



REQUEST FOR DECISION

Area C Wildfire Development Permit Area (First Reading)

Meeting Date: February 9, 2022/February 23,2022

To: SLRD Electoral Area Directors/SLRD Board

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That it be recommended to the Regional District Board:

THAT Bylaw 1741-2022, cited as “Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999, Amendment Bylaw No. 1741-2022” be introduced and given first reading.

THAT Bylaw 1741-2022, cited as “Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999, Amendment Bylaw No. 1741-2022” be referred to the appropriate First Nations, Village of Pemberton, and provincial agencies including the Ministries of Transportation and Infrastructure, Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, and Vancouver Coastal Health for comment.

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS:

In recent years, wildfires have caused significant personal, cultural, economic and environmental loss in British Columbia and the SLRD. With the effects of climate change being felt across the province, this trend is expected to continue unless sufficient wildfire mitigation and preparedness measures are put in place.

Electoral Area C is the only area within the SLRD not covered by a Wildfire Protection Development Permit Area (DPA), and it has been the intention of staff to introduce one for some time. A Wildfire Protection DPA is needed to help reduce the risk to public safety, property and forests from wildfire hazards. The objective of the Wildfire Protection DPA is to ensure new developments in Electoral Area C are designed and constructed to minimize wildfire hazard, and contribute to the fire safety of neighbourhoods and communities.

OCP Amendment Bylaw No.1741-2022 is being presented for consideration of first reading. The referral process to adjacent First Nations and local governments, as well as provincial agencies provides an opportunity for additional review and recommendations, with any related content changes made in advance of second reading.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

[Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999](#)
[Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1062, 2008](#)
[Electoral Area C Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#)

BACKGROUND:

Existing Wildfire Protection DPAs in Areas A, B and D have been used as the template for the proposed Area C Wildfire Protection DPA, with some updated language to reflect current BC

FireSmart best practices and BC Building Code terminology. Area D and C Wildfire Protection DPAs will be aligned (as both are currently being addressed through amendment bylaws), with the opportunity to update Area A and B Wildfire Protection DPAs in the future.

Local Government Act

Under section 488(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act*, a local government may introduce a Wildfire Protection DPA – designated as a development permit area for protection of development from hazardous conditions.

BC FireSmart and BC Building Code

BC FireSmart now includes recommendations based on a Non-Combustible Zone (0 – 1.5 meters), Zone 1 (1.5 – 10 meters; fire resistant landscaping) and Zone 2 (10 – 30 meters; coniferous tree spacing). The DPA guidelines are focussed around these three areas. It is also recognized that non-combustible roofing is the most critical FireSmart action to implement; thus, all Wildfire Protection DPA applications require the use of non-combustible roofing materials, as well as the option of implementing two or more other guidelines.

Application

The Wildfire Protection DPA (DPA4) applies to all lands within Electoral Area C. There are some exemptions, including additions to existing buildings where the total area of the additions is less than 50 m². For a full list of exemptions see Section 17.20 in Appendix A.

WedgeWoods Estates

At WedgeWoods Estates, all Wildfire Protection measures are required (as opposed to non-combustible roofing and two or more measures, which is the requirement elsewhere in Area C). This approach is being proposed at WedgeWoods Estates as this reflects most closely what is currently required under the “Appendix B: Wildfire Protection Guidelines and Checklist” – part of the developer Building Scheme and Covenants. The updated terminology, based on BC FireSmart and BC Building Code, will also support ease of implementation for property owners and consistency for SLRD staff.

Fire Protection Plan

As the SLRD does not have subdividing authority (this is with MOTI); subdivision aspects are proposed to be addressed through a new Wildfire Protection Policy:

17.16. For Zoning Amendment applications involving the subdivision of 10 parcels or more, a Fire Protection Plan prepared by a Qualified Professional may be requested. The Fire Protection Plan should address safe access and evacuation routes, fire hydrant locations, fuel management.

ANALYSIS:

SLRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Alignment

The Wildfire Protection DPA supports the strategic directions of the SLRD RGS Goal 7 Create Healthy and Safe Communities and Goal 11 Take Action on Climate Change.

