

AGENDA

Regional District of Nanaimo
Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan Review Citizen's Committee

Monday September 14, 2009 @ 6:30 pm
(*North Cedar Improvement District Fire Hall - 2100 Yellow Point Road*)

1. **Minutes**
 - Adoption of the minutes from the meeting of July 13, 2009 - Page 2
 - Adoption of the minutes from the meeting of August 10, 2009 - Page 13
2. **Draft Official Community Plan Overview and Discussion**
 - Working Draft of Sections 1-3 - Page 23
3. **Other**
 - Reschedule October 12, 2009 meeting

Regional District of Nanaimo
Summary of the Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan Review
Citizen's Committee Meeting Held on Monday, July 13, 2009 at 6:30pm
At the North Cedar Improvement District Hall
2100 Yellow Point Road

The Chair- Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm. There were approximately 25 people in attendance including guests.

Agenda Item No. 1 – Minutes of the April 20, 2009 Meeting

The minutes May 4, 2009 were moved by Ray Digby and seconded by Hendrick Kreiberg and were carried without amendments.

Agenda Item No. 2 – Adoption of Official Community Plan Citizen's Committee Speaker Series Meeting Minutes

The Official Community Plan Speaker Series Minutes were moved by Ray Digby and seconded by Bert Vermaskari and were carried without amendments.

Agenda Item No. 3 - Community Development Forum

Mr. Keller - provided handouts and explained that the group would be going over each handout one at a time.

Boat Harbour

Attendee - I would like to comment that I don't want us to ignore the developments on the Electoral Area 'A' boundaries. Greg forwarded out an e-mail regarding Airport which stated that the RDN has no ability to comment on airport. RDN has no say in aviation activities as we are exempt from Local Government Bylaws. Would we have a say on other types of uses.

Mr. Keller – Jurisdiction on airport lands lies with the airport. Perhaps we should think about how the Official Community Plan could identify the community's concerns with respect to the airport?

The Chair- The Regional District of Nanaimo has no jurisdiction on airport lands. However, we can work with the airport to try and make sure we satisfy the communities' visions but we have no ability make final decisions on their development.

Mr. Hooper – The Nanaimo Airport is always looking to work with public and willing to reach out and work with community.

Gary Laird - If we don't have any say on the airport how can we work with the Island timberlands and Cassidy?

Mr. Keller - We will talk about the airport at a future meeting as it is an important issue, but off topic at the moment.

Mr. Anderson – I want to bring up the topic of a sustainability checklist. For example, a checklist for individual developments which entails giving points and creating incentives for green development.

Mr. Keller - We have discussed this before and noted that the Regional District of Nanaimo has a checklist which is being used for a slightly different purpose. In addition, the draft Official Community Plan will support the use of incentives for green development including a checklist.

Mr. Anderson – I am concerned we don't have a matrix to evaluate environmental and fiscal effects on the land. RDN should have a philosophy behind it, for example DCC and scores correlate. It will cost the developer more money or less money based on scores.

Mr. Keller - The committee was not supportive of charging more for non-desirable developments which is reflected in the minutes.

Gary Laird - Why should developer get penalized?

Mr. Anderson – Because they are not green. Even if they're not being sustainable? We should be setting the bar in the Official Community Plan, should we not?

The Chair- let's keep on the topic at hand.

Ray Digby – Talked about lot averaging – resort component looks outside the Official Community Plan although the RGS supports resorts across the region.

Mr. Keller - Provincial bare land strata regulations allow an owner to create the equivalent number of smaller lots provided the developer can meet the conditions of the Approving Officer.

Anne Fiddick- Does RDN have jurisdiction over water lot?

Mr. Keller - The RDN cannot prohibit certain uses but can have some regulations that must be followed. Anything related to navigation is essentially off limits for RDN to regulate thorough zoning bylaws.

Anne Fiddick– Can they do what they want?

Burt Vermaskari – Federally and provincially, this water lot has slipped through the cracks.

Ray Digby – Couldn't we include green development for building?

Mr. Keller - If there is support we could do this.

Henrick Kreiberg – Could this be a cluster development with strata?

Mr. Keller - Yes, it could be strata or it could be fee simple, both result in efficient use of land and both require different approval processes.

Attendee – This could create a different community node if it becomes a strata development as opposed to fee simple subdivision. The strata counsel may pursue things (use of common area land) more than individual owners would.

Trevor Scott – The property has two zonings and compatibility. Is the zoning required compatible with the rural zoning in the area?

Mr. Keller - Depends on the management of the property. Good question and should be looked at more closely in the re-zoning process

Trevor Scott – Is there any way to set guidelines for compatibility with the surrounding uses?

Mr. Keller - There is no one prescribed formula to determine compatibility. It comes down to number of factors and how are they managed. For example, historical land use resulted in separated uses, now we look at mixed uses and more connectivity within the community.

The Chair– In dealing with sustainability, do they fit in the two documents?

Brain Collen – This is difficult thing to answer, I have a hard time seeing the positives.

Mr. Burnett– 60 lots verses - 5 acre lots?

Ray Digby – The difficulty of densification is that there is no guarantee. I can't find a level of comfort that the development would turn out to meet the parameters of the Official Community Plan. I worry about open space being locked away from it being Open Park. Also that it would meet green environmental standards. We should put different conditions on it to be refined in the future to make sure these items are not avoided.

Jill Maibach– I agree with Ray Digby this does meet concept. I would like to see it as part of the Official Community Plan for future discussion to meet criteria discussed.

Anne Fiddick – looking at principles 1-15 maybe we could do this but thinking about transportation, this is not the space for this type of development. Services are not cost efficient. Checking against checklist and does not come out greater than 50%.

Gary Laird – Densification should not be outside the UCB boundary. Future developments will look to this as an example if this goes through.

Mr. Keller - Density is not an issue, they can still have the same density with the current zoning. They can build the same number of units without re-zoning. The big issue is should a resort component be supported?

Anne Fiddick – This is not the same though as strata could keep green space from public.

Ray Digby- What about fire protection?

Burt Vermaskari – Densification has already started; Holden Corso has large lots.

Ray Digby– They can do this now?

Mr. Keller – Yes they can create an equivalent number of 2000m² lots under the Provincial Bare Land Strata Regulations.

Jill Maibach – Can we put a covenant on the land to protect green space?

Mr. Keller – We could make this a condition of re-zoning or the developer may be willing to do so.

Attendee – Is it realistic to worry about strata. I don't understand the objections. There are a lot of strata lots in Cedar already. Kirkstone has one, concept is already there.

Jill Maibach – Thinking about active transportation, can we put an inclusion for public to use marina that we want to see, are we included in this decision?

Mr. Keller - Conditions of re-zoning such as active transport can be included as conditions of rezoning in the Official Community Plan.

Mr. Keller - Every application goes through this process of meeting the guidelines and other recommendations of the Official Community Plan.

Brain Collen– Sustainability principles seems to be up to board interpretation, we need qualifiers to evaluate development. How can we evaluate any without this?

Mr. Keller - When we release the draft there will be qualifiers briefly explaining the sustainability principles, we have had extensive discussion on this subject in previous meetings. They are our guiding principles.

Brain Collen – Looking to implement boat harbour into the Official Community Plan based on other details we don't have yet, what are our assurances?

Mr. Keller – There is a whole draft process and in addition even if it is supported in the Official Community Plan a re-zoning process involving public input would be required.

The Chair- Recap: concept of strata to allow ½ acre lot to save green space would be supported in strata?

Mr. Keller – This can be a suggested preference, not a requirement there is no guarantee unless re-zoning was to occur.

The Chair– Can we move discussion to debate the resort itself, we've covered off the housing, is this the best use?

Jill Maibach - Resort portion to move forward provided Official Community Plan supports it with the visions of the committee.

Mr. Keller - We can only take what is put forward.

Anne Fiddick– What about historical and archaeological issues?

Mr. Keller - Many sites have this as something to consider and we work with the Archaeological Branch to protect them.

Attendee– Does the community have criteria? Looking at the community and the history of youth in the area I see it as providing employment for young in summer. Consider Yellow Point area, it has many resorts and works well for the area. We need to think as a committee, saves on transportation to other areas for the locals and gives employment.

The Chair– Regional Growth Strategy supports resorts, although it still needs to meet criteria, do we want to support this potential development for future consideration?

Henrik Kreiberg- Do we gain anything by making a conditions, isn't it like any other development

Mr. Keller - There won't be specific conditions although if there are key things you want to see then we need to put them into the Official Community Plan.

Henrik Kreiberg – I don't think I've heard anything yet?

Anne Fiddick– I think Mordern trail must connect through the subject property to tide line.

Mr. Anderson – Speaking on Henrik's question, maybe one principle should be public access to prime open space on the subject property but under control of strata. The feel of the plan does not seem to provide access to water for public.

Mr. Keller - Yes, these are the types of things that the Official Community Plan can identify if the community wants it to.

The Chair– Staff will provide a draft of the condition as discussed and come back to committee.

Cedar Estates ; Page 68 and 87

The Chair– they would still be required to apply for a DP and re-zoning

Henrik Kreiberg – if OCP was not changed then they would need to amend the OCP as well.

Jill Maibach - Is there minimum square footage for single seniors and couple?

Mr. Keller – This a VIHA question.

Gary Laird – Is there fire safety considerations?

Mr. Keller – As part of a rezoning, the fire department would receive a referral.

The Chair- Looks like they are looking at raising storeys, this would be something that the North Cedar Improvement District would need to be referred to for comments.

Ray Digby – This looks like it will take longer than Official Community Plan will take, is this not applicable?

Joe Burnett - Will not accept any new applications which are not consistent with the OCP until the OCP is complete.

Anne Fiddick–I hope it does not set a precedent for higher stories in the rest of Area ‘A’

Mr. Keller - Official Community Plan looks at this individual sites separately as well as the residents specific to the area in question would have an opportunity to comment at the time of re-zoning.

Kipp Road

Ray Digby– We need to consider Sandstone, that is where is should go not in an existing residential area.

Brain Collen – I don’t want t to use precedence, this is not supported in the area by residents.

Mr. Anderson – That industrial park does not serve only Electoral Area ‘A’ it’s for the whole region. If it was more community based it would have more validity. The highway gives it high visibility, anything further inland it’s not enhancing South Wellington.

Mr. Keller - Any ideas on target development vs. regional development?

Mr. Anderson – Let’s say for example a recycled materials business, this is a local community based community public facility as opposed to regional industrial use.

Henrik Kreiberg - Should industrial uses grow? If so, EMCON should be able to grow.

The Chair– A land review could show the ‘build out’ of certain area, this is something we could look at doing.

The Chair- RDN should do a land review to see if we need to encourage the build out of these areas to include industrial uses.

Michael Hooper – I would need more data to make informed decision.

The Chair– We still need to do a land review to make an informed decision.

Mr. Keller – We still need to consider this with more information.

Kirkstone Way; page 71 and 97

The Chair- Developer had it removed from ALR

Mr. Keller - We would have to consider a change to the Urban Containment Boundary.

Mr. Anderson – Why was the Urban Containment Boundary proposed to be moved to its proposed location?

The Chair- They are not in the Urban Containment Boundary right now. We can look at two things; Official Community Plan would support this and second or take whole area out.

Mr. Keller – In the earlier meeting we talked about Urban Containment Boundary and sewer lines, if this is something that the committee would like to support then the Official Community Plan would consider it.

Henrik Kreiberg - Is it the proximity to the sewer lines there?

The Chair- Must be within the Urban Containment Boundary then could be expanded but right now it is not

Mr. Keller – We are waiting for a sewer study.

Henrik Kreiberg – No one else can hook up until the sewer capacity is increased.

Mr. Keller – Urban Containment Boundary and land use designation would have to support it. That would set the stage for the developer to apply to re-zone.

Mike Hooper - Seems like a logical property.

Brian Collen – Do you have a model?

Mr. Anderson – According to my analysis this development scores much higher than others. Triple bottom line, this is a model green development. We don't do enough of these fast enough. If ALC took it out.

Jill Maibach – I hear no negative comments on this proposal.

The Chair- The Agricultural Land Commission talked about buffering and development does provide for buffering and a connection to Morden Colliery Trail.

The Chair- We want to see this as a condition.

Cassidy; Page 72 and 87

Mr. Keller – Gave an overview of the project.

Brian Collen – This is a huge addition to a small area. It is a large area and with diverse uses. We don't know what the airport is planning on doing? This would be the absolute last area. We haven't even given cedar any consideration for industrial uses. Also, transit is long from coming out there.

The Chair– A transit study being done right now.

Ray Digby - To me, this looks like one great industrial strip mall.

The Chair– The Urban Containment Boundary was looking at this location to make Cassidy a more complete community with community amenities and a broader range of housing, services, and employment. There is more than just industrial, there is commercial and residential component as well.

Mr. Keller – Within the Cassidy area there is no other logical area to locate something like this. That is why these area were identified.

Mr. Keller - Past discussion identified that a more complete community was desirable and this is the area that makes the most sense. The land is not in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

The Chair- Transportation will be based on ridership. Many riders are from Ladysmith to VIU, which provides potential to this being feasible.

Jill Maibach – Would the transit expansion include South Wellington.

Attendee – Island Timberlands took all trees from this area and now they want to develop it?

Jill Maibach – Agree that timber companies would develop overkill for a small community such as Cassidy.

