

SUBMISSION TO THE NANAIMO COMMUNITY
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

RESPECTING OCP00083 AMENDMENT APPLICATION

SUBMITTED BY

“SAVE LINLEY'S HIDDEN RIDGE” CAMPAIGN

November 23, 2017

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This submission identifies and documents many reasons why OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 should not be supported by Nanaimo's Community Planning and Development Committee, and also summarizes the actions and results of the "Save Linley's Hidden Ridge" campaign.

Save Linley's Hidden Ridge is a group of concerned citizens from many parts of Nanaimo and adjacent areas, who believe that healthy communities need healthy natural ecosystems. We believe that approval of OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 and development of the properties identified in this application will threaten the ecological integrity of the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, and also poses safety and liveability issues in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Since April 2017, we have conducted a public information campaign, offered free public events in Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, and collected more than 1,800 signatures on our petition requesting City Council to reject this OCP Amendment Application. Citizens of Nanaimo that we have contacted have overwhelmingly voiced their opposition to the development of this urban wilderness area. Specifically, we are asking Nanaimo City Council and staff to:

1. Reject the Developer's applications to: a) amend the Official Community Plan; b) remove the land from the Urban Reserve; and, c) have it rezoned for a Steep Slope subdivision.
2. Work with the citizens of Nanaimo to develop a comprehensive plan for Linley Valley and the surrounding neighbourhoods.
3. Add the 72 acre Hidden Ridge land to the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park.

There are many implications if the OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 is approved by City Council. Some of the main implications are summarized below.

Policy Implication: The OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 is not consistent with many of the Goals and Policies of Nanaimo's Official Community Plan. Approval of this OCP Amendment Application would directly contravene several major OCP (2015) policies. For example, the OCP (Section 2.6 Policy 5) states that:

"An Area Plan must be adopted before urban development is permitted, including further subdivision and servicing of lands, within an Urban Reserve area."

The subject properties are located in the Long Lake Planning Area and Urban Reserve. No Area Plans currently exist for either of these areas. Approval of OCP00083 is also inconsistent with overall OCP Goals (e.g. Goal 5: "Protect and Enhance Our Environment"). In addition, the Developer has not provided relevant documents (e.g. a Tree Management Plan), which are required by the OCP Amendment Application process. However, *protecting* the remaining land in the Urban Reserve in Linley Valley would satisfy many of the stated Goals and Policies of the OCP.

Budget Implication: The subject properties are located in an Urban Reserve area (AR2 Zoning) that does not currently have any City services. It will be difficult and costly to provide City services if Council approves a subsequent application for rezoning of the subject properties for the proposed high-density development. These properties include large areas with very steep slopes and rocky ridges, and low-lying wetlands and creeks. The high elevation of much of this land is above the level to which the existing city water system can supply adequate water pressure. The Developer's plans posted on the City's "What's Building" website do not provide sufficient or adequate information to allow assessment of the short-term and long-term costs to the City of providing and maintaining the proposed development, and for necessary upgrades to existing infrastructure such as water systems and access roads. These additional costs are not included in City current budgets or in the longer-term fiscal plans.

Legal Implication: A similar OCP Amendment Application for land in this Urban Reserve area (e.g. OCP Amendment application 034 in 2007) was previously rejected by the Community Development and Planning Committee and by City Council. Council approval of this application OCP00083 would be inconsistent with this previous ruling and could expose the City to legal challenges.

Engagement Implication: The Developer has not met the OCP Amendment Application requirements for conducting a public consultation meeting. The only public meeting held by the Developer to date was not appropriately advertised, and was not sanctioned or attended by any City staff, as required by OCP policy. The City also has not yet engaged in consultations with citizens regarding this OCP Amendment Application.

Strategic Priorities Implication: Further development of the Urban Reserve lands in the Linley Valley is not one of the key projects identified by City Council in the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan.

Political Implication: There is strong support from neighbourhood residents and the broader public for ***rejecting*** this OCP Amendment Application. For example, more than 1,800 citizens from Nanaimo and adjacent areas have signed our petition requesting City Council to reject OCP Amendment Application OCP00083. The MLA for North Nanaimo (Leonard Krog) and the Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) have also written to Council in support of keeping the subject properties within the Urban Reserve.

Neighbourhood Implication: The potential negative impacts on safety and liveability are major concerns for residents who live in the neighbourhoods that would be most affected by approval of the OCP Amendment and proposed development. We talked to hundreds of residents during our SLHR door-to-door canvassing campaign. Local residents in the Lost Lake Road neighbourhood and adjacent areas said they were most concerned about the potential increased volume and speed of traffic, and resulting increased risks to pedestrians, especially children. The next biggest concern we heard was about the potential negative impacts of the proposed development on the natural environment and ecosystems in Linley Valley and Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, that would result in decreased enjoyment and liveability of the neighbourhood.

Ecological Implication: Approval of this OCP Amendment Application and subsequent rezoning for the proposed high-density development will result in significant loss of ecological services and benefits for Nanaimo citizens. The OCP (2015) recognizes that Urban Forests and their landscapes serve many of purposes, including rainwater attenuation, air quality improvements, energy savings, public safety and health benefits, wildlife habitat, and economic benefits. Many of these benefits and ecological services will be lost or greatly diminished if the proposed development is allowed to proceed. The entire Linley Valley, including the subject properties, also fits the OCP (Section 5.2) description of an Environmentally Sensitive Area: “Areas that provide productive fish or wildlife habitat; contain sensitive, rare or depleted ecosystems and landforms; and represent sites of Nanaimo’s natural diversity that are in danger of disappearing”. This Section of the OCP commits: “To protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas. Avoid or mitigate disturbance of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) from human activities and maintain their ecological function.” The proposed development of the subject properties also poses significant risks to the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, including the sensitive ecosystems, threatened species, and ecological services that support our community.

Future of Linley Valley Implication: We believe that the best outcome would be for the City of Nanaimo to acquire the subject properties and add this land to the protected parkland in Linley Valley. Protecting the remaining land in the Urban Reserve in Linley Valley would satisfy many of the OCP (2015) Goals and Policies. This outcome would also meet many of the visions, values and priorities in the City of Nanaimo Strategic Plan Update 2016 – 2019, including the “Property Acquisition” initiative and priority. We strongly support and encourage City Council to designate what's left of Linley Valley, not as Neighbourhood, but as Resource Protection or Parks and Open Space, and as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. An intact Linley Valley is a “living utility”, providing valuable direct and indirect economic and public health physical and mental benefits if preserved.

INTRODUCTION

This submission identifies and documents many reasons why OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 should not be supported by Nanaimo's Community Planning and Development Committee or City staff, or approved by City Council, and also summarizes the actions and results of the "Save Linley's Hidden Ridge" campaign.

Save Linley's Hidden Ridge (SLHR) is a group of concerned citizens from many parts of Nanaimo and adjacent areas who believe that healthy communities need healthy natural ecosystems. We believe that approval of OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 and development of the properties identified in this application will threaten the ecological integrity of the existing Linley Valley Cottle Creek Park, and also poses safety and liveability issues in the surrounding neighbourhoods.

SLHR is opposed to OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 (See Figure 1 for map of proposed development area and adjoining Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park). Specifically, we are asking Nanaimo City Council and staff to:

1. Reject the Developer's applications to: a) amend the Official Community Plan; b) remove the land from the Urban Reserve; and, c) have it rezoned for a Steep Slope subdivision.
2. Work with the citizens of Nanaimo to develop a comprehensive plan for Linley Valley and the surrounding neighbourhoods.
3. Add the 72 acre Hidden Ridge land to the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park.

Our SLHR campaign was initiated in January 2017, organized by a Steering Committee of seven members (S. Juby, Y. Leduc, V. Adamson, C. Spencer, R. Clark, M. Hargreaves and B. Hargreaves). Since then we have conducted a public awareness and information campaign, provided free public events in Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, and collected more than 1,800 signatures on our petition requesting City Council to reject this OCP Amendment Application OCP00083. We have heard loud and clear that citizens throughout Nanaimo and adjacent communities do not support the development of these lands.

To learn more about our SLHR campaign please visit:

- Website: <https://www.savelinleyshiddenridge.org>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SaveLinleysHiddenRidge>
- Petition: <https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/save-the-linley-valleys-hidden-ridge.html>

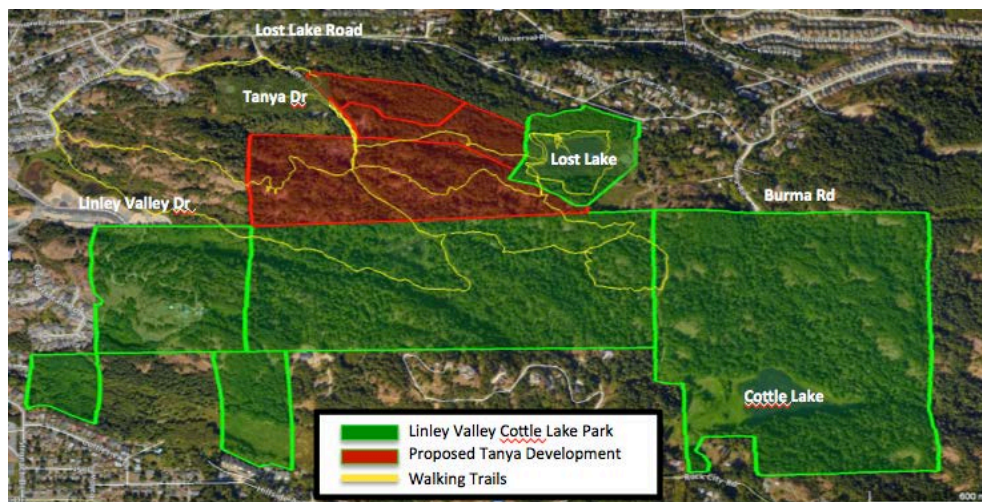


Figure 1: Google Earth view of OCP00083 Amendment Properties (red) and Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park (green). See enlarged version in Appendix 1.

OCP POLICY AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

OCP AMENDMENT APPLICATION OCP00083 CONTRAVENES OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

Approval of this OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 would contravene key OCP (2015) policies. The three properties included in OCP00083 (located at 5300, 5280 and 5260 Tanya Drive; hereafter referred to as the “subject properties”) lie within the Long Lake Planning Area of the City of Nanaimo. There has not been an OCP Area Plan developed that includes these subject properties in the Urban Reserve (AR2 zoning). The OCP states (Section 2.6 Policies 2-5 (p. 54)) that:

1. Areas identified for future urban development are contained within an Urban Reserve designation.
2. The Urban Reserve designation allows for interim rural land uses and density until an Area Plan is completed.
3. Urban Reserve areas will not be rezoned for higher density residential development other than that permitted by zoning existing at the time of the Plan’s adoption.
4. An Area Plan for lands within an Urban Reserve designation will be prepared to provide a comprehensive plan for land uses (including residential, parks and open spaces, and supporting commercial), environmental protection (including wetlands and steep slopes), servicing, integrated storm water management, transportation, and timing of development.
5. Adoption of an Area Plan is required prior to urban development occurring, including further subdivision and servicing of lands, within an Urban Reserve area.

This proposed development is also inconsistent with the overall Goals of the OCP. For example, the Land Use Designations under Goal 2 (OCP p.30) define the Urban Reserve as land that is:

“Recognized for future growth. Areas Plans will be required prior to development to address timing and services of development, land use and densities, and environmental protection issues.”

The proposed high-density development of this area would also be contrary to Goal 5 of the OCP: “Protect and Enhance Our Environment”.

