Results of Public Consultation
May 21\textsuperscript{st} to June 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2012
Project Description

The Alternative Forms of Rural Development study was undertaken to assist the RDN with creating a suite of options to support a more sensitive and sustainable approach to development in rural areas. The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) set the policy framework for the study, requiring that the recommended options not increase the overall density or total number of new lots, or compromise the servicing of new lots. A further requirement was that residual lands be protected in perpetuity for agricultural, forestry, conservation or other purpose that serves the public good.

The study focused on identifying ways to better protect rural values without compromising the existing development potential of land. The study was not about increasing the amount of development in rural areas. None of the options proposed in the study provides for more density. Some propose clustering density, or shifting it around within a specific area, but no additional density is proposed. The alternatives outlined in the study are meant to assist with limiting sprawl, reducing fragmentation of ecological systems, maintaining rural landscapes, and encouraging more sustainable forms of subdivision, all of which are consistent with the vision of the RGS.

It is anticipated that the study will be useful during OCP update discussions, by providing residents with the opportunity to discuss and consider the alternatives presented in this report. Within the existing policy context, the alternatives presented in this study may appeal to landowners and developers who wish to undertake a different form of development.

IPS Island Planning Services was retained by the RDN to undertake this study in March 2012. The first step was to develop a comprehensive set of options for review by RDN planning staff before going out for community consultation. The public were invited to attend one of four open houses and workshops in Coombs (Arrowsmith Hall) on May 23rd, Qualicum Bay (Lighthouse Community Hall) on May 24th, South Wellington (Cranberry Community Hall) on May 26th and Nanoose (Nanoose Community Hall) on June 5th. An online survey was also available between May 21 and June 22 to solicit feedback on the options.

The consultants and RDN staff received feedback from attendees and participants through one-on-one conversations, written correspondence (email and other handwritten notes) and a questionnaire that addressed matters related to the proposed options. In the community meetings, responses to the questions were gathered using “clickers,” an audience response technology system on loan to the RDN from the Cowichan Valley Regional District. An online survey asked identical questions to those that were asked in the community meetings. A “final comments”
section of the online survey invited further observations from online participants. Online responses were collected with the community meeting responses, and all responses were aggregated for analytical purposes.

The consultants collated and analyzed all notes and comments gathered from the online surveys, written communications received from community members, and conversations held during the open houses, looking for themes and concerns. Based on the feedback received, the consultants then “tweaked” the options proposed so that they were clearer and better suited to the RDN overall.

The following provides a summary of the responses to the 19 questions that were asked at each of the four community meetings and in the online survey. The full text of all written responses received at the workshops and from the survey is included as an appendix in the final report.
Summary of Responses to Questions asked at the Community Meetings and in the Online Survey

**Question 1** - How long have you lived in the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN)?

A. I do not live in the RDN
B. 1-5 years
C. 6-10 years
D. 11-20 years
E. 20+ years

![Bar Chart](image)
Question 2 - Where do you live?

Survey Responses

Coombs Meeting

A. Area F (Coombs, Hilliers, Errington)
B. Another Electoral Area in the RDN
C. A municipality in the RDN (Parksville, Nanaimo, Qualicum, Lantzville)
D. Outside the Nanaimo Region
Qualicum Bay Meeting

A. Area H (Shaw Hill, Qualicum Bay, Deep Bay, Bowser)
B. Another Electoral Area in the RDN
C. A municipality in the RDN (Parksville, Nanaimo, Qualicum, Lantzville)
D. Outside the Nanaimo Region

South Wellington Meeting

A. Area A (Cassidy, Cedar, Yellowpoint, South Wellington)
B. Another Electoral Area in the RDN
C. A municipality in the RDN (Parksville, Nanaimo, Qualicum, Lantzville)
D. Outside the Nanaimo Region
**NanOOSE BAY MEETING**

A. Area E (NanOOSE Bay)
B. Another Electoral Area in the RDN
C. A municipality in the RDN (Parksville, Nanaimo, Qualicum, Lantzville)
D. Outside the Nanaimo Region
Question 3 - Homestead -- On a 5-point scale, how well do you like the idea of grouping buildings closer together on a single lot?

Question 4 - OSCAR -- On a 5-point scale, how well do you like the idea of allowing smaller fee simple lots to preserve a larger lot, conserving more open space?
Question 8 - FRED -- On a 5-point scale, how well do you like the idea of open space conservation through flexible residential development (bare land or building strata)?

Question 9 - Eco-village -- On a 5-point scale, how well do you like the idea of open space conservation through clustered residential development on large properties, with no subdivision?
Question 10 - Hamlet -- On a 5-point scale, how well do you like the idea of open space conservation through development of mini-villages on large properties?
Question 11 - Do you think that allowing for density shifting is a good idea?

Market forces (6)

Neighbour to neighbour (7)
**Question 12** - Of the four ways to encourage density shifting, which do you think would be best in the RDN?

A. Market forces (6)...allow individuals to voluntarily take initiative to find a seller or buyer of density

B. Neighbour to neighbour (7)...encourage abutting landowners to work together to optimize development

C. Registry (8)...Create a registry of land owners interested in participating in a density shift

D. Bank (9)...Create a “bank” to purchase or hold density and then sell to prospective development sites

![Bar chart showing responses to Question 12]
Question 13 - Of the two approaches, which is better?

A. Checklist
B. Scorecard
C. Not sure

Question 14 - Should the RDN consider using alternative development standards?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Not sure / need more information
Question 15 - Should the RDN establish an awards system that recognizes green development?

A. Yes
B. No

Question 16 - Do you think the RDN should set up a system to grant property tax relief to property owners who voluntarily protect private lands with high conservation values?

A. Yes
B. No
Question 17 - Do you think this option (fast-tracking/ fee reductions) is fair and has merit?

A. Yes

B. No

Question 18 - Does this approach of redefining density fit your idea of rural living?

A. Yes

B. No
Question 19 - If it were up to you, to meet conservation goals, would the RDN choose to:

A. Create overlay zoning?

B. Create development permit areas with guidelines?

C. Use a combination of both tools, based on the types of conservation goals?

D. Do neither?