

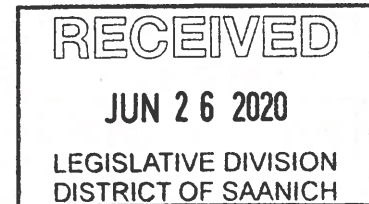
2110-20 Prospect Lake Rd



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Sharon Hvozdanski, Director of Planning
Date: June 25, 2020
Subject: Agricultural Land Reserve Application
File: ALR00025 • 321 Prospect Lake Road



RECOMMENDATION

That Council forward the application for Non-Farm Use in the Agricultural Land Reserve to the Agricultural Land Commission with a recommendation for approval.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from Council on the subject application. The application is to allow a Non-Farm Use for two portable classrooms and a new parking lot for Prospect Lake Elementary School. The applicant is Saanich School District 63.

DISCUSSION

Neighbourhood Context

The 2.59 ha P-1 (Assembly) zoned site is in the Prospect Lake neighbourhood of the Rural Saanich Local Area and is located approximately 120 m west of the intersection of Prospect Lake Road, Interurban Road, West Saanich Road and Sparton Road (see Figure 1). The site is the location of Prospect Lake Elementary School. Surrounding properties are zoned P-4 to the east, A-4 to south and A-1 to the north and west. The parcel is within the Agricultural Land Reserve and outside the Urban Containment Boundary and Sewer Service Area.