The subject properties should not be removed from the Urban Reserve in Linley Valley if there is other land that is not in the Urban Reserve available elsewhere in the City that is suitable for development and less costly to service. There is still sufficient land available for development within Nanaimo’s Urban Containment Boundary (UCB), without rezoning and developing the Urban Reserve land in Linley Valley. The Developer’s Letter of Rationale states (p.1):

“The Urban Reserve was created to provide an area for future housing for the City of Nanaimo. After years of sustained growth, the inventory of building lots is low and there is significant demand for housing in North Nanaimo.”

However, the OCP (2015); p.24 states:

“Under existing zoning for single family and multi-family residential uses, there is enough serviced land, either vacant or underutilized land, within the UCB to house the overall projected housing demand to 2031 (even without rezoning to allow for higher densities in the Urban Nodes and Corridors). The UCB ensures future growth will focus in areas where urban uses make sense from social, economic, and environmental perspectives”.

City staff informed us that there are currently approximately 520.7 ha of vacant lands in Nanaimo designated Neighbourhood in the OCP. Parcels smaller than 0.2 ha (1/2 acre) make up approximately 52.8 ha. There are approximately 166.1 ha of vacant lands in north Nanaimo designated as Neighbourhood in the OCP. Parcels smaller than 0.2 ha (1/2 acre) make up approximately 19.3 ha.

HISTORICAL PRECEDENT

Support from the Community Planning and Development Committee (CPDC) or City Council of this current OCP Amendment Application 00083 would be inconsistent with other rulings, and could expose the City to legal challenges. For example, in 2007, an OCP Amendment Application OCP034 was made for two properties on the west side of Burma Road (lots 4451 and 4471), with a total area of 14.7 acres (5.9 ha). These properties are located in the Urban Reserve area of Linley Valley. In 2007 the applicant requested that these two properties on Burma Road be moved inside the UCB to allow development of sixty to ninety residential dwelling units in a townhouse complex. The OCP policy required that a comprehensive plan be completed for Linley Valley before these lands are brought inside the UCB. No comprehensive plan had been done. Both the Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee (PNAC) and City staff recommended that this OCP Amendment Application be denied. On April 16, 2007 City Council denied OCP Amendment Application OCP034 and directed City staff to undertake a comprehensive plan of the Linley Valley upon completion of the 10-year OCP review. Currently the 10-year OCP review has not yet been initiated, and there is still no comprehensive Plan for the Linley Valley, or the Urban Reserve land, or the Long Lake Plan Area.

INADEQUATE PUBLIC CONSULTATION BY THE CITY OF NANAIMO

Public consultation prior to review of this OCP00083 Amendment Application has not been adequate. The OCP Section 7.2. (p. 125) "Amending the Plan", Objective 3 states:

"The Committee will consult and involve neighbourhoods who may be affected by OCP changes."

The OCP Terms of Reference for the Community Planning and Development Committee (CPDC) provide for Neighbourhood Associations or representative groups to provide up to three temporary representatives to attend meetings (in a non-voting role) to review proposed changes to Area or Neighbourhood Plans. The current Chair (Sherry Mauro) of the Lost Lake Neighbourhood Association (LLNA) has confirmed that the City has invited three representatives to attend the CPDC meeting on November 29, 2017 where this OCP00083 will be considered. However, this invitation was not sent until 11 November 2017, and only as a result of our SLHR request to City staff. No other public consultation has been done by either the City or the CPDC, and no other Neighbourhood Associations or citizen groups have been consulted with or invited to participate at this CPDC meeting.

With more than 1,800 signatures on our petition for City Council regarding this OCP00083 Application, our SLHR group is clearly a "representative group" for the citizens in the surrounding neighbourhoods that will be most affected by this proposed OCP Amendment and development. The SLHR campaign submitted a formal application to the City to "Request to Appear as a Delegation" at the CPDC meeting, where this OCP Amendment Application will be considered. This application was denied.

INADEQUATE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION BY THE DEVELOPER

The OCP (2015) states (Section 7.1; Policy 7):

"Prior to proceeding to the Nanaimo Advisory Planning Committee (the "Committee") or Council, persons applying to amend the OCP must meet at least once with the neighbourhood residents to discuss their application and receive comments. A City staff member will attend such meetings to act as a resource person on the City's policies and procedures."

The Developer has not met this OCP requirement to adequately inform and consult with neighbourhood residents who would be affected by this OCP Amendment. The Developer has held one "Town Hall" meeting at the Oliver Woods Community Centre on 29 June 2017. This meeting did not meet the OCP requirements, for the following reasons:

- The City was not informed of this public meeting.
- City staff did not attend, as required by the OCP (Section 7.1; Policy 7).
- The Developer inappropriately used his roadside Rezoning Application signs posted on Tanya Drive to announce this meeting. This was not actually a "Public Hearing" officially sanctioned or recognized by the City, as was implied by these signs.
- The date, time and place of this "Town Hall" meeting was posted on these roadside signs at the end of Tanya Drive less than 72 hours before the meeting. Only people who travelled along Tanya Drive during this 72 hour period were aware of this meeting.
- This meeting was not advertised in local newspapers.
- The Developer claimed 2000 notices for this meeting were sent by post to local residents. The SLHR campaign has canvassed hundreds of residents in the area and has heard of only three residents in the entire Lost Lake neighbourhood area that received that notice.
- Most of the 183 people who attended this meeting only did so because they were informed and encouraged to attend by our SLHR campaign communications.
- One of our SLHR group stood at the entrance to the room where this meeting was held and personally counted all 183 people in attendance. Several SLHR Steering Committee (SC) members spoke to, and listened to, many people who attended this meeting and all, without exception, were strongly opposed to this OCP Amendment and proposed development on Tanya Drive. In addition, several committee members overheard comments from attendees made to Jared Steingard and David Steingard and none of these comments were in favour of the proposed development.
- Members of the SLHR SC were outside the venue at this meeting providing SLHR campaign information and collecting petition signatures. The majority of people voiced their opposition to the proposed development, their annoyance with the format and venue, and the minimal information provided at this Town Hall meeting. Many also signed our petition asking City Council to reject the Developer's OCP Amendment and Rezoning Application.
- The 29 June 2017 Developer's meeting was held before the Developer submitted the revised/new OCP Amendment Application OCP00083. The Developer has not held a public meeting since then to address the revised OCP00083 application made on November 1, 2017.
- The SLHR campaign has, as of November 10, 2017, obtained more than 1,800 signatures on our petition asking City Council to reject the Developer's OCP00083 Amendment Application. Many of these people live in the Lost Lake neighbourhood areas that would be most affected by this OCP Amendment and proposed development.

INACCURATE CLAIM OF FINANCIAL BENEFITS

INVALID ESTIMATE OF FEES PAYABLE AND “BENEFITS” TO NANAIMO

The economic impact analysis provided by Westbrook Consulting, in the letter of rationale for OCP Amendment Application OCPO00083, shows a range of fees payable to the City of Nanaimo consisting of development cost charges (DCCs), building permit fees (BPFs), and property taxes. The lump sum total for DCCs and BPFs ranges from \$8,384,000 to \$9,033,000 and the annual property taxes range from \$1,876,000 to \$2,579,500. These are presented as benefits to the City of Nanaimo and its citizens.

This economic analysis provided by Westbrook Consulting misrepresents the facts. We asked Dr. Alan Mehlenbacher, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, University of Victoria to comment on the economic analysis provide by Westbrook Consulting. His conclusions are that:

1. DCCs are not a benefit: DCCs cover the City’s costs of infrastructure for the new development and do not constitute a benefit to the City of Nanaimo.
2. BPFs are not a benefit: BPFs cover the City’s costs of reviews and inspections of building, electrical, plumbing, etc. They do not constitute a benefit to the City of Nanaimo.
3. Therefore, the lump sum benefit of BPFs and DCCs is actually zero, and the Developer’s claimed “benefit” to the City of Nanaimo of \$8,384,000 to \$9,033,000 does not exist.
4. The annual benefit from property taxes is actually much lower than \$1,876,000 to \$2,579,500. To more accurately assess property taxes for the value as a benefit, we need to know how property taxes are spent. From the City of Nanaimo’s website, we see that about 58% of the property taxes from a new development would be spent on police, fire, emergency, engineering, and public works services to the new development. However, the remaining 42% would be of general benefit to the City of Nanaimo for planning and development, conference centre, culture and heritage, parks and recreation, etc. Thus, a more realistic “benefit” has an annual estimated value of \$788,000 to \$1,083,000.

We believe these estimated “benefits” to the City are likely too high. The last estimate (#4 above) assumes the proposed development is allowed to occur at the maximum density permitted for Steep Slope Development. It is unlikely this high density of development would actually be permitted to occur, due to the extent of environmentally sensitive areas on the subject properties.

INVALID ECONOMIC MODEL AND INAPPLICABLE DATA

In their economic impact analysis, Westbrook Consulting quotes a January 2016 Times-Colonist article entitled “House Construction Industry Optimistic for Victoria Region”.

<http://www.timescolonist.com/business/house-construction-industry-optimistic-for-victoria-region-1.2148677>

The author, Carla Wilson, quotes a paragraph from the Executive Summary of a 2015 report by the United States National Association of Home Builders (USNAHB):

https://www.nahb.org/-/media/Sites/NAHB/Economic%20studies/1-REPORT_local_20150318115955.ashx?la=en&hash=9E3CC5207C80D53E949F6D9988F2FA99183D0632

There are major problems with this economic impact analysis provided by the Developer that is based on United States data. We asked Dr. Alan Mehlenbacher to comment on the conclusions in this USNAHB report. The following is his summary:

1. **Self-serving:** This is a self-serving report that is published by the home-building industry to promote the home-building industry in the United States. The analysis and conclusions in the report should therefore be viewed suspiciously, even when used in the United States.
2. **Out-of-date foreign data:** Although the Times-Colonist article was published in January 2016, the USNAHB report was published in April 2015, and the report is based primarily on the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analyses (USBEA) input-output tables from 2007. The data is out-of-date, and from a foreign country.
3. **Invalid multiplier model:** The conclusions in this report are based on a flawed “multiplier” model. These multiplier models are used almost exclusively by companies and organizations to exaggerate the benefits of their proposed projects. Notable B.C. examples include the 2010 Winter Olympics, the Kinder-Morgan Trans-Mountain pipeline, the LNG plant proposals, and so on.
4. **Invalid data used to draw conclusions.** The idea behind multiplier models is stated on p. 9 of the technical documentation of the USNAHB report: “Phase I of the model translates home building activity into income for local workers and business proprietors, and revenue for local governments. This output serves as the input for Phase II, as part of the local income generated will be spent, generating more income, generating more spending, and so on. These spending ripples damp and eventually converge to a limit, which is the ultimate ripple or multiplier effect.” These ripples extend several years into the future (mathematically to infinity), but the data these are based on are for spending and buying in a single year. It is simply invalid to use this “static” data to draw “dynamic” conclusions.

DEFICIENCIES IN THE DOCUMENTS AND PLANS SUBMITTED BY THE DEVELOPER

INCOMPLETE SERVICING REPORT

The “Civil Servicing Report” provided by the Developer is incomplete. This report identifies the many challenges that must be overcome to provide City services (water, sewer, storm drains, etc.) to the proposed development. It does not, however, provide any cost estimates. This is a major deficiency. There currently are no City services provided to the subject properties. These properties include large areas with very steep slopes and rocky ridges, and low-lying wetlands and creeks. The high elevation of much of the land is above the level to which the existing City water system can supply adequate water pressure. This report states that providing City water to the subject properties will require constructing an additional water reservoir and pumping station on Tanya Drive to boost water pressure. Extensive networks of new storm drains and sewage lines will also be required. What will the costs be to build and maintain City services to these properties if the proposed development proceeds? Who is going to pay for it? The DCCs and the BFPs certainly won't cover it all.

