Boundary Extension Application:
Town of Ladysmith, British Columbia
Summary Report (including Conceptual Land Use Plan)
January 2014
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1. INTRODUCTION

Couverdon Real Estate (Couverdon), the real estate business of TimberWest Forest Corporation, has submitted an application for the annexation of 283 hectares of TimberWest lands into the Town of Ladysmith. The proposed boundary extension area is adjacent to the northwest boundary of the Town and provides a logical extension of the current Town boundaries as shown in Figure 1, Context Map below.

*Figure 1: Context Map*

The Town of Ladysmith’s steady population growth over the past decade confirms its unique character and desirability as a place to live. The proposed boundary extension gives the Town and Couverdon an opportunity to work together on a comprehensive long-range land use plan for the area that extends and reinforces the core values of the community. In particular, the proposed extension and subsequent development applications provide an opportunity for the Town to realize three key objectives:

- Acquisition of watershed lands (around Stocking Lake and Holland Lake).
- Protection of key viewscapes (i.e. the forested hills behind the Town).
- Implementation of planned community development that respects the Visioning Report of the Town of Ladysmith.
Objective 1: Acquisition of Watershed Lands

Acquisition of watershed lands (around Stocking Lake and Holland Lake) to protect the drinking water that supplies the Town, the Diamond District, and Saltair, as well as the future proposed service to Stz’uminus First Nation is a key objective of the Town. A diagram of the contributing areas around Stocking and Holland Lakes is shown in Figure 2, Watershed Contributing Areas. The contributing areas were identified based upon a slope analysis to identify which lands drain toward Stocking and Holland Lakes.

Figure 2: Watershed Contributing Areas
The area of land around Holland Lake under discussion is approximately 120 ha (296 ac), as shown in Figure 3: *Holland Lake Contributing Area*. If these lands were to be acquired by the Town of Ladysmith, the Town would control 100% of the catchment area for Holland Lake.

**Figure 3: Holland Lake Basin Watershed**
Similarly, the amount of lands around Stocking Lake under discussion is approximately 76 ha (188 ac), as shown in Figure 4: *Stocking Lake Basin Watershed*. Acquisition of these lands by the Town of Ladysmith, plus the lands already owned by the Town, will give the Town control of approximately 89% of the Stocking Lake watershed. These lands plus the lands owned by the Province and the Regional District will put 100% of the catchment area into the public ownership.

*Figure 4: Stocking Lake Basin Watershed*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stocking Lake Basin Watershed</th>
<th>Current Land Area (ha)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Proposed Land Area (ha)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ladysmith (Municipal)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>80–177/ha to 100</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TimberVest</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crown (Provincial)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart/Stocking Lakes Park</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Catchment Area</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stocking Lake</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Basin Area</td>
<td>199</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disclaimer: Calculated from a combination of GIS data sources and results are approximate.

**Objective 2: Protection of Key Viewscapes (i.e. the forested hills behind the Town)**

Strategies to protect viewscapes and reduce the visual impact within and adjacent to the boundary extension area are addressed in sections 4.5 Viewscapes and Visual Impact, 4.6.5 Viewscape – Boundary Extension Area, and 4.6.6 Visual Impact – Forest Management.

**Objective 3: Implementation of Planned Community Development**

Implementation of planned community development which employs smart growth practices and supports the Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town. Section 5 of this summary report specifically addresses how the proposed land use concept will preserve and protect natural areas while promoting sustainable neighbourhood design practices.
2. BOUNDARY EXTENSION PROPOSAL

2.1 Legal Description of Parcels and Title Charges Summary

2.1.1 Legal Parcels

All of the subject parcels are owned by TimberWest Forest I Limited. There is no other property owner involved in this boundary extension application, and there are no Crown parcels included in this application.

The proposed boundary extension area includes complete legal parcels. A list of parcels, with their respective legal descriptions and PID numbers, is included below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Description</th>
<th>PID Number</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot A, Block 5, Oyster District, Plan EPP29924</td>
<td>029-125-651</td>
<td>26.5 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot B, Blocks 381, 1397 and 1398, and District Lot 137, Oyster District, Plan EPP29924</td>
<td>029-125-677</td>
<td>36.0 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot C, Blocks 381 and 1397, Oyster District, and Block 337, Bright District, Plan EPP29924</td>
<td>026-125-707</td>
<td>82.6 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot D, Block 1 and District Lot 2000, Bright and Oyster Districts, Plan EPP29924</td>
<td>029-125-766</td>
<td>27.1 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot E, Block 1398 and District Lot 126, Oyster District, Plan EPP29924</td>
<td>029-125-774</td>
<td>60.7 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Lot 108, Oyster District, except that part shown outlined in red on Plan 323R and except Parts in Plans 47290 and VIP73133</td>
<td>000-877-921</td>
<td>6.12 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Lot 117, Oyster District, containing 40.25 acres more or less, as shown outlined in red on plan deposited under D.D. 36477-I</td>
<td>000-878-022</td>
<td>16.3 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Lot 122, Oyster District</td>
<td>000-877-794</td>
<td>15.3 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Lot 123, Oyster District, containing 35.55 acres more or less and shown outlined in red on plan deposited under DD 5419N</td>
<td>000-879-215</td>
<td>14.4 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 1534, Oyster District, Plan EPP32779</td>
<td>029-173-884</td>
<td>0.342 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 1535, Oyster District, Plan EPP32780</td>
<td>029-173-892</td>
<td>0.283 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block 1536, Oyster District, Plan EPP32780</td>
<td>029-173-906</td>
<td>0.365 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Area</td>
<td></td>
<td>286.0 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Area of Lot E Lying within Town of Ladysmith Boundary*</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3.1 ha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Total Annexation Area</td>
<td></td>
<td>282.9 ha</td>
</tr>
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Notes:
* The existing boundary of the Town of Ladysmith is not coincident with the boundary of Lot E; therefore a portion of this lot already lies within the Town of Ladysmith jurisdictional boundaries.

