$10,000 in the 2019 budget to undertake building inspection public information sessions in Electoral Area D. Costs associated with the public engagement for the proposed building regulation service included the expenses associated with developing the information materials, newspaper advertisements, hall rentals, travel costs, consultant and staff time. Total expenses are within budget.

The inclusion of Electoral Area D in the CSRD building inspection service is not expected to result in any significant net cost increase to the service as a whole. Current staffing levels consisting of two Building Officials, another to be hired shortly, one Building Inspection Assistant and one Clerical Assistant, will be able to handle for the foreseeable future the projected volume of building permit applications anticipated from the addition of Electoral Area D to the building inspection service area.

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS:

The open houses were an opportunity for Development Services staff and the Electoral Area Director to speak with residents and landowners about the proposed building inspection service. Although several members of the public arrived with preconceived ideas as to what the service would be and what the impacts on them individually would mean, staff and the Director were able to hear these concerns first hand while also being able to correct some misinformation about the proposed service. Even though many attendees understood why the CSRD Board and staff may desire to bring in building

inspection to other Electoral Areas, e.g. legal costs, health and safety, many individuals philosophically believe there is already too much regulation, that the service is expensive and unnecessary, and do not believe that local government should be bringing in regulation where none currently exists as building-related issues are minor or non-existent. As presented to attendees at the open house and in available materials, there are several reasons why building regulation is necessary, including for equitable taxation and assessment, consumer protection, and building and occupant safety; these and other benefits have previously been discussed at length with the Board. It is for similar reasons that most other regional districts have enacted a building inspection service: out of the 27 regional districts in the province, 18 have full building inspection, 5 have building inspection in parts of their regional district, and 4 have no inspection service. Of the eight 8 regional districts in the southern interior of the province only the Cariboo Regional District and the CSRD do not have full building inspection.

SUMMARY:

Staff have now completed the public engagement requested by the Board in regard to the proposed building inspection service for Electoral Area D. From the verbal and written comments obtained through this engagement it is clear that most residents who attended the public meetings are strongly opposed to the implementation of building inspections in their area. Staff are now seeking direction from the Board with regard to the proposed service.

IMPLEMENTATION:

If the Board decides to proceed at this Board meeting with the implementation of building inspection in Electoral Area D, the Board will need to adopt the Building Inspection Service Establishment Bylaw No. 5795 to add Electoral Area D at the October 2019 Board meeting. The early adoption is necessary to obtain taxation authority required for the expanded building regulation service area anticipated to start in spring 2020. Building Bylaw No. 660 will also require an amendment to add Electoral Area D as a participating area.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Although the formal public engagement is now complete with regard to the proposed building inspection service, all of the material used for this engagement will remain available on the CSRD's website and in hardcopy at the front counter at the CSRD office.

Should the Building Inspection Service Establishment Bylaw No. 5795 and Building Bylaw No. 660 amendment receive Board approval, additional communications will also be undertaken with other government agencies, e.g. Interior Health and BC Housing, as well as reaching out to those involved in the construction industry with updated informational brochures and face to face contact with building staff.

Should the Board decide not to implement a building inspection service in Electoral Area D at this time, staff will communicate via the CSRD's website and social media that the service will not be provided.

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

1. That the Board receive this report for information.
2. That the Board provide direction to staff with regard to the proposed building regulation service for Electoral Area D.

BOARD'S OPTIONS:

1. *Endorse the Recommendations.*
2. *Deny the Recommendations.*
3. *Defer.*
4. *Any other action deemed appropriate by the Board.*

LIST NAME OF REPORT(S) / DOCUMENT(S) AVAILABLE FROM STAFF:

1. Comment Forms Electoral Area D
2. Building Scenario Construction
3. Building Scenario Renovation
4. What is Building Inspection?
5. How does the Service Work?
6. Value of Building Inspection
7. Cost of Building Inspection?
8. When does it start?
9. Glossary Part I
10. Glossary Part II
11. Frequently Asked Questions

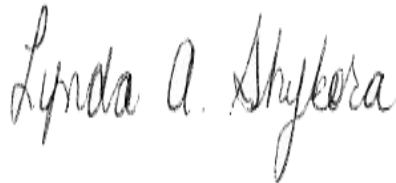
Report Approval Details

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This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Gerald Christie - Aug 6, 2019 - 12:04 PM



Lynda Shykora - Aug 7, 2019 - 10:21 AM



Charles Hamilton - Aug 7, 2019 - 1:40 PM