



City of Delta
COUNCIL REPORT
Regular Meeting

To: Mayor and Council

File No.: P22-01

From: Development

Date: February 7, 2024

Official Community Plan Communications and Consultation Plan

The following report has been reviewed and endorsed by the City Manager.

▪ **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT staff be directed to proceed with consultation on an updated Official Community Plan (OCP).

▪ **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is provide an overview of the proposed communications and consultation plan for the Delta OCP Provincial Housing Update.

▪ **BACKGROUND:**

In October 2023, the Province issued a Ministerial Order to the City of Delta under Section 2 of the *Housing Supply Act*. This Order requires Delta to meet a five year target of 3,607 net new housing units to be completed starting October 1, 2023. This number represents 75 percent of the estimated five year housing need for Delta. In November 2023, the Province introduced legislation that requires municipalities across British Columbia to allow increased density in areas currently zoned for single-family and duplex use. To achieve the target of increased housing supply and to respond to the new provincial legislation, the OCP needs to be updated to reflect the current housing needs of the community.

The role of an OCP is to create a vision for future planning in the community. The current OCP, originally adopted in 1985, is no longer reflective of Delta and the pressures facing the community. Over the years, the objectives and policies guiding growth have become outdated and unable to support current priorities. The current ability for Delta's OCP to meet housing needs is limited and has thus resulted in frequent OCP amendments for individual development projects. At this time there are approximately 30 OCP amendment applications currently under development review. The objective of this strategic OCP update is to enable greater housing options and align Delta's future with both provincial policy and growing housing need. A document covering many of the frequently asked questions about why changes to the OCP are needed is included in Attachment A.

▪ DISCUSSION:

In order to meet the housing target set by the Province, Delta needs to average 180 net new units receiving occupancy permits each quarter. In our first quarter, between October 1 and December 31, 2023 we added 106 net new units. While lower than our targeted average, this was not unexpected, as all completions were the result of single-detached construction, with no multi-unit residential projects receiving occupancy during this period. To enable Delta to meet this target in the future, a series of measures to increase housing options are being proposed, some of which require significant updates to Delta's OCP. These changes will be focused largely around three big moves to help meet our housing needs: increasing development opportunities in urban centres, allowing small scale multi-unit housing, and simplifying land use descriptions.

Changes to the OCP will look to enable greater opportunities for new townhouses, apartments, and mixed-use residential development in strategic locations along density corridors and urban centres. There are currently very few opportunities for these types of developments, which has led to projects having to undertake lengthy OCP amendments under the current OCP.

The second big move will work to enable small scale multi-unit housing. Changes will be made to reflect the options for small scale housing in residential areas which are currently not represented or permitted in the OCP. These will include permissions for accessory dwelling units and different forms of small scale housing.

The final big move will focus on simplifying land use descriptions. Land use designations within the current OCP will need to be streamlined to better align with both current and future land use needs. These changes will also be required for future Zoning Bylaw updates to align with provincial requirements. Additional changes will include work to permit greater density bonusing for affordable housing and purpose-built rental, and the establishment of a frequent transit development area along the Scott Road Corridor.

An OCP is intended to be a living document that can grow and change with the needs of a community. The proposed areas of focus for the renewed OCP are intended to be a strategic housing update that will work to reflect updated growth projections and align land use within the OCP with requirements of provincial legislation. These changes will allow Delta to best accommodate much needed new housing, and be better prepared to meet the Provincial Housing Target. These changes will also allow for a needed refresh to outdated policy content in the OCP. However, it is anticipated that greater work will be required in the future to further update both policy and development permit guidelines. By developing a new OCP that better reflects both the current conditions and needs of future growth, Delta will be better prepared to plan for future growth and development.

Statutory Requirements for Consultation

A local government's OCP sets policy on a wide range of topics of community interest. The *Local Government Act (LGA)* outlines the statutory requirements for community involvement in the development of the OCP. It states the local government must provide one or more opportunities it considers appropriate for consultation with the persons, organizations, and authorities that will be affected. Section 475 of the *LGA* outlines

consultation requirements during the repeal and development of an OCP, specifically noting the municipality must consider how they will consult both the public as well as local organizations and agencies. An outline of the relevant sections of the *LGA* and the list of agencies that will be consulted as part of the OCP engagement process is included in Attachment B.

