

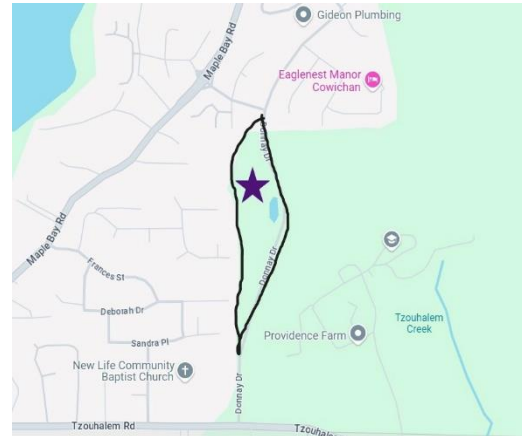
North Cowichan Mayor and Council
Delegation Request - Creating a Neighbourhood Park along Donnay Drive

2/5/25

ACTION REQUEST. Providence Farm has an important piece of land for sale in our neighbourhood (see inset). This delegation proposes that North Cowichan purchase this land and designate it as parkland.

Concerned residents of the adjacent neighbourhoods have written multiple letters to Council and are appearing before the Committee of the Whole now to request that Council vote in favour of this proposal for multiple reasons including:

- The adjacent neighbourhoods have only one small pocket park/playground available for their use and long ago ‘adopted’ these parcels of land for recreation and for the enjoyment of nature. This can be evidenced by the unofficial trail from end-to-end that is regularly used for biking, hiking, and dog walking.
- Many people, beyond those living in these neighbourhoods, are using this route to avoid walking along a very dangerous and increasingly busy section of Maple Bay Rd.
- This small pocket of forested land is home to many large cedar and fir trees and, as such, home to several species of wildlife and birds that are increasingly under pressure for land and resources. A raptor study has been requested to document this assertion.
- The land’s A2 rural zoning allows for a number of permitted uses including agricultural storage, animal shelter or kennel, distillery, and/or (most significantly) forestry. The land is nested directly between and beside the long-established Stonehouse Way subdivision, the Frances St/Deborah Drive/Harmony Estates subdivisions, and the Chaparral subdivision and these permitted uses are very inconsistent with the values of healthy neighbourhoods.
- The land encompasses the lagoon used by the Farm for irrigation and the underground services that connect the Farm’s infrastructure to the NC sewer system.



The property in question consists of two parcels that were originally donated by the Sisters of St Ann to Providence Farm Housing Society for the purpose of creating social housing. Having now determined that this initiative will not proceed, The Providence Farm Board seeks to recover their invested costs (taxes, surveys, engineering studies etc) through a sale.

The land was offered first to Cowichan Tribes and declined. Subsequently, it was listed on the MLS system and the Providence Farm Board approached North Cowichan about the potential for purchase. We understand that a motion from Council in November has directed staff to prepare a report.

We come before you requesting quick action on this matter before the land falls into private hands.

With Thanks.