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**File No. 546724/000116**

August 8, 2012

**District of North Saanich**  
1620 Mills Road  
North Saanich, BC V8L 5S9

**Attention:** Mr. Rob Buchan, Chief  
Administrative Officer  
Email: rbuchan@northsaanich.ca

**Capital Regional District**  
625 Fisgard Street  
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

**Attention:** Mr. Robert Lapman, General  
Manager, Planning and Protective Services  
Email: rlapman@crd.bc.ca

**District of Central Saanich**  
1903 Mt. Newton Cross Road  
Saanichton, BC V8M 2A9

**Attention:** Mr. Gary Nason, Chief  
Administrative Officer  
Email: gary.nason@csaanich.ca

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

**Re: Final Proposal Arbitration Under S. 860 of the *Local Government Act***

I enclose the Award. Originally signed versions of the Award are being sent to you by delivery service.

Thank you for having involved me in this very interesting matter.

Yours truly,

**Borden Ladner Gervais LLP**

By: 

Gerald W. Ghikas, Q.C., FCI Arb., C. Arb.

- cc. Brent Mueller, MA,  
Growth Strategies Manager, Vancouver Island and Sea-to-Sky Regions  
Ministry of Community, Sports and Cultural Development  
Brent.Mueller@gov.bc.ca  
(250.387-2540)
- cc. Mr. Buholzer  
Ms. Stuart

**IN THE MATTER OF A FINAL PROPOSAL ARBITRATION PURSUANT TO  
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, R.S.B.C. 1996, C. 323**

AMONG:

**DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH**

AND:

**DISTRICT OF NORTH SAANICH**

AND:

**CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT**

**Arbitrator:** Gerald W. Ghikas, Q.C.

**Counsel:** William Buholzer for District of Central Saanich  
Kathryn Stuart for Capital Regional District

**Party Representatives:** Gary Nason for District of Central Saanich  
Rob Buchan for District of North Saanich  
Robert Lapman for Capital Regional District

**AWARD**

**(A) BACKGROUND**

1. Effective June 13, 2012 I was appointed arbitrator by agreement of the parties for a final proposal arbitration under Sections 860 and 861 of the *Local Government Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, C. 323 (**Act**) to resolve a dispute between District of Central Saanich and Capital Regional District concerning a proposed amendment to the Regional Context Statement in the District of Central Saanich Official Community Plan in accordance with Central Saanich Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No. 1736 2011.
2. On June 14, 2012 I gave notice to all eligible parties pursuant to Section 5(3) of the *Regional Context Statements Regulation*, B.C. Reg. 191/98 (**Regulation**) of my appointment and pursuant to Section 17(1) of the Regulation advised the eligible parties

that if they wished to be participating party they must advise me, the proposing council and all affected local governments by no later that June 27, 2012:

- (a) that the eligible party intended to be a participating party;
- (b) of the name, address and telephone number of the individual who represents that eligible party; and
- (c) of the name, address and telephone number of that individual's alternate.

3. By June 27, 2012 the required forms of written notice had been received from District of North Saanich, District of Central Saanich and Capital Regional District, as a result of which they became the participating parties in this final proposal arbitration.

4. On July 10, 2012 I received from the participating parties a joint statement pursuant to Section 19(1) of the Regulation.

**(B) Proposals of the Participating Parties**

5. On July 20, 2012 I received a letter from the designated representative of District of North Saanich advising that its submission is that it supports the amendment of the Regional Context Statement proposed by District of Central Saanich and recommends its acceptance.

6. On July 24, 2012 I received the submissions of District of Central Saanich. The final proposal of District of Central Saanich (**District of Central Saanich Proposal**) was stated in paragraph 4 of those submissions, as follows:

The specific wording proposed by the District of Central Saanich for its regional context statement is set out at **Appendix 1** which includes one version of the regional context statement as it currently exists in the Official Community Plan with the proposed changes shown black-lined, and a second "clean" version of the statement as proposed to be amended. The District's proposal includes the consequential amendment of Schedule A: Land Use Plan to the District's Official Community Plan (the last page

of **Appendix 9** to these submissions) to designate the West Saanich Road site indicated as such in **Appendix 2** as part of the District's Urban Settlement Area. The District of Central Saanich proposes that the Arbitrator select the regional context statement that is set out in **Appendix 1** to these Submissions with the consequential change to the Schedule A: Land Use Plan, to settle this dispute.