A number of the parcels are original surveyed district lots wholly contained within the boundary extension area. However, in order to define the limit of the extension area along its western boundary, a subdivision of much larger parcels created distinct parcels of land and separate indefeasible titles for inclusion in the boundary extension area. This subdivision was approved and is now registered in the Victoria Land Title Office as Plan EPP29924.

In addition to the original fee-simple parcels identified above, three portions of vacant, unsurveyed E&N land were identified in the vicinity of Tyee (Rocky) Creek. These parcels were
excluded from the original surveys of District Lots 117 and 123, and Block 1398. The process to raise title to these parcels was undertaken and completed, with the resulting Blocks 1534, 1535, and 1536 being defined on Plans EPP32779 and EPP32780.

2.1.2 Charges and Interest
Generally the titles identify a number of existing rights of way over the subject lands. These rights of way relate to BC Hydro lines and the Terasen natural gas line which currently run through the properties. There are no plans to relocate any of these infrastructures.

2.1.3 Current Jurisdiction
All of the subject parcels, except a small (3 ha) portion already within the Town of Ladysmith, are currently located within Electoral Areas G (Saltair/Gulf Islands) and H (North Oyster / Diamond) of the Cowichan Valley Regional District – 256 ha in Electoral Area H and 27 ha in Electoral Area G.

While the land use is under the jurisdiction of the Cowichan Valley Regional District, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is the approving authority for subdivision.

2.1.4 Current Taxes
Taxes (2013 rates) paid to the Cowichan Valley Regional District are as follows:

- For lands within Area G: $759.50.
- For the lands within Area H: $4,609.90.

The lands are classified Managed Forest and are not serviced by any public roads or other services (i.e. water, sewer, hydro).

2.2 Provincial Criteria for Municipal Boundary Extensions
The Provincial Government is responsible for the review and implementation of changes to municipal boundaries. In order for a municipal boundary extension proposal to be considered, it must meet certain technical criteria related to boundary contiguity, legal parcels, and local roads. Couverdon’s proposed boundary extension meets these criteria, as explained below.

- The proposed boundary extension area is contiguous with the existing Town of Ladysmith boundary and provides an extension of the Town to the northwest. Figure 1, Context Map shows the physical relationship of the proposed boundary extension area to the existing Town of Ladysmith municipal boundary.

- The proposed boundary extension area includes complete legal parcels. A list of parcels, with their respective legal descriptions and PID numbers, is included above in section 2.1.1. No portions of the subject parcels are located within the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR).

- The proposed boundary extension area includes no existing local roads. Two existing town roads, Fourth Avenue to the north and Malone Road to the south, provide future access to the boundary extension area. Additionally, Christie Road links the property to
the Inland Island Highway. Fourth Avenue, Malone Road, and Christie Road are classified as Urban Collectors.

2.3 Purpose of the Boundary Extension and Conceptual Land Use Plan

The proposed boundary extension and subsequent land use development application provides an opportunity for the Town to realize three key objectives:

- Acquisition of watershed lands (around Stocking Lake and Holland Lake) to protect the drinking water that supplies the Town, the Diamond, and Saltair.
- Protection of key viewscapes (i.e., forested hills behind the Town).
- Implementation of community development which employs smart growth practices and supports the Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town.

Additionally, the boundary extension provides the Town with a unique opportunity to achieve several important and interrelated goals of its Official Community Plan:

- **Growth Management:** Integrate ecological, economic, physical, and social factors.
- **Environment:** Ensure stewardship of lands with strong ecological value.
- **Economic Development:** Enhance Ladysmith’s economic development and explore partnerships with prominent Vancouver Island institutions.
- **Community Facilities and Services:** Create new recreational, parkland, open space, and community garden opportunities.
- **Infrastructure:** Limit impact on existing infrastructure and balance the capacity of the natural environment with the demands of growth.
- **Diversity of Land Uses:** Provide a range of land uses and housing types, including an exploration of affordable housing options, to create a series of complete neighbourhoods that meet the community’s needs.
- **Land Use Planning and Community Design:** Engage stakeholders to implement Ladysmith’s Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town.

