



CARING FOR OUR NATURE: MAPLE RIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Council Workshop

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Outline

Process

Key Findings

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Next Steps

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Council Direction

Official Community Plan adopted by Council

- OCP included the identification of environmentally sensitive areas and creation of a “comprehensive environmental management plan.”

Municipal Corporate Sustainability Strategy adopted by Council

- emphasizes the District’s commitment to taking a leadership role in “protecting environmentally sensitive areas and preserving and enhancing the community’s quality of life, air, water, and land.”

Council Resolution

- Develop a draft Environmental Management Strategy report for Council’s consideration and to move forward with the consultation program.

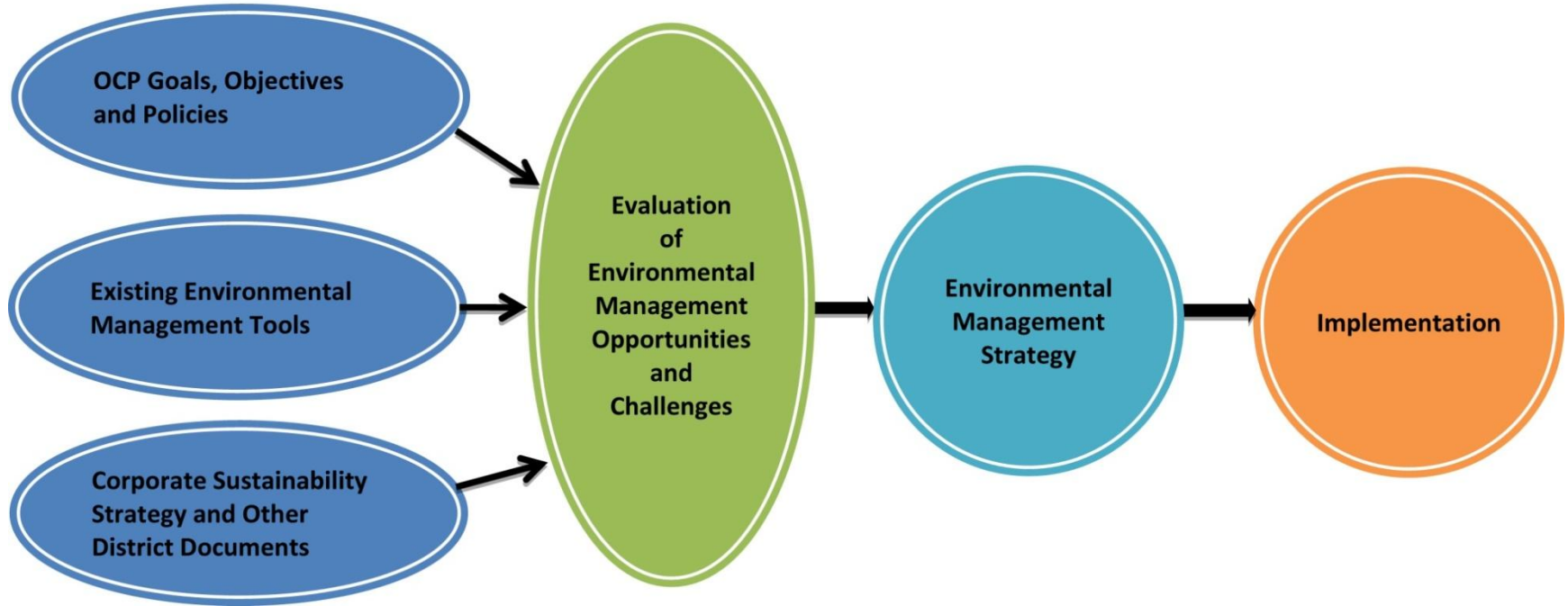
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Introduction

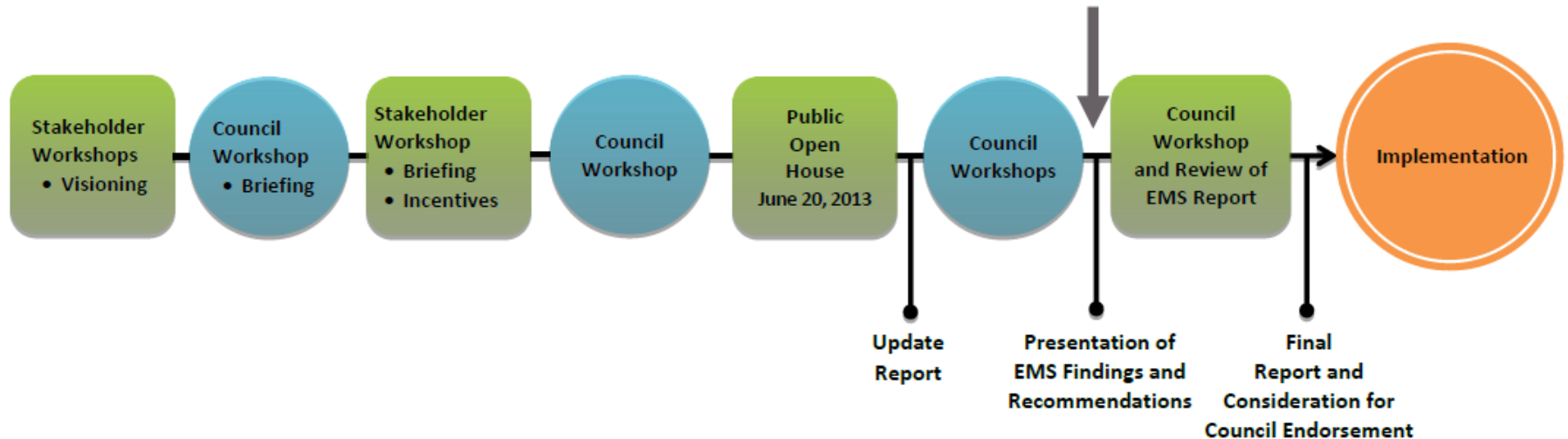
Opportunities after presentation for feedback and discussion with Council about next steps:

