

**MASTER PLAN FOR THE
COMOX VALLEY EXHIBITION GROUNDS
FOR
COMOX VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT
FEBRUARY 2017**



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Executive Summary

The Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds has for many years played a central role in the life of the Comox Valley. It has primarily focused its services and events on serving the agricultural and equestrian organizations in the Valley. It has been the home to the Annual Exhibition and the Curling Centre since the 1950's, and more recently has been the venue for MusicFest, RibFest, and a wide range of other events. Every Saturday in the summer, it is the location of the increasingly popular Farmers' Market.

The Regional District has previously commissioned studies of the Exhibition Grounds: a Master Plan in 2002, and a Revitalization Study in 2009. Both provided broad guidelines for the Exhibition Grounds. In the past five years, the water and electricity services have been upgraded (\$2.1m) and the Curling Centre renovated (\$1.9m). However planning for the new facilities recommended in the 2009 study has not proceeded until recently when two proposals for new buildings were advanced by local organizations. These are an Agricultural Awareness Centre proposed by the Comox Valley Exhibition Society, and an Agriplex proposed by the Comox Valley Farmers' Institute. Other upgrading needs have been suggested by organizations such as the Farmers' Market Society.

In August 2016, the Regional District retained the services of Yates, Thorn & Associates to develop a new Master Plan for the Exhibition Grounds (see appendix B for details of the assignment and process). Stakeholders and the public have been consulted (see appendix D), and all aspects of the project have been researched. In February 2017, this Master Plan was presented to the Regional District's Committee of the Whole for information.

The Master Plan identifies an overall vision for the Exhibition Grounds, as well as a set of goals which take into account the views of all parties as well as the challenges of the site.

This report provides a summary of all aspects of the project and provides detail on the key aspects of the vision. The full details of the background research and consultations are provided in appendices.

The Vision proposed for the Exhibition Grounds is as follows:

The Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds are at the heart of the region. The Exhibition Grounds reflect the region's history and heritage, and provide a year round venue for a wide range of community events. The informal recreation areas provide a green and pleasant environment for the region's residents to walk, ride and enjoy the treed banks of the Tsolum River. The exhibition grounds are the location of the region's Curling Centre and a variety of other buildings, large and small, that serve as program and event venues for a wide range of community organizations. It is the region's facility and while it is owned by the Comox Valley Regional District, it is managed and governed by community volunteers and Regional District staff and elected officials working collaboratively together.

The recommendations of this report are as follows:

That any changes to the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds respect the environmental and cultural/First Nations sensitivity of the land, protect the Tsolum River and ensure that opportunities for enjoyment of time in nature are maintained.

That any new building or development considered for the site be located in the part of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds (CVEG) north of the Curling Centre which is above the 200 year floodplain limit.

That the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) 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.

That discussions be held with the equestrian and dog group members to ascertain their commitment to ensuring the viability of a soil-based arena.

That a report for the CVRD Board be prepared outlining options allowable under the Local Government Act regarding the establishment of an agency to manage the day-to-day operations of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds, and that members of the user groups be represented on this agency.

That two years after the adoption of this Master Plan, the CVRD commission an implementation and future feasibility analysis to refine all aspects of the plan.

That a phased plan be implemented to upgrade key aspects of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds as funding becomes available.

Introduction

The Comox Valley is blessed with one of the most beautiful settings in BC. It has a rich heritage based on its First Nations history, and its agriculture and forestry industries. The Valley is home to a wide range of residents, some long-established, some recent arrivals. While its industrial base has been under stress in recent years, both agriculture and forestry form essential elements of its culture, and have strong support from community volunteers and organizations. The Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds (CVEG) embodies and benefits from these strong traditions.

Yet time has not been kind to fairgrounds, agricultural parks and rodeo grounds in other communities. Many, if not most, have aging infrastructure. Many are managed by community groups under some form of lease or long-term agreement with the local government owners of the property. And most of the loyal cadre of organization volunteers are aging, and diminishing in numbers.

At the same time, many fairgrounds occupy geographically central or strategic locations in the community, reflecting their long heritage and status. They provide great venues for a range of community activities and festivities, such as the Vancouver Island MusicFest, as well as providing valuable greenspace and amenity values.

The CVRD has invested in its Exhibition Grounds, developing two plans and studies, in 2002 and in 2009, which have guided the CVEG over the past two decades.

Following the 2009 Revitalization Study, a major infrastructure upgrade for water and electrical supply in 2012, and through the acquisition of the neighbouring property, Stonehenge Farm, in 2016. It has also upgraded the Curling Centre which has been an occupant of the CVEG for over 50 years.

These upgradings bring their own challenges, and there is a need to redefine the site's vision in the changing regional context, to modernize its infrastructure and governance to reflect the new economic development directions, and to establish a firm foundation with an implementable master plan, while still retaining the CVEG's sense of heritage and history, and its closeness to the agricultural community.



The Current Site

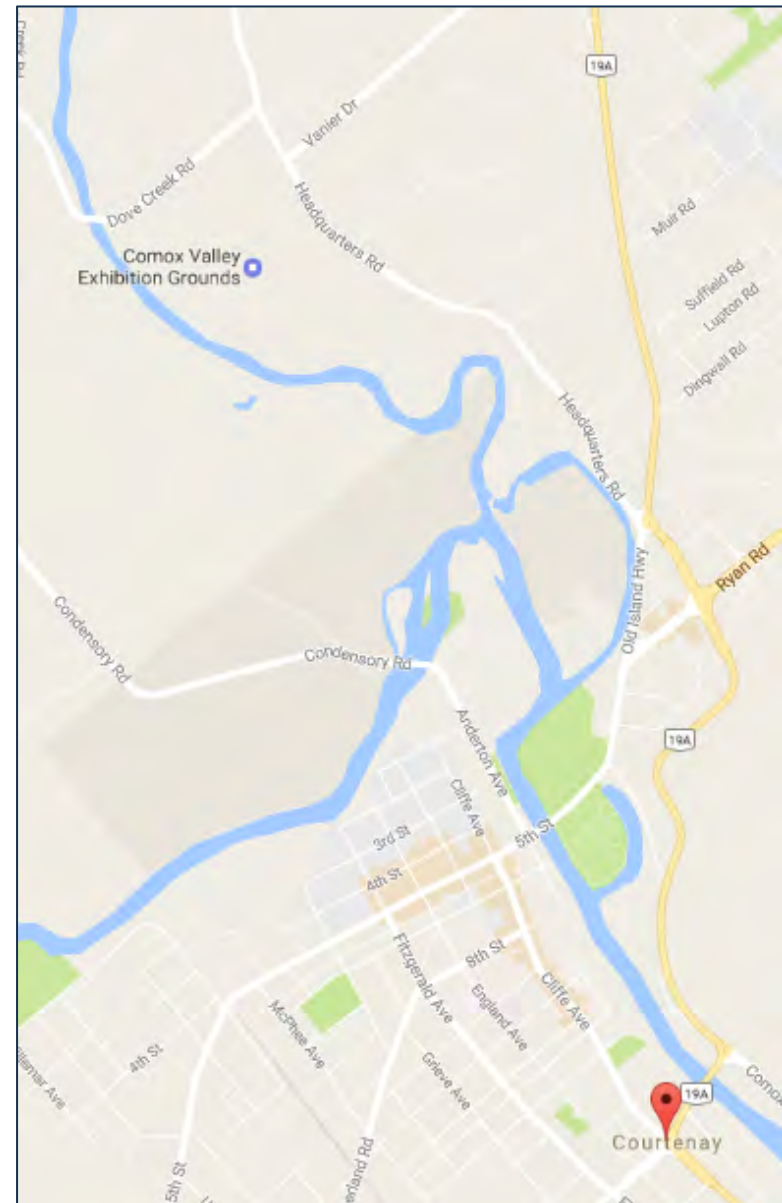
(See appendix C for a fuller description of the current site and context).

The CVEG is centrally located within the CVRD, approximately one kilometre north of the centre of the City of Courtenay. It is located on Headquarters Road and Dove Creek Road, with its western boundary being the Tsolum River.

It is served by the Comox Valley transit service, route #5 Vanier, although service is limited to two buses each way per day to serve G.P. Vanier High School students.

The site is accessible from the west side of the Tsolum River via Dove Creek bridge, which will soon be upgraded as part of the North Courtenay Connector project. This will also assist in connecting the site to the regional trail system on the west side of the River.

Currently Headquarters Road is two lane without sidewalks for most of the journey to and from downtown, and has very limited on-street parking, which is a challenge when events are being hosted at the CVEG. The road also feeds into the traffic system of north Courtenay which can itself be challenging for access both to downtown Courtenay and via Highway 19A to south Courtenay and southerly areas of the CVRD.



Site Inventory

The main CVEG site is divided into six zones with fields and rings as follows:

Zone A Dove Creek Field

In the NE corner of the site, this field is used primarily for event camping and overflow activities.

Zone B Lower Field, with Lower Ring and Warm-Up Ring

This zone, with its two rings, is used extensively for primarily equestrian events throughout the summer. It is well serviced with water and electricity.

Zone C Rotary Bowl

This field is used primarily for non equestrian events, especially the MusicFest, Rib-Fest, etc. It is well serviced with water and electricity.

Zone D CVTRS Barn

This has been the home of therapeutic riding in the Valley for over 25 years.

Zone E Upper Ring

Large outdoor ring used for equestrian and agricultural events.

Zone F Market Field

Area used for Farmers' Market. Also an area that was leased to the School District on a three year (expiry September 2019) for a Compost Education Centre, but little used.

Zone G Kin Hut Field

Centrally located field – few amenities.

There is also an outdoor ring on the Stonehenge Farm property.

Biophysical, Cultural and Visual Attributes

The site has the following attributes:

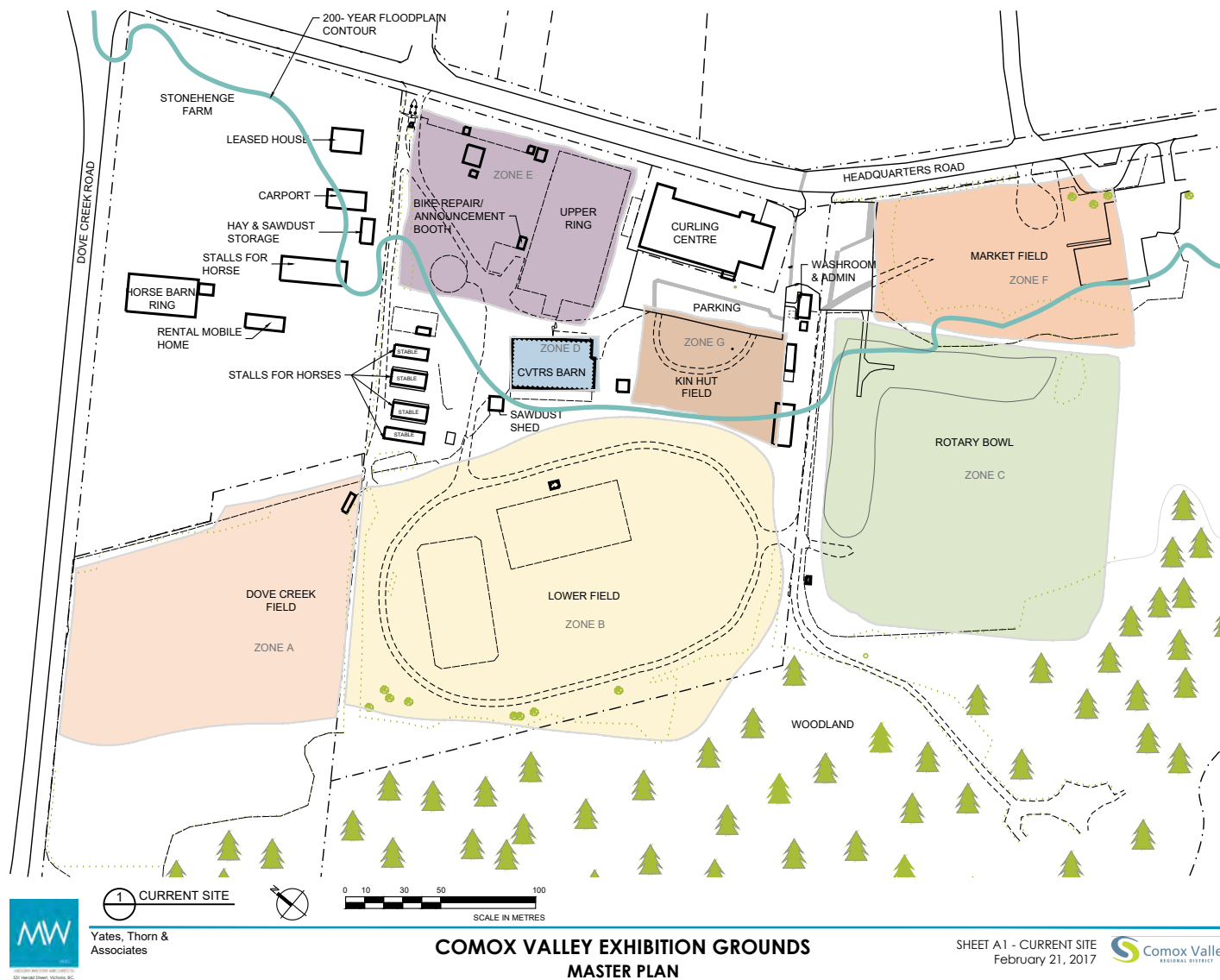
- Riverside location and access for walking and equestrian trails as well as informal recreation such as off-leash dog walking.
- Mature forest canopy and key role in the region's urban forest and climate adaptation strategies.
- The majority of the site is below the 200 year floodplain level and thus serves as part of the region's flood defense system.
- Key role in the life of the region through hosting a large number of events which add to a sense of community, of place and of community pride.
- Serves as the region's agricultural and equestrian centre.
- Provides a key pastoral and visually attractive venue for informal recreation.

