

SECTION 4 - DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Development Strategy is a key component of the East Wellington - Pleasant Valley Official Community Plan. The Strategy represents a long-term approach to the future development of the community by establishing parameters around how land within the Plan Area is to be used and, if applicable, how new development, or redevelopment, will take place.

The Development Strategy has evolved from three primary sources: the expressed objectives, issues and concerns of the Plan Area's residents as established through consultation initiatives; physical influences and characteristics of the Plan Area, including existing land use and development patterns; and the Regional Growth Management Plan.

Residents have clearly expressed their desire and commitment to preserving the Plan Area's dominant rural character. They are concerned about the impact of further growth and development on this character, the overall ability of lands to accommodate such growth and development in an environmentally sensitive manner, the protection of lands with agricultural and silvicultural value, and the protection of the natural environment. Accordingly, the Strategy emphasizes maintenance of the *status quo* and provides for only limited growth and development.

The Plan Area is characterized by rural holdings and extensive agricultural, forestry and resource lands. Significant urbanization has been avoided due primarily to established silvicultural and agricultural land uses, physical constraints (including topography, watercourses and associated floodplains, and other environmental features) and to limited servicing capability; it is not anticipated that full urban services will be introduced into the Plan Area in the future. The Plan Area is also influenced by the close proximity of the City of Nanaimo and the Nanaimo Parkway.

The Regional Growth Management Plan recognizes the rural character and dominance of traditional land uses and large rural holdings within the Plan Area by emphasizing designations and policies which support and encourage agricultural and forestry activities, the rural economy, the protection and stewardship of the natural environment, and which limit growth and development pressures.

The Strategy does not include provisions for the expansion of industrial land uses or the introduction of commercial land uses into the Plan Area. Generally, residents utilize industrial and commercial services located in Lantzville and the City of Nanaimo. As such, these types of land uses are to be directed to other areas with appropriate servicing capabilities.

It is recognized that the interests, assumptions or expectations of some landowners or developers for policy change to facilitate future development may in some circumstances conflict with the Development Strategy's policy direction. The Strategy does not attempt to satisfy development expectations, which may be in conflict with the stated preferences and values of the community nor with the Regional District of Nanaimo planning process.

The Development Strategy consists of land-use designations identified on the Land Designation Map (Map No. 3) and by companion objectives and policies. Land use designations are intended to reflect a future development pattern while objectives and policies represent the mechanism to achieve it. Action-oriented policies define the long-term use of land in terms of appropriate parcel sizes, residential development densities and permitted uses. They also represent a decision-making framework and establish future courses of action in terms of regulatory or land use changes. Development activated policies establish the parameters under which proposed changes in land use or new development are to be evaluated. These are used by the Regional District and individuals when considering and assessing the feasibility and appropriateness of new proposals and their compatibility with stated objectives.

General Objectives:

- *Preserve and enhance* the rural character of the Plan Area and the integrity of rural land uses, resources and the natural environment.
- *Identify and implement* a balanced mix of rural land uses that meet the requirements of existing and future residents and which reinforce the Plan Area's character.
- *Establish, protect and maintain* greenways and buffers within the Plan Area, especially between it and the Nanaimo Parkway and intensive urban land uses located within the City of Nanaimo.
- *Preserve and enhance* natural amenities including the landforms, green spaces, lakes, rivers and streams.
- *Accommodate* alternative forms of residential development in a manner compatible with rural character, the natural environment and the capabilities of the land.
- *Direct* new urban and related uses away from the Plan Area to the City of Nanaimo and other urban areas.
- *Ensure* that of zoning amendment and development applications are reviewed and assessed by provincial and federal ministries and agencies.

General Policies:

Action:

1. The following land use designations shall be identified on the Land Use Designation Map (Map No. 3) attached to and forming part of this Plan: *Resource, Rural, Rural Residential and Industrial*.
2. Natural state and/or landscaped buffering to protect or enhance farming, forestry or environmentally sensitive areas shall be encouraged.

