

TO: CITY MANAGER

1997 SEPTEMBER 25

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES RAISED BY THE
STONEY CREEK ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Purpose: To provide Council with information regarding environmental issues recently raised by the Stoney Creek Environment Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to Jennifer Atchison, Chair - Stoney Creek Environment Committee, 2625 Noel Drive, Burnaby B.C. V3J 1J2; the Lougheed Area Advisory Committee, the Environment and Waste Management Committee and the Parks Commission for their information.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 1997 August 25, Council requested a staff report on the issues raised by the Stoney Creek Environment Committee in a local newspaper article regarding the potential environmental impacts of proposed developments adjacent to Stoney Creek in the general area between the Lougheed Highway and Beaverbrook Drive. This report provides the requested information.

2.0 CONTEXT

The City recognizes the sensitivity of the Stoney Creek watershed. To this end, a number of initiatives are currently in place to protect and sensitively manage the Stoney Creek corridor. The following provides a context to the issues raised:

2.1 Lougheed Town Centre Plan

The Lougheed Town Centre Plan which was adopted by Council in June, 1997 includes an environmental framework for future development and management around Stoney Creek including:

- managing the Stoney Creek area according to the City's initial Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) strategy's planning and design principles including run-off control, measures to control construction damage to development sites and other means;
- working within the DFO and MoELP, *Land Development Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Habitat* and seeking approval from these agencies for all city development projects which may affect aquatic habitat;
- facilitating the development of a Stoney Creek Environmental Work Group involving the existing environmental stewardship groups associated with the Lougheed area to provide a forum for coordinated environmental action. The City has coordinated several meetings with Stoney Creek stakeholders including the Stoney Creek Environment Committee, BCIT- Burnaby Lake Systems Project, Sapperton Fish and Game Club, DFO, MoELP, GVRD Sewerage and Drainage Department (GVS and DD), B.C. Hydro and TransMountain Pipelines to address a variety of creek-related issues and propose follow-up actions. This work is continuing to help guide coordinated action along the creek.

2.2 Brunette Basin Watershed Management

In 1996 October, Council adopted the Still Creek - Brunette River Issues and Proposed Actions draft report which was prepared by a work group of stakeholders including the City, GVS and DD, Westwater Institute and BCIT - Burnaby Lake Systems Project. Many of the adopted actions have direct applicability to Stoney Creek. The report identifies issues, a vision statement, objectives and action items towards environmentally sustainable management of the Brunette basin. This work serves as a basis for the development of the GVRD's Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP). Under the LWMP process, the Brunette Basin Task Group was established to develop a comprehensive watershed-based management strategy. The Task Group involves the GVS and DD, City of Burnaby, BCIT - Burnaby Lake Systems Project, Westwater Institute (UBC), Sapperton Fish and Game Club, the Stoney Creek Environment Committee and others.

Stoney Creek is within the Brunette basin and encompassed by the Task Group's work. The Task Group will liaise with Stoney Creek stakeholders and the Stoney Creek Environmental Work Group in its watershed planning and management.

2.3 City's Alternative Stormwater Management Practices

In 1995 October, the City adopted an alternative approach to stormwater management whereby environmentally-sensitive *Best Management Practices* (BMPs) such as detention/ infiltration ponds, grassed swales, etc. are incorporated in stormwater management works. This approach has application to any future City developments including those in the vicinity of Stoney Creek.

2.4 Burnaby Streamkeepers

In the fall of 1996, the City, BCIT- Burnaby Lake Systems Project and community coordinator, Elmer Rudolph established the Burnaby Streamkeepers program to encourage active stream stewardship and coordinate the activities of existing streamkeeping groups throughout Burnaby. A number of meetings and events have successfully taken place. The Stoney Creek Environment Committee is a new and highly active streamkeeping group participating in Burnaby Streamkeepers which recently received funding through the Provincial Urban Salmon Habitat Program (USHP) to implement inventory, enhancement and public education works. The Sapperton Fish and Game Club has been streamkeeping on the Brunette River and within the Brunette watershed for approximately 25 years. These Burnaby Streamkeepers groups play a significant role in the environmental stewardship of Stoney Creek.

The City also recently relocated the Environmental Classroom to Stoney Creek School where it is actively used by the Stoney Creek Environmental Committee.