I have attached Appendix 1 of the submissions to this award.

7. On July 25, 2012, I received submissions of Capital Regional District. The final proposal of Capital Regional District (**Capital Regional District Proposal**) was stated in paragraph 32 of those submissions as follows:

That the decision of the Capital Regional District board made on August 10, 2011 refusing to accept the amendment to the District of Central Saanich regional context statement in accordance with "Central Saanich Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No. 1736 2011" remain in force and effect. The wording of the current District of Central Saanich official community plan to remain as it is without the proposed amendments contained in the "Central Saanich Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No. 1736, 2011".

**(C) Statutory Requirements**

8. Section 861 (2) of the Act states:

(2) As a second option, the provisions of a regional growth strategy may be settled by final proposal arbitration by a single arbitrator as follows:

...

(d) subject to the regulations, the arbitrator must conduct the proceedings on the basis of a review of written documents and written submissions only, and must determine each disputed issue by selecting one of the final written proposals for resolving that issue submitted by one of the participating parties;

(e) the provisions of the regional growth strategy will be as settled by the arbitrator after incorporation of the final proposals selected by the arbitrator under paragraph (c);

(f) no written reasons are to be provided by the arbitrator.

9. Sections 18 and 20 of the Regulation state:

18. The arbitrator must not meet with or discuss any aspect of the disputed issues with the participating parties or any other person and the arbitrator is restricted solely to consideration of the written submissions and proposals filed by the participating parties.

20 (1) Unless the participating parties agree on a regional context statement during the settlement process or the minister extends the time period, the arbitrator must settle the disputed issues of the regional context statement within 63 days of the date of his or her selection.

(2) The arbitrator must select, in respect of each disputed issue, one of the final proposals submitted under section 19 and

(a) the selection of a final proposal on a disputed issue submitted by one participating party does not preclude the selection of a final proposal on another disputed issue submitted by another participating party, and

(b) the arbitrator may not alter the terms of a final proposal in selecting the final proposal.

(3) The arbitrator must give the selections under subsection (2) in writing and provide signed and dated copies of them to all participating parties and the facilitator or, if no facilitator was appointed by the minister, to the minister.

10. As set out in the Act and Regulations, my authority is limited to determining each disputed issue by selecting one of the final written proposals for resolving that issue submitted by one of the parties. Although the joint statement described above set out a number of issues each Participating Party has presented a single proposal to resolve all of the issues so stated. I am prohibited from providing reasons.

**(D) Award**

11. I have carefully considered the very helpful submissions of the participating parties, the documents provided to me, the District of Central Saanich Proposal and the Capital Regional District Proposal.

12. My Award is that each of the issues set out in the joint statement are determined by selecting the Capital Regional District Proposal.

Made at the City of Vancouver, British Columbia, this 8th day of August, 2012.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, sweeping loop on the left and a more complex, angular shape on the right, ending in a horizontal line.

Gerald W. Ghikas, Q.C.  
Arbitrator

## APPENDIX 1

# 12. Regional Context Statement (Blacklined)

## 12.1. Introduction

A Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) for the Capital Regional District was approved by the CRD Board in August, 2003.

Provincial legislation requires that each Capital Regional District member municipality prepare, as part of its Official Community Plan (OCP), a Regional Context Statement which illustrates the policy links between the OCP and the RGS.

The RGS is divided into sub-strategies under the following headings:

### **Managing Balance and Growth**

- Keep Urban Settlement Compact
- Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities

### **Environment and Resources**

- Protect Regional Green and Blue Space
- Manage Natural Resources and the Environment Sustainably

### **Housing and Community**

- Build Complete Communities
- Improve Housing Affordability

### **Transportation**

- Increase Transportation Choice

### **Economic Development**

- Strengthen the Regional Economy

## 12.2. Local Context

The District of Central Saanich was incorporated as a municipality in 1950. Central Saanich separated from the Municipality of Saanich to protect its rural heritage. The creation of the Agricultural Land Reserve in 1973 assisted in maintaining the agricultural character of the municipality. Approximately 65% of the District is designated ALR.

