

**Stewardship Pemberton Society
& the Village of Pemberton
Agricultural Parks
Master Plan
CONSULTATION PLAN**



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November 27, 2015

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Purpose & Goals

The purpose of this Consultation Plan is to guide the work of Stewardship Pemberton Society and the Village of Pemberton in conjunction with Upland Agricultural Consulting Ltd. as it engages the community and seeks feedback for use in the development of the Pemberton Agricultural Parks Master Plan.

The three broad goals of the Consultation Plan are to:

- Communicate to raise awareness about the Pemberton Agricultural Parks Master Plan, to spark interest and discussion on potential issues and priorities, and inform about opportunities to participate;
- Gather input and feedback through a variety of means, including invited stakeholder group meetings, one-on-one meetings and a Public Open House;
- Present this input and feedback in a manner that informs the development of the Pemberton Agricultural Parks Master Plan.

Description of the Project

Stewardship Pemberton Society (SPS), in partnership with the Village of Pemberton, is developing a Pemberton Agricultural Parks Master Plan for four (4) parcels of land totaling twenty-seven (27) hectares (approximately sixty-seven (67) acres) tenured by the Village of Pemberton that have been identified as having potential for community supported agricultural purposes¹. The parcels are identified in **Appendix A** as:

- **Site A** - Airport lands (fields)
- **Sites B & C** - Lots 8 & 20 at the end of Harrow Road
- **Site D** - Lot 13 (immediately adjacent to Signal Hill Elementary School and near the potential future Tiyata Community Garden location)

Two of the four (4) parcels of land are located within the municipal boundaries of Pemberton (Sites A & D), and two (2) are outside municipal boundaries in SLRD Electoral Area C (Parcels B & C). See **Appendix A** for a Location Map of the properties.

Three (3) of the four (4) properties are within the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) (Parcels A, B, & C). All are in various states of non-productive agricultural use. All four (4) properties require further land use evaluation and a feasibility analysis before agricultural opportunities can be identified and implemented. While the parcels have excellent potential, each parcel is constrained by different environmental and social considerations:

¹ Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is defined as “an alternative, locally based economic model of agriculture and food distribution”. A CSA also refers to a particular network or association of individuals who have pledged to support one or more local farms, with growers and consumers sharing the risks and benefits of food production. CSA members or subscribers pay at the onset of the growing season for a share of the anticipated harvest; once harvesting begins, they periodically receive shares of produce. In addition to produce, some CSA services may include additional farm products like honey, eggs, dairy, and meat.

- *Site A* (Airport fields) is adjacent to the landing strip at the Pemberton Airport.
- *Site B and C* (Lots 8 & 20) are adjacent parcels located in the rural-urban interface between the SLRD and the VOP. They are located partially on or near a historic dump site, in proximity to a wetland, and provide public access to the Lillooet River.
- *Site D* (Lot 13) is located under the BC Hydro power lines immediately adjacent to Signal Hill Elementary School.

Further investigation and community consultation is required to determine the best possible use of these municipal and interface lands to determine what types of agricultural uses the lands will support given their environmental and social considerations.

The Pemberton Agricultural Lands Master Plan will be produced after the following components have been completed:

- Site and Soils Assessment
- Assessment of Future Agricultural Potential and Value of the Site(s)
- Consultation with Key Stakeholders and the Broader Community

Implementation would most likely require the identification of new potential sources of funding.

Background

The Village of Pemberton began to initiate the concept of community agricultural parkland in 2012 and pursued tenure over two Crown Land lots in the ALR located just outside the Village Boundaries near the Glen neighbourhood. In 2012, Village Staff presented a report to request Council's support and resolution endorsing Crown Land Tenure applications in order for the Village to pursue various park land acquisitions including Lots 8 and 20 Plan 883 for the purpose of community recreation. Upon receiving Council's support, Village staff successfully made Crown Land Tenure Applications in 2013 for Lots 8 and 20 for a Community Agricultural Park & Trails Network. On May 20, 2014 the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MFLRNO) approved a License of Occupation by the Village on Lots 8 and 20.