In summary, these initiatives indicate that from an overall environmental context significant efforts are being made to plan and manage the Brunette basin including Stoney Creek in a proactive , environmentally sustainable manner by involving community stakeholders, adopting a watershed-based management approach, and implementing environmentally sensitive development practices.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

3.1 GVRD Proposal to Upgrade Access to the Sanitary Sewer Line

The GVS and DD recently informed City staff and the Stoney Creek Environment Committee that they will need to upgrade access to their sanitary sewer line along their right-of-way adjacent to Stoney Creek below Beaverbrook Drive for regular, required maintenance works. This includes video monitoring of the sanitary sewer

line through the manholes in this area as well as flushing/ suctioning and other potential maintenance works. Truck access is needed to implement these works. The improved access, as proposed in a preliminary drawing, involves the creation of a 4-metre wide compacted gravel roadway along the GVS and DD's right-of-way generally between Beaverbrook Drive and the Lougheed Highway. Figure 1 (*attached*) shows the approximate route of the preliminary proposal for an upgraded access to the GVS and DD's sanitary sewer line.

City staff, BCIT - Burnaby Lake Systems Project and members of the Stoney Creek Environment Committee met with the GVS and DD on August 12th to review the preliminary proposal for this upgraded access route. A number of concerns were raised which related to the proximity of the access route to the creek including the loss of riparian vegetation and habitat, potential sedimentation and erosion and increased public access to the creek which might disturb sensitive habitat. In addition, a crossing of the tributary running parallel to Eastlake Drive at the confluence with Stoney Creek is proposed by the GVS and DD in the preliminary plan to access the manhole on the north side of the tributary from the turnaround along the BNR right of way. Concern was expressed regarding the potential loss of fish habitat associated with this crossing.

A letter was sent by the City to the GVS and DD and copied to the DFO with coordinated comments from this site visit and a request that the GVS and DD work with the City and the Stoney Creek Environment Committee to further explore the proposed access to the sanitary sewer. The GVS and DD has also indicated that they will seek the approval of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and the Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks (MoELP) for any proposed works to upgrade the access to the sanitary line. These agencies require that works in and about streams are in accordance with the *Land Development Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Habitat* and that in-stream works to occur outside of fisheries sensitive periods.

At this time, the GVS and DD has indicated that they are revising preliminary plans to reflect the input from the Stoney Creek Environment Committee, the City, BCIT and MoELP and will consult further with these representatives to develop an acceptable option. Physical works are not expected to occur until the 1998 "Fisheries Window" of July 15 - September 15.

3.2 Proposed Extension of Eastlake Drive

Figure 1 (*attached*) shows the conceptual alignments for the City's Urban Trail and the extension of Eastlake Drive adjacent to Stoney Creek as adopted by Council in the *Lougheed Town Centre Plan*. It is emphasized that these alignments are preliminary concepts which will require further design development as well as a review of potential environmental impacts.

The proposed Eastlake Drive extension utilizes the current BNR right-of-way and connects with Government Road. This connection is desirable in providing southern access to the proposed northeast high school and to better link the community south of the Lougheed Highway with the north as desired by area residents. This road would only be constructed after the BNR rail use is phased out. It presently accommodates one train movement per day and BNR has indicated it could be phased out within 5 years. There are no funds in the Five Year Capital Program for the construction of the Eastlake Drive Extension.

3.3 Proposed Urban Trail

The urban trail is proposed along Eastlake Drive and its proposed extension as well as crossing Stoney Creek to connect to Bell Park and the surrounding neighbourhood. Staff have met with the Stoney Creek Environment Committee on site to review the proposed urban trail bridge crossing of Stoney Creek. This will involve a structure that spans from top-of-bank to top-of-bank without impacting the Stoney Creek Ravine or riparian area. Construction will commence in early 1998. The Stoney Creek Environment Committee has indicated that they support the proposed urban trail bridge crossing. Staff have begun to develop options for the urban trail along Eastlake Drive which would minimize potential environmental impacts to the tributary flowing into Stoney Creek and its associated riparian area. Staff will consult with the Stoney Creek Environment Committee to gain input towards the development of the urban trail design for this area.

3.4 Recent Creek Erosion

In response to erosion which occurred along Stoney Creek this past winter during intense rainfall events, the City Parks Department in consultation with DFO, plans to decommission a portion of the pedestrian trail network downstream of Stoney Creek Community School to Beaverbrook Drive. This will allow the riparian area which is currently impacted by the trail to re-establish and permit natural stream

processes to occur without being impacted by the trail (as shown in Figure 2, *attached*). An upland trail will continue to provide access in the creek area for park and school users. DFO has reviewed sites where erosion occurred within the creek channel with the GVS and DD (who have the mandate over storm conveyance in Stoney Creek) and feel it is appropriate that these areas remain unmitigated.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report provides the requested information to Council regarding environmental issues in the vicinity of Stoney Creek in response to concerns expressed by the Stoney Creek Environment Committee in a recent local newspaper article. A number of initiatives are currently underway to plan and manage the Brunette basin including Stoney Creek in an environmentally sustainable manner by involving community stakeholders, adopting a watershed-based management approach, and implementing environmentally sensitive development practices. As discussed in this report, further environmental review and appropriate approvals will be required as the preliminary development proposals are further explored. Staff will continue to consult and work with the Stoney Creek Environment Committee to address their concerns and work for environmentally responsible development and management.