Central Saanich has four main areas for urban settlement (residential, commercial and/or industrial): Brentwood Bay, Keating Industrial Area, Saanichton and Tanner Ridge. Most of the development in these areas occurred prior to 1990. At this time, there are few developable tracts of land left in the District. New residential development is usually in the form of residential infill and densification by subdivision or rezoning. There is significant light industrial/business land that may be developed when the Butler Brothers' gravel extraction operation is completed. Essentially, the existence of the Agricultural Land Reserve limits growth and development within the District.

## 12.3. Specific RGS Strategic Directions

### 12.3.1. Managing and Balancing Growth

#### **Keep Urban Settlement Compact**

The OCP Schedule A Land Use Plan map designates four Residential-Settlement Areas



(Brentwood Bay, Tanner Ridge, Saanichton and Lochside Drive) which serve as the District's urban containment boundaries. The Residential-Settlement Areas are consistent with the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area (RUCSPA) indicated on Map 3 (Growth Management Concept Plan) in the Regional Growth Strategy. These areas are serviced and developed for a mixture of residential, commercial and institutional uses.

The OCP suggests that residential growth should not exceed one percent annually (approximately 70 new residential units per year), nor should residential growth exceed the capacity of the Saanich Peninsula Treatment Plan. The OCP further defines low or gradual growth in Section 1: gradual, low impact growth is supported provided it is at a rate which does not place an undue burden on the existing utility infrastructure and community services, and will not result in substantial increases in the municipal tax rate. Infilling of existing residential areas (to about 95 percent of development potential) will be required prior to extension of services for residential purposes to undeveloped areas.

In order to maintain the integrity of this urban containment area, the District is guided by a policy in the OCP which states that the major portion of residential and commercial growth shall be confined to the Urban Settlement Area. It is recognized that more intensive land use and higher overall densities may be needed in the Urban Settlement Areas to maintain the containment boundaries. The District has displayed a willingness to amend OCP and zoning regulations to allow increased densities and a wider variety of housing options in the Urban Settlement Areas. Further to this, Section 10 states that as a general principle, water and sanitary services will be only available in areas designated as Urban Settlement Area Schedule A, Land Use Plan.

#### **Additional Urban Settlement Area for Commercial Use**

The District has also indicated a willingness to consider amending the OCP and zoning regulations to allow expanded commercial uses outside of the four Urban Settlement Areas. To this end, an additional Urban Settlement Area (Commercial Supermarket Site) has been designated in the 6700 block of West Saanich Road to accommodate a large supermarket and its accessory office uses. No residential, industrial or institutional uses are permitted in this urban settlement area.

#### **Water and Sanitary Services**

Section 10 states that, as general principle, water and sanitary services will be only available in areas designated as Urban Settlement Areas in Schedule A, Land Use Plan. Extension of water lines into rural or agricultural areas is not supported, except to address pressing public health or environmental issues, or to provide water for agricultural or fire suppression uses. Given concerns about the link between extension of sewer services into rural areas and urban development, the extension of sanitary sewer services outside the RUCSPA will only be considered in cases where public health or environmental issues associated with septic system failures cannot otherwise be resolved, except in the case of the urban settlement area of the Commercial Supermarket Site in the 6700 block West Saanich Road, where the cost of all extensions and servicing upgrades will be borne by the owner. Any other extensions must be consistent with currently adopted Council policies for water and sewer line extension criteria.

The residential portions of Urban Settlement Areas are subject to zoning and permit guidelines that encourage modest growth, redevelopment, minor subdivisions, infill housing and multifamily housing options.

#### **Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities**

The residents of Central Saanich have expressed strong support for preserving the agricultural and rural land, which is reinforced by the OCP. Sixty-five percent of the land base in this District is part of the Agricultural Land Reserve, which is recognized on the Central Saanich Community Plan, Schedule A Land Use Plan map. The designated agricultural land is consistent with the Renewable Resource Lands Policy Area (Map 3, Growth Management Concept Plan) found in the Regional Growth Strategy.

