

SILVER VALLEY POTENTIAL FUTURE SCHOOL SITES

PURPOSE

In October 2012, the District of Maple Ridge (the City) formally requested the Board of Education of School District No. 42 (SD#42) give consideration to immediate acquisition of the 136th Avenue, Blaney Hamlet, Silver Valley property for a future school site.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the information used by the Board in reaching its decision not to proceed with the purchase of the Blaney Hamlet property as a potential future school site.

SILVER VALLEY AREA PLAN

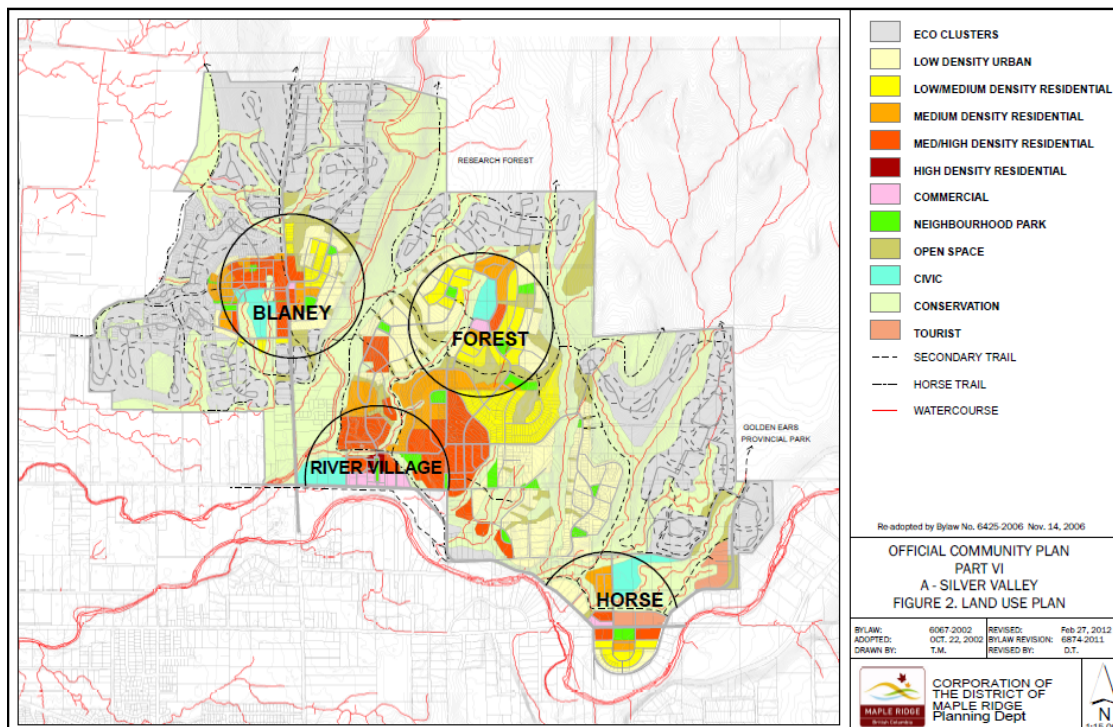
The overall Silver Valley Land Use Plan as prepared by the District of Maple Ridge is shown below.

The Silver Valley Land Use Plan proposes 4 schools - an elementary school in each of Blaney, Forest and Horse Hamlets and a secondary school in Rivers Village.

The Silver Valley Area Plan is derived from the concepts and principles described in the Silver Valley Area Planning Study completed in 2001. It is now more than 10 years old. The City admits that things have not quite developed as the plan originally proposed.

Schools have also changed - distributed learning, all day kindergarten, boundary enrolment choice for parents and many more changes have been introduced. Over the next 10 years, changes to education will continue to occur.

While these changes have taken place, 44% of Silver Valley has already built-out.



There are 1,616 dwelling units within the planning area providing a current Silver Valley population of 4,000. The City forecasts the maximum dwelling units to total 3,700.

The City indicated an additional 676 dwelling units (17% of the total) are under active application at this time so the area continues to actively build-out.

The current population of 4,000 within the Silver Valley Planning Area produces an elementary student yield of 498 students. At present the majority of these students (70%) attend Yennadon Elementary.

