

TO: Agricultural Advisory Committee **DATE:** September 21, 2018

FROM: Kristy Marks
Planner **FILE:** PL2018-075

**SUBJECT: Request for Comment on Non-Farm Use in the Agricultural Land Reserve
Application No. PL2018-075
3452 Jingle Pot Road – Electoral Area C
T & R Ventures Ltd., Inc. No. BC1112945 / Brent Murdoch & Discover
Montessori Society
The Easterly 60 Acres of Section 16, Range 3, Mountain District Except That
Part in Plan 29404, VIP68415, VIP68636 and VIP72060**

SUMMARY

This is an application for non-farm use in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) to permit the development of a sustainably designed Montessori Farm School on an 8.8 hectare parcel located in Electoral Area C. Should the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) wish to provide comments to the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), it may do so by considering the adoption of a motion. Any comments provided by the Committee will be provided to the ALC, along with a copy of this report to assist the ALC in making a decision on this application.

BACKGROUND

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) has received an application for non-farm use in the ALR from Brent Murdoch, agent for the Discover Montessori Society on behalf of T & R Ventures Ltd., Inc. No. BC1112945. The subject property is legally described as The Easterly 60 Acres of Section 16, Range 3, Mountain District Except That Part in Plan 29404, VIP68415, VIP68636 and VIP72060 and the civic address is 3452 Jingle Pot Road. The subject property is approximately 8.8 hectares in area and is located entirely within the ALR. The parcel is bounded by Jingle Pot Road to the west, developed rural properties to the north and south and a large ALR parcel to the east. The property currently contains a dwelling unit, farm market building, barn, and several accessory buildings. Existing uses include self-board horse boarding and riding ring as well as fields that are not currently being farmed (see Attachments 1 and 2 for Subject Property Map and Aerial Photo).

The applicants, the Discover Montessori Society, made a non-farm use application in 2017 to permit the development of a sustainably designed Montessori Farm School under application PL2017-013. They were granted a conditional approval by the ALC for Phase 1 of their proposal including the use of 0.95 hectares for the school on the existing gravel parking. The approval limited construction to a maximum of 12,000 ft² of single storey modular buildings as well as the repurposing of the existing farm market building for classroom purposes. The applicants have

since revised their plans and are requesting approval for a non-farm use to allow 1.63 hectares of the parcel to be used to develop farm school infrastructure, 0.55 hectares of which would include permanent buildings with a maximum floor area of approximately 18,000 ft². The applicants have continued to work on the farm planting several crops, renovating paddocks, prepping an additional two acres for planting next spring and are involved with the Stream Keepers program.

A copy of the applicant's submission package is included as Attachment 10. Personal Information is redacted in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. The site visit was waived for this application given that Agricultural Advisory Committee members were provided an opportunity to attend the site on March 8, 2017 as part of a previous non-farm use application.

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

The subject property is currently designated 'Resource Land and Open Spaces' pursuant to the "Regional District of Nanaimo Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1615, 2011" (RGS). The RGS policies support minimizing the potential impacts that non-farm land uses may have on farming operations and recommends the inclusion of policies in Official Community Plans (OCP) and the adoption of zoning regulations that reduce the opportunity for land use conflicts to occur (see Attachment 7 Regional Growth Strategy - Land Use Designation). Further to this, the RGS encourages the provincial government to protect and preserve the agricultural land base through the ALR (see Attachments 8 and 9 Regional Growth Strategy Goals).

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

The subject property is currently designated as 'Rural' pursuant to the "Regional District of Nanaimo East Wellington – Pleasant Valley Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1055, 1997" (see Attachment 6). The policies of this designation support traditional rural activities, including those associated with normal agriculture and silviculture and recognize that where land in the ALR is proposed for non-farm use, approval must first be obtained from the ALC. In addition, all subdivision and non-farm uses within the ALR shall comply with the agricultural objectives and policies in Section 3.1 – Agriculture of the OCP. Policy within this section states that the RDN may support the use of agricultural land for non-farm purposes provided the ALC first grants permission for the proposed use and the use is compatible with surrounding land use patterns and development (see Attachment 6 Official Community Plan Land Use Designation).

The parcel is also designated within the Fish Habitat Protection Development Permit Area therefore a development permit may be required prior to development, including alteration of land, vegetation removal or construction of buildings and structures on the subject property.

Amendments to "Regional District of Nanaimo East Wellington – Pleasant Valley Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1055, 1997" are not required provided the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal is consistent with OCP policies at the time of the zoning amendment.

ZONING

The parcel is currently zoned Agriculture 1 Zone (AG1), Subdivision District 'D', pursuant to "Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987" (Bylaw 500) (see

Attachments 4 and 5 for zoning regulations and minimum parcel size). The AG1 Zone permits principle uses including: Farm Use, Agriculture, Residential Use; Accessory Residential Uses: Home Based Business, Secondary Suite and Accessory Farm Uses: Temporary Sawmill, Agricultural Education and Research, Agri-tourism Accommodation, Production of Biological Integrated Pest Management Products and generally allows two dwelling units on parcels greater than 2.0 hectares in area. The applicant proposes to develop a sustainably designed Montessori Farm School offering hands-on education in a working agricultural farm setting as shown on the Proposed Site Plan, prepared by the applicant (see Attachment 3 Proposed Site Plan).

Amendments to Bylaw 500 are required to allow the proposed non-farm use.

BOARD POLICY AND AAC PROCEDURE

Regional District of Nanaimo “Board Policy B1.8: Review of ALR Applications” (Board Policy B1.8) provides an opportunity for the AAC to review and provide comments on ALR applications for exclusion, subdivision and non-farm use, on lands within the ALR. Policy B1.8 also states that all ALR non-farm use applications are to be forwarded to the ALC with no resolution of support or opposition from the Regional Board of Directors.

In accordance with the AAC Terms of Reference, the role of the AAC members is to provide local perspective and expertise to advise the Board (and in this case comment to the ALC) on a range of agricultural issues on an ongoing and as needed basis, as directed by the Board. In addition to members’ local knowledge and input, comment on ALR applications may be guided by Board approved policies such as the RDN AAC, the Board Strategic Plan, the RGS and the applicable OCP along with the relevant land use bylaws. Members of the AAC can also find information related to ALR land use and agriculture in BC, on the ALC and Ministry of Agriculture websites. Local and contextual information can also be found on the RDN’s agricultural projects website at www.growingourfuture.ca.

Comment provided to the ALC from the AAC is consensus based, through Committee adoption of a motion. If an AAC member has comments regarding an application being submitted to the ALC, the appropriate time to provide those comments is in the Committee meeting, during discussion on the application, and prior to the Committee’s adoption of its motion. Only motions approved by the Committee will be forwarded to the ALC for its consideration. Comments from individual AAC members will not be included in the staff report that is forwarded to the ALC.

