



June 2018

# Progress Report

## Local Government Food and Farmland Trust in the CRD



## Acknowledgements

This report is brought to you by CRFAIR, the Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable. CRFAIR is a non-profit organization promoting healthy and sustainable food systems in the Capital Region. Working as the backbone organization for the Good Food Network, CRFAIR aligns efforts for collective impact in the areas of food literacy, food access and the local food economy.

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This report is supported by preceding discussion papers and reports by CRFAIR:<sup>1</sup>

- *Farmland Access in British Columbia: Four Innovative Approaches (2016)*
- *Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report (2015)*
- *Local Government Farmland Trust Summary Report (2015)*
- *Local Government Farmland Trust Policy Brief (2015)*
- *Policy Discussion Paper One: Role of Local Government in Farmland and Farm Viability (2013)*
- *Policy Discussion Paper Two: Regional Farmland Conservation and Access Program (2012)*
- *Policy Discussion Paper Three: Agriculture Parks Model for the Capital Region (2013)*
- *Policy Discussion Paper Four: Farm Incubators Growing Access to Land and Mentorship for New Farmers in the CRD. Incubator Farm Introductory Guide (2013)*

The following report addresses land management and access in the CRD region. We endeavour to honour the land Coast Salish peoples by strengthening our relationship and responsibilities to them. We live and work<sup>2</sup> on unceded Coast Salish Territories,<sup>3</sup> specifically of the Lekwungen (Songhees and Esquimalt Nations) and W̱SÁNEĆ (Tsartlip/W̱JŌŁŁP, Tseycum/W̱SIKEM, Tsawout/S̱ÁUTW, and Pauquachin/BOKÉCEN Nations).

This project was made possible by funding from the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia, the Victoria Foundation, Vancity, the District of Saanich and the District of North Saanich.



<sup>1</sup> A selection of the reports are available online at <http://www.crfair.ca/researchreports/>

<sup>2</sup> CRD. (2015). *Capital Regional District First Nations with Reserve land and Traditional Territories throughout the Capital Region.*

<sup>3</sup> The term Coast Salish is used to encompass a number of Indigenous peoples, including Esquimalt, Hul'qumi'num, Klahoose, Lekwungen, MALAXEt, Musqueam, OStlq'emeylem, Pentlatch, Scia'new (Beecher Bay), Sliammon, Shishalh, Skxwú7mesh-ulh Úxwumixw, Stó:lo, Straits, Tsleil-Waututh, T'Sou-ke, W̱SÁNEĆ, and Xwemalhkwwu.

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## Executive Summary

As a community based actor CRFAIR has been playing a specific role in terms of moving the development of food and farmland access initiatives and policy directives forward in the capital region. CRFAIR's work in this arena has been largely centred on addressing a pressing issue for food security and sustainability in the region, **the lack of access by food providers to land**. One avenue that we are exploring is that public land be made available for food providing. This report serves to document and summarize the process of exploring and developing models for a local government supported land bank or "trust" in the Capital Region, referred to as the Regional Food and Farmland Trust (RFFLT). This report provides information for local government, civil society, private and public sector actors about our process and findings in the Capital Region, in hopes it assists others who are exploring these options in their own region.

The outcome of CRFAIR's work to date on this initiative has been to secure local government support and policy directives supporting access to land, the exploration of a model, and implementation of a pilot test case that is supported by researchers, subject experts, decision makers and key partners. This will enable forward motion by the stakeholders to hone the details of the model, and provide a case study to learn from and inspire the development of a long term solution to land access. The lasting legacy of this project would be a sustained mechanism for local government to steward land of food provisioning value in trust for generations to come.

This document is primarily focused on summarizing the process undertaken and providing insights on the progress achieved. It also provides a brief summary of the models, governance, and financing that emerged from the research and engagement activities. To learn more about the details of the FFLT approach please see the preceding CRFAIR document: [\*Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report.\*](#)

## Glossary of Acronyms

- **AFSP:** Agriculture and Food Security Plan
- **ALC:** Agricultural Land Commission
- **CRD:** Capital Regional District
- **CRFAIR:** Capital Region Food & Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable
- **ENAAC :** Environment & Natural Areas Advisory Committee
- **PAAC:** Peninsula & Area Agricultural Commission
- **PPSC:** Planning and Protective Services Committee
- **RFAS** Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy
- **RFATF:** Regional Food and Agriculture Task Force
- **RFFLT:** Regional Food and Farmland Trust
- **RGS:** Regional Growth Strategy
- **RSS:** Regional Sustainability Strategy
- **WCAS:** Whole Community Agriculture Strategy

# RFFLT Development Timeline

## TIMELINE

### Regional Food & Farmland Trust (RFFLT) Development

- 
- 2009**
    - First calls of action in CRFAIR's *Our farmlands, Our foodlands, Our future: findings report on tools and strategies for ensuring productive and accessible farmlands in the CRD*
  - 2010**
    - Mentioned again in *BC's Farming and Food Future Local Government Toolkit for Sustainable Food Production* (Curran & Stobbe)
  - 2012**
    - Identified in North Saanich's economic development strategy
    - Identified in CRFAIR's *Policy Discussion Paper #2: Regional Farmland Conservation and Access Program*
  - 2013**
    - Identified in CRFAIR's *Policy Discussion Paper #1: Role of Local Government in Promoting Farmlands and Farm Viability*
  - 2014**
    - *CRD Board Strategic Priorities 2015-2018 – At A Glance*
    - Item 4d: "Develop a regional agricultural land banking solution"
    - *CRD Corporate Plan 2015-2018* reiterates CRD BOD Item 4d
    - District of Saanich Council passes motion to support exploration of a RFFLT, requests staff report on topic
    - District North Saanich Council passes motion to support the CRD in establishing a RFFLT and farmland acquisition fund
  - 2015**
    - *CRD Draft Regional Sustainability Strategy Policy* 2.3.3: "Initiate RFFLT and farmland acquisition fund"
    - CRFAIR *Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report* outlines models
    - Launch of Vision Sandown process in North Saanich to establish local government owned farm
  - 2016**
    - CRD's *Regional Food & Agricultural Strategy (RFAS)* adopted by CRD BOD Recommendation 9: "Initiate a process to establish a RFFLT"
    - District Saanich passes motion to support continued work exploring RFFLT through participating in the RFASTF and requests CRD refer to RFFLT development as priority initiative
    - CRFAIR receives LOS from PAAC endorsing exploration of RFFLT implementation
  - 2017**
    - CRD RFAS Task Force (RFASTF) created
    - CRFAIR representation on RFASTF
    - CRFAIR providing additional research and support
    - CRFAIR & ES480 class on Saanich site assessment
    - Sandown lands officially transferred to District of North Saanich, site farm planning begins
  - 2018**
    - CRD posts RFP *Regional Food Lands Improvement Feasibility Study & Business Case*
    - Feasibility Study commences

## 1.0 Introduction

Nearly 20 years ago Moura Quayle stated

*Without the courage to hold firm, with stakes in the ground, there will be no incentive to better manage our land base in the face of competing uses. We must halt the slow, but steady erosion of our agriculture and food resources, and support our varied agricultural industries. As a forward thinking society, we must dig in, take responsibility, and make sure that future generations have a vibrant agricultural land base.*<sup>4</sup>

Over the past decade there has been growing recognition of the need to protect lands with food provisioning capacities and histories. Concurrently, there's been an increased appetite for alternative models to steward lands; land trusts being one mechanism in a suite of tools. There is a clear need to address access to land for food producing and farming. With the average age of farmers over 55,<sup>5</sup> the next decade will see the largest share of farm operators move retire. Meanwhile, one of the top barriers for new entrants into the sector is access to land.<sup>6</sup> Having land for food and farming is the second most important land use in BC after natural fresh water systems.<sup>7</sup> With the increasing pressure and competition on land use, it is necessary to consider a variety of avenues to secure local land base for food security. A local government supported land trust that directly focuses on food and farmland is one promising approach.

Since 2012 the Capital Region Food & Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable (CRFAIR), in collaboration with other organizations, has investigated this topic in the Capital Regional District (CRD). The CRD is the regional government for 13 municipalities and three electoral areas on southern Vancouver Island and the nearby Gulf Islands, serving more than 383,000 citizens. Governed by a 24-member Board of Directors and supported by more than 75 committees and commissions, the CRD provides regional decision-making on issues that transcend municipal boundaries.<sup>8</sup>

Objectives of CRFAIR's work are rooted in the need for policy frameworks that directly address and ensure the stewardship and access to food and farmland in perpetuity. In the past four years CRFAIR has engaged with local governments in the CRD to foster the development of policy tools for the management of public lands to support land access, protection, and utilization for food provisioning and farming. Over the course of this project we have worked to establish that framework in the Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy (RFAS), as well as the directive to form and operationalize a Regional Food and Farmland Trust (RFFLT) within the CRD. The project specifically set out to:

- A. explore** opportunities for increasing the protection of, and access to, food and farmlands in the Capital Region, with a focus on the role that local government can play
- B. support** the creation of a policy directive to form a local government task force
- C. provide** assistance for the next steps of the task force and RFFLT exploration
- D. build** partnerships and coordinate the work of municipal, academic and community partners towards the development of Sandown in the District of North Saanich as the first pilot site, and look at the opportunities for the District of Saanich
- E. evaluate** progress, share learnings and continue to collaborate locally and across British Columbia.

<sup>4</sup> Quayle, M. (1998). [Stakes in the Ground: Provincial Interest in the Agricultural Land Commission Act](#). P27.

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. (2017). [Table 32-10-0442-0: Farm operators classified by number of operators per farm and age](#).

