



**District of
North Saanich**

STAFF REPORT

To: Rob Buchan
Chief Administrative Officer

Date: June 20, 2016

From: Anne Berry
Director of Planning and Community Services

File:

Re: **Vision Sandown – Community Input Report**

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council:

1. Receive the report entitled Vision Sandown: What We Heard, Community Input on the Development of Sandown, prepared by CRFAIR; AND
2. Refer the Vision Sandown report to the Community Planning Commission and the Community Stewardship Commission for review and advisory comments; AND
3. Direct staff to review the Vision Sandown report and bring back a staff report outlining various options for consideration.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS:

This matter relates to the following Council strategic priorities:

Protect and Enhance Rural, Agricultural, Heritage, Marine and Environmental Resources

Ensure Strong Leadership, Fiscal Responsibility and Transparent Government

Council's Strategic Plan supports the District's commitment to protect its rural, agricultural and heritage roots and lifestyle, and calls for progressive leadership, service excellence, and outstanding stewardship of public assets.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

The Vision Sandown project was undertaken as a result of the rezoning of the former 95 acre Sandown Raceway on Glamorgan Road. The rezoning facilitates a future subdivision to allow a 12 acre commercial site on the western portion of the lands while retaining the remaining 83 acres for agricultural purposes. The developer is currently working to complete the requirements of the Phased Development Agreement which was entered into to better enable the process, and which will result in the transferring of the 83 acre portion of the site to District control.

The District retained the consulting services of the Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable (CRFAIR) to conduct an assessment of the community's vision and priorities for the 83 acre portion of the site that is to remain as agricultural land.

This engagement process was the next stage of the decision making process regarding the future uses of the Sandown site. This stage involved the identification of a range of options for the future management, ownership and operation of the 83 acres (33.6 ha) of agricultural land. It was the

intention that these options would be identified and discussed with the community in order for Council to consider all aspects prior to deciding how the property will be used.

The Vision Sandown engagement process was robust and comprehensive. It began in July 2015 and was completed in February 2016. In total, over 500 community members participated in the engagement process over the six month time frame. Methods of engagement included a survey, Vision Sandown information tables at various different peninsula events, individual and community meetings, collaboration with the University of Victoria, site walking tours, and a Community Ideas Fair.



Figure 1 – Sandown Site

DISCUSSION:

CRFAIR has submitted the Vision Sandown: What We Heard, Community Input on the Development of Sandown Report for Council's consideration of the results of the engagement process initiated to obtain public input on future community agricultural uses at the Sandown site.

The Report includes a developed community vision and outlines the key community values and priority activity areas identified by the participants. The Report concludes with a series of next steps for the District to consider.

Findings: Vision and Values

The vision that resulted from the engagement process is identified as:

The vision for Sandown is a model of sustainable food production that respects and works with natural ecosystems, that integrates a diversity of production styles both commercial and non-commercial, and that integrates recreational and educational opportunities for the public. It is a

model that employs agriculture and food based activities to realize community benefits including teaching and learning, food literacy, environmental awareness, supporting and training farmers, increasing community food access, food security and food self-reliance, bringing community together, and facilitating healthy living.

The key values that resulted from the engagement process are identified as:

- 1. Realize the community food and agriculture potential of the land*
- 2. Restore, protect and respect the natural ecology and wildlife*
- 3. Teaching and learning: work and learn together*
- 4. Community gathering place: Public access and community involvement*
- 5. Recognize and celebrate the site's heritage*
- 6. No one thing does one thing: integrated land uses*
- 7. Financial sustainability: revenue generating and self-sustaining activities*

Findings: Priority Areas

Four key priority activity areas were identified, with sub-considerations:

- 1. Food Production: Community Food and Commercial Agriculture*
 - Scale of production*
 - Type of land access, duration and to whom*
 - Investment and sustainability*
 - Fairness*
 - Standards for production practices*
 - Types of agricultural production*
 - Community food production activities*
 - Storage and processing facilities*
 - Farmer's market*
- 2. Ecological Conservation*
 - Conservation*
 - Restoration*
 - Interpretation*
- 3. Recreation, Culture, Heritage and Equestrian*
 - Public trails*
 - Agri-tourism*
 - Equestrian*
 - Arts and Events*
 - Heritage*
 - Celebrate First Nations Culture*
- 4. Teaching, Learning and Research*
 - Experiential education programs for children*
 - Agricultural and sustainability education for the public*
 - Agricultural education for new farmers*
 - Agricultural research and university student learning*

The Report also addresses site infrastructure, the possible governance model for regulation of the property and its future uses, and financing for the development of the site, for program implementation, and for site infrastructure related items (such as building maintenance related

costs etc.). It was identified that there is a need for key infrastructure to be established. The Report provides various different case studies for use as examples for proposed site uses.

Findings: Next Steps

Based on the four priority activity areas established during the engagement process, the Report provides potential next steps for the District, community partners, and community members in order to develop the site. The recommended next steps are intended to be ones that can be implemented presently, in order to advance the project. They vary in scope and scale and may require a phased implementation plan.

OPTIONS:

Council can:

1. Receive the report entitled Vision Sandown: What We Heard, Community Input on the Development of Sandown, prepared by CRFAIR; AND
2. Refer the Vision Sandown report to the Community Planning Commission and the Community Stewardship Commission for review and comment; AND
3. Direct staff to review the Vision Sandown report and bring back a staff report outlining various options for consideration; OR
4. Make another recommendation as Council sees appropriate.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None identified at this time, however future financial implications will depend on what Council decides to do with the land.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

None identified.

CONSULTATIONS:

At the June 15th, 2016 meeting, the Community Planning Commission passed a motion recommending that Council forward the proposed land use plan for the Sandown site to the Commission for review, once that plan has been drafted.

MOVED BY: S. Harrison

SECONDED: J. Kingham

18-CPC The Community Planning Commission recommends that when the District of North Saanich has drafted a land use plan for the Sandown lands that the plan be referred to the Community Planning Commission for review.

CARRIED

Staff recommends that Council forward the Vision Sandown Report to the Commission for review and discussion as part of staff's review of the document and in advance of any staff recommendations resulting from the Report findings.

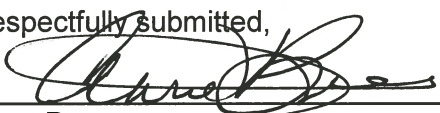
INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS:

This report has been circulated to the Directors for review.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION:

The Vision Sandown Report is the product of the community consultation process undertaken by the District to assist Council in its decision making regarding specific agricultural uses for the Sandown site. Staff recommends that Council direct staff to review the Report and to prepare next step options for Council's consideration. Staff also recommends the Report be forwarded to the Community Planning and Community Stewardship Commissions for advisory comments in advance of the further preparation of any staff reports.

Respectfully submitted,


Anne Berry
Director, Planning and Community Services

Concurrence,


Rob Buchan
Chief Administrative Officer

Concurrence:


Theresa Flynn, Director Financial Services


Eymond Toupin, Director Infrastructure Services


Curt Kingsley, Director Corporate Services


Gary Wilton, Director Emergency Services

Attachment A: Vision Sandown: What We Heard, Community Input on the Development of Sandown, prepared by CRFAIR



March 2016

Vision Sandown: What We Heard

Community Input on the Development of Sandown

Prepared by CRFAIR for the District of North Saanich



VISION SANDOWN

VisionSandown@gmail.com



north
saanich



Photo Ken Josephson

Acknowledgements

This report is prepared for the District of North Saanich to support their development of Sandown as a community agriculture resource. The community consultation that provided the input to this report was facilitated, recorded and compiled by the Vision Sandown Team of CRFAIR, the Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable.

CRFAIR, is a collaborative initiative of food and farm organizations formed in 1997. CRFAIR's mission is to mobilize and connect efforts to develop a healthy and sustainable food system in the Capital Region. Our work is focused on aligning efforts for collective impact in the areas of food literacy, food access and the local food economy.

CRFAIR would like to acknowledge Linda Geggie the CRFAIR Project Manager and lead on the Vision Sandown Initiative. We would also like to acknowledge Rhianna Nagel, from the Institute for Study and Innovation Community University Engagement (ISICUE) for her work organizing the community engagement and Jessica Dennis for her work in preparing this report. Thank you to James Pratt and Evan Peterson for project consulting. We would also like to extend a huge thank you to our Faculty collaborators Ken Josephson and Cam Owens at the University of Victoria Department of Geography and to the many student volunteers who helped out. Thank you to the friends of Sandown for their energy and dedication to supporting the Sandown process and a special thanks to Bob Maxwell and Springfield Harrison for their mapping expertise.. We would also like to acknowledge those who provided their professional and experiential expertise to the development of this report. Finally we would like to acknowledge all those who participated and provided input over the course of the Vision Sandown engagement campaign. We appreciate all of your time, enthusiasm and ideas that are key to the success of Sandown.



The following report addresses land management and access of the Sandown property in North Saanich. We acknowledge that the land that is the subject of this report, Sandown, is the traditional territory of the W̱SÁNEĆ First Nation.

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Executive Summary

Project Background: The [District of North Saanich Phased Development Bylaw No. 1343](#) was approved in 2014 and concerns the transfer of 83 acres of ALR land to the District of North Saanich in exchange for a rezoning approval of 12 acres of privately owned land for commercial uses.

Vision Sandown Purpose: To present the community's vision and priorities for Sandown based on the input we heard. Over 500 community members participated in the engagement process over a 6 month period. Engagement included a survey, tabling at events, individual and organizational meetings, collaboration with the University of Victoria, site tours, and facilitated public meetings.

Community Vision: The vision for Sandown is a model of sustainable food production that respects and works with natural ecosystems, that integrates a diversity of production styles both commercial and non-commercial, and that integrates recreational and educational opportunities for the public. It is a model that employs agriculture and food based activities to realize community benefits including teaching and learning, food literacy, environmental awareness, supporting and training farmers, increasing community food access and food security, bringing community together, and facilitating healthy living.

There is a lot of excitement within the community about the potential for Sandown. We found that people were very supportive of the project and eager to lend their ideas, time and energy to both the visioning process and future initiatives on the site.

| Key Community Values: | Priority Activity Areas Identified by Community: |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Realize the community food and agriculture potential of the land 2) Restore, protect and respect the natural ecology and wildlife 3) Teaching and learning: Work and learn together 4) Community gathering place: Public access and community involvement 5) Recognize and celebrate the site's heritage 6) No one thing does one thing: Integrated land uses 7) Financial Sustainability: Revenue generating and self-sustaining activities | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Food Production: Community Food and Commercial Agriculture 2. Ecological Conservation and Interpretation 3. Recreation, Culture, Heritage and Equestrian 4. Teaching, Learning & Research |

Next steps

The development of Sandown will be a long term initiative and we heard support for a phased approach. The following are potential next steps to be taken by the District, community partners and community members to further develop plans and begin implementation of the community vision and priority activities identified in the Vision Sandown engagement process. The emphasis is on steps that can be taken presently to advance the project to the next phase. The set of steps is structured around the four priority activity areas we heard from the community and is based on the input we received.

1. Food Production: Community Food and Commercial Agriculture

- 1.1. Continue to work with agrologists and farmers to determine soil quality and develop a plan to bring the agricultural areas into production (amendments, cover cropping, etc.).
- 1.2. Develop/decide on a set of production standards for all future growers working at Sandown.
- 1.3. Determine the actual land area for farming and delineate available land between commercial farm operations, community food production activities, farm school/incubator plots.
- 1.4. Develop protocol for leasing and an application process for use of the agricultural lands.
- 1.5. Put out a Request for Proposals for organization(s) to manage the agricultural lands.
- 1.6. Further assess the community food opportunities such as individual community garden plots, shared community plot/demonstration, and community greenhouse.
- 1.7. Work with the North Saanich Farmers Market and other markets on the Peninsula to determine if there is capacity for a new market and what type of market to develop.
- 1.8. Assess whether a commercial kitchen and/or storage facility is feasible.

2. Ecological Conservation and Interpretation

- 2.1. Partner with community groups, conservation organizations, First Nations, and University students to inventory plants and wildlife on site and to identify and map important conservation areas (provide to landscape architect to incorporate into plan).
- 2.2. Organize volunteer and student groups to begin invasive species control and other identified restoration needs.
- 2.3. Partner with post secondary institutions and local farmers to design and plant hedgerows/vegetative buffers between agricultural areas and natural areas.
- 2.4. Engage post secondary students in class projects exploring feasibility of proposed activities at Sandown (e.g. feasibility of agroforestry activities in the natural areas, potential for aquaculture (land based or pond), ethnoecological interpretive trail).

3. Recreation, Culture, Heritage, and Equestrian

- 3.1. Engage a trail design expert to work with the community's input and design a trail system that will best meet a diversity of uses (walking, horse, cycling, dog walking) and minimize impact on natural ecology. Refer to [ALC's recommendations for trails](#).
- 3.2. Assess the compatibility of keeping one of the tracks onsite for horse use with food production and natural area conservation. Determine the feasibility of using the track for transportation/agricultural machinery as well as horse riding.
- 3.3. Develop a repository to collect and organize community stories, photos, memorabilia to integrate into the history and heritage component of Sandown.
- 3.4. Work with community members to identify objects and areas of historical significance on site and work towards installation of informational plaques (inclusive of First Nations histories and cultural connections to the land as well as Sandown Track history).

4. Teaching, Learning & Research

- 4.1. Continue to build partnerships with the University of Victoria, engage the expertise of academic partners, and create teaching, learning and research opportunities for faculty and students throughout the planning and design process.
- 4.2. Incorporate indoor and outdoor learning space into the site plan that can be multi-use (e.g. teaching and learning space for school groups, farmers, community workshops). Partner with organizations to develop and operate these sites.
- 4.3. Integrate teaching, learning and research opportunities throughout the development of the above three activities on site.

Section 1: Introduction

"Sandown farm is a visionary project. This is an opportunity to really excel at growing food and being a model for others to follow into the future." – Survey Respondent

Background

Sandown is 95 acre property located at McDonald Park and Glamorgan Road in North Saanich. It is owned by the Randall family and was leased by the Great Canadian Gaming Corporation to operate a horse racing track from the 1950s until February of 2011. The property is located in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). In 2011, the District of North Saanich received an application from the owners of Sandown to rezone 12 acres of the property for a range of commercial uses. Central to the proposal is that the owners will transfer ownership of the remaining 83 acres of the property to the District of North Saanich. The District will replace the excluded 12 acres of farmland by adding 12 acres of adjacent municipally owned land into the ALR. Hence the plan would result in a contiguous 95 acre parcel of ALR land owned by the District and 12 acres of privately owned land rezoned for light commercial use. The District of North Saanich Phased Development Bylaw No. 1343 was approved by council in 2014 and sets out the terms of transfer, requirements of the landowner and allowable uses for the commercial land. Requirements include that the agricultural land to be transferred to the District be remediated and reclaimed, fencing installed and a vegetative buffer established between the commercial and agricultural land at the owner's expense. For full details refer to the [District of North Saanich Phased Development Bylaw No. 1343](#).

The Sandown redevelopment project has the potential to create a lasting legacy of an 83 acre community farm in the Capital Region, a place that supports learning, growing, biodiversity and recreation within the purposes of the Agriculture Land Reserve. The initiative will directly contribute to implementing key strategic priorities set by the District including:

- Protect Rural, Agricultural, Heritage, Marine and Environmental Habitats
- Encourage Suitable Commercial and Local Business Development
- Build a Strong and Vibrant Community

Report Objective

The objective of this report is to present the community's vision and priorities for Sandown.

The first step in the redevelopment process is to build a shared vision, based on strong engagement of people interested in shaping the future of the site. Bringing together a community vision was the goal of the Vision Sandown campaign carried out between July 2015 to February 2016 and herein reported on. We will seek feedback on this report findings at the February 16 Community Meeting and then this report will be finalized and

presented to the District. The following report provides a synopsis of what we heard with a focus on the values the community holds most important for Sandown and the key activities people would like to see implemented. The report concludes with potential next steps. A strong community vision will in turn shape a successful development plan for Sandown.

Engagement Process

“We need to have a strong vision to make something positive happen.” – Walk and Talk Participant

The Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable (CRFAIR) was contracted by the District of North Saanich to conduct engagement on the redevelopment of Sandown. A project team was formed and launched the Vision Sandown engagement process in July 2015.

Vision Sandown Goal and Objectives

The goal of Vision Sandown was to meaningfully engage a broad range of interested people and organizations, including residents of North Saanich, the Peninsula, and the Capital Region. Information and updates continue to be communicated through the [Vision Sandown website](#). The Vision Sandown engagement objectives were to:

- Provide appealing, accessible information about the site and the visioning process, using a variety of communication methods – online, print and face to face
- Offer a diverse range of opportunities to participate in creating the vision, so that people of all ages and walks of life can give input and feedback
- Develop a vision that includes an overall site concept, values, principles, mix of uses, possible partnerships, and potential resources
- Honour and celebrate community contributions to the vision
- Build shared ownership of the visioning process and results
- Engage community and students in a range of activities that help to build capacity and support the process



Initial site walk with CRFAIR, student interns, volunteers, faculty and landowner in preparation for engagement campaign. Photo credit Ken Josephson.