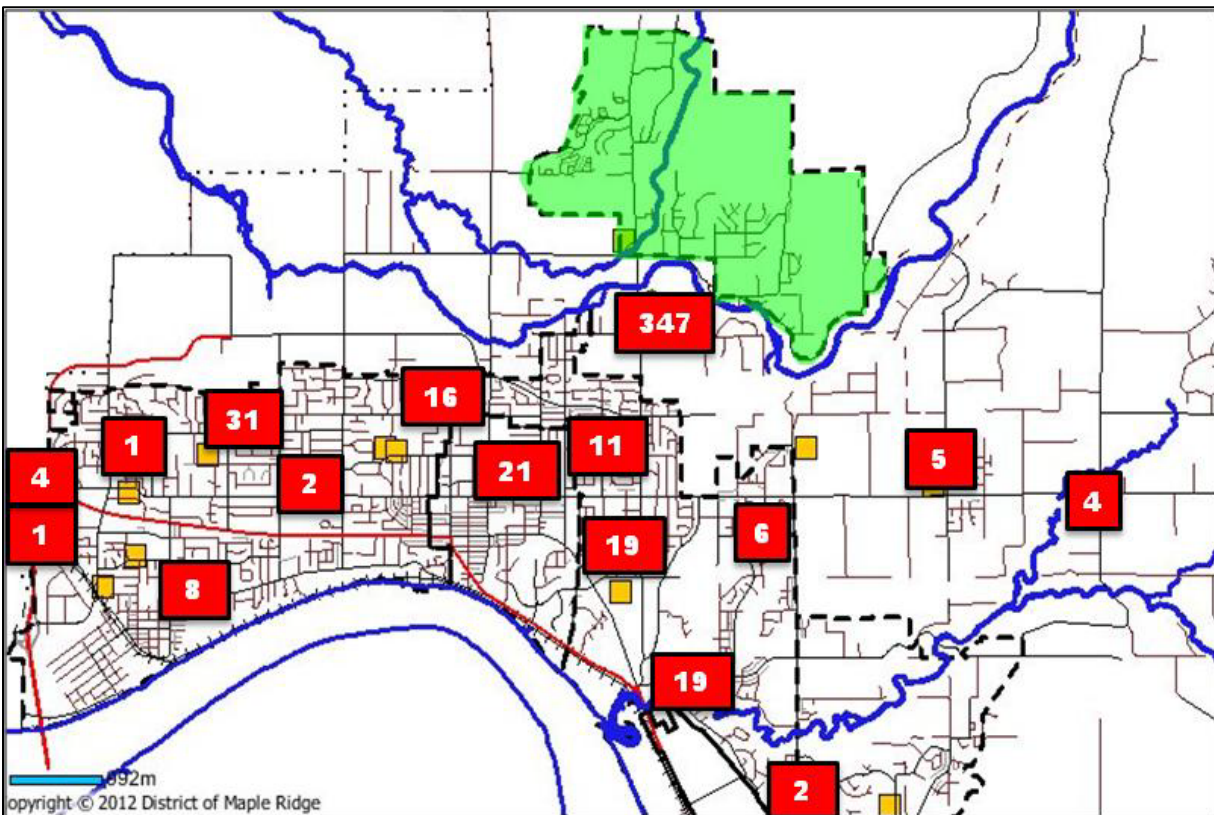
Based on the number of elementary students per population, the student yield in Silver Valley is 1.43 times that in the overall school district. This indicates that families with younger children are a large part of the population in the Silver Valley area.

The City ultimately forecasts a build-out population of 10,000 for Silver Valley. If the student yield continues at the current rate, this would provide an estimated 1,245 school age elementary students for grades K - 7.

CURRENT SILVER VALLEY ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Distribution

Baragar Systems assists SD#42 with management of student data. Utilizing their computerized tools, we are able to determine that, for the 2011-12 school year, the 498 elementary aged students from Silver Valley attended the schools as shown below. Statistics for 2012-13 are expected to be similar.



Silver Valley is entirely within the Yennadon Elementary catchment area and 70% of the Silver Valley elementary students attend Yennadon Elementary.

After Yennadon, the closest schools generally have the most Silver Valley students, although students are spread throughout the district. For the nearer schools, the capacity, enrolment and utilization are shown below. As well, the number of students attending the school from the Silver Valley is also included.