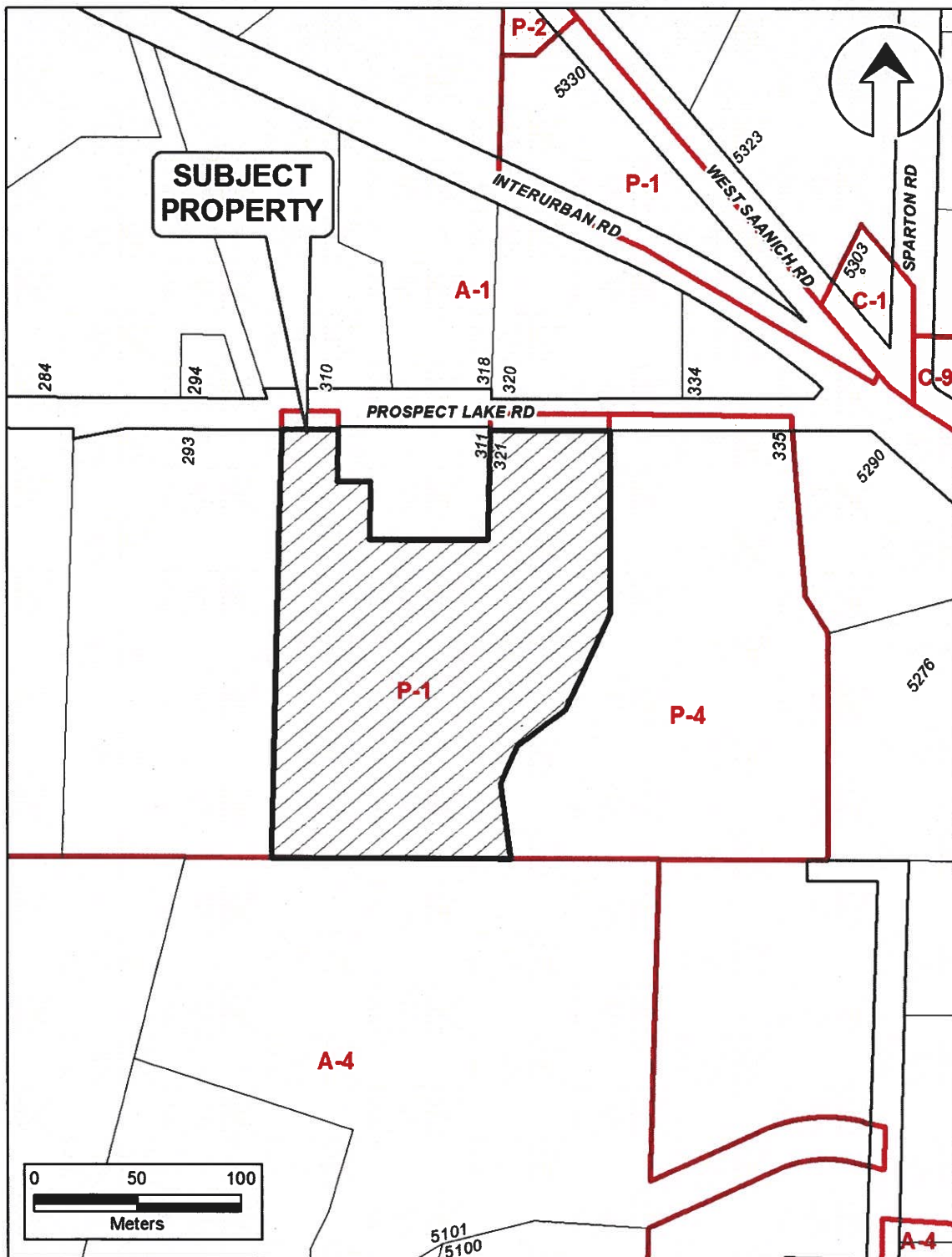


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Context Map

Proposed Land Use

As noted, the site is zoned P-1 (Assembly) and is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) (see Figure 2). Schools are a permitted use in the P-1 Zone and no change to the land use is proposed. The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) prioritizes ALR lands for farm uses and in order for the applicant to place two portables on the site, approval from the ALC for a Non-Farm Use is required, as a school use is not considered a farm use. If approved by the ALC, the uses and buildings associated must comply with all applicable local government bylaws and regulations.