Engagement and Consultation Tools

Over 500 community members participated in the engagement process over a 6 month period. Engagement included a survey, tabling at events, individual and organizational meetings, collaboration with the University of Victoria, site tours, and a Community Ideas Fair. The Vision Sandown Initiative was introduced to all District of North Saanich Residents through the September 2015 Newsletter and information updates were provided on the District website. Information was also reported in local newspapers and radio. From the engagement process it is clear that there is a lot of energy and excitement within the community about Sandown's potential. People were very supportive of the project and eager to lend their ideas, time and energy to both the visioning process and future initiatives on the site. We greatly appreciate all those who got involved and took the time to provide excellent ideas and input over the course of the engagement process. Thank you to all participants!

Survey (120 responses)

A survey developed by the project team and reviewed by the District was available online and in paper form. Every resident in North Saanich was made aware of the Vision Sandown Process survey through the District Newsletter. People were further made aware of the survey at outreach events, through a display at the North Saanich municipal hall, through North Saanich's website, and CRFAIR's listserves.

The survey was open from August until December 2015 and there were 120 survey responses. The residency and age distribution of respondents is shown in Figures 1 and 2. Questions gathered information on the potential benefits and priority activities for Sandown as well as how to support the process. Respondents were not required to answer all questions and responses from incomplete surveys were included in the results. Response summaries to all questions are included in the report.

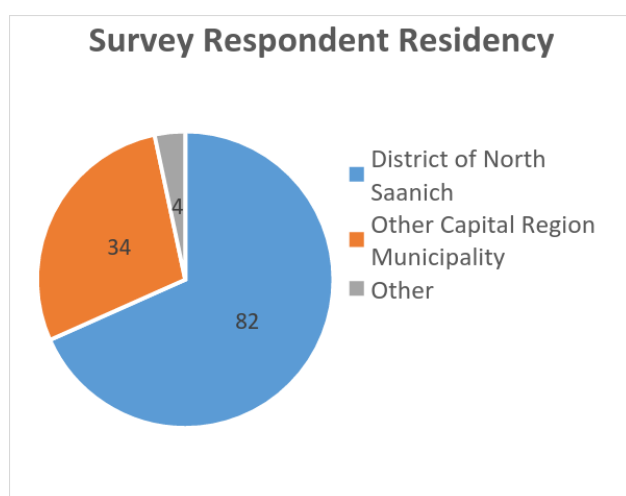


Figure 1: Residency distribution of survey respondents.

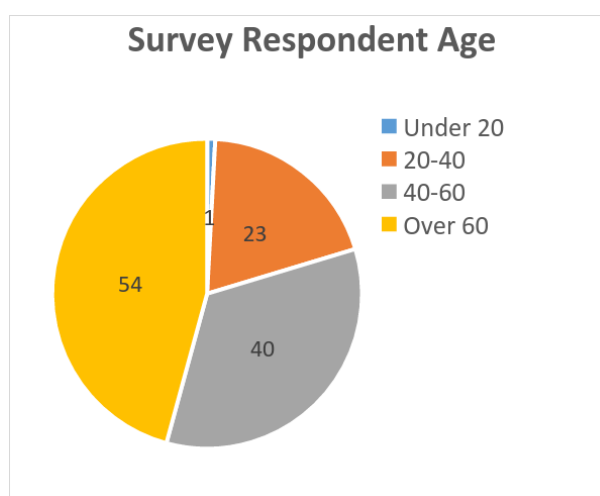


Figure 2: Age distribution of survey respondents.

Event Outreach (estimated over 350 people reached)

Information tents were set up at the North Saanich Jubilee breakfast, at the North Saanich Farmers Market during the Flavour Trail event, and at the Saanich Fair. Maps of the site were available to provide participants with a visualization of Sandown. Project team members were available to provide information, record input, and encourage people to complete the survey.



At outreach events, tables were set up with information and team members were available to answer questions and take down input. There was also a large map of Sandown displayed and people could contribute ideas by adding stick-it notes to the map.

On-Site Walk and Talks (85 participants)

Four themed walking tours of the site were held over the months of October and November. Participant input was recorded by the project team. The themes were agriculture, trails and public access, ethnoecology, and history, and the tours were led by experts in the four areas.



The CRFAIR team provided an introduction to the Sandown project and site at the beginning of each Walk and Talk and made maps available for participants to observe and discuss.



Walk and Talk tour groups exploring the Sandown site.

Ideas Fair (35 participants) and North Saanich Residents Association Meeting (35 participants)

The Ideas Fair Town Hall Meeting and the **North Saanich Residents Association Meeting** were hosted by the project team and invited community members out to participate in a facilitated visioning process and discussion of opportunities and considerations for Sandown.



The CRFAIR facilitated general and small group discussions with attendees of public meetings to gather input. Photos Credits Ken Josephon.

UVic Student Volunteers & Projects

CRFAIR partnered with Faculty members at the University of Victoria (UVic) who provided support in the form of research and mapping expertise and engagement of students. Students were engaged through class projects related to Sandown and several students generously volunteered time to support the engagement process.



Students volunteering at one of the walk and talks, helping table at the Saanich Jubilee breakfast and students presenting their final project at the Legacy gallery, in downtown Victoria, Monday, November 30, 2015. Photo Credits Ken Josephon and Linda Geggie.

University of Victoria Geography Department's Vision Sandown Colloquium

Department of Geography Lecture Series

Vision Sandown:

An opportunity
for applied geography –
Presentation and discussion



Linda Geggie

Associate, Community Based Research, UVic

Friday, October 23, DTB B215, UVic



All are welcome. Bring your coffee mug!!

refreshments **2:45 pm**, seminar **3:00 pm**

Hosted by Dr. Johan Feddema, Dr. Cameron Owens and Ken Josephson this symposium brought together CRFAIR and North Saanich with professors, staff and students to consider the types of work and research that the faculty could contribute towards the development of Sandown. In addition there was significant interest in looking at student service learning and research that could mutually benefit the development of students as well as support Sandown over the long term. One of the key needs and opportunities that was identified and supported was to conduct a baseline biophysical survey (including bio-diversity, climate and hydrology) of the site and explore methods for site remediation and soil building. A class at UVic will be integrating this into their curriculum in the winter 2016 semester.

Consultation with professionals, key groups, and advisories

Throughout the process a number of key professionals were sought out for participation in the engagement activities to provide specific expertise in relation to the soil, drainage and productive capacity of the land. Consultations included farm professionals, agrologists, policy makers, geographers, soil scientists, and the North Saanich Residents' Association.

Friends of Sandown

Friends of Sandown is a group of community members who have come together to support and provide input into the Sandown redevelopment project. The Vision Sandown team collaborated with Friends of Sandown and integrated input the group provided over the duration of the engagement process.

Public Meeting to Review Draft Vision Sandown Report (35 participants)

"I felt like you guys were really listening." – Community Member Participant

The draft version of this report was made available to the public and to the District of North Saanich for review in advance of a final public meeting. We then held a meeting attended by members of the public, councillors and District staff, at which we did a summary presentation of this report and sought feedback. We asked the community if their vision and input provided over the duration of the public engagement process was accurately captured in the report and provided a final opportunity for input. Additional input and feedback was minimal and is incorporated into this current version of the report. We received positive feedback from the community and several participants said they thought the report accurately captured the community's vision and input and that they felt like they were heard in the process. Participants expressed that they were impressed with the high level of participation and enthusiasm over the duration of the engagement process.

Site Description

"We need a good plan and a good plan rests on good inventory." – Walk and Talk Participant

Location

Sandown is located in North Saanich along the north side of Glamorgan Road, bordering Macdonald Park Road on the west and Littlewood Road on the east. The neighbouring areas include residential, farms and commercial properties. The aerial map and two images below show what Sandown currently looks like.





Agricultural Zoning and Classification

The entirety of the Sandown property was zoned Exhibition by the District and located within the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve. The 12 acres that remains under private ownership has been rezoned to light commercial and the exclusion from the ALR has been approved by the Agricultural Land Commission. In their assessment, the ALC stated that though the 12 acres being excluded are good agricultural land, the resulting benefits from the transfer of the land to the District to be developed for food and agricultural uses outweighs the drawback of excluding the 12 acres. In addition the District of North Saanich has successfully included 12 acres of land into the ALR to ensure no net loss. The remaining 83 acres, which was multiple lots, is being consolidated into a single lot, rezoned Rural Agriculture, and the District will register a covenant on the title of the consolidated parcel to ensure its agricultural use and prohibit park development on the site. [The full report detailing the ALC's decision can be accessed on the Vision Sandown website.](#)



Image showing the areas to be excluded (green), included (yellow) and consolidated (blue outline). Image copied from the ALC report on Sandown.

The municipal designation of the land as Rural Agriculture and the provincial ALR designation of Sandown means that food and agricultural uses of the land must be the priority. Prioritizing food and agriculture does not exclude other uses on the land such as recreational trails and educational programs so long as they are compatible with

agricultural land uses. The ALR designation has specific regulations on permitted land uses that must be followed in the development of Sandown.

Permitted uses in the ALR include agricultural production activities, activities linked to agricultural production, and activities that may not be linked directly to agriculture but are considered compatible with agriculture and have a low impact on the land. With respect to housing, on a single parcel (which Sandown will be) there is allowance for one single family dwelling which may include a secondary suite. There is potential allowance for a second home for a family member and housing for farmworkers. The table below summarizes the types of permitted uses. Refer to the Agricultural Land Commission's [Agricultural Land Reserve, Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulations](#) for full regulations.

Selected Permitted Uses on ALR (not complete list):

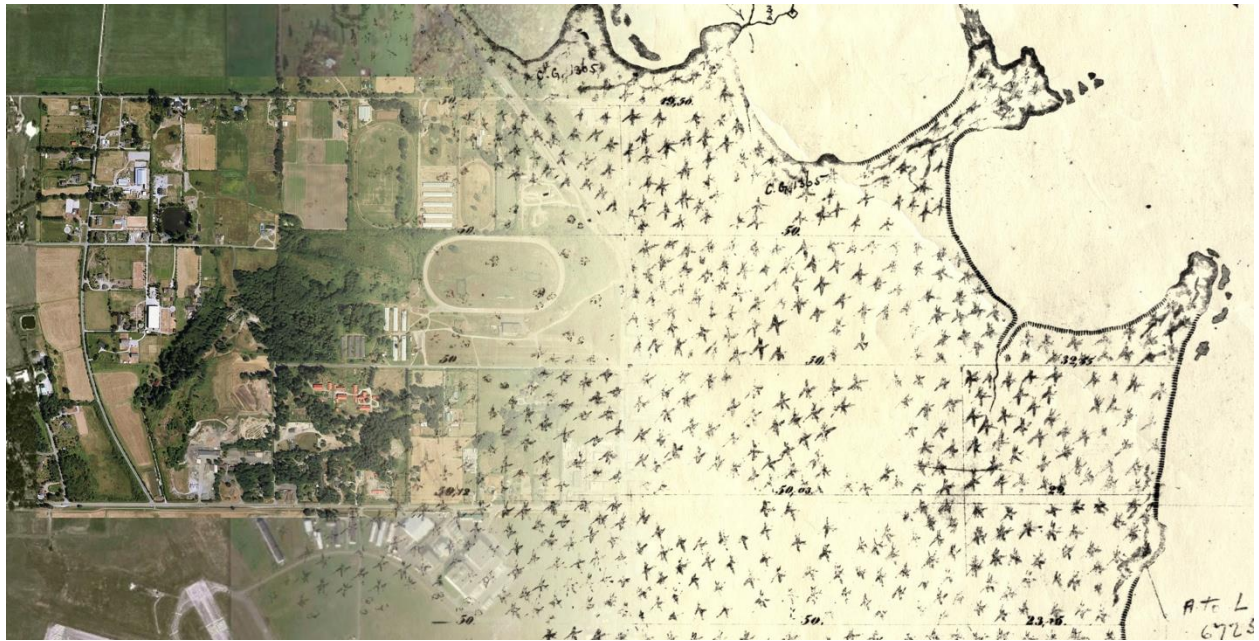
| Farm Uses | Farm Support Uses | Compatible Non-Farm Uses |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field crop production • Livestock • Apiculture • Mushrooms • Forage crops • Greenhouses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm retail sales • Storage, packing & processing of farm products • Equestrian activities • Compost facilities • Agri-tourism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation & passive recreation & open land parks • Education & research (not schools) • Home based business |

History

The Saanich Peninsula is the traditional territory and current home of the Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tseycum and Tsawout First Nations. First Nations participants shared that land on which Sandown is located was used by the different tribes in the area as a place of meeting and a place of refuge. On the ethnoecology walk and talk, participants shared and identified different types of food and medicinal plants used by First Nations peoples that grow on the land. An aerial photograph of the land from 1932 shows that at this time the land was used for agriculture. As of the 1950s the land was used for horse racing, which was its most recent use. The race track closed down in 2011 as it was no longer financially viable and the land has not since been used for another purpose. As horse racing was the most recent land use, this shapes the current state of the land which has remnants of two tracks, stables, grandstands, viewing towers, jockey house, and caretaker residences. There are also existing trails previously used by the public for walking and horseback riding.







Sandown property aerial photos today and 1946, created by Ken Josephson, University of Victoria Department of Geography.



Sandown property today and as shown on a map dated 1859, created by Ken Josephson, University of Victoria Department of Geography.

Soils

The Agricultural Land Commission rates the soils on the 83 acres as improvable to Class 2 (Class 1 is highest and Class 7 lowest in BC) which means the land has a high agricultural capability with the right management practices. Based on existing soil maps, the main soils at Sandown are the Cowichan Soils (CO) (silty clay loam, poorly drained), the Brigantine Soils (BE) (sand and gravel (50 to 100cm) over silt and clay, imperfectly drained), and the Parksville Soils (PA) (sand over silty clay loam, poorly drained). These classifications provide a general idea of soil characteristics however there is site variability and the soils on site have been significantly disturbed from previous uses. It is known that topsoil was removed from certain areas such as the track and transported off the site, the track is filled with limestone, and it is unknown if there is fill in other areas. Certain areas on site were used as dumpsites and while there has not been any sites identified as contaminated, this was raised as a concern. Contamination can be assessed through soil tests and as mentioned above in the agreement with North Saanich, the landowner is responsible for site reclamation and remediation. Soil testing, characterization and mapping by an agrologist is a key first step to determine site use potential and any remediation needs.



An agrologist and farmer dug several small soil pits to observe and discuss the soils on site with participants on the agricultural Walk and Talk.

The front field which has Parksville soils was identified as a suitable and ready site for farming by soil experts and farmers who participated in the onsite walk and talk. This area is relatively flat, dry, and has suitable soil texture for agriculture. Other areas also have potential for agriculture such as in and around the track, however were found to have areas with high clay levels (heavy, poor drainage soils) and areas with coarse, sandy soils (low nutrient retention) and may require amending/soil building to bring into production. A higher water table was noted around the track, indicating a need for drainage and/or short season crops. Areas close to the pond and forested areas are marshy and shady and least suitable for agriculture without significant disturbance to the land (i.e. clearing), though may have potential for uses such as agroforestry, wild harvesting or aquaculture. A small

number of participants suggested clearing the whole site to maximise agricultural potential. The dominant community input was to retain the natural marshy areas for their ecological value and consider integrative food production such as agroforestry.

Healthy soils are the foundation of sustainable agricultural practices and productivity. The Victoria Airport Authority (VAA) has offered to provide topsoil (which is the layer of soil rich in organic matter and nutrients) that is being removed from their site to Sandown free of charge. Any topsoil removed from the 12 commercial acres must also be provided to the 83 acre site. Farmers and agrologist participants also identified several soil building measures that can be easily taken to begin building soil capacity including compost applications, cover cropping and grazing livestock.

Drainage

Throughout the consultations we heard a lot about water and drainage on the site. Sandown is a low lying area with little elevation change, has a year round pond and a fluctuating and high water table. There is no known presence of wells on site. There are currently drainage ditches which have been roughly mapped and require improvement. There may be tile drainage in place as well, but the exact location is not known. We heard that certain parts of the site, particularly the marshy areas, have importance as natural areas and habitat and should not be drained. Participants would like to see water on the site be used for irrigation purposes where possible (retention ponds, wells, winter water collection system). The availability of water on the site can be viewed as an asset to farming with appropriate management. One concern raised regarding use of water for irrigation was over the quality of the water. The water has been tested and there was not found to be any heavy metal contaminants but there was a high levels of coliforms. Irrigation water for food will need to be regularly tested to ensure food safety.

It is clear that a water management and drainage plan needs to be implemented. This need has already been recognized in the District's planning process and was a stipulated requirement in Agricultural Land Commission's exclusion decision. Note that any drainage improvements related to the 12 acre commercial development are the responsibility of the private developer. Community members highlighted that hydrological work on Sandown should be coordinated with corresponding drainage projects to improve the function of the watershed and avoid flooding in the area as a whole. It is essential that the impact of any changes to the hydrology or drainage upgrades take into consideration the impact on surrounding properties.