Mike Hooper – The airport is looking at looking at 1600 jobs in the near future. From a sustainability viewpoint we would like to have housing for these jobs, and affordable housing as well. We need this kind of increased housing or better transportation. We need better infrastructure for the folk that live in Timberlands area. They are all on septic and well, this would help expand community water and sewer into these areas.

Mr. Keller - Services should be supported but cost is so high that it's impractical. If help is received from developers and the airport then the costs would be offset.

Ray Digby – I originally supported the expansion of the UBC. This is no place for the young people to keep living there, there is nothing to offer. I support affordable housing and business but the industrial lands, I am not keen on. We need to know better what kind of industrial development could happen. Current Mobile Home Park could not afford hook up to community services, many people are retired or low income or young families.

Mr. Keller - Potential for expansion is there, maybe this is good.

Ray Digby - then why didn't we consider support for industrial lands in cedar area?

Henrik Kreiberg – I’m also having a problem it too. Knowledge of demographic would help me to see whether this would serve existing community, I don’t feel comfortable making a comment if it’s just anticipatory.

Ray Digby – How can we find these statistics?

Mr. Keller – Age demographics are not specifically available for Cassidy.

Ray Digby – This is a regional project, it can’t be specific to Cassidy.

Gary Laird – All land can grow food, next door is a gravel pit, use it for things that make sense not develop it on things that can be done elsewhere like greenhouses. This area is not at all like CVRD, Saanich. We are not good at growing vegetables; some land is not useable as it used to be for food production. This proposed use fits with the Official Community Plan. Live work and job opportunities. We can’t speak out the both sides of our mouth.

Jill Maibach - You are right, I question the location.

Brian Collen - Maybe growing forest may be a better use of land other info must be considered.

Gary Laird - This is our only opportunity to have some of the services paid for; sewer and water.

Joanne McLeod – I’m concerned with industrial sprawl, I grew up in Duncan and it’s ugly along that highway.

The Chair- Looked at UCB and Cassidy and should have some areas to consider areas for development boundary, what I’m hearing is we are not supporting the industrial lands portion of the proposal?

Mr. Keller - Workbook is correct. Timberland changed the plan to work with community.

Mike Hooper – We should also note that there is opportunity here for commercial development.

Ray Digby – I remember with the Cassidy people, there was not much feedback except for having a park and kids to have a home. Considering the lowest income groups in the area, taxes will go up, what are the impacts of this.

Chris Pagan - I don’t know if residents have made up their minds but it looks like a great opportunity here. Lots of young families live here all the way up to retirees. They have to drive everywhere with very little opportunity for work in the area. Maybe the light industrial may provide some job opportunities.

Mr. Keller - Light industrial is open to interpretation, it could be low impact uses, there is lots of flexibility. No standard uses.

Ray Digby – We could make this become a model green community, make it a DPA that could go with this concept

Chris Pagan – Probably wouldn't be developed all at once, these development are long term plans.

The Chair– It would be developed over time, for example Sandstones development timeline about 20-25 years.

Wayne Proctors proposals

1. Cedar Store:

Mr. Keller – This would contribute toward the cedar main street concept. Any comments?

Ray Digby – This is one of the few proposals that fits with what we are talking about

Brian Collen – Looks like it fits with the others stores that we've looked at.

The Chair- If we do a charrette then we need to look at this.

2. Millay Market

Greg Keller - Consistent with the Official Community Plan and would like addition recognition;

Brian Collen - Is it on the sewer line?

Mr. Keller – It is on the boundary.

3. Ruckledge Store

Henrik Kreiberg –My understanding is that piece of Morden road is only a 33 foot side road allowance and expansion of this nature sounds like it would be a recipe for problems. Before going down that road it's an issue that needs to looks at before anything.

Mr. Keller - MOTI would get a referral and they would have to consider approving the bylaw. Any time a property changes use they also need a access permit approved my MOTI. These are both opportunities to ensure adequate road standards.

Brain Collen – There has been no discussion about the adjacent school. Industrial traffic will be travelling down that road. I don't support this until further discussion.

Jill Maibach – From an observational point of view, the volume of traffic is very high entering into the store. Maybe this would relieve that by pulling back the traffic off the highway.

Attendee - I agree with Jill Maibach, it would help a lot if it could be adjusted further back off the highway.

Mr. Keller - It would require a re-zoning so all of these issues would be looked at.

Joanne McLeod – This is a hotspot, getting a lot of negative feedback. This one is unpopular compared to the other two.

The Chair- What I'm hearing is some concerns and maybe this proposal is not the one that would fit this site. Maybe the developer can re-think this plan and the committee can reconsider this later?

Western Maritime Institute

The Chair- I'm not totally familiar with this site and if not liable for the activities maybe we can support something.

Mike Hooper – Following the suggestion of another committee member to develop a playground on the site. Mike Hooper – noted that it might not be the best location since there is fire suppression training on the property

Anne Fiddick – I'm concerned with the impact on the water.

The Chair- Can the septic system support it?

Ray Digby – Do we know exactly what are they exactly doing.

The Chair– They will be working with the fire department on these activities.

Ray Digby – I'm concerned with the waste water, how are they doing this? Are they using any oils?

Mike Hooper – He is using clean close system, no oils.

The Chair- On surface seems acceptable but need a bit more research.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 pm.

Certified correct by:

Director Joe Burnett, Committee Chairperson

Regional District of Nanaimo
Summary of the Electoral Area ‘A’ Official Community Plan Review
Citizen’s Committee Meeting Held on Monday, August 10, 2009 at 6:30pm
At the North Cedar Improvement District Hall
2100 Yellow Point Road

The Chair, Joe Burnett – Called the meeting at 6:30.

Adoption of Minutes

Joe Burnett – Brian Collen stated that some of the comments were mistakenly attributed to him in the July 13th minutes. The committee agreed that the minutes be deferred to the next meeting.

South Wellington Commercial Area

Greg Keller, RDN Senior Planner –The land use designation in the existing Official Community Plan is for an industrial - commercial area. It is a regional industrial service centre that is meant to service the area beyond the Area ‘A’ boundaries. The designation supports industrial and highway commercial uses that do not affect ecosystems and ground water resources. The current Official Community Plan does not support any expansion to this designation. A development permit area is also in place to protect the environment and maintain the ‘form and character’ of the area.

Lavonne Garnett – Explained that she did not understand the ‘form and character’ aspect.

Greg Keller – Explained this is a term used to describe the characteristics of a development such as site layout, parking, landscaping, and screening so there is the least visual impact.

Lavonne Garnett – Stated that the development permit does not seem to be in effect.

Greg Keller – Provided a summary of a high level inventory of the South Wellington Industrial Commercial Area.

Participant – Questioned if the airport area was being considered.

Greg Keller – Confirmed that it is not because it is not located within the South Wellington Industrial Commercial Area.

Kenn Joubert – Questioned where does water supply become a consideration.

Greg Keller – Explained that this is just an inventory. There are a number of Residential 2 zoned properties that if they are rezoned would need to provide adequate supply of water.

Greg Keller – Although we do not have understanding of demand, there is potential for infill in the industrial area. There is an estimated additional 10,000 m² for industrial development. Sandstone is proposing access along fielding road, though we do not know exactly where. The potential for additional floor area is expected to meet the needs of South Wellington during the life expectancy of the new Official Community Plan.

Henrik Kreiberg – Asked if this is a conservative estimate based on displacing existing land uses.

Greg Keller – The estimate does include existing developed lands because many still have the potential for additional development.

Henrik Kreiberg – Is timeframe for build out based on the conservative estimate

Greg Keller – It is a very high level estimate. It would require significant work for more detail.

Henrik Kreiberg – Explained that he is trying to get a sense for the amount of space. In reality it could be much less.

Stephen Henderson – Questioned if there a track record for rezoning residential to industrial land.

Greg Keller – Did not know how many were rezoned, only that some were successful and others were not within the South Wellington Industrial Commercial Area.

Ray Digby – Questioned if this whole area is classified as an industrial area.

Greg Keller – Designation states that it is meant for industrial development.

Ray Digby – Questioned if residential would likely be rezoned. If the community felt that Sandstone would provide enough industrial space, would the Official Community Plan not support rezonings.

Greg Keller – Purpose of this inventory is to give a general idea of what we have today. Not looking at any change to existing Uses.

Terry Paterson – Questioned if you take the Residential 2 zoned land out of the area now.

Dave Dunaway – Questioned why we are revisiting this question if the Official Community Plan said that there will be no more additions to the development permit area. Residents have been complaining for a decade. The only place with a short fall of industrial land is within the City. There is a surplus of industrial land within the South Wellington area. The only thing that it is being used for is mini-storage.

Barbara Ehmig – Would like to go on record on behalf of South Wellington and Area Community Association to be opposed to any further rezoning that is designated for industrial commercial.

Greg Keller – Asked for clarification if this is requesting that the Official Community Plan be amended to remove properties that are not zoned industrial.

Barbara Ehmig – South Wellington community was able to get one industrial land downzoned. A lot of auto wreckers have been around for 35 years, and community has had enough of this sort of business.

Marj Stupich – Pointed out that industrial land in Sandstone will be developed in phase 1 and 2. There is also a conflict between reports on the number of lots that may be created for commercial and industrial.

Participant – Why is the airport not zoned light industrial.

Greg Keller – It is under the federal jurisdiction and it is not within this particular designation.

Lynnia Clark – Heard very little support from South Wellington community for the expansion of the industrial lands.

Joe Burnett - The purpose of this is to visit the topic and discuss it.

Dave Dunaway – Emphasized that the important subject is the Regional Growth Strategy. South Wellington does not have a village node designation. It has requested to be in the Regional Growth Strategy at least a decade ago.

Commercial Opportunities in South Wellington - Ruckledge Store

Greg Keller – Been in discussions with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to ensure that adequate road width is provided. He asked the group if the road issues are addressed, what would the group think about having some sort of development at the site. Also if the group thought that South Wellington should have some sort of neighbourhood centre. The owner of Ruckledge store had the idea to move the store further back on the lot to make more room for an expanded service centre and gas bar.

Mike Hooper – From a safety perspective it would be beneficial to give more room.

Lavonne Garnett – A village node is something they would want to review more in the South Wellington community.

Greg Keller – Stated that when it is at the draft stage we can have more discussion.

David Dunaway – Asked if there can be a special meeting in South Wellington to support the subject.

Joe Burnett – Discussed holding some more meetings about the developments. They would be held in specific areas that are affected by the development and would have the developer at the meeting to respond to the questions.

Gary Laird – Difficult to come to conclusion on the Ruckledge store because the traffic lights are being changed to accommodate Sandstone. The owner may back away if they do not get the traffic light in the location.

Devon Wyatt – It is unrealistic for Sandstone to move the light. Good idea for the actual development of the store.

Nick Dudink – There will be two industrial places not far from each other. People in South Wellington are not happy with it.

Joe Burnett – We had to get the feeling of the community.

1 Hectare Minimum Parcel Size

Greg Keller – Introduces the idea of having a 1 ha minimum parcel size as the smallest lot size outside of the Urban Containment Boundary.

Donna Sweeney – Asked if this means going from ½ acre to 2.5 acre lots.

Greg Keller – Explained that it would in some cases mean that the minimum parcel size would increase from 2000m² to 1.0ha. He explained that the 1 hectare minimum parcel size makes the zoning consistent with urban containment and sustainability goals. He also explained that a 1 hectare parcel size is required in areas outside of Urban Containment Boundary for community sewer grants. The Ministry of Community Services has made this change a condition of sewer funding. This is something that the RDN would have to consider in the other electoral areas. The RDN is still seeking further direction and other options to get sewer grants. Without grants providing sewer servicing is cost prohibitive. The current Official Community Plan also supports larger parcel sizes, it is only the zoning that lags behind. The zoning has not been brought in line with the Official Community Plan.

Lavonne Garnett – Confirmed that all of these areas are outside of the Urban Containment Boundary.

Greg Keller – For access to community sewer grants, it is areas outside of the Urban Containment Boundaries that must be increased as these are areas that are not intended to be provided with sewer servicing.

Lavonne Garnett – What about areas being added to the Cedar Urban Containment Boundary.

Greg Keller – These areas would not be affected if they are in the Urban Containment Boundary.

Henrik Kreiberg – If the current Official Community Plan already supports 1 ha, than is there any reason that a new 1 ha policy in Official Community Plan would be anymore successful.

Greg Keller – The way the RGS is worded we can not further reduce parcel size on property located outside the Urban Containment Boundary. So the question becomes are we willing to implement the parcel size that we already support in the current Official Community Plan?

Henrik Kreiberg - Must all electoral area have this in the zoning, not just the Official Community Plan. How many electoral areas have 1 ha minimum parcel size wording.

Greg Keller – Yes all Electoral Areas must have the zoning in place and most Electoral Area OCPs have wording in support of this.

Participant – Questioned how difficult is it to implement.

Greg Keller – It depends on how strongly the community supports the implementation.

Joe Burnett – In regards to sewer requirements of the provincial government, the CAO is in discussions with the province for a different approach.

Greg Keller – Stated that they are also exploring other options.

Lynnia Clark – Indicated that the Province has made it impossible for sewer grant, since the Regional District of Nanaimo has to go to public with this mandate.

Greg Keller – Explained that the rationale is they do not want to have to bail out property owners with failing septic systems.

Lynnia Clark – Would take years for region wide rezoning amendments. The province has had a mandate that cannot be met.