The comment provided by the AAC is not an approval or denial of the application and is only a recommendation to the ALC regarding a specific application. As per Board Policy B1.8 any comment from the AAC is provided in addition to the applicable standing Board resolution and Electoral Area Director’s comment (if provided). The ALC is the authority for decisions on matters related to the ALR and will consider comments in making its decision on an application.

ELECTORAL AREA DIRECTOR COMMENT

As per Board Policy B1.8, all applications under the *Agriculture Land Commission Act* for exclusion, subdivision, or non-farm use of ALR land are to be forwarded to the applicable subject property’s Electoral Area Director for comment.

With respect to this application, Director Young has provided the following comments:

I am fully supportive of the non-farm use request from the Discover Montessori School, as well as, the increase in size of the buildings from 12,000 ft² to 18,000 ft² of buildings.

Comments of Electoral Area C Director Young will be provided to the ALC, as included with this report.



Kristy Marks
Kmarks@rdn.bc.ca
September 12, 2018

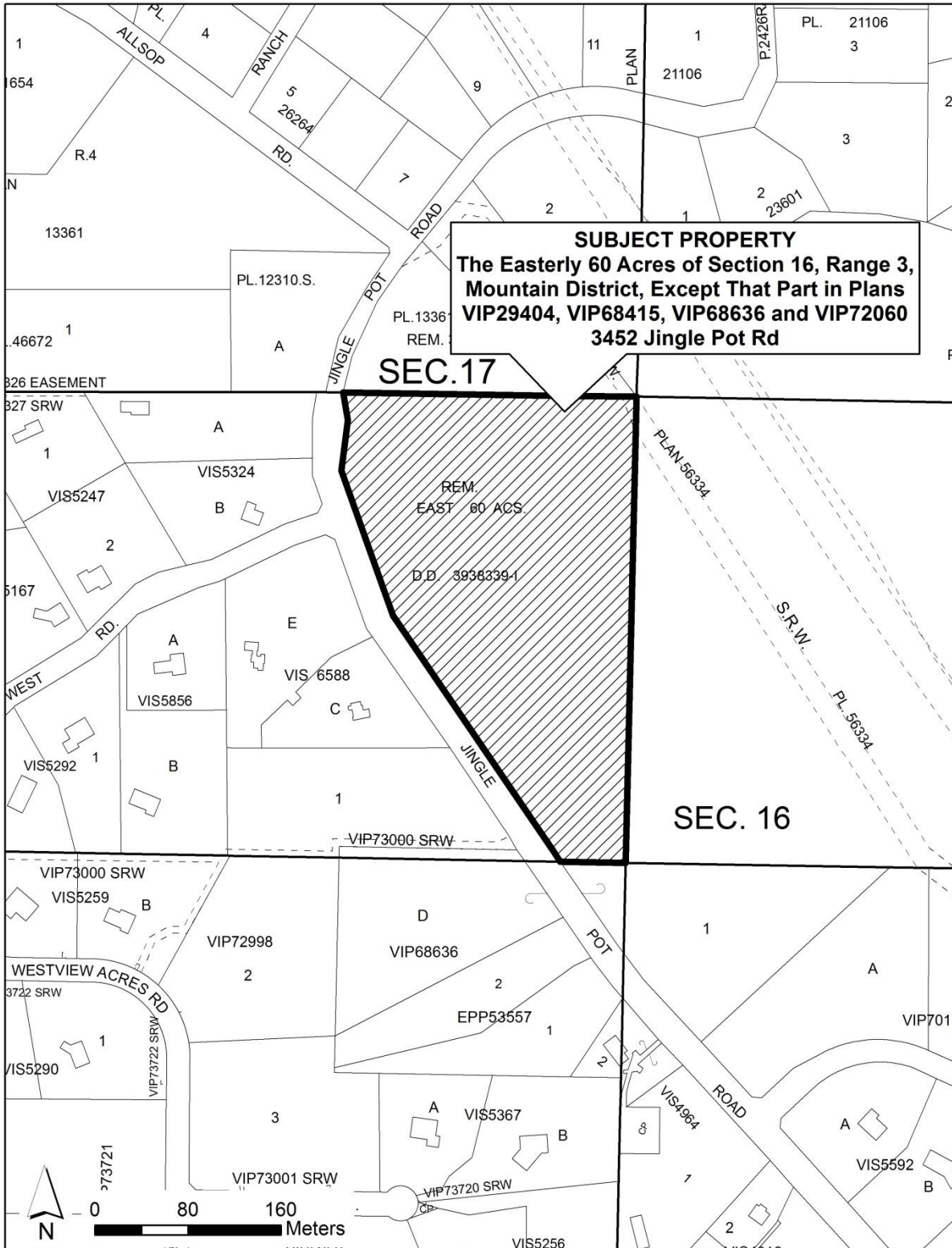
Reviewed by:

- J. Holm, Manager, Current Planning
- P. Thompson, Manager, Long Range Planning
- G. Garbutt, General Manager, Strategic & Community Development
- P. Carlyle, Chief Administrative Officer

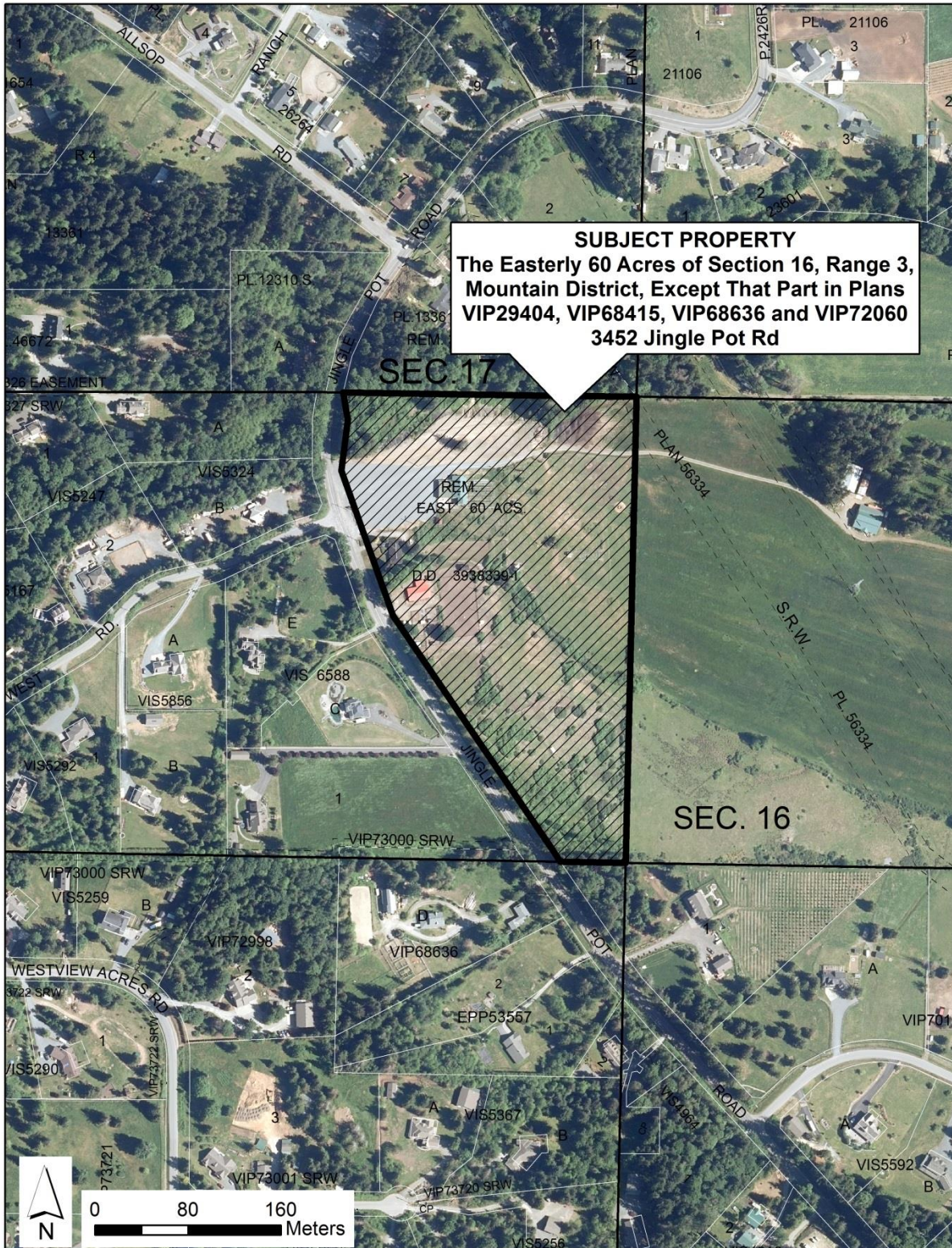
Attachments:

1. Subject Property Map
2. 2016 Aerial Photo
3. Proposed Site Plan (Concept Plan)
4. Existing Zoning
5. Bylaw 500, Schedule '4B' Subdivision Districts – Minimum Parcel Size
6. Official Community Plan Land Use Designation
7. Regional Growth Strategy - Land Use Designation
8. Regional Growth Strategy - Goal 7 - Enhance Economic Resiliency – Agriculture
9. Regional Growth Strategy - Goal 8 – Food Security
10. Applicant's Submission Package

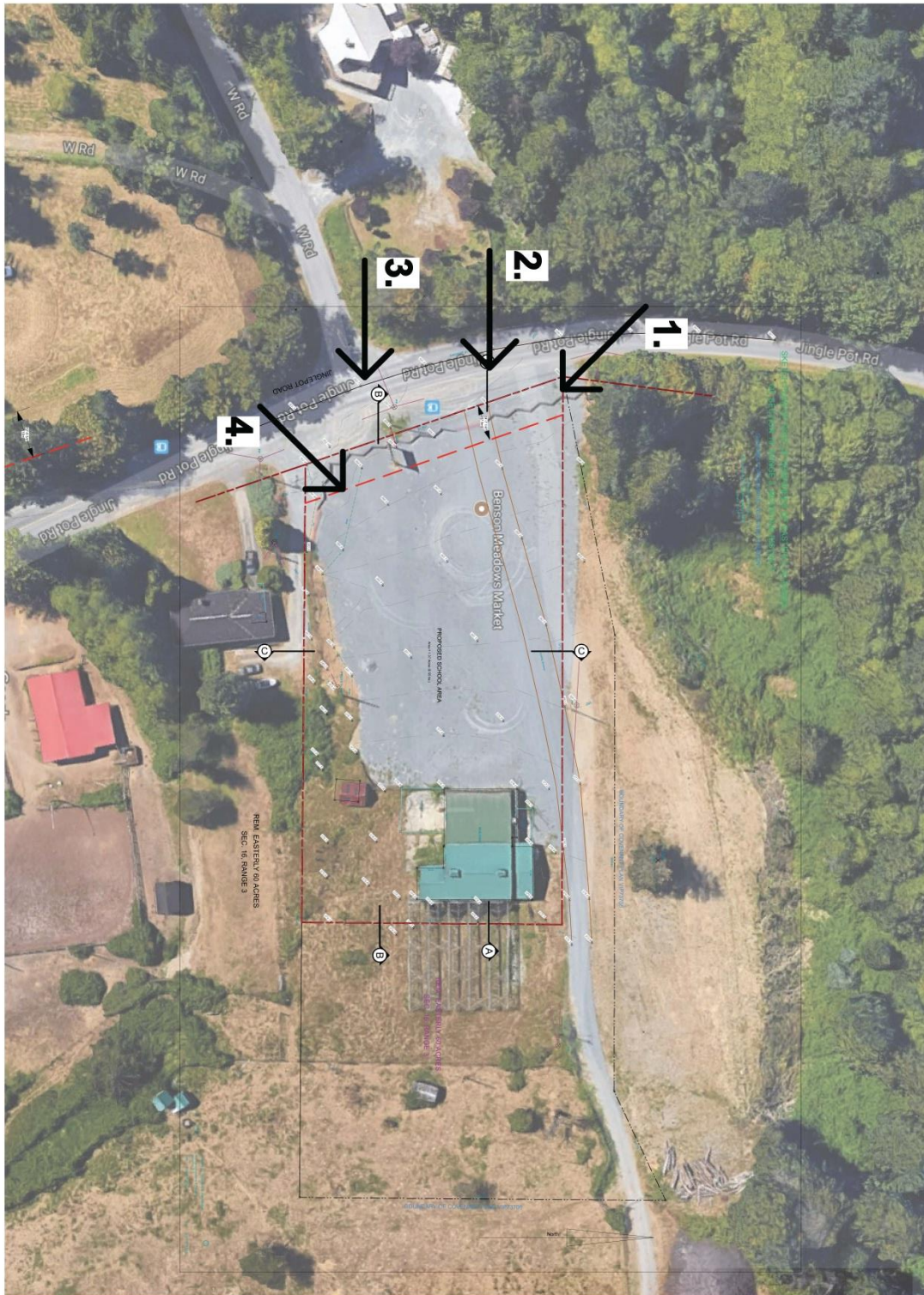
**Attachment 1
Subject Property Map**



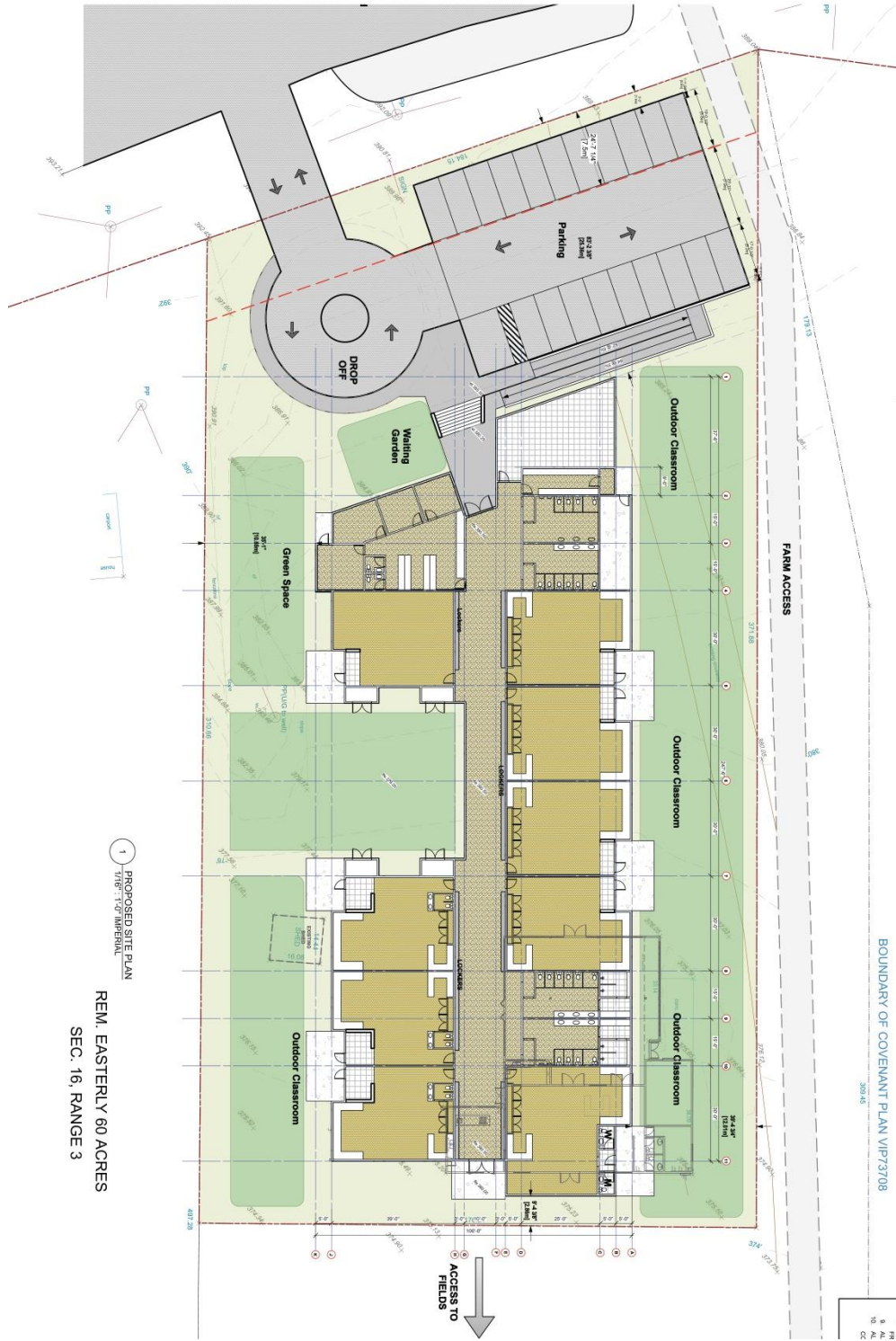
**Attachment 2
2016 Aerial Photo**



Attachment 3 Proposed Site Plan (Concept Plan) (Page 1 of 2)



Attachment 3
Proposed Site Plan (Concept Plan)
(Page 2 of 2)



Attachment 4 Existing Zoning (Page 1 of 4)

Part 3 – Land Use Regulations

Section 3.4.1

A GR I C U L T U R E 1

AG1⁴²⁴³

3.4.1.1 Permitted Uses and Minimum Site Area

Permitted Principal Uses

- a) Farm Use – on lands located in the Agricultural Land Reserve
- b) Agriculture – on lands not located in the Agricultural Land Reserve
- c) Residential Use

Permitted Accessory Residential Uses

- a) Home Based Business
- b) Secondary Suite

Permitted Accessory Farm Uses

- a) Temporary Sawmill
 - b) Agricultural Education and Research
 - c) Agri-tourism Accommodation
 - d) Production of Biological Integrated Pest Management Products
 - e) Gathering for an Event⁴⁴
-

3.4.1.2 Maximum Number and Size of Buildings and Structures

- 1) Accessory residential buildings combined floor area of 400 m²
- 2) Dwelling units/parcel
 - a) on a parcel having an area of 2.0 ha or less 1

For Electoral Areas 'A', 'C', 'E', and 'H'

 - b) on a parcel having an area greater than 2.0 ha 2

For Electoral Area 'G'

 - c) on a parcel having an area equal to or greater than twice the minimum parcel size as established by Schedule '4B Subdivision District – Minimum Parcel Sizes' 2

⁴² Bylaw No.500.383, Adopted June 25, 2013

⁴³ Bylaw No. 500.402, adopted June 28, 2016

⁴⁴ Bylaw No. 500.413, adopted May 22, 2018

**Attachment 4
Existing Zoning
(Page 2 of 4)**

Part 3 – Land Use Regulations

AGRICULTURE 1 continued