Land Use and Transportation

- The CVEG is located in the City of Courtenay and is zoned as A-2 Agricultural (Stonehenge Farm is zones A-1).
- It is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve.
- It is well served for vehicle traffic, but has limited transit access.

Infrastructure

- The site was extensively upgraded for water and electrical service in 2012 (budget \$2.1m).



COMOX VALLEY EXHIBITION GROUNDS MASTER PLAN

SHEET A1 - CURRENT SITE
February 21, 2017

Facility Inventory

On the current CVEG, there are seven primary buildings as follows:

Curling Centre

This building has recently been renovated with new ice plant, floor, and lobby windows to viewing areas, side walls and general refurbishing. It has a life span of at least the next 30 years

CVTRS Barn

This building has also been recently reroofed and, while dated in parts, is in generally good condition and has a life span of at least the next 20 years. The main area of the building is a soil based indoor riding ring. The side wings contain stalls for the resident horses. The caretaker's residence is located in the upper floor at the southern end of the building; it is leased to the caretaker on a one year term.

Upper Ring Announcers' Booth

This is a new building, completed in 2016. Its upper floor provides a location for announcers while its lower floor will, by spring 2017, accommodate the CVTRS's Bike Repair Shop.

Stalls for horses

There are four buildings which provide temporary stalling for horses during horse shows and which can be rented on a daily or weekly basis. Two are wood frame construction with duroid roofing, while two are of less robust construction with tarp roofs. The two wood frame buildings are of solid construction, they could be relocated on site or removed if required.

Washrooms and admin space

This building dates from the 1990s. It provides an open area upstairs and washrooms on the ground floor. It is of solid construction (largely concrete block) with a good lifespan if required.

Bicycle Repair building

This building is used by the CVTRS Bike Repair team who will relocate to the Upper Ring Announcer's Booth (lower level) in spring 2017. This building will then be demolished.

Storage Shed

This large shed is in good condition. It is used by the CVEA for equipment storage. This equipment serves as a resource for many Comox Valley not-for-profit groups hosting events, etc.

On the recently acquired Stonehenge Farm site, there are six additional buildings as follows:

Leased House

The farmhouse is in generally poor condition and is slated for demolition in 2017. It is leased to a tenant on a five month lease.

Horse Barn/Ring

This basic but functional building and is in fair condition. It has open canvas sides, metal roof and a soil riding ring.

Stalls for horses

A very solidly constructed (concrete block with metal roof) building in good condition. Five of the stalls are rented out on a monthly basis.

Rental mobile home

Currently rented on a short term lease and in fair condition.

Hay and sawdust storage

Suitable for short term use only.

Carport

Suitable for short term use only.

Proposals for New Buildings

(see appendix E for a fuller discussion).

In the Revitalization Study prepared in 2009, two buildings were proposed for the CVEG. These were a Multipurpose Building (which we will term Building 1) and an Agricultural Arena (Building 2).

There are currently two buildings which are being proposed respectively by the CVEA, which is an Agricultural Awareness Centre (Building 3) and an Agriplex (Building 4) which is being proposed by the Comox Valley Farmers' Institute.

Details about the size and amenities of all four buildings, and their proposed uses and users are provided in Appendix E.

The following comments can be made about this set of four facilities:

- The 2009 Study proposed two buildings, one that would serve as an Exhibition Hall and one that would serve the equestrian and agricultural groups.
 - The Exhibition Hall was relatively 'bare bones' without many amenities beyond storage for event equipment, a kitchen and washrooms, and an office. Both the kitchen and washrooms could be accessed from the outside to service other events not using the main hall.
 - In the second building, they proposed a soil floor deliberately so that horses could perform. This proposed building could conceivably have a plywood floor laid over or the soil compacted¹ to make it more of an indoor event or exhibition space, but the quality of finishing, etc would somewhat limit the uses and events that this kind of temporary conversion would allow. It was therefore designed primarily with the equestrian/agricultural events in mind.

- The CVEA building – Comox Valley Agricultural Awareness Centre - as currently proposed is even more 'bare bones', with a main hall that is a quarter of the size proposed in 2009 and a range of small amenities that can serve both the main hall and outside events.
- The Agriplex currently being proposed by the Comox Valley Farmers' Institute is almost double the size of the Agricultural Arena proposed in 2009. Its main floor is about the same width but almost twice as long. Its concrete floor will serve the needs of trade shows and many other major events; the list noted in the Business Plan is as follows:
 - Trade shows
 - Conferences
 - Fairs and Auctions
 - Music festivals and outdoor concerts
 - Corporate and incentive events
 - Community events
 - Livestock shows
 - Aeronautical events
 - Sportsman shows
 - Cars, RV, and boat shows
 - Graduations and special events
 - Home shows
 - Summer, winter, senior games
 - 4H Events
- However it will only serve equestrian events if a large amount of soil is trucked in, likely making rental by these not-for-profit groups a prohibitive expense.

¹ In Chilliwack's Heritage Park arenas, soil compacting is successfully used.

This assessment of the four buildings raises several major questions:

1. Would the region be well served by adding an Exhibition Hall that would serve the CVEG, but could also be used for a wide range of other relatively small events (eg up to 350 people seated banquet style)?
2. Given that the principal users of the CVEG for events are the equestrian groups, primarily in the summer, and given that the 2009 plan identified them as key users of the Agricultural Arena, and given that the Agriplex, with its concrete floor, is unlikely to

serve their needs or be affordable for them, how can the needs of equestrian groups best be met?

3. Does the region need a Trade and Convention Centre? And if it does, should it be located on the CVEG?
4. Would the region be better served by one building serving a number of these needs, or by two or more smaller buildings scattered across the site?
5. Does there need to be changes to the governance structures for the site in order to support the vision for its future?



Governance

Since the early 1970s, the CVEG has been in the ownership of the CVRD. It has been administered as part of the recreation and community services branch. The CVRD is responsible for all major maintenance of the buildings and all maintenance, operations, programing and event scheduling of the site.

Various other agencies lease or rent space from the CVRD:

- The Curling Club has a long term (4 year) lease and manages its internal programming and maintenance and custodial operations.
- The CVTRS and K911 Dog Sports lease space for defined periods of time for multiple weeks, both using the Barn.
- The Farmers' Market also leases the use of the Market Field for Saturday mornings from April to mid-October.
- Numerous other groups rent some or all of the site for short periods of time. These include the CVEA for the Fall Fair, Rotary for RibFest, the MusicFest Society for Music Fest, and various equestrian groups for summer weekend events.
- Individuals can also purchase a pass that allows them to exercise their horses on the site and its rings and trails and can rent stalls in the stables on a daily basis.

Additionally, of course, many individuals simply use it as any other park, walk themselves or their dog, etc.

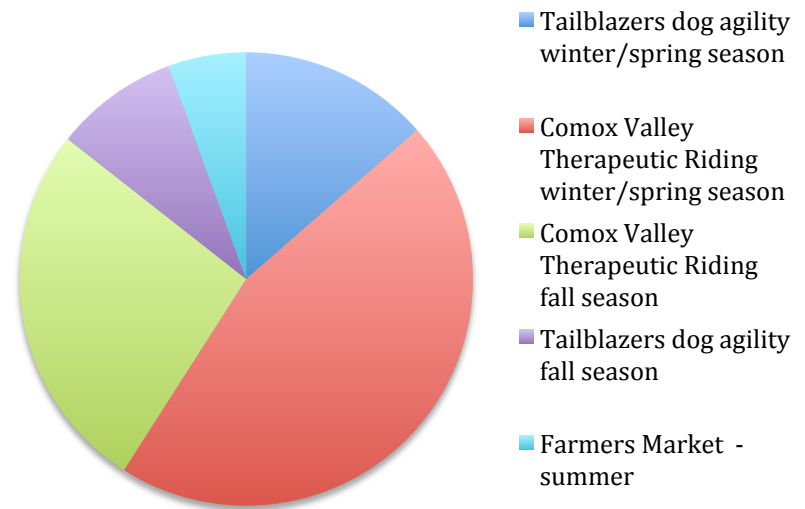
Users and Uses

The CVEG are well used. User groups either book for a season (ie the same space at the same time for multiple weeks) or for events (ie a particular space for a single time period). See appendix D and H for further details on the consultation results, appendix G on users and uses, and appendix I for full 2016 event listing.

The following organizations book space for a season:

- Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society
- Comox Valley Farmers' Market
- K911 Dog Sports

Hours - Season Bookings



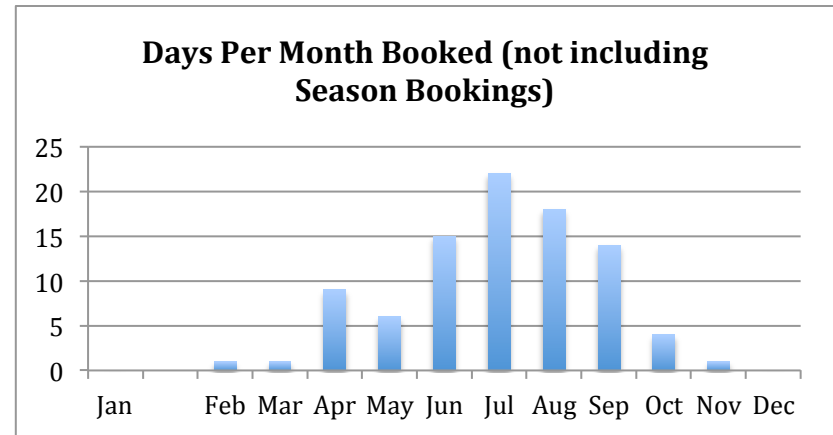
The following organizations book space for events:

- Comox Valley Exhibition Association (Fall Fair)
- Agricultural Groups
 - Comox Valley District 4H
 - Comox Valley Farmers' Institute
- Equestrian Groups
 - Comox Valley Pony Club
 - Courtenay Cadora
 - North Vancouver Island Horse Association (NVIHA)
 - Backcountry Horsemen
 - North Vancouver Island Rodeo Association.
- Dog Groups
 - Forbidden Plateau Obedience and Tracking Club
 - Roadsters Agility Club
 - Trailblazers Agility Training (TaG)
- Other Event Organizations and Exhibition Grounds Users
 - Vancouver Island Music Fest
 - Comox Valley Curling Club
 - Courtenay Rotary

- Other organizations which have indicated that they would like to host activities or events include:

- Comox Valley Arts Council
- Comox Valley Classic Cruisers

The majority of events occur in the spring and summer months as follows:



The Vision for the CVEG

Current Challenges of the Site

A number of questions can be posed about the future of the CVEG:

1. The vision of the CVEG has remained fairly constant for the past several decades. Is some modification required in order to keep abreast of broader social and economic changes in the region?
2. There are two significant constraints on the site, its location relative to the 200-year floodplain level, and its designation as part of the Agricultural Land Reserve. How are these two constraints best addressed?
3. What should be the vision for land above the 200-year floodplain level?
4. What configuration of buildings would best suit the site and any expanded role which the CVRD might wish to see adopted for the site?
5. What site development, including major maintenance, is needed to complement any expanded vision and role?
6. Will future site development require review of additional offsite utility servicing capacity?

A Changing Vision for the CVEG

The Context for the Vision

The historical focus of the CVEG has been to serve the needs of the agricultural and, as an extension, the equestrian communities of the region. The primary vehicle for this was the Fall Fair, but the CVEG also served as a base and show venue for a wide range of organizations such as 4H and Pony Club, as well as the home of therapeutic riding in the Valley.

But even in the past decade or so, the region has seen significant change. Access to a wide range of western Canadian communities has opened up through the growth of the airport, allowing more weekend visitors and tourists. And with the aging of the Baby Boom generation, an increasing amount of 'amenity migration' has followed those shorter term visits. There has been both urban (eg townhouse) and ex-urban development (large rural properties).

This migration has been driven by the primary 'amenity' of the region, its quality of life. This amenity takes on many guises: the climate, the 'green' environment, the access to the water and boating/fishing, access to winter sports, support for local events such as MusicFest, local food and 100 Mile diets...and many more.

The region has needed to respond to this influx of people, and this has certainly included a refocusing of its economic development goals, and part of this has been a move away from agriculture; or more precisely a refocusing of the image of agriculture that is part of its economic development messaging. Agriculture is now more a part of the region's quality of life and image, as opposed to an employment and economic development generator in its own right. Other regional agencies are also making this change: North Island College for instance has more courses in horticulture and tourism than in agriculture.