MISSING TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Developer has not provided any information about trees on the subject properties, or a Tree Management Plan. The OCP Amendment Application process requires that a Tree Management Plan be provided that describes how trees will be managed, preserved and any impacts minimized and mitigated. The City of Nanaimo also has a “Management and Protection of Trees Bylaw (2013)” (No.7126) that identifies “Significant Trees” as important to the community. A “Significant Tree” means any tree that is of particular significance to the City, due to large size (“Landmark” trees), age, overall cultural, ecological or social impact, scientific value, trees planted by the City on boulevards, and any tree that is protected as wildlife habitat for an egg or nest under section 35 of the Wildlife Act. Included amongst Landmark Trees are Western Red-Cedar (greater than 80 cm diameter), Douglas-Fir (greater than 80 cm diameter), and Arbutus (greater than 50 cm diameter). A previous professional environmental report titled “Baseline Bio-Inventory and Conservation Assessment for Linley Valley West, Nanaimo” by Ursus Environmental (2012) that included the largest of the subject properties (50 acres at 5260 Tanya Drive), and our own SLHR surveys, confirm that many “Significant Trees” are found on the subject properties. A healthy urban forest is essential to the quality of life of Nanaimo citizens.

OTHER MISSING REPORTS

The Developer has neglected to submit other documents that are required to assess this OCP Amendment Application OCP00083. According to the City's "Official Community Plan Amendment Application Checklist", these missing documents include: a Geotechnical Report, an Archaeological Assessment, a Landscape Plan, and a more detailed Site Plan. The Site Plan provided by the Developer does not show all the information required (e.g. all legal property lines, rights-of-way and easements, the natural boundaries of all watercourses, the wetland boundaries for all watercourses, top of bank and leave strip boundaries).

INADEQUATE AND MISLEADING SITE CONCEPT PLAN

The Developer's "Site Plan - Bldgs / Roads" is inadequate and inconsistent with the other documents provided. Some homes do not have access roads. The plan shows one road passing through a green corridor (protected Riparian Setback zone) and "wildlife corridor." Several other roads pass through sensitive wetland areas and two large natural ponds. Clearly, the planned location of roads supersedes any objective or concerns for preserving sensitive habitat. The Developer's "Site Plan" Figure shows only 158 homes, but the separate "Civil Servicing Report; p.4)" provided by the Developer refers to 469 units with a configuration of lots (Figure 2; p.5) that is substantially different. The Developer also used 469 homes for estimating property taxes "benefits" for the City in the "Rationale for OCP Amendment" letter (Table on page 4). Regardless of the actual number of lots, the only access road to the proposed development is Tanya Drive; no alternate access road is available or planned, which is clearly inadequate and unacceptable under the City's "Transportation Master Plan".

INADEQUATE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The 5260/5280/5300 City of Nanaimo Detailed Biophysical Assessment (Cascadia 2017) (hereafter referred to as *Biophysical Assessment*), provided by Cascadia Biological Services on contract to the Developer to support OCP00083, is inadequate and contains conclusions that are misleading. This report indicates that field reconnaissance was conducted between March 2015 and June 2017, however, the only sampling dates referenced are in the spring of 2017. The report contains only summarized data that lack details on species, quantity and geo-referencing, maps are missing legends and figure captions, and the descriptions of methods offers no statistical rationale or defence for the selected sampling regime. Lacking this basic information, it is not possible for anyone to provide a credible review of the environmental assessment. Based on what has been provided in this report, a basic understanding of biological sampling design, a comparison to previous studies conducted in this area, and on our own field observations, this biophysical assessment provided by the Developer should be deemed inadequate for the purposes of this OCP application. The following examples of some key deficiencies illustrate this conclusion.



Figure 2: Northern Red-legged Frog, photographed July 20, 2017 on 5260 Tanya Drive

The *Biophysical Assessment* provides data on the presence or absence of various plant species. The field sampling consisted of only 4 sample quadrants, each 10 meters by 10 meters, over the entire area of the subject properties, for only one time (possibly one day) of the year. Only one quadrant was sampled for each of 4 distinct plant communities identified on the subject properties. This means that only 0.14% of the entire 72 acres was examined. No replicate

sampling was conducted and the site selection was not randomized. Even an elementary understanding of scientific sampling design would confirm that this is not an adequate sampling protocol for plants known to have an uneven



Figure 3: Pacific Side-band Snail photographed September 9, 2017 on 5250 Tanya Drive.

distribution and even less adequate to identify rare species of plants, or to assess the presence or absence of species that have seasonal variability. All that can be concluded from this report is that the species found do occur in the study area. It is not valid to conclude that other species do **not** occur, or draw conclusions about the distribution and abundance of the species found.

Due to inadequate sampling, the *Biophysical Assessment* fails to identify any BC Provincial Red-listed species (at risk of being lost (extirpated, endangered or threatened) or Blue-listed species (any indigenous species considered to be vulnerable in their locale and of special concern) on the subject properties. This omission is clearly wrong based on a previous, more a rigorous environmental assessment conducted by Ursus Environmental (2012) for the Save Linley Valley West campaign, and also based on our own current SLHR observations on the subject properties.

For example, we have photographed a Northern Red-legged Frog (Figure 2) three times between July and August 2017 on the trail beside the wetlands at the end of Tanya Drive. Northern Red-legged Frogs (*Rana aurora*) are a native species that have declined in some parts of their range due to habitat degradation and loss from agriculture, urban development and forestry. Northern Red-legged Frogs are nationally listed as “Special Concern” by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), and they are on the Provincial Blue List. We have also photographed the Pacific Sideband Snail (*Monadenia fidelis*) (Figure 3) in September 2017, which through loss and fragmentation of habitat has seen a population decline, leading to a Blue-list designation in British Columbia.

Another serious oversight in the *Biophysical Assessment* is the failure to acknowledge the Red-listed Douglas-Fir/Dull Oregon Grape forest community listed as “rare” in the B.C. Conservation Data Centre (CDC) on-line database (Rare Element Record 55759) (Figure 4). This forest community covers a significant portion of the subject properties, as well as the whole Linley Valley. Additionally, while not yet officially acknowledged by the Province for the subject properties, the Ursus Environmental report identified the presence of two additional Provincially Red-listed ecosystem communities (FDPI-Arbutus and Grand Fir-Foamflower) occurring on the 5260 Tanya Drive property.

In comparing the bird survey results in the *Biophysical Assessment* to the Ursus report, there is a significant discrepancy between these two assessments. The Developer’s report identifies 24 bird species, while the Ursus Environmental report identifies 31 for the 5260 Tanya Drive property. However, the *Biophysical Assessment* does identify one Blue-listed bird species, the Great Blue Heron and four other species not identified in the Ursus

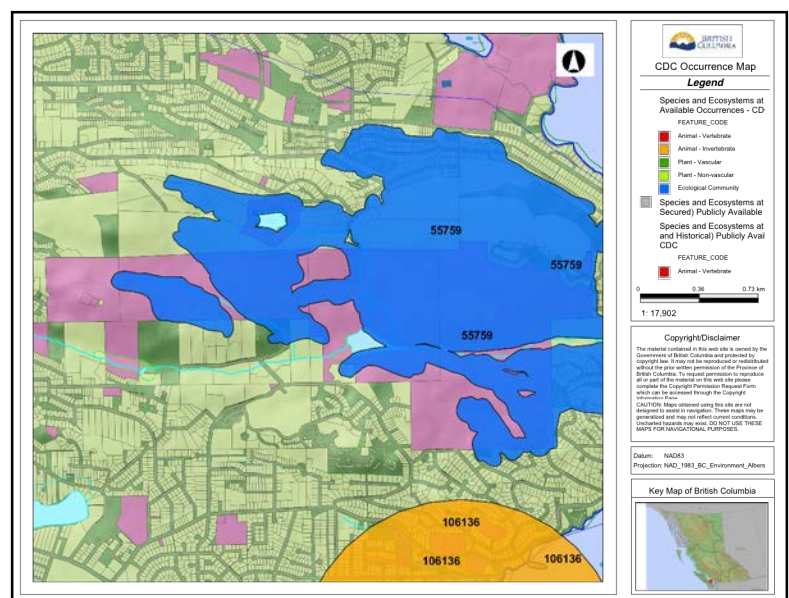


Figure 4: B.C. Conservation Data Centre Rare Element Record 55759, Ecological Community. (See Appendix 2 for enlarged map)

Environmental report, providing a combined unique bird identification of 36 species of birds on the subject properties. The Ursus Environmental report identifies a total of 66 species of birds for the entire study area comprising west Linley Valley, including Blue-listed Sooty Grouse, Olive-side Flycatcher, Band-tailed Pigeon and Great Blue Heron, all of which are associated with forested habitat like that of the subject properties. Like the vegetation assessments, there are few details in the *Biophysical Assessment* provided by the Developer to assess the adequacy of the sampling design for the bird surveys. The information provided suggests nocturnal bird surveys may have been done on only two nights in February, and daytime transect surveys only during one period in the Spring. The lack of seasonal coverage brings the entire environmental assessment and conclusions in the Developer's report into question.

Amphibians were surveyed for a total of 10 hours, only in the Spring of 2017, which again limits any understanding of seasonal presence and habitat utilization by these species. However, the survey design did include transect surveys, as well as focused wetland surveys. In total, the *Biophysical Assessment* shows three species of amphibians, none of which are designated Provincially or Federally as at-risk. These results are similar to those in the Ursus Environmental report. But, as noted above, SLHR has photographed the Blue-listed Red-Legged Frog (Figure 2) on the subject properties three times between July and August 2017. Red-Legged Frogs were documented to occur in other areas in the west Linley Valley, based on the Ursus Environmental report.

The *Biophysical Assessment* did not include an assessment of invertebrate species, a significant deficiency given the Blue-listed Pacific Sideband Snail is known to occur in Linley Valley. As noted above, SLHR has photographic evidence to confirm the presence of this species on the subject properties.

The *Biophysical Assessment* includes an assessment of aquatic resources and a section on "Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures". SLHR is concerned about the main conclusion in the final section of this report that states:

"... the overall percentage of disturbed land within the study area is expected to be low and therefore, minimal risk is expected to the species identified in our assessment or of those having the potential to occur."

A simple examination of the "Site Plan – Bldgs / Roads" Figure indicates that the proposed development will require much of the subject properties to be deforested and the hydrology of the wetlands modified, eliminating or degrading essential habitat for the many species of plants, animals, birds, amphibians and invertebrates.

In addition to the likely destruction that is not adequately accounted for in the conclusions provided, the "Site Plan – Bldgs / Roads" Figure shows one planned road passing through a green corridor (protected Riparian Setback zone) and "wildlife corridor." Several roads pass through sensitive wetland areas and two large ponds. Clearly, the planned location of roads supersedes any objective or concerns for preserving sensitive habitat.

INADEQUATE PLAN FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO LINLEY VALLEY COTTLE LAKE PARK

The Developer's "Letter of Rationale" document submitted for OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 briefly mentions public access to Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, stating "Through the development we could offer an accessible trail head, complete with a parking lot and other park amenities". However, the "Site Plan – Bldgs / Roads 3" Figure also provided by the Developer does not show any dedicated access, parking lot or amenities for the public to access the Park. The City intends to create interconnected greenways within the City, of which the Cottle Creek watershed and Linley Valley are included. The proposed high-density development of the subject properties would seriously disrupt this plan.