- d) Notwithstanding subsection (c), on a parcel located in this zone and created prior to February 22, 2011 and having an area greater than 2.0 ha. 2
 - 3) Height (non-farm and accessory farm buildings and structures) 9.0 m
 - 4) Parcel coverage
 - a) Non-farm buildings and structures 10%
 - b) Farm or agriculture buildings and structures 25%
 - c) Greenhouses 75%
 - d) In no case shall the combined parcel coverage exceed 75%.
 - e) Notwithstanding a), b), c) and d) above or any other regulation in this Bylaw, the following agricultural structures shall be exempt from maximum parcel coverage:
 - i) Permeable detention ponds
 - ii) Support structures used for shading, frost and wind protection, netting, or trellising.
-

3.4.1.3 Minimum Setback Requirements

- 1) All non-farm buildings and structures – All lot lines 8.0 m
except where:
 - a) the parcel is less than 4000 m² in area then the setback from lot lines may be reduced to 2.0 m from an interior side lot line and to 5.0 m from other lot lines, excluding the front lot line;
 - b) any part of a parcel is adjacent to or contains a watercourse or the sea then the regulations in Sections 3.3.8 and 3.3.9 shall apply.
 - 2) All agriculture or farm buildings, structures and uses – in accordance with Section 3.3.10.
-

3.4.1.4 Other Regulations

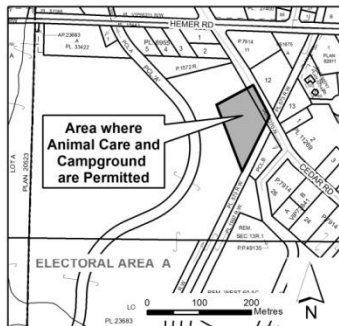
- 1) For any part of a parcel in the Agricultural Land Reserve, 'Farm Use' shall be a permitted principal use and for any part of a parcel not located in the Agricultural Land Reserve, 'Agriculture' shall be a permitted principal use.
- 2) Accessory Farm uses are only permitted on that part of a parcel that is within the Agricultural Land Reserve.
- 3) Specific 'Farm' and 'Permitted' uses as defined in the *Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision, and Procedure Regulation* shall be developed in accordance with Section 3.3.15 and 3.3.16 of this Bylaw.
- 4) Despite any regulation in this Bylaw, land established as "Agricultural Land Reserve" pursuant to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* is subject to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act and Regulations*, and applicable orders of the Land Reserve Commission.