<sup>6</sup> Dennis, J. and Wittman, H. (2014). [Farmland Access in British Columbia: Project Summary Report](#).

<sup>7</sup> McAllister Opinion Research. (2014). [BC Public Attitudes Toward Agriculture and Food 2014](#). P8.

<sup>8</sup> CRD. (2017). [What Is CRD?](#)



This report serves to document progress made from 2015 to mid-2018 as part of and recommend subsequent action planning for continued advancement. An overview of the process to date can be seen in RFFLT Development Timeline on page 4.

This work has, and continues to be, part of a broader collaborative effort to further research and synthesize knowledge with key stakeholders to inform and execute the development of these models in BC with a specific focus on a municipally supported trust in the CRD. Integral to progress has been utilizing a systems approach. This means regarding multiple angles and contexts to understand the connections among and between the various stakeholders and forces (economic, demographic, cultural, etc.) that influence, and are influenced by how land is acquired, held, and managed. In exploring how land could be access through the mechanisms of a RFFLT, it is crucial to acknowledge the complexities of regional and national agri-food systems, Indigenous land histories and broad socioeconomic and cultural systems.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout this report reference is made to a “food and farmland trust”, as per the language used in local council and CRD vernacular. CRFAIR promotes the use of the term “foodlands” and “foodlands trust” which emerged from dialogue with participants from the B.C. Food Systems Network Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty. The term “foodlands” aims to recognize the diversity of food growing and harvesting practices and to open a dialogue between farmland protection and access initiatives and Indigenous land rights in BC. CRFAIR encourages consideration of a shift from “farmland trust” to “foodlands trust” to be inclusive of the wide range of approaches to food growing, harvesting and gathering, both commercial and non-commercial which may be supported by a trust approach.

## 2.0 Background

### 2.1 Supporting Implementation: 2015 — 2018

Significant research and consultation exploring a RFFLT has been mounting for close to a decade.<sup>10</sup> This project builds on the 2014, CRFAIR led, collaborative work to research and consult on models for access to land for farming, including a Regional Food and Farmland Trust (RFFLT). It is intricately linked with the work of FarmFolk CityFolk/Foodlands Cooperative of BC towards a provincial level trust. This work is summarized in the document *Farmland Access in British Columbia: Four Innovative Approaches*.<sup>11</sup> With primary sponsorship from the Real Estate Foundation, and support from the Victoria Foundation, Vancity, and the University of Victoria, CRFAIR has engaged key players to develop a policy directive for development of a government supported RFFLT in the CRD.

Launching from policy discussion papers in 2012 and 2013, the first phase of the project (2014-2015) involved developing policy proposals through stakeholder consultation and public engagement around mechanisms and models for food land protection. *Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report*<sup>12</sup> was created and provided to the local governments

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<sup>9</sup> Ruhf, K. (2013). “[Access to farmland: A systems change perspective](#)”. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. 4(1), P3.

<sup>10</sup> First calls to action regarding RFFLT were found in Geggie, L. & Platt, K. (2009). [Our farmlands, Our foodlands, Our future: a findings report on tools and strategies for ensuring productive and accessible farmlands in the CRD](#). CRFAIR. (2009). [BC’s Farming and Food Future Local Government Toolkit for Sustainable Food Production](#). Curran, D & Stobbe, T. (2010). [Local Government Policy Options to Protect Agricultural Land and Improve the Viability of Farming in Metro Vancouver](#).

<sup>11</sup> FarmFolk CityFolk et.al. (2016). [Farmland Access in British Columbia: Four Innovative Approaches](#).

<sup>12</sup> CRFAIR. (2015). [Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report](#).

and participating stakeholders in the summer of 2015. These efforts proved successful in building support for the articulation of new policy directions supporting RFFLT with two local governments (Districts of Saanich and North Saanich) in their food and agriculture plans<sup>13</sup> and strategies<sup>14</sup>, as well as with the regional government (Capital Region District) through the launch of the Capital Region District Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy (RFAS)<sup>15</sup>.

The first phase of the project was successful in providing rationale, models, building support and establishing supportive policy directions. The second phase (2016-2018) aimed to continue this work by moving the needle in three key areas:

- 1. Establish & Implement Recommendation 9 in the CRD Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy (RFAS):** Creating a policy directive to form a local government CRD Food and Agriculture Task Force, ensuring the establishment of this task force and supporting their efforts around the RFFLT strategy implementation of recommendations and associated actions.
- 2. Institute Municipal Policy & Advance Work on Pilot Sites:** Working with cross sector organizations and two municipal governments to ensure their food and agriculture policy included the community priority of the RFFLT, as well as building partnerships and planning for pilot sites.
- 3. Evaluate Progress & Share Learnings:** including working with the provincial Foodlands Cooperative of BC, and other farmland trust initiatives, as well as promote discussion and dissemination of information about the initiative.

Movement on these concrete objectives has been realized to date and are outlined in Section 3.0.

## 2.2 Support & Suitability

Increasing capacity for local food production through investigating and supporting the feasibility of a regional land trust has been articulated across municipalities through various agricultural food system action plans<sup>16, 17</sup> and provincial focussed organizations such as the Foodlands Cooperative of BC. The concept has also been stated as one of the 18 new opportunities for collaborative action outlined in the Metro Vancouver 2016 Regional Food Systems Action Plan endorsed by municipalities such as City of Coquitlam, City of Richmond, Corporation of the City of New Westminster, City of North Vancouver, City of Surrey, City of Port Moody, and Bowen Island Municipality. Additional reports in the past few years have also called for regional governments to increase land access.<sup>18</sup> The work being done in the Capital Region is informing and being informed by these parallel processes.

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<sup>13</sup> District of Saanich. (2018). [Agriculture & Food Security Plan](#).

<sup>14</sup> District of North Saanich. (2011). [Whole Community Agricultural Strategy](#).

<sup>15</sup> CRD. (2016). [Regional Food & Agriculture Strategy](#).

<sup>16</sup> The Corporation of Delta. (2011). [Delta Agricultural Plan Phase 2 Report: Issues and Options](#). P19.

<sup>17</sup> Metro Vancouver. (2016). [Metro Vancouver Regional Food System Action Plan](#). P13.

<sup>18</sup> The Land Conservancy of British Columbia. (2009). [BC's Farming and Food Future Local Government Toolkit for Sustainable Food Production](#). National Young Farmers Coalition. (2011). [Building A Future With Farmers: Challenges Faced by Young, American Farmers and a National Strategy to Help Them Succeed](#); CRFAIR. (2012). [Policy Discussion Paper #2: Regional Farmland Conservation and Access Program](#); Dennis, J. (2012). [Emerging Farmer Movements and Alternative Land Access Initiatives in British Columbia, Canada](#); CRFAIR. (2013). [Policy Discussion Paper #1: Role of Local Government in Promoting Farmlands and Farm Viability](#); National Young Farmers Coalition. (2013). [Farmland Conservation 2.0: How Land Trusts Can Protect America's Working Farms](#); District of Saanich. (2014). [Minutes of the Council Meeting, February 24, 2014](#). District of North Saanich. (2014). [Staff Report: Notice of Motion: Regional Farm Trust and Farmland Acquisition Fund](#). CRFAIR. (2015). [Findings Report Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach](#); Sussmann, C., C. Dorward, W. Polasub, K. Mullinix and B. Mansfield. (2016). [Home on the Range: Cost pressures and the price of farmland in Metro Vancouver](#). Vancouver City Savings Credit Union.



In CRFAIR's 2015 *Findings Report* it was noted that "a regional (CRD) approach to a farmland trust and acquisition fund was favoured over implementation at the municipal level. However, municipal leadership and support is critical to implementation".<sup>19</sup> As noted in Saanich Council meeting in December 2016, the Director of Planning stated "there is strength in a regional approach".<sup>20</sup> The motion that carried was a recommendation to receive the CRFAIR *Findings Report*, and request CRD refer development of Regional Food and Farmland Trust (RFFLT) to Regional Food and Agriculture Task Force (RFATF) as priority and support continued work to explore RFFLT.

With regards to the motion, Saanich Councillors shared numerous statements of support for the idea in general and in specific, with regards to a regional approach noted:

*"The recommendation creates an opportunity to evolve the conversation to a regionally focused, collaborative and cooperative solution".*<sup>21</sup> (Murdock)

*"In the past, regional approaches have been successful; food security is a concern to all residents in the region, therefore a regional approach is appropriate".*<sup>22</sup> (Brice)

*"Food security has been a concern for a number of years; taking a regional approach is appropriate".*<sup>23</sup> (Brownoff)

As a federation of local governments with access to decision making authority over a range of shared land use initiatives, CRFAIR sees the CRD as a logical choice to coordinate the creation of and operation of a RFFLT. The CRD is able to establish the structure needed to provide for good governance and providing the guidance needed by an administrative board responsible for the implementation such an initiative. Local governments have "the means and authority to encourage farming in their respective jurisdictions, and can facilitate and support creation of community-initiated farmland trusts".<sup>24</sup> Furthermore "agriculture is a regional issue"<sup>25</sup> with municipalities having different scales of land suitable for agriculture but all municipalities having those who need access to food. Farmland protection is an issue relevant to urban and rural communities and to food producers and eaters across the CRD; enabling local food access and activities needs to happen across the region and in those municipalities both with and without farmland. With support from the District of North Saanich, District of Saanich and the Peninsula and Area Agriculture Commission (PAAC) additionally providing a statement of support<sup>26</sup>, the concept advanced into a policy framework.

### **3.0 Leveraging the Policy Framework & Pathways To Implementation**

This section provides a summary of the key activities aligned with our three desired outcomes of the process:

1. establish and implement recommendation 9 in the CRD RFAS
2. institute municipal policy and advance work on pilot sites
3. evaluate progress and share learnings.

