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John Burrows

Steve Curry

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#201 - 2736 Quadra Street
Victoria, B.C. V8T 4E6

May 16, 2016

Mayor Lisa Helps
City of Victoria

Your Worship:

As the Union representing the employees for the City of Victoria we are writing to ask for the support of the Council in supporting future wastewater treatment as a public legacy for Victoria taxpayers, and all residents of the Capital Region District.

Public operation of waste water treatment ensures the project is accountable to local residents, makes certain concerns of the public are addressed promptly, and saves money in the long run while keeping resources in the local economy for the benefit of the CRD community.

Planning for new wastewater treatment in the CRD is once again at a critical point. New secondary treatment was mandated by the BC Government in 2006 and will be required to meet new federal guidelines by 2020. The previous CRD approved plan would have seen public operation of the vast majority of sewage treatment.

As work continues to meet the new federal deadline of September 2016, public discussion is largely focused on plant siting and technology. However, it is also important to ensure that the issue of public ownership, control and operation of wastewater treatment public is part of the conversation.

Cost for the region's taxpayers is a key issue and there's much evidence that public solutions are more affordable. Most recently, the District of Sooke ended their contract with the more expensive private operator to bring sewage treatment back into public operation.

No one is well served when large spending decisions occur secretively, as they inevitably do with complex private deals involving proprietary technologies and corporations whose priority is to meet their shareholders' interests.

Core Area residents deserve an opportunity to canvass the full range of issues, including ownership and operation, if we want to make sure that this large infrastructure project is delivered in all local residents' best interest.

We urge the Council to communicate to the CRD that public ownership and operation of future wastewater treatment is in the best interest of taxpayers.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Burrows', written over a circular stamp.

John Burrows
President
CUPE Local 50

c. City Council