- Timing for setting up an Environmental Advisory Committee to assist with review of implementation
- Updates to Tree Protection Bylaw and Soil Deposit Bylaw
- Other items

What is the EMS?



EMS Process – Council Endorsed



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Findings

Findings are based on:

Analysis by Consulting Team

Input from Stakeholders – workshops, open house, survey

All aspects of the EMS project are closely aligned with the OCP objectives and policies.

Key Successes

OCP framework – objectives, policy framework, environmental
Development Permit areas, urban area boundary

Environmental mapping system

Streamside Protection Regulations

Extensive natural areas remaining

Dedicated and knowledgeable staff

Greater emphasis on low impact development and site source control
requirements using Watercourse Protection Bylaw & DP guidelines



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Key Challenges

Consideration of all scales, sense of ‘falling behind’

Habitat fragmentation and impacts from urban ‘sprawl’

Public desire for more information and awareness

Tree removal and related impacts

Limited municipal resources for the environment

Some gaps between policy and implementation

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Key Opportunities

Strengthen existing tools

- Clarify language and process
- Monitoring and enforcement
- Integration of environ mapping
- Low impact development BMPs
- Natural Features DP
- Soil Deposit Bylaw
- Environmental Educ./Outreach

New action items/tools for consideration

Ecological Network Management Strategy
Tree Preservation and Management Bylaw
Urban Forest Management Strategy
Groundwater Management Plans
Integrated Watershed Management Plans
Environmental Advisory Committee
Integrated Hazard Management DP

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Three EMS Goals

Goal A: Conserve and manage our natural assets

Goal B: Design and build sustainable neighbourhoods

Goal C: Improve communications & environmental awareness

“Continue to” is implied in objectives, strategies and actions

Goal A Objectives: Conserve and manage our natural assets

1. Identify, protect, and value significant ecological resources.
2. Maintain the ecological health of natural areas.
3. Consider natural connections beyond the municipal boundaries.
4. Continue to build ecological resilience for adaptation to impacts from climate change and hazards.



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Goal A Objectives: Conserve and manage our natural assets

5. Consider the potential values, services, and financial benefits provided by the natural environment in planning and development.
6. Provide incentives to encourage the protection of sensitive or valued natural areas that are not currently regulated.
7. Continue to protect agricultural land in recognition of its environmental values.

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Goal A Strategies and Actions

A1. Protect and manage Crown lands and watershed areas within and extending beyond the District's boundaries in collaboration with other jurisdictions.

- Sustainable management plans e.g., Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve
- Revise and update OCP aquifer map,
- Prepare groundwater management plans for relevant areas,
- Explore partnerships and planning strategies with other stakeholders

A2. Identify, protect and manage ecosystems that support important habitats and biological diversity.

- Ecological Network Management Strategy

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Goal A Strategies and Actions (cont'd)

A3. Evaluate the socio-economic values and benefits of natural assets.

- Use scientific studies by others and cost effective software tools to evaluate and monitor natural assets and ecological resources.

A4. Update bylaws and regulations related to soil deposition and environmental practices on agricultural and rural lands.

- Review/update Soil Deposit Bylaw, encourage and support improved practices, work with ALC, DFO and the agriculture community

Goal B Objectives: Design and build sustainable neighbourhoods

1. Protect and manage the urban forest, including existing forests and significant trees, with methods to support future tree cover.
2. Protect important natural and heritage resources within neighbourhoods as part of the planning process, including watercourses, wetlands, steep slopes, greenway corridors, native soils and significant view-scapes.



Goal B Objectives: Design and build sustainable neighbourhoods

3. Minimize and mitigate the impacts of development on natural and protected areas.
4. Use appropriate best management practices to ensure attractive, safe, and affordable communities.



Goal B Objectives: Design and build sustainable neighbourhoods

Use sustainable site planning and landscape design standards to

- reduce energy use;
- protect habitat, conserve water; and
- make neighbourhoods more attractive and livable.



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Goal B Objectives: Design and build sustainable neighbourhoods

6. Use and promote alternative transportation as a sustainable design measure to improve air quality, reduce energy use, and increase health and recreation opportunities.
7. Enforce environmental regulations and determine whether additional updates to regulations and/or necessary resources are available to do this properly.

