
TO: Agricultural Advisory Committee **DATE:** February 28, 2019

FROM: Angela Buick
Planner **FILE:** PL2019-007

SUBJECT: Request for Comment on Subdivision in the Agricultural Reserve
Application No. PL2019-007
2452 Hemer Road – Electoral Area A
Section 14, Range 2, Cedar District, Except the Westerly 60 acres Thereof,
and Except Parcel B (DD 6974N) of Said Section

SUMMARY

This is an application for subdivision in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) to allow a two lot subdivision on a 14 hectare parcel located in Electoral Area A. 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 subdivision in the ALR from Rhonda Kulai the property owner, on behalf of additional family members on title. The subject property is legally described as Section 14, Range 2, Cedar District, Except the Westerly 60 acres Thereof, and Except Parcel B (DD 6974N) of Said Section. The civic address is 1813 Rugg Road and 2452 and 2448 Hemer Road. The subject property is approximately 14 hectares in area and is located entirely within the ALR. The parcel is bound by Rugg Road and Agriculture 1 (AG1) zoned lots within the ALR to the north, Hemer Road and Residential 2 (RS2) zoned lots to the west, Crown land (Hemer Provincial Park) to the south and Holden Corso Lake and a large Agriculture 1 (AG1) zoned lot, half within the ALR, to the east.

The property is bisected by the Morden Colliery Regional Trail. This multi-use trail currently connects Hemer Provincial Park and Cedar Road with future plans to connect to Morden Colliery Historic Provincial Park. The property currently contains two dwelling units, barn, shop and accessory buildings (see Attachments 1 and 2 for Subject Property Map and Aerial Photo). The property is also bisected by Holden Lake as wetlands at the north end of the lake extend past the north boundary of the subject property.

The property owners applied for a non-farm use to permit the construction of a second dwelling unit (log cabin) in 2009. In addition to the non-farm use, the applicants also requested to subdivide the subject property in the same application. The ALC resolution (# 1050/2009) dated October 15, 2009 approved the second dwelling but did not approve the subdivision.

The property owners applied again for subdivision in the ALR in 2011. This proposal was to separate the lot into two parts separated by the Morden Colliery Provincial Trail. The ALC resolution (#127/2012) dated April 3, 2012 refused the application.

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*.

Agricultural Advisory Committee members were provided an opportunity to attend the site on February 6, 2019.

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

The subject property is currently designated 'Resource Lands and Open Space' pursuant to the "Regional District of Nanaimo Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 1615, 2011" (RGS). The policies of this designation do not support the creation of new parcels that are smaller than the size supported by the official community plan in effect at the date of the adoption of the RGS (see Attachment 7). 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).

A copy of the applicant's submission package is included in Attachment 10.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

The subject property is currently designated as 'Agricultural' pursuant to the "Regional District of Nanaimo Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1620, 2011" (see Attachment 6). The policies of this designation do not support subdivision of land within the ALR which does not result in a net benefit to agricultural production as determined by a qualified professional. In addition, the 'Agricultural' designation supports a minimum parcel size of 8.0 hectares for lands within the ALR.

The parcel is also designated within the Eagle and Heron Nesting Trees and Freshwater and Fish Habitat Protection Development Permit Areas. A development permit may be required prior to any subdivision or alteration of the land.

Amendments to "Regional District of Nanaimo Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1620, 2011" are not required.

ZONING

The parcel is currently zoned Agriculture 1 (AG1), Subdivision District 'D', pursuant to "Regional District of Nanaimo Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987" (Bylaw 500). The AG1 Zone permits Farm Use, Agriculture, Residential Use, home based business, Secondary Suite, Temporary Sawmill, Agricultural Education and Research, Agri-tourism Accommodation, Production of Biological Integrated Pest Management Products, Gathering for an Event and allows 2 dwelling units on parcels greater than 2.0 ha in area.

