



NEWS RELEASE

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A more sustainable approach to Eustace Road Development

Transition Sooke is very concerned about a proposed shopping plaza for the property at 6783 Eustace Road.

“The owners are likely banking on the rapid future growth of Sooke,” said Transition Sooke’s Alan Dolan, “but our analysis shows that continued rapid growth is not sustainable and will make it impossible for Sooke to meet its climate change targets and align with residents’ vision of a small town close to fields, forests and the ocean.”

In a recent study commissioned by Sooke, Colliers estimated that Sooke could experience a demand for retail space of an additional 18,035 square feet by 2030. The proposed plaza, which is fronted by US-based Mid America Venture Capital, features large blocks of retail space including a grocery store for a total of 156,000 square feet.

“Why does Sooke need so much retail space including a third grocery store?” said Transition Sooke’s Roland Alcock. “Specialty food stores or ‘mini-markets’ featuring locally grown agricultural and value-added products would be more appropriate.”

“Independent, locally owned retail businesses such as restaurants, clothing stores and book stores would never be able to afford the 6,000 square foot space in the proposed development,” said Dolan. “There is no way they would even need that kind of square footage either.”

“This retail proposal is designed to attract franchises and ‘small box’ stores,” said Alcock, “and that means money leaving our community. We need to support existing and new ‘made-in-Sooke’ businesses that create local jobs and keep money in Sooke.”

Transition Sooke has offered a low carbon, low growth alternative for Sooke’s proposed new Official Community Plan (OCP), which lays out a modest growth scenario with some non-market affordable housing and economic development created by local, independent businesses in the town core.

Transition Sooke’s OCP and Climate Action Team is joining forces with its Local Economy Working Group to offer an alternative suggestion for the Eustace Road property that would be consistent with a low carbon/low growth future, a robust local economy, and a liveable community.

Transition Sooke is a citizen-based, volunteer, public-interest group focused on co-creating a sustainable, resilient and secure community that meets the challenges of the climate emergency in the Sooke region.

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