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Goal B Strategies and Actions

B1. Explore, in collaboration with developers and other jurisdictions and organizations, the use of incentives and tools for conserving significant natural areas or features that are not protected under municipal regulations.

- Consider tax incentives, density bonus and transfer, etc.

Goal B Strategies and Actions (cont'd)

B2. Protect, enhance and manage the forests and trees, recognizing the multiple environmental, social and economic benefits they provide.

- Prepare a Tree Preservation and Management Bylaw for both urban and rural areas with stronger tree replacement criteria and/or compensation fees to the District.
- Consider tree canopy targets, education and monitoring programs, and an urban forest management program.
- Revise other bylaws to increase the focus on tree protection, management and planning.

Goal B Strategies and Actions (cont'd)

B3. Review and update the Watercourse DP and Watercourse Protection Bylaws and work with stakeholders on the implementation, monitoring and enforcement components of these bylaws.

- Clarify language, update map, consider a long-term DP map; work on implementation, monitoring and enforcement.

B4. Increase the profile of rainwater and stormwater management, and groundwater management, in bylaws and continue to improve implementation based on best practices.

- Incorporate in Subdivision Servicing Bylaw design standards that match current environmental Watercourse Protection Bylaw regulations and requirements.

Goal B Strategies and Actions

B5. Review and update the Natural Features Development Permit.

- Focus on clear, sensible, and effective best management practices and design standards for hillside areas including:
 - Best management practices for hillside areas
 - Preservation of sensitive ecosystems & priority habitat areas
- Evaluate appropriate plans, standards, and necessary tools to help
 - work with natural topography
 - mitigate impacts to groundwater and develop plans for management of critical aquifer recharge areas where residents are dependent
 - Minimize visual impacts through clear guidelines and standards for visual impact assessment.

Goal B Strategies and Actions

B6. Prepare a new Natural Hazards Development Permit that focuses on integrated management solutions for dealing with steep slopes, floodplains, creek and wildfire hazard areas.

- Consider how the District can evaluate and possibly update its tools to ensure safe development and resiliency to climate change impacts
 - ✓ development permit guidelines,
 - ✓ hazard management plans, and
 - ✓ risk management standards around floodplains,
 - ✓ steep slopes, and
 - ✓ forest interface areas.



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Goal B Strategies and Actions

B6. Prepare a new Natural Hazards Development Permit that focuses on integrated management solutions for dealing with steep slopes, floodplains, creek and wildfire hazard areas.

- Create a more integrated and coordinated approach to dealing with natural hazards including appropriate standards for safe development in floodplains and steep slope areas.

Goal B Strategies and Actions (cont'd)

B7. Encourage sustainable development practices that go beyond minimal requirements and capture the spirit of comprehensive “smart growth” principles.

- Sustainability checklist, communal recreation/open spaces, consider carbon calculator for local projects, eco-cluster concepts, neighborhood parks, and conservation incentives.

B8. Update environmental bylaws, processes and practices to be consistent with each other, with OCP objectives and policies, and with future potential Council endorsement of the EMS recommendations.

Goal B Strategies and Actions (cont'd)

B9. Strengthen monitoring and enforcement to encourage widespread and long-term compliance and stewardship. Utilize the principles of adaptive management to continually improve processes and efficiency.

- Monitoring and enforcement;
- Develop ecological indicators and performance targets;
- Explore full-cost accounting.

Goal C Objectives: Improve communications and environmental awareness

1. Continue to improve communication and collaboration among District staff and stakeholders to promote efficient, effective, and integrated solutions.
2. Expand communication about the value of environmental resources and municipal environmental management strategies and tools.
3. Increase education and engagement opportunities related to experiencing nature and continue to foster a stewardship ethic in the community.



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Goal C Objectives: Improve communications and environmental awareness

4. Update information packages and checklists for land development applicants and professionals to help make information more accessible.
5. Collaborate with other government agencies and First Nations on initiatives of shared interest and benefits.
6. Partner with non-government organizations and stewardship groups on initiatives and objectives of shared interest.

Goal C Strategies and Actions

C1. Improve communication structures and tools for use among District staff, Council and stakeholders.

- Consider an EnvAC (advisory only, define the ToR, needs dedicated staff resources), refine communication processes.

C2. Consolidate and distribute information related to environmental management with captivating, graphically rich and educational materials.

- Digital information hub, varied information to multiple sources.

Goal C Strategies and Actions (cont'd)

C3. Expand environmental education opportunities in partnerships with others.

- Broaden partnerships to expand outreach, materials, celebrations.

C4. Encourage the expansion of opportunities that support nature experiences and ecotourism.

- Continue to help other municipal departments and NGO's with environmental initiatives that support outdoor recreation, education, and eco-tourism.

C5. Provide more staff resources for environmental management.

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Next Steps

Complete EMS Report after receiving Council feedback

Submit EMS report for Council endorsement

Prepare an Implementation Plan with priorities and phasing possibly with the assistance of an Environmental Advisory Committee

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Comments and Questions

THANK YOU