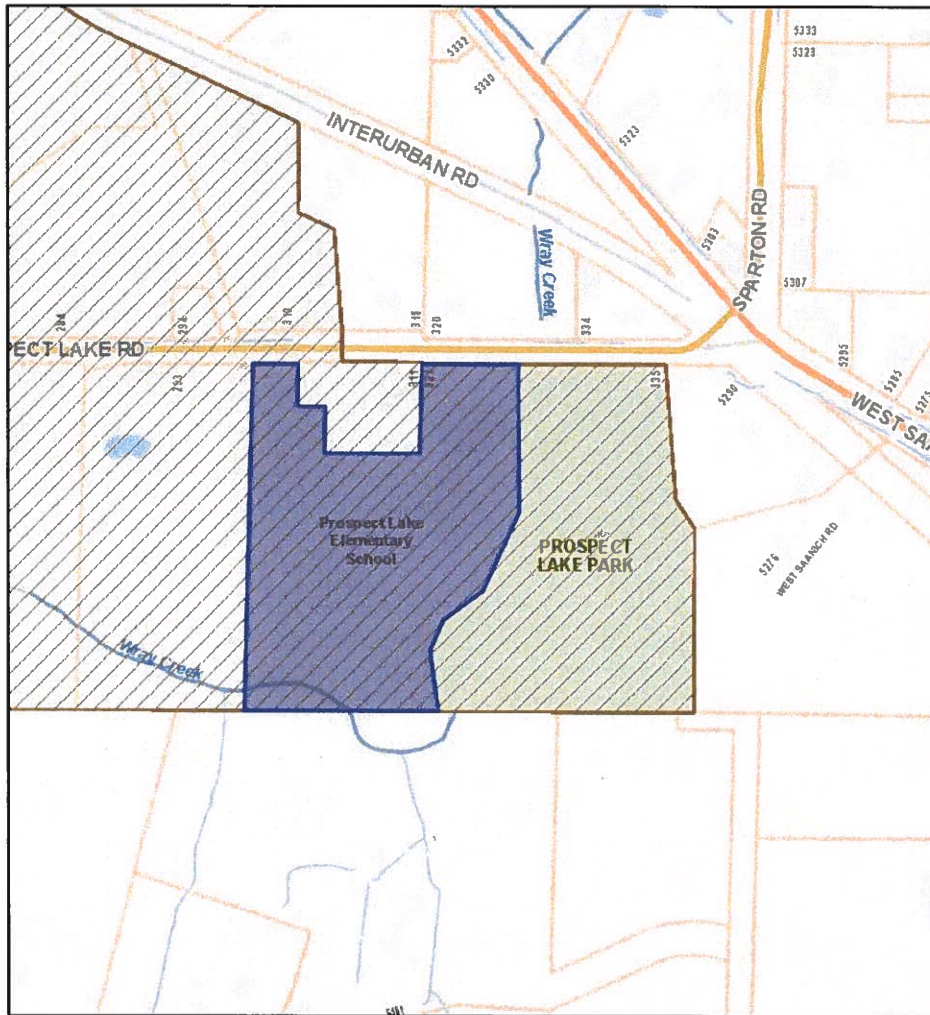


Figure 2: Agricultural Land Reserve Boundary

Prospect Lake Elementary School officially opened on May 31, 1966, prior to the introduction of the ALR. Due to the fact that Prospect Lake Elementary School was lawfully used for a non-farm use prior to December 21, 1972, the school use is “grandfathered” under section 23 of the Agricultural Land Commission Act. However, any expansion of the use, including the placement of portables, is not permitted unless approvals are granted from the ALC. The only process for Prospect Lake Elementary School to be considered for an exemption is through the Non-Farm Use Application for the Commission’s consideration.

Site and Building Design

The existing School is situated on the north side of the large property (see Figure 3). The two proposed portable classrooms would be placed at the rear of the school (see Figure 4) and would be 88 m² each.

If approved by the ALC, a Building Permit would be required and the portables would be required to meet the setback and height requirements for the P-1 (Assembly) Zone.