2.4 Planning Process to Date

2.4.1 Community Engagement

Couverdon has met with Ladysmith Council and Staff and presented the concept of a municipal boundary extension in the northwest area of Ladysmith to include TimberWest lands. Council has been supportive of involving residents and other stakeholders in the extension process by encouraging community engagement efforts.

In July 2011, Couverdon hosted a community open house at Eagles Hall. The purpose of the open house was to introduce the preliminary proposal to members of the community, introduce the Couverdon team, and give the public an opportunity to provide feedback. Members of the project team, including Couverdon, Sasaki Associates, and PGL Environmental Consultants, were present to describe the proposal and address the community’s questions.
The team organized the open house as a series of 17 presentation boards which were placed around the perimeter of the room. The boards covered such topics as Couverdon’s mission, the anticipated planning process, a principled approach to community growth, ecological conservation, and realization of community goals from Ladysmith’s *Official Community Plan* and *Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town*. The format of the event allowed visitors to view the boards and talk with project team members one-on-one in an informal setting.

A computer display at the conclusion of the board sequence introduced the community to the ‘*MyLadysmith*’ interactive map and online comment form (www.ladysmithopenhouse.ca).

Approximately 50 citizens attended the open house. Couverdon encouraged all attendees to fill out comment forms prior to departing, as well as to continue to participate and stay up to date by following and posting on the online open house website.

In addition, presentations have been made to number of community groups which include Area G Ratepayers, Area H Ratepayers, Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce, Probus, and the Stz’uminus Chief and Council.

Couverdon will be hosting a community open house following submission of the boundary extension application.

**2.4.2 First Nations Consultation and Support**

As part of its engagement process, Couverdon has consulted with First Nations. Letters expressing support for or no opposition to the proposed boundary extension—as well as satisfaction with the Crown’s, Town’s, and Couverdon’s respective consultation processes—have been provided by Cowichan Tribes, Halalt First Nation, Lake Cowichan First Nation, Lyackson First Nation, Penelakut Tribe, and Stz’uminus First Nation.

**2.4.3 First Phase Studies**

A series of preliminary studies have been completed to assess the archeological, environmental, service infrastructure, transportation, and viewscape of the boundary extension and the land use concept. The preliminary findings of these studies are summarized in Section 4 Background Studies.
3. RATIONALE

3.1 Planning and Policy Context
The Town of Ladysmith’s steady population growth confirms its unique character and attractiveness as a place to live. As one of the fastest growing communities in the province, Couverdon recognizes the need for planned community growth over the next several decades. The boundary extension gives the Town an opportunity to undertake a long-range master plan that extends and reinforces the core values of the community.

In the Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town, Ladysmith residents explore the ideas, opportunities, and character options for their growing town. Couverdon wants to promote and complement this identity and enhance the qualities that residents already value, including the following:

- A small town with a strong sense of history
- Sustainability
- Heritage influence
- Natural areas and experiences
- A boutique and artisan economy
- Art and culture
- Orderly and well managed neighbourhoods

Many of the land use policies outlined in the Town’s Official Community Plan (OCP) address current and future population needs and the opportunities to accommodate population growth. These include the following:

- The Town recently expanded its boundary to accommodate planned growth the area beyond Holland Creek. Previous extensions to the Town boundary have also occurred in the south and north end of the community.
- The Official Community Plan acknowledges that “increased residential development is inevitable. The Town needs to plan for this growth to ensure the community does not grow up along the highway but grows in designated locations.”

Couverdon proposes a boundary extension to reinforce the aspirations of the community, the Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town, and the Official Community Plan.

3.2 Principled Approach
Couverdon is committed to community growth that achieves the triple bottom line of environmental, social, and economic health. Couverdon’s Principled Approach, which is explained below, aligns naturally with Ladysmith’s Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town.
Engage Local Stakeholders in Planning for their Future
A successful planning process is dependent upon thoughtful and open dialogue with Ladysmith representatives and stakeholders regarding the future of the community. The Ladysmith sustainable community visioning process established a high standard for community engagement, which Couverdon is committed to through a similarly collaborative and highly inclusive process, including community open houses and an open-forum website.

Create Economically Sustainable Communities
An economically sustainable community will maintain or improve the fiscal health of the Town. Couverdon is examining economic development opportunities to support a diversity of land uses and provide high quality employment to Ladysmith. In particular, Couverdon is interested in exploring new industries around alternative energy technologies, innovative live/work concepts, and partnerships with key Vancouver Island institutions.

Conserve Ecological Integrity
A comprehensive analysis of the lands will help preserve and enhance key view corridors and sensitive environmental habitats, including stream corridors, wetlands and steep slopes. Mapping archaeological resources also will also preserve these features as part of the land’s important anthropological history.