The applicants propose to create two fee simple lots. The lots are proposed to be separated by the natural boundary of the Morden Colliery Regional Trail into approximately one 8.0 hectare Lot and one 6.8 hectare lot. (See Attachment 3 – Proposed Plan of Subdivision).

Amendments to Bylaw 500 would not be required.

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. Board Policy B1.8 also includes a standing Board resolution for subdivision of lands within the ALR which reads as follows:

As outlined in the Regional Growth Strategy, the Regional District of Nanaimo fully supports the mandate of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and the preservation of land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) for agricultural use. The Regional District encourages the ALC to only consider subdivision where in the opinion of the ALC the proposal will not negatively impact the agricultural use of the land or adjacent ALR lands.

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 Agricultural Land Commission 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, Electoral Area A, Director Keith Wilson has provided the following comments:

As the Regional District of Nanaimo Director for Area A, I support this application to the ALC as it is apparent that the regional trail bisecting this property (and not allowing travel over it from one parcel to the other) as well as the geography of the property make it such that the agricultural potential for the land is not lessened by the proposed separation into two lots. In fact, it makes agricultural pursuits on either lot more attractive if the parcels are separated as access, proximity to farm buildings and difference in topography may become less of a factor on each lot.

Comments of Electoral Area 'A' Director Keith Wilson will be provided to the ALC, as included with this report.



Angela Buick
abuick@rdn.bc.ca
February 20, 2019

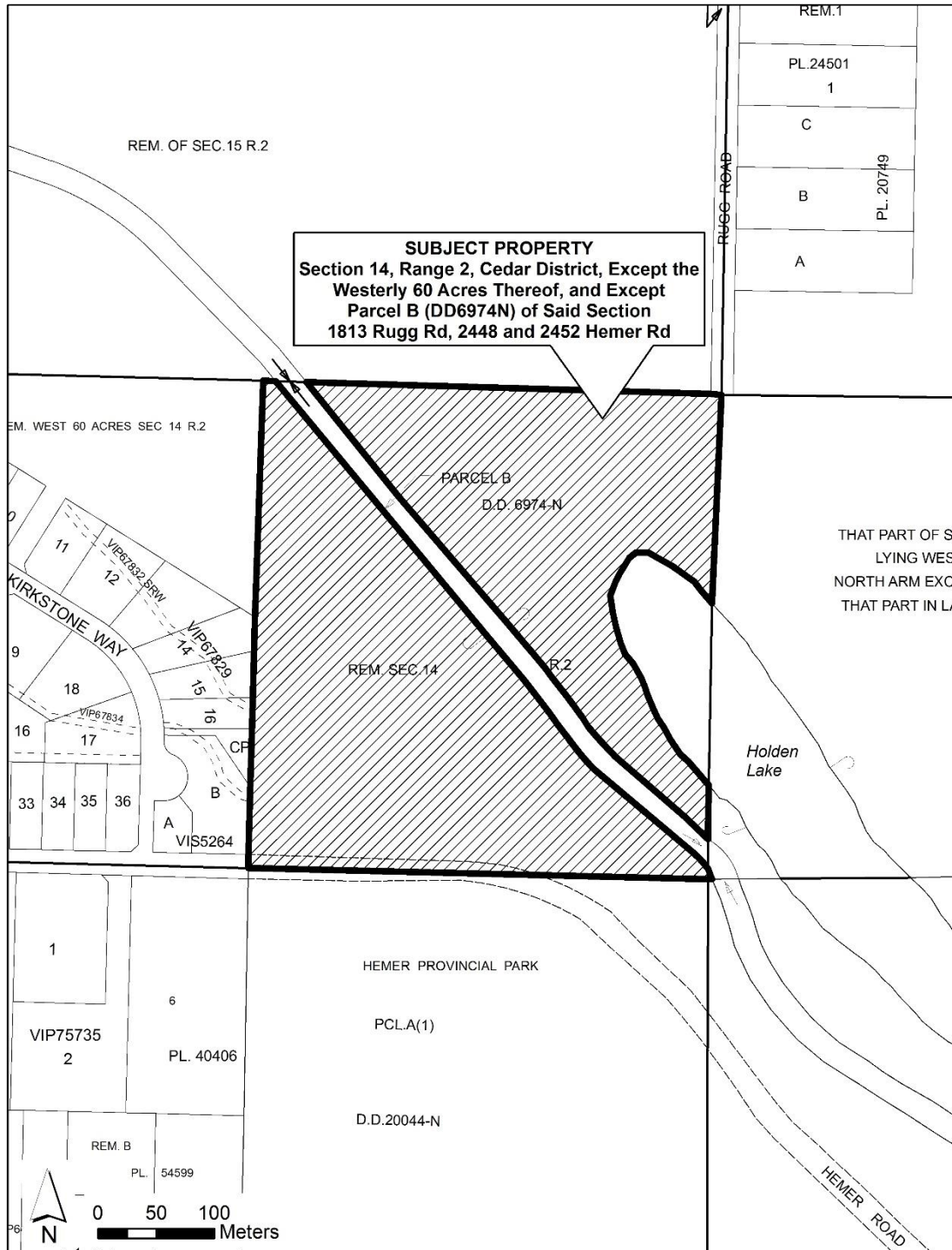
Reviewed by:

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

Attachments

1. Subject Property Map
2. 2016 Aerial Photo
3. Proposed Plan of Subdivision
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

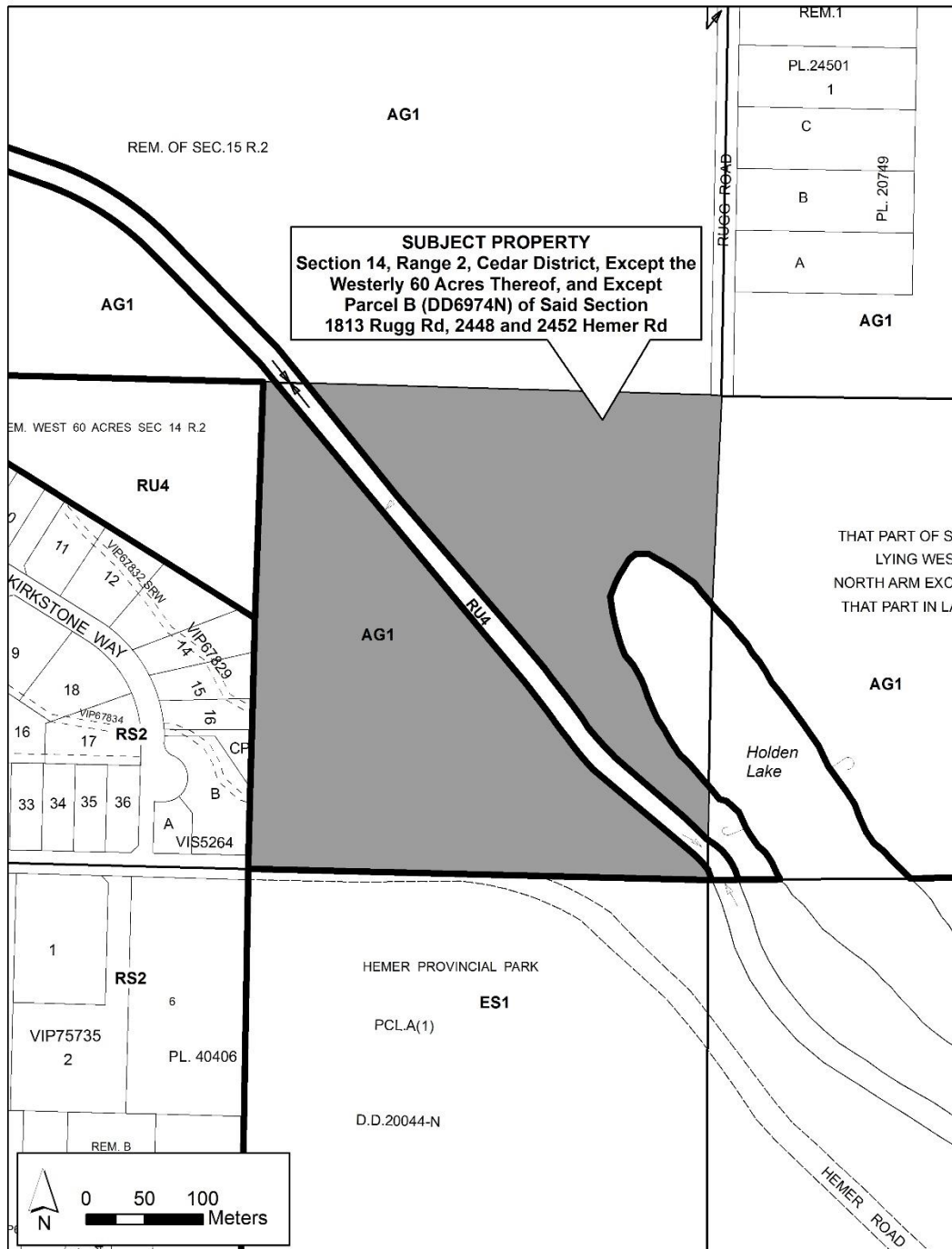
Attachment 1
Subject Property Map



Attachment 3
Proposed Plan of Subdivision



**Attachment 4
Existing Zoning
(Page 1 of 3)**



Attachment 4 Existing Zoning (Page 2 of 3)

Part 3 – Land Use Regulations

