

DATE: February 1, 2019

FILE: 8020-03

TO: Chair and Directors
Committee of the Whole

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: Update on the Proposed Multiplex

Purpose

Provide the Committee of the Whole with an update on the proposed Multiplex project, highlighting key Board decision points and seek a Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) board appointee to the Comox Valley Multiplex Association (CVMA).

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the Comox Valley Regional District Board appoint Director _____ (and Director _____ as the alternate) to the Comox Valley Multiplex Association for the 2018 - 2022 term;

AND FURTHER THAT remuneration and expenses be paid, provided remuneration and/or expenses are not paid directly by the external organization.

Executive Summary

- CVMA is creating a concept proposal to build a multiplex facility.
- Facility scope, costs and users to be determined.
- Board key decision points - Agricultural Land Commission (ALC); application, borrowing approval, business/operating plan and tender award.
- Estimate five years to complete project.
- Public assent process to obtain borrowing approval.
- CVMA seeking CVRD Board member to be appointed to the CVMA (request attached as Appendix A).

Prepared by:

T. Ian Smith

T. Ian Smith, MCE
General Manager of Community Services

Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

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| Comox Valley Multiplex Association, Comox Valley Curling Club, Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society, Comox Valley Farmers Market, Comox Valley Exhibition | ✓ |
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Background/Current Situation

The CVRD had been approached by the Comox Valley Exhibition Society (CVEX) and the Comox Valley Farmers Institute (CVFI) to build facilities by their respective organizations on the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds (CVEG). As a result of these initiatives there was a need to update the Exhibition Grounds Master Plan and the Board endorsed this concept in April 2016. The master plan was to be designed to serve as a guiding document for the CVRD Board, staff, and stakeholders, and provide high level strategic direction, identification of priorities, and specific recommendations for the first phase of implementation.

The Board on April 21, 2017 adopted the CVRD Exhibition Grounds Master Plan. Contained within the master plan was the following recommendation: “that the Comox Valley Regional District Board support the concept of there being a single Agricultural Trade and Awareness Centre constructed on the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds and that concept plans for such a building be developed.” This recommendation resulted in the formation of the CVMA which has membership from CVEX, CVFI and an appointed CVRD Director who acts as a liaison with the board, staff, public and stakeholders.

CVMA are proposing to build a multi-purpose agricultural event centre (multiplex) to be located on the CVRD’s Exhibition Grounds. The focus of this facility will be to develop, enhance, support and preserve the farming, agricultural, silviculture, and aquaculture sectors not only within the Comox Valley but for the entire Vancouver Island.

This proposed facility will contain three main components comprised of an exhibition hall, indoor riding arena and interconnecting lobby between these two components. The exhibition hall has a concrete floor of 38,000 square feet with supporting infrastructure to host agricultural events and activities, trade shows, cultural/community events, and recreational activities.

The riding arena would primarily be an earth floor with a functional space of 46,000 square feet. This part of the facility would provide for a wide range of agricultural events from 4-H programs to stock auctions. Additional agricultural amenities such as an area for preparing, processing and packaging food would also be accommodated into the proposed facility. This would provide local area producers and processors’ access to a much needed affordable production kitchen and processing space.

The interconnecting lobby area is 8,900 square feet of multi-purpose space. A portion of the building would be two stories to help reduce the overall footprint. The second floor space contains mechanical rooms, washrooms, meeting rooms, etc. The total space of the building is 173,000 square feet. To accommodate the event space, approximately 500 green parking stalls would also be considered to provide ground water recharge and control site runoff.

Attached as Appendix B is a draft site plan of the building footprint and location. This facility would supplement current activities on the exhibition grounds such as equine events, horse boarding, annual Fall Fair, and possibly a permanent indoor space for the local Farmers Market.

The CVMA has been finalizing the concept drawings to determine project scope and capital costs. Once this is finalized some of the next key steps include:

- 1) Update the CVRD Board and seek approval to submit an application to the ALC in spring of 2019;
- 2) Secure support from the City of Courtenay for the ALC application
- 3) Update community and stakeholder groups to seek input;
- 4) Determine potential user groups and partners for the facility;
- 5) Update the CVRD Board and confirm terms of reference for the business case and management model with associated costs to complete;
- 6) Conduct a flood plain study;
- 7) CVRD Board update and determination to proceed or not based on the business case;
- 8) Public assent (Referendum; Grant Applications as required).

Key decisions points and approvals for the CVRD Board in the proposed project will be:

- 1) to proceed with an ALC application;
- 2) terms of reference for the business case and management model;
- 3) approval of business case and management model;
- 4) receipt of the business case and whether to accept the CVRD role in the project;
- 5) public assent process;
- 6) project approvals through various contract.