School	Capacity	Enrolment	Utilization	From S.V.	% of Enrol
Yennadon	525	558	106.3%	347	62%
Laity View	625	617	98.7%	31	5%
Eric Langton	425	414	97.4%	21	5%
Golden Ears	525	461	87.8%	19	4%
Kanaka Creek	575	591	102.8%	19	3%
Alouette	450	387	86.0%	16	4%
Harry Hooe	425	355	83.5%	11	3%

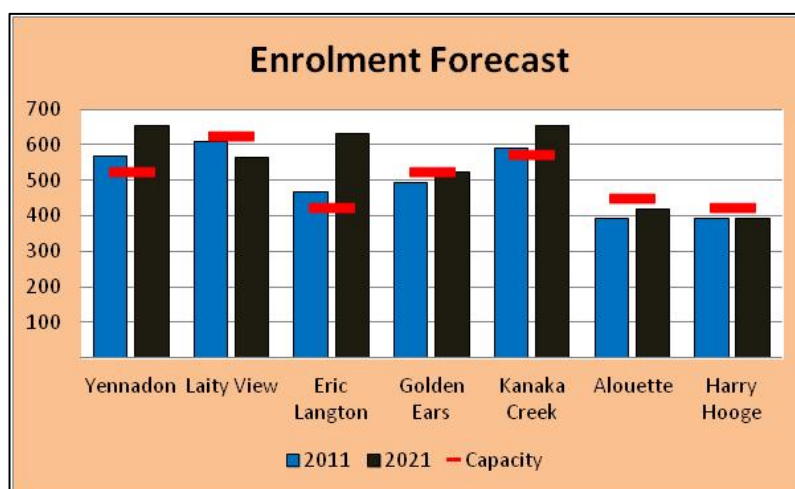
Enrolment Impacts

This chart shows the current enrolment and the forecast to 2021. The **RED bars** show the current design capacity of the school.

Looking into the future, the majority of these schools are forecasted to increase in enrolment.

The greater forecasted increases are in the Silver Valley, Town Centre and Albion areas. These are the major growth areas forecasted by the City.

A new elementary school at South Albion will assist with capacity in the East Zone but will likely not be available for several years even if approved in the near future. It will be challenging to accommodate the forecasted increase in schools such as Yennadon and Kanaka Creek due to existing size or lack of expansion room.



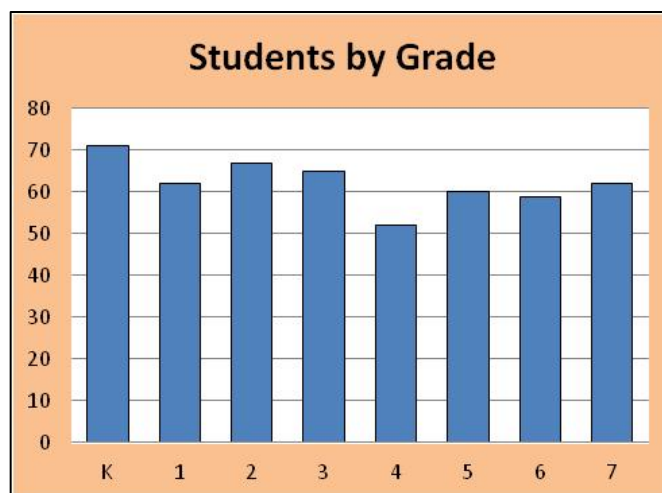
The schools to the east are forecasted to have less growth or even some decline (i.e. Laity View). As a result, adjustments to boundaries may continue to be required to meet changes in demand. Before approving any new school, the Ministry takes into account both total district enrolment, capacity and facility utilization.

Student Ages

The age distribution for students in Silver Valley is generally consistent by grade.

In addition, the yield based on population is significantly higher than the school district average (1.43 times). This speaks to families with smaller children within the Silver Valley area.

These are positive signs for the future as Silver Valley continues to build-out. If the student yield continues, it can be expected there will be as many as 1,245 elementary students from Silver Valley.



SD#42 generally has historically had larger elementary schools. To accommodate an additional 742 elementary students in Silver Valley, elementary schools with an average capacity of 375 students will be required.

Location

There are other considerations before deciding on school capacities in Silver Valley.

While many parents see a neighbourhood school as attractive; many others take their children elsewhere for personal reasons such as sibling issues, childcare, proximity to work location, etc.