Section 3.4.1

AGRICULTURE 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 3 of 3)

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 5

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

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

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

BYLAW NO. 500

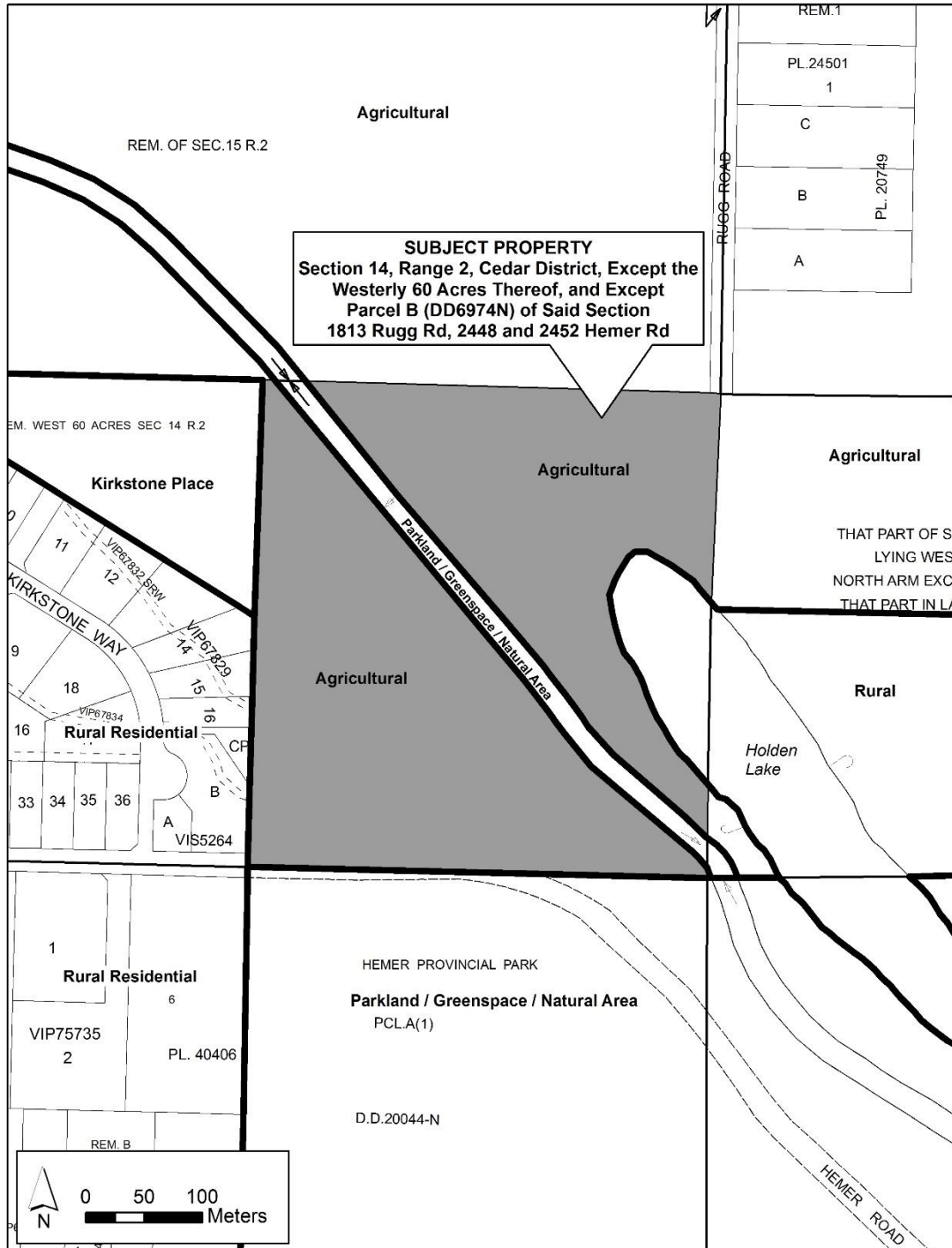
SCHEDULE '4B' SUBDIVISION DISTRICTS - MINIMUM PARCEL SIZES

