

Executive Summary of the Baker Mountain Quality of Life Assessment

Evaluation Completed by the Foundation for
Democratic Advancement (September, 2008)

Purpose of Assessment: In June of 2008, the BC provincial government, through the Ministry of Tourism, Sport, and Arts, Resort Development Division did not address satisfactorily the issue of quality of life and sanctity of the Baker Mountain area versus an all season resort for the area.¹ The FDA citizen panel will evaluate this issue of whether or not development of the Baker Mountain area should be considered in light of the quality of life and sanctity of the Baker Mountain area, including Cranbrook and surrounding areas. The evaluation is based on the better interest of the people of Cranbrook, British Columbia, and people in bordering rural areas.

There is no attempt by the FDA to single out any individual or organization. Rather, the FDA is evaluating a contentious, complex land development issue.

Also, this determination is an outside perspective to give the citizens and politicians of Cranbrook, British Columbia, and relevant other individuals and organizations, an evaluated, informed public perspective on the Baker Mountain land development issue. Also, this determination is an example of how to decide similar land development issues. And it is an example of land development evaluation which looks critically at development itself.

The study is an independent assessment of the Baker Mountain land development issue by an FDA citizen evaluation panel made up Cranbrook citizens and FDA members/associates. The principles of objectivity, transparency, and non-partisanship guide the panel.

¹ See Appendix A, B, and C for the list of Resort Development Division's identified major issues, a list of comments from the public, and the FDA's correspondence with the Resort Development Divisions regarding its failure to evaluate satisfactorily the major issue of quality of life.)

The views in this study are the views of the FDA and/or panelists. The FDA and its members, and non-FDA panelists are in no way affiliated with any of the relevant parties in this study. The FDA has no ties to any political party or organization, or corporate interests.

Key Definitions:

All season resort:

In the context of the proposals for the Baker Mountain area, the all season resort will entail a ski component in the winter and a golf component in the summer, and recreation liking four wheeling etc., mixed in. Moreover, the resort will entail significant housing development, road construction, and water, hydro, and sewage infrastructure, and maintenance of the infrastructure. The estimated permanent population of the resort is 7,500, and up to 4,000 new homes (estimated 16,000 bed units). The main road into the resort will be through Gold Creek, and the resort will be fully independent of Cranbrook city services.

Baker Mountain area:

5812.18 hectares of crown land, just north/east of Cranbrook, British Columbia.

The land is outside of the city limits of Cranbrook, and therefore it is under the jurisdiction of the BC provincial government.

People of Cranbrook, and people in bordering areas:

Population of Cranbrook of approximately 18, 267 people and population of surrounding rural area of approximately 3,850 people. (2006 Census Population & Dwelling Count.)

Preserve quality of life and sanctity of Baker Mountain area:

Maintain the existing quality of life of the Baker Mountain area, in terms of population level, noise level, pollution level, crime level, social cohesion, and recreation habitat. Also, maintain the sanctity of the area in terms of overall landscape and intrinsic beauty.

Brief Methodology

Fundamental evaluation issue for the Baker Mountain Land area:

Main evaluation:

1. What are the effects of an all season resort on quality of life of the citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding rural areas? Viz., Does an all season resort add or detract from the quality of life, and to what degree?

Sections for Evaluation:

Clean, accessible drinking water

Clean air

Social cohesion of rural community

Quality of living in terms of overcrowding, pollution, and crime

Protection of environment and quality of visual impact

Access to outdoor recreation

Sustainable employment

Three Cranbrook area population groups to be assessed:

1. Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population)
2. Population B: Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population).
3. Population C: Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B).

Information sources:

City of Cranbrook engineering department and corporate services, Citizens for a Livable Cranbrook, BC government's Resort Development Division out of Kamloops, various public correspondence with Resort Development Division, Pickering's outline of vision for Baker Mountain, Environment of Canada etc., Environment Canada, various academic articles (referenced throughout report), 2006 Population & Dwelling Count, and interview of Darren and Kris Pickering (two of the proponents of the Baker Mountain Development).