A key objective of the OCP is to ensure the sustainability and economic viability of the District's agricultural community as an integral part of farming on the Saanich Peninsula. There are policies in place that support: drainage, stormwater management and irrigation projects that improve farm productivity; farm gate marketing; and new crops. The District does not extend urban services such as the sewer and water system into the rural or agricultural areas, except to address pressing public health or environmental issues or to provide water for agricultural or fire suppression uses, as stated above. Developable land abutting ALR land is to include a buffer strip. The District supports the Peninsula Agricultural Commission in addressing farm issues, landowner conflict and to implement the objectives of the "Agricultural Strategy for the Saanich Peninsula" (1997).

The preservation of agricultural land is demonstrated through support of the Agricultural Land Commission's objective to retain agricultural parcels of land in as large parcels as possible. In the event of any significant changes to the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve legislation, the District intends to maintain and protect those areas designated in the OCP as agricultural land. The OCP also states that the designated rural lands are for rural purposes rather than being considered as a reserve for future residential, commercial or industrial purposes (sec. 3.3.2).

The Capital Green Lands are recognized as Parks and Open Space on Schedule B map Parks and Open Space Plan. These are consistent with RGS Map 3. Section 6 of the OCP refers to the Parks and Open Space Master Plan and the CRD's Regional Green/Blue Spaces Strategies as key companion documents to the OCP in managing green space in the District. Capital Green Lands areas are protected through the zoning bylaw and the OCP states in Section 6 that there is no support for the disposal or sale of park space without full public hearing and debate in each case.

Overall, the OCP is consistent with the "Renewable Resource Land" and "Capital Green Land" policy areas designated on Map 3 and 4 appended to the RGS.

### **12.3.2. Environment and Resources**

#### **Protecting Green and Blue Space**

The OCP recognizes the Green and Blue spaces indicated on RGS Map 4 (Green/Blue Spaces System) on the Schedule B Parks and Open Space Plan and Map 7 Sensitive Environments. In terms of Green spaces, a main OCP objective is to develop a system of parks and open spaces that meet the existing and future needs of the residents of all ages and abilities consistent with the policies of the Central Saanich Parks and Open Space Master Plan (1999). The OCP provides direction to secure additional Green space through innovative means such as: subdivision, rezoning, purchase or donation (sec. 6.2.4).

The development of a comprehensive system of trails (pedestrian and/or cycle paths) is part of Section 6 of the OCP. The Schedule B Parks and Open Space Plan map regional and municipal trails. This map is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy's Map 4: Regional Green/Blue Spaces System.

The Unprotected Green Space Policy Area indicated on RGS Map 4 is not specifically recognized in the OCP mapping. However, these areas are protected by the Soil Protection Erosion Area (tree cutting) regulations, as well as zoning. The areas in question are zoned Rural Estate and Agriculture. Under these zoning categories, there is minimal residential development allowed. Additionally, the District encourages sustainable practices and encourages covenants to protect sensitive areas (sec. 8.2.2 and sec. 8.2.3). Specifically, the OCP states in Section 8 that the District will take a leadership role in educating people about the value of protecting land and water resources of ecological significance and will facilitate partnerships among the public, private and not-for profit sectors for the conservation and

stewardship of these resources. The District will also investigate the establishment of a permissive municipal property tax exemption policy for land owners who establish a conservation covenant to protect sensitive ecosystems.

The OCP places equal importance on Blue spaces protection. Saanich Inlet is considered to be an important and sensitive ecosystem, highly valued for its aesthetic, cultural, spiritual and environmental attributes. Similarly, Haro Straight has regionally significant parks, beaches and coastal dune ecosystems. In the OCP the District has resolved to minimize impacts on shoreline and marine environments through zoning and the shoreline development permit process. Additionally, in Section 8, it states that the District will use available powers through provincial legislation, to protect and conserve sensitive land and water environments in Central Saanich.