Attachment 4 Existing Zoning (Page 3 of 4)

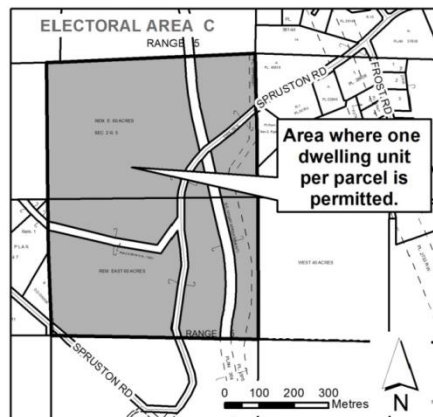
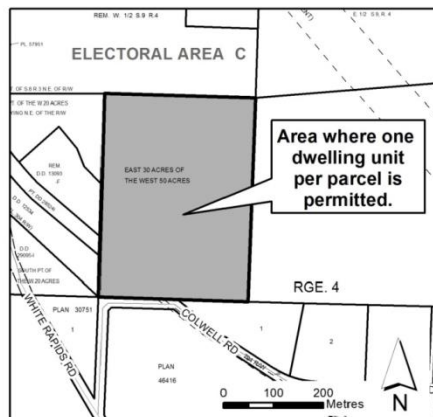
Part 3 – Land Use Regulations

AGRICULTURE 1 continued

- 5) Animal Care and Campground shall be permitted in the shaded area outlined in bold in the map below.



- 6) Notwithstanding Section 3.4.1.2 Dwelling units/parcel the maximum number of dwelling units permitted in the shaded areas outlined in bold in the maps below shall be limited to one dwelling unit per parcel.

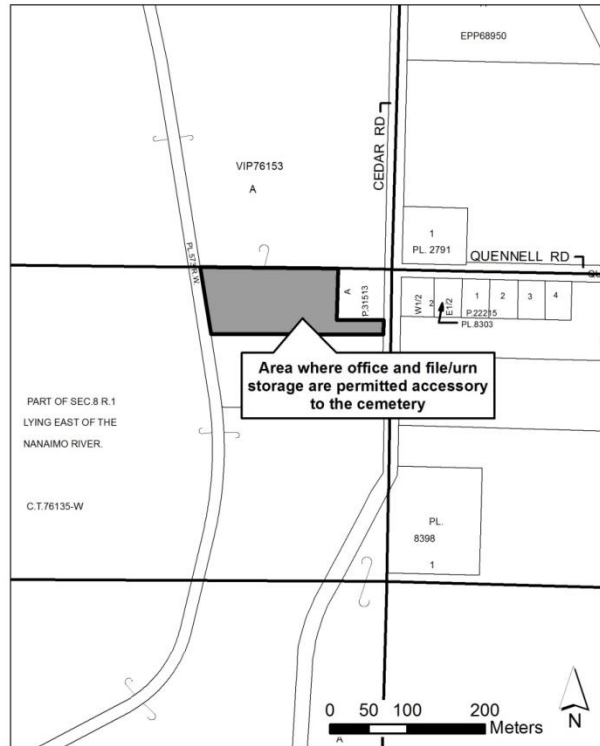


**Attachment 4
 Existing Zoning
 (Page 4 of 4)**

Part 3 – Land Use Regulations

AGRICULTURE 1 continued

- 7) Office and file/urn storage accessory to the cemetery shall be permitted in accordance with ALC non-farm use approval in the shaded area outlined in bold in the map below.⁴⁵



⁴⁵ Bylaw 500.412, adopted March 27, 2018

Attachment 5

Bylaw 500, Schedule '4B' Subdivision Districts – Minimum Parcel Size

Part 4 – Subdivision Regulations '4B' – Subdivision Districts

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

BYLAW NO. 500

SCHEDULE '4B' SUBDIVISION DISTRICTS - MINIMUM PARCEL SIZES

- 1) The minimum size of any lot created by subdivision shall be determined by the standard of services provided and shall meet the applicable minimal parcel size set out below: ¹

Minimum Parcel Sizes				
Subdivision District	Community Water & Sewer System	Community Water System - No Community Sewer	Community Sewer System - No Community Water	All Other Subdivisions
A	20.0 ha	20.0 ha	20.0 ha	20.0 ha
B	8.0 ha	8.0 ha	8.0 ha	8.0 ha
C	5.0 ha	5.0 ha	5.0 ha	5.0 ha
CC ²	4.0 ha	4.0 ha	4.0 ha	4.0 ha
D	2.0 ha	2.0 ha	2.0 ha	2.0 ha
E	1.6 ha	1.6 ha	1.6 ha	1.6 ha
F	1.0 ha	1.0 ha	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
G	8000 m ²	1.0 ha	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
H	5000 m ²	1.0 ha	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
J ³	4000 m ²	6000 m ²	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
K	4000 m ²	4000 m ²	4000 m ²	4000 m ²
L	2000 m ²	2000 m ²	4000 m ²	4000 m ²
M	2000 m ²	2000 m ²	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
N ^{4,5}	1600 m ²	1600 m ²	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
P	1000 m ²	1600 m ²	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
Q (EA G only)	700 m ²	⁶ 1.0 ha	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
Q (other EAs)	700 m ²	2000 m ²	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
R	500 m ²	⁷ 1.0 ha	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
S ⁸	400 m ²	2000 m ²	1.0 ha	1.0 ha
T ⁹	600 m ²	No further subdivision		
V ¹⁰	50.0 ha	50.0 ha	50.0 ha	50.0 ha
Z	No further subdivision			
CD9 ¹¹	400 lots with approved pump and haul service connection			

¹ Bylaw No. 500.238, adopted February 10, 1998² Bylaw No. 500.347, adopted September 22, 2009³ Bylaw No. 500.27, adopted August 9, 1988⁴ Bylaw No. 500.66, adopted December 12, 1989⁵ Bylaw No. 500.324, adopted February 28, 2006⁶ Bylaw No. 500.264, adopted October 10, 2000⁷ Bylaw No. 500.264, adopted October 10, 2000⁸ Bylaw No. 500.27, adopted August 9, 1988⁹ Bylaw No. 500.394, adopted August 25, 2015¹⁰ Bylaw No. 500.253, adopted January 11, 2000¹¹ Bylaw No. 500.275, adopted October 9, 2001

Attachment 6
Official Community Plan Land Use Designation
(Page 1 of 6)

Regional District of Nanaimo
EAST WELLINGTON - PLEASANT VALLEY OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN - BYLAW NO. 1055

Objectives: Resource

- *Support and maintain* the long-term viability of the natural resource land base and *protect* it from activities and land uses, which may diminish its resource value or potential.
- *Encourage* the comprehensive management of the resource land base.
- *Minimize* the impact of resource operations and activities on the natural environment and neighbouring land uses and development.