Panel comprised of:

Mr. Stephen Garvey, BA, MA, CEO of the FDA,

Mrs. Rita Romeo, Program Coordinator for the East Kootenay Child Care Resource and Referral

Mr. Simon Brown, retired Charter Accountant and FDA associate

Mrs. Hillary Brown, Education Facilitator and FDA associate

Mr. Doug McPhee, Cranbrook District Principle (School District 5)

Mr. Greg Ringness, Creative Principal for Domino Communications, former director of marketing for Wildstone, and hospitality and tourism and non-profit experience, and former President for the Kinsmen club of Kelowna.

Mr. Duane Foster, Senior Property Specialist and former President of the High Level, Alberta Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Ron Popoff, Senior Public Health Inspector, Kootenay Health Protection, BC Interior Health

Mr. Norman Weitzel, retired school teacher, volunteer for the Cranbrook Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society, and Cranbrook SPCA, on the board of directors for the Canadian Mental Health Association for the Kootenays, and advocate for senior citizens

Mr. Jay Kruszewski, CUPW President of the Cranbrook Local and East Kootenay labour representative

Mr. Chris Matishak, President/CEO of BuckRidge Homes Inc.

Mr. Tim Cooper, General Manager Purcell Resources Inc.

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Section 1: Clean, accessible drinking water

Assessment:

Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population)

Score for quality of life, Clean Accessible Drinking Water: 3 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population A

Rational: Close proximity of resort population to Cranbrook watershed, and consequently threat of disturbance, contamination from resort population entering the Cranbrook watershed. Decrease in future water sources for Cranbrook from the resort taping into the spring runoff of Baker Mountain and/or the Kootenay river.

Population B: Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population).

Score for quality of life, Clean Accessible Drinking Water: 1.88 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population B

Rational: resort on population B's watershed—threat of contamination, significant disturbance; already decline in Population B's water supply; pesticide/herbicide/fertilize run off from golf course, licenses for water sources.

Population C: Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent

population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B).

Score for quality of life, Clean Accessible Drinking water: 10 out of 10 addition to quality of life of Population C

Rationale: Population part of resort.

Overall score for quality of life, Clean Accessible Drinking water:

Population A 3.16 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, clean accessible drinking water

Population B 1.86 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, clean accessible drinking water

Population C 10 out of 10 addition in quality of life, clean accessible drinking water

Population A, B, and C, 3.92 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, clean accessible drinking water

Section 2: Clean air

Assessment:

Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population)

Score for quality of life, Clean Air: 3.58 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population A

Rational: more vehicle emissions especially as tourists congregate in Cranbrook; development in area going to happen so air quality effect neutral; no heavy industry or additional wood stoves

Population B: Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population).

Score for quality of life, Clean Air: 3.2 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population B

Rational: more traffic and co2 emissions through Population B; tourist season high emission co2; valley bottom effect of containing co2 in Population B including prevailing winds; short-term air quality concerns from construction of resort; co2 from increased ATV, snowmobile etc., usage; time to take to develop asphalt roads.

Population C: Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B).

Score for quality of life, Clean Air: 10 out of 10 addition to quality of life of Population C

Rationale: Population part of resort.

Overall score for quality of life, Clean Air:

Population A 3.58 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, clean air

Population B 3.2 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, clean air

Population C 10 out of 10 addition in quality of life, clean air

Population A, B, and C, 4.3 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, clean air

Section 3: Social cohesion of rural community:

Assessment:

Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population)

Score for quality of life, Social Cohesion of Rural Community: 4 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population A

Rational: influx of tourists; alienation of local residents; resort separate from Cranbrook; tourists/seasonal occupants do not contribute to Cranbrook; some tourists will make up permanent residence, and thereby diversify Cranbrook; infrastructure issues; impact on less well off due to focus on resort and tourists; Cranbrook regional center and thereby can handle influx of tourists.