An initial hydrological assessment of the site indicated that the use of the pond at Sandown for stormwater detention and the installation of subsurface drainage on the 83 acres would effectively provide drainage and a means to detain water during high precipitation events. The assessment further found that the drainage improvements and retention pond at Sandown would not worsen and in fact would likely result in improvements to the downstream Macdonald Park Road drainage system. There may be a need to construct an additional detention facility in the Northwest corner of the site to manage flows in the direction of the Wsiken Creek Catchment. It was also noted that the addition of soil to be brought in from the Victoria Airport Authority will contribute to water flow management.

The drainage assessment can viewed in the [March 2012 Staff Report](#) available on the Vision Sandown website.

Note that in the phased development plan it states that “The Owner shall remediate and reclaim the Agricultural Land at the Owner’s expense, in accordance with Schedule A to this Agreement,” where the owner refers to the current landowner. The Site Remediation, Land Reclamation and Drainage Requirements for the development of Sandown are described in [Schedule A To Phased Development Agreement](#).

Plants and Wildlife

Approximately 20 acres of the western portion of the property is covered in trees or a pond and supports a diversity of plants and wildlife. Some plants and animals identified on the site tours are listed below, many of which were indicated to have ecological importance and/or traditional use value by local First Nations. We heard high support from the community for the retention of natural areas, wildlife habitat and restoration of native ecology. In the survey, ‘support land and water conservation’ was indicated to be ‘highly important’ by more respondents than any other benefit.

Wildlife known to currently be supported (as indicated through participant input):

| Wildlife | Plants | |
|---|--|--|
| Owls (barred, great horned, western screech, saw-wet, barn) Frogs Lizards Many birds (e.g. quail, woodpeckers, herons, sandpipers, eagles) Deer | Garry oak Douglas fir Cedar Willow Alder Cotton Wood Poplars Plantain | Camus Balm of Gilliad Mushrooms Hawthorne Dandelion Horse tail Snowberry |



The pond located in the treed area that the community identified has having important ecological and passive recreation value and would like to see maintained.

Section 2: What We Heard: Vision and Values

Vision

The key purpose of the engagement process was to hear what is important to community members with respect to the primary purpose of Sandown, the benefits it could provide the community, the ways in which people want to be involved, and what activities would best suit the property. Identifying a set of values and key benefits the community would like to see derived from Sandown helps to guide the prioritization of activities for the land and the next steps of land use planning.

As public land Sandown is a community asset and the input highlighted many ways through which this asset could benefit the community. While there were a diversity of specific ideas for activities at Sandown, there was general consensus across these ideas that Sandown should be developed by and for the community. That is, the primary purpose of activities developed on the land, whether commercial or non-commercial, should be to meet the needs of the surrounding community. The land is in the Agricultural Land Reserve and participants affirmed the importance of preserving the region's limited agricultural lands and realizing the agricultural potential of Sandown through the development of community food and agricultural initiatives. As ALR land, it is important for agriculture to be the primary use and as public land there is an opportunity to establish a model of agriculture that involves the wider community through a diversity of measures such as gardens, markets, events, training programs, and food literacy initiatives. While participants provided a very broad range of ideas for activities at Sandown, food and agricultural activities are the foundation of the vision put forth by the community.

The vision for Sandown is a model of sustainable food production that respects and works with natural ecosystems, that integrates a diversity of production styles both commercial and non-commercial, and that integrates recreational and educational opportunities for the public. It is a model that employs agriculture and food based activities to realize community benefits including teaching and learning, food literacy environmental awareness, supporting and training farmers, increasing community food access, food security and food self-reliance, bringing community together, and facilitating healthy living.



Values

One of the survey questions asked respondents to rate a list of the most important benefits that they felt Sandown could provide for the area. The results are shown in Figure 3 below. From the figure it is seen that the four top rated benefits are centred on the food, agriculture and ecological benefits of the land, with the fifth being teaching and learning. Community celebration, heritage and traditional uses, recreation and economic development were also considered to be extremely important by a majority of respondents. Spiritual retreat was the only option provided in which less than 50% of respondents indicated highly important or important.

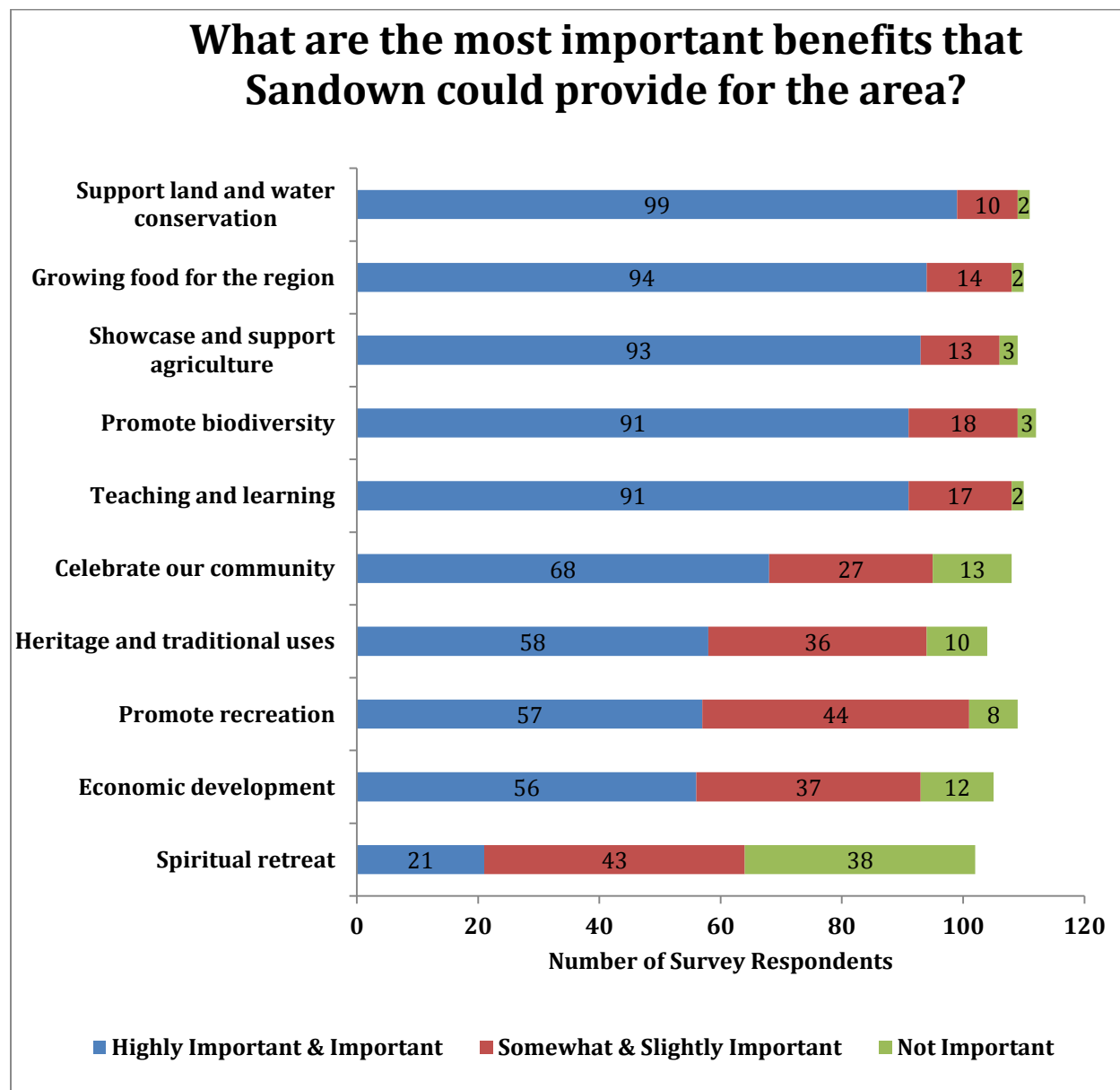


Figure 3: Survey results on the most important benefits Sandown could provide the region. The potential benefits are organized along the vertical axis from highest importance at the top to lowest at the bottom, and the numbers in the bars are the number of respondents who selected the indicated categories.

The input from the other consultation activities coincided with the survey findings. Based on analysis of all of the input provided across the engagement process the following are the key values we heard expressed by the community for the development of Sandown. The input we heard with respect to each one is elaborated below.

- 1. Realize the community food and agriculture potential of the land**
- 2. Restore, protect and respect the natural ecology and wildlife**
- 3. Teaching and learning: Work and learn together**
- 4. Community gathering place: Public access and community involvement**
- 5. Recognize and celebrate the site's heritage**
- 6. No one thing does one thing: Integrated land uses**
- 7. Financial Sustainability: Revenue generating and self-sustaining activities**

1. Realize the community food and agricultural potential of the land

“With good planning and a strong board of governors, this project can be a gem for North Saanich and the CRD to really support agriculture, organic farming and food security resilience and awareness.” – Survey Respondent

There was strong recognition of the agricultural value of the land and we heard clear support for developing Sandown with a focus on community food and agricultural activities. We heard support for revenue generating and self-sustaining farming operations that also support a diversity of public values. Food literacy, local food access, new and young farmer support, demonstration of sustainable agricultural practices, and wellness through gardening were themes that ran throughout the input. There were many ideas provided for the type of food and farming activities, both commercial and non-commercial, that could be implemented and these are further elaborated below. There was a small minority of input that emphasized use of the land for larger scale commercial farming operations. We heard both demand from currently established farmers to access land to expand existing operations and public support for small-plot leases and/or training programs for new farmers. There was also support for non-commercial growing activities on the land, such as shared community plots or demonstration sites, alongside commercial farming. We also heard very strong interest in a market on site to increase local food access.

2. Restore, protect and respect the natural ecology and wildlife.

“There are several different values that come into play on this land; wildlife needs to be respected, we need to learn from the past, we need to not disrupt the balance of nature, and we need to restore the land naturally.” – Walk and Talk Participant

Maintaining the natural areas at Sandown was held to be very important, both for the ecological value as well as for recreational and cultural values derived from public access to natural areas. Restoration, controlling invasive species, maintaining important wildlife habitat, and minimizing the ecological impacts of activities were common input. Conducting a wildlife inventory, identifying invasive species needing control, identifying important habitat, and assessing the ecological status were suggested first steps to developing appropriate management. It was also suggested that local First Nations,

conservation societies, or individuals/organizations with knowledge of native ecology and restoration experience in the community be engaged.

Land use planning and development of activities on the land must be compatible with, and guided by, the existing natural landscape as well as the constructed landscape. We also heard support for working with and integrating the constructed landscape and salvaging existing infrastructure or materials where possible. Many participants would like to see the track maintained and used either for horse riding and/or as part of a road system for transporting goods around agricultural sites.

There were also some specific suggestions regarding establishing food and agricultural production that is in harmony with the existing ecology. There are many plants native to the site that have food, medicinal, craft, and/or cultural uses that were identified by participants on site tours. There is opportunity to integrate wild harvesting alongside agricultural production. Some suggestions for an ecologically integrated agricultural system included agroforestry/food forest, implementing permaculture design principles, exploring crops that are suited to marshy landscapes, aquaculture in the pond, utilizing hedgerows to create buffers/habitat, and promoting production practices that minimize environmental impacts.

3. Teaching and Learning:

“Work and learn together” – Ideas Fair Participant

One community member’s vision for Sandown was as a place to “work and learn together” and this captures a sentiment that ran throughout the engagement process. Both the prioritization of teaching and learning as an activity and the sentiment of working together as a community towards shared goals. The educational potential of the land was highly valued, including opportunities for all ages and abilities. We heard support for a diversity of possibilities including teaching and learning related to food and agriculture, to sustainable living, to biodiversity and native ecology, to First Nations cultures, and to horseback riding. Participants highlighted the uniqueness of the site in terms of its potential for outdoor and experiential education. There was also support for integrating research opportunities at the farm and fostering partnerships with local universities such as University of Victoria (UVic). A relationship with UVic has already been established and there is interest for continued research and student engagement at Sandown.

4. Community gathering place: Public access and community involvement

“I envision a lively community atmosphere in that area. I think it has huge potential as a community gathering place.” - Survey Respondent

Sandown is a community asset that has a long history of being a place of bringing people together, and residents want to see this renewed in the future uses of Sandown. Public trails were expressed to be a great asset and many community members mentioned their disappointment when public access to the property was closed. Trails were one of the most commonly raised topics and there is clear support for improving the trail network at Sandown. Community food and agricultural activities were also highlighted as an important

means to involve the community alongside commercial agricultural operations. People would like the food growing activities to not only provide access to land for farmers and food to the community but also to create ways for community to be directly involved. For example community gardens, community kitchen or demonstration agricultural site were suggested. Community members shared stories from when Sandown was a racetrack and highlighted memories of Sandown as a community hub and place of celebration in North Saanich and we heard that people want to see Sandown continue to be a place for bringing people together and celebrations.

5. Recognize and celebrate the site's heritage in the design: First Nations, Peninsula Farming, Sandown Racetrack

"I think it could be a point of interest if pictures/items/videos could be collected to give a small snapshot into what life would have been like in the days of the Sandown Racetrack." – Survey Respondent

It is important to the community that the history of the land be incorporated into the design and renewed uses of the land. There were many stories shared about community members' connections to the land and input on how to develop new land uses that incorporate this important community history. First Nations participants shared that this land was a common area where different tribes came together in peace. It was a place of meeting and of retreat and refuge for the different Nations on the Peninsula. It is known that prior to its use as a racetrack the land was used for farming and the whole peninsula has a strong agricultural heritage that is important to maintain. Preserving an equestrian component to the land, in recognition of its history as Sandown Racetrack, was indicated to be very important by many community members. People from the community had many fond memories of Sandown to share and the equestrian community provided significant input in favour of maintaining equestrian uses of the land. Several suggestions were provided regarding ways in which recognizing and celebrating history can be incorporated into the development of Sandown:

- Put up plaques around the site for people to learn about the previous uses of the land
- Renew history of land as a public space where community comes together
- Protect native ecology and develop interpretive trails through natural areas that identify and explain First Nation's uses of native plants
- Build a First Nation's cultural or education center around traditional foods and medicines for the peninsula
- Maintain equestrian uses of the land, keep the racetrack and incorporate into new use
- Ensure protection of the large oak tree and install a plaque, use this area for quiet sitting, space for reflection (ashes of the Randall family are scattered under this tree and a traditional song about tying a yellow ribbon around the old oak tree was sung during races)
- Preserve the starting gate from the old race track with historical plaque
- Keep the grandstands and use as a meeting area, for events, as seating area
- Maintain and repurpose the Jockey House
- Keep elements of horse stalls for a historical display or turn one of the old stalls into a historical display



Current photo of the old oak tree at Sandown from one of the Walk and Talks, historical photo of the oak tree from when Sandown was active and the plaque marking the location of William Randall's ashes.

6. No one thing does one thing: integrated land uses.

Select and develop activities that support and complement one another to maximize potential of the site. There are many overlaps between the key activities proposed for the site that were highlighted throughout the input process. Suggestions from the community for ways to integrate different priority activities included:

- Integration of public education and agricultural activities through development of farmer training programs, school tours, and farm events for the public
- Integration of recreation and public education through creation of trail networks and signage that allows public to learn about native ecology, history of the land and agricultural production while walking on trails
- Integration of equestrian uses and agriculture through utilization of the horse manure as fertilizer and horse drawn plough for farming
- Connect the commercial development to the farms through market space, retail sales and/or restaurant sales
- Maintain the track and use it both for horseback riding and as a stable roadway for agricultural machinery and transportation
- Restore native ecology and integrate wild harvesting into agricultural potential of the land as well as integrate native ecology and First Nation's history of the land into public education programs
- Design multi-use facilities, for example build a commercial kitchen that can be both used for commercial food processing activities and community programming

7. Financial sustainability: Revenue generating and self-sustaining activities

It is clear that there needs to be some major work done to bring the Sandown vision into reality and this will require human resources and financial investment. Ensuring a means to finance the development and long-term management of activities at Sandown was indicated by participants to be a key to the success of Sandown. There were both questions raised around how the financing will be made possible and suggestions provided to finance the project. It is recognized that there will need to be significant financial investment in the land to realize the vision. We need to invest in infrastructure to support the activities; we know this includes drainage, fencing, irrigation, storage areas, trails, roads and other facilities just to start. Then there is also the insurance, management and coordination required to turn the community's vision into reality. We heard that that it is important to ensure that the development plan addresses ways to generate the financial resources for both the initial investment requirements and then to ensure there is ongoing maintenance.

The type of investments can be diverse and include the provision of expertise and research to support decision making. We know that there are professionals who are already engaged in soil and hydrology analysis who can lend to this work. We have also established partnerships the Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community University Engagement and the Faculty of Geography at UVic. There are private sector businesses, local governments, academic institutions, philanthropists, community investment ideas, and just good old community elbow grease that can be brought together with some coordination to bring ideas to life. Through the engagement activities we found there are many people and

organizations who want to lend a hand and have a lot to offer. Fostering partnerships will be a key ingredient to the success of Sandown.

Sandown is public land and there is clear support for public access and community uses of the land, however there was also recognition of a need for revenue generating activities to support the development and management of Sandown as a community asset. We heard strong support for implementing financially self-sustaining and revenue generating activities at Sandown. It was emphasized that any commercial operations like farming must be financially self-sustaining. We heard that it may take time to get there, but that this should be the end goal.