Agriculture is also changing. Employment in more traditional aspects of agriculture, such as dairy, beef and wheat production has shrunk, while employment in horticulture is growing and crops include grapes, berries and organic vegetables to make and offer a range of high-end products. And its community role is also diminishing: 4H now has only two clubs

(down from six or more in past decades) and Pony Club only has about 20 members.

These changes must provide the context for visioning the future of the CVEG, and indeed are already both extant, such as the popularity of the weekly Farmers' Market, and planned, such as the inclusion of a Food Processing Lab in the CVEA's facility proposal.

The community needs to rethink and revise its vision of how the CVEG serves the region. Is it still just an agricultural entity? How can it serve those new demographic groups who are increasing in number and playing a larger role in the region's economy and life?

The following vision and goals are proposed for the CVEG:

A Vision Statement

The Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds are at the heart of the region.

The Exhibition Grounds reflect the region's history and heritage, and provide a year round venue for a wide range of community events.

The informal recreation areas provide a green and pleasant environment for the region's residents to walk, ride and enjoy the treed banks of the Tsolum River. The exhibition grounds are the location of the region's Curling Centre and a variety of other buildings, large and small, that serve as program and event venues for a wide range of community organizations. It is the region's facility and while it is owned by the Comox Valley Regional District, it is managed and governed by community volunteers and Regional District staff and elected officials working collaboratively together.

Goals and Objectives

1. *To provide a pastoral location for the leisure and enjoyment of the region's population.*
2. *To protect the Tsolum River and its riparian environment.*
3. *To limit the area for construction of permanent buildings to the area above the 200 year floodplain level.*
4. *To serve as an event centre for a wide range of community organizations, primarily those with agricultural and equestrian roots.*
5. *To provide a venue for the Farmers Market.*
6. *To develop collaborative governance and management capabilities.*
7. *To allow for smooth passage and parking of vehicles.*
8. *To meet high environmental standards in all aspects of the site's development.*



Source: <https://www.discovercomoxvalley.com/agriculture/>

A Vision for Informal Recreation and Nature

The CVEG still has roles to play beyond the support of agriculture and equestrian. Many responders to the online survey noted the role it plays as a large green space with access to the river and the opportunity to walk, ride and let the dog run. It is a beautiful location and that beauty needs to be preserved even as new roles are explored for the site.

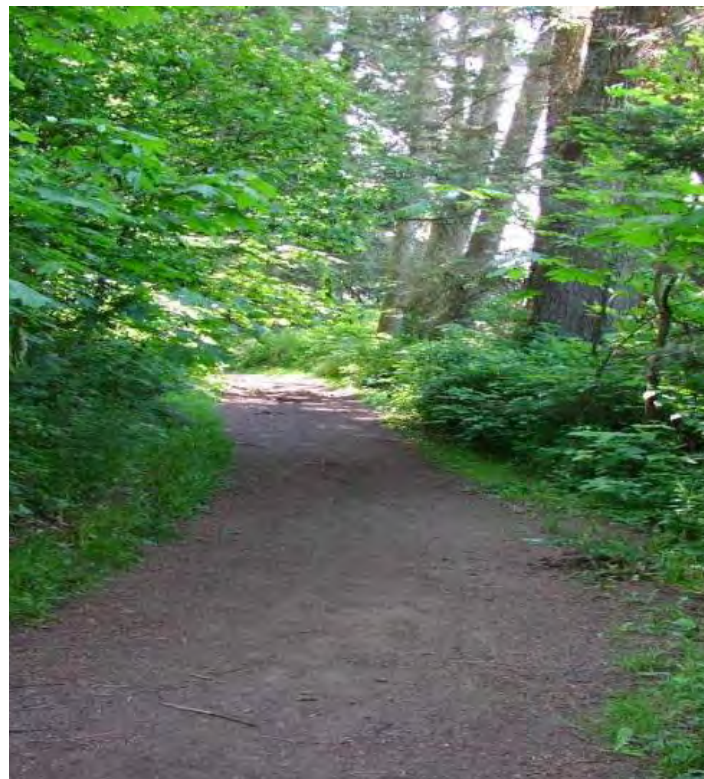
Protecting the Tsolum River, its riverbanks and riparian ecosystem, and the ability of residents and visitors to enjoy the peace and tranquility.

This can be best achieved by restricting new development and opposing change to the treed area along the river and the adjacent zones of the Rotary Bowl, the lower rings and the Dove Creek field. These latter zones are heavily used during the summer months by equestrian events and it would seem that these happily coexist with the casual walkers and riders.

There are occasional conflicts between off-leash dogs, their owners and equestrians, but these would appear to be incidental to the general run of affairs. If in the future, they become more frequent, some intervention (such as limiting off-leash hours to before 9.00am in the summer months) might become necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

That any changes to the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds respect the environmental and cultural/First Nations sensitivity of the land, protect the Tsolum River and ensure that opportunities for enjoyment of time in nature are maintained.



A Vision for the Lands above the 200-year Floodplain

The CVEG is totally within the ALR and a good portion of it is below the 200-year floodplain limit. Both these criteria place limits on the development potential for the site.

The ALR has been in place since 1974. The current buildings that are on the site were either developed before the ALR was implemented (such as the Curling Centre), or are regarded as agricultural or ancillary to agricultural uses (eg the buildings on the Stonehenge Farm part of the site, and the barns and stables on the main site). The development of non-agricultural land uses and buildings is only allowed after specific processes are followed and approvals gained. The request for an exemption for any non-agricultural building will require actions by the CVRD as the land owner and the City of Courtenay as the planning authority.

The 200-year floodplain limit is of importance because the planning regulations and building codes of BC/Canada place special restrictions on the development of any permanent structures in the floodplain below this limit. These restrictions effectively financially limit any development to above the limit.

As can be seen from the attached map, the floodplain limit effectively limits major development to the lands adjacent to Headquarters Road, either north or south of the Curling Centre.

This also effectively protects the lower parts of the site, both the Rotary Bowl, the Lower Rings, the Dove Creek Field, most of the Stonehenge Farm property and the woodland along the riverfront, from any but minor development.



The land above the 200 year limit can be divided into three zones:

- The Curling Centre and related access.
- The Farmers' Market field with its separate access; and
- The lands to the north of the Curling Centre, which include the Upper Ring and Upper Announcers' Stand, and the lands immediately north in what was the Stonehenge Farm property.

The middle zone is fixed by the Curling Centre and its access and required parking. However there is some flexibility in this arrangement, and parking could be combined with other zones. There is also a lobe of land (Kin Field – Zone G) which could be utilized for other purposes, and it is on this site that the CVEA are proposing the CVAAC.

The Farmers' Market zone is easily accessed off Headquarters Road, but suffers from inadequate services such as washrooms and parking.

The addition of Stonehenge Farm has added to the amount of land north of the Curling Centre. This portion of land is the proposed site for the CVFI Agriplex, although the size of this building, when located only on the Stonehenge Farm lands, extends beyond the 200-year limit.

If a large new building is to be part of the future vision for CVEG, then its parking requirements need to be assessed. There is only limited parking currently available at the south end of the site and the Farmers' Market normally is accompanied by extensive parking along the sides of Headquarters Road. Equally, there is little potential to add parking at this end of the site without encroaching on the Rotary Bowl. Therefore the only location for a large new building is in the northern sector, as proposed by the CVFI, with parking both shared with the Curling Centre and extending below the 200-year limit and accessed from Dove Creek Road.

This would also leave the Farmers' Market in its current location (recognizing that this part of the CVEG needs significant new drainage, ground stabilization and general upgrading – see below).

RECOMMENDATION

That any new building or development considered for the site be located in the part of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds (CVEG) north of the Curling Centre which is above the 200 year floodplain limit.

A Vision for a New Agriplex

The review of the four building proposals earlier in this master planning report noted five questions:

1. Does the region need a major trade show building, and, if so, is the CVEG the best location for one?
2. Does the CVEG need a new exhibition building that would service both the Fall Fair/CVEX and the variety of smaller events held during the year?
3. How can the needs of the equestrian groups be incorporated into the current planning?
4. Can these needs be consolidated into one building albeit with a large or larger footprint?
5. Do there need to be changes to the governance structures for the site to ensure that the value of the new vision and building is maximized?

Addressing each question in turn:

- **Need for a major trade show building on the CVEG** – this question is beyond the scope of this report. However discussions with the various organizations would indicate that a strong case can be made for such a building. Our analyses would indicate that such a building can be accommodated on the CVEG, and our assessment of the changing nature of the region would indicate that the time may well be right for such an investment. We shall proceed on this assumption, recognizing that it may well be that the CVRD chooses to defer until further studies are completed.
- **Need for a new Exhibition Building on the CVEG** – the need for a new exhibition building was identified in the 2009 report and has continued to be a priority of the CVEA. Discussions with other groups have indicated that some of the amenities proposed to

serve other events and activities would indeed be welcomed. Therefore we would agree that such a building is desirable.

- **Meeting the needs of equestrian groups (and to a lesser extent dog groups)** – the 2009 report identified a need for an indoor arena that could serve the needs of both agricultural and equestrian groups for shows and events. This arena was designed with a soil-based floor. Neither building currently proposed has a soil based floor so the needs of equestrian groups can only be met if soil is moved in and then out for each event. It is likely that this would make it prohibitively expensive for not-for-profit groups. While a concrete floor may make it non-functional for groups needing a soil-based floor, it is likely that the reverse is not true. For instance, in Chilliwack, Heritage Park has four arenas, two concrete floored and two soil; for large trade shows needing three or four arenas, they roll and compact the soil making it hard enough for large vehicles and RVs (then cover high traffic areas with carpeting). At Heritage Park, the soil base does raise issues of dust, but this is primarily a design issue and can be controlled for in the design process.
- Given this, it would seem that the needs of equestrian groups for an indoor arena can be met if the major building proposed by the CVFI were to be divided in two parts, one with a concrete floor and one with a soil floor.
- However this is also dependent on there being a demand for a range of equestrian and dog group events. While our analysis would indicate that such events can be attracted to the Comox Valley, this aspect was not included in either the 2009 Study or the Business Plans of either of the more recently proposed buildings. It is not just a hypothetical question of whether such events can be attracted, but also a question of whether the not-for-profit equestrian and dog group members are prepared to host such events. This challenge needs to be put to these groups before a commitment is made to a soil based arena.
- **Potential to consolidate the two currently proposed buildings into one building** – the two buildings currently proposed have areas of 9,200sqft and 76,000sqft. They both contain lobby/entry,

ticket and coat area, food service area/kitchen, storage, mechanical/janitorial, washrooms, office and meeting rooms. While there has been discussion between the CVEA and CVFI regarding merging the two buildings, no firm decisions have been made. Leaving aside the discussion of 'whose building is it?', it is clear from the viewpoint of an outsider that it is not sensible to have two buildings and that the building requirements should be consolidated into the design for one building. Some suggested parameters for this building are as follows

- Main event hall (concrete floor) – 140ft by 260ft
- Small event hall (concrete floor) – 50ft by 80ft
- Agricultural/Equestrian arena (main floor soil-based - 140ft by 200ft)
- Amenity spaces (lobby, washrooms, etc) – 50ft by 80ft
- Total area approximately 80,000sq ft
- Construction – using the same industrial building shell proposed for the CVFI Agriplex
- Estimated unit cost - \$120 to \$150 per square foot²
- Estimated total cost - \$10 to \$12m

RECOMMENDATION

That the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) 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.

That discussions be held with the equestrian and dog group members to ascertain their commitment to ensuring the viability of a soil-based arena.

² This is a best estimate. Any number of other factors may impact this rate. For instance the recent renovations of the Curling Centre identified some soil contamination. This was rectified under the Curling Centre, but a major new building on a site that has not been extensively surveyed, could encounter similar cost issues.

A New Governance Vision

The current governance structures have been detailed earlier in this report, along with information about the governance of other exhibition grounds. These governance structures can be summarized as follows:

- The CVRD owns and is responsible for all major maintenance.
- All other groups rent or lease space/buildings from the CVRD.

It should be noted that currently neither the CVEA nor the CVFI are anything more than occasional renters at the site, yet they are proposing to erect buildings which they would then manage. Both buildings will be on CVRD land and most likely will be funded to some extent by the CVRD.

Given the financial exposure that the CVRD will accept if this plan is implemented, there is a need to streamline these governance structures. An amended governance structure should also strengthen the managerial operations of the CVEG. Also, given the funding realities in the Comox Valley, as elsewhere, it would be sensible if CVRD continues to own all buildings and land, and to be the principal funder of capital improvements.

The review of other exhibition grounds noted that there are many ways in which such sites can be run, all of which can be accommodated with the *Local Government Act*. Some options in this regard would include:

- Contracting with a private firm to manage all aspects of the CVEG. This could include an advisory council appointed by the Regional Board. It will also likely include a requirement for the CVRD to provide an annual grant to this organization (although this could be channeled through the various not-for-profit organizations).
- Establishing a commission under the *Local Government Act* (section 176) to manage the day-to-day operations of the CVEG.

This could also include some kind of advisory council and an annual grant.

- A third option, which would be a variation on #2 above, would be to establish a Corporation, which is allowable under section 195 of the Act.

Additionally, there could be various permutations of these three options, and a hybrid version could emerge.

