

# Cowichan committee scraps housing from \$1.5-billion Bamberton development

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**Developer Three Point Properties had proposed to transform the former cement plant at Bamberton into a mixed-use residential and commercial development over a 25-year period.**

**Photograph by: Russ Heint, Handout**

A vision for a \$1.5-billion live-work-and-play development in Bamberton is dead after the plan for more than 3,000 homes was scrapped by Cowichan Valley Regional District politicians on Monday night.

The region's electoral area services committee decided Monday to move forward on only the commercial and industrial portions of the project slated for 630 hectares on the Saanich Inlet on the north side of the Malahat.

Developer Three Point Properties had initially hoped to transform the former cement plant into residential and commercial development, creating a community of 7,200 people within 25 years. However, a Cowichan Valley Regional Districts staff report, which was presented at committee Monday night, highlighted several issues with the project, noting that while the Bamberton concept was attractive, it had shifted away from a mixed-use waterfront village to a more conventional development along the TransCanada Highway.

Other issues included: The need for updated assessment reports; interim commercial and industrial use on the waterfront seemed contradictory to the long-term vision for the site; and commitments for amenities to service development were limited and conditional, potentially resulting in a future community that would be under serviced.

On Monday night, the electoral area services committee decided to recommend that bylaws be drawn up that would pave the way for a public process on only the non-housing components.

Three Point Properties is hoping to see residential use included for that site in the next official community plan, Ross Tennant, development manager for the company, said Tuesday.

Bamberton's industrial land on the waterfront will be reconfigured, Tennant said. A business park is planned close to the highway.

Three Point is the third company to attempt to develop Bamberton. Victoria developer David Butterfield and Vancouver's Greystone Properties each tried to create communities on the site. They were stymied by the sheer size of the undertaking and such other issues as the potential environmental impact and projected effects on traffic on the Malahat.

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