In addition to the tenures above, the Village recognized it had held tenure over Crown Lands referred to as Lot 13, DL 2013, LLD, Plan 7619 since 1996. This Tenure was for parking purposes and would require approval by Sea to Sky School District No. 48 as legal access to Lot 13 is currently through Lot 10 (Signal Hill Elementary School). On July 22, 2014 staff presented a report to the Committee of the Whole in which it was recommended that staff explore, with the community, certain opportunities to farm the municipal tenured properties known as Sites A, B, C and D. The intent was to establish a possible course of action to pursue agricultural activities on these properties in response to community needs. At that time, Staff received support from Village Council to initiate a planning process in partnership with community interest groups for the development of various Village controlled properties for agricultural purposes.

As a result of this direction, on August 26, 2014 Village Staff held a brainstorming session with interested community members for ideas and direction related to community supported agricultural park planning. There were seven (7) adults and four (4) children attending, and despite the small numbers, meaningful input was provided.

Some of the recognized opportunities that came out of the initial brainstorming event included:

- A large market/community garden next to Signal Hill Elementary School, providing fresh vegetables for school food programs and serving as an outdoor classroom
- A Farm to School project next to Signal Hill Elementary based on successful projects in other communities
- Incorporation of a native pollinator garden or pollinator corridor throughout the parcels and beyond
- A community supported agriculture system consisting of a fruit orchard, honey bees, and chickens that serves as an example for maintaining food sustainability while co-existing with bears
- A means to contribute to local food security through focusing on foods not widely available locally
- An equestrian centre/riding arena
- A permaculture demonstration site with educational opportunities

A staff report following the brainstorming session included recommended next steps in planning a course of action for the agricultural use of various Village tenured properties, which would entail:

1. Engaging existing community organizations
2. Recognizing expertise needed
3. Identifying organization structure
4. Developing a work program
5. Identifying funding sources

This direction was supported by Council at the Regular Council Meeting No. 1375, held September 16, 2014. However, due to limited staffing and resources, activity on this initiative did not proceed in 2014 and was moved to the 2015 work plan and budget discussions.

In January 2015, Stewardship Pemberton Society approached the Village of Pemberton and offered assistance to seek additional funding and leverage the funds allocated to the Agricultural Park lands project (as proposed in the 2015 budget by the Village) to increase the overall scope of the project. On February 3, 2015, Council supported the inclusion of the establishment of a Village of Pemberton Agricultural Parks Plan in the 2015 Strategic Plan and Budget deliberations; supported partnering with Stewardship Pemberton to source out funding for the development of an Agricultural Parks Master Plan; and directed staff to work with Stewardship Pemberton Society on developing applications for appropriate grant programs and report back if applications have been approved.

Stewardship Pemberton Society successfully obtained a grant of \$10,000 from the Community Foundation of Whistler (CFOW) and a grant of \$20,000 from the B.C. Real Estate Foundation to support the development of an Agricultural Parks Master Plan. The Village of Pemberton has also committed to contributing \$5,000 in cash and \$2,500 in kind to this project. Following the success of the grant writing stage, Stewardship Pemberton secured a contract with Ione Smith of Upland Agricultural Consulting in July 2015. Upland conducted a Soils Analysis in September 2015 to assist in determining the best uses for the parcels.

Village Staff reported back to the Committee of the Whole on October 6, 2015 and included a copy of Draft Report 1 - Soil Technical Report submitted by Upland Agricultural Consulting for their information. A finalized version of this report is attached as **Appendix B**. In November 2015, the Village and Stewardship Pemberton Society received draft Report 2 - Pemberton Agricultural Parks – Assessment on Suitable Agricultural Activities, submitted by Upland Agricultural Consulting Ltd. This report is attached as **Appendix C**.

Rationale

Food security and sustainability, community engagement and social activism are all driving forces for this project. Climate change and rising food costs have in part led to an increased and growing interest in food security in the Sea to Sky Area.

Several higher level plans support the concept of community-based agriculture in the Pemberton Valley:

- The Village of Pemberton Official Community Plan includes goals around the promotion of agriculture;
- The results of the Electoral Area C Agricultural Area Plan supported community agricultural opportunities in the Pemberton Valley;
- The Report of the SLRD Energy Resilience Task Force recognized the need to accommodate the interest of young entrepreneurs wanting to get into farming but finding it difficult due to the high price of farmland in the Pemberton Valley;
- The SLRD Regional Growth Strategy recognized the importance of protecting farmland for agricultural production, recognizing the existing and potential regional provincial and international markets for locally produced agricultural products.