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<sup>19</sup> CRFAIR. (2015). [Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report](#). PIV.

<sup>20</sup> District of Saanich. (2016). [Minutes of the Council Meeting, December 12, 2016](#). P6.

<sup>21</sup> District of Saanich. (2016). [Minutes of the Council Meeting, December 12, 2016](#). P10.

<sup>22</sup> District of Saanich. (2016). [Minutes of the Council Meeting, December 12, 2016](#). P10.

<sup>23</sup> District of Saanich. (2016). [Minutes of the Council Meeting, December 12, 2016](#). P10.

<sup>24</sup> Gorsuch, W., & Scott, R. (2010). [A Review of Farmland Trusts](#). PVIII.

<sup>25</sup> Regional District of Central Okanagan. (2005). [Agricultural Plan](#). P49.

<sup>26</sup> Peninsula and Area Agriculture Commission. (2016). [Annual Report](#). P2.

### **3.1 Establish & Implement Recommendation 9 in the CRD Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy**

#### **Step One: Building a Vision & Support Through the Creation of Policy Frameworks**

CRFAIR undertook considerable work to research and consult with key stakeholders, develop options for food and farmland access and investigate the role and potential models for local governments to support such access.

CRFAIR subsequently disseminated and presented the *Findings Report* to multiple audiences including local governments, the Peninsula & Area Agricultural Commission (PAAC), Environment & Natural Areas Advisory Committee (ENAAC), and representatives from Sooke Region Farmland Trust, Sooke Region Sooke Food Community Health Initiative (CHI) and the Metchosin Agriculture Advisory Committee. Letters of engagement to all nine regional First Nations were also disseminated. In presenting our findings and engaging these audiences we sought input, feedback, and shared our experiential knowledge. Further details of this work are detailed in Section 3.2.

In addition to building evidence, models, and endorsement for the RFFLT as a strategy for land access, CRFAIR worked to ensure a sufficient show of support for planning for food and agriculture more generally through the development process of a Regional Sustainability Strategy (RSS). CRFAIR launched a campaign to garner engagement in the RSS consultation phase to demonstrate support and interest by residents around food issues. The CRD, finding that food and agriculture was of the second highest priority in terms of feedback in the RSS consultation<sup>27</sup> decided to establish a stand-alone food and agriculture sub strategy. This proved to be of critical importance, as later the Regional Sustainability Strategy was not passed by the CRD Board of Directors, and the CRD reverted back to their Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). Even though the RSS did not advance, the creation of a food and agricultural strategy however was supported and moved forward.

#### **Step Two: Initiating Policy Framework for RFFLT & Task Force for Implementation**

CRFAIR was able to see a regional policy directive to explore a RFFLT realized. This formally occurred in the approval of the Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy (RFAS) on December 14, 2016.<sup>28</sup> The RFAS provides an in-depth exploration of regional food and agriculture objectives, issues and opportunities to guide action and foster leadership. It furthermore identifies the CRD's role in food and agriculture along with recommendations, associated actions, and resourcing requirements. Within the RFAS, ten recommendations are presented alongside associated actions and desired outcomes. Appendix 1 details the visual representation of this directive as it pertains to the RFFLT. Within the RFAS, the language of an “agricultural land banking solution” is in use interchangeably with RFFLT.

The first step in implementing the RFAS was the formation of a Regional Food and Agriculture Task Force (RFATF). RFATF members represent non-profits, municipalities with significant agricultural land holdings or interests in food and agriculture, First Nations and the Ministry of Agriculture. Task force appointments are

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<sup>27</sup> CRD. (2015). [CRD Draft Regional Sustainability Strategy: Volume 1: Integrated Summary of Public and Stakeholder Input](#). P6.

<sup>28</sup> CRD. (2016). [CRD Board Approves Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy](#).

intended to reflect the geographic and sectoral diversity of the Capital Region food and agriculture economy. The RFATF provides input to the Planning and Protective Services Committee (PPSC) to help set priorities and advance the Strategy recommendations.

### **Step Three: Forming & Operationalizing a Local Government Task Force**

A key outcome for CRFAIR was to transfer the championing of the RFFLT to local decision makers and official bodies. Once the policy direction to explore the establishment of a RFFLT had been completed it was imperative to ensure that it would be taken forward. This advancement occurred in the following ways.

#### ***A. Local Government Actors Take On A Leadership Role***

An informal (or “ad hoc”) intergovernmental task force convened in the fall of 2016 to strategize on moving the RFFLT forward through building support at the municipal level with end goal of having a motion of support at the CRD Board level adopted by 2017. Fifteen councillors were engaged and three meetings were held. This group utilized CRFAIR and other resources, formed a proposal and created model draft resolution for local government to support the Regional Food and Farmland Trust (RFFLT). A subset of this group took a formal proposal to the CRD Board of Directors, which is further detailed below.

#### ***B. Formal Leadership Body Emerges***

With the RFATF established, the inaugural meeting occurred February 28, 2017 with bi-monthly meetings since that time. The District of Saanich had requested that the RFATF prioritize the establishment of the RFFLT in their work plan. The RFATF submitted a work plan as their first order of business to the CRD Planning and Protective Services Committee (PPSC) that did indeed prioritize the exploration of a RFFLT.

Simultaneously, as the Task Force was developing its work plan, the ad hoc intergovernmental task force was developing their proposal for a food and farmland trust. CRFAIR was involved in both processes, with the aim of ensuring cross communication and diversification of strategic focus to hedge against potential stalling of the CRD formal process. CRFAIR advised the intergovernmental task force to delay advancing their proposal and instead wait to align with the official RFATF activities. However, the ad hoc group felt they had enough support to take a full proposal forward for approval.

Meanwhile the RFATF developed a work plan and on September 6, 2017 they provided a RFAS recommendations update report to the CRD PPSC. In that report the RFATF recommended that seven actions be prioritized with the first being to initiate a process to “establish a regional food and farmland trust”.<sup>29</sup>

Proposals from both the formalized Regional Food and Agriculture Task Force and the informal intergovernmental task force, landed at the same meeting. This led to considerable confusion at the CRD Planning and Protective Services Committee (PPSC) table. PPSC did not pass the motion of the informal intergovernmental task force and chose to refer further consideration of the RFFLT back to the RFATF asking them to provide a broader proposal for land access to the CRD Board of Directors for consideration.

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<sup>29</sup> CRD. (2018). [Staff Report RFAS Strategy Recommendations Update](#). P1.

PPSC also provided a long list of questions and considerations to be addressed in this proposal. After the defeat of their motion, the adhoc intergovernmental task force disbanded.

### **C. A Subcommittee of the RFATF Is Formed To Specifically Work On the RFFLT Initiative**

A “Food and Farmlands Trust Subcommittee” formed within the RFATF. This subcommittee was provided a background paper prepared by CRFAIR that considered all of the PPSC questions and made the case for the RFFLT. Additional work was completed by planning staff and the RFATF subcommittee on the RFFLT to build support with CRD Board members who did not support the proposal. This included asking the various agriculture advisory committees in support of the proposal to speak to their CRD representatives in support of the proposal and write letters of support. The subcommittee provided the RFATF with their recommendation to undertake a feasibility study and business case to inform implementation of the RFFLT. The RFATF approved this direction and moved forward this recommendation to the Planning and Protective Services Committee. Details as to CRFAIR’s specific role with this subcommittee and aforementioned background paper are detailed in Section 3.3.1.

### **D. Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy Task Force Recommendation**

The recommendation to approve the Regional Food Land Access Improvement Feasibility Study and Business Case was received for information by the Planning and Protective Services Committee. On January 24, 2018 the PPSC unanimously supported the Terms of Reference for the Regional Food Land Access Feasibility Study and Business Case<sup>30,31,32</sup>. This was then sent to the CRD Board of Directors where it was approved on February 14.<sup>33</sup> The feasibility study and business case are now in the process of moving forward with the following timeline:

- *May 18, 2018* | Draft written report responding to the identified scope of work.
- *June 18, 2018* | Presentation of the draft feasibility study to the RFTAF.
- *July 23, 2018* | Revised written report responding to RFTAF and staff input.
- *September 19, 2018* | Presentation of the revised written report to the Planning and Protective Services Committee to summarize key findings and answer questions.
- *October 31, 2018* | Final written report, delivered in a graphically designed format, reflecting any direction from the Planning and Protective Services Committee.

As detailed in the staff report,<sup>34</sup> the feasibility study will to identify and assess options for increasing food production, by enhancing access to farmland as a community asset for the public good. In response to prior Board direction, the proposed scope of work for the feasibility study and business case will identify approaches to increasing access to farmland and food production. A cost-benefit analysis will compare and contrast potential approaches. Operating models will be identified for all cost-effective and timely approaches and the consultant asked to recommend an approach, operating model, partnerships, funding

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<sup>30</sup> CRD. (2018). [Meeting Minutes Planning and Protective Services Committee, January 23, 2018](#). P3.

<sup>31</sup> CRD. (2018). [Regional Food Land Access Improvement Feasibility Study and BusinessCase ToR](#).

<sup>32</sup> CRD. (2018). [RFP No. RFP-2018-001 Regional Food Lands Improvement Feasibility Study and Business Case](#).

<sup>33</sup> CRD. (2018). [Meeting Minutes Capital Regional District Board, February 14, 2018](#). P6.

