



SHBC Gentle Density Network Pipes & Wires Webinar - 2023-08-02 Breakouts & Takeaways

The following is a summary of key takeaways resulting from the focused breakout discussions at the Pipes & Wires webinar held Wednesday, August 2, 2023.

Electric Avenue (Electrification)

- Local governments have information that is not currently shared with BC Hydro that could be very helpful with our system planning activities
- Local governments would appreciate information on the health of the electrical grid in their areas
- There is an opportunity for BC Hydro to provide local governments with information that would support their constituents in getting the service upgrades or new connections they need to support gentle densification

Who Does #2 Work For? (Sewer System Capacity)

- The representatives felt that they have completed sufficient sanitary sewer modeling to get a good idea of their existing capacity and how that aligns with growth projections in their OCP
- Asset management has been pursued in recent years to give a better accounting of the current lay of the land for sanitary sewer functioning and capacity
- Some members while they have a solid understanding of their systems, are at capacity and even small amounts of new development can trigger need for capital improvements
- Most haven't modeled a lot of infill envisioned under the provincial changes
- Discussion on who is going to be paying for these upgrades and whether or not the viability of projects would be impacted as a result of upgrades needed for new development

What's Going On / Underground (Local government capacity)

- Concern over local government capacity to process the expected BP applications.
- A lack of understanding over the implementations of the proposed upzoning on municipal infrastructure. The concern was related to understanding where and how many property owners would elect to take advantage of the blanket upzoning. This would be critical to allow local governments to focus resources on upgrades in specific areas rather than to contemplate system wide upgrades of underground utilities.
- Potential space conflicts for competing underground and above ground works. In the public realm the road dedication and frontage provides the limits within which to fit water, sanitary, storm, electrical, gas and telecommunications mains, servicing and metering (including associated chambers, manholes, junctions, service boxes, ect...) while meeting the required separations between the various underground works. In addition there is then the surface works such as the road, sidewalk, driveway, street lighting, street trees, ect... that also have separation requirements from the underground works.



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You Never Give Me Your Money (Gaps in Development Finance Tools)

- Existing development financial tools are more effective to larger scale development and revised tools needed
- Challenge of first one in with plex development in areas in need of infrastructure upgrades
- Challenges with hydro upgrades for each plex versus a more block based approach
- Requiring excess and extended services and frontage improvements at time of Building Permit and recognizing that many LGs are only requiring as a condition of subdivision
- Limitations for requiring excess and extended for gentle density/plex developments
- Interest in learning about frontage improvement requirement options and innovations

Wider on the Storm(pipes) (Stormwater)

Do the recommendations align with your needs and issues? What's your local situation?

- Watersheds management plans - lack of consistency in the implementation. Local policy level changes (incl. Bylaw updates) - often don't fully consider the watershed and stormwater planning, and don't include detailed requirements (at an adequate level). Change in impervious services and how that affects the storm systems. Loads have increased, and there's a need for bigger pipes. Water quality has also been degraded, as there's less filtering through the ground.

Wish list:

Would be nice to have best practices for stormwater management.

- Want standards - low maintenance strategies that are expressly designed for low-density development. CNV and West Van have standards in place. Need to be careful to not be (be seen) as an impediment to development.

If you could double your capital budget - where would you dedicate it?

- Acquiring Land. Land big enough to do some of the bigger interventions for retention/detention. Generally done on public land. Is there a way we can work with Parks? (competing priorities for space) - to have more green infrastructure as part of the park - above ground or underground tank.
- Maintenance. Maintenance is a large challenge, especially if collaborating with other City Departments to site the installations: who will do it; what will the maintenance requirements be; inspections after big storm events?; how do maintenance needs change over time.



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Putting out Fire (Water & Fire Protection)

- In smaller communities, a fire response that requires hydrant use can deplete overall water supply systems quickly
- There is a need to improve the number of tradespeople capable of sprinkler installation to reduce costs - Vancouver has a more well established industry because the requirements have been in place for some time, but other locals (Penticton, even Edmonton) the costs are higher because firms are not experienced with sprinkler installation
- There is a challenge with locating water metering for detached ADUs - if it is outside as preferred by water agencies/meter readers the minimum size tends to be 3 inches which is far above the need for firefighting and adds cost.
- Sprinklering can be a challenge due to the need to educate homeowners on their obligation to maintain the system, and due to the potential for damage to the home if the system is not set up properly.