3. Land with any of this Plan's land-use designations may be considered for rezoning to recreational, institutional or public assembly uses without its amendment provided that the proposed land use is compatible with surrounding land uses.
4. Notwithstanding Regional District regulations and/or policies related to home-based businesses, this Plan recommends that the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw be amended to permit more intensive home-based businesses on larger properties where the impact of such activities would be minimal on surrounding lands.
5. Notwithstanding that the Agricultural Land Commission may have indicated approval of, or no objection to this Plan as it relates to Agricultural Land Reserve lands, the Commission is obliged to consider individual applications on their own merit under the mandate of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and is not obliged to approve applications that comply with or, alternatively, to refuse applications that do not comply with the land use standards of this Plan.
6. Where land is within the Forest Land Reserve, and is proposed for subdivision or non-forestry related uses, approval must first be obtained from the Forestry Land Commission pursuant to the *Forestry Land Commission Act*. Non-forestry uses within the FLR shall comply with the forestry objectives and policies in Section 3.2 - Forestry of this Plan and the *Forest Practices Code*.

Development Activated:

7. New zoning amendment or subdivision proposals shall be considered in the context of the overall Plan Area and their relationship to community character, implications on agricultural and forestry lands, ability to preserve open space and create greenway linkages, sensitivity to the natural environment, capabilities of on-site servicing, impact on public services, and with the Regional Growth Management Plan.

4.1 RESOURCE

The Resource designation generally applies to those lands, which have a natural resource value and capability in terms of harvesting or extraction. This may include lands within the Forest Land Reserve (FLR), Crown Forest or private forestlands that have managed forest or tree farm status, as well as lands, which may contain minerals or aggregates of a commercial value. Within the Plan Area there is approximately 535 hectares of Crown land, accounting for 16% of its total area. The majority of this land is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Forests. Forest companies own approximately 630 hectares, or 19% of the total land base. There are six gravel pits in operation in the Plan Area.

Objectives: Resource

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

Policies: Resource¹

Action:

1. Land within the *Resource* designation as shown on Map No. 3 attached to and forming part of this Plan, shall have a minimum parcel size of 50.0 hectares.²
2. On land in the *Resource* designation, residential development shall be limited to one (1) dwelling unit per four (4) hectares, to a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per parcel.
3. Permitted uses within the *Resource* designation shall generally be associated with those activities involving natural resource harvesting or extraction, primary processing and passive recreational uses, including campgrounds. This shall not preclude the Regional District Board from amending the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw to either include or exclude other uses, which are deemed to be compatible or incompatible with the *Resource* designation.

Development Activated:

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

4.2 RURAL

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

¹ Bylaw No. 1055.05, adopted December 4, 2018

² Bylaw No. 1055.02 adopted January 24, 2006

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

Objectives: Rural

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

Policies: Rural

Action:

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

³ Bylaw No. 1055.02 adopted January 24, 2006

Development Activated:

6. Where land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve and is proposed for subdivision or non-farm use, including the placement of a second dwelling, approval must first be obtained from the Agricultural Land Commission, except where additional dwellings are necessary for farm purposes subject to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*. All subdivision and non-farm uses within the ALR shall comply with the agricultural objectives and policies in Section 3.1 - Agriculture of this Plan.

