

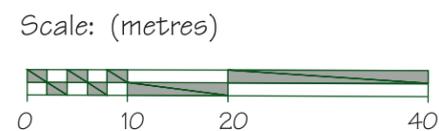


# Village Commons



Cortes Community Economic Development Association

Title: Concept Plan  
 Site: 785 Sutil Pt. Rd, Cortes Island  
 Date: January 12, 2022  
 Revision: B



## Legend

- 1. Central Covered Area
- 2. Flex Space / Washrooms
- 3. Transitional Housing / Caretaker
- 4. Cooking Hut
- 5. Vending Boardwalk
- 6. Flex Offices (possibly FOCI)
- 7. Welcome Pole
- 8. Playspace
- 9. Septic System
- 10. Well and Pumphouse



## Trails

- 3m
- 2m
- 1m



# Village Commons



## Key Elements:

### 1. Central Covered Area

Cortes Island residents and visitors will make effective use of a four season, common outdoor gathering area. The desire is to have an open-sided flexible space that can accommodate groups of up to 200, with a fire and stage. The graphic shows a space with three elements but six edges to the structure. To the north is a welcoming entrance gable, to the southeast a stage, and the southwest features a fire ring with chimney. Between the gables are glass covered rooflines. The structure as shown is simply a placeholder until a final structure is proposed, however it shows the main elements.

#### Stage

The stage should be approximately 10m wide and 5m deep. Although the rest of the structure is open, the concept shows the rear of the stage enclosed which will open up options of a backstage area or storage, accessible from the inside or outside. The backstage may also provide space for technical needs. If elevated, storage may also be provided below the stage. The stage area is oriented to the northwest so that sound will carry away from residential areas and into the Manson's Hall parking lot and skate park. With the backstage enclosed, less sound will transfer to the southern neighbour and the residences across Sutil Pt. Road.



#### Fire Ring

The fire ring should be about 1m in diameter and elevated about 300mm, constructed of steel or stone, with a vent at grade. If situated under the structure, a hood and chimney that meet the approval of regulators should be installed. It's recommended that the structure in this area be constructed from non-combustible materials. Careful attention must be given to the BC Building Code and associated fire suppression requirements. The fire should be positioned to the side of the main audience area so as to not present a hazard to participants.

#### Entrance and surroundings

The entrance from the north should provide an open welcome to users through a wide entrance with a repeated gable structure as seen in the entrance arch near the radio station. To the west of the structure, a plaza is shown. This serves as an outside extension of the structure as a vending or breakout space. The outer wall should be made of natural materials that provide a seating height of 450-500mm.

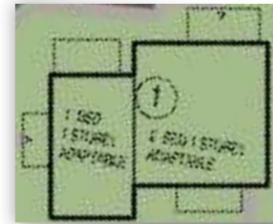
### 2. Flex Space and Washrooms

Washrooms should be designed as gender-inclusive. This typically includes open grooming and hand washing areas, with private toilet and/or shower rooms. While this style of facility design offers inclusivity, it also can be spatially efficient as well. The building should be designed with exterior and interior washroom entrances. The inside door may be locked after working hours so event washroom users don't have access to office spaces. The graphic shows two main entrances: one leading to the washroom and the other to office or flexible rooms.



### 3. Housing

The vision for the Commons includes residential units as possible lodging for a site caretaker. The plan shows two units that are similar in style to those proposed for Rainbow Ridge. Positioned next to Rainbow Road, these residents may feel part of the Rainbow Ridge community while living with autonomy. If residential needs are served elsewhere, this location can be left undeveloped, or can host other purpose-built structures. Buildings must be situated 7.5m from the property line and may not follow the BC Housing standards.



Sample - Rainbow Ridge



Sample - Powell River

### 4. Cooking Hut

The community expressed a desire to have a space to come together to cook and eat in a public setting. The cooking hut is intended to be large enough for one or two families while functioning in conjunction with other structures and sitting areas on site for larger meals. Positioned away from residential uses and separate from the main structure, it's hoped that it can be operated autonomously when needed without being a distraction. However, the location along a main trail will allow it to be used in conjunction with markets and events.