Section 3: What We Heard: Community Priorities

Alongside establishing a community vision and set of values for the development of Sandown, a key goal of the engagement process was to seek input on the types of activities the community supports and would like to participate in at Sandown. The survey provided respondents an opportunity to indicate their support for a diversity of potential activities that could be implemented and the results are shown in Figure 4. From viewing the figure you will see that the top four activities in which respondents are most strongly in favour are centred on food and agriculture with 'teaching and learning and growing food' being the number one priority according to the survey population.

The survey also asked respondents what activities they would personally be interested in participating in at Sandown and the results are shown in Figure 5 below. This input is important because it tells us a story about where Sandown would provide direct benefit to the greatest amount of people in the community. The survey identifies that a community based market, walking trails and community celebrations would be most popular. The feedback also told us that there was quite a bit of interest in participating in teaching and learning activities such as a demonstration site. The results of where people are interested in being directly involved differ from the order of the list of priorities shown in Figure 4. Access to land for farming and participation in an incubator farm received a low score in terms of involvement (Figure 5), however growing food and land access for farmers were indicated to be strongly supported by a majority of respondents (Figure 4). This discrepancy is likely just reflective of the fact that farmers are a minority of the population and hence the number of people seeking to access land for farming will be low compared to activities the general public can participate in such as walking trails. Another discrepancy that is noteworthy is that there is high level of support for community gardens but a low number of people that said they would like to participate in community gardens. From the input, it is the extent of the need for individual community garden plots is unclear and this could be further assessed prior to deciding the amount of land to devote to and the design of community gardens. In the consultations we heard interest in larger community garden plots where enough food for a family can actually be grown, and in communal garden plots where people are growing together for themselves and for food banks.

How would you feel about the following activities happening at Sandown?

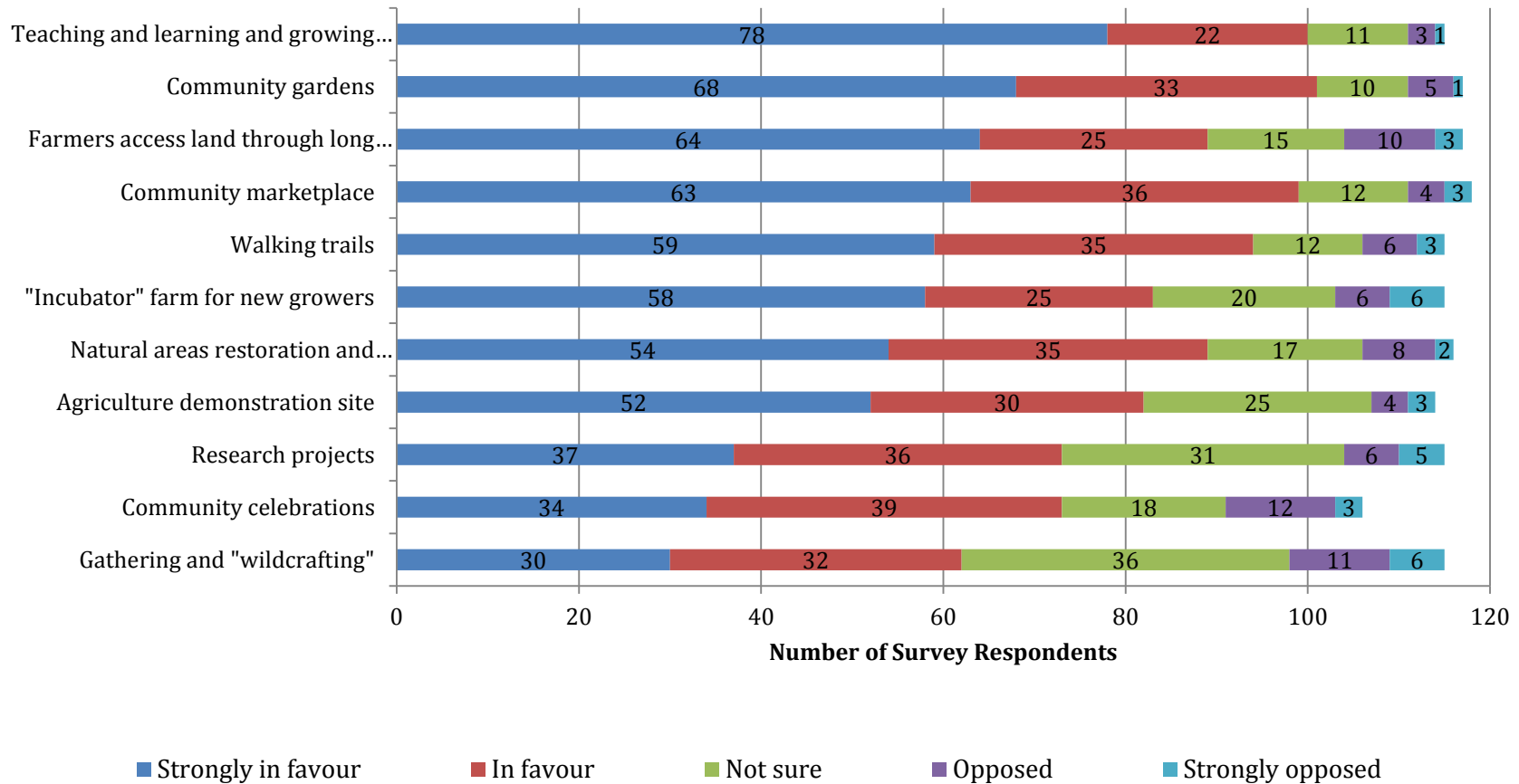


Figure 4: Survey results showing the prioritization of activities by community for the development of Sandown. The activities are listed with the highest priority at the top of the vertical axis down to the lowest priority indicated by survey population. The numbers in the bars are the number of respondents who selected the indicated category.

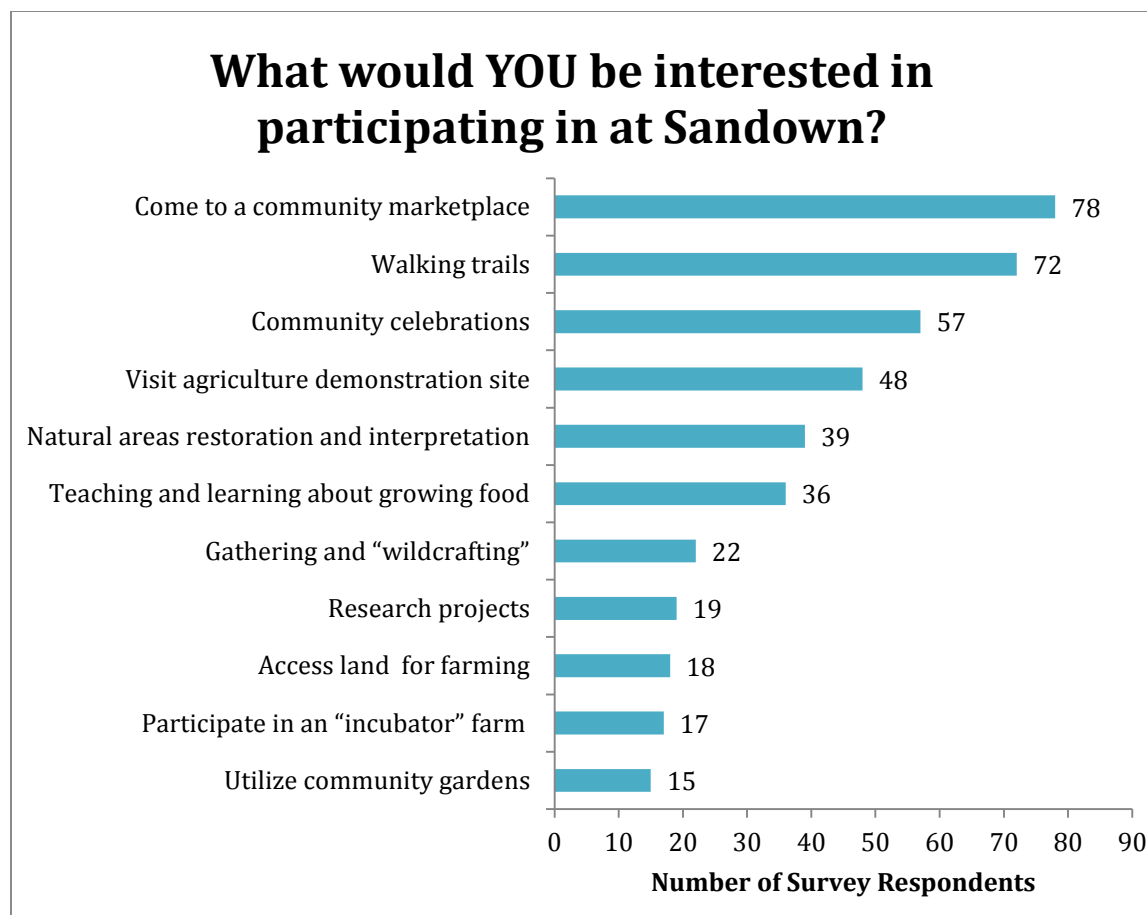


Figure 5: Survey results showing the activities that individuals would be most interested in participating in themselves. They are ordered with the activity in which there would be the highest participation at the top of the vertical axis to lowest participation at the bottom. The number at the end of the bar is the number of participants who indicated they would be interested in participating in each activity. There is a difference in the order of activities that people would most likely participate in and those in which they support on the site (Figure 4 compared to Figure 5). This difference stems from differences in ability to participate in certain activities compared to others (e.g. walking trails vs. accessing farmland) for the general public.

Two activity areas that were not included in the survey categories that very commonly arose across the other forms of input were equestrian uses and storage and processing facilities, particularly a commercial kitchen. The equestrian community actively participated in the consultations and voiced support for continued utilization of the land for equestrian activities through horseback riding trails, use of the track and riding programs. There was a significant amount of input from farmers indicating a need (and current lack) of access to storage and processing facilities in the area including an abattoir. There was also input from community members in support of a commercial kitchen that could be used by community groups.

Throughout the in-person engagement activities significant input was provided on the type of activities people would like to see implemented at Sandown. This input ranged from broad suggestions such as agricultural production to very specific ideas such as types of crops people would like to see grown. The input we heard on activities falls into four major themes representing the priority activity areas identified by participants across the

engagement process. The four key areas are listed below and then the more specific ideas that were provided by community members within these key activity areas are described in the sections below. This input serves as an initial brainstorm of activities that could be integrated into the Sandown development plan. There are more ideas than can all be included but we wanted to represent the array of ideas and possibilities we heard from the community.

5. **Food Production: Community Food and Commercial Agriculture**
6. **Ecological Conservation and Interpretation**
7. **Recreation, Culture, Heritage, and Equestrian**
8. **Teaching, Learning & Research**

1. Food Production: Community Food and Commercial Agriculture

“Farmland is rapidly disappearing and far out of reach of purchasing by farmers.” – Young Farmer Survey Respondent

Across the board, through every consultation method, community food production, commercial agricultural activities, and agricultural support activities were identified as the highest priorities for Sandown. Commercial agriculture refers to growing food or raising animals as a commercial enterprise. This could be done either by current farmers, or new and beginning farmers who need access to land and support in their early years. Community food activities refer to those activities in which food is being grown by and for the community rather than income generation. The types of community food producing activities that were suggested included community gardens (both large and small plots), communal gardens, small shared plots, or demonstration gardens that could involve teaching and learning components and could provide food for the food bank, seniors homes, or schools.

Alongside growing food there was a high level of support for and input on potential agricultural support activities such as farmers markets, storage and processing facilities, and shared infrastructure such as greenhouses and toolsheds. As indicated in Figure 5 above, coming to a community marketplace was the activity that the greatest number of respondents indicated that they would like to participate in. Support for public integration and educational opportunities into the agricultural activities, whether through a demonstration site or other means such as community workshops was common input across the engagement.

During the consultations the following key aspects of community food and agricultural activities were brought forward for consideration:

Scale of Production: There was support for small-scale farming, particularly for new or young farmers, however there was also input in favour of long-term leases to established farmers. Overall we heard the highest amount of support for a small-scale/small plot farming model that enables land access to several farmers and community members, over a

lease to one or two farmers. A mix of plot sizes can be made available to meet different needs and to enable access to a diversity of farmers on the land.

Type of Land Access, Duration and to Whom: There was debate over the type of lease arrangements people thought were most suitable as well as to whom land would be made available. We heard support for short-term leases to support a new generation of farmers and also heard support for long-term leases for current farmers. The cost of land is a huge barrier to new farm entrants and short-term leases, an incubator model, can play an important role in supporting the establishment of young and new farmers on the peninsula. The cost of land can also be barrier to current farmers seeking land and finding long-term secure leases is a challenge for all farmers. Sandown has the potential to provide both short-term or long-term leases both of which we heard a need for. There were suggestions for a mixed approach of devoting some land to short-term access for new farmers and some for long-term leases to any farmers. There is also the possibility of having a flexible lease duration and plot size and allow applicants to indicate what they are looking for in a lease application process within a set of guidelines developed by the District. For instance the Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust allows farmers to apply to lease up to 10 acres rather than making it pre-set acreage.

Investment and Sustainability: There was emphasis on the considerable work that will need to be undertaken to build soil fertility and put infrastructure in place over time. This could come at considerable investment cost. We heard that a staged approach could be effective. That is identify areas that could be worked quickly and with the least amount of cost, balanced with looking at the overall site development and major projects over time. Many partners and investors were identified through the process, with a lot of community members willing to step forward. We did hear that while there is support for some level of financial support from the municipality, there are concerns regarding the financing and use of municipal funds. With respect to commercial farming in particular we heard that it must be self-sustaining and revenue generating for the site (lease fees at market rates) over the long-term. Suggestions we heard for revenue generation to support the development and ongoing community activities at Sandown are detailed below.

Fairness: We heard recognition of the challenges farmers can face with respect to land access and viability and heard strong support in favour of supporting farmers and local agriculture, particularly new farmers. However, there were concerns raised regarding fairness towards farmers in the region and avoiding the creation of ‘unfair advantages’ through the supports provided at Sandown. This concern is often raised with respect to land access programs and people would like to see leases at fair market value even though it is public land. Exception may be made in the case of programs that specifically aim to support new farmers establish such as incubator programs run by non-profit organizations.

Standards for Production Practices: There was significant input on the type of production the community would like to see on the land, ranging from consideration of overarching production principles (e.g. organic) to specific crops. There was a predominance of support for creating guidelines or regulations to ensure implementation of sustainable production practices. However, there was not agreement on what the

specific standards should be. For instance, concerns were voiced regarding the preference of certain production models (e.g. certified organic) and exclusion of some farmers as a result. A suggestion is to look to the work of other initiatives such as the Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust's application process for Burgoyne Farm to provide example guidelines.

Case Studies: Farmland Trust Lease Agreements

Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust: The Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society (SSIFTS) is a charitable organization that was formed in 2009 "To promote agriculture on Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands by acquiring, managing and leasing land for farming."¹ The Burgoyne Valley Community Farm is a 60 acre parcel in the ALR that was transferred to the SSIFTS as an amenity contribution as part of a rezoning application. The SSIFTS released a request for proposals for the rental of farmland for commercial purposes, has an established application process, and is managing leases of up to 10 acres to farmers for 10 years. In the case of Burgoyne Farm, SSIFTS requires that farmers renting land follow organic practices but do not require that farmers be certified organic. They refer farmers to the standards of the Certified Organic Associations of BC (COABC). This is an option that could be considered by Sandown, and by using COABC standards it eliminates the need for the District to develop their own set of standards. The [RFP to rent farmland for commercial farming at Burgoyne](#) can be viewed on their website and may serve as a useful reference for the District (or a non-profit partner) in developing leasing arrangements with commercial growers at Sandown.

Equity Trust: [Equity Trust's Farms for Farmers](#) program "promotes alternative ownership structures for farms, to benefit farmers who need affordable farmland and communities that want a secure source of locally grown food and a way to preserve their environmental heritage is a non-profit farmland trust in the United States."² On [their website](#) they have resources including a model Agricultural Ground Lease and Agricultural Easement (covenant) with detailed commentary on each. While the legalities may differ in the US, it may be a useful reference for considering what to include in a lease and agricultural covenant.

Newman Farm & Haliburton Farm: In both of these cases, municipally owned land is leased to a non-profit organization (Farmlands Trust in the case of Newman Farm and the Haliburton Farm Society). The lease agreements held by the Districts of Saanich and Central Saanich can be referred to as a reference for creating a leasing arrangement with a non-profit at Sandown. Furthermore the municipal staff and members from the two societies may be able to provide integral input on recommended practices based on their experience with a lease between a municipality and a non-profit to manage farmland. Haliburton Farm Society rents land to farmers and hence can be used as reference for developing the agreements between a non-profit society and commercial farmers for the rental of municipal farmland.