Create Integrated Networks of Parks and Natural Spaces for Outdoor Recreation
Parks, open spaces, and trails will provide fundamental community benefits that sustain and promote economic, environmental, and social health.

Foster Vibrant and Diverse Neighbourhoods
A healthy neighbourhood has a mix of housing types and sizes, providing options for a variety of lifestyles and stages of life. Vibrant and diverse neighbourhoods in the community will exhibit the following characteristics:

- Neighbourhoods integrated with and connected by natural landscapes.
- Diverse land uses and balanced traffic management to support a complete community.
- Neighbourhood scale defined by walkability and proximity to shared amenities.

Employ Green Infrastructure
An integrated system of green infrastructure holistically addresses issues of water quality, energy, carbon footprint, public health, and neighbourhood identity. Couverdon will work with the Town to explore innovative strategies for sustainable neighbourhood development.

Celebrate Our Island’s Natural and Cultural Heritage
Ladysmith’s identity is that of a small west coast town with a deeply rooted heritage and beautiful natural setting. Future growth of the Town into the proposed extension area will celebrate and build upon Ladysmith’s strong community history and culture.
3.3 Land Use Implications
Current growth areas in the Town include Holland Creek and South Ladysmith. Holland Creek has been identified as a potential future neighbourhood area for approximately 2,000 to 3,000 residents. South Ladysmith has been identified as a location for future growth with a focus on industrial and agricultural uses.

The Ladysmith OCP includes an urban containment boundary which generally reflects the current Town boundary to the west and excludes the lands within the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR) to the south. If the Couverdon lands are included within the Town boundaries, this local urban containment boundary would require re-examination.

The Couverdon lands are envisioned as a new growth area and natural extension of the Town's northwest boundary which will complement existing growth areas. Similar to Holland Creek, the expansion lands are projected to accommodate a population of 2,500 to 3,500 residents. The future development is envisioned to provide up to 1,500 residential units of varying housing types from single family to multifamily along with complementary commercial and institutional uses.

Couverdon has participated in the Town's planning process which culminated in the Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town. The Principled Approach which Couverdon developed as part of the boundary extension process and preliminary land use planning aligns naturally with the Town's sustainable planning vision.

The preliminary land use concept anticipates a foundation of best practices in community planning and design to minimize impact on climate. These best practices include the maintenance of significant open spaces and natural amenities, creation of walkable neighbourhoods, support for alternative modes of transportation including cycling and hiking, and accommodation of transit.

The approach that Couverdon is bringing to this proposal is required by the Town through its recent Visioning work and is consistent with Town's Climate Action Charter commitments.

3.4 Current Planning Policy and Regulations
3.4.1 OCP Designation
The lands located within Electoral Area G are designated Forestry (F) under the Electoral Area G – Saltair Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2500.

The lands located within Electoral Area H are designated Forestry (F) and Agriculture (A) under the North Oyster-Diamond Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1497. Note, although a small portion of the lands are designated Agriculture, these lands are not part of the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR).

3.4.2 Current Zoning
The lands currently located within Electoral Area G are zoned Forestry/Natural Resources (F1) according to Saltair Zoning Bylaw No. 2524, and are subject to a minimum parcel size of 20 ha.
The lands located within Electoral Area H fall within one or more of the following zones according to *North Oyster/Diamond Zoning Bylaw No. 1020*:

- **Primary Agriculture (A1)** – minimum parcel size 12 ha - despite this zone, none of the lands are located within the ALR;
- **Primary Forestry (F1)** – minimum parcel size 80 ha;
- **Secondary Forestry (F2)** – minimum parcel size 20 ha.

Given the minimum parcel sizes for each of the respective zones, subdivision opportunities are significantly limited.
4. BACKGROUND STUDIES

In support of the boundary extension application, a series of preliminary studies have been completed to assess the archeological, environmental, service infrastructure, transportation, and viewscape of the boundary extension and the land use concept. The preliminary findings of these studies are summarized in following sections.

Couverdon anticipates that more detailed information will be required at the Official Community Plan and Rezoning stage. The studies described here are meant to form the baseline data set and will be built upon as Couverdon proceeds through the various approval stages.

4.1 Archaeology

Millennia Research Limited (Millennia) has carried out an Archaeological Overview Assessment (AOA) of the proposed boundary extension area, consistent with the British Columbia Impact Assessment Guidelines (British Columbia Archaeology Branch, 1998).

Millennia and a representative of Stz’uminus First Nation conducted a Preliminary Field Reconnaissance (PFR), based on the results of an in-office archeological potential assessment. The team surveyed areas of archaeological potential as identified by the pre-field potential assessment. Additionally, they examined rocky outcrops, crests and bases of slopes, road cuts, and other exposures for the presence of rock shelters, burial cairns, rock art (petroglyphs and pictographs), rock alignments (petroforms) and lithic scatters. Due to the extent of logging activities within the project area, the likelihood of encountering culturally modified trees (CMTs) was minimal; however, where observed, the team examined cedars and Douglas firs for cultural modification.