### 5. Vending Boardwalk

There are many local artisans on Cortes Island that need a place to sell their products. The vending boardwalk includes trailer mounted small stores that can be moved on and off site as needed. Inspiration for this was taken from the successes at Carcross, Yukon as shown below. The parking areas across from the vending boardwalk allow for both patron parking and the manoeuvring needed to position the trailers. The boardwalk is to be created at trailer entry height (typically around 600mm above grade) for level entry into the units. If the units are moved off site, this can be a pleasant seating edge for a picnic area.



Carcross Commons Website



Carcross Commons Website

### 6. Flexible Buildings

The community has expressed the need for flexible space at the Village Commons, including: non-profit or professional office space, artist studios, vending, and other associated uses. Small offices are shown next to the welcome pole courtyard and other space in half of the washroom building. Development of any pathways on adjacent lands will only be constructed as agreed in a memorandum of understanding with the land owner.

### 7. Welcome Pole and Courtyard

To the north of the structure is a proposed welcome pole, which would be carved by an artist from Klahoose, Tla'amin, or Holmalco Nation. The pole should be surrounded by native vegetation or other surface as directed by the carver. All elements in this plaza are directed to the pole. The plaza also features a kiosk that can display community posts, information about the site features and interpretive information about the language and culture of these territories. Often these kiosks are weather protected with a small roof. Community messages may be managed by the caretaker or non-profit renting a flex space to ensure relevance and tidiness.

### 8. Playspaces

Playspaces are intended to be woodland play and should be created with natural or natural feeling materials, under the tree canopy. A complete play experience includes swinging, spinning, climbing, and sliding, however, not all elements must be included. At the Commons, two play areas are shown, including a swing set, slide, balance and climbing elements. It is recommended that all elements comply with the CSA standard for play spaces, which should be adhered to over the comments below.

#### Slide

A hill slide is a useful solution where a grade change is present. Cut earth from the construction of waterways can be mounded to create a new hill. The slide material must be free of splinters or edges that could hurt a child. The upper end of the slide should have a 'hood' to cause a child to sit to slide (CSA standard). The lower end of the slide should be elevated to allow the child to stand up when exiting. This final drop should be approximately 300mm above the resilient surface.



#### Swings

Swings should only have 2 swings per bay. This will help to avoid a collision as children get hurt going to the middle swing. Surfacing under swings should be raked back into place periodically to ensure resiliency and proper swing seat height.

#### Climbing

Climbing elements should provide challenge to children as they climb logs, rocks, stumps and other natural materials. Hand/foot grips can be cut into or fastened to materials. Large flat surfaces at the top of a climb may require a handrail. For this reason, it may be easiest for climbers to bring children to a higher grade of land, like climbing a retaining wall or wooden bank structure.



#### Balance Elements

Balance elements are the easiest to create out of natural materials. They can consist of rock, stumps, logs, and rope. Children should be challenged by the placement so there's a sense of achievement and progression as they enjoy the space.

### 9. Septic System

There's a covenant on the frontage of Sutil Pt. Road for the installation of a septic system. The covenant area is forested with the most meaningful canopy on the site. The installation of a traditional septic field would result in the removal of approximately half of this stand. The hydrological study identified that the west side of the project site has a high water table (approx 4') while the east side is more dry and will support the percolation needed for a septic system. Further confirmation may be required. Having said this, it may be beneficial to pursue a modular septic treatment unit that would more thoroughly treat effluent. Since these systems are expensive, it's recommended that the project consider partnering with Rainbow Ridge to create a shared system that could utilize the proposed storm water easement to also incorporate a sewer connection.

### 10. Well and Pumphouse

There's an existing shallow well on the west side of the site. This will be insufficient to provide the potable water needs of the site. The hydrological study identifies that subsurface water flows from Hague Lake westward to the sea at a depth of approximately 70m and that the west side of the site should be appropriate for a well of this depth.