The Developer's "Traffic Study" that is required for an OCP Amendment Application, is incomplete, unreliable, and misleading. Traffic impacts are one of the biggest concern for residents in the neighbourhoods that would be most affected by the proposed development. The Developer submitted a report, prepared by the Watt Consulting Group in October 2016, entitled "Lost Lake Corridor Review; Traffic Impact Assessment". This study was conducted just before the Developer's previous two applications (for an OCP Amendment and R10 Rezoning) were submitted to the City in November 2016. The analysis and conclusions in this report are based on traffic counts obtained on only one day (Tuesday, October 18, 2016), for 1 hour (4 to 5pm), at two locations: one on Rutherford Road / Vanderneuk, and the other on Lost Lake /Tanya Drive. This traffic assessment takes into consideration the future (5 years) and current developments at 5300 Rutherford Road and 5701 Vanderneuk Road. A total of 558 homes are assumed for 5300 Rutherford and 5701 Vanderneuk. Both these areas are currently only partially developed. This report also assumes 469 housing units will be built on the subject properties on Tanya Drive. In total, 1144 homes were assumed in this study to contribute traffic to neighbourhood roads.

This traffic report is now out of date and inadequate. It does not factor in the new and large developments on Dewar Road and Laguna Way, nor several smaller ones planned or underway in the area. This report assumes a 2.0% growth rate/year for future traffic projections, although this area is clearly growing faster than 2%. Data were also added in from an earlier 2013 traffic study, which are now 4 years out of date. This recent traffic assessment was limited to Lost Lake Road, west of Tanya Drive. No analysis was provided for traffic moving east of Tanya Drive along Lost Lake Road, nor for the impacts on Laguna Way, Malaspina Road, and Hammond Bay Road. This report also assumes a single-family traffic trip rate of 1 trip/unit during evening peak hour, which is much lower than the multipliers used by the City of 7.5 trips/day for a single family dwelling and 5.0 trips/day for a multi-family home. Furthermore, the likely presence and number of secondary suites, with their additional impacts on traffic, were not mentioned.

Three main traffic options were analyzed, with all three requiring a new traffic light with right and left turning lanes at the intersection of Vanderneuk Road and Rutherford Road. Under "Option 1", by 2021, a left turn lane is required on Vanderneuk Road onto Rutherford Road, and would need to be a minimum of 130 m long. A dedicated right turn lane from Rutherford Road onto Vanderneuk Road is also required, and would be over 200 m long. By 2021 there would be over 14,000 vehicles per day (vpd) on Vanderneuk Road, and 8,300 vpd on Lost Lake Road. Assuming that most of these trips occur during the day, dividing by 16 hours yields 650 vehicles per hour on Vanderneuk Road and 500/hr for Lost Lake Road.

Option #2, which assumes the completion of the new roundabout on Rutherford Road, was reported to result in significantly less impacts on traffic than Option 1. By 2021 approximately 10,000 vpd would occur on Vanderneuk Road and 8,300 vpd on Lost Lake Rd. This would still be about 500 – 600 vehicles per hour on Lost Lake Road based on a 16 hour day.

Option 3 included construction of an additional new connecting road from the south end of Tanya Drive to Linley Valley Drive, but the report does not describe how this would occur. The Developer does not own the land that is required for this new connecting road. This option gives the best results according to the report, with 4,000 to 8,000 vpd vehicles per day on Vanderneuk Road and Lost Lake Road by 2021.

This report concludes that all three options examined resulted in traffic impacts that were classified as at least level C ("Good"). This conclusion does not seem even reasonable.

Several other key assumptions used in the Developer's "Traffic Study" contribute to the invalidity of both the modelling and conclusions of this report. The road grade is set to 0% when the grade is obviously very steep in some locations on Rutherford Road, and only slightly less steep in some sections of Lost Lake Road and Tanya Drive. The north end of Rutherford Road has sharp turns and a steep grade that contribute to numerous accidents in rain and snow conditions. The analyses assume that the heavy vehicle component of traffic is only 2%, when it currently is, and will undoubtedly

continue to be, much higher due to all the housing, road and services construction currently occurring in new developments. The traffic report does not state how the future traffic volume estimates are calculated, so we cannot assess if the numbers are accurate or even reasonable. The report also does not specify how the vehicles per day estimates are calculated, using data from only one hour of traffic counts. Watt Consulting apparently used a common software modelling program for this analysis. However, their report does not state the key assumptions, or the quantity and quality of data, that are required to ensure the modeling results, and conclusions based on these results, are valid.

The modelling used in the traffic impact assessment assumes there is no (zero) conflicting pedestrian traffic on local roads. However, common sense and experience show that the denser the development is in an area, the more pedestrians there are. There are already pedestrians impeding traffic flow in the area, due to the narrow roads and lack of sidewalks on Lost Lake Road. School children and their parents, dog walkers, elderly residents, etc. frequently cross both Rutherford Road and Lost Lake Road.

OVERARCHING PUBLIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CONCERNS

FIRE HAZARDS AND RISKS

The Nanaimo Fire Rescue Department has identified and mapped the Wildfire Hazard Zones within the service area using specific criteria, such as topography, water pressure and supply, access and vegetation. Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park and Lost Lake Park have a rating of 'extreme' risk level of an interface fire.

While the Developer's report indicates the provision of water for firefighting will be addressed through the proposed installation of a new water storage facility, it would also appear that inadequate access for firefighting and other emergency services could be a significant risk. With only one road available to access the entire development, in a fire or other natural disaster situation the people and homes in this large development could be cut off from escape and emergency services.

SCHOOLS

The distance from the proposed development to schools in the area is problematic. The minimum distance from homes in the proposed development to elementary schools are 1.7 km (Rutherford Elementary School), 2.1 km (Randerson Ridge Elementary School), 2.8 km (McGirr Elementary School) 3.5 km (Frank J. Ney Elementary School), and 4.0 km (Uplands Park Elementary School). However, Rutherford Elementary School, the closest to this proposed development area, is scheduled to permanently close by July 2018. As the proposed development would be completed after this date, attendance at Rutherford School is not an option. The closest secondary schools are Wellington Secondary School (2.2 km) and Dover Bay Secondary School (2.6 km). It is not clear if any of these schools will have the capacity to accept all the new students from the proposed development.

All these schools, at both the elementary and secondary level, are a significant distance from this proposed development. Most parents would likely consider the distances too great for young children to walk to school. The Nanaimo School District bussing policy is that bussing will only be provided to students who live 4 km or more from their designated school. The obvious conclusion, based on distance and school board policy, is that children from this area will have to walk to and from school, or be transported to and from school each day by vehicle, resulting in an increase in both child pedestrian, and vehicle traffic. Lost Lake Road's lack of sidewalks, limited shoulders, narrowness, sharp turns and heavy traffic that frequently travels too fast, coupled with increases in child pedestrian and vehicle traffic, creates an even more hazardous situation that could result in a tragedy. In addition, there is no public transit that services Tanya Drive or Lost Lake Road that children could use to go to and from school.

TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Increased traffic on Lost Lake Road and pedestrian safety were two of the main issues and concerns raised by citizens who live in the neighbourhoods near the proposed development. The SLHR door-to-door canvassing campaign for our petition provided the opportunity for us to talk to many people who live in the neighbourhoods that would be most affected by the proposed development. Local residents along Lost Lake Road and in surrounding areas typically said they were most concerned about the potential increased volume and speed of traffic, and resulting increased risks to pedestrians, especially children, from further development. The next biggest concern we heard was about the potential impacts on the natural environment and ecosystems in Linley Valley generally, or Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park. The comments provided by people who signed our SLHR petition online generally did not mention concerns about traffic or pedestrian safety, but

were focused on concerns about the impacts of the proposed development on the natural environment and ecosystems in Linley Valley generally, or Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park in particular.

In the Developer's letter to Mr. Bruce Anderson, he indicates that, based on feedback he received at the June 29th "Town Hall" meeting, residents were only concerned about traffic speeds, not volume. This is clearly not correct, based on the door-to-door canvassing that SLHR has conducted.

Public transit is not currently available to the subject properties. Residents in the proposed development would be required to walk 1.8 km, including up or down a steep hill, to the nearest bus stop at the intersection of Rutherford Road and Hammond Bay Road.

The Traffic Report provided by the Developer assumes there is no (zero) conflicting pedestrian traffic. The dangerous conditions for pedestrians that currently exist on Lost Lake Road, due to lack of sidewalks, would only increase as traffic increases from developments. The Developer has proposed minimal improvements to Lost Lake Road, and deemed that sidewalks are unnecessary.

The City has acknowledged that Lost Lake Road has become increasingly dangerous by recently placing a warning sign "Caution Narrow Road Next 1.7 km" just west of Tanya Drive (Figure 5). In addition, excessive speed along the full length of Lost Lake Road historically has been a major concern; more vehicles will only exacerbate this current problem. School children and their parents, dog walkers, elderly residents, frequently walk and cross Rutherford Road and Lost Lake Road.

The "T" road intersection where Tanya Drive meets Lost Lake Road is already notoriously dangerous, even with the current low volume of traffic on Tanya Drive. The poor sight lines and steep grade on Tanya Drive where it meets Lost Lake Road make this intersection very dangerous even under ideal weather conditions. When there is snow on these roads it can be very difficult to stop a vehicle on the steep downhill approach to Lost Lake Road. Vehicles frequently slide out-of-control thru the "Stop" sign on Tanya Drive and onto Lost Lake Road, into oncoming traffic. If the proposed high-density development on Tanya Drive is built, thousands more vehicles will need to use this dangerous intersection every day.



Figure 5: Pedestrian Safety sign installed by the City of Nanaimo on Lost Lake Road, west of Tanya Drive, during the summer of 2017.

ECOLOGICAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS

City Council Approval of this OCP Amendment Application OCP 00083 and subsequent rezoning for the proposed high-density development will result in significant loss of ecological services and benefits for Nanaimo citizens. It is widely acknowledged that healthy natural ecosystems have multiple benefits that will sustain not only valuable wildlife resources, but are essential in combating climate change and for the very health and continuation of our species. These benefits accrue from what is commonly called “Ecosystem Services” (Figure 6).

The Nanaimo OCP recognizes that Urban Forests and their landscapes serve many of these purposes:

- Rainwater attenuation. Pollutants carried in surface water are the primary cause of degradation of our streams and rivers. An intact tree canopy reduces runoff and pollutants by intercepting and storing rainfall, thereby increasing soil infiltration and transpiration back into the atmosphere.
- Air quality improvements. Trees absorb gaseous pollutants such as ozone, nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide; and they filter particulate matter such as dust, ash, pollen and smoke. Urban trees both absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen.
- Energy savings. Trees shade buildings and pavement, reducing the urban heat island effect, thereby decreasing the use of air conditioning and the demand for electricity.
- Public safety and health. Trees along transportation corridors narrow a driver’s field of vision, reducing traffic speeds and increasing pedestrian safety by providing a natural, physical barrier.
- Wildlife habitat. Trees and intact ecosystems provide essential food and nesting habitat for all wildlife from micro-organisms to birds and small to larger mammals. The presence of these species in our communities contributes to our well-being and our connection with nature.
- Economic benefits. Improving the aesthetics of our community has tangible economic benefits. Systems of open space and bike trails give a community a reputation for being a good place to live and visit. Increased recreational and community activity attracts new businesses and stimulates tourism.

Many of these benefits and ecological services in Linley Valley will be lost or greatly diminished if the proposed development is allowed to proceed.

Citizens of Nanaimo, the Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) and the City of Nanaimo were visionary in protecting the 405 acres that currently make up Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park in the heart of Nanaimo. This spectacular ecosystem of ridges, wetlands, meadows, and forest is home to a vast array of land, water and sky inhabitants, and provides a range of ecosystem services for Nanaimo residents and visitors. It also contributes to global action to support environmental sustainability and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

SLHR is opposed to OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 and development of the subject properties due in part to the risks that development poses to the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, including the sensitive ecosystems, threatened species, and ecological services that support our community. The rationale for this statement is provided below under “Threats To Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park”.