This project can be a catalyst for community change. It can serve as a healthy outlet for youth: a source of inspiration for teachers and community members. It will add to Pemberton's already diverse and dynamic agricultural-tourism appeal, further validate Pemberton as a destination, and have a positive social and environmental impact through eating local foods and educational outreach. Community Agricultural Park land could provide many families in Pemberton who cannot afford to own agricultural land an opportunity to be involved as part of a collective group of citizens with common goals.

Some of the larger benefits that can be attained by this project include:

- Demonstration of community collaboration to reach common goals;

- Showcase progressive partnerships between local government and non-government organizations;
- Demonstration of how high level planning (Village of Pemberton Official Community Plan and Electoral Area C Agricultural Area Plan) guide community visions to create and implement real tangible projects;
- The project process can serve as an example for other communities to follow as a fiscally responsible social enterprise providing local employment opportunities based on sound agricultural practices.

However, it is recognized that the Village faces a unique combination of challenges with respect to the development of an Agricultural Parks Master Plan. These include the following:

- Potential competing land use desires from other community organizations seeking Village tenured Crown Land (i.e., Equestrian uses, other community uses such as the Men's Shed);
- Potential competing land use desires from development interests who have requested the use of Lot 13 as an access to a development project (Portage Landing) in exchange for agreed-upon community amenities;
- Potential competing land use considerations with respect to acceptable and appropriate uses of Airport lands.

Despite the recognized challenges, the Village of Pemberton supports Stewardship Pemberton Society's mandate to contribute to sustainable agricultural practices, local and regional food security, as well as community driven initiatives that have benefit the wider community.

These opportunities and challenges need to be addressed in such a way that will contribute to Stewardship Pemberton's Society's and the Village's mutual goals. Ultimately, the Agricultural Parks Master Plan Update will be successful if it clearly articulates a vision that enables decision makers to address the following unique circumstances:

1. To develop and manage the use of Agricultural Parkland in a manner that it is consistent with environmental and community values, as reflected in the principles of the Village of Pemberton Official Community Plan;
2. To address conflicts and liability issues within the Parklands through responsible policy direction and maintenance to ensure the long-term viability of these important community assets.

Consultation Scope

Initial outreach on the development of agricultural parkland took place in August of 2014. This included an open brain-storming meeting with interested individuals. As a result of this meeting, Village staff prepared a report to Council recommending referrals, community organization engagement, and consultation with Village Staff.

The present consultation efforts will seek to inform residents, affected agencies, adjacent local governments (SLRD and Lil'wat Nation), and community interest groups that the process is

underway, and will focus on broader engagement with the above-listed in order to confirm information gathered by the consultant on best uses for the four parcels is relevant. This process will also enable the project team to seek comments from residents that were not involved earlier to incorporate their desires/concerns.

A substantive emphasis of the Agricultural Parks Master Plan will be shaped in accordance with the issues and priorities identified via the consultant and through public consultation activities. Throughout this process, Village Staff will provide project oversight for the update and Council will be kept regularly apprised of the results of the consultation stages.

Consultation Timeline & Stages

The Agricultural Parks Master Plan process was launched in the Spring of 2015 with an anticipated conclusion in the Spring of 2016. Within this time-line there will be various opportunities for public input on the plan. Consultation has been divided into five (5) stages:

Stage 1 includes preparation of funding requests and selection of a Consultant. These activities occurred over the months of March to July, 2015.

Stage 2 includes soil sampling and the development of technical reports by the Consultant. These activities occurred over the months of August to November 2015.

Stage 3 includes the development of the Consultation Plan for the Agricultural Parks Master Plan update, identification of Key Stakeholders, presentation of Consultation Plan to the Village Committee of the Whole (December 1 2015), and following this, meetings with Key Stakeholders (SLRD, Active Farmers, Equestrian Interest Groups, Airport Users Group, among others) beginning in the second week of December 2015, and the initiation of dialogue with the Lil'wat Nation about their preferences regarding involvement in the Agricultural Parks Master Planning process. These activities will occur over the months of December, 2015 and January, 2016.