Electoral Area C Official Community Plan (OCP) Alignment

The Electoral Area C OCP includes a Wildfire Protection section with policies. These policies are supported by the addition of a Wildfire Protection DPA.

Electoral Area C Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The Electoral Area C Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was updated in 2016. This plan acknowledged: “wildfire management requires a multi-faceted approach for greatest efficacy and risk reduction”; as part of the CWPP update, a total of 36 strategic recommendations and objectives were outlined for Electoral Area C. The following objectives and strategic recommendations are directly addressed by the Area C Wildfire Protection DPA:

7.4 Planning and Development

Objective: To reduce wildfire hazard on private land, increase number of homes in FireSmart compliance, and decrease risk of human-caused ignitions.

- *Consider amending OCP to include Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Areas within which building standards and fuel mitigation activities can be enforced (rated roofing requirements, minimum setbacks from forested edge and top of slope, rated exterior building materials, and fuel management activities such as thinning, brushing, or pruning).*

7.4.1.1 Planning and Development (Subdivision Design)

Objective: To incorporate wildfire hazard reduction considerations in subdivision design.

- *New subdivisions should be developed with access points that are suitable for evacuation and the movement of emergency response equipment. The number of access points and their capacity should be determined during subdivision design and be based on threshold densities of houses and vehicles within the subdivision.*
- *Where forested lands border new subdivisions, consideration should be given to requiring roadways to be placed adjacent to those lands. If forested lands surround the subdivision, ring roads should be part of the subdivision design. These roads both improve access to the interface for emergency vehicles and provide a fuel break between the wildland and the subdivision*
- *Proximity of hydrant locations to access points for forested parks should be a consideration during the design process for new subdivisions*

And the following objectives are supported by implementation of the Area C Wildfire Protection DPA:

7.2 Structure Protection and Planning

Objective: Improve the FireSmart conditions of Area C by increasing FireSmart compliance for critical infrastructure, improving suppression abilities for interface areas, and increasing FireSmart compliance on private property.

7.2.1 Structure Protection and Planning (WUI Site and Structure Assessments)

Objective: Encourage private homeowners to voluntarily adopt FireSmart principles on their properties.

7.3.1 Emergency Response and Preparedness (Evacuation and Access)

Objective: To improve access and egress and enhance emergency preparedness and study area-specific evacuation plans.

Note the SLRD is in the process of preparing Community Wildfire Resilience Plans for Electoral Areas C and D. These plans state that “two of the most powerful influences that legislation and planning can have on local wildfire risk is through wildfire hazard Development Permit Areas

(DPAs) and through open burning bylaws”. Amendment Bylaw 1741-2022 directly addresses this opportunity and gap for Electoral Area C.

REGIONAL IMPACT ANALYSIS:

Impacts of the Electoral Area C Wildfire Protection DPA will largely be localized, as the DPA is only applicable to Electoral Area C. The Electoral Area C Wildfire Protection DPA is consistent with the other Electoral Area Wildfire DPAs. It is also aligned with the Regional Growth Strategy and supports implementation toward achieving the regional goals therein.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (PREFERRED OPTION)

Give first reading to Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999, Amendment Bylaw No. 1741-2022 and initiate the referral process.

Option 2

Revise as per Board direction and give first reading to the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999, Amendment Bylaw No. 1741-2022 as revised.

Option 3

Refer the OCP amendment back to SLRD staff for more information, or for revision.