Gary Scott – Let the CAO talk to the Ministry about other options, such as developers fronting costs. In relation to sustainability principles, any community relying on grants cannot be economically sustainable.

Joe Burnett – The question is if we should carry through with the 1 ha parcel size in the revised Official Community Plan.

Participant – Bad idea to remove it.

Greg Keller – Cannot decrease minimum parcel size. How much emphasis should we put on the implementation of this policy? Should it be supported as regional initiative?

Ray Digby – Suggested that this is a huge task and he would rather see time and energy go into making the rest of it work for community.

Lavonne Garnett – Questioned if there was a possible alternative to providing sewage.

Greg Keller – May be to access green infrastructure grants, such as heat recovery from sewage.

Henrik Kreiberg – Mentioned RGS prohibits decreasing the minimum parcel size. If the policy for a minimum parcel size was not included, than what does it stops people from applying for the minimum parcel size that they want. He would strongly support keeping it in the Official Community Plan do to the potential impacts.

Lavonne Garnett – Why is the focus on building more compact communities in an agricultural area?

Greg Keller – Provides more opportunities for efficient land use and transportation within designated areas. It also reduces sprawl and the impact on the environment. It is really important to encourage development a within well defined area.

Lavonne Garnett – There is lots of agricultural land and sprawl is not a problem here. She suggested that we were changing the landscape of the area by putting it into Urban Containment Boundary.

Joe Burnett – Clarified they are only limiting the growth outside of the Urban Containment Boundary.

Mayta Ryn – Explained that almost 55% of Area ‘A’ in the Agricultural Land Reserve. The land being addressed is not within the Agricultural Land Reserve. The Agricultural Land Reserve is not under attack.

Joe Burnett – Suggested the approach to include a 1 ha minimum parcel size in the Official Community Plan and take it to the community.

Motion – Use the same wording as existing OCP and take the draft to the community

In favour - Unanimous

Opposed - 0

Island Timberlands Open House

Greg Keller – Opened up the discussion to anyone with input on these open houses.

Joe Burnett – Explained that the RDN held a developer forum to put development proposals in front of the community. RDN is not taking position on any development at this time. The intention is to get feedback from the community and to be transparent.

Mike Hooper – Stated that the Island Timberlands open house was a very informative and open process. It was very well attended.

Participant – Asked what the minimum parcel size was.

Greg Keller – The lands would be included in the Urban Containment Boundary.

Dave Dunaway – Asked if there was any feedback from Dr .Wendling on the capacity of the wells. He stated he wants to be on record that his well has been the lowest it has been in the past 6 months.

Kenn Joubert – He was impressed by the Island Timberland proposal, but does not live in Cassidy.

Greg Keller – A committee member from Cassidy supported it in an email.

Mike Hooper – Stated that the Cassidy Urban Containment Boundary is built beyond its capacity supported in the Official Community Plan.

Participant – Questioned who is for development in the community.

Greg Keller – That is what Island Timberlands is trying to gauge.

Boat Harbour

Donna Sweeney – Impressed that they have taken concerns from July meeting for the protection of green space land, but other participants at the open house have indicated problem with their proposal. There are acreages placed between farming areas. This is a concern to the communities. There is also a concern for the location of sewage treatment. There is a lot of water that feeds people’s wells. There were two groups at the meeting: ones who wanted 5 acre parcels with no changes to zoning and others who felt they needed to negotiate for green space and access. The development might be beneficial if done similar to Yellow Point Lodge.

Bert Vermaskari – People opposed to the development overall. Developers did not provide a lot of detail. The amount of parking was not appropriate. Too many people are already parking on the road.

Lynnia Clark – Indicated that she attended and suggested that there was a lot of negative reaction to the smaller residential component.

Henrik Kreiberg – One of the issues in past proposals has been a long standing community interest in the Morden Colliery trail that goes to the sea. In the last concept of development there were a lot of roadblocks to the trail. Has this changed?

Bert Vermaskari – The trails stop well before the historic area. One of the most ecologically sensitive and historical areas they want to cover with buildings. The information provided was not sufficient. People will come on board if there is more tangible information provided.

Donna Sweeney – Part of rationale is that if community is opposed to anything than the permitted 5 acre lot and building stratas than they will not bother preparing any detailed concepts.

Norma Czerny – Explained that the treatment plant is on her property line. The development proposes to put density farthest away from village centre as possible.

John Stone - Attended the meeting for Boat Harbour. He emphasised the importance of being transparent and the developer's effort falls short of good public process. The quality of information provided is less than is appropriate for a developer. Some of the concerns and observations at the meeting were that there was no support for the development. A lot of participants concerns were about the densification issue. This is contrary to existing zoning and the OCP. The lack of density was one of the reasons people purchased in the area. There is also concern about the infrastructure and road use. There are proposed sewage treatment areas that people would be bordering on. These areas were selected only because they were convenient. There will also be an impact on existing water resources in the area. The developer did not have any detail and could not define community for the proposal. The proposal made comment on how it related with OCP, though the developer could not explain how it was consistent. Though he could explain why it was consistent with economic benefit and profit. The principle for densification was used in the proposal, but it is out of context. Given the location it was not consistent. The proposal seemed to rely on that a significant part of property would be gifted to the community for recreation. There were no clear answers on a permanent gifting from an ecological or recreation perspective. He understood that there would be a summary of the input to be consistent with the principles of transparency.

Joe Burnett – Explained that the minutes will be available as a circulation. They are planning on holding other meetings where the developer will be present.

Recognition of Tamagawa University

Greg Keller – The University is something unique to Area 'A'. Currently it is in the ALR and is zoned for public use. It is a satellite campus of a Japanese university. Question is if the OCP should recognise the university, because right now it does not

Dave Dunaway – Need to be careful with language so that there are no more exclusions from the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Joanne McLeod – She leased the land for years and it is not very arable. Are they planning on developing?

Greg Keller – It would only recognise it as an education facility.

Gary Laird – Asked what it does for them.

Greg Keller – It gives them recognition.

Gary Laird – Never heard that they ever had a problem.

Ray Digby – Asked if they comply with the zoning. The recognition may not be necessary.

Greg Keller – It is about recognising the land and the university. It does have to recognise the Agricultural Land Commission's jurisdiction.

Mike Hooper – Does it offer them security?

Greg Keller – It was not something they requested, but it was logical to support what they are doing.

Kenn Joubert – Asked how many acres of agricultural land is there.

Greg Keller – Indicated that he believes its about 84 acres

Kenn Joubert – Would there be way of recognizing them, but keeping the land for agriculture?

Greg Keller – The Agricultural Land Commission would also need to give their approval for any changes to the land use.

Lavonne Garnett – Would this set precedence for other uses that may be supported in the Official Community Plan?

Greg Keller – This is a unique opportunity to recognise the university.

Mayta Ryn – More educational facilities being proposed for agricultural land, such as groups looking to do rehabilitation. It might be beneficial to come up with designation of educational – agricultural use of land.

Joe Burnett – It is a subsidiary of a university of Japan, but would like to build a stronger relationship with the Regional District of Nanaimo.

Joanne McLeod – Originally they were very inclusive, but they have really opened up to the community. They are now really integrating with the community.

Norma Czerny – They are interacting with the high school.

Lynnia Clark – Suggest that Greg write and come back with a policy.

Motion – To write and come back with a policy to support the Tamagawa University.

In favour – Unanimous
Opposed - 0

Outline of OCP

Greg Keller – Explained outline and suggested that the group may contact him with any concerns.

Louise Shuker – Suggested that there were errors in the minutes.

Greg Keller – Suggested that he would look into the minutes.

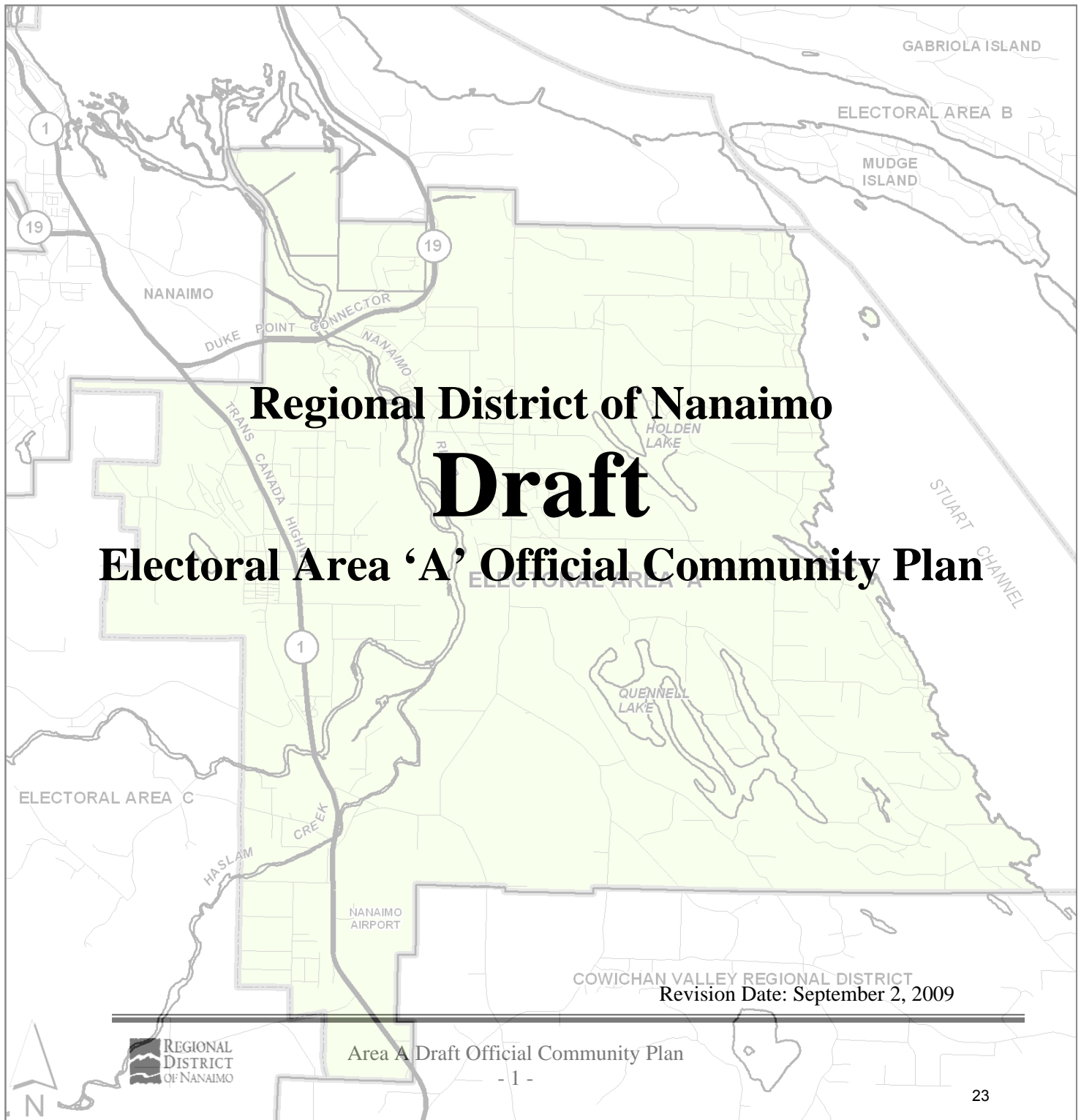
The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 pm.

Certified correct by:

Director Joe Burnett, Committee Chairperson



A Shared Community Vision



Acknowledgements

This OCP was developed through a collaborative community effort which involved a broad cross section of Electoral Area 'A' residents, business owners, and stakeholders. This OCP would not have been possible, without the hard work and dedication of all those involved. The Regional District of Nanaimo would like to acknowledge and thank all those who participated in the OCP review. A special thanks goes out to the Electoral Area 'A' Citizen's Committee Members who devoted a significant amount of their time and energy to produce this document. The committee members included:

Joe Burnett, Chair and Electoral Area 'A' Director
Chris Pagan
Donna Sweeney
Anne Fiddick
Brian Collen
Jill Maibach
Sharon Stannard
Jack Anderson
Devon Wyatt
Ray Digby
Bert Vermaskari
Zita Hartman
Lynnia Clark
Henrik Kreiberg
Joanne McLeod
Gary Laird

Table of Contents



1.0 Introduction

What will Electoral Area 'A' be like in 2030? For every citizen, there is undoubtedly a different prediction. What is more important than predictions is to know *what* residents *want* it to be like and to *plan today* to work towards that desirable future. For example, how can we make sure our children will continue to want to live here when they grow up? Will they be able to afford a home, have a job, and enjoy the same or better quality of life as residents do today? Will seniors and young families be able to stay in the community in which they grew up? How can we protect the environment, preserve the rural character, and enhance the economy?

In addition, other increasingly important aspects to consider include reducing greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging local food production in pursuit of becoming a more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable community. These are some of the challenges and opportunities faced by the community and which are addressed in this Official Community Plan.



THIS OCP IS
OUR
COMMUNITY'S
ROADMAP TO
SUSTAINABILITY

1.1 What is an Official Community Plan?

The *Local Government Act* authorizes local governments to adopt Official Community Plans (OCPs) that guide the community's future development. The same legislation provides direction on the focus of an OCP and its content as well as its adoption procedures. The *Local Government Act* defines an OCP as a “*statement of objectives and policies to guide local government decisions on planning and land use management within the planning area.*”

An OCP is also a strategic and visionary document that describes a community’s desired future. The vision reflects the ideas and input of the Regional Board, Electoral Area residents, stakeholders, professionals and staff who participated in the preparation of the Plan. In this way, an OCP is the road map for a community to guide its progress towards its desired future.