<sup>34</sup> CRD. (2018). [Staff Report: Req'l Food Land Access Improvement Feasibility Study-ToR](#).

and to suggest a timeline to implement. As of April 30, the quarterly CRD Priorities Dashboard lists the status of developing a RFFLT and other RFAS priorities as “proceeding as planned”.<sup>35</sup>

### **3.2 Institute Municipal Policy & Advance Work on Pilot Site Inclusion**

While the aforementioned pieces were developing at the CRD level, CRFAIR continued to liaise and support policy directives at the municipal level which is detailed in this section. CRFAIR’s *Findings Report* was presented to the District of Saanich and was received for information with accompanying staff recommendations in a Committee of the Whole Meeting December 12, 2016.<sup>36</sup> Council provided two key directions to staff to 1) request that the CRD Board refer the development of a regional farmland trust to the proposed Regional Food Security Task Force as a priority initiative; and 2) support continued work to explore a farmland trust in the Capital Regional District, through participation in RFATF<sup>37</sup>. The District of North Saanich and the District of Central Saanich also sent correspondence to the CRD in support of this direction which helped to build the traction outlined in Section 3.1.3.

Furthermore, CRFAIR engaged in partnerships to begin exploration of pilot local government owned land as potential inclusion sites. The aim was to utilize opportunities for collaboration to build traction and resources that can be utilized when the RFFLT begins the process of inclusion of sites. It was also designed to demonstrate that local governments have the mandate and ability to hold land that is directed to food and agriculture production. In fact, local governments currently have land and are looking for frameworks to support food production on those sites some of which is located within the Agriculture Land Reserve. What follows is an overview of both municipal policy and pilot site exploration advancement for two municipalities; the District of North Saanich and the District of Saanich.

#### **District of North Saanich**

##### ***A. Supporting Municipal Policy***

In 2016 the District of North Saanich contracted CRFAIR to undertake a review of its 2011 *Growing Towards Food Self Reliance: a Whole Community Agricultural Strategy* (WCAS) and deliver community consultation to ascertain community priorities for implementation. The 2011 plan had a directive to “support the establishment of a farmland trust.”<sup>38</sup>

The WCAS 2016 Update provides a status report on the set of 2011 WCAS actions and details an updated set of municipal and community actions to be implemented. Of the top priority WCAS actions, Priority 1 details protecting and enhancing land access through in three separate actions:

- 1.1 Protect working agricultural lands and enhance public agricultural holdings in the region with a farm land fund and acquisition program
- 1.4 Pursue the implementation of the Sandown Agreement and considerations around the future use of Sandown
- 1.8 Inventory all public lands in DNS for food growing potential.

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<sup>35</sup> CRD. (2018). [Priorities Dashboard Progress Report No.9 – Q1, 2018](#). P3.

<sup>36</sup> District of Saanich.(2016). [Minutes of the Council Meeting, December 12, 2016](#). P6.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> District of North Saanich. (2011). [Whole Community Agricultural Strategy](#). P19.



On February 5, 2018 District of North Saanich Council received Whole Community Agricultural Strategy Review 2016 Update report and agreed to support its recommendations. Furthermore Council directed staff to develop the detailed implementation plan as recommended in the WCAS 2016 Update Report.<sup>39</sup> Appendix 2 outlines details about these actions, implementation considerations and the role of the District of North Saanich.

### ***B. Pilot Site Exploration***

The Vision Sandown project was undertaken as a result of the rezoning of the former 95 acre Sandown Raceway on Glamorgan Road in North Saanich BC. The rezoning facilitates a subdivision to allow a 12 acre commercial site on the western portion of the lands while retaining the remaining 83 acres for agricultural purposes. The District of North Saanich also placed 12 acres of their own land that is contiguous to the Sandown site into the ALR so there was no net loss of agriculture land.



**Image 1: Overview of Sandown Lands**

The District of North Saanich retained the consulting services of CRFAIR to conduct an assessment of the community’s vision and priorities for the site that is to remain as agricultural land, see Image 1. This engagement process involved the identification of a range of options for the future management, ownership and operation of the land, with the goal of bringing all options forward for Council to consider. The Vision Sandown engagement process began in July 2015 and ran until February 2016 and saw over 500 community members participate. Methods of engagement included a survey, Vision Sandown information tables at various events, individual and community meetings, collaboration with the University of Victoria, site tours, and a “Community Ideas Fair”. CRFAIR’s 2016 report *Vision Sandown: What We Heard, Community Input on the Development of Sandown*<sup>40</sup> was received by Council and the recommendations ratified on June 27 of that year.<sup>41</sup>

In November 2017, the District of North Saanich advanced a key priority of the Whole Community Agricultural Strategy, by taking ownership of the Sandown Raceway property to ensure its future for local food production. Initiated in 2011, the land transfer was a complex process, needing approval from the

<sup>39</sup> District of North Saanich. (2018). [Minutes of the Council Meeting, February 5, 2018](#). P8.

<sup>40</sup> District of North Saanich. (2016). [Staff Report: Vision Sandown – Community Input Report](#).

<sup>41</sup> District of North Saanich. (2016). [Minutes of the Special Council Meeting of Council](#).P2.



Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and detailed conditions of compliance. A key condition required by the ALC was the development and implementation of a site drainage and agricultural reclamation plan.

Following the Vision Sandown process, Council awarded a contract to CRFAIR's and the Sandown Transition Team for transition planning services for the agricultural lands. The team is building on recommendations from the report and by August 2018, will create:

- site plan for Sandown Farm
- financial sustainability plan outlining a range of potential revenues/profits for the District/operator and necessary financing and revenue generation
- governance model to address authority, ownership, autonomy, reporting, communication, transparency, independence, accountability.

The transition plan will include multiple productive farming options, from incubator plots to medium scale operation; both community and commercial food production, recommend governance and revenue options, and the necessary infrastructure to support and enhance food production in our region. The overarching goal is to create a community farm that actively contributes to our local food security, engages the community in local food systems, offers teaching and learning, and stewards responsibly the diverse onsite ecosystems.

While the plan is being developed the land is undergoing changes to transform it from its days as a racetrack to a new community farm. Platform Properties is completing the site remediation - demolishing and removing the old infrastructure. Some materials from the stables are being salvaged and stored for future use. Site remediation, following the agricultural reclamation and preliminary drainage plan prepared by Madrone Environmental Services, will be completed by fall 2018. The District has contracted an agrologist to support this work and to collaborate with the new team developing the plan to transition the land to active food production.

### ***C. Creation of the Sandown Agricultural Reserve Fund***

A key ground-breaking aspect of the transfer and development of Sandown Racetrack into a community farm was the establishment of the Agricultural Reserve Fund. Approved by North Saanich in February of this year,<sup>42</sup> the directive states that 50% of the taxation revenues realized by the District by the development of the commercial portion of the rezoned ALR land would be put into a fund to benefit agriculture in the region in perpetuity. This idea was first seeded in the Vision Sandown process and one that CRFAIR and others continually advocated for. Projections from municipal staff peg 50% tax revenues from commercial development over the next five years at \$850,000 that will go towards the development of Sandown primarily but could also be directed to support other food and agriculture and land access projects in the area. This is projected conservatively to generate more than \$2 million in the next decade. The initial years of funding that would be generated by this fund will go directly into the development and operations of Sandown. To CRFAIR's knowledge there is not another example of this innovative tool of a directed agricultural fund anywhere in the province. The District of North Saanich has been rightly recognized for their innovation pertaining to the Sandown lands, receiving the Innovation in Agriculture Award, presented by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), the BC Agriculture Council

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<sup>42</sup> District of North Saanich. (2018). [Minutes of the Budget Committee Meeting](#). P3.

(BCAC) and the Ministry of Agriculture. The District was acknowledged for its role in including farmers and stakeholders in their planning process for the Sandown lands project, and the resulting commitment to develop agriculture resources on land.

## **District of Saanich**

### ***A. Supporting Municipal Policy***

In 2016, the District of Saanich created an Agriculture and Food Security Task Force and began the development of the Agriculture & Food Security Plan (AFSP). The purpose of the AFSP is to provide the District with a coordinated approach for supporting agriculture and improving food security in Saanich over the next 10 to 15 years. The plan provides a roadmap for achieving Official Community Plan (OCP) priorities and outlines a comprehensive approach to enhance the viability and long term sustainability of Saanich agriculture and food security.<sup>43</sup> CRFAIR participated in the planning process and was pleased to see the specific directions incorporated into the final draft of the AFSP that will go before the District of Saanich Council for approval in the summer of 2018. The AFSP is guided by a vision statement and objectives that are organized around seven themes. Actions contained in the AFSP are of two types: “priority” – specific initiatives that can be undertaken to enhance agriculture and food security; and “ongoing” – principled directions to guide future decision making. The focus of Theme 6 is to “Support Multi-Generational Farmers and Emerging Farmers,”<sup>44</sup> with 6D specifically focussed on supporting affordable access to farmland. Associated actions are to:

- increase the potential for farmers to access land by working with non-government organizations that help link new and existing farmers and land owners (6.9)
- support the CRD in efforts to establish a regional food and farmland trust (6.10)

Appendix 3 outlines detailed information about Theme 6D of Agriculture and Food Security Plan as it pertains to land access.

### ***B. Pilot Site Exploration***

Panama Flats is a 25 hectare parcel in Saanich, which was purchased by the District of Saanich in December 2011. A remarkable property with many assets, a full profile of the site is available on the Saanich Park’s website.<sup>45</sup> Originally CRFAIR had intended to work with the District on advancing the inclusion of Panama Flats as a pilot site for the RFFLT. However, we learned that a first priority for staff was awaiting the decision on the application to include a parcel of Panama Flats into the ALR. Furthermore, there are considerable water management considerations that will require further study as the Flats currently acts as an important flood plain. Instead, with agreement from planning and senior management, CRFAIR began an initial review of land owned by the District of Saanich with the goal of readying an assessment tool for identifying public land of food provisioning value and potential inclusion in the RFFLT.