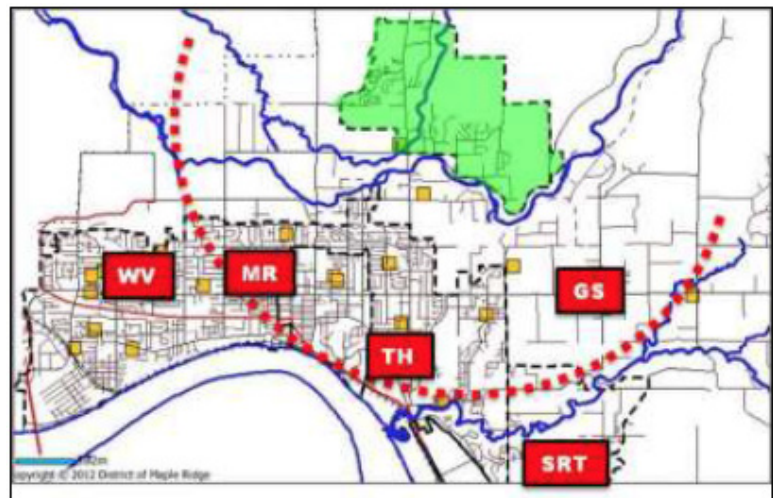
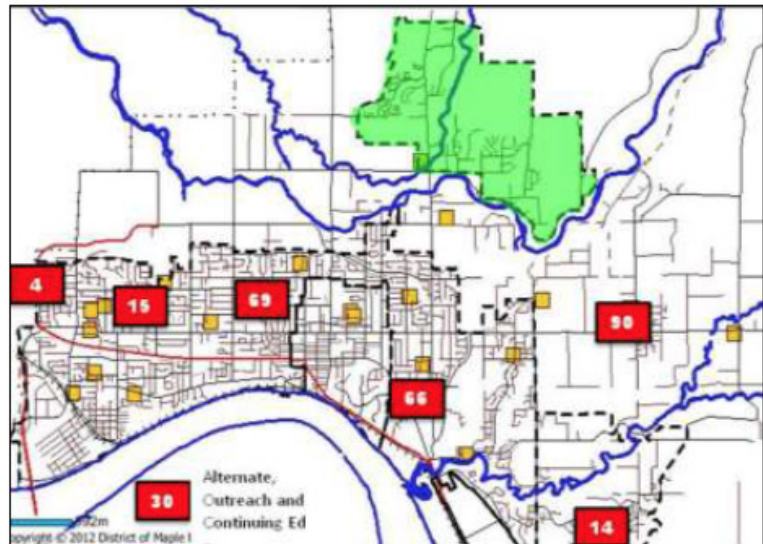
Other parents may look for district programs i.e. French immersion, year-round schooling, etc. Because of this, and like the present, not every student in Silver Valley will likely attend school there.

For secondary students, as the higher grades are reached, students, who are very mobile, often choose their school based on courses offered to complement their graduation program. It becomes more challenging to offer a wide variety of alternative course options as a secondary school gets smaller.

The map shows the location of all the current secondary schools except Pitt Meadows Sec. The 3 schools within the 4.8 km bussing radius currently have an excess capacity of 511 students, for an overall combined utilization of 86%. This is surplus capacity will be sufficient for some time.

To some degree, Silver Valley is somewhat isolated as an area, separated physically from other areas of Maple Ridge by agricultural areas and the Alouette River.

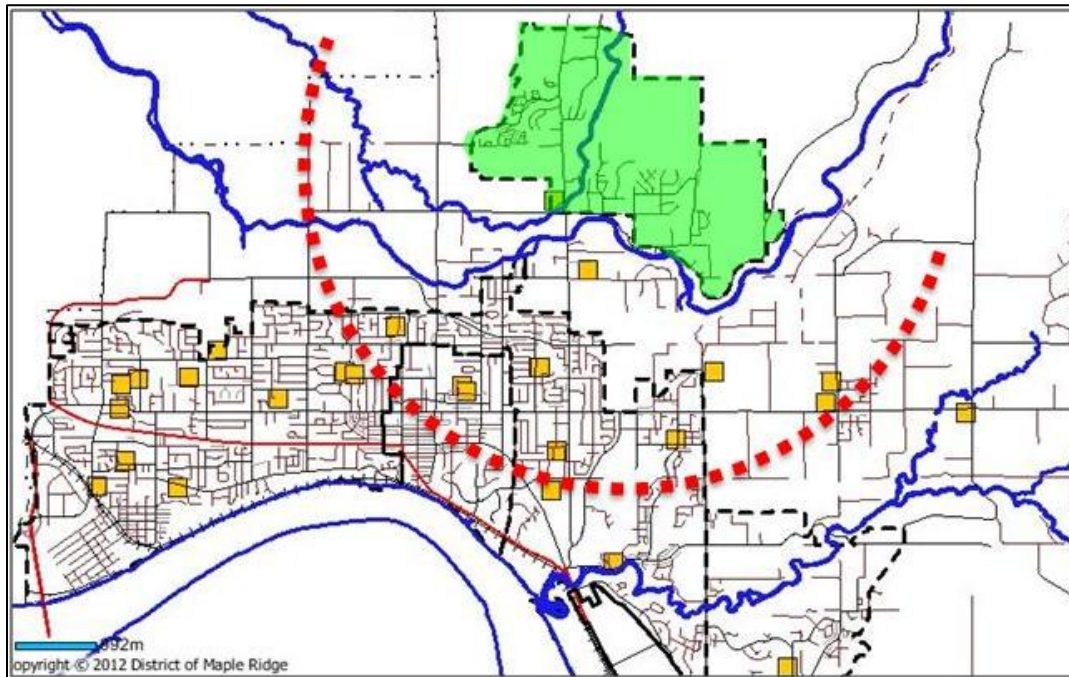
It is questionable whether many elementary or secondary students from the more developed areas to the south would travel north to go to school in Silver Valley. Over the long term, it would be important not to build excess school capacity into the Silver Valley area.