Whichever option is selected, the agency could collaborate with the CVRD on the planning, building, financing, marketing and operation of all buildings on the site. This would provide an increased degree of unity to all aspects of the operation and planning of the CVEG.

This is clearly a topic requiring further deliberation by the Regional Board.

RECOMMENDATION

That a report for the CVRD Board be prepared outlining options allowable under the *Local Government Act* regarding the establishment of an agency to manage the day-to-day operations of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds, and that members of the user groups be represented on this agency.

That two years after the adoption of this Master Plan, the CVRD commission an implementation and future feasibility analysis to refine all aspects of the plan.

A Vision for Maintenance, Site Upgrading and Phasing

There are a number of other major maintenance and site development projects which need to be undertaken if the long term vision of the CVEG is to be realized. These can be summarized as follows:

High priority / Short Term

- Farmers' Market field – this field should receive additional drainage and ground stabilization, as well as additional access to washrooms.
- The two rings on the lower field should be renovated with particular reference to the footings.

In conjunction with the construction of the new building

- The buildings on Stonehenge Farm should be demolished.
- All the parking areas between the Farmers' Market field, the Curling Centre, the CTRS Barn and the proposed new building should be integrated and resurfaced to appropriate environmental standards. To the extent possible, parking areas should be limited to areas above the 200 year floodplain limit.
- A new parking lot should be created on the Stonehenge Farm site to serve the new agriplex. It should be accessed from Dove Creek Road. Consideration should be given to providing additional serviced parking/camping spaces for tenting and RVs along the line of intersection with the Dove Creek field.
- Depending on the nature and usage of future facilities at the exhibition grounds, CVRD staff should work with BC Transit to analyze the potential for transit ridership. This in turn would be used to consider how and if future transit service is brought to this location. This could include regularly scheduled service or special event service for events with large attendance. Applicable bus stop infrastructure should also be determined as part of this work.

Less priority / Medium Term

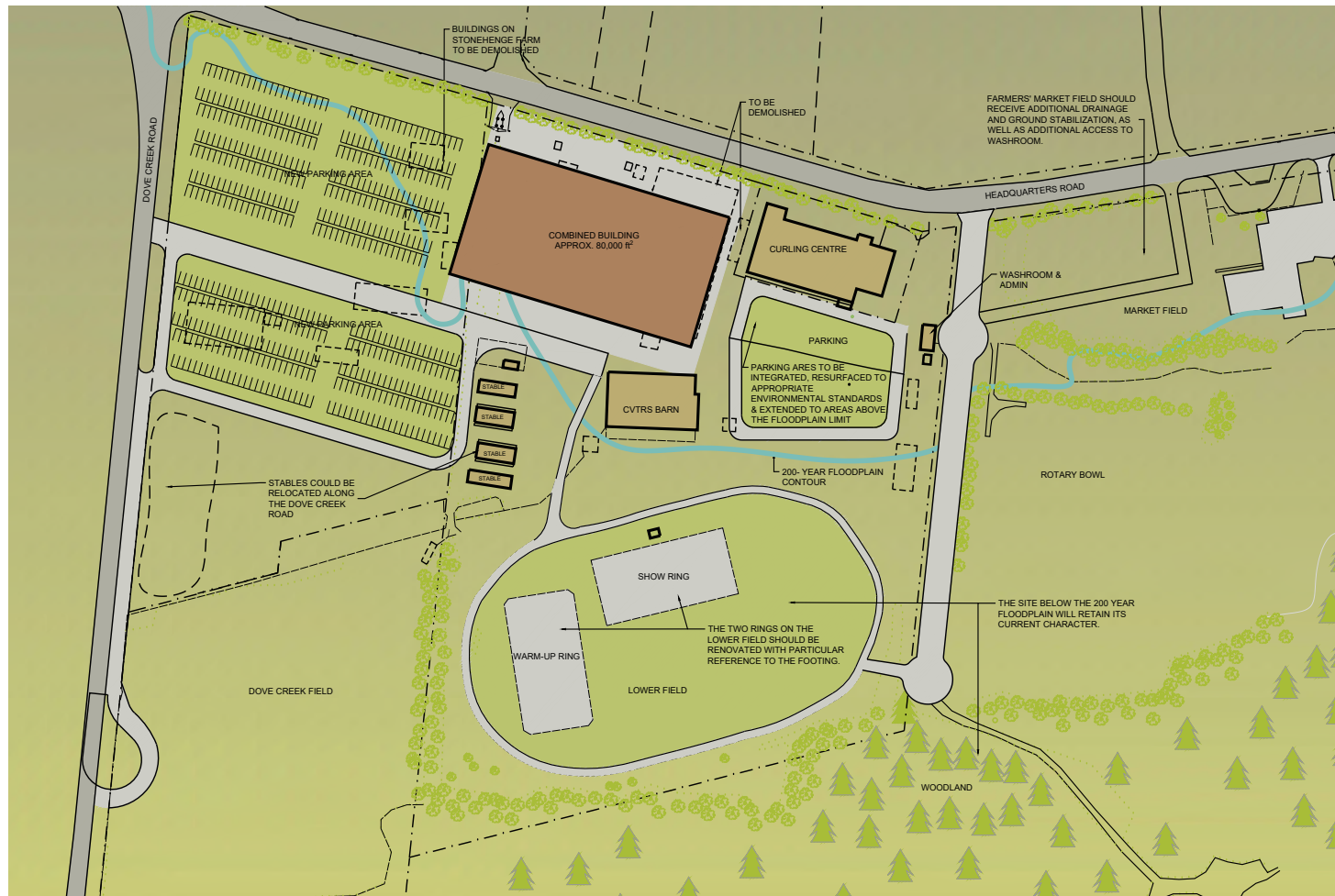
- The storage buildings that edge the Rotary Field should be demolished, with required storage space replaced elsewhere as required.
- The four stables should be relocated such that they serve as a divider between the parking lot for the new building and the Lower Field.

RECOMMENDATION

That a phased plan be implemented to upgrade key aspects of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds as funding becomes available.

All proposed items are noted on the plan on the following page.





1 FUTURE SITE DEVELOPMENT



Yates, Thorn &
Associates

COMOX VALLEY EXHIBITION GROUNDS MASTER PLAN

SHEET A2 - FUTURE SITE DEVELOPMENT
February 21, 2017



Recommendations

That any changes to the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds respect the environmental and cultural/First Nations sensitivity of the land, protect the Tsolum River and ensure that opportunities for enjoyment of time in nature are maintained.

That any new building or development considered for the site be located in the part of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds (CVEG) north of the Curling Centre which is above the 200 year floodplain limit.

That the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) 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.

That discussions be held with the equestrian and dog group members to ascertain their commitment to ensuring the viability of a soil-based arena.

That a report for the CVRD Board be prepared outlining options allowable under the *Local Government Act* regarding the establishment of an agency to manage the day-to-day operations of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds, and that members of the user groups be represented on this agency.

That two years after the adoption of this Master Plan, the CVRD commission an implementation and future feasibility analysis to refine all aspects of the plan

That a phased plan be implemented to upgrade key aspects of the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds as funding becomes available.

Appendix A - List of Abbreviations

CVEG	Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds
CVRD	Comox Valley Regional District
CVEX/CVEA	Comox Valley Exhibition Association
CVFI	Comox Valley Farmers' Institute
CVTRS	Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society
ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve
ALC	Agricultural Land Commission
CVAAC	Comox Valley Agricultural Awareness Centre
NVIHA	North Vancouver Island Horse Association
OCP	Official Community Plan

Appendix B – Assignment and Process

Yates, Thorn & Associates were retained by the CVRD to prepare a master plan for the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds, including the original property and a newly acquired adjacent site, known locally as Stonehenge Farm. The purpose of the master plan is to meet the needs of the community and stakeholder groups, and to incorporate potential economic opportunities and actions to support growth in the agriculture sector in the region.

The master planning process was required to consider past work, gather and address stakeholder input, and look at the long-term future of the region in the context of its changing environment, demographics, and emerging priorities and needs related to the agriculture sector, community events, and economic opportunities. The master plan was to be designed to serve as a guiding document for the CVRD board and staff, and stakeholders, and provide high level strategic direction, identification of priorities, and specific recommendations for the first phase of implementation.

Process

The project was undertaken in three phases

Phase 1 – Project Commencement and Background Research

- A meeting was held with the CVRD staff at which key issues were discussed, and the general focus and vision for the project agreed.
- A tour of the Exhibition Grounds and related parks and amenities was undertaken.
- An overall communications strategy was prepared to ensure that all public and stakeholder meetings were well publicized and that all opportunities for gathering input capitalized upon.
- Key issues from relevant planning and policy documents were identified.

- The estimated growth of the population over the next 5, 10 and 20 years and the changing context of the region were documented.
- The current usage of the Exhibition Grounds was described and assessed through the development of several inventories:
 - Organizations and programming – user groups were identified and information as to their current programming and organizational capacity gathered.
 - Facilities – all the facilities and amenities (biophysical, cultural, etc) on the Exhibition Grounds site were assessed and their current condition and future required upgrading identified.
- Information from a variety of fairgrounds, agricultural parks and rodeo grounds in BC and Alberta was gathered, and trends identified.

Phase 2 – Determining Current and Future Needs

- 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. 307 responses were received.
- Six focus group meetings were organized with stakeholder groups.

See Appendix H for groups and individuals who were interviewed or who attended focus group sessions.

Phase 3 – Reporting – Recommendations and Action Plans

- The learning from phases 1 and 2 was compiled into a report for the Staff Support Team. It included:
 - Strategic issues identified by the consulting team.
 - Concept alternatives.
 - General recommendations.
- The draft plan was prepared, and a final version was presented to CVRD Committee of the Whole on February 21, 2017.

Appendix C – Current Context and Background Review

Exhibition Grounds History

The CVEG has been serving the Comox Valley for over 65 years. Key highlights in its history include:

- 1950 - approximately 65 acres of Armed Forces Training Camp lands became surplus and were acquired by the Comox Valley Exhibition Association.
- 1959 - a Curling Rink was constructed on the CVEG, but the title of the land remained with the CVEA.
- 1969/70 - following difficulty repaying the mortgage on the Curling Rink, the regional district (then CSRD) held a referendum and then assumed 'the properties, liabilities and affairs of the Comox Valley Exhibition Association'
- 1973 – the K'ómoks First Nation Longhouse was relocated off the property.
- 1981 - a new barn (currently used by CVTRS) was constructed.
- 2002 - the first Master Plan for the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds was prepared. It made a number of recommendations and also identified a number of 'design principles' that continue to have relevance today.
- 2009 - A Revitalization Study that explored master plan options was conducted in 2009 with a full process involving stakeholders and the public. The 2009 plan, which included a proposal for a multi-purpose facility and an Agriplex, was approved by the CVRD board.
- 2011/2012 - Water and electrical infrastructure were upgraded (\$2.1m).

- 2015 - The curling rink was renovated (\$1.9m) and is now called the Curling Centre (the 2009 study assumed it would be removed).
- 2016 - The adjacent property, Stonehenge Farm, was acquired by the CVRD

There are currently two proposals for new facilities on the CVEG, from the Comox Valley Exhibition Association (CVEX) and the Comox Valley Farmers' Institute (CVFI). They have both been presented to the CVRD board for information. An MOU and agreement in principle has been signed with CVEX for their facility and the CVRD board has agreed in principle to support a facility by the CVFI located within the Comox Valley.

Previous Studies and Reports

Local Government Planning Documents

A number of CVRD policy documents were reviewed:

- Comox Valley Official Community Plan (Bylaw No. 337)
- Comox Valley Regional Growth Strategy (Bylaw No. 120, 2010)
- Comox Valley Sustainability Strategy - 2010
- Comox Valley Agricultural Plan - 2002

While the Exhibition Grounds do not get very much reference in these documents, the policy framework that these documents create for the Regional District reinforce and reflect key roles and can be played by the CVEG:

- Support for farmers, present and future.
- Base for agricultural and equestrian activities and groups.
- Opportunities for public education and awareness raising.
- Contribution to food system planning.

- Home of Farmers' Market.
- Opportunities for public to purchase local produce.
- Historic Fall Exhibition as a cultural resource.
- Support for agriculture as a growing industry.
- Home of agricultural and equestrian events.
- Home for other events.
- CVEG as parkland

Previous Master Plans for the CVEG

Two previous comprehensive plans have been prepared for the CVEG: the first in 2002; the second, a Revitalization Study, in 2009.