- 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, 1998
² Bylaw No. 500.347, adopted September 22, 2009
³ Bylaw No. 500.27, adopted August 9, 1988
⁴ Bylaw No. 500.66, adopted December 12, 1989
⁵ Bylaw No. 500.324, adopted February 28, 2006
⁶ Bylaw No. 500.264, adopted October 10, 2000
⁷ Bylaw No. 500.264, adopted October 10, 2000
⁸ Bylaw No. 500.27, adopted August 9, 1988
⁹ Bylaw No. 500.394, adopted August 25, 2015
¹⁰ Bylaw No. 500.253, adopted January 11, 2000
¹¹ Bylaw No. 500.275, adopted October 9, 2001

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



Attachment 6

Official Community Plan Land Use Designation

(Page 2 of 6)

Food Security

Much of the produce eaten in British Columbia comes from distant lands. Many of these areas are experiencing an increase in severe weather events which are threatening crops and creating additional vulnerabilities and price fluctuations in the food system.

Climate Change Implications

Industrialized agriculture is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions through deforestation, livestock production, application of chemical fertilizer and manure, and from the use of fossil fuels in the sowing, harvesting, processing and transport of agricultural products. Creating local food systems reduces the distance food must travel and as a result reduces greenhouse gas emissions and transport costs.

In addition to warmer average temperatures, climate change is expected to shift precipitation patterns and increase the frequency of severe weather events which may increase the risk of extreme drought and crop failure. Local food systems help mitigate the impacts of climate change by building resiliency into the system and becoming more self-reliant.

Food Accessibility

Access to fresh nutritious food is critical for maintaining a healthy population. All area residents should have access to affordable, fresh, nutritious, culturally appropriate food, which is locally produced. Access to healthy food can help combat rising rates of obesity and chronic illnesses that can be partially addressed by improvements to diet and exercise.

Strategic Direction and Goals

Section 5.0 helps achieve the Community Vision by contributing towards community Goals 1, 6, 7, 13, 15, 16, and 17. Please refer to Section 3.3 for a list of community goals.