# Village Commons



Cortes Community Economic Development Association

## General Objectives:

### Roadways

The roadways through the site, including parking areas are semi-permeable, allowing rainwater to permeate the surface, and recharge the groundwater system. To this end, the base material should be clear crushed rock with limited fines for water detention within voids, and angular to allow for compaction. Rock should be a minimum depth of 100mm on roadways and parking areas and compacted with a roller. Where the subgrade is soft, a layer of geotextile fabric should be installed between subgrade and rock, and a larger stone diameter and depth should be employed. Surface rock will be held in place with plastic permeable grid pavers. These pavers also allow for markers to be installed to designate parking lines and cross walks to help slow motorists. Final grade should be crowned or graded to drain at 5%. The elevation of the road edge should be 50mm above surrounding natural grade for positive drainage.



Image courtesy of True Grid website

### Pathways

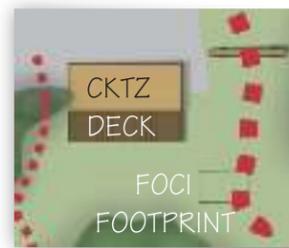
The pathways are to be constructed of fine crushed gravel 50mm compacted thickness and at grades not exceeding 5% for accessibility. The paths are established in a hierarchy of widths based on their expected volumes. The Sea to School trail extension from Rainbow Road to Manson's Hall should be 3m wide. Paths internal to the site will be generally 2m wide and minor connecting paths constructed at 1m wide. These widths will allow for accessibility and native vegetation to grow into the trail section over time and will reduce the frequency of maintenance. Pathways are designed through wooded areas and should be constructed and maintained as "green belts" to facilitate the community value for their use as nature corridors. It is also a community value to see this land managed with a high proportion of greenspace, not through legal mechanisms but by design.

### Stream and Pools

Rainbow Ridge is a development uphill (west) of the Commons. The development is proposing a stormwater pond at the edge of the site with a proposed easement for a stormwater drainage channel along the southern border of the Commons. It's recommended that this channel function as a small stream, which meanders and incorporates small pools and woody debris from on-site. This will further slow the water flow to facilitate groundwater infiltration, absorption of nutrients and positive aquatic habitat. Plantings on the south side of this waterway will shade the stream to cool the water and feed the habitat. This new riparian habitat should be planted according to Ministry of Environment specifications. A stream pathway is planned for the north side of this easement. This will provide an enjoyable walk but also facilitate maintenance of the watercourse and pools.

### Berm

A berm is planned for the west side of the waterway to help screen the adjacent resident from the activities of the Commons. This mound should be planted with both native trees and shrubs according to Ministry of Environment specifications.



### Market Opportunities

The community market takes place at the Manson's Hall parking lot. With vendors in the parking lot, patrons have limited parking options. The Village Commons will be available for use as a market location. Vendors can set up in the main covered structure, along paths, in the welcome plaza and vending boardwalk. The looping paths, natural site, shade, washrooms, cooking hut and playgrounds will provide a pleasant place for vendors and patrons alike.

### Site Grading and Drainage

The Hague Lake Watershed is sensitive and therefore care should be given to grading and drainage within it. A hydrological study commissioned by Rainbow Ridge identified that conditions on site support expanded uses. The site is gently sloping and soils are sandy, promoting infiltration to recharge ground water.

The Commons site is naturally sloping from west to east. Site modifications should respect this slope, by maintaining similar grades to facilitate the retention of native vegetation. On the west side of the site, the water table is high <1.2m with a clay layer beneath. For this reason, ditching should be minimal, or at shallow depths where possible, to avoid dewatering this side of the site and thereby threatening retained vegetation. Shallow ditches sloping east may exit via small culverts under roadways or paths to enter the constructed waterway along the southern boundary.

### Vegetation

In general, the vegetation is a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees, in the form of a regenerating meadow and open land in healthy condition with few invasive species (broom and holly). The site is regenerating after previous clearing, as transitional alders give way to native conifers. Understory plants like salal, berries and ferns dominate the ground plane except in the dense stand of hemlock, cedar and fir that border Sutil Point Rd.

### Tree Retention

Tree retention should be done in clusters where possible to ensure the resulting stands are windfirm and healthy. Isolated retained trees should be evaluated by an arborist to ensure they are good candidates for retention.