Population B: Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population).

Score for quality of life, Social Cohesion of Rural Community: 2.3 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population B

Rational: disregard of rural properties—trespassing, vandalism; increased drunk driving due to increase in tourists/recreationalists; conflict in lifestyles—quiet rural living versus tourists/recreationalists; larger area absorb smaller area; small town rural feeling will diminish due to proximity of tourist population and their travel through Population B.

Population C: Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B).

Score for quality of life, Social Cohesion of Rural Community: 10 out of 10 addition to quality of life of Population C

Rationale: Population part of resort.

Overall score for quality of life, Social Cohesion of Rural Community:

Population A 48 out of 120 (40%)

Population B 27.5 out of 120 (22.92%) adjusted by 10.35% to 2.37 out of 10.35

Population C 120 out of 120 (100%) adjusted by 18.3% to 18.3 out of 18.3

$48 + 2.37 + 18.3 = 68.67$ out of 148.65 (46.2%)

Total results:

Population A 4 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, social cohesion of rural community

Population B 2.3 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, social cohesion of rural community

Population C 10 out of 10 addition in quality of life, social cohesion of rural community

Population A, B, and C, 4.6 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, social cohesion of rural community

Section 4: Quality of Living in terms of overcrowding, pollution, and crime

Assessment:

Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population)

Score for quality of life, Quality of Living in terms of Overcrowding, Pollution, and Crime: 3.5 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population A

Rational: increased population results in increased crowds and pollution; rural development linked to increased crime; more co2 exhaust; no heavy industry; Cranbrook area going to grow anyways.

Population B: Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population).

Score for quality of life, Quality of Living in terms of Overcrowding, Pollution, and Crime: 2.5 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population B

Rational: rural development linked to increase in crime; increase in vandalism, littering, noise from resort population; more co2 exhaust and noise from increased traffic and recreational vehicles ATVs, snowmobiles etc.;

Population C: Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent

population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B).

Score for quality of life, Quality of Living in terms of Overcrowding, Pollution, and Crime: 10 out of 10 addition to quality of life of Population C

Rationale: Population part of resort.

Overall score for quality of life, Quality of Life in terms of Overcrowding, Pollution, and Crime:

Population A 3.5 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, quality of life in terms overcrowding, pollution, and crime

Population B 2.5 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, quality of life in terms overcrowding, pollution, and crime

Population C 10 out of 10 addition in quality of life, quality of life in terms overcrowding, pollution, and crime

Population A, B, and C, 4.3 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, quality of life in terms overcrowding, pollution, and crime

Section 5: Protection of environment and quality of visual impact

Assessment:

Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population)

Score for quality of life, Protection of environment and Quality of Visual Impact: 4.3 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population A

Rational: visual impact subjective; resort can hide buildings in trees; increase in billboards and signs; elk and whitetail deer will have less winter range in Baker Mountain area; increase in road kills.

Population B: Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population).

Score for quality of life, Protection of environment and Quality of Visual Impact: 2.7 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population B

Rational: guaranteed destruction of rural setting through close proximity of and absorption by larger resort area; leaching, runoff of pesticides/herbicides from golf course; badger, painted turtle, firefly already listed as endangered; destruction of large larch forest; visual impact subjective—though Population B tends to have naturalist leaning.

Population C: Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent

population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B).

Score for quality of life, Protection of environment and Quality of Visual Impact: 10 out of 10 addition to quality of life of Population C

Rationale: Population part of resort.

