

March 8, 2017

Future water system costs reduced by millions thanks to new water supply project

The City's new water supply project reduces the cost of future water system upgrades by an estimated \$16.5 million over the next 10 years.

"With the construction of Campbell River's new water intake and water quality centre at John Hart Lake, we eliminate the need for millions of dollars in future upgrades that would have otherwise been required," says Mayor Andy Adams. "We appreciate BC Hydro funding the majority of this new water supply project, and we recognize that years of positive partnership between the City and BC Hydro have helped generate this benefit for the entire community."

The City regularly updates its long-term, strategic water system plan that identifies future improvements to meet demand related to community growth. This most recent update was triggered by the City's water supply system changes associated with the BC Hydro's planned removal of the penstocks that currently supply community water.

The City's new water supply system, now under construction, will improve reliability and resiliency of the City's water supply and will also incorporate water supply to the industrial park and Gordon Road residents, an area currently supplied by a separate water system.

"Future capital plan cost reductions are primarily the result of efficient design of integrated water supply and disinfection facilities and an overall net increase in water system operating pressure," explains Jennifer Peters, the City's utilities manager. "The new water system will include a pumping component that ensures water can be supplied to the community regardless of the water elevation in John Hart Lake, which greatly improves the reliability of community water. It has the added benefit of increasing the available operating pressure to the community's water distribution system, which in turn has helped eliminate the need for significant infrastructure upgrades that would have otherwise been required to boost water pressure in certain neighbourhoods."

Construction of the City's new water supply system is expected to be completed in early 2018 with commissioning in spring 2018. Neighbourhoods that could experience water pressure changes will be notified in advance of the new system being put into operation. The findings of the new plan will also be shared with developers and consultants so that future construction can reflect this new water system plan.

"Eliminating \$16.5 million in anticipated future infrastructure system upgrades is hugely significant to the City's water utility," says Ron Neufeld, the City's general manager of operations and deputy city manager. "Even with this good news, it is important that we all remain vigilant in our water conservation efforts. After all, the more effective we are collectively in reducing the amount of water we use – especially during the summer peak use periods – the more cost savings we all realize through deferral of other system upgrades."

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