

Watercourse Protection Development Permit Application Guide



MAY 2024

This handout provides information on the application requirements and processes for altering land or doing development within a **Watercourse Protection Development Permit Area**.

What is a Watercourse Protection Development Permit?

The City of Coquitlam's Citywide Official Community Plan (CWOCP) designates **Watercourse Protection Development Permit Areas** within the City:

- All lands within 50 metres of the top of bank or top of the ravine bank of a watercourse in the Northeast Coquitlam Area Plan (NECAP)
- All lands within 30 metres of the top of bank or top of the ravine bank of a watercourse in the City Centre Area Plan (CCAP), Austin Heights Neighbourhood Plan (AHNP), Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan (MNP), and Burquitlam-Lougheed Neighbourhood Plan (BLNP)

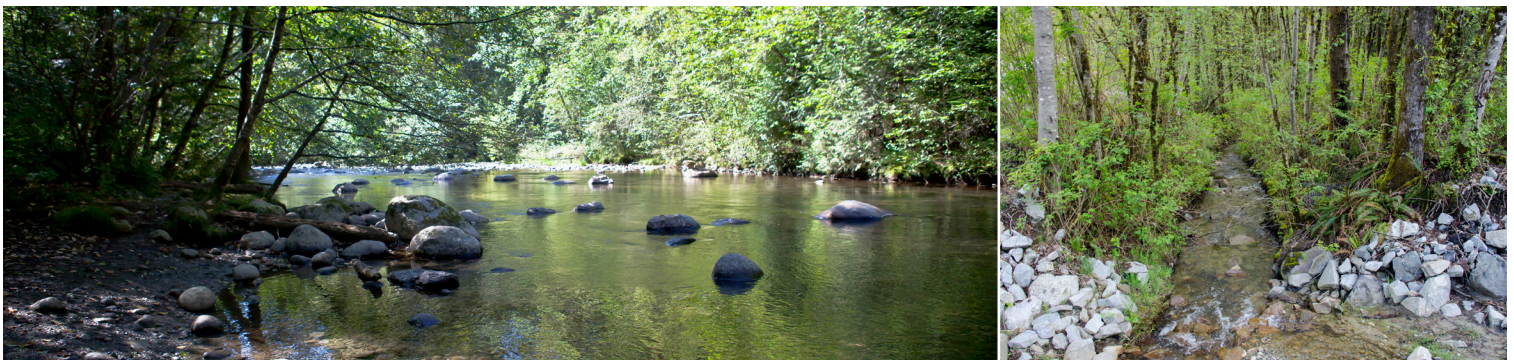
A **Watercourse Protection Development Permit (WDP)** allowing land to be altered or developed within the **Watercourse Protection Development Permit Areas** sets conditions. It may change or add relevant bylaw requirements to ensure that the following Development Permit guidelines are met:

- That environmentally-sensitive areas and features are identified, protected, restored, replaced or enhanced, as appropriate
- That the quality of water and runoff to receiving watercourses shall be maintained as close to pre-development conditions as possible or improved
- That the proposed alteration of land or development will not cause erosion, sloughing, landslip or flooding
- That riparian areas along watercourses will be protected according to standards which Council may approve by bylaw and through any necessary authorization by senior levels of government

When is a Watercourse Protection Development Permit required?

A Watercourse Protection Development Permit is required within the designated Watercourse Protection Development Permit Areas before:

- Subdividing land
- Constructing or altering a temporary or permanent building or structure
- Altering land, including the removal and deposit of soil, regrading, adding impervious surfaces, altering drainage patterns, making changes to a stream or its banks or removal of vegetation



Questions?

If you have questions regarding:

- Watercourse Protection Development Permit applications: contact the Environment Division at 604-927-3500 or WatercourseInquiries@coquitlam.ca
- Other Development Applications: contact Development Planning at 604-927-3430 or DevInfo@coquitlam.ca or visit coquitlam.ca/development

Before Making an Application

Development Permit Applications should be well-planned before submittal. Actions recommended before making an application include:

1. **Locate the Watercourse Protection Development Permit Area:** Check the City’s QtheMap mapping tool to find out if your property is in a **Watercourse Protection Development Permit Area**. Select the “Designated Land Use” (CWOCP) layer to see if your property is in an Area or Neighbourhood Plan where Watercourse Protection Development Permits apply.
2. **Determine if the Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR) applies:** According to Section 523 of the **Zoning Bylaw** and the **Riparian Areas Protection Regulation**, a RAPR assessment report is required in certain areas to determine watercourse setbacks where no development or land alteration is allowed. This requirement applies for development proposed:
 - Within 30m of the stream, measured from the top of bank or boundary of the stream (see Figure 1.1)
 - Within 30m of a ravine less than 60m in width, measured from the top of bank or top of the ravine bank (see Figure 1.2)
 - Within 10m of a ravine 60m or more in width, measured from the top of bank or top of the ravine bank (see Figure 1.2)
3. **Check if Flood Protection and Slope Control measures apply:** Section 519 of the **Zoning Bylaw** provides setbacks from watercourses and slopes for flood protection, within which no building or structure (or part of it) may be located. This is assessed using a current survey of your property.
4. **Contact the Environment Division:** Staff are available to discuss the proposed development to help identify any other required applications, and to explain the review procedure with prospective applicants and their consultants before submitting a Watercourse Protection Development Permit Application.

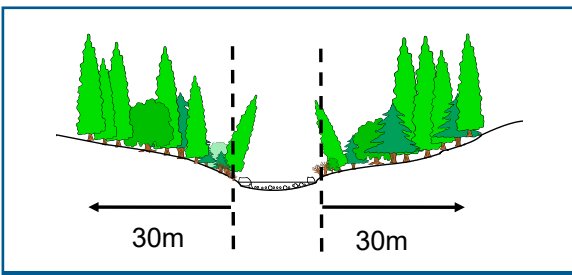


Figure 1-1: Assessment Area

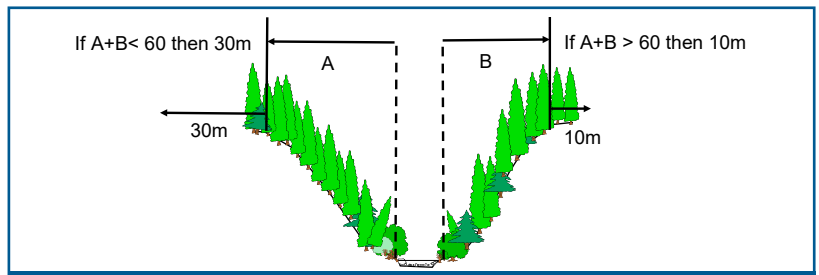


Figure 1-2: Assessment Area for ravines

Additional Applications Or Reports May Be Required

- A Significant Natural Features (SNF) report may be required under the WDP, which requires retaining a QEP
- A windfirm assessment may be required under the WDP which requires retaining a Registered Professional Forester.
- A hazard tree assessment may be required under the WDP, which requires retaining a QEP who is a certified provincial wildlife danger tree assessor.
- The Citywide Official Community Plan (CWOCP) sets out the land uses for all areas of the City. If the proposed development does not match the CWOCP land use designation, then an **Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment Application** will also be required.
- All land in the City is assigned a zone as shown on the City’s Zoning Bylaw Maps and is subject to specific regulations. If the proposed development does not match the regulations of the zone, then a **Rezoning Application** will also be required.
- If the property is within a **Development Permit Area** in the **CWOCP**, a **Development Permit Application** may also be required.
- If the proposed development involves creating new lots and/or changing an existing property line, a **Subdivision Application** will also be required.
- **Processing Timing:** If additional application(s) are required, the file manager will process them at the same time.
- Find the guides for these other application types at coquitlam.ca/development
- If the proposed development includes “changes in or about a stream” as defined under the provincial Water Sustainability Act (WSA), a Notification application or Change Approval application to the provincial government may be required as a condition of the WDP.

Watercourse Protection Development Permit (WDP) Review Process

- 1. File Manager Assigned:** City staff will assign the application to a file manager in the Environment Division. The file manager will send a letter or email to the applicant to acknowledge the application and provide contact information.
- 2. Referrals:** The file manager refers the application to City departments including Development Planning, Development Servicing, Transportation Planning, Parks, Recreation, Culture and Facilities, Building, Environment Division and Engineering and Public Works. The file manager may also refer the application to other agencies including the Provincial Ministries, adjacent municipalities and Metro Vancouver.
- 3. Review Letter:** After receiving referral comments, the file manager forwards these comments to the applicant in a **Review Letter**. The **Review Letter** identifies the changes necessary before the **WDP** may be authorized.
- 4. Resubmission:** After the applicant submits revisions, the file manager refers the revisions back to the appropriate groups. The referral groups confirm to the file manager whether the revisions address the issues identified in the **Review Letter**.
- 5. WDP Permit Preparation:** Once the plans meet the requirements, the file manager prepares the **WDP**. The file manager will forward a **WDP Package** letter containing copies of the **WDP** to be signed by the property owner, copies of the performance agreement and a sample **Letter of Credit** (for security) before the **WDP** is authorized.
- 6. WDP Authorization:** The **WDP** has been delegated to the General Manager Engineering and Public Works for authorization. Once authorized, the file manager will forward the **WDP**, signed by the City, and a copy of the performance agreement to the applicant. The **WDP** authorization is valid for two years.
- 7. Permit Fees:** See Fee Calculation Guide updated annually on the City's website.

Legal Costs

Restrictive covenants, Statutory Rights-of-Way or other legal agreements and documents may be required as part of the conditions of the **WDP**. It is the applicant's responsibility to prepare these documents for the City's review.

Time Frame

The time needed to get a decision on a **WDP Application** depends on many factors including:

- > Completeness of the application
- > Variances requested
- > Complexity of development project
- > Whether other applications are also required
- > Time for the applicant to address the identified issues in the **Review Letter**
- > Timing of Council meetings (for applicable applications)

Security

A security, based on the estimated construction value of any environmental protection structures (e.g. SPEA setback protection fencing), or habitat compensation works (e.g. channel reconstruction, riparian replanting) must be paid before the **WDP** is authorized. This security ensures the development is completed according to the terms and conditions of the Permit. When the construction of the environmental protection structures or habitat compensation works is completed, the applicant must call the file manager for an inspection before the security is refunded.

Building Permit

The applicant may apply for a **Building Permit** after the **WDP** is authorized (and other applicable applications are completed). **The Building Permit Application must follow the WDP plans.** Any changes to the approved design of the building or landscaping must be brought to the file manager and may require amending the **WDP**.