Transportation

The map shows the 4.0 km bussing radius for K - 5 students from the centre of Silver Valley. Consequently, bussing is not provided for elementary students from Silver Valley since there are many schools within this radius in addition to Yennadon.

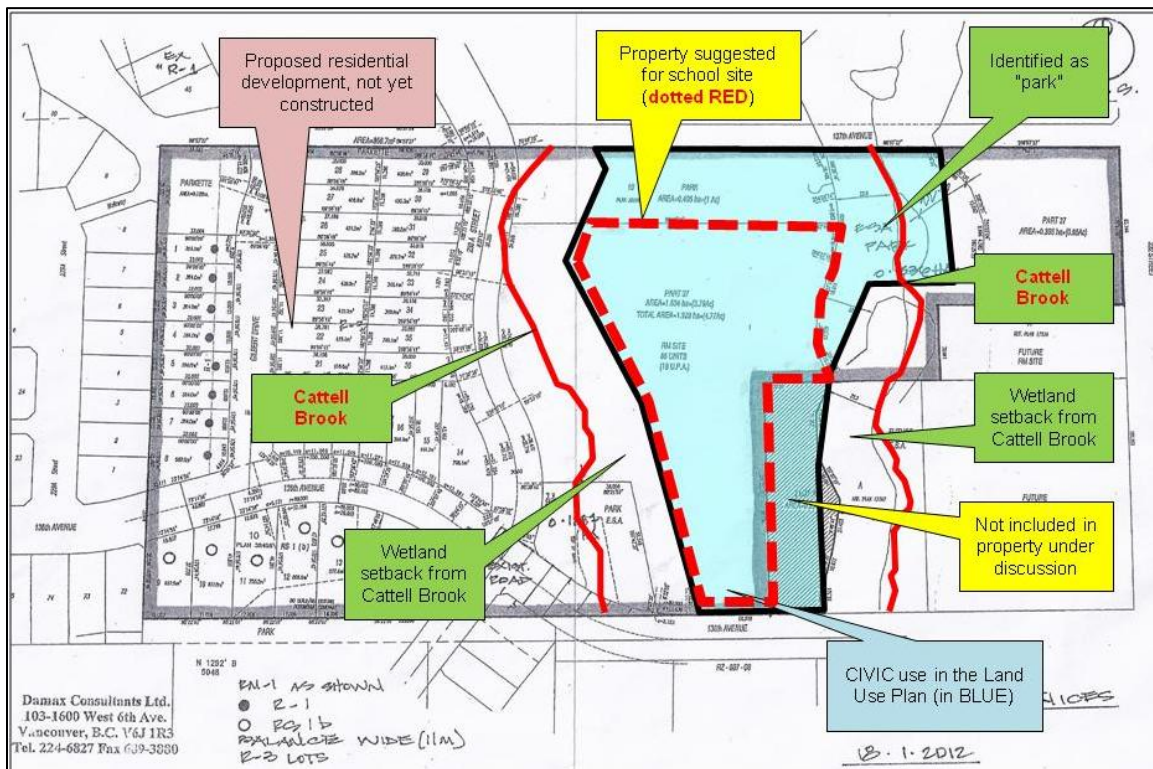
Since secondary schools are located farther away, there is some bussing provided for secondary students. The 4.8 km bussing distance for Grades 6 - 12 is not shown.



