DISTRICT OF
OAK BAY

MEMORANDUM TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: David Brozuk, Acting Director of Engineering Services

DATE: May 9, 2016

RE: Uplands - Assessing Service Installs and Tree Damage

For almost 25 years in the Uplands area, any major renovation or new construction has required property owners to install a separate sewer / storm water system. Installation of the utilities causing damage to trees was questioned by Council and an analysis was performed by the Superintendent of Public Works, David Brozuk, BSc Forestry and Manager of Parks Services, Chris Hyde-Lay. In the analysis, visual observation of tree stress or damage (multiple limb die off greater than 20%) that could be attributed to the installation of a separate sewer / storm water system was noted.

The Humber Catchment has 30 out of 150 properties with a separate sewer / storm water system. The Rutland Catchment has 61 out of 236 properties with a separate sewer / storm water system. Out of the 30 properties in the Humber Catchment, 1 property appears to have tree stress or damage due to the installation of the sewer / storm water system. Out of the 61 properties in the Rutland Catchment, 1 property appears to have tree stress or damage due to the installation of the sewer / storm water system. It is uncertain if the tree stress or damage will lead to mortality.

It is hypothesised that the two main reasons for such low numbers may be due to:

1.) Location of the service installs have been placed at locations that are of least impact to tree health. It is the practice of Oak Bay Engineering and Public Works to avoid damage to trees when installing services.
2.) With large trees, visually observable damage does not usually show in short time periods of 20 years or less.

During the construction design phase, the Uplands Combined Sewer Separation Project will minimize tree damage with a property by property assessment. These assessments will determine the best location for the services, aspiring to limit root damage and disturbances due to excavation.

D Brozuk

David Brozuk, Acting Director of Engineering Services