#### **Manage Natural Resources and the Environment Sustainably**

The OCP supports the principles of sustainability as defined in this section of the RGS. Section 8 outlines policies regarding the protection of ecologically significant areas, the preservation of water quality and quantity and regulating development in environmentally sensitive areas. As stated previously, urban development is limited to the Urban Containment boundaries. All other development in rural and agricultural settings is governed by zoning, permit and OCP policies.

Through this Regional Context Statement, the District recognizes the value of monitoring: the assimilative capacity of the natural environment in terms of waste; and the depletion rates and consumption of natural and scarce resources. The District also recognizes that decision making should give priority to options that maintain ecosystem health and support the ongoing ability of natural systems to sustain life.

### **12.3.3. Housing and Community**

#### **Build Complete Communities**

This section of the RGS supports the development patterns that allow residents to undertake a wider range of daily activities closer to home. This objective is supported in Sections 4, 5 and 10 of the OCP. These sections indicate strong support for a wide variety of housing opportunities with particular consideration for multifamily, supportive/care housing and multifamily developments located within walking distance of commercial areas. There is a priority placed on reducing the use of private vehicles. There is also support for home based businesses and to increase opportunities for public transit.

#### **Improve Housing Affordability**

A key objective identified in the OCP is to support the development of diverse housing types to accommodate the various housing needs of existing as well as future residents, and to meet the changing needs of the various age groups of residents (sec. 4.3.2.). In 2000, the District completed a Housing Needs Assessment to identify housing needs, gaps and to develop a list of priority development proposals. Support for housing that is affordable, rental based, family oriented and/or allowing seniors to "age in place" are given priority. Particular consideration will be given to multi-family rental housing proposals, supportive housing and multi-level care facilities. The District encourages alternative housing tenures (i.e. co-housing, non-profit and cooperative housing), the retention of rental housing and transitional housing. Section 4 of the OCP also discourages the conversion of rental housing to strata ownership. In Council's consideration of residential redevelopment proposals, the Residential Evaluation Guidelines are provided to developers to ascertain the affordability component of the project. Secondary suites are also currently permitted in agricultural and specified residential zones. The District will undertake a process of reviewing this policy to determine if permitting secondary suites in all residential zones should be allowed.

### **12.3.4. Transportation**

### **Increasing Transportation Choice**

The OCP supports a comprehensive local and regional transportation system which includes driving, cycling and walking. Section 10 states that there is priority placed on reducing dependence on the use of private vehicles over time and that there is support for the development of additional bus shelters and information signage to increase ridership. As well, there is support for car share co-operatives and for investigating smaller buses to operate within Central Saanich. There continues to be support for improving sidewalks, pedestrian paths and bicycle paths, including the Regional trail system as funds permit.

### **12.3.5. Economic Development**

#### **Strengthening the Regional Economy**

The OCP's fundamental principles guide decision making regarding a sustainable economy. Section 1 states that: there is support for economic development and diversification in Central Saanich, including agricultural and home based businesses; this will help balance the number of jobs and residents. The agricultural base in Central Saanich will play an increasingly important role in the food supply for the entire region. There is continuing support for the well-established, pedestrian oriented commercial centres in Saanichton and Brentwood Bay, as well as support for the commercial and industrial activities in the Keating Business Park. Section 5 of the OCP addresses economic development more specifically defining direction for economic planning, arterial commercial, tourism and recreation, light industry, gravel extraction areas, home based employment and the agricultural economy. Through this Regional Context Statement the District acknowledges the importance of encouraging the development of a sustainable economy.

## 12. Regional Context Statement (Clean)

### 12.1. Introduction

A Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) for the Capital Regional District was approved by the CRD Board in August, 2003.

Provincial legislation requires that each Capital Regional District member municipality prepare, as part of its Official Community Plan (OCP), a Regional Context Statement which illustrates the policy links between the OCP and the RGS.