As the school district grows, bussing may be more economically attractive in the future as these enrolment demands change and catchment boundaries are adjusted.

PROPERTY PROPOSED TO BE ACQUIRED

The City has requested SD#42 purchase property in the Blaney Hamlet for a future school site.



The area shown in **BLUE** in the plan above is identified as CIVIC use in the Land Use Plan. The city has resisted development approval for these sites using provisions within the Area Plan. However, with development proceeding, the city is under pressure either to acquire the property or to allow development to proceed.

The proposed acquisition for the future elementary school is outlined in **dashed RED**.

The City has already acquired property for park immediately north of this site and now intends to acquire the property to the north and northeast of the school site for additional park. No other community amenities are proposed for the Blaney Hamlet.

The outlined property for the school is approximately 1.5 hectares with wetland setbacks on the west and east sides for Cattell Brook.

No specific site layouts for a school have been assessed. The site under discussion is outlined on the development plan below and shows:

- The entire parcel proposed for development outlined in **solid RED**.
- The locations of the tributaries to Cattell Brook are shown in **dotted RED**. There will be setbacks from the westerly tributary but the City has stated that the actual setbacks may be less than the east tributary.
- The parcel SD#42 is requested to purchase is outlined in **dashed BLACK**.
- The City previously acquired parcel A for parkland and parcel F as wetland setback for Cattell Brook.
- The City intends to acquire parcel B for extension of parkland. No other community amenities are proposed for the Blaney Hamlet.
- Parcel C and D will be acquired as wetland setbacks for Cattell Brook.
- Parcel E will be acquired as wetland setback for Cattell Brook when the southeast parcels develop.



Even though no specific school layouts were completed, we do know that the proposed site for school acquisition is approximately 1.5 ha less some setback requirements from Cattell Brook west. This requires the purchase of the shaded property in the south west to ensure a minimum site size of 1.5 ha.

We also know, that 1.5 ha will permit an elementary school with a capacity of 200, a playfield and sufficient parking for 25 vehicles.

We also know the shape of the parcel is irregular and that the land slopes significantly in the south half of the parcel. This means the best site for the school and playfield are in the north portion of the site.

Given this information, there are several site layout options:

1. School in the north with playfield and parking in the south. This will require retaining walls to provide a flat playfield.
2. School in the south and playfield in the north. This will likely require terracing the site with a multilevel school building.

3. The City could be approached to permit the school and playfield to encroach on to parcels B and perhaps even parcel A. This would enable a flat site for both the school and playfield and may eliminate the need to acquire the shaded parcel in the southeast.
4. If all sites A, B and the school site were combined, the overall buildable site size could approach 2.7 ha which would enable a future elementary school to approach a capacity of 500. Locating the school at the north end of this site would enable a suitable pick-up and drop-off to be designed along the roadway to the west.

OPTIONS

The options considered by the Board were:

- A. Ask the City to purchase
- B. SD#42 can proceed with purchase
- C. Do not acquire the property at this time
- D. Do not acquire the property

SUMMARY

Enrolment in SD#42 is expected to increase as the City grows over the next 10 years. The City is forecasted the majority of the growth in the Albion, Town Centre and Silver Valley areas. This means the enrolment will continue to grow in the east more than the west.

Planning for this shifting demographic and understanding the impact on the west and central zone schools requires a longer range plan for all schools in the district.

Development of a comprehensive School District Facilities Plan has been recently approved by the Board and it will be completed over the following year in consultation with stakeholders, educators, the community and the two municipalities. Before new school sites are acquired, the Board needs to first define what they believe the schools of the future should look like in order to deliver the educational programs of the future. That will enable the Board to assess its current inventory of schools and if needed acquire new school sites. Until this is completed, it will not be possible to put acquisition of this parcel in the perspective of an overall district plan.

Historically, the provincial Ministry of Education has had limited capital funds to disperse among the entire province and a new elementary school in Silver Valley could be a long way into the future.

While an additional school in Silver Valley may be required, proceeding with purchase of the Blaney Hamlet property at this time does not guarantee a school will be constructed at this location in the future.

After careful consideration and review, the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Board of Education has decided not to proceed with the purchase of the Blaney Hamlet property.