Proposed Engagement Process:

Staff are proposing an engagement process that will meet the statutory requirements for consultation and support the updates needed to fulfill the Provincial Housing Target Order, while also providing the community with opportunities for meaningful involvement. Recognizing the potential for community interest in other areas of the OCP in addition to housing, the process will also provide opportunities for community input on all sections of the plan. The input gathered will be reviewed to identify areas where future work may be required. The OCP engagement process is proposed to commence in February with targeted engagement occurring in the next two-month period.

The following is a selection of the proposed steps and actions that would occur in each phase of engagement in the coming months.

Phase 1: Raise Awareness and Build Understanding (February 2024)

Recognizing that awareness of the need for housing and an update to the OCP may be low, the first phase of the consultation program will seek to raise awareness of the City's efforts to meet the provincial mandate and provide the context for the coming changes. Examples of the activities that will occur in support of the first phase include:

- Let's Talk Delta page
- Initial social media
- Fact sheets, Q&A
- Delta-wide mailout
- Outreach to agencies and interest groups

The first fact sheet, which is proposed for distribution subject to Council direction to proceed is included as Attachment C.

Phase 2: Review Direction and Gather Feedback (March 2024)

With the foundation created in the first phase, the second phase will share the direction of the OCP. In the second phase the community will be invited to review what is being considered and share their feedback through online forms and in-person discussion. Feedback gathered through this phase will be reflected in the draft of the plan. Examples of the activities that will occur in support of the second phase include:

- Videos, fact sheets, Q&A and feedback form
- Social media launch and engagement promotion
- Delta-wide mailout
- Open houses in North Delta, Ladner and South Delta to provide the community with the opportunity to review the key concepts in the plan and discuss with staff

- Online info sessions will increase access to community members not able to attend in-person events
- Ongoing outreach with agencies and interest groups

Phase 3: Final Draft, Public Hearing (April 2024)

Once the draft plan is ready, the third phase will provide the community and interested parties with the opportunity to view the draft and how their interests have been considered. This phase will also include the statutory requirement for a public hearing. Examples of the activities that will occur include:

- Social media and press release of final phase
- Draft to provincial agencies for review
- Publish draft on Let's Talk Delta page for the community to review
- Statutory notice and Public Hearing

Phase 4: Statutory Reviews and Adoption (May 2024)

Should Council wish to proceed following the public hearing and give third reading to the new OCP bylaw, the City's work on the plan concludes and reviews by the Agricultural Land Commission and Metro Vancouver are completed. Examples of the activities that will occur include:

- Agricultural Land Commission referral
- Metro Vancouver Regional Planning and Board Meetings
- Final Adoption of Bylaw (June 2024)

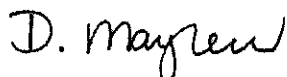
▪ Implications

Financial Implications – Delta recently received \$655,377 in provincial capacity funding to assist in implementing new legislative changes to support housing initiatives. A portion of this funding will be allocated to communications and consultation associated with Delta's OCP update.

Interdepartmental Implications – The development of an OCP requires the input and collaboration across departments including Development, Engineering, Finance, Corporate Services, and Parks, Recreation and Culture. Staff are actively engaging with representatives from these departments in the plan update process.

▪ CONCLUSION:

This report provides an overview of the proposed engagement process for the OCP Provincial Housing Update. It is intended to meet the statutory requirements for consultation and provide residents and interested parties with meaningful opportunities to participate within the constraints of the housing mandate and recent provincial legislation. With Council's direction, staff will initiate the public consultation process for the new OCP.



Doreann Mayhew, P.Eng.
General Manager, Development



Deanie Wong
Director, Communications

▪ **ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Emerging Frequently Asked Questions about Official Community Plans
- B. Local Government Act Consultation Requirements
- C. Housing Our Future Fact Sheet

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What is an Official Community Plan (OCP)

An Official Community Plan, often referred to as an OCP, is a City's plan for how the community will grow and develop by guiding future land uses. It reflects the overall values of the community by establishing visions, policies and objectives for future development that impact where we live, work and play. An OCP is a legal requirement under Sections 471 to 478 of the provincial *Local Government Act*.

