

RE:	South Highlands Local Area Plan – Task Force Members Email
Email from:	Marcie McLean
To:	Evan Peterson, Jennifer Kay, Laura Beckett, Lexie LeGrand-Biegun, Bob McMinn, Scott Richardson, Regine Klein, Rick Lester, Terri Wood, Mel Sangha, Leslie Anderson, Kim Vincent
Date Received:	September 18, 2021

Hello all, I apologize for the delay in getting this email out to you, I was prepared for discussion at the cancelled meeting, but then had the Union of BC Municipalities Conference to prepare for which involves much reading and thought and days of attendance.

On the latest Draft Survey I have the following: (and, unfortunately some continue to be repeat requests/comments),

Please increase the font size, there are many people who have visual challenges, and others who do not have large monitor screens. This is a simple and reasonable request yet the font doesn't change. Why not?

Rick also made this request months ago.

On page 2 of the draft survey, **Core Planning Principles, Questions**

Question 1, "Minimize impacts" or perhaps "Reduce" or "Eliminate" impacts on groundwater resources. Minimize is used twice in your sentence.

Question 2, Foster and the creation of gathering places and amenities.

I happen to believe that the Highlands already has a "strong community identity" therefore may I suggest that we would: **"Continue to foster....."**

The Highlands already has a number of "public" gathering places for the Community and a number of public facilities. These existing public places and spaces could and should be used more by Highlands residents.

In that question sentencing which ends with "and amenities". It has been noted previously by several Task Force members that residents should be provided with some commentary details on the concept of rezoning or increased density (housing/population) for potential "amenities". I am sure there is existing wording to this effect in our current OCP Appendix A-Public Amenities and related OCP Policy 2.2.17.

Page 3

Question 5, "Ensure District fiscal responsibility and economic sustainability." Well, that's a given. Fact is however often most development is not at a "cost recovery" base to the District & District services provided by staff cost all of the tax payers in the Highlands and take our District (staff) resource time away from day to day operations and/or some of Council's Strategic Plan(s) over the years.

There are environmental costs to Natural Assets (air, land & water) and costs or impacts to the character of the Highlands in its natural landscape, ecological systems, and our rural lifestyle.

Therefore, my point on this question 5 is that it is one sided and incomplete in its scope.

On Question 6, “Work to mitigate Climate Change while integrating adaptation into future planning” HHmmm, what does that even mean to people?

I think that question should incorporate that the Highlands Council declared a Climate Emergency several years ago and that Highlands is also in an Ecological Crisis and, how these very important issues be implemented into future planning?

Section 2: Community & Placemaking I think the word “placemaking” could be improved upon, and should be. The term “sense of place” has of course been commonly used for years, I find the term placemaking odd.

Again, the question actually is: Does Highlands identity need reinforcing to strengthen community character and “sense of place”?

I do not feel that this direction or questioning addresses the importance of Highlands character in a meaningful way.

If the intent of the question remains I would suggest that it be changed to: “Consider establishing a small community hub.....”. With the additional required question are you as a tax payer willing to pay for such facility as shop/service, free store, other District facilities, and their required on-going maintenance over time?

Page 5, Question “Create a landscaped gateway that creates a sense of arrival.....”

A number of Task Force members have commented on this in the past indicating that it is not necessary, needed or desirable , yet it remains in the draft survey, I do not understand why?

It would be more appropriate and needed for the existing corporation or business owners to hide the eyesores people see from the road into those properties. And, that does not equate to shrubs and non-native vegetation being planted along the aprons of their driveways.

The above noted question is not useful. I suggest that it be deleted.

Page 5-6, Question: “Engage with T’sartlip First Nation.....” This question seems to be back to the previous poor wording. I suggest the following improved wording for all’s consideration:

“Initiate a Highlands community desire and need to engage with T’sartlip First Nation to hear their thoughts and ideas and collaborate with them in the future to consider and discuss potential access to their land in the Highlands and potential land use or use concepts.”

Page 7, Crown Lands has 5 questions:

First question, suggest changing BC to Province for clarity. Further, this question is too vague in respect to: “partnerships and others”.

Second question: “Explore opportunities for land remediation with BC and other partners.” I suggest deleting that question. Who, when and where have the Crown Lands been formally declared contaminated?

And, again, management and cleanup or remediation of contaminated lands are not a local government jurisdiction. At the upcoming meeting please kindly explain your rationale for continuing to include this type of questioning on a matter that is a Provincial jurisdiction and the responsibility of the property owner(s).

Fourth question:” Support low-impact, non-development land use types.....” I think that there is a need for clearer information here in order for the proposed question to be meaningful.

I think you are asking people technical wording that is not clear in its definitions and is vague, therefore, it is unclear to me the point in asking this question? And, please note that any proposed trails or potential recreational amenities are still potentially land alterations and therefore by definition are development. Therefore, keeping that in mind, I recommend improving the wording in this fourth question.

This leads me to my question to the Project Team what exactly is Early Direction #5 for the Crown Lands?

Note: from the first completed survey and its results on the Crown Lands former question 15, on the survey of best future uses were: The highest result was 13 responses for park/conservation. The next highest responses was 6 for low-impact Green Campus. And the next highest response was 5 for Rural (large lot) residential.