FOLLOW UP ACTION: If approved by the Board, proceed with initiating referral process for OCP amendment bylaw.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999, Amendment Bylaw No. 1741-2022

Prepared by: C. Dewar, Senior Planner

Reviewed by: K. Needham, Director of Planning and Development Services

Approved by: M. Helmer, Chief Administrative Officer

SQUAMISH-LILLOOET REGIONAL DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA C OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW NO. 689, 1999, AMENDMENT BYLAW NO. 1741-2022

A bylaw of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District to amend Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999

WHEREAS the Board of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District wishes to amend the Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999;

NOW THEREFORE the Regional Board of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

1. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as “Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999, Amendment Bylaw No. 1741-2022”.
2. Schedule A Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area C Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 689, 1999 is hereby amended as follows:
 - a. Replacing the Wildfire Hazard section under 17 NATURAL HAZARDS with a new Wildfire Hazard section and **Development Permit Area 4: Wildfire Protection**, attached as Schedule 1 to this bylaw.
 - b. Updating numbering of the Flood Hazard section, to reflect additions to the Wildfire Hazard section, beginning with 17.27.
3. By adding Amendment Bylaw 1741-2022 to the Summary of Amendments table as follows:

1741-2022	Wildfire Protection Development Permit Area (DPA4)	[Date of Bylaw Adoption]
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READ A FIRST TIME this _____ day of _____, 2022.

READ A SECOND TIME this _____ day of _____, 2022.

PUBLIC HEARING this _____ day of _____, 2022.

READ A THIRD TIME this _____ day of _____, 2022.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Jen Ford
Chair

Kristen Clark
Corporate Officer

Wildfire Protection

- 17.12. The Regional District encourages the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to:
- a. Designate and maintain emergency evacuation routes from existing neighbourhoods and future subdivisions;
 - b. Establish a unified road signing and street addressing system, to facilitate emergency access and 911 services.
- 17.13. The Regional District encourages Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to reduce wildfire hazard and create and maintain fire defense improvements on Crown Lands within the Plan area.
- 17.14. Homeowners are urged to carry out annual wildfire threat assessments and to reduce wildfire threat by measures described in the Home Owner's FireSmart Manual, recognizing that the community desires a balance between retaining the visual character of the rural setting with fire protection objectives. (The FireSmart Manual is available at the following website: (<https://firesmartbc.ca/>))
- 17.15. The design of new community water systems shall take into consideration the water volumes required for adequate fire protection.
- 17.16. For Zoning Amendment applications involving the subdivision of 10 parcels or more, a Fire Protection Plan prepared by a Qualified Professional may be requested. The Fire Protection Plan should address safe access and evacuation routes, fire hydrant locations, fuel management.
- 17.17. Volunteer fire protection services shall be supported within the context of the BC Fire Safety Act and the Office of the Fire Commissioner Playbook requirements.

Development Permit Area 4: Wildfire Protection

BACKGROUND

Purpose

- 17.18. Pursuant to Section 488(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act*, Development Permit Area 4: Wildfire Protection (DPA 4) is designated as a development permit area for protection of development from hazardous conditions.

Application & Area

- 17.19. The Wildfire Protection DPA (DPA4) applies to all lands within Electoral Area C. For land within WedgeWoods Estates, see guidelines set out in 17.26. A Wildfire Protection Development Permit is required for development activities that involve any of the following:
- (a) Construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or other structure, where a building permit is required.

Exemptions

- 17.20. A Wildfire Protection Development Permit is not required for:
- (a) additions to existing buildings where the total area of the additions is less than 50

- m2;
- (b) renovations within an existing building that are not roofing related (note: roof renovations require non-combustible construction materials as per section 17.23);
- (c) where a covenant is registered on title requiring property owners to comply with the Wildfire Protection DPA guidelines;
- (d) a temporary use being carried on under a Temporary Use Permit issued by the **Board**;
- (e) where exempted by the building inspector.

Delegation of Authority

17.21. The Board delegates the authority to issue Wildfire Protection Development Permits to the Director of Planning and Development.

Objective

17.22. To ensure new developments in Electoral Area C are designed and constructed to minimize wildfire hazard, and contribute to the fire safety of neighbourhoods and communities.