4.2 Environment

Pottinger Gaherty Environmental Consultants Ltd. (PGL) completed an Environmental Status Report and Riparian Area Regulations Compliance report. This work forms the first phase of environmental planning, including the review of existing data for the site and development of a preliminary understanding of the probable sensitive areas. PGL has been involved from the outset of the environmental planning process for the proposed boundary extension area, with a focus on identifying preliminary environmental sensitivities for consideration in conceptual land use planning.

PGL has completed a preliminary environmental sensitivities mapping exercise for the TimberWest lands. A sensitivities map is a tool to spatially identify the relative environmental values in a study area for the purpose of minimizing impacts through avoidance of valuable areas at an early land use planning stage. It is important to recognize that the map is at a coarse level of resolution; the boundaries are not exact and will require refinement as the design and approvals process requires a higher level of detail. As such, the mitigation of environmental impacts is best achieved with an ongoing interactive planning process that aligns with the steps of the development approvals process.
4.3 Slope
A slope analysis was carried out using TimberWest’s GIS data files (1m contours). Slopes greater than 25% and a 30m slope buffer have been mapped as part of the Boundary Extension Application, as shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Slope Analysis

4.4 Servicing & Infrastructure
R.F. Binnie & Associates (Binnie) has prepared a preliminary servicing design concept for the proposed boundary extension area. The concept includes connections to the Town’s existing water and wastewater networks. The infrastructure planning process includes analysis of the downstream impacts to the Town’s existing sanitary and water networks over the phased build-out of the extension area.

Couverdon is currently working with the Town’s engineering consultants to model water and sewer infrastructure to ensure there is a clear understanding of potential infrastructure upgrade requirements for which Couverdon would be responsible. These studies are currently underway.

The Town’s water supply is considered adequate to accommodate growth over the next 10-20 years. Work is currently underway by the Town to update previous water supply studies conducted in the 1990’s to update watershed modelling to account for the effects of climate change, and to update growth projects to the current day. This work is being conducted by the Town independently of the Couverdon proposal, and is being coordinated through the CVRD to ensure all water users are reflected in the review. This review will include a review of current water licensing of the upper Bannon, Holland, and Stocking Lake watersheds.
4.5 Transportation

Binnie and Associates has conducted a preliminary transportation planning review for the proposed boundary extension area. The transportation planning review includes a forecast of the site-generated vehicular traffic along with growth within the Town, and estimates the impacts of this growth on the existing road network. The planning review also proposes necessary on-street and off-street infrastructure improvements to support all modes of traffic. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has also received the report. Improvements which are solely required to support growth from the Couverdon lands will be the responsibility of Couverdon. Improvements which are a shared responsibility between Couverdon and other growth areas will be shared by the proponents, either by agreement, or though the Development Cost Charge (DCC) program.

4.6 Viewscapes & Visual Impact

4.6.1 Annexation Lands

Dunster & Associates has completed a viewscape analysis of the potential visibility of future development within the proposed boundary extension area. The study identified several locations within the Town and the boundary extension area. At each location, the team acquired a series of images to create a panorama of the viewscapes and recorded the latitude and longitude along with the compass bearing of the panoramic images. Using existing LIDAR data, TimberWest prepared slope profiles in order to show which parts of the slopes were readily visible from various vantage points.

4.6.2 Non-Annexed Lands

In addition to the above Couverdon has provided documentation of the potential visual impact of proposed TimberWest harvesting in forestry lands above the Town. The lands in the Stanton Ridge area are not being annexed and will remain as privately managed forest. TimberWest will work with the Town to maintain a green backdrop which is an objective of the Town.

4.7 Summary of Study Recommendations

4.7.1 Archaeology

The Archaeological Overview Assessment (AOA) is intended to assist planners and manage risk associated with the potential for protected but unrecorded archaeological sites that may be present in the project area. In keeping with the objectives of the AOA, an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) under a provincial Heritage Inspection Permit is recommended for the following locations and localities within the project area:

- In the northern portion of the boundary extension area, it is recommended that an intensive pedestrian survey with judgmental shovel testing be undertaken in high potential areas along both sides of Bush Creek, should development plans extend into this area.

- Three areas within the central portion of the boundary extension area require further study. It is recommended that the moss from the hearth feature be removed to facilitate closer examination, and that a judgmental shovel testing program be implemented in the location of the hearth feature and at the locations of the hogsback ridge and ridge crest landforms.
In the southern portion of the boundary extension area, three locations require further study. It is recommended that the moss from the pictograph, petroform, and fire rings in each of the locations be removed to facilitate closer examination, and that a judgmental shovel testing program be implemented at each of the locations.