Further to the response of a potential Green Campus type of development I think the public should be made aware that the Crown lands are outside of the Contained Urban Development area in the Regional Growth Strategy (CRD). Therefore, the Highlands community would likely not want to see that Urban Containment Boundary moved north. People really need more factual information to answer such questions in a meaningful and thoughtful way. Rational: a high density use or change in land use that is intense use that would require piped domestic water will likely not move forward.

Section 4: Gateway Area

Gateway-Option 1, second paragraph or notation says: “ (Note that land use policy does not directly impact existing zoning or current on-site activities.)”

I am wondering if the wording here perhaps should indicate “**future**” land use policy..... In order to be a bit clearer, unless I have this existing wording intent incorrect?

The fifth paragraph on page 8 starting with “**A challenge of this approach.....**” Clearly needs to be discussed by the Task Force at their Sept. 20th meeting and I sincerely hope that there will be adequate time allocated to that task in order for them all to do so. **(In fact, I think that entire Gateway- Option 2 needs to be discussed by the Task Force at the Sept. 20th Task Force meeting.)**

And just a side note on Millstream Meadows, which should be obvious it that is has been tax payers whether through their municipal tax requisition annually from the CRD to the District of Highlands, or taxpayers into the provincial budget portion on the remediation of this contaminated site which is not completed yet. Unfortunately, the “investors” in the case of Millstream Meadows have been all of the tax payers for the Capital Regional District for many years.

Gateway –Option 2

The fifth paragraph on page 8 starting with “**A challenge of this approach.....**” Clearly needs to be discussed by the Task Force at their Sept. 20th meeting and I sincerely hope that there will be adequate time allocated for that task in order for them all to do so. **(In fact, I think that entire Gateway- Option 2 needs to be discussed at the Sept. 20th Task Force meeting.)** In anticipation of that I will leave the majority of my comments for that time if I am allowed as there are a number of concerning sentences

and wording such as paragraph 3: The detailed policies..... Which are actually “potential” detailed policies or “potential future” detailed policies.

A general point I need to raise is a bit of potential confusion to the public in respect to the way that Gateway-Option 1 and Gateway- Option2 are laid out. The text seems to criss cross on pages 8, 9 and 10.

For example under Gateway- Option 2 after the text for that it then moves to: **Review the Option 1 for the Gateway land use direction, and tell us how much you agree with it for Early Direction #6.**

And then, there is the map or plan showing for #6. This appears confusing to me. Recommendation, please keep all of option 1 and its Early Direction map/plan and, the same for option 2 each all on their own page to avoid confusion.

On page 10, “Create a new gateway (#1) land use designation in the OCP as described above, including:” “Restrict further development of these lands (i.e., no additional commercial, industrial, or residential use) beyond existing zoning” My question to the project team is how would residential be in the listing since all 4 parcels of land listed are too contaminated for any residential land use? Therefore, why bother listing residential?

“Seek passive regeneration of these lands over time.....” My question to the project team is why? In the state of a climate change and ecological crisis, why would anyone be “seeking anything “passive” or “over time”. These seems very odd to me. I would appreciate learning about the rationale for this proposed question from the consultant at the next meeting.

And the third question there, what does “Explore opportunities for additional site regeneration, conservation and climate change mitigation” actually mean?

Again, could the consultant please speak to this at the upcoming Task Force meeting for clarity with their rationale.

On page 12, Section 5: Transportation, Question: “Improve short-term cycling safety..... My question is what exactly is short-term?

Is that really all that the Highlands has got towards transportation?

Page 14 Questions: I would dispute that Highlands has any “unsafe intersections”, some may need improving on such as Millstream Rd at Industrial Way Rd due to the usual size of vehicles coming out of there some of which are coming from the Langford side of the Industrial park.

For the project team to suggest there are unsafe intersections implies a liability. I am not convinced that is warranted.

On page 15, Questions, Re: **Hanington Rd**

My comment on this is the question may need to be revisited by the Task Force and Project Team since in the June 2021 issue of the Goldstream Gazette Bear Mountain/Ecoasis announced that they have sold some of their land to developers and they will take over 2000 Hanington Rd and be constructing 2 large buildings (which they are already advertised for sale) for condo homes on the former Highlander Condo site.

One building is planned to be 18 stories with 209 units and the other building to be 14 stories number of units for that one not indicated in the article.

This would have a significant increase in traffic onto Millstream Rd via Hanington Rd in the near future, which it is clearly not designed for including a District Rd, vehicle bridge, and a Strata Tight Pipe used for sewage from Hanington Creek Estates. Therefore, I think the existing draft question deserves revisiting by the Task Force at the next meeting on Monday Sept. 20th.

On page 17, Question: "Work to improve the safety of the Disc Golf parking area, such as clearly demarcating a parking area, enforcing posted parking restrictions, and/or working with private property owners."

Again, this is a matter for Bear Mountain/Ecoasis, the only land that the District owns there on Millstream is the municipal road right of way (RoW), and technically speaking the vehicles can really only be parked parallel to Millstream Rd, unless the vehicle is very small. Again, this is a parking and land use issue for Bear Mountain. It is unlikely the District would do what the project teams suggests since the activity occurring on their private land is likely not a permitted use under their zoning. Again, this question should be removed, from my perspective.

On page 18 demographics, I recommend changing the question to: Do you live in the Highlands? Or, Do you live outside of the Highlands?

Or, Are you a Highland resident? And,

Or, Are you a Highland property owner?

Note, the existing question: Do you own, or lease land or own a business in the South Highlands should actually be 3 separate questions in my opinion.

Sincerely,

Marcie