How old is Delta's OCP?

The structure of Delta's current OCP was established in 1985. A comprehensive update of guiding policies was last completed in 2005. The OCP contains five different area plans, all of which were established in the 1990s. The East Ladner and Riverside Area Plans have remained generally the same since adoption in 1992 and 1994, respectively. The North Delta Area Plan is the most recent, with a full update in 2014. The Ladner Area Plan was originally adopted in 1998, and has had portions of the plan amended in 2006 (housing policies), 2012 (Ladner Waterfront updates) and 2021 (Ladner Village updates). The Tsawwassen Area Plan was last updated in 2011.

Why do OCPs need to be updated?

Official community plans describe the vision for growth in the community. Over the years, the objectives and policies related to growth and development of the community change. The ability to support current objectives are limited when the OCP is not regularly updated to reflect the current challenges and future growth.

What will be updated in the new OCP?

The focus of this update is on accommodating current housing needs and responding to provincial requirements. As such, the main updates are to the growth projections and the future land use plan, which outlines a plan for housing growth by designating lands for different uses. Land use designations in our environmental, agricultural, and industrial areas are generally remaining the same; the emphasis is on planning for new housing opportunities within the existing communities of Ladner, North Delta and Tsawwassen. These opportunities will be identified on a new city-wide land use map that includes a unifying framework throughout Delta.

This update also includes a basic review of policies and development guidelines to refresh outdated content. It is anticipated that work will continue to be required in these aspects of the plan in subsequent updates.

Why is Delta updating the OCP so quickly?

Delta's OCP is old and needs to be updated to reflect the current housing needs in the community. Council's consideration of OCP amendments have become a regular part of processing development applications. OCP amendments for single projects should be an infrequent occurrence. There are currently over 30 OCP amendment applications in the City's development review process.

Shouldn't the OCP take years to update?

There is an urgent need for a quick update to respond to the provincial Housing Target Order and respond to Delta's current housing needs. This update will also help fulfil Delta's obligations to respond to other provincial requirements related to small scale multi-unit housing, transit-oriented areas, and a requirement to update Delta's Official Community Plan to accommodate housing needs. Delta will continue to review and refine its Official Community Plan in future years. The Province has indicated that updates will be mandatory every five years.

What is a Zoning Bylaw?

A Zoning Bylaw regulates how land, buildings and other structures may be constructed and used. Zoning bylaws divide the municipality into zones, name each zone and establish the boundaries of those zones. A zoning bylaw defines permitted uses in a zone and building regulations such as density, height and setbacks. For example, residential zones can be defined to reflect different types of residential uses such as single-detached homes, duplexes, townhomes, and apartment. Municipalities are required to align zoning bylaws with their OCP.

Why does Delta need more housing?

The City of Delta's goal is to have housing available for all, such that there is a place for everyone in the community. The City has undertaken significant work to develop a Housing Action Plan to achieve this goal. Some key highlights from Delta's Housing Needs Assessment include:

- Over 75% of Delta's housing stock is owned, with about 80% of rental stock being provided as secondary rental (e.g., suites in detached homes, rented condos).
- The amount of primary, purpose-built rental in the city only accounts for approximately 5% of Delta's housing stock. Only 2% of Delta's purpose-built rental stock has been built since 2000, meaning 98% of Delta's purpose-built rental stock was built in the last century.
- Increases in household income are not keeping pace with the increases in rents or home sale prices.
- Many Delta households (18% of owners and 33% of renters) spend more than 30% of their income on shelter costs.
- Waitlists for the limited supply of non-market housing (e.g. through BC Housing) are increasing.
- Delta's population is aging, and household size is decreasing.
- The housing affordability challenges experienced by renters generally require more intervention than the challenges experienced by owners.

How much housing does Delta need?

The province has estimated that Delta's total housing need is 4,809 net new units over the next five years.

What is the Housing Target Order?

On September 23, 2023 the Province imposed a Ministerial Order to the City of Delta under Section 2 of the Housing Supply Act. The Ministerial Order requires Delta to meet a five-year target of 3,607 net new housing units, which the Province noted reflects 75% of the total Provincial Housing Needs Estimate for the City of Delta. See [Ministerial Order 279/2023 \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/speical/ministerial-orders/2023/2023-09-23-ministerial-order-housing-supply-act)

Why was Delta issued an order?

