



**SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT TO THE
PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2011**

SUBJECT

North Saanich Official Community Plan (OCP) and Rezoning Amendment: Proposed OCP Amendment Bylaw No. 1280 – Lots 2, 3, 4 and 5 and Part Lots 6, 7 and 8, Section 14, Range 2 East, North Saanich District, Plan 6103 and Part Lot 2, Sections 13 and 14, Range 1 East, North Saanich District, Plan 8126 – Sandown Raceway Proposal

PURPOSE

This report provides an additional alternative regarding the request from the District of North Saanich for the above-noted application after further discussion between staff and the District of North Saanich.

BACKGROUND

Report No. PPS/RP 2011-13 was considered by the Planning & Protective Services Committee at their meeting of October 26, 2011 and the following resolution was passed:

*“**MOVED** by Director Finall, **SECONDED** by Director Brownoff,
That the report be referred back to staff for consideration.*

CARRIED”

The report on the Sandown Raceway proposal discussed the request by the District of North Saanich to amend their Regional Context Statement and provided a range of alternatives for the committee’s consideration. Overall, the proposal is viewed favourably by staff, with the question being how to accommodate the request, not whether to do so. The supplementary report simplifies and presents two alternatives, with a new preferred alternative based on information arising since the October meeting.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Notify the District of North Saanich that the proposed Regional Context Statement amendments pertaining to the referred proposal described in Report No. PPS/RP 2011-13 and PPS/RP 2011-22 are accepted, based on the proposal meeting the overarching policy intent of the Regional Growth Strategy and that the Board agrees to resolve any outstanding mapping and policy matters through the Regional Growth Strategy review process.
2. Notify the District of North Saanich that the proposed Regional Context Statement amendments pertaining to the referred development proposal described in Report No. PPS/RP 2011-13 are not accepted at this time, for the reasons that said amendments are not consistent with the following parts of the Regional Growth Strategy:
 - a. the Renewable Resource Area indicated on Map 3 (Growth Management Concept Plan),
 - b. the servicing policies of Section 1.1, Action 5 and Section 1.2, Action 3,
 - c. the renewable resource policies of Section 1.2, Action 2.

Further that the CRD Board initiate a minor amendment to the RGS that would:

- a. provide a text edit in the RGS to recognize the exception in service extension for new development on Parcel A, as identified on Schedule 1 of Bylaw 1280,
- b. remove Parcel A and add Parcel B, as identified on Schedule 1 of Bylaw 1280, from/to the Renewable Resource designation on Map 3, and
- c. provide a corresponding text edit in the RGS to permit the swapping of land between the ALR and other uses, subject to no net loss in quantity or quality of land.

GROWTH STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Regional Context Statement (RCS) Requirements:

A RCS forms part of a municipal OCP and addresses how local planning and land use policy will work towards the goals and objectives established in the RGS to achieve consistency over time. Normally, this means that there is a degree of latitude that provides for some inconsistency with the RGS for a time, as long as it is clear that consistency will be achieved over time. In this case, there is an opportunity through the RGS review to achieve consistency by amending policies of the RGS to accommodate the North Saanich proposal.

Regional Context Statement Consistency Considerations:

Regarding servicing considerations, plain reading of the RGS indicates that an amendment is required to accommodate the addition of new lands within the North Saanich Servicing Area (NSSA) boundary, a proxy for the RUCSPA in the RCS. However, conceptually, the District is removing an equal amount of land that is currently within the NSSA (Parcel B) in exchange for adding Parcel A, resulting in no net gain of serviced area. Through the RGS review process, adjustments in policy and mapping can be made to account for this re-allocation of servicing area, as required.

While the larger issue is the removal of lands from the Renewable Resource Lands designation for the purpose of non-agricultural commercial development, the proposal entails a land swap such that there is no net loss. Moreover, the proposal would restore Parcels B and C to productive agricultural use and provide opportunities for farmers that are in keeping with the working policy directions of the Regional Sustainability Strategy. Regional planning staff concur that this proposal has considerable merit and achieves the overarching RGS policy intent of ensuring long-term protection of renewable resource lands for agriculture. To further support the RGS policy intent, the District of North Saanich included wording in the RCS ensuring that any lands proposed for addition to the ALR in exchange for an exclusion should be of an equivalent area, in an appropriate location and have suitable agricultural potential in comparison to the lands proposed for exclusion.

Given that the RGS defines the Renewable Resource Lands Policy Area to include: *"lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)..."*, the decision to accept the swap proposal rests largely on the decision of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). The District has applied to the ALC for consideration of inclusion of Parcel B and exclusion of Parcel A to/from the ALR. It is staff's understanding that this request has been given favourable consideration by the ALC, subject to conditions. The ALC decision further supports the proposal's consistency with the overarching policy objectives of the RGS.

Currently, the RGS does not anticipate the notion of swapping ALR lands and this is a matter that should be addressed during the RGS review process. Similarly, the technical mapping changes required to facilitate this proposal in the RGS, i.e. the removal of Parcel A from the Renewable Resource designation on Map 3 and the addition of Parcel B, can be addressed through the RGS review.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

CONCLUSION


A full debate on the major policy areas (servicing and renewable resource lands) affected by this proposal will occur as part of the RGS review. This amendment is instrumental in illustrating that the policy framework for major policy areas needs to provide flexibility for local circumstances or conditions without undermining regional planning principles. Further, by addressing these circumstances in policy, the difference between a minor or major amendment or whether an amendment is necessary at all will be clarified.

Based on further analysis in this report and the supporting information regarding the ALC decision on the North Saanich proposal, Regional staff are prepared to recommend Alternative No. 1 to the Committee and Board. While, technically, this leaves the RGS and the North Saanich RCS somewhat out of sync, this is viewed as being temporary with reconciliation to occur through the RGS review process. The North Saanich proposal represents an ideal that should be accommodated through regional policy.


RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning, Transportation and Protective Services committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

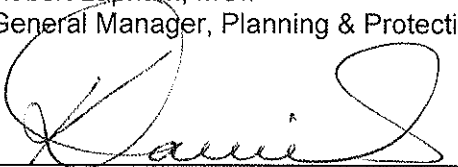
1. That the District of North Saanich be notified that the proposed Regional Context Statement amendments pertaining to the referred proposal described in Reports No. PPS/RP 2011-13 and PPS/RP 2011-22 are accepted, based on the proposal meeting the overarching policy intent of the Regional Growth Strategy and that the Board agrees to resolve any outstanding mapping and policy matters through the Regional Growth Strategy review process.



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Concurrence