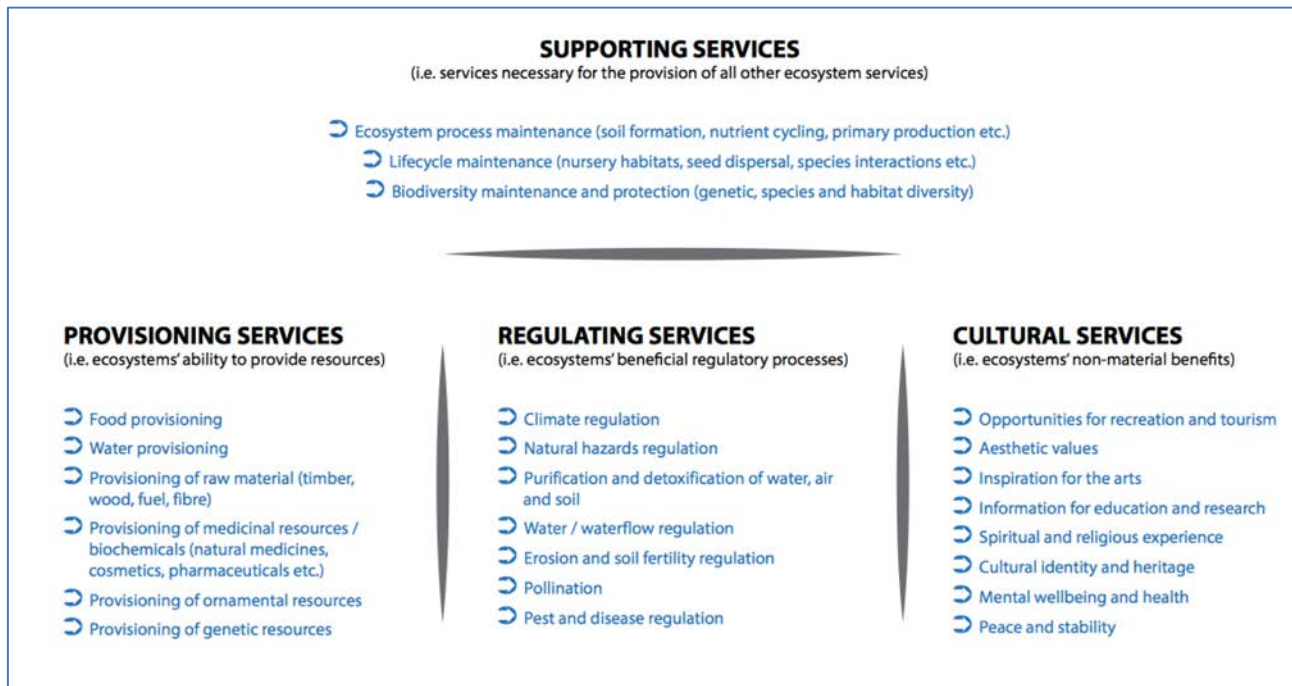


Figure 6: Ecosystem services and related goods from protected areas

Source: Kettunen and ten Brink (2013); adapted from MEA (2003); de Groot et al. (2010); and UK NEA (2011)
<http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p312491/pdf/CHAPTER6.pdf>

The proposed high-density development of the subject properties contradicts Goal 5 of the OCP. The City of Nanaimo, on behalf of the citizens of Nanaimo, has clearly articulated a commitment to the environment, through the OCP (Goal 5) to:

“Protect and enhance our environment, which means looking after Nanaimo’s natural diversity of our terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems in the course of land use and development. It means identifying, protecting and enhancing the ecological health of significant natural features and systems. It also means adapting the way in which we live, work, recreate, and travel within the new reality of climate change, and doing so in a manner that builds in a greater efficiency in how we use energy, transportation, and protect and enhance our natural environment.”

To achieve this Goal, the Policies of this Section aim to:

- Sustain our community by protecting its basic resources of clean air, water and land for future generations;
- Protect environmentally significant and/or sensitive areas representative of Nanaimo’s natural diversity;
- Require environmentally responsible development practices and the integration of development design into the natural features;
- Manage development so as to protect life and property from natural and human-made hazards; and,
- Enhance awareness and promote activities that protect and restore the environment.

THREATS TO LINLEY VALLEY COTTLE LAKE PARK

A major deficiency in OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 is any assessment on the impact that development of these properties will have on the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park and Lost Lake Park. Given its proximity to the Park (see Figure 1; Appendix 1) on both the north ridge above the Park, and along the slopes leading down into the lower watershed which are connected to the main watercourse leading to Cottle Lake, many environmental parameters will be negatively impacted if these properties are developed. Some examples include storm runoff, hydrology, connectivity corridors for wildlife, and disturbance of wildlife by construction noise and activity.

A second concern, over and above the ecological function of Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, is the threat to the recreational and cultural services the existing Park provides. From the main east-west corridor, those enjoying the Park would no longer look up to see the natural open ridges and forested slope (Figure 7). Instead, they would see a Steep Slope development, with its concrete retaining walls, fences and multi-level homes, like the development that is currently occurring nearby on Dewar Road (Figure 8). No longer will the visitors to this Park enjoy the urban wilderness experience that exists today.



Figure 7: "Before" - Current Linley Ridge on 5260 Tanya Drive.

The health of Linley Valley and the parkland within depends on maintaining the integrity of this ecosystem. Residential developments in and around the Valley undoubtedly have, and are having, negative impacts on air and water quality and on the sensitive habitats and their flora and fauna. In considering this OCP amendment, it must be kept in mind that there

are parcels of land around the Valley that have already been approved for development, but are not yet developed. Therefore, their impact has not yet occurred. In particular, 5701 Vanderneuk, a parcel of land just west of 5260 Tanya Drive contains significant ridges and has geography and habitat much like that of the properties in this amendment. Development of the lower and flatter areas of 5701 Vanderneuk is nearing completion. The north part of the parcel is not yet developed but has been approved for approximately 147 units at higher elevation along the rocky bluffs. Rejecting the OCP00083 amendment will help preserve what remains of Linley Valley.



Figure 8: "After" - Current Steep Slope development on Dewar Road, two blocks away from subject properties.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

The entire Linley Valley fits the description of an Environmentally Sensitive Area in the OCP, Section 5.2:

“These areas are natural ecosystems greater than 0.5 ha in size that provide productive fish and wildlife habitat, contain sensitive, rare or depleted ecosystems and landforms, and represent sites of Nanaimo's natural diversity that are in danger of disappearing. These areas include wetlands, riparian areas, rocky outcrops (terrestrial herbaceous sites), Arbutus and Garry Oak woodlands and older, primarily second growth, forests.”

And further commits:

“To protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas. Avoid or mitigate disturbance of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) from human activities and maintain their ecological function.”

Nanaimo's “Community Sustainability Action Plan” Goal 5 commits to:

“Protect and Enhance Our Environment: By looking after and enhancing Nanaimo's natural diversity; found throughout the City in our Douglas-Fir forests, Garry Oak meadows, watercourses and wetlands; we ensure we are more resilient and better prepared for the coming changes that will affect our landscape with a warming climate.”

Further, as noted previously, a significant portion of the properties in this application is Red-listed by the Province of B.C. as a rare Douglas-Fir/Dull Oregon Grape forest community (CDD on-line database; Rare Element Record 55759) (Figure 4; Appendix 2). Additionally, while not officially designated by the Province for the subject properties, the Ursus Environmental report identified the presence of two additional Provincially Red-listed ecosystem communities (FDPI- Arbutus and Grand Fir-Foamflower) occurring on the 5260 Tanya Drive property. Therefore, as defined by the City's own definition of a “Sensitive Ecosystem” and the Province of B.C.'s definition, Linley Valley, including the subject properties in this OCP Amendment Application OCP00083, fits the description of an Environmentally Sensitive Area.

COASTAL DOUGLAS-FIR AND ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

A recent City of Nanaimo Press Release¹ confirms that on June 19, 2017, Nanaimo City Council agreed to join the Coastal Douglas-Fir and Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership (CDFCP). This is a multi-agency partnership created to allow for a collaborative approach among stakeholders with an interest in the conservation of Coastal Douglas-Fir (CDF) ecosystems.

The smallest and rarest of the 16 such eco-zones in B.C., the CDF covers only 0.3% of the Province. Despite its small size, it contains the highest diversity of plant species in the Province and includes a number of species-at-risk or in need of protection. Given the proximity to urban areas, CDF is the least protected eco-zone in B.C. and has the lowest number of protected areas. The majority of the City of Nanaimo is included within the CDF eco-zone. Linley Valley and the subject properties are currently a relatively undisturbed part of this CDF eco-zone.

Joining the CDFCP is supported by the “Environmental Responsibility Values” in Nanaimo's 2016-2019 Strategic Plan. Environmental responsibility is defined to include “protecting and enhancing Nanaimo's natural environment by looking after the community's biological diversity in the course of land use development.”

¹<http://www.nanaimo.ca/NewsReleases/NR170627CityJoinsCoastalDouglasFirConservationPartnership.html>

PUBLIC HEALTH BENEFITS LOST

City Council approval of this OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 and subsequent rezoning for the proposed high-density development will result in significant loss of public health benefits. Extensive scientific study has clearly demonstrated the positive impacts of parks and urban forests on physical and mental health. (e.g. Buckley RC, Brough P. 2017). A recent article in the Vancouver Sun newspaper summarized the evidence for the physical and mental health benefits:

<http://vancouversun.com/opinion/op-ed/why-parks-should-be-a-policy-priority>

The author (Roz Yazdanmehr) concluded that “The profound health benefits offered by parks result in a healthier population and lead to diminished health-care costs.” One example cited was a study of 24,000 adult residents in San Jose, California who generate medical cost savings of US\$28.3 million per year by engaging in regular physical activity using the local parks and trails. Linley Valley is extensively used by Nanaimo residents for outdoor recreation and enjoyment, including hiking, walking, jogging, mountain biking, nature appreciation and photography, and walking dogs. The 72 acres included in the subject properties are currently considered and used by many citizens as a northern extension of the official Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park. This benefit would be lost if City Council approves OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 and allows rezoning for the proposed high-density development.

SNUNEYMUXW FIRST NATION

The City has committed to explore partnership opportunities with Snuneymuxw First Nation in co-managing culturally significant natural landscapes (Garry Oak meadow areas) within the City’s parkland areas. City staff informed us that this OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 has been submitted to external agencies, including the Snuneymuxw First Nation. However, we do not know if the Snuneymuxw First Nation and City have recognized any Garry Oak trees and meadows on the subject properties or other locations in the Linley Valley. Adequate environmental surveys should be done to identify and map these sensitive areas prior to approving any OCP Amendment Application or proposed development in Linley Valley.