In May 2023, the provincial *Housing Supply Act* came into force to help increase the amount and pace of new housing by giving the Province authority to set housing targets for 47 municipalities. The Province prioritized municipalities for housing orders in late 2023, using an empirical index to determine which municipalities in BC were experiencing the greatest housing pressures. Delta was among one of the first 10 municipalities that received a provincial housing target. The targets require Delta to address local barriers to construction so that housing can get built faster, including updating zoning bylaws and streamlining local development approval processes. See [Targets released for 10 municipalities to deliver more homes for people | BC Gov News](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/speical/ministerial-orders/2023/2023-05-03-ministerial-order-housing-supply-act)

What if Delta fails to meet the order or does not comply?

Municipalities issued housing target orders must report their progress annually. The deadline is 45 days after the end of the reporting period. To meet housing targets, municipalities will need to create the conditions for housing development, including updating official community plans and zoning bylaws, and streamlining development approval processes. If a municipality can't meet their target, the Minister of Housing may appoint an advisor to review the municipality's progress and make recommendations. As a last resort, the B.C. government may issue a directive to require the municipality to enact or amend a bylaw or accept or reject a permit to help meet the target. See [Municipal housing targets - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

What actions has Delta already taken to improve housing opportunities?

Delta has undertaken a number of steps to help improve opportunities for new housing in recent years. The Housing Action Plan, completed in 2021, put forward a series of short and long term strategies to support housing development. Since adoption several of these priorities have been completed, including DCC waivers for non-profit housing in 2022, and the approval of Tenant Relocation and Rental Stock Protection Policies in 2023. Other changes have also been made to help support housing including permitting suites in duplex dwellings, parking reductions for rental developments, and harmonizing maximum floor area regulations across Delta.

How does Delta plan to meet the Order?

Building on recent policy changes, Delta is proposing a series of additional measures to meet the housing targets. Many of these measures required updates to Delta's Official Community Plan (OCP). The updated OCP would include permission for accessory dwelling units, small scale multi-unit housing opportunities, increased densities in the urban centres and major corridors, density bonusing for affordable housing and purpose built rental, as well as new townhouse and apartment opportunities. See [Delta - Search \(civicweb.net\)](#)

How will the community be involved?

Delta will be hosting a series of in-person and on-line information sessions in March 2024 on the proposed updates to the OCP. At the sessions, residents will be able to see the proposed updates to the land use maps and ask questions of staff.

Where will growth be focused?

Increases to density are proposed in the urban centres and major corridors. This includes major arterial roads such as Scott Road, 56 Street and Ladner Trunk Road. It also includes urban centres in all three communities.

How were the growth locations identified?

Growth areas have been identified where there is good proximity to transit, shops, services and infrastructure that would support additional density.

Consultation requirements:

Sections 475 of the *Local Government Act (LGA)* requires that during the development of an Official Community Plan, the local government provide one or more opportunities it considers appropriate for consultation with persons, organizations and authorities it considers will be affected.

In particular Sections 475(2)(b) specifies that to satisfy Section 475, Delta must consider whether consultation is required with the following:

- Metro Vancouver Regional District Board;
- Municipal Council for any adjacent municipalities;
- First Nations;
- Provincial and Federal governments and their agencies.

In addition, Section 476 of the *LGA* requires that Delta School Board be consulted when a new OCP is being prepared.

Finally, Section 477 of the *LGA* requires that Delta must refer the new OCP to the Agricultural Land Commission for comment after first reading of the bylaw.

Proposed External Consultation:

With consideration to the legislation the following is a list of agencies for consultation:

- Metro Vancouver
- Tsawwassen First Nation
- Musqueam Indian Band
- Delta School Board
- Delta Fire Department
- Delta Police Department
- TransLink
- Fraser Health
- Agricultural Land Commission
- Province of British Columbia

In consideration of consultation with adjacent municipalities, a letter will be sent to Surrey and Richmond explaining that Delta is completing a strategic, housing-focused OCP update in a short time frame in order to meet Provincial requirements.