Overall score for quality of life, Protection of environment and Quality of Visual Impact:

Population A 4.3 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, protection of environment and quality of visual impact

Population B 2.7 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, protection of environment and quality of visual impact

Population C 10 out of 10 addition in quality of life, protection of environment and quality of visual impact

Population A, B, and C, 4.9 out of 10 detraction quality of life, protection of environment and quality of visual impact

Section 6: Access to outdoor recreation:

Assessment

Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population)

Score for quality of life, Access to Outdoor Recreation: 6.8 out of 10 addition in quality of life of Population A

Rational: commercial recreation via skiing and other recreation activities closer to Cranbrook; diminished public outdoor recreation; increased commercial recreation; excess commercial recreation in area—skiing, golf etc.; more people in Baker Mountain area makes the area less attractive from a recreational standpoint; less crown land, so more pressure on it; use of ski hill in summer enhances recreational opportunities.

Population B: Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population).

Score for quality of life, Access to Outdoor Recreation: 4.5 out of 10 detraction in quality of life of Population B

Rational: natural beauty diminished; local residents more inclined to non-commercial activities—camping, hunting, trail riding, snowshoeing, mountain biking, hiking; trails, favorite spots etc., all established for local residents; commercial recreation not attractive—for example, Wardner golf course converted to parkland due partly to lack of local interest.

Population C: Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B).

Score for quality of life, Access to Outdoor Recreation: 10 out of 10 addition to quality of life of Population C

Rationale: Population part of resort.

Overall score for quality of life, Access to Outdoor Recreation:

Population A 6.8 out of 10 addition in quality of life, access to outdoor recreation

Population B 4.5 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, access to outdoor recreation

Population C 10 out of 10 addition in quality of life, access to outdoor recreation

Population A, B, and C, 7 out of 10 addition quality of life, access to outdoor recreation

Section 7: Sustainable employment:

Assessment:

Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population)

Score for quality of life, Sustainable Employment: 4.4 out of 10
addition in quality of life of Population A

Rational: not enough workers at present to fill low skill job demand; resort will draw employees from Cranbrook although Cranbrook needs more employees—employment shortage; employment from tourist operations; revenue and thereby jobs from tourist shopping in Cranbrook; possible resort reliance on oversea workers which would mean less employment for Cranbrook locals and yet less drain on employment pool, questionable that resort employment would be sustainable due to cyclical nature of tourist industry, competitiveness of industry, and possible reliance on overseas workers; resort self-contained and seasonal occupants so the revenue trickle to Cranbrook may not be much.

Population B: Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population).

Score for quality of life, Sustainable Employment: 5.6 out of 10
detraction in quality of life of Population B

Rational: employment opportunities for children of Population B's families, though employment may not be sustainable due to possible reliance on overseas workers, competitiveness of industry,

low skilled nature of employment; rural recreational opportunities such as guides, horse lessons and rides etc.,

Population C: Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B).

Score for quality of life, Sustainable Employment: 10 out of 10 addition to quality of life of Population C
Rationale: Population part of resort.

Overall score for quality of life, Sustainable Employment:

Population A 4.4 out of 10 detraction in quality of life, sustainable employment

Population B 5.6 out of 10 addition in quality of life, sustainable employment

Population C 10 out of 10 addition in quality of life, sustainable employment

Population A, B, and C, 5.2 out of 10 addition quality of life, sustainable employment

Overall Score for the Seven Sections of Quality of Life:

Population A Citizens of Cranbrook and surrounding areas (less Gold Creek area) (18,267 plus 2,265 population: 20, 532 total population):

Clean, accessible drinking water 36/120

Clean air 43/120

Social cohesion of rural community 46/120

Quality of living in terms of overcrowding, pollution, and crime 42/120

Protection of environment and quality of visual impact 52/120

Access to outdoor recreation 81/120

Sustainable employment 53/120

Total: 353/840 42% (4.2 out of 10) overall detraction in quality of life of Population A

Population B Citizens of Cranbrook's surrounding areas who live adjacent to Baker Mountain development (2,126 population):