Policies: Resource

Action:

1. Land within the *Resource* designation as shown on Map No. 3 attached to and forming part of this Plan, shall have a minimum parcel size of 50.0 hectares.¹
2. On land in the *Resource* designation, residential development shall be limited to one (1) dwelling unit per four (4) hectares, to a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per parcel.
3. Permitted uses within the *Resource* designation shall generally be associated with those activities involving natural resource harvesting or extraction, primary processing and passive recreational uses, including campgrounds. This shall not preclude the Regional District Board from amending the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw to either include or exclude other uses, which are deemed to be compatible or incompatible with the *Resource* designation.
4. The Regional District may consider the issuance of temporary use permits for the manufacture of asphalt products or soil composting operations on land within the *Resource* designation of this Plan provided that such operations are to be located on parcels greater than 8.0 hectares in area and associated impacts will not adversely impact neighbouring land or development or the natural environment. In the case of soil composting, such activities shall be solely for the purpose of reclaiming mined land.

Development Activated:

5. Where land designated as *Resource* is proposed to be subdivided, the Regional District shall encourage the Approving Officer to give due consideration to the protection of any adjacent forestry and/or agricultural lands, including active and *bona fide* farming operations not located within the Agricultural Land Reserve, by encouraging buffers and subdivision road layout designs which minimize intrusive points of access.

4.2 RURAL

The Rural designation applies to lands with recognized agricultural or forestry value and which are designated as either Agricultural Land Reserve or Forest Land Reserve. These

¹ Bylaw No. 1055.02 adopted January 24, 2006

Attachment 6 Official Community Plan Land Use Designation (Page 2 of 6)

Regional District of Nanaimo
EAST WELLINGTON - PLEASANT VALLEY OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN - BYLAW No. 1055

lands, which account for approximately 29% of the Plan Area's land base (950 hectares), significantly contributes to its predominant rural character by supporting traditional rural activities, large parcels and green spaces. FLR lands designated as Rural are generally in close proximity to lands used primarily for residential purposes and presently do not support intensive processing operations. The Rural designation is intended to protect agricultural and forestry lands and associated operations by relieving development pressures.

Objectives: Rural

- Support and encourage agricultural activities on productive agricultural lands.
- Support silviculture activities on productive forestry lands.
- Preserve and enhance the Plan Area's rural character and environmental quality.

Policies: Rural

Action:

1. Land within the *Rural* designation, as shown on Map No. 3 attached to and forming part of this Plan, shall have a minimum parcel size of 2.0 hectares except those lands that as of the date of this amendment are designated as **Crown Lands** (forest) or where for taxation purposes are designated as **Managed Forest Class** shall have a minimum parcel size of 50.0 hectares.²
2. On land in the *Rural* designation, residential development shall be limited to one (1) dwelling unit per one (1) hectare, to a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per parcel.
3. On land in the *Rural* designation, the creation of parcels having an area less than two (2) hectares by way of subdivision pursuant to the *Condominium Act* (British Columbia), with the exception of subdivision pursuant to the *Bareland Strata Regulations* (British Columbia), shall not be supported.
4. Permitted uses within the *Rural* designation shall generally be limited to traditional rural activities, including those associated with normal agriculture and silviculture practices. Intensive forestry processing uses shall not be supported on lands designated as *Rural* in this Plan.
5. Where land is removed from the Agricultural Land Reserve or the Forest Land Reserve the *Rural* designation shall remain unless redesignated by amendment to this Plan and permitted uses shall be generally be limited to traditional rural activities.

Development Activated:

6. Where land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve and is proposed for subdivision or non-farm use, including the placement of a second dwelling, approval must first be obtained from the Agricultural Land Commission, except where additional dwellings are necessary for farm purposes subject to the

² Bylaw No. 1055.02 adopted January 24, 2006

Attachment 6 Official Community Plan Land Use Designation (Page 3 of 6)

Regional District of Nanaimo

EAST WELLINGTON - PLEASANT VALLEY OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN - BYLAW NO. 1055

Agricultural Land Commission Act. All subdivision and non-farm uses within the ALR shall comply with the agricultural objectives and policies in Section 3.1 - Agriculture of this Plan.

4.3 **RURAL RESIDENTIAL**

The Rural Residential designation reflects lands characterized by large lots and low population density and which are not within the Agricultural Land Reserve or Forest Land Reserve. Traditional rural activities such as agricultural operations, hobby farms and large-lot residential uses predominate. The Rural Residential designation assists in maintaining the rural character of the community and providing large pockets of green space within the community. Approximately 1000 hectares of land are within the Rural Residential designation, representing approximately 30% of the total Plan Area.

Objectives: Rural Residential

- *Preserve and enhance* the Plan Area's rural character and environmental quality.
- *Support* traditional rural land uses and activities within the Plan Area.
- *Provide* for some flexibility in the form and character of rural subdivision development.

Policies: Rural Residential

Action:

1. Land within a *Rural Residential* designation as shown on Map No. 3, attached to and forming part of this Plan shall have a minimum parcel size of 2.0 hectares.
2. On land in the *Rural Residential* designation, residential development shall be limited to one (1) dwelling unit per one (1) hectare, to a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per parcel.
3. Permitted uses within the *Rural Residential* designation shall generally be limited to traditional rural activities and passive recreation.
4. Notwithstanding Regional District regulations and/or policies related to the maximum number of dwellings per parcel, this Plan recommends that the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw permitting a maximum of two (2) dwelling units on parcels greater than 2.0 hectares be amended as follows:
 - a) residential development shall be permitted to a maximum density of two (2) dwelling units on parcels of greater than 2.0 hectares, which existed prior to the adoption of such an amendment to the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw;
 - b) residential development shall be limited to a density of not more than one (1) dwelling unit per two (2) hectares, to a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per parcel, for parcels created subsequent to the adoption of such an amendment to the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw (see Figure 4.1); and
 - c) the creation of parcels having an area less than two (2) hectares by way of subdivision pursuant to the *Condominium Act* (British Columbia), with the

Attachment 6 Official Community Plan Land Use Designation (Page 4 of 6)

Regional District of Nanaimo
EAST WELLINGTON - PLEASANT VALLEY OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN - BYLAW No. 1055

SECTION 3 - NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The East Wellington - Pleasant Valley Plan Area contains a variety of lands with natural resource value, including those for agriculture, aggregates and forestry. These lands have historically played a significant role in shaping the character of the Plan Area as well as providing important economic benefits. Their long-term viability and productivity is increasingly threatened by urban encroachment and the spread of incompatible uses, necessitating special attention and protective measures. It cannot be overlooked that operations and activities related to these resources can have equally significant consequences on the natural environment and existing residents and development. It is important to achieve a balance.