In addition to consultation with external agencies, engagement events and activities will be undertaken to connect with both local residents and community groups to both inform them and allow them to provide feedback throughout the process. This will include engagement and promotion of the OCP through Delta social media channels, a Let's Talk Delta page, as well as public meetings and online webinars.

HOUSING OUR FUTURE

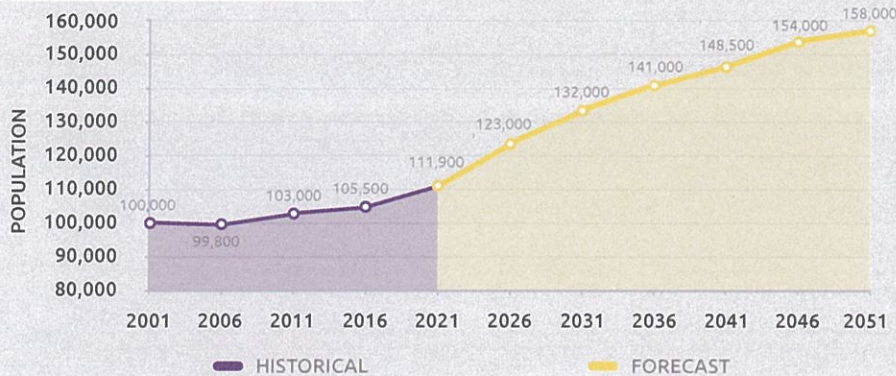
2024 Official Community Plan Update

Attachment C
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The BC Government has ordered cities across the province to update their Official Community Plans to expedite the addition of more housing. The community will have the opportunity to learn more about this work and what it means to Delta neighbourhoods, and share their views about the OCP update through the City's engagement process. The City has prepared this fact sheet to provide residents with the information they need to participate effectively. Visit letstalk.delta.ca/HousingOurFuture for more information and to follow this work.

Delta Population, 2001 - 2051



Delta Is Growing

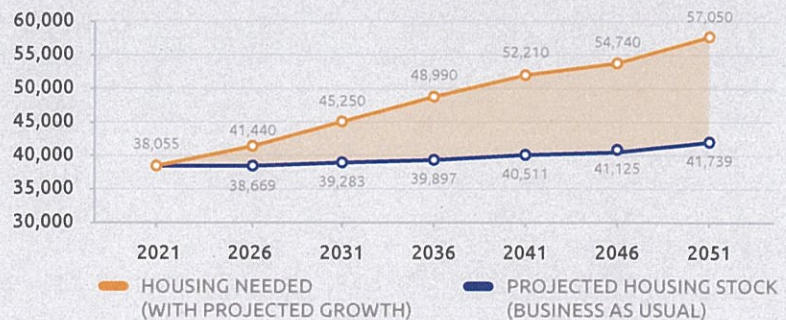
The province estimates that Delta's population will grow by as many as 31,000 people in the next 20 years. This is an increase of close to 28% over today's population of 112,000.

Did you know? The largest population spike in Delta history occurred in 1971 when the population grew by 214%.

Housing Not Keeping Pace With Growth

Delta is expected to need another 14,000 homes over the next 20 years and the rate of development is not keeping pace. In order to accelerate development in the city and meet the housing demand, the City is reducing 'red tape', investing in infrastructure, and working to update outdated bylaws and plans.

