

Frequently Asked Questions: Kaleden Sewer Project

Keeping the Community Informed

PROJECT BACKGROUND

What is the project?

The Kaleden Sewer Project is a community sewerage project that will serve to collect sanitary sewage, presently being discharged into individual septic systems, from approximately 150 properties and direct these flows to the existing sanitary sewer treatment facility in Okanagan Falls. If approved, the project will receive its primary funding from the New Building Canada Fund – Small Communities Fund, with the serviced property making up the difference.

Why do we need sewer in our community?

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen has identified that the installation of a sewer collection system is in the best interest of the environment and the Kaleden community as a whole. A community collection system will eliminate the cumulative impacts of seepage of septic fields and generate potential economic benefits within the community. Since the mid 1980's, the direction and support of the Kaleden community has kept this initiative moving forward through various studies and plans to where we are today. For additional information on both the [history of the project](#) and [septic systems and sewer benefits](#), updated handouts are available for viewing.

PROJECT BENEFITS

What are the benefits to residents?

A community sewer system has many positive benefits to residents and the community:

- Reduced risk of pathogens threatening public health from struggling septic systems along the lakeshore.
- Reliable service and no more maintenance of a septic tank or field.
- Enhanced recreational opportunities due to improved water quality.
- Increased property values for homeowners.

What does this mean for the environment?

A community sewer system has many positive environmental outcomes:

- Reduced leaching of contaminants, such as bacteria, viruses, detergents and pharmaceuticals, into the natural environment from aging septic systems.
- Reduced risk of algae blooms and plant growth from the excess nutrients, like phosphorus and nitrogen.
- Community sewage systems improve surface and groundwater quality by eliminating cumulative effects.
- Sewage systems protect the natural environment and support wildlife habitats, as wastewater is fully treated and disinfected before re-entering natural water bodies.

How would the project enhance recreational use of Skaka Lake?

A community sewer system will protect the lake from any cumulative and negative effects, in this case, from roughly 150 septic systems as they age and their performance deteriorates. By doing so, we are proactively protecting ongoing water quality and preserving the quality of existing recreational lake activities that so many enjoy – particularly over the summer months.

The initial service area for the project will set the stage for future areas of Kaleden to connect to the community sewer system, which will further reduce the negative cumulative effects of aging septic systems.

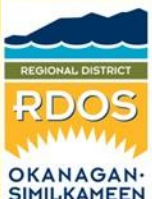
What are the overall economic advantages?

Economic development can take many forms, but must align with the direction set out our Official Community Plan, a long-term planning document developed with extensive community input that guides the RDOS Board on how a community is shaped over a 25 to 30-year time horizon.

Although typically thought of on a larger scale, economic development can also take the form of:

- Short-term tourist accommodation (B&Bs and vacation rentals)
- Home occupations, and on parcels greater than 2.0 ha in area, home industry-type uses
- Basement suites in existing residences that potentially could accommodate rentals or aging parents needing additional care;
- Addition of a garage or workshop on the property, currently limited by the real needs of a septic tank and tile field;
- Construction of a new home or expansion of an existing home to provide a bit more floor space or additional bathrooms creating employment opportunities; or
- Construction of a vegetable garden or expanding existing landscape features that are currently not possible because of the land requirements for a septic tile field.

Is this a good time to build the project?



RDOS Contact Information
Liisa Bloomfield, Manager of Engineering
250.490.4229
Email: engineering@rdos.bc.ca
Project Website: www.KaledenSewer.ca

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
101 Martin Street
Penticton, BC V2A 8X9
P: 250.492.0237 F: 250.492.0063
info@rdos.bc.ca
www.rdos.bc.ca

The individual septic systems within the Kaleden community are aging and prone to failure as they age. The environmental and social risks associated with these aging septic systems led the Regional District Board of Directors to identify that a community sewer system for Kaleden is a high-priority project. The community has been planning for this upgrade for a long time ([see project timeline](#)).

In addition, the grant funding provided for this project has a specific end date at which point, if not spent, would return to the Province. It would be unlikely, if rejected, that future grant funding would become available for a community sewer system for the area. As some property owners have experienced, replacing a septic system is not as inexpensive as it used to be. With evolving legislation focusing on protecting waterways, fish bearing waterbodies and drinking water supplies, the requirements from the Interior Health Authority have increased, thus increasing the costs substantially.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

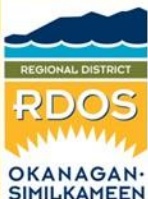
Where is the proposed service area?

The proposed service area includes the following:



How do I find out if I am inside or outside of the service area?

You can either search your address on the [project website](#) or review outline service area in [the following document](#).



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How long will it take to construct the infrastructure?