The policies in this section define the community's intentions and priorities with respect to the long-term management and use of lands with natural resource value. Where stated policies relate to matters beyond the jurisdiction of the Regional District, they are only intended to compliment, guide and assist senior governments in their decision-making processes.

General Objectives:

- *Protect and maintain* the agricultural, forestry and aggregate land base and associated activities.
- *Minimize* the impact of agriculture, forestry and aggregate-related activities on both the natural environment and other land uses and development.
- *Support* sustainable and best management practices for the resource base.
- *Advocate* comprehensive resource management decision-making where resource lands are in conflict with other lands.

3.1 *AGRICULTURE*

Agriculture plays an integral role in defining the rural character of the Plan Area. Agricultural lands establish limitations on the extent of development, provide buffer areas between established residential areas and represent both a primary and secondary source of income for some Plan Area residents. The Regional District supports and encourages land management practices, which preserve agricultural land and the sustainable production of food.

Approximately 24% of the total area, equating to approximately 790 hectares of land, has been designated Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) under the provincial *Agricultural Land Commission Act*. The Agricultural Land Commission is one of the main agencies responsible for managing the use and subdivision of ALR lands and, along with the Ministry of Agriculture, is also an important agency for promoting agricultural activities. The ALR's integrity is often threatened at the interface with urbanized development.

Objectives: Agriculture

- *Protect and maintain* the agricultural land resources of the Plan Area for present and future food production.

Attachment 6
Official Community Plan Land Use Designation
(Page 5 of 6)

Regional District of Nanaimo
EAST WELLINGTON - PLEASANT VALLEY OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN - BYLAW NO. 1055

- *Recognize and protect* the needs and activities of agricultural operations when considering non-agricultural uses on adjacent lands.
- *Encourage* sustainable and environmentally sound farming practices.
- *Ensure* that the availability and quality of water supply is protected and seek ways and means of improving water availability for irrigation purposes.

Policies: ***Agriculture***

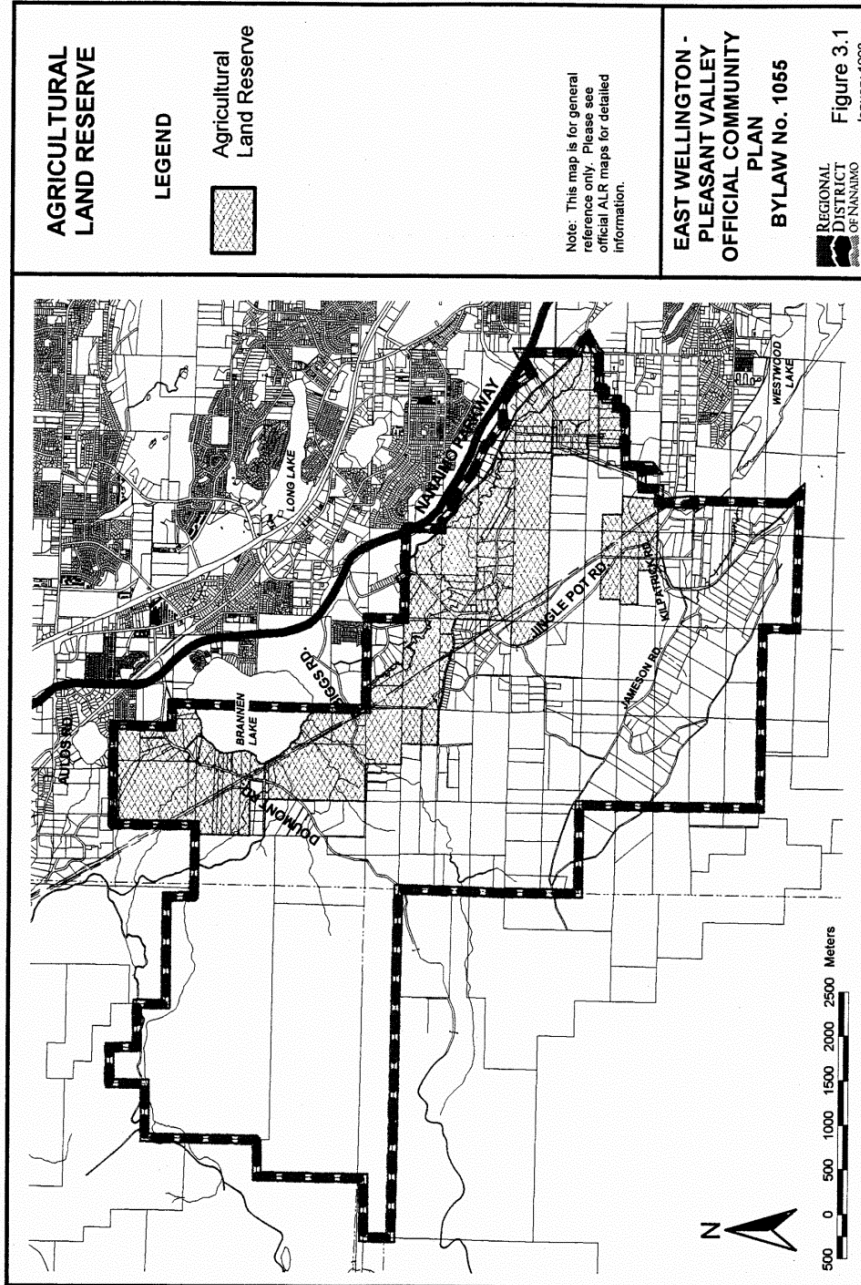
Action:

1. Lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve, as well as all other lands considered to be agricultural in character or supportive of agriculture, shall generally be designated as *Rural* in this Plan.
2. Broad-based agricultural activities, including agricultural, livestock and horticultural uses and the processing, production, distribution and sale of locally grown products, shall be encouraged and supported on agricultural lands both within and outside the Agricultural Land Reserve. It is recognized that the regulation of intensive agricultural operations located on land outside the Agricultural Land Reserve, which may be detrimental to the natural environment and surrounding lands, may be necessary.
3. The retention of large land holdings within the Agricultural Land Reserve shall be encouraged to maintain the option and feasibility of farm use.
4. The Regional District shall encourage adjacent land uses to be compatible with existing farm uses and to minimize impacts on agricultural lands.
5. The Regional District shall support the Agricultural Land Commission's mandate of preserving and encouraging the use of agricultural land for agriculture. The Regional District may support the use of agricultural land for non-farm purposes provided that the Agricultural Land Commission first grants permission for the proposed use and the use is compatible with surrounding land use patterns and development.

Attachment 6 Official Community Plan Land Use Designation (Page 6 of 6)

Regional District of Nanaimo
EAST WELLINGTON - PLEASANT VALLEY OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN - BYLAW NO. 1055

Figure 3.1



Attachment 7 Regional Growth Strategy - Land Use Designation

Resource Lands and Open Space

The Resource Lands and Open Space land use designation includes:

- Land that is primarily intended for resource uses such as agriculture, forestry, aggregate and other resource development; and
- Land that has been designated for long-term open space uses.