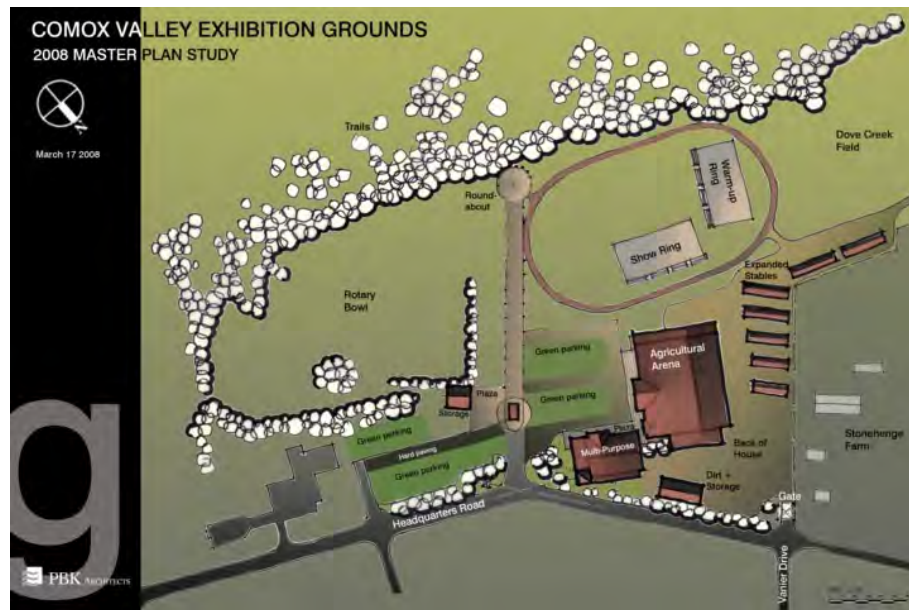
The 2002 study laid out a series of Design Principles which were adopted by the 2009 Study. Many still have relevance for the CVEG today, and still collectively describe the 'vision' for the site and its functioning. These design principles are as follows (verbatim):

1. *The fairground's primary function is as an agricultural fairground and therefore proposals should support and not detract from this function.*
2. *The calibre of the open spaces should be high with an emphasis on natural and open environments.*
3. *The forested riverside portion of the site should be protected and managed as nature preserve. Vanier Creek should be protected and enhanced. Both the Tsolum River and Vanier Creek should be embraced in the site planning as unique landscape features.*
4. *Buildings and facilities should be grouped to create positive open spaces.*
5. *The fairgrounds should be planned to efficiently accommodate simultaneous events.*
6. *Facilities on the fair grounds should be multi-functional wherever feasible.*

7. *The site should have a high degree of legibility to orient first time attendees and to simplify rental agreements.*
8. *Efficient vehicle movements on and off the site need to be planned for especially during large events. Summertime over flow parking needs to be provided.*
9. *Additional permanent parking should be provided very cautiously to avoid detracting from the qualities of the fairground.*
10. *Separation between non-compatible uses should be planned for. Likewise, grouping of compatible uses should be planned for.*
11. *Safety and universal access should be provided for.*
12. *The aesthetics of the fairgrounds should be preserved and enhanced.*
13. *New and existing buildings should have a form and character that supports the vision statement. In general buildings should conform to a West Coast Pioneer Farm theme. This would entail buildings that generally feature unpainted cedar board & batten or shingle siding, galvanized (non-coloured) or cedar shake roofs and rustic details and finishes. Concrete, vinyl and other modern finishes should be avoided wherever possible.*
14. *Proposed facilities at the fairgrounds should not compete directly with established businesses.*
15. *The master plan should be fiscally and environmentally responsible.*
16. *Buildings and functions that cannot be justified according to the fairground's vision statement should be removed over time.*
17. *Rows of trees should be planted to green the site and build on the rural agrarian theme. Ornamental landscaping should be avoided and considered for removal where it cannot be justified.*
18. *Where feasible install permanent event infrastructure (fencing, washrooms, etc.) to minimize setup/breakdown labour.*

The 2009 Revitalization Study was design oriented and looked primarily at the development of a preferred design through public meetings.

The final concept is shown below:



This had the following noted attributes:

- The riding track, while not necessarily used for races in the future, should be preserved for structured and unstructured recreational activity:
- A main pedestrian mall running from the Headquarters Road entry to the south of the site terminating in a small “Roundabout Plaza”. This provided one of the main pedestrian access points to the lower Rotary Bowl.
- The majority of parking is “green” parking with the drive lanes constructed of interlocking paving stones (or asphalt as an alternate).
- Parking has been extended into the existing Farmers’ Market area – this surface improves the set up for the market.
- A new Multi-Purpose Building constructed from the heavy timber Barn replaces the existing Curling Rink which has been removed/relocated.
- An Agricultural Arena replaces the old relocated Barn.
- There is a large open “back of house” area off of Vanier Drive.
- A large Dirt + Storage Building has been provided in the back of house area.
- The Stables have been expanded and follow the property line with the adjacent Stonehenge Farm
- The existing stand-alone washroom facility was maintained and incorporated into the north-south pedestrian plaza that divides the site.

Details of the floor plans of the multi-purpose building and Agricultural Arena were included as follows:



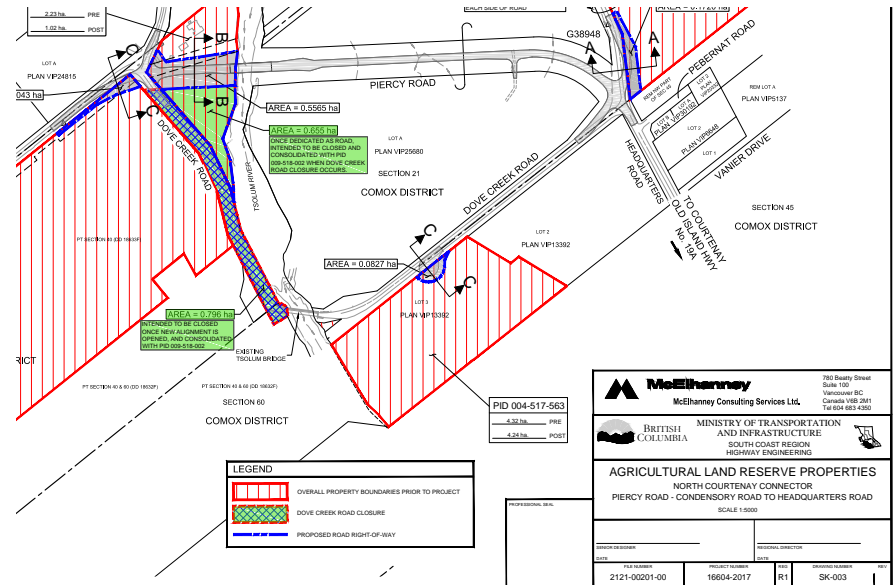
Other Reports Reviewed

Three other reports were reviewed:

2012 Archeological Impact Assessment – its conclusion was that “no archaeological material was identified during the monitored excavations at the Courtenay Fairgrounds and the unmonitored excavations were in areas assessed as having a low potential for archaeological resources”.

2013 Tree Risk Assessment – this was a follow-up study of tree risk. It determined that all trees identified as ‘risky’ in the previous assessment had been addressed, with a few exceptions, all of which were in the wooded zone of the site along the Tsolum River.

2016 North Courtenay Connector – the new connector will leave Headquarters Road at the junction with Dove Creek Road, and run north of the site, crossing the Tsolum River 300 m farther north than at present, and joining shortly after with Piercy Road. This will make the current bridge redundant, and will provide a buffer to the property north of the current line of Dove Creek Road. Dove Creek Road will become a cul-de-sac, and a turnaround will be provided at the entrance to the current Dove Creek Field.



Regional Context/Demographics

A review of the Official Community Plan for CVRD, the Regional Growth Strategy, and other sources provide the following context for the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds over the next 10 to 20 years.

- In the next 20 years, the CVRD's population will grow by about 30%, all of which will be in the three urban municipalities.
- The population will age, with the percentage of people aged over 65 years increasing from 22% to 28% in 2031.
- Between 4,000 and 8,000 new dwelling units will be constructed.
- At least 8,400 new jobs will need to be created.

Statistical Summary	Population		Proportion aged 65+		Housing
	CVRD	Areas A, B, C	CVRD	Areas A, B, C	CVRD
2011 Actual	63,538	22,163	22%	19%	31,156
2021 Projection	73,341	22,165	27%	n/a	4,300 (new)
2031 Projection	82,976	22,168	28%	n/a	4,226 (new)
Increase in 20 years	30.59%	0.02%	29.6%	n/a	22%
Increase in 20 years	19,438	5	9,557		8,526

TABLE 1) STATISTICAL SUMMARY POPULATION, DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSING (CENSUS, NHS)

The recently released Census indicated the Regional District 2016 population was 66,527. This is in line with the projections noted above.

In 2008, it was estimated that only 544 people, or less than 3% of total employment, was in agriculture. A small increase in this sector was projected through 2030.

Employment Estimates, 2008 and Employment Forecasts, 2030

	2008 est.	Projected Average Annual Growth	2030 - Low	2030 - High
Retail trade	4,687	1.0% to 2.0%	5,834	7,246
Accommodation & food service	2,872	0.5% to 1.5%	3,205	3,985
Health care and social services	3,130	2.0% to 4.5%	4,839	8,243
Construction	3,912	-4.0% to 3%	3,912	6,735
Manufacturing	1,499	0.5% to 1.0%	1,499	2,080
Finance and real estate	1,615	0.5% to 1.0%	1,615	2,010
Educational services	1,382	-0.5% to 1.0%	1,542	1,720
Public administration	1,332	0.5% to 1.5%	1,486	1,848
Information, culture and recreation	1,229	1.5% to 3.0%	1,801	2,355
Transportation and warehousing	1,341	0.75% to 1.25%	1,581	1,762
Professional scientific and technical	1,182	0.75% to 1.25%	1,393	1,553
Management and administration	1,251	0.75% to 1.25%	1,475	1,644
Other services	1,132	0.75% to 1.5%	1,334	1,571
Forestry, fishing and resource-based	847	.75% to 2.0%	998	1,309
Agriculture	544	1.5% to 3.0%	755	1,042
Totals	27,955		33,269	45,105

Vital Signs is an annual publication of the Comox Valley Community Foundation. It noted in 2015 a community interest in more festivals and community celebrations, and the CVEG is a major location for such activities.

However these data only tell the statistical story. Some more qualitative trends that can be noted in the community include:

- Lifestyle and quality of life are the main reasons people are moving to the Comox Valley.
- The aging of the population has two drivers. One is aging of the current population, but the other is retired people moving to the region in search of increased quality of life.
- The average income of Valley residents allows significant disposable income to be spent on quality of life supplements.
- Concern for the environment and an interest in quality food is high among this demographic.
- The local agricultural industry is responding to these changes and diversifying into a wide range of non-traditional crops and local, primarily small-scale food processing.

The CVEG can play a key role in supporting these trends such as by supporting small scale agricultural processing and sales through the Farmers' Market.



Appendix D - Views of Public and Stakeholders

Key Informant Interviews and Focus Groups

As part of the consultation for the Master Plan, interviews were carried out with a number of key informants, as well as hosting six focus groups with individuals involved in the various organizations and users of the CVEG. The comments made at these meetings are summarized as follows:

Note: the comments about the two proposed facilities, the Comox Valley Agricultural Awareness Centre proposed by the CVEA and the Agriplex proposed by the CVFI are discussed later in this report.

Planning for the Needs of Equestrian Groups

- The value and contribution of the CVTRS is recognized and recent improvements to the roof of the barn have provided both a facility and a home for the next decade.
- The barn is also a key venue for MusicFest.
- The outdoor equestrian facilities at CVEG are generally good, but a lack of maintenance, upgrading and investment over the past few years has diminished their quality. In particular the ring footings are in poor condition and sometimes are dangerous. This has also meant riders avoid the CVEG.
- There are many events at present and there could be more if facilities, indoor and outdoor, were improved.
- The needs for stabling, for events and for both summer and winter, should be clarified and adequate stabling planned for.
- A new indoor arena must have a soil floor, but would be well used as long as it was affordable for hosting groups.
- Most groups need a simple indoor arena with stabling and limited seating. Only rodeo requires extensive seating.
- Some groups, such as the Cow Horse Division of NVIHA, require additional facilities for events.

- The arena at Stonehenge Farm offers some potential but is very poorly drained.

Planning for the Needs of Dog Groups

- There are 6 or 7 discipline related dog clubs which together provide significant potential for dog events.
- There could be 40+dog events hosted each year. Most are two-day events, and 50% of participants would be from out-of-town. They are mainly weekend events, but some occur during the week.
- Event requirements for indoor events include a ring, preferably two rings, a waiting area for dogs, good flooring (not dirt, but needs to be soft, not concrete)
- Outdoor events require flat field such as Rotary Bowl - but this would need some upgrading to meet provincial championship standards
- Preferred size of arena for outdoor events - 250 x 350ft, with 4ft fence around
- Preferred size of arena for indoor events - 90 x 100ft or 100 x 150ft, with dog waiting area (preferably 100 x 200ft).

Planning for the Needs of the Farmers' Market

- The agricultural industry in the Valley is changing with new activities such as vineyards and a winery. Many of the new farmers are young people for whom the Farmers' Market plays an important role as an incubator and initial sales venue.
- There are over 100 current members of the Farmers' Market society, and approximately 55 to 70 vendors during the summer months of April to October.