An OCP must be adopted by a local government as a bylaw, which requires four readings by the Regional Board as well as a public hearing. The OCP bylaw must also be referred to the Agricultural Land Commission and approved by the Minister of Community and Rural Development.

To provide flexibility for any changes that may occur over the long-term, the *Local Government Act* states that an OCP does not commit a local government to implement policies specified in the plan but limits them to ensure actions are consistent with the plan.

An OCP is a ‘living document’ that provides clear direction but does not preclude amendments to the plan based on changing circumstances or interpretation of policies by the Regional Board and staff. However, all other Regional District policies, plans and regulations must be in alignment with the Official Community Plan. Therefore the OCP is a powerful guide to decision-making.

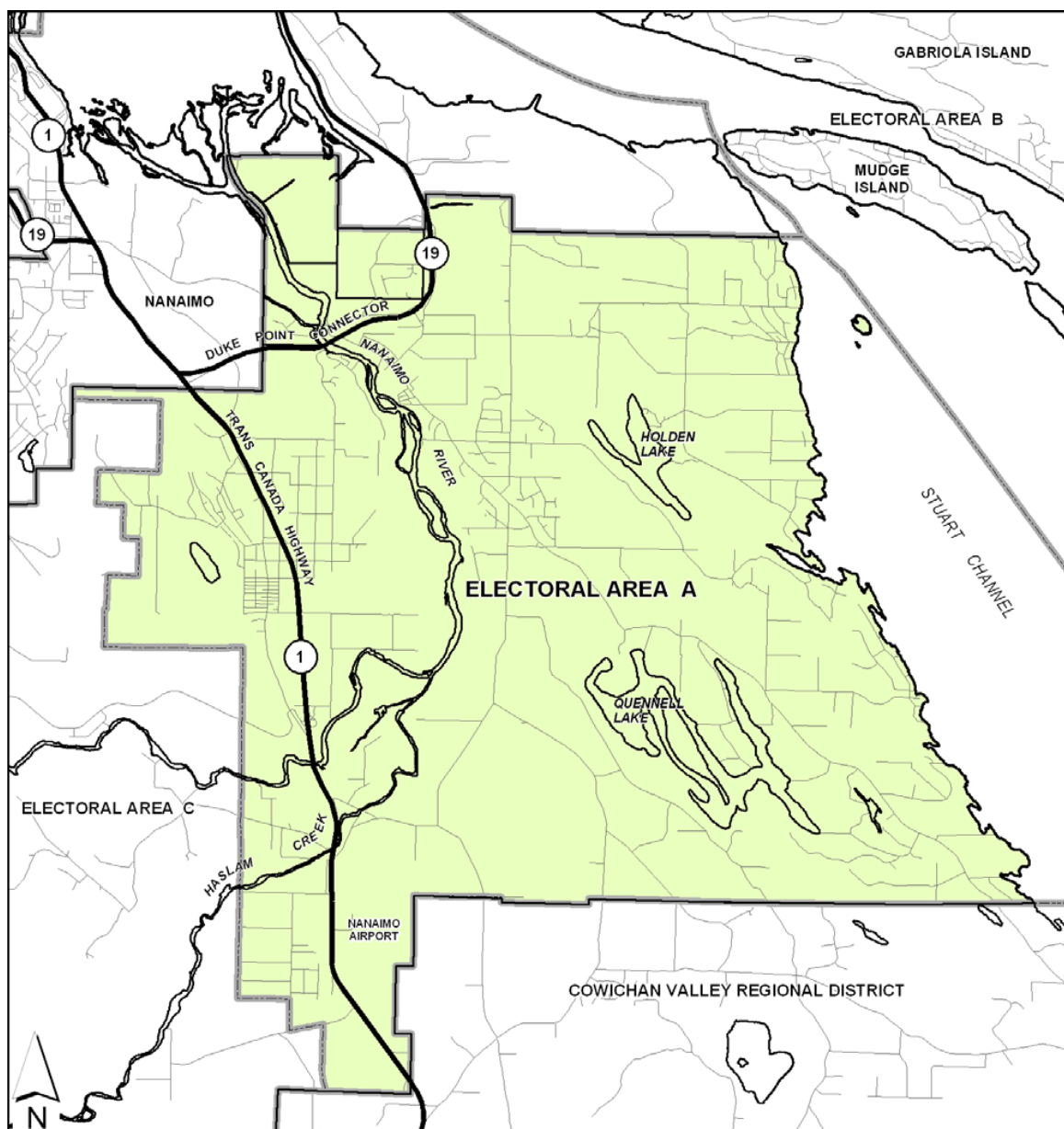
1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this OCP is to:

- help Electoral Area 'A' move towards becoming more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable.
- present a long-term vision to provide goals, objectives, and policies which if implemented would help the community work towards achieving the community's vision;
- provide guidance on decision-making towards the achievement of community goals;
- direct discussion and decisions about land use and development; and,
- help the community prepare for change, future challenges, and growth.

1.3 Scope

The Electoral Area 'A' Plan Area is bordered by the City of Nanaimo to the north, Electoral Area 'C' to the west, the Strait of Georgia to the east, and the Cowichan Valley Regional District to the south. The Plan Area includes the neighbourhoods of Boat Harbour, Cassidy, Cedar, Cedar-by-the-Sea, South Wellington, and Yellow Point. The Plan Area is shown on Figure No. 1.



The Plan Area is influenced by a number of significant physical factors, both constructed and natural, including the Trans Canada Highway and the Duke Point Connector Highway, the Nanaimo Regional Airport, the Nanaimo River and its estuary, the Cassidy aquifer, and the Strait of Georgia (Stuart Channel).

Approximately 6,751 people live within the Plan Area based on the Statistics Canada 2006 Census. Over the past few years, the rate of growth of Electoral Area 'A' has been slower than other areas in the Regional District of Nanaimo. If the current growth trend continues, it is anticipated that as many as 8,700 people could be residing in Area 'A' by 2026.

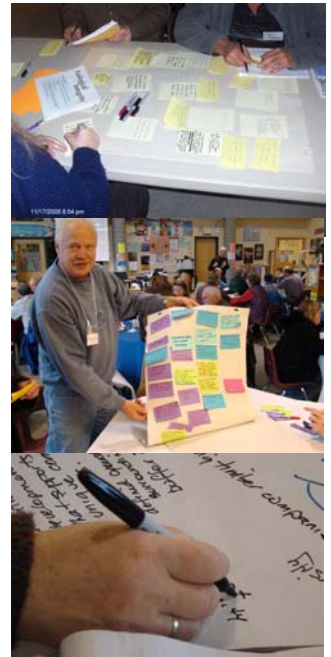
The intent of this OCP is to provide direction on how the Plan Area will grow and change over the next 5-10 years while recognizing the needs and desires of the community for the next 15-20 years. However, it is recognized that the Plan may require amendment in response to changes in legislation, changing community opinions, and amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy.

1.4 Official Community Plan Review Process

The Electoral Area 'A' OCP review was a collaborative effort which involved an extensive public consultation process which was held between May 2008 and 2009. The process was based on the input received at a Community Forum which asked the community what they wanted included in the review, how they wanted to participate, and how they wanted the Regional District of Nanaimo to communicate with them.

As a result of the Community Forum, it became clear that there was support to rewrite the Official Community Plan with a focus on sustainability, use a variety of techniques to engage the community and obtain their input, use a variety of methods to communicate with the community, and for the process to be open and transparent.

In addition to providing a variety of different opportunities for the community to get involved in the OCP review process, a Citizen's Committee consisting of 17 members representing a variety of interests and geographic locations within the Plan Area was also established. The purpose of the Committee was to augment the input received by the general community and to act as resident experts to discuss issues and ideas, make recommendations to the Regional District of Nanaimo, as well as to encourage open dialogue about the OCP review within the community.



1.5 Organization of the Plan

For an OCP to be clear and understandable, its organization must provide clear linkages between goals, objectives and policies. It must also articulate a strong vision where the land use plan and policies can be demonstrated to be consistent with the vision. In this way, the vision becomes a storyline that ensures that strategies, objectives, and policies are all working in the same direction. Figure 2 below provides an overview of how this OCP is structured.