### Tree Protection Fencing

Retained trees should have a tree protection fence installed prior to site construction. This temporary fence should be positioned at the drip line of the tree or cluster of trees. It should remain in place throughout construction and be removed after. Final site grading should not change grade within this zone more than 50mm. This fencing will protect the vegetation at all times from compaction of the soil; damage of any kind to trunks, bark, branches, leaves and roots of all plants; protection from deer; and contamination of the soil, bark or leaves with construction materials, debris, silt, fuels, oils, and any chemical substances. Plastic mesh fencing can consist of snow fencing attached to metal "U" or "T" posts driven into the ground of sufficient depth to hold the fabric solidly in place without sagging. It's also acceptable to build the fence frame out of wood as structurally appropriate. There should be a small (8.5"x 11") sign on the protective fencing stating "Tree and Plant Protection Area- Keep Out".

### Radio Station Building

Although the radio station and FOCI buildings are not on the Village Commons site, they are relevant to the site and can interact with it in a positive way. As the location of the radio station is directly between the main commons and the hall parking lot, it's suggested that consideration be given to the construction of a deck on the south side of the radio station. One of the two windows in the building could be converted to a door. This deck could allow the station to 'face' the commons and provide a space for broadcast coverage of public events held in the Village Commons. As mentioned previously, any renovations or relocations would be governed by mutually beneficial memorandums of understanding between all involved parties.



Possible locations of vendor booths

### Tree Removal

Trees designated for removal should be removed in a manner that will not damage adjacent trees or structures, or compact the soil around retained trees. Where adjacent trees are to be retained, trees should not be felled in one cut and stumps should either be left in place, flush cut or removed with a stump grinder. All invasive species should be removed at the earliest practical stage to avoid their spread. Utilize advice from the Invasive Plant Council of BC for the most effective removal techniques.

### Signage

The Village Commons site is set back from Sutil Pt. Road and behind the Manson's Hall parking lot. For this reason, signage is very important. It's recommended that the CCEDA engage a graphic designer to establish a brand for the Village Commons. This will shape the style and appearance of the signage on site. Signage should utilize the principle of progressive disclosure where the message given on a sign is appropriate to the information the user needs at this part of their experience with the site. For instance, at a parking lot, the message should be about locking your car, location of trailhead, dogs should be on leash, etc. As one progresses into the site, wayfinding information is given to ensure the patron finds the destination they're looking for. When there, interpretive information is appropriate as the user is ready to slow their pace and read information.

### Entrance Features

A large gateway is proposed on the Manson's Hall property near the radio station building. This feature should attract users from the parking lot to the site. If the SCCA doesn't agree to this location, it should be installed just inside the property line along the same pathway. Conceptually, it can be constructed to reflect the iconic sun 'A' frame on the side of Manson's Hall. Another entrance feature should be constructed along Sutil Pt. Road to draw users in via the one-way lane. This structure should be at a vehicular scale. Consideration should be given to the message this sign is intending to give. For instance, it could identify the name with "service entrance" below to discourage tourist parking on site. It may also point to another parking site off Beasley Road.



### Wayfinding

Within the site, there may be a need to direct patrons to the vending area, cooking hut or external destinations like the trail to Smelt Bay. These signs should be small, free-standing signs that don't distract from the natural feel of the area. Consideration should be given to the use of wooden posts to blend into the forest. A site map may also be included in the welcome kiosk for general information.

### General Objectives:

In general the site should be as self-sustaining as possible. This includes the management of on-site waste, rainwater and utilizing natural sources as practical.

### Alternative Energy Systems

Independence from reliance on BC Hydro is desirable and will make this site more sustainable. Alternative energy systems should be researched and employed, which may include solar power, on structures in the Commons. Lighting can be solar as well, which will reduce the vegetative disturbance created by power lines above or below grade.

### Local Materials, Skills and Labour

Where possible, local materials, skills and labour should be used in the project execution for the following purposes:

- To provide meaningful employment for locals and honour local skills and knowledge
- To reduce the carbon footprint of the project
- To have materials fit into the local environment
- To support local material producers
- To ensure that supply chain, transportation and other delays don't impact the project.

### Phased Approach

There is a desire for this development plan to be built in phases over several years, rather than being realized all at once. The completion of various components of this plan will depend on need, capacity, funding, other planning processes for the area, and other factors. Allowing for time in between construction projects will also ensure responsiveness to changing needs in the community, and allow ecosystems a chance to rest and regenerate after each construction disturbance.