This review began in spring 2017 through collaboration with Saanich Parks Department, Saanich Planning Department and the University of Victoria’s Environmental Studies 480, Capstone Course in Environmental

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<sup>43</sup> District of Saanich. (2018). [Agriculture & Food Security Plan](#). iii

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., P41.

<sup>45</sup> District of Saanich Parks. [Panama Flats](#).

Studies: Applied Policy and Action (ES480) with Professor Deborah Curran. The ES480 seminar develops student skills towards a current environmental issue, the role and impact of policy and presents an opportunity to apply theory to a case-study scenario. With the seminar happening over both spring and fall 2017, we were able to engage 34 students and co-create inventory objectives and criteria, implement site assessments and prepare evaluations that can be brought forward to the RFASTF, Saanich staff and Councillors and other appropriate players. The fall seminar saw the same sites assessed to observe at a different time of year and apply more criteria such as Indigenous land uses to ascertain potential food provisioning potential sensitive to traditional land patterns.

Of seven sites assessed, an overall impression of the agricultural suitability of each park site was given rating from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Four sites were identified as promising, based on report findings and the overall impression rating: Beckwith Park (rated 4/5), Horner Park (4.5), Houlihan Park (4.5), and Panama Flats (5). Quick's Bottom (3) may also have potential, depending on the dynamics of site hydrology. Tolmie Park (1) and Reynolds Park (1) seem unlikely to support any type of food provision use. The suitability of the sites that were rated most likely to accommodate agriculture will need further consideration, particularly with respect hydrology. Drainage and flood management studies may be required. Infrastructure is also an issue that will require further consideration, including the need for fencing, water, parking and storage. The level of community support for agricultural use of the parks, and enthusiasm for accommodating additional uses, is a significant unknown for some of the heavily-used parks and may need to be explored through community engagement.



**Image 2: ES480 students Matthew Lilly, Randi Jennings and CRFAIR Team Member Keeley Nixon presenting to Saanich Parks**

A presentation to Saanich Parks staff was delivered in July 2017 (Image 2) to share the process and findings and provide an overview of the class work.<sup>46</sup> Parks staff expressed interest in the project and the opportunity to present not only served to build a relationship with staff but also to increase student engagement with municipal staff. Additional dialogue, research mobilization and planning is ongoing with key municipal, community, academic stakeholders to support cross sectoral engagement and understanding opportunities.

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<sup>46</sup> Please see Appendix 4 for this document

### **3.3 Evaluate Progress & Share Learnings**

#### **Analysis of the Role of CRFAIR as Community Animator**

##### ***A. Consultation & Assistance***

As a community based actor CRFAIR has been playing a specific role in terms of moving the development of food and farmland access initiatives and policy forward in the region. CRFAIR has played a key role to engage across a wide spectrum of expertise to gather information, models, and innovative approaches to inform the process. We have worked across a growing Good Food Network and extended to other sectors including planners, decision makers, and industry to build agreement and support. CRFAIR has also consistently been working behind the scenes and, at times, out front to ensure that policy frameworks coming forward at the local government level considered the creation of a RFFLT as one of the tools that can be explored for farmland protection and foodland access in the future. The next section summarizes some of the activities that CRFAIR undertook to support establishing the policy frameworks, RFATF, prioritization of RFFLT implementation and the investment by the CRD in the current work to develop the business case and model.

##### ***B. Research, Resources & Building Support***

Over the course of the project CRFAIR had an ongoing role of engagement and providing information and resources to the local government processes in play. These processes include the development of the RFAS, the update to the District of North Saanich's Whole Community Agriculture Strategy (WCAS), and the development of the District of Saanich's Agriculture and Food Strategy (AFSP).

In the initial stages there was wide stakeholder and expert engagement in bringing forward the concept and proposals for providing access to land for food providing. This included a number of processes and policy papers including our pivotal *Findings Report*. Policy frameworks both at the regional and municipal government level supported the strategy. Simultaneously, specific work was done with student engagement to support both the Districts of Saanich and North Saanich in looking at specific opportunities for food and farmland access by the municipalities (as detailed in Section 3.2).

After the policy frameworks were completed, the work began to implement them. CRFAIR supported the first priority to create a Regional Food and Agriculture Task Force (RFATF). CRFAIR was awarded a seat at the table and worked as part of the Food and Farmlands Subcommittee. In the annual work plan for the RFATF that was presented to the CRD Board of Directors, the implementation of the RFFLT was identified as a priority of the RFATF. Considerable work was undertaken to garner demonstration of support (letters) as well as respond to questions and concerns from decision makers around the approach. In particular, CRFAIR provided a document titled *Regional Food and Farmland Trust: Background Report* responding to key questions and concerns that the CRD Board Directors brought forward from the Planning and Protective Services Committee (PPSC) meeting March 22, 2017. This document framed the questions in a larger context, synthesizing both qualitative and quantitative research and experimental models. The document was in no way intended to be regarded as a definitive guide in determining the framework of the RFFLT, but instead provide detailed information to the RFATF. This in turn enabled them to respond in a timely manner to the CRD Board of Directors. The document submitted from the RFATF to the PPSC titled

*Regional Food and Farmland Trust Research and Responses to PPSC Questions and Comments*<sup>47</sup> and can be viewed online.

Creating this report, along with amassing letters of support and working with the local agricultural advisories contributed to building the CRD Board of Directors support in moving forward the approach. They approved \$30,000 investment in the development of a business case and model for models for land access and the Food and Farmland Trust which is currently underway.

## **Challenges & Strengths**

Advancing a policy such as a local government food and farmland trust is a major endeavor. There are many actors and a public and political process that are influenced by things both known and unknown. The perspective that farming sits squarely, and solely, in the hands of the private sector with the market dictating the success or failures of farming models and land use has been pervasive. Values are shifting around the role of the public sector in long term planning and support for local food systems resulting in tension between these varying viewpoints. This friction greatly impacts the way policy makers view their role and the role of local government in this realm.

Furthermore, in this current sociocultural and political moment, there is a groundswell for deeper commitment to reconciliation with First Nations and Indigenous peoples. This entails Indigenizing the food system discourse to nurture dialogue that is broadening the scope of food systems analysis and shifting the paradigm towards a more equitable and sustainable food system. The consideration of food provisioning to affirm Indigenous gathering, hunting, and fishing strategies in the forests, fields and waterways and expand definitions of land use beyond “production farming” is adding a much-needed decolonizing dimension to the process.

### **A. Challenges**

In actualizing this project there were significant challenges working with multi-stakeholder processes and adapting to the pace of process and workflow. With some enthusiastic champions in and across municipalities as well as others reluctant to engage in any way, having clear messaging, and relationship building strategies proved critical. There was concern over the timeline of enthusiastic municipal representatives who chose to test the Board early. This can be important to move policy proposals forward, and it can also have the opposite impact. It is imperative to thoroughly consider who the designated champion will be to move forward a specific proposal and their ability to build the necessary support. From our perspective, it may indeed prove critical to have a moderate and measured voice to gain consensus on advancing a directive. CRFAIR experienced an interesting dynamic where strong champions brought a proposal forward outside of the Regional Food and Agriculture Task Force process. This early test demonstrated that there was more work to do to convince decision makers that this was the right approach. Working to build broad consensus through a careful process was vital to gaining support. More work is still needed in this area.

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<sup>47</sup> The report can be viewed downloaded from the following link: <https://bit.ly/2JbfwVb>

## **B. Strengths**

Having a good read of the environment, building support, taking incremental steps while working at the long game all takes time, relationships, consistency and persistence. A key to increasing the chances of success that we can point to at this stage in the process is the importance of building support for the initiative and commitment from a range of stakeholders involved. The groundwork of community education, presentations and dialogue helped to create momentum and support for the initiatives. Having credible research and expertise was key. With this groundwork in place, we were able to respond, present or provide information quickly as opportunities arose knowing we had champions at the table. This is evidenced through the work with the District of Saanich in particular. The District of Saanich Planning Staff would not have advanced and undertaken this work on their own. The groundwork of community engagement built significant support, as well as developed an educated municipal planning staff and Council. This work created a significant turnaround from our introduction of the concept with Saanich three years ago that was met with lukewarm interest to gaining unanimous support for the initiative with the Mayor and Council in fall 2017. Persistence and gaining credibility through the work really paid off.

Community partner relationships have also allowed us to seize opportunity and move the work forward on the ground, beyond the policy realm. This includes ongoing work to launch pilot inclusion sites through:

- mobilizing research towards the use of public lands for food production in the CRD identifying key pilot sites
- developing assessment tools to determine site suitability
- initiating dialogue with key municipal, community, academic stakeholders to develop partnerships and plans for pilot sites for inclusion in the RFFLT
- securing a pilot site for inclusion, undertaking a community visioning process, developing a plan, as well as establishing a Food and Agriculture Fund to support long term development.

## **C. Sharing what we learned:**

Over the course of the project there were significant opportunities to share what we were learning. The main ways that we shared learning were:

- one on one meetings with key stakeholders
- meetings with planning staff at the CRD and municipalities
- meetings with Administrative Staff and elected officials of local governments
- dissemination of our reports through various stakeholder networks and list serves
- presentations to stakeholder groups including the PAAC and the RFATF.

Additionally, CRFAIR was able to do a number of workshops and sessions with key interested parties:

- 2017 | BC Food Systems Network Conference
- 2017 | Good Food Network Summit
- 2018 | Tour of the Planning Institute of BC 2018.