If those within the initial service area approve the borrowing of funds to move forward with the project, the project will move into detailed design, tender then construction. It is anticipated that construction would likely commence by mid-late 2021 and be completed before 2022.

Where will the wastewater be treated?

Wastewater will be pumped to the Okanagan Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant where it will undergo treatment. Handout #4 shows a schematic of the treatment plant and some basic process information.

Will the system in Kaleden produce any odours?

Odour control will be managed through a combination of carbon filters as well as odour control chemicals (i.e. Biomaxx) that is directly applied to the sewage. These chemicals are designed to negate hydrogen sulphide and other odor generation in the system.

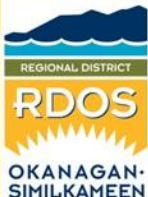
What is 1-hr Emergency Storage?

The one-hour emergency storage is intended to allow operations staff time to deal with a pump or electrical issue at the lift station in the event both pumps in the station are not operational. During this one hour period, the incoming sewage is stored in either the lift station wet well or in underground pipes and the wet well.

The probability of an event requiring the emergency storage is very low. First of all, the stations are equipped with a “spare” pump in case one pump becomes inoperable. In the case of a power failure, the stations are equipped with a standby power unit that comes on and supplies power to the lift station until such time as the utility power is restored.

In the event that emergency storage is triggered, the lift station is equipped with an alarm dialer that informs RDOS operations staff of a failure so they can immediately respond. Pump trucks are then placed on standby should the emergency storage capacity be reached and pumping of the wet well required.

We note that the provincial guidelines for lift stations do not include a requirement for emergency storage where a standby power unit is provided for the station. However, the RDOS takes a more cautious approach and includes emergency storage as part of the design requirements for the station.



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CONNECTION OPTIONS & REQUIREMENTS

As a residential property owner, would I be required to connect?

Yes, all property owners within the initial service area will be required to connect likely within one year of the completion of the community sewer system.

Can properties abutting the proposed service area be included in the initial phase?

The service area is fixed at this time. If, however, nearby property owners would like to connect to the system, they would need to follow a petition process for their properties and surrounding neighbours who want to join. For more information, interested property owners should contact the RDOS.

Will crews be required to access private property throughout construction?

Yes, but only where rights-of-way have been obtained or where accessing private property is required to install the sanitary service connection point.

COSTS & RATES

How much does the system cost and how do we pay for it?

The estimated cost of the project is \$10 million. Funds for the project will come from:

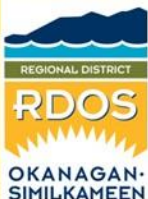
- **The New Building Canada Fund — Small Communities Fund Program.** The RDOS has secured senior government grant funding to assist with costs for the design and construction of a community sewer system for Kaleden. \$6.2 million covers the majority of the total project costs.
- **Borrowing by RDOS from Municipal Finance Authority.** The public has to agree, through a public assent process, to borrow up to \$4 million to complete the project.

How much is this going to cost, per household and over what period of time?

Based on the highest project cost of \$10.6 M and 150 parcels being serviced in the identified service area, an estimated cost has been established.

There are both **capital costs** and **operations and maintenance (O&M) costs**.

- **Capital Costs:** Residents will have the option to submit a one-time payment or a yearly debt servicing payment to cover capital costs not covered by the grant.
 - *One-time payment: \$22,900 - \$26,200*
 - *Annual debt payment over 30 years at 2.58% interest: \$1,150 - \$1,330/year*



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- **O&M Costs:** The annual fees will be very similar to what is currently established for the different users in Okanagan Falls.

Those within the service area will also be responsible for decommissioning their existing septic system and covering the costs associated with connecting to the system. These costs vary from property to property based upon the physical location of the existing service to the septic tank, site topography, length of service, soil types and impacted landscaping/hardscape improvements.

PUBLIC INFORMATION & ENGAGEMENT

Where can I go to make sure I have the most up to date information about the project and the referendum?

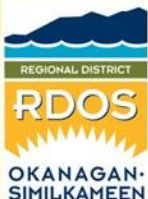
The most up to date information can be found on the project website at kaledensewer.ca. Details on the project will be posted as available, including a referendum date when provided. Information about the referendum process is available through the *Local Government Act* and can be found on the province's website ([Assent Voting \(Referendum\) for Local Government](#)). If you have specific questions regarding eligibility or the process please contact the Legislative Services department at the RDOS.

Will there be an open house?

Members of the project team will be available for a “pop-in and chat” on July 18th and August 15th, 2020 at Pioneer Park from 9am – 11 am. Additional information sessions can also occur in the fall prior to the referendum as requested.

If I want to speak with someone about this who can I contact?

Please contact the Regional District's manager of engineering, Liisa Bloomfield, at 250.490.4229 or lbloomfield@rdos.bc.ca.



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