- Many of the sellers at the Farmers' Market do the majority of their sales there. Given this, it is important to note the marginal nature of some of the vendors and their reliance on the Farmers' Market.
- The Farmers' Market society has a strategic plan which includes staying at the CVEG and not growing from their current size.
- The current land on the CVEG used for the farmers market is dangerous due to holes and depressions which flood in heavy rain. This is an issue for everyone especially those with walking or accessibility issues/challenges.
- Access to washrooms is extremely poor – there are inadequate numbers and the quality is very low.
- The farmers market in winter uses the Native Sons Hall – this is not a very satisfactory arrangement as the building is too small for the inside stalls, requires the food trucks to be outside, and is problematic since the Market is often required to cancel when the Hall is booked by other events and activities. A new facility on the CVEG could provide a good winter location for the Farmers' Market.

Site Planning Issues

- Parking at CVEG is always a challenge, although additional signage would assist in clarifying the parking situation.
- The City of Courtenay have identified in their OCP a trail along the river to the CVEG, which would enable non-vehicular access to the site from town. A trail linkage to the regional trailhead on the west side of the river would also increase access.
- Traffic on Headquarters Road is hazardous, especially when it is being used for event parking. Traffic also bottlenecks just short of downtown. The new North Courtenay connector will improve the link across the river to new hospital via Vanier. The upgrade will increase the accessibility of the CVEG.

- Additional bus services to the site would improve accessibility, however a bus turnaround on-site is needed.
- The CVTRS use of the site, plus general requirements, increase the need to consider physical accessibility requirements.
- Many groups use the facilities on the CVEG for storage.
- A campground should be provided within the exhibition grounds to serve events –this will require more power and some consideration for other servicing such as sewerage. Most events attract many motorhomes.
- The bathroom situation is a challenge for all events. One facility that would significantly add to the efficiency of many events would be a sewerage/ablution block.
- Drainage is a major issue – the site requires better overall drainage and some kind of environmentally appropriate paving.
- The potential of the CVEG for other semi-agricultural uses such as compost education and community gardens should be explored.

Events and Event Potential

- The Comox recreation center is currently the largest facility in the Valley and can seat 500 people or have 600 people standing.
- The Valley is a significant destination for cultural events and this could be significantly expanded. The Arts Council is working on a plan for a community arts facility. It will support all aspects of arts development and delivery in the Valley.
- Intent, a commercial company, purchased a 10,000 ft.² tent with assistance from crowd-funding. It has been used at various music festivals and at the Cumberland Atmosphere. It could be used for a variety of events. It would be better if it were erected in one location for several weeks as the erection and taking down costs are significant. Such marquees are used frequently in Australia. It

could be used for an event similar to Vancouver's *Bard on the Beach*.

- The Island Agricultural Show is always held in Duncan, but could be hosted in the Comox Valley if there were an appropriate facility.
- Other events could include big auctions - farm instruments, livestock, etc.
- Comox Valley has potential for more music festivals.
- The Classic Cruisers have been hosting events in the Valley for over 30 years. They currently host two shows each year.
- The proposed CVEA building is designed to serve as a hub for events and to be operative for year-round.

Planning for the Needs of MusicFest

- The demographic of MusicFest is significantly older than for other music festivals and events such as the Cumberland Atmosphere and the possibility of a similar event in Campbell River, will not dent the attendance at MusicFest.
- MusicFest has a staff of five FTEs, with one person working year-round.
- It receives significant community support from the public.
- The exhibition grounds are the ideal site for MusicFest.
- The main stage is brought in every year and provides a very professional experience. Other stages are locally created.
- Now that RootFest has been deleted from the Victoria event calendar, MusicFest is the Island's major music event.
- It is seen as a best practice for music festivals across North America.

- 10,000 people per day over three days is the average attendance. This level of attendance is considered the capacity for the site at the present time. It is always sold out well in advance and this significantly assists the economic and financial stability of the event (it makes a profit even if it rains).
- The beauty and success of the event is in large part due to the site.
- The Barn has become a strong venue for the early evening events at MusicFest, since at night only the main stage is operating and other stages have closed.
- All its needs are currently met, and while it would use new facilities or improvements to the Exhibition Grounds, it does not require these to continue operating successfully.
- If a new building is designed and approved for the Exhibition Grounds, the MusicFest board would like to have input to its design.

Online Survey

An online survey was used to gather information from the general public. It was available from October 27 to November 21. Its results can be summarized as follows:

- Of the 307 people who responded to the survey, only 3 had not visited the CVEG in the past year. Clearly those who responded were knowledgeable users of the grounds.
- In terms of frequency of visiting, the respondents were equally split between frequent visitors (weekly), those who visited once a month, and those who visited just once or twice per year, presumably to attend events such as the Fall Fair or MusicFest.
- Equestrian events/programs were the most frequently noted reasons for visiting the CVEG:

Choice	Total	%
Equestrian event or program	155	27%
Fall Fair / Comox Valley Exhibition	134	23%
Farmers' Market	91	16%
MusicFest	58	10%

- Generally, respondents thought that the condition of the buildings at the CVEG was adequate: Only 9% thought that the condition of the buildings and site was poor, although many had comments about the condition of various aspects. 52 respondents noted the inadequate nature of equestrian facilities, especially the 'footings' in the rings. The desire for a larger indoor facility that could be used for events was also noted frequently.
- 15 respondents noted that the facilities for dogs and dog events/programs were inadequate and a new facility that served this purpose is required.
- 14 respondents noted that the area used by the Farmers' Market was in poor condition and needed to be upgraded.

- 12 respondents noted the need for new facilities to serve one use or another.
- 12 respondents specifically noted that the washrooms were inadequate.
- 95% or respondents were supportive of hosting more events, etc at CVEG. Only 14 registered a negative vote.
- 37 respondents noted that the CVEG is a wonderful asset in the Comox Valley, that its peaceful ambience should be kept, that additional buildings weren't required, but if they were, then the agricultural and equestrian focus should be maintained.
- 28 respondents noted the exceptional nature of the CVEG, its location by the river, its trails and natural beauty, and indicated that they wanted these aspects protected and preserved.

Appendix E - Proposals for New Buildings

In the 2009 Revitalization Study, two buildings were proposed for the CVEG. These were a Multipurpose Building (which we will term Building 1) and an Agricultural Arena (Building 2).

There are currently two buildings which are being proposed respectively by the CVEA, which are an Agricultural Awareness Centre (Building 3) and an Agriplex (Building 4) which is being promoted by the Comox Valley Farmers' Institute.

Details about their size and amenities, and their proposed uses and users are as follows.

Building 1 – Multipurpose Building

Proposed by:	2009 Revitalization Study
Size	Overall size approximately 175ft by 100ft, or 17,500sqft Main room – 135ft by 87ft or 11,745sqft Amenity space – approx. 5,500sqft
Amenities	Entry/lobby, office, washrooms, kitchen, mechanical/electrical room, storage
Flooring	Concrete throughout
Uses and users	Primarily designed as an Exhibition Hall, with some other amenities, such as exterior accessed washrooms and limited storage to serve other user groups and event organizers.



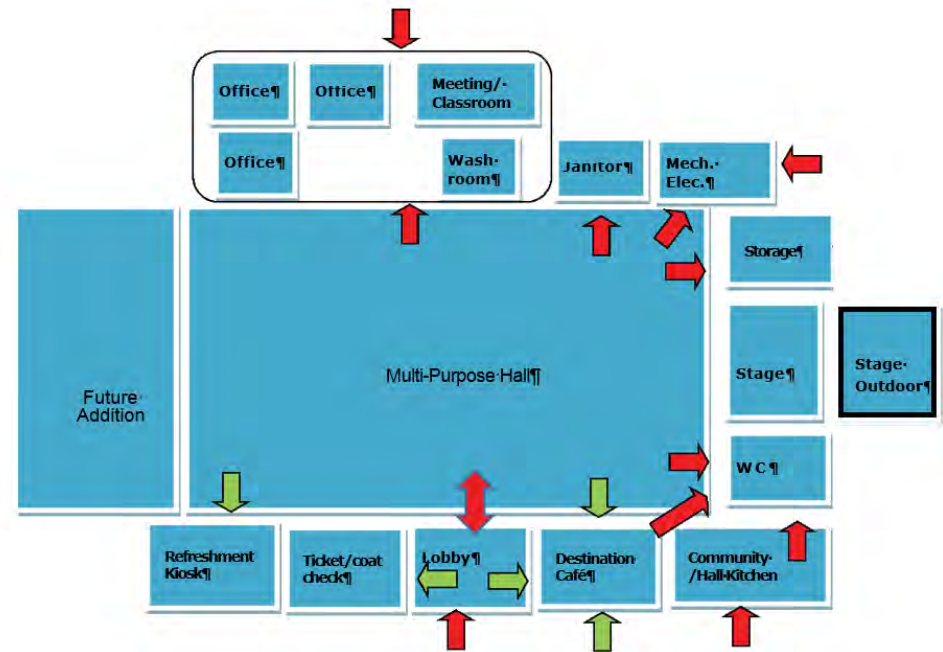
Building 2 – Agricultural Arena

Proposed by:	2009 Revitalization Study
Size	Overall size approximately 240ft by 175ft, or 42,000sqft Main room – 130ft by 220ft or 28,600sqft Amenity space – approx.12.500sqft
Amenities	Covered loading at either end of main floor, storage, caretaker's residence (800sqft), administration, concession, lobby/entry, washrooms, tack/commercial support area
Flooring	Main room – concrete perimeter around soil ring of approx. 100 by 200ft Remainder of the building – concrete
Uses and users	Primarily for equestrian and agricultural display and events, with some other amenities, such as exterior accessed washrooms and limited storage to serve other user groups and event organizers.



Building 3 – Agricultural Awareness Centre

Proposed by:	CVEA
Size	Overall size approximately 92ft by 100ft, or 9,200sqft Main room – 50ft by 84ft or 4,200sqft Amenity space – approx. 4,500sqft
Amenities	Lobby/entry, ticket and coats area, refreshment kiosk, café and community kitchen with food analysis lab space, indoor/outdoor stage, storage, mechanical/janitorial, washrooms, office and meeting rooms
Flooring	Concrete throughout
Uses and users	Primarily designed as an Exhibition Hall, with other amenities, such as exterior accessed washrooms and limited storage to serve other user groups and event organizers. The addition of a commercial kitchen and food analysis lab does expand its potential to support emerging agricultural entrepreneurs does expand its potential for service to the agricultural community. Will also serve as a home for the CVEA.



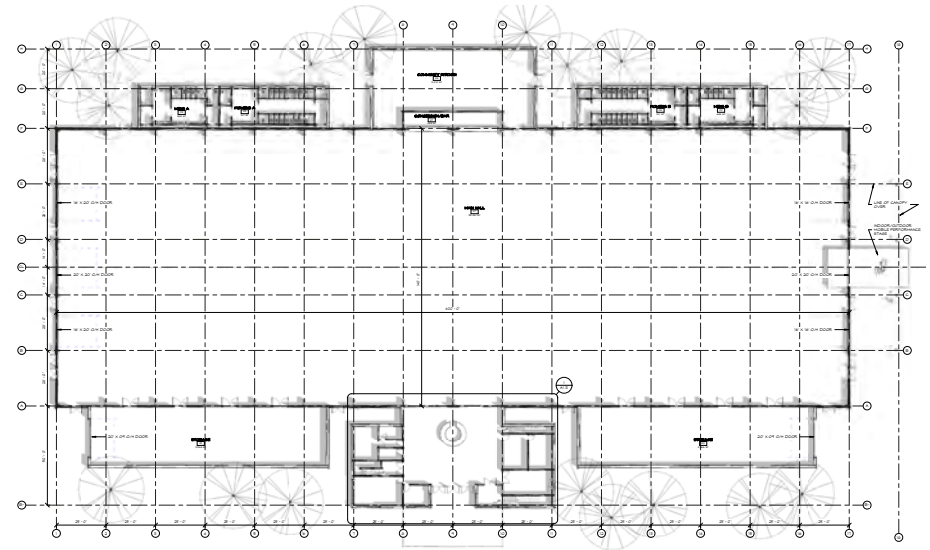
In discussion with the CVEA and other groups, the following additional points were noted:

- The Association's vision for the CVEG, which this building forms a part, is for the development of a collection of buildings similar to the arrangement at Saanich Fairgrounds.
- The facility being proposed is similar to the one proposed in 2009
- The building is designed for events to serve as a hub and to be operative for year-round.
- The building would provide a kitchen which could be used by both MusicFest and volunteers, and also an outside concession for all events.
- The building will include a food analysis lab to allow small-scale food processors to test their food and receive approval.
- The building is to be multi-purpose and will provide space for the many not-for-profit groups as well as provide the CVEA with sustainable income.
- The organization's plan is to have it built by the end of 2017.
- The organization's plan is for funding to be primarily from grants, not from CVRD, and they currently have commitments for \$600k.
- The current estimated capital cost is \$2.1 million.
- The focus of the building is around awareness of agriculture hence the title.
- There is potential to link with the Culinary Association in town and also with North Island College.
- There are a variety of environmental opportunities such as water retention and linkages to education, community gardens etc.

- Initial discussions have been held with the Agricultural Land Commission which is 100% supportive.
- A memorandum of understanding has been agreed between the CVEA and the CVRD (see appendix J).