We also worked consistently to share and dialogue with groups and organizations working towards similar goals including:

- Farmlands Trust (Greater Victoria) Society
- Haliburton Community Organic Farm Society



- Salt Spring Farmland Trust
- Squamish Food Policy Council
- Vancouver Food Policy Council

#### ***D. Intersect with Supportive and Interconnected Provincial Framework***

An ongoing commitment to working in collaboration has also seen continued growth with the Foodlands Cooperative of BC. Going back to CRFAIR’s 2014/2015 research conducted with FarmFolk CityFolk and UBC Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, each organization decided to focus on distinct but complementary strategies for holding farm and foodlands. FarmFolk CityFolk incubated and stewarded the formalization of the Foodlands Cooperative as a provincial, non-governmental, community-based land trust. The Foodlands Cooperative of BC is a registered society founded in 2017 with the mission to secure and hold land in trust and promote the protection and utilization of food providing lands across BC.

The Purposes of the Foodlands Cooperative of BC are:

- To secure, protect and steward land that is to be used for the promotion of sustainable agriculture and local food provisioning for the benefit of communities in British Columbia, while recognizing, respecting and including indigenous food systems;
- To advance education by supporting public workshops, training, and mentoring programs related to sustainable agriculture and local food provisioning for the benefit of communities in British Columbia.

Foodlands Cooperative of BC operates through holding land, making it available for community group to manage and further seeing it made available for food provisioning. Foodlands is positioned to be a strong ally in alternative strategies for land protection and access.

In looking ahead to next steps, CRFAIR will continue dialogue with Foodlands to explore how they might support municipal governments who want to hold land and the type of resources that can be shared and developed in partnership.

#### **Key Learnings & Considerations for Implementing a RFFLT**

As mentioned in Section 3.1.3D, a feasibility study is underway to develop the business case and proposed model for a CRD “land banking model”. A cost benefit analysis of a Regional Food and Farmland Trust (RFFLT) as the vehicle for the CRD to provide access to land will be analyzed and a resulting preferred model recommended. This model will initially look at land that is already owned by local governments but be able to consider additional gifts and purchases of land over time. The research and information undertaken by this project will be considered as a key body of work contributing to the analysis. Below is a summary of what has been brought forward for consideration through our research on models and through consultation and dialogue with experts and stakeholders.

Recommendations have captured the need for

- a regional (CRD) approach
- diversified strategy for land acquisition and *start* with existing public lands
- diversified strategy for funding
- clear governance structure and development of strategic plan
- partnership with non-governmental organization(s)

- building on proven models
- including diverse land use/food activities
- exploring partnerships with First Nations governments and communities to determine how land access needs and food activities in their communities can be co-created/integrated in RFFLT process.<sup>48</sup>

There are four essential elements for a RFFLT that have emerged from CRAIR’s research and consultation processes which are detailed below.

- Governance & Land Holding Structure
- Means Of Financing
- Means Of Land Acquisition
- Means Of Making Land Available

Figure 2 visually presents the relationship of the four areas to be considered. As specific nuances of each area and subtopic have been explored previously in the 2015 *Findings Report*, what follows is a brief recap and illustration of its potential for a model at this time.

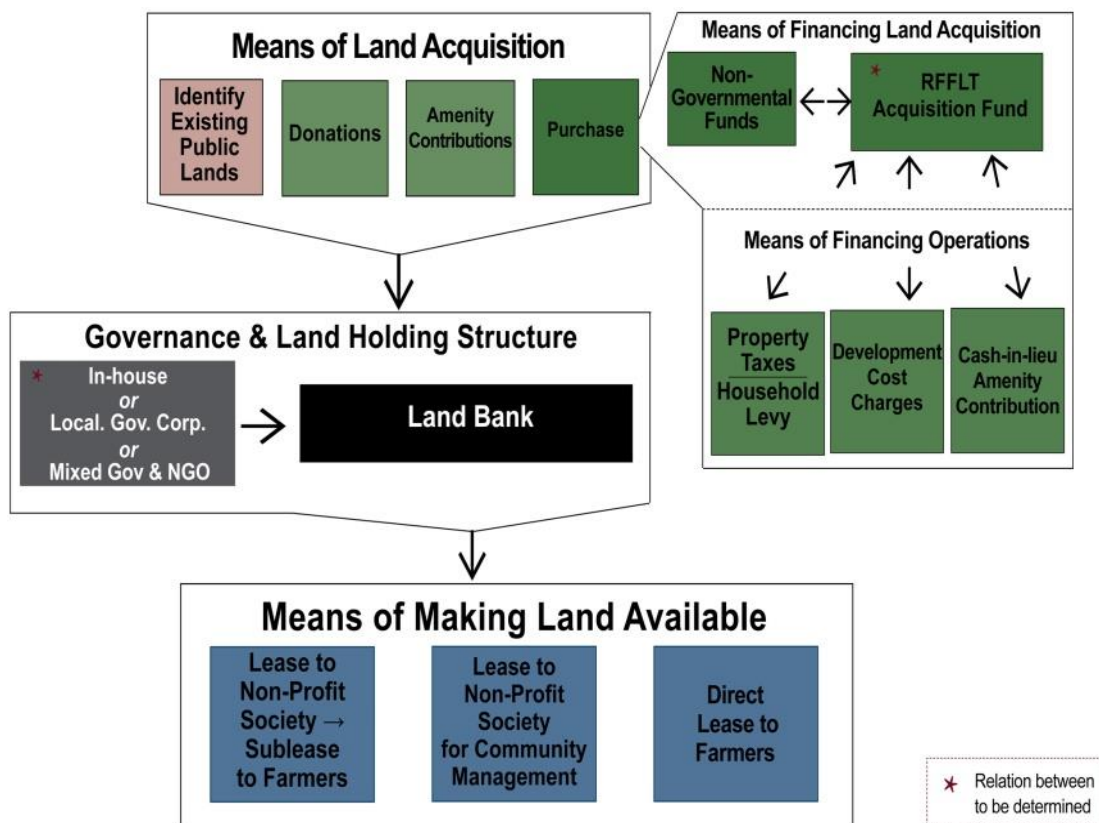


Figure 2: RFFLT Overview

<sup>48</sup> CRAIR. (2015). [Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report](#). P34-35.

## **A. Governance & Land Holding Structure**

### **Key Considerations:**

There is strength and weakness in each land holding structure. Whichever is further explored it is necessary for community stakeholder oversight to be integrated into the governance structure and the development of a strategic vision.<sup>49</sup> Stakeholder oversight can be achieved through arrangements such as advisory panels, advisory boards, or as board members of a subsidiary corporation.

### **Models to consider:**

- I. **In-house:** *Example:* CRD Parks & Environmental Services Department and **Land Acquisition Fund**. Department staff is responsible to oversee land acquisition, develop management plans, conduct assessment and consult with partners on parkland management. Acts in accordance with CRD Board Strategic Plan that could include a volunteer Citizen Advisory Panel to provide input.
- II. **Local Government Corporation (LGC):** *Example:* **The Capital Regional Housing Corporation** (CRHC) and **Regional Housing Trust Fund** (RHTF). The Corporation is owned by the CRD, and is governed by a Board of Directors of government and community directors, and is a non-profit provider developing and managing affordable housing. The RHTF is managed distinct from entity by government commission<sup>50</sup> and advisory committee.<sup>51</sup>
- III. **Mixed Government and NGO:** *Example:* **Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society** (SSIFLTS); **Burgoyne Valley Community Farm**. The SSIFLTS is charitable organization, the farm is a 60 acre parcel in the ALR that was purchased by a developer and transferred to the SSIFLTS as an amenity contribution as part of a rezoning application on a property in Fulford Harbour. This could potentials allow for NGO's to 1) access funds to purchase and hold land in trust 2) receive results from local government policies (i.e. Community Amenity Contributions).  
**Suggested Model:** as per the Business Feasibility Study recommendations.

## **B. Means of Financing**

### **Key Considerations:**

The forthcoming feasibility and business plan from the CRD will further ascertain a complete financial analysis; until a model and specifics are confirmed it is difficult to project a financial forecast however, it is essential that a diversified funding strategy is required for sustainability and resiliency. The first stage is recommended to look to utilize existing lands, and pursue private and non profit sector partnerships to leverage resources for management. There are a range of options for land acquisition and financing a RFFLT as it develops.

### **Models to consider:**

- I. **RFFL Acquisition Fund:** This has been articulated in aforementioned local government documentation and could be modelled after the CRD **Land Acquisition Fund** which relies on a household levy and the **Regional Housing Trust Fund** which relies on a levy on participating municipalities in the CRD who in turn raise their contribution through property taxes. Feedback from CRFAIR 2015 consultation was clear a recommendation of a fund specific for farmland is preferred over the expansion of a more general fund (such as the Parks Acquisition Fund. A phased approach in which the RFFL Acquisition Fund is initiated within the municipality of Saanich and/or North Saanich and then expanded to incorporate other municipalities in the CRD is an option,

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<sup>49</sup> CRFAIR. (2015). [Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report](#). P15.

<sup>50</sup> CRD. (2005). [Bylaw No. 3294: A Bylaw Establishing the Regional Housing Trust Fund Commission and Administration of the Fund](#).

<sup>51</sup> CRD. (2005). [Bylaw No. 3296: A Bylaw Establishing the Regional Housing Trust Fund Commission Advisory Committee](#).

Especially now that North Saanich has launched their own fund through the Sandown Process. The RHTF began with 6 participating municipalities and has since expanded to twelve.<sup>52</sup> A farmland trust could similarly begin with selected municipalities and expand over time<sup>53</sup> and has indeed been recommended.<sup>54</sup> In the case of North Saanich, tax contributions from land converted out of the ALR are collected to benefit agriculture.