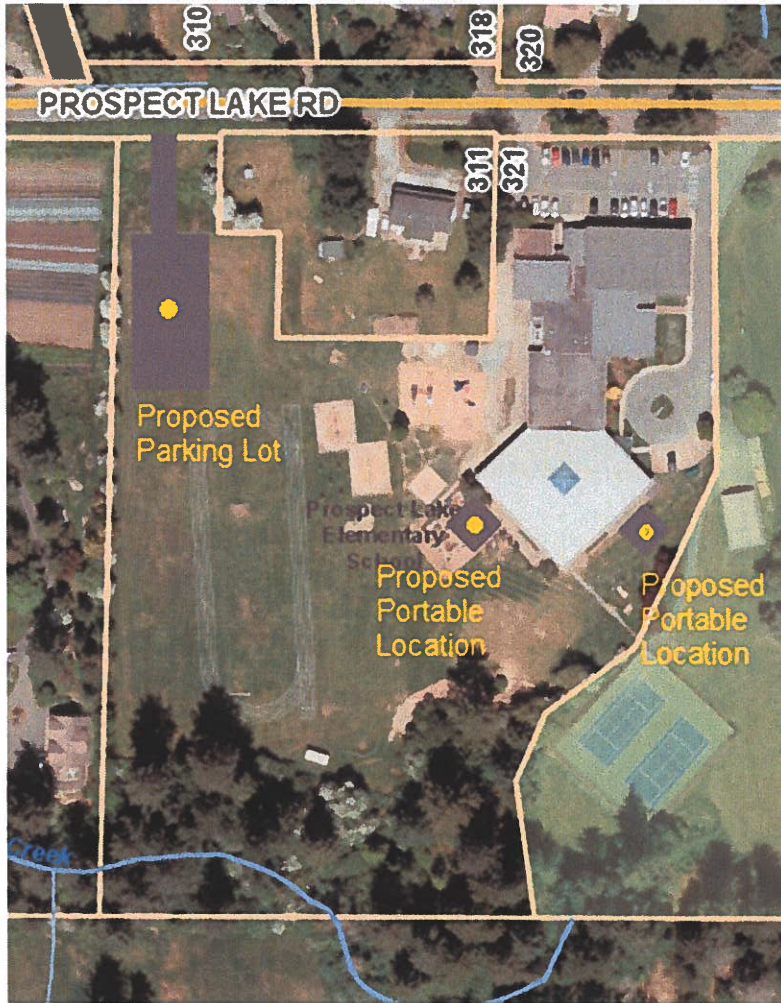


Figure 3: Site Plan

Prospect Lake Elementary School currently has 259 students enrolled, and the two proposed portable classrooms are required, in order to accommodate increasing enrollment. The enrollment for 2021 is predicted to increase to 271 students and approximately 300 students in 2022. To accommodate this growth additional classrooms are needed.

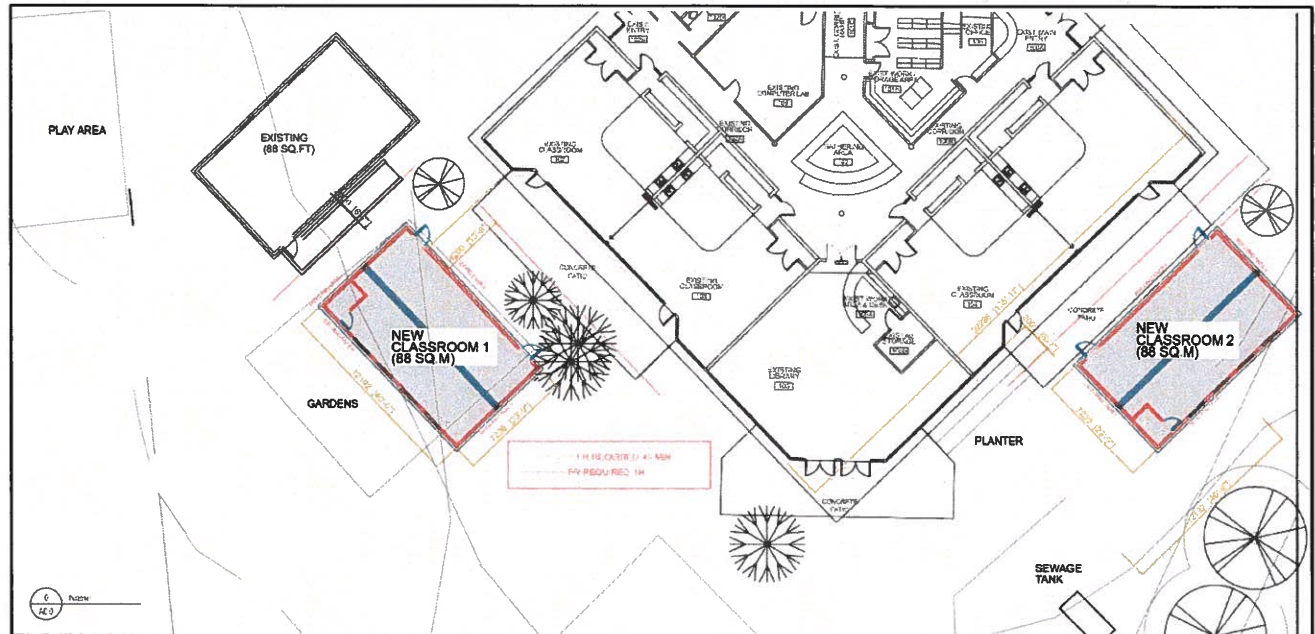


Figure 4: Proposed Portables (from plans by Bradley Shuya Architect Inc.)