Building 4 – Agriplex

Proposed by:	CV Farmers' Institute
Size	Overall size approximately 76,000sqft Main room – 140ft by 400ft or 56,000sqft – can be used as two rings, one 240 by 120, the other 100 by 120ft. Amenity space – approx. 20,000sqft
Amenities	Phase 1 – Main hall plus washroom pod Phase 2 – Administration /office (2489sqft), meeting space (301sqft), storage (3566sqft x 2), kitchen/bar (422 + 2810sqft) Parking for 568 vehicles
Flooring	Concrete throughout
Uses and users	Primarily designed to serve as a trade show facility. None of its amenities is designed to be accessed from outside so its potential to serve other events is limited. Will also serve as a home for the CV Farmers' Institute.



In discussion with the CVFI and other groups, the following additional points were noted:

- There is currently a need for convention space in the region. There are currently three other large public assembly buildings but none are large enough. Some people are of the view that convention space should be in downtown Courtenay although for serving a regional market, a location at the CVEG may be preferable.

- The addition of this facility would allow the region to become a primary destination for major Island and especially North Island events
- The need for the new facility is driven by agriculture but it must be designed such that others sectors can use the facility if it is to be economical.
- The selection of the name Agriplex is to focus on its agricultural orientation.
- Since an exhibition building is not an allowable use in the ALR, there would need to be an application to the ALC for 'non-farm use'
- A business case has been completed.
- While it is being planned in two phases, it really requires phase 2 if the facility is to be financially viable.
- It is being designed with a strong environmental/education linkage – heat pumps, solar power, etc.
- The CVFI recognize the potential for there to be one very large building if their current plan were combined with the CVEA facility plan.
- If a new building were to be designed and approved for the Exhibition Grounds, the MusicFest board would like to have input to its design.
- The new facility could also serve as a recreational facility.
- The current planning does not include a level of investment that would ensure the building's continued use in the face of a major seismic event/earthquake.

The following comments can be made about this set of four facilities:

- The 2009 Study proposed two buildings, one that would serve as an Exhibition Hall and one that would serve the equestrian and agricultural groups.
 - The Exhibition Hall was relatively ‘bare bones’ without many amenities beyond storage for event equipment, a kitchen and washrooms, and an office. Both the kitchen and washrooms could be accessed from the outside to service other events not using the main hall.
 - In the second building, they proposed a soil floor deliberately so that horses could perform. This proposed building could conceivably have a plywood floor laid over or the soil compacted³ to make it more of an indoor event or exhibition space, but the quality of finishing, etc would somewhat limit the uses and events that this kind of temporary conversion would allow. It was therefore designed primarily with the equestrian/agricultural events in mind.
- The CVEA building – Comox Valley Agricultural Awareness Centre - as currently proposed is even more ‘bare bones’, with a main hall that is a quarter of the size proposed in 2009 and a range of small amenities that can serve both the main hall and outside events.

- The Agriplex currently being proposed by the Comox Valley Farmers’ Institute is almost double the size of the Agricultural Arena proposed in 2009. Its main floor is about the same width but almost twice as long. Its concrete floor will serve the needs of trade shows and many other major events; the list noted in the Business Plan is as follows:
 - Trade shows
 - Conferences
 - Fairs and Auctions
 - Music festivals and outdoor concerts
 - Corporate and incentive events
 - Community events
 - Livestock shows
 - Aeronautical events
 - Sportsman shows
 - Cars, RV, and boat shows
 - Graduations and special events
 - Home shows
 - Summer, winter, senior games
 - 4H Events
- However it will only serve equestrian events if a large amount of soil is trucked in, likely making rental by these not-for-profit groups a prohibitive expense.

³ In Chilliwack’s Heritage Park arenas, soil compacting is successfully used.

This assessment of the four buildings raises several major questions:

1. Would the region be well served by adding an Exhibition Hall that would serve the CVEG, but could also be used for a wide range of other relatively small events (eg up to 350 people seated banquet style)?
2. Given that the principal users of the CVEG for events are the equestrian groups, primarily in the summer, and given that the 2009 plan identified them as key users of the Agricultural Arena, and given that the Agriplex, with its concrete floor, is unlikely to serve their needs or be affordable for them, how can the needs of equestrian groups best be met?
3. Does the region need a Trade and Convention Centre? And if it does, should it be located on the CVEG?
4. Would the region be better served by one building serving a number of these needs, or by two or more smaller buildings scattered across the site?
5. Does there need to be changes to the governance structures for the site in order to support the vision for its future?

Appendix F –Review of Other Exhibition Grounds

As part of the background for this project, a review was undertaken of a number of BC exhibition and fairgrounds. The learning from this review, which may be of great use in the implementation phase of the project, is summarized as follows:

Location/History

Fairgrounds in British Columbia have a long history. Often they were originally located close to the city centre. However they are recognized now to be a land-use which is more appropriate on the periphery of the community, and in most cases they have been relocated. This relocation generally occurred in the post WW2 period as the communities expanded and as the presence of the annual exhibition was seen as inappropriate or undesirable. The move of the Exhibition from downtown Courtenay to the CVEG occurred in early 1950s.

While some exhibition grounds still have only agricultural or equine facilities, most have become the locations for other municipal recreation buildings. Beban Park in Nanaimo is one example.

Often the linkage with municipal recreation buildings was the reason that the fairgrounds came into municipal ownership. In the case of Comox Valley, it was to financially assist the Curling Club; in other cases it was simply to find a location for a municipal recreation facility.

Ownership and Management

Most fairgrounds are currently in municipal ownership, having been sold or given to the municipality by the original not-for-profit society which had obtained the land, often directly from the Crown. Unpaid land tax was often the reason that land was transferred into public ownership.

The few fairgrounds which are still privately owned either pay a substantial land tax (Saanich – \$60,000+) or have those taxes waived by the municipality.

The municipality normally plays some role in the maintenance and operation of the fairgrounds. However often the actual operation and day

to day management of the fairgrounds is in the control of one or more not-for-profit groups. This has advantages such as the ability to apply for a range of grants and the ability to use volunteer and in-kind services.

Often, major facilities operating on the exhibition grounds have a long-term lease to use/occupy the municipal land. Where these legal agreements were in place, they were either leases or licenses to operate. These generally ranged in duration from five years to 20 years.

There is significant variation in how and how much municipalities charge the various organizations that operate the fall fair, or operate other services on the Exhibition grounds. Some provide services at no cost to the organizations at fair time. Other municipalities waive all rental fees for the fair operating organization. This was however generally limited to the agricultural or equine facilities, although some municipalities did provide free use of related indoor facilities.

Municipalities also generally provide some additional maintenance to the site at fair time such as grass-cutting. However most also expected to recover the real costs of any additional staff time that was incurred.

Capital costs were generally provided by municipalities with contributions from user groups such as fair societies. However given that the role of most fairs was to break even, and they generally adjust their entry fees to achieve this goal, it is only with one or two of the largest fairs that there was any significant revenue left after all expenditures were accounted for.

In terms of the balance of authority in fairground management, several structures are evident:

- The most frequent arrangement is that the municipality is clearly in control. They manage the site in collaboration with one or more groups, but there is no question that they run the show.
- In some cases, an umbrella group has been created to share authority among the various not-for-profit groups, thus allowing the municipality who are the owners of the land to play a more background role.

- In a few instances, the fairground is included in the contract with a private company who primarily manage other recreation facilities in the municipality.
- In one case (Saanich), the organization that runs the fair also manages the fairgrounds year-round. In this case, that organization is the owner of the land, and the municipality is in no way involved, except in receiving the land taxes applicable to the site.

Primary User Groups

The set of groups who use the fairground facilities is generally the same at every fairground – agricultural, equine, dog, rodeo, etc. In those cases where additional facilities are located on the fairgrounds, those groups are often involved in the general management.

In one or two communities, the hosting of other events is seen as a key element of the community's economic development. One of these cases is Chilliwack where the city has invested significantly in a major year-round facility. The other is Burns Lake where the fairgrounds have recently been improved with a grant from the Northern Development Trust with event hosting as a major goal.

General Finances

Where the municipality is involved in the fairground, generally through a lease with participating not-for-profit societies, an annual report including financial report is either required or requestable. In one or two cases it is also required for the organizations to have long-range plans for their operation, although they are often "back of the napkin".

Local government support

Most standalone fairgrounds operate at arms length from the municipality – and municipalities are generally happy with this relationship. In some cases grants are occasionally given to groups for specific projects although it is the general feeling that the fair and other activities should be conducted on a break even basis.

Where the fairground was the location for significant recreation facilities the municipalities were much more active and generally controlled the long-term planning and any required capital development.

Appendix G – Users and Uses

The CVEG are well used. User groups either book for a season (ie the same space at the same time for multiple weeks) or for events (ie a particular space for a single time period). See Appendix I for full 2016 event listing.

Seasonal Booking Organizations

- **Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society** – has been running a year-round program at the Barn for over 25 years, serving physically and mentally challenged children and youth in the Valley. It is well regarded in the community and will likely continue its use of the barn well into the future.
- **Comox Valley Farmers' Market** - the Comox Valley Farmers' Market Association was created in 1992 and hosts a weekly year round market, which uses the CVEG in the summer months. The purpose of the market is:
 - To promote the economic health of the local farm community,
 - To provide quality locally grown farm products,
 - To educate the community in agricultural issues, and
 - To promote local agriculture.
- **K911 Dog Sports** - use the Barn for classes and but generally use other locations for events.

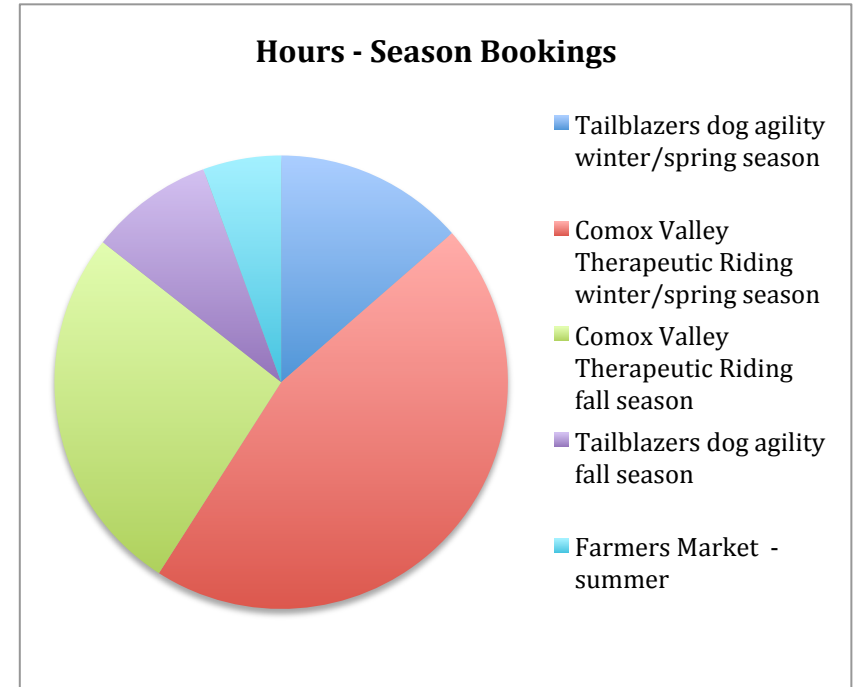
Event Booking Organizations

Comox Valley Exhibition Association (Fall Fair)

While the original owners of the CVEG, the only role that the CVEA play now is organizing the Fall Fair. This three day event occurs on the last weekend of August. This organization is currently proposing a new building for the site, the Comox Valley Agriculture Awareness Centre, which has been supported by the CVRD Board through a Memorandum of Understanding (see appendix J).

Agricultural Groups

While once a very strong part of the Valley's economic and community structure, these groups now play a smaller role in the region:



- **Comox Valley District 4H** – there are now only two clubs/divisions in the Valley: the Calf Club and the Shamrock Club. These clubs participate at the Fall Fair and have a Judging Rally in the spring.
- **Comox Valley Farmers' Institute** – has been in existence since 1873 and currently has approximately 80 members. They are currently planning a new Agriplex building which is supported in principle by the CVRD board for a location within the Comox Valley (see appendix J).

Equestrian Groups

There are a number of equestrian groups which use the CVEG for both regular practices and events:

- **Comox Valley Pony Club** - has been serving children and youth in the Comox Valley for over 40 years. It currently has about 20 members, mainly girls.
- **Courtenay Cadora** - this is the local arm of the Canadian Dressage Owners and Riders Association. It has been active in the Comox Valley since the 1970's
- **North Vancouver Island Horse Association (NVIHA)** - this organization has four divisions all of which are active users of the CVEG.
- **Backcountry Horsemen** – this group of horsemen use CVEG as a base, and use the trails along the river.
- **North Vancouver Island Rodeo Association** – this group generally host one event per year at the Fall Fair.

Dog Groups

While the CVEG is used for general off-leash dog walking, it is also used by a variety of organized dog training and agility groups, which, like the equestrian groups, use the CVEG for both regular practice and events:

- **Forbidden Plateau Obedience and Tracking Club** – this group offer a variety of classes at several locations in the region including CVEG.
- **Roadsters Agility Club** - Host 5 or 6 events each year, mostly on the Rotary Bowl.
- **Trailblazers Agility Training (TaG)** - Host 10 to 12 events per year. These are mostly 2-day weekend events. They are also the host organization for 'Conformation' events, which is a style of dog show which is very popular and can attract up to 200 dogs and their owners (and motorhomes).

