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Public gets a look at Bamberton master plan  
Developers: Changes to original plan reflect community concerns

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A new master plan to develop the land around Bamberton was put to the public at an open house last evening at Mill Bay's Brentwood College theatre.

Changes to the original plans include:

- Removal of housing from Southlands and dedication of entire Southlands area as regional park;
- Changes to the housing plan in the Northlands area, west of the Trans-Canada Highway, retaining provisions for a recreation centre, playing fields, Park & Ride and school site;
- Increased land for commercial and eco-industrial land use;
- Provisions for employee housing and having the first phases include affordable housing.

Three Point Properties is involved in a public consultation process as part of the rezoning process through the Cowichan Valley Regional District. Last night's event incorporated public input gathered over previous open houses, said Three Point co-founder, Ross Tennant.

"We've got a revised plan that we hope the community is going to feel positively about," said Tennant in an interview yesterday afternoon.

The start of construction depends on the CVRD review process, said Tennant, "but I would hope that we'll be within a 12-month window."

There has been a strong desire by the community to make sure the Bamberton neighbourhood co-exists with the nearby community of Mill Bay, said Tennant, "so it's not a separate town but a neighbourhood within the region."

People asked for plans to cope with increased traffic over the Malahat, he said.

"The Malahat corridor study was taking place while (the public consultation process) was happening so we were interested in transportation alternatives, ferry routes, bus routes and light rail.

"The public is interested in how sewage would be handled and where fresh water would be coming from," said Tennant.

He said he's "really pleased" people have come out to share their thoughts on the proposed development.

"It's a different style of doing a development, with this degree of collaboration, but I think it's been a healthy exercise," Tennant said.

The land was purchased in March 2005 with plans by Three Point Properties to transform it into a walkable community of single family, multi-family and commercial buildings overlooking Saanich Inlet.

Much of the work done so far has involved the removal of contaminated soil, left from the cement plant that once operated there.

Sustainability will be a key feature of the proposed Bamberton development, said Tennant, with building standards and design of the highest rating of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

"We've said we would be targeting LEED Gold for the community and our desire is to at least that," he said.

Three Point plans to submit an updated rezoning application to the CVRD in December.