Policy Analysis

Bylaw No. 136 grants the powers of acquiring, constructing, equipping, operating and maintaining exhibition and recreation services for the Comox Valley in Electoral Areas B (Lazo North) and C (Puntledge – Black Creek), the City of Courtenay, the Town of Comox and the Village of Cumberland by way of supplementary letters patent issued on the 19th day of February 1971 and specifically including Electoral Area A (Baynes Sound – Denman / Hornby Islands), by way of supplementary letters patent issued on the 18th day of January 1973.

The Board on April 21, 2017 adopted the CVRD Exhibition Grounds Master Plan. Contained with the master plan was the following recommendation; “that the Comox Valley Regional District Board support the concept of there being a single Agricultural Trade and Awareness Centre constructed on the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds and that concept plans for such a building be developed.” The plan can be viewed at https://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/sites/default/files/docs/Projects-Initiatives/master_plan_cv_ex_grounds_0.pdf.

Options

- 1) Receive this report, and appoint a CVRD Director to the CVMA. Request CVMA to report back on next steps and timeline.
- 2) Request further information be brought forward at a future Board meeting.
- 3) Alternative direction on this project.

Financial Factors

The CVMA is currently refining their project scope and costs and, once finalized, CVMA will provide an update to the CVRD Board. If the project continues, one of the requirements from CVMA will be to present a business case for this project that will require CVRD administrative and Board approval. The business plan will help the board decide about the viability of the project. It is estimated the cost of a business plan to be \$65,000 and \$25,000 to develop an operating model.

Some of the required key components of the business plan will include the following:

- overall business concept, goals and vision;
- partnerships, participants, etc.;
- Class C or higher cost estimates for design and construction;
- capital funding sources and how funding will be raised;
- detailed operating budget, showing the estimated costs and how these costs are proposed to be funded and any required taxation;
- operating and management model - CVRD operated, contracted service, non-profit society;
- asset management plan; and
- communication and stakeholder plan.

It is anticipated a project of this nature will require a public assent process to obtain borrowing approval. The amount and type of public assent process will be determined by the CVRD Board. In 2019 the requisition for this service is \$486,000 and the maximum requisition is \$659,072. Although the requisition and financial plan for this service is currently over the next five years, new projects, initiatives and asset management works may be restricted in future years. It may be recommended the maximum requisition be increased in future years to come.

Legal Factors

The former Stonehenge Farm property was purchased by the CVRD in 2016 to be incorporated in to the exhibition grounds for future use. It has been determined there are a number of risk/liability concerns with this property which mainly seem to be associated with current building code violations, drainage, age of structures, tenant occupancy rights etc. Further analysis of the site by electrical, structural and civil engineers could identify further risk/liability concerns. River flooding has also occurred in the vicinity of this property and there may have been flooding on parts of this property over the past several years. The majority of the property lies within the 200 year flood plain.

Previous operations of the curling rink caused some environmental impacts on the site as the result of leaking brine lines. The contaminated soils has been removed and disposed of in accordance with environmental regulations. Currently there is a ground water monitoring program in place to determine if further remediation is required. Any future developments on the exhibition grounds will have to review any potential environmental concerns that may affect the project.

With the risk and liability issues that are presently known, it is of the opinion of staff that these can be managed as the site develops.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

The CVRD Regional Growth Strategy supports this initiative through:

Objective 6-D: increase farming activity in the Comox Valley. Supporting value-added practices (including food processing) will become increasingly important in order to support the existing agricultural industry. The supporting kitchen facility has the potential to be developed as food processing kitchen in line with regulatory agency requirements.

Objective 6-E: raise awareness of the regional importance of the local food system. Raising awareness of the importance of healthy food and the local economy could be generated through this facility by hosting farmers markets and hosting/promoting agricultural events.

Intergovernmental Factors

The exhibition grounds is located within the municipal boundaries for the City of Courtenay and in addition is dedicated as agricultural land reserve (ALR). Any future site development will have to be in accordance with City of Courtenay and ALR permitting and zoning bylaws. K'ómoks First Nation will have an interest, member municipalities and various stakeholders need to be informed throughout this process.

Interdepartmental Involvement

Although the Community Services Branch has taken the lead on this project, the Executive Management Team, Finance Department and Corporate Services, and Planning and Development Services have provided input and will continue to do so if this project moves forward.

Citizen/Public Relations

The proposed project has been presented to Comox Valley Local Government Councils, the CVRD Board and local community service organizations such as the Comox Valley Rotary Clubs. In addition CVEX and CVFI have held a number of forums to inform the public of their proposed projects for the exhibition grounds.

The exhibition grounds master plan process involved a number of public consultation processes with user groups, stake holder groups and individuals. This included:

- Key informants interviews (15) were conducted through a mix of face-to-face meetings and telephone interviews.
- An online survey was used to gather information from the general public with 307 responses being received.
- Six focus group meetings were organized with stakeholder groups. See appendix A of the master plan for groups and individuals who were interviewed or who attended focus group sessions.

If the project continues a comprehensive communications and stakeholder consultation plan will be developed.