4.7.2 Environment

PGL will continue to work with Couverdon to define a land use strategy which preserves and enhances priority areas and ensures that the key environmental values are sustained by the following:

- Providing ongoing guidance that is based on a thorough understanding of the valued habitats and species on the site.
- Developing further environmental planning objectives as part of a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- Developing and implementing detailed protection measures that meet or exceed standard best practices (e.g., provincial Develop with Care guidelines) as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Including priority habitat enhancement in the neighbourhood plan wherever feasible.

Through this environmental planning process, environmentally responsible land development is achievable for the property with the continued implementation of diligent environmental practices.

4.7.3 Slope

Slopes greater than 25% and a 30m slope buffer have been mapped as part of the Boundary Extension Application, as shown in Figure 5, using TimberWest GIS data (1m contours). As the land use planning process evolves, opportunities to respect and incorporate steep slopes into the framework of natural and protected areas will be maximized to preserve and enhance the eco-structure of the site.

4.7.4 Servicing

Preliminary analysis of the existing infrastructure and future improvements that are currently planned suggests there is adequate capacity in the wastewater system to support the extension area. The detailed sanitary analysis underway will identify specific deficiencies in the sanitary sewer network, such as localized pipes that may require future upsizing at later phases of the build-out.

Preliminary information available on the Town’s existing water network suggests there is suitable capacity to service the extension area up to the 110 meter contour elevation. The topography of the extension area will require an additional reservoir to meet domestic supply and fire flow requirements for the later phases of the build-out above the 110 meter contour elevation. The detailed analysis underway will identify specific deficiencies in the existing Town network, such as localized branches that may require future upsizing at later phases of the build-out. The Town will also review the appropriate siting for the future reservoir to ensure that this facility will efficiently service those future growth areas above the 110 meter contour.
The Town has indicated that it will be reviewing its Development Costs Charges (DCC) program given new infrastructure costs, possible new Provincial requirements for water filtration and the potential for the new water reservoir to benefit other development lands within the Town.

4.6.5 Transportation
Review of the Town’s existing road network and the nearby communities assumed that a large proportion of traffic will access Highway 1 to travel north and south while additional local area traffic will remain within the Town. Based on the traffic analysis and signal warrant performed, the following upgrades are suggested over the course of the 20-30 year build-out:

- The existing Highway 1 and Grouhel Road intersection should be signalized in the future to serve as an access point to the Town for the planned neighbourhood traffic. Discussions are underway with the Ministry of Transportation to facilitate this improvement.
- Minor improvements required in the horizon years for the existing highway intersections.
- The existing Fourth Avenue and Christie Road intersection, as well as the Sixth Avenue and Malone Road intersection, should receive upgrades in the future to ensure that they can adequately support the forecasted traffic volumes.

4.6.6 Viewscape – Boundary Extension Area
Few parts of the boundary extension area are visible from viewpoints within the Town. Similarly, beyond the Town boundaries, the extension lands are seldom visible, as other properties in the foreground obstruct the view.

Views from within the boundary extension area are variable and some will be local and short, while others will be more distant. Some of these views may be altered as harvested areas regenerate and block distant views. Conversely, views that are currently blocked by standing timber may be created through future harvesting.

Additional timber harvesting is unlikely to alter the potential views of the boundary extension area from viewpoints in or adjacent to the Town.
4.6.7 Visual Impact – Forest Management

The Town of Ladysmith has indicated that one of its key objectives is to preserve the viewscape behind the Town. Couverdon has conducted a visual modeling exercise to examine the potential impact of future harvesting along Stanton Ridge. Figure 6 illustrates the visual impact of harvesting over a 30-40 year timeline through a series of 4 ‘harvest passes.’ Each pass represents a possible harvest area. Once harvested, TimberWest would replant and give an adequate time for a harvested area to ‘green up’ before commencing the next pass. The harvest management plan for this area will result in the management of timber harvesting in a way that minimizes visual impact from the harbour and the Town.

The visual impact model tries to emulate the sight lines to Stanton Ridge from specific points around the Town, including:

- 3rd and Roberts
- 7-Eleven
- Dunsmuir Island
- Safeway
- Sharpe Point

Figure 6: Visual Impact Analysis (Example View of Stanton Ridge from the Town)
5. LAND USE CONCEPT

5.1 Current Land Use, Plans and Regulations
As outlined in Section 2.1, the subject parcels, except a small (3 ha) portion already within the Town of Ladysmith, are currently located within the Cowichan Valley Regional District Electoral Areas G and H – 256 ha in Electoral Area H and 27 ha in Electoral Area G.

The lands (27 ha) currently located within the Cowichan Valley Regional District Electoral Area G are zoned Forestry/Natural Resources and are subject to a minimum parcel size of 20 ha. The lands (256 ha) located within Electoral Area H of the Cowichan Valley Regional District are zoned as Primary Agriculture, Primary Forestry, or Secondary Forestry and are subject to minimum parcel sizes of 12 ha, 80 ha, and 20 ha respectively.