The RGS is divided into sub-strategies under the following headings:

#### **Managing Balance and Growth**

- Keep Urban Settlement Compact
- Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities

#### **Environment and Resources**

- Protect Regional Green and Blue Space
- Manage Natural Resources and the Environment Sustainably

#### **Housing and Community**

- Build Complete Communities
- Improve Housing Affordability

#### **Transportation**

- Increase Transportation Choice

#### **Economic Development**

- Strengthen the Regional Economy

### 12.2. Local Context

The District of Central Saanich was incorporated as a municipality in 1950. Central Saanich separated from the Municipality of Saanich to protect its rural heritage. The creation of the Agricultural Land Reserve in 1973 assisted in maintaining the agricultural character of the municipality. Approximately 65% of the District is designated ALR.

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### 12.3. Specific RGS Strategic Directions

#### **12.3.1. Managing and Balancing Growth**

##### **Keep Urban Settlement Compact**

The OCP Schedule A Land Use Plan map designates four Residential-Settlement Areas

(Brentwood Bay, Tanner Ridge, Saanichton and Lochside Drive) which serve as the District's urban containment boundaries. The Residential-Settlement Areas are consistent with the Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area (RUCSPA) indicated on Map 3 (Growth Management Concept Plan) in the Regional Growth Strategy. These areas are serviced and developed for a mixture of residential, commercial and institutional uses.

The OCP suggests that residential growth should not exceed one percent annually (approximately 70 new residential units per year), nor should residential growth exceed the capacity of the Saanich Peninsula Treatment Plan. The OCP further defines low or gradual growth in Section 1: gradual, low impact growth is supported provided it is at a rate which does not place an undue burden on the existing utility infrastructure and community services, and will not result in substantial increases in the municipal tax rate. Infilling of existing residential areas (to about 95 percent of development potential) will be required prior to extension of services for residential purposes to undeveloped areas.

In order to maintain the integrity of this urban containment area, the District is guided by a policy in the OCP which states that the major portion of residential and commercial growth shall be confined to the Urban Settlement Area. It is recognized that more intensive land use and higher overall densities may be needed in the Urban Settlement Areas to maintain the containment boundaries. The District has displayed a willingness to amend OCP and zoning regulations to allow increased densities and a wider variety of housing options in the Urban Settlement Areas.

#### **Additional Urban Settlement Area for Commercial Use**

The District has also indicated a willingness to consider amending the OCP and zoning regulations to allow expanded commercial uses outside of the four Urban Settlement Areas. To this end, an additional Urban Settlement Area (Commercial Supermarket Site) has been designated in the 6700 block of West Saanich Road to accommodate a large supermarket and its accessory office uses. No residential, industrial or institutional uses are permitted in this urban settlement area.

#### **Water and Sanitary Services**

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The residential portions of Urban Settlement Areas are subject to zoning and permit guidelines that encourage modest growth, redevelopment, minor subdivisions, infill housing and multifamily housing options.

#### **Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities**

The residents of Central Saanich have expressed strong support for preserving the agricultural and rural land, which is reinforced by the OCP. Sixty-five percent of the land base in this District is part of the Agricultural Land Reserve, which is recognized on the Central Saanich Community Plan, Schedule A Land Use Plan map. The designated agricultural land is consistent with the Renewable Resource Lands Policy Area (Map 3, Growth Management Concept Plan) found in the Regional Growth Strategy.

A key objective of the OCP is to ensure the sustainability and economic viability of the District's agricultural community as an integral part of farming on the Saanich Peninsula.

There are policies in place that support: drainage, stormwater management and irrigation projects that improve farm productivity; farm gate marketing; and new crops. The District does not extend urban services such as the sewer and water system into the rural or agricultural areas, except to address pressing public health or environmental issues or to provide water for agricultural or fire suppression uses, as stated above. Developable land abutting ALR land is to include a buffer strip. The District supports the Peninsula Agricultural Commission in addressing farm issues, landowner conflict and to implement the objectives of the "Agricultural Strategy for the Saanich Peninsula" (1997).

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Overall, the OCP is consistent with the "Renewable Resource Land" and "Capital Green Land" policy areas designated on Map 3 and 4 appended to the RGS.