<https://www.crd.bc.ca/education/our-environment/ecosystems/terrestrial/garry-oak-meadows>

<http://www.goert.ca/about/index.php>

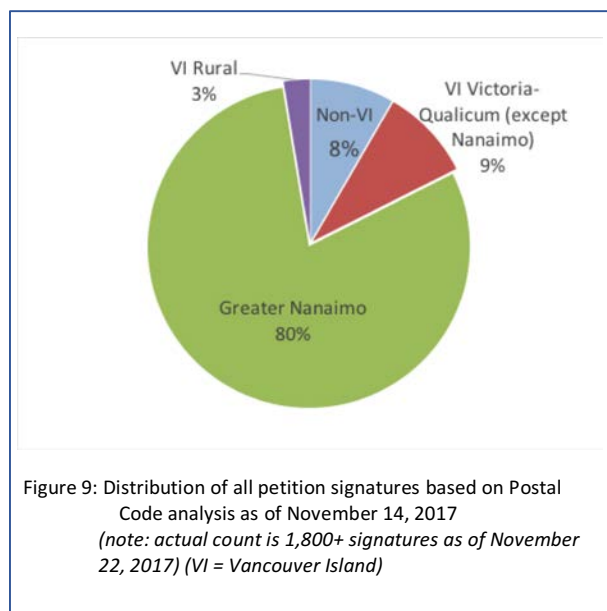
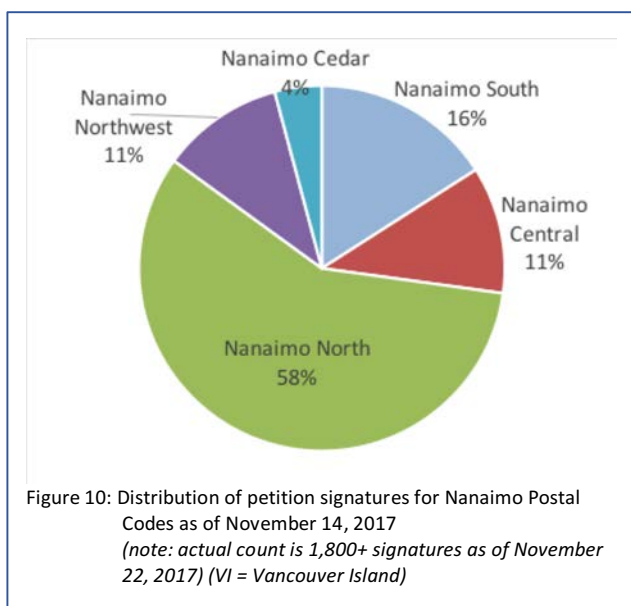
SAVE LINLEY VALLEY'S HIDDEN RIDGE CAMPAIGN

Since January 2017, the SLHR campaign has worked to inform and involve the public in Nanaimo and surrounding communities about this proposed development. We have conducted a public information and awareness campaign through a website, Facebook and email blog, and provided free public events in Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park. We have also collected more than 1,800 signatures on our petition (Appendix 3) that requests City Council to reject this OCP00083 Amendment Application. We collected petition signatures by talking to people at local public events (e.g. Farmer's Markets) and through door-to-door canvassing, beginning in October, of all the Lost Lake area, plus several other Nanaimo neighbourhoods such as Rutherford, Harewood and Rock City, as well as Vancouver Island University. We currently have 20 volunteers canvassing on behalf of SLHR. Our on-line petition is accessed through our Facebook page and website.

RESULTS OF OUR PETITION

The 1,800+ signatures on our petition confirm that neighbourhood residents, and many people in the broader Nanaimo City and surrounding areas, do not support this OCP Amendment Application OCP00083, and do not support the Developer's proposed concept plan for development of the subject properties on Tanya Drive. Those who have signed the petition are asking the City of Nanaimo to work with the citizens of Nanaimo to develop a comprehensive plan for Linley Valley and the surrounding neighbourhoods, and add the 72 acre Hidden Ridge land to the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park.

Everyone who signed our petition, either on paper or online, was asked to provide their name, signature, street address, postal code and comments. The first petition signatures were obtained in February 2017 and we have continued to obtain more since then. The signatures we obtained up to 14 November 2017 were tabulated by geographical area using the postal code information. The results show that 80% of the people who signed the petition live in a Nanaimo postal code



area (Figure 9). Of the Nanaimo residents who have signed the petition, 58% live in the "V9T" postal code (North Nanaimo) area (Figure 10). These are citizens in neighbourhood areas that would be most directly affected by the proposed OCP00083 Amendment and development. The remaining signatures (20%) were from people living outside Nanaimo, both on Vancouver Island and off Island, including Greater Vancouver, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

These results indicate that support for our “Save Linley’s Hidden Ridge” campaign is widespread throughout Nanaimo and surrounding communities. This support clearly is not a “Not In My Backyard “ (NIMBY) response from only the residents who live closest to the proposed development.

The door-to-door canvassing in the Lost Lake Neighbourhood, however, provides a compelling picture of the degree to which Lost Lake residents oppose this proposed OCP Amendment Application and development. Canvassers were asked to keep a record for each house on neighbourhood maps (example provided in [Appendix 4](#)) where they were able to talk directly to the homeowner, regardless of whether the resident signed the petition or not. An **overwhelming portion (80%) of the people** that the canvassers talked to signed the petition.

The comments provided by people who signed our SLHR petition indicate that the main concerns citizens have are the potential impacts on traffic, and on the natural environment and ecosystems in Linley Valley. Our extensive door-to-door canvassing campaign to inform people and ask them to sign our petition provided the opportunity for us to talk to many people who live in the neighbourhoods that would be most affected by the Developer’s OCP Amendment Application and proposed development on Tanya Drive. Local residents along Lost Lake Road and in surrounding areas typically said they were most concerned about the potential increased volume and speed of traffic, and resulting increased traffic noise and risks to pedestrians, especially children. The next biggest concern we heard was about the potential impacts on the natural environment and ecosystems in Linley Valley generally, or Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park in particular. The comments provided by people who signed our SLHR petition online generally did not mention concerns about traffic or pedestrian safety, but focused on concerns about the impacts of the proposed development on the natural environment and ecosystems in Linley Valley.

Additional details regarding our petition, including the full text, an example of the maps used for the door-to-door canvassing areas, are provided (Appendix 4). Examples of the comments we received from people who signed our online petition are also provided (Appendix 5). All the signatures received on paper petitions up to 14 November 2017 have been scanned into digital format. A digital copy of all petition signatures, obtained on paper or online, will be submitted to the City Legislative Services office. The signatures obtained on paper petitions are also available for inspection.

SUPPORT FROM MLA AND NALT

The MLA for Nanaimo (Leonard Krog) and the Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) have written letters to City Council in support of keeping the subject properties within the Urban Reserve designation (Appendix 6). One quote from Mr. Krog’s letter is “I wish to offer my support for their [SLHR] campaign to not allow any development of this property to proceed. And if that is not possible, then to consider that the addition of 72 acres to the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park would be a legacy of unparalleled value for the city and its’ future citizens.” One quote from the NALT letter is “... the NALT Board is writing to express its strong support for keeping the 72 acres of the valley, known as the Hidden Ridges (5260,5280 and 5300 Tanya Drive), within the Urban Land Reserve.

THE FUTURE OF LINLEY VALLEY

BENEFITS OF NOT DEVELOPING THE REMAINING URBAN RESERVE LANDS IN LINLEY VALLEY

Protecting the remaining land in the Urban Reserve in Linley Valley would satisfy many of the stated Goals and Policies of the OCP. We believe that the best outcome would be for the City of Nanaimo to acquire the subject properties and expand the protected parkland in Linley Valley. Such an initiative would also meet many of the visions, values and priorities outlined in City of Nanaimo Strategic Plan Update 2016 – 2019, including the “Property Acquisition” initiative and priority. We strongly support and encourage City Council to designate what's left of Linley Valley, not as Neighbourhood, but as Resource Protection or Parks and Open Space, and as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. An intact Linley Valley is a “living utility”, providing valuable direct and indirect economic and public health physical and mental benefits if preserved.

Dr. Alan Mehlenbacher, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, University of Victoria provided the following comments and advice:

1. Developer and City revenue: The City of Nanaimo should consider increasing population density by going up rather than out. We are at a point in history where we need to preserve as much of the small amount of remaining natural area as possible. The Developer can make money and the City can increase revenue by following the example of many other cities (e.g. the City of Victoria) -- increasing density in currently developed areas instead of expanding into natural areas. This usually has the added benefit of reducing demands on transportation [and services] infrastructure.
2. Estimated value of preserving the Urban Reserve: The City of Nanaimo recently (2014) paid (valued) \$5.7 million to preserve 195.9 acres (79.3 ha) of natural area in Linley Valley as a park. This is about \$29,000/acre or \$72,000/ha. The natural area being considered for development is 72 acres (29.1 ha) that, based on the previous acquisition would be valued at about \$2.1 million by the City of Nanaimo as natural area. Indeed, the City of Nanaimo offered to pay \$2 million for this area in 2014.
3. Ongoing value: There are ongoing benefits to preserving the area. The benefits accrue to citizens of Nanaimo directly (recreation value, mental health value) and indirectly (ecosystem services). There also may be cultural/spiritual value to the local First Nations that is completely non-quantifiable. If there is cultural/spiritual value, the land is priceless. Generally, the entire concept of assigning a dollar value is “loathsome” to Indigenous peoples (Gregory, 2009).
4. Quantifying recreation value would require a survey of the current and potential park users. Quantifying mental health value is a relatively new concept, and we have no data for this although the general arguments for such values is strong (Buckley, 2017). Since the 1970s (Westman, 1977), there have been many studies quantifying the value of ecosystem services throughout the world. Costanza (2014) has provided a breakdown of ecosystem service value by land type. The relevant value in 2011 for temperate forest is \$3,137/ha/yr, which is about \$92,000 for the 29.1 ha under consideration.

The BC property Assessments website accessed on November 19, 2017 indicates that the assessed value of the subject properties on July 1, 2017 was \$960,000.00 for 5300 Tanya Drive, \$1,333,000.00 for 5280 Tanya Drive, and \$1,942,000.00 for 5260 Tanya Drive. The sales history indicates that 5300 Tanya Drive was sold for \$1,000,000.00 in July 2016, and 5260 Tanya Drive was sold for \$2,000,000.00 in September 2014.

City Council had great foresight in 2014 and voted almost unanimously to purchase several parcels of land in Linley Valley to add to the Park. However, they were not successful in acquiring one of these parcels, 5260 Tanya Drive, from the new owner (the applicant of this current OCP Amendment Application OCP00083). Developing 5260 Tanya Drive would completely contradict the previous goal of Nanaimo citizens and its Council. And it would also jeopardize the City's investment in the existing parkland in the Valley.

IMPLICATIONS OF APPROVING OCP AMENDMENT APPLICATION OCP00083

There are many implications if the OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 is supported by the Community Planning and Development Committee, and approved by City Council. Some of the main implications are summarized below.

Policy Implication: The OCP Amendment Application OCP00083 is not consistent with many of the Goals and Policies of Nanaimo's Official Community Plan. Approval of this OCP Amendment Application would directly contravene several major OCP (2015) policies. For example, the OCP (Section 2.6 Policy 5) states that

“An Area Plan must be adopted before urban development is permitted, including further subdivision and servicing of lands, within an Urban Reserve area.”

The subject properties are located in the Long Lake Planning Area and Urban Reserve. No Area Plans currently exist for either of these areas. Approval of OCP00083 is also inconsistent with overall OCP Goals (e.g. Goal 5: “Protect and Enhance Our Environment”). In addition, the Developer has not provided relevant documents (e.g. a Tree Management Plan), which are required by the OCP Amendment Application process. However, protecting the remaining land in the Urban Reserve in Linley Valley would satisfy many of the stated Goals and Policies of the OCP.

Budget Implication: The subject properties are located in an Urban Reserve area (AR2 Zoning) that does not currently have any City services. It will be difficult and costly to provide City services if Council approves a subsequent application for rezoning of the subject properties for the proposed high-density development. These properties include large areas with very steep slopes and rocky ridges, and low-lying wetlands and creeks. The high elevation of much of this land is above the level to which the existing city water system can supply adequate water pressure. The Developer's plans posted on the City's “What's Building” website do not provide sufficient or adequate information to allow assessment of the short-term and long-term costs to the City of providing and maintaining the proposed development, and for necessary upgrades to existing infrastructure such as water systems and access roads. These additional costs are not included in City current budgets or in the longer-term fiscal plans.