Other Event Organizations and Exhibition Grounds Users

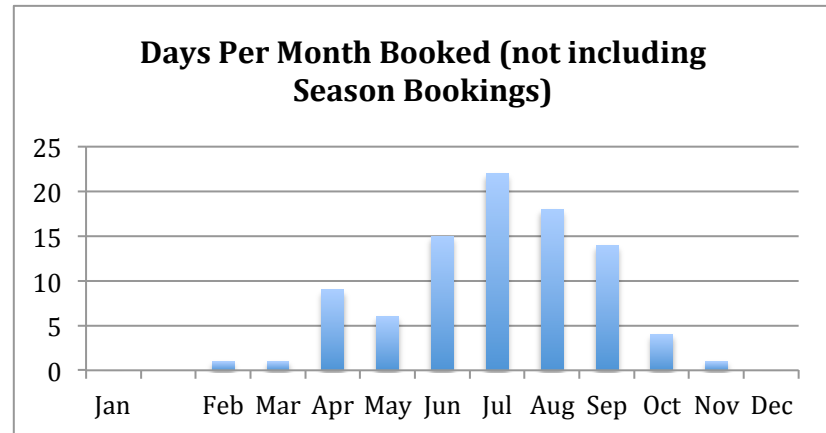
Other key organizations that are located on or host events at the CVEG include:

- **Vancouver Island Music Fest** - has been in operation for over 20 years and is now recognized as the premier music festival on the Island.
- **Comox Valley Curling Club** – is located on the CVEG.
- **Courtenay Rotary** - host the Rib Fest at the CVEG each year

Other organizations which would like to host activities or events include:

- **Comox Valley Arts Council**
- **Comox Valley Classic Cruisers** - a classic car club in operation for over 30 years

The majority of events occur in the spring and summer months as follows:



Appendix H – Groups Consulted

• CV Exhibition Association (Fall Fair)	Jim Lilburn Brian Woods Mike Trimble Therese Schwab
• Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society	Nancy King
Equestrian Groups	
• Comox Valley Pony Club	Leah Partridge Rachel Bood
• Courtenay Cadora	Deanna Diguette Sheila Watt
• North Vancouver Island Horse Association (NVIHA)	
• English Division	Dorothy Christie
• Western/Gymkhana	
• Western Performance	Stelle Shaughnessy
• Cow Horse Sport Division	Rick Danyluk
• Backcountry Horsemen	Bonnie Hull Sharon Pickthorne
• North Vancouver Island Rodeo Association	Orval Harris
Dog Groups	
• Forbidden Plateau Obedience and Tracking Club	Ruth Bridges Catherine Preece Margot Jorgensen
• Glacier View Kennel Club	
• K911 Dog Sports	Doug Wilson Heather Wilson
• Roadsters Agility Club	Margot Jorgensen Barbara Warren
• Trailblazers Agility Training (TaG)	Glenn Tiede

Agricultural Groups	
• Comox Valley District 4H	Steve Schmetz
• Comox Valley Farmers' Institute	Jo and Doreen Smith Brian Geiger Ben Vanderhorst Mike Huxham Brad Chappell
• Comox Valley Farmers' Market	Jo and Doreen Smith Grace Obal Vickey Brown John Grayson
Other Event Organizations and Exhibition Grounds Users	
• Vancouver Island Music Fest	Jay Oddliefson
• Comox Valley Classic Cruisers	Marty Grundy Duane Shalen Ken Mattson
• Comox Valley Curling Club	Kelly Allan
• Comox Valley Arts Council	Kera McHugh
• Cumberland Village Works	Victor Schulman
• Intent Rentals	Darryl Czegled
•	Pete Knight Berta Knight
• North Island College	Tony Bellavia

Appendix I – 2016 Events

Dates:	Event	Days	Hours per week	Weeks per year	Main venue	Second venue	Third venue
January 6 – May 1, 2016	Tailblazers dog agility in barn, & storage stall - Wednesdays, 6:30-9:30pm, - Saturdays 4:00-8:00pm, - Sundays 9:00am-9:00pm		19	20	Barn	Storage stall	
January 1 - June 12	Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding season, - Zone D (Barn), Mon-Thurs 8:00-6:30pm, Fri 8:00-6:00pm, Sat 7:00-4:00pm & Dove Creek Field, and inner barn stables		53	24	Zone D Barn	Dove Creek Field	Inner barn stables
April 9 - October 15	CV Farmers Market (open to the public Saturdays 9:00am-1:00pm)		6.5	24	Zone F *Market Field		
September 12 - December 31	Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding season, - Mon-Thurs 8:00-6:30pm, Fri 8:00-6:00pm, Sat 7:00-4:00pm &		53	14	Zone D (Barn),	Dove Creek Field	inner barn stables
September 7 - December 18, 2016	Tailblazers dog agility in barn, & storage stall - Wednesdays, 6:30-9:30pm - Saturdays 4:00-8:00pm, - Sundays 9:00am-9:00pm		19	13			
February 21	NVIHA Western Games/Gymkhana "fun horse show"	1	9	1	Zone B Lower Ring		
March 20	NVIHA Western Games horse show	1	9	1	Zone E Upper Ring		
April 1-2 - *event on April 2	CV Farmers Institute – Farm machinery auction	2		1	Zone C *Rotary Bowl		
April 7-10	NVIHA English horse show - (setup on Thurs, event Friday to Sunday)	4		1	Zone B		

Dates:	Event	Days	Hours per week	Weeks per year	Main venue	Second venue	Third venue
April 10	NVIHA Gymkhana horse show	1	9	1	Zone E *Upper ring		
April 16-17	NVIHA Western Performance horse show - (setup on Saturday)	2		1	Zone B		
May 8	NVIHA Western Games horse show	1	9	1	Zone E *Upper ring -		
May 13-16 - *event on May 15	CVTRS – Touch a truck event -	4		1	Zone C *Rotary Bowl	*Event on Sunday. And using Zone B, E, F & G	
May 29	CV Mini Tri K / (event at the CVRD Sports Centre)	1		1	Market Field	– using trails	
June 2-5	Comox Valley Pony Club – Hunter Jumper show (setup on Thurs, event Fri-Sun)	4		1	Zone B		
June 4	CVTRS – volunteer picnic - (event from 12-2pm)	1		1	Zone E *upper ring	& Zone G *Kin hut field	
June 10-12 - *event on June 11	CVTRS - Barn Dance	3		1	Zone D *Barn	Zone E, F, G – Saturday June 11	
June 12	NVIHA Gymkhana horse show	1	9	1	Zone E *Upper ring		
June 25-26	Courtenay Cadora horse show	2		1	Zone B		
June 26	Comox Valley District 4H - Judging rally in the barn, 8-4pm	1	8	1	Zone D – Therapeutic Barn		
June 27-29	NVIHA English – clinic	3		1	Zone B		

Dates:	Event	Days	Hours per week	Weeks per year	Main venue	Second venue	Third venue
June 30 - July 3 - *event Fri-Sun	Vancouver Island Quarter Horse - Setup Thurs June 30 th @12pm, event Fri-Sun	4		1	Zone B		
July 4-13	Comox Valley Folk Society – Vancouver Island Music Fest - (event July 8-10)	9		1	All Areas		
July 1-3	K911 – dog scent detection in the barn - – setup on Friday evening, event Sat & Sun	3		1	Zone D		
July 17	NVIHA Western Games horse show - 8:00-5:00pm	1	9	1	Zone E *Upper ring		
July 19-22	Comox Valley Pony Club – horse camp	4		1	Zone B		
July 26	Comox Valley Pony Club – testing	1		1	Zone B		
August 1-4	Glacier View Kennel Club dog show - (setup on Mon, event Tues-Thurs)	4		1	Zone C *rotary bowl		
August 6-7	Courtenay Cadora schooling show	2		1	Zone B		
August 7	NVIHA Gymkhana horse show - 8:00-5:00pm	1		1	Zone E *Upper ring		
August 11-14 - *event Fri-Sun	NVIHA English horse	4		1	Zone B		
August 21-28	CV Exhibition Fall Fair (setup Sun-Thurs, event Fri-Sun) - *will start setup Mon morning in (after horse event)	7		1	Zone B		
September 2-5	Roadsters dog agility trial	4		1	Zone C *rotary bowl		
September 14-19 - *event Fri-Sun	Courtenay Rotary – Rib Fest - , setup starting Wednesday and cleanup on Monday. (Fri-Sun)	6		1	Zone C – Rotary Bowl	Also using Zone , B, & F	

Dates:	Event	Days	Hours per week	Weeks per year	Main venue	Second venue	Third venue
September 22	Comox Valley Pony Club – Testing –	1		1	Zone B		
September 24 & 25	Comox Valley Economic Development – Farm Cycle Tour -	2		1	Zone C – Rotary Bowl		
September 11	NVIHA Western Games horse show - 8:00-5:00pm	1	9	1	Zone E *Upper ring		
October 9	NVIHA Western Gymkhana horse show - 8:00-5:00pm	1	9	1	Zone E *Upper ring		
October 28-30 - *Event Sat Oct 29 th evening	CVTRS - Halloween at the Barn, 5-9pm - Setup Fri Oct 28, Event Saturday Oct 29 evening, Tear down Sunday Oct 30– Sat Oct 29	3			Zone D *barn	Zone E, F & G	
November 6	NVIHA Western Games horse show - 8:00-5:00pm	1	9	1	Zone E *Upper ring		

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Appendix J – CVRD Agreements with CVFI and CVEX

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN:

COMOX VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT
600 Comox Road
Courtenay, BC V9N 3P6

(the CVRD)

AND:

COMOX VALLEY EXHIBITION ASSOCIATION – FALL FAIR
201-580 Duncan Avenue
Courtenay, BC V9N 2M7

(the CVEX)

WHEREAS:

- A. The CVRD is the registered owner of the land commonly known as 4839 Headquarters Road, Courtenay, B.C., V9J 1P2; legally described as Lot 1, Plan 11475, Section 18; Comox Land District; Except Plan 12735, & SEC 45 Agricultural Exhibition Buildings MA SEC 792(L). See also Lot 3 PLAN 13392 SEC 45 Comox District, herein called "the Land" and;
- B. The CVEX requires space for office, meeting, classroom, storage, washroom, stage and kitchen purposes and wishes to construct, operate and maintain an agricultural awareness centre for these purposes and the education and enjoyment of its members and their guests; and;
- C. The CVEX is interested in constructing an agricultural awareness centre on that portion of the Land, informally known as the Kin Hut field, outlined in Appendix A having an approximate area of 8000 sq. ft. (the Site); and;
- D. The parties agree to enter into this memorandum of understanding to confirm the commitments of the parties.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to demonstrate the commitment of the CVEX and CVRD to work together towards the completion of the Agricultural Awareness Centre.

COMMITMENTS

1. The CVRD agrees in principle to provide the CVEX with access to the Site for the construction of an agricultural awareness centre (AAC) and to hold the Site for the purpose of the CVEX's AAC until June 30, 2018.
2. The CVEX commits to demonstrate financial viability for the construction and operation of the AAC by June 30, 2018.
3. The CVEX commits to obtaining all permits and constructing and operating the AAC at its own expense.
4. The CVEX will report to the CVRD on the progress of their fundraising efforts by June 30 and December 31 in each year of the Term of this MOU.

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5. The parties agree to enter into a construction agreement for the AAC when the funds required for the construction have been raised by the CVEX.
6. Upon completion of the construction of the AAC, the parties agree to enter into a lease agreement for the AAC in which the CVEX assumes responsibility for all costs of operation and maintenance.

TERM

This MOU will expire on July 1, 2018.


CONTACT

The officials of each party who shall be responsible for the notices and the administration of this memorandum of understanding are:

- CVRD general manager of community services
- CVEX chair Agricultural Awareness Centre Building Committee

As evidence of their memorandum of understanding to the above terms and commitments, the CVRD and the CVEX have executed this memorandum of understanding as set out below:

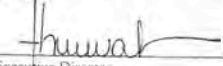
COMOX VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT


Chair


Corporate Legislative Officer

COMOX VALLEY EXHIBITION ASSOCIATION – FALL FAIR


President


Executive Director

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Office of the Chair

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Toll free: 1-800-331-6007
www.comoxvalleyrd.ca



File: 0400-01

December 2, 2016

Sent via email only: ggeiger@telus.net

Mr. Brian Geiger
Comox Valley Farmer's Institute
PO Box 3493
Courtenay, BC V9N 6Z8

Dear Mr. Geiger:

Re: Letter of support in principle for proposed agriplex

The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) board, at its November 29, 2016 meeting passed the following resolution:

“That the board provide a letter of support in principle to the Comox Valley Farmers’
Institute for a proposed agriplex facility within the Comox Valley.”

The CVRD is undertaking a master plan for the exhibition grounds as well as one for CVRD indoor recreation facilities. These two plans will assist in guiding future decisions on the development of the exhibition grounds and CVRD recreation indoor recreation facilities.

We look forward to understanding the concepts and proposal in greater detail and also understanding how the project aligns with existing CVRD operations, finances and interests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Jolliffe', is written over the printed name.

Bruce Jolliffe
Chair

cc: Ian Smith, acting chief administrative officer