### **12.3.2. Environment and Resources**

#### **Protecting Green and Blue Space**

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The OCP places equal importance on Blue spaces protection. Saanich Inlet is considered to be an important and sensitive ecosystem, highly valued for its aesthetic, cultural, spiritual and environmental attributes. Similarly, Haro Straight has regionally significant parks, beaches and coastal dune ecosystems. In the OCP the District has resolved to minimize impacts on shoreline and marine environments through zoning and the shoreline development permit process. Additionally, in Section 8, it states that the District will use available powers through provincial legislation, to protect and conserve sensitive land and water environments in Central Saanich.

#### **Manage Natural Resources and the Environment Sustainably**

The OCP supports the principles of sustainability as defined in this section of the RGS. Section 8 outlines policies regarding the protection of ecologically significant areas, the preservation of water quality and quantity and regulating development in environmentally sensitive areas. As stated previously, urban development is limited to the Urban Containment boundaries. All other development in rural and agricultural settings is governed by zoning, permit and OCP policies.

Through this Regional Context Statement, the District recognizes the value of monitoring: the assimilative capacity of the natural environment in terms of waste; and the depletion rates and consumption of natural and scarce resources. The District also recognizes that decision making should give priority to options that maintain ecosystem health and support the ongoing ability of natural systems to sustain life.

### **12.3.3. Housing and Community**

#### **Build Complete Communities**

This section of the RGS supports the development patterns that allow residents to undertake a wider range of daily activities closer to home. This objective is supported in Sections 4, 5 and 10 of the OCP. These sections indicate strong support for a wide variety of housing opportunities with particular consideration for multifamily, supportive/care housing and multifamily developments located within walking distance of commercial areas. There is a priority placed on reducing the use of private vehicles. There is also support for home based businesses and to increase opportunities for public transit.

#### **Improve Housing Affordability**

A key objective identified in the OCP is to support the development of diverse housing types to accommodate the various housing needs of existing as well as future residents, and to meet the changing needs of the various age groups of residents (sec. 4.3.2.). In 2000, the District completed a Housing Needs Assessment to identify housing needs, gaps and to develop a list of priority development proposals. Support for housing that is affordable, rental based, family oriented and/or allowing seniors to "age in place" are given priority. Particular consideration will be given to multi-family rental housing proposals, supportive housing and multi-level care facilities. The District encourages alternative housing tenures (i.e. co-housing, non-profit and cooperative housing), the retention of rental housing and transitional housing. Section 4 of the OCP also discourages the conversion of rental housing to strata ownership. In Council's consideration of residential redevelopment proposals, the Residential Evaluation Guidelines are provided to developers to ascertain the affordability component of the project. Secondary suites are also currently permitted in agricultural and specified residential zones. The District will undertake a process of reviewing this policy to determine if permitting secondary suites in all residential zones should be allowed.

### **12.3.4. Transportation**

#### **Increasing Transportation Choice**



The OCP supports a comprehensive local and regional transportation system which includes driving, cycling and walking. Section 10 states that there is priority placed on reducing dependence on the use of private vehicles over time and that there is support for the development of additional bus shelters and information signage to increase ridership. As well, there is support for car share co-operatives and for investigating smaller buses to operate within Central Saanich. There continues to be support for improving sidewalks, pedestrian paths and bicycle paths, including the Regional trail system as funds permit.

### **12.3.5. Economic Development**

#### **Strengthening the Regional Economy**

The OCP's fundamental principles guide decision making regarding a sustainable economy. Section 1 states that: there is support for economic development and diversification in Central Saanich, including agricultural and home based businesses; this will help balance the number of jobs and residents. The agricultural base in Central Saanich will play an increasingly important role in the food supply for the entire region. There is continuing support for the well-established, pedestrian oriented commercial centres in Saanichton and Brentwood Bay, as well as support for the commercial and industrial activities in the Keating Business Park. Section 5 of the OCP addresses economic development more specifically defining direction for economic planning, arterial commercial, tourism and recreation, light industry, gravel extraction areas, home based employment and the agricultural economy. Through this Regional Context Statement the District acknowledges the importance of encouraging the development of a sustainable economy.