A Shared Community Vision

Regional District of Nanaimo Electoral Area ‘A’
OCP Review,
Agriculture

March 23, 2009
Presentation Outline

• How the OCP supports agriculture
• Policies and regulations
• Policy options for Electoral Area ‘A’
How the OCP Supports Agriculture

– 3 Land Use designations
  • Rural Residential
  • Rural
  • Rural Resource
How the OCP Supports Agriculture

- Rural Residential
  - Focused on rural character
  - No policies to encourage agriculture
  - Supports a 1.0 ha min. parcel size
  - Zoning allows a 2000m² min. parcel size
How the OCP Supports Agriculture

• Rural
  – Applies to lands not in the ALR
  – No policies to encourage agriculture
  – Supports a 2.0 ha min. parcel size
  – Zoning is generally consistent
How the OCP Supports Agriculture

**Rural Resource**
- Applies to lands in the ALR
- Includes about half of the land in Area ‘A’
- Contains general objectives and policies in support of agriculture
- Supports a 50.0 ha min. parcel size, except 8.0 ha for ALR land
- Zoning generally allows 2.0 ha min. parcel size
How the OCP Supports Agriculture

• General Policies
  – Section 5 includes a section on resource activities
    • Supports the ALC’s mandate
    • No policies that encourage agriculture
    • No requirements or Development Permit Area for the protection of agriculture
Policies Vs. Regulations

- **Policy**: A written statement that indicates the community's preference
  - Policies are not enforceable
  - Policies generally do not apply to current land use
  - Help guide decisions
  - Require other means to implement policies
Policy Implementation

Policy Implementation

- Limited tools
  - Rezoning amendments
  - Amendments to the Zoning Bylaw
  - Development Permit Areas
  - New bylaws and programs
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Support the development of an Agricultural Plan and/or Farm Bylaw
  – OCP could recommend that an Ag. Plan be developed
  – Farming bylaw could be supported to allow greater flexibility for Ag. uses than what zoning allows
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Provide incentives that encourage agriculture
  – Waiving of fees
  – Fast tracking
  – Use of conservation covenants
  – Collaboration
  – Support agriculture growth and investment
  – Support agriculture as the priority use
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

- Support maximum setbacks and floor areas
  - Reduce the impact of non-farm use on arable lands
  - Discourage large estate dwelling units that require large amounts of land where agriculture is not the intended use.
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

- Encourage value-added agricultural uses
  - Support a broader range of uses
  - Uses allowed on ALR lands
  - Uses that compliment agriculture and make it more viable
  - Implementation in 1 of 2 ways
    - Property owner initiated
    - RDN initiated
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Explore alternate land tenure options
  – Part of Agricultural plan
  – Address aging population
  – Encouraging the younger generation to get in to farming
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Support the retention of ALR lands
  – Current plan contains this policy
  – Encourages the ALC to retain land in the ALR
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Discourage development of arable lands
  – Supports minimizing the impacts of non-farm development on the most arable lands in Electoral Area ‘A’
  – Right now we don’t know where those are
  – Implementation Options
    • Encourage the ALC to deny applications which result in a reduction in agricultural potential
    • Require an agrologist report for all rezoning applications with recommendations that become conditions of approval
    • Development Permit Area to identify and mitigate impacts of non-farm use
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Support the concept of Transfer of Development Credits
  – To preserve lands for their value to the community (env, farming, resource)
  – A way of responding to concerns over the financial impacts of reduced development potential
  – Designate areas for conservation and growth receiving areas
  – Development credits are issued based on development potential at the time the program is initiated
  – Property owners wishing to build higher density in growth receiving areas must purchase development credits from property owners in conservation areas.
  – An alternate source of income from property without developing or subdividing it
  – As credit is sold, development potential is removed
  – Results in the same amount of development, with more focus on creating compact communities
  – Requires further study
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Provide an agricultural focus for new rural development
  – Ensuring that new development does not have a negative impact on agriculture
    • Discourage road ends leading in to ALR land
    • Require an agriculture assessment for all non-farm development outside the Urban Containment Boundary
    • Require buffering
    • Limit the number of dwellings to 1 per ALR parcel, unless more are needed for legitimate farm help
    • Encourage agriculture on lots of all sizes
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Designate a Farmland Protection DPA
  – Apply to land adjacent to ALR land
  – To protect against impacts of non-farm use
  – Agricultural operations would be exempt
Policy Options for Area ‘A’

• Develop Agricultural Zoning
  – Apply to ALR land
  – To clarify the role of ALR land
  – Uses would could include agriculture, farm business, and home based business
  – 2 dwelling units per lot, provided that one is a manufactured home.
Discussion