¹ Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society. (n.d.). <http://ssifarmlandtrust.org/>

² <http://equitytrust.org/>

Types of Agricultural Production: The community had many ideas about specific production practices/methods as well as crops. The types of production methods we heard support for included organic, permaculture, agroforestry, small plot intensive (SPIN) farming, wild harvesting, low energy intensive methods (e.g. horse and plough farming). Use of agricultural practices that work with and protect the surrounding ecology was indicated to be highly important by a clear majority of participants. We heard support for a wide diversity of crops including fruit and vegetables, livestock, local hay production, aquaculture, seed saving, greenhouse production (especially on areas with marginal production potential), sustainable woodlot. In sum, we heard support for a diversified production system and we heard a lot of enthusiasm about the production potential of the land.

Community Food Production Activities: Community gardens were mentioned by many people and were well supported, however in the survey there was not indicated to be a high number of people interested in accessing a community garden. Some participants cited a need for them in North Saanich and Sidney, while others questioned whether there is significant demand. It would be beneficial to investigate the current status of community garden availability and demand in North Saanich and Sidney to establish if there is a need. Some participants suggested establishing a communal plot or a community greenhouse. There may also be organizations or community groups that might want to establish and manage gardens for a specific purpose. For example there may be an organization or residents association interested in operating a therapeutic gardening program for seniors and/or people with mobility limitations. Growing area could also be dedicated to gardens for school groups and educational programs. We also heard support for organizations to grow or glean (collect unsalable produce from farmers and gardeners) to donate to the food bank. The case studies below illustrate examples in practice of ideas we heard for community food initiatives at Sandown.

Case studies: Community Food Activities

Richmond Sharing Farm: Meal programs and Richmond Food Bank

Terra Nova Rural Park is a 63 acre park owned by the City of Richmond. The Sharing Farm Society operates a community farm on 4 acres of the parkland and grows food primarily for donation to the Richmond food bank. There are a diversity of community food programs on site, the farm hosts over 1000 volunteers per year as well as operates a farm school run in conjunction with a local university. The Sharing Farm operates a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) box program to generate revenue from farming and donates thousands of pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to meal programs and the Richmond Food Bank each year.³ Sandown could similarly contribute fresh food to local organizations or food banks on the peninsula.

³ Sharing Farm Society. (2012). About Us. <http://www.sharingfarm.ca/about/>



Farmers on 57th: Therapeutic Gardens

Farmers on 57th is a one acre urban farm located at the George Pearson Centre, which is a long-term care facility for people with disabilities in Vancouver. There is a commercial farm operation as well as community activities on site. One of the community programs, [the Garden Club](#), creates opportunities for residents of George Pearson to participate in gardening and growing food. The program pairs residents with volunteers and has constructed garden beds that are accessible for people in wheelchairs and with disabilities. The community gardens at Sandown could be designed to include garden beds suitable for seniors and people with disabilities to participate in.

Groundswell Network Society: Community Greenhouse

The [Community Greenhouse](#) is located on land owned by a school district in Invermere and is operated by the Groundswell society. The Greenhouse is used as a base to offer programs, events, and workshops to people of all ages on local food production and environmental sustainability practices. The Greenhouse was designed by the community to not only produce local food but to be a model of sustainability. It relies completely on solar energy and rainwater. The Greenhouse has been in operation since 2009 and “is an incredible asset that serves as a hub bringing people together for food, education, social contact and inspiration.”⁴ A community greenhouse and being a model of sustainability were suggestions we heard for Sandown and Groundswell provides a successful example.

Storage and Processing Facilities: There was a strong identification of storage and processing facilities as a need and opportunity in the area. For processing, establishing a commercial kitchen on site for both farmers and community groups was commonly suggested. From the farming community we also heard the need for a local abattoir and for processing, aggregation and storage facilities. While it was not specified in the input, note that there is a poultry abattoir in North Saanich and hence the need may be for a red meat abattoir. The concerns with regards to an abattoir at Sandown included impact on neighbours, land footprint, water requirements, effluent and waste management. Any

⁴ <http://groundswellnetwork.ca/community-greenhouse/>

facilities on site could benefit both growers at Sandown as well as growers across the region. It will be necessary to ensure processing facilities are in line with the ALC regulations which. The ALC allows farmers to process, cook, freeze and pack their crops on land in the Agricultural Land Reserve provided that at least 50 per cent of the farm products are grown on the farm or are supplied by a co-operative of farmers. There was interest in converting the Jockey House into a processing facility or multi-use building inclusive of a processing facility. The case studies below provide examples of other community storage and processing facility initiatives in BC.

Case Studies: Community Storage and Processing Facilities

Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust: Community Farm Produce Centre

Based on community input a Farm Produce Centre will be developed on a parcel of land that was acquired by the Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust as an amenity contribution. The Salt Spring Island Farm Produce Centre will assist farms with the processing and wholesaling/distribution of locally grown produce. It aims to support small-growers, who cannot afford their own processing infrastructure through access to shared infrastructure and it aims to increase the supply of local food to the island. The Centre will additionally benefit the community as it will be made available for workshops, training, community food education and cooking programs. We heard the need for a similar facility from farmers and community members on the Saanich Peninsula. Currently funding is being sought for the establishment and then the goal is for the Centre to operate on a break even basis. The plans for the Centre are available from the [Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance site](#).

Senden Sustainable Agriculture Resource Centre: Processing Facility & Storage

The [Senden Centre](#) is a community food initiative located on farmland owned by a non-profit society (Upper Skeena Development Centre) in Hazelton. The primary goal of the Centre is to provide an opportunity for community members to gain skills for work and sustainable living through food, wild harvesting, and agricultural activities. The project includes a demonstration market garden, an approved commercial processing facility, vegetable cold storage and a retail outlet. It will support local farmers to create value-added products and increase their marketing channels and will contribute to the food security of the region. The proposed plan is to have a government approved commercial kitchen/processing facility as part of a multi-functional activity centre on the site that will be used for both commercial and community activities.

Farmers Market: We heard very strong support for a farmers market on site and for the food grown on site to be made locally available to the community. There was preference for both a permanent year round farmers market and a temporary farmers market expressed. Several participants suggested converting the old jockey house into a permanent market place for farmers and artisans. There is already a vibrant North Saanich farmers market and the organizers of this market would have valuable input on planning the market aspect of Sandown.

2. Ecological Conservation

Maintenance of natural areas and the ecological value of the land were found to be very important to the community. There are currently treed areas, a pond, and marshy areas that people want to see maintained for public enjoyment and to provide habitat for a diversity of species. There is strong support for ensuring natural areas are protected from the impact of recreational and agricultural activities developed on the land.

Conservation: Conserving the trees, ponds, natural areas and wildlife habitat that currently exists on site was very strongly supported by a clear majority of participants. We also heard that it was important in selecting and implementing other activities on the site that conservation of natural areas be taken into consideration at all times. For instance ensuring that trails and agricultural practices are designed to minimize the impact on the surrounding ecology.

Restoration: There was an interest in active restoration of the native ecology and in controlling invasive species. It was suggested that this could be done by community groups or as an educational activity for students. We also heard support for working with and integrating First Nations knowledge of the land and ecology into any restoration activities.

Interpretation: Interpretation and enjoyment of the natural areas and the biodiversity supported by these areas was indicated to be an activity in which many people would like to participate. This can be done through walking trails and wildlife viewing areas. There were also some suggestions for creating interpretative trails with signage about the native plants and animals for people to learn.



3. Recreation, Culture, Heritage and Equestrian

While the priority for the land is food and agricultural uses, it is through recreational, community events and educational opportunities that a large majority of the community will be involved at Sandown. This is reflected in the survey findings shown in Figure 5 above in which a community market place, walking trails, community celebrations, an agricultural demonstration site and nature interpretation were indicated to be the ways in which the greatest numbers of community members will get directly involved at Sandown. This is also reflected in the community's valuation of Sandown as a community gathering place and it is largely through the recreational, cultural and heritage aspects of the site that

community gathering and place making will be enabled. Agri-Tourism activities were mentioned often as ways to not only promote celebration of agriculture, promote education and also have the potential to bring in revenue to the Sandown site. It is important to note that there is an active equestrian community in North Saanich and the equestrian activities were expressed to be very important to many participants both in terms of recreation and preserving the history of the property. The development of the recreational aspects of the site and the cultural and heritage aspects are important to both community building and to individual health and wellness through active living and engagement.

Public Trails: We heard that public trails were very important for Sandown. Not only would they provide access for recreation and physical health, but as they were adjacent to land growing food would also provide educational value. It was also felt that public trail access to farm stands or a market at the site would benefit the agriculture producers. There were concerns raised around ensuring the public and their horses or dogs did not interfere with the farming operations and this needs to be considered in the design. Trails are a non-agricultural use allowed on ALR lands and there are trail development guidelines that can assist in the process. While there was clear consensus on having public trails, we heard divergent input with respect to trail types/allowable uses (i.e. walking vs. cycling vs. equestrian, dog vs. no dogs, ATV vs. no motorized vehicles, multi vs. single use trails). There was low support for motorized vehicles on the trails. There was concern around motorized vehicles and cyclists impacting safety of walkers and horse back riders. We heard very strong interest in a safe off road horse riding loop from the equestrian community. There are people interested in trails for different uses and it will be important to design a system that is compatible with a diversity of uses whether it be mixed use trails, different uses on different days, or different sets of trails for single use. Lastly, people would like the trails to be designed to link up with existing trail networks in North Saanich.

Agri-tourism: We heard that there was the potential to combine community recreation, education and celebration through agri-tourism activities on the site. Many of these types of activities are identified in other areas of the report, but include things like livestock shows, tours, and festivals. These activities were also identified as potential fundraisers or revenue generators for Sandown. Agri-tourism activities allowed in the ALR include:

- Educational tours – general public, school children
- On-farm marketing, including u-pick and pumpkin patches
- Temporary corn maze or christmas tree maze
- Agricultural heritage events
- Ranch or farm tours
- Livestock shows
- Harvest festivals
- On-farm classes and/or workshops related to the farm operation
- Farm stays or B&B
- On-farm processing facility tours

Equestrian: The equestrian history and continued equestrian use of Sandown is very important to community members. We heard a lot of interest in publicly accessible, off road, safe horse trails and specifically for horse only trails. There were some concerns raised over the impact of the horses on the natural areas that needs to be taken into consideration in the trail design. We also heard support for keeping one of the tracks and making it available for riding and/or designating an area for a community riding ring. There was also interest in having horse riding programs or a club for children or the general public and this has the potential of being a revenue generating activity on the site. There were a few individuals who questioned the need for more equestrian areas and suggestions that the equestrian community is already well served. It is also useful to note that the land use is transitioning from its previous equestrian use to an agricultural focus. Equestrian uses are permitted on ALR land, however as food production is cited as the priority use for Sandown, some of the equestrian uses must be compatible with the food and agricultural goals for the site. The equestrian community had a strong presence and interest in contributing to the success of equestrian activities on the land, with the understanding that equestrian activities would be complementary to other activities.

Case Study: Southlands Equestrian Trails Development

The Southlands neighbourhood of Vancouver has a strong equestrian community and the city has undertaken a trails development project. A participant suggested referring to this initiative as an example for the development of equestrian trails at Sandown linked with a network of trails in North Saanich. The trails in Southlands are being developed on city owned lands with the goal of creating a network of safe equestrian trails for the community. The development process is detailed on the [City of Vancouver's website](#).

Arts and Events: Participating in community celebrations was the third highest activity that survey respondents indicated they would be interested in participating in. As discussed in the values section there is strong support for Sandown as a place for gathering and bringing the community together. Within the theme of community celebrations we heard a variety of specific ideas for events on site, and before proceeding with any would need to ensure they are compatible with the agricultural uses and the ALR regulations. Suggestions we heard included community events, workshops, celebrations, flower shows, garden shows, agriculture fairs, artisan workshop spaces, artisan spaces at market, outdoor music, and outdoor theatre. Several people suggested keeping/rebuilding grandstands for a seating area for outdoor events. Several of these ideas are also activities that could generate revenue for Sandown. Note that while many people indicated that they would like to participate in events and celebrations, it was not indicated to be one of the most valued activities or benefits the community envisions for Sandown.

Heritage: Throughout the consultations we heard a lot about the history of the site and the role it has played in the community. There was strong interest in finding ways to recognize and celebrate the value of the property and its history to the community. Suggestions included to reuse and repurpose components of Sandown infrastructure (such as barn doors and glass for greenhouses, wood for siding); install interpretive signage at key

locations (like the big oak tree where race horses are buried, story about the kids pony races, the track announcer etc.); use the jockey house as an interpretive cultural centre/community museum with displays on the racetrack and First Nations culture and history. Alongside plaques there are creative ways of using mobile tagging (e.g. QR Codes) or self guided audiotours that could link the physical site with a digital repository of history and information.



The old horse barns and relics of the Sandown racetrack remain on the site. People are interested in salvaging and repurposing materials where possible to integrate the Sandown racetrack history into the new iteration of Sandown.

Celebrate First Nations Culture: There was considerable interest in working with and celebrating local First Nations' culture and knowledge, especially with respect to the land, native ecology and integrating uses of cultural plants, medicines and foods at Sandown. Some suggestions included collaborating with First Nations partners to integrate wild harvesting and gathering into the food production activities at Sandown and creating interpretative walking trails with signage on native plants and cultural uses. According to a First Nations participant who walked the land with us, Sandown was a place of refuge for the WSÁNEĆ Peoples when warring tribes came from the North. Many Walk and Talk participants liked the idea of this history being a premise for Sandown going forward - a place of refuge for wildlife, for people, for sustainable agricultural practices, for weaving history into the present, for learning and for community gathering.

Case Studies: Indigenous Programming

UBC Farm: Indigenous Initiatives

UBC Farm recognizes that it is located on unceded Musqueam territory and strives to engage and create positive relationships with local Indigenous communities. The farm is currently host to [four Indigenous initiatives](#) who manage gardens on the land. The

initiatives link land, culture, food, skills development, youth outreach, community health and research. The programs are all collaborative and involve both academic partnerships at UBC and community partnerships with several organizations in Vancouver. The creation of opportunities for urban Indigenous residents in Vancouver to connect with food and land has had positive impacts on the lives of the many participants. The programs also create an opportunity for the many other community, student and research groups at the UBC Farm to learn about Indigenous food systems. The University of Victoria offers courses and programs rooted in the cultural and historical perspectives of Indigenous peoples and could be a partner in developing programs at Sandown that support Indigenous students and communities.

Lifecycles: PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Project

The [PEPÁKEN HÁUTW project](#) provides hands-on participatory learning opportunities for children and adults. The project offers year round food systems programming, workshops, food celebrations and feasts for W̱SÁNEĆ students of all ages, and invites knowledge keepers, elders and other community members to share and celebrate. The program is currently based at the ŁÁU, WELNEW tribal school on the Saanich Peninsula. There may be opportunity to work with this existing program to integrate First Nations' food and cultural programming at Sandown and to engage local First Nations communities and elders in the development of Sandown.

4. Teaching, Learning and Research

We heard a lot about the education potential of Sandown from creating practical hands-on demonstration areas and courses for growing food, to farm schools for new growers, to providing tours for schools and the public. We also heard a lot of interest from UVic to look at Sandown as a potential site for a long-term field school that could be a home not only for student service learning to support the site's activities, but also for research that could generate localized knowledge, and provide social and economic benefits. Below is a summary of some of the key things we heard about.

Experiential education programs for children: There was strong support for and recognition of the important opportunity to connect with neighbouring schools and create food, agriculture, and environmental education programs for children in North Saanich. Sandown provides a unique opportunity for hands-on learning opportunities for children both in the agricultural activities as well as for environmental education. Many participants suggested building relationship with local schools to run educational programs at Sandown. There was also support for offering farm tours to school groups and community groups and creating school gardens for children to learn about growing food. The UBC Farm in Vancouver has educational programs that could be used as a reference for the development of Sandown.

Case Studies: Experiential education programs for children

UBC Farm: Children's Programs

The UBC Farm is a model of a wide diversity of integrated community and research programs on an operational market farm. The UBC Farm has an area of gardens dedicated to its three Children's Programs. The [Intergenerational Landed Learning program](#) connects generations through experiential education on food, agriculture, the environment and well-being. The program is an initiative of the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia. The UBC Farm also offers the [Farm Wonders Day Camp and Farm Discovery Tours](#) during the school year for children. These programs provide examples of integrating hands-on educational activities into a working farm, ideas for partnering with public schools to bring children out to the farm, and partnering with a University to develop farm/garden based curriculum for kids.

Lifecyles: Growing Schools

The [Growing Schools program](#) connects children in Victoria with the food they eat and provides hands-on food systems education opportunities through school garden programs. Growing Schools offers five hands-on workshops that have been designed to directly contribute to the Learning Outcomes of the Ministry of Education. These existing workshops may be used as a reference for developing educational programs at Sandown in conjunction with neighbouring public schools.

Farm to School BC

This provincial wide initiative aims to support programs to "bring healthy, local food into schools and provide students with hands-on learning opportunities that foster food literacy, all while strengthening the local food system and enhancing school and community connectedness." [Farm to School BC](#) provides a diversity of resources for both integrating fresh food into school cafeterias and agricultural education programs for schools. There are a number of resources and funding opportunities specific to Farm to School/School Food Programs that are listed on the their website that could assist in the development of programs at Sandown.