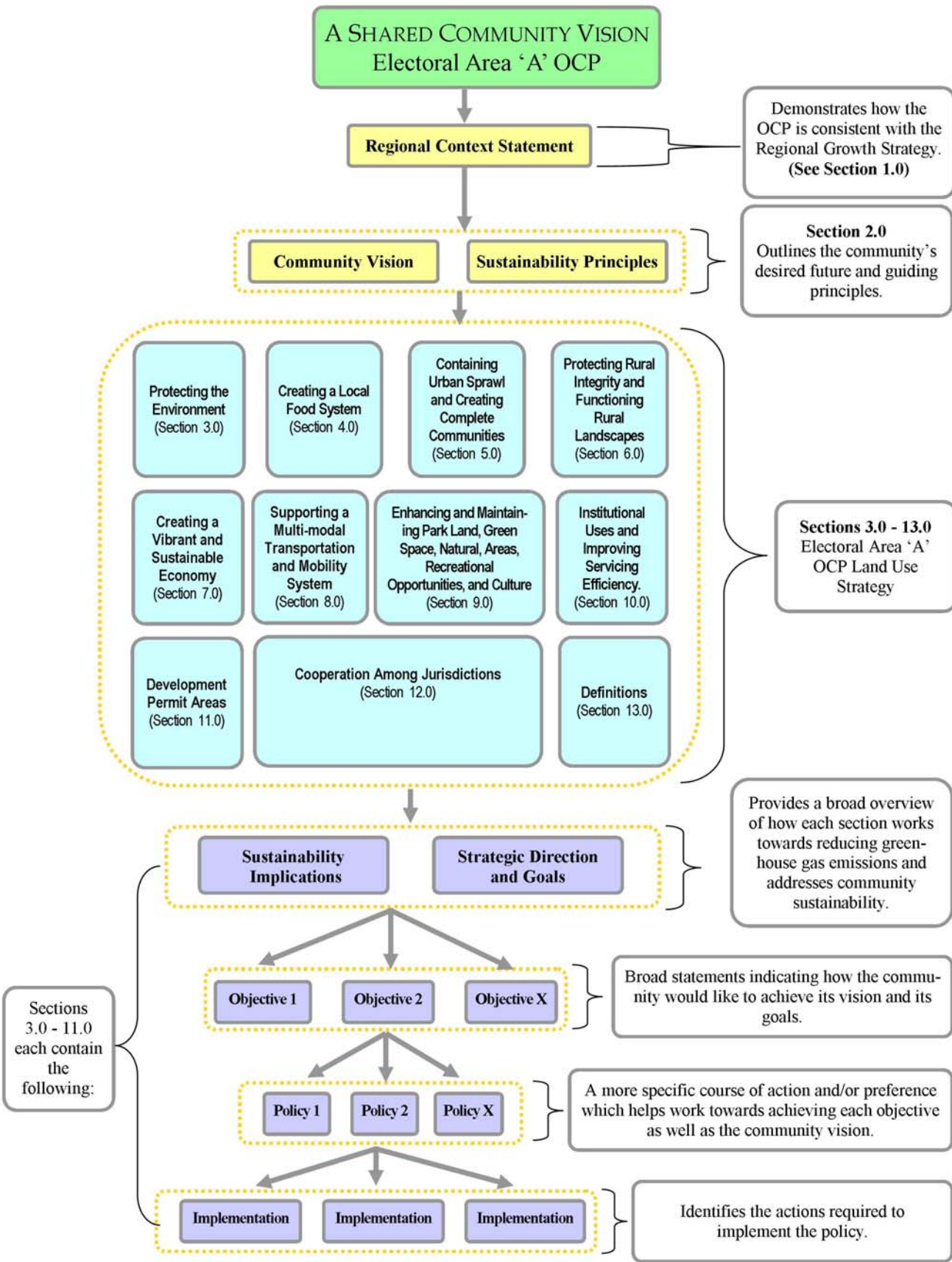


Figure No. 2

1.6 Regional Context Statement

Reserved for Regional Context Statement

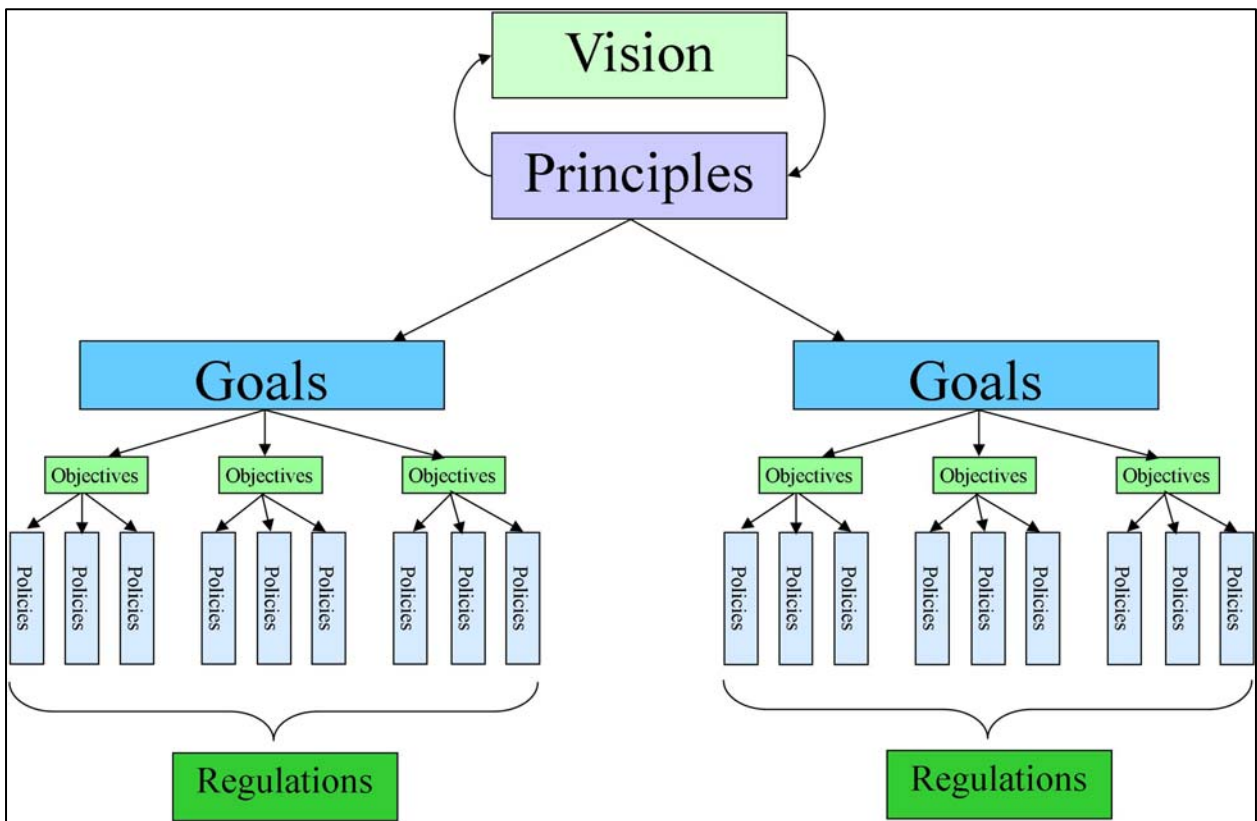
Will be drafted following completion of other sections

2.0 Vision, Principles, and Goals

The Electoral Area 'A' OCP review process provided opportunities for the community to work together to develop a community vision titled '*A Shared Community Vision*', a set of sustainability principles, and a number of goals.

The Community Vision identifies the desired future for Electoral Area 'A'. The sustainability principles provide a set of guiding principles which have helped guide decisions on what was included in the OCP and will assist the Regional District of Nanaimo in making sound land use decisions in the future to ensure that Area 'A' works towards becoming a more sustainable community.

It is important to understand the relationship between the community vision, sustainability principles, goals, objectives, policies, and implementation. Figure 3 below provides an overview of the relationship between the vision, principles, goals, objectives, policies, and regulations.



2.1 A Shared Community Vision

Electoral Area 'A' is a diverse caring community full of local talent, which respects its cultural and historical roots in agriculture, mining, forestry, and other resource uses. Electoral Area 'A' residents include members of the Snuneymuxw and Chemainus First Nations.

Electoral Area 'A' is also a community with a strong emphasis on the preservation of its existing rural values, which are deeply entrenched in the community and passed down through generations. Rural village feel, lands in agricultural and resource production, quietness, open spaces, opportunities to interact and be in touch with and appreciate nature, and clean air and water are some of the values which contribute towards area residents' way of life and is the reason we call Electoral Area 'A' home.

On December 6, 2008, the community came together to develop 'A Shared Community Vision'. This Vision recognizes that environmental, social, or economic changes may be needed to ensure that the things the community values today are preserved and enhanced for future generations. It also ensures that the community continues to work toward sustainability in consideration of the potential global impacts of climate change.

The community vision is:

It is 2033, and Electoral Area 'A' is a highly desirable place to live, work, and play and as a result has become more socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable. The community has evolved over time through careful planning and guidance provided by the Official Community Plan, which has been upheld by the Regional District of Nanaimo and strongly supported by members of the community. The Official Community Plan is based on the concept of sustainability and 'smart growth', which seeks to minimize the impacts of human activities. This has been accomplished by managing natural resources, as well as economic environmental, and social systems in a way that enhances quality of life, yet does not diminish the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Electoral Area 'A' has become a leader in local food production and sustainability and is often showcased as a model community due to its environmental stewardship and protection policies, growth management strategies, innovative use of alternative technologies, green building programs, recreational and sports opportunities, diverse culture, artistic talent, and excellent multi-modal transportation system.

After nearly 25 years of well managed development, rural values are not only maintained and protected but are also enhanced. Young families and seniors are now attracted to and are staying within the community. There are opportunities for local employment, which contributes to the local economy and has minimal impacts on the environment. Per capita green house gas emissions have been reduced and continue to decline as the economy prospers.

Growth is directed into well-defined village and neighbourhood centres. Growth and development outside these centres has largely been avoided as agriculture, resource use, and conservation of biodiversity have become the top priority for these areas.

The community is a vibrant place to live where a diversity of residents from all economic levels and ethnic backgrounds are welcomed and have an enhanced sense of community pride. Electoral Area 'A' residents feel safe in their community and enjoy the personal freedom a rural lifestyle provides.

2.2 Sustainability Principles

In the pursuit of becoming a more sustainable community it is recognized that, when making decisions, economic, social, and environmental factors are interdependent and must not be considered in isolation. In addition, it is recognized that decisions made today not only affect the current generation, but are also a major determinant in the quality of life to be enjoyed by future Electoral Area 'A' generations.

Electoral Area 'A' residents have worked together to define what is important to ensure that Area 'A' continues to be a great place to live, work, and play as well as to work towards what is required to become a more sustainable community. In doing so nine sustainability principles are presented below which provide guidance for making sound decisions and also form the foundation for the goals, objectives, and policies of this Plan. It is intended that these sustainability principles will provide guidance to the Regional Board, Regional District of Nanaimo staff, other government and non-government agencies, stakeholders, developers, and community members in making decisions that will result in a positive impact on Electoral Area 'A'.

Principle 1 Nature has Intrinsic Value

Electoral Area 'A' residents believe that nature has intrinsic value and as such are committed to environmental stewardship and conservation and support the concept that the natural environment and all of its ecosystem components have value beyond what can be extracted, harvested, or derived from them.

Electoral Area 'A' residents' health and well-being relies upon functioning native ecosystems which are critical to a sustainable long-term future. This includes not only biologically diverse local flora and fauna, but also the quality and quantity of drinking water and the maintenance of services provided by a health ecosystem such as clean air, water, and soil.

It is recognized that nature is complex, diverse and unpredictable and therefore Electoral Area 'A' residents understand that in order to protect and enhance the natural environment, it is necessary to continually adapt to changing conditions and strive to better understand and mitigate the potential impacts of our actions and important land use decisions.

Principle 2 Maintain local history, culture, and rural character

Local history, culture, rural character, and rural lifestyles are highly valued and are of critical importance to residents of Electoral Area 'A'. There is no single definition of rural character in Electoral Area 'A' as it varies by location. However, rural character is generally defined by low population density focused primarily on agricultural and resource uses with large expanses of open and green space which typically include larger land holdings than compared to suburban and urban areas. Some area residents say rural character is food production while other believe that it is about living closer to the land and its aesthetic qualities. Rural character also provides residents with a lifestyle different than what would be encouraged and expected in an urban environment which includes lack of urban services and amenities, peace and quiet, close social networks, safety, and the sound, and smells of active agriculture.

Principle 3 Leaders in Local Food Production

Over half of the Plan Area is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve and agriculture is an important contributor to the local economy. Area residents wish to become leaders in local food production as a means of reducing the dependence on imported food and as such wish to see land located in the ALR being used wisely and for its intended purpose in a sustainable fashion. Area residents discourage uses

which may create conflicts with agricultural such as non-farm related residential, commercial, or industrial growth on lands located within the ALR and encourage more intensive land use and higher densities to be developed within the urban containment boundary and in a way which minimizes the impacts of these uses on agricultural operations.

Principle 4 Manage Growth Carefully

Area residents support and understand that in order to protect the rural character of Electoral Area 'A' and the quality of life enjoyed by rural residents, it is necessary to limit the rate of change in rural areas. This plan achieves this by discouraging new non-agricultural and resource development in rural areas and encouraging new non-agricultural and resource growth into well-defined urban areas, which are not recognized by this Plan as being 'rural'. In addition, infill and intensification of existing residential areas within the urban containment boundaries is strongly encouraged.

Principle 5 Safe, Healthy, and Active Communities for all Residents

The creation of safe healthy and active communities is critical to the overall livability and long term sustainability of Electoral Area 'A'. Residents who live in communities which provide a range of opportunities for safe and efficient interconnected forms of transportation which include opportunities for walking, cycling and other forms of human-powered transportation are more likely to choose modes of transportation other than the use of a private automobile. Providing opportunities for Active Transportation reduces obesity, improves community health, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, improves social networking opportunities, and improves safety as more people use Active Transportation routes. Electoral Area 'A' residents support a broad range of transportation and mobility options.

Principle 6 Participatory Democracy

Electoral Area 'A' residents value the ability to participate in decisions that affect them. Effective public participation provides opportunities to engage citizen's in a way that is meaningful, transparent, and inclusive. It is recognized that participation by all stakeholders affected by a decision is crucial in developing good plans and making sound decisions.

Principle 7 A Diverse Community

Electoral Area 'A' is comprised of a diverse group of individuals who have different educational backgrounds, economic status, religious beliefs, and interests who when combined contribute towards a sense of community in Electoral Area 'A'. A diverse population also means that that the community has a broad range of needs including transportation, housing, recreation, medical, and education. Area 'A' residents wish to support and encourage diversity in the community and as such it is recognized that the community must provide for a diverse range of needs including transportation and mobility options and housing types and options.

Principle 8 A Diversified Local Economy

A healthy local economy provides a range of employment opportunities catering to a diversity of skill sets which meet the needs of the community. Electoral Area 'A' residents wish to strengthen and diversify the local economy and generally support economic development which makes a positive contribution to the local economy without negatively affecting the environment or sacrificing rural integrity or local resident's quality of life. Preference is given to well-designed pedestrian-oriented developments within appropriate areas designated by this Plan.

Principle 9 Efficient and Cost Effective Services

The provision of community services such as parks and trails, water, sewer, and transit are important in creating healthy livable communities. However, it is important to ensure that delivery of these services does not place an undue burden on residents of Electoral Area 'A'. Therefore, Electoral Area 'A' residents support the provision of a variety of community services in an efficient and cost effective manner.

2.3 Community Goals

A number of community goals were developed at a series of four community workshops and from responses received to a number of workbooks submitted by the community.

The purpose of the community goals is to provide general direction on how the community would like to achieve its vision in a way which is consistent with the sustainability principles designated in Section 2.2 above. The community goals also form the basis for the objectives and policies contained in this Plan.

Growth Management

1. Support and encourage the development of a diverse and sustainable system of agricultural production in Electoral Area 'A'.
2. Avoid development outside of the Urban Containment Boundary which does not contribute towards achieving the community vision and making Electoral Area 'A' a more sustainable community.
3. Direct growth into well-defined village centres within the Urban Containment Boundary.
4. Manage the rate of change in areas where additional development is supported.
5. Ensure that the amount of growth respects and is limited by the local water supply.
6. Engage the community in an early and ongoing basis in a transparent and meaningful way when consideration is being given to potential amendments to this Plan and/or when important land use decisions are being considered.
7. Create clear rules and criteria for development.

Community Well being

8. Preserve the rural character of Electoral Area 'A'
9. Create a dynamic and sustainable community which welcomes a diversity of residents of all ages and from all economic levels.
10. Create neighbourhoods that have distinct identities and lively public spaces that promote social connections.
11. Encourage and support community services geared towards all ages including active transportation, recreation, culture, sports, the arts, and education.

Environmental Integrity

12. Support and encourage green development.
13. Preserve, protect and enhance biodiversity, ground water resources, and natural habitat.
14. Support environmental stewardship.
15. Establish, protect, and enhance green space.
16. Minimize the impact of development on the natural environment.
17. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Economic Health

18. Build and encourage economic diversity.

19. Support economic development which creates opportunities for local employment does not have negative environmental impacts and does not detract from the quality of life enjoyed by area residents.
20. Establish and support efficient infrastructure and community services.



3.0 Protecting the Natural Environment

The earth is a robust self-sustaining system adapted to a range of naturally-occurring disturbance, change, and natural disasters. However, the cumulative impacts of human activities over the past two centuries have introduced disturbances and change beyond this natural range, which now threaten our continued well-being.

It is important to maintain healthy ecosystems which regulate our climate, clean our fresh water, regulate and clean atmospheric gases, maintain genetic diversity, sustain the water cycle, recycle nutrients, and pollinate our crops.

The Georgia Basin, which includes the Regional District of Nanaimo, is one of the fastest growing areas in the Province and is also one of the most biologically diverse areas of North America. Electoral Area 'A' is home to many environmentally sensitive features which must be identified and preserved to ensure the long term environmental health of the area.