5.1 Agricultural

The Agricultural Land Use designation applies to all land located in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) at the date of adoption of this plan. These lands occupy approximately fifty-five percent of the plan area and are generally characterized by parcels, greater than 2.0 ha in area. Lands within the ALR are intended for agricultural production. These lands contribute to the economy and are of critical importance in helping Electoral Area 'A' become a leader in local food production.

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

Objectives and Policies

Section 5.1	Policy/Objective
Objective 5.1.1	Protect ALR land from non-agricultural development.
Policy 5.1.1	Lands within the Agricultural Lands designation are shown on Map No. 3.
Policy 5.1.2	Agriculture shall be the priority use on lands located within the Agricultural Lands designation.
Policy 5.1.3	Uses within this designation shall include agriculture and uses which are compatible with agriculture and contribute towards making it more productive.
Policy 5.1.4	Rezoning may be supported, subject to the approval of the Agricultural Land Commission to allow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Value added agricultural uses; b. 'Permitted use' as defined by the ALR, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation (BC Regulation 171-2002), as amended or replaced from time to time; or, c. Agricultural education and/or demonstration of agricultural technologies.
Policy 5.1.5	This plan supports the creation of an agricultural zone which applies to all lands within this designation.
Policy 5.1.6	Removal of lands from the ALR, which are capable of agricultural production, is considered contrary to the Community Vision and is not supported by this plan.
Policy 5.1.7	Subdivision of land within the ALR, which does not result in a net benefit to agricultural production as determined by a qualified professional, is considered contrary to the Community Vision and is not supported by this plan.
Policy 5.1.8	The RDN should consider providing comments to the Agricultural Land Commission on all applications for non-farm use, subdivision, and exclusion.
Policy 5.1.9	If land is removed from the ALR, the land should continue to be designated 'Agricultural Lands' and should not be considered for additional development potential.
Policy 5.1.10	This plan supports ongoing consultation with the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Agricultural Land Commission, and the Provincial Ministry responsible for Agriculture to find ways to encourage agriculture and make it more productive.
Advocacy Policy 5.1.11	The RDN shall work with the MOTI to discourage the creation of new public roadways ending at lands located in the ALR to reduce the future demand for further non-agricultural development of ALR land.



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

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Designate DPA's on land adjacent to the ALR to ensure adequate buffers are provided and to reduce the impacts of non-agricultural development on agricultural land.	Immediate
Work with the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Ministry responsible for Agriculture, the Agricultural Land Commission, and the community to develop an agricultural zone and identify opportunities to increase diverse agricultural activity. Amend RDN Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987 to include the new zone.	Short Term
Review the current board policy on commenting on applications made to the Agricultural Land Commission and consider the potential role of the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Write a report to the Board with recommendations.	Short Term
Work with the Provincial subdivision approving officer, Ministry of Agriculture, and the Agricultural Land Commission to minimize the impact of subdivision on lands within the ALR.	Ongoing

Objective 5.1.2	Support and promote sustainable agriculture on ALR lands.
Policy 5.1.12	The minimum parcel size for lands located within the Agricultural Lands designation shall be 8.0 ha.
Policy 5.1.13	<p>Despite policy 5.1.12 above, subject to approval from the Agricultural Land Commission, and subject to being consistent with the RGS, the RDN may support the creation of more compact residential clusters through a rezoning or Development Variance Permit (DVP) on lands within this designation which may include smaller parcels and/or a subdivision pursuant to the Strata Property Act subject to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal must include a significant agricultural component which would contribute towards making Electoral Area 'A' a leader in local food production. The proposal does not result in more dwelling units and/or parcels than what is permitted by the zoning in place at the time the application is made. The overall density and/or number of parcels shall be determined based on the buildable area of the subject property and not the total site area as determined by the RDN. The proposal is consistent with ALR, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation (BC Regulation 171/2002). Residential development should be located on the least fertile portions of the subject property. Residential development must include a vegetated buffer designed and constructed in accordance with the Ministry of Agriculture "A Guide to Edge Planning Promoting Compatibility Along Urban-Agricultural Edges" published in 2009 by the Ministry of Agriculture as amended or replaced