4.3 RURAL RESIDENTIAL

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

Objectives: Rural Residential

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

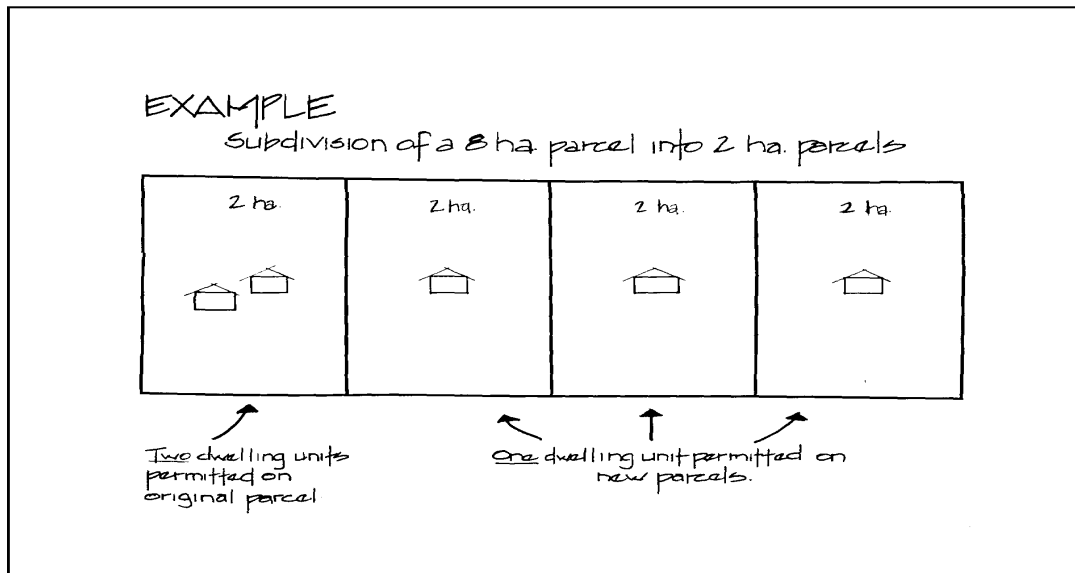
Policies: Rural Residential*Action:*

1. Land within a *Rural Residential* designation as shown on Map No. 3, attached to and forming part of this Plan shall have a minimum parcel size of 2.0 hectares.
2. On land in the *Rural Residential* designation, residential development shall be limited to one (1) dwelling unit per one (1) hectare, to a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per parcel.
3. Permitted uses within the *Rural Residential* designation shall generally be limited to traditional rural activities and passive recreation.
4. Notwithstanding Regional District regulations and/or policies related to the maximum number of dwellings per parcel, this Plan recommends that the Land

Use and Subdivision Bylaw permitting a maximum of two (2) dwelling units on parcels greater than 2.0 hectares be amended as follows:

- a) residential development shall be permitted to a maximum density of two (2) dwelling units on parcels of greater than 2.0 hectares, which existed prior to the adoption of such an amendment to the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw;
- b) residential development shall be limited to a density of not more than one (1) dwelling unit per two (2) hectares, to a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per parcel, for parcels created subsequent to the adoption of such an amendment to the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw (see Figure 4.1); and
- c) the creation of parcels having an area less than two (2) hectares by way of subdivision pursuant to the *Condominium Act* (British Columbia), with the exception of subdivision pursuant to the *Bareland Strata Regulations* (British Columbia), shall not be supported