GUIDELINES

General Guidelines

17.23. The following general guidelines apply:

- (a) a development permit shall be issued only if non-combustible roofing materials that conform to Class A or Class B fire resistance as referenced in the current BC Building Code are utilized (examples include metal, asphalt, clay and composite rubber tiles) and if two or more of the following measures identified in the BC FireSmart Home Owner's Manual and BC Building Code are indicated in the application:
 - i. Non-Combustible Zone (0 – 1.5 meters from face of building) – implement all of the following: non-combustible siding (including but not limited to cement board, slate, metal, plaster, stucco, and other concrete products, excluding decorative trim, soffit, fascia, and similar features); fire resistant windows (exterior windows, windows within exterior doors, and skylights shall be tempered, multilayered glazed panels, or glass block), install spark arrestor on chimney (for fireplaces, wood stoves and furnaces), screen vents, eaves, attics and underfloor openings with three-millimetre non-combustible wire mesh;
 - ii. Zone 1 (1.5 – 10 meters) – implement fire resistant landscaping (plant low-growing, well-spaced, fire-resistant plants and shrubs – refer to BC Fire Smart Landscaping Guide) and maintain a 1.5-metre, non-combustible zone around the entire home and any attachments (rock, or stone surface with no plants, debris or combustible materials); and/or
 - iii. Zone 2 (10 – 30 meters) – implement coniferous tree spacing (spacing trees at least 3 meters apart) and remove combustible materials.
- (b) Applications for a Wildfire Protection Development Permit shall be accompanied by plans indicating the following, as necessary to show how the requirements under 17.22 (a) are being implemented in the proposed development:
 - i. Location of all existing and proposed buildings and structures, parking areas, and driveways;
 - ii. Extent and nature of existing and proposed landscaping, including details of trees and ground cover; and

- iii. The exterior materials of existing and proposed structures.
 - (c) Additional information that may be required in order to consider issuance of a Development Permit includes landscape plans that are prepared in consultation with a Registered Professional Biologist, Forester, or Landscape Architect and that provide recommendations for ensuring minimal fuel loading within landscaped areas, ongoing protection from interface fire hazard, and the type and density of fire resistive plantings that may be incorporated within landscaped areas to help mitigate the interface fire hazard.
 - (d) Applicants are encouraged to review and comply with the BC FireSmart Guidelines and the fuel management recommendations outlined in the SLRD Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
 - (e) Applicants are encouraged to remove all debris from land clearing (clean wood and vegetation) and take it to an appropriate facility to be composted.
- 17.24. Where building construction and/or vegetation fuel management is proposed to take place within a Riparian Protection Area, as outlined in this bylaw, all work undertaken should be consistent with the Riparian Protection DPA Guidelines.
- 17.25. It is the applicant's responsibility to comply with all other relevant Bylaws, Acts and Regulations, including but not limited to the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*, *Water Sustainability Act*, *Fisheries Act*, *Wildlife Act*, *Migratory Birds Convention Act*, *Species at Risk Act*, and *Weed Control Act*.

WedgeWoods Estates Guidelines

- 17.26. The general guidelines outlined in 17.23 apply, with the exception of 17.23 (a). For WedgeWoods Estates a development permit shall be issued only if all of the following measures identified in BC FireSmart Home Owner's Manual and BC Building Code are indicated in the application:
- (a) Non-combustible roofing materials that conform to Class A or Class B fire resistance as referenced in the current BC Building Code are utilized (examples include metal, asphalt, clay and composite rubber tiles);
 - (b) Non-Combustible Zone (0 – 1.5 meters from face of building) – implement all of the following: 70% non-combustible exterior building materials (including siding, soffits, fascia, windows and doors), install spark arrestor on chimney (for fireplaces, wood stoves and furnaces), screen vents, eaves, attics and underfloor openings with three-millimetre non-combustible wire mesh;
 - (c) Zone 1 (1.5 – 10 meters) – implement fire resistant landscaping (plant low-growing, well-spaced, fire-resistant plants and shrubs – refer to BC Fire Smart Landscaping Guide) and maintain a 1.5-metre, non-combustible zone around your entire home and any attachments (rock, or stone surface with no plants, debris or combustible materials); and
 - (d) Zone 2 (10 – 30 meters) – implement coniferous tree spacing (spacing trees at least 3 meters apart) and remove combustible materials.