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

	<p>from time to time.</p> <p>f. No parcel of less than 1.0 ha shall be created.</p> <p>g. All development must be serviced with onsite methods for treating wastewater and water systems.</p> <p>h. The proposal includes a report from a professional Agrologist outlining how the proposal would be more efficient from an agricultural perspective than a traditional subdivision and certifying that the proposed residential development is located on the least fertile portions of the land and is necessary to support the proposed agricultural use.</p> <p>i. The remainder must be protected against further subdivision and non-agricultural uses through covenant and/or zoning.</p>
Policy 5.1.14	This plan supports the use of conservation covenants for the preservation of environmentally sensitive features. However, it is recognized that agricultural considerations must be taken fully into account when the use of a conservation covenant for the preservation of environmentally sensitive features is being contemplated.
Policy 5.1.15	This plan supports a feasibility study looking at the use of conservation covenants and transfer of development credits for the preservation of farm land.
Policy 5.1.16	Property owner initiated zoning to reduce subdivision and preserve large parcel of agricultural land is supported.
Policy 5.1.17	The use of agricultural practices which minimize the impacts on the environment, improve water use efficiency, reduce the use of chemical fertilizers, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels, such as permaculture, shall be encouraged.
5.1.18	The use of water for irrigation on agricultural lands to boost local food production is supported.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Conduct a public process for considering implementation of minimum parcel sizes.	Please refer to Appendix 3 for more information
Conduct a feasibility study looking at the use of conservation covenants and transfer of development credits for the preservation of farm land.	Short Term

Objective 5.1.3	Create opportunities for local food markets
Policy 5.1.19	This plan supports collaboration, cooperation, and flexibility to support agricultural operations looking at investing in agriculture and/or attempting to resolve issues which are limiting agricultural production in Area 'A'.
Policy 5.1.20	The RDN shall work with other levels of government and other agencies to develop financial incentives to preserve farm land and encourage young families to get in to farming.
Policy	This plan supports the use of public land for community gardens and farmers



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

5.1.21	markets where appropriate.
Policy 5.1.22	Proposals for the establishment of a cold storage facility and provincially licensed meat processing facility may be supported within the plan area in consultation with the ministry responsible for Agriculture, Agricultural Land Commission, the farming community, and the community at large.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Work with the farming community and the Agricultural Advisory Committee to develop strategies which support and encourage agriculture in Electoral Area 'A'.	Ongoing
Amend 'RDN Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw No. 500, 1987' to permit community gardens and farmers markets. Develop a process for managing the use of these lands for community agriculture.	Short Term

Objective 5.1.4	Support and Encourage Agricultural Education.
Policy 5.1.23	This plan supports the preparation of an Agricultural Plan for Electoral Area 'A' which should at minimum provide an overview of the local food system, its relative food security, capacity, opportunities for enhancing the food-related economy, and recommendations for increasing the sustainability of the food system.
Policy 5.1.24	The RDN should provide perspective purchasers, developers, and land owners with information on living in rural agricultural communities.
Policy 5.1.25	The RDN should work with the Nanaimo and Cedar Farmers Institute, ministry responsible for Agriculture, RDN Advisory Committee, Agricultural Land Commission, Nanaimo Foodshare, and School District 68 to develop an agricultural education program aimed at elementary and high school students.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Prepare an agricultural plan which is consistent with the plan prepared for the Cowichan Valley Regional District.	Immediate
Develop informational brochures to distribute to prospective property owners as well as existing Area A residents.	Short Term
Work with the Agricultural Advisory Committee to establish an agricultural education program.	Short Term



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*

Attachment 9
Regional Growth Strategy Goal 8 – Food Security
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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.

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- 8.6 Encourage and support agricultural activity on lands that are not within the ALR. This may include small-scale home-based agricultural businesses.
- 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).

Attachment 10
Applicant's Submission