The lands have historically been used for managed forest purposes and have remained undeveloped, except for some logging roads to access the timber resources.

5.2 General Development Areas & Neighbourhood Vision
The preliminary land use concept for the 283 hectare boundary extension area envisions a mixed use community which will be an extension of the historic fabric of the town, building upon Ladysmith’s Smart Growth Practices, Sustainability Vision, community history, and culture (Figure 6: General Development Areas). The boundary extension area is part of a contiguous area of accessible land which is connected to downtown via Fourth Avenue to the north and Malone Road to the south. Christie Road also links the property to the Inland Island Highway.

Figure 7: General Development Areas
The land use concept responds to the boundary extension area’s highly accessible location and the environmental characteristics of the property with a series of interconnected neighbourhoods each with a distinct vision and character. The land use concept also responds to and provides a foundation for Couverdon’s Principled Approach to community planning, explained in section 3.2, which aligns naturally with Ladysmith’s Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town.

Several features distinguish the preliminary land use concept:

- A mixed use activity center for neighbourhood commercial, education, and community facilities, as well as a range of residential types. This area offers the opportunity to create a new employment node.

- A series of mixed density residential neighbourhoods which will respond to the site’s defining environmental and topographic characteristics and provide a spectrum of housing choices.

- A framework of natural and protected areas which will include steep slopes, stream corridors, and wetlands to preserve and enhance the eco-structure of the site.

- An open space network including active and passive recreation, parks, community gardens, and nature trails will be embedded throughout the community and provide continuous connections between neighbourhoods, community facilities, the mixed use activity center, and regional trails.

The neighbourhood vision for each of these elements of the conceptual land use plan is explained in more detail below.

### 5.2.1 Mixed Use

A mixed use activity center for neighbourhood commercial, education, and community facilities, and a range of residential types will support the eastern portion of the extension area. As the part of the boundary extension area closest to downtown, it will have complementary uses and connections to the Town’s existing commercial areas via Fourth Avenue. This area is envisioned as a village center, providing a node of activity adjacent to the Town’s new playfields. A mix of uses will support a new activity center with employment, housing, and cultural and natural attractions within a compact, walkable design. The mixed use activity center is envisioned as the gateway and “heart” of the community—a social and recreational center where all paths converge. The planning and programming of the mixed use area will respond to the topography which is favorable for higher density development around shared open space amenities.

The mixed use activity center is anticipated to be part of the first phase of community development. The area will provide a focal point for the community and define a “quality of place” early in the development process—based on a strong sense of community, active open spaces, connections to the natural landscape, and diverse neighbourhoods. This identity will be further enhanced by one of the potential anchors for the area which may include an institutional use, community center, or recreational center as the gateway to the property’s extensive open space and trail network. Such amenities would likely enhance interest in multifamily housing of various types, sizes, and price points to attract a mix of people who want convenience and vitality.

The mixed use activity center is envisioned to be a walkable place, with a framework of streets and blocks designed to be pedestrian-oriented in keeping with high-quality urban design.
practices. Active design elements will promote healthy living and reduced vehicle trips. The mixed use activity center could accommodate a regional transit stop if supported by sufficient density.

Mixed Use Character Images

5.2.2 Residential Neighbourhoods

Surrounding the mixed use activity center, a series of mixed density residential neighbourhoods will respond to the site’s defining environmental and topographic characteristics. Each cluster will be nestled into the landscape offering a diversity of housing types. The land use concept will preserve and enhance view corridors and sensitive environmental systems, including stream corridors and wetlands, steep slopes, and natural habitats.

A spectrum of housing types is envisioned within the residential neighbourhoods. Multifamily dwellings may take the form of apartments or condominiums, quads, and townhomes in order to target a wide range of market audiences (e.g. singles, couples, retirees, weekenders). Single family homes will also take on a variety of forms ranging from cottage clusters to woodland estates grouped together in neighbourhoods that conserve open space and wildlife habitat while creating distinctive neighbourhood identities. Higher density housing is generally envisioned in the eastern neighbourhoods as part of the mixed use activity center close to the existing Town, while housing elsewhere on site will be designed to respond to the unique characteristics of the land. A mixture of water views, mountain views, and internal views will contribute to each neighbourhood’s unique character and sense of place.
Walkability and proximity to shared amenities will define the neighbourhood scale. Each neighbourhood will have its own unique open space amenity which may be a park, recreation field, greenway, scenic overlook, or other feature. Further, neighbourhoods will be connected to each other by a robust system of trails. A network of shared streets which follow the natural contours of the land will further connect the neighbourhoods to each other, the mixed use activity center, and the Town.