Legal Implication: Similar OCP Amendment Applications for land in this Urban Reserve area (OCP Amendment application 034 in 2007) have previously been rejected by the former Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee (PNAC) and by City Council. Council approval of this application OCP00083 would be inconsistent and could expose the City to legal challenges.

Engagement Implication: The Developer has not met the OCP Amendment Application requirements for conducting a public consultation meeting. The only public meeting held by the Developer to date was not appropriately advertised, and was not sanctioned or attended by any City staff, as required by OCP policy. The City also has not yet engaged in consultations with citizens regarding this OCP Amendment Application..

Strategic Priorities Implication: Further development of the Urban Reserve lands in the Linley Valley is not one of the key projects identified by City Council in the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan.

Political Implication: There is strong support from neighbourhood residents and the broader public for rejecting this OCP Amendment Application. For example, more than 1,800 citizens from Nanaimo and adjacent areas have signed our petition requesting Council reject OCP Amendment Application OCP00083. The MLA for North Nanaimo (Leonard Krog) and the Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) have also written to Council in support of keeping the subject properties within the Urban Reserve.

Neighbourhood Implication: The potential negative impacts on safety and liveability are major concerns for residents who live in the neighbourhoods that would be most affected by approval of the OCP Amendment and proposed development. We talked to hundreds of residents during our SLHR door-to-door canvassing campaign. Local residents in the Lost Lake Road neighbourhood and adjacent areas said they were most concerned about the potential increased volume and speed of traffic, and resulting increased risks to pedestrians, especially children. The next biggest concern we heard was about the potential negative impacts of the proposed development on the natural environment and ecosystems in Linley Valley and Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, that would result in decreased enjoyment and liveability of the neighbourhood.

Ecological Implication: City Council Approval of this OCP Amendment Application OCP 00083 and subsequent rezoning for the proposed high-density development will result in significant loss of ecological services and benefits for Nanaimo citizens. The OCP (2015) recognizes that Urban Forests and their landscapes serve many of purposes, including rainwater attenuation, air quality improvements, energy savings, public safety and health benefits, wildlife habitat, and economic benefits. Many of these benefits and ecological services will be lost or greatly diminished if the proposed development is allowed to proceed. The entire Linley Valley, including the subject properties, also fits the OCP (Section 5.2) description of an Environmentally Sensitive Area: “Areas that provide productive fish or wildlife habitat; contain sensitive, rare or depleted ecosystems and landforms; and represent sites of Nanaimo’s natural diversity that are in danger of disappearing”. This Section of the OCP commits: “To protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas. Avoid or mitigate disturbance of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) from human activities and maintain their ecological function.” The proposed development of the subject properties also poses significant risks to the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park, including the sensitive ecosystems, threatened species, and ecological services that support our community.

Future of Linley Valley Implication: We believe that the best outcome would be for the City of Nanaimo to acquire the subject properties and add this land to the protected parkland in Linley Valley. Protecting the remaining land in the Urban Reserve in Linley Valley would satisfy many of the OCP (2015) Goals and Policies. This would also meet many of the visions, values and priorities in the City of Nanaimo Strategic Plan Update 2016 – 2019, including the “Property Acquisition” initiative and priority. We strongly support and encourage City Council to designate what's left of Linley Valley, not as Neighbourhood, but as Resource Protection or Parks and Open Space, and as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. An intact Linley Valley is a “living utility”, providing valuable direct and indirect economic and public health physical and mental benefits if preserved.

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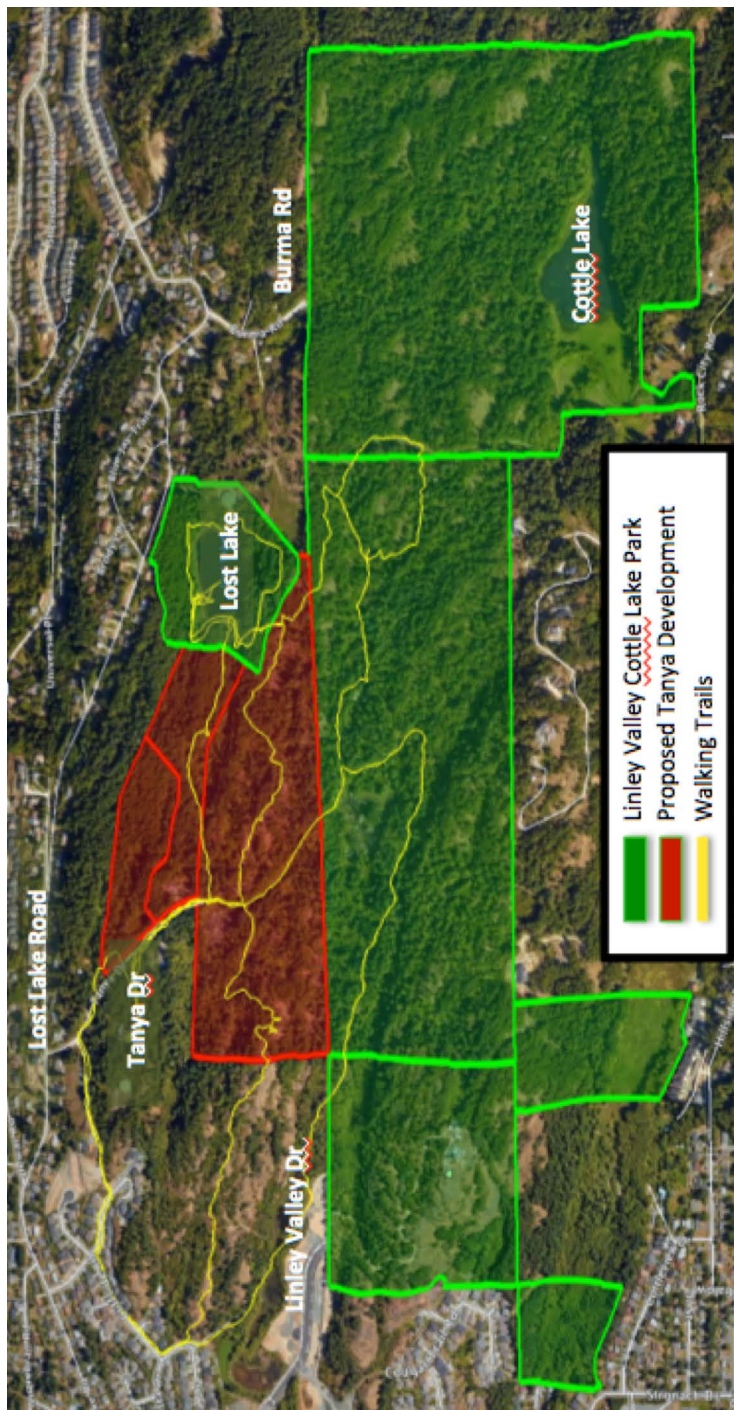
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: MAP OF OCP AMENDMENT PROPERTIES AND LINLEY VALLEY COTTLE LAKE PARK

Google Earth view of OCP00083 Amendment Properties (red) and Linley Valley Cattle Lake Park (green).



APPENDIX 3: PETITION

HARDCOPY PETITION

SAVE LINLEY'S HIDDEN RIDGE PETITION

Regarding the properties located at 5260, 5280 and 5300 Tanya Drive, Nanaimo, B.C., we, the undersigned, call on the Nanaimo City and Council to:

1. Reject the developer's applications to a) amend the Official Community Plan; b) remove the land from the Urban Reserve; and, c) have it rezoned for a steep slope subdivision.
2. Work with the citizens of Nanaimo to develop a comprehensive plan for Linley Valley and the surrounding neighbourhoods.
3. Add the 72 Acre Hidden Ridge land to the existing Linley Valley-Cottle Lake Park.

NAME	ADDRESS	Email (if want to be on mailing list)
Name:	Street:	
Signature	City:	Postal Code:
Name:	Street:	
Signature	City:	Postal Code:
Name:	Street:	
Signature	City:	Postal Code:

Note the signatures section of this example petition has been abbreviated to fit this page

SAVE LINLEY VALLEY'S HIDDEN RIDGE

Apr 25 2017  Save Linley's Hidden Ridge (/author.php?petid-84990&ref-petition)

674 Signatures (/petitions/save-the-linley-valleys-hidden-ridge/signatures.html)

Like 585

Share



#Environment (/petition-campaigns/Environment/)

Target: Nanaimo City Council

Region: Canada (/petition-campaigns/Canada/)

A Victoria developer has applied to amend Nanaimo's Official Community Plan, and remove 72 acres from the Urban Reserve along the north ridge of Linley Valley and border of the Linley Valley-Cottle Lake Park. The concept plan (1) includes 469 residential units on Tanya Drive (off Lost Lake Road). The properties to be rezoned include the forests, ridges and wetlands located at 5260, 5280 and 5300 Tanya Drive, Nanaimo, B.C.

If allowed to proceed, this development will:

- destroy an ecological gem and irreparably damage the ecosystem of the entire Linley Valley, which is home to many at-risk species
- devastate sensitive wetlands and downstream water systems, which are critical habitat for migrating birds, beavers and many other plants and animals
- severely diminish the cultural and recreational value of the forest that Nanaimo has assembled to create the Linley Valley-Cottle Lake Park
- massively increase the daily traffic on Lost Lake Road and add further pressure in the event of heavy snowfall, an earthquake or other natural disaster
- dangerously increase the fire risk in this urban/forest interface which is outside the six-minute fire response area
- require expensive and extensive utility installation and service upgrades

The City of Nanaimo has been visionary in protecting the 405 acres that currently make up Linley

Sign the petition

First name

Last name

Email

State, county or province

City or town

Street address

Zip code or post code


Comment to target

☒ Display my name publicly [?]

Verify (check then click Sign) [?]

I'm not a robot

reCAPTCHA
Privacy - Terms

 GoPetition respects your privacy
(/pushers/content/petition-privacy/)

Sign this petition

<https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/save-the-linley-valleys-hidden-ridge.html>



Page 1 of 3

Valley-Cottle Lake Park. With the addition of the 72 acre Hidden Ridge land, the park would become Nanaimo's version of Stanley Park. If this proposal is approved, the potential to add the Hidden Ridge to the park will disappear forever.

(1) As posted on the City of Nanaimo "What's Building Website" June 26, 2017. The developer's concept plan may change; please check the website for the most up-to-date details.

Regarding the properties located at 5260, 5280 and 5300 Tanya Drive, Nanaimo, B.C., we, the undersigned, call on the Nanaimo City and Council to:

1. **Reject** the developer's applications to a) amend the Official Community Plan; b) remove the land from the Urban Reserve; and, c) have it rezoned for a steep slope subdivision;
2. **Work** with the citizens of Nanaimo to develop a comprehensive plan for Linley Valley and the surrounding neighbourhoods;
3. **Add** the 72 Acre Hidden Ridge land to the existing Linley Valley-Cottle Lake Park.