The following subsections and their associated objectives and policies help ensure that the impacts of development are minimized while working towards achieving the community vision in a way which is also consistent with the sustainability principles.

Sustainability Implications

Climate Change

The world's leading scientists (Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change) agree that the world's climate is warming at an alarming rate. A change in global mean temperature of 1 to 2 degrees Celsius above 1990 levels poses significant risks to many unique and threatened systems including many biodiversity hotspots. The earth is now nearing this threshold. Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities, the catalyst for global warming, have significantly increased over the last 30 years and continue to increase today. In our region, the three main sources of greenhouse gas emissions are transportation, buildings and solid waste. These are topics which this OCP can influence through the designation and implementation of development and conservation policies.

To stabilize the concentrations of greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere, emissions need to decline. This is no easy task and it is not to be taken lightly as it requires changes and cooperation at all levels. The OCP's role in addressing climate change is to support actions and decisions which are necessary to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare the community to adapt to changing conditions as a result of climate change (adaptation and mitigation).



***"ELECTORAL AREA A ... IS OFTEN
SHOWCASED AS A MODEL
COMMUNITY DUE TO ITS
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND
PROTECTION POLICIES... "***

- A SHARED COMMUNITY VISION

Environment

Biodiversity and ecosystem health are in decline worldwide, largely due to human activities. Factors such as climate change, pollution, resource extraction and over consumption impact both local and global ecosystems. As a growing electoral area with a desirable quality of life within close proximity to urban services, it is anticipated that there will be continued pressure placed on the natural environment. OCP policies need to ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem health are protected.

Social

The environment provides many services such as clean air and water, food, resources, and the essential ingredients that support the economy. A healthy environment is valued by Electoral Area 'A' residents, although it is recognized that the challenge is to find approaches to environmental management that give people the quality of life they seek while protecting the environmental systems that are also the foundations of our well being.

Individual property owners, area residents, non-profit conservation organizations, business, First Nations and all levels of Government have a role to play in protecting the natural environment.

The Regional District of Nanaimo recognizes its role is to ensure the natural environment is protected and enhanced as the Plan Area grows and changes over time to safe guard current and future Electoral Area 'A' residents' ability to enjoy the natural amenities the Plan Area has to offer.

Economic

The economy depends on the environment for every aspect of its existence. Food, energy, minerals, raw materials, and water, are some examples of what the environment provides. As mentioned above, biodiversity and ecosystem health are in decline in part due to past and present economic activities. Without biologically diverse and healthy ecosystems, the economy could not prosper. Electoral Area 'A' residents support the 'emerging economy' which provides opportunities for local employment while not having a negative impact on the environment.

Strategic Direction and Goals

Section 3.0 helps achieve the community vision by contributing towards the following goals:

1. Preserve, protect and enhance biodiversity, ground water resources, and natural habitat.
2. Support environmental stewardship.
3. Establish, protect, and enhance green space.
4. Minimize the impact of development on the natural environment.
5. Create clear rules and criteria for development.
6. Preserve the rural character of Electoral Area 'A'

3.1 Environmentally Sensitive Ecosystems and Species of Concern

In keeping with the community vision and the Region's goal of protecting the natural environment, the Electoral Area 'A' Official Community Plan identifies and supports the protection and enhancement of important environmentally sensitive ecosystems within the Plan Area. Environmentally sensitive areas are areas of land and/or water that are sensitive to human presence, development, and interference. They are also features, areas, or habitats that are worthy of a higher level of protection as a result of vulnerability, or particular value in maintaining essential ecosystem function as well as a high abundance and/or wide range of local biodiversity, including red and blue listed and migratory species.

An inventory of sensitive ecosystems on east Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands was undertaken by the Canadian Wildlife Service in partnership with other agencies. The result of this inventory was the Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory of east Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands 2004. Protection of these

ecosystems has been incorporated into the policies found within this OCP. As well, there are likely other environmentally sensitive ecosystems and features unknown to the community and the Regional District of Nanaimo. In addition, the Conservation Data Centre is part of the Environmental Stewardship Division of the provincial Ministry of Environment, this agency collects and disseminates information on plants, animals, and ecosystems at risk in British Columbia. This OCP includes provisions to protect the known locations of species of concern.

It is the intent of this Plan to recognize new information on environmentally sensitive features and species of concern as it becomes available and to adapt to changes in the location and extent of environmentally sensitive ecosystems, habitats, species, and features.

Objectives, Policies, and Implementation Actions

Section 3.1	Policy/Objective
Objective 3.1.1	Retain a full range of habitat required to maintain and re-establish indigenous and endangered species.
Policy 3.1.1	Consider the adoption of a tree cutting bylaw.
Policy 3.1.2	Land, water, and species of concern which are sensitive to human disturbance are deemed to be an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA). These areas are identified on Map No. 1 of this Plan. It should be noted Environmentally Sensitive Areas are not limited to the boundaries indicated. This Plan may be amended from time to time to recognize newly identified ESAs and to make changes to ESA boundaries to reflect changing on-site conditions or more comprehensive environmental assessments and amendments to the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Atlas.
Policy 3.1.3	Require return to Crown, or apply protective covenants or conservation agreements for riparian corridors along the bed of watercourses, creeks, lakes and wetlands wherever development on land adjacent to these features is proposed.
Advocacy Policy 3.1.4	Encourage the British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Environment Canada to monitor environmentally sensitive features and take an active role in providing the Regional District of Nanaimo with updated information on the status, location, and management of any environmentally sensitive features on an ongoing basis.
Advocacy Policy 3.1.5	Encourage senior provincial and federal agencies to work with the Regional District of Nanaimo, non-government organizations, and other community interest groups to identify, preserve, protect, and enhance environmentally sensitive areas.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Request the authority to require a permit for the removal of trees from the Ministry of Community and Rural Development. Engage the community to establish appropriate locations and requirements.	Immediate
Advise senior government agencies of policies in the Official Community Plan.	Ongoing
Incorporate new and more accurate verifiable information on ESA's in this Plan as it becomes available.	Ongoing
Work with the Provincial Approving Officer, property owners, and developers, and include protection guidelines within a Development Permit Area.	Immediate

Section 3.1	Policy/Objective
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Objective 3.1.2	Ensure that site specific evaluations of properties with environmentally sensitive features are required when developments are contemplated within or adjacent to areas containing environmentally sensitive features and/or species.
Policy 3.1.6	Designate Development Permit Areas in Section 11 (Development Permit Areas) of this Plan to protect the following sensitive ecosystem types: riparian vegetation, wetland, woodland, coastal bluff, terrestrial herbaceous, and sparsely vegetated as defined in the ESA Atlas.
Policy 3.1.7	Designate Development Permit Areas in Section 11 (Development Permit Areas) of this Plan to protect Bald Eagle and Great Blue Heron nesting trees, and known occurrences of rare and endangered species shown on Map No. 1.
Policy 3.1.8	In evaluating development proposals, the RDN may require development approval information including, but not limited to, report(s) prepared by Certified Environmental Professionals (R.P.Bio, R.P.F, etc.) identifying and locating all environmentally sensitive ecosystems and features, assessing the environmental impact of a proposed development and providing recommendations to mitigate all potential impacts.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Designate development permit areas as per <i>Local Government Act</i>	Immediate
RDN to consider information requirements as part of development applications	Ongoing

Section 3.1	Policy/Objective
Objective 3.1.3	Protect sensitive ecosystems and rare species with policies and Development Permit Areas
Policy 3.1.9	Ensure that Zoning Amendment Applications within or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas are not approved where a proposed development would adversely affect an environmentally sensitive ecosystem or species of concern as determined by an environmental professional.
Policy 3.1.10	Despite the minimum parcel sizes supported by this Plan, the creation of new parcels less than the minimum parcel size supported by this Plan and located within a smaller footprint of the parent parcel may be supported to protect and/or enhance an environmentally sensitive feature without an amendment to this Plan provided the overall number of parcels and density is consistent with the current zoning and the environmentally sensitive feature is permanently protected. Density and/or the number of potential parcels shall be based on the buildable area taking into account site constraints not the overall parcel size. It is recognized that an amendment to the policies related to Goal 3 – Rural Integrity of the Regional Growth Strategy may be required in order to permit parcel clustering.
Policy 3.1.11	Development should generally conform to " <i>Develop With Care: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Development in British Columbia</i> " as amended and/or replaced from time to time.
Policy 3.1.12	Zoning amendments and development proposals shall be reviewed in relation to existing and potential archaeological sites and where sites are apparent or identified on provincial archaeological mapping, such applications shall be referred to the Heritage Conservation Branch of the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Development.
Policy 3.1.13	Development applications for lands in or adjacent to environmentally sensitive features generally as identified on Map No. 1 of this Plan, shall ensure that the environmentally sensitive feature is protected to the greatest extent possible.

Policy 3.1.14	Notwithstanding Policy 3.1.13 above, developments that result in negative impacts to environmentally sensitive features shall not be supported unless the impacts are mitigated in accordance with the recommendations of a Qualified Environmental Professional.
Policy 3.1.15	To the greatest extent possible environmentally sensitive features and the habitat requirements for species of concern should remain in their natural state and should not be developed or disturbed.
Advocacy Policy 3.1.16	With respect to a proposed subdivision within, adjacent to, or containing an ESA, request that the Subdivision Approving Officer not support the proposed subdivision unless the environmentally sensitive feature is adequately protected through zoning, covenants, park land dedication where appropriate, or conservation agreement. It is preferred that the creation of new parcels not be supported in the case where it is likely that encroachment into the sensitive area would occur over time.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
RDN to consider the protection of Environmentally Sensitive Features as part of zoning amendment application review process	Ongoing
Bring forward a request to amend the Regional Growth Strategy to allow more compact density neutral forms of development.	Immediate
Work with the Provincial Subdivision Approving Officer to encourage the protection of ESA's	Ongoing

Objective 3.1.4	Support and encourage community involvement and environmental education
Policy 3.1.17	Support and encourage communication and education on environmentally sensitive features within the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and community groups.
Advocacy Policy 3.1.18	Land owners, senior government agencies, non-profit societies, and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to participate in the registration and holding of covenants and to assist with funding for environmental conservation.
Policy 3.1.19	Encourage land owners to develop their land in an environmentally sensitive way.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
The RDN should develop an environmental stewardship education program	Short Term
The RDN should develop an eco-gifting program.	Short Term
The RDN should develop incentives to encourage green development.	Short Term

3.2 Freshwater Management

Electoral Area 'A' contains an extensive and complex interconnected water system within the Nanaimo River Watershed which includes watercourses, lakes, wetlands, and aquifers that help define Electoral Area 'A'. The preservation and enhancement of pristine aquatic and riparian ecosystems is vital as many terrestrial and aquatic plant and animal species depend on these ecosystems for survival.

Surface water is also a source of water for residences and agriculture and is valuable for recreational activities. In addition, maintaining intact watersheds and natural flow regimes serves to maintain stable stream channels and helps prevent or moderate flooding.

The Ministry of Environment, in cooperation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, adopted the "*Riparian Areas Regulation*" (RAR), which came into force on March 31, 2006. This legislation was enacted in July of 2004 under Section 12 of the British Columbia *Fish Protection Act*. The purpose of the RAR is to protect the features, functions, and conditions that are required to support fish life processes in riparian areas. Local governments are required to protect all streams in accordance with the regulation. This official community plan satisfies the requirements of the RAR.

Objectives and Policies

Section 3.2	Policy/Objective
Objective 3.2.1	To identify, preserve, protect, and enhance all freshwater ecosystems within Electoral Area 'A'.
Policy 3.2.1	Ensure that all development, including the subdivision of land containing or adjacent to a watercourse, does not adversely affect that watercourse and its associated riparian ecosystems.
Policy 3.2.2	Development applications that pose negative impacts will not be supported unless those impacts are mitigated on the subject parcel or an adjacent parcel containing similar habitat such that the end result represents an overall improvement to the function of the ecosystem being impacted.
Policy 3.2.3	The restoration and 'day lighting' of previously disturbed watercourses is supported and culverting and the permanent diversion of watercourses shall be discouraged.
Policy 3.2.4	Creative development proposals which enhance a watercourse and/or provide protection to a watercourse shall be supported including clustering of development, density averaging, covenant protection, park land dedication over and above the minimum 5% requirement, providing green space, and other methods.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Consider implications of development on surface water and riparian areas during application reviews.	Ongoing
The RDN shall support return to Crown, or apply protective covenants or conservation agreements for riparian corridors along the bed of watercourses, creeks, lakes and wetlands wherever development on or adjacent to watercourses is proposed.	Ongoing
Request that the Subdivision Approving Officer not support a proposed subdivision unless the watercourse is adequately protected through covenants, green space dedication where appropriate, or conservation agreement.	Ongoing

Objective 3.2.2	To maintain, enhance, and protect the biodiversity, ecological function, aesthetic appeal and recreational value of all watercourses in Electoral Area 'A'.
Policy 3.2.5	Designate Development Permit Areas in Section 11 (Development Permit Areas) of this Plan to protect watercourses and their associated riparian ecosystems.
Policy 3.2.6	The RDN supports measures to protect return to Crown, or apply protective covenants or conservation agreements for riparian corridors along the bed of watercourses, creeks, lakes and wetlands wherever development on adjacent land is proposed.

Advocacy Policy 3.2.7	Proposed subdivisions that include or are adjacent to a watercourse shall not be supported unless the watercourse is adequately protected through covenants, green space dedication where appropriate, or a conservation agreement. Subdivision layouts designed to reduce encroachment into protective covenant areas are strongly supported.
Policy 3.2.8	Encourage the British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Environment Canada to monitor watercourses and provide the Regional District of Nanaimo with updated information on their status, location, and management.
Policy 3.2.9	Encourage senior provincial and federal agencies to work with the Regional District of Nanaimo, non-government organizations, and other community interest groups to identify, preserve, protect, and enhance watercourses.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Ongoing communication with the British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Environment Canada	Ongoing
For development applications require information from applicants that identifies and identifies measures to protect environmentally sensitive areas	Ongoing

Objective 3.2.3	To encourage and promote environmentally responsible development.
Policy 3.2.10	For development applications, the Regional District may require development approval information including, but not limited to, report(s) prepared by an Environmental Professional (R.P.Bio, R.P.F, etc.) identifying and locating all environmentally sensitive ecosystems and features; assessing the environmental impact of a proposed development and providing recommendations to mitigate all potential impacts.
Policy 3.2.11	Support and encourage communication and education on environmentally sensitive features within the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and community groups.
Policy 3.2.12	Development should generally conform with <i>"Develop With Care: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Development in British Columbia"</i> as amended and/or replaced from time to time.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Ongoing communication with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and community groups.	Ongoing
RDN staff shall become familiar with Develop with Care, Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia. The RDN shall refer to Develop With Care for application reviews.	Ongoing

3.3 Coastal Zone Management

Coastal and marine environments provide essential services and goods from an ecological, economic, and social perspective. The form and dynamics of the physical shore help determine essential habitat conditions for coastal plant and animal communities. Coastal areas are also highly valued by property owners, the general community, and marine recreational users for their aesthetic qualities, recreational values, and viewscapes.

In addition, many coastal communities are experiencing unprecedented levels of growth. This is a critical time, which provides an opportunity to recognize the unintended consequences of past practices and identifies ways to reduce the impacts of development and to ensure that the benefits of having healthy marine ecosystems continue to be enjoyed for generations to come.

Objectives and Policies

Section 3.3	Policy/Objective
Objective 3.3.1	Maintain, enhance, and protect the biodiversity, ecological functionality, aesthetic appeal, and recreational value of the waterfront.
Policy 3.3.1	Designate Development Permit Areas in Section 11 (Development Permit Areas) of this Plan to protect the coastal waterfront including its associated upland ecosystems.
Policy 3.3.2	Discourage the continued development or intensification of neighbourhoods along the coastal foreshore in order to limit impacts on environmentally sensitive features, and the aesthetic impacts of development.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Consider changes to the zoning bylaw to limit development along the shoreline by increasing the minimum parcel size to be consistent with this Plan	Immediate

Objective 3.3.2	Encourage development which will not alienate the foreshore from public access or impact on the natural environment.
Policy 3.3.3	Development which impedes public access along the foreshore shall not be supported.
Policy 3.3.4	Due to the sensitive nature of the marine zone and minimal rates of water exchange in Stuart Channel, the RDN will only support the siting of aquaculture farms along the coastline if an RDN approved public consultation process has been completed and the impacts of such use have been adequately identified and mitigated.
Policy 3.3.5	The use of marine retaining walls and other "hard" surfaces such as seawalls, concrete groynes, gabions, and rip rap shall only be supported where a qualified professional has determined that "soft" approaches to shoreline stabilization such as vegetation enhancement, upland drainage control, biotechnical measures, beach enhancement, anchor trees, and gravel placement are not appropriate given site specific conditions. In addition, the construction of shoreline stabilization measures including marine retaining walls must be in compliance with the Regional District of Nanaimo Marine Retaining Wall Policy, as amended from time to time.
Policy 3.3.6	The use of shoreline stabilization measures on Crown foreshore, in a manner that obstructs public access to and along public beaches or foreshore areas, shall not be supported. All works below the high water mark require Fisheries and Oceans Canada approval and a Crown foreshore tenure from the ILMB. Where approval for Crown foreshore use is considered, the RDN may support proposals for shoreline stabilization measures below the high water mark, provided they are designed to encourage public access along the beach and do not have negative environmental impacts.
Policy 3.3.7	The RDN supports public access to the water in new subdivisions. Where more than one access to water is required under Section 7(f) of the <i>Land Title Act</i> , the Regional District of Nanaimo may support the consolidation of accesses to support recreational uses.
Policy	Development proposals adjacent to the marine foreshore should maintain and enhance

3.3.8	public access.
Policy 3.3.9	The surface of water within the Plan Area shall not be zoned for residential or industrial purposes.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Establish Development Permit Area so that environmental and geotechnical impacts can be considered	Immediate
Work with the Subdivision Approving Officer to obtain public access to water bodies.	Ongoing

Objective 3.3.3	Advocate cooperation and coordination between agencies responsible for the use and management of marine, foreshore and upland resources in order to assure more comprehensive management of the coastal zone.
Policy 3.3.10	Protect beach access road right-of-ways for public beach access and preservation of the shore zone ecosystems.
Policy 3.3.11	The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure shall be encouraged to foster the improvement of beach access road right-of-ways for public recreational use and beach access.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Request tenure for road right-of-ways for community park use.	Ongoing

Objective 3.3.4	Foster public ownership and stewardship of the waterfront.
Policy 3.3.12	Support community involvement in the cooperation and coordination between agencies responsible for the use and management of marine, foreshore and upland resources in order to balance community objectives with comprehensive management of the coastal zone.
Policy 3.3.13	Waterfront development proposals which do not provide suitable public waterfront access or which could cause damage to the environment, on land adjacent to the coastal foreshore, shall be opposed by the Regional District of Nanaimo.
Policy 3.3.14	The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is strongly encouraged to deny encroachment permits to occupy road ends adjacent to the ocean or a watercourse where the permit would affect public access.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
In considering referrals from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Regional District of Nanaimo shall oppose encroachment permits which would negatively affect public access.	Ongoing
In reviewing rezoning and subdivision applications, ensure that public access to the waterfront is considered.	Ongoing

The Regional District of Nanaimo shall oppose rezoning applications and/or subdivision applications which do not provide satisfactory public access to the waterfront.	Ongoing
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Objective 3.3.5	Minimize the environmental and aesthetic impacts of boat houses, beach access stairs, and boat ramps.
Policy 3.3.15	New boat ramps located on private property shall be discouraged.
Policy 3.3.16	Notwithstanding policy 3.3.15, new boat ramps should be encouraged to be located on publicly accessible lands such as public road right of ways to reduce the need for individual boat ramps and to reduce the cumulative environmental impacts.
Policy 3.3.17	The construction of structures for the purpose of providing private beach access shall only be supported where it does not impede public access and where it can be demonstrated that the proposed structure would not have a negative environmental impact and would be safe from a geotechnical and structural engineering perspective.
Policy 3.3.18	The construction of boat houses shall not be supported where such structures have negative environmental impact and/or impede views from adjacent properties.
Policy 3.3.19	The size and scale of beach access stairs should be minimized and should not include oversized landings, viewing platforms, decks, or any other additions beyond that which is required to provide safe access.
Policy 3.3.20	The RDN will consider developing regulation for the construction of boat houses, beach access stairs, boat ramps, boat launching devices, and private docks. The regulations should address maximum dimensions, public access, environmental protection, building materials, minimum setback requirements, protection of view corridors, public consultation, and maximum height requirements.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Undertake a community planning exercise to develop regulations for boat houses, beach access stairs, boat ramps, and private docks.	Short Term

3.4 Drinking Water Protection and Ground Water Resources

Groundwater is the primary source of water in Electoral Area 'A' and as such residents depend on it to meet residential, industrial, commercial, and agricultural needs. A recent groundwater assessment and vulnerability study has shown that the surface water and groundwater regimes in Area A are very complex, and still not very well understood.

Area A includes both bedrock and large, shallow, and unconfined aquifers in coarse permeable materials. Some of these aquifers are very productive but are also very vulnerable. The release of contaminants at the surface would reach the water table quickly and could rapidly contaminate the aquifers. In addition to aquifer vulnerability, some portions of Electoral Area 'A' also experience a water deficit in the late summer/early fall meaning that more water is extracted from the aquifers than is replenished resulting in a decline in groundwater levels. Some portions of the Plan Area, mainly those with shallow bedrock aquifers with little storage capacity, experience severe water shortages during these times and require water to be trucked in from elsewhere to meet their daily needs. Therefore, protection of drinking water and ground water resources from both a quality and quantity perspective is paramount to the residents of Electoral Area 'A'.

This section provides objectives and policies which aim to implement the recommendations of the Electoral Area 'A' Groundwater Assessment and Vulnerability Study conducted by GW Solutions Inc. and Vancouver Island University dated March 2009.

Objectives and Policies

Section 3.4	Policy/Objective
Objective 3.4.1	Support and encourage further research, inventories, and monitoring of groundwater resources within the Plan Area
Policy 3.4.1	Support the installation of monitoring wells throughout the Plan Area to characterize the dynamic of the aquifers and to monitor the interaction between the surface water and the groundwater. They should also be installed along the coast to better characterize the groundwater discharge to the foreshore and to monitor any deterioration of the groundwater quality due to sea-water intrusion.
Policy 3.4.2	The Regional District of Nanaimo shall work with the Ministry of Environment, Snuneymuxw First Nation, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to consider installing a surface water gauging station where the Nanaimo River discharges into its estuary.
Policy 3.4.3	This Plan support conducting further research and study in order to gain a better understanding of the aquifers in Electoral Area 'A' including characterization and quantification of the water budget for the Plan Area.
Advocacy Policy 3.4.4	The Regional District of Nanaimo shall encourage the Ministry of Environment to quantify and monitor the volume of water being used by the holders of surface water licenses and also being delivered by truck within the Plan Area.
Advocacy Policy 3.4.5	Support the creation and implementation of an aquifer/groundwater monitoring program in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment, community water service providers, and Plan Area residents.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
At the time of subdivision, development permit application, or rezoning where a groundwater assessment is being conducted, consider the requirement for the installation of monitoring wells when recommended by a qualified professional	Ongoing
Conduct additional detailed groundwater studies as time and funding permit.	Ongoing

Objective 3.4.2	Ensure that development applications and proposed subdivisions do not have a negative affect on the quantity or quality of groundwater both today and into the future
Policy 3.4.6	The vulnerability of aquifers to surface contamination is shown on Map No. 2. Adjustments may be made to reflect new information as it becomes available.
Policy 3.4.7	Designate Development Permit Areas in Section 11 of this Plan to protect groundwater resources from potential negative affects of proposed development, where a development permit would be required prior to the development or alteration of land.
Policy 3.4.8	Zoning amendments that propose to increase the density or intensity of the use of land above an area designated as 'Moderate' or 'High' vulnerability on Map No. 2 shall only be supported where an aquifer impact assessment conducted by a Hydro geologist or

	other qualified person can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Regional District of Nanaimo that the proposed development will be serviced with an adequate year round supply of potable water that meets or exceeds Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines and will not negatively affect the subject aquifer(s) or jeopardize the quality or quantity of water available for use by existing Plan Area residents.
Policy 3.4.9	The establishment of land uses which would have a negative impact on the quality, or quantity of ground or surface water shall not be supported.
Policy 3.4.10	All land uses and development within Electoral Area 'A' should generally be consistent with the groundwater protection best management practices contained in Appendix 1. It is recognized that some of the best management practices go beyond the Regional District of Nanaimo's jurisdiction and require cooperation with other jurisdictions, individuals, and business owners.
Policy 3.4.11	All development applications must minimize impervious surfaces and consider both natural and man-made systems to maximize groundwater recharge while ensuring that groundwater resources are protected from potential deleterious substances.
Policy 3.4.12	Encourage the Subdivision Approving Officer, when considering a proposed subdivision to require an aquifer impact assessment to ensure that the proposed development will be serviced with an adequate year round supply of potable water that meets or exceeds Canadian Drinking Water Standards and will not negatively affect the subject aquifer(s) or jeopardize the quality or quantity of water available for use by existing Plan Area residents.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)

Objective 3.4.3	Encourage a comprehensive and innovative approach to water conservation
Policy 3.4.13	Encourage the use of soil covers and crops with both low watering needs and small loss to evapotranspiration.
Policy 3.4.14	Consider the formation and implementation of a comprehensive water conservation program in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment, community water service providers, and Plan Area residents.
Policy 3.4.15	Encourage the use of xeriscaping, low flow plumbing fixtures, micro-irrigation and other innovative water conservation technologies in all existing and proposed development. Require it for new development on areas with high aquifer vulnerability or known water deficits.
Advocacy Policy 3.4.16	Senior agencies are encouraged to recognize that there are proven water conservation technologies that can significantly reduce water consumption and amend their legislation to remove barriers to water conservation.
Advocacy Policy 3.4.17	The Ministry of Environment is strongly encouraged to monitor existing water extraction licenses and to revoke licenses that are no longer in use.
Advocacy Policy 3.4.18	The Ministry of Environment is encouraged to adopt a groundwater extraction licensing and monitoring program to encourage water conservation and to provide aquifer data to help better understand and manage groundwater resources.
Advocacy Policy 3.4.19	The Provincial Government is requested to introduce legislation to govern the management of groundwater resources to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the rate of groundwater withdrawal does not exceed the rate at which the sources are recharged, and

	b. the human use of ground or surface waters does not have negative impacts on fish and wildlife habitat or on the recreation potential of a creek, river or significant wetland.
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Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Consider amending the Regional District of Nanaimo building bylaw. Provide educational materials on how to conserve water.	
Designates guidelines within Development Permit Areas to encourage water conservation.	

3.5 Rainwater Management

The creation of impervious surfaces interrupts the natural hydrological cycle by decreasing the percentage of rain water and other surface water that is able to naturally infiltrate back in to the earth.

The resulting excess surface water, the water that would have otherwise been able to infiltrate back in to the earth, no longer becomes available to recharge the aquifers and moderate stream flow and stream temperature. In addition, the excess water has the potential to erode native soils and pick up contaminants, as it flows along the surface, before depositing them in watercourses that form part of the natural drainage system. Therefore, there is a direct relationship between the amount of impervious surfaces in our built environment and environmental health.

Since Plan Area residents rely on groundwater for their domestic water supply and the Plan Area contains many fish bearing streams that are sensitive to disturbance that are also valued for their role in the ecosystem and for recreational opportunities, it is important to ensure that rain water is managed in a way that respects the environment.

Objectives and Policies

Section 3.5	Policy/Objective
Objective 3.5.1	Recognize rain water as a natural resource that must be managed to protect the environment including the quality and quantity of ground and surface water.
Policy 3.5.1	Erosion control must be provided during construction and demolition.
Policy 3.5.2	The Regional District of Nanaimo may consider regulating impervious surfaces within the Plan Area through tools such as zoning regulations, landscaping requirements, etc.
Policy 3.5.3	The creation and implementation of a comprehensive area wide rain water management plan is supported.
Policy 3.5.4	The Regional District will consider approving land development proposals only if there is assurance that rain water drainage from development does not increase the peak flow run off into adjacent areas.
Policy 3.5.5	The Regional District of Nanaimo shall not support development applications that propose to release rain water run off containing sediments or other contaminants.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Develop a strategy for management of impervious surfaces at a watershed scale.	Long Term

Develop a watershed management plan.	Long Term
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Objective 3.5.2	Support the use of engineering techniques and environmental designs that mimic the function of the natural environment.
Policy 3.5.6	Development or subdivision of land must where practical be designed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Replicate the function of a naturally vegetated watershed; b. Maintain the hydrological regime of surface and groundwater and pre-development flow rates; c. Minimize interference with groundwater recharge; and, d. Not introduce or remove materials where it would cause erosion of or the filling in of natural watercourses and/or wetlands.
Advocacy Policy 3.5.7	The Regional District shall request that the Approving Officer require subdivisions to be designed to maintain the hydraulic regime of streams while providing sufficient drainage in a manner which does not interfere with groundwater recharge or allow erosion materials into natural watercourses, lakes and wetlands.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
When considering rezoning applications, generally oppose development which does not include rainwater management systems designed in accordance with this Plan.	Ongoing
When commenting on Subdivision application referrals from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Regional District of Nanaimo shall request that the Subdivision Approving Officer require the applicant to incorporate rainwater management systems which do not interfere with groundwater recharge or allow erosion materials into natural watercourses, lakes and wetlands.	Ongoing
Include guidelines within Development Permit Areas to ensure that rainwater is managed appropriately and in general conformity with this Plan.	Immediate

Objective 3.5.3	Minimize the amount of impervious surfaces to the greatest extent possible.
Policy 3.5.8	Zoning amendment applications that would result in increased density or intensification of land use shall be required to demonstrate that impervious surfaces have been minimized.
Policy 3.5.9	Rain water management provisions shall be incorporated in to all Development Permit Areas included in Section 11 of this Plan.
Policy 3.5.10	Properties must not be developed in a manner which allows drainage water collected on a property to flow onto any adjacent private or public lands including public roads. On-site drainage shall be controlled by retention of open ground for infiltration, on-site retention basins, naturally vegetated areas, rock pits or dry wells to the satisfaction of the RDN, who may require the owner to have the on-site storm drainage facilities designed by a qualified professional engineer at the owner's cost. Where onsite drainage is not possible due to poor drainage conditions as determined by a professional engineer, other environmentally sound options may be considered and may be subject to approval by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short
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	Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
When evaluating rezoning applications which result in increased density or intensification of land use the Regional District of Nanaimo shall require the applicant to demonstrate that impervious surfaces have been minimized	Ongoing
Incorporate rainwater management provisions in all Development Permit Areas contained within this Plan.	Ongoing

3.6 Encouraging Sustainable Development

Well designed developments can contribute towards Electoral Area 'A residents' goal of preserving and protecting the natural environment. Factors such as historical land use patterns, inefficient buildings and site design, and recently climate change have raised environmental awareness and the need to improve the efficiency of and reduce the ecological footprint of the built environment.

Although it is recognized that site selection is a major determinant in sustainable development, there are recognized construction methods, building materials, and design criteria which significantly reduce the water and energy requirements, waste by-products, greenhouse gas emissions, and environmental impacts of existing and future development. Electoral Area 'A' residents have indicated a strong desire to encourage green development and for Electoral Area 'A' to become a model community for sustainable neighbourhood design.

This section works towards achieving the community vision by identifying options and potential incentives intended to encourage green development and discourage traditional, less efficient development.

Objectives and Policies

Section 3.6	Policy/Objective
Objective 3.6.1	Encourage the use of efficient building materials, techniques, and practices that reduce energy and water consumption
Policy 3.6.1	The Regional District of Nanaimo shall consider amendments to its building bylaws to require the installation of low flow toilets and other fixtures in new construction.
Policy 3.6.2	Subject to the availability of funding, the RDN may consider a rebate program for replacing inefficient high capacity toilets and other water consuming devices with currently acceptable low flow models.
Policy 3.6.3	The use of proven innovative and technologically viable technologies that make efficient use of water and energy resources shall be supported such as gray water recycling, subject to provincial approval where applicable
Policy 3.6.4	The RDN shall consider the adoption of an incentive program which involves the use of a sustainability checklist for the purpose of evaluating development proposals against the community's sustainability goals and community vision and provides in incentives for green developments which receive a high score. Incentives should include reduced/waived fees, quicker processing times, rebates for energy and water efficiency, and community recognition.
Policy 3.6.5	Where irrigation is required to maintain proposed landscaping, it should be designed and installed by an Irrigation Industry Association of British Columbia certified irrigation designer.
Advocacy Policy	The Vancouver Island Health Authority is encouraged to support the use of green technologies for on-site rain water, gray water, and sewage recycling.

Section 3.6	Policy/Objective
3.6.6	

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
The Regional District of Nanaimo shall consider an amendment to the building bylaw to require the installation of low flow toilets and other fixtures in new construction.	Immediate
Investigate the feasibility of a water conservation rebate program.	Short Term
Work with the Vancouver Island Health Authority to streamline approvals for green alternatives.	Ongoing
In consultation with the community, develop a comprehensive sustainability checklist used to evaluate and score development applications and form the basis for incentives for green development.	Short Term

Objective 3.6.2	Encourage the creation of compact complete communities which reduce the dependence on automobiles for the primary mode of transportation
Policy 3.6.7	Higher density development shall be concentrated in village centres within the Urban Containment Boundary in accordance with Section 5.0 of this Plan.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
The Regional District of Nanaimo shall encourage development applications which propose higher densities and mixed use to be located within the Urban Containment Boundary in accordance with this Plan.	Ongoing.

Objective 3.6.3	Encourage developments that contribute towards maintaining a healthy natural environment, conserving water and energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and assist in moving towards sustainability and discourage developments which do not.
Policy 3.6.8	The RDN shall explore the option of implementing a revenue neutral fee structure for all development and building permit applications whereby developments which score high on the sustainability checklist would be eligible for reduced fees and developments which conflict with the community vision and sustainability principles would pay more.
Policy 3.6.9	Rezoning applications that propose developments that achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification or equivalent standard shall be given preference over those which do not.
Policy 3.6.10	Comprehensive development proposals that consider the full life cycle of input materials and process by-products as well as seek to minimize energy and raw materials use, minimize waste, and that build sustainable economic, ecological and social relationships (eco-industrial networking) are supported (may require a Regional Growth Strategy amendment).

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
The Regional District of Nanaimo should initiate a fee structure review with	

the intent of identifying options for encouraging green development in conjunction with the development of a sustainability checklist.	
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Objective 3.6.4	Educate the public on sustainable development practices and the use of green building technologies
Policy 3.6.11	The RDN shall consider providing clear and concise consolidated information available on line and in hardcopy about the availability of grants and rebate programs which support green initiatives for homeowners and developers.
Policy 3.6.12	This Plan supports the adoption of a green building policy for all new buildings.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Amend the RDN website by creating a section for grants and rebate programs. Develop informational brochures updated on a yearly basis outlining the availability of grants and rebate programs in support of green development.	Short Term
Develop a green building policy.	Short Term

3.7 Hazard Management

Natural hazard areas are sources of potentially dangerous chance events. Examples of natural hazard areas include lands which may be susceptible to damage from floods, mass movement of soil, landslides, earthquakes or forest fire. Natural hazard areas are identified on Map No. 1 (Environmentally Sensitive Features and Natural Hazard Areas).

The 2003 Kelowna forest fire that destroyed approximately 334 homes and forced the evacuation of over 45,000 people, launched a series of actions that resulted in the present province-wide wildland urban interface fire hazard assessment and fire hazard mitigation. In response a wildland fire protection plan for the North Cedar Improvement District, Snuneymuxw First Nation, and Electoral Area 'A' was prepared. The report found that a large portion of Electoral Area 'A' is considered to have a moderate, high, or extreme forest fire risk.

Seismic activity is a distinct possibility within the Plan Area. South central Vancouver Island is classified as a Zone 4 area according to the 1990 National Building Code Seismic Zoning Map. This indicates that the area is at high risk for seismic activity.

To protect development from potential hazards, this Plan advocates the use of both policies and development permit areas to complement other regulatory devices, such as setbacks from unstable slopes and flood controls. Development Permits offer the flexibility to customize development standards to reflect specific on-site conditions. Associated guidelines are designed to minimize the risk of potential hazards to persons and property.

Objectives and Policies

Section 3.7	Policy/Objective
Objective 3.7.1	Minimize the risk of personal injury or loss of property which may result from natural hazards.
Policy 3.7.1	Designate Development Permit Areas in Section 11 of this Plan to protect lives and property from natural hazards to ensure that development is reviewed through the

Section 3.7	Policy/Objective
	Development Permit process prior to the development or alteration of land.
Policy 3.7.2	<p>Despite the minimum parcel sizes supported by this Official Community Plan or the current zoning, proposals on lands located outside of the Urban Containment Boundary and not located in the ALR proposals which do not result in an increase to the number of parcels being created or an increase in density may be supported through a rezoning or Development Variance Permit subject to satisfying the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposal must demonstrate that the purpose of the alternate land use pattern is for mitigating a risk as a result of a natural hazard on the property including flooding, landslide, and/or forest fire; 2. A report from a professional qualified to comment on the applicable hazard shall be required which must include an assessment of the hazard and recommendations to minimize the risks; 3. A covenant prepared at the applicant's expense shall be registered on the title of the subject property registering the professional report, requiring compliance with the report's recommendations, and saving the Regional District of Nanaimo harmless from liability as a result of the proposed development. 4. There must be a demonstrated need and rationale for the proposed land use pattern; 5. Performance bonding and/or a development agreement may be required to ensure that the recommended mitigation works are complete to the satisfaction of the Regional District of Nanaimo. 6. Density and/or the number of potential parcels shall be based on the buildable area taking into account site constraints not the overall parcel size. 7. The balance/remainder of the property is protected from further subdivision and/or development through zoning and/or covenant.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)

Objective 3.7.2	Enforce mitigation measures which are compatible with the needs of local residents and are sensitive to the environment.
Policy 3.7.3	No development application, subdivision or alteration of land in a natural hazard area shall be supported unless the applicant or appropriate authority provides evidence that measures can and will be taken to reduce the potential hazard, mitigate the risk, and protect adjacent properties from possible impacts.
Policy 3.7.4	For all lands located within the Regional District of Nanaimo Building Inspection Area, development proposals located adjacent within a designated floodplain must comply with the Regional District of Nanaimo Floodplain Management Bylaw.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)

Objective 3.7.3	Identify, conserve and protect natural hazard areas and adjacent lands from damage due to development, subdivision or alteration of land.
Policy 3.7.5	Areas susceptible to flooding, mass movement, unstable slopes, high rates of erosion, forest fire, steep slopes or land that would pose a threat to property or lives if developed is deemed a natural hazard area. These areas are identified on Map No. 1 (Environmentally Sensitive Features and Natural Hazard Areas).
Policy 3.7.6	Natural Hazard Areas are not limited to the boundaries indicated on Map No. 1 and adjustments may be made to reflect changing on-site conditions or hazard assessments.
Policy 3.7.7	The Ministry of Environment is encouraged to provide additional floodplain mapping data on other watercourses in the Plan Area.
Policy 3.7.8	The Regional District of Nanaimo is encouraged to provide information to land owners, perspective buyers, and developers on the potential hazards within the Plan Area and methods for minimizing risk.

Implementation Actions	Timing (Immediate, Short Term, Long Term, Ongoing)
Distribute firesmart manuals and informational brochures to land owners and applicants for development applications.	