



PROPOSAL FOR USE- LAKE KATHLYN SCHOOL

At the November 11th, 2017 Board Meeting of the Coast Field and Forest Co-operative (CFFC) the Directors unanimously moved that the following proposal be submitted to the Board of Trustees of School District 54;

Proposal

If the SD 54 Board shows interest or support, CFFC is proposing that the vacant school could be converted for the following potential combined collaborative uses;

1. **Agricultural Research Facility**

Whereas the Bulkley Valley once had an agricultural research and trialing facility, this facility ceased operations many years ago. There has been an explosion of interest in developing the agricultural potential in the Valley, but there is a dearth of information and meaningful research on the current climatic conditions, suitable crops, growing potential, and modern techniques and equipment. The CFFC would seek to leverage Federal, Provincial and other grant funding and support to initiate an agricultural research and trialing facility utilizing a portion of the school building and up to 2 acres of the property. The focus of this facility would be on intensive vegetable and fruit production research, as this is recognized as an emergent industry with substantial growth potential in the Valley.

2. **Folk School**

'Folk Schools' have seen a substantial growth in interest in the United States, with schools beginning to emerge in Canada. For those unfamiliar with the concept, Folk Schools teach traditional arts, crafts and skills through immersive hands-on workshops and extended education sessions. They are primarily oriented towards adult education, although there are often programs open to and tailored towards children. In the Bulkley Valley there would be an opportunity to engage the Witsuwit'en in creating course content specific to their unique indigenous skills and knowledge, along with courses such as those taught at other folk schools. The proximity of Lake Kathlyn School to Smithers Airport in a stunning setting would create a compelling opportunity to attract highly skilled educators as well as clientele from outside of the local area. The following website addresses link to examples of successful folk schools in the United States;

<http://driftlessfolkschool.org/>

<https://livingartsschool.com/>

The folk school would use a portion of the school, and potentially a portion of the 10 acre property.

3. **Makerspace / Community Workshop / Library of Things**

Lake Kathlyn School is in an area with existing light industrial zoning and businesses. As such, it would be a suitable location for a community shared facility for disciplines such as woodworking, metalworking, fabricating, CNC and 3D

printing technologies etc. This could be a substantial revenue generator for the facility through memberships and one-time user fees. These uses, particularly the 'Makerspace' concept, have been identified as facilities of interest by numerous area residents. These uses would utilize a portion of the school building. The following website addresses link to a thorough examination of the 'Makerspace' concept, and to a successful Makerspace facility;

https://placesjournal.org/article/makerspace-towards-a-new-civic-infrastructure/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI8_PDoYS_1wIV0oh-Ch3LugcOEAAAYAiAAEglou_D_BwE

<https://artisansasylum.com/hours-and-tours/#>

Summary

The three identified uses appear to fit the existing zoning of the location, and would be able to co-exist within the facility without unresolvable conflicts of use. There may also be significant opportunities for shared use of space and/or equipment. These uses could also take place regardless of whether the SD 54 Board's decision is to sell or to retain and rent the facility. CFFC has assembled a preliminary list of potential stakeholders and partners in the project, and has begun contacting them to establish interest pending direction of the SD 54 Board.

Prior discussions with administrative staff have indicated that shared use partners have been successfully located in other vacant school buildings in our region.

Additionally, CFFC would be open to other collaborative uses within the facility, should there be other proponents looking for space.

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