Mixed Density Residential Character Images
5.2.3 Natural and Protected Areas

The preliminary land use concept is guided by an overarching goal to preserve and enhance priority environmental areas and ensure that key environmental values are sustained. The land use planning process began with an examination of the land and an evaluation of strategies to respect topography, reconnect natural stream corridors, and link habitats to support natural species. A preliminary environmental sensitivities mapping exercise was carried out to spatially identify the relative environmental values within the boundary extension area for the purpose of minimizing impacts through avoidance of valuable areas at an early planning stage. Ongoing planning will be based upon a thorough understanding of valued habitats and species. As the land use strategy evolves, the boundaries of sensitive environmental areas will be refined based upon further study, and detailed protection measures will be established as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Figure 8: Preliminary Environmental Sensitivities
5.2.4 Parks and Open Space

An integrated open space network and system of pedestrian-friendly streets will provide continuous connections between neighbourhoods, community facilities, and the mixed use activity center. Parks, community gardens, and other open spaces at varying scales will offer opportunities for healthy living and working with active and passive uses. The public realm will have a comprehensive landscape strategy that incorporates best practices to balance sociability with natural area preservation.

Building off of the energy and example of the new community playfield on Fourth Avenue adjacent to the proposed mixed use activity center, each neighbourhood will have its own open space which may take the form of a village green, park, recreation space, scenic overlook, or greenway with physical connections to the surrounding trail network. The land use concept anticipates that the community trail network will link to the regional trail network and the TransCanada Trail via a new Ridgeline Trail (“Potential Regional Trail Connector”) and may connect to the proposed Cowichan Valley Trail Route in the future. The open space network will further integrate with the Town’s bicycle routes and expand the parkland access of the current residents.

Figure 9: Parks & Open Space Concept
5.3 Phasing Concept

Development within the boundary extension area will be phased over time. The preliminary phasing concept anticipates at least four phases generally progressing from east to west. The lands in the east/northeast portion of the extension area, with access via Fourth Avenue, are expected to be part of the initial phases of development. Phase 2, to the south, connects to Malone Road and completes the Fourth Avenue to Malone Road loop. The land use concept anticipates the accommodation of transit service along the Fourth Avenue to Malone Road loop if supported by sufficient density. Development of residential neighbourhoods is planned to occur throughout all phases. The roadway network and development areas have been planned in response to natural topographic characteristics of the land. The primary determinants for phasing will be market demand and an imperative to efficiently implement transportation and service infrastructure.

The boundary extension area is anticipated to accommodate up to 1,500 residential units of varying housing types from single family to multifamily along with complementary commercial and institutional uses. The number of residential units developed in each phase will depend upon the future rezoning of the lands as well as market demand, and is anticipated to be approximately 775 units in Phase 1, 375 units in Phase 2, 200 units in Phase 3, and 150 units in Phase 4. Assuming a persons-per-household ratio range of 1.66 to 2.33, the boundary extension area could accommodate a total population of 2,500 to 3,500 residents.

Figure 10: Phasing Concept
6. NEXT STEPS

6.1 Process
Municipal boundary extension proposals are referred to the Ministry of Community and Rural Development. The process of developing, processing, and approving a boundary extension proposal typically includes six steps:

1. Proposal Development following Town Council Resolution
2. Proposal Submission to the Ministry of Community and Rural Development
3. Ministry Review
4. Municipal Electoral Approval
5. Provincial Approval
6. Implementation of Boundary Extension

Following the boundary extension approval process, a land use planning process will be carried out, with ongoing community engagement, to amend the Town’s Official Community Plan (OCP) and zoning for the annexed land. This process will provide an opportunity to further define the policies, guidelines, and mix of community uses for the property.

6.2 Further Studies
Following the boundary extension application process, further studies will be conducted based upon the recommendations of the preliminary technical studies and consultation with the Town. These studies are anticipated to address issues related to urban design, the environment, and infrastructure, among others.

6.3 Public Consultation
In consultation with Town of Ladysmith staff, Couverdon proposes to host a follow-up community open house in the first quarter of 2014. The open house will address the findings of the preliminary technical studies and land use concept.

6.4 Community Amenity Contributions
Couverdon is committed to collaborating with the Town throughout the planning process. The boundary extension and subsequent land use development application provide an opportunity for the Town to realize several community benefits, including:

- Acquisition of watershed lands (around Stocking Lake and Holland Lake) to protect the drinking water that supplies the Town, the Diamond, and Saltair.
- Protection of key viewscapes (i.e., forested hills behind the Town).
- Enhancement of Ladysmith’s economic development opportunities.
- Stewardship of lands with strong ecological value.
- Creation of a range of recreational and parkland spaces, both active and passive.
- Provision of a range of land uses and housing types, including an exploration of affordable housing options, to create a series of complete neighbourhoods that meet the community’s needs.
- Engagement of stakeholders to implement Ladysmith’s Community Vision for a Sustainable West Coast Town.
6.5 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Development Permit Areas

Following successful completion of the boundary extension application, Couverdon will work with the Town of Ladysmith to undertake the process of amending the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw to accommodate a comprehensive land use plan for the subject properties.

Couverdon is committed to working the Town to create the appropriate land use policies and development permit guidelines to ensure consistency with the Town vision for the future development.