Attachments: Appendix A – “Request for Board committee member”
Appendix B – “CVMA Draft Site Plan”

Kristy Morro

Subject: FW: CVRD rep to Multiplex Association

From: benvanderhorst@aol.com [<mailto:benvanderhorst@aol.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, January 08, 2019 9:56 AM

To: Jake Martens <jmartens@comoxvalleyrd.ca>

Cc: mike@woofys.ca

Subject: Re: CVRD rep to Multiplex Association

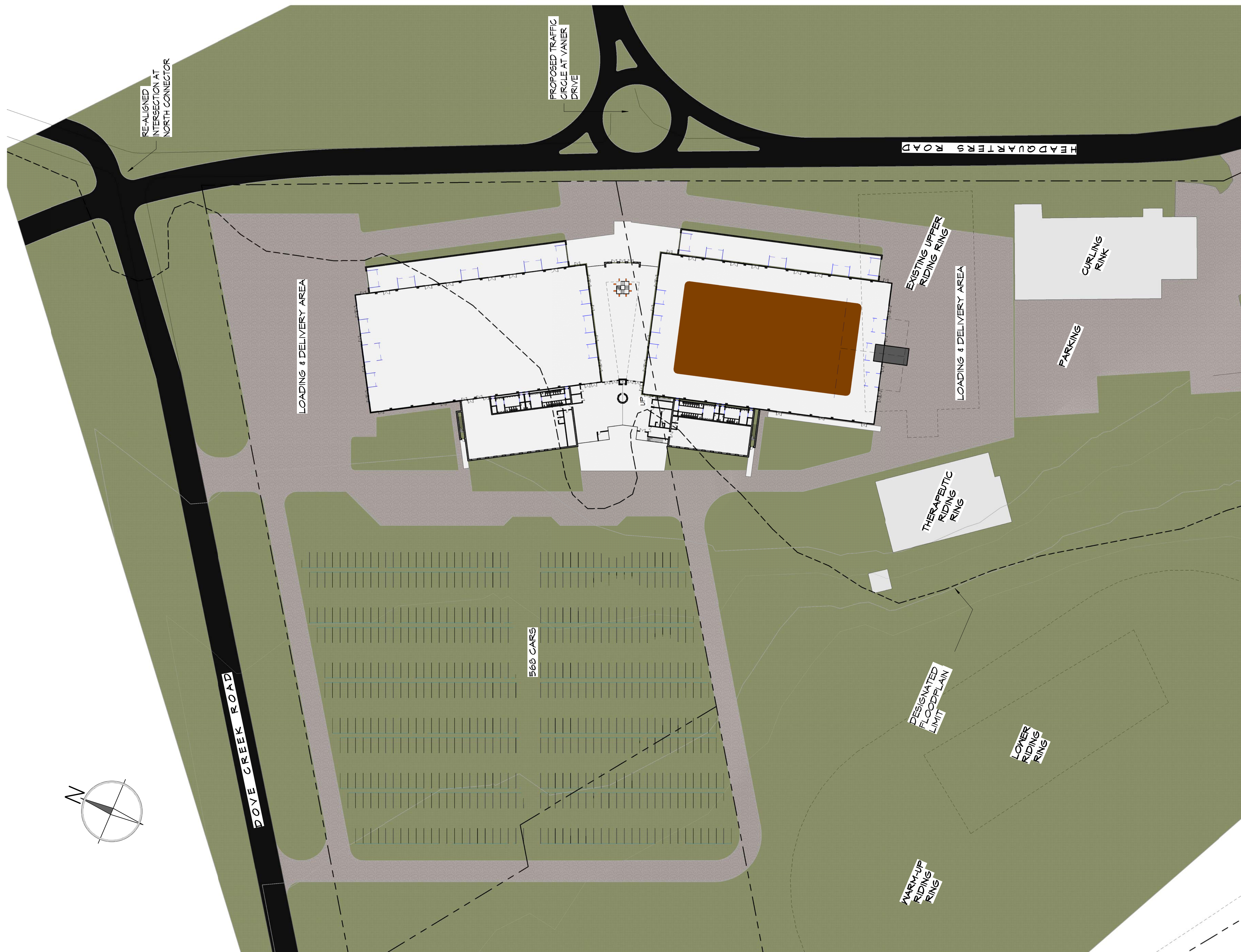
Board of Directors,
Comox Valley Regional District

We write to request the re-appointment of Director Edwin Grieve as the CVRD representative to the Comox Valley Multiplex Association.

At present, our group is refining the architectural drawings for the proposed facility, and we expect to be in a position to update the board on our progress and status through a presentation later in the spring.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ben Vanderhorst, President
Comox Valley Mutiplex Association



1 SITE PLAN - PROPOSED
AS SHOWN 1" = 60'-0"

SITE PLAN
COMOX VALLEY AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION CENTRE

ISSUE FOR REVIEW
COMOX VALLEY EXHIBITION GROUNDS

SCALE : 1" = 60'-0"



THOMAS DISHLEUOY
ARCHITECTURE
LIMITED