

## REFERRAL RESPONSES for 02-F-17RS

- **BC Transit & CVRD Facilities and Transit Division (Coordinated Response)**

Existing Fixed Route Service:

Route #7 (Cowichan Lake via Gibbins) provides daily, scheduled, transit service between Cowichan Lake and Duncan along Cowichan Lake Road near the subject property. If rezoned, lots to the northern end of the subject property may be up to a kilometre away from the closest bus stop on Cowichan Lake Road at Culverton Road. As a regional connector service, Route #7, will not deviate to provide service into this neighbourhood area if developed into residential lots. Service will remain on Cowichan Lake Road with access to transit at bus stops along that road.

HandyDART Service:

This development area also falls within the service boundary for handyDART service. HandyDART offers accessible door-to-door shared transit service for registered users with permanent or temporary disabilities that prevent them from using fixed route transit without assistance. Design considerations should be given to ensuring lots are accessible for service, by a community-sized handyDART bus and potential future residents.

Land Use

The subject properties are designated "Forestry" (F). The intent of the application is to rezone the property to Suburban Residential to facilitate the subdivision into approximately 9 lots, with each lot proposed at 2 ha (5 acres) or more.

Bus Stops and Stations

The proposed development area is located within a kilometre of the nearest bus stops on Cowichan Lake Road at Culverton Road. If rezoning the subject property from Forestry to Suburban Residential, consideration should also be given to ensuring road access to potential future lots is navigable by a community sized handyDART bus and that safe walking access between these lots to existing Cowichan Lake Road bus stops is provided.

BC Transit and CVRD Facilitates and Transit Division Level of Support

BC Transit and the Cowichan Valley have no objection to this development, however consideration should be given to pedestrian connectivity and infrastructure.

- **Cowichan Tribes**

Cowichan Tribes staff and an elder attended at the subject property on two separate occasions. It is from our observations during these site visits that we put forth the following comments for consideration by the Electoral Area Services Committee (EASC):

1. Species of concern present in and around the subject property include: Red-legged Frog (provincially blue-listed, SARA listed); Roosevelt Elk (provincially blue-listed).
2. Other species present in and around the property: Red Tailed Hawk, Blue (Sooty) Grouse, ruffed grouse.
3. Concerning the elk, a traditional food species on which Cowichan Tribes relies, we would encourage the proponent to explore ways in which fencing around each lot can be prevented or minimized. The subject property is used by the elk as a migration corridor; any impediment to their movement and any increased human-elk conflict is a concern.
4. Groundwater: at present, the South Sahtlam aquifer is classified as low vulnerability with moderate productivity. It should be noted that no wells in the South Sahtlam Aquifer have had pumping tests completed to determine the transmissivity or specific capacity of the aquifer. The lots proposed are on the large side, and individuals with properties of that size tend to utilize the space with lawns and gardens (food and flora) that need to be irrigated. Planning in this area must

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take into account this likelihood, and stress on groundwater levels during the summer months should be factor that is taken into consideration when deciding whether the CVRD would like more residential growth in the area.

5. Rural residential sprawl continues to be a problem in the Cowichan Valley Regional District and, in our view, the CVRD should not be supporting it.
6. If possible, any septic system should be kept at least 30ft away from any wetland or creek (including seasonal creeks).

### • **Island Health**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the CVRD zoning amendment. The past few years have seen significant advances in linking urban planning with a variety of health outcomes.

These include outcomes such as: the encouragement of physical activity, healthier eating, greater safety, cleaner air and healthier living environments, access to health services, food security, age friendly communities, and improved social interaction amongst other potential health criteria.

Island Health (VIHA) appreciates the opportunity to provide evidence based recommendations and comments for this referral. Highlights as well as recommendations are itemized below:

#### Highlights

- The proposed development lot plan indicates a portion of the subject property will be designated for park space. Provision of greenspace for social gathering and child play space will provide access to nature, fostering a livable environment. This in turn encourages physical activity and promotes better mental well-being.
- The proposed rezoning includes the following permitted uses: secondary dwelling unit/suite, home-based businesses and agricultural uses; which help achieve positive health outcomes in a community by increasing affordable housing options, providing residents the opportunity to work where they live (lessens commute times), and builds on local food knowledge and preference while adding to the local food supply. Although, these uses are already permitted under the current zoning for the subject property.

#### Regulatory Considerations

As indicated on the lot plan, a considerable portion (about 50%) of proposed lot 1 is within the BC Hydro Transmission right-of-way. This may pose limitations on the location of a dwelling, water source and sewage disposal system. Approval from BC Hydro will need to be granted prior to development. Furthermore, setback distances from wells/sewage disposal systems on adjacent properties as well as any sources of contamination as per the Groundwater Protections Regulation and the *Health Hazard Regulation* will need to be maintained, which could cause further limitations on this lot.

#### Drinking Water

Under the Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation, any construction, installation, alteration, or extension of (a) a water supply system, or (b) works, facilities, or equipment that are intended to be a water supply system or part of a water supply system, must be issued a construction permit from our Public Health Engineer. Consultation with our Drinking Water Officer will also be needed (for more information: <http://www.viha.ca/mho/water>).

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### Sewerage Disposal

Sewage disposal for the proposed development must be in compliance with the Sewerage System Regulation.

### Recommendations under Island Health's Healthy Built Environment Initiative

- Cowichan's Regional Airshed Protection Strategy identifies PM<sub>2.5</sub> as the contaminant of greatest concern for air quality in the region and focuses on reducing PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from sources of wood smoke such as open burning and wood burning appliances. Recent studies have shown PM<sub>2.5</sub> from wood smoke to increase hospital visits due to heart attacks. To lessen the burden of PM<sub>2.5</sub> from increased development, restrictions should be placed on wood burning due to land clearing, backyard burning and space heating. Measures such as restricting burning to daylight hours to lessen impacts of PM<sub>2.5</sub> (as smoke dispersion is poor during nighttime), the use of air curtains for land clearing, and non-burning alternatives for home heating are recommended.
- Retain as much of the existing natural environment (i.e. mature trees) as possible, while abiding any applicable wildfire protection development guidelines. Health evidence shows a strong link between exposure and engagement to natural areas and the reduction of stress, chronic disease, depression and anxiety as well as improvements in cognitive functions.
- Encourage connections through the site to existing, if any, trails in the area. Trails promote and increase opportunity for residents to increase physical activity, which in turn, leads to overall improvements in emotional and physical wellness, and can help lessen obesity rates and decrease the risk of chronic diseases.

- **Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

The Ministry has no objection to the proposed rezoning and no further requirements for approval.

- **Sahtlam Volunteer Fire Department**

The main concerns to maintain an effective provision of service is quick, easy, safe access for emergency services with a reliable water source in proximity to the property.

- The entrance to the property(ies) clearly marked with the address visible from the road to assist in quickly locating the property
- Driveway access to allow clear passage of fire apparatus to the structures on the property. Including a clearance the sides and a firm enough road surface to support the apparatus.
- Clear access around the structure, using fire smart principles, to reduce combustibles against/near the structures and allow safe working areas for fire fighting.
- A stable, accessible water supply in the form of a reservoir equipped to allow the fire department to connect the apparatus to. This should be at least 10,000 gallons. It should also be located for quick, easy access/egress for fire fighting equipment.
- The subdivision be designed with 2 points of access/egress to allow for emergency services and evacuation to occur simultaneously in the event of an emergency.

- **CVRD – Environmental Services**

The past application was modified to allow a limited number of new lots with the remainder to be left in place as forestry designated lands – not a second phase. This application is not supported for the following reasons:

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1. It appears that there is industrial forestry operation on this property with replanting as required under the PMFL process. If lands and the productive forest is removed a penalty is applied for that process given the historic lower tax rate. The lands are working forest and no supporting material regarding the viability has been provided with the exception of a long growth period.
2. The site has a high groundwater potential contamination rating.
3. There appear to be a number of forested wetlands on site.
4. There is already a surplus of available residential properties in the area.
5. There is an adjacent park that would be utilized (good and bad).
6. Water resources in the area are variable with little available information – test pumping will be required to prove water.

If there is support for this at the community and planning level – I would request that the proponent be required to put in a groundwater monitoring well to be included in the provincial network - or pay funds to go into a regional account for this purpose if the property itself is not appropriate for this infrastructure.

The PMFL penalty funds be required and go to the CVRD for environmental monitoring.

That a survey for provincially listed species be undertaken in spring and early summer as there are noted communities in the area.

That an elk cohabitation and management plan be undertaken as this is on a movement route.

- **CVRD – Parks and Trails Division**

The application was sent to the Area F Parks Commission and they concurred with the staff recommendation to require a trail dedication along the east side of the property rather than park dedication along Cowichan Lake Road as is shown on their application.

- **CVRD – Public Safety**

In review of the Bylaw Amendment Referral Form No. 02-F-17RS the following comments are provided:

- Proposal is within the Duncan North Cowichan RCMP Detachment area.
- Proposal is within the British Columbia Ambulance Station 152 (Duncan) response area.
- Proposal is within the boundaries of the CVRD Regional Emergency Program.
- Proposal is within the Sahtlam Volunteer Fire Department protection response area.

Public Safety has the following concerns that may affect the delivery of emergency services to the proposed facility:

- The Community Wildfire Protection Plan has identified this area as **high** and requires the completion of a professional Wildland Urban Interface Assessment.
- FireSmart principles must be adhered to (see attached information).
- Water resource options for firefighting should be supplied and installed for use by the Sahtlam Fire Department. There is a critical need of establishing a water source for firefighting efforts as there is no municipal water system or pressurized fire hydrant in the area. Having a static water source will enable the fire department to access a reliable water source and reduce time to transport water to a fire scene. Ideally, at a minimum, a static water source should have a capacity of 10,000 gallons, be placed in a stable spot that is easily accessible, and have a fill connection of two 2 1/2-inch female national standard threads and plug. Final design and placement needs to be collaborated with CVRD Public Safety and the fire department.

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- Minimum two points of access/egress to the proposed residential development should be considered to provide community and emergency services personnel the ability to enter and exit simultaneously to improve response and evacuation capability.
  - All roadways (private & public) and driveways must be designed to support and allow access to the largest emergency vehicle likely to be operated on the driveway. This includes fire trucks and other emergency vehicles.
  - As per Cowichan Valley Regional District House Numbering, Unsightly Premises and Graffiti Bylaw No. 1341, building numbers assigned are to be displayed in a conspicuous place on the property on which the building is located so that the number is visible from the roadway.
- **CVRD – Water Management**  
The subject property is not within or near any CVRD water or sewer systems. Water Management therefore has no comments regarding this proposed rezoning.