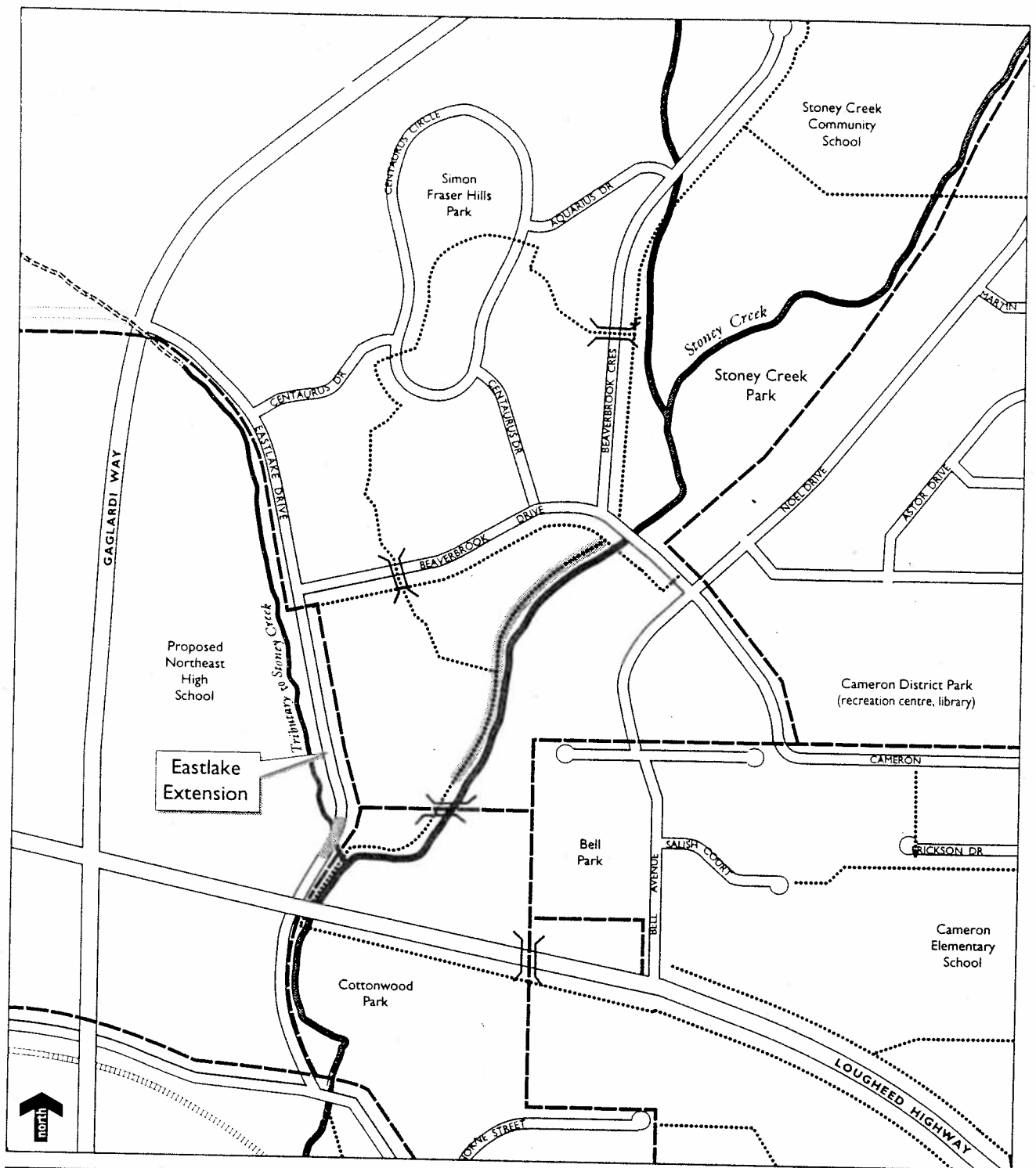


D.G. Stenson, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

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Attachments

cc: Director Engineering
Director Recreation and Cultural Services
Chief Environmental Health Officer



Stoney Creek through Lougheed Town Centre Area


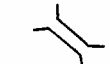


-  Proposed Urban Trail
-  Pedestrian Crossings
-  Neighbourhood Walkways
-  GVS&DD Sanitary Sewer line - area where access required



Figure 1