- II. **Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) and Density Bonus Zoning:** Farmland and/or community food producing lands (rural and urban) should be recognized as a community amenity and that local governments further pursue the acquisition or development of agricultural and food producing lands as amenity contributions provided by developers.<sup>55</sup>
- III. **Emerging Financing Models:** Community Bonds and Community Investment Funds.<sup>56</sup> For further information on community bonds in BC see the report produced by the Community Social Planning Council.<sup>57</sup>
- IV. **Public Fundraising Campaigns/Annual Membership Fees:** Support or “Friends of the RFFLT” campaign,
- V. **Fees for Services:** land access workshops, field agent visits to property etc.
- VI. **Leveraging:** Local government funds can be also used to leverage matching funds from other levels of government, the private sector, and the non-profit sector.
- VII. **Bequest and Donations of Land**

**Suggested model to pursue:**

- All to be considered in tandem

**C. Means of Land Acquisition**

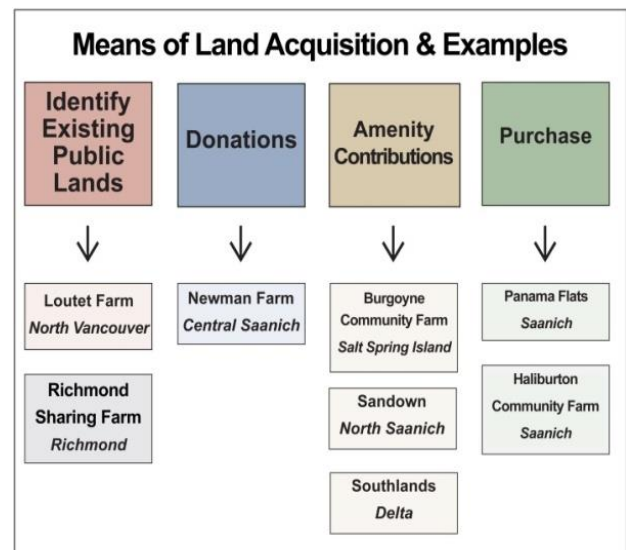
**Key Considerations:**

Start with existing publicly owned land with production capacity to establish a RFFLT framework and develop operations.<sup>58</sup>

**Models to consider:**

Figure 3 presents these means of acquisition with examples from the region and lower mainland that fit with each of the below mentioned categories.

- I. **Identify Existing Lands:** Continue surveying land held by local government or municipality committed (such as Saanich or North Saanich). This can be the continued work of the survey of Saanich Parks- utilizing a side such as Panama Flats as a first case study.
- II. **Donations from Private Land Holder:** a RFFLT will want to be able to accept donations of privately held land. To incentivize farmland donations a recommend that the taxation



**Figure 3: Means of Land Acquisition & Examples**

<sup>52</sup> CRD. [Regional Housing Trust Fund](#).

<sup>53</sup> CRFAIR. (2015). [Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Approach](#).

<sup>54</sup> Dennis, J. (2012). [Emerging Farmer Movements and Alternative Land Access](#)

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.,P83.

<sup>56</sup> See more about the [Vancouver Island Community Investment Co-operative](#) here.

<sup>57</sup> For more info please reference. Amyot, S. (2014). [Community Investment Funds How-to Guide](#).

<sup>58</sup> CRFAIR. (2015). [Exploring Farm and Food Lands Access in the CRD: A Local Government Farmland Trust Approach: Findings Report](#). P36.

benefits afforded to the land owners donating land for conservation purposes be extended to land owners wishing to donate farmland.<sup>59</sup> This form of land acquisition could dovetail with the provincial BC Foodlands Cooperative which is developing mechanism for accepting donations and then having regionally appropriate group manage.

**III. Community Amenity Contributions and Density Bonus Zoning:** as outlined above

**IV. Purchase:** The RFFLT can also consider outright purchase of land. As agricultural land is expensive, purchase could be a complimentary tool to the above listed methods of acquisition. Leveraging funds for purchase would be a necessary component for this form of acquisition and the purchase of land should be considered a means of acquirement to be further developed later in the process.

**Suggested model to pursue:**

- All to be considered in tandem

**D. Means of Making Land Available**

**Key Considerations:**

Research and consultation showed support for an administrative model that includes a partner organization that understand agriculture and food provisioning, and provides or generates the needed resources to manage the sites. Identified as key to successful land tenure negotiations are communication skills (listening, mediation, negotiation), outreach, site evaluation skills, familiarity with the local farm community etc.<sup>60</sup>

**Models to consider:**

Figure 4 presents these options with examples from the region and lower mainland that fit with each of the below mentioned categories.

- I. **Lease to Non-Profit Society** who then subleases to farmers
- II. **Lease to Non-Profit Society** who then manages for community
- III. **Direct Lease To Farmers** who then grow on and manage land

**Suggested model to pursue:**

- Lease to Non-Profit Society who then subleases to farmers

**E. Summary:**

As detailed in Figure 5, a potential model that showed considerable support is as follows.



Figure 4: Means of Making Land Available & Examples

<sup>59</sup> Dennis, J. (2012). *Emerging Farmer Movements and Alternative Land Access Initiatives in British Columbia, Canada*. P83.

<sup>60</sup> Pillen, L. & Hinrichs C. (2014). *Land Link Programs in the Northeast US: A Program Assessment and Lessons Learned*. Pennsylvania State University. P7.

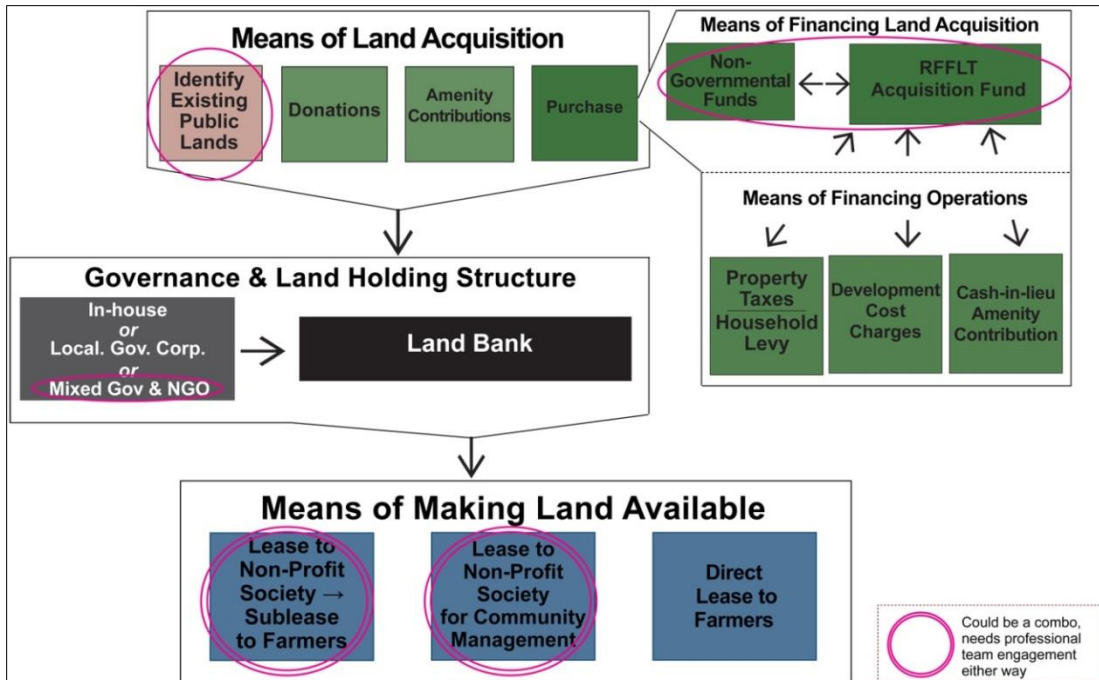


Figure 5: RFFLT Mechanisms Selected

## 4.0 Summary & Conclusions

This progress report has set out to provide insights into the process, from the perspective of community stakeholders, to develop a policy and program for a local government food and farmland trust. We know that there are significant challenges to maintaining and accessing land for food provisioning in our region and anticipate pressure on these lands increasing over time. CRFAIR worked with a wide range of stakeholders over a four year period to develop and move forward responsive policy proposals to this challenge.

The policy directives and implementation approaches are now a matter that is being led by local government. Much was learned through the process and at the end of the day the model that ultimately emerges is not as important as long as there is a land banking solution created. This model will need to be a way to access public lands and offer long term leases to farmers and support food production, and teaching and learning activities. Going with the proposed FFLT model would provide multiple avenues for utilization of appropriate existing lands, and landowners to donate or sell their lands into the land bank, and also for local governments, funders, donors, lending institutions and citizens to generate resources that would transfer land into the land bank and support the development of these lands for sustainable farming, effectively taking these lands out of the speculative market. Decision makers are looking for workable solutions to balance the pressures of population growth, needs for economic development, and for land use planning that supports their long term sustainability objectives. Through learning about workable models we hope to provide decision makers and communities across BC with replicable solutions to these growing challenges.



A municipally supported farmland trust model would be the first of its kind in BC. With the development of the Sandown Community Farm we are seeing great progress in this direction. We hope that it will inspire not only our regional government but others to the potential to leverage local government resources and policy tools as an innovative approach to increase the use of public lands for food production and would act to elevate land use planning for farming and food activities on par with planning for other sustainability priorities like transportation, water, parklands, and affordable housing.

Again it is important to thank everyone who supported and has been involved in this process to date. This approach to supporting food security and sustainability into the future is not an easy path. Bold public policy solutions are needed and will continue to take time to take shape.