Agricultural and sustainability education for the public: Alongside programs for children there was also strong support for teaching and learning opportunities for the general public. There was very strong support for having an educational or food and agricultural literacy component to the food and farming activities at Sandown. There were also suggestions for ecological education, sustainable design and building programs, climate change awareness programs, and permaculture design courses to be offered at Sandown. A demonstration farm site could be used to offer hands-on courses for the public. There was also strong support for designing the farm component, including commercial farming, of Sandown to integrate public education. Ideas included trails through agricultural areas for public viewing, educational signage to inform the public on food production and conservation activities, farm tours for community groups, a community seed library, and public farmers markets.

Agricultural education for new farmers: Another form of education we heard support for was farm training programs or a field school specifically for new or beginning farmers. People expressed concerns over declining numbers of young farmers and supported the idea of a training program or incubator farm with an educational component to help support and grow new farmers in the area. The UBC Farm in Vancouver offers a hands-on practicum program for new farmers and Kwantlen Polytechnic University offers courses in sustainable horticulture with the option of a season long practicum at the Richmond Sharing Farm. These existing programs could be looked to as potential models.

Case Studies: Farm Schools & Incubator Farms

UBC Farm: Practicum in Sustainable Agriculture (located on endowment land)

The [UBC Farm Practicum program](#) is a season long apprenticeship for aspiring new farmers that integrates classroom learning, learning through hands on field work and field trips. It is open to university students and community members of any age, and it can contribute towards university credits for students in agricultural programs at UBC. This program is an example of a hands-on farm school, geared towards individuals with little to no experience, and is based on curriculum developed by UBC Farm. It is led by a full-time field instructor with contributions from many guest academics and professionals. The program has greater demand than it can meet and reports that approximately 50% of graduates to date have continued careers in farming.

Haliburton Community Organic Farm: Incubator Model (located on municipal land)

The [Haliburton Farm Society](#) leases land from the municipality of Saanich and in turn manages rental agreements with farmers. Haliburton offers short-term leases to farmers and provides an opportunity for beginning farmers to develop their skills within a supportive community. Working alongside other farmers provides mentorship opportunities, collaborative marketing channels, shared infrastructure and buildings. This allows farmers to get started without making a risky financial investment right away in land/buildings/machinery, which is a key function of the incubator farm model. Haliburton creates a community on site through having multiple farm businesses and integrates surrounding community through food sales, workshops and volunteer opportunities.

Kwantlen Polytechnic University: Richmond Farm School & Richmond Incubator Farm (located on municipal lands)

[Kwantlen's Institute for Sustainable Horticulture](#) partners with the Richmond Sharing Farm Society to deliver a season long farm school program based at the Sharing Farm located on the municipally owned Terra Nova lands. The [Richmond Farm School](#) is a 10 month program that mixes classroom education and hands on learning for individuals interested in careers in small-scale sustainable agriculture. The Richmond Incubator Farm, which is also located on city owned land, provides beginning farmers short-term access to

½ acre plot of land as well as to shared tools, infrastructure, and training to develop their farm business. The Richmond Incubator Farm is also operated in partnership with KPU and the idea is to provide farm school graduates an opportunity to take the next step to establish their independent farm business and hone their farming skills. The Richmond Farm School and Incubator Farm present a stepwise approach to supporting new farmers and an approach that is delivered through a partnership between a University, community organization and municipality.

For more detailed information on Incubator Farms see [CRFAIR's Incubator Farms Introductory Guide](#).

Agricultural Research and University Student Learning: There was also support for educational opportunities for university and college students through research and experiential learning opportunities at Sandown. We heard support for collaborating with UVic and other local educational institutions to pursue both research and student learning opportunities at Sandown. There were also a few suggestions for partnering with a university to develop Sandown into an experimental and research farm. The UBC Farm and UBC's Agassiz Dairy Research Centre were suggested as models. Vision Sandown has already been collaborating with the Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community University Engagement and the Faculty of Geography at UVic which has been a successful and mutually beneficial relationship. It creates learning opportunities for students and provides valuable expertise, resources and research to support the development of Sandown.

Section 4: What We Heard: Infrastructure, Governance, Financing

Infrastructure

Input on infrastructure included both discussions of existing infrastructure on site as well as new infrastructure required in the redevelopment of Sandown. An important element of discussions on infrastructure was the question of who is responsible for installation, maintenance and financing of the new infrastructure, should any be required (irrigation, fencing, roads, ditching, etc.)

There is infrastructure remaining on the land from the Sandown Racetrack. The infrastructure has been inventoried and its status assessed. For a full review of existing infrastructure and its exact location on the site please see the [report produced by PHH ARC Environmental](#) available on the Vision Sandown website. The majority of the buildings on site have already been scheduled for decommission. The removal of buildings and structures is included as a requirement of the current landowner and is stipulated in The Site Remediation, Land Reclamation and Drainage Requirements for the development of Sandown are described in [Schedule A To Phased Development Agreement](#).

Opportunities to Repurpose Existing Infrastructure

Community members expressed a strong interest in repurposing buildings and infrastructure when possible and in salvaging and repurposing materials from buildings that are removed. In particular there were several suggestions for use of the jockey house as a new permanent market space, as an educational facility, or as cultural centre. The grandstands have been slated for removal however there were several community members who wanted to see the seating kept and used for events. Some of the structures (the long sheds adjacent to the jockey houses) were considered sound enough to be storage for agriculture purposes, or potentially a row of undercover market stalls. The viewing towers could be kept both for historical value as well as potential for wildlife viewing. There are currently public washrooms on the site which can remain. There is a cell phone tower which will remain and provides a source of income. There is a caretaker house located on site. Finally, there are hard surfaces (e.g. the track) which could be kept and integrated into new uses. There was significant interest in keeping the limestone track for riding and/or as a hard surface that can be used for transporting agricultural goods or machinery on site. A drawback we heard to keeping the track is that it may fragment the agricultural area. People would like to salvage materials from the old horse stalls, buildings, gates, old signage to be repurposed thereby incorporating history into the development of the site.

Key Infrastructure for Initial Phase of Development

In order for Sandown to become a viable food producing farm there is some key infrastructure that will need to be developed in line with the proposed activities. We heard the key first steps for infrastructure include:

- Drainage
- Fencing around production areas (8ft minimum)
- Irrigation
- Electrical power for irrigation pumps, lighting, etc.
- Storage facilities
- Access roads
- Parking

Proposed Infrastructure to Support Priority Activities

We received input on ideas for new infrastructure requirements for a diversity of proposed site activities. Processing facilities and a market space were the most repeated suggestions for new infrastructure on the site. Requests for a community kitchen, commercial kitchen, processing facility and abattoir were commonly made. Participants expressed a demand for both access to commercial processing/kitchen facilities as well as a community kitchen. A single multi-use facility could be designed to meet the needs of both commercial and community group users. The issue of housing for farmers on site was raised. Housing may be a challenge, particularly if there will be multiple farmers on site and with regards to ALR and municipal zoning regulations. Housing for farmers and workers is an important consideration in the development of agricultural uses of the land. Smaller infrastructure

projects that were very commonly suggested included public seating areas and interpretive signage around the property. The following is a summary list of ideas for new infrastructure we heard over the course of the consultations:

- Small-scale processing facilities inc. commercial kitchen/community kitchen, abattoir
- Education facility for children and/or farm school
- Permanent, indoor farmers market and artisan vendor space
- Multi-use building with commercial kitchen and meeting spaces for events and classroom
- Community garden plots (raised beds/boxes)
- Benches, picnic tables, outdoor seating and meeting space
- Heritage and interpretive signage
- Cold storage
- Tool storage
- Greenhouses
- Livestock housing
- Auction site for livestock
- Horse stables
- Milking parlour
- Housing for farmers/housing for caretakers to help administer programs
- Community heritage museum
- Local First Nation's cultural centre/ethnoecology centre
- Compost facility (potential to redirect municipal green waste)

We heard far more suggestions than can all be implemented. It is clear from the input that there is support for new infrastructure to facilitate the implementation of the priority activities identified by the community. The feasibility and cost of infrastructure requirements for each activity should be weighed in the planning process. Larger infrastructure projects could be part of a phased development plan and be implemented over a longer time period while activities with lower infrastructure requirements are implemented in the short term of a phased development plan.

Financing Infrastructure Upgrades and New Infrastructure

One of the repeated concerns heard throughout the engagement process was with respect to financing and in particular how and by whom needed infrastructure on the land will be paid for. In particular there were concerns over who would fund infrastructure such as fencing, drainage, and irrigation which are fundamental for successful farming on the site. Drainage, any required soil remediation and the removal of unwanted buildings is the responsibility of the current land owner as stipulated in The Site Remediation, Land Reclamation and Drainage Requirements for the development of Sandown are described in [Schedule A To Phased Development Agreement](#).

With respect to fencing, the Phased Development Agreement States that the current landowner must install a wire fabric fence 6 feet in height and install a vegetative buffer consisting of edible fruit and nut-bearing plants and trees between the commercial land and agricultural land and construct a wire fabric fence 4 feet in height along Glamorgan Road as far as the northeast corner of the intersection of Glamorgan Road and Littlewood Road. We heard concerns that the fencing planned is not high enough to

effectively keep predators out of the agricultural lands. It was recommended that fencing constructed around the agricultural land be 8 feet high.

With respect to financing further infrastructure requirements there are a diversity of options to be considered. It is recommended that permanent site infrastructure such as perimeter fencing, irrigation access, public seating areas, public bathrooms be the responsibility of the District. Infrastructure specific to a project or a farm can be the responsibility of either the organization or commercial farmer leading the project. For instance in the case of a commercial farmer leasing land, they would be responsible for needed infrastructure on their plot such as irrigation lines, tools, trellises, hoophouses, etc. There will need to be a set of guidelines established on allowable infrastructure and land development for farmers leasing land. In the case of infrastructure such as a community greenhouse or community garden beds there is the opportunity for a community organization to lead the initiative and access financial resources through grants and fundraising. Very large scale projects such as a commercial kitchen would likely require diversified financing which could include financial resources from the District, grant and fundraising by potential community users, and seeking private investors. There is also the opportunity for in-kind support; for instance community labour in building garden boxes, donations of building supplies from local businesses, or collaboration with students and faculty for research and design elements. Clarity around who is responsible for the initial financing and continued maintenance of old and new infrastructure on the site is a key to successful development and long term management of the site.

Governance

There was limited input with regards to governance and site management. However, there was recognition of the need for long term management and monitoring of the site and participants raised the issue of whose responsibility that will be and how site management will be funded. There are different options the municipality could consider with respect to governance and funding. CRFAIR's recent report [Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: a Local Government Farmland Trust Approach](#) explored the ways that local governments can look at owning and governing land to make it accessible and utilized for food production. It provides a detailed description of different models for local government to acquire and hold farmland, to finance farmland acquisition and to manage activities on the farmland. The report was based on consultations with local government and other key stakeholders on the peninsula.

A key element of the Local Government Farmland Trust report was mechanisms for the acquisition of land into a public land bank, and in the case of Sandown this step has been achieved through a density bonus rezoning application. That is the 83 acres of farmland was provided to the municipality in exchange for the rezoning of the 12 acres of land to commercial. Sandown is a successful example of using a community amenity contribution or density bonusing approach to increase a municipality's food and agricultural assets. This is one of the strategies that was highlighted in our consultations for the operations of a Local Government Farmland Trust approach.

The report also discusses possible governance models for the management of municipal farmland. Two aspects of governance are considered: 1) the governance of the land

acquisition, 2) the governance and management of the day to day activities (operations) on the land. In the case of Sandown the governance and decision making process around the land transfer and development plan for Sandown is under the direction of council with input from staff and the community. With respect to day to day management operations there are two key options, both of which there are currently examples of in practice:

1. Local government staff be responsible for the farmland management and access agreements with farmers. In this case the District would be leasing directly to farmers;
2. The government leases the land to a non-governmental organization who is then responsible for managing activities on the land and access agreements with farmers. In this case the non-governmental organization can directly manage activities on the land (e.g. Richmond Sharing Farm) or can manage sub-leases/rental agreements with farmers (e.g. Haliburton Community Farm) and other organizations who can support complimentary activities.

The District has already expressed a preference for the second option – for a partner organization to be responsible for the ongoing management and costs of the property once the conditions set out by the Agricultural Land Commission for the land transfer have been met.

| Government Manages Lease Agreements and Oversight of Land | Non-Profit Manages Lease Agreements and Oversight of Land |
|--|---|
| Pros <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain control over tenant selection & property management • Rental income to District • Streamlined, single lease agreement | Pros <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in government staff time • Non-profit link to community, engagement • Non-profit can leverage non-governmental funds for programming • Provide support for farmers, run training programs • Often better knowledge and expertise in farmland management and programming |
| Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government staff time to manage • Lack of knowledge or expertise in leasing and managing farmland | Cons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with a society/board of directors may be a deterrent to some farmers |

It is important to recognize that the land being managed for agricultural uses on the Saanich Peninsula is the traditional territory of the Saanich Peoples. There is great opportunity to work with First Nations governments and communities on the Peninsula to determine how land access needs, food activities, and knowledge of First Nations communities can be integrated into the food and agricultural goals of North Saanich and the development Sandown. As an example, the recently launched [Tsawwassen First Nation Farm School](#) links sustainable agriculture and traditional indigenous food systems in a land based farm school program.

Case Study: Public Land Leased to and Managed by a Society

Richmond Sharing Farm, Newman Farm Central Saanich, and View Royal Welland Community Orchard

Terra Nova Rural Park is a 63 acre park owned by the City of Richmond. The Sharing Farm Society operates a community farm on 4 acres of the parkland and grows food primarily for donation to the Richmond food bank. The land use is managed by the Society and there is a hired farm manager who runs the farming operations and works to integrate the many community volunteers on which this farm relies. The site also has a community garden offering garden boxes to individual community members and runs a diversity of workshops and events on the land for the public. The farm is also host to the Richmond Farm School run by Kwantlen Polytechnic University which is a 10 month hands-on training program for entry into agriculture. The Sharing Farm is an example of agricultural activities on public land directly run by a non-profit society and an example of a farm on public park land providing a diversity of public benefits to the community. The Sharing Farm hosts over 1,000 volunteers per year, provides thousands of pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to meal programs and the Richmond Food Bank each year, and provides educational opportunities for entry into agriculture.⁵ The activities on Newman Farm in Central Saanich is similarly being managed by a non-profit society, the Farmlands Trust Society, who leases land from Central Saanich. Welland Community Orchard is another example of this same arrangement in a more urban context. Rex Welland donated his orchard to the City of View Royal when he passed away and the City of View Royal has an agreement with LifeCycles, a local non-profit organization, to support teaching and learning, and community food growing on the site.

Case Study: Government Lease to Society & Society Rental to Farmers

Haliburton Community Organic Farm Society, Saanich

Haliburton Farm was purchased by the District of Saanich from the CRD in response to community request for the municipality to preserve the agricultural uses of the land. The land is leased to the Haliburton Community Organic Farm Society (HCOFS), managed by a volunteer board of directors, which in turn manages land use and rental agreements to farmers on the land. Haliburton is a community farm with multiple independent farm businesses sharing the land. Farmers rent sections of land for 4 years with an option to renew, and similar to the incubator farm model, Haliburton provides an opportunity for farmers to get started and establish their business without buying land and with support on the land. A unique feature of Haliburton farm is that the land was rezoned by Saanich as Rural Demonstration Farm Zone. Haliburton Farm provides an example of an existing lease template between Saanich and a non-profit society and has an established farmer

⁵ Sharing Farm Society. (2012). About Us. <http://www.sharingfarm.ca/about/>

application process and rental agreements that can be used as templates in future initiatives.⁶

The Farmland Trust Report was focused specifically on governance and management of farmland, however the above options can apply to other activities at Sandown as well. For instance the District could lease land and/or establish an agreement with a non-governmental organization or community groups to manage the non-agricultural activities on the land. As we learn more specifically what activities will be undertaken at Sandown through the engagement and subsequent planning process then we can draw from this work to select or adapt the best model for long term management of Sandown.

Financing

Financing is needed for the development of Sandown, infrastructure, program implementation, operations and monitoring over time. Financial planning and sustainability is fundamental to the success of Sandown. Questions over how to finance the development of Sandown were raised throughout the consultations and participants provided a diversity of suggestions for revenue generation. There were a few participants who expressed that they did not want to see tax dollars spent on the project however there were also those who expressed that funding support from the District was desirable.

The District has already carried out a financial analysis and reports that the Sandown development project will be a financial gain to the District. The appraised value of the 83 acres of land acquired by North Saanich is \$2,400,000. It is estimated that tax and lease revenues, less the costs of improvement, would be in the range of 1.5 – 2.3 million dollars over the first 10 year period. That is Sandown will be a financial gain in the range of 3.9 – 4.7 million dollars to the District over the first 10 year period. The details of this analysis as are available in the [March 2012 Staff Report](#) available on the Vision Sandown website.