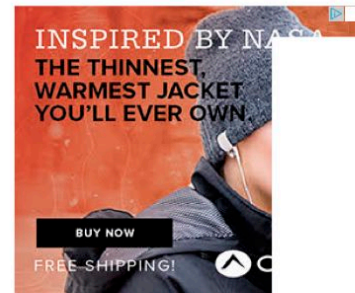
 Sign Petition  Signatures (/petitions/save-the-linley-valleys-hidden-ridge/signatures.html)

 Comments  Share  Info

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download.fromdoctopdf.com

Petition tags: linley valley (/tag/linley%20valley), nanaimo (/tag/nanaimo), hidden ridge (/tag/hidden%20ridge), vancouver island (/tag/vancouver%20island)



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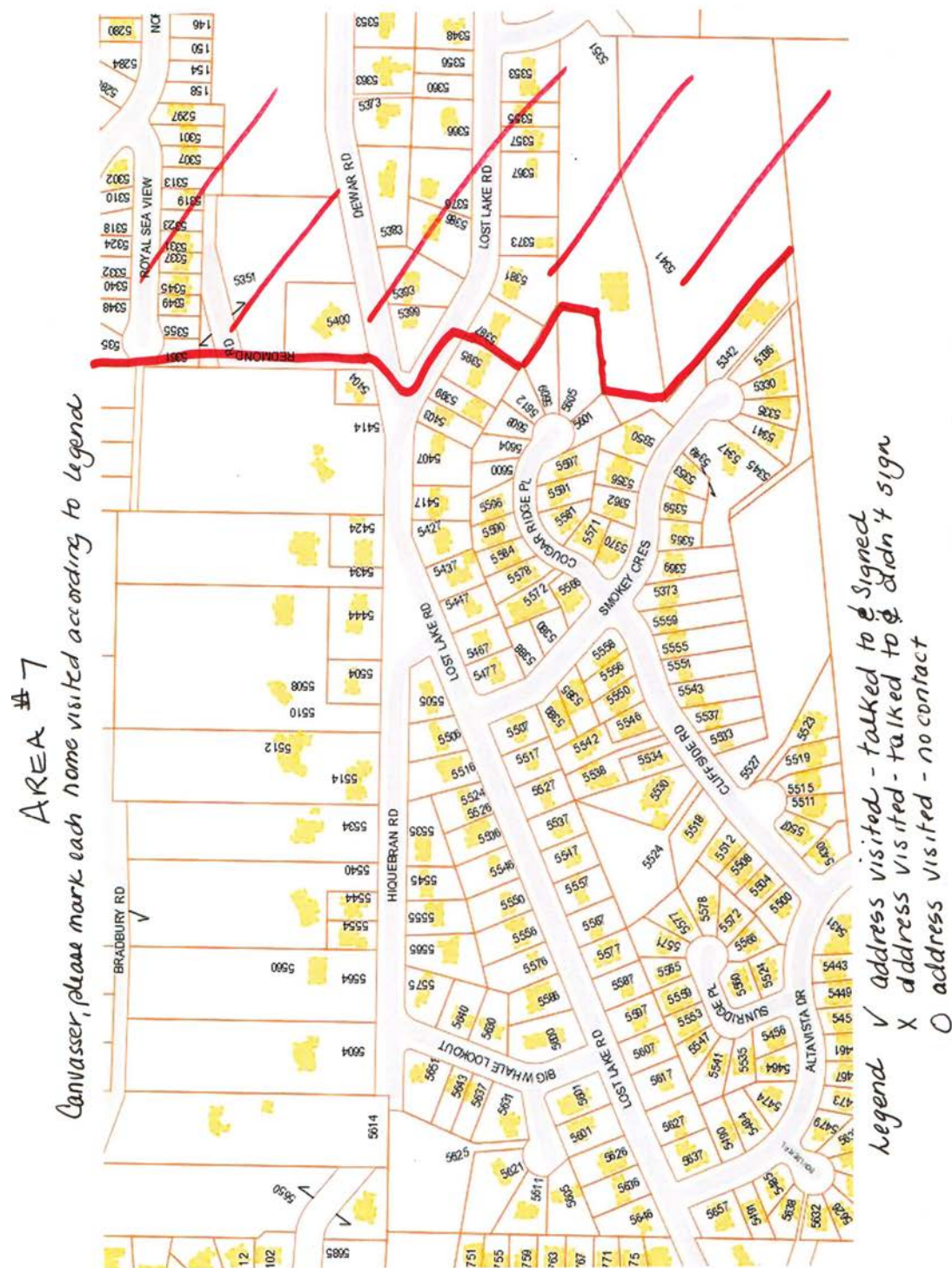
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APPENDIX 4: CANVASSER'S MAP (EXAMPLE)



APPENDIX 5: COMMENTS FROM PEOPLE WHO SIGNED THE PETITION ONLINE

The following quotes are some of the comments people provided when they signed our SLHR petition online:

- “This is a seminal moment for Nanaimo to protect one of the key green spaces that makes Nanaimo so special to both locals and to visitors to the Harbour City.”
- “This is a city treasure that can add huge value to the quality of life in Nanaimo. It can be preserved and enhanced for the north end just as Westwood Lake has been used in the south end.”
- “Linley Valley is the last natural area in city limits that offers connected habitat and unspoiled nature.”
- “We must preserve the Maximum amount of natural forest land in this region. I, (...Name Redacted..., served on the City Commission in the 1990"s that worked to protect these lands. Leave it alone.”
- “We need to conserve our natural biodiversity on the island more than we need more subdivisions or fancy condos for the rich.”
- “it is places like this that make Nanaimo a unique and appealing city to live in.”
- “We still have a valuable contiguous green space along the Linley Valley Ridge that we must preserve for wildlife and future generations who will live in this city.”
- “Enough destruction of wetlands and nature areas. Stop the urban sprawl and build up the downtown area.”
- “As Nanaimo's population grows it will be increasingly important to protect intact ecosystems for the ecological services they provide, such as water and air filtration.”
- “natural wetlands cannot be replaced by man-made ponds and still support the diverse ecology of this area. A steep slope residential area would destroy this unique area forever and deny many people of the chance to experience the natural beauty available here so close to the city.”
- “The proposed plan will significantly increase traffic in this area, which does not have the infrastructure to support it.”
- “In the interests of safety, and preservation of Nanaimo's unique and beautiful ecosystem, please stop the re-zoning of Hidden Ridge”
- “The new proposal on Tanya will further diminish the wetlands and traffic will be even worse on Lost Lake. It is dangerous to walk on Lost Lake with no sidewalks.”
- “there will be too much traffic on Lost Lake Rd and Rutherford Rd if a proposal as large as this were to be allowed.”
- “We should seriously considering to densify the core of the city as opposed to spreading ourselves out further outwards costing us a fortune in infrastructure expense-water, sewer and roads.”
- “Encourage this developer to redevelop existing communities, with an eye to creating mixed-use, mixed-economic housing.”
- “Nanaimo has the opportunity to be a leader in responsible development. Make this into the "Stanley Park" of the Central Island!”
- “Nanaimo City Council need to honor the commitment to it's citizens and protect this beautiful park for future generations and for the well being of the species in the park.”
- “This is one amendment of the Official Community Plan that is not in keeping with community values.”

- “I grew up near Linley Valley. I had a great childhood exploring in it. Don't take that away from today or tomorrow's kids.”
- “Please save The Linley Valley for the future generations of wildlife and people!”
- “This park is one of the best things about Nanaimo.”
- “I live in the area and it is so sad to see what already has been destroyed.”
- “Please consider adding this section to the existing Linley-Cottle Creek Park. We are so fortunate to have this amazing setting where people can connect with nature.”
- “Nanaimo council should be supporting sustainable housing developments, not ones that harm the environment”
- “The long-term value of keeping this land intact far outweighs any momentary financial gains for a few individuals. Please use your power to make the best ecological decision.”
- “1. Existing road infrastructure is already overburdened. 2. Park is highest and best use for this property.”
- “the arterial routes in and out of the area are over congested as is and cannot support any additional traffic.”
- “I AM SIGNING BECAUSE WE DO NOT NEED 200+MORE CARS COMING ONTO LOST LAKE ROAD. AND TO SAVE THE FOREST.”
- “The traffic right now is awful, I shudder to see what it will be like if 200 more homes (2cars each?) will do to my street.”
- “Every time we come to Nanaimo to visit we walk in the Linley park area. It is a beautiful peaceful slice of heaven that is amazing to wander through. Such a gift! Don't develop !”
- “Please, please don't destroy this last vestige of nature in North Nanaimo in the name of greed.”
- “I am a birder and nature lover and I walk the trails of Cottle Lake / Linley Valley at all times of the year. This is an extremely important urban green space that supports many different species and would be a significant loss to the people of Nanaimo.”
- “Our schools cannot accommodate more families!”
- “If there is a need for further residential development in Nanaimo, priority should be given to downtown locations such as the ACME food lot. In the long term, Nanaimo will benefit much from the re-development of the downtown.”

NANAIMO & AREA LAND TRUST



#8 – 140 Wallace Street, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5B1
Phone/Fax 250-714-1990 Email: admin@nalt.bc.ca
Website: www.nalt.bc.ca

September 28th, 2017

To: Mayor and Council, City of Nanaimo

Re: Hidden Ridges, Linley Valley

Dear Mayor and Council,

The Nanaimo & Area Land Trust (NALT) and the City of Nanaimo have worked together to protect the natural values and services in the Linley Valley. Initially with the purchase of lands that now constitute the Cottle Lake Park and subsequent purchases to add to the preservation of the valley, successive incarnations of NALT Boards and City Councils have recognized the benefits to the citizens of Nanaimo offered by preservation and stewardship of Linley Valley.

Today, the NALT Board is writing to express its strong support for keeping the 72 acres of the valley, known as the Hidden Ridges (5260, 5280 and 5300 Tanya Drive), within the Urban Land Reserve. The rocky outcrops and wetlands contained within the 72 acres represent crucial habitat within the valley. This land also provides connectivity between larger wetland and forested areas with upslope features of the valley. Plant, avian, reptilian and mammal populations, some of them species of concern and blue listed species, rely on these connected natural features to survive. As well, these natural features provide an opportunity for groundwater recharge and storm water surge abatement, services that would require engineered installations and continual upkeep. Another crucial role of this land is offering a refuge for people to enjoy hiking, wildlife viewing and quiet reflection in a natural area, easily accessed by foot, bicycle or transit. The Linley Valley is a jewel. Nanaimo is rightfully proud of the foresight to protect it and preserve it for natural and human values.

NALT would like to see a comprehensive inventory of the area, the habitat and populations dependent on the habitat, the eco-asset services provided by the lands in a natural state and the human use and enjoyment of the lands in a natural state. Only when we have full accounting of all the values sustained by the lands can we make sound decisions. The Urban Land Reserve offers us all the opportunity to take the time to ensure we make the right decisions.

NALT is willing to assist in this accounting of values and securement of the natural values of these lands.

Sincerely,

Nina Evans-Locke
NALT Board Co-Chair

Dean Gaudry
NALT Board Co-Chair

August 22 2017

Mayor Bill McKay
And City Council
City of Nanaimo
455 Wallace Street
Nanaimo, BC V9R 5J6

RE: Linley Valley Hidden Ridges land

Dear Mayor and Council,

I met recently with representatives and members of the "Save Linley's Hidden Ridge Citizens Group Steering Committee" who provided me with information about the proposal to remove 72 acres along the north ridge of Linley Valley from the urban land reserve which I understand presently limits development of the property to several larger acreages.

City hall records will disclose that I supported saving the Linley Valley West back in 2011, and past councils have shown incredible foresight in ensuring the preservation of portions of Linley Valley, which lies in the heart of one of our communities' fastest growing areas.

I wish to offer my support for their campaign to not allow to any development of this property to proceed. And if that is not possible, then to consider that the addition of 72 acres to the existing Linley Valley Cottle Lake Park would be a legacy of unparalleled value for the city and its' future citizens.

There is an old joke about the value of land, and they are not making any more of it. There never were truer words more appropriately applied in this situation of this significant development in the north part of the city where there is so little space available for wildlife and recreation in the woods. I certainly encourage you to listen to the citizens, particularly in the north end who are making a great case for preservation of these properties.

Yours very truly,

Leonard Eugene Krog, MLA
Nanaimo

LK/prc

CC: Susan Juby