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# Appendix 1: RFAS Recommendations

## POLICY FRAMEWORK

### Regional Food & Agriculture Strategy & Policy Directive for Regional Food & Farmland Trust (RFFLT) Development



The Regional Food and Agriculture Strategy (RFAS) provides an in-depth exploration of regional food and agriculture objectives, issues and opportunities to guide action. The RFAS also identifies the CRD's role, along with recommendations, associated actions, and resourcing requirements



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Support regional, cross-sector relationships, including a food and agriculture task force.
- 2 Improve the CRD's capacity to address regional food and agriculture issues
- 3 Support regional organic-matter recycling approaches that benefit food and agriculture
- 4 Address chronic drainage issues across the region
- 5 Continue to consider approaches to effectively address existing and emerging regional wildlife and invasive species issues
- 6 Maintain affordability and improve access to irrigation water for food and agricultural operations
- 7 Encourage a place-based regional food culture by building relationships between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities.
- 8 Support Aboriginal food and agriculture-related activities, projects and events.
- 9 Increase access to agricultural and food lands.
- 10 Support regional economic development strategies for food and agriculture

## ASSOCIATED ACTIONS



Initiate a process to establish a regional food and farmland trust.



## DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Farmland trust participation and support from local municipalities, community groups, financial institutions and investors, government agencies and First Nations.



## Appendix 2: District of North Saanich WCAS Action 1

### MUNICIPAL ALIGNMENT

## District of North Saanich Whole Community Agricultural Strategy



The 2016 Update to the Whole Community Agricultural Strategy” (WCAS) provides a status report on the set of 2011 WCAS actions and details an updated set of municipal and community actions to be implemented. Of the Top Five Priority WCAS Actions, Priority 1 details protecting and enhancing land access through in three separate actions.

### 1. Municipal Actions to Support the Agricultural Land Base

ACTION	Applies to		Implementation Considerations	DNS Role
	Trad.	Non-Trad.		
<b>1.1 Protect working agricultural lands and enhance public agricultural holdings in the region with a farm land fund and acquisition program (SP 5).</b>	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to advocate for the establishment of a farm land trust and acquisition program at the regional level.</li> <li>Review and advance suitable models outlined in the CRFAIR report.</li> <li>Continue to increase agricultural holdings and increase food activities on existing public holdings in North Saanich.</li> </ul> <p><i>Potential Partners: CRD, other municipalities, CRFAIR, UBCM, University of Victoria Faculty of Law, Ministry of Agriculture</i></p>	DNS Program or Policy  Advocacy to CRD
<b>1.4 Pursue the implementation of the Sandown Agreement (SP 24). Consider and determine the future use of Sandown (SP 23).</b>	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and incorporate public input provided to DNS in 2015 CRFAIR report “<i>Vision Sandown: What We Heard - Community Input on the Development of Sandown</i>” to develop and begin implementation of a plan for the future use of Sandown.</li> <li>Based on public input, develop a land use plan, financial plan and implementation timeline for the development of Sandown.</li> <li>Continue to partner with community to develop and implement future uses of Sandown.</li> </ul> <p><i>Potential Partners: Friends of Sandown, CRFAIR, University of Victoria</i></p>	DNS program or policy  Provide support and/or resources to community
<b>1.8 Inventory all public lands in DNS for food growing potential.</b>	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue food growing activities on public lands already held by the District. Consider opportunities to integrate food production within public parks.</li> </ul>	DNS program or policy



## Appendix 3: District of Saanich AFSP Theme 6

### MUNICIPAL ALIGNMENT

## District of Saanich Agriculture & Food Security Plan



The Agriculture and Food Security Plan (AFSP) provides the District with a coordinated approach for supporting agriculture and improving food security in Saanich over the next 10-15 years. Theme 6 is directly related to land access in the region.

### Objective 6D

#### Support Affordable Access to Farmland

A total of 73% of respondents to the survey noted the high cost of farmland and capital inputs as a significant challenge in Saanich. Farmers responded overwhelmingly through the survey and one-on-one interviews that the cost of land, taxes, and inputs are some of the top concerns facing agriculture in the area. Over 200 young people attended a Farmer2Farmer workshop in the Spring of 2016, indicating that they are eager to farm, but lack the land they need. With appropriate policies and community initiatives in place, some of the burden of accessing land can be alleviated.

#### Actions

6.9 Increase the potential for farmers to access land by working with non-government organizations that help link new and existing farmers and land owners. Work with these organizations to provide:

- Access to information on alternative farm business development and land tenure models (e.g. stratas, co-ops, corporations); and
- A template for land sharing or leasing agreements for the purpose of farming.

6.10 Support the CRD in efforts to establish a regional food and farmland trust.



*Census Canada Data 2016*

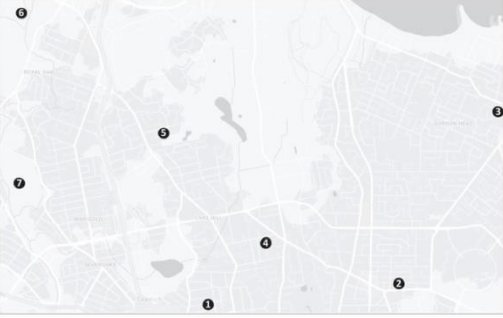


# Appendix 4: ES480 Info Shared with Saanich Parks

### Sites Assessed & Their Ratings

**Sites**

1. Tolmie Park	5. Beckwith Park
2. Horner Park	6. Quick's Bottom Park
3. Houlihan Park	7. Panama Flats
4. Reynolds Park	



Park	Overall Impression
Tolmie Park	1.0*
Horner Park	4.5
Reynolds Park	1.0
Houlihan Park	4.5
Beckwith Park	4.0
Quick's Bottom Park	3.0
Panama Flats	5.0

\* rated from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)

### Site Assessment Criteria

<p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size</li> <li>Zoning</li> <li>Percentage of open land</li> <li>Soil texture</li> <li>Sun exposure</li> <li>Land surface</li> <li>Land orientation</li> <li>Slope</li> <li>Tree canopy</li> <li>Elevation</li> <li>Wind exposure</li> <li>Vegetation (degree of invasive weeds)</li> <li>Presence of animals (dogs, deer)</li> <li>Proximity to busy road</li> <li>Presence of ecologically sensitive area (Gary Oak, riparian zone)</li> </ul> <p><b>Existing Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water spigots</li> <li>Water line to property</li> <li>Potable water</li> <li>Fencing</li> <li>Storage shed</li> <li>Covered area</li> <li>Washrooms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accessibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle access for loading/unloading</li> <li>Parking for vehicles</li> <li>Existing paths</li> <li>Bike rack</li> <li>Bus accessibility</li> <li>Gates vehicle could enter</li> <li>Gates pedestrian could enter</li> <li>Cell phone reception</li> </ul> <p><b>Social</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourhood demographic</li> <li>Proximity to community hub and/or prominent location</li> <li>Degree of use/busyness</li> <li>Existing programming at location</li> <li>Privacy from neighbours</li> </ul>
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### ES480 & CRFAIR Land Inventory Project

CRFAIR & Farmland Access

- CRFAIR is working with municipalities in the CRD (with a focus on the Saanich) to support development of CRD's Regional Food & Farmland Trust (RFFLT) as stated in Recommendation 9 of the *Regional Food & Agriculture Strategy*

Why is it important?

- Predicted population growth in region (30% increase from 2010-2036) means increasing land use competition
- A RFFLT can secure a land base for food growing and teaching, training and learning; all which support growing farmers
- In the next decade we will lose over 50% of our current farmers to retirement, we need to support new entrants by providing access to training and land today

Goal of project

- Develop a framework for assessment of Saanich held land with food production possibility
- Assess, identify and log land categorizing according to potential, location, site assessment as it is identified, document the process as a case study or model

Project Overview

- Identify initial list of sites to apply criteria to
- Set suitability framework & assessment tools
- Visit and assess sites
- Create final document with defined criteria, applications to site, legal description, photo, GIS markers, zoning, initial rating, qualifications

#### Regional Food and Farmland Trust Overview

\* Relation between to be determined

Flow chart of possible land bank and trust mechanisms. Our focus is on \*

### Models, Examples & Resources

- #### 1. Terra Nova Rural Park, Richmond

63 acre park owned by the City of Richmond. The Sharing Farm Society operates a community farm on 4 acres of the parkland and grows food primarily for donation to the Richmond food bank. The land use is managed by the Society and there is a hired farm manager who runs the farming operations and works to integrate the many community volunteers on which this farm relies. The site also has a community garden offering garden boxes to individual community members and runs a diversity of workshops and events on the land for the public. The farm is also host to the Richmond Farm School run by Kwantlen Polytechnic University which is a 10 month hands on training program for entry into agriculture. The Sharing Farm is an example of agricultural activities on public land directly run by a non-profit society and an example of a farm on public park land providing a diversity of public benefits to the community.
- #### 2. Loutet Park Urban Agriculture Project, City of North Vancouver

Loutet Farm was established on existing municipal parkland owned by the City of North Vancouver. The project was initiated in partnership with the UBC Faculty of Landscape Architecture, the City of North Vancouver and the North Shore Neighbourhood House's Edible Garden Project. The project is managed by the Edible Garden Project, a non-profit society, and the urban farm is structured as a social enterprise that aims to be revenue neutral. Loutet Farm generates employment, local food availability, provides educational opportunities for youth, volunteer opportunities, and community events, thereby providing a diversity of public benefits to the surrounding community
- #### 3. Colony Farm Regional Park, Coquitlam

Colony Farm was developed through a community planning process that looked to balance needs for habitat conservation along with goals for local food security and sustainability. It was originally a Federal Government Experimental Farm that is now owned by Metro Vancouver. The land is used primarily for community gardens, wildlife habitat, trails and recreational use.