Stage 4 includes assembling information and holding a public open house to present options to the general public, once all the information is gathered through preliminary consultation and technical analysis. The public open house will offer the opportunity for feedback via feedback forms to fill out on-site or hand in at a later date. This open house is anticipated to occur in February, 2016 (details to be announced). These activities will occur over the months of January and February, 2016.

Stage 5 will occur once the consultation results are analyzed and a draft plan is prepared. This stage includes sharing of the Draft Agricultural Parks Master Plan with key stakeholders and affected agencies via a referral process, presentation of the Draft to Committee of the Whole, and posting the Draft on the Village website with a means to collect comments before contemplating adoption of the Plan. The schedule of timing of Agricultural Parks Master Plan Consultation activities is identified in the table below.

Stage	Responsibility	Timing
<u>1 – Initial Stage:</u> Preparation of funding requests to Whistler Environmental Fund, Real Estate Association of BC, SLRD. Confirmation of funds from CFOW and BCREF. Hire consultant.	Stewardship Pemberton takes the lead with the assistance of VoP Planner	March - July, 2015
<u>2 – Data Gathering Stage:</u> Soil Sampling and development of Draft Stage 1 Report.	Consultant	August - September, 2015
<u>3 – Technical Analysis Stage:</u> Completion of Soil Technical Report (Stage 1 Report). Staff Report to CotW on the Agricultural Parks, presentation of Terms of Reference and Soil Technical Report (Report 1). Development of Draft Stage 2 Report: Pemberton Agricultural Parks –Assessment of Suitable Agricultural Activities (DRAFT)	Consultant Village Planner prepares Report to COW (RtCOW) Consultant	October 1, 2015 October 6, 2015 November 6, 2015
<u>4 - Consultation Phase:</u> Present Consultation Plan & Draft Stage 2 Report to COW for their Information Information on eNews & Website re: Agricultural Parks Planning Process Series of One-on-one and group meetings with selected stakeholders Public Open House to review concepts and options. Information shared with CotW	Village Planner to prepare RtCOW Village Staff Consultant and Village / SPS Staff (All) All Planner to prepare RtCOW	Dec 1, 2015 Dec 2 – Dec 14, 2015 To begin Dec 9 – 10, 2015 Feb 2016 (TBD) Feb 2016

<u>5 - Final Review and Adoption Stage:</u> public review and referral of the draft to Key Stakeholders and affected agencies Adoption of the Agricultural Parks Master Plan	Village staff to do Email referrals / Website link / RtCOW RtCOW	TBD TBD TBD
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Details of Consultation Methods

Stewardship Pemberton Society and the Village will use the following consultation methods in developing the Agricultural Parks Master Plan Update:

- Dialogue with Lil'wat Nation to explore options for their involvement;
- Key Stakeholders Meetings, engaging representatives of a variety of community organizations and sectors of the populations in the development of the Agricultural Parks Master Plan;
- A public open house designed to involve participants in the review of Agricultural Parks Master Plan options, and the choice of a preferred option;
- Reports to the Committee of Whole at key points in the process;
- Inclusion of input from relevant government agencies (SLRD, ALC, Min of AG, etc.) through referrals.

Lil'wat Nation Consultation

Traditional land use management, including the cultivation of crops, has been a long standing practice for many First Nations. All parcels of lands for the Pemberton Agricultural Parks are located within Lil'wat Traditional Territory. To ensure inclusivity, it is advisable that the leaders of the Lil'wat Nation be formally invited to participate in the Agricultural Parks Master Plan process. The Planner recognizes that effective First Nations consultation may require an initial discussion with Lil'wat Nation to seek their input and explore options for effective involvement of their communities. In general, it would be inadvisable to pre-determine in any great detail what effective consultation with the Lil'wat Nation would look like without first involving the affected First Nations in the design of the plan.

It is recommended that a letter of invitation from Stewardship Pemberton Society and the Village of Pemberton be sent inviting the Lil'wat Nation's participation in the Master Planning Process. Based on Lil'wat Nation's response the consultation plan can be amended accordingly.

Key Stakeholder Meetings

Representatives from key community groups will be invited to group and one-on-one meetings to provide input on the materials developed by Upland Agricultural Consulting Ltd. (Appendices B & C).

The following groups / sectors of the population will be invited to participate:

- ☐ Pemberton Farmers Institute
- ☐ Pemberton Creek Community Garden
- ☐ Pemberton Farmer's Market Equestrian Community PACA/Equi-fest
- ☐ Airport User Group
- ☐ SLRD / Electoral Area C Agricultural Advisory Commission
- ☐ SD48 / Signal Hill Elementary School / Pemberton Secondary School
- ☐ Pemberton Youth Centre
- ☐ Pemberton Seniors Society (Men's Tool Shed)
- ☐ Stewardship Pemberton Society
- ☐ Small/Medium Commercial Market Gardeners - Ice Cap Organics, Bathtub Gardens, Willowcraft Farms, Rootdown Farms, North Arm Farm, Helmer's Organics, Across the Creek Organics, JD Hare Farms, etc.
- ☐ Pemberton Beekeepers Association
- ☐ Conservation Officer Services representative
- ☐ BC Hydro representative
- ☐ Pemberton Valley Trails Association
- ☐ Others, as determined necessary

Project Advisory Group

The following members will together form a Project Advisory Group:

- ☐ Nikki Gilmore, CAO and/or Tim Harris, Manager of Operations & Development Services
- ☐ Lisa Pedrini, Village Planner
- ☐ Dawn Johnson, Executive Director, Stewardship Pemberton
- ☐ Consultant: Ione Smith, Upland Agricultural Consulting, Professional Agrologist

Public Open House

A "Have your Say" public open house is expected to be held at the Pemberton Community Centre (Room B) in the Spring of 2016. This open house will focus on review and discussion of Agricultural Parks Master Plan options. Following presentation of the options, participants will be encouraged to engage in dialogue on the pros and cons of each option. The event will be designed to maximize:

- ☐ understanding of each of the agricultural feasibility options;
- ☐ engagement in discussion of the merits of each option, considering community and environmental priorities; and
- ☐ input on what option is preferred.

In addition, respondents will have opportunities to comment on how preferred options could be modified and strengthened.

Committee of the Whole Meetings

There will be several Committee of the Whole (COW) meetings throughout the planning process, which will allow staff to keep the COW up to date on the process. It is key to maintain ongoing contact with Village Council through update reports to the Committee of the Whole on the status of the process and to obtain their feedback at various stages.

Summary of Consultation Tools

A range of communication tools will be used throughout the Agricultural Parks Master Plan consultation process to inform and engage the general public and interested parties. Informing residents and interested organizations will be important for raising awareness of the update, keeping residents updated on progress; and, informing people about opportunities to provide input and feedback.

The process will rely on the following primary tools for dissemination of information:

- Village of Pemberton electronic newsletter (eNews)
- a dedicated project page on the Village of Pemberton website (<http://www.pemberton.ca/municipal-hall/village-projects/>)
- Information on the Stewardship Pemberton Society's website – Projects Page (<http://www.stewardshippemberton.com/home/projects>)
- Information shared on other websites of willing stakeholders, such as the Pemberton Farmers Institute
- posts on the Village Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/VillageOfPemberton> and Stewardship Pemberton's One Mile Lake Nature Centre's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/One-Mile-Lake-Nature-Center>)
- Reports to Council/Committee of the Whole posted on the Village website

Two additional communication tools will be used to support consultation events: display materials, and advertising in local media to inform about the Public Open House event.

Consultation Budget

Method	Details	Estimated Cost
Website/eNews	Creation of copy, update website, send out eNews	Village Staff time
Meetings	Send invitations by email, staff facilitation, venue: Village White Bldg.	Staff & Consultant
"Have Your Say" Public Open House	Advertising in local paper (one (1) half (1/2) page colour ad one (1) week prior to event Rent Room B, PCC for 2.5 hours at \$29.87 hr + refreshments or use White Building (no additional cost)	Cost Covered by Grant Funding raised by SPS Cost Covered by Grant Funding raised by SPS or n/a
Referrals	Send out referrals to appropriate government agencies	Staff Time
TOTAL		All expenses Covered by Grant Funding from VoP, BC REA, and WB Foundation

Appendices to follow.