Clean, accessible drinking water 1.94/10.35

Clean air 3.3/10.35

Social cohesion of rural community 2.37/10.35

Quality of living in terms of overcrowding, pollution, and crime 2.6/10.35

Protection of environment and quality of visual impact 2.8/10.35

Access to outdoor recreation 4.7/10.35

Sustainable employment 5.8/10.35

Total: 23.51/72.45 32.4% (3.2 out of 10) overall detraction in quality of life of Population B

Population C Baker Mountain Land Development area; citizens and occupants of the all season resort (3,750 permanent population—reduced to take account for possible overestimation and increase in Population A and B):

Clean, accessible drinking water 18.3/18.3

Clean air 18.3/18.3

Social cohesion of rural community 18.3/18.3

Quality of living in terms of overcrowding, pollution, and crime 18.3/18.3

Protection of environment and quality of visual impact 18.3/18.3

Access to outdoor recreation 18.3/18.3

Sustainable employment 18.3/18.3

Total: 128.1/128.1 100% (10 out of 10) overall addition in quality of life of Population A

Overall Quality of Life Score:

504.61/1040.55 48.5% (4.9 out of 10) overall detracting in quality of life for Populations A, B, and C.

Analysis:

The Baker Mountain development overall detracts from the quality of life of the Cranbrook area, with a rating 48.5% or (4.9 out of 10). This negative rating is within .1 of a neutral effect on the quality of life of the Cranbrook area (i.e. neither adds or detracts from the quality of life). However, there is cause for concern with the impact on Populations A and B. In Population A, the sections of clean, accessible drinking water, clean air, social cohesion, and quality of living in terms of overcrowding, pollution, and crime, had a negative rating of 35.2% (or 3.5 out of 10). And in the same sections plus protection of environment and quality of visual impact, Population B had a negative rating of 25.3% (or 2.5 out of 10). These ratings are significant detractions in quality of life for Population A and B, and in vital areas such as quality of water and air.

Moreover, the Baker Mountain quality of life assessment did not factor in quality of life issues stemming from the construction of the resort, like increased air pollution from diesel exhaust and use of dirt roads, and increased noise pollution.

Further, the assessment did not factor in First Nation claims to the Baker Mountain area for cultural and traditional use. Also, there is a Ktunaxa reserve beside Baker Mountain on the north-east side, which would be in close proximity to the actual resort and golf course.

The Ktunaxa Nation was invited to have a representative on the panel, but declined.

The subjective issue of determining the quality of visual impact could be improved with a survey of citizens from Population A and B. Similarly, the issue of determining the impact of the resort on

access to outdoor recreation could be improved with a survey of citizens from Population A and B.

Conclusion:

The quality of life assessment examined the Baker Mountain Land Development itself. Therefore, if the development detracts from the quality of life of the area and it should not go forward, there is nothing the proponents can do to mitigate the problems with quality of life, except for changing significantly the concept of the Resort itself. Even then the Resort may still detract from the quality of life of the Cranbrook area.

The Baker Mountain Land Development, based on the quality of life assessment, should not be developed. Overall, the Resort detracts from the quality of life of the area with a negative rating of 48.5% or 4.9 out of 10. Moreover, the Resort detracts significantly from the quality of life of Population A and B in vital areas of quality of life.

It should be noted that quality of life surpasses sustainability because sustainability is not necessarily contingent on satisfying quality of life issues; whereas, positive quality of life itself is sustainable by the very fact of emphasizing the value of life and its positive value. An unsustainable positive quality of life is a contradiction in terms.

In conclusion, the Baker Mountain Land Development should not proceed on grounds of an overall detraction in quality of life of the Cranbrook area, and significant detraction in quality of life in areas vital to the well-being of Population A and B.

The Baker Mountain quality of life assessment can be used as public information source on the evaluating proposed current and future developments of Baker Mountain. Also, the assessment provides an example of how to assess quality of life in other developments. The FDA hopes that the British Columbia

government, and other governments nationally and internationally, will improve their development process by adding this quality of life assessment approach to not only the process, but also early in the process.