As financing is a key ingredient for success there was a question on the survey that asked respondents to indicate, from a list of possibilities, the ways in which they thought activities at Sandown could be supported. Respondents could indicate which options they thought were possible as well as which ones they considered most desirable and the results are shown in Figure 6 below. The three options which were indicated by the most respondents to be both possible and desirable were:

1. Grants
2. Agri-tourism activities
3. Revenue generation on site

⁶ Haliburton Community Organic Farm Society. (2015). Haliburton Community Organic Farm. haliburtonfarm.org/

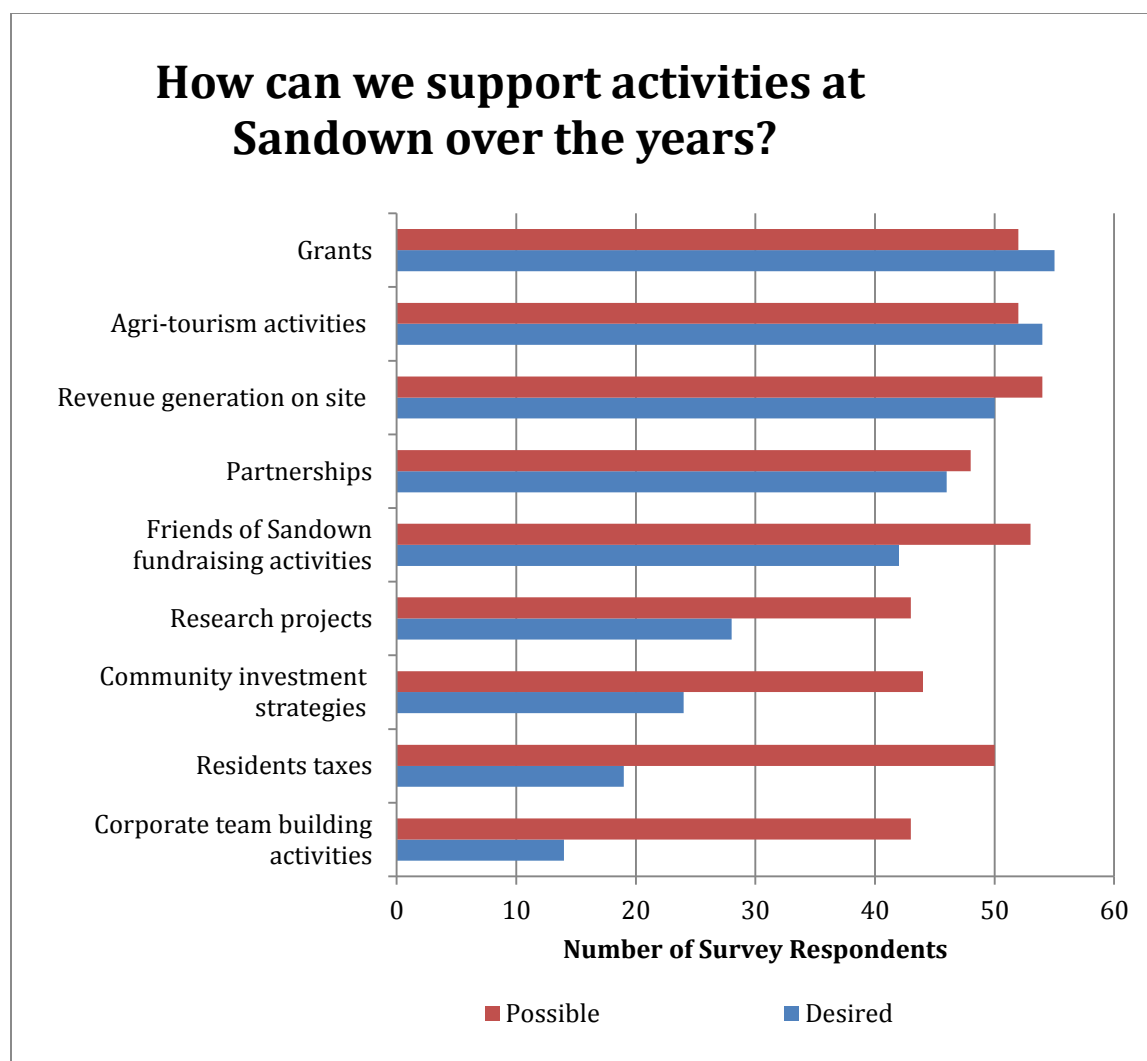


Figure 6: Survey respondents indicated the ways they thought were possible and desirable to support the development of Sandown over time. The graph above displays those mechanisms that had the highest scores of being both desirable and possible at the top of the vertical axis.

Residents taxes were noted to be possible by a significant number of participants but were not indicated to be desirable by the same number of people. There is often times an aversion to increased taxes to residents, however, taxes support key services to residents. There has been strong support and success with the CRD's Parkland Acquisition Fund and the Housing Trust Fund, both of which rely on a property tax mechanism. There is general support for the use of taxes for parks and recreation and affordable housing, and there is opportunity to increase the public's awareness around the benefits that agricultural projects such as Sandown can provide to the public which may then lend to greater support to directing local government revenue to community food and agriculture activities. Also the question did not include commercial taxes which may have received a different response as it has a less direct impact on individual taxes. It is already included in the Sandown development agreement that 50% of commercial tax revenues, from the 12 acres that were rezoned, for the first 5 years would be devoted to agriculture in North Saanich,

including the development of the Sandown farm. We heard support for this financing provision from the community.

In the Local Government Farmland Trust report options for a local government fund to finance the acquisition and management of community food assets is presented. Residential taxes is just one option, there are also mechanisms such as creating a general amenities fund inclusive of food and agriculture. These financing and farmland trust fund options are discussed in detail in the [Local Government Farmland Trust report](#). Alongside the survey we also received input from the consultations on financing activities at Sandown. There is a lot of community support, and though financial resources are certainly required, it is important to note the role that time and labour volunteered by community members can play in actualizing the development of Sandown. We heard strong support for the implementation of activities that are either self-sustaining and/or revenue generating. All commercial farming operations must be self-sustaining and able to finance their own operations. The farming operations would also be revenue generating to the farmer/farm business as well as revenue generating to the site from the lease fees. Non-commercial activities such as trails and community gardens can be self-sustaining through management by community volunteers. Partnering with non-governmental organizations to manage activities on the land opens up revenue streams available to the non-profit sector. There were many good ideas provided for revenue generating activities that could contribute to the development and management of activities on site over time. We heard the following ideas:

| Input on ways to generate revenue for site development and management: | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial taxes from 12 acre development • Cell tower lease income (lease to 2017, opportunity to renew) • Lease revenues from activities on site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Farming ○ Nursery ○ Horse activities ○ Market ○ Restaurant ○ Artisan spaces ○ Research • User group fees • Riding club with membership • Commercial/community kitchen with fees for rental • Community garden space with fees for plot space • Auction old horseshoes, beams from stables, stable doors, etc. to fundraise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market stall fees • Agri-tourism events • Wedding venue • Public /Friends of Sandown Fundraising • Grants – Non-profit, industry, government (e.g. Vancity, Microloans, Whole Foods) • Create a non-profit society specific to Sandown (membership fees, grant access) • Festivals • Music concerts • Open-air theatre • Flower/Garden shows, Cherry blossom festival • Host Feast of Fields event • Host an agricultural fair • Sell limestone from track |

Financial planning is fundamental to the success of Sandown. Based on the input we received a diversified strategy is widely supported and there are many ideas for ways to

generate funds from grants to taxes to revenue generation on site. A phased development approach allows for the financing of Sandown to be spread out over time and for the feasibility and business plans for large investments (e.g. new infrastructure) to be conducted as the project progress and as lower investment initiatives (e.g. trails development) are being implemented. A detailed financial assessment and business plan should accompany the final plan for Sandown and all initiatives managed by a non-governmental organization on site should have a strong business plan for approval.

Financially Successful Agricultural Parks

Successful examples of agricultural parks exist around the globe and can be looked to as models for Sandown. One of the University of Victoria student projects conducted in partnership with CRFAIR studied an agricultural park in the United States and one in Hong Kong. These financially successful cases rely on a diversity of funding strategies including festivals and activities, workshops, interpretative programs, music shows, holiday festivities, conservation displays, public membership, private donations, and management of a foundation specific to the park. These cases as well as other existing models demonstrate that such projects are financially viable and can be used as resources to develop a successful financial plan for Sandown. The student's report is included in Appendix 1. CRFAIR's [Policy Brief on Agriculture Parks Model for the Capital Region](#) provides an analysis of agricultural parks and refers to several successful models in BC and globally.

Section 3: Going Forward

Phased Development Plan

The development of Sandown will be a long term initiative and we heard support for a phased approach. The development of Sandown will be a long term initiative and we heard support for a phased approach. Based on input we received, the following is the outline of a potential phased development plan for the consideration of the District.

Phase 1: Planning and Preparation

- Continue work on site evaluation (soil testing, hydrology assessment, building assessment) with the Landowner and utilizing support from University partners.
- Work with the Landowner to meet all the requirements set out in the Phased Development Agreement and by the ALC:
 - Implement any necessary soil reclamation, soil building and amending activities
 - Install drainage and second catchment pond if required
 - Demolish buildings (salvage materials that can be reused or saved for historical/practical value)
 - Establish vegetative buffers and perimeter fencing
- Install key infrastructure to initiate agricultural activities (fencing, irrigation, access road, tool storage, electricity)
- Conduct a feasibility study of major infrastructure proposed by the community (commercial kitchen, indoor permanent market space, educational facility, multi-use building integrating

| |
|---|
| <p>the previous three activities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue communications, public consultation and engagement (more details below) • Initiate advisory committees to contribute to the planning and implementation of identified priority activity areas for Sandown (see next steps section below) • Engage a landscape architect to create three detailed, spatially accurate, scenarios based on priority activities and biophysical capacity of the land for review and selection of a final (but flexible) plan for Phase 2 • Draft and approve a 10 year Strategic Plan for Sandown in partnership with a community member based advisory committee • Develop protocol for partnering with/leasing to NGOs and/or farmers |
| Phase 2: Implementation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish partnerships with non-governmental organizations to implement and manage activities in line with the finalized Site Plan and Strategic Plan • Establish a permanent Sandown citizen advisory committee • Support any large infrastructure requirements for implementation of key activities (e.g. multi-use building for community food activities & education) • Monitor and evaluate yearly |
| Phase 3: Self-Sustaining Operations |
| <p>Channels created to ensure ongoing communications between organizations managing activities, citizen advisory committee, and District</p> <p>Monitor and evaluate yearly</p> <p>Conduct a detailed review on the outcomes of Sandown initiative in 2025, renew goals and priorities as needed, update Strategic Plan</p> |

Next steps

The following are potential next steps to be taken by the District, community partners and community members to further develop plans and begin implementation of the community vision and priority activities identified in the Vision Sandown engagement process. The emphasis is on steps that can be taken presently to advance the project to the next phase. The set of steps is structured around the four priority activity areas we heard from the community and is based on the input we received.

1. Food Production: Community Food and Commercial Agriculture

- 1.1. Continue to work with agrologists and farmers to determine soil quality and develop a plan to bring the agricultural areas into production (amendments, cover cropping, etc.).
- 1.2. Consider a phased approach; start with implementation of community food activities and incubator farm plots on ready areas and expand over time into larger scale commercial operations in areas where there is a need for land improvements.
- 1.3. Develop/decide on a set of production standards for all future growers working at Sandown.
- 1.4. Determine the actual land area for farming and delineate available land between commercial farm operations, community food production activities, farm school/incubator plots.

- 1.4.1. These were all supported options in the input and it needs to be determined if they can all be implemented or if it would be more successful to focus on fewer options.
- 1.4.2. Liaise with The Farmlands Trust/Newman Farm in Central Saanich and the District of Central Saanich regarding Panama Flats; develop complementary activities rather than redundant for the peninsula.
- 1.5. Develop protocol for leasing and an application process for use of the agricultural lands.
- 1.6. Put out a Request For Proposals for organization(s) to manage the agricultural lands.
 - 1.6.1. This may shape options as it is necessary that there be an organization to champion the implementation of initiatives (e.g. a farm school).
- 1.7. Further assess the community food opportunities and determine where there is the greatest need/potential for involvement/community benefit.
 - 1.7.1. Consider individual community gardens plots, shared community plot/demonstration, community greenhouse.
- 1.8. Work with the North Saanich Farmers market and other markets on the peninsula to determine if there is capacity for a new market and what type of market to develop.
 - 1.8.1. Temporary/permanent, outdoor/indoor, vendor types.
- 1.9. Assess whether a commercial kitchen and/or storage facility is feasible.
 - 1.9.1. ALR regulations, land requirement, conversion of Jockey House, demand, viability.

2. Ecological Conservation and Interpretation

- 2.1. Partner with community groups, conservation organizations, First Nations, and University students to inventory plants and wildlife on site and to identify and map important conservation areas (provide to landscape architect to incorporate into plan).
- 2.2. Organize volunteer and student groups to begin invasive species control and other identified restoration needs.
- 2.3. Partner with post secondary institutions and local farmers to design and plant hedgerows/vegetative buffers between agricultural areas and natural areas.
- 2.4. Engage post secondary students in class projects exploring feasibility of proposed activities at Sandown (e.g. feasibility of agroforestry activities in the natural areas, potential for aquaculture (land based or pond), ethnoecology interpretive trail, alternative energy).

3. Recreation, Culture, Heritage, and Equestrian

- 3.1. Engage a trail design expert to work with the community's input and design a trail system that will best meet a diversity of uses (walking, horse, cycling, dog walking) and minimize impact on natural ecology. Refer to [ALC's recommendations for trails](#).
- 3.2. Assess the compatibility of keeping one of the tracks onsite for horse use or dedicating an area for a community riding ring with food production and natural

area conservation. Determine the feasibility of using the track for transportation/agricultural machinery as well as horse riding.

- 3.3. Develop a repository to collect and organize community stories, photos, memorabilia to integrate into the history and heritage component of Sandown.
- 3.4. Work with community members to identify objects and areas of historical significance on site and work towards installation of informational plaques (inclusive of First Nations histories and cultural connections to the land as well as Sandown Track history).

4. Teaching, Learning & Research

- 4.1. Continue to build partnerships with the University of Victoria, engage the expertise of academic partners, and create teaching, learning and research opportunities for faculty and students throughout the planning and design process.
- 4.2. Incorporate indoor and outdoor learning space into the site plan that can be multi-use (e.g. teaching and learning space for school groups, farmers, community workshops).
- 4.3. Integrate teaching, learning and research opportunities throughout the development of the above three activities on site.

Continued Community Engagement:

- Continue to host site walking tours to keep community members engaged and updated on the development process.
- Continue regular communications and updates on Sandown website.
- Provide updates to the public on the status of the land transfer and progress reports on implementation of the Phased Development Agreement.
- Strike the following activity specific community and expert advisory groups to take action on the next steps listed above for the completion of the planning phase:
 - Food and agriculture advisory group;
 - Natural areas restoration and trails design advisory group, inclusive of equestrian community and First Nations representation;
 - Site heritage advisory group inclusive of First Nations communities.
- Foster partnerships and support from academic institutions, community organizations, residents associations, public schools, First Nations, business community.
- Host an inaugural community event to celebrate the land transfer to North Saanich and bring community together on the site.
- Present site plans created by landscape architect to the community, host a public forum to provide input to District on the site plan options as final step of Phase 1, the District selects and finalizes a site plan to move into implementation phase.



Conclusion: Imagine Sandown

Imagine it is 2025 and you are a thousand feet up looking down at Sandown.

The first thing you will notice at Sandown is fertile agricultural fields enclosed by large perimeter fences that keep the deer out of the food producing areas. The landscape of these food producing areas are diverse and contribute to the biodiversity of the site. The fields are not only full of plant life but are filled with farmers and community members of all ages engaged in agricultural activities and contributing to their community's food security. You will also notice that there are designated walking and equestrian trails around the south of the site that go up and disappear under the canopy at the forested end of the site. You can see people along the trail resting at the benches, eating a picnic lunch, and reading the signs about what was once a racetrack called Sandown under the Oak Tree. You may spot some bird watchers around the site appreciating the wildlife that the natural areas host or some elders from the community teaching a group of children about the medicinal uses of native plants as they walk the trails.

When you look down, the main thing you see is intensively farmed areas of Sandown. In one area, which was known as the grass fields used for parking many years ago, there is a series of 10 one acre plots that are leased out to new growers. They are a sister "incubator" community farm to Haliburton Farm in Saanich and these growers work together to learn about becoming viable food producers. They have a market stand on site that they grow for and also sell their produce at the bustling year around weekly community farmers and artisans market. The market is full of vendors from both Sandown and the peninsula and has grown into an important place of gathering and socializing for the community.

You will also notice a second area, where there are some larger plots of mixed field crops, small fruit trees, and a flock of laying hens. These lands are under long term leases to farmers who know their trade and are excited to be able to demonstrate a successful operation to the people who come and visit Sandown and act as mentors to the new farmers in the incubator program.

There are many visitors who come to Sandown, some just to walk the "Flavour Trail" to see the farm sites and potentially purchase from the farm stand, but others come to actively participate in the shared community garden where they learn to grow food, and feel good about donating it to the seniors lunches at the community center.

If you look down you will also see a lot happening at the old jockey house. There is a hub of student activity with the field school in session, today they look to be working on water conservation and setting up a new drip irrigation and gravity fed rainwater system in the shared community garden. There is also a group of students doing ecological restoration pulling invasive ivy and broom out of the forested area.

