

Association for the Protection of Rural Metchosin,
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January 2, 2020

Mayor and Council
District of Metchosin
4450 Happy Valley Road
Metchosin, BC V9C 3Z3

Re: Royal Beach and Latoria South Developments – Impact to Metchosin

Two additional development phases for the Royal Bay area are now before the City of Colwood: the Royal Beach and Latoria South projects. Approval of these developments will bring unprecedented population growth and commercial expansion to south Colwood. The extreme density of these projects will also place intensive urbanization right up to Metchosin borders and will create significant impacts with respect to community resources and infrastructure, in addition to environmental, socio-economic and cultural consequences.

Statistics from Development proposals before the City of Colwood.

(see also attached SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES)

The Royal Beach (RB) and Latoria South (LS) proposals include:

- Over 2,600 apartment dwelling spaces (RB; 1850; LS: 837 (est.))
- Over 1,500 single family and townhomes (RB: 650; LS: 940)
- Over 1 million square feet (93,375 m²) of commercial/non-residential,
 - RB: 868,367 sq.ft. (80,674 m²)
 - LS: 136,701 sq.ft. (12,700 m²)
 - Buildings up to 12-storeys are envisioned for the RB area

Recommended action

The Association for the Protection of Rural Metchosin (APRM) requests the District of Metchosin to provide, for the benefit of Metchosin residents, a detailed assessment of the Royal Beach and Latoria South Bay development proposals in relation to the potential impacts that Metchosin will experience from the significant population and commercial growth envisioned.

The APRM sees three, but not limited to, major impacts to our community that should be reviewed and defined.

Transportation

This level of projected population growth will bring significantly higher volumes of vehicular traffic to the area (conservatively estimated at 9,970 more vehicles – source CRD) and in addition to that already introduced by Phase I. Congestion is therefore expected on roadways that many Metchosin residents and through traffic use daily: Metchosin/William Head Roads, Latoria Road, Veterans' Memorial Parkway and Ocean Boulevard. We understand that transportation studies are being conducted, but have little confidence that Metchosin's interests are being represented in that process.

Parkland

The proposed green/recreational space in particular with respect to Royal Beach is grossly inadequate for the projected population. As a consequence, thousands of additional people will, by default, utilize the parks located within Metchosin's borders. Adverse impacts may be expected to the natural flora/fauna, trail erosion, as well as the lack of adequate parking, and overall sanitation (i.e. wash and bathroom facilities). While the CRD has authority over the key parkland assets (Witty's Lagoon, Matheson Lake, etc.), these are nevertheless within our municipal borders and vital to Metchosin's rural character. There is no indication that impacts to CRD parks, as well as Metchosin's, are being considered or that a substantial contribution by the developer be made to the CRD for park acquisition and maintenance.

Royal Bay foreshore and hydrology

Both developments threaten change to the drainage patterns of the area's sand/gravel geostrata. Previous studies by the CRD have clearly indicated the interconnection and risk to tidal and lagoon areas, in particular Esquimalt and Albert Head Lagoons, which will be disrupted by this development. Stability of bluffs and maintenance of littoral drift are also important to the spits and lagoons.

Additionally, we ask Council to request that Colwood provide a formal channel for receipt of such studies that will be conducted for these developments, i.e., provision of adequate parkland, traffic impacts and resolution, environmental studies, commercial space absorption.

On-going pressure to Metchosin's rural character

Our concerns over the continuing development of Royal Bay arise within the context of the on-going pressure and disregard for the maintenance of Metchosin's rural character, particularly from the high-density development in adjacent municipalities as well as proposals on our own borders that clearly threaten our rural and environmental values.

It is highly unlikely that any other development proposal of the magnitude of Royal Bay will come before the District of Metchosin in the next decade. Surely not one that has such potential for significant adverse impacts on all that our community holds dear. The time to act is NOW.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Burgis,
President, APRM
On behalf of APRM Members