This designation includes:

- Land in the Agriculture Land Reserve;
- Crown land;
- Land designated for resource management or resource use purposes, including forestry, in official community plans;
- Recognized ecologically sensitive conservation areas;
- Provincial parks;
- Regional parks;
- Large community parks;
- Cemeteries;
- Existing public facilities outside of areas planned for mixed-use centre development;
- Destination Resorts; and
- Golf courses.

Resource activities on land in this designation should be encouraged to operate in ways that do not harm the functioning of natural ecosystems. Land use control, and resource management of lands in this designation is shared between landowners, local, provincial and sometimes federal government. Much of the forest land is privately owned. Forest companies, farmers, shellfish aquaculture (and associated research facilities) and aggregate resource development companies are recognized to have the right to operate on land within this designation in compliance with local, provincial and federal government regulations.

No new parcels that are smaller than the size supported by the official community plan in effect at the date of the adoption of this *Regional Growth Strategy* may be created on land in this designation.

Attachment 8

Regional Growth Strategy - Goal 7 – Enhance Economic Resiliency - Agriculture

Agriculture

- 7.14 Recognize the importance of agriculture to the region's economy. To this end, the RDN and member municipalities agree to:
- Support the management of the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR) by the provincial government;
 - Encourage the provincial government to protect the agricultural land base through the ALR;
 - Support the agricultural use of ALR lands within designated Urban Areas or Rural Village Areas except in instances where urban land uses have already been established at the time of the adoption of this RGS;
 - Recognize that all ALR lands will be subject to the regulations of the Agricultural Land Commission;
 - Support the preparation of a study of agriculture in the region for the purpose of identifying the issues and needs (both immediate and future) of the agricultural sector;
 - Encourage and support value-added agricultural industries; and
 - Enhance opportunities for agricultural activity on lands not in the ALR.

Attachment 9
Regional Growth Strategy - Goal 8 – Food Security
(Page 1 of 3)

Goal 8 - Food Security - Protect and enhance the capacity of the region to produce and process food.

Most of the food we eat comes from other parts of the world. A study conducted by the Region of Waterloo Public Health in Ontario (M. Xuereb, 2005) found that *'Imports of 58 commonly eaten foods travel an average of 4,497 km to Waterloo Region'*. Although there are currently no regionally specific studies estimating the distance food travels to reach our plates, it is safe to estimate that many of the foods we regularly consume travel on average at least 2,400 km to reach us (a widely quoted figure for North America, based on research conducted in Iowa by R. Pirog, et al 2001).

Despite ongoing debate about the environmental benefits of 'buying local' food versus making dietary changes (C. Weber and H. Scott Matthews, 2008), it is clear that our dependence on imported foods means that our access to food is vulnerable to the effects of weather and political events that may occur thousands of kilometers away. As well, world energy prices play a large role in the cost of food production and distribution. Greater food security means that more food is grown locally and therefore is not as susceptible to events occurring outside the region.

Local food production generates numerous economic, environmental and social benefits. Agriculture employs almost 3,000 people and generates a flow of income into the region. Local sources of food help reduce the region's carbon footprint by reducing transportation-related GHG emissions. In addition, the nutritional content of locally produced food is often greater than imported food – providing a healthier choice of food for residents.

Ensuring the long-term viability of farming and agricultural activity in the region requires a coordinated effort on the part of local, provincial and federal authorities. In addition to the provisions of Policy 5.4, the RDN and member municipalities can undertake a number of actions to support and enhance the viability of food production in the region as set out in the following policies (See Map 5 – Agricultural Lands).

The '5 A's' of food security:

- *Available – sufficient supply*
- *Accessible – efficient distribution*
- *Adequate – nutritionally adequate and safe*
- *Acceptable – produced under acceptable conditions (e.g. culturally and ecologically sustainable)*
- *Agency – tools are in place to improve food security*

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Regional Growth Strategy - Goal 8 – Food Security
(Page 2 of 3)

Protecting the agricultural land base is a key requirement for enhancing food security. The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) established by the Province in 1973 has largely been effective in reducing the loss of agricultural lands. Since 1974 the percentage of land protected under the ALR in the RDN has decreased approximately 12%, from 10.10% of the total land base to approximately 8.85% (www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alr/stats).

The majority of ALR lands in the RDN are located in rural Electoral Areas, with smaller portions located within the boundaries of municipalities. This RGS recognizes and supports the jurisdiction of the ALC over all ALR lands and strongly supports the retention and use of all ALR lands for agriculture. The RDN will continue to endorse the Agricultural Land Commission's efforts in preserving agricultural lands. Other actions that would enhance food security in the region include:

- Supporting improved access to sustainable water supplies for irrigation;
- Encouraging best water management practices in agriculture;
- Providing drainage infrastructure for flood-prone lands that do not include environmentally sensitive areas;
- Improving infrastructure to provide agricultural services and processing; and improving access to markets.

Policies

The RDN and member municipalities agree to:

- 8.1 Encourage and support the Agricultural Land Commission in retaining lands within the ALR for agricultural purposes.
- 8.2 Discourage the subdivision of agricultural lands.
- 8.3 Include provisions in their official community plans and zoning bylaws to allow for complementary land uses and activities that support the on-going viability of farming operations.
- 8.4 Establish agriculture as the priority use on land in the ALR.
- 8.5 Minimize the potential impact non-farm land uses may have on farming operations and include policies in their official community plans and zoning bylaws that reduce the opportunity for land use conflicts to occur.
- 8.6 Encourage and support agricultural activity on lands that are not within the ALR. This may include small-scale home-based agricultural businesses.

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Regional Growth Strategy Goal 8 – Food Security
(Page 3 of 3)

- 8.7 Recognize the importance of value-added agricultural uses and complementary land use activities for the economic viability of farms. To support complementary farm uses, official community plans should consider:
- The provision of appropriately located agricultural support services and infrastructure;
 - Reducing impediments to agricultural processing and related land uses;
 - Allowing compatible complementary land use activities (e.g., agri-tourism);
 - Allowing farmers' markets and other outlets that sell local produce to locate in all parts of the community.
- 8.8 Encourage urban agriculture initiatives and support activities and programs that increase awareness of local food production within the region.
- 8.9 Support the appropriate use of water resources for irrigation of agricultural lands.
- 8.10 Support the provision of drainage infrastructure to flood-prone lands that do not lie within environmentally sensitive areas.
- 8.11 Work in collaboration with federal and provincial agencies, adjacent regional districts, and agricultural organizations to improve access to markets for agricultural products.
- 8.12 Support partnerships and collaborate with non-profit groups to enhance the economic viability of farms.
- 8.13 Support farms that produce organic agricultural products and use sustainable farming practices.
- 8.14 Support the production, processing, distribution and sale of locally grown produce (including shellfish).