In addition to the increasing enrollment projections, parking on the site is insufficient. During peak times, vehicles are parked along Prospect Lake Road and along the asphalt sidewalk, which creates unsafe conditions for both pedestrians and motorists. As a result of a Safe Route to School analysis, Saanich Engineering will be installing a concrete sidewalk complete with a non-mountable curb from Goward Road to Prospect Lake Community Hall (5358 Sparton Road). This will increase safety for pedestrians and the installation of the sidewalk will eliminate unlawful parking along the school's property.

In November 2019, Saanich Engineering hosted an Open house for the West Saanich, Prospect Lake and Sparton Road infrastructure upgrades project. In response to this Open House, School District 63 reached out to Saanich Engineering and proposed that construction of a new parking lot on the school's property would eliminate problems with unlawful parking on Prospect Lake Road during drop-off and pick-up times.

If construction of the proposed parking lot is scheduled at the same time as the Saanich Engineering construction of the sidewalk and the intersection, it would benefit both the District of Saanich and the School District as follows:

- The proposed parking lot area could be used for material staging during construction, which would allow for better traffic flow through construction area;
- The proposed parking area could be filled with the blasted rock created from blasting in other areas of the project, which would reduce the costs for hauling this blast rock from the site; and
- The parking issues at the school would be reduced after construction is complete.