The old Jockey house is home to the Farm School, has rooms available for community and school groups, and office space used by community food organizations running programs on site. There is a group of folks setting up for the weekend workshop on storing vegetables for the winter. Depending on the day you may luck out and observe one of the large community celebrations that are hosted at Sandown. These bi-annual events attract

people from all over the Capital Region who come together to celebrate the connection between the land, community and food.

Sandown is a valuable community asset that contributes to the retention of green space and natural resources, to community food security and food literacy, to supporting successful farmers and the local food economy, to bringing people together, and to active, healthy living. Establishing a community vision for Sandown was the first step in the development process and with the strong community involvement and local government leadership that has emerged throughout the initial consultations, the Sandown project has gained momentum and is on the path to success.



Appendix 1: Sandown Raceway as an Agricultural Park: Feasibility Study, student paper by Lorenzo Magzul

Introduction

Sandown Raceway is an old horse racetrack that is no longer in use. The property is located on the Agricultural Land Reserve. In 2014 the Randall family donated 85 acres of the property to the District of North Saanich. In return, 12 other acres of the land have been removed from the ALR and have been authorized for the development of a commercial property. The land is currently being overseen by CRFAIR, (the Capital Regional Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable), who are widely consulting the community looking for potential uses of the land. The goal is to maximize the agricultural benefits from the land.

The land is particularly special because it is now community owned, giving it the unique potential to involve the surrounding community in agriculture. Maximizing agricultural benefits does not necessarily mean using the land only for agriculture. In order to achieve the highest agricultural utility, multiple uses of the land should be considered. Alongside traditional farming, plots and incubator plots, integrating education, interpretation, community events, and a place for social gathering.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a feasibility analysis of potential uses for the Sandown Raceway. Over the last 3 months of classes, we have been conducting primary and secondary research to determine the best approach to the redevelopment of the land. We will compile input collected from community as well as research from other cases of community owned farming projects.

Methodologies

In order to identify potential uses for the land, CRFAIR has undergone many community involvement processes. It is important that this project be conducted in a participatory manner because the use of the land must represent the preferences of the local community.

To understand the community's desired use of the land, we consulted Rhianna Nagel of Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria. Among those working on the project, Rhianna has been heavily involved in community meetings and consultations regarding the land.

After meeting with Rhianna, she provided us with a summarized list of suggested uses of the land as identified by the community:

- community gardens (both small plots and larger plots - each with associated fees)
- incubator plots
- leasing larger plots for farming and grazing (primarily sheep)
- protected areas - with some accessible areas having interpretive signage

- use of jockey house:
 - small historical museum
 - farmers' market
 - community kitchen/ processing facilities
- horse riding coop with membership fees
- walking trails
- re-using materials - salvage for building community garden plots and also for auctioning
- place of refuge/ reflection/ picnic area

Rhianna emphasized the goal of multiple uses for the land. It is a fairly large property, and only around 10 acres of it are suggested for an incubator farm program. Another 10 or 20 acres will be used for small farm plots. Therefore there is plenty of space for the development of many other programs and uses.

In order to analyze the feasibility of these projects and ideas, research was conducted on 2 different case studies of community based agricultural parks. Montgomery Park in Maryland, USA offers a huge variety of purposes given that it is made up of 454 acres: agricultural use, forests, festivals, interpretive programs, and educational programs. Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Gardens in Hong Kong uses over 363 acres of land in one of the highest mountain. It was established to serve as a protected area for endangered animals and plants. It also provides educational experience to the public in order to understand the severe situation of endangered species due to deforestation and illegal animal hunting. Each of the two cases shows the successful implementation a few of the proposed projects at Sandown.

Case Study 1: Montgomery Park

The first case that we have studied is Montgomery Park, in Maryland, USA. In total, the park is made up of 454 acres: 185 acres are dedicated to agricultural use, 193 acres are forests, and 77 acres comprise of roads, a parkade, and the Agricultural History Farm Park. Montgomery Park generates revenues from multiple sources.

One of the major sources of revenue is the festivals and activities organized by the Agricultural History Farm Park. The Harvest and Spring Festival is a main source of revenue, attracting more than 5,000 visitors each year. Activities during the festival includes a corn maze, garden tours, candle making, working farm animals demonstrations, scarecrow making, antique farm equipment demonstrations, soap making, sheep shearing, and a market of seasonal products and crafts. The park organizes smaller activities throughout the year, such as interpretive programs about natural or cultural history, speakers on topics like water gardening, and an educational program for youth to serve the community and learn about agriculture at the same time. These smaller activities offered by the park attract a total of 3,000 visitors per year (Hench, 2005).

The Agricultural History Farm Park also raised money through tributes. They placed benches in the park with a plaques to remember a deceased person. They raised close to US\$60,000 in 2013 from tributes donations alone (Montgomery Parks Foundation, 2013).

Another source of funds is the opportunity for community members to become “Friends” of the Agricultural History Farm Park. Friends receive benefits according to the amount of money they contributed (see Appendix 1). The park raised only US\$16,000 from the Friends’ program in 2013, but the program brings other advantages rather than only funding the park. Activities and festivals are organized to generate the necessary funding. They host Blue Grass Shows for a festival of traditional Blue Grass music. Christmas on the Farm is an event with music, elaborate decorations and children’s activities. Events held on the farm such as these two are popular throughout the community. The Friends of Agricultural History Farm Park grow a variety of farm crops to demonstrate the cycle of soil preparation, planting, cultivating, and harvesting during events. Montgomery Park has additionally funded the construction of a large building for the storage of farm equipment. They maintain the building themselves and occasionally use it to hold events (Hench, 2005).

Finally, Montgomery Park obtained a large portion of its revenue through donations. Donors can choose to make a general donation or a donation dedicated to a particular project. Another source of donation is the Donation Boxes, which can be installed in public centers (such as shopping mall in the park’s neighborhood) (Montgomery Parks Foundation, 2013).

Case Study 2:

Hong Kong Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden (KFGB)

The second case we found it helpful to Sandown’s case is the Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, located in Tai Mo Shan, one of the highest mountain in Hong Kong. It used up over 148 hectares of land including a deep-set valley between two ridges, with a stream running steeply down through the forest. The park is made up of 366 acres including a picnic area, museums, theme gardens, vegetable terraces, 8 km of walking trails, 9 km of roads, and conservation and educational facilities. (Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Gardens, 2015)

Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden is a non-profit organization that aims to provide agricultural support to poor farmers who suffered from natural disasters, including extreme weather conditions such as floods and exploitation of natural resources. KFGB also focuses on promoting biodiversity conservation of Hong Kong and south China is creating greater environmental awareness such as the need for protected areas for endangered animals and plants. They have a mission statement of educating the public to protect endangered species and plants in order to prevent further extinction.

Nature Conservation and Education Facilities

One of the major sources of revenue is the educational displays of endangered animals and plants organized by Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden. It attracted more than 166,000 visitors last year. This organization believes that it has the obligation to help conserve the growing number of endangered species, including flora and fauna in the region and to educate the public about the importance of protecting endangered species

and plants. This is because many animals and plants are under severe threat due to uncontrolled 'harvesting' of nature, illegal wildlife trade, and the loss of natural habitats as a direct result of people's disconnection from nature. To address this problem, Kadoorie Farm sets up Native Mammal and Plants Displays as places for the public to know what kind of highly endangered species must be protected from international illegal trade of animals. Previous deforestation and several illegal pet trade in Hong Kong has led to the increasing number of endangered species. This situation is now improving thanks to the local conservation efforts. However, many mammals in the region still face a threat from the illegal pet trade, with wild populations of some species dwindling at an alarming rate. Therefore, these endangered animals will be kept captive in enclosures inside the agricultural park. They have often been rescued and cared for and no longer to be released outside the forest to avoid further extinction. For example, in the native mammal display, there are two leopards that were rescued as orphaned kittens (see Appendix 2). Also, Kadoorie Farm has an educational display of plants endangered through habitat destruction and over-collection from the wild, some fern species, especially the tree ferns, as seen in KFBG, are now gravely endangered. Kadoorie Farm is trying to send a key message to the public that people should avoid the use of chemicals and farming practices that discourage wildlife and upset the balance of nature. There are gardens that grow and protect rarely found plants such as orchids (see Appendix 3) that can be found in Kadoorie Farm.

Financial Situation

During the past five years, more and more people have come to Kadoorie Farm. About 60% of visitors are individuals, while school groups make up about 26%. There were 166670 visitors in 2014, which is a 28% increase since 2010.

In terms of finance, Kadoorie Farm is on a good track. Comparing revenues to expenditures in 2014, the revenues totalled 135,838,434 HK dollars, but Kadoorie Farm only spend 99,434,000 HK dollars. Most of the cost is from operating, but Kadoorie Farm bought a large amount of capital in 2014; they spent 61,211,687 HK dollars. There was another larger expansion during 2013-2014.

Since Kadoorie Farm is a non-profit organization, most of their income comes from foundations. More than 95% of its income comes from New Kadoorie and the government. Public donation is only 0.04% of KFBG's income, so public foundation are not the main income for the agriculture park. Moreover, an agriculture park should found a long-term and stable funding resource. The New Kadoorie founded about 92,250,000 HK dollars each year. Also, since more individuals come to Kadoorie Farm, entrance fees could be more important for Kadoorie Farm in the future.

Analysis & Recommendations for Sandown Raceway

To generate revenue, we propose the idea of holding community events at Sandown Raceway. Not only would events such as farmers markets, and festivals contribute to

funding but would help to promote awareness of local farmers and the importance of island-grown food throughout the Saanich community. Our idea was inspired by Montgomery Park's annual Harvest and Spring festival. By organizing numerous activities at the festivals for families to enjoy, Montgomery Park attracts thousands of visitors and generates substantial revenue to invest back into the Park. We suggest that Sandown Raceway hold similar events on their 85 acres of land and to organize activities such as craft stations, corn mazes, wine and cider tastings, and invite local artists to perform. Holding an event with numerous activities which appeal to both children as well as adults is an ideal way to gather the community and raise funding. We also propose a potential collaboration between Sandown and local stables to organize and host fun, low budget horse races.

Feast of Fields is a gourmet style food and wine festival held annually in the Okanagan Valley, Metro Vancouver and on Southern Vancouver Island. The harvest festival focuses on connections between farmers and chefs, field and table, as well as between farm folks and local members of the community. Participants in the festival include BC top chefs, farmers, fishers, ranchers, food artisans, brewers, distillers and other beverage producers. Entrance tickets are available to purchase either online or on location. Upon obtaining a permit to sell liquor, Sandown has the potential to generate substantial revenue by hosting a similar event. Nearby wineries located in the Saanich region include DeVine Vineyards, Victoria Estate Winery, Symphony Vineyard, Dragonfly Hill Vineyard, Starling Lane Winery, Muse Winery and Flying Fish Winery. Additionally, Sea Cider is an orchard situated nearby. We recommend that Sandown collaborate with local food and wine businesses to organize a community-oriented festival. Such an event would promote the importance of buying local and advocate for local sustainable agriculture.

Every agricultural park has to have a good plan for their operating. By doing this, we did lots of research into case studies. Our plans for revenue are mainly from land leasing, community events and programs, cooking and farming classes, markets, and donation.

Use for Agriculture

Agricultural uses of the land will be split amongst community gardens, incubator plots, and small farm plots for leasing. We recommend that a garden plot is dedicated to the North Saanich Middle School adjacent to the property. Getting children and youth involved in farming is integral for the future of agriculture in BC, so we propose setting aside land for schools who are able/willing to educate on the property.

Incubator plots will not only help to generate substantial revenue for Sandown but will additionally give young, small-scale farmers the opportunity to start out a successful farming career, providing them with access to land and allowing them to learn and develop new, sustainable farming methods. Sandown could generate revenue by leasing plots of land for farmers. Incubator farms promote sustainable agriculture and are an effective way to nurture and prepare the community's next generation of farmers.

Beekeeping could be a good way to promote the health of property while creating a product of high value.

Farm Plot for North Saanich Middle School

We recommend that a portion of the property closest to North Saanich Middle School should be donated to them. The school could eventually develop programs and curriculums involving the nearby farming plot in their education. If it is successful Sandown's collaboration with the school could be a model for other schools in the future.

Events

Community events are a good way of increasing awareness of the property and its contribution to agriculture in BC. They can help increase the sales of value added products, build customer loyalty, and facilitate community involvement in programs offered by Sandown. A small outdoor stage could be a good place to host plays, seminars, and interpretation programs.

Use of Jockey House

Cooking classes have become more popular in the last few years. We have found that there are cooking classes offered in Victoria. The best example is Cook Culture. This company offers classes about different food cultures including Vietnamese, Italian or Thai cultures. They also offer special classes for New Year's Eve and Christmas. The other companies operating in Victoria offer similar classes (Cooking School). The classes are usually 3 hours. The participants receive a small printed recipe booklet, dozens of advices, and a multi-course meal, cooked either in front of them, or cooked by them. The prices vary between \$75 and \$95 for this type of classes.

What those potential competitors do not provide are classes about how to cook with local, fresh, and bio food. Yet, the point of an agricultural park is to provide fresh local food and to sensitize community to the environment. We believe that there is a potential for the agricultural park to offer cooking classes in the jockey house. The fixed costs to such a project are around \$1,000, which is the costs of the cooking materials if we do not consider the price of the kitchen's installation. Variable costs depend on the ingredients needed for the chosen recipe, and on if the instructor is a volunteer or not.

If a farmers market is organized by the park, we can imagine a bundle between cooking classes and the fruits or vegetables needed to cook the recipe at home.

The kitchen could also be used for rental. The average rent cost of a kitchen is around \$30 per hour. Considering that the renter is usually asked to pay cleaning fees, it doesn't cost anything to the park to rent its kitchen.

Donation

From our case studies, we found that donation is helpful if we have a good donation strategy. We could not rely on public donations since it usually makes up a small part of all donations. It means Sandown should go out looking for other types of donations. Governments and enterprises are good resource, and Sandown should also make

partnership with some companies. This partnership should be long-term and business related. Moreover, an entrance fee could be considered after the agricultural park was well-known by the public. It will help control park quality and increase profit.

Tributes benches around the park

Personalized benches can be used to commemorate loved ones throughout the 85 acres of land. Memorial benches in Vancouver area cost between CA\$1,500 and CA\$4,000 ("Tribute Benches", n.d.). We found out that there is a waiting list in West-Vancouver to buy a memorial bench (Sinovski, 2014). It does mean that there is a high demand compared to the offer, and that the park could enter this market.

Conclusion

Sandown Raceway is a significant agricultural property. It has massive potential to influence farming, education, and social systems in the CRD. However, maximizing the agricultural benefits from the land will require a lot of time and effort. Many buildings must be destroyed and infrastructure redesigned before it can begin many facets of the project. For this reason we recommend a multi-use of the land and an incremental development of projects. It is important to consider introducing programs and facilities that do not require the rejuvenation of the land to create fertile agriculture plots.

The long time needed to create the vision of Sandown shared by the community allows for a planning advantage. It gives a timeframe of opportunity to introduce food and agriculture related subjects and programs into the school curriculum. If agricultural education was pushed forward within and by school advisory boards, Sandown will offer a perfect learning environment for children in the next 10 years.

By analyzing case studies of other agricultural parks and getting information from the community, our group has gained a general understanding on what the community sees as the most important use for the land in Sandown Raceway. We identified two case studies including Montgomery Park and Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, as good examples to apply to the Sandown Raceway case. This has been a valuable opportunity for our group to learn about the contemporary issue regarding Agricultural Park models. We trust the above recommendations are feasible in providing stepping stones for farmers to launch new farm businesses and support new growers in the region and to meet the needs of Sandown's community. In fact, we are looking forward about its possible occurrence.

Appendix

2013 BENEFITS

BASIC- \$35

- Welcome Packet!
- Park Souvenir
- Invitation to Friends night at the Garden of Lights
a car load of people are welcome

BASIC PLUS- \$55

- Includes all of the above plus:
- Invitation to the Haunted Train for two people

SUPPORTER- \$75

- Includes all of the above plus:
- Invitations to two Friends-only park opportunities* for two people

CONTRIBUTOR- \$95

- Includes all of the above plus:
- 5% off permit fee for park activity building

CHAMPION- \$115

- Includes all of the above plus:
- 10% off any park permit fee
*including picnic shelters, activity buildings and fields***

Financial Figures (excluding depreciation)

| Expenditure (HK\$) | *Year Ended 31.3.14 (audited) | **Year Ended 31.3.15 (unaudited) |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Capital | 61,211,687*** | 19,979,000 |
| Operating | 74,626,747 | 79,455,000 |
| Total | 135,838,434 | 99,434,000 |

| Income (HK\$) | Year Ended 31.3.14 (audited) | Year Ended 31.3.15 (unaudited) |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| New Kadoorie Foundation | 96,500,000 | 89,000,000 |
| Shop Sales | 2,073,896 | 2,221,538 |
| Government and other funding (see breakdowns below) | 13,496,543 | 28,719,231 |
| Entrance fees | 1,346,940 | 2,653,950 |
| Workshop fees | 653,687 | 1,198,522 |
| Public donations | 55,076 | 54,231 |

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