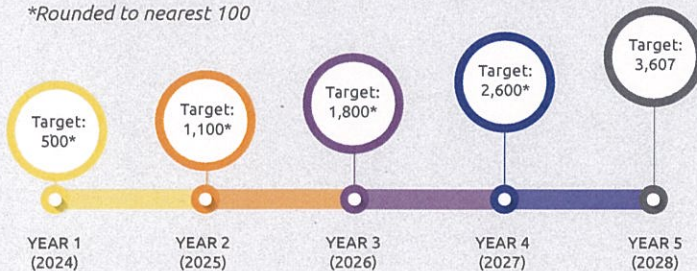
Projected Housing Supply Shortage



Province Issues Housing Target Order To Delta

New Housing Targets

*Rounded to nearest 100



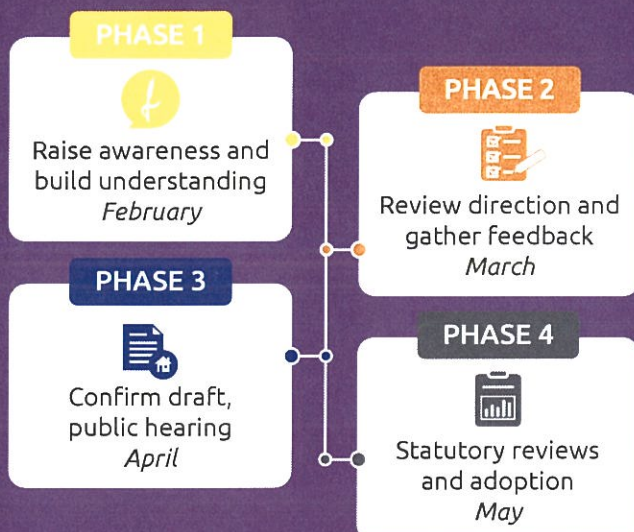
Many cities across the province have not been able to keep up with the need for housing in their communities. The province created the Housing Supply Act to address the problem and on September 23, 2023 the City of Delta was one of 10 cities that received a Ministerial Housing Target Order to add housing.

The Ministerial Order requires Delta to meet a five-year target of 3,607 net new housing units, which the Province noted reflects 75% of the total Provincial Housing Needs Estimate for the City of Delta. See Ministerial Order 279/2023 (gov.bc.ca)

Learn more about Delta's plan on the next page.

Changes Coming To Delta Neighbourhoods

Residents will see changes in Delta neighbourhoods as a result of the province's Housing Target Order and the update to the OCP. The City is planning a multi-phase process to share information about the changes and invite feedback from residents within the constraints of the provincial mandate.



Community Invited To Get Involved

In March, the OCP updates will be presented for discussion with the community. A series of open houses, online information sessions, and meetings with interest groups are being planned to share information and gather feedback.

Additional details regarding opportunities to get involved will be provided in the next few weeks. Key dates are outlined below. To prepare, we invite residents to visit letstalk.delta.ca to access materials and register to receive updates directly.

Phase 2 Key Dates

- Feb 29 Materials available for review
- Mar 5 Online Info Session* – 6 pm to 7:30 pm
- Mar 6 Open House – 6 pm to 8 pm
at North Delta Rec Centre Gym
- Mar 7 Open House – 6 pm to 8 pm
at South Delta Rec Centre Main Hall
- Mar 9 Open House – 10 am to 12 pm
at Ladner Community Centre Auditorium
- Mar 12 Online Info Session in Punjabi*
– 6 pm to 7:30 pm
- Mar 14 Open House – 6 pm to 8 pm
at North Delta Centre for the Arts

*Registration required at letstalk.delta.ca/HousingOurFuture

The province introduced a number of changes to incentivize the development of more small-scale, multi-unit housing in the short term.

- Allowing secondary suites, accessory dwelling units and coach homes in all single-detached residential zones
- Increasing the number of units allowed on single-detached lots up to four units
- Eliminating public hearings for rezoning applications that align with the OCP

More information on the province's housing directives can be found at strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/housing.

A Plan For How We Grow

Cities are required to update their Official Community Plans to integrate the provincial requirements and expedite the addition of housing over the next 20 years. These plans describe the long-term vision of a community and guide decisions on municipal planning and land use management. They include maps that identify how a city's land will be used and where it will grow.

Delta has not had a consolidated update to the OCP since 1985. There are currently 30 applications in the queue seeking amendments to Delta's OCP.

OCP Update Focused On Housing

Work on the required OCP update is underway. The update will focus on housing and the changes needed to meet the requirements of the provincial order. To support the addition of housing, the City will also consider simplifying land uses, expanding the range of unit types, increasing the floor space allowances, reducing parking requirements, and allowing more height in urban centres and along transit corridors.

The City will also review other sections of the OCP to determine if future work is required. Other sections that will be reviewed include:

- Transportation
- Commercial Land Use
- Industrial Land Use
- Community Services
- Natural Environment
- Climate Change
- Agriculture
- Utilities and Infrastructure
- Parks, Rec & Culture
- Inclusive and Vibrant Community



Visit letstalk.delta.ca/HousingOurFuture for more information and to participate.
Contact us at 604-946-3380 or email DeltaOCPUUpdate@delta.ca.