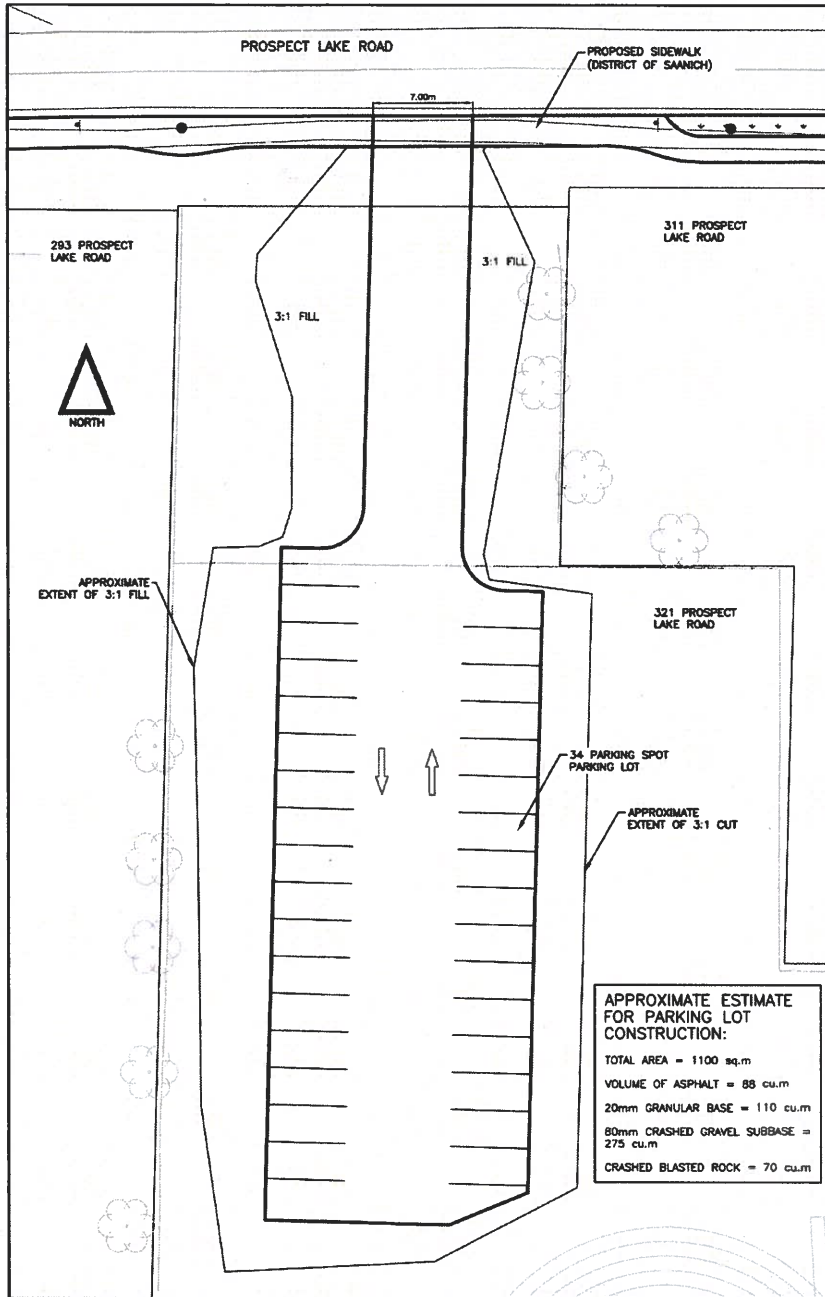


Figure 5: Proposed parking expansion

In addition to the partnership between the School District and Saanich Engineering, Saanich Parks is also working with the School District to install new tree plantings around the proposed parking lot.

Consultation

Referrals were sent to the Prospect Lake and District Community Association (PLDCA) and the Peninsula & Area Agricultural Commission. The Peninsula & Area Agricultural Commission suspended their meetings for 90 days due to COVID-19, however staff received three

responses of “no objection” from their members. Copies of the correspondence has been included in the agenda package. No response has been received from the PLDCA to date.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That Council approve the recommendations as outlined in the staff report.
2. That Council reject the recommendations as outlined in the staff report.
3. That Council provide alternate direction to Staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposal has no immediate implications related to the District of Saanich Financial Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The subject proposal works towards achieving a number of Council's Strategic Plan goals, namely:

- Collaborate with partners and organizations that complement our work;
- Engage in strategic dialogue with post-secondary institutions, school districts and other key organizations located in Saanich and seek opportunities to leverage mutual benefits with these strategic partners; and
- Strengthen road safety for all transportation modes.

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Policy

The following Saanich Planning Policies are most applicable to the subject proposal:

Official Community Plan (2008)

4.2.1.1. “Support and implement the eight strategic initiatives of the Regional Growth Strategy, namely: Keep urban settlement compact; Protect the integrity of rural communities; Protect regional green and blue space; Manage natural resources and the environment sustainably; Build complete communities; Improve housing affordability; Increase transportation choice; and Strengthen the regional economy.”

4.2.5.1. “Support the retention of rural and farm lands through adherence to the Urban Containment Boundary policy and preservation of the Agricultural Land Reserve (Map 19).”

Rural Saanich Local Area Plan (2008)

6.2 “Continue to work with School District #61 and School District #63 to improve community access to school facilities.”

12.11 “Continue to work with School District No. 61 and School District No. 63, elementary school principals, and Parent Advisory Committees to develop safe walking/cycling routes to school plans and to address issues related to student drop-off/pick-up.”

CONCLUSION

The applicant is seeking approval from the Agricultural Land Commission for a Non-Farm Use application for two portable classrooms and a new parking lot for Prospect Lake Elementary School.

The addition of the two proposed portables would accommodate the increasing number of children enrolling at Prospect Lake Elementary School and the proposed parking lot, in conjunction with the Saanich Engineering sidewalk project, would improve safety for drivers and pedestrians accessing Prospect Lake Elementary School.

The Official Community Plan and Rural Saanich Local Area Plan supports the improved service needs as well as the safety improvements for school drop-off and pick-up.

For the above noted reasons, Staff support the Agricultural Land application.

Prepared by: Sarah de Medeiros
Sarah de Medeiros
Planning Technician

Reviewed by: Shari Holmes-Saltzman
Shari Holmes-Saltzman
Manager of Current Planning

Approved by: Sharon Hvozdanski
Sharon Hvozdanski
Director of Planning

SD/rh

Attachments

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.

Paul Thorkelsson
Paul Thorkelsson, Administrator