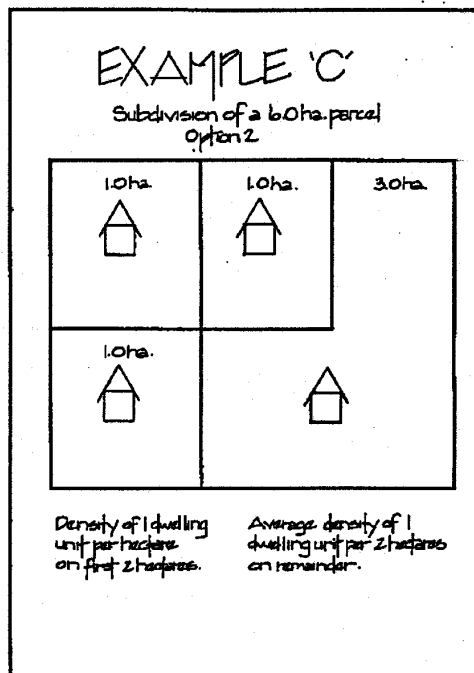
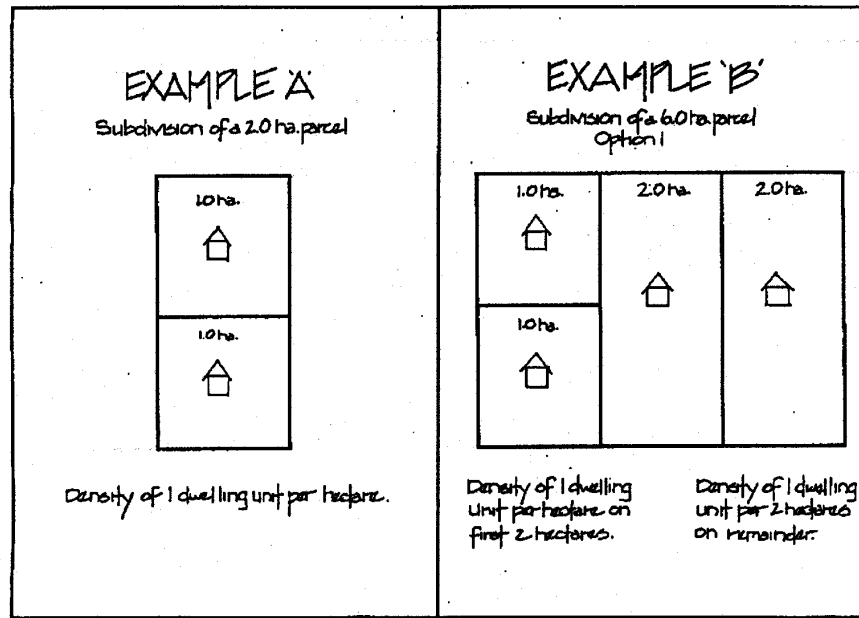
Figure 4.1



Development Activated:

5. Notwithstanding Policy 4.3.1, the subdivision of a parcel, which existed prior to the adoption of this Plan, to parcels less than 2.0 hectares in area shall be permitted within the *Rural Residential* designation without amendment to this Plan provided that:
 - a) the Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw is amended to accommodate the proposed development;
 - b) new parcels are not less than 1.0 hectare in area;
 - c) a gross density of one (1) dwelling unit per one (1) hectare on two (2) hectares of the parcel and one (1) dwelling unit per two (2) hectares, or greater, on the remaining portion of the parcel is evident (see Figure 4.2);
 - d) registration of a restrictive covenant prohibiting the further subdivision (pursuant to either the *Land Title Act* [British Columbia] or the *Condominium Act* [British Columbia]) of all new parcels greater than 1.0 hectare in area;
 - e) the subdivision of land does not adversely affect the character and/or environmental quality of surrounding lands and, where possible and appropriate, demonstrates significant advantages to the natural environment, protection of existing vegetation, optimum utilization of open space and park land requirements and the buffering of road right-of-ways and adjacent lands, especially those used for agricultural and resource purposes; and
 - f) verification that on-site septic disposal capability and potable water sources are sufficient to service the proposed development.

Figure 4.2



4.4 INDUSTRIAL

The Plan Area presently has a limited amount of industrial development. The majority of industrial-type land uses are related to resource extraction and processing activities. As industrial development reflects a more intensive use of land, that often generates heavy traffic, noise, dust and odour, lighting, and a demand on water services, it is not consistent with the Plan Area's pervading rural character. For this reason, strict limitations on industrial development are essential to fulfilling this Plan's objectives.

Objectives: Industrial

- *Discourage* the designation of land for industrial uses.
- *Avoid* conflicts between traditional rural and residential uses and industrial uses.

Policies: Industrial

Action:

1. Expansions to the *Industrial* designation as shown on Map No. 3, attached to and forming part of this Plan shall not be considered.
2. On land designated as *Industrial* in this Plan, the Regional District shall only permit the establishment of light industrial uses that do not involve processing, manufacturing, storage, collection or recycling activities.
3. Subdivision of land designated as *Industrial* shall not be permitted. The Land Use and Subdivision Bylaw shall be amended to reflect this policy.
4. All land designated *Industrial* shall be included in a Development Permit area in order to achieve community